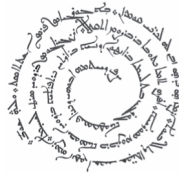


A Palimpsest: Rhetoric, Ideology, Stylistics, and Language Relating to Persian Israel



Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and its Contexts

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A Palimpsest: Rhetoric, Ideology, Stylistics, and Language Relating to Persian Israel

Edited by

**Ehud Ben Zvi
Diana V. Edelman
Frank Polak**



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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------------|--|
| <i>AA</i> | <i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i> |
| AASOR | Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research |
| AAUSSU | Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Semitica Upsaliensia |
| AB | Anchor Bible |
| ABD | <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> (ed. D. N. Freedman) |
| ABRL | Anchor Bible Reference Library |
| <i>AJSL</i> | <i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i> |
| AnBib | Analecta biblica |
| AnOr | Analecta orientalia |
| AOAT | Alter Orient und Altes Testament |
| <i>BASOR</i> | <i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i> |
| BETL | Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium |
| BHT | Beiträge zur historischen Theologie |
| BibS(F) | Biblische Studien (Freiburg) |
| <i>BN</i> | <i>Biblische Notizen</i> |
| BWANT | Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament |
| BZAW | Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft |
| CahRB | Cahiers de la Revue biblique |
| CAT | Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament |
| CBC | The Cambridge Bible Commentary, New English Bible |
| CBET | Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology |
| <i>CBQ</i> | <i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i> |
| ConBOT | Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series |
| CUF | Collection des universités de France |
| DDD | <i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> (eds K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst) |
| <i>DSD</i> | <i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i> |
| FAT | Forschungen zum Alten Testament |
| HALOT | Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . |
| HAT | Handbuch zum Alten Testament |
| <i>HS</i> | <i>Hebrew Studies</i> |

| | |
|---------|--|
| HSAT | <i>Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments</i> . Edited by E. Kautzsch and A. Bertholet. 4 th ed. Tübingen, 1922–1923. |
| HSM | Harvard Semitic Monographs |
| ICC | International Critical Commentary |
| IEJ | <i>Israel Exploration Journal</i> |
| JANES | <i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i> |
| JAOS | <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> |
| JBL | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> |
| JBQ | <i>Jewish Bible Quarterly</i> |
| JCS | <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> |
| JECS | <i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i> |
| JETS | <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i> |
| JHS | <i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i> |
| JJS | <i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i> |
| JNSL | <i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i> |
| JSJSup | Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism |
| JSOTSup | Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series |
| JSPSup | Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series |
| JSS | <i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i> |
| JTS | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> |
| LA | <i>Liber Annuus: Annual of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Jerusalem</i> |
| LCL | Loeb Classical Library |
| LD | Lectio divina |
| LHBOTS | Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies |
| LSTS | Library Second Temple Studies |
| MdB | <i>Le Monde de la Bible</i> |
| MEFR | <i>Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'école français de Rome</i> |
| NCB | New Century Bible |
| NCBC | New Century Bible Commentary |
| NEA | <i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i> |
| NICOT | New International Commentary on the Old Testament |
| OBO | Orbis biblicus et orientalis |
| OIP | Oriental Institute Publications |
| OLA | Orientalia lovaniensia analecta |
| OTL | Old Testament Library |
| OTWSA | <i>Die Oud Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika</i> |
| PEQ | <i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i> |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| SBLDS | Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series |
| SBLSCS | Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies |
| SBLSymS | Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series |
| <i>SEA</i> | <i>Svensk exegetisk årsbok</i> |
| SFSHJ | South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism |
| SPOṬ | Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament |
| SR | Studies in Religion |
| SSN | Studia Semitica Neerlandica |
| STAR | Studies in Theology and Religion |
| STDJ | Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah |
| SubBib | Subsidia Biblica |
| <i>TA</i> | <i>Tel Aviv</i> |
| TDOT | <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> (eds G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren). |
| <i>TbR</i> | <i>Theologische Rundschau</i> |
| <i>Transeu</i> | <i>Transeuphratène</i> |
| <i>TynBul</i> | <i>Tyndale Bulletin</i> |
| <i>VT</i> | <i>Vetus Testamentum</i> |
| VTSup | Vetus Testamentum Supplements |
| WBC | Word Biblical Commentary |
| <i>WZKM</i> | <i>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i> |
| <i>ZABR</i> | <i>Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i> |
| <i>ZAW</i> | <i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i> |

INTRODUCTION

DIANA V. EDELMAN

The present collection of essays are the result of two invited sessions of the group designated “Israel and the Production and Reception of Authoritative Books in the Persian and Hellenistic Periods,” co-chaired by Ehud Ben Zvi and myself, which meets annually under the auspices of the European Association of Biblical Studies. Most were presented either at the Vienna meeting in 2007 or at the Lisbon meeting in 2008, though some are by scholars who were invited to present but were unable to do so in person, who have kindly written contributions for the present volume. The session in Vienna, jointly sponsored by the Biblical Hebrew and Linguistics group, explored the current dialogue concerning the relationship between “early” or “standard” biblical Hebrew and “late” biblical Hebrew. These papers appear in the second section of the volume under “Stylistics and Linguistics.” The papers presented in Lisbon and written in response to an invitation to present there constitute the first section of the volume, “Rhetoric and Ideology.”

There has been a tendency for papers dealing with Hebrew linguistic issues to appear in specialized volumes or journals, so that those who are not actively part of the discussion or this area of research are not necessarily abreast of the recent challenge to the long-standing evolutionary view of late biblical Hebrew from early biblical Hebrew or standard Biblical Hebrew. We felt it important to include some papers dealing with this important debate in a more generalized volume to raise its profile, and we hope that future literary and historically oriented studies will engage more directly with the implications of the current debate.

The papers on rhetoric and ideology cover a wide range of topics and construe these two terms fairly loosely; “rhetoric” in particular is used in the sense of strategies or techniques used to persuade an audience to adopt a particular view or position. There can be a large amount of overlap with ideology, since the latter represents a particular view or position being asserted over against

a competing one, which will be developed using rhetorical strategies designed to be as persuasive as possible. Finally, the reference to “Persian Israel” is not chronologically specific; the five stylistic and linguistic papers include texts like Chronicles, Esther, Daniel, Ezra 1–6, and Zechariah 9–14, all of which tend to be dated in the late Persian or Hellenistic period, and the dates of Haggai, Zechariah 1–8, Malachi, Ezra 7–10, and Nehemiah, while generally placed in the early or mid Persian/Achaemenid period, are thought by some to be late Persian or Hellenistic as well. The paper by D. Rom-Shiloni on group identities in Jeremiah identifies an ideology associated with those exiled in 597 BCE with King Jehoiachin, a more inclusive Babylonian exilic strand following 586 BCE, a third counter-ideology representing the concerns of the non-exiled, beginning after 597 but also continuing after 586 into the early exilic period, and a fourth ideology of repatriated exiles; the first three would originate prior to the Persian period.

My essay on Ezra 1–6 proposes a likely Hellenistic date of composition for the idealized account of the temple-building, which draws heavily on canonical prophetic texts, and the paper by J.-D. Macchi argues that the author of Esther was familiar with a number of Greek accounts of life and events associated with the Persian court and modelled his story on a number of them, writing sometime in the 3rd century BCE. Nevertheless, the story is set during the reign of King Xerxes, just as the temple-building account in Ezra 1–6 is set during the reigns of Cyrus and Darius, all three Persian kings, and both involve alleged events that had an important impact on Israel. The paper by P. Guillaume on the partial acrostic poem in Nahum 1 that he believes gives rules for using the 20-square board of senet for divination is the least specific in terms of dating but offers an intriguing idea with important implications for the use of literary prophecy to help individuals answer questions of importance in their daily lives.

Section I contains six papers. The first, by Dalit Rom-Shiloni, identifies four competing ideologies embedded in original and editorial layers of the prophecies of consolation in the book of Jeremiah (Jer 3:14–17, 18; 16:14–15; 23:7–8; 24; 30–33; 50–51). Three express communal-national identities that emerged in the closing years of the monarchy and in the Neo-Babylonian period, while the fourth emerged after the repatriation of some of the Babylonian exiles in the Persian period. She examines the rhetoric used to express each, using sociological distinctions between in-

group and out-group and identifying features relating to the three strategies of continuity, entirety, and annexation used to assert group exclusivity in each case. She specifically aims to counter the view expressed by R. P. Carroll that the Jeremiah tradition reflects post-exilic ideological conflicts within Yehud, conflicts that emerged as a result of the encounter between representatives of those who remained in Judah and those who returned to Palestine at various points during the Persian period. She argues that this internal conflict emerged already in the Neo-Babylonian period in Judah and in Babylon, and is represented in antagonistic positions within the prophecies of consolation in the book of Jeremiah. These prophecies reveal diversity of perspectives not only between pro-*golah* and pro-Judean voices, but also within Babylonian-exilic/editorial strands in the book of Jeremiah. Among the latter are traces of re-formulation of Jeremian (Judean) prophecies by repatriated members of the *golah* in the early Persian period.

In my first article, I look at two complementary rhetorical strategies developed in the Hebrew Bible to help emergent Jewish communities think about and relate to a new, aniconic, monotheistic divinity: *shem* or “name” theology and *kabod* or “glory” theology. The first I tie to changes in the conception of the contents of the Ark from a container of a portable statue of Yahweh Sebaot to a container for Torah, symbolized by the ten commandments written by the finger of God. Whether one argues that “name” theology involves the setting up of a monument or the establishing of a reputation, both meanings point to Torah as the new means of expressing the divine presence and its relationship with Israel. The second I argue has roots in the Iron age temple cult associated either with solar imagery or perhaps with a concept equivalent to divine *puluh(t)u* in Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian tradition; the fiery, glittery radiance of a god. However, I suggest that the fire imagery that is prominent in various books of the Hebrew Bible may have become the preferred, self-revelatory form of manifestation chosen by Yahweh himself in the texts because of the prominence of fire in old Iranian religion, particularly in association with the deities Mithra and Ahura Mazda. Such an alignment could have gained favorable acceptance of his worship throughout the Persian empire.

Francesca Stavrakopoulou discusses the function of Genesis 23 in which purchased land and ancestral land are combined in a single ideological frame. Abraham is not cast as an ecumenical ancestor whose land purchase is meant to promote a peaceful, coop-

erative relationship between immigrant citizens of Yehud in the Persian period and the native inhabitants, as some have argued. Instead, Abraham's purchase of the field and cave at Machpelah is an assertion of territorial possession via the territorial function of a grave and of ethnic exclusivity via the tomb's function as a boundary marker separating him from the locals. Abraham is transformed from a "resident incomer" into a landowner whose chosen line of descendants, Israel, can claim perpetual ownership of their "ancestral" land. The narrative seeks to legitimize early "Jewish" claims to the tomb cult at Macphelah/Hebron while also serving as a Persian-era paradigm of land appropriation by new arrivals through purchase and subsequent ancestralization.

In my second article I examine how Ezra 1–6 was constructed using every prediction concerning the rebuilding of the temple found in the canonical prophetic corpus, resulting in an idealized account of how the temple was rebuilt, not a factually reliable one (Isa 44:28; 52:11; the book of Jeremiah; Jer 25:8; 29:10–14, 25, Ezekiel 40–48; Ezek 40:5–7; Haggai 1–Zechariah 8). It thus seems to be an implanted cultural memory rather than one generated in the historical context of the temple's rebuilding, which was adjusted by a subsequent generation to meet its needs. I then consider whether the author intended this to be a new, ideal beginning that would end positively or negatively or whether he wanted to place the account of the rebuilding of the temple prior to Ezra's introduction of Torah to post-exilic Israel, either to give the temple and its cult priority over the law in terms of authority, to be superceded by the law, once it is introduced, or for the two to serve as the twin, equal pillars of emerging Judaism.

Jean-Daniel Macchi writes about how the book of Esther tells a story set at the court of the Persian king Xerxes but betrays knowledge and use of a number of Greek sources about Persian court life and well-known figures, indicating a likely composition in Hellenistic Jewish circles in the 3rd century BCE. The proposed sources used by the author include Herodotus for the story of Cambyses' marriage to his sister, the refusal of two free Spartans to bow down to Xerxes, the story of how Phaedyme and Otanes discovered a magus had usurped the throne at Cambyses' death, and the account of the establishment of the annual Persian festival commemorating the massacre of the magi; Ctesias for the account of the manipulative actions of the queens Amestris and Parysatis; and Aelian for the story of the first meeting between Aspasia and

Cyrus II. Greek literary techniques found in Esther include the custom of explaining exotic customs, reference to alleged archives used as sources, and the use of Persian terms and names to give local coloring.

Finally, Philippe Guillaume argues that the partial acrostic psalm in Nah 1:2–11, which is both irregular and incomplete, contains one set of rules to be used with a senet board of 20 houses/squares and astragali (animal knucklebones) as dice. He thinks the psalm was inserted into its present position in front of the oracles concerning Nineveh and Assyria before the entire collection labelled “the book of the vision of Nahum” was added to the Book of the Twelve. Significantly, it is placed at the beginning of the book of Nahum, which fulfils the oracle predicting the destruction of Nineveh at the end of the book of Jonah and in the LXX; it immediately follows Jonah, in a position where it bridges an oracle and its clear fulfilment. This could suggest a desire to endorse the use of 20-house senet as a sure means of determining the divine will. The Chronicler’s failure to mention any of the minor prophets from the Book of the Twelve could suggest that the collection did not yet exist when he wrote. There is clear use of 20-space game-boards and astragali for divination, dating as early as Ur III (ca 2600 BCE) and as late as 177–76 BCE from Babylon. Written prophecy would only have been effective in replacing functioning prophets if the oracles collected in the prophetic books could offer people guidance for their daily lives by means of randomly selecting individual oracles that would give an answer to a specific question. Astragali were used in conjunction with senet boards for such scriptural divination.

Section II contains five papers. The first paper by Frank Polak is an examination of frequent verbs of motion, particularly הָלַךְ, “to go,” יָצָא, “to go out,” בּוֹא “to come,” and לָקַח, “to take,” in three corpora: A, representing the Achaemenid period (Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Daniel 1); B, attributed to the late Judahite monarchy or the 7th and early 6th century (Deuteronomistic associated narratives, including most of Joshua; 1 Kings 3–16; 2 Kings 11–25; Jeremiah’s *Vita*); and C, texts that are not intrinsically related to either period, but which from a sociolinguistic and sociocultural point of view seem to originate in the period from the tenth to the middle of the eighth century BCE—the main stock of the patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12–50), the Samuel-Saul-David complex (1 Samuel 1:1–1 Kings 2:46), and the Elijah-Elisha cycle.

In addition, his study considers prophetic texts from the Achaemenid period (Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, with, e.g., Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah 1–32, as control texts, matching corpus C-B).

In corpus C Polak notes a preference for הלך, which is neutral in orientation or indicates movement toward a destination remote from the point of origin, and for בוא, when the destination is indicated, while in the late biblical Hebrew texts in A, the central terms are יצא, to highlight the point of departure, and בוא for indication of the destination. However, in A the latter two verbs are also used when the orientation points are not stated and sometimes their use does not tally with the orientation implied by the narrative. לקח, a central verb in corpus C, almost disappears in corpus A where the preferred verb is הביא.

He then examines biverbal and biclausal constructions in which לקח and הלך serve as the first of two verbal predicates that have the same subject and which describe a single action. In this pattern the information presented by the first verb (or clause) pertains to the content of the second or clause that carries the main information, and serves as modifier of this clause (for instance: 'Take your son ... and go to the land of Moriah,' as comitative). Since biverbal/biclausal patterns abound in corpus C but are infrequent in B and rare in A, Polak infers that patterns of this type embody a particular syntactic-semantic structure (serialization) that is not part of the language, culture, cognitive stance, or mentality of late biblical Hebrew. His conclusion is that the differentiation between Classical and Late Biblical Hebrew relates to syntax and discourse structure rather than merely to stylistic preference.

In his second paper, Polak investigates parallelism and noun groups in Haggai 1–Zechariah 8; Zech 11:4–14:21; and Malachi, representing different stages of the Achaemenid period. He finds a relatively high incidence of syndetic junctions of semantically related terms and of parallelism built on the repetition of a single lexeme; an imperfect use of gapping in Haggai and its infrequent use in Zechariah 1–8; 11:4–14:21; and a certain dependency on the collections of Isaiah and Jeremiah. He concludes that these factors provide evidence of a loss of technical skill in the handling of the prosodic characteristics of parallelism. On a more positive note, however, the mixture of poetry with prose found in all three books, akin in some ways to the prose speeches in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, allows the prophets to convey their ideas in a manner not easily achieved in poetry alone. Prose statements can be acerbic and can

convey a sense of urgency. The repeated use of divine quotation formulae in parallelism, a technique used in Jeremiah (in particular in the secondary redaction, indicated by the minuses of the LXX) and renewed in these three books, allows the authority of the prophetic message to be underscored.

In his contribution, Robert Rezetko notes the lateness and sparseness of manuscript evidence for the book of Samuel, which makes any discussion of the book's language in the monarchic, Babylonian, Persian, or even Hellenistic period, from when some of the Qumran fragments date, speculative. If the book had a long and complex history of development, as is commonly thought, we cannot isolate and date literary layers to certain periods on the basis of linguistic profiling without engaging in circular argumentation. Early and Late Biblical Hebrew are distinguishable by degree; one corpus may have more examples of a particular lexical or grammatical feature than the other or, in some cases, may have such features that are absent in the other corpus. Problems associated with attempts to date biblical texts linguistically include an overestimation of linguistic contrast between books written in Early and Late Biblical Hebrew and overestimation of linguistic uniformity in Early Biblical Hebrew books on the one hand and in Late Biblical Hebrew books on the other. These issues are illustrated by a synopsis of 460 Late Biblical Hebrew linguistic features in terms of distribution and opposition, the accumulation of typical Late Biblical Hebrew features in MT 2 Samuel 6, and several matters of usage of Hebrew verb forms. The research by F. Polak on Hebrew stylistics does not map easily onto a neat chronological linguistic scheme, although it is important in demonstrating that certain biblical narratives have an oral style closer to speech than to writing. The linguistic profile of the book of Samuel cannot be used as a basis to argue against a post-monarchic date of composition or redaction.

Ian Young examines the question, "What is Late Biblical Hebrew?" He argues that, despite its name, it is not specifically a chronological phenomenon since characteristic "Late Biblical Hebrew" traits are found in every part of the Hebrew Bible, as well as in monarchic-era extra biblical inscriptions. He agrees with the work of Avi Hurvitz that what characterizes the core Late Biblical Hebrew books of Esther, Daniel, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah is the presence of large concentrations of such Late Biblical Hebrew features, whereas so-called "Early Biblical Hebrew" is charac-

terized by small accumulations of these features. However, since Early Biblical Hebrew-like small concentrations are found in works throughout the Second Temple period, and a high concentration is found in Qoheleth, which he dates to the late monarchy, he argues that so-called “Early” and “Late” Biblical Hebrew are better regarded as styles of literary Hebrew that co-existed throughout the biblical period. He then addresses the question of why some authors chose to write in the Late Biblical Hebrew style. He critically discusses and modifies his own previous proposal that it was a geographical phenomenon to be associated with the eastern diaspora in the Persian period but concludes that this proposal still has merit. However, he argues further that geography is not necessary to explain the use of the Late Biblical Hebrew style, drawing an analogy with the accepted division of Achaemenid period Aramaic into eastern and western styles, in use for different functions and types of literature, in the same time and in the same communities. In this model the important factor is the perceived audience or purpose of the document. Late Biblical Hebrew may be used, therefore, to consciously distance this style of literature from literature produced in the “Early” Biblical Hebrew style.

Finally, Ehud Ben Zvi focuses his discussion on three related questions: What effect did the language in which a text was written, standard biblical Hebrew, late biblical Hebrew, or Aramaic, have on ancient readers and what did they learn about the text from the choice of language? What can we learn from the choice of language in which texts were written, read, and reread about the socio-cultural and ideological contexts from which they emerged in Yehud? He notes that the three collections of texts comprising the Pentateuch, the Deuteronomistic History, and the prophetic books, which informed each other and evolved together as part of the discourse of the community of Jerusalem-based literati in Persian Yehud, were all written in Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH), not Late Biblical Hebrew or Aramaic. He suggests the choice of SBH, which also would have been used in the cult, created a sense of an authoritative religious corpus defined by language boundaries, just as administrative texts would have been written in Aramaic. Late Biblical Hebrew may reflect one of the forms of spoken Hebrew of the Persian period but more importantly, when used to produce literature, signals a composition with less authority than books belonging to the SBH corpus and may have been thought to connote “an

(implicit), ideologically construed” connection with Babylonian Israel.

I hope that more than one of the article abstracts just presented have piqued your interest and that you find this a thought-provoking collection of essays that will stimulate further debate and discussion.

I want to thank my co-editors, Ehud Ben Zvi and Frank Polak, for their time and effort expended to make this volume a reality, Katie Stott for her careful work with the ms and George Kiraz for publishing it in Gorgias Press.

GROUP IDENTITIES IN JEREMIAH: IS IT THE PERSIAN PERIOD CONFLICT?”¹

DALIT ROM-SHILONI

I. INTRODUCTION

The Book of Jeremiah challenges scholars in two very different areas of analysis, raising questions of communal-national identity and issues concerning the literary evolution of the book.² In reference to definitions of communal-national identity, contradictory positions are proclaimed in Jeremiah, reflecting a conflict between pro-Judean and pro-*golah* voices (as for instance in Jer 42:10–12 versus Jer 24:5–7).³ Both perspectives appear as the words of the prophet, spoken by YHWH to Jeremiah, and yet contemporaneous biblical compositions show that these perspectives represent antagonistic positions current among Judeans in the early sixth century and following (as in Ezek 11:14–21; 33:23–29). While it is possible to harmonize these two positions by reconstructing ideological developments or even transformations within the prophet’s

¹ I am greatly indebted to Dr. Ruth Clements for being an inspiring reader, for her insightful comments and improvements put into this paper.

² On the tight connection between community and tradition, see Robert P. Carroll, *From Chaos to Covenant: Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 249–68, especially 256–58.

³ This dichotomy was suggested by Christopher R. Seitz, *Theology in Conflict: Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah* (BZAW, 176; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1989, 201–2, and *passim*; and elaborated by Carolyn J. Sharp (*Prophecy and Ideology in Jeremiah: Struggles for Authority in Deutero-Jeremianic Prose* [Old Testament Studies; London: T&T Clark, 2003], 157–69) who used those terms to identify two antagonistic authorial and redactional circles of Jeremian traditionists. While I differ from Sharp in how I would assign specific passages to the two groups, I accept the “two-circle” redactional theory as very helpful in understanding Jeremiah.

own thought,⁴ more prominent critical approaches find these contradictions to be a significant key to the literary history of the Book of Jeremiah. In this view, there is a (primary) Jeremian-Judean voice in Jeremiah, along with (secondary) redactional strands expressing the outlook of the Exiles in Babylon, who are responsible for the editorial process that gave the book its final shape.⁵

The present study focuses on these secondary redactional strands. Accepting the basic distinction between the Jeremian-Judean perspective and the redactors' Babylonian outlook as a point of departure, I want to challenge Robert P. Carroll's argument that:

It makes a good deal of sense to see such a dismissal [of the Judean group who had fled to Egypt and of Judean claims in general, D. R-S] as part of the counter-claim of the Babylonian exiles *who returned to Palestine at various periods in the Persian era* [my emphasis, D. R-S]. . . . The presence in the Jeremiah tradition of pericopes siding with the Babylonian exiles suggests *an element in that community struggle after the ending of the Babylonian period*

⁴ This approach characterizes traditional medieval Jewish exegesis and is also utilized by modern scholars, such as Jeremiah Unterman, *From Repentance to Redemption: Jeremiah's Thought in Transition* (JSOTSupp, 54; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987); and more recently Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36* (AB, 21B; New York: Doubleday, 2004); as also by Mark Leuchter, *Josiah's Reform and Jeremiah's Scroll: Historical Calamity and Prophetic Response* (Hebrew Bible Monographs, 6), Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006. In his recent monograph, *The Polemics of Exile in Jeremiah 26–45* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Leuchter perceived chapters 26–52 to be an exilic supplement compiled in Babylon by 570 BCE out of various materials, which in parts were edited by Jeremiah himself (as for instance chapters 27–29, 30–31), and in which the prophet was the one who addressed the 597 Exiles in Babylon.

⁵ There has been a broad consensus among scholars that the exilic redaction of Jeremiah may be characterized very clearly as deuteronomistic in nature; see for instance Ernest W. Nicholson, *Preaching to the Exiles: A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970). Carroll (*From Chaos to Covenant*, 249–68) mentioned three basic communities in Judah, Egypt, and Babylon interested in Jeremiah's prophecies, but recognized the dominant power of the Babylonian Exiles. Sharp (*Prophecy and Ideology*, 157–69) further elaborated this redactional theory to include editorial centers in Judah and in Babylon, arguing for diverse deuteronomistic activity in both centers.

[my emphasis, D. R-S]. It may also contribute to the view that one of the strongest reasons for the production of the Jeremiah tradition along the lines it now takes is as a contribution to one of the parties in the struggle within the community.⁶

Should these secondary strands in Jeremiah be related only to the postexilic, Persian era conflict? Or, appreciating Carroll's emphasis on the significant connections between community and tradition, might we refine our examination to find several *diverse* Babylonian-exilic perspectives in the book of Jeremiah, parallel to or different from those we know of in other exilic and postexilic compositions of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE?

In an earlier study of internal Judean conflicts over group identities during this time span, I pointed out marked differences and transformations within Babylonian-exilic ideology.⁷ Here, I will use this same method to discern different voices and even subsequent levels of literary evolution within the redactional strands of Jeremiah, and to place those levels of evolution at relative dates during the Neo-Babylonian and the Persian periods.

II. STAGES IN BABYLONIAN EXILIC IDEOLOGY

Babylonian exilic ideology comprises those diverse outlooks reflected in the literature written, compiled, and edited *both* by Exiles in Babylon *and* by Babylonian-Repatriates in Achaemenid Yehud. This definition is indeed comprehensive, as it is quite clear that Babylon-oriented exilic communities were responsible for much of the compilation and editorial work done within the sixth and the fifth centuries BCE. Hence deuteronomistic literature, priestly compositions, and prophetic literature all show Babylonian-exilic perspectives in their final redactional stages. The chronological range for this literature starts as early as the first wave of Judean Exiles to Babylon in the Neo-Babylonian era (i.e., the Jehoiachin Exile, 597 BCE), and concludes with the later waves of return,

⁶ Carroll, *From Chaos to Covenant*, 259.

⁷ Dalit Rom-Shiloni, "From Ezekiel to Ezra-Nehemiah: Shifts of Group-Identities within Babylonian Exilic Ideology," G. Knoppers, O. Lipschitz, and M. Oeming (eds), *Judeans in the Achaemenid Age: Negotiating Identity in an International Context* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, [in press]).

those of Ezra and Nehemiah (458–432 BCE) deep in the Persian period. Accordingly, the geographical spectrum encompasses both literature produced in Babylon (Ezekiel; Isaiah 40–48; the editorial strands of Jeremiah; Kings, etc.), and Repatriate literature written in Yehud (Isaiah 49–66; Haggai and Zechariah 1–8; Ezra-Nehemiah).⁸ The present study adds observations concerning the book of Jeremiah, and examines the strands of Babylonian exilic ideology found within it from the perspective of what those strands say about group identity.

It has long been recognized that questions of identity were at the core of the internal polemic within Judean communities of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. In my earlier paper I suggested an overview of the oppositional relationships between the Exiles and Those who Remained in Judah (then, Yehud), by moving backwards from Ezra-Nehemiah and Zechariah 1–8 to Ezekiel. The oppositions between the communities were established by using distinctive criteria of “otherness”; the two communities articulated their antagonistic positions through specific designations and counterdesignations, by mounting three arguments and counterarguments (those of continuity, entirety, and annexation of national-historical traditions), and by utilizing excluding strategies and counterstrategies by which each community legitimized its status and delegitimized its counter-community.⁹

Using quite a rough chronological separation I divided the sixth–fifth centuries into three main periods: the early exilic (597–586 BCE and on), exilic (circa 570/mid-sixth century to 538 BCE), and Persian periods (538–430 BCE). Within these periods several developments in attitudes towards self (in-group) and other (out-group) may be discerned:

1) In-group definitions:

A. Within the early exilic period (597–586 BCE and on), Ezekiel considers the Jehoiachin Exiles to be the exclusive

⁸ For this division of Deutero-Isaiah see recently Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–48, 49–66* (Mikra LeIsrael; Jerusalem/Tel Aviv: Magnes and Am Oved, 2008).

⁹ For a discussion of these arguments of *differentiation* within Babylonian exilic ideology see, Rom-Shiloni, *ibid.*, 6–28; for its sociological theoretical background see, Rom-Shiloni, “Ezekiel as the Voice of the Exiles and Constructor of Exilic Ideology” *HUCA* 76 (2005), 1–45, especially 5–8.

people of God (Ezek 11:14–21, etc.). In this extreme position, he excludes even the 586 Exiles from forming a united community with the earlier Exiles (14:21–23), whom he designates as “the seed of Jacob” (20:5).¹⁰

B. Deutero-Isaiah (Isaiah 40–48) designates a shift within Babylonian exilic ideology as he addresses all the Exiles using the most general designations, not giving any special prominence to the Jehoiachin Exiles. This inclusive attitude within Babylonian exilic ideology, which might have started earlier, persisted during the first decades of the Exile, circa 570/mid-sixth century to 538 BCE, and was retained in the Persian period (538–430 BCE, in Zechariah 1–8 and Ezra-Nehemiah).¹¹

C. Another inclusive tendency among the Exiles envisions a reunification between Exiles of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Judean Exiles in Babylon (Ezekiel 37:15–24).¹²

2) Out-group definitions:

Within the above writings and throughout these three periods, the “others” are always the inhabitants of Judah (Yehud), designated as foreigners, as not-Israel. Ezekiel labels Jerusalem as descending from the “land of the Canaanites—your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite” (Ezek 16:3). Ezra-Nehemiah repeatedly uses the phrase “the people(s) of the land(s)” (עמי הארצות, as in Ezra 3:3), or “all foreigners” (בני נכר, Neh 9:2), to describe the Persian period inhabitants of Yehud (encompassing the people of Judah who were *not* deported) as an amalgamation of foreign peoples which manifests itself in several subdesignations:¹³ (1) deportees fairly recently brought to the land by

¹⁰ Rom-Shiloni, *ibid.*, especially 39–40.

¹¹ Yet the Jehoiachin Exiles continue to be highly regarded through the Persian period, as the genealogy of Mordechai in Esth 2:1 suggests.

¹² The vision of reunification between Israel and Judah is by no means a new or exilic notion, and is assumed to have arisen in Judah after the destruction of Samaria. In what follows I will point out its occurrences in pre-exilic prophecies of Jeremiah (see below pp. 25–26).

¹³ Other quite independent occurrences of בני נכר in Deutero-Isaiah portray these people as “foreigners who attach themselves to the Lord” (Isa 56:7; 60:10; 61:5), individuals who were accepted into the community,

the Assyrians from northern areas under their control (Ezra 4:1–4); (2) descendants of the ancient peoples of Canaan, of Canaanite, Trans-Jordanian, or even Egyptian ancestry (as in Ezra 9:2, 11); and (3) individuals in Nehemiah’s memoir who are defined by personal names and (non-Yehud) national identities: Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arab (Neh 2:10, 19; 6:1–9, 11–19; 13:1–13; and see 4:1–2; 13:23). These designations share the clear tendency to exclude any group except the Babylonian Exiles (and the later Repatriates) from membership in the community of “Judeans.”

3) The Rhetoric of Desolation:

Another rhetorical strategy reinforces the exclusiveness of the community of Babylonian Exiles by portraying the land of Judah after the deportations as completely empty and desolate, awaiting the Repatriates’ return. The land has no residents at all, neither former Judeans (Israelites) nor any other designated population (as in 2 Kings 25). This theme goes throughout sixth-century sources, beginning with Ezekiel (as in Ezek 36:6–15), Deutero-Isaiah (Isa 49:14–21; 54:1–10; 60:14–21, etc.), and Zechariah 1–8 (Zech 1:7–17; 7:14; 8:1–15).

In Ezekiel, #2 and #3 form two parts of a unified argument “defining out” those left behind in Judah. The major shift in the Babylonian exilic ideology concerning the “other” was the evolution of an independent status for each of these two parts. Ezra-Nehemiah utilized the analogy in which the “others” become the foreign peoples of the land (#2), echoing Ezekiel’s designation of Jerusalem and its inhabitants as the “Canaanite” or foreign “peoples of the land.” Deutero-Isaiah, on the other hand, used the imagery of Zion as the empty land and the Exiles as the people of God who would fill it (#3), the path which Zechariah son of Iddo (and implicitly Haggai) would follow (this may be seen, for instance, in the similarities between Isa 49:15–21 and Zech 8:1–15).

Babylonian exilic ideology thus presents lines of continuity between its three chronological subdivisions. In addition, a “land orientation” seems to be a shared focus of Babylonian exilic ideology both in Babylon and back in Yehud. The Exiles in Babylon contin-

even allowed to participate in the Temple’s worship.

ued to negotiate their status in relation to those Judeans who remained in the land of Israel, rather than in relation to “proximate others” of the diverse national groups of exiles in Babylon.

The present study advances the questions of whether perspectives in the Book of Jeremiah accord with these polarized viewpoints developed in Babylon concerning Judean identities throughout the sixth-fifth centuries BCE; and more specifically, whether this paradigm might serve to construct a relative chronology by distinguishing the different perspectives apparent in the Book of Jeremiah; Would such an approach enable us to ascertain Persian period strands within the book?

III. BABYLONIAN EXILIC IDEOLOGY IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

To narrow somewhat the search for traces of Babylonian exilic ideology in Jeremiah, I have focused this paper on prophecies of consolation: Jer 3:14–17, 18; 16:14–15; 23:7–8; chapter 24; chapters 30–33; and passages within chapters 50–51.

These prophecies have attracted a great deal of scholarly attention. Textual, linguistic, literary, thematic, historical, redactional, and comparative criteria have been employed to distinguish the early prophecies, which are said to be among the earliest in Jeremiah’s career, and which are placed side by side with (later) prophetic passages that resemble Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, even Nehemiah, in style and themes. In addition to the standard methods, I suggest that we now examine these prophecies utilizing sociological distinctions between in-group and out-group.

A. In-group and Out-group Definitions: The Jehoiachin Exiles’ Exclusive Positions in Jeremiah (24, 29:16–20, chapters 40–44)

Jeremiah 24 presents the clearest example of boundary setting between “us” and “them.” This prophecy has long been considered non-Jeremian; it has been suggested that the passage reflects the Babylonian exilic perspective of the editorial strata of the book.¹⁴ I

¹⁴ Philip Hyatt considers chapter 24 to be deuteronomistic, presumably written around 550 BCE in Egypt (“Introduction and Exegesis, Jeremiah,” *Interpreter’s Bible*, 5:788–89, but cf. 996–98); while Nicholson correctly moves the deuteronomistic authorship of this oracle to Babylon

would be much more specific and say that, based on its labelling of self and other, its arguments, and strategy, this chapter illustrates the Jehoiachin Exiles' exclusivist ideology.¹⁵

The vision of the two baskets of figs, good and bad, brought before God symbolizes two groups, according to the divine explanation. The "good" basket is designated as גלות יהודה (NJPS: "the Judean exiles," v 5), and refers specifically to the Jehoiachin Exiles (v 1).¹⁶ The "bad" basket denotes a long list of components:

את צדקיהו מלך יהודה ואת שריו ואת שארית ירושלים
הנשארים בארץ הזאת והישיבים בארץ מצרים

(*Preaching to the Exiles*, 81–83). Robert P. Carroll (*Jeremiah* [OTL; London: SCM Press, 1986], 482–88) argues that it was an exilic or even postexilic passage, reflecting the conflict of Ezra's era; William L. Holladay (*Jeremiah 1* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986], 655) admits that the chapter contains deuteronomistic redaction phraseology and a message that diverges from Jeremiah's point of view, but he limits such instances to expansions of specific phrases within vv 5–7, 8–10, in which he finds the expression of the exilic and the postexilic communities' own important message. These expansions were added to an authentic prophecy dated to the reign of Zedekiah, 594 BCE (ibid., 657). On this last dating, see Unterman (*From Repentance to Redemption*, 55–87), Lundbom (*Jeremiah 21–36*, 222–36), and Leuchter (*Josiah's Reform*, 179–82) who argue for the Jeremianic authorship of this chapter.

¹⁵ Contra Carroll (*Jeremiah*, 483) who indeed argued that this strand in the Jeremiah tradition functions as "propaganda for a particular group of deportees," yet he found it to echo the Ezra-Nehemiah traditions that evolved during the reconstruction of Jerusalem. I find it unnecessary to project this strand into the later period.

¹⁶ הגולה appears only in Jer 24:4, 5; 29:22; otherwise יהודה is used in reference to the Jehoiachin Exiles (29:1, 4, 20, 31; as in Ezek 3:11, etc.). Indeed, William McKane (*Jeremiah 1–25* [ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986], 608–9) considered גלות יהודה to refer to the earliest group, to the Jehoiachin Exiles, *excluding* the 586 deportees and thereby delimiting "the entire, Babylonian, exilic community" (609). Cf. כל גלות ירושלים ויהודה (Jer 40:1), which refers to the 586 Exiles. The phrase שארית יהודה is restricted to chapters 40–44 in Jeremiah (where it occurs nine times) and refers to the Remnant that remained in Judah after the Destruction (Jer 40:15; 42:15, 19; 43:5; 44:12, 14, 28; 40:11, שארית ליהודה; and see 44:7).

King Zedekiah of Judah and his officials and the remnant of Jerusalem that is left in the land, and those who are living in the land of Egypt (v 8).

The list distinguishes between the royal and the lay people; then שארית ירושלים (“the remnant of Jerusalem”) is said to encompass two communities:¹⁷ those who remained in the land, and those who were resettled in Egypt. All groups date back to the period immediately prior to the Destruction (597–586 BCE), or shortly after it.

The crucial dichotomy established in Jeremiah 24 between גלות יהודה and שארית ירושלים is constructed upon the three arguments of exclusivity.

(1) *Continuity*. *Galut Yebudah* is said to have gained the blessing (ושמתי עיני עליהם לטובה, v 6a); the prospect of regathering in the land (והשבתי על הארץ הזאת, v 6a); and a transformation, led by God, through which they will reinstitute the covenant relationship (ונתתי להם לב לדעת אתי כי אני ה' והיו לי לעם) (v 7a) in continuity with Israel's past history.¹⁸ This transformation is, however, mentioned as a reaction

¹⁷ שארית ירושלים is a *hapax*, otherwise this community is called יהודה (see above).

¹⁸ Verses 5–6 transform the Jeremian phraseology of judgment into one of consolation, directed to this community of Exiles. The *hapax* phrases, . . . לטובה הכיר את (v 5), and שם עינו על . . . לטובה (v 6, together with 32:42; 39:9) suggest a transformation in God's attitude towards this community of Exiles, and cf. the otherwise judgmental contexts in which the antonyms לרעה ולא לטובה occur (21:10; 39:16; 44:27; and 14:11). This same transformation also appears in the two pairs בנה / לא הרס, נטע / לא (Jer 1:10; 18:7–9; and in part, 12:17). Such a transformation occurs also in prophecies of consolation to the Exiles (31:28), to the Repatriates (31:38–40), and in Jeremiah's call to the Remnant of Jerusalem (42:10), which is then dramatically transformed back into judgment in 45:4. Thus, I would not consider these phrases deuteronomistic (concurring with Helga Weippert, *Die Prosreden des Jeremiabuches* [BZAW, 132; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973], 193–202; and Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 36–37, 658; *Jeremiah 2*, 308); but on the other hand, I would not exclude the option that their occurrence in 24:6 is a secondary adaptation of Jeremiah's own phraseology, used now to support the Jehoiachin Exiles in Babylon (and see the notes below discussing other phrases).

towards the people's return to God with all their hearts (כי ישובו אלי) בכל לבם (v 7b).¹⁹ On the other extreme, those bad figs, King Zedekiah and the Remnant of Jerusalem, are doomed to total annihilation.²⁰ The phraseology used in vv 9–10 seems to bring together several otherwise independent phrases of curses for the sake of denigrating this “other” community as doomed both in the land and in Egypt.²¹

¹⁹ כי ישובו אלי בכל לבם (v 7b; see Jer 3:10, and Deut 30:10; 1 Kgs 8:48), together with כי אני ה' (according to its parallels in P [Exod 6:2–8], H, and Ezekiel, as in Ezek 20:5–6), are counted by Holladay as later additions (*Jeremiah* 1, 658–59). Holladay adds an *ex silentio* argument concerning both these phrases, which do not appear in Jer 31:31–34 (a passage he rightfully considers authentic/Judean). Indeed, כי אני ה' expands the object of knowing YHWH, which occurs in Jer 22:16; and 9:23, and adds another non-deuteronomistic phrase used in this prophecy. Unterman recognizes that the mention of the people's repentance occurs in Jer 24:7 “almost as an afterthought” (*From Repentance to Redemption*, 64–67, quotation from p. 66). Nevertheless, he finds this phrase to be a major example of Jeremiah 24's deviance from deuteronomistic phraseology and perceptions, and thus Jeremian in its authorship. Based on the exceptional phraseology mentioned in notes 15–20 here, I would add Jeremiah 24 to Jer 32:36–41 and count them as non-Jeremian (and non-deuteronomistic), early exilic Babylonian passages, see Rom-Shiloni, “The Prophecy for ‘Everlasting Covenant’ (Jeremiah 32:36–41): An Exilic Addition or a Deuteronomistic Redaction?” *V/T* 53 (2003), 201–23.

²⁰ Among the later additions, Holladay (*Jeremiah* 1, 659) counts the reference to “those dwelling in Egypt” (v 8, influenced by 44:27). But here is one example of the vicious circle Holladay has trapped himself in, by insisting on the authenticity of this prophecy. I would, however, accept his observation as to the late, or rather another exilic addition of בכל המקומות אשר אדיחם שם (v 9; *ibid*, 659), since it refers to exile as this community's divine judgment, in contradistinction to the calamitous fate envisioned for the Remnant of Jerusalem (including those who voluntarily migrated to Egypt) within the land. (v 10).

²¹ To add to this list of exceptional exilic phraseology: משל ושנינה is a *bapax* in Jeremiah (otherwise appearing only in late deuteronomistic passages, Deut 28:37; 1 Kgs 9:7). It may be added to the other Jeremianic pairings: שמה ושרקה (as in Jer 19:8; 25:9); לקללה ולחרפה (other references to the Land of Judah, as in 44:8); לחרבה לשמה (25:11; 44:6); שמה (2:15; 4:17); or strings of four of these terms brought together: והייתם לאלה (25:18); ולשרמה ולקללה (42:18; 44:12). The opening phrase ונתתם לזועה (read: לזועה) occurs in 24:9; in 29:18 in

(2) More so, this denigration and predicted judgment constructs an argument of *entirety*: since the land of Judah will be completely empty once those afflictions are implemented against the Remnant of Jerusalem in all of their places of residence (v 10), *Galut Yehudah* in Babylon represents the *entire* people of God; it is the only community that God will return to the land, the only community with whom God will reinstitute the covenant relationship.

(3) *Annexation*. *Galut Yehudah* thus annexes to itself several national traditions as referring exclusively to its own future; that is, the conceptions of covenant, land, and the trajectory of exile-redemption.

However, this prophecy does not give an indication of counterarguments against the Jerusalemite position.²² Jer 24:8–10 does not explain, why the Remnant of Jerusalem (including those settled in Egypt) is cursed.

These stylistic and ideological characteristics construct a divisive rhetoric that is close to Ezekiel's ideology and exclusive preference for the Jehoiachin Exiles.²³ As in Ezek 11:1–13, 14–21; 33:23–29, the argument of exclusivity entails a dichotomy of self and other, which is portrayed as a matter of life and death (Jer 24:5–7 versus vv 8–10).²⁴

While chapter 24 illustrates most clearly the antagonism between Judean groups of the first decades of the sixth century, one fragmentary prophetic passage, 29:16–20, should also be adduced here, as it builds on the same imagery and dichotomy. It establishes the

reference to the Remnant; and once in a judgment prophecy it refers to total destruction within the land (15:4; following Deut 28:25).

²² Cf. Jer 29:17–19, where quite a similar list of curses occurs, but which makes elaborate reference to the people's sin of disobedience against the words of God delivered by His prophets.

²³ See above, pp. 14–16. For *division* as a strategy of exclusiveness, see Donald L. Horowitz, "Ethnic Identity," N. Glazer and D. P. Moynihan (eds), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 111–40.

²⁴ Contra Holladay, who argues that this prophecy's main issue is "that those who stay at home should not feel superior" (repeated twice in *Jeremiah* 1, 656). This is much too mild a description of the antagonism suggested in this chapter, and certainly in vv 8–10.

king and the people of Jerusalem, “your brothers who did not go out with you into exile” as the bad figs, doomed to annihilation

כי כה אמר יהוה אל המלך היושב אל כסא דוד ואל כל העם
היושב בעיר הזאת, אחיכם אשר לא יצאו אתכם בגולה

Thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who live in this city, your brothers who did not go out with you into exile: v 16, cf. 24:8–10).

But the prophecy is cut off just as it moves to address “the whole exile community which I banished from Jerusalem to Babylon” (כל הגולה אשר שלחתי מירושלים בבלה, v 20). In the current editorial sequence, v 20 functions as the superscript for the coming judgment upon the prophets serving in Babylon, Ahab son of Koliah and Zedekiah son of Ma’aseiah (vv 21–23), and upon Shema’iah son of the Nehelamite (vv 24–32). But, based on the parallel dichotomy established in Jeremiah 24, it is much more reasonable to think that vv 16–20 were secondarily interpolated into their present context (note the natural flow between v 15 and 21), and originally contained a different, favourable prophecy addressed to the Jehoiachin Exiles.²⁵

As shown by Gunther Wanke, Karl F. Pohlmann, and recently Mark Leuchter (each in his own way), chapters 40–44 (together with 45:1–5) present a thoroughly edited story of the Remnant of Judah, told in its present form by Babylonian exilic authors.²⁶ This masterful editorial work highlights the transition in the Remnant’s fortunes from restoration (40:7–12) to annihilation (40:13–45:5),²⁷

²⁵ On the interpolative nature of 29:16–20, see Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 135; Carroll (*Jeremiah*, 559) who holds that these verses support the 597 Exiles; and C. S. Sharp (*Prophecy and Ideology*, 108–11) who argues for competing editorial voices in this chapter.

²⁶ Gunther Wanke, *Untersuchungen zur sogenannten Baruchsschrift* (BZAW, 122; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971), 91–133; Karl F. Pohlmann, *Studein zum Jeremiabuches* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978); Leuchter, *The Polemics of Exile*, 120–41.

²⁷ Note the contradiction between the promise, 42:10 and the final threat, 45:4. Hence, while this passage is mostly treated as a colophon (to either 26–36, 26–44, or even to chapters 1–44), and a piece of personal guidance (Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 307–11), it seems to make an important

and advances several counterarguments denigrating the Remnant community.²⁸

Continuity. The main problematic characteristic of the Remnant of Judah now living in the land of Egypt is disobedience. Disobedience is directed against Jeremiah the prophet (see 42–43:7, especially 43:2–3); more importantly, though, disobedience is aimed at YHWH himself (43:4, 7). With their settlement in the land of Egypt, the Remnant adds yet another dimension to their disobedience (ch. 44). In continuity with their ancestors they worship other gods (44:2–6, 7–10), bringing the inevitable divine judgment of total calamity upon themselves (vv 11–14). Their response to Jeremiah further substantiates and justifies their destiny (vv 15–19), and elicits a second threat of total annihilation (vv 27–30). Closing with what is definitely a salvation prophecy, pronounced to Baruch (45:1–5), this last passage portrays Baruch as the sole survivor of YHWH's total judgment (בִּי הִנְנִי מְבִיא רָעָה עַל כָּל בָּשָׂר נֶאֱמַר ה', 45:4–5).²⁹ Thus this Babylonian exilic perspective uses a negative construction of *continuity* as a counterargument against the Judean community now in Egypt.

Entirety. Through these prophecies of total calamity to the Remnant of Judah the editorial presentation accentuates the exclusive status of the Babylonian exilic community. Due to the Remnant's disobedient and idolatrous behavior, the Babylonian Exiles have become established as the sole and entire people of God. The "other" Judean community(ies), that is, the people who had remained in Judah post–586, had all escaped to Egypt, leaving Judah empty and desolate.³⁰

Strategically, these chapters do not point towards an explicit confrontation between the two groups; they rather focus on the "other" community relating its story coupled with prophecies of

thematic statement on the issue of identity at the close of chapters 40–44 (see Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 747–50).

²⁸ These counterarguments indeed start already within chapters 37–39, in reference to the reign of Zedekiah.

²⁹ בִּי הִנְנִי מְבִיא רָעָה עַל כָּל בָּשָׂר alludes to the Deluge story, with Noah as its sole survivor (Gen 6:13). כָּל בָּשָׂר occurs also in Jer 12:12; 25:31, as a sign of total calamity; thus I would suggest all these passages allude to the totality of the Deluge, emphasizing the magnitude of the coming destruction. In a different context, note the divine epithet, אֱלֹהֵי כָּל בָּשָׂר (32:27).

³⁰ This same perspective appears in 2 Kings 25; see vv 21 and 26.

judgment. These denigrating tendencies clear the way to confirm the Jehoiachin Exiles as the one and only community of the people of God.

To sum up, these passages in Jeremiah may be classed with similar passages known from Ezekiel, which reflect the initial stages of polemic prior to the Destruction and in the early years after it, i.e., the early exilic period (597–586 BCE and following).

The author of Jeremiah 24 (as also Ezekiel) had to emphasize that while the Jehoiachin Exiles had indeed been removed from the land (Ezek 11:16; cf. Jer 24:5), they (and only they) are the recipients of promises of future return and restoration in their land; they (and they alone) are the entire people of God, those with whom God will reinstitute the covenant relationship. The Babylonian Exiles lay exclusive claim to arguments of *continuity*, and *entirety*, and they *annex* national covenant traditions in the service of this claim. Chapters 40–44 argue the delegitimization of the Remnant of Judah through counterclaims of *continuity* in their disobedience, and bring their story to an end with Judah desolate and empty of all Judeans, and the people in Egypt doomed to annihilation. With these arguments and counterarguments those passages represent the first seeds sown towards a shift in center–periphery relations among the Judean communities by the early sixth century BCE.

This explicit (and at times only implicit) polemic between Babylonian Exiles and the people who remained in Judah is fairly limited in Jeremiah. Much more prominent are emphases on ingroup definitions within each community.

B. Ingroup Definitions in the Book of Jeremiah

Consolation prophecies in Jeremiah comprise several layers of prophetic pronouncements. Some may be assumed to be Jeremian in origin, or at least Judean in their geographical location and Neo-Babylonian in their dating; the others must have been the product of the prophet's Babylonian followers and editors of the book, thus reflecting Babylonian exilic ideology, and dating into the Persian period. Observing the sociological strategies employed within prophecies of consolation, inclusivity seems to be guiding the ingroup approach. Yet the inclusive strategies used by Judean communities within Judah differ from those employed by Babylonian exilic communities. Teasing out the Jeremian-Judean layers in the consolation prophecies, will allow us to understand how Babylonian exilic authors, and in a different way the Repatriate-

Babylonian counterparts, redefined their in-group identities based on definitions established already by Jeremiah in Judah early in the prophet's career and within the early exilic period (597–586 BCE).

1. Inclusive Judean Perspectives:

(a) Incorporating the Northern Kingdom within Zion

The Book of Consolation (Jeremiah 30–31) contains several prophetic passages that address the former Northern Kingdom of Israel: Jer 30:5–9, 10–11; 31:2–6, 7–9, 10–14, 15–22.

Jer 30:5–9 aims at the remnant left in the land in the aftermath of the Assyrian conquest of Samaria, and with 31:2–6 uses the designations “Jacob”/“Israel” (30:7; 31:2). These passages do not mention a change in the geographical residence of those so designated, but rather describe an agricultural restoration of the land (31:4–5). The passages furthermore call *betulat Israel* “to go up to Zion” (31:6), where the people shall serve “David their King,” now restored to his kingdom (30:9). The other prophecies (30:10–11; 31:7–9, 10–14, 15–22) refer to Jacob/Israel, Ephraim, or *betulat Israel*, as living in exile. They are joyfully called to return “here” (הנה, 31:7–8), back to the land (30:10–11; 31:7–9, 10–14, 15–22), or specifically to Zion (31:10–14), where God will reinstitute the close relationship of fatherhood with Ephraim, His firstborn (31:9), transform their grief into joy (31:12–13), and resettle them in their land (30:10, even their cities, 31:21). The people, on their part, will acknowledge their sins (31:18–19), and enjoy God's “full bounty” (31:14).³¹

One remarkable characteristic of these prophecies is their social/national viewpoint. The prophecies envision the return of Jacob of the North, Ephraim, to Zion; to David as King; to Yahweh as God. It is significant that this vision of unity is presented without using the national name of the Southern Kingdom, “Judah.”³² These passages portray a restoration limited to agricul-

³¹ This difference between location in Judah and location in exile in the prophecies directed to Northern Israel seems to be a dividing criterion in the passage 30:5–9, 10–11. Cf. Bob Becking, *Between Fear and Freedom: Essays on the Interpretation of Jeremiah 30–31* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 135–64.

³² “Judah” occurs throughout the book of Jeremiah to designate the kings of Judah (54 times in the singular, and 10 in the plural); the people (called simply יהודה [2:28]; or by the phrase איש יהודה, which occurs 11

tural rural life, evidently not as a political revival of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, nor as a confederation of the two Kingdoms. Rather this former Northern community, as referred to by its ancient premonarchic ancestors (Jacob, Ephraim, Rachel), is to incorporate back into the community that presently *is* the people of God, and thus once again be considered “my people” (עמי, 31:14).

Incorporation (A + B = A) is a sociological strategy suggested by a community which considers itself dominant. While it is certainly an inclusive strategy, it maintains a clear hierarchal relationship between itself and its subordinate communities, and demands full acceptance of its own theology, worship, and political institutions—in this case, those of the dominant community of Judah.³³ Hence, these prophecies seem indeed to reflect a preexilic viewpoint, when Judah was at its full political strength, possibly during Josiah’s reign.³⁴

(b) שארית יהודה “The Remnant of Judah”

Pro-Judean (pro-land) prophecies of consolation are found in several contexts within the book of Jeremiah, originating both prior to the Destruction (Jer 32:6–15) and in its aftermath (42:7–17).³⁵ The more challenging question is whether other pro-land prophecies of consolation are embedded within chapters 30–33, and this will be discussed below.³⁶

times, as in 3:3–4; as also בית יהודה, in 11:10 etc.); the cities of Judah (22 times, as in 1:15; 9:10), all referring to the kingdom and/or its people. It is then remarkable that Judah does not appear as the incorporating community within the above mentioned passages.

³³ On *incorporation* as an inclusive assimilatory strategy, see Horowitz, “Ethnic Identity,” 110–40.

³⁴ Marvin Sweeney, “Jeremiah 30–31 and King Josiah’s Program of National Restoration and Religious Reform,” *ZAW* 108 (1996), 569–83. These annotations bring me to accept only partly Sweeney’s observations on this earlier strand of Jeremiah 30–31, yet I do agree with his suggestion that the Judean initiative should be linked to Josiah (*ibid*, 580–83).

³⁵ Jer 42:7–17 illustrates Jeremiah’s adaptation of the Deuteronomical admonishing pattern, as it is comprised first by a pronouncement of consolation (vv 7–12), and then by a threat against disobedience to the divine demand (vv 13–17).

³⁶ See pp. 34–35 below.

Purchasing the land of his cousin Hanam'el on the eve of the Destruction (32:1–5, 24–25), Jeremiah performs a symbolic act which starts with a personal-family transaction, but then appears to demonstrate the national sphere (Jer 32:6–15): “For thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God Israel: ‘Houses, fields, and vineyards shall again be purchased in this land’” (v 15). Three terms are cardinal in this prophecy: the verb **קנה** (vv 7, 8, 9, 15; with the noun **ספר המקנה** ‘deed of purchase,’ vv 11–14); **משפט הגאלה** (v 8); and **משפט הירשה** (v 9).

Hanam'el approaches Jeremiah with the request to buy his land according to **משפט הגאלה**, a presumably well-known legal proceeding.³⁷ While the story leaves vague the familial-historical, economic, etc., circumstances leading to the transaction, Hanam'el and Jeremiah both share the understanding that Jeremiah is the *go'el* (vv 7–8, 9).³⁸ Yet, whereas the story relies on the known procedure and legal rights of **גאלה**, i.e., redemption of lands, the legal context of which is known from Lev 25:25–34 and the practical customs described in Ruth (chapters 3–4), it is important to note two major differences between these three texts. First, Lev 25:25–34 discusses six different legal cases of redemption, yet none of them parallels the case of Hanam'el and Jeremiah. The law opens with the situation: “If your kinsman is in straits and has to sell part of his holding, his nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his kinsman has sold” (Lev 25:25). But in the case of Hanam'el and Jeremiah there was no sale to a third party outside of the family. Hanam'el suggests to Jeremiah a preventative action in order to *guarantee* that the land not be sold to an outside owner, i.e., a preemptive case not mentioned in Lev 25:25–34.³⁹ With this initiative Hanam'el has

³⁷ **משפט הגאלה**, **משפט הכהנים** (Deut 18:3–5; 1 Sam 2:12–17), and **משפט המלך** (1 Sam 8:11–18) are three contexts in which the legal claim and the procedure for each are elaborated. In other contexts we find this terminology applied to presumably known legal claims without specified procedural components, see **משפט הבנות** (Exod 21:9), **משפט הבכרה** (Deut 21:15–17).

³⁸ On the *go'el* as a theological term, see Robert L. Hubbard, “The *go'el* in Ancient Israel: Theological Reflections on an Israelite Institution,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 1 (1991), 3–19. For the historical background see John Bright, *Jeremiah* (AB, 21; Garden City, NY: Doubleday 1965), 238–39; and for a typically ahistorical explanation, see Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 621–22.

³⁹ See Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus* 23–27 (AB, 3B; Garden City, NY:

succeeded in keeping the land within the family with no interruption.⁴⁰ Second, in reference to Jeremiah's purchase, Jacob Milgrom has pointed out an important difference between the passages in the usage of קנה, stating that the lack of the verb in the Leviticus context and the emphasis on it in Jeremiah 32 (and in Ruth 4:1–10) implies that in the case of Hanam'el and Jeremiah "the redeemer possesses the land for himself. And unless the original owner or his heirs exercise their rights of redemption and repurchase the property, it remains with the redeemer for perpetuity" (p. 2195). Furthermore, Milgrom adds, "Since Jeremiah is the redeemer, Hanam'el or his heirs have lost their rights of redemption" (p. 2196). Hence the purchase is a permanent one, indeed for "long time" (ימים רבים, Jer 32:14).

The crucial theme which indeed joins these three passages on redemption is the importance given to the continuous possession of the family land. Jeremiah's purchase of the land is the only passage in which the family's legal rights are transferred to the national sphere. This transferral not only appears in the explicit prophecy of v 15, but is already embedded in the term משפט הירשה, v 9: "for the right of possession [cf. NJPS: 'succession'] is yours." In contradistinction to קנה and גאל, ירש has the meaning of "take possession of a land which is not legally permitted." Norbert Lohfink explains the *gal* form of ירש as "juridical seizure of enemy territory after battle";⁴¹ ירש with this sense serves as a major component of the deuteronomic/deuteronomistic conception of the land as given to the forefathers and to the people to possess (cf. Jer 32:23). This meaning is indeed drawn upon in Jeremiah in reference to both judgment (8:10) and consolation (30:3; 49:1–2). I suggest that by adapting this national term to the symbolic act described in Jer 32:6–15, the prophet states the legitimacy before God of this legal procedure through which Jeremiah takes possession of Hanam'el's field.⁴²

Doubleday, 2001), 2193–204.

⁴⁰ On this basis, I believe Lisbeth S. Fried and David N. Freedman's hypothetical reconstruction should be rejected; see Jacob Milgrom, *ibid.*, 2257–62. Milgrom himself expresses a different position (*ibid.*, 2195–96).

⁴¹ Norbert Lohfink, *yarash*, TDOT 6.368–96 (378).

⁴² Cf. Lohfink (*ibid.*, 376) who emphasized the difference between *ge'ullah* and *yerushah* as the difference between "rights and obligations"; and cf. Holladay (*Jeremiah* 2, 213–14) who considers the two terms synony-

These three unique components—ספר המקנה, משפט הגאלה, משפט הירשה—of Jeremiah's symbolic act function together to legitimize the *continuity* of the settlement of those who had remained in Judah, through *annexation* of pentateuchal conceptions of the land. Implicitly this strategy also utilizes the argument of *entirety*, promising permanent ownership to the new buyer, and excluding the seller's right of redemption.

The fairly short final prophecy in Jer 32:15 uses the phrase עוד יקנו ('*od + yiqtol* [*Nifal* form]), which is a unique sixth century construction, found mostly in consolation prophecies. This construction appears to designate both short-term prospects (Zech 1:16, 17; including threats of immediate judgment, as in Ezek 8:6, 13, 14; Jer 2:9) and long-term forecasts which include exile (Isa 49:20; 56:8; Zech 8:20–23). Hence, linguistic criteria fall short of defining the future outlook of Jer 32:15. Thematically, however, the emphasis on the continuing possession of the land through both the legal status of the redeemer (משפט הגאלה) and the divine permission to possess the land (משפט הירשה), with no interruption that might symbolize exile, leads me to infer that the promise of possession in v 15 has an immediate significance, that is, it applies to those who remained in Judah. Two points defend this reasoning.

First, the conception of uninterrupted, divinely sanctioned, possession of the land, as put forth in this symbolic act, is well situated in the Jeremian message prior to the Destruction and in its aftermath. Jeremiah's commitment to the uninterrupted settlement of the land predominates in his prophecies to Zedekiah during the last decade of Jerusalem and Judah.⁴³ This commitment was the driving force behind the prophet's repeated urging of Zedekiah to accept Babylonian rule and live (see Jer 27:8–11 and vv 12–13, as well as 38:14–23), and exemplified in

mous.

⁴³ Jeremiah's concept of the land may further be elucidated by a look at his conception of exile, see Dalit Rom-Shiloni, "Deuteronomic Concepts of Exile Interpreted in Jeremiah and Ezekiel," H. Cohen, V. A. Hurwitz, B. J. Schwartz, J. H. Tigay, and Y. Muffs (eds), *Birkat Shalom: Studies In the Bible, Ancient Near Eastern Literature and Post-biblical Judaism Presented to Shalom M. Paul on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 101–23.

והגוי אשר יביא את צוארו בעל מלך בבל ועבדו
והנחתיו על אדמתו נאם ה' ועבדה וישב בה

But the nation that puts its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serves him, will be left by Me on its own soil—declares the Lord—to till it and dwell on it (Jer 27:11).

This same commitment to the land stands behind his personal choice to remain in Judah with Gedaliah (40:1–6), and it governs his prophecies to the Remnant of Judah ready to flee to Egypt in the aftermath of Gedaliah's assassination (42:7–12).⁴⁴ In Jeremiah's prophecy God calls the Remnant of Judah to remain settled in the land, promising them restoration within its borders. According to the divine explanation, **כי נחמתי אל הרעה אשר עשיתי לכם** (v 10), God had reversed His plan to totally destroy Judah, and He now calls for a period of grace, of reconciliation, to be granted to the Remnant.⁴⁵ The prophecy thus envisions salvation and rescue by God from the king of Babylon, even projecting the merciful attitude with which he (God and/or the Babylonian King) will treat the Remnant and restore them to their properties (v 11).⁴⁶ The one thing the Remnant must not do is leave the land of Judah; such a

⁴⁴ Cf. Carroll (*Jeremiah*, 717–19) who argues for a change in the prophet's attitude towards the community in the land, and mentions 42:7–17 as in contradistinction to 21:8–10. He furthermore finds vv 10–17 to parallel the conditionality in Jer 7:3–7; 11:3–5; 18:7–10; 22:3–5, but he accepts all these passages as non-Jeremian “sermons.” I would, however, understand those similarities to reflect genuine Jeremian pronouncements.

⁴⁵ This meaning and usage of **נחם** occurs also in Jer 18:8, 10; 26:3, 13, 19; (and in the negative, 15:6; 20:16); see David N. Freedman, “When God Repents,” J. R. Huddleston (ed.), *Divine Commitment and Human Obligation: Selected Writings of David Noel Freedman* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 1:409–46. Amos 7:3, and 6 demonstrate prophetic intercession which delays such a threat, but only the people's repentance/obedience may insure that the respite is permanent (*ibid.*, 410; see 415–16, and the discussion of the Jeremian passages, 428–32).

⁴⁶ On the sequence of divine action and its counterpart in the activity of the human-Babylonian king: **ואתן לכם רחמים ורחם אתכם** (v 12), see 43:10, 12 (Lundbom, *Jeremiah* 37–52, 133). The Septuagint first person for both **ורחם** (as also the Peshitta and the Volgate) and **והשיב** seem harmonistic. **והשיב אתכם אל אדמתכם** refers to resettlement within the land, and does not need to refer to exile and return, see McKane, *Jeremiah* 26–52, 1034–35.

step is taken as clear disobedience on the part of the people, which guarantees that God will reinitiate punishment against the people in Egypt (vv 13–17).⁴⁷

Second, Jeremiah's position stands in clear contradistinction to Ezekiel's Babylonian exilic perspective. Ezekiel refutes this exact argument, characterizing it as prevalent in the land of Israel. In two disputation speeches the prophet quotes the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" prior to the Destruction as saying first: רחוק מעל ה' לנו היא ("Keep far from the Lord; the land has been given as a possession [cf. NJPS: heritage] to us," Ezek 11: 15); later, as residents of "the ruins in the land of Israel" they argue: אחד היה אברהם וירש את הארץ, ואנחנו רבים לנו נתנה הארץ למורשה ("Abraham was but one man, yet he was granted possession of the land. We are many; surely, the land has been given as a possession to us," Ezek 33:24). The repeated phrase, לנו (היא) נתנה הארץ למורשה, which expresses the Remnant of Jerusalem's right of possession alludes to the concept of the land either in its Priestly phraseology (Exod 6:2–8) or in its deuteronomic parallel (ירש, נתן את (הארץ לרשתה)).⁴⁸

Utilizing the conceptually contradictory terms משפט הגאולה and משפט הירשה in the description of his symbolic purchase of the land (Jer 32:6–15), Jeremiah's counter-prophecy demonstrates the existence of counter-polemic which advocated the exclusive status of the Judean Remnant as redeemers and possessors of the land, first after 597 and then after 586 BCE, in contradistinction to any claims of the community of Jehoiachin Exiles in Babylon. This line of consolation in Jeremiah is therefore to be considered an expression of the exclusivist in-group ideology of the Judean Remnant during the early exilic period (597–586 BCE and on). Like Ezekiel in Babylon, Jeremiah plays a major role as mediator between God and the people, as he establishes from the Judean perspective the

⁴⁷ I follow here Freedman ("When God Repents," 428–29) who emphasizes that the reversal in the divine plan is temporary and conditional; in Jer 42:10–17 God's intention moves from bad to good (vv 10–12; for a movement in both directions, see Jer 18:7–10). Gary E. Yates (in "New Exodus and No Exodus in Jeremiah 26–45: Promise and Warning to the Exiles in Babylon," *TynBul* 57 [2006], 1–22) suggests that the migration to Egypt symbolizes an opposing future of 'No Exodus' for this community.

⁴⁸ For discussion of Ezekiel's position in these disputation speeches, see Rom-Shiloni, "Ezekiel as the Voice of the Exiles," 11–20.

ideological arguments of *continuity* and *entirety*, together with *annexation* of traditional (and legal) conceptions of possession of the land.

Before discussing other prophecies of consolation to the Remnant of Judah, a glance should be given to prophecies of consolation addressing the Babylonian Exiles.

2. Inclusive Babylonian-Exilic Perspectives

A different strand among the prophecies of consolation in the book of Jeremiah may be understood in the framework of the Babylonian exilic situation. Without mounting an explicit polemic against other Judean communities (as in some texts mentioned in pp. 17–24 above), the following prophecies address the Exiles in Babylon: Jer 3:18; 16:14–15; 23:7–8; 29:10–14; 30:12–17; 32:36–41; 50:17–20, 33–34; 51:20–24. A special group of consolation prophecies are those embedded within the prophecies against Babylon, where salvation is engaged with a call of revenge and a description of its future fall (50:28; 51:1–6, 7–10, 11–14, 34–44, 45–53). All of these prophecies share the following characteristics:

(a) A promise of ingathering, from the land in the north and from Babylon, and a prospect of resettlement of the Exiles back in the land of their fathers (3:18; 16:14–15; 23:7–8; 29:10–14; 50:17–20; 50:28; 51: 1–6, 7–10, 45–53).

(b) The land to which the Exiles shall return is described as empty and desolate. The people of God are far away from the land (51:50–51); restoration thus consists in reinstituting Zion after a period of forsaken neglect (נִדְחָה קִרְאוּ לָךְ צִיּוֹן הִיא דֹּרֶשׁ אֵין לָהּ, Jer 30:17; and implicitly in 32:36).⁴⁹ Throughout those prophetic passages there is no mention of any Judean population within the land of Judah which those returnees will join.

(c) Very prominent among these prophecies are their phraseological and thematic resemblances on the one hand to Ezekiel and

⁴⁹ Jer 30:12–17 shows close parallels to Deutero-Isaiah's metaphoric treatment of Zion as a woman (see Isa 49:14–21, 22–26). This adds to the element of reversal within Jeremiah (cf. Jer 22:20–22); yet in contrast to the feminine metaphor deployed in Jer 30:12–17, Jeremiah usually designates the people as *בְּתוּלַת בֵּית עַמִּי* (as in Jer 2:17–37; 14:17). Another similarity is the renaming of Zion, which in Deutero-Isaiah gains the names: *עִיר יְהוָה* “the city of YHWH,” *חֲפְצִיבָה* “I delight in her,” *דְּרוּשָׁה* “Sought out,” all in opposition to her previous name *עֲזוּבָה* “Forsaken” (see Isa 60:14; 62:4, 12); see also Jer 30:16 and Isa 42:24.

to Deutero-Isaiah (Jer 16:14–15; 30:12–17; 32:36–41),⁵⁰ and on the other hand, to deuteronomistic (exilic) phraseology (29:10–14; 32:36–41).⁵¹

Nevertheless, once these prophecies are observed as a group, their diverse rhetoric style and themes are apparent.⁵² This diversity may be the result of a relatively long period of literary evolution involving a number of exilic authors.⁵³ Their time span may extend from the first decades of the sixth century down to its second half, i.e., the early exilic or the exilic eras (597–586 BCE and following; 570–538 BCE), still within the Neo-Babylonian period. The authors may stem from different exilic groups/literary circles, within which the Deuteronomists were only one such group.

Looking at the sociological categorizations which build a community's identity, each of these prophecies utilizes the three arguments of exclusivity in relation to the Babylonian Exiles: *continuity*, *entirety*, and the *annexation* of national traditions.

I will restrict myself here to but one example. Jer 16:14–15 (and with slight yet significant differences, 23:7–8), seems to be a

⁵⁰ The pairing of *קבץ נדח*, *hiphil*, and *הושיב לבטח* illustrates the phraseological and thematic resemblances between this strand in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Deutero-Isaiah, while highlighting the unique position of the Jeremian exilic idioms; see Rom-Shiloni, "The Prophecy for 'Everlasting Covenant,'" 201–23.

⁵¹ Allusions to deuteronomistic/deuteronomistic phrases may be found in Jer 29:10–14 in reference to Deut 30:1–10, and see also the application of the deuteronomistic phrase *לבלתי סור מעל* to designate disobedience (Jer 32:40; see 2 Kgs 10:31; 15:15, 18; cf. the Deuteronomistic phrase: *סור מן הדרך*, as in Deut 9:12, 16; Judg 2:17), etc.

⁵² Compare, for instance, the different phraseology concerning the return to the land, which appears as the land given to the forefathers: *הארץ* *אשר הנחלתי את אבותיכם* (Jer 3:18, alluding to Deut 3:28; 19:3; 31:7; Josh 1:6; and see Isa 49:8; Zech 8:12; and cf. Jer 12:14); *והשבתי על אדמתם* *והשבתי אל האדמה אשר נתת* (Jer 16:15, see 1 Kgs 8:34: *אשר נתתי לאבותם* *והשבתי על אדמתם*); the land from which the people was expelled: *ממקום אשר הגלית אתכם משם* (29:14); or simply "this place," *והשבתי אל המקום הזה* *והשבתי לבטח* (32:40).

⁵³ In Rom-Shiloni, "The Prophecy for Everlasting Covenant," 211–15, I presented ten *hapaxes* that occur in Jer 32:36–41, which I found to demonstrate the independent position of the author of this passage.

prophetic passage interpolated into two different contexts.⁵⁴ The prophecy promises the ingathering of the people from the land in the north (מֵאֶרֶץ צָפוֹן) and from “all the lands to which He had banished them” (וּמְכֹל הָאֲרָצוֹת אֲשֶׁר הִדְיָחָם שָׁמָּה, v 15), and utilizes the three major in-group arguments. *Continuity* is seen in the designation of the present Exiles, the addressees, as *bnei Israel*, the national name of the people saved previously from Egypt. *Continuity* with and *annexation* of ancient national traditions is further emphasized by the analogy drawn between the first Exodus and the second projected one, in a framework which holds this future salvation to even outshine the first.⁵⁵ Jer 16:15: וְהַשְׁבֵּתִים עַל הַשְּׁבִיטִים אֲשֶׁר נִתְּנִי לָאֲבוֹתָם not only closes this new-Exodus with resettling the people in the land, but explicitly alludes to the return as bringing “the people back to their land, which I gave to their fathers” (16:15, cf. the more brief וְיָשְׁבוּ עַל אֲדָמָתָם, in Jer 23:8).⁵⁶

⁵⁴ For the interpolation of this passage in Jer 16:14–15 and its role as a corrective of Jer 16:10–13, see Holladay (*Jeremiah* 1, 474, 621–23), who thinks the verses fit better in chapter 23, in a context of consolation prophecies, and who dates them to the fifth century, based on the occurrence of זֶרַע בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל (23:8).

⁵⁵ This second Exodus has been recognized as a major theme of consolation in Ezekiel (20:32–38) and especially in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa 48:20–21; 52:11–12). Yates has indeed emphasized the place of the Exodus within Jeremiah 30–33 (“New Exodus and No Exodus in Jeremiah 26–45,” 1–22). However, he did not make a delicate enough distinction between different elements within the Exodus traditions. I here suggest that we need to maintain a distinction between the Exodus–Desert traditions which refer to salvation from bondage and the journey in the desert (as invoked in Jer 16:14–15), and the Exodus–Desert traditions concerning the covenant which are invoked in Jeremiah as “on the day that I freed them [i.e. your fathers] from the land of Egypt,” and which serve in prophecies of judgment (e.g., Jer 7:22; 11:4; 34:13).

⁵⁶ The phrase הָשִׁיב (אֵת הָעָם) אֶל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָאֲבוֹתָם occurs in deuteronomic segments within Kings (1 Kgs 8:34; 2 Kgs 21:8), and in Jer 24:10, which is closer to 2 Chr 6:25. This slight yet significant difference between Jer 16:14–15 and 23:7–8 joins another difference in the phrase זֶרַע בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל (23:8), in contradistinction to בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in 16:14–15 and in 23:7. While the phrase זֶרַע אֲפִרַּיִם (Jer 2:21; 7:15) occurs in Jeremiah, it is nevertheless much more common in exilic and postexilic literature, and thus in late passages within Jeremiah, such as זֶרַע בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל in Jer 31:36–37 and Ezek 44:22; זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל in Isa 45:25; 2Kgs 17:20; Ps

The two implicit arguments of *continuity* and *annexation* lead also to the third, *entirety*. These general references to the people (in Babylon) as the entire people of God, in its past and in its present/future, with no mention of any other national component residing elsewhere, points to the self-perception of this exilic community as the entire people of God.

These prophecies share Deutero-Isaiah's basic group-identity perception—they treat all the Babylonian Exiles as a single inclusive group and do not attribute any special status to the 597 Jehoiachin Exiles; these Exiles (and only they) are *the* people of God. This is therefore an exilic strand, different from that of Ezekiel and from Jeremiah 24 (with 29:16–20, and the editorial layer of 40–44). We may locate this strand in the exilic era (circa 570/mid-sixth century to 538 BCE), the period when the redaction of the deuteronomistic literature is thought to have taken place, including the book of Kings as well as the Babylonian chapters of Deutero-Isaiah (Isaiah 40–48).⁵⁷

3. Repatriate Ideology in Jeremiah?

The most intriguing group of prophetic passages of consolation within Jeremiah 30–33 are several prophecies which resemble in phraseology and even more in theme the inclusive Judean perspectives of the Remnant of Judah (see above). The main characteristic these prophecies share is their omission of any mention of exile, of any period of separation from the land—and in consequence, of any mention of gathering the dispersed and return to Zion. They are very clearly Judean in their geographic outlook.

The prophetic passages in this category are Jer 30:18–22; 31:23–26, 27–30, 31–34, 38–40; 32:42–44; 33:1–9, 10–11, 12–13, 14–22. These prophecies are commonly held to apply to one of two sets of circumstances: either to the period following 586 BCE, the era Jack R. Lundbom terms “Jeremiah’s Mizpah sojourn (586–582 BCE),”⁵⁸ or to a much later timeframe, i.e., the first generation

22:24; Neh 9:2; 1Chr 16:13; in the concatenation of the phrases: זרע יעקוב וזרע אברהם ישחק ויעקב (Jer 33:26, and see v 22). For other similar phrases, note זרע יעקב (Isa 45:19; Ps 22:24); זרע בית יעקב (Ezek 20:5); זרע אברהם (Isa 41:8; Ps 105:6; 2Chr 20:7); זרע הקדש (Isa 6:13; Ezra 9:2).

⁵⁷ For this division of Deutero-Isaiah see note 8 above.

⁵⁸ Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 494.

of the Repatriates' transplantation back to Yehud during the early Persian period.⁵⁹ Hence, these prophecies are certainly at the core of our present discussion of Persian period ideology in Jeremiah.

I want to suggest a third option, that is, that these passages represent original prophecies of Jeremiah directed to the Remnant of Judah that were adapted, expanded, and re-read through the lens of the returnees from Babylon. These secondary re-reading(s) added dimensions which may be compared to early Persian period prophetic (and historiographic literature). The interesting point is that while this adaptation retained the Judean geographical perspective of the earlier Jeremian prophecies, it fused with them perspectives otherwise known from Babylonian-Exilic ideology.⁶⁰

In studying these prophetic passages, the following characteristics emerge as common denominators:

(a) *The people addressed.* While several of these prophecies focus on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (31:23–26; 32:42–44; 33:10–11, 12–13) and envision the revival of pastoral life in this area (31:24; 33:13), other passages invoke a vast national united audience: עמי ישראל ויהודה (30:3);⁶¹ יהודה וישראל (as in Jer 33:7), or בני ישראל ובית יהודה (33:14, 31; 27:31), as also בני ישראל ובני יהודה (50:4–5); זרע ישראל (31:36, 37).

⁵⁹ This latter viewpoint governs most of the commentaries on Jeremiah. To give but one example, Holladay considers Jer 31:23–25, 26, 38–40; 33:12–13, 14–26 as Persian (*Jeremiah* 2, 165–67, 224, 228–31), but he does not suggest late contexts for 30:18–22; 33:1–11 (*ibid.* 157, 222–24).

⁶⁰ The suggestion that earlier prophecies have been readapted to new conditions through secondary redactional processes has of course been raised by scholars of Jeremiah, and most profoundly by William McKane in his commentary. In reference to the consolation prophecies, see Barnabas Lindars (“‘Rachel Weeping for Her Children’—Jeremiah 31:15–22,” *JOT* 12 [1979], 47–62). Lindars suggested that in this passage, Jeremiah (himself) turned to Hosea’s prophecies that had been addressed to Northern Israel, which he then readressed and adapted to Judah following the Destruction (56–57). Similarly, Lindars furthermore recognized later additions to those Jeremianic prophecies, which he characterized as having affinities to other poetic passages of Jeremiah and to Deutero-Isaiah, with “little sign of the work of the Deuteronomistic editor” (55). See also Sweeney, “Jeremiah 30–31,” 582–83.

⁶¹ Cf. Jer 3:18: יהודה על בית ישראל ויבאו יחדו, which does envision reunification and return from exile.

(b) *The situation of the land.* Both within the city and in the periphery, restoration takes place after a period whence the land had been empty of man and beast (32:42–44; 33:10–11, 12–13). As presented in #3 (p. 16 above), the empty desolate land is a Babylonian exilic feature (for instance 30:17; 32:36).

(c) *The general perspective on restoration.* The repeated phrase in these passages, (כבראשונה) שבות (השיב) שב refers to the people's restoration within the land designated as Judah and Israel (33:7–9), “the tents of Jacob” (30:18), or simply “the land” (33:11).⁶² These passages, use the phrase שבות שב, and do not mention exile as the point of departure, nor do they describe the journey back to the land.⁶³ It is interesting, though, that these prophecies give substance to restoration by mentioning the destruction of material components (e.g., the houses of the city, including the royal buildings, 33:4), but the portrait of reversal and restoration focuses on changes in the activity of human-beings—the empty and desolate land becomes a place of lively voices of joy, of marriage, and renewal of worship within the House of YHWH (33:11; and see Isa 65:19).

(d) *The pattern of the prophecies.* These prophecies follow the pattern governed by the construction ‘*od* + *yiqtol*’ discussed above,

⁶² Jer 30:1–3, as introductory verses to the Book of Consolation, establish the semantic and contextual distinction between two phrases: והשבתי אל הארץ אשר נתתי and ושבתי את שבות עמי ישראל ויהודה והשבתי אל הארץ אשר נתתי, and join them together. The first phrase signifies restoration within the land, the second refers to re-gathering the people from exile. On the cumulative nature of these introductory verses, see Sweeney, “Jeremiah 30–31,” 571, 577–78. Contra Sweeney (ibid, 577–82), the addition of chapters 32–33 establishes yet another “Jeremian” strand, that of the restoration of Judah alone.

⁶³ שבות שב in its basic meaning “restore to its previous condition (referring mostly to the agricultural life in the land)” occurs in Hosea 6:11; Amos 9:14; Zeph 2:7, and in the above mentioned passages in Jeremiah (for a detailed discussion of this phrase see Meir Weiss, *Amos* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992], 1.299–300, 2.553–54). Exilic (and post-exilic) readings are responsible for the slight yet significant change in the *Ketib* (and/or *Qere*) to שבית “captivity, exile” in Jer 29:14 (as also Ezek 16:53; 39:25; Ps 85:2; 126:4; and Lam 2:14 where the *Qere* suggests a correction); Deut 30:3 designates a third stage, where שבות שב becomes part of the “languages of return” as it opens the chain of deliverance actions from exile (as also Joel 4:1; Zeph 3:20).

which I suggested implies restoration within the land in the near future.⁶⁴ This pattern characterizes prophecies in chapter 30–31 (30:8–9; 31:2–6), and 32–33 (32:15; 33:10, 12).

(e) *The process of restoration.* The actual restoration is described as rebuilding the city (30:18–22; 31:38–40) and as restoring agriculture in the rural periphery (31:23–26; 33:12–13).⁶⁵ Medical remedy languages serve as imagery for restoration in the land (33:1–9; and already in 30:12–17).⁶⁶

(f) *Renaming.* Restored Zion gains new names: **יִבְרַכְךָ ה'** **נוֹה** (31:23); **זוֹה אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא לָהּ ה' צִדְקָנוּ** (33:16); (cf. Jer 30:17, **כִּי נִדְחָה קְרָאוּ לָךְ צִיּוֹן הִיא דְּרֵשׁ אֵין לָהּ**, see also Isa 60:14; 62:4, 12).

(g) *Special thematic components of restoration:* (1) A central topic within these prophecies is the covenant between God and His people, which appears from two different (perhaps even contradictory) perspectives. First, the covenant formula: **וְהִיטֵתִי לִי לְעָם וְאֲנֹכִי וְהִיטֵתִי לִי לְעָם וְאֲנֹכִי** sets the goal for the future reinstitution of the covenant relationship (30:22; 30:25; 31:1; 31:31–34). But second, the ongoing (present) existence of Israel/Judah as God's people is guaranteed through the analogy established between the universal covenant, which ensures cosmic order, and the covenants God had established with His people, His Davidic king, and the levitical priests (31:35–37; 33:14–22).

(2) The prophecies emphasize divine justice by focusing on the qualities of benevolence and mercy (33:6, 8; 33:11), and point to the people's penitence (33:1–9; 50:17–20).⁶⁷

(3) The prophecies give a special importance to publicizing God's name among the nations (33:9). This feature is otherwise

⁶⁴ See p. 29 above.

⁶⁵ According to Holladay (*Jeremiah* 2, 199) the setting of Jer 31:38–40 “is doubtless in the time of Nehemiah.”

⁶⁶ The imagery of medical remedies is well-attested within communal laments found in Jeremiah, Jer 8:15, 22; 10:19; 14:19; once in a personal lament, 15:18; as well as these two consolation prophecies (33:1–9 and 30:12–17).

⁶⁷ Mercy and benevolence do not characterize God's behavior towards his people during the crisis era (see Jer 13:14; 16:5). This is another example of the reversal of judgment and consolation. **רַחֵם** in a positive context occurs in Jer 12:15 as well.

unknown among the prophecies of Jeremiah,⁶⁸ but is well recognized in Ezekiel (Ezek 36:16–32) and in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa 48:9).

It is almost impossible to differentiate early and late themes in this list of characteristics. The decisive argument in favour of a notion of secondary adaptations of Jeremian prophecies by Babylonian Repatriates is this mixture of (at least) two layers within prophetic passages of consolation. The above-mentioned passages contain expansions of prophetic pronouncements, or even two diverse (at times contradictory) outlooks described above as separate perspectives, the one referring to the Remnant of Judah, while the other invokes Babylonian exilic perceptions of group identity and restoration.⁶⁹ I will again restrict the discussion here to but two of these prophetic passages.

Jer 33:10–11, 12–13 describe the change within “this place,” bringing together a prophetic pronouncement and several expansions:

⁶⁸ The one exception in Jer 14:7–9 is a fragment of a communal lament which Jeremiah quotes and incorporates into his prophecy.

⁶⁹ An example of such a contradiction may be found by comparing Jer 32:5–16 with vv 42–44. The latter passage functions as an inclusio to vv 5–16 and is patterned as an adaptation of that earlier prophecy said to the Remnant of Judah under Zedekiah prior to the Destruction. Like Jer 33:10–11 and 12–13 (to be discussed below), this passage transforms restoration to the empty land utilizing the **שב שבות** formula to this new context.

| | |
|---|--|
| 10 כה אמר ה' עוד ישמע במקום הזה | אשר אתם אמרים חרב הוא <u>מאין אדם ומאין בהמה</u> |
| בערי יהודה ובחצות ירושלים | הנשמות <u>מאין אדם ומאין יושב</u> <u>ומאין בהמה</u> |
| 11 קול ששון וקול שמחה קול חתן וקול כלה | קול אמרים הודו את ה' צבאות כי טוב ה' כי לעולם חסדו מבאים תודה בית ה' |
| כי אשיב את שבות הארץ כבראשנה אמר ה'. | |
| | 12 כה אמר ה' צבאות עוד יהיה <u>במקום הזה</u> החרב <u>מאין אדם ועד</u> <u>בהמה</u> ובכל עריו, נוה רעים מרבצים צאן. 13 בערי ההר בערי השפלה ובערי הנגב ובארץ בנימן ובסביבי ירושלים <u>ובערי יהודה</u> , עד תעברנה הצאן על ידי מונה אמר ה'. |

This consolation prophecy (vv 10–11), which promises the return of joyful sounds to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah, the sounds of bride and groom, reverses well-known Jeremian prophecies of judgment (7:34; 16:9; and 25:10).⁷⁰ The syntactical pattern of *'od + yiqtol* together with **שב שבות**, the promise to restore the land “as of old” with no mention of exile and return, identify this prophecy as originating among Jeremiah’s prophecies of consolation to the Remnant of Judah (as in 32:15).

However, this promise was expanded by four different statements: (1) A description of “that place” brought in a quotation; (2) a second parallel description referring to “the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem”; (3) an addition of sounds of rejoicing, which unite with the sounds of worship and thanksgiving in the House of YHWH. (4) Moreover, vv 12–13 which indeed are constructed on the same pattern as vv 10–11,⁷¹ expand this prophecy further, adding a third (and a fourth) description of “that place,” which this time highlights the transformation of the rural areas of Judah (“In the towns of the hill country, in the towns of the

⁷⁰ The reversal nature of this prophecy was pointed out by Holladay, *Jeremiah* 2, 224; Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 634–36;

⁷¹ See Lundbom, *Jeremiah* 21–36, 534–35.

Shephelah, and in the towns of the Negeb, in the land of Benjamin and in the environs of Jerusalem and in the towns of Judah,” in similarity to 32:44). The arguments for considering these pronouncements as secondary expansions are founded on stylistic grounds:

(1) אשר אתם אמרים חרב הוא מאין אדם ומאין בהמה (1) [of] which you say: “It is ruined!, without man or beast” follows the pattern of 32:36, 43:⁷²

32:36: But now, assuredly, thus said the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the city of which you say, “It is being delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon through the sword, through famine, and through pestilence.”

ועתה לכן כה אמר ה' אלהי ישראל אל העיר הזאת אשר אתם אמרים נתנה ביד מלך בבל בחרב וברעב ובדבר

32:43: And fields shall again be purchased in this land of which you say, “It is a desolation, without man or beast; it is delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans.”

ונקנה השדה בארץ הזאת, אשר אתם אמרים שממה היא מאין אדם ובהמה נתנה ביד הכשדים

These three anonymous quotations invoke descriptions of Jerusalem and its surroundings as destroyed and desolate, by utilizing prophecies of judgment spoken earlier by Jeremiah.⁷³ However, the syntactical construction **חרב הוא** (similar to **שממה היא** [32:43]) is exceptional in Jeremiah. Furthermore, the use of the adjective **חרב** “ruined” in this context is itself a *hapax* (33:10, 12); the normally occurring form of the word in Jeremiah is the noun **חרבה**, “ruin.” The latter term is used to describe the fates of the Temple (22:5), the city (27:17), Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (25:18; 44:2, 6), and the land (7:34; 25:11; 44:22).⁷⁴ In addition, the common

⁷² Note that the NJPS takes this as indirect rather than direct speech, and therefore misses the parallel between these two verses.

⁷³ For a discussion of these special quotations in Jeremiah 32, see Rom-Shiloni, “Everlasting Covenant,” 208–10.

⁷⁴ **חרבה** occurs eight times in Jeremiah in the singular (noted above), and twice in the plural (**חרבות**; 25:9, 49:13). See also its similar usage in Ezekiel in reference to Jerusalem (5:14), the mountains of Israel (38:8), the land of Egypt (29:9), Edom (25:13), cities in the Se'ir mountain (35:4); note also its use in the plural referring to cities (33:24, 27; 13:4; 36:10, 33;

phrases used in prophecies of judgment in Jeremiah are the verbal phrases: **היה שממה** (4:27; 50:13), **שים שממה** (6:8; 10:22), **נתן שממה** (15:10; 34:22); these, then, are a bit closer to Jer 32:43: **שממה היא**, but the syntactical uniqueness remains.

(2) The impression of extraordinary phraseology is reinforced by this phrase in v 10a: **מאין אדם ומאין בהמה**, along with the expanded repetition in v 10b: **מאין אדם ומאין יושב ומאין בהמה** and the further repeat in v 12: **מאין אדם ועד בהמה**. The standard phrase in prophecies of judgment in Jeremiah is the single construction, **מאין יושב** (4:7; 26:9; 34:22; 44:22), which also appears in prophecies to the nations (46:19; 48:9; 51:29, 37). Hence, the doubled and even tripled constructions of 33:10–12 intensify the impression of that desolation; the construction itself may have been influenced by the phrase **אדם ובהמה** “man and beast” which is used frequently in Ezekiel in prophecies of judgment (Ezek 14:12, 17, 19, 21; 25:13; 29:8; 36:11), but only once in Jeremiah (Jer 36:29).

(3) The third expansion adds to the rejoicing sounds of the bride and groom—the private-familial joy in restoring daily life—the sounds of the communal thanksgiving offering and liturgy in the House of YHWH. This expansion finds its equivalent in the liturgy (Ps 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 136:1–26), and while the offering of thanksgiving is recalled in another expansion in Jeremiah (17:26),⁷⁵ it otherwise appears only in Second Temple biblical sources (Ezra 3:11; 1Chr 16:34, 41; 2Chr 5:13; 7:3, 6; 22:21).⁷⁶

Two major themes were added through those expansions: the emphasis on the land as empty prior to the restoration (vv 12–13); and, the restoration as not restricted to private fortunes but which has its major impact on the worship in the Jerusalem Temple (v 11; see Ezra 3:11).

Jer 33:10–11, 12–13 seem, therefore, to merge different prophetic pronouncements. The Repatriates’ early Persian-period ex-

38:12) and land (26:20).

⁷⁵ Jer 17:26 is to be counted as an editorial expansion of the otherwise authentically Jeremian covenant speech in Jer 17:19–27 (see Rom-Shiloni, “Law Interpretation in Jeremiah: Exegetical Techniques and Ideological Intentions,” *Shnaton* 17 [2008], 59–79 [Hebrew]). The other argument to substantiate its secondary and late character is its list of the geographic districts, which is similar to 32:44 and 33:13.

⁷⁶ Lundbom (*Jeremiah* 21–36, 536) recognizes this late context, but nevertheless counts it as a possibly ancient institution.

pansion is built upon the prophet's earlier proclamation to the Remnant of Judah, which is then adapted to the Repatriates' reality of restoration within the land. The time span that has passed from the early exilic period to the last decades of the sixth century and the prophecy's concentration on in-group perspectives allowed this transitional adaptation.

In sum, the features which call attention to such secondary readings are: the reversal of Jeremiah's prophecies of judgment;⁷⁷ *hapax* words and syntactical patterns in Jeremiah; and resemblances to Babylonian exilic and postexilic literary compositions, mainly Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, Zechariah 1–8, and even Ezra-Nehemiah (see for instance, Jer 31:38–40).⁷⁸

IV. CONCLUSIONS: IS IT THE PERSIAN PERIOD CONFLICT?

In bringing this study to a close, I want to return to Robert Carroll's observations (above pp. 12–13) in which he argued for a mid-Persian period context for the polemical perceptions in Jeremiah. Evaluating the in-group and the out-group positions in Jeremiah in

⁷⁷ While reversal in itself is found in passages in which there is no reason to question the prophet's authorship, the accumulation of these features together suggest a non-Jeremian, and even Babylonian–Repatriate authorship.

⁷⁸ To mention another example, Jer 50:4–5 has several components which reveal its exilic provenance and some which reflect a Judean perspective. Among the Babylonian–Exilic characteristics are the formula **בני יחזו** (v 4) **וְאֵת ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם יִבְקְשׁוּ** (v 4) which alludes in this context to an exilic situation, where inquiry of YHWH represents the people's initiative towards repentance (see Deut 4:29; and Jer 29:13); and so also the use of **בְּרִית עוֹלָם** (Jer 50:5; and see the exilic perspective of Jer 32:36–41). For the Babylonian–Exilic orientation of this **בְּרִית עוֹלָם**, see Rom-Shiloni, “Everlasting Covenant,” 215. For a Judean perspective, note **דֶּרֶךְ הַנָּה פְּנִימָה** (Jer 50:5; crying as part of the journey of return draws on Jer 31:9, from the Northern preexilic prophecies, see 1a above). The phrase **נִלְוָה אֶל יְהוָה** (v 5b) is a *hapax* in Jeremiah, and it invites the people in this context to establish an eternal covenant with YHWH. In this usage the phrase differs from other occurrences of **נִלְוָה אֶל יְהוָה** which appear in cultic contexts (Num 18:2; Isa 56:3, 6), or apply to strangers joining Israel (Isa 14:1). The closest similarity to Jeremiah would be Zech 2:15, where nations attach themselves to YHWH and become His people. But cf. Lundbom, *Jeremiah* 37–52, 374–76.

comparison to perceptions held within Judean communities of the sixth-fifth centuries, the following conclusions may be reached.

First, group-identity issues are a major component in the prophecies of consolation within Jeremiah. Each of the prophetic passages of consolation independently utilizes elements which contribute to building self-identities and/or counter-identities, i.e., designations, arguments, and strategies which create a framework of exclusivity. Hence, the complicated picture within the book of Jeremiah proves that making claims about identity was not an innovation of the exilic or the post-exilic (Persian) periods. On the contrary, the book of Jeremiah is unique within biblical literature in its attestation to two antagonistic positions, that is, the claims of those who remained in the land after the Jehoiachin Exile and following the destruction, and claims of those who were exiled to Babylon (in the different waves) and later returned. The only period for which we have evidence of explicit confrontation between the two groups is the early exilic period (597–586 BCE, and on). Much more prevalent in Jeremiah are reidentifications of the in-group within each of the communities. In the consolation prophecies, the pro-Judean passages seem to be genuine Jeremian, whereas the Babylonian exilic passages parallel Ezekiel and then Deutero-Isaiah.

Pro-Judean prophecies of consolation stem from two different periods within the prophet's activity. First, early in his career Jeremiah prophesied to Northern Israel, encouraging them to join Judah (incorporate into Zion). To the later period belong his prophecies to the Remnant of Jerusalem/Judah, made initially after the Jehoiachin Exile (597 BCE), and then again and with even greater force after the Destruction (586 BCE).

Yet, as part of the editorial process, prophecies to the Remnant of Judah have been situated side by side with prophecies directed to the Babylonian Exiles (Jer 32:6–15, and 36–41, 42–44; Jeremiah 30–31, and 33); and the exilic editorial context governs the structure of entire units (as in chapters 40–44). The editorial pro-*golah* passages reveal the Babylonian exilic ideology apparent in Jeremiah. In fact, in reference to in-group and out-group definitions, three different Babylonian exilic strands may be discerned.

* In-group definitions:

(a) Exclusive designations of the Jehoiachin Exiles appear in but a few prophecies in Jeremiah (24; 29:16–20; and the editorial work of 40–44). These prophecies show important resemblances to

Ezekiel, and thus may be dated as early exilic Babylonian positions (597–586 BCE and on).

(b) A second Babylonian exilic strand in Jeremiah is manifested in prophecies of consolation to the Babylonian Exiles which do not retain the Jehoiachin Exiles' exclusivity, but include all future communities of Exiles in Babylon (the land in the north, as in 16:14–15; 30:12–17; 32:36–41) as the people of God. This inclusive exilic position parallels exilic literature (570–538 BCE), generally configured within later passages in Ezekiel and in Deutero-Isaiah, still within the Neo-Babylonian period. These prophecies in the book of Jeremiah show phraseological resemblances to both Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah, and in accordance with the latter, portray the land as empty and desolate awaiting the return of the people.

(c) This paper has suggested that a third Babylonian exilic strand is recognizable within a subgroup of the consolation prophecies. This third strand seems indeed to belong to Repatriate voices in Jeremiah thus dating from the early Persian period, after the Edict of Cyrus at the close of the sixth century. While this late strand adds its own contribution to in-group designations and arguments, it does not show any interest in out-group (Judean) communities of the mid-Persian period (mid-late fifth century).

* Out-group definitions:

The book of Jeremiah does not accord with Babylonian exilic ideology in the presentation of the “others” as foreigners, as non-Judahite. It has no attestation of such denigrating, exclusive positions (# 2 above, pp. 15–16).

The image of the empty and desolate land of Judah (# 3 above, p. 16) does play a role in consolation prophecies in Jeremiah, which seem to be addressing Babylonian Exiles (e.g., 32:36–41) and Repatriates in Persian Yehud (e.g., 33:10–11, 12–13). The imagery functions to augment the argument of *entirety* advocated by Babylonian Exiles and Returnees.

Is it then the Persian period conflict? The book of Jeremiah does not explicitly describe the conflicts between Repatriates and “other” Judean (or foreign) communities, in a fashion similar to Ezra-Nehemiah. Yet it does bring to the fore Babylonian exilic positions which had developed in Babylon over the Neo-Babylonian exilic period, and which may be assumed to have been brought by the Babylonian Repatriates to Persian Yehud during the early Persian period. These Repatriate-oriented passages seem to resemble most closely the exilic prophetic literature: Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah,

and Zechariah 1–8.⁷⁹ However, the Repatriates introduced a new element into the mix of “exilic” ideology by appropriating for their own group Jeremiah’s prophecies of consolation, which were first directed to those who had remained in Judah from the time of the Jehoiachin Exile. Hence, while the overall picture illustrates the multiple hands involved in the final shaping of the book of Jeremiah, mid-Persian period (i.e., mid-late fifth century BCE) tracks within the book still remain a mystery to be deciphered.

⁷⁹ To this Neo-Babylonian period within exilic literature belongs also the deuteronomistic literature, and particularly the editorial work in Kings.

EZRA 1–6 AS IDEALIZED PAST

DIANA V. EDELMAN

INTRODUCTION

Ezra 1–6 is not a straightforward historical account of past events surrounding the rebuilding of the temple in the Persian era but rather, an account framed according to prophetic predictions telling what should have happened. It is a narrative of fulfilled prophecy set in real time, which draws elements from every prophetic text in the present canon that predicts something about the rebuilt temple and makes the chosen elements fictionalized reality. In this paper I will substantiate this view of the contents of Ezra 1–6 and then consider why its author chose to present an idealized account of how, when, and why the temple should have been rebuilt instead of a factual report of how, when, and why it was.

A perusal of commentaries and articles on Ezra 1–6 reveals that most consider this a straightforward historical account,¹ with a

¹ So, for example, E. Meyer, *Die Entstehung des Judentums: eine historische Untersuchung* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1896), 41–46; E. Bickerman, “The Edict of Cyrus in Ezra 1,” *JBL* 65 (1946), 247–57; M. Noth, *The History of Israel* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960, 3rd English translation), 306–15; J. M. Myers, *Ezra, Nehemiah: Introduction, Translation and Notes* (AB, 14; Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1965), xlix–l; P. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.* (London: SCM, 1968), 140–52; R. de Vaux, “The Decrees of Cyrus and Darius on the Rebuilding of the Temple,” *The Bible and the Ancient Near East* (trans. from French; London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1972), 63–96; S. Herrmann, *A History of Israel in Old Testament Times* (trans. from German; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 300–305; D. J. A. Clines, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther* (NCBC; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1984), 8–9; J. M. Miller and J. H. Hayes, *History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 440–60; J. Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community*

minority rejecting the claim that the temple foundation was initially laid under Cyrus but accepting the part from Darius onward as reliable, assuming the entire rebuilding process took place under his authority.² But both of these assumptions undervalue the key statement from the ancient author in the opening two verses that the temple was rebuilt in order that the word of Yahweh by Jeremiah might be accomplished: "In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, *in order that the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished*, Yahweh stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom and also in a written edict declaring: 'Yahweh Elohe Hasshamayim....has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judah....'" This

(trans. from German by D. L. Christopher-Smith; JSOTSup, 151; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 28–29, 103, 106, 111–12, 117–18, 123; C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *Haggai-Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 25B; Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1987), xxxi–xl; 37–38; 390); G. W. Ahlström, *The History of Palestine from the Palaeolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest* (JSOTSup, 146; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 841–48.

² So for example, W. H. Kusters, *Die Wiederherstellung Israels in der persischen Periode* (trans. from Dutch by A. Basedow; Heidelberg: n. p., 1985); C. C. Torrey, *The Composition and Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah* (BZAW, 2; Giessen: Ricker, 1896); G. Hölscher, "Die Bücher Esra und Nehemia," *Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments Zweiter Band: Hosea bis Chronik* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1923), 491–562 (495); A. Thomson, "An Inquiry Concerning the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah," *AJS* 48 (1932), 99–132 (103–104); S. Herrmann, *A History of Israel in Old Testament Times* (trans. from German by J. Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 300–301; H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC, 16; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 80–81; H. W. Wolff, *Haggai: A Commentary* (trans. from the German by M. Kohl; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 41, 44; J. Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow: A Social and Historical Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 57–63; P. R. Bedford, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah* (JSJSup, 65; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 152–57. Herrmann and Bedford argue Cyrus originally gave permission but that work only began under Darius. A minority position holds that the builder was Darius II Nothus, (423–404 BCE), not Darius I Hystaspis (521–485 BCE); see, for example E. Havet, "La modernité des prophètes," *Revue des deux mondes (troisième partie)* 94 (1889), 107–22 (119); L. Dequeker, "Darius the Persian and the Reconstruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 4,24)," J. Quaegebeur (ed.), *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East* (OLA, 55; Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 67–92 (68).

claim highlight's the author's central concern and guiding principle in his account: the making of prophetic word reality. The last observation, the making of prophetic word reality, has been deliberately framed to highlight the question: is this depiction of prophetic fulfilment in real time historically accurate and reliable, or is it a fictional account of what should have happened because various prophetic books had contained divine pronouncements predicting what was to happen when the temple was rebuilt? Was it important for the author and his audience that Yahweh's word not fall to the ground but be fulfilled, or is Ezra 1–6 a more pessimistic vision of yet another ideal beginning that quickly degenerated, negating any major break between pre-exilic and post-exilic Israel in the group's officially endorsed cultural memory?

PROPHETIC PASSAGES USED TO COMPOSE EZRA 1–6

The opening reference to Jeremiah is a bit perplexing since the prediction that Cyrus would rebuild the temple and return the temple vessels (Ezra 1:7) is found in Second Isaiah (Isa 44:28), not Jeremiah. A review of all prophetic predictions concerning the temple rebuilding is therefore warranted, in order to understand the reference to Jeremiah in verse 1 and also to see the impact of prophetic texts more fully on the construction of the larger account of the rebuilding process in Ezra 1–6.

Predictions or claims about the future temple that would replace the one destroyed in 586 BCE are found in Second Isaiah, Ezekiel, Haggai-Zechariah 8, while more general claims about the rebuilding of Jerusalem are found in Jeremiah. In Isa 44:28 God is said to say of Cyrus: "He is my shepherd and he shall fulfil my purpose; Jerusalem is to be rebuilt and the temple foundation is to be relaid." According to Ezra 3:8–13, Cyrus authorizes the rebuilding of the temple and the foundation is relaid in his second year. In Isa 52:11, the future departure of the temple vessels from Babylon during the reign of Cyrus is envisioned, and this is reported as having taken place in Ezra 1:2–6.³

³ The reference in Jer 27:22 to the vessels remaining there until the day Yahweh will give thought to them and to his causing them to be brought out and returned to this place are later expansions of the MT text that are lacking in the LXX version.

In Ezekiel 40–48, the functionary who would oversee the new temple was to bear the title *nasi*.⁷ This title is applied to Sheshbazzar, the leader of the initial group that reportedly brought back the vessels and laid the temple foundation (Ezra 1: 8).

Ezekiel 40:5–7 states the depth and height of the outer wall that would enclose the temple complex would be six cubits. The dimensions that Cyrus reportedly specified for the new temple in 6:3, 60 cubits x 60 cubits, are arguably taken from the Ezekiel reference. The presence of only two dimensions in Ezra 6:3 has puzzled scholars for centuries. Finding no predicted dimensions for the temple building proper, the author of Ezra 1–6 may have multiplied the 6-cubit figure for its outer enclosing wall by 10 to arrive at a reasonable estimation of the height and depth or breath for the temple building proper. Notably, however, he gave no length, perhaps intending his erudite target audience to pick up on this allusion. In this case, he has not turned to descriptions of the monarchical-era temple for help, even though the old foundation was allegedly being reused; the author of Kings gives the dimensions as 60 x 20 x 30 cubits (1 Kgs 6:2) while the Chronicler gives those dimensions as 60 x 20 x 120 cubits (2 Chr 3:3–4).

The writer names the prophets Haggai and Zechariah directly in 5:1–2 and 6:14a, showing he knew of the tradition that they were actively delivering divine messages at the time the temple was rebuilt. However, a strong case can be made that he knew the combined literary composition, Haggai-Zechariah 8, and drew on it as a source for his account. There are arguably four instances of literary dependency or inspiration. First, the names of Zerubbabel and Yeshua and the fact that they were present at the laying of the temple's foundation are taken from Haggai and Zechariah, even though the author ended up having to date both figures to the reign of Cyrus rather than to the reign of Darius I, as stated explicitly in the editorial framework of both prophetic books, in order to remain faithful to the detail that they dedicated the temple's foundation (Ezra 5:1–2; 6:14). Secondly, the editorial dating scheme in Haggai-Zechariah 8 creates a two-year interruption in the rebuilding process (Hag 2:15–19; Zech 7:1; 8:9–12), which is echoed, but greatly lengthened, in the interruption of work in the Ezra account. The plot develops by having Artaxerxes officially stop the rebuilding work in response to accusations by neighbours that Jerusalem had been, and would again be, a rebellious settlement (Ezra 4:7–24). Work is not resumed again until the second year of King

Darius (4:24). Thirdly, Zech 8:10 refers to unspecified adversaries at the time of the rebuilding, which appears to have provided the author of Ezra 1–6 with a ready rationale for the cessation of work in his story (4:1–3). Fourthly, the dating of the resumption and completion of the temple's building under Darius is likely also to have been based on the editorial dates in Haggai-Zechariah 8, which placed the entire process in the early reign of Darius.

This review should have demonstrated that the author of Ezra 1–6 carefully collated written prophetic traditions concerning the rebuilding of the temple and incorporated all of them into his account. He harmonized the contradictory claims in 2 Isaiah and Haggai-Zechariah 8 about who would or allegedly did rebuild the temple by devising an interruption in the process so that both could be shown to have been accurate. A precedent for this break in the rebuilding process was already available in Haggai-Zechariah.

In passing, it can be observed that the author of Ezra 1–6 also used the book of Nehemiah as a source. The list of returnees in Nehemiah 7 appears in Ezra 2,⁴ and it is likely that the specific

⁴ Those who think the Ezra version is dependent on the Nehemiah one include, for example, L. W. Batten, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1913), 71; W. Rudolph, *Esra und Nehemiah samt 3. Esra* (HAT, 1.20; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1949), 26; H. L. Allrik, "The Lists of Zerubbabel (Nehemiah 7 and Ezra 2) and the Hebrew Numerical Notation," *BASOR* 136 (1954), pp 21–27 (26); H. Schneider, *Die Bücher Esra und Nehemia übersetzt und erklärt* (HSAT, IV, 2; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1959), 37; J. M. Myers, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, I; F. Michaeli, *Les livres des Chroniques, d'Esdras et de Néhémie* (CAT, 16; Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1967), 262; S. Japhet, "Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel," *ZAW* 94 (1982), 66–98 (84); H. G. M. Williamson, "The Composition of Ezra i–vi," *JTS* 34 (1983), 1–30 (27); Clines, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 45; B. Halpern, "A Historiographic Commentary on Ezra 1–6: A Chronological Narrative and Dual Chronology in Israelite Historiography," W. H. Propp, B. Halpern, and D. N. Freedman (eds), *The Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreters* (Biblical and Judaic Studies for the University of California, San Diego, 1; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 81–142 (95–96). Fewer have concluded that Ezra 2 is the original context from which the author of Nehemiah 7 borrowed; see for example, H. H. Schaefer, *Esra der Schreiber* (BHT, 5; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1930), 19–24; J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 83. Another proposed option is that both lists were drawn independently from archival material. For this, see for example,

identification of the “adversaries” who interrupted the temple building process as inhabitants of the adjoining province of Samerina was inspired by the naming of Sinuballit, governor of Samerina, as the ring-leader of the opposition to the rebuilding of Jerusalem in the book of Nehemiah (2:1, 19–20; 4:1–3, 7–8; 6:1–14 in English). In addition, Neh 6:10–14 appears to provide the basis of the idea of the hiring of counsellors against the community of returned exiles in Ezra 4:4–5. Perhaps this would have been a common procedure, but it seems more than coincidental that it appears in both accounts, especially when other details most likely have been drawn from the Nehemiah account.

The author also probably drew a number of details from the Chronicler’s history, as opposed to the version in the books of Kings. For example, the claim that Cyrus returned all the temple vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had carried off in 586 BCE (Ezra 1:7–11) follows the statement of Nebuchadnezzar’s actions in 2 Chr 36:10, 18 but is not found in the parallel narrative in 2 Kgs 24:13, where Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the golden temple vessels. The claim that the rebuilding was funded jointly by private and royal funds echoes the same situation in the case of the building of Solomon’s temple in 1 Chr 29.9 as opposed to that in 1 Kings 5–8, where Solomon alone bore the cost. The reference to David having established the Levites in their various divisions for temple service in Ezra 3:10 agrees with 1 Chronicles 23–26; no mention of this occurs anywhere in the Kings account. On analogy, it is likely that the report of the bartering of food, wine, and oil for cedar from Sidon and Tyre (3:7) and the initiation of the rebuilding in month 2 (3:8) also have been derived from Chronicles (2 Chr 1:3, 8, 15; 2 Chr 3:2), even though both are also found in Kings (1 Kgs 5:8–11; 1 Kgs 6:1). Conspicuously, however, Sidon now appears beside Tyre as a source of timber; its pre-eminence over Tyre had already been established by the early 5th century BCE and continued until the closing years Persian rule (333 BCE). Thus, the narrative in Ezra 1–6 is very much a late composition that presumes and draws upon a number of other compositions that form part of the emerg-

J. Nikel, *Die Wiederherstellung des jüdischen Gemeinwesens nach dem babylonischen Exil* (BibS(F), 5/2 and 3; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1900), 71–72; L. H. Brockington, *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther* (NCB; London: Thomas Nelson, 1969), 49, and F. C. Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 49.

ing authoritative corpus of texts defining the religious community of Israel at some point after the reconstruction of the temple.

THE REFERENCE TO JEREMIAH IN EZRA 1:1

Let us now return to Jeremiah, the prophet or prophetic book that is referenced in Ezra 1:1. There are no explicit predictions about the rebuilding of the temple in this prophetic book, but there are chronological predictions concerning the length of time the land of Judah would lay desolate until the rebuilding of Jerusalem in general, which implicitly would have included the temple. In Jer 25:8 Yahweh says he is bringing Nebuchadnezzar and all the tribes of the north against “this land and its inhabitants.” In 25:11, he promises that “this whole land shall become a ruin and a waste and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon for 70 years” while in 29:10–14 Yahweh promises he will bring his people back to the place from where he sent them into exile. In Jer 29:20, Yahweh addresses “the exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.” Now, some argue the original context of some or all of these prophecies in Jeremiah likely would have been the battle of Carchemish in 605 BCE, accepting the date given as genuine.⁵ Whether they are correct or not, reading the words as they stand, it would have been logical for someone removed from the immediate time and circumstances to assume they predicted events dating to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 by the Neo-Babylonians, when Judah ceased to be a vassal kingdom and was turned into a Babylonian province.⁶

⁵ So, for example, B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia* (Die poetischen und prophetischen Bücher des Alten Testaments, 3; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1903), 203; A. Orr, “The Seventy Years of Babylon,” *VT* 6 (1956), 304–306; G. Larsson, “When Did the Babylonian Captivity Begin?,” *JTS* 18 (1967), 417–23. For a post-exilic date and context, see for example, Ahlström, *History of Ancient Palestine*, 790, n. 2.

⁶ The majority favour Jer 29:10, though many think it needs to be taken in combination with 25:11 to be the likely basis of the allusion in Ezra 1:1; see for example, J. M. Myers, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 6; Brockington, *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther*, 48; R. J. Coggins, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1976), 11; D. Kidner, *Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries; Downer’s Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1979), 32; Fensham, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 42; Clines, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 34. Myers and Cog-

The person responsible for two particular passages in Haggai-Zechariah 8 certainly understood the 70 years to begin with the exile and took the figure more or less literally, rather than as a round, conventional figure for “a very long time.” In Zech 1:12 a divine messenger asks God how long he will have no mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which he has had indignation “these 70 years.” Then, in 7:4–5, God tells Zechariah to say to the priests and the people of the land, “When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month on the seventh (day)⁷ for these seventy years, was it for me that you fasted?” The seventy years alludes to the length of time between the destruction of the temple in year 18 or 19 of Nebuchadnezzar, depending which text you read (Jer 52:29; 2 Kgs 25:8–9), and its rebuilding in the Persian period. According to Zech 7:5, the temple is on the verge of being rededicated or has been recently completed. During the intervening 70 years, the people had conducted an annual commemorative fast on the day the Neo-Babylonians had razed the temple: day 7 in month 5. Both of these passages may be editorial insertions, like the dating framework to the reign of Darius.⁸

Others have seen Ezra 1:1 to allude to Jeremiah 51, especially v. 11, which states that Yahweh has stirred up the spirit of the Medes, because his purpose concerning Babylon is to destroy it as vengeance for the temple.⁹ There is shared language about stirring up the spirit of a foreign king. However, the focus in Jeremiah is on the destruction of Babylon while in Ezra is it on the rebuilding of the temple, making this a less convincing allusion.

gins also add Jer 31.38 to the mix. L. W. Batten concluded that the reference either was an early textual error for Isaiah or that the unit now comprising Isaiah 40–66 was originally anonymous and at the time Ezra was composed, was being attributed to Jeremiah by some, including the present author (L. W. Batten, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, 57). J. Blenkinsopp thinks it is a conflation of Jer 29:10–14; 25:11–14 and exilic Isaiah (41:2, 25; 45:13) (*Ezra-Nehemiah*, 74.)

⁷ For the cogent suggestion that the word ‘day’ (*yom*) dropped out of the text after ‘seventh’ during the early course of transmission, see C. F. Whitely, “The Term Seventy Years Captivity,” *VT* 4 (1954), 60–72 (64).

⁸ For this view, see D. Edelman, *The Origins of the Second Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem* (London: Equinox, 2005), 91–95, 103–106, 172–75.

⁹ So Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 10.

How, then are we to understand the key phrase, “in order to fulfil the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah,” in the opening verse of Ezra 1? A number of options are possible.

1) Jeremiah 51:11 is the specific text the author had in mind, which he considered to be a general statement for which Isa 44:28 then provided a specific example. He worked with the principle of moving from the general to the specific, where he implicitly understood the Mede to be Isaiah’s Cyrus and shifted focus from the implicit punishment of Babylon in Jeremiah to its aftermath, the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, as in Isaiah.

2) Jeremiah 25:8 and 29:10–14, 25 were the specific texts the author had in mind, which he was using as a general chronological frame to date the end of the exile and restoration. He wanted to equate the end of the exile and new beginning back in the homeland with an alleged rebuilding of the temple after 70 years. An additional possibility within this frame is that he was signalling his decision to give priority to the date implications for the temple’s rebuilding found in the 70-year tradition as opposed to the prediction in 2 Isaiah that Cyrus would rebuild it.

3) The larger collection known as the book of Jeremiah in one of its more or less complete forms was being invoked here, because it dealt with the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile and predicted the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem in a general way. This was the background for the story line about to be picked up: the restoration, which centred on the rebuilding of the temple. In this case as well, it is possible to think that the author might also have been subtly signalling his preference for the Jeremianic 70-year tradition that would have placed the restoration of the temple under Darius over the one in 2 Isaiah that predicted its restoration by Cyrus.

We have no definitive information or way that allows us to choose among these options, but we can infer from this key statement that the writer was concerned with the completion or fulfilment of Yahweh’s word through the mouth of one or more prophets. This concern is further developed in the use of the four prophetic books containing all the predictions about the rebuilding contained in the Hebrew Bible as sources to construct the plot and details of the temple rebuilding narrative in Ezra 1–6. The presence of allusions to every book in the prophetic corpus dealing with the restoration of the temple after its destruction must be more than coincidental. This prophetic focus is logically part of the authorial

intention. So let us consider the range of possible inferences we can draw about this intention, bearing in mind that our individual stances on whether Ezra 1–6 is the latest part of Ezra, framed as an introduction to create the two-book sequence, Ezra-Nehemiah, or the original introduction to the book of Ezra will influence this list of options.

IMPLIED AUTHORIAL INTENTION

The first rather obvious intention was to create an ideal beginning for the author's view that a new era of Israel's history as a non-political, ethno-religious entity was beginning with the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. But then, was this to create a break with the past, or to repeat it? After all, the garden of Eden symbolizes an idealized beginning that deteriorates quickly; Abraham's move to the promised land, in which he instantly disobeys the divine command, even before leaving, results in a less than ideal situation. The exodus represents yet another new start that deteriorates into rebellion in the wilderness; the crossing of the Jordan to enter the "promised land" is one more new beginning that ends in a failure to carry out the divine command to destroy the Canaanites there.

Does the post-exilic community of Israel similarly make an ideal start and then quickly ruin it through disobedience? Yes, according to the balance of the book of Ezra (esp. ch. 9), though it ends with the possible restoration of the ideal after Ezra's correction of the legal transgressions (ch. 10). For those who would read the entire book as a single literary project from conception to reality, either as a single book, in conjunction with Nehemiah, or as part of a larger project that included Chronicles,¹⁰ it might be seen to end on a positive note of hope that the pattern of rebellion and disobedience can be overcome after a single round of transgression. Or, it might have been seen to end on an ominous note that one transgression will inevitably lead to another so that the ideal will never remain in place for very long in the real world, but nevertheless, is a goal to strive toward in this imperfect world. For those

¹⁰ This is the majority view. The debate continues over whether Ezra and Nehemiah had one or two authors, and whether in either case, the author of Chronicles was involved. For a convenient summary, see the introductory comments in a standard commentary; Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, xxi–xlviii or Blenkinsopp, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 41–54.

who would see it to be the introduction written to combine the remainder of Ezra with Nehemiah,¹¹ we see a second infraction within a relatively short span of time, which eliminates the first option above but still can allow the ideal beginning to stand as a goal. But here, we have a stronger possibility of cynicism on the part of the author, who doubts the new Israel will ever measure up to God's demands, so that a perfect beginning will only end in failure and is almost like divine entrapment because it holds up impossible standards. Within such a possible frame of reference, it could even be asked if the author intended Ezra 1–6 to be satirical—an allegedly perfect beginning to what he perceived in his time to be a corrupt temple, perhaps to play off conventions that saw the re-establishment to be a positive ideal achieved in real time.

Another consideration that might well have affected authorial intentions in Ezra 1–6, which emerges in the placement of Ezra-Nehemiah in the larger canon, is a desire to have the temple built and functioning before the introduction of Torah in the post-exilic Israel, creating twin pillars to support the authoritative basis for emerging Judaism. But are they meant to be of equal authority, or is the temple to take precedence over Torah as the founding institution, or the law over the temple as the form of knowing God that supersedes the restored temple? This then takes us back to the question about whether the author intended his account of the rebuilding of the temple to function positively or negatively. But perhaps this tension depends in large part on a canonical perspective and is not present if one takes the book of Ezra in isolation or Ezra-Nehemiah as an independent literary unit. Did the author of one or both books presume a version of Israel's past that followed the broad brushstrokes of what is presented in Torah and the Prophets or not?

It is impossible to know whether the present placement of Ezra 1–6 conveys the same impressions the author or editor originally intended or whether these have been tempered and even reversed by the incorporation of Ezra with Nehemiah or Ezra-Nehemiah into a larger sequence of texts and a macro-story line. The apparent use of multiple prophetic books and other writings that ended up in the canon tends strongly to indicate a late date of

¹¹ This is the minority view; see Williamson, "Composition of Ezra i–vi," 1–30.

composition for this narrative but does not help us decide whether the author was taking a pious vs satirical stance in relation to them. At the same time, it is hard to decide whether this account from its inception was an attempt to create an ideal cultural memory of a new beginning for the larger religious community of Israel within the larger sweep of the “remembered” past embodied in the emerging set of authoritative books or rather, was a satirical tract written to criticize such moves by those in power, which might originally have been directed at a small elite minority. In the latter case, was its original intention reversed when it was adopted into the emerging mainstream canon and situated in the macro-story line, or was it meant to remain a challenge, as a discordant voice that prevented an easy monolithic theology to become authoritative, providing centuries of rabbinical, clerical, and scholarly debate over the nature of the divine and its intentions for humanity?

In the study of cultural memory, it is recognized that a common way to create a perceived continuity between the past and the present is to retroject current practices or views that are different from earlier ones into the past, to eliminate any sense of discontinuity. When such a move is done, it is considered to be an implanted or embedded cultural memory.¹² Implanted cultural memories may derive from events or traditions that had or would have had a different purpose or understanding in their originating or allegedly original contexts. A second means of creating continuity when change has occurred is to alter an existing older memory to conform more closely with current reality.

In my opinion, Ezra 1–6 is not a cultural memory generated in the historical context of the rebuilding of the temple, which has been adjusted by a subsequent generation to address its needs. Rather, it appears to be an implanted memory inserted into a non-originating historical context. It is drawing on too many details in other written biblical books vs archival materials or oral tradition to be an adjusted memory. But even so, we cannot know if the implanted memory had a pre-life in a historical context or is an idealization of “what should have happened” or of an ideal beginning. Did it arise out of an inner community debate whose intention was

¹² For this technique as one means of creating continuity between past and present, see for example, J. D. Y. Peel, “Making History: The Past in the Ijesho Present,” *Man* New Series 19/1 (1984), 111–32.

to critique a majority understanding being advanced by one group, which then secondarily was implanted as a cultural memory for the entire community, possibly changing its original intention? Did it arise in an inner community debate as an expression of the majority view that came to dominate, quashing a minority view? Or, was it generated without debate, using a common template for understanding the past in which new beginnings were to be ideal before the onset of imperfect reality?

ANCESTOR IDEOLOGIES AND THE TERRITORIALITY OF THE DEAD IN GENESIS

FRANCESCA STAVRAKOPOULOU

In recent years, it has become increasingly popular to read the Abraham narratives in the book of Genesis as a Persian period manifesto designed to promote a peaceful, co-operative relationship between incoming (or “returning”) citizens of Yehud and indigenous communities. Framed within this context, and in contrast to the seemingly exclusivist ethnocentrism of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah,¹ Abraham is imaged not only as the founding father of the nation, but also as the archetypal immigrant, whose friendly relations with various “Canaanite” groups model a tolerant and inclusive attitude to the non-Jewish groups living within and alongside the province of Yehud.² This reading of the Abraham

¹ See further, for example, L. L. Grabbe, “Triumph of the Pious or Failure of the Xenophobes? The Ezra-Nehemiah Reforms and Their Nachgeschichte,” S. Jones and S. Pearce (eds), *Jewish Local Patriotism and Self-Identification in the Greco-Roman Period* (JSPS, 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 50–65; E. Ben Zvi, “Inclusion in and Exclusion from ‘Israel’ in Post-monarchic Biblical Texts,” S. W. Holloway and L. K. Handy (eds), *The Pitcher Is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström* (JSOTSup, 190; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 95–149; cf. D. L. Smith-Christopher, “Between Ezra and Isaiah: Exclusion, Transformation, and Inclusion of the “Foreigner” in Post-Exilic Biblical Theology,” M. G. Brett (ed.), *Ethnicity and the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 117–142.

² E.g., J. L. Ska, “Essai sur la nature et la signification du cycle d’Abraham (Gn. 11,27–25,11),” A. Wénin (ed.), *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 153–177;

narratives is well illustrated in an article by Albert de Pury, who argues that in the priestly traditions of Genesis, Abraham is intentionally presented as an “ecumenical” ancestor: “Abraham is placed from the beginning in an inter-tribal, inter-communitarian, ‘ecumenical’ perspective.”³ Accordingly, Abraham’s biblical imaging as the father of a mixed multitude of tribal and ethnic groups renders him a symbol of an inclusive and foreigner-friendly nascent Judaism:

The thoroughly positive view of Abraham as an ecumenical patriarch by the Priestly writer is remarkable. Especially if one remembers that this story was conceived and written down by a very pious and profound Jewish writer, and that the story was not originally intended to be broadcast to the world, but was meant to be read and mediated by the Jewish community in Jerusalem or wherever it lived in the diaspora ... the Priestly writer’s interpretation of Abraham is valuable not just as a testimony to a form of Jewish self-understanding in the beginning of the Persian period but as an attempt to conceive of a Jewish “ecumenism” or monotheistic humanism in a differentiated but pacified world of (de-nationalized) nations.⁴

Others offer similarly inclusivist interpretations of the priestly perspective, some of which have been brought to bear upon debates concerning constructions of ethnicity, community, imperialism and scribal authority in Yehud.⁵ Within these debates, percep-

M. Liverani, *Israel’s History and the History of Israel* (trans. C. Peri and P. R. Davies; London: Equinox, 2005 [2003]), 258–267; cf. J. D. Levenson, “The Universal Horizon of Biblical Particularism,” M. G. Brett (ed.), *Ethnicity and the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 143–169.

³ A. de Pury, “Abraham: The Priestly Writer’s ‘Ecumenical’ Ancestor,” S. L. McKenzie and T. Römer (eds), *Rethinking the Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible: Essays in Honour of John Van Seters* (BZAW, 294; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2000), 163–181, here 167.

⁴ A. de Pury, “Abraham,” 178.

⁵ See, for example, the debates in E. T. Mullen, *Ethnic Myths and Pentateuchal Foundations: A New Approach to the Formation of the Pentateuch* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); R. Christopher Heard, *Dynamics of Dissection: Ambiguity in Genesis 12–36 and Ethnic Boundaries in Post-Exilic Judah* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001); J. W. Watts (ed.), *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2001); R. L. Cohn, “Negotiating (with) the Natives: Ancestors and Iden-

tions of territoriality are particularly prominent. Set alongside Persian policies of forced migrations and “repatriation”—which likely included land provision for settlers⁶—biblical portrayals of the “post-exilic” period are frequently suggestive of conflict and competition between incoming groups and indigenous communities.⁷ As some scholars have argued, there is good reason to suspect that land tenure in Yehud was bound up with the socio-economic interests of the imperial overlords, and that these imperial interests were pointedly promoted in certain biblical texts (for example, Ezra 7:26; 10:8).⁸ Against this background, then, the Abraham narratives continue to play an important role in assessing the shape and function of various—and likely competing—territorial ideologies of the Persian period.

Although several forms of land appropriation are imaged or inferred in the Hebrew Bible,⁹ the dominant dynamics of biblical

tity in Genesis,” *HTR* 96 (2003), 147–166; M. Douglas, *Jacob's Tears: The Priestly Work of Reconciliation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); G. N. Knoppers and B. M. Levinson (eds), *The Pentateuch as Torah: New Models for Understanding its Promulgation and Acceptance* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2007).

⁶ P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (trans. P. T. Daniels; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 505–506; K. G. Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah* (SBLDS, 125; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 237–39; D. V. Edelman, *The Origins of the “Second” Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem* (London: Equinox, 2005), 342–43.

⁷ E.g., Ezra 4:1–4; 6:21; 9:1–2, 11–12, 14; 10; Neh 2:10; 5:5, 12; 9:2; 10:29, 31–32.

⁸ See particularly P. Frei, “Die persische Reichsautorisation: Ein Überblick,” *ZABR* 1 (1996), 1–35, an English translation of which is included (1–35) in the important collection of essays in J. W. Watts (ed.), *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* (SBLSymS, 17; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2001).

⁹ These include ancestral inheritance, royal grant, divine deed, redemption, colonial seizure, strategies of debt recovery, legal transfer, environmental damage, and the establishment of a cult site. See further J. Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community* (trans. D. L. Smith-Christopher; JSOTSup, 151; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); N. C. Habel, *The Land Is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995); C. J. H. Wright, *God's People in God's Land: Family, Land and Property in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990); cf. J. A. Dearman, *Property*

territorialism are shaped by the “national” foundation myths of patriarchs and conquest—both of which model the idea that land is allocated by divine deed¹⁰ and that entitlement to that land is claimed, maintained, and sustained by incomers, whether by means of peaceful immigration (the myth of the patriarchs) or military invasion (the conquest myth). But whilst the latter endorses the dispossession and annihilation of indigenous populations, the former appears to promote, and even rely upon, an on-going co-existence with the inhabitants of the land, for individual plots are acquired by the incomer not through force, but through negotiation and purchase. Thus Abraham buys a plot of land from the Hittites (“sons of Heth”) in Genesis 23,¹¹ Jacob purchases a portion of a field from the sons of Hamor at Shechem (33:18–20; cf. Josh 24:32) and in Egypt, Joseph buys the lands offered for sale by apparently willing Egyptians (47:18–20).¹² If these narratives are

Rights in the Eighth-Century Prophets (SBLDS, 106; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

¹⁰ Perceptions of the “divine deeding” of land are well known throughout ancient West Asia, and are particularly bound up with urban ideologies concerning the allotment and use of a city’s agricultural hinterland. This is particularly well illustrated in Leviticus 25–27, in which Yhwh is imaged as the divine patron and owner of land surrounding his sanctuary, which is allocated to his Israelite tenants. See further R. P. Carroll, “Textual Strategies and Ideology in the Second Temple Period,” P. R. Davies (ed.), *Second Temple Studies, Volume 1: Persian Period* (JSOTSup, 117; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 108–124. On land tenure and the interrelation of urban and rural economies, see n. 25 below.

¹¹ In Genesis 23, the local community are labelled בְּנֵי חֶת, “the descendants of Heth,” a designation complementing the claim in 10:15 (cf. 26:34; 36:2; 1 Chr 1:13) that Heth is a son of Canaan. The majority of commentators agree that this designation is essentially synonymous with (הַחִתִּים), the more usual biblical designation for the Hittites. Though some are convinced that these Hittites are the Anatolian-Syrian Hittites, they seem to be cast in the Hebrew Bible as an indigenous Canaanite group. See further J. Van Seters, “The terms ‘Amorite’ and ‘Hittite,’” *VT* 22 (1972), 64–81; G. McMahon, “The Hittites and the Bible,” *BA* (1989), 71–77; I. Singer, “The Hittites and the Bible Revisited,” A. M. Macir and P. de Miroschedji (eds), *“I Will Speak the Riddle of Ancient Times”: Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday* (Vol. 2; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 723–756.

¹² However, Joseph’s land deals are facilitated by his reducing the in-

read as Persian period propaganda, the patriarchal purchase of land presents territorial acquisition by incomers—whether “returning” from or remaining within their diaspora contexts—as a process endorsed *both* by the imperial overlord (represented by Yhwh in Genesis 23; 33:18–20 and Pharaoh in 47:18–20; cf. vv 4–6, 11–12) *and* by the inhabitants of the host country (represented by the Hittites, Shechemites, and Egyptians), who are willing to give up their land to make room for the newcomers.¹³ This seemingly cooperative and peaceful portrayal of land appropriation in Genesis has therefore particularly encouraged an inclusivist and postcolonial reframing of the portrait of Abraham as the archetypal immigrant.

The burial ground at Machpelah is the only piece of the promised land to come into Abraham’s possession (Genesis 23). Its purchase is prompted by Sarah’s death and the need for a tomb, requiring Abraham to enter into lengthy negotiations with the Hittites in order to secure a gravesite. Commentators tend to make much of Abraham’s insistence on paying good money for the site, even though he is offered it for free (cf. 2 Sam 24:22).¹⁴ In particular, both Norman Habel and Mark Brett set this and other episodes in the Abraham narratives against biblical texts promoting more aggressive land-grab ideologies.¹⁵ Habel describes Abraham as a “welcome immigrant” who “chooses to put down roots and buy land on the terms of the host country.”¹⁶ He argues that although

digenous vendors to apparent slavery (47:13–26; cf. LXX 47:13). See further M. G. Brett, *Genesis: Procreation and the Politics of Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 128–131.

¹³ That Joseph’s purchase of land leads to a familial “land-holding” is made explicit in 47:4–6, 11–12, in which Pharaoh grants land to Jacob and to Joseph’s brothers, land designated אֲחֻזָּה in v 11. On the meaning and significance of this term, see the discussion below.

¹⁴ E.g., G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (trans. J. H. Marks; 2nd edn. London: SCM Press, 1963), 248; C. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36* (trans. J. J. Scullion; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985), 375; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50* (WBC, 2; Waco: Word, 1994), 128–29; V. P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 135; L. A. Turner, *Genesis* (Readings; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 101.

¹⁵ Habel, *The Land Is Mine*, 115–133; M. G. Brett, *Genesis: Procreation and the Politics of Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 78–83 and *Decolonizing God: The Bible in the Tides of Empire* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008), 112–131.

¹⁶ Habel, *The Land Is Mine*, 125, 119.

Abraham's descendants will one day control the land, they will empower—and not disempower—the other nations of the host country (cf. Gen 18:18). According to Habel, Machpelah is thus the setting for a lesson in the just treatment of the legal owners of land.¹⁷ Similarly, Mark Brett reads Genesis 23 as an endorsement of peaceful land-sharing and tolerant co-existence with other peoples, undercutting the hostile exclusion or extinction of the inhabitants of the land promoted in texts such as Deut 7:1 and 20:17.¹⁸ Thus for both Brett and Habel, Genesis 23 is not about occupation but cooperation, an appeal directed at the biblical narrator's post-587 BCE audiences, for whom land was likely a live issue.¹⁹

But there are some problems with this view, not least of which is Abraham's refusal to accept the Hittites' initial offer of a free land transfer (23:10–13), which undermines Habel's suggestion that Abraham's compliance towards the Hittites is evident in his purchasing land on *their* terms; rather, he acquires the land in precisely the way *he* proposes (23:8–9).²⁰ More significantly, however, an inclusivist reading of this narrative overlooks the territorial significance of the plot of land Abraham purchases: a burial ground. Within many traditional societies, graves and burial grounds function as important markers of territorial possession and occupation, dividing one group and their land from another. As such, a grave or

¹⁷ Habel, *The Land Is Mine*, 120–122, 129.

¹⁸ Brett, *Genesis*, 78–79. For a more detailed discussion of Brett's views on Deuteronomy's portrayal of incomers and inhabitants, see his *Decolonizing God*, 79–93.

¹⁹ See, for example, S. Japhet, "People and Land in the Restoration Period," G. Strecker (ed.), *Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit* (Göttinger Theologische Arbeiten, 25; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 103–25; H. M. Barstad, *The Myth of the Empty Land: A Study in the History and Archaeology of Judah During the "Exilic" Period* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996); O. Lipschits, "Demographic Changes in Judah between the Seventh and the Fifth Centuries BCE," O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp (eds), *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 323–736.

²⁰ The inclusive ethic seemingly promoted in the patriarchal narratives is further cheapened by an ethnocentric bias against various indigenous communities—including the Hittites (26:34–35; 27:46). See further R. Christopher Heard, *Dynamics of Diselection*; see also Brett's nuanced response to these aspects of the book of Genesis in *Decolonizing God*, 125–131.

collection of graves might serve to mark the boundary of a given place or to signal "occupation" or "possession" of a territory.²¹ It is very likely that this was the case in ancient Israel and Judah, as biblical traditions and extant remains of the material culture suggest.²²

The interrelation of graves and boundaries is closely tied to the veneration of the dead and their roles in the lives of the living. Within ancient West Asian ancestor cults, perceptions of the continued existence of the dead were bound up with the family household; simply put, the death of a family member did not irrevocably fracture the social dynamics of the group, it merely altered the nature of a family's interaction with the deceased individual.²³ Burial in the family tomb constituted an idealized process effecting and maintaining the transformation of the deceased from a living member of the social group into a non-living entity—an ancestor—enabling the living community to negotiate and reframe their relationship with that individual.²⁴

²¹ See, for example, M. Bloch, *Placing the Dead: Tombs, ancestral villages, and kinship organisation in Madagascar* (London: Seminar Press, 1971); J. Glazier, "Mbeere ancestors and the domestication of death," *Man* (ns) 19.1 (1984), 133–147; M. Parker Pearson, *The Archaeology of Death and Burial* (Stroud: Sutton, 2003), 124–141; K. Prag, "The Dead Sea Dolmens: Death and the Landscape," S. Campbell and A. Green (eds), *The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East* (Oxbow Monograph 51; Oxford: Oxbow, 1995), 75–84; cf. I. Malkin, "Land Ownership, Territorial Possession, Hero Cults, and Scholarly Theory," R. M. Rosen and J. Farrell (eds), *Nomodeiktes: Greek Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 225–234; C. M. Antoniaccio, *An Archaeology of Ancestors: Tomb Cult and Hero Cult in Early Greece* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995).

²² For biblical examples of boundary burials, see Josh 24:30; Judg 2:9; 1 Sam 10:2. See further H. C. Brichto, "Kin, Cult, Land, Afterlife—A Biblical Complex," *HUCA* 44 (1973), 1–54; E. Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (JSOTSup, 123; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 111; F. Stavrakopoulou, *Land of Our Fathers: The Roles of Ancestor Veneration in Biblical Land Claims* (New York and London: T. & T. Clark, forthcoming).

²³ On the nature and function of these household dynamics, see the essays collected in J. Bodel and S. M. Olyan (eds), *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).

²⁴ For the social dynamics of the dead and their roles as ancestors, see the important discussion in P. Metcalf and R. Huntington, *Celebrations of*

The ancestors played an important dual role within the lives of their descendants: they bore some responsibility for the fertility, protection, and perpetuation of the family line, and they acted as guardians and guarantors of hereditary “property” and places, including the land upon which most ancient West Asian families lived, worked, died, and were buried. The territoriality of the ancestors was not incompatible with the urban-controlled economic infrastructures of ancient agriculture, nor with the ideological superstructures within which they were framed. Whilst (primarily urban) perceptions of land possession rendered the deity the landowner, and the king (whether domestic or imperial) the “steward” or “curator” of these divinely-owned territories, fields, and plots, institutional “stewardship” of agricultural land did not preclude a familial, ancestral dimension to its character. Mario Liverani argues that, under certain circumstances, land granted or “loaned” from temples and palaces often became “private” land in practice, so that, although initially only the *obligations* on the land were heritable, the land itself soon was too.²⁵ Thus for families working the land, the

Death: The Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual (2nd revised and expanded edn.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) and the essays collected in M. Bloch and J. Parry (eds), *Death and the Regeneration of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); M. S. Chesson (ed.), *Social Memory, Identity, and Death: Anthropological Perspectives on Mortuary Rituals* (Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association, 10; Arlington: American Anthropological Institute, 2001). Note also N. Laneri (ed.), *Performing Death: Social Analyses of Funerary Traditions in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean* (University of Chicago Oriental Institute Seminars, 3; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2007).

²⁵ M. Liverani, “Land Tenure and Inheritance in the Ancient Near East: The Interaction between ‘Palace’ and ‘Family,’” T. Khalidi (ed.), *Social Transformation in the Middle East* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1984), 33–44; cf. J. Blenkinsopp, “Did the Second Jerusalemite Temple Possess Land?,” *Transeu* 21 (2001), 61–68; J. Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community*, 92–104; M. Hudson and B. A. Levine, *Urbanization and Land Ownership in the Ancient Near East* (Peabody Museum Bulletin, 7; Cambridge, MS: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 1999); J. Pastor, *Land and Economy in Ancient Palestine* (London: Routledge, 1997); C. E. Carter, *The Emergence of Yebud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study* (JSOTSup, 294; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); B. A. Levine, “The Clan-Based Economy of Biblical Israel,” W. G. Dever and S. Gitin (eds), *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and*

socio-religious dimensions of both their (agri)culture and territoriality (essential constructs of identity) maintained household, local, and regional or even “state” dimensions. The territoriality of the dead thus played an important role within these contexts; their tombs were physical markers of their occupation of the land on which they were buried and on which their descendants lived and worked. Occupation and “ownership” of land was thus marked by ancestral graves within or upon its boundaries.

Set against this cultural backdrop, the biblical story of Abraham’s land deal carries a potent ideological charge: in acquiring a burial ground that, by the close of the book of Genesis, is the model of an ancestral tomb, housing the remains of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Leah, and Jacob (23:19; 25:9–10; 35:29; 49:29–32; cf. 47:29–30), Abraham’s actions look more assertively territorial than inclusive or “ecumenical.” And this is revealed in the dynamics and language of the land deal itself. In approaching the Hittites, Abraham’s initial request seems straightforward: “I am a stranger and an alien among you; give me a burial property (**אחזה** **קבר**) among you, so that I may bury my dead” (v 4). But his language is loaded. In employing the term **אחזה קבר**, Abraham is asking for more than a grave (**קבר**); in using the term **אחזה**, he is asking for a land-holding, that is, “(landed) property” or a “possession” that can be retained by his descendants and guarded by the generations buried there.²⁶ But the Hittites’ response is similarly

the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palestine (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 445–453; L. L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period, Volume 1 Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah* (LSTS, 47; London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 189–208.

²⁶ G. Gerleman, “Nutzrecht und Wohnrecht,” *ZAW* 89 (1977), 313–325. Abraham’s bid for land seems pointedly assertive given his use of the term **אחזה**. As several commentators observe, the term is employed in priestly texts to designate tenured land (e.g., Lev 14:34; 25:13; 27:16, 22, 28), and is used in Gen 17:8 and 48:4 to refer to the land divinely promised. Jacob Milgrom describes **אחזה** as “a technical term denoting inalienable property received (or seized) from a sovereign,” which is used to describe the land taken by incoming Israelites which becomes their inheritance (**נחלה**), thereby making sense of the conflated expression **אחזה נחלה**, “inherited holding” (Num 27:7; 32:35; cf. 35:2) (Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB, 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991], 5–6, 866–867). Mario Liverani re-

loaded: though they offer him the pick of any grave (קבר), they neglect to use the expression אֶחָזָה קֶבֶר, thereby ignoring his request for land (v 6).²⁷

The territorial concerns of both parties become increasingly transparent as the language of graves and burial places gives way to talk of fields and land: Abraham specifies that he wants the cave of Machpelah “at the edge of the field” (שָׂדֶה) owned by Ephron the Hittite (v 9). The use of שָׂדֶה here, sharing a context with אֶחָזָה, is suggestive of Abraham’s request for a field for cultivation, a plot of land on which a living can be made.²⁸ Ephron’s reply is a candid acknowledgement of Abraham’s grounded interests, for he offers first the field and then the cave, though he notably avoids the term אֶחָזָה קֶבֶר. The rhetorical dynamics of these detailed negotiations suggest that it is not the particularities of Sarah’s burial that concern Abraham and Ephron, but the use of a burial site as a means to occupy and possess land. Indeed, without reference to the cave or the grave, Abraham’s final petition is a direct and explicit appeal to buy the field—“then,” he says, “I will bury my dead there” (v

finer the ideological connotations of the priestly use of אֶחָזָה in suggesting that the term refers to landed property taken by returnees in the Persian period, so that the terminological shift from נַחֲלָה (employed particularly in deuteronomistic texts to refer to hereditary land) to אֶחָזָה in the priestly literature “apparently marks the transition from a judicial claim to an act of taking possession” (Mario Liverani, *Israel’s History and the History of Israel*, 258). On these key biblical terms and their cognates, see F. Horst, “Zwei Begriffe für Eigentum (Besitz): *nahala* und *’abuzza*,” A. Kuschke, *Verbannung und Heimkehr: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Theologie Israels im 6. und 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Wilhelm Rudolph zum 70. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1961), 135–156; C. J. H. Wright, *God’s People in God’s Land*, 19–20.

²⁷ M. Sternberg, “Double Cave, Double Talk: The Indirections of Biblical Dialogue,” J. P. Rosenblatt and J. C. Sitterson (eds), “*Not In Heaven*”: *Coherence and Complexity in Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 28–57, here 31; V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 18–50*, 134, n. 14.

²⁸ Gerleman argues that אֶחָזָה is often used in priestly texts (particularly Leviticus 25–27) to refer specifically to cultivated land (“Nutzrecht und Wohnrecht,” 313–325). Similarly, the term שָׂדֶה tends to be used in relation to a city or a settlement, suggesting a field cultivated to provide food (G. Wallis, “שָׂדֶה,” *TDOT* 14, 37–45, here 39–40), though its topography might be more akin to a “highland,” so W. H. Propp, “On Hebrew *śade(b)*, ‘Highland,’” *VT* 37 (1987), 230–36.

13). Similarly, Ephron's final words are choice and precise, his vocabulary exposing the valuable territorial function of the dead: he agrees to sell Abraham אֶרֶץ, both "land" and "underworld"—"So now bury your dead" (v 15).²⁹ The pun here does not lessen the impact of the land deal. In purchasing a burial site, which in mytho-symbolic terms is a manifestation of the uncultivated wilderness, Abraham has secured tenure of the adjoining field for cultivation. The presence of his dead in the tomb at the edge of the field thus marks his "possession" of the land.

Throughout the narrative, the legality of the purchase is emphasized in the very public nature of the negotiations, the witnesses' characterization as those who go through the city gate (vv 10, 18), the careful reference to merchants' weights (v 16), and the repetitive but detailed description of the plot sold (vv 17–20).³⁰ The narrator is insistent that Abraham's claim to this site cannot be contested. The land deal is celebrated at the close of the chapter with a lengthy statement designed both to detail the precise location, borders and lie of the land purchased, and to underline the legitimacy of the transfer. The real focus of the story is revealed in the way in which the burial site is described in these closing verses, for repeatedly and explicitly, these verses demonstrate that Abraham's gain is a plot of land and everything within its boundaries—including, of course, its burial cave:

So Ephron's field in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre, the field with the cave in it and all the trees that were in the field, within the confines of its whole boundary, passed to Abraham as a bought-possession (מַקְנָה) in the presence of the Hittites, in the presence of all who went in at his city-gate.

²⁹ On אֶרֶץ as "underworld," see, for example, *HALOT* 1, 91; M. Ottosson, "אֶרֶץ 'erets," *TDOT* 1, 388–405, esp. pp. 399–400.

³⁰ For various analyses of Abraham's land deal alongside ancient or contemporary purchase paradigms, see M. R. Lehmann, "Abraham's Purchase of Machpelah and Hittite Law," *BAIOR* 129 (1953), 15–18; H. Pet-schow, "Zwiesgesprächsurkunde und Genesis 23," *JCS* 19 (1965), 103–120; G. M. Tucker, "The Legal Background of Genesis 23," *JBL* 85 (1966), 77–84; R. Westbrook, *Property and the Family in Biblical Law* (JSOTSup, 113; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); N. MacDonald, "Driving a Hard Bargain? Genesis 23 and Models of Economic Exchange," L. J. Lawrence and M. I. Aguilar (eds), *Anthropology and Biblical Studies: Avenues of Approach* (Leiden: Deo, 2004), 79–96.

After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah facing Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. The field and the cave in it passed from the Hittites to Abraham as a burial property **אחזת קבר** (Gen 23:17–20).

In concluding the story in this way, the narrator cannot help but reveal that the story has been not about Sarah's burial (whose death is merely the hook on which the land deal is hung), nor is it about the processes of negotiation, but it is about the possession of hereditary land, constructed around the territorial function of a tomb.

The territorial currency of Genesis 23 finds its value in a separatist ideology that distinguishes between Abraham, his kin and his land, on the one hand, and the Hittites and their land on the other. Though the Hittites locate Abraham "in our midst" and offer him a choice of any one of their tombs (v 6), Abraham specifically requests the cave of Machpelah "at the edge" (**בקצה**) of Ephron's field (v 9)—implying his resistance to incorporation among them. The sense, then, is that Abraham chooses not to be "in the midst" of the Hittites; instead, he chooses to be separate from them.³¹ As Meir Sternberg comments, "The patriarch will not bury his wife, any more than in the next chapter he will marry his son, among the people of Canaan."³² But it seems likely that this separateness is constructed around the territorial function of a tomb as a boundary marker. It demarcates the difference between Abraham's dead and the Hittites' dead; between his land and theirs. The territorial dynamics of the narrative thus endorse exclusiveness and separation, rather than an inclusive or "ecumenical" attitude to indigenous communities.³³

³¹ Sternberg, "Double Cave, Double Talk," 31–32.

³² Sternberg, "Double Cave, Double Talk," 31; cf. Mullen, *Ethnic Myths*, 145. Drawing on Sternberg's discussion, Robert Cohn ("Negotiating (with) the Natives," 160) similarly reads Abraham's request for a tomb at the edge of the field as a petition for ethnic separateness; *contra* Hamilton (*Genesis 18–50*, 131–132), who assumes Abraham's choice of a plot on the edge of Ephron's field is dictated "by modesty" because his status "restricts him to minimal privileges"; cf. N. M. Sarna, *Genesis* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 159.

³³ This separateness is underscored further in the sharp contrast between Ephron's willingness to give away or sell his burial ground to an

If Abraham is to be viewed as a paradigmatic incomer, the policy of land appropriation he models in Genesis 23 attempts to accommodate two concepts of territorial possession: one is the idea that land can be bought, and the other is the idea that land is ancestral. Each of these forms of territorial possession can play a crucial role in land claims (past and present) and they are often deemed to be ideologically opposed. Indeed, within the biblical context, the story of Naboth's vineyard would appear to illustrate this opposition, for he refuses to sell King Ahab his land because it is *נַחֲלַת אֲבוֹתַי*, "my ancestral inheritance" (1 Kgs 21:3–4). But in Genesis 23, purchased land and ancestral land are held closely together within the same ideological frame.

Given his role as the paradigmatic incomer, Abraham's actions in buying Machpelah legitimise the purchase of property by immigrants in the host country. From this perspective, land becomes a commodity available to the incomer—and so implicitly, it can be bought and sold time and time again. But conversely, Machpelah is also imaged as ancestral land, which within the Hebrew Bible is itself idealised as an exclusive and permanent possession of one descent group. Thus in the context of Abraham's purchase of Machpelah, the transformation of the land from commodity to ancestral holding ensures the perpetual possession of the incomer's plot, protecting it from resale in the future. There are therefore two models of land acquisition in this narrative, which might in certain circumstances conflict with each other. However, in Genesis 23, purchased land and ancestral land are mapped onto one another: the narrator turns a purchased plot into an ancestral landholding, transforming Abraham from a resident incomer into a perpetual landowner. In this way, Abraham is implicitly recast in the guise of an indigenous inhabitant, allowing his descendants to claim perpetual ownership of their "ancestral" land.

Recognizing the territorialist ideology of Genesis 23 puts a different spin on the assumed ideological function of the story. Albert de Pury has argued that the biblical identification of Machpelah with Hebron plays an important role in the inclusive programme promoted in Genesis. According to de Pury's "ecumenical" model, Abraham has the potential to be claimed by diverse

incomer and Abraham's determined acquisition of what amounts to an ancestral landholding.

tribal, ethnic, and religious groups as their forefather,³⁴ and Hebron's geographical position complements this. Most scholars are agreed that during the Persian period (and continuing into the Hellenistic period), Hebron was not a part of Yehud, but a territory just beyond the border in what was formerly Edomite territory west of the Dead Sea, and later a part of Idumaea.³⁵ This suggests that the patriarchal tomb might have been within the control of non-Yehudites during this period, a time when the book of Genesis—and its Abraham narratives—was likely compiled.

Accordingly, de Pury argues that the assumed venerative cult of Abraham in and around Hebron offered the so-called Priestly Writer the opportunity to promote his belief that the communities immediately bordering Yehud's frontiers—including the Edomite, Arab, and Jewish groups in the broad vicinity of the tomb site—are all the descendants of Abraham. In his vision of the biblical "Israel," de Pury says, the Priestly Writer "knew that some of the peoples around Israel, especially on the southern fringes of Palestine, but certainly elsewhere as well, were more closely related in their religious traditions to the Jews than others."³⁶ For de Pury, this inclusive perspective is indicated in Gen 25:9, in which Abraham is buried in the cave of Machpelah by both Isaac and Ishmael (despite Ishmael's apparent expulsion from the land earlier in the story) and in 35:29, in which Isaac is buried by both Jacob and Esau.³⁷ The "ecumenical" nature of the tomb at Hebron is further reflected in the genealogical matrix set out in the book of Genesis, in which Abraham is the father of a variety of ethnic and religious groups,

³⁴ A. de Pury, "Abraham," 163–181; cf. F. Crüsemann, "Human Solidarity and Ethnic Identity: Israel's Self-Definition in the Genealogical System of Genesis," M. G. Brett (ed.), *Ethnicity and the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 57–76.

³⁵ Cf. Neh 11:25–30; 1 Macc. 5:65. See further A. Lemaire, "Nabonidus in Arabia and Judah in the Neo-Babylonian Period," O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp (eds), *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 285–298, esp. pp. 290; J. R. Bartlett, "Edomites and Idumaeans," *PEQ* 131 (1999), 102–14; Grabbe, *History of the Jews and Judaism, Vol 1*, 43–53, 162–166; A. Lemaire, "Populations et territoires de la Palestine à l'époque perse," *Transeu* 3 (1990), 31–74.

³⁶ A. de Pury, "Abraham," 174.

³⁷ A. de Pury, "Abraham," 175.

including Jews (identified as the descendants of Isaac), Arabs (identified as the descendants of Ishmael), Edomites (identified as the descendants of Esau), and perhaps also the inhabitants of the former northern kingdom of Israel and the Samaritans (groups whose territories are closely associated with Jacob). Thus the borderland location of the tomb of Abraham at Hebron offered, in De Pury's words, "un lieu de ralliement partagé" for all the descendants of Abraham.³⁸

But this "ecumenical" reading is perhaps too optimistic. Certainly, given the heavy emphasis in Genesis upon the role of Abraham as *the* national ancestor, and in particular the repeated insistence that he was the legitimate owner of the burial ground at Machpelah, Hebron's location beyond Yehud's thresholds raises interesting questions about the perceived ownership of the ancestral tomb at this time. Indeed, it seems likely that the mix of Yehudite, Arab, "Edomite" and non-Yehudite Jewish groups living in the Hebron highlands comprised "an area of heterogeneous, inter-permeable societies" typical of the "frontiers" of traditional (as opposed to modern) states.³⁹ And yet, given the territorial function of tombs as boundary markers, can it really be the case that Hebron was so unproblematic and inclusive a "rallying-point" for these diverse groups?

Whilst the politico-cultural ambiguities of Hebron's locality and some of the Genesis traditions may allow for an inclusive portrait of Abraham, the patriarchal tomb itself is nonetheless exclusive: in the Hebrew Bible, it is held to be the burial place of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah (23:19; 25:9–10; 35:29; 49:29–32; 50:13; cf. 47:29–30), but—significantly—it is not said to be the burial place of the "rejects" Ishmael and Esau.⁴⁰ Indeed,

³⁸ A. de Pury, "Le tombeau de Abrahamides d'Hébron et sa fonction au début de l'époque perse," *Transen* 30 (2005), 183–184, here 183.

³⁹ J. W. Wright, "Remapping Yehud: The Borders of Yehud and the Genealogies of Chronicles," O. Lipschits and M. Oeming (eds), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 67–89, here 72. Wright's important essay highlights the conceptual and ideological problems inherent within scholarly discussions of Yehud's "borders"; cf. K. W. Whitelam, "Lines of Power: Mapping Ancient Israel," R. B. Coote and N. K. Gottwald (eds), *To Break Every Yoke: Essays in Honor of Marvin L. Chaney* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007), 40–79.

⁴⁰ Cf. R. Christopher Heard, *Dynamics of Dissection*, 174–178. Rachel is

their burial places go unmentioned.⁴¹ Despite the extensive genealogical matrix detailed in Genesis, the ancestral tomb—and the land it marks—memorializes just one line of Abrahamic descent. The burial ground is thus home to the ancestral tomb of Isaac’s descendants, not Ishmael’s; it is the ancestral tomb of Jacob’s descendants, not Esau’s. From this biblical perspective, the tomb cult at Persian period Hebron appears more possessively territorial than “ecumenical.”

This territorialism, closely focused on Machpelah, might also be evident in other ways. There are indications that other (perhaps rival) sanctuaries in different regions might have “lost” their ancestors to Machpelah in the final, biblical cut of the patriarchal stories. In Gen 50:7–11, Jacob appears to be buried in the borderlands of the Jordan⁴² at the cult place (תַּרְגִּי, “threshing floor”) of Atad in “Abel-mizraim” whilst a New Testament tradition claims he is buried at Shechem (Acts 7:15–16), the site at which Joseph’s bones are buried in Josh 24:32. Moreover, in what is likely a further (though possibly related) tradition in Gen 50:5, the dying Jacob is said to

notably absent from the tomb, but buried instead at the place of her death, on the way to Ephrath (Gen 35:16–20; 48:7; cf. 1 Sam 10:2; Jer 31:15); her corpse is not transferred to Machpelah (unlike that of Jacob: Gen 47:29–30; 49:29–32; 50:5–14), nor is it disinterred for reburial (unlike the remains of Joseph: Gen 50:25–26; Josh 24:32). In a recent article, Benjamin Cox and Susan Ackerman argue that Rachel’s immediate and hasty burial, away from the ancestral tomb at Machpelah, is necessitated by her dangerous liminality as a mother killed by childbirth: B. D. Cox and S. Ackerman, “Rachel’s Tomb,” *JBL* 128 (2009), 135–148.

⁴¹ In Gen 25:17, the reader is told simply that Ishmael was “gathered to his people.” This death notice follows a list of Ishmael’s descendants in their territories (vv 12–15), implying, perhaps, that Ishmael’s “people” are these Arab groups. Esau’s last appearance in Genesis coincides with his voluntary disappearance from the promised land into Seir (36:6–8), where he and his descendants settle. A post-biblical Jewish tradition, however, states that Esau’s head is buried in Machpelah, following his death at the site after a dispute over the patriarchal burial ground (*bSotah* 13a). Biblical anxieties about an Edomite claim to Machpelah might underlie the tradition in 26:34–35 that Esau married into the Hittites, the very group whose willing “dispossession” of the burial ground is so emphatically asserted throughout Genesis.

⁴² B. Gemser, “Be’ēber hajjardēn: In Jordan’s Borderland,” *V/T* 2 (1952), 349–55.

have requested burial in the tomb he had “purchased” or “dug out” (כרה) for himself. This seems to be an allusion to the plot of land he purchases at Shechem, where according to Gen 33:18–20, he simply sets up an altar, but where, according to Acts 7:15–16 (as noted above) his tomb is said to be located.⁴³ Though somewhat elusive, these fragmentary glimpses of alternative—or perhaps even competing—tomb traditions render the repeated biblical claim that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are all buried together in Machpelah forcefully or even overly insistent. It is suggestive of a deliberate move to “centralise” these ancestral figures within one tomb, in one place, Machpelah.

Ideologically, the biblical “centralisation” of the supposedly national ancestors at Machpelah may also betray a territorial interest. The story of Abraham’s land purchase is markedly framed at its beginning and end by the close alignment of the tomb-site with Hebron (Gen 23:2, 13). Within the broader biblical context, the narrative framing of the tradition in this way is indicative of the tomb’s “Judahite” placement—and thus by strong implication, a “Yehudite” claim to the site of Machpelah. It is significant, however, that although post-biblical texts are reasonably clear that the tomb of the patriarchs was located at Hebron, the biblical traditions are more confused about the precise identification and location of the burial ground. This confusion is evident in the ambiguous and changing designations of the tomb site in Genesis itself.

Though the patriarchal burial ground is primarily called “Machpelah,” the precise use of this designation is somewhat uncertain, for it is not always clear whether “Machpelah” refers to the field, its burial cave, or the wider locality.⁴⁴ Contributing further to

⁴³ On these traditions, see S. E. Loewenstamm, ‘The Death of the Patriarchs in the Book of Genesis,’ *From Babylon to Canaan: Studies in the Bible and Its Oriental Background* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992), 78–108, esp. pp. 87–93. On the possibility that Jacob buys land at Shechem for a burial ground, see E. Nielsen, *Shechem: A Traditio-Historical Investigation* (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1955), 230, who observes: “Jacob might have been seeking for a burial place, a place for his eternal tent ... Josh 24,32 has preserved the memory of this motive, but connected with Joseph [sic].” On some of the ambiguities of the narrative concerning Jacob’s burial, see J. Berman, “Identity Politics and the Burial of Jacob (Genesis 50:1–14),” *CBQ* 68 (2006), 11–31.

⁴⁴ Sarna, *Genesis*, 158. The term מכפלה is found in Gen 23:9, 17, 19;

the confusion is the repeated aligning or identification of Machpelah with Mamre, Kiriath-arba, and Hebron.⁴⁵ Throughout Genesis, all these toponyms crowd the ancestral burial site, jostling for recognition. Though it is often assumed that these were all essentially the same place, the aligning, glossing, or renaming of locations is frequently suggestive of changing or competing claims to ownership.⁴⁶ It is difficult to assess whether, or the extent to which, the toponymic competition over Abraham's burial ground reflects disputes between different groups, each claiming Abraham as their "local" ancestor, or is more suggestive of rivalry between multiple sites, each competing for identification with Machpelah. Either way, this is likely something of the background to the different designations of the site in the book of Genesis.⁴⁷

This possibility of competing claims is particularly attractive in considering the persistent association of Machpelah with Mamre (Gen 23:17, 19; 25:9; 49:30; 50:13) and the insistent (if somewhat clumsy) assertion that these places are to be identified with Kiriath-arba and/or Hebron (13:18; 23:19; 35:27; cf. 23:2). It may be that, by the time the book of Genesis reached the form in which

25:9; 49:30; 50:13. Given its occurrence with the definite article, it is generally thought unlikely to be a personal or divine name. Most translators and commentators (ancient and modern) relate it to כפל, '(to be) double,' suggesting that the site's name refers to the "double-cave" in which the patriarchal family is interred. For a critique of the tenuous view that Machpelah was a cult site of the goddess Cybele, see K. van der Toorn, "Cybele," *DDD*², 214–15.

⁴⁵ Machpelah is closely associated with Mamre in Gen 23:17, 19; 25:9; 49:30; 50:13, which in its turn is identified with Hebron in Gen 13:18; 23:19; 35:27. Kiriath-arba is identified with Hebron in Gen 23:2; 35:27; Josh 14:15; 15:13, 54; 20:7; 21:11; Judg 1:10 and with Mamre in Gen 35:27. The tomb site is identified with Hebron in Gen 23:19 and aligned with Kiriath-arba and Hebron in 23:2.

⁴⁶ See further O. Eissfeldt, "Renaming in the Old Testament," P. R. Ackroyd and B. Lindars (eds), *Words and Meanings: Essays Presented to David Winton Thomas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 70–83. As Hamilton points out (*Genesis* 18–50, 126), place names are often changed in biblical narratives when a change in ownership occurs, though the context is usually one of conflict or land seizure, e.g., Num 32:42; Deut 3:15; Josh 19:47; cf. 2 Sam 5:7–9.

⁴⁷ Pace E. Lipiński, "'Anaq – Kiryat 'Arba' – Hébron et ses sanctuaires tribaux," *VT* 24 (1974), 41–55.

(broadly speaking) it is now found, the identification of all these sites was unproblematic, and that in particular, the “double cave” was widely understood to be located in the region of Hebron. But the complexity of the means by which Hebron and Machpelah are aligned in the biblical texts is suggestive of a more determined and forceful assertion that the two designations ultimately refer to the same place. And the ideological potency of this assertion renders this suggestion more compelling. Within the context of the varied biblical traditions, Hebron carries great religious and political weight: in Num 13:22, it is hailed as a city of great antiquity; in the books of Joshua and Judges, Hebron is the ancestral inheritance of Caleb, the conquering tribal hero of Judah (Josh 14:13–15; 15:13; Judg 1:20; cf. Josh 21:11), the “locative center” of Judah’s ancestral territory (1 Chr 2:42–55),⁴⁸ and in Samuel and Kings, it is vividly portrayed as a ritual seat of Davidic kingship (2 Sam 2:11; 5:1–5; 1 Kgs 2:1 cf. 2 Sam 15:7–10). Within all these biblical traditions, Hebron is clearly a high-status *Judahite* location; its asserted function in Genesis as home to the Cave of Machpelah not only emphasizes this, but bolsters its credentials as a locus of cultic, ancestral, and “national” prestige.

In essence, then, the Persian period book of Genesis portrays the ancestral site of Machpelah as a place belonging to the citizens of Yehud, not those peoples beyond its borders. The biblical Cave of Machpelah therefore represents a “centralised” ancestral tomb,⁴⁹ in which the similarly “centralised” and paradigmatic ancestor Abraham is located, and by which the genealogical and territorial dimensions of an emergent, Persian period, biblical “Judaism” are marked. In Genesis 23, the territorial potential of Machpelah is realised and exploited in two ways: on one level, it seeks to legitimise early “Jewish” claims to the site of the tomb cult at Machpelah; on another, it serves as a paradigm of land-appropriation for incomers, whose acquisition and possession of land occupied by

⁴⁸ J. W. Wright, “Remapping Yehud,” 79.

⁴⁹ Cf. T. C. Römer, “Les récits patriarcaux contre la vénération des ancêtres: Une hypothèse concernant les «origines» d’Israël,” O. Abel and F. Smyth (eds), *Le Livre de Traversée: de l'exégèse biblique à l'anthropologie* (Paris: Cerf, 1992), 213–225, esp. p. 223. On the “Judahite” claim to Abraham in the books of Isaiah and Ezekiel, see L.-S. Tiemeyer, “Abraham—A Judahite Prerogative,” *ZAW* 120 (2008), 49–66.

“foreigners” is bolstered both by its commodification and ancestralization.

In the book of Genesis, Abraham may be presented as an inclusive ancestor, but his land deal is assertively territorial, and his tomb site is exclusively Judahite—and therefore pointedly “Jewish.” An “ecumenical” reading of Abraham might be more palatable to modern readers, but in Genesis 23, it is counter to the essential territorialism of the biblical tradition. As such, Machpelah models more than an ancestral landmark on the biblical map of “Israel”; it indexes—both within and beyond the Hebrew Bible—the ideological centrality of the past and the dead in the lives and the land of the living.

GOD RHETORIC: RECONCEPTUALIZING YHWH SEBAOT AS YHWH ELOHIM IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

DIANA V. EDELMAN

INTRODUCTION

Shem and *kabod* “theologies” were two strategies used in the scriptures being formulated for developing forms of Judaism to help the nascent *qahal yisra’el* think about and relate to its aniconic, monotheistic divinity. After a brief sketch of wider changes that accompanied the move from monarchic-era Yahwisms to early forms of Judaism, I will explore how “*shem* theology” is to be closely associated with changes in ark theology and the development of *torah*, on the one hand, and how “*kabod* theology,” especially the association of fire imagery with YHWH Elohim, may have been influenced by old Iranian and/or Zoroastrian religion.

The authoritative scriptures created for emergent Judaism, Tanak, recognize YHWH Sebaot as the main male deity of the kingdom of Judah, who was closely associated with the ark. When the temple was rebuilt in Jerusalem in the post-monarchic Persian period, the deity to whom it was dedicated was YHWH Elohim, not YHWH Sebaot. The ark was no longer a physical container for, or temple appurtenance of, this deity. YHWH Sebaot had been a territorial god in charge of the land of Judah; YHWH Elohim was a universal god in charge of all the lands of the earth. YHWH Sebaot had probably been represented in the temple as an enthroned, *el*-type god (see Exod 24:9–11; the epithet “cherubim-sitter” in 1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 6:2 = 1 Chr 13:6; 2 Kgs 19:15 = Isa 37:16; and Ps 80:2; 99:1; and the visions in 1 Kgs 22:19; Isa 6:1–3; Ezek 1:26–28) who, with his wife Asherah, had ruled over lesser gods and created orders of invisible beings in heaven. The house of David had been his earthly vice-regents, and there had been multiple temples and

shrines throughout the territory of Judah where the native Judahite gods had been worshipped. YHWH Elohim ruled heaven alone, with lesser created orders of invisible beings to carry out its commands, and the reigning king of the world empire was its designated earthly vice-regent. This deity would designate one sacred place on earth where its name would abide but otherwise, remained distant in heaven. It could manifest itself at its chosen site, however, and when it did, it was in the physical form of fire and a disembodied voice, in keeping literally with the first commandment.

The Hebrew Scriptures were assembled at a time of transition, when part of the community in Yehud and probably abroad continued to worship YHWH Sebaot in traditional ways and another was trying to introduce instead the worship of YHWH Elohim into the newly re-established temple in Jerusalem. Tanak became in part a means to reinforce a new, aniconic conceptualization of a new, monotheistic deity, drawing on the cultural memory of the Judahite and Judean and, to some extent, of the Israelite and Samaritan communities, to explain correct and incorrect attitudes in the past and present for those who were to be members of the family of YHWH Elohim, the *qahal yisra'el*. Continuity with the past was asserted in many ways, including the tracing of a common ancestry and shared history, by claiming that YHWH Sebaot and YHWH Elohim were the same deity in effect, even if certain rituals and practices had changed, and by embedding the preferred new conceptualizations of YHWH Elohim into the distant past of the community, as though they had always been there, while developing new explanations of the function and contents of the ark when it had existed.

Various strategies were used in the texts to transition from the former practiced Yahwism of YHWH Sebaot to emergent Judaism of YHWH Elohim. The worship of gods other than YHWH was condemned; at the same time, YHWH was assigned to oversee the domains that had formerly been associated with other deities, since, as the only deity, he/it was now in charge of all aspects of life and death for plants, humans, and animals. Visible signs of adherence to the new concept of YHWH were introduced: fringes on clothes, *mezuzot* on doorposts, *tefillin*, *shabbat* observance, keeping of kosher food laws, and the attendance at three commemorative festi-

vals annually.¹ A sacrificial system that required individuals to make amends for the advertent and inadvertent breaking of God's commands supplemented one that had involved the daily feeding of the deity and his heavenly and earthly attendants.² The deity was now aniconic,³ requiring new modes of conceptualization, and could no longer be consulted face to face on a daily basis via his statue by a range of cultic specialists. Instead, his will was communicated in the writings gathered together to form the Tanak. To know YHWH Elohim was to memorize his written revealed words and the stories about the proper and improper ways to follow his path, to enact them, and to reflect upon them and study them in all their complexity, including apparent contradictions.

Finally, as noted in the opening paragraph, *shem* and *kabod* "theologies" represent two rhetorical strategies to be added to the list of equally interesting transitions and uses of the community's

¹ For one possible explanation for the emphasis placed on circumcision, Shabbat, and dietary laws, which assumes these had been Iron Age practices that were given new prominence as a means of asserting continuity with the past while adjusting to an identity crisis brought about amongst Babylonian exiles, see N. Wyatt, "Symbols of Exile," *SEA* 55 (1990), 39–58, republished in N. Wyatt, *The Mythic Mind: Essays on Cosmology and Religion in Ugaritic and Old Testament Literature* (London: Equinox, 2005), 55–71. For the modification of the triennial pilgrimage system to allow for its observance in the diaspora as a means of reinforcing Jewish group identity, see details in note 16.

² See e.g. C. Nihan; *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus* (FAT 2nd series, 25; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 166–98; 245–56; J. W. Watts, *Ritual and Rhetoric in Leviticus: From Sacrifice to Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chs 4–5. This is not to say that in the monarchic era, some sacrifices had not already functioned to remove impurity or appease divine anger at wrongdoing (sin). Rather, it is emphasizing a shift in emphasis, with the apparent development of specialty sacrifices within the broader repertoire, especially the *batta't* and *'asham*, for this purpose. Nihan thinks both already existed in the monarchic era but were later elaborated in the Second Temple cult.

³ For the secondary nature of the prohibition against images in the first commandment, see conveniently, T. Mettinger, "Israelite Aniconism: Development and Origins," K. van der Toorn (ed.), *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (CBET, 21; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 173–204 (175–78).

remembered and constructed past and present. While all of the items on the list warrant full investigation, I will focus on these two in the balance of this paper.

Experience has taught me that many readers will be saying to themselves, “prove that picture you just sketched; it is wrong on a number of points.” I will respond to this perception now in the hopes of not losing many at this point, before I even begin my actual investigation. Everything I have laid out above is based on evidence drawn from the biblical texts themselves. It is not that evidence is lacking; rather, it is that many scholars are uncomfortable with the cause-and-effect interpretative framework in which I have set the evidence, because it goes against the grain of a number of “clear statements” in the texts themselves. Thus, the disagreement is not over the evidence so much as what it provides evidence of. Many readers are assuming the scriptures are straightforward reports of things as they were before and at the time of writing while I am assuming they are rhetorical constructions designed to persuade hearers and readers about how things ought to be and should have been, which might include some reliable information about how things were before and at the time of writing, but incidentally, not as the primary focus.

T. Mettinger’s seminal work on *shem* and *kabod* theologies (*The Dethronement of Sebaot: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies*) has been out now since 1982 and seems to have generated surprisingly few waves if one judges such things by its discussion and citation in other written work.⁴ Perhaps this indicates it has met widespread

⁴ Objections have been voiced to the idea that “the name” is a means of representing the divine essence; see, in a general context, for example, H. Marks, “Biblical Naming and Poetic Etymology,” *JBL* 114/1 (1995), 21–42 (42). For specific questionings of *shem* representing divine essence in Deuteronomy and/or the “Deuteronomistic History,” see, for example, W. Zimmerli, “Das Wort des göttlichen Selbsterweis (Erweiswort); eine prophetische Gattung,” *Mélanges bibliques redigés en l’honneur de A. Robert* (Travaux de l’Institut Catholique de Paris, 4; Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1956), 154–64 (159); R. de Vaux, “Le lieu que Yahwé a choisi pour y établir son nom,” F. Mass (ed.), *Das Ferne und Nabe Wort, Festschrift L. Rost zur Vollendung seines 70 Lebensjahres* (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1967), 219–28 (224); G. J. Wenham, “Deuteronomy and the Central Sanctuary,” *TynBul* 22 (1971), 103–118 (114); J. G. McConville, “God’s ‘Name’ and God’s ‘Glory,’” *TynBul* 30 (1979), 149–63 (152); A. D. H. Mayes, *Deuteronomy*

approval and is simply being presupposed or adopted. There has been little dispute over the existence of *šēm* and *kabod* “theologies”; points of disagreement have tended to centre on the reason for their development, the dates of their formulation, and whether they were competing or complementary conceptions. He argued that *šēm* theology was devised in 598 BCE as a means to separate YHWH from Zion theology, so that when Zion and the temple were captured and desecrated, YHWH could remain aloof and unaffected.⁵

H. Niehr’s suggestion that it emerged instead after the iconic statue of Yahweh had been damaged, stolen, or destroyed in 586 BCE is more convincing.⁶ Niehr notes that all anthropomorphic references to Yahweh, but especially those to seeing the face of God or seeing God, presuppose the existence of a cult statue (e.g. Pss 11:7; 17:15; 27:4, 13; 42:3; 84:8; 63:3) while Pss 24:7, 9; 47:6, 9; and 68:25 presuppose a procession involving Yahweh’s cult statue.⁷ Prophetic visions of Yahweh seated on a throne (1 Kgs 22:19; Isa 6:1–3; Ezek 1:26–28) would have been based on first-hand knowledge of Yahweh’s cult statue, and the concept of the temple as Yahweh’s house presupposes it was the place where his statue dwelt and was cared for and fed by earthly attendants.⁸ Mettinger would reject this idea because he believes the monarchic-era cult of

(NCB; London: Oliphants, 1979), 59–60, 224–25; H. Weippert, “Der Ort, den Jahwe erwählen wird, um dort seinen Namen wohnen zu lassen: Die Geschichte eine alttestamentlichen Formel,” *BN* 24 (1980), 76–94 (78); A. S. Van de Woude, ‘šēm name,’ in E. Jenni and C. Westermann (eds), *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament, Volume 3* (tr. M. E. Biddle; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 1348–67 (1350–51), S. L. Richter, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology: lešakken šēmô šam in the Bible and the Ancient Near East* (BZAW, 318; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 8–11; 36–39, 215–17. For a study of language used in Deuteronomy to signal divine presence, which concludes that name theology wrongly assumes a transcendent god only, see I. Wilson, *Out of the Midst of the Fire: Divine Presence in Deuteronomy* (SBLDS, 151; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

⁵ *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 58–59, 123–32.

⁶ H. Niehr, “In Search of YHWH’s Cult Statue in the First Temple,” K. van der Toorn (ed.), *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (CBET, 21; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 73–95.

⁷ Niehr, “YHWH’s Cult Statue,” 82–87.

⁸ Niehr, “YHWH’s Cult Statue,” 89–91.

YHWH Sebaot was aniconic, with the deity represented in the holy of holies by an empty throne.⁹ In my opinion, he has accepted one of the later reconceptualizations of the ark as a genuine report of actual practice. Niehr has demonstrated there is enough indirect biblical textual evidence to argue that a statue of Yahweh seated on a throne stood inside the holy of holies in the temple in Jerusalem during the monarchic period, while C. Uehlinger has demonstrated from excavated remains that in the Iron II period, major cults and temples attached to royal sponsorship were centred on iconic statuary, usually anthropomorphic, so that it is likely the same was the case in Judah.¹⁰

Niehr's explanation for the need to develop a new means to represent Yahweh's presence post 586 BCE because of this statue's removal or damage, which precluded Yahweh's continuing presence in his temple, is less convincing, however. When the temple was rebuilt, it would have been possible to make and dedicate a new statue of Yahweh Sebaot, so there would not have been a need to develop either *shem* or *kabod* ideology, nor to abandon the epithet *sebaot* in favour of *'elohim*. The denial of the deity's presence in his cult statue associated with *shem* ideology must represent a deliberate decision not to continue to represent Yahweh as an enthroned deity. God's dwelling in heaven but placing his 'name' in a chosen place on earth implies that YHWH will interact with his people or with priests inside a sacred site as before, but now in a

⁹ T. N. D. Mettinger, *No Graven Image? Israelite Aniconism in its Ancient Near Eastern Context* (ConBOT, 42; Stockholm: Almqvist, 1995), 16–17, 19, 167–68.

¹⁰ C. Uehlinger, "Anthropomorphic Cult Statuary in Iron Age Palestine and the Search for Yahweh's Cult Images," K. van der Toorn (ed.), *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (CBET, 21; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 97–155 (139). He notes Arad and Lachish room 49 provide irrefutable evidence of "aniconic" worship as part of the larger picture but not proof of a general principal of Judahite aniconism (139–40). It is unclear if stelae found at sacred sites represent deities or deified ancestors, however, and the function of Lachish Rm 49 as a shrine has been questioned, so it may not be relevant to the discussion (D. Ussishkin, "The Level V 'Sanctuary' and 'High Place' at Lachish," C. G. den Hertog, U. Hübner, and S. Münger [eds], *Saxa Loquentur: Studien zur Archäologie Palästinas/Israels, Festschrift für Volkmar Fritz zum 65. Geburtstag* [AOAT, 302; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2003], 205–11).

different format: via his “Name.” Niehr recognizes that the priestly *kabod* ideology is much closer to the former representation of Yahweh as a seated deity, where the abstract concept of glory is meant to replace a physical body on a throne (e.g. Jer 17:12–3), though Ezek 1:26–28 claims the *kabod* took human form. Thus, it has not jettisoned the concept of divine form altogether, like name “theology” did, but made it more abstract, though closely associated with the former divine throne.¹¹

“ŠEM THEOLOGY”

“Name theology” is closely associated with a divinely selected single site to be located in Cisjordan. It appears in longer and shorter formulations in the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14:23, 24, 25; 15:20; 16:2, 6, 11, 15, 16; 26:2); there is to be an intimate link between YHWH and the site where his “name” i.e. “reputation” will “settle down, abide,” assuming a west-Semitic idiom for the phrase *šakken šēmo*, or where he will “set his monument,” if an east Semitic idiom is followed (Deut 12:5, 11; 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2; Jer 7:12; Neh 1:9).¹² The title YHWH Sebaot is absent from Deuteronomy; YHWH is consistently described as YHWH Elohim, or as YHWH your Elohim throughout the book; thus, “name theology” is closely associated with the conceptualization of YHWH Elohim.

“Name theology” is still very much temple-centred, if we assume that *maqom* is being used with the nuance of “holy” space. What does it mean for a name to remain or abide in a selected (holy) space? Many assume it refers to the pronouncing and invoking of Yahweh’s name, which closely reflects his personality and being, as well as his presence.¹³ Mettinger argues that Exod 20:24

¹¹ Niehr, “YHWH’s Cult Statue,” 92–93.

¹² For a detailed discussion of the two options, see S. L. Richter, *Deuteronomistic History and Name Theology*, 96–121, 153–204

¹³ See conveniently, T. Mettinger, *In Search of God: The Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 6–8. In Egyptian thought, a name may “exist” (*wnn*), “live” (*‘nkl*), “come into existence” (*khpr*), “be stable” (*rwḏ*), and so forth (*WB II*, 425) (K. Nordh, *Aspects of Ancient Egyptian Curses and Blessings* [Boreas. Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations, 26; Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Uppsala, 1996], 95. The name of a being can represent the being as a whole. It carries the identity and personality of that being, de-

has Yahweh state, “in every place where I proclaim my name I shall come to you and bless you,” and he then relates this to Deut 4:7, saying that Yahweh manifests his presence in the sanctuary when he proclaims his name there.¹⁴ The *hiphil* conjugation of *zkr* has a sense of “causing to remember” or “keeping in remembrance,” leading by extension to the meanings, “to call upon” or “to mention” by name, and “to commemorate” or “praise.” Thus, the immediate sense of *’azkîr ’et-shemî* in Exod 20:24 is not “I will proclaim my name”; at most, this is a derivative sense. The intended meaning needs to be considered carefully given the multivalent nature of both the verb *zkr* in *hiphil* and the noun *shem*.

On a number of occasions, Yahweh is depicted as acting on behalf of his people “for the sake of his name” (1 Sam 12:22; Ps 23:3, 25:11; 31:4; Isa 48:9, 11, 66:5; Jer 14:7; Ezek 20:9, 14; Ps 108:9) or “to make a name” (Isa 56:5–6; 60:9; 63:12, 14, 64:1; Jer 32:20; Ps 63:14; Neh 9:10; Dan 9:15). It seems that these related phrases might be helpful in determining the force of the phrase *hizkîr et-basshem* as well as *shakan et-bassem* and *sim et-basshem*. In these other two idioms, “name” is referring to reputation. Thus, name theology could be referring to a designated site where Yahweh’s famous actions could be preserved in a collection of scrolls, depicted or written on temple courtyard walls, and/or recited periodically to his worshippers.¹⁵ If so, it would be referring to a central commemorative shrine of sorts, along the lines of a central *beth midrash* (or *mo’ed-el* [?] [Ps 74:8]). Tanak is essentially a collection of books that narrate how and why Yahweh warrants universal respect, how he built his reputation, and a number of the psalms contain “historical” recitals of his “saving deeds” that are meant to establish his name and fame (e.g. Psalms 9; 66; 86; 96; 105; 106; 135). Torah was to be read out in the temple courtyard to the gathered members of the *qahal yisra’el* every 7 years at Sukkot according to Deut 31:9–13; in the narrative in Nehemiah 8, this command is

terminating its character.

¹⁴ T. Mettinger, *In Search of God*, 9.

¹⁵ The shrine at Deir ‘Alla that had the story of Balaam written on its walls might be a relevant parallel. That shrine was a place to call to mind the name of Balaam and various deities by recalling his and their deeds in words that could be read out to worshippers by a literate priest of temple functionary. For the text, see conveniently, J. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Alla* (HSM, 31; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984).

fulfilled. The three annual pilgrimage festivals become commemorative celebrations of Yahweh's deliverance from slavery in Egypt (Pesah), his giving of the Law at Sinai (Shavuot; Feast of Weeks), and the wilderness wandering (Sukkot)—all illustrations of his “name” tied closely to Torah/the Pentateuch.¹⁶

If, on the other hand, we were to take seriously the broader, non-religious sense of *maqom* as the intended meaning in the deuteronomistic legislation, as well as the depiction of Jerusalem as God's chosen place for his “reputation” to be established in the books of Kings, then the focus on the fate of Jerusalem in so many of the prophetic books, as well as the book of Kings, Nehemiah, and Chronicles, would make very good sense. An integral part of the making of YHWH's name would then revolve around the rebuilding and resettlement of Jerusalem in the Persian period. The place he had abandoned he now re-chose and caused to be re-established and resettled.

It is possible, then, to see name ideology to be intimately associated with the creation of written Torah and TANAK as expressions of the divine nature, will, and “name” or reputation, particularly if we understand it to be consistent with the many references to YHWH's concern with his name inside and outside Deuteronomy and the wider collection commonly dubbed the Deuterono-

¹⁶ For the modification of the triennial pilgrimage system to allow for its observance in the diaspora as a means of reinforcing Jewish group identity, see W. Johnstone, “The Revision of Festivals in Exodus 1–24 in the Persian Period and the Preservation of Jewish Identity in the Diaspora,” R. Albertz and B. Becking (eds), *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Period* (STAR, 5; Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2003), 99–114. The argument may need nuancing with the recognition of a triennial harvest festival system celebrated at local sanctuaries during the monarchic era, which then became centralized in Yehud in the Persian period once the temple was rebuilt. A historicization process that removed the festival cycle from its immediate agricultural context and began to associate it instead with the remembrance of Yahweh's name by recalling his glorious past deeds began, as Johnstone argues, but probably in the Persian period, not the Neo-Babylonian era: the exodus delivery (Exod 12:24–27, 42; 13:3–10), the giving of the law at Sinai (implicit in 2 Chr 15:8–15; explicit in the final form of Exodus where the law-giving at Sinai occurs 50 days after the Passover night and slaying of the firstborn in Egypt), and the guidance through the wilderness into the promised land (Lev 23:42–43).

mistic History. It would be concerned with replacing the former iconic representation of YHWH Sebaot in the holy of holies with an aniconic, invisible form of divinity that, nevertheless, could be made vivid and meaningful in the minds of its worshippers through the systematic retelling of its acts on behalf of its chosen people in the past and present. In this sense, *hizkeir 'et basšem* in Exod 20:24 could be understood to be Yahweh announcing the recalling of the ways in which he has established his reputation in the recitation of his saving deeds in selected locations.¹⁷

In the context of the book of Deuteronomy, both the east Semitic idiom, “to place a written inscription” and the west Semitic one, “to make one’s reputation abide,” would point to the two tablets of the law inscribed by the finger of God and deposited in the ark as their intended referent. The book explicitly states that Yahweh wrote “ten words” on two tablets of stones (4:13; 9:10–11), which, after being smashed by Moses in response to the people’s fabricating and worship of the golden calf, were re-inscribed by Yahweh himself on two new stone tablets, which were then put into the ark for transport and safe-keeping (10:1–5). Thus, within the logic of the narrative, it would be possible for Yahweh Elohim to declare that he will establish a temple site where he will place his inscription that he has given to his people—the inscribed tablets bearing the “ten words” that represent the terms of his covenant with Israel. These are contained within the ark, a wooden chest that was to be placed inside the sanctuary, out of sight of the common people, like a kind of holy relic. Assuming a west Semitic idiom,

¹⁷ As a less convincing argument, it could be proposed that the passages that depict YHWH’s concern for his “name” and the reference to YHWH coming to any place an earthen altar is built to offer sacrifice, where he will cause his name to be remembered (in Exod 20:24) are deliberate, negative reactions to “name” ideology as formulated particularly in Deuteronomy and adopted in other deuteronomistic writings. In this case, “name” would need to be more narrowly linked to the pronouncement or invocation of the name YHWH Elohim in the temple cult and at festivals as a means of asserting the presence of an invisible deity. It would have no particular ties to Torah as a means of establishing the basis of the power to be associated with his name by retelling the deeds that have established God’s reputation in a strategy to compel ongoing loyalty. *Kabod* theology might be intended as a corrective, giving a more clearly visual symbol of the presence of the deity. I am not persuaded by this, however.

Yahweh's saving deeds for his people that establish his reputation, recounted in Torah, would be represented figuratively by the "ten words" inscribed by the finger of God and kept in the ark. In either instance, then, "name theology" is intimately tied to "ark theology." The contents and nature of this piece of cultic furniture were redefined over time from being the chest that likely housed a portable statue of Yahweh to be consulted during battle or on important royal business trips to the chest containing the legal principles underlying the covenant between Yahweh and Israel, which was one of the greatest acts done by Yahweh to establish his "name" or reputation. Both possible idioms also, in turn, link "name theology" with "Torah theology" by recognizing that Yahweh Elohim's "name" and presence is made known to his chosen people by the periodic reading out of Torah.

If there is an underlying ideological dispute behind the current formulation of this ideology, it would tend to lie in the centre that would have authority to promulgate and oversee the dissemination of the official written version of the making of Yahweh's name. Deuteronomy is to become normative once the people enter the land, implying that centre is in Cisjordan. If so, the rejected, competing centres would lie outside, in the diaspora, probably in Babylonia and/or in Egypt. Thus, in its original formulation, the dispute would not have been whether that centre was to be in Samerina or Yehud, which seems to have been a secondary development.

"KABOD THEOLOGY"

The other concept of the divine, which can manifest in the form of "glory," probably has older roots in the temple iconography and liturgy of Iron Age Yahwism (e.g. Exod 16:7, 10; 24:16–7; 33:18, 22; 29:43; 40:34–5; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 14:10, 22; 16:19; 17:7; 20:6; Deut 5:21; 1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chr 5:14; 7:1–3; Ezek 1:28; 3:12, 23; 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 9, 18; 11:22–3; 43:2, 4–5; 44:4).¹⁸ Like *šem*, *kabod* can have overtones of reputation; it can represent a person's character or the dignity of his position. Yahweh's character is often represented via fire, a natural element that is associated with life in its provision of warmth, safety from danger, the growth of crops, and its ability to cook food, as well as with death in its destructive, consuming ca-

¹⁸ So, e.g. M. S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 120.

capacity (e.g. Exod 3:2; 19:18; 24:17; Lev 10:2; Num 9:15, 16; 11:1–3; 26:10; Deut 1:33; 4:14; 9:3; 1 Kgs 14:8; 18:13–4; Neh 9:12, 19).

Yahweh is described as having solar attributes (e.g. Ezek 43:2; Mal 3:20; Pss 18:28; 31:16; 43:3; 50:2; 80:2; 84:11; 89:15; 90:8; 104; Job 37:21–2), which might explain fire imagery since fire is easily associated with the sun. Additionally or alternatively, however, the fire might be similar to the flames associated in Assyrian and Babylonian tradition with the cloth deities wore that gave them a glittering, shimmering, fiery appearance known as *pul(u)h(t)u*, possibly derived from the astral associations of most deities or from the use of silver or gold leaf to cover a deity statue and its bedecking with numerous jewels so that it glittered when viewed in direct sunlight.¹⁹ *Pul(u)h(t)u* is represented in iconography on seals and is reflected in the textual tradition as well. In the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic, the final battle with the Kassite king Kastiliash is led by Assur with a devouring flame (*išāti*), and Enlil is also present with a burning flame (*nablu*), beside Adad, who brings the flood (*abūbu*).²⁰ A

¹⁹ L. Oppenheim, “Akkadian *pul(u)h(t)u* and *melammu*,” *JAOS* 63 (1943), 31–34; E. Cassin, *La splendeur divine: introduction à l'étude de la mentalité mésopotamienne* (Civilisations et sociétés, 8; Paris: Mouton, 1968), 65–73. *Melammu* was a shining tiara creating a dazzling nimbus surrounding the deity, that, together with *pul(u)h(t)u*, which represented the awe-inspiring terror of the god, were worn by gods in their epiphany. H. Niehr has argued that the priestly concept of *kabod* was developed during the exile under the direct influence of the Mesopotamian conception of divine splendour, *melammu* (“The Changed Status of the Dead in Yehud,” R. Albertz and B. Becking [eds], *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era* (STAR, 5; Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2003), 137–55 [147]). While this is possible, it is also possible that both conceptions became known and familiar in Judah during the periods of Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian hegemony via iconographic representations on seals, references to such terms in official court correspondence, and visits of high Judahite officials and the kings to the royal courts of their overlords in Assyria and Babylonia which were, in turn, applied to the local deity to make him the iconographic equal of the main empire gods, even if officially, he would have been considered to have been a lesser deity in the entourage of Asshur or Marduk.

²⁰ W. Lambert, “Three Unpublished Fragments of the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic,” *A/O* 18 (1957–1958), 38–51; P. Machinist, “Literature as Politics: The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic and the Bible,” *CBQ* 38 (1967), 455–82 (466). The dates of Tukulti-Ninurta I are ca 1243–1207 BCE.

seal of Tukulti-Ninirta II (ca 890–884 BCE) depicts a winged and bird-tailed Asshur, with bow drawn, inside a large circle, with flames radiating from his body and barely crossing the outer ring, which perhaps represents the sun.²¹ Since the flames come directly from the god's body and are primarily contained within the ring, it is less likely they are meant to be sunrays.

In Babylonian tradition, the Enuma Elish describes Marduk arming himself to do battle with Tiamat after being declared king of the gods thus: "He placed the lightning before him; with a burning flame he filled his body" (Tablet IV, 39–40).... "Wrapped in a mantle of fearsome *pulhu*, with frightful *melammu* covering his head, the Lord went forth and followed his course, towards the enraged Tiamat he set his face" (IV, 57–60).²² Ps 104:2 describes Yahweh as "clothed with honour and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment." In Psalm 18, "smoke went up from his nostrils and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him" (v 8). In Ezek 1:26–27, the envisioned, enthroned Yahweh glitters in his upper half and glares like fire in his lower half. His "glory" speaks and acts in Ezek 9:3–7; 43:1–11; 44:4–5 and can move (9:3; 10:4; 10:18; 43:2, 4 and 3:12 in an emended text).²³ Thus, in this book at least, the *kabod* substitutes directly for Yahweh himself.

In old Iranian tradition, fire is one of the four primal elements, alongside water, earth, and wind. It was a source of warmth and light and also protected against wild animals at night. It could also be honoured as a hypostasized deity named Atar, who was manifest in the home hearth fire and was "fed" daily with offerings

²¹ Stamped on a brick fragment; British Museum object 115 706; for discussion, see E. D. van Buren, *Symbols of the Gods in Mesopotamian Art* (Analecta Orientalia, 23; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1945), 95–6; G. E. Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation: the Origins of the Biblical Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 43–53; O. Keel, *Jahne-Visionen und Siegelkunst: Eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4* (Stuttgarter Bibelstudien, 84/85; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1977), 260–63. For a rendering, see conveniently, Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sebaot*, 104.

²² T. W. Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance in Israelite Traditions: The Typology of Exaltation* (The Johns Hopkins Near Eastern Studies; London: Johns Hopkins University, 1977), 48–49.

²³ Mettinger, *Dethronement*, 107.

of dry twigs and fat.²⁴ In the Indian Vedic tradition, the same hypospōstasis occurred, yielding Agni and demonstrating this was an ancient tradition. In the *Rig-Veda*, the oldest Indian scripture, Agni is invoked to conduct the gods to the sacrifice or to convey the offerings to the gods. The view that fire was sacred and should not be allowed to die is found in Indian and Iranian tradition and also in the Roman cult of Vesta, suggesting a shared Indo-European world-view.²⁵

In Zoroastrian tradition, Fire is the son of Ahura Mazda, the visible sign of his presence, a symbol of his true order (*Asha*), and the “bold and good warrior” against evil. In the *Gatha Haptanbaiti*, written in the same archaic dialect as the *gathas* (hymns attributed to Zarathustra) but in prose and considered part of the liturgy, not a *gatha* proper, (*Yasna* 36.3), it is equated with *Spenta Mainyu*, the Holy Spirit, being its form of visible manifestation. *Spenta Mainyu* is the eternal antagonist of the Destructive Spirit, *Angra Mainu*.²⁶ *Atar* appears in a number of *yashts* or hymns (e.g. 17.11; 36:1; 62) and is to be tended by a member of the religious community who is to keep the hearth burning, please the god with incense, and nourish him with food offerings.²⁷ Within the divine council, *Atar* is classified among the *yazatas*, “ones worthy of worship,” who rank third in importance after Ahura Mazda and the six ‘Bounteous Immortals’ (*Amerta Spentas*).²⁸

Yasht 17.11 describes five types of fire: 1) *berezisawah*, “which blazes in the presence of Ahura Mazda” or transcendent fire; 2) the

²⁴ *Atar* has been argued to be an Iranian word adopted in place of the Indo-European term by, for example, J. R. Hinnels, *Persian Mythology* (rev. ed; Middlesex: Newnes, 1983), pp. 31–2; W. W. Malandra, *An Introduction to Ancient Iranian Religion: Reading from the Avesta and Achaemenid Inscriptions* (Minnesota Publications in the Humanities, 2; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1983), 15, 159–61. Moulton had much earlier related it to the Latin term *atrium*, the room where the hearth-fire burned in a house; they appear to have rejected this idea in their decision not even to raise it (*Early Zoroastrianism*, 302).

²⁵ J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols and Values in Zoroastrianism: Their Survival and Renewal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 66.

²⁶ R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961), 45, 75.

²⁷ Malandra, *Ancient Iranian Religion*, 159–60.

²⁸ Hinnels, *Persian Mythology*, 49.

wobu.fryana, “which is in the bodies of men and animals”; 3) the *urva-zishta*, “which is in plants”; the *wazishta*, “which is in the cloud”; and 5) the *spenishta*, “which is kept for work in the material world.”²⁹ According to this passage, fire is a type of life-force in all living plants, animals, and humans in addition to being lightning and the element that provides heat, cooks, and protects against wild animals. In later Pahlavi tradition, all fire derives ultimately from heavenly fire. The same range occurs in India in the Chagdogyā-Upanishad to describe the five types of natural fire alongside three types of sacrificial fires, suggesting this is an old, pre-Zoroastrian idea.³⁰

Ahura Mazda could be represented anthropomorphically or aniconically; in the latter case, fire was his primary means of physical manifestation, along with the sun and daylight, which proceeds from it.³¹ His association with the sun is demonstrated by the fact that his name became the common word for “sun” in Khotanese (*urmayzde*) and in Sanglechi (*ormozd*).³² The *yasht* to Ahura Mazda in the Avesta is a late work, as shown by its language and concern for spells;³³ this suggests that he may not have been an old Indo-Aryan deity but the newly encountered “Wise, all-knowing Lord” who appeared to Zarathustra in visions.³⁴ In later, Middle Persian (Pah-

²⁹ Malandra, *Ancient Iranian Religion*, 160.

³⁰ Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols in Zoroastrianism*, 72–3.

³¹ Zaehner, *Dawn and Twilight*, 77, 110.

³² Zaehner, *Dawn and Twilight*, 75.

³³ So, for example, Zaehner, *Dawn and Twilight*, 97; Malandra, *Ancient Iranian Religion*, 46–47.

³⁴ Malandra, *Ancient Iranian Religion*, 46–47. There are two possible references to the god Mazda prior to the Achaemenid period but after the likely life-time of the prophet, which is generally set 1200–1000 BCE: the personal name Mazdaku in an inscription of Sargon II, dating ca 715 BCE and referring to a Mede, and the occurrence of Assara Mazash in a list in which it is followed by the Igigi, seven good gods of heaven and then the Annunaki, seven evil spirits of earth dating to the reign of Assurbanipal in the 7th cent. BCE. In the latter case, the occurrence would predate the shift of –s to –h; but it is not certain if these are one or two gods in the list, and there was a Sumerian goddess named Manzat, Mazat, who might be intended if the two are separate. (J. H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism* [the Hibbert Lectures, Second Series; London: Williams and Norgate, 1913], 30–1; E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion according to the Chief Greek Texts* [University of Paris Ratanbai Katrak Lectures, 1; Paris, Paul Gueth-

lavi texts) he is described as wearing a star-decked robe, and he can take the form of the sun on high or light on earth; the sun is his eye. His throne is in heaven in celestial light, where he holds court amongst created entities that do his bidding.³⁵ One of his six *spentas* or aspects is *Asha*, “Truth,” who represents divine law and moral order in the world and who protects Fire. *Asha* kills death, disease, fiends, sorcerers, and vile creatures on earth and opposes Indra of the forces of Angra Mainyu/Ahriman/Evil.³⁶

Fire is also a vital element associated with the *yazata* Mithra, the god of celestial light, contracts, and justice, who also could be symbolized by the sun. His name means “covenant” and his job was to direct humans “into the path of *asha*” (Yt 10.86), bestow on them “possession of *asha*” (Yt 10.33, 65), and guard those who kept social order and truth. In *Yasht* 10, written in his honour, the

ner, 1929], 41–42). For the alternate suggestion that Ahura Mazda was a new title for the old Indo-Aryan deity Varuna, see Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, 32, 61, 139; Zaehner, *Dawn and Twilight*, 65–70. Another possibility would be that Ahura Mazda was a merging of the former two head deities of the Indo-Aryan pantheon, Varuna and Mithra, into a single, abstract principle and source of all. The two gods were so closely related they could be made a single compound deity with a dual determinative in the treaty between the Hittite King Supiluliumash and the Mitannian king Mattiwaza and in the *Rig-Veda*. In addition, the *Yasna* refers on more than one occasion to two “preserver-creators,” who could be the original pair, Mithra and Varuna (Zaehner, *Dawn and Twilight*, 66, 69–70, 105). In this case, the re-emergence of Mithra under Darius II or Artaxerxes II, paired with a female deity, Anahita, could have been a further movement of official Achaemenid religion away from the Zoroastrian components it had incorporated earlier, to bring it more in line with the prevalence of divine couples as heads of local pantheons or the main major active gods who are the offspring of the less active head divine couple. The reference to Ahura Mazda ordering the *Amerta Spentas* to build a dwelling for Mithra above the cosmic mountain Hara in the *Yasht* to Mithra (§§ 50–51) sounds to me very much like the Semitic myths of Ba’al and Marduk getting permission to have palaces built for them after their victory over the forces of chaos as the warrior champions of the gods. Might it be a new element influenced by Semitic mythology?

³⁵ Hinnels, *Persian Mythology*, 44.

³⁶ M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism, Volume One: The Early Period* [Handbuch der Orientalistik, Abt.1 Der Nahe und der mittlere Osten, Bd. 8, Religion. Abschnitt 1, Religionsgeschichte des Alten Orients. Lfg. 2. Heft 2A; Leiden: Brill, 1975], 35; Hinnels, *Persian Mythology*, 48.

agreements he oversaw included those between trading partners, friends, fellow citizens, husband and wife at marriage, and treaties. Oaths sealing such agreement were sworn over fires, and as overseer of covenants and contracts and dispenser of justice and maintainer of law and order, Mithra witnessed the administration of ordeals to determine guilt or innocence; three prominent ones involved fire. The first involved pouring boiling oil on the body of the accused, the second pouring molten metal on the person's chest, and the third consisted of the building of two huge firebanks that, when in full blaze, the accused had to ride or run between without being scorched to death.³⁷ Fire is actively involved in Mithra's role as enforcer of right order. In Pahlavi texts, a fire temple is called *dar-i-Mibr*, 'house of Mithra,' which could mean either that the fire represented specifically the deity Mithra, or that, in addition to being a cultic site, such a building served as a place to dispense justice³⁸ or seal contracts, using the sacred fire as witness and guarantor.

In Yasht 10, Mithra is the god of celestial light and also is associated with the first light of morning. It was thought he patrolled the earth unceasingly, seeking those who had broken their formal oath agreements, and this could have led to his association with the sun in its daily travels and then, by extension, with the sun itself. Alternatively, since oaths were sworn over fires, the universal association of fire and the sun might equally have led to his secondary association with the sun.³⁹ The solar association becomes dominant over time; in Middle Persian, Parthian, and Sogdian texts, and on Kushan coins, various permutations of the Old Iranian name Mithra mean "sun."⁴⁰ Strabo (63 BCE–19 CE) claimed that the Persians honour, besides Zeus, various natural elements and the moon and the sun, whom they call Mithra (Bk XV.3.13), illustrating once again the close equation of this deity with the sun; the view that Ahura Mazda's eye was the sun either was a later development after Mithra's importance diminished, an early, competing view as to which deity was most closely associated with the sun, or a shared trait, since Ahura Mazda himself was to have created the sun as

³⁷ So, for example, Malandra, *Ancient Persian Religion*, p. 160.

³⁸ Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols of Zoroastrianism*, 71–72.

³⁹ So suggested by Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism I*, 28–29; Malandra, *Ancient Persian Religion*, 58.

⁴⁰ Malandra, *Ancient Persian Religion*, 58.

part of the natural good order, *asha*, and appointed Mithra to oversee *asha*'s administration, which would have led to the latter's use of fire and sunshine as agents to accomplish his responsibilities.⁴¹

Another fiery element created by Ahura Mazda but under the administration of Mithra as overseer of covenants and social order was a power called *xwārenah* in the Avesta, and *farnah* in Median: "glory, fortune," which accompanies legitimate authority.⁴² *Yasht* 19 says Ahura Mazda created Mithra possessing the most *xwārenah* of the supernatural gods (19.VI. 35). When King Yima introduced untrue speech into his mind, the *xwārenah* he had possessed visibly departed from him in the form of a bird and Mithra "of wide pastures, who has listening ears and a thousand perceptions, took possession of it" (19.VI.34–35). This glory is never bestowed on evil rulers, especially non-Iranians, but it also can desert an Iranian ruler

⁴¹ According to Benveniste, Mithra is unknown in the Gathas and is no longer the most important *yazata* in the younger Avesta (*Persian Religion*, 55). The first option could have arisen as a deliberate exclusion of the older Indo-Iranian deity by Zoroaster in his "reform" (so, for example, J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Ormazd et Ahriman: l'aventure dualiste dans l'antiquité* [mythes et religions, 31; Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1953], 15). Zaehner more or less espouses this position in saying "there could be no room for a co-creator with God" but denies any passionate hostility on the part of Zarathustra toward Mithra (*Dawn and Twilight*, 69). The lesser status in the younger Avesta, however, might well indicate Mithra's eclipse at the expense of the aggrandizement of Ahura Mazda, at a time when the widespread, independent (Roman) cult of Mithra known as Mithraism had more or less died out (after 400 CE). Alternatively, as suggested in n. 29, the duo Mithra-Varuna may have become Zarathustra's Ahura Mazda, with Mithra emerging again as a separate deity or as a visible form of this deity under Darius II or Artaxerxes II, partnered with Anahita. Mithra remains a much-reverenced deity amongst Zoroastrians today, and the longest Avestan *Yasht* is dedicated to him (Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism I*, 24), which could be seen to point toward any of the three options outlined above, allowing for changes in popularity over time

⁴² H. W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth Century Books* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1943), 1–77. The more recent trend seems to be to link the underling root of the word with *hvar*, "sun," which would favour a return to the original meaning of "glory" (see for example, M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism, Volume Two: Under the Achaemenians* [Handbuch der Orientalistik, Abt.1 Der Nahe und der mittlere Osten, Bd. 8, Religion. Abschnitt 1, Religionsgeschichte des Alten Orients. Lfg.2. Heft 2A; Leiden: Brill, 1982] 17, n. 23).

if he falls into evil ways instead of upholding and maintaining the path of *asha*. In the *yasht* it is described as belonging to “the Aryan countries—to the born and unborn—and to righteous Zarathustra” (19.VIII. 56–57, 60, 63). When bestowed on a ruler, it makes him brave, courageous, solicitous, filled with wondrous power, perceptive, and bold in action (19.X.72) as well as strong, possessing conquering superiority, able to give well-formulated commands, unalterable commands, and irreversible commands for immediate victory over opponents (19.XI.74). It is not limited to political leadership; it can be a creative power used by the gods as well as a power used by holy men to conquer the forces of the Lie (*druj*) that oppose *asha*.⁴³ It can also belong to ordinary humans; in this case, it represents any action that contributes to the jobs they have been set to do on earth by God.⁴⁴ Iconographically, *xwārenah*/*farnah* may be represented by a nimbus around the head of a ruler, god, or graced individual, corresponding to the Mesopotamian concept of *melammu*, a radiance probably associated originally with a crown.⁴⁵

In later Zoroastrianism, the *Bahram* fire is invoked to give strength against the forces of darkness; its “glory,” standing on the side of righteousness, does battle with the Lie (Destructive Force). The wood in the fire is set out in the pattern of a throne, and a crown is hung over it to symbolize its sovereignty. Then it is carried in triumph like a king by four priests in procession while oth-

⁴³ Malandra, *Ancient Iranian Religion*, 88–97. Moulton argued that “glory” was similar to the notion of *fravashi*, which he felt was not merely an ancestor spirit, as often suggested, but more of a *genius* or external soul. *Yazatas* have them as well as humans, and he concludes both developed independently from belief in the existence of the external soul. He relates the story found in the Pahlavi book, the *Denkart*, of *xwārenah*/*farnah* descending from the eternal light to enter the house where Zarathustra’s mother was to be born and remaining with her until she is 15 and gives birth to Zarathustra (*Early Zoroastrianism*, 275–77). This seems to be consistent, however, with a connection of this idea with rulership.

⁴⁴ Zaehner, *Dawn and Twilight*, 151.

⁴⁵ Oppenheim, “Akkadian *pul(u)h(t)u* and *melammu*,” 31. Zaehner disputes the equation of a nimbus in art with *xwārenah* (*Dawn and Twilight*, 151–2); however, his reliance on the widening of the idea in later Pahlavi texts, especially the *Denkart*, to include all individuals seems to be a secondary development from an earlier one that limited this concept to royalty and possibly priests; in *Yasht* 10.127, royal *xwārenah* is identical with a blazing fire.

ers hold a canopy over it and priests carrying the swords and maces of Mithra walk before and behind it forming a royal bodyguard. Once enthroned in the sanctuary, it can only be tended by priests who have undergone the most extensive purification rites. It is the product of fire gathered from sixteen different sources and purified 1,128 times.⁴⁶ While this is a ceremony of contemporary Zoroastrianism whose antiquity is hard to determine, it seems to trace back to Sasanian time at least (224–636 CE).⁴⁷ Coins from that period give the fire altar lion's legs, which might be intended to depict it as a throne.⁴⁸ The *bahram* fire seems to represent a substitution of the sacred fire for a physical representation of Ahura Mazda as described above, as an enthroned royal celestial king of heaven. Thus, the fire has come to replace an anthropomorphic representation.

In the Achaemenid period, it is likely that Ahura Mazda would have been represented in both an anthropomorphic form and in a celestial/astral form, as were Neo-Babylonian deities. Fire could have been an early, traditional means of expressing the divine presence or imaging of the main deity, though whether the fire should be considered a form of *pul(u)h(i)u* or representative of solar aspects of this deity is hard to determine. Depictions of Ahura Mazda from the Achaemenid period have his upper torso protrude from a winged sun disk with birdtail, which could be argued, represent an early, genuine Persian conception, even if the mode of representation is an adaptation of Assyro-Babylonian imagery used to depict both Assur and Marduk.⁴⁹ In the Gathas, hymns thought to trace back to the founding prophet Zarathustra and be part of the oldest recoverable stratum of religious thought, Ahura Mazda is said to live in the realm of endless, infinite light, whose radiance he joined with his own fire that makes manifest his glory and radiance.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Hinnels, *Persian Mythology*, 125.

⁴⁷ M. Boyce, "On the Sacred Fires of the Zoroastrians," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 31.1 (1968), 52–68 (58).

⁴⁸ Duchesne-Guillemin, *Symbols in Zoroastrianism*, 66.

⁴⁹ The attempt by Boyce to identify these images as representations of the royal Achaemenid "glory," *xwārenah*, gives too much credence to the rejection of such an idea as impossible by practicing Zoroastrians (*History of Zoroastrianism II*, 103–105). She is ignoring the use of the same image to represent preceding head male empire gods

⁵⁰ J. W. Boyd and F. M. Kotwal, "Sacred Times and Spaces: Iran," S.

Zoroastrian scholars have argued that the cult of the temple fire was first introduced in the 4th century BCE, during or after the reign of Artaxerxes II (404–359 BCE), in reaction to the emphasis placed at that time on an iconic cult that elevated the role of the non-Persian fertility goddess Anahita beside that of Ahura Mazda.⁵¹ There is no term used to describe a sacred fire maintained inside a temple in any of the Avestan texts; in Middle Persian/Pahlavi, it is described as a “house of fire.”⁵² The use of fire as a favoured means of imaging Ahura Mazda or, more generally, the divine, either as a single element or in combination with other representations, logically would have preceded the creation of fire temples, which may have been designed to eliminate all iconic images of Ahura Mazda and other lesser gods in the Old Persian pantheon in a return to a more traditional form of theophany.⁵³ Fire temples and the purification rituals conducted therein allow segments of the temporal world to escape from the contaminated mixture of good and evil that characterize it and temporarily manifest the sacred power of good inherent in creation.⁵⁴ Given the latter understanding, it seems likely that rituals involving fire as a sacred element would have been an early, integral part of the cult, whether or not they took place within dedicated buildings or in open area on a mountain, or at home, on the hearth. Unfortunately, how early the practice of representing the divine by fire took place in Zoroastrianism or in Indo-Aryan tradition cannot be determined from the present evidence available, which lacks firm chronological indicators.

Iles Johnston (ed.), *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 264–66 (265).

⁵¹ S. Wikander, *Feuerpriester in Kleinasien und Iran* (Acta Regiae Societatis Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis, 40; Kungl. Humanistiska vetenskapssamfundet I, 40; Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1946), 60–65, 69, 117, 211–2, 216; Boyce, “Zoroastrian Cult of Fire,” 456. Duchesne-Guillemin points out that the hypothesis of Wikander that the fire cult was a new rite attached to the cult of Anahita has not gained support since there is no evidence that links the two (*Symbols in Zoroastrianism*, 67).

⁵² M. Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism* II, 227.

⁵³ M. Boyce, “On Mithra’s Part in Zoroastrianism,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 32.1 (1969), 10–34 (17–20; 23–25; 28–30); Boyce, “Zoroastrian Cult of Fire,” 462.

⁵⁴ J. W. Boyd and F. M. Kotwal, “Sacred Times and Spaces: Iran.”

Seal 20, used on an item found in the Persepolis Treasury and dating to the time of Darius I (522–486 BCE), appears to provide evidence of two men in Median dress feeding a sacred fire. One holds a bundle of *baresman* twigs and the other feeds two sticks into the fire; the winged circle though to represent Ahura Mazda hovers above them. A small table with a mortar and pestle is positioned between the fire altar and the person on the right, almost certainly representing the crushing of the sacred plant haoma.⁵⁵ Thus, this seal would seem to confirm the use of fire to honour or worship the deity represented by the winged solar disk, which is generally assumed to be Ahura Mazda from the evidence provided by the Behistun inscription and reliefs. Whether this scene is specifically Zoroastrian or more generally Indo-Aryan, however, remains to be clarified. Nevertheless, the seal provides vital evidence that during the reign of Darius I, an official in the Persian administration, perhaps a *magus*, identified himself with rituals associated with Iranian or possibly more specifically, Zoroastrian worship.

The tendency toward an aniconic cult in old Iranian and perhaps, in Zoroastrian worship, if it was practiced by the Achaemenids,⁵⁶ is confirmed by Herodotus. Writing ca 445 BCE, he de-

⁵⁵ Boyce, *History of Zoroastrianism II*, 145–6.

⁵⁶ There is a range of views about whether any of the Achaemenids were Zoroastrians. Moulton for example, questions whether Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius I were Zoroastrians or simply “Mazdeans,” worshippers of Ahura Mazda, the “god of the Aryans” (*Early Zoroastrianism*, 42–43, 50–66, 104). He sees Xerxes as a relapse into Aryan religion and Artaxerxes II to be the promoter of religious syncretism (Moulton, 104). Zaehner helpfully proposes three types of Zoroastrianism: “primitive,” representing Zarathustra’s reform, “catholic,” representing the re-introduction of some of the old gods and a belief that all nature was permeated with the divine, and “reformed,” characterized by dualist orthodoxy as developed under the Sassanids (81). Zaehner then suggests that Cyrus the great and Cambyses were probably non-Zoroastrians, Darius I an early Zoroastrian, and then Xerxes and his successors Catholic Zoroastrians (*Dawn and Twilight*, 73–4, 121, 155–161). Boyce on the other hand, argues that all the Achaemenids, beginning with Cyrus, were practising Zoroastrians (*History of Zoroastrianism II*, 41–42, 51–2, 64, 76–77, 118–22, 174–77, 183, 198, 217, 263, 282–3). Boyce cites the occurrence of names associated with both branches of the royal Achaemenid house that were also borne by the first converts and patrons of Zarathustra, King Vishtapa/Hystaspes, his queen Atossa/Hutaosa, and their son Pissouthnes/Pishishyaothna (41–43, 59).

scribes beliefs he encountered in Asia Minor thus: "Now the Persians I know to have the following customs. They count it unlawful to set up images and shrines and altars and actually charge them that do so with folly, because, as I suppose, they have not conceived the gods to be of like nature with men, as the Greeks conceive them" (Hist. I. 131.). He goes on to describe a sacrifice he witnessed, held outdoors on a height, upon which he based his previous deductions.

Had he witnessed the reliefs at Persepolis, Ecbatana, Susa, or Darius' inscription and imagery carved at Behistun, Herodotus might have revised his deduction about the use of images to represent Ahura Mazda, because in royal and monumental art, he was represented in human form, adapting the long-standing Assyrian and Babylonian iconography of the main empire gods for the depiction of Ahura Mazda. This suggests, on the one hand, a desire to conceive of the Persian empire as a continuation of the previous world empires, and, on the other, to use a well-established system of propagandistic iconography to keep subjugated kingdoms in their place through symbolic displays of the power, might, and glory of the ruling empire on monumental art. However, what he witnessed was a scene of individual worship, and it would seem that in common practice, the gods were not depicted or housed inside shrines or temples that established the sacred realm on earth. Thus, his eye-witness report would tend to corroborate the view that prior to the reign of Artaxerxes II, temples with deity statues were not a common feature of the Persian religious system.

It has been suggested that no identifiable ruins of a fire temple can be dated before the Parthian period (238 BCE–226 CE) and that the oldest reference to a fire enthroned in a special location is in the *Videvdāt*, a composite text whose final redaction post-dated the Hellenistic period and perhaps was accomplished in the 1st or 2nd century CE, in the second half of the Parthian period.⁵⁷ The

However, the names might have been introduced by one or more queens who had joined the court as a result of diplomatic marriages made with conquered Iranian kingdoms to the east. They are not firm indicators that the Achaemenid rulers themselves were followers of any form of Zoroastrianism. She also argues for the introduction of the cult of Anahita into official religion by Darius II, whose mother was Babylonian, rather than by his son Artaxerxes II, as is commonly done (198, 202).

⁵⁷ Boyce, "Zoroastrian Cult of Fire," 455. The Sasanians (224–636

suggestion that a small group of conspicuous installations cut from rock or from a large stone at Naqsh-e Rostam and Hussein Kuh in central Fars, some dating to the Achaemenid kings, were fire altars has now been shown to be incorrect. They stand about 3 m high, with oval troughs on their tops, some of which have a ridge for a lid. It would be almost impossible for a human to tend them from the ground, and they occur in the open, not inside a building. They appear to be, instead, astodans or human bone receptacles that could be covered with protective stone lids.⁵⁸ However, the limited number of excavations conducted to date using modern methods within geographical regions where one might expect to find such fire temples must be acknowledged to be a major factor in the lack of evidence so far,⁵⁹ with a strong likelihood that the picture will change in the future as more systematic excavations are conducted. Thus, the verdict remains out on what archaeology can and will contribute to the debate over the date of the introduction of fire temples in the ritual and cult of Zoroastrianism, and whether they were ever a feature of pre-Zoroastrian, old Iranian religion.

It is thought that the antecedents of the fire cult should be sought in a much older veneration of the hearth fire. The rites of both are the same and the prayer uttered in the former refers to "all those for whom it cooks the morning and evening meal."⁶⁰ While this is possible, it needs also to be realized that the fires of home hearths were considered home deities needing constant tending with offerings of dry wood, incense, and fat from the sacrificial

CE) escalated the emphasis on aniconic fire and actively suppressed the use of images within the religion. They established temple fire cults in their place or left former image shrines empty and unused (456).

⁵⁸ D. Huff, "'Fire Altars' and Astodans," V. Sarkhosh Curtis, R. Hillenbrand, and J. M. Rogers (eds), *The Art and Archaeology of Ancient Persia: New Light on the Parthian and Sasanian Empires* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998), 74–83 [78–81]; contra the argument of Boyce that the white stones with circular or rectangular basins were fire-altars (*History of Zoroastrianism II*, 51–2).

⁵⁹ Many of the excavations conducted to date have been done by Russian teams, with any final reports being published in Russian, making accessibility difficult.

⁶⁰ K. Schippmann, *Die iranischen Feuerheiligtümer* (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, 31; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971); Boyce, "Zoroastrian Cult of Fire," 455–56.

animal.⁶¹ Thus, while the rites and prayers used to honour both may be the same, caution is needed in concluding that home deities were deemed interchangeable with the supreme deity, Ahura Mazda, or were considered some sort of manifestation of him. This idea might be expressed in the five types of fire mentioned in *Yasht* 17, of unknown date, if we assume that the five types of fire are all forms of a single essence; this appears to be the view in the much later Pahlavi writings, where the ritual flame is the visible sign of the God's presence and all fire is linked back to heavenly divine fire in origin. It might not have been part of the earlier, old Persian world view, however.

The fire imagery that is central to *kebod* theology as expressed currently in Priestly writings within TANAK, though probably rooted in older Judahite conceptions of YHWH's forms of theophany, probably gained new importance and prominence in the Persian period because of its ability to be linked with old Iranian or possibly Zoroastrian manifestations of Ahura Mazda via the primal element of fire or old Persian views concerning the sacredness of fire as a divine element and physical representation of the divine realm. To be able to align the conceptualization of YHWH with that of the primary empire deity, Ahura Mazda, would have allowed the two deities to be easily equated in deity lists as manifestations of the same divine phenomenon.⁶² If old Iranian religion were the norm, or a hybrid form of that with some teachings of Zarathustra, to conceptualize Yahweh as fire, the central means used by the empire's rulers to visualize the realm of divine order (*asha*) and the good heavenly forces of light fighting to maintain its superiority over "the Lie" or Untruth (*dryu*) and its forces of darkness and evil, Yahweh could be aligned with Mithra or another divine Ahura ('Lord') who was thought responsible for creating cosmic order (*asha*), thereby gaining favourable acceptance for his cult throughout the empire. Yahweh's creation of the covenant with Israel, the revelation via Torah of his 'way,' the path to truth,

⁶¹ Boyce, "Zoroastrian Cult of Fire," 455.

⁶² Moulton rejected any connection between the use of fire to represent both deities as coincidental, arguing the fire of Ahura-Mazda derived from the hearth fire while that of Yahweh derived from lightning; he failed to consider the possibility that a secondary association of the two took place in the Persian period when Yahwism came in contact with the religion of the empire rulers (Moulton *Early Zoroastrianism*, 302).

righteousness, and life, and his overseeing of all oaths sworn in his name, punishing those who break his laws and rewarding those who follow them loyally, could have facilitated his association with Mithra by outsiders.⁶³

Kabod theology does not break the first commandment, though it might go against its spirit. Fire is not a living animal or plant, but a primal, physical element. Technically, then, if one were to be a literalist, it would not be prohibited as a representation of YHWH. However, the commandment seems designed to exclude any iconic form of representation and fire is arguably iconic since it is a physical element, so any attempt to represent Yahweh regularly on earth in the form of fire would be a breaking of this command. However, in the Hebrew Bible, fire is depicted as the preferred, self-revelatory form of manifestation chosen by Yahweh himself. Thus, it is not a human attempt to represent the divine nature, but a divine self-representation and as such, would not contravene the first commandment.

CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

Finally, were *šem* and *kabod* ideologies complementary or contrasting? Niehr claims they are mutually exclusive but does not explain his reasons for drawing this conclusion, though he raises the possibility that both were unconnected to the practice of temple ritual.⁶⁴ I would suggest, rather, that they were complementary, representing two means of expressing the presence of the divine on earth that corresponded to the twin pillars of emerging Judaism: temple and Torah. In the rebuilt temple, the divine presence could be expressed in terms of fiery flames that had once constituted the

⁶³ I have not found the attempt by S. J. Sherwin to dismiss Zoroastrian influence on the development of Jewish religion convincing ("Old Testament Monotheism and Zoroastrian Influence," R. P. Gordon [ed.], *The God of Israel* [University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 64; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2007], 113–24); he has limited his discussion to Second Isaiah, the Cyrus Cylinder, and the *Gathas* assigned to Zoroaster alone as representative of pure Zoroastrianism. Possible influence needs to be widened to conceptions of Yahweh Elohim in various books of the Hebrew Bible, and since it is unclear if any form of pure Zoroastrianism was adopted by the Achaemenid kings, the possible field of influence needs to be widened to Old Iranian religion as well.

⁶⁴ Niehr, "YHWH's Cult Statue," 94–95.

pul(u)h(t)u of an iconically imaged Yahweh or his astral aspect.⁶⁵ The altar fire that consumed offerings in the central temple courtyard could have represented the presence of an otherwise invisible deity who had been invoked by the pronouncement of his name and perhaps, as well, the recitation of his divine qualities (see formulae in Exod 34:6–7; Jonah 4:2). Torah, on the other hand, was able to be taught inside but also outside of the central sanctuary courtyard and represented a way for worshippers of Yahweh Elohim to visualize an otherwise abstract, invisible deity via the reputation he had earned through his deeds and his requirements recounted therein. Unlike *kabod* theology, it need not have been connected with temple ritual. Both are present in Ps 29:2; 96:8; 66:2; 79:9; and 1 Chr 16:39, showing they were deemed compatible and complementary by some biblical writers or subsequent editors.

⁶⁵ The *ner tamid* may have had its origins in such a conception, rather than in the oft-assumed derivation from the *menorot* that flanked the table of shewbread before the holy of holies. Niehr, for example, follows K. Seybold in thinking that the menorah placed before the holy of holies in Zechariah's fifth vision is meant to sustain continuity between the first and second temples by symbolizing Yahweh in place of his statue, serving as the object of priestly tending and care ("YHWH's Cult Statue," 4; K. Seybold, *Bilder zum Tempelbau: Die Visionen des Propheten Sacharja* [Stuttgarter Bibelstudien, 70; Stuttgart: KBW Verlag, 1974], 107). While the two share a common root *nmr*, both are containers for a burning flame or small fire, so the issue needing resolution is whether the function attached to the flame rather than the type of container.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER: A PERSIAN STORY IN GREEK STYLE

JEAN-DANIEL MACCHI

The book of Esther¹ is a novel set in the Persian Empire. It recounts how Esther, a young Judean girl, became Queen at the court of the Great King of Persia Ahashwerosh (Xerxes I), and was later able to prevent the anti-Judean plot of Haman, the King's counselor, with the help of her adoptive father, Mordecai.

¹ We should rather speak of the books (plural) of Esther. Three main versions of Esther's story have indeed been preserved: the Hebrew Masoretic text (MT), the LXX, which appears to be a translation of MT with six additions, as well as the Alpha text (AT), which is likely to be the translation of a Hebrew text older than the MT. To compare the three texts of Esther, see the synopsis in K. H. Jobes, *The AlphaText of Esther. Its Character and Relationship to the Masoretic Text* (SBLDS, 153; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996). Further on this issue, see H. Wahl, "Esther-Forschung," *TbR* 66 (2001), 103–130; K. De Troyer, *The End of the Alpha Text of Esther. Translation and Narrative Technique in MT 8:1–17, LXX 8:1–17, and AT 7:14–41* (SBLSCS, 48; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000); S. W. Crawford and L. J. Greenspoon, *The Book of Esther in Modern Research* (JSOTSup, 380; London/New York: T & T Clark, 2003); J.-D. Macchi, "Esther grec," T. Römer, J.-D. Macchi, and C. Nihan (eds), *Introduction à l'Ancien Testament* (Monde de la Bible 49; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2004), 610–614; J.-D. Macchi, "Les textes d'Esther et les tendances du Judaïsme entre les 3e et 1er siècles avant J.-Chr.," I. Himbaza and A. Schenker (eds), *Un carrefour dans la Bible. Du texte à la théologie au IIe siècle avant J.-C.* (OBO, 233; Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press/ Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 75–92.

Esther's story, which is clearly fictional,² is a well-elaborated narration which develops a coherent plot and where we find many literary techniques used in novels. There are suspense and mystery when Esther comes uninvited to the King (5:2) and when, at the end of her first banquet, she invites him to a second one (5:8). There is an amusing scene when Haman misunderstands the King's intention because of his pride (6:6–10), as well as a surprising new development when the reader learns that a letter, which is written and sealed by the King, cannot be reversed (8:8).

By this fictional story situated in the Persian court, the authors³ of the book of Esther take up a lot of basic issues regarding Judean identity, the potential dangers incurred by Judeans living in a foreign empire, and the correct way to react to such threats.⁴ However, in order to analyze such issues correctly, it is important to know the historical and intellectual context of production of the book. Indeed, understanding the background of the composition of the book of Esther should help us assessing which empire, exactly, the Judeans were confronted with, when the book was written, and what kind of challenges Judeans had to face

² The fictional nature of the book of Esther is currently admitted; see M. V. Fox, *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther* (SPOT; University of South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 131–152; L. M. Wills, *The Jewish Novel in Ancient World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 95 ff.; J. D. Levenson, *Esther. A Commentary* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1997); A. Berlin, "The Book of Esther and Ancient Storytelling," *JBL* 120 (2001), 3–14. Besides the novelistic character of the book, additional evidence does support the conclusion that Esther is a work of fiction. For example, there is no historical document showing the existence of a Judean Queen of Persia, or showing that a major conflict in which Judeans were involved happened at any time within the Persian empire.

³ The multi-layer nature of the book accounts for the fact that we should talk of the authors (plural) of Esther.

⁴ The most important question dealt with in Esther's story is: when, how, and why someone has to say that he (or she) is a Judean? Esther was first invited to hide her Judean identity (2:10, 20) before she had to disclose this identity in order to save her people (7:3–4). After Mordecai had said that he was Judean, his people were condemned (3:4 ff.). However, thanks to him, at the end of the story the Judean identity was eventually glorified throughout the empire (8:15–17; 9:3–4). See J.-D. Macchi, "Dieu, la Perse et le courage d'être Juive. Réflexions sur Esther 4," *FoiVie.CB* 43 (2004), 59–77.

in order to preserve their identity. Especially in the case of a fictional story, the way in which the story's world is described—in Esther's case, Persia—is basically a cultural construction that we have to analyze by comparison with the cultural environment, in which the text was produced.

This essay will argue that Esther's Persia compares, in many way, with Persia's description in Hellenistic texts; and that this finding, in turn, implies that Esther should be understood as a product of Hellenistic Judaism.

THE GREEKS AND THE HISTORY OF PERSIA

First of all, it is important to remember that the Persian world is a major theme in the Greek literature as early as the 4th century BCE and at least down to the 3rd century CE.⁵ The Greek world was confronted with the Persian Empire for several centuries; and during the Median Wars, it had to fight against that empire. From the perspective of the identity politics, the Persian Empire and its kingship were usually considered as a kind of anti-model to the Greek way of life and policy. The Greek writers described Persian customs as strange and exotic. The ancient Greeks regarded the royal political system ruling over the Persian Empire as tyrannical and non-egalitarian, the exact opposite of the egalitarian ideal of the Greek cities. Furthermore, they also considered the world dominated by the Persian King as very rich and prosperous, contrary to their own world, which was poor but free.

In any case, scholars have to be careful in using Greek texts as historical sources for ancient Persia, because those texts contain many stereotypes about Persia, which resemble more ideological constructions rather than historical records.⁶ However, for our

⁵ Persia appears in nearly all the so called "classical" historical texts (Herodotus, *Historiae*; Xenophon, *Anabasis*; *Cyropaedia*; Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*; and later Diodorus of Sicily, *Bibliotheca historica*; Justinus, *Philippic History*; Plutarch, *Lives*; Aelian, *Varia historia*), as well as in tragedies (Aeschylus, *Persians*), and in more "philosophical" texts (Plato, *Laws*; Plutarch, *Moralia*; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*) as well as in texts dealing only with the Persian world (Ctesias of Cnidus, *Persica*: see Ctésias de Cnide, *La Perse*; *L'Inde*; *Autres fragments. Texte établi, traduit et commenté par Dominique Lenfant* [CUF, 435; Paris: Belles Lettres, 2004]).

⁶ Because of the small number of ancient Persian documents, Greek texts are often used as main sources in historical research concerning Per-

subject, the question as to how far the Greek writings about Persia are consistent with the historical reality is not very important. Indeed, our central focus is not to compare Esther's representation of Persia with the social and political world of "historical" Persia as it can be reconstructed from the various sources at our disposal, but to compare Esther's picture with the—for a part no less fictional—image of Persia in ancient Greek literature.

PERSIAN WORLD AND PRACTICES IN THE BOOK OF ESTHER AND IN THE GREEK LITERATURE

It is at once striking that, within the book of Esther, the world of Persia is represented in a way that is always compatible with what appears in the Greek writings. For example,⁷ the book of Esther tells that the King of Persia—and his administration—led an empire big enough to stretch from India to Egypt (Esth 1:1), that he managed all the aspects of the life of the empire's "citizens" (Esth 1:20b), and that he could do everything he wanted with them (2:3; 3:9).⁸ Groups of seven high-ranking Persian men, as

sia. On historical sources for Persia, see P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: a History of the Persian Empire*. (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbraun, 2002), 5–9 and about the reign of Xerxes I, Briant, 515–18, as well as J. Wiesehöfer, *Das antike Persien: von 550 v. Chr. bis 650 n. Chr.* (Düsseldorf/Zürich: Artemis & Winkler, 1998), 31–32. Regarding the issue of the Persian sources of Greek literature, see H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt, *Achaemenid History II. The Greek Sources. Proceedings of the Groningen 1984 Achaemenid History Workshop* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1987). The fact that stereotypes about Persia were used by the Greek writers is well shown by C. Tuplin, *Achaemenid Studies* (Historia, 99; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1996), 164–177.

⁷ For a more detailed demonstration see J.-D. Macchi, "Le livre d'Esther: écrire une histoire perse comme un Grec," D. Doré (ed.) *Comment la Bible saisit-elle l'histoire?* (LD, 215; Paris: Cerf, 2007), 197–226 (200–204). The fact that Persia's depiction in Esther is consistent with Greek stereotypes about Persia was already pointed out by A. Berlin ("Book of Esther," 10).

⁸ Even if the number of 127 Persian provinces (NB: in Esther [3:12], the provinces are not identified with the satrapies) is symbolic, it is compatible with the number of the nations concerned by the fiscality of the empire (Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.89–117, also Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.6.19–21). The universal power of the Persian king and of his administration is well known in Greek literature, and is even compared to the gods' power on

mentioned in Esth 1:10, 14 are also famous in Greek literature⁹ as is the existence of an efficient postal service (1:22; 3:15; 8:14).¹⁰ According to Esther as well as to ancient Greek authors, the eunuchs played an important role in the Persian court and in the harem, and were susceptible to plotting against the King (1:10, 21–23; 2:8–9, 15).¹¹ Finally, the luxury of royal Persian banquets, as well as the tendency to drink to excess in the course of such banquets (Esth 1:6–8), are no less well attested in Greek writings.¹²

The above remarks show that the general framework in which Esther's story was told is consistent with what a Hellenistic author could know concerning the Persian court. However, we have to go further in showing that similarities do exist between the episodes of the book of Esther, on the one hand, and major patterns found in ancient Greek stories located at the Persian court, on the other hand. In addition to helping us in assessing the historical and intellectual background for Esther's composition, the similarities, which can be observed, will also cast light on the meaning of some of the most difficult (at times even abstruse) episodes in Esther.

earth (see Pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mundo*, 398a).

⁹ Seven conspirators after the death of Cambyses (Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.71 ff.); seven ambassadors (Herodotus, *Hist.* 5.17); seven friends of Cyrus (Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.6.4).

¹⁰ Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.6.17–18 and Herodotus, *Hist.* 8.98.

¹¹ For the representation of the eunuchs in the Persian court, see: Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.77–78. 92; 6.32; 8.105–106. For a eunuchs' plot against the king, see in particular Ctesias, *Persica*, 54.

¹² See Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.133; 9.82; Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.8.15–18. For studies about the Persian and the Greek banquets, see K. Vössing, *Mensa Regia. Das Bankett beim hellenistischen König und beim römischen Kaiser* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, 193; München/Leipzig: K. G. Saur, 2004); H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, "Persian Food: Stereotypes and Political Identity," J. Wilkins, D. Harvey, and M. Dobson (eds), *Food in Antiquity* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1995), 286–302; J.-D. Macchi, "L'identité judéenne au banquet, Le défi de la commensalité à l'époque hellénistique selon le livre d'Esther," O. Artus and J. Ferry (eds), *L'identité dans l'Écriture. Hommage au professeur Jacques Briand* (LD, 228; Paris: Cerf, 2009), 227–260.

QUEEN VASHTI REFUSES TO COME TO THE KING (ESTH 1:10–12)

In the book of Esther, the plot starts at the end of 187 days of royal festivities when the Queen Vashti rejects the request of the King to come and show her beauty (1:12). The commentaries of the book give numerous different explanations for her refusal, but the book itself remains entirely silent on the reasons for Vashti's refusal as if, against the authors' cultural background, such reason was obvious.

Now, in the Hellenistic cultural context, a wife—contrary to a concubine or a maidservant—did not take part in banquets, especially because men usually got drunk in the course of such banquets.¹³ A similar attitude towards wives during royal Persian banquets is also attested in Hellenistic literature. Plutarch explains that “the lawful wives of the Persian kings sit beside them at dinner, and eat with them. But when the kings wish to be merry and get drunk, they send their wives away, and send for their music-girls and concubines (*παλλακαί*).”¹⁴ In a context where such an attitude toward wives in banquets is well known, there is no need to explain why Vashti refused to come to the King's banquet: indeed, the reader immediately understands that Vashti's social status prevented her from doing so.¹⁵

JUDGES AND KING'S MARRIAGE (ESTH 1:12–20)

After Vashti's refusal, the King becomes very angry with her. However, he is not entitled to make a decision but has to consult a college of lawyers in order to know what should be done according to Persian law (1:13–15). The college concludes that the King should divorce Vashti.

¹³ Esth 1:7–8.10 stresses the abundance of wine as well as the King's drunkenness. On wine in Persian banquets, see above note 12.

¹⁴ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 140b [Translated by F. C. Babbitt (LCL; London/Cambridge: William Heinemann/Harvard University Press, 1962)], see also Aelian, *Var. hist.* 12.1. In a sense, the story told in Herodotus, *Hist.* 5.18 goes to show the same thing: a wife has no place during the last part of a banquet.

¹⁵ This explanation is pointed out by Levenson, *Esther*; M. V. Fox, *Character*, 164–170; A. Berlin, *Esther* (JPS Bible Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society 2001).

This episode has many similarities to the account of Cambyse's marriage with his sister as told by Herodotus. Herodotus stresses that this kind of marriage was unprecedented "Cambyse was enamoured of one of his sisters and presently desired to take her to wife; but his intention being contrary to usage, he summoned the royal judges and inquired whether there were any law suffering one, that so desired, to marry his sister."¹⁶ Next, Herodotus explains that those lawyers, supposed to interpret the old Persian laws, found a way to allow the King to do what he wanted, without violating the law.

In the story concerning Cambyse, as well as in Esther chapter 1, we find a very similar depiction of the legal procedure for decision-making in matters related to the King's marriage. In both cases, the King of Persia cannot take the decision on his own marital affair alone, but has to consult lawyers. Furthermore, in both cases, the lawyers give an advice that actually corresponds to the King's wish.

ESTHER BECOMES QUEEN OF PERSIA (ESTH 2:1–18)

According to chapter 2, Esther is a beautiful orphan girl (2:7). She was taken away from her adoptive father Mordecai in the course of a sort of mass roundup of girls, the purpose of which was to find a wife for the King. After she was installed in the palace's harem, she pleased the eunuch in charge of the women. The Massoretic text emphasizes the long cosmetic treatment required before each of the women in the harem was allowed access to the King. At the end of the episode, the King loves Esther more than all other women, and makes her Queen of Persia.

It is well known in the Greek literature that the Persian palace included a harem with many women from different countries and nationalities. This element contributed to stressing the universality of the Persian King's domination over his kingdom.¹⁷ The idea that different women came, one by one, into the King's bedroom after a sort of beauty contest is attested by Diodorus of Sicily who wrote

¹⁶ Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.31 [Translated by A. D. Godley (LCL; London/Cambridge: William Heinemann/Harvard University Press, 1960–1963)].

¹⁷ See Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.97; 3.134; 6.19; 6.32; 9.76; Diodorus of Sicily, *Bibliotheca historica*, 17.77.6; Plutarch, *Artaxerxes*, 27.

that the concubines of Darius, each night, “paraded about the couch of the king so that he might select the one with whom he would lie that night.”¹⁸

Beside these classical patterns regarding the relationship between the King, his wives, and his concubines, many similarities exist between the second chapter of Esther and the story of the first meeting between Aspasia and Cyrus son of Darius in the Greek literature. Aelian’s version of this story, which was well known in antiquity, is the most complete.¹⁹ Aspasia, daughter of Hermotimus, was a Phocian orphan girl. Aelian describes her beauty at length. Like Esther, she did not come to her Persian master of her own will. She was abducted after her city had been taken. In Aelian’s *Varia historia*, Aspasia is regarded as a perfect Greek woman who embodies the virtues of dignity, simplicity, and modesty. The first time she came to Cyrus she was brought with three other girls. The text mentions the necessity that those women be prepared by the staff of the kingdom of Persia, before being introduced to Cyrus. Apparently, Aspasia’s refusal to charm Cyrus, in the usual fashion of Persian concubines, causes Cyrus to fall in love with her. Aelian ends the story by telling that “it was really believed that after her Cyrus would not wish to have anything to do with any other woman.”²⁰

As we can see, the similarities between Esther and Aspasia are numerous. As in the case of Esther, the story of Aspasia describes the ascension of a foreign woman to the Persian royalty.²¹ In both stories, the foreign woman wins a beauty contest judged by a King or a Prince. Furthermore, the point of view of Aelian on Aspasia is very similar to the one of the book of Esther on its own heroine.

¹⁸ Diodorus of Sicily, *Bibliotheca historica*, 17.77.7 [Translated by C. B. Welles (LCL; London/Cambridge: William Heinemann/Harvard University Press, 1963)]. See also below, the episode concerning the magus (Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.69).

¹⁹ Aelian, *Var. hist.* 12.1. Aelian wrote during the 3rd century BCE but the story is also known by Plutarch, *Art.* 26; Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.10.2, and Justin, *Philippic History*, 10.2.

²⁰ Aelian, *Varia historia* 12.1 (Translated by N. G. Wilson, [LCL; London/Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997]).

²¹ In fact, Aspasia never became Queen because Prince Cyrus son of Darius himself never became King. However, Aspasia is described among the key people of the kingdom of Persia even after the Cyrus’ death.

As virtuous foreigners, Esther and Aspasia act differently from the Persian concubines but nonetheless charm the Persian Prince or King. It is noteworthy that both Aspasia and Esther are not attracted by riches.²²

The most important difference between Esther and Aspasia concerns the nature of her relationship with her husband. Aelian describes Aspasia and Cyrus as a woman and a man in passionate love, and having an exclusive relationship. Not so in the book of Esther, where the relationship between Esther and Ahashwerosh is described as a distant and a formal one. Esther is not called by the King for 30 days (4:11), she is afraid of him (4:16), and both use very formal sentences to talk to each other (5:1–8; 7:1–8:8).²³ This difference in the representation of the matrimonial relationships of the two heroines can be easily accounted for, despite the fact that the authors of the book of Esther probably knew the story of Aspasia and apparently tried to write a Judean version of that story. Contrary to the Greek authors, who can present the marriage of Aspasia as a good (Greek) marriage, this would probably have been more difficult for a Judean author of the 3rd century BCE because of the dominant rejection of inter-marriages in the Judean culture.

HAMAN'S WRATH (ESTH 3:1–5)

According to the Esther narrative, it is because Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman that the latter decided to condemn by decree Mordecai's people. The reason why Mordecai refused to bow down is not clearly explained in the Massoretic text. Did Mordecai refuse because he was too proud or because Haman was an Agaguite? Or, did he act thus because he refused to put the glory of a man above

²² Compare Esth 2:13 et 2:15 with Aspasia who “did not wish to wear an expensive dress” and with Aelian’s notice that “Aspasia thus did the opposite of what women tend to do, as they are extremely fond of jewelry; it was a noble and royal act beyond the reach of other women” (Aelian, *Var. hist.* 12.1 [Wilson, LCL]).

²³ Concerning that last point, the three texts of Esther are quite different. The Alpha-Text describes the relationship between Esther and Ahashwerosh as less formal than the Massoretic text does. Furthermore, in the Septuaginta, addition C explicitly tells that the relationship between a Jewish woman and a Persian man is problematic. See L. Day, *Three Faces of a Queen. Characterization in the Books of Esther* (JSOTSup, 186; Sheffield: Academic Press, 1995), 183–187.

the glory of God? Was Mordecai jealous because Haman was promoted as Prime Minister just after Mordecai himself had saved the King (Esth 2:21–23)?²⁴ If the text does not explain Mordecai's refusal to bow down, it could be because in the cultural context of the authors of the book the reason why he refused was clear enough.

In my opinion, it is quite likely that the interdiction for a Judean to bow down to another god than Yahweh plays a role in Mordecai's refusal, as in the narrative of Daniel 3 for instance.²⁵ However, even this explanation is not entirely satisfactory: in particular, it does not really account for the fact that Mordecai, in the Esther story, refuses to bow down to a man, and not to a god. Here it seems to me, a further additional explanation may be required, which is this time connected with the Hellenistic way of thinking.

In a Hellenistic way of thinking, bowing down (*προσκύνησις*) to high-ranking people or to the King is a distinctively Persian practice,²⁶ which is therefore not suitable for a free man. This is well illustrated by a passage of Plutarch, where Artabanus the Chiliarch explains to Themistocles: "Now you Hellenes are said to admire liberty and equality above all things; but in our eyes, among many fair customs, this is the fairest of all, to honour the King, and to pay obeisance to him (*προσκυνεῖν*)."²⁷ The Greek rejection of

²⁴ The confusion is total and modern commentaries as well as ancient authors propose each of these different explanations, however, without any decisive argument. Compare, Septuaginta add C (prayer of Mordecai), *Tg. Esth.* I; F. W. Bush, *Ruth, Esther* (WBC, 9; Dallas: Word Books, 1996), 379; M. V. Fox, *Character*, 42–44.

²⁵ The books of Maccabees as well as the story of Daniel's refusal to bow down to the statue set up by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3) show that during the Hellenistic period Judeans were regularly confronted with the problem raised by the obligation to worship other gods.

²⁶ Concerning the Persian *proskunesis*, see Briant, *From Cyrus*, 222–223. The Persian custom of bowing down (*προσκύνησις*) to high-ranking people or to the King is reported in Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.119, 1.134; Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.6.10, 1.8.21; *Cyr.* 8.3.14; Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 13.556b; Aelian, *Var. hist.* 6.14. Furthermore, the Persian *proskunesis* is already well known by ancient Athenian authors (cf. Tuplin, *Achaemenid*, 134–5; 157–8). For a moral criticism of Persian *proskunesis*, see Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, 151.

²⁷ Plutarch, *Themistocles* 27.3 [Translated by B. Perrin (LCL; London/Cambridge: William Heinemann/Harvard University Press, 1914)].

the bowing down to high-ranking people is also clearly shown by Herodotus, who recounts that, when two Spartans came to Xerxes in order to pay the death of the heralds of Darius “the guards commanded and would have compelled them to fall down and do obeisance (προσκυνέειν) to the king, they said they would never do that, no not if they were thrust down headlong; for it was not their custom (said they) to do obeisance to mortal men, nor was that the purpose of their coming.”²⁸ These two examples show that the Greek refusal to bow down to the King has to be explained as the expression of the Greek identity, of its morality and its values. For a Greek man, freedom and equality between each other are the most important things to defend. This is the reason why, when the Persian Hydarnes said to the two Spartans that they should submit to the Persian King in order for them to become rich and powerful, Herodotus reports that they answered: “you know well how to be a slave, but you have never tasted of freedom, to know whether it be sweet or not. Were you to taste of it, not with spears you would counsel us to fight for it, no, but with axes.”²⁹

In the book of Esther, we can see that, in refusing to bow down, Mordecai is depicted as acting exactly as a free Greek man would have acted. What is more, it should be noted that, exactly as in the Greek accounts, Mordecai’s refusal is not only an individual decision but has a distinctively ethnic and collective dimension. By refusing to bow down and by telling that he is Judean (Esth 3:4), Mordecai actually implicates all his people in the conflict. As a result, Haman logically decides to destroy all the people of Mordecai. Thus, in a Hellenistic context, the reader immediately understands, first, why Mordecai refuses to bow down and, second, that if Haman wanted everybody to bow down to him, he then had to destroy all the Judeans.

THE QUEEN RISKED LIFE TO CONTACT THE KING (ESTH 4:1–5:2)

In the Esther narrative, at the request of her adoptive father Mordecai, Queen Esther accepts to risk her life by going to see the King uninvited and by entreating him for her people.

²⁸ Herodotus, *Hist.* 7.136 (Godley, LCL).

²⁹ Herodotus, *Hist.* 7.135 (Godley, LCL).

The notion that the access to the King of Persia was difficult, or even just not possible at all so that all messages had to go through intermediaries is well known in the Greek literature.³⁰

Beside these classical patterns, an episode where a wife had to risk life to contact her royal husband can be found in the *Histories* of Herodotus.³¹ After the death of Cambyses, when the magus usurped the kingship, a high-ranking man named Otanes suspected the imposture because the so-called King “never left the citadel nor summoned any notable Persian into his presence.”³² Phaedyme, daughter of Otanes, was one of the royal wives. By sending messages to her, Otanes learnt that she never had seen the legitimate King and that she could not know more about him because she lived alone and apart from all the other royal wives. Finally, Otanes sent a last message asking Phaedyme to risk her life on the grounds of her noble birth. During a night when this so-called King would sleep with her, she would have to touch him in order to know if he had ears. Indeed, Otanes knew that the magus’ ears had been cut off. Phaedyme answered that she would run this great risk, and did so.

³⁰ According to Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.99, this custom was established by Deioeces King of Media. Thucydides explains that Pausanias was trying to live as a Persian King in that he prevented access to himself (*Peloponnesian War* 1.130) and Justinus, *Philippic History*, 1.9 explains that “among the Persians, the person of the king is concealed from public view, under pretext of keeping his majesty inviolate” (Justinus, *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus*. Translated by J. S. Watson, London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853.).

³¹ Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.68–69 and Justinus, *Philippic History*, 1.9. The similarities between Herodotus’ episode and Esther 4 have been noted by J. Schwartz, “Récits bibliques et mœurs perses,” A. Caquot, M. Hadas-Lebel, and J. Riaud (eds), *Hellenica et Judaica. Hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetzky* (Leuven Paris: Peeters, 1986), 267–277 (274–5); A. Momigliano, “Persian Historiography, Greek Historiography, and Jewish Historiography,” *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Sather Classical Lectures, 54; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 5–28 (15). See also J. M. Balcer, *A Prosopographical Study of the Ancient Persians Royal and Noble C. 550–450 B.C.* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1993), 276–278. A. Berlin, *Esther*, 44–45 find also similarities between Esther 4 and Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.117–119.

³² Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.68 (Godley, LCL).

The parallel between Esther and Mordecai on the one hand, and Phaedyne and Otanes on the other hand, is apparent. Fathers and daughters communicated through messages, and both fathers gave very risky instructions to their daughter, justified by loyalty and fidelity to their family. In both stories, the existence of an odd Persian royal custom complicates the problem: the magus could rule without being seen; likewise no one was allowed to come to Ahashwerosh freely. Such resemblances are best accounted for, if the authors of Esther knew the story of Phaedyne and included a sort of Judean version of this story into the plot of the novel they wrote.

THE QUEEN MANIPULATES PEOPLE AT THE COURT (ESTH 5:3–14; 7:1–8)

After inviting twice the King and Haman to a banquet, Esther eventually obtains the hanging of Haman. During these episodes, Esther wins by acting cleverly: she waits before taking advantage of the King's promise to fulfill her petition, stimulates the pride of Haman by inviting him with Ahashwerosh (5:9–14), and waits for the King to get drunk before telling the truth (7:2–4).

It is well known in the Greek literature that Persian Queens or princesses used to manipulate Kings as well as the members of the court in order to get rid of their enemies. A reading of Ctesias of Cnidus' *Persica* even gives the impression that the enemies of the Queen of Persia usually died under torture.³³

Furthermore, many resemblances exist between the actions of Esther and those of the Queen mother Parysatis, who took revenge on the servants of the King Artaxerxes responsible for the death of Cyrus, her favourite son. Plutarch's version of this story is the most complete.³⁴ As in Esther, Parysatis tricked Mithridates, during a banquet, using the pride of this high-ranking servant as well as his desire to be on equal footing with the King. During the war

³³ See Ctesias, *Persica*, 34–56. Artoxares was put to death by Parysatis (54), as well as the family of Terituchmes and Roxana who was hewn to pieces alive (56). Amestris obtained that Inarus was impaled and that 50 Greeks were decapitated (39); she also buried alive the doctor of her daughter and crucified a man of Caunios.

³⁴ Plutarch, *Art.* 14–17, probably depends on Ctesias, but Photius' summary describes the events more briefly.

between Artaxerxes and Cyrus, Mithridates had hit Cyrus. At the end of the battle, Artaxerxes gave many presents to Mithridates, but told that he had himself hit Cyrus. Shortly after, however, Mithridates maintained, during a banquet, that in reality it was he, who had killed Cyrus. Plutarch stresses that Mithridates said those rash words when he was drunk and in order to answer questions asked by Parysatis' eunuch, who manipulated him with success. Of course, Parysatis reported the words of Mithridates to the King, who then condemned Mithridates to be put to death in troughs. Parysatis also succeeded in taking revenge of Masabates, the King's eunuch who had cut off the hands and the head of Cyrus' body, in manipulating the King. Plutarch explains that Queen Parysatis spent as much time as possible with the King—the theme of the two banquets has the same function in the book of Esther. In the course of a dice game with her, the King accepted that the stake was a eunuch and that the winner could choose him. After her victory, she asked the King that Masabates be handed over to her, and killed him.

The writings of Plutarch and Ctesias' describe Parysatis and the other Queens of Persia as extremely cruel and vengeful. Even if Esther is described as a kind woman acting to defend her people, who were victim of a plot, she brings about Haman's death using similar methods to Parysatis. In order to achieve her ends, she tried to be as close as possible to the King and she took advantage of the pride, drunkenness, and clumsy promises of men.

PRESENTS TO THE BENEFACTOR (ESTHER 6)

In chapter 6 of the book of Esther, the King reads the book of the records during the night. He decides to honour Mordecai after reading the story relating how Mordecai had saved the King's life by denouncing the two eunuchs who had plotted against him (2:21–23). Haman, who arrives just after that episode, also suggests to the King a distinct way of honouring Mordecai—with the secret hope that the King would actually honour him instead of Mordecai. According to Haman's proposition, the honoured man should wear royal clothes and ride a royal horse with a crown on its head through the streets of the city.

In the Greek literature, we do not find a similar story where a high-ranking man is forced to honour his enemy because of a mix-up. Nonetheless, several well-known themes concerning the kingship of Persia are taken up in the account of Esther 6. In the

Greek literature, the King of Persia was supposed to give many gifts, including clothes and horses. Furthermore, the existence of a book where the King of Persia recorded his benefactors is mentioned several times in Greek writings.³⁵ Finally, in the stories of Teribazus and Demaratus as told by Plutarch, the wish to wear royal clothes is seen as a kind of *hubris* similar to the attitude of Haman.³⁶

MASSACRE AND FESTIVAL (ESTHER 8–9)

The fact that the Judeans, after massacring their enemies, established an annual festival celebrating those events has a parallel in an episode related in the *Histories* of Herodotus. After the seven Persian conspirators put to death the magus who had usurped the kingship, Herodotus told that “The Persians, when they heard from the seven what had been done and how the Magians had tricked them, resolved to follow the example set, and drew their daggers and slew all the Magians they could find; and if nightfall had not stayed them they would not have left one Magian alive. This day is the greatest holy day that all Persians alike keep; they celebrate a great festival on it, which they call the Massacre of the Magians (*Magophonia*); while the festival lasts no Magian may come abroad, but during this day they remain in their houses.”³⁷

Because we have seen that nearly every episode in the book of Esther has similarities with Greek stories about Persia, it is not surprising that the book ends with the establishment of a festival (*Pourim*) very similar to the Persian festival whose inauguration is recounted in Herodotus. As with *Pourim*, the *Magophonia* celebrates the victory over an iniquitous ruler and the massacre of his followers.

³⁵ See Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.84; 3.139–140; 3.160; 4.97; 5.11; 7.8; 8.5; 8.85; 9.109; Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.9.14–28; *Cyr.* 8.2.1–2; 8.2.8; 8.3.3; 8.3.23; Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 1.129.

³⁶ The stories of Teribazus (Plutarch, *Art.* 5.3–4) and of Demaratus (Plutarch, *Them.* 29.6–8) are rightly considered as parallel to Esther 6 by A. Berlin, “Book of Esther,” 11–13; M. Heltzer, “Mordekhai and Demaratos and the Question of Historicity,” *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 27 (1994), 119–121; C. Grottanelli, “Honour, Women and Sanctuary at the Persian Court [Plutarch, *Them.* 29–31 and *Esther* 6–8],” *Dialoghi di Archeologia* 3e ser. 6 (1988), 135–138.

³⁷ Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.79 (Godley, LCL).

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Our study has shown the striking similarities between the representation of the Persian world and its practices in the Greek literature and in the Book of Esther. Furthermore, it has also shown that most episodes described in Esther's story look like episodes concerning characters that Greek literature situates in the Persian world. The college of lawyers consulted by Ahashwerosh to decide on the future of his wife Vashti looks like the college that legislated on the marriage of Cambyses with his sister (Herodotus). The story of Esther's ascending to the queenship makes her another Aspasia (Aelian). Mordecai's refusal to bow down to Haman can be compared with the attitude of the two Spartans in front of Xerxes (Herodotus and Plutarch). The risk that Esther accepts to run in order to go to the King makes her like Phaedyne (Herodotus); furthermore, she acts in the very same way as Parysatis when she manipulates the King and Haman (Ctesias). Haman's hanging can be compared with the torturing to death of many enemies of the Queens Amestris and Parysatis (Ctesias); and *Pourim* is not without similarities with the Persian *Magophonia* (Herodotus). In addition to these numerous similarities, we can add that the book of Esther uses several historiographical techniques, which are distinctive of Hellenistic literature.³⁸ For example, like Herodotus and others, the authors of Esther were concerned with explaining exotic customs (2:12–14 and 4:11); they also mentioned or quoted alleged archives (Esth 9:11–13³⁹), and used terms and names with Persian consonance (in particular Esth 1:11, 14).⁴⁰

³⁸ For the relationship between Greek historiography and biblical texts in general, see Momigliano, "Persian Historiography"; and E. Will and C. Orrieux, *Ioudaïsmos-hellénismos. Essai sur le judaïsme judéen à l'époque ancienne et moderne*. (Nancy: Presses universitaires de Nancy, 1986).

³⁹ The MT of Esther mentions more than it quotes such documents. However, both add. B and E in the Greek text quote the full text of the supposed decrees of Haman and Mordecai.

⁴⁰ For Persian terms (or terms with Persian consonance) in the Greek literature, see Tuplin, *Achaemenid*, 134–136. For Persian terms in the book of Esther, see J.-C. Picard, "Les 'clouds' d'Esther. L'historiographie juive de l'époque perse et le Rouleau d'Esther," *Le continent apocryphe: essai sur les littératures apocryphes juive et chrétienne* (Instrumenta Patristica 36. Turnhout: Brepols 1999), 165–193.

The large number of parallels that can be drawn between the book of Esther and Hellenistic literature has no equivalence elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. To be sure, as regards general conceptions of history and geography as well as historiographical literary techniques, some connections do exist with Hellenistic historiographical literature elsewhere in the biblical literature. However, those connections are nowhere as significant as in Esther.⁴¹ Furthermore, within the biblical literature, very few stories can be found, which are really similar to the stories found in Greek literature.⁴² Thus, as regards connections with Hellenistic literature, Esther comprises a distinct book in the Hebrew Bible.

In order to explain the parallels between Esther and the Greek texts and to preserve a dating for the redaction of Esther as ancient as possible, scholars argued that the same literary conventions about the Persian world existed in the Greek world and in the Near East.⁴³ However, considering the large number of parallels

⁴¹ In scholarly discussion, connections with Hellenistic historiography are shown in the Enneateuch (Genesis–2 Kings), in Ezra–Nehemiah, and in the books of Maccabees. See Momigliano, “Persian Historiography”; L. L. Grabbe (ed.), *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period* (JSOTSup, 317; Sheffield: Academic Press, 2001); J. Van Seters, *Prologue to History. The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992); *The Life of Moses. The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus–Numbers* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994). S. Mandell and D. N. Freedman, *The Relationship Between Herodotus’ History and Primary History* (SFSHJ, 60; Atlanta: Scholars Press 1993); J.-W. Wesseliuss, *The Origin of the History of Israel: Herodotus’ Histories As Blueprint for the First Books of the Bible* (JSOTSup, 345; Sheffield: Academic Press, 2002); T. B. Dozeman, “Geography and History in Herodotus and in Ezra–Nehemiah,” *JBL* 122 (2003), and my analysis in Macchi, “écrire une histoire perse,” 215–218.

⁴² Parallels can be drawn between Jephthah’s daughter’s story (Judges 11) and Samson’s stories (Judges 13–16) on the one hand, and the stories of Iphigenia and Heracles on the other hand (see T. Römer. “Why Would the Deuteronomists Tell about the Sacrifice of Jephthah’s Daughter?” *JSOT* 77 (1998), 27–38; D. Nocquet, “De quelques intentions du cycle de Samson: regards historico-critiques sur Jg 13–16,” *Graphè* 13 (2004), 53–73). However, the contexts in which those stories are situated are very different.

⁴³ See A. Berlin, “Book of Esther,” 9; A. Momigliano, *Essays in ancient and modern historiography* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1977),

identified above, this solution seems less likely than the assumption of a direct influence of Greek writings on the authors of Esther. Literary conventions about Persia similar to those of the book of Esther are not attested in any writings that were composed outside the Hellenistic cultural influence. Furthermore, the dating of the book of Esther does not contradict *a priori* the possibility that the Greek literature influenced the authors of Esther, quite to the contrary. In fact, most scholars argue for a dating of Esther between the last part of the Persian period (4th century BCE) and the Hasmonean period (2nd–1st century BCE).⁴⁴

In my opinion, all the parallels between the Hellenistic literature and the book of Esther highlighted above are best accounted for if the authors of Esther were familiar with the Greek culture and literature. Even if they wrote in Hebrew, the Hellenistic literature was clearly the intellectual background of such authors. They knew the Greek way of life, and had probably read the Greek writings or at least had heard about the Greek stories. Thus, the authors of Esther were able to write a text like the book of Esther, which is very much in agreement with the Greek way of writing a Persian story. In order to create a story involving Judeans living in the Persian Empire, they resorted to major aspects of the Hellenistic culture in which they lived. Furthermore, they did not hesitate to write most episodes of Esther's story on the base of well known Persian stories composed by the Greek writers. In a way,

25–35 (27).

⁴⁴ We have to note that Esther is written in late biblical Hebrew, and that no external evidence for the existence of the book is found before the 1st century CE. For a dating of the book of Esther in the 4th or 3rd century BCE, see A. Berlin, *Esther*, xli–xliii; Levenson, *Esther*, 23–27; C. A. Moore, “Book of Esther,” *ABD* 2:633–643; M. V. Fox, *Character*, 139–140; W. Bush, *Ruth, Esther*, 295–297. For a dating in the 2nd or 1st century, see C. Herrenschildt, “Une lecture iranisante du livre d’Esther,” *MdB* 106 (1997), 74–75; J.-D. Macchi, “Esther.” T. Römer, J.-D. Macchi, and C. Nihan (eds), *Introduction à l’Ancien Testament* (Monde de la Bible, 49; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2004), 570–571; L. B. Paton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Esther* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1908), 60–63; B. Schneider, “Esther Revised according to the Maccabees,” *LA* 13 (1962–1963), 190–218.

the book of Esther can be viewed as a Hebrew equivalent of the “persicae”⁴⁵ of Greek literature: a Persian story in Greek style.

If the results of our analysis are correct, the following conclusions should be drawn:

Regarding the meaning of the text and its underlying problematics, the fundamental questions already identified concerning Judean identity should be situated in the context of the dialogue and of the confrontation between Judean identity and the Hellenistic culture. By writing a novel about Persia in a way very similar to what a Greek would have been able to write (and read), the authors of the book establish two things: on the one hand, that Judeans living in the Persian Empire did not act differently from well-educated Greek men or women (refusal to act as a Persian concubine, refusal to bow down in front of a Persian King, acceptance of risking one’s life to save one’s own people etc.). Thus, the text shows that the Judeans had many values in common with the Hellenistic world in which they lived. On the other hand, however, the book of Esther shows that Jews living in an oppressive foreign empire had to resist strongly their enemies and defend their own values. This part of the argumentation can probably be understood as a warning against the possible abuses of power of the Hellenistic dominators, particularly when they became tyrannical.

Regarding the dating and the historical context of production, the book of Esther was certainly written within a Judean circle significantly influenced by the Hellenistic culture. This kind of circle, which had access to some of the masterpieces of Greek historical literature, and was able to produce a book at the frontier between Greek and Judean ways of thinking, never existed before the middle of the 3rd century BCE. They probably first appeared in the Judean *diaspora* living in the great cities of Egypt and of Syria. Later, during the Seleucid period, such circles gradually developed in the city of Jerusalem, as the latter became more and more Hellenized.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The word “persica” designates a literary genre dealing only with the Persian world. Ctesias’ *Persica* is the most famous of them but some citations let us know the existence of other “persicae” in the Greek literature (see F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* (Leiden: Brill, 1958), 687–690).

⁴⁶ In Macchi, “textes d’Esther,” I argued that the redaction of the

proto-Esther (the oldest text of Esther of which the Alpha text is a translation—without the additions) should be situated in Alexandrian diaspora during the 3rd century and that the Massoretic text resulted in a rewriting process during the Maccabean period.

NAHUM 1: PROPHET, SENET, AND DIVINATION

PHILIPPE GUILLAUME

NAHUM 1, ALPHABETIC?

Nahum begins with a Psalm. In the nineteenth century, Pastor Frohnmeyer realized that this psalm follows an alphabetic pattern. There are eight alphabetic psalms in the Book of Psalms, four in Book I (Pss 9–10; 25; 34; 37) and four in book V (Pss 111; 112; 119; 145), another four in the book of Lamentations and one in Proverbs. These alphabetic acrostics are based on the alphabetic sequence from א to ת.¹ They only vary as to some missing letters and to the number of lines attributed to each letter.² Compared to these poems, Nahum 1 remains a puzzle because its alphabetic sequence is both partial and irregular. Irregular since line ט begins with א, line י begins with ז, and line יא begins with י. The acrostic is partial because the alphabetic sequence ends before the letter ת. In

¹ D. N. Freedman, “Acrostic Poems in the Hebrew Bible, Alphabetic and Otherwise,” *CBQ* 48 (1986), 408–31; W. M. Soll, “Babylonian and Biblical Acrostics,” *Bib* 69 (1988), 305–23; J. F. Brug, “Biblical Acrostics and their Relationship to Other Ancient Near Eastern Acrostics,” W. W. Hallo, B. W. Jones, & G. L. Mattingly (eds), *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1990), 283–304.

² Psalm 9/10 is missing seven letters. Psalm 25 is missing a י and a ק. Psalm 34 is missing י. Psalms 25 and 34 have an extra verse beginning with the letter ז added to the end. Psalm 37 is missing a verse for the letter פ. Psalm 145 is missing a י line: R. Benun, “Evil and the Disruption of Order: Structural Analysis of the Acrostics in the First Book of Psalms,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 6 (2006) article 5, table 1. (Available at <http://www.jhsonline.org>) But Sir 51:13ff covered the full alphabetic sequence. See 11QPs^a (*DJD* IV.79–85).

the margin of the BHS, the editors reproduced the alphabetic sequence until כ, but there is no consensus over the identification of the final line of the Psalm. To further complicate the matter, the א verse occupies three lines, the last one transmitting the traditional confession of Exod 34:6–7 with the replacement of רב גדל with רב חסד.

Since the discovery of the alphabetic acrostic, research has remained divided between those who seek to restore the alphabetic sequence and those who reject the notion of an alphabetic sequence all together. Since it seems highly improbable that a poet would deliberately choose to write a poem that is *partly* acrostic,³ either the seven letters that follow each other in alphabetical sequence do so by pure coincidence, or the original acrostic has been messed up.

Having recently studied the problem, Klaas Spronk strikes a middle position. He rejects attempts to recover the entire alphabetic sequence of twenty-two letters but accepts the presence of a partial acrostic which he restores as far as letter ו.⁴ This, however, does not explain the irregularities of the sequence. These scribal games find their accomplishment in the fact that they cover the entire alphabet, which Nahum 1 fails to do. In short, Nahum 1 has too many letters in the right order to dismiss its alphabetic character altogether, but too many deviations to explain them as accidents of transmission. Because the various changes suggested in the critical apparatus of the BHS have no textual support, one has to admit that the alphabetic sequence was carefully transmitted complete with the irregularities. A. Van Selms suggested that the acrostic was intentionally destroyed in order to prevent any magical associations with the alphabet.⁵ Since the use of Homeric and Biblical texts for

³ J. Nogalski, "The Redactional shaping of Nahum 1 for the Book of the Twelve," P. R. Davies & D. J. A. Clines (eds), *Among the Prophets* (JSOTSup, 144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 193–202 (199). H.-J. Fabry, *Nahum* (Freiburg: Herder, 2006), 132 also doubts the value of the acrostic hypothesis.

⁴ K. Spronk, "Acrostics in the Book of Nahum," *ZAW* 110 (1998), 209–222. A. Pinker, "Nahum 1: Acrostic and Authorship," *JBQ* 34 (2006), 97–103, accepts that Nahum was not adverse to use the acrostic format but did not rigorously adhere to its requirements.

⁵ A. van Selms, "The Alphabetic Hymn in Nahum 1," *OTWSA* 12 (1969), 33–45 (42).

mantic purposes is well attested⁶ in spite of sharp critiques of prophetic predictions of the future (Isa 9:15–16; Mic 3:5, 11; Zech 13:2–4), Van Selms has the merit of offering a rationale for the misplaced letters. His intuition that magic was part of the solution led me to explore the function of Nahum 1 in reference to the game of *senet*. Before addressing these matters, a few words about this ancient game are in order.

THE SENET OF TWENTY HOUSES

The most famous board game from ancient Egypt is *senet*, a designation covering two different games: the *senet* of thirty houses and the *senet* of twenty houses or game of twenty squares.⁷ A board for the *senet* of thirty houses is composed of 3 rows of 10 squares. Pawns follow an S shape path (boustrophedon) on the board to reach their destination:

⁶ P. W. van der Horst, "Sortes: Sacred Books as Instant Oracles in Late Antiquity," L. V. Rutgers, P. W. van der Horst, H. W. Havelaar, & L. Teugels (eds), *The Use of Sacred Books in the Ancient World* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 143–174 = P. W. van der Horst, *Japhet in the Tents of Shem* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 159–190 (179). T. Ritti, "Oraculi alfabetici a Hierapolis di Frigia," *MRG* 14 (1989), 243–86. R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Penguin Books, 1988); J. Champeaux, "Sorts et divination inspirée: pour une préhistoire des oracles italiens," *MEFR* 102 (1990), 801–828. W. E. Klingshirn, "Defining the Sortes Sanctorum: Gibbon, Du Cange, and Early Christian Lot Divination," *J ECS* 10 (2002), 77–130. The mantic use of the Bible is well attested among Jews and Christians. The oldest references are biblical (1 Macc 3:48; 2 Macc 8:23). The Qumran War Scroll contains a whole series of short biblical expressions written on the banners of the eschatological army. WS 4:14 could be the passage referred to in 2 Macc 8:23, or it comes from Ps 3:9. Such mantic practices always had a positive "randomizing" effect, the non-programmed response, that is, not just saying what the inquirer wishes to hear and forcing one to think carefully about the issue. In that respect, they exemplified the 'resistance' of divine revelation: H. B. Huffmon, "The Oracular Process: Delphi and the Near East," *VT* 57 (2007), 449–460.

⁷ E. B. Pusch, "The Egyptian 'Game of Twenty Squares,'" I. L. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games in Perspective* (London: British Museum Press, 2007), 69–86.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 20 | 19 | 18 | 17 | 6 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 11 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

Some senet boards carry on their reverse side another game previously designated as *Tjan* or *Tau* “robbers: but now simply referred to as the game of twenty squares. This game was introduced in Egypt from Mesopotamia where it is attested in the third millennium at Ur and at Shahr-i Sokhta (Iran). In its third millennium shape, the board consisted of a 3 x 4 squares block on one side and a 2 x 2 squares block on the other extremity linked by a central bridge of two squares:⁸

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| * | | | | | | * | |
| | | | * | | | | |
| * | | | | | | * | |

During the second millennium, the disposition of the board was slightly modified with a lengthened central row of twelve squares (3 x 4 + 8) while the position of the rosettes or crosses retained some similarity:⁹

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| * | ← | ← | start | | | | | | | | |
| → | → | → | * | → | → | → | * | → | → | → | * finish |
| * | ← | ← | start | | | | | | | | |

⁸ I. L. Finkel, “On the Rules for the Royal Game of Ur,” I. L. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games in Perspective* (London: British Museum Press, 2007), 16–32. For the boards, C. L. Wooley, *The Royal Cemetery of Ur* (Ur Excavations II; London: 1934) and M. Pipertino & S. Salvatori, “Recent Results and New Perspectives from the Research at the Graveyard of Shahr-I Sokhta, Sistan, Iran,” *Annali. Revista del dipartimento di studi asiatici e del dipartimento di studi e ricerche su Africa e paesi arabi* 43 (1983), 173–91.

⁹ See E. B. Pusch, “Egyptian Game,” 71.

A hundred of such boards were found across the Orient. Instead of the S shape trajectory followed on thirty squared senet boards, on twenty squared boards pawns follow a J shape course. At first they go backwards for 4 squares before turning in the opposite direction and joining the central row towards the “finish” square. The rules of the game are not known precisely and may have varied, but the general principle is clear. Each player has a number of pawns kept in a reserve. The players use knucklebones as a randomising device. The aim is to be the first player to land all of one’s pieces on the last square or off the board. The players throw once alternately, and move a single piece by the appropriate number of positions. A move must be made and made in full. If no move is possible, the turn is forfeited. Pieces move forward only. The function of the rosette or cross found sometimes on squares 4, 8, 12, and 16 is not clear. When a pawn lands on a square occupied by one of the opponent’s pawns, it probably swallows it and sends it back to the reserve. To bring the first piece or each piece on the first square of the board, a particular throw is required—a double six or any other double—and when that happens, the player gets an extra throw and moves the piece by that amount.

In Egypt, the game of twenty houses is restricted to 17th to 21st dynasty contexts, but captions on the side of double-sided boards are always written in such a way that the twenty squares game is on top.¹⁰ In Syria-Palestine, senet boards are found mainly in Late Bronze contexts¹¹ but continue into the Iron Age with the

¹⁰ P. A. Piccione, “The Egyptian Game of Senet and the Migration of the Soul,” I. L. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games in Perspective* (London: British Museum Press, 2007), 54–63 (55).

¹¹ J. W. Meyer, “Lebermodell oder Spielbrett,” R. Hachmann (ed.), *Bericht über die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen in Kamid el-Lôz in den Jahren 1971 bis 1974* (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt, 1982), 53–79 provides a convenient classification and bibliography. See J. W. Meyer, “Die Spielbretter KL 78:534 und KL 78:536bis,” R. Hachmann (ed.), *Kamid el-Lôz 1977–81* (1986), 123–6; Y. Yadin, *The James A. de Rothschild Expedition at Hazor 2* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1960) table 78,6; W. M. F. Petrie, *Ancient Gaza 3* (British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 55; London: 1933) Pl. XXVIII:364 (Dynasty XV, double sided senet); E. Grant, *Rumeileh being Ain Shems Excavations 3* (Biblical and Kindred studies, 5; Haverford: Haverford College, 1932) Pl. 20:2 and abb. 4, limestone, 152–118 cm, MB-LB; G. Loud, *The Megiddo Ivories* (OIP, 52; Chicago: University Press, 1959) Pl. 47–51 Str. VII, ivory. P. Guillaume, “New Games from Me-

latest examples found in the Assyrian heartland of 7th century BCE.¹²

NAHUM 1 AND THE SENET GRID

The game of twenty squares provides a rationale for the irregularities of the acrostic without any deletions or additions. Unlike alphabetic Psalms which are intellectual games by themselves, in Nah 1:2–11 the game takes place on a board of twenty squares. Each verse of the Psalm is examined to explain its function.

Verse 1 is the superscription and as such it does not belong to the acrostic Psalm which starts in verse 2. The superscription, however, creates with verses 2 and 3a a rare biblical example of an acrostic-teletic game, using both the first and the last letters of the lines to produce the words אַנִּי (acrostic) and יהוה (teletic):¹³

משא נינהו ספר חזון נחום האלקשי
אל קנוא ונקם יהוה נקם יהוה ובעל חמה
נקם יהוה לצריו ונוטר הוא לאיביו
יהוה ארך אפים וגדול-כוח ונקם לא ינקם יהוה

I attribute lines 2 and 3 of the acrostic-teletic to the same hand as the superscription. These lines tie up the superscription to the beginning of the alphabetic Psalm that begins with the א of אל קנוא. The insertion of the last two lines of the acrostic made the א line three times longer than the other lines and now blurs the be-

giddo,” I. Finkelstein and D. Ussishkin (eds), *Megiddo V* (Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2010; forthcoming).

¹² W. F. Albright, *Beit Mirsim volume 2: the Bronze Age in AASOR* 18 (1936–1937) § 45, p. 133 Pl. 37, reproduced in J. B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: 1954) plate 214; W. M. F. Petrie & O. Tufnell, *Beth-Pelet 1* (London: 1930) Plate XL:481 (doubled senet); P. J. Riis & M.-L. Buhl, *Hama II.2, les objets de la période dite syro-bittite* (København: Nationalmuseet, 1990), 243 no. 958; P. J. Riis, *Hama II.3, les cimetières à crémation* (København: Nationalmuseet, 1948), 174–6: ivory or bone, LB-Iron Age. A. Becker, “The Royal Game of Ur,” I. L. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games in Perspective* (London: British Museum Press, 2007), 11–15.

¹³ Spronk, “Acrostics,” 216–7 has a slightly different arrangement with the acrostic Psalm beginning with the א of ארך in verse 3.

ginning of the alphabetic Psalm, which explains why it remained unnoticed until the nineteenth century.

Verse 2a is the א-line of the acrostic Psalm and corresponds to square 1 of the board with the following warning to the players:

אל קנא ונקם יהוה נקם יהוה ובעל חמה

A jealous and avenging God is YHWH, avenging is YHWH and Lord of wrath.

The alphabetic acrostic continues with ב, square 2 on the board.

בסופה ובשערה דרכו וענן אבק רגליו

By storm and by gale his way, a cloud of dust his feet.

Like Jonah 2, the Nahum Psalm is made of stock expressions found elsewhere in the Bible.¹⁴ Used to describe Jacob's wrestling match at the Jabbok (Gen 32:25), אבק evokes the dust swirled up by charging horses (Ezek 26:10) and heralds the struggle the pawn is about to encounter when it reaches the central bridge. As אבק derives from Greek ἀβακιστον 'scoring board' or ἄβαξ 'abacus,' a calculation table strewn with sand, the word is rather well chosen as a reference to the senet board used to determine the divine will as well as playing with friends (Prov 1:14).¹⁵

גוער בים ויבשהו וכל־הנהרות החרב

Rebuking the sea and drying it, all the rivers he makes dry.

Travelling on Square 3 (ג), the pawn is still within the safe zone of the first four squares since it has not yet joined the central row where it will be liable to attacks from the opponent's pawns. The theophanic language refers to YHWH who utters a threatening roar (Pss 18:16; 76:7; 104:7).

אמלל בשן וכרמל ופרח לבנן אמלל

¹⁴ See Spronk, *Nahum*, 28–58.

¹⁵ HALOT, 9. N. Purcell, "Inscribed Imperial Roman Gaming-Boards," I. L. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games in Perspective* (London: British Museum Press, 2007), 90–7. For examples of boards scratched on stones and ostraka: J.-M. L'Hôte, *Histoire des jeux de société* (Paris: Flammarion, 1994), 124.

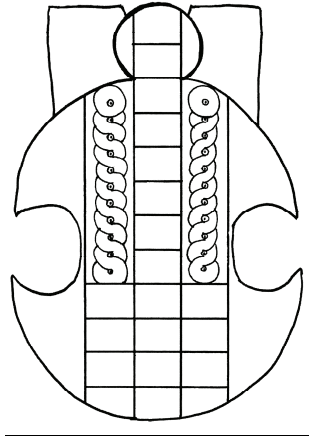
Dwindle Bashan, Carmel and bloom of Lebanon dwindle! (4b)

Instead of beginning with ד, verse 4b is framed by a double אַמלל. This initial א is the first irregularity in the alphabetic sequence. Line ד is also missing in Psalm 9 while some twenty squared boards bear a star, a cross, a rosette, or a sacred symbol on this square as on every fourth square.¹⁶ Contrary to the petulant tone of יבש and חרב in the previous line, אַמלל “to dwindle, dry up” has negative connotations implying harmful consequences for the pawn landing on this square. Instead of following the BHS which suggests ‘correcting’ the first word with a word beginning with a ד (דלל), the game provides a simple answer. This irregular א pawn sends pawns landing on square 4 back to square 1 (א), a backward leap similar to the one indicated by lines marked on boards of the Hounds and Jackals.¹⁷ The fact that the Megiddo boards of the 58-hole type carry on the reverse a twenty squares game (Fig. 1) supports the contention that the alphabetical abnormalities in the sequence of the Nahum Psalm derive from the same principle of gain and loss incurred at particular positions on the board.

¹⁶ . B. Pusch, “Twenty Squares,” 70–73.

¹⁷ Also designated as the 58-hole game: Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use* (British School of Archaeology in Egypt: 42; London: 1927), 55. These marks link different holes and indicate that pegs landing on hole 6 move forward to hole 20 and vice-versa. Additional marking at holes 8 and 10 imply similar leaps forward and backward. J. W. Meyer, “Lebermodell,” 58 adds moves from 5 to 29, 25 or 30; 10 to 24 or 25; 15 to 23, 21, or 24; and 20 to 22. This race game originated in Egypt around 2100 BCE and is attested by six Late Bronze Age boards in Palestine: Loud, *Megiddo Ivories*, Plate 49b, republished (?) in E. Fischer, *Ägyptische und ägyptisierende Elfenbeine aus Megiddo und Lachisch. Inschriftenfunde, Flaschen, Löffel* (AOAT, 47; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2007). Again, the latest examples are Assyrians dated to the sixth century BCE: A. J. Hoerth, “The Game of Hounds and Jackals,” I. L. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games in Perspective* (London: British Museum Press, 2007), 64–68.

Figure 1: Twenty Squares boards at the verso of a 58-hole board,
Megiddo Ivories Pl. 47



הרים רעשו ממנו והגבעות התמגגו
ותשא הארץ מפניו ותבל וכל-ישיבי בה

Mountains quake from him, heights come apart.

The land rises in front of him, the earth and all residents in it
(5).

Squares 5 and 6 (ה"ו) form the first squares of the central bridge where pawns reverse the direction of their progression on the board. The pawns of the two opponents now use the same squares and risk being knocked out if one of the opponent's pawns lands on the same square. Besides their initial letters, the content of the lines seems somewhat relevant to the situation of the players who have plenty to fear as their pawns venture forth onto the central row and find themselves at the mercy of divine whim. Thanks to the ambiguity of the masculine pronoun, the standard theophanic images of YHWH who causes mountains to shake apply to the pawn which is likely to encounter a storm from square ה on. At square ו, the "him" in front of whom the land raises is both YHWH and the player and his pawn as it progresses towards the finish.

לפני זעמו מי יעמוד ומי יקום בחרון אפו

In front of his curse who stands up, who stands up in the heat
of his anger? (6a)

The expected ז line begins with ל . Spronk, following the BHS and most commentators, move לפני from the beginning to the end of the first colon (and adds a ו to לפני) in order to recover an initial ז : $\text{זעמו מי יעמוד לפניו}$.¹⁸ As suggested above for the missing ד in verse 4b, the senet board indicates that pawns landing on square 7 (ז) move directly to square 12 (ל). This is a positive move since it brings the piece five squares closer to the finish. Such an advantageous move does not square up with the meaning of the line referring to YHWH's threatening anger, unless the threat is taken over by the triumphant player whose good fortune begins to make him feel irresistible.

חמתו נתכה כאש והצרים נתצו ממנו

His wrath is poured out like fire, the rocks are smashed from it
(6b).

Square ח is the eighth and corresponds to the second square marked on some boards with a rosette. The angry tone of the line (חמתו "his wrath") suggests that upon reaching square 8 pawns suffer a major loss. In light of the 'well' or 'trap' on square 27 of thirty squared boards,¹⁹ pieces are probably sent back to the reserve or they are incorporated into the adversary's ranks. Double-sided boards commonly found in Egypt would facilitate the use of a similar principle on different games. Incidentally, the only double-sided board found outside Egypt was discovered at Hazor.²⁰

טוב יהוה למעוז ביום צרה

Good is YHWH as a fortress²¹ in the day of anxiety (7a).

¹⁸ Spronk, "Acrostics," 213.

¹⁹ P. A. Piccione, "The Egyptian game of Senet and the migration of the soul," I. L. Finkel (ed.), *Ancient Board Games in Perspective* (London: British Museum Press, 2007), 54–63.

²⁰ M. Sebbane, "Board Games from Canaan in the Early and Intermediate Bronze Ages and the Origin of the Egyptian "Senet" Game," *TA* 28 (2001), 213–30 (693).

²¹ Or following a suggestion by L. Zalcman, "Intertextuality at Nahum 1,7," *ZAW* 116 (2004), 614–5, the awkward למעוז may be improved into לעמו עז and read "The Lord is good to his people, a refuge in time of

As is the case of thirty squared boards which juxtapose the good square (*nfi*, square 26) and the fatal house of water (*mm*, square 27²²), wrath and refuge stand next to each other at squares ה and ט. Pawns landing on square ה are knocked off the board while on square ט pawns are safe and cannot be bumped off the board if an enemy pawn lands on it as well.

Spronk considers that the acrostic ends at letter ט since the phrase **טוב יהוה** echoes the authorial formula **אני יהוה** in verse 2 and constitutes a ‘perfect’ ending.²³ However, at least one more letter can be recovered in the following lines as the BHS shows.

וידע חסי בו ובשטף עבר

He knows those spared by him although he passed through a flood (7b–8a)

The question of how far the acrostic continues is crucial. Spronk refuses to go beyond the letter ט because the י line begins with י. If the irregularities of the alphabetic sequence indicate particular moves on the senet board, the fact that the י line begins with a י can not be the decisive factor to identify the end of the acrostic Psalm. This initial י can be understood as sending pawns landing on square 10 four positions back to square 6. The meaning of the line matches the move. The piece is washed away by a flood although not to the point of being drowned completely as YHWH spares the player.²⁴

כלה יעשה מקומה ואיביו ירדף־חשך

A completion he will make of rising, his enemies he will pursue in darkness (8aβ–β).

trouble.”

²² A small senet of 30 Squares grid scratched on a stone in Megiddo also bears a cross at Square 27: P. Guillaume, “New Games from Megiddo.” K. Spronk, “The Line Acrostic in Nahum 1,” *Pericope* 2008 shows that the Greek Codex Marchalianus indicates the importance of this line with a capital *Chi*.

²³ Spronk, “Acrostics,” 219.

²⁴ That verb **חוס** is also the key of Jonah’s conclusion (Jonah 4:10–11) and suggests that the senet is relevant to the book of Jonah as well.

The first כ refers to position 11 on the board. This line bears a promise of completing the ascent toward the finishing square or a threat to be pursued back into darkness.

There is no ל line at this point. This, however, does not mean that there is no ל square on the board since this square has already been mentioned at square 6 which starts with ל instead of ז. Therefore, square 12, the third square marked with a rosette on some boards, is the destination of the fortunate piece landing on square 6.

מה־תחשבון אליהוה כלה הוא עשה

What are you calculating about YHWH? A completion he has made (9a).

Line מ follows logically after ל. In the BHS layout, it is too short. It should be completed with the remaining words of verse 9a indicated by the *atnah* under עשה. Because it appears in astronomical and astrological contexts in the sense of calculating the positions of stars or planets,²⁵ תחשבון is usually understood as negative scheming. It is used in Jonah 1:4 for the boat reckoned as broken which aptly reflects the situation of the pawn landing on square 13 since it is impossible to get a sum of three with two astragali in order to reach the finish (see below). As the pawn landing on this square is stuck there, it is “finished” in the negative sense of כלה. The only way out is to be swallowed by one of the adversary’s pawn and be sent to the reserve in order to start all over again. Although the senet is mostly a game of chance, there is a limited amount of strategy involved. A player may avoid this square if he/she has another pawn to move on the board. Hence the need to calculate the best moves available.

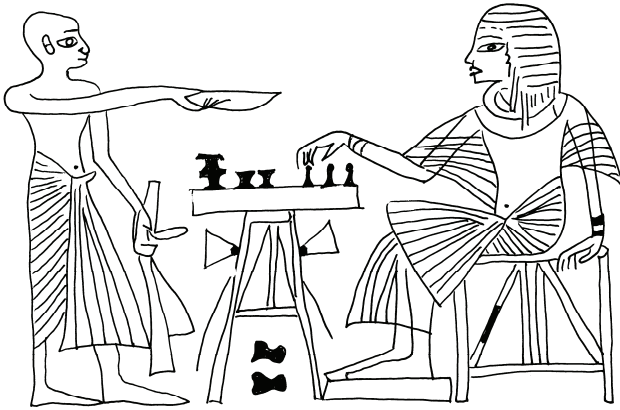
לא־תקום פעמים צרה כי עד־סירים סבכים וכסבאם סבואים

You will not rise a second time. Anxiety, because [you are] before entwined thorns, bound as bindweed (9b–10a).

²⁵ M. Albani, “Horoscopes in the Qumran Scrolls,” P. W. Flint & J. C. Vanderkam (eds), *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 279–330 (290): 4Q209 25:3; 26:7; 4Q204 13.24; J. Holo, “Hebrew Astrology in Byzantine Southern Italy,” P. Magdalino & M. Mavroudi (eds), *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium* (Genève: la Pomme d’or, 2006), 291–324.

Verse 9b begins with 𐤋 as verse 6a does. This second initial 𐤋 , corresponding to square 14 on the board (see above), sends the piece back to square 12 (𐤋). In fact, going back is beneficial since the only way to reach the finish from square 14 is by getting two ones in one throw. This brings up the question of the randomizing devices used. A senet scene painted in an Egyptian tomb shows two astragali under the playing board (Fig. 2):²⁶

Figure 2: Tomb drawing of senet game, Egypt 19th dynasty
(ca. 1200 BCE)



Ten centuries after this painting, a cuneiform tablet from Babylon (see below) confirms that two astragali are used for the game of twenty squares, a small one from a sheep and another one from a bovine.²⁷ Thanks to their shape, astragali are naturally loaded dice. We know from classical sources that the convex wide side of astragali, which have four uneven sides, is worth three ($\alpha\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma \ \upsilon\pi\tau\iota\omicron\varsigma$ “stomach”). The wide hollow side ($\alpha\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma \ \pi\rho\alpha\nu\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$ “back”) is worth 4. Its shape recalls that of a boat.²⁸ The flat narrow side ($\alpha\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma \ \chi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ or $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\omega\nu$ canis “dog,” or vulturous “eagle”) is worth 1 and is considered the worst throw. The narrow “S” side ($\alpha\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma \ \kappa\omega\omicron\varsigma$ “Cos”) is worth 6 and is

²⁶ From L’Hôte, *Histoire*, 606: ca. 1200 BCE.

²⁷ Finkel, “Rules,” 20.

²⁸ It is probably not a coincidence that the LXX renders $\alpha\sigma\tau\rho\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ and $\kappa\omega\omicron\varsigma$ in Jonah 1:3, 4, 5 *four* times by $\pi\lambda\omicron\iota\omicron\nu$ “boat”?

statistically the least common since astragali fall on the wide sides (3 and 4) with a frequency of 75% of the throws, providing the following ten combinations:²⁹

$$\begin{array}{llll} 1 + 1 = 2 & 3 + 3 = 6 & 4 + 4 = 8 & 4 + 6 = 10 \\ 1 + 3 = 4 & 1 + 6 = 7 & 3 + 6 = 9 & 6 + 6 = 12 \\ 1 + 4 = 5 & 3 + 4 = 7 & & \end{array}$$

It is difficult but not impossible to throw a double one (פעמים dual form) to reach the finish, but the access is barred by thorns. For this reason, the pawn is sent back two squares as prescribed by the initial ל.

אכלו כקש יבש מלא ממך יצא חשב

They are eaten like dry straw completely. From you came out a reckoning (10b–11a).

The last square before the finish sends the pawn back to square א. This makes sense since with two astragali, it is impossible to score one to reach square 16 from square 15. The final line of the acrostic Psalm begins with ע and corresponds to square 16, the finish square:

על-יהוה רעה יעץ בליעל

Against YHWH misfortune advises a good-for-nothing! (11aβ–b).

The Psalm concludes with an imprecation functioning as a congratulation in reverse. Reaching square ע is impossible without YHWH's help which proves that the lucky player is not a good-for-nothing. Pawns leave the game upon reaching square ע after having thrown the exact number of squares to reach it.

The end of the acrostic is clearly marked by the formula כה יהוה אומר introducing the next pericope at verse 12 and by the *setuma* between verses 11 and 12.³⁰ The acrostic sequence is com-

²⁹ U. Schädler, "Spielen mit Astragalen," *AA* 1 (1996), 61–73. J. Tallardat, *Suétone: peri paidon, peri blasphemion, extraits byzantins* (Paris: Belles Lettres: 1967), 155. Piccione, "Migration," 54–63, with calculations of probability and frequency of throws at page 57.

³⁰ This ending seems preferable to the 'perfect ending' at verse 7 suggested in K. Spronk, "Nahum, and the Book of the Twelve: A Response to Jakob Wöhrle," *JHS* 9 (2009) article 8, p. 5 available at <http://www.jhsonline.org>

א-ב-ג-ד (ה-ו) ז-ח-ט (י) כ-ל-מ-נ (ס) ע-פ-צ

אֵל קִנּוּא וּנְקָם יִהְיֶה נֶקֶם יִהְיֶה וּבַעַל חֲמָה

בסופה ובשערה דרכו וענן אבק רגליו

גוער בים ויבשהו וכל-הנהרות החריב

אמלל בשן וכרמל ופרח לבנן אמלל

הרים רעשו ממנו והגבעות התמגגו

ותשא הארץ מפניו ותבל וכל-ישבי בה

לפני זעמו מי יעמוד ומי יקום בחרון אפו

חמתו נתכה כאש והצרים נתצו ממנו

טוב יהוה למעוז ביום צרה

וידע חסי בו ובשטף עבר

כלה יעשה מקומה ואיביו ירדף-חשך

[٧]

מה-תחשבון אל-יהוה כלה הוא עשה

לֹא־תִקּוּם פַּעֲמַיִם צָרָה כִּי עַד סִירִים סִבְכִּים וְכִסְבָּאִם סְבוּאִים

אכלו כקש יבש מלא ממך זצא חשב

על-יהוה רעה יעץ בליעל

Line 13 (irregular ♚ instead of ♜) is longer than the others, which may be a reminder not to forget attributing line 12 to ♚ in spite of the lack of a specific ♚ square which serves as the destination of pawns landing on squares 7 and 14. The entire grid with the corresponding lines looks like this:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| א | ב | ג | ד | Reserve 3 black pawns | | | | | | | |
| ה | ו | ז | חמה | טוב | י | כ | ל | מ | נ | ס | ע |
| א | ב | ג | ד | Reserve 3 white pawns | | | | | | | |

The sequence provides one leap forward of five squares (7 to 12) against four leaps backwards. Square 7 sends the pawn back to square 8 (square 4 to square 1), square 7 to 1 (10 to 6), square 1 to 5 (14 to 12), and square 5 to 8 (15 to 1) representing losses of two, four, and fourteen squares. Some of these “set-backs” are actually beneficial. As it is impossible to throw one with two astragali, pawns ending on square 19 would remain stuck on that square if they were not sent back to square 1. It is not impossible to reach the final square from square 18, but since it requires the throw of a double one, moving back to square 11 increases the chances of the pawn reaching the final square. Besides the moves indicated by acrostic irregularities, the first words of lines 8 (חמתו) and 9 (טוב) indicate that at square 8 pawns are knocked out of the board and sent back to the reserve, while square 9 is a safe haven where pawns are protected and cannot be swallowed by the adversary. The juxtaposition of good and bad squares reflects the juxtaposition of the House of happiness and the House of water at squares 26 and 27 on boards of senet of thirty houses.³¹

Taking into consideration the special moves and the absence of faces worth two and five on astragali, square 9 can only be reached through the following combinations:

3 + 1 from square 12

4 + 1 from square 11

4 + 3 or 6 + 1 from square 9

6 + 4 from square 6

As seven is the only sum that can be obtained in two different ways with the astragali (1 + 6 and 3 + 4) and as three and four are obtained from the two wide sides of the astragali, square טוב is indeed the best square from which to reach the finish.

The irregularities of the acrostic reflect a conscious scheme aimed at reducing the accessibility of the finish square in order to enhance the fight. As a double six would theoretically allow reaching the finish directly from square 4 without risking being swallowed by the opponent's pawns on the central line, the initial 8 of line 4 of the Nahum Psalm sends the pawn back to square 1. Square 10 sends back the pawn to square 6 (7) and prevents access to the finish with double 3. Square 8 (ח) does not constitute an anomaly in the alphabetic order but, by sending the pawn back to

³¹ L'Hôte, *Histoire*, 606; Piccione, “Migration,” 58.

the reserve, it also bars direct access to the finish by throwing a double four. Square 13 (𐤒) is a trap reflected in the corresponding phrase “*What are you calculating about YHWH? A completion he has made!*” Squares 14 and 15, however, preserve the pawn from such a predicament by sending it back to squares 7 and 1 respectively.

The stakes are high against the players although they are not entirely helpless. Contrarily to the game of Hounds and Jackals that is entirely governed by chance, this version of the game of twenty squares introduces an element of human strategy. As long as a player has more than one piece on board, he or she has the possibility of choosing which pawn to move in order to avoid falling into one of the traps.³² Similarly, the throw of a double can afford the choice between bringing a new piece on board or of advancing a pawn already on the board if such move is favourable. Through the astragali, however, the divinity remains firmly in command. The game is a faithful reflection of human fate.

The game hypothesis explains why the acrostic Psalm in Nahum 1 is both irregular and incomplete. The first four squares bear the same letters on both sides since they have the same function for each player. The board of Twenty Squares only uses the first sixteen letters of the alphabet (𐤀 to 𐤐) which is why the Nahum 1 acrostic is incomplete. All its irregularities are explained as logical moves of the pawns on the board without emending the text. Standing outside the 𐤀 line of the Psalm, the superscription (Nah 1:1) was inserted after the Psalm was composed and placed as the introduction of the dirge over Nineveh. The same can be said about the acrostic-telestic (Nah 1:2b–3a) which tripled the 𐤀 line. Spronk notes that the gentilic אלקשי in Nahum’s superscription forms a parallel pair with אל קנוא in the next line illustrated by a surprising echo in Song 8:6 קשה כשאל קנאה “Hard as Sheol is jealousy.”³³ The connection with the Song of Songs suggests a late date for the superscription. That the authorial acrostic-telestic quotes the confession of Exod 34:6–7 as do Joel 2:12, Jonah 3:9; 4:2; Mic 2:8; 7:18–20 indicates with a high degree of probability that the Psalm was produced before the formation of the collection of the Twelve Minor Prophets.³⁴ This means that the Psalm was

³² Pusch, “Twenty Squares,” 73.

³³ Spronk, “Acrostics,” 217.

³⁴ R. C. van Leeuwen, “Scribal Wisdom and Theodicy in the Book of the Twelve,” L. G. Perdue, B. B. Scott, & W. J. Wiseman (eds), *In Search of*

inserted in front of a little collection of oracles concerning Nineveh (Nah 2:8; 3:1, 7) and Assyria (Nah 3:18) before the ensemble was classified as the Book of the vision of Nahum and became one of the Twelve Minor Prophets.

The general terms in which the Psalm is couched can fit any context,³⁵ but its line divisions and semi-acrostic nature only fit a board game of twenty squares for which it provides a set of rules. Practice shows that the rules are functional. With three pawns per player, and two astragali, it takes about ten minutes for one of the players to land all his or her pieces on the last square. The question now is to determine whether this senet was a mere game or if it had a deeper function. Were senet boards used for divination?

THE GAME OF TWENTY SQUARES AND DIVINATION

Ancient notions of recreation, including sport events, competitions, and games were not as divorced from religious activity as they appear to be in modern western practice. Ancient societies did not interpret the outcome of randomizing devices as chance, but associated them to divine will. Senet boards were conduits between the living and the dead, permitting contact between the two.³⁶ Senet was imbued with a religious significance of its own.³⁷ Several sources transmit what is now known as the 'Great game-text' related to a ritual game of senet performed at tombs involving some kind of recitation and play of the game with the deceased as a means of spiritual renewal.³⁸ Such rituals provide a clue that the verses of the Nahum Psalm could be sung by the players as their pieces landed on the corresponding squares. Besides the importance of the senet board, astragali were also endowed with special

Wisdom (Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 31–49; and the discussion between J. Wöhrle, "A Prophetic Reflection on Divine Forgiveness: The Integration of the Book of Jonah into the Book of the Twelve," *JHS* 9 (2009), article 7, available at <http://www.jhsonline.org> and K. Spronk, "Jonah, Nahum, and the Book of the Twelve: A Response to Jakob Wöhrle."

³⁵ W. J. Wessels, "Yahweh, the Awesome God. Perspectives from Nahum 1," *JSS* 14 (2005), 55–73 (66).

³⁶ C. Laughlin, "Revealing the hidden: the Epiphanic Dimension of Games and Sport," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 7 (1993), 85–104.

³⁷ Piccione, "Migration," 59.

³⁸ Piccione, "Migration," 60–2.

significance. They were placed as foundation deposits at Tell Afis in Syria. Astragali were also found in large quantities scattered throughout the Beer-Sheva II level. An astragal found at the Hellenistic site of Sha'ar-Ha'amakim in Lower Galilee is inscribed with a dedication to Hermes, the messenger of the gods.³⁹

Compared to extispicy and divinatory techniques based on the observation of natural phenomena (bird flights...) which all required hours or days before returning an answer and involved expensive offerings, astragali were economical on all accounts. The "yes/no" answers of astragali, like those delivered by urim and thummim,⁴⁰ may have been considered wanting when important decisions had to be taken, unless they were associated to more elaborate devices like a board game. Divination offers an interesting context for the nature of a text like Nahum 1 which is made up of snippets which do not constitute a coherent narrative. Obviously one needs no board-game to throw lots and read the corresponding line in a Psalm. Similar procedures were commonly used with Homer and later with the Bible, by pointing to a passage with a

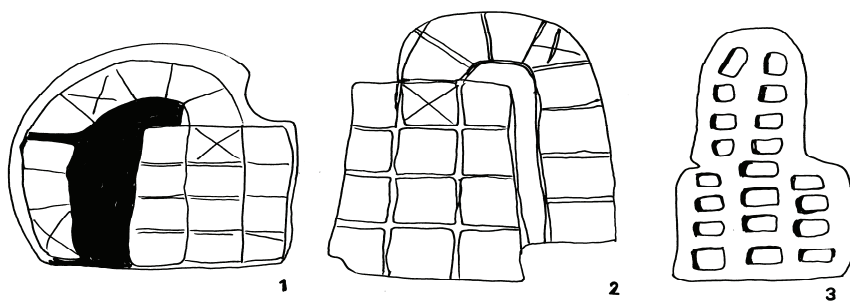
³⁹ Two groups of 37 and 43 astragali as foundation deposits: F. Venturi, "Deux dépôts de fondation d'astragales à Tell Afis (Syrie)," *Orient Express* 1 (2006), 27–29. A. Sasson, "Corpus of 694 Astragali from Stratum II at Tel Beersheba," *TA* 34 (2007), 171–81; G. Bar-Oz, "An Inscribed Astragalus with Dedication to Hermes," *NEA* 64 (2001), 211–213, found in a water cistern dated to the Hellenistic period. J. R. Dandoy, "Astragali through Time," J. M. Maltby (ed.), *Integrating Zooarchaeology* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2006), 131–137. G. H. Gilmour, "The Nature and Function of Astragalus Bones from Archaeological Contexts in the Levant and Eastern Mediterranean," *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 16 (1997), 167–175. A. Brody, *"Each Man Cried out to His God": the Specialized Religion of Canaanite and Phoenician Seafarers* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1998). Opened in 2008, Megiddo area Q (Iron II) has yielded over 60 astragali, some of which clearly were artifacts. The wood and branches used for divination (Hos 4:12) seem to be Egyptian throwing sticks that the prophet considers illegitimate due to their association with the Ashera tree. Aaron Sasson (private communication) reports that when Yemeni Jews killed a sheep for a special occasion, the host used the two astragali of the sheep that was being eaten to tell the fortune of those sharing the meal. The sacrifice, the meal, and the knucklebones established a privileged link with the god.

⁴⁰ W. Horowitz & V. A. Hurowitz, "Urim and Thummim in Light of a Psephomancy Ritual from Assur (*LKA* 137)," *JANES* 21 (1992), 95–115.

needle or any other random method.⁴¹ Yet, there is clear evidence of the use of game-boards for sophisticated divinatory methods.

A clay sheep liver model at Kāmid el-Lōz (KL 79:700) bears on one side a Twenty Squares grid twisted in order to fit the schematic shape of the liver (Fig. 3:1).⁴² A more schematic tablet from Ain Shems also marks the *fossa venae umbilicalis* with a clear ditch separating the squares and the lobes of the liver (Fig. 3:2).⁴³ With a third even more schematic example from Tell Halaf,⁴⁴ the location of these finds is limited to Greater Syria (Fig. 3:3), although the connection of liver-divination with the game of twenty squares probably goes back to the Ur boards since the 20 squares correspond to the 20 questions and answers derived from the different parts of sheep livers organised on a schematic grid similar to that of the Ur game.⁴⁵

Figure 3: liver-shaped boards



⁴¹ B. Holbek, "What the Illiterate Think of Writing," K. Schousboe & M. T. Larsen (eds), *Literacy and Society* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1989), 183–96 (190–1). Papyrus notes onto which oracular petitions were written were called βιβλίον: D. Valbelle & G. Husson, "Les questions oraculaires d'Égypte," W. Clarysse, A. Schoors, & H. Willems (eds), *Egyptian Religion. The Last Thousand Years II* (Leuven: Peters, 1998), 1055–71 (1068).

⁴² J. W. Meyer, "Lebermodell," 65–9.

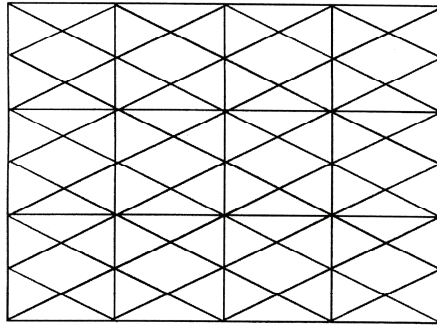
⁴³ E. Grant, *Rumeileh being Ain Shems Excavations 3*, Table 20.2.

⁴⁴ E. D. von Buren, "A Gaming-board from Tell Halaf," *Iraq* 4 (1937), 11–15, Fig. 1.

⁴⁵ A. Becker, "Royal Game," 11–15 discussing J. W. Meyer, *Untersuchungen zu den Tonlebermodellen aus dem alten Orient* (AOAT, 39; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1987).

The clearest indication that twenty squares boards were used for divination comes from two cuneiform tablets, one written in the Seleucid era (DLB), the second from Babylon (BM 33333B) written on 3 November 177–6 BCE. They transmit partly identical material.⁴⁶ Both bear an unusual grid of twelve squares (DLB) or rectangles (BM) corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac. Each square or rectangle is further intersected by diagonal lines which divide each square into a central lozenge surrounded by six triangles, 84 units in total (Fig. 4):

Figure 4: Cuneiform grid



Mathematically, it is significant that this intricate network of 84 fields corresponds to the sum of the value of the sequence of the squares of a Twenty Squares board when every four squares (the squares usually bearing a rosette or a cross) are omitted $([1+2+3] \times 2) + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 + 10 + 11 + 12 = 84$:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|---|--|--|
| * | 3 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | * | 7 | 8 | 9 | * | 10 | 11 | 12 | * | | |
| * | 3 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |

Each of these 84 fields bears cuneiform signs which, read clockwise, transmits an oracle for each square. Moreover, the reverse of

⁴⁶ J. Bottéro, “Deux curiosités assyriologiques (avec une note de Pierre Hamelin),” *Syria* 33 (1956), 17–35; B. Landsberger, “Einige unerkannt gebliebene oder verkannte Nomina des Akkadischen,” *WZKM* 56 (1960), 109–29; discussed by Finkel, “Rules,” 16–32.

the BM tablet lays out rules for 5 pawns and show that the twelve squares or rectangles of the tablets correspond to signs of the zodiac (Table 1):⁴⁷

⁴⁷ The Egyptian evidence displays a similar trend with the decoration of squares 26–30 on 30-square senet boards taking lunar and astronomical concepts: P. A. Piccione, *The Historical Development of the Game of Senet and its Significance for Egyptian Religion* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1990), 343–51.

Table 1: Cuneiform oracles

| | DLB/BM obverse ⁴⁸ | DLB reverse | From the rules on BM reverse | |
|--------------------|--|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Pegasus | One who sits in a tavern | ... | Swallow | A woman will love those who linger in a tavern Regarding their pack, well-being will fall to them |
| Aries | A beer vat(?) will turn away | Popular omens will be im- posed on you(?) | | |
| Pleiades Taurus | I will pour out the dregs for you | There will be no beer tab- let(?) | | |
| Gemini | You will find a friend | ..., you will not depart | | |
| Cancer | You will stand in ex- alted places | You will... ghee | Storm- bird | There will be enough food for the pack |
| Leo | You will be powerful like a lion | There will be... | | |
| Virgo | You will go up the path | Justice(?) from a coloquinth(?) | Raven | There will be enough food for the pack |
| Libra | Like one who weights up silver | A...-louse will be there(?) | | |
| Scorpio | You will draw fine beer | Tearing up(?) his bandage(?) | Rooster | There will be enough fine beer for the pack |
| Sagittarius | You will cross the ditch | ... | | |
| Capricornus | Like one who owns a herd | He will be equal(?) to (someone in authority?) | Eagle | The pack will eat its fill of meat |
| Aquarius | You will cut meat | An upper mill- stone that | | |

On the obverse, the two tablets transmit the same short phrases, some of them having obvious connections to zodiac signs

⁴⁸ The material from the obverse of BM is partly restored on the basis of the obverse of DLB.

(Gemini/friend, Leo/lion, Libra/silver, Capricorn/herd). The reverse of DLB is badly damaged but enough is readable to suggest a list of predictions related to the personal fortune of the player, most of them quite negative. By contrast, the reverse of BM transmits more positive *omina* divided among the five different flying-pieces. The four 'shining' pieces (Storm-bird, Raven, Rooster, and Eagle) cover two signs each while the 'lazy' piece (Swallow) covers four signs. Apart from the difficult storm bird, these birds' names designate constellations. The raven is *Corvus* (see Ps 147:5.9), the rooster is *Lepus*, the eagle is *Aquila*, and the swallow is *W. Pisces*.⁴⁹ The entire reverse describes the procedure followed to obtain answers, using a sheep astragal and an ox astragal as dice and a game-board which is beyond doubt a board of the game of twenty squares.⁵⁰

The text is far from clear, but it is likely that a throw of 2 (double 1) moves the Swallow either on the first rosette or on square 2. If, during its progression on the board, the Swallow lands (lit. 'descends') upon a rosette, love and food are predicted. If it does not land on a rosette before it exits the board, the opposite is predicted. A score of five moves the Storm-bird to square 5, that is after the first rosette, but if it manages to land on a rosette afterwards, there will be food. If it does not, there will be starvation. With a score of six, the Raven sits on square 6 and brings food if it lands on a rosette. A score of seven sends the Rooster to square 7 and promises fine beer if it lands on a rosette. Finally, with a score of ten the Eagle sits on square 10 (between the second and the third rosette) and will bring meat if it lands on a rosette.⁵¹ The higher the score, the lower the probability for the 'bird' to land on a rosette since the Swallow has three to four rosettes in front of it while the Eagle has only two before the finish. Much remains unclear in this text, but it is enough for the present purpose to note that the series of omen are no less obscure than those listed in *Nahum* 1.

With the boards scratched on the reverse of clay liver models, these tablets establish the close link between the game of twenty squares and divination. The special marks at squares 4, 8, 12, 16 on

⁴⁹ Finkel, "Rules," 23; referring to H. Hunger & D. Pingree, *Astral Science in Mesopotamia* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 271–77.

⁵⁰ Finkel, "Rules," 19.

⁵¹ Finkel, "Rules," 20.

some boards of twenty squares only correspond to some of the moves stipulated by the irregularities of the Nahum sequence. Losses are incurred at square 4 and 8, square 12 (𐤒) is the destination of pawns landing on squares 𐤓 and 𐤔, and square 16 is the finish square. In the absence of directions as those stipulated by the cuneiform tablets, it is not possible to know whether the people who produced the Nahum Psalm used the rosettes at all. Yet, in light of the archaeological evidence about the use of senet boards for divination, it is likely that the rules provided by the Nahum 1 psalm were but the first element of a divinatory apparatus that eventually lead from indications provided by the board and the astragali to particular oracles from the Minor Prophets.

SORTES SANCTORUM

Repeated condemnations of *sortes sanctorum*, the use of sacred texts for divination, support the claim that Nahum 1 and the Minor prophets were used for divination by Christians. Judeans of the Hellenistic period used biblical texts for the same purpose. "Opposition to pagan divination centered on the fact that it was pagan, not that it was mantic."⁵² Biblical strictures against divination should not be understood as blanket prohibitions of the practice of divination but as a means of restricting the practice to an authorised elite.⁵³ The Rule of the Community stipulates the oracle of the lots to select candidates (1QS 6). Josephus reports that some Essenes were trained in the study of the holy books and the sayings of the prophets. They became experts in foreseeing the future and were rarely deceived in their predictions (*War* 1.3.5 §78; 2 §159; *Ant.* 13.11.2 §311). Josephus also attributes the gift of prophecy to John Hyrcanus who was so closely in touch with the Deity that he was never ignorant of the future. (*Ant.* 13.10.7 §299). Before a crucial battle, Judas Maccabee cast a glance into the Holy Book and got the watchword 'The help of God' (2 Macc 8:23 see 1 Macc 3:48). The passage is far from clear and it is not sure that divination was at work in this instance, but if it was, these words were selected by a procedure more complicated than picking a single passage at

⁵² J. C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (Washington: CBA, 1984), 75.

⁵³ F. H. Cryer, *Divination in Ancient Israel and its Near Eastern Environment* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1994), 327.

random since nowhere are these words found together in the Hebrew Bible.

Rabbinic literature transmits stories about rabbis entering a school to discover the will of god from the mouth of children by asking them to repeat the verse they learnt today.⁵⁴ There is the debated interpretation of Jesus' opening the scroll of Isaiah at chapter 61 and reading a prophecy about himself. We do not know whether that particular synagogue used a *haftarah* cycle or if Luke wants us to understand that Jesus unrolled the scroll at random, but this episode also suggests that prophetic books were used as oracle-books. Following this example, Christian history is full of stories of conversion by chance hearing of biblical verses. Saint Antony enters a church and upon hearing Matt 19:21 he goes to sell everything he inherited. Saint Augustine converted upon hearing children sing *tolle lege, tolle lege*. *Tolle* is the technical term to designate throwing lots to get an oracle. *Lege* is the invitation to read the verse that supplies the answer.⁵⁵ Like the Egyptians and the Greeks, Ps 8:3 claims that power against the enemies come from the mouth of babes and infants, very much like the Assyrians who carefully recorded the utterances of mad people and epileptics which were considered bearers of divine messages.⁵⁶ Simpletons and children are innocent people, so they were considered reliable agents because they could not manipulate the message to their own interest. Another method to find God's will was to open a holy book at random and read the first verse that came under the eyes, or the first letter of the word at the top or the bottom of the page, depending on the type of question. Then there was a list of answers for each letter of the alphabet.

A more sophisticated method is recorded in the story of a Frankish king who enters a church to find out his fate. Three books are put on the altar: the Prophets, the letters of Paul, and the Gospels. Each book is opened at random and the three verses suggest that the king is going to die soon, which, of course, he did. Another story has the Psalter, the book of Kings, and the Gospels

⁵⁴ P. Schäfer, "Jewish Magic Literature in Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages," *JJS* 41 (1990), 75–91.

⁵⁵ Van der Horst, "Sortes," 169.

⁵⁶ M. Nissinen, "The Socioreligious Role of the Neo-assyrian Prophets," M. Nissinen (ed.), *Prophecy in its Ancient Near Eastern Context* (SBLSymS, 13; Atlanta, Ga.: SBL, 2000, 71–114.

placed upon the tomb of a saint. After a fast and a night in prayer, the books are opened. In this, Jews and Christians only imitated the Greeks who used Homer and the Romans who used Virgil for the same purpose.⁵⁷

The earliest attestation for the use of Homer as oracle book is from Aristophanes, *Pax* 1089–94 in the form of a satire (5th century BCE). Apart from the disputed evidence from Maccabees, the bulk of the evidence for the use of Homer and the Bible for divination comes from the Christian era.⁵⁸ Some oracle sentences were inserted into the text of Psalms or Gospels. Gospels of John with *hermêneiai*, as these notes are called, date to the third to the sixth centuries CE. Codex Bezae has them in the Gospel of Mark which in this codex is placed as the fourth Gospel.⁵⁹ The Gospel is divided into numbered portions with a corresponding oracle written at the end of the section. The oracles are short sentences such as “You will not get it,” “it will happen in ten days,” “if you believe you will rejoice,” “great glory will happen,” “do what you must do,” or “seek something else.”

Such systems are known in Greek, Coptic, Latin, Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Celtic, and Chinese. It is not clear how numbers were selected because most of the manuscripts are fragmentary. One codex divides John into 316 numbered sections. There is a drawing of a wheel divided into eight sectors full of numbers from 1 to 316. The wheel was obviously used to select numbered sections of the Gospel. An even more elaborate system is found in a Byzantine book of fate with 38 short passages from the four gospels each followed by a fortune. Dice or astragali were used to get combinations of numbers from one to twelve. It is hardly surprising that the exact procedure remains unknown since the divination specialist had every interest in keeping the system hidden since it was a major source of prestige, if not a source of revenue. The

⁵⁷ E. F. Weidner, “Ein Losbuch in Keilschrift aus der Seleukidenzeit,” *Syria* 33 (1956), 175–183; B. Landsberger, in *WZKM* 56 (1960), 117–29; 57 (1961), 22–23; van der Horst, “Sortes,” 168–72.

⁵⁸ Pseudo-Plutarch, *De homero* II 218,4; Cassius Dio LXXIX 8,6; *Home-romanteion*, *Sortes Astrampsychi*, *Sortes Vergilianae*.

⁵⁹ B. Outtier, “Les *prosermeneiai* du Codex Bezae,” D. C. Parker & C.-B. Amphoux (eds), *Codex Bezae* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 74–78. B. M. Metzger, “Greek Manuscripts of John’s Gospel with ‘Hermeneiai,’” A. F. J. Klijn (ed.), *Text and Testimony* (Kampen: Kok, 1988), 162–9.

same can be said about the Nahum senet. I tried in vain to find how one moved from the game to particular oracles. I found nothing because all we have left is the Psalm giving the rules of the game. Maybe the enquirer played against the diviner. According to who won the game, one got a yes or no answer. The elaborate system transmitted by the cuneiform tablets mentioned above are but one example among endless possibilities and it is likely that each specialist elaborated his or her own method. The more elaborate the system, the more convincing the entire procedure would appear to the enquirer.

Until we find a scroll of the minor prophets with special annotations in the margins, we can only speculate on the method used to get oracles from Nahum 1. The existence of such annotations may be inferred from special marks in the Habakkuk pesher, in particular an unexplained final at the end of line 5 and a botched 1 in 3:7.⁶⁰ The twelve X marks that appear on the left margin of the same pesher remain a puzzle to the specialists.⁶¹ Maybe these marks also identified particular oracles within a wider system of bibliomancy. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the majority of the marginal letters classified as Cryptic A in the Dead Sea scrolls are found in Isaiah (1QIsa^a).⁶²

In any case, the discovery of the Nahum senet suggests that the use of prophetic texts for divination belonged not only to the reception of the Bible, but already to the formation of the collection of the twelve Minor Prophets. It is significant that the set of rules for the senet was placed as the introduction of the book of Nahum which fulfils the oracle predicting the destruction of Nineveh at the end of Jonah.⁶³ The book of Jonah also refers to the drawing of lots by the sailors (Jonah 1:7).

⁶⁰ H. G. Snyder, "Naughts and Crosses: Pesher Manuscripts and their Significance for Reading Practices at Qumran," *DSD* 7 (2000), 26–48 (40).

⁶¹ Snyder, "Naughts," 42–46.

⁶² E. Tov, "Scribal Notations in the Texts from the Judaean Desert," E. Tov (ed.), *The Texts from the Judaean Desert Indices* (DJD, XXXIX; Oxford: Clarendon, 2002), 323–50 (336–8).

⁶³ See E. Ben Zvi, "Jonah 4:11 and the Metaphorical Character of the Book of Jonah," *JHS* 9 (2009) article 5, and P. Guillaume, "Rhetorical Reading Redundant," *JHS* 9 (2009) article 6, both available online at <http://www.jhsonline.org>.

PROPHETS IN CHRONICLES

The main difference between the position of prophets in the Former Prophets and in Chronicles is the transfer of Israelite prophets to Judah and the inflation of the number of prophets to present an unbroken chain of prophecy between God and the Judean kings.⁶⁴ In spite of this prophetic inflation, Chronicles does not refer to figures from the Minor Prophets and it renders Isaiah and Jeremiah almost irrelevant. This is paradoxical. On the one hand there is an insistence on the importance of prophecy while on the other hand there is no reference to the “minor prophets.” This suggests that the collection of the Minor Prophets was not known to the Chronicler. If this is the case, the Chronicler’s insistence on prophecy could have spurred the formation of a canon of the minor prophets.⁶⁵ Besides Isaiah and Jeremiah, the Chronicler presents “prophets of the moment” as Yairah Amit calls them, a chief of the captains, a levite, a priest, and kings. The Chronicler enlarges the meaning of prophecy to activities associated with figures known from the books of Psalms (Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun 1 Chr 25:1–5) while ignoring the notion of false prophecy (except in 2 Chronicles 18). Moreover, the Chronicler’s prophets are not concerned with the distant future but with predictions of immediate developments. Is the Chronicler’s view on prophecy compatible with *sortes sanctorum*?

PROPHETIC COLLECTION AS ORACLE COLLECTION

Modern theologians are as uneasy as their ancient colleagues regarding the use of astragali to find out the divine will. A barrier is raised between prophecy as the written word of God, and divination. Contrary to divination, “prophecy does not rely on material means because it communicates directly with the divine.”⁶⁶ This

⁶⁴ Y. Amit, “The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler’s World,” in M. H. Floyd & R. D. Haak (eds), *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 80–101.

⁶⁵ T. Renz, “Torah in the Minor Prophets,” J. G. McConville & K. Möller (eds), *Reading the Law. Studies in Honour of Gordon J. Wenham* (LHBOTS, 461; London: T. & T. Clark, 2007), 73–94.

⁶⁶ A. Lange, “Literary Prophecy and Oracle Collection,” M. H. Floyd & R. D. Haak (eds), *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* (LHBOTS, 427; New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2006),

fine claim sidesteps the difficulty involved with the practical use of scriptural prophecy. How is one to find out God's will about the many practical issues that confronts every individual in real life? Common sense is not always enough to decide and God's will is sometimes folly in the eyes of common sense (1 Cor 1:19–20). Reading Isaiah through to Malachi does not provide very enlightening answers. So we find ourselves in a quandary. We are told that in Israel actual prophets were marginalized in favour of written prophecy, but we do not see how prophetic books can provide any guidance. The oracle collections of the Bible, like the *Losbücher* of Greece were not meant to be read as narratives. Each verse had meaning by itself and the books were collections of individual oracles to be used in conjunction with a randomizing device. The *pesher* functioned on the same principle, isolating and commenting on a prophetic verse by pointing to its fulfilment in persons and events belonging to the age of the interpreter.⁶⁷

The furious condemnation of prophets in Zech 13:2–6 makes sense if written prophecy can somehow replace other types of prophecy. Scriptural prophecy renders prophets irrelevant when anyone who has a scroll of prophetic texts at hand can pull an oracle out of it. The random aspect of divination based on scriptural prophecy has the significant advantage of preventing the manipulation of God's word by those in power. It also avoids the bizarre behaviour associated with ecstatic prophecy (Hos 9:7).

Despite efforts to stamp it out and despite inevitable cases of manipulation by unscrupulous individuals, Jews and Christians have always sought directions from God through divination out of holy books. Practised by ascetics of good reputation, accompanied with singing of hymns and fasting, drawing oracles through lots

248–75 (249). C. van Dam, *The Urim and Thummim* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 271–4 considers that the increasing emphasis on the word alone phased out prophets and culminated in the coming of the Word who became flesh!

⁶⁷ 1Q14 pMic; 1Q15 (*DJD* I.75–80); 1QHab (*DSSMM* I); 4Q166–170 (*DJD* V). S. L. Berrin, "Lemma/Pesher correspondence in Pesher Nahum," L. H. Schiffman, E. Tov, & J. C. VanderKam (eds), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Fifty Years after Their Discovery* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 341–350. Jo Ann Scurlock is preparing a reading of Nahum 1 in relation to what Mesopotamian specialists call historical omens (signs from God in the form of historical events).

was a cherished method to alleviate stress resulting from the uncertainties of life.

Lots included, among many others, coloured stones, throwsticks, dice, and astragali. The irregularities of the acrostic in Nahum 1 strongly suggest that some literati who gathered prophetic oracles considered the ancient game of senet a useful and acceptable means for biblical divination. Instead of preventing “magical” use of the Psalm as Van Selms thought, the Nahum 1 acrostic was a learned mantic tool. Whether or not it was magical is another matter. In addition to the sacrifice of the animal that provided the knucklebones, the board was more “scientific” as it offered a greater range of technical options for the expression of the divine will than would dice or astragali used on their own for mere yes/no queries. The intimate relation between senet and divination, combined with the prevalence of *sortes sanctorum*, calls for the integration of divination as an important factor in the reception as well as the production of an authoritative body of prophetic texts.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ P. R. Davies, “Beginning at the End,” E. Ben Zvi (ed.), *Rereading Oracles of God: Twenty Years after John Barton, Oracles of God: Perceptions of Prophecy in Israel after the Exile* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1986), *JHS* 7 (2007) article 14, p. 7, available at <http://www.jhsonline.org>.

VERBS OF MOTION IN BIBLICAL HEBREW: LEXICAL SHIFTS AND SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE

FRANK POLAK

Verbs of movement occupy a special place in biblical Hebrew. In texts in the classical language three verbs stand out by their frequency, הלך, 'to go,' בוא, 'to come,' and לקח, 'to take.'¹ On the other hand, the narratives that by their very content are undoubtedly related to the late exilic or the post-exilic era (LBH) are characterized by a dramatic decrease in the use of two of these verbs, הלך and לקח. A shift of this kind necessarily implies significant changes in the use of other motion verbs. In particular one notes far-reaching changes in basic syntactic patterns involving verbs of motion. An in depth study of these phenomena suggests two results. From a semantic point of view, the variation between the classical and the post-exilic language involves profound differences in orientation. With regard to syntactic structure, the classical language is characterized by particular 'two-verbal' patterns that disappear in the postexilic corpus. In the view of the present author, it hardly seems possible to account for shifts of this kind by means of stylistic design or rhetorics. Something more is involved.

A study of this problem is expected to contribute to the clarification of some of the linguistic aspects of the large scale distinction between two of the main corpora of biblical narrative. These corpora include: corpus A—Achaemenid period, consisting of narratives that by their very content are undoubtedly related to the late Babylonian or the Persian era (or its aftermath); (2) corpus B—

¹ In general I use the rendering of the NJPSV, unless indicated otherwise.

narratives originating, by their very content or their relation to Deuteronomy, to the late Judean monarchy, i.e., 7th to early 6th century and including the inception of the Babylonian period; the narratives include 1 Kings 3–16; 2 Kings 11–25; Jeremiah *Vita*, and most of Joshua; (3) corpus C—texts that are not explicitly related to these periods but which from a sociolinguistic and sociocultural point of view seem to originate in the period from the 10th to mid-8th century BCE, including the main stock of the patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12–50), the Samuel-Saul-David complex (1 Samuel 1:1–1 Kings 2:46), and the Elijah-Elisha cycle.²

The present study is mainly concerned with corpora A and C, although I take the freedom to discuss examples which I would attribute to corpus B to illustrate some semantic features. However, all statistics relate to corpora A and C only.

Systematic study indicates that the differences between these corpora for the most part are not related to literary structure or stylistic design. I have analyzed a large number of narratives with different themes (meal/cultic festivity; public honour/anointing; battle) and thus with different emotional content and activity pattern in corpus C on the one hand, and on the other hand in corpora A and B.³ This analysis indicates a syntactic-stylistic typology of the latter two corpora that is strikingly different from the typology of narratives with similar theme in corpus C. On the other hand, samples from different thematic groups within corpus C reveal a very similar typology, in spite of the differences in theme, expressivity, and action pattern. The stylistic typology of corpora A and B likewise is highly homogeneous. The upshot is that these corpora embody different syntactic-stylistic typologies, and that these large scale typological differences are not related to stylistic design and rhetorics as such. What I attempt to show in the present study is that the variation in typology involves (a) differences in the

² An analysis of the relationship between corpus A and C is in my paper, F. Polak, "Sociolinguistics, a Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Hebrew," *HS* 47 (2006), 115–62.

³ An analysis of almost 80 samples is offered in my studies, F. Polak, "Sociolinguistics, a Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Hebrew;" "The Book of Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Syntactic-Stylistic Analysis," Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger (ed.) *The Books of Samuel and the Deuteronomists* (BWANT; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, forthcoming).

lexical characteristics of verbs of motion in general, and (b) in particular differences in the syntactic patterns and discourse structures in which *הלך*, *לקח* (and other verbs) are involved.

1. SOME NOTES ON SEMANTICS AND SYNTAX OF MOTION VERBS

a. 'To Go,' 'to Come,' and Orientation

Fillmore's primary analysis of the semantics of 'to come' and 'to go' is based on the opposition of the movement away from the speaker ('to go'), and the motion toward the speaker ('to come'), or to the addressee, or to the place where the speaker is to position himself at a future point in time (the time of arrival).⁴ In the field of caused motion this opposition is paralleled by the contrast between 'to take' and 'to bring'.⁵ In a more generalized account, the speaker functions as *origin* (or *source*) of the movement, the way to be traversed is the *path*, and the position at the end of the path is the *goal* of the movement.⁶ When origin or goal are marked by the semantic content of the verb used, this verb is *oriented*; when not, it is *neutral* with regard to orientation.⁷ In classical biblical narrative (corpus C) the place at the center of stage (the deictic center) may function as origin. Thus Eli blesses Hannah, *לְכִי לְשָׁלוֹם* (1 Sam 1:17, "go in peace"), indicating a movement away from his place in the sanctu-

⁴ Charles J. Fillmore, "Coming and Going," *Lectures on Deixis* (Stanford, CA: Center for the Study of language and Information, 1997), 77–102; Stephen C. Levinson and David P. Wilkins, "Patterns in the data: towards a semantic typology of spatial description," S. C. Levinson and D. P. Wilkins (eds), *Grammars of Space: Explorations in Cognitive Diversity* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2006), 512–52, esp. pp. 527–50; see also R. Botne, "Cognitive Schemas and motion verbs: Coming and Going in Chindali (Eastern Bantu)," *Cognitive Linguistics* 16 (2005), 43–80; D. P. Wilkins and D. Hill, "When 'go' means 'come': Questioning the basicness of basic motion verbs," *Cognitive Linguistics* 6 (1995), 209–50; C. J. Fillmore, "Deictic Categories in the Semantics of 'Come,'" *Foundations of Language* 2 (1966), 219–27.

⁵ Fillmore, "Coming and Going," 89–93.

⁶ In the typology constructed by Leonard Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics* (2 Vols.; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 1.217–52, 313–42.

⁷ See D. P. Wilkins, "Towards an Arrernte grammar of space," S. C. Levinson and D. P. Wilkins, *Grammar of Space*, 24–62, esp., pp. 42–46.

ary (the origin). When Hannah leaves the place her departure is described as a movement toward a destination that is remote from the deictic center, **וַתֵּלֶךְ הָאִשָּׁה לְדֶרֶכָּהּ** (v 18, “So the woman went her way,” ASV),⁸ with indication of the path (**לְדֶרֶכָּהּ**). **הֵלֵךְ** also indicates movement in space, with no specific point of departure or destination, such as, **וַיָּקָם דָּוִד וַיֵּלֶךְ הוּא וְאֲנָשָׁיו** (1 Sam 18:27, “David rose up and went, he and his men,” NRSV). Movement in general can also be indicated by **הֵלֵךְ**, such as **עַל-גֻּחְנֶךָ תֵּלֵךְ** (Gen 3:14, “upon your belly you shall go,” NRSV). Thus, **הֵלֵךְ** indicates a movement with no special orientation, or toward a destination that is remote from the origin. In general, then, **הֵלֵךְ** is neutral in respect of orientation.⁹

By contrast, **בוא** indicates movement oriented ‘toward’ the ‘origin,’ such as in Joab’s rebuke of David, **הִנֵּה-בָא אֲבִנֵּר אֵלֶיךָ** (2 Sam 3:24). By the same token the narrator tells us **וַיָּבֹא אֲבִנֵּר וַיַּלְדֵּם דָּוִד חֲבֵרֹן** (v 20). **בוא** can also be used to indicate motion toward someone in a higher position in the hierarchy, such as **וַיָּבֹאוּ אֲנָשֵׁי יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְשְׁחוּ-שָׁם אֶת-דָּוִד לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-בֵּית יְהוּדָה** (2:4, “The men of Judah came and there they anointed David king over the House of Judah”). **בוא** also indicates motion toward the endpoint of the path, **וַיָּבֹא דָוִד בְּבַעַל פְּרָצִים** (5:20, “so David came to Baal-perazim,” NRSV).¹⁰ Thus **בוא** is always oriented toward a goal, either the origin, or another location that takes the center of stage. By the same token, **הביא**, ‘to bring,’ is oriented toward the origin or the center of stage, whereas **לקח**, ‘to take,’ does not imply any orientation and thus remains neutral.

⁸ On the other hand, the NRSV renders this verse as “Then the woman went to her quarters,” implying an endpoint, which is not given in the Hebrew. The NJPSV renders the phrase as “So the woman left,” which does not reflect the path.

⁹ The neutrality of **הֵלֵךְ** apparently has deep roots in language history, since Akkadian *alāku* changes orientation according to the ventive affix; see W. von Soden, *Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik* (3rd edn; AnOr 33; Rome: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1995), 133–34.

¹⁰ The NJPSV rendering (“David marched”) adds the manner of movement to the direction, which is the only indication in the Hebrew.

b. Trajectory and Narrative

One of the outstanding features of biblical narrative is the importance of trajectory and location, indicated by simple verbs of motion, for instance:

וַיֵּקַח אַבְרָם אֶת־שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ ... וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ
אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיַּעֲבֵר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שֵׁכֶם

Abram *took* his wife Sarai ... and *they set out for* the land of Canaan, and thus they *arrived* in the land of Canaan.¹¹ And Abram *passed* through the land as far as the site of Shechem... (Gen 12:5–6)

וַיָּשְׁבוּ שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּרְדוּ מִהָהָר וַיַּעֲבְרוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון
וַיְסַפְּרוּ־לוֹ אֵת כָּל־הַמַּצְאוֹת אֲוֹתָם

Then the two men *came down again* from the hills and *crossed over*. They *came* to Joshua son of Nun and reported to him all that had happened to them (Josh 2:23).

Such descriptions of the path transversed may also indicate a transition in the moral sense, for instance:

וּמֹשֶׁה הָיָה רָעָה אֶת־צֹאן יִתְרוֹ חֹתָנוּ כֹּהֵן מִדְיָן וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־הַצֹּאן
וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָהָר הָאֱלֹהִים חֲרִיבָה אַחֵר הַמִּדְבָּר

Now Moses, tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, *drove* the flock into the wilderness, and *came* to Horeb, the mountain of God (Exod 3:1).

וַתֵּצֵא מִן־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָיְתָה־שָׁמָּה ... וַתֵּלְכֶנָּה בְּדֶרֶךְ לָשׁוּב
אֶל־אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה

She left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to the land of Judah (Ruth 1:7).

The fact that transitions of this kind are indicated by motion verbs shows that this class contributes far more to biblical Hebrew discourse than just the indication of change of place.¹² Notably, in

¹¹ The RSV, NJPSV, and the NRSV, follow the Vulgate (*cumque venissent in eam, pertransiuit Abram terram usque ad locum Sychem*) in joining the last clause of v 5 to the opening of v 6.

¹² Analysis by the methods of cognitive linguistics highlights the key metaphor 'journey,' discussed in the biblical context by Olaf Jäkel, "How Can Mortal man Understand the Road He Travels? Prospects and Prob-

cognitive linguistics motion is a metaphor for change, and ‘locality’ for position or situation.¹³ The metaphorical use of verbs of motion is not to be disregarded.

c. Motion Verbs ‘Beyond the Clause’

An additional factor to be taken into account is the use of verbs, such as קום, ‘to stand up,’ together with a second verb, in a construction that has been categorized as ‘pleonastic,’¹⁴ but which I would characterize as biverbal (if the first verb appears by itself),¹⁵ or biclausal (if the first verb is the predicate of a clause).¹⁶ An obvious example for a construction of this type is presented in Kish’s instructions to his son Saul in 1 Sam 9:3

קח-נָא אֶתְּךָ אֶת־אֶחָד מֵהַנְּעָרִים וְקוּם לְךָ בִּקֵּשׁ אֶת־הָאֲתָנָת

“Take along one of the servants and *up, go out* and look for the asses.”

The first clause mentions the preparations for the quest: קח-נָא אֶתְּךָ אֶת־אֶחָד מֵהַנְּעָרִים, and the second clause states the main order, by means of three verbs in sequence, וְקוּם, לְךָ, בִּקֵּשׁ אֶת־הָאֲתָנָת.

lems of Cognitive Approach to Religious Metaphor,” Kurt Feyaerts (ed.), *The Bible through Metaphor and Translation. A Cognitive Semantic Perspective* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003), 55–86.

¹³ G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors we live by* (2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 56–61, 258, 263 (1st ed. 1981). Notably, much English terminology in this field derives from verbs of motion: transition < *ire* ‘to go’ (trans-*ire*); position < *ponere* ‘to place;’ situation < *situs* ‘place’ (from *sinere*, ‘to leave’).

¹⁴ See Wilhelm Gesenius’ *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament* (17th ed.; ed. F. Buhl; repr. Berlin: Springer, 1959), 389 (s.v. לקח, 1). Buhl (op. cit., 181, s.v. הלך, 5) mentions the function of הלך as introductory element.

¹⁵ This is the term used by M. Eskhult, “The Verb *sbh* as a Marker of Inception in Biblical Hebrew,” *Orientalia Suecana* 47 (1998), 21–26, esp. pp. 21–22, 25 (also “verbal hendiadys”).

¹⁶ The term “biclausal” is a variant of “super-clausal,” introduced in my paper, “Linguistic and Stylistic Aspects of Epic Formulae in Ancient Semitic Poetry and Biblical Narrative,” in: *Biblical Hebrew in its Northwest Semitic Setting* (ed. S. Fassberg and, A. Hurvitz; Jerusalem: Magnes Press and Winona Lake, Ind.; Eisenbrauns), 285–304, esp. p. 289, n. 21.

In such constructions the opening verb (or clause) serves to modify the predication of the main clause, as shown by, for example, the description of Moses' prostration before the deity at Mount Sinai in Exod 34:8

וַיַּמְהַר מֹשֶׁה וַיִּקְדַּ אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ

Moses hastened to bow low to the ground in homage

The verb **וַיַּמְהַר** characterizes the action of the second clause, **וַיִּקְדַּ אֶרְצָה**, a construction which the NJPSV reflects by means of the auxiliary verb '*hastened*' (to bow low).¹⁷ By the same token, **וַיִּשְׁב** describes the repeated action in the second clause, which the translation reflects by the adverb '*anew*,'¹⁸

וַיִּשְׁב יִצְחָק וַיַּחֲפֹר אֶת־בְּאֵרֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ בְּיָמֵי אֲבִרָהִם
אָבִיו

Isaac dug *anew* the wells which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham (Gen 26:18)

As we will see, constructions of this type are highly frequent in narrative texts in the classical language (corpus C), but are rather rare in texts from the Persian era (corpus A). In consequence, we note a basic difference between the syntactic patterns 'beyond the clause' of LBH and the discourse structure of the classical language. The present considerations will open with a discussion of the differentiation in the lexical field; the shifts in discourse patterns will be treated in the second part.

d. The Units Analyzed in this Study

My examination will be based on the following units:

¹⁷ So also, e.g., Gen 24:18, 20, 46; 43:30; 44:11; 45:13; Judg 13:10; 1 Sam 4:14; 17:48. The infinitive construction is found in such passages as **וַיִּמְהַר פְּרָעָה לִקְרֹא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן** (Exod 10:16); so also, e.g., Gen 18:7; 27:20; Exod 2:12; 2 Sam 15:14.

¹⁸ In Josh 5:22; 1 Kgs 19:6 **שׁוּב** is followed by **שׁוּבִית**; see also, e.g., Lev 14:43; Num 11:4; 14:36; Deut 1:45; Josh 2:23; Judg 8:33; 19:7; 1 Sam 3:5,6; 2 Kgs 1:11, 13; 7:8; 13:25; 19:9; 21:3; 24:1. The infinitive pattern appears in many passages, e.g., Exod 14:27; Deut 24:19; 30:9; Judg 14:8; 2 Kgs 8:9; 9:15; Ps 104:19; Job 7:7; Qoh 1:7; 5:14; Ezra 9:4; Neh 9:28.

Corpus C:

Genesis Narrative: Gen 2:5–4:16; 12:1–16:16; 18:1–25:1; 25:19–27:46; 28:10–35:8; 35:16–22; 37:2–46:5; 46:28–49:1; 49:29–50:26;

Samuel Narrative: 1 Sam 1:1–27; 2:11–26; 3:1–18; 4:2–21; 9:1–10:16; 13:2–12; 13:14–16:13; 17:1–18:7; 18:17–30; 19:11–17; 20:1–21:10; 22:1–23:18; 25:2–28:2; 1 Sam 29:1–2 Sam 1:16; 2 Sam 2:1–3:1; 3:6–5:3; 5:17–7:29; 9:1–20:22; 21:1–22; 2 Sam 24:1–1 Kgs 1:53; 1 Kgs 2:12–46.

Corpus A:

Chronicles Non-Shared:¹⁹ 1 Chr 2:19–24; 5:18–26; 7:21–24; 10:13–14; 11:10; 12:1–2, 16–23, 39–41; 13:1–6; 14:17–15:2; 15:11–17; 16:37–42; 21:6; 21:27–23:5, 23:24–32; 24:6; 24:31–25:1; 25:5–8; 26:1–29:26; 29:28–30; 2 Chr 1:1–6; 1:18–2:15; 2:16–3:8; 4:1, 7–10; 5:11–13; 6:41–7:3; 7:6, 13–15; 8:11–17; 11:5–12:8; 12:14; 13:3–21; 14:3–15:15; 16:7–10; 16:12–18:1; 19:1–20:30; 20:34–21:4; 21:11–20; 22:1; 22:7–9; 23:18–19; 24:3–27; 25:5–16; 26:5–20; 27:3–6, 8; 28:5–25; 29:1–32:31; 33:11–17, 19, 23; 34:3–8, 12–14, 33; 35:1–17, 20–27; 36:6–7, 14–21;

Ezra-Neh-Esth:

Ezra 1; 3:1–4:5; 6:19–7:10; 8–10; Neh 8–9; Neh 1:1–7:5; 12:27–13:31; Dan 1:1–2:3; Esther.

For comparison I will adduce prophetic texts from the Achaemenid period (Prophecy II) as against control texts which can be taken to reflect the Israelite/Judean monarchy, in the main paralleling corpus C:

Prophecy II (LBH): Hagg 1–Zech 8; Zech 12–Malachi 3

Prophecy I: Amos; Hosea; Isaiah 1–11; 14; 17–22; 28–32; Micah; Zephaniah; Habakkuk; Nahum.

2. LEXICAL SHIFTS

a. To Take

The verb **לָקַח**, ‘to take,’ is one of the most frequent verbs in the Hebrew Bible, with no less than 967 instances, of which 940 are in

¹⁹ The samples chosen are those that do not have textual parallels in 1–2 Samuel or 1–2 Kings, but units in which the formulation is significantly different from the text found in Samuel-Kings, have been included.

the *Qal*,²⁰ 15 in the passive *Qal*,²¹ and 11 in the *Niphal*.²² The most common meaning of the verb is ‘to take’ something (in the hand; Gen 18:4) or to move someone (or something) from one place to another (Gen 2:22, 23; 3:19, 23; 14:21; 15:9; 24:7), sometimes by force (‘carrying off,’ 12:15; 14:11) or illegally (1 Sam 2:16; and as a metaphor for stealing, Gen 27:35; or conquest, 1 Sam 7:14). Specialized meanings include ‘taking in marriage’ (e.g., Gen 4:19; 6:2; 11:29; 19:14; Exod 2:1), ‘receiving’ (Gen 33:11; Ps 15:2; also of instructions, Num 23:20) and ‘acquiring’ (Prov 31:16). In prose from the Persian era לקח almost disappears, as one may see from the following table which compares the frequency of לקח to other transitive/causative verbs of motion: נשא,²³ ‘to lift,’ הביא, ‘to bring,’ הוציא, ‘to bring/lead out,’ העלה, ‘to bring up,’ הוריד, ‘to bring down.’ In this table the percentages indicate the percentage of the given lexeme relative to the other transitive verbs of motion in the sample. Thus, 118 instances of לקח in the Genesis narrative form 53.39% of all transitive motion verbs in the sample from Genesis, whereas 6 instances in Chronicles form 7.32% of all occurrences of these verbs in this book.

Table I. Verbs of Motion: Transitive

| Verb/Text | Gen Narr | 1–2Sam | ChroNonS | EzraNehEst | IIPro | IPro | Total |
|-----------|----------|--------|----------|------------|-------|-------|-------|
| לקח | 118 | 83 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 23 | 243 |
| % Mov | 53.39 | 44.15 | 7.32 | 11.59 | 18.52 | 27.38 | |
| נשא | 28 | 38 | 13 | 13 | 10 | 34 | 136 |
| % Mov | 12.67 | 20.12 | 15.85 | 18.84 | 37.04 | 40.48 | |
| הביא | 42 | 35 | 35 | 31 | 9 | 9 | 161 |

²⁰ One instance (2 Sam 23:6) probably should be read as passive *Qal*, according to LXX *λημψθησονται*, most likely reflecting *יִקָּחוּ*.

²¹ Passive *Qal* in prose: Gen 2:23; 3:19, 23; 12:15; 18:4; Judg 17:2; 2 Kgs 2:10; in poetry: Isa 49:24, 25; 52:5; 53:8; Jer 29:22; 48:46; Ezek 15:3; Job 28:2; and probably 2 Sam 23:6 (see previous note). In prose, then, the passive *Qal* is limited to Corpus C.

²² The *Niphal* in prose only: 1 Sam 4:11, 17, 19, 21, 22; 21:7; 2 Kgs 2:9; Ezek 33:6; Esth 2:8, 16. In addition one notes *מִתְלַקֶּחֶת* (Exod 9.24; Ezek 1:4) used to describe the movement of fire.

²³ The instances adduced for נשא do not include the formulaic forms נשא עין and נשא קול, with 17 cases in the sample from Genesis, 6 in Samuel, and 6 in Zechariah 1–8. However, in most cases metaphorical usage has been included, as an extension of literal meaning.

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| % Mov | 19.00 | 15.84 | 42.68 | 44.93 | 33.33 | 10.71 | |
| הוציא | 14 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 40 |
| % Mov | 6.33 | 3.72 | 4.88 | 13.04 | 11.11 | 3.57 | |
| העלה | 6 | 19 | 24 | 8 | - | 11 | 68 |
| % Mov | 2.71 | 10.11 | 29.27 | 11.59 | - | 13.10 | |
| הוריד | 13 | 6 | - | - | - | 4 | 23 |
| % Mov | 5.88 | 3.19 | - | - | - | 4.76 | |
| Move Trans | 221 | 188 | 82 | 69 | 27 | 84 | 671 |
| | | | | | | | |
| All Verbs | 4177 | 5273 | 2021 | 1896 | 992 | 3827 | 18186 |
| Trans/Verbs | 5.29 | 3.57 | 4.06 | 3.64 | 2.72 | 2.19 | 3.69 |

In the samples from Genesis and Samuel לקח is the main verb in the field, constituting around half of all occurrences of the six verbs mentioned. On the other hand, in prose from the Persian era, whether in Chronicles or in Ezra, Nehemiah or Esther, the leading verb is הביא (more than 40% of the field).²⁴ The Chronicler's preference for הביא is also indicated by its use in comparison with other verbs in parallel places. For instance, where the David narrative uses the phrase לְהַעֲלוֹת מִשָּׁם אֶת אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים (2 Sam 6:2, "to bring up from there the Ark of God"), the chronistic version mentions the aim לְהַבִּיא אֶת־אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים מִקִּרְיַת יְעָרִים (1 Chr 13:15, "in order to bring the Ark of God from Kiriath-jearim").²⁵ The Chronicler describes the deportation of the Gileadites to the region of Gozan and the Khabur river ('Habor') as וַיְבִיאֵם לְחָלָח וְחָבוּר וְהָרָא (1 Chr 5:26, "and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan"). By contrast in the book of Kings the terms used are וַיֵּשֶׁב (2 Kings 17:6) and וַיִּנָּחֵם (18:11). Hiram is quoted as promising to deliver trees as rafts, וַנְּבִיאֵם לָךְ רַפְסָדוֹת עֲלִי־יָם יָפוֹ (2 Chr 2:15, "and we will deliver them to you as rafts by sea to Jaffa;," similarly Ezra 3:7), summarizing the complicated description in the book of Kings, 1 Kgs 5:23

עֲבָדֵי יִרְדּוּ מִן־הַלְּבָנוֹן יָמָּה וְאָנִי אֲשִׁימֵם דְּבָרוֹת בָּיִם עַד־הַמָּקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר־תִּשְׁלַח אֵלַי וְנַפְצָתִים שָׁם

²⁴ In Chronicles one notes the frequency of העלה, often in connection with sacrifice: 1 Chr 16:40; 23:31; 29:21; 2 Chr 1:6; 8:12, 13; 23:18; 24:14; 29:7, 21, 27, 29; 35:14, 16; side by side with הביא: 2 Chr 29:21, 32; 30:15.

²⁵ By the same token להביא is used for the transport of the Ark to the Temple (1 Chr 22:19).

My servants shall bring it down to the sea from the Lebanon; I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you indicate. I will have them broken up there ... (NRSV)

הביא is also used to indicate the upward transport of the Judean prisoners to “the top of Sela” (2 Chr 25:12). In the Esther novella הביא indicates, for instance, the invitation of Haman’s guests: וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיָּבֵא אֶת־אֶהֱבִיו וְאֶת־זֶרֶשׁ אִשְׁתּוֹ (Esth 5:10, “then he sent and called for his friends and his wife Zeresh,” NRSV; similarly v 12).

In texts from this period לקח is far less frequent. In the sample from Chronicles this verb is used to indicate marriage (1 Chr 2:19, 21; 2 Chr 11:18, 20),²⁶ conquest (1 Chr 2:23) and stealing (7:21). In other prose texts one notes marriage (Neh 6:11), adoption (Esth 2:7, 15) and buying (Neh 5:2–3, 15).²⁷ In the prophetic reproach our verb is used in the meaning ‘to accept’ sacrifice (Mal 2:13). Hence the basic meaning of לקח has not disappeared, but is becoming extremely rare. How are we to account for this striking decrease in the use of לקח?

One could explain this shift by the postulation of a general shift of meaning, since in Mishnaic Hebrew לקח itself mainly means ‘to buy,’ whereas the meaning ‘to take’ is mainly assumed by נטל.²⁸ לקח is not attested in biblical Aramaic or Syriac, and in Jewish Aramaic the normal term is נסב or נסיב (e.g., Gen 2:21–23, T^O). In some cases one notes a preference for specific terms,²⁹ for example:³⁰

²⁶ So also in lists and other non-narrative texts: Ezra 2:61; Neh 7:63; 10:31; 1 Chr 4:18; 7:15.

²⁷ So also Neh 10:32. By contrast, in the negotiations between David and Araunah ‘taking’ (קח) is opposed to ‘buying’ (לקנות); 2Sam 24:21–24; 1 Chr 21:23–24).

²⁸ See E. Y. Kutscher, *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies* (ed. Z. Ben-Hayyim, A. Dotan and G. Sarfatti; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1977), שנה-שנה (Hebrew); Abba Bendavid, *Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew* (2 Vols.; 2nd ed.; Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1967), 1.67, 352 (Hebrew).

²⁹ Indeed, נטל itself (‘to lay upon,’ ‘to lift,’ 2 Sam 24:12; Isa 40:15; 63:9; Lam 3:28; and in Aramaic: Dan 4:31; 7:4) originally has a specialized meaning.

³⁰ The phrase הסיר טבעת also appears in Gen 41:42, and thus most probably has influenced the wording of the Esther scroll, but the use of העביר in Esth 8:2 shows that the influence of the Joseph tale does not

וַיֵּסֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־טַבַּעְתּוֹ מֵעַל יָדוֹ וַיִּתְּנָהּ לְהָמָן בֶּן־הַמֵּדָתָא

Thereupon the king *removed* his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha (Esth 3:10).

וַיֵּסֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־טַבַּעְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר הָעֶבֶיר מָהֵן וַיִּתְּנָהּ לְמֹרְדֵּכַי

The king *slipped off* his ring, which he had *taken* back from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai (Esth 8:2).

In the description of booty, the verb used is *שבה*, such as, for example:³¹

וְעוֹד אֲדוֹמִים בָּאוּ וַיַּכּוּ בִיהוּדָה וַיִּשְׁבּוּ־שָׁבִי

Again the Edomites came and inflicted a defeat on Judah and *took* captives (2 Chr 28:17).

The alternative wording, *לקח שבי* (Jer 48:46), is not used in Chronicles. Receival is indicated by the verb *קבל*, such as, for example,³²

וַיִּשְׁחָטוּ הַבָּקָר וַיִּקְבְּלוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־הַדָּם

The cattle were slaughtered, and the priests *received* the blood (2 Chr 29:2).

A third aspect of the issue is the reduction of some particularities of the classical usage of *לקח*. The tale of the celebration of Sukkoth includes the instruction to bring wood from the hills:

צֹאן הָהָר וְהִבְיֵאוּ עֲלֵי־זֵית וְעֲלֵי־עֵץ שִׁמֹן וְעֲלֵי הָדָס וְעֲלֵי תְּמָרִים
וְעֲלֵי עֵץ עֵבֶת

provide a complete explanation for the use of the verbs.

³¹ So also 1 Chr 5:21; 2 Chr 4:14; 21:17; 25:12; 28:5, 11; 30:9. We encounter the phrase *שבה שבי* in 2 Chr 6:38; 28:17; in Num 21:1; Deut 21:10; and in poetry: Judg 5:12; Ps 68:19.

³² So also Ezra 8:30; 2 Chr 29:16; and in the meaning 'to accept': Esth 4:4; 9:23, 27; 1 Chr 12:19. By contrast, *לקח* is used in Exod 12:7; 24:6, 8; 29:12, 16, 20, 21; Lev 4:5 and *passim*, Ezek 43:20; 45:19. The interchange *לקח/קבל* has been studied by Avi Hurvitz, "The Evidence of Language in Dating the Priestly Code," *RB* 81 (1974), 24–56, esp. pp. 43–44; "Once Again: The Linguistic Profile of the Priestly Material in the Pentateuch and its Historical Age. A Response to J. Blenkinsopp," *ZAW* 112 (2000), 180–91, esp., pp. 181–85.

Go out to the mountains and *bring* leafy branches of olive trees, pine trees, myrtles, palms and [other] leafy trees to make booths (Neh 8:15).

וַיֵּצְאוּ הָעָם וַיָּבִיאוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם סֻכּוֹת

So the people went out and *brought* them, and made themselves booths (v 16).

In this pattern two verbs are used: **יצא** and **הביא**. On the other hand a similar description in the Jacob tale includes **לקח**:

לֵךְ-נָא אֶל-הָעֶצֶן וְקַח-לִי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גְדֵי עִזִּים טְבִים

Go to the flock and *fetch* me two choice kids (Gen 27:9)

אֲדָ שָׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי וְלָךְ קַח-לִי

Just do as I say and go fetch them for me (v 13)

וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ

He went, got them and brought them to his mother (v 14).

In this context **לקח** indicates not merely taking, but definitely also implies the conveyance of the kids to Rebekah. This meaning is made explicit by the phrase **וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ** (v 14). The account of the branches for the Sukkoth booths indicates the same actions by **הביא** only, bypassing **לקח**. In addition one notes the role of **לקח** in the biverbal construction **וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ** (Gen 27: 14). This issue will be discussed in the final chapter of our study.

b. To Go, to Go Out, and to Come

The second verb which is used far less in corpus A than in the classical corpus is **הלך**, 'to go.'

The following table presents the data for **הלך** in comparison with a number of intransitive verbs, **ירד**, **עלה**, **בוא**, **יצא** (all in the *Qal* stem).³³

³³ In our corpus the *biphil* **הוליד** appears in 2 Chr 33:11; 35:24; 36:6; and in prophetic texts: Hos 2:16; Amos 2:10; Zech 5:10.

Table II. Verbs of Motion: Intransitive

| Verb/Text | Gen Narr | 1– 2Sam | ChroNonS | EzraNehEst | IIPro | IPro | Total |
|------------------|-------------|------------|----------|------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Intrans | | | | | | | |
| הלך | 103 | 192 | 20 | 18 | 11 | 71 | 416 |
| % Intrans | 29.10 | 30.62 | 13.61 | 15.13 | 16.18 | 35.86 | 27.30 |
| יצא | 48 | 74 | 30 | 16 | 20 | 22 | 210 |
| % Intrans | 13.56 | 11.80 | 20.41 | 13.45 | 29.41 | 11.11 | 13.78 |
| בוא | 143 | 256 | 80 | 69 | 29 | 68 | 650 |
| % Intrans | 40.40 | 40.83 | 54.42 | 57.98 | 42.65 | 34.34 | 42.65 |
| עלה | 39 | 61 | 13 | 12 | 7 | 28 | 165 |
| % Intrans | 11.02 | 9.73 | 8.84 | 10.08 | 10.29 | 14.14 | 10.83 |
| ירד | 21 | 44 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 83 |
| % Intrans | 5.93 | 7.02 | 2.72 | 3.36 | 1.47 | 4.55 | 5.45 |
| Intrans | 354 | 627 | 147 | 119 | 68 | 198 | 1524 |
| All Verbs | 4177 | 5273 | 2021 | 1896 | 992 | 3827 | 18186 |
| Intrns/ Verbs | 8.47 | 11.89 | 7.27 | 6.28 | 6.85 | 5.17 | 8.38 |

a. Some Notes on the Semantics of Motion Verbs

Of course, the issue is not just the frequency of the verbs. Orientation in space is an important factor. As noted at the outset of this study, Fillmore surmises that in English the verb ‘to go’ is used for a change of location when the speaker’s position serves as point of departure, and the point of destination is remote from the speaker’s position. On the other hand, ‘to come’ is used when the point of departure is the point of destination where the speaker is situated, or where he imagines himself to be.³⁴ In biblical Hebrew the relationship between the verbs is more complex, since, as I already noted, הלך also may indicate movement in general, for example,³⁵

וַיֵּקֶחַ אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵצֵי הָעֵלֶה וַיִּשֶׂם עַל־יִצְחָק בְּנֹו וַיִּקַּח ... וַיֵּלְכוּ
שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו

³⁴ Fillmore, “Coming and Going,” 83–84, 87.

³⁵ Similarly Exod 17:5; 22:8; 2 Kgs 2:6; Isa 40:31; Amos 3:3 (BDB, 230). One also notes the flowing of the water, Gen 2:14; Isa 8:6 (both with indication of manner); 8:7; Joel 4:18; and the Siloah inscription, lines 5–6 (KAI 189; with indication of origin and endpoint).

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on his son Isaac ... and they *went* both of them together (Gen 22:6; ASV)³⁶

One even notes a few passages in which הלך is used with the source as goal:³⁷

וַיֹּאמֶר הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי אֶל־דָּוִד לָכֵה אֵלַי

and the Philistine said to David, "Come here" (1 Sam 17:44, ASV).

As I already noted, הלך is neutral with regard to orientation, or indicates movement toward a location that is remote from the origin.

On the other hand, בוא means not only 'to come,' with the origin as endpoint, but also 'to enter,' 'to arrive,' 'to reach' the destination (which then serves as deictic center). In the first meaning it contrasts with הלך, whereas in the latter sense it is opposed to יצא. In both cases the orientation is marked.

The relationship between הלך and יצא is not less complex. Whereas הלך is mostly neutral with regard to orientation or takes the source as point of departure, יצא is used to describe the way viewed from the point of departure, often a closed, and thus protected space, such as, for example, with the residence as origin,

קוּמוּ צֵאוּ מִן־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה

Up, get out of this place (Gen 19:14; NRSV).

וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לָשׁוּחַ בַּעֲדָה לַפָּנוֹת עָרִב

Isaac went out in the evening to walk in the field (Gen 24:63; NRSV).

Or, with a different point of departure:

וַיֹּאמְרוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים הִנֵּה עֹבְרִים יִצְאִים מִן־הַחֲרִים אֲשֶׁר
הִתְחַבְּאוּ־שָׁם

³⁶ The NJPSV renders וילכו as 'walked off,' highlighting source orientation.

³⁷ Similarly Num 22:16, 37, Balak addressing Balaam, but in these cases הלך could mean 'travel.' In any case, this use is extremely rare.

and the Philistines said, "Look, some Hebrews are *coming out* of the holes where they have been hiding" (1 Sam 14:11).

וּבֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד עַד־בְּחוּרִים וְהָיָה מִשָּׁם אִישׁ יוֹצֵא מִמְּשַׁפַּחַת
בֵּית־שָׁאוּל

As King David was approaching Bahurim, a member of Saul's clan ... *came out* from there (2 Sam 16:5).

Accordingly, the orientation of יֵצֵא marks the point of departure, which may be the source (like הֵלךְ) or a different center of attention (like בּוֹא). Some examples may clarify these distinctions between יֵצֵא and הֵלךְ:

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת־שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ ... וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ
אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן

Abram took his wife Sarai ... and *they set out* for the land of Canaan, and they *arrived* in the land of Canaan (Gen 12:5)

וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּעָר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חֲרָנָה

Jacob *left* Beer-sheba, and *set out* for Haran (Gen 28:10).

בּוֹא and יֵצֵא³⁸

וַיָּבֹא לָבֵן בָּאֵהָל יַעֲקֹב ... וַיֵּצֵא מֵאֵהָל לֵאָה וַיָּבֹא בָּאֵהָל רָחֵל

So Laban *went* into Jacob's tent ... *Leaving* Leah's tent, he *entered* Rachel's tent (Gen 31:33).

בְּזֹאת תִּבְחָנוּ חַי פְּרַעָה אִם־תֵּצְאוּ מִזֶּה כִּי אִם־בָּבוֹא אֲחִיכֶם
הַקָּטָן הַזֶּה

By this you shall be put to the test: unless your youngest brother *comes* here, by Pharaoh, you shall not *depart* from this place! (Gen 42:15)

וַיְהִי כִכְלֹתוֹ לְהַעֲלוֹת הָעֵלָה וְהָיָה שְׂמוּאֵל בָּא וַיֵּצֵא שָׁאוּל
לְקִרְאָתוֹ לְבָרְכוֹ

³⁸ In addition one notes the idiomatic use of יֵצֵא and בּוֹא for indicating 'leaving and entering' a city under siege (Josh 6:1; 1 Kgs 15:17) or leadership (going out to and returning from a campaign; Num 27:21; 1 Sam 18:13, 16; 2 Sam 5:2 and *passim*).

He had just finished presenting the burnt offering when Samuel *arrived*, and Saul *went out* to meet him and welcome him (1 Sam 13:10).

Sometimes we encounter בוא where הלך would be more appropriate to the orientation implied by the narrative. For instance, when the Aramean king is brought before Ahab in order to conclude a covenant:

וַיֹּאמֶר בָּאוּ קָחֵהוּ וַיֵּצֵא אֵלָיו בֶּן־הַדָּד וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ עַל־הַמָּרְכָבָה

“Go, bring him,” he said. Ben-hadad *came out* to him, and he *invited* him into his chariot (1 Kgs 20:33).

בוא, rendered by ‘to go’ (NJPSV and NRSV) reflects a surprising orientation toward the abode of the Aramean king, since the envoys have to proceed from Ahab to the place where their king is hiding.³⁹

הלך and בוא

וַיָּקֻמוּ שְׂרֵי מוֹאָב וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־בָּלָק וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵאֵן בִּלְעָם הֵלֵךְ עִמָּנוּ

The Moabite dignitaries *left*, and *they came* to Balak and said, “Balaam refused to *come* with us” (Num 22:14).

וַיֵּלֶךְ בִּלְעָם עִם־בָּלָק וַיָּבֹאוּ קִרְיַת הַחֲצוֹת

Balaam went with Balak and they came to Kiriath-huzoth (Num 22:39).

וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ מִנּוּחַ אַחֲרֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָאִישׁ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ

Manoah promptly *followed* his wife. He *came* to the man and asked him... (Judg 13:11).

וַיֵּלְכוּ חֲמִשָּׁת הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיָּבֹאוּ לַיִּשָּׁה

The five men *went on and came* to Laish (Judg 18:7).

וַיֵּשְׁבֻם דָּוִד בְּבֶקֶר ... וַיֵּלֶךְ כְּאִשֶּׁר צִוָּהוּ יֹשִׁי וַיָּבֹא הַמַּעֲגָלָה וְהַחִיל
הַיֵּצֵא אֶל־הַמַּעֲרָכָה וְהִרְעוּ בַּמִּלְחָמָה

³⁹ See next note. Alternatively, the speaker could view the Aramean party as returning to Ahab (compare Judg 3:24: וַיָּבֹאוּ וַיַּעֲבְדוּ בָּאוּ).

Early next morning, David ... *set out*, as his father Jesse had instructed him. He *reached* the barricade as the army *was going out* to the battle lines shouting the war cry (1 Sam 17:20).

וַיֵּלֶךְ הַמִּלְחָמָה וַיָּבֹא וַיַּגֵּד לְדָוִד אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר שָׁלְחוּ יוֹאָב

The messenger set out; he came and told David all that Joab had sent him to say (2 Sam 11:22).

One notes a number of cases in which the orientation centers on the endpoint. *BDB* quotes the Isaian prophecy

לֵךְ-בֹּא אֶל-הַסֵּכֶן הַזֶּה עַל-שִׁבְנָא אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַבַּיִת

Go in to see that steward, that Shebna, in charge of the palace (Isa 22:15).⁴⁰

לְכִי וּבֹאִי אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד

Go immediately to King David (1 Kgs 1:13).

וַתָּבֹא בַת-שֶׁבַע אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ הַחֲדָרָה

So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber (v 15).

וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתָּבֹא וַתִּלְקֹט בַּשָּׂדֶה אַחֲרֵי הַקְּצָרִים

So she went. She came and gleaned in the field behind the reapers (Ruth 2:3; NRSV).

b. הלך as against בוא: Corpus C

Thus it still is important to note that in the narratives of the Patriarchs the frequent verbs are *הלך*, the indication of motion that is neutral with regard to orientation and of movement toward a destination that is remote from the origin, and *בוא*, the marker of movement with orientation toward the speaker or a central point of view. In the Abraham tales *הלך* is more frequent than *בוא*;⁴¹ in

⁴⁰ Similarly Gen 45:17; 1 Sam 22:5; 2 Kgs 5:5; Ezek 3:4, 11. See *BDB*, 98 (Qal, 4, 'with limitation of motion given'). But in Isa 47:5 (שְׂבִי דוֹמָם) (*בואי בחשך בתי-כשדים*) the sense of *בוא* is metaphorical rather than local. In 2 Kings 10:12 (וַיָּקָם וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּלֶךְ שִׁמְרוֹן) the LXX has two verbs, *καὶ ἀνέστη καὶ ἐπορεύθη*, possibly reflecting *וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ*, without representation of *וַיָּבֹא* (similarly Ruth 2:3).

⁴¹ In the Abraham narrative *הלך* has 13 occurrences in 12:1–16:16; and 31 occurrences in 18:1–25:1, with 14 and 27 instances respectively for *בוא*.

some sections of the Jacob tales **בוא** is more frequent, but this is not the general picture.⁴² In the Joseph tale **בוא** is heavily preponderant.⁴³ On the face of it, this phenomenon could be explained by Joseph's central position at the Egyptian court (for instance, 41:57; 42:5–7, 9, 10, 12, 15; 43:23, 25, 26, 30; 44:14), which likewise affects his position in other passages (37:10). But this is only one aspect of the issue. On the other hand one notes the high frequency of the verbs of vertical motion, **ירד** and **עלה**, the specific indications of the journey to Egypt (**ירד**) or to Canaan (**עלה**).⁴⁴ The incidence of **הלך** together with these verbs (52 instances) exceeds the incidence of **בוא**. In the book of Samuel the preponderance of **בוא** is less striking than in the Joseph tales, but is nevertheless unequivocal.⁴⁵ Once again, one point is the central position of the king, his quarters and his court. One notes, for instance, the difference between the opening of Jotham's fable **הַלֹּךְ הָלְכוּ הָעֵצִים לְמִשָּׁח** **מֵלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם** (Judg 9:8; "Once the trees *went* to anoint a king over themselves"), and the description of David's anointment by the Judeans: **וַיָּבֹאוּ אֲנָשֵׁי יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְשְׁחוּ־שָׁם אֶת־דָּוִד לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־בֵּית יְהוּדָה** (2 Sam 2:4: The men of Judah *came* and there they anointed David king over the House of Judah). On the other hand, in the David narratives **עלה** and **ירד** occupy a special position, since the narrator often indicates upward and downward movement.⁴⁶ In the first section of the book of Samuel, the incidence of **בוא** (116 instances) is smaller than that of **הלך** together with the directional verbs (160 cases). However, this picture changes in the second section. Here

⁴² In the Jacob tale we count 14 instances of **הלך** in chapters 25–27 and 23 in chs 28–35; for **בוא** we have 7 examples in chapters 25–27 and 33 cases in chs 28–35. The high number of instances in the latter group is only partly connected with the use of **בוא** for sexual intercourse (Gen 29:21, 23, 30; 30:3, 4).

⁴³ In the Joseph narrative we encounter 19 cases of **הלך** in chapters 37–46, as against 49 cases of **בוא**, and 1 instance of **הלך** as against 13 cases of **בוא** in chapters 46–49; 50. Of course, the quantitative picture is not affected by the use of **בוא** in sexual context (38:2, 8, 9, 16, 18; 39:14).

⁴⁴ For **ירד** and **עלה** we find 16 and 17 instances, respectively.

⁴⁵ In the sample extending from 1 Sam 1–2 Sam 1, we encounter 94 cases of **הלך** as against 116 cases of **בוא**, whereas in 2 Samuel **הלך** has 98 instances, and 140 **בוא**. We find 30 and 44 instances of **יצא** respectively.

⁴⁶ S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon press, 1913), 183, 205, 219–220, 263.

עלה (140 instances) is slightly more found than הלך, ירד, and בוא together (137 cases), but the difference is no more than minimal.

Table III. Intransitive Verbs of Motion: Corpus C

| Verb/Text | Abram 1 | Abram 2 | Jacob 1 | Jac 2 | Jos 1 | Jos 2 | Sam 1 | Sam 2 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Intrans | | | | | | | | |
| הלך | 13 | 31 | 14 | 23 | 19 | 1 | 94 | 98 |
| % Intrans | 37.14 | 40.25 | 50.00 | 31.08 | 16.81 | | 30.72 | 30.53 |
| יצא | 6 | 12 | 5 | 10 | 12 | 1 | 30 | 44 |
| % Intrans | 17.14 | 15.58 | 17.86 | 13.51 | 10.62 | | 9.80 | 13.70 |
| בוא | 14 | 27 | 7 | 33 | 49 | 13 | 116 | 140 |
| % Intrans | 40.00 | 35.06 | 25.00 | 44.59 | 43.36 | 56.22 | 37.91 | 43.61 |
| עלה | 1 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 17 | 8 | 36 | 25 |
| % Intrans | 2.86 | | | 9.46 | 15.04 | 34.78 | 11.76 | 7.79 |
| ירד | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 16 | 0 | 30 | 14 |
| % Intrans | 5.71 | 3.90 | | 1.35 | 14.16 | | 9.08 | 4.36 |
| Intransitive | 35 | 77 | 28 | 74 | 113 | 23 | 306 | 321 |
| All Verbs | 297 | 906 | 376 | 891 | 1147 | 339 | 2532 | 2741 |
| Intrans/Vrb | 11.78 | 8.50 | 7.45 | 8.31 | 9.85 | 6.78 | 12.09 | 11.71 |

c. בוא and יצא: corpus A

When we turn to Chronicles (those parts not shared with Samuel-Kings) we note two phenomena. First, verbs of movement (intransitive) as a class are less frequent than in Genesis/Samuel: 7.21% versus 8.44 and 11.80% respectively. Secondly, within the class of movement there is a dramatic decrease in the frequency of הלך (13.61% of the intransitive verbs of motion, as against around 30% in Genesis/Samuel), whereas there is a certain increase in the use of בוא (54% as against around 40% in Genesis/Samuel) and of יצא (20% as against around 12–13% in Genesis/Samuel).⁴⁷ That is to say, at this juncture יצא is more frequent than הלך.

⁴⁷ The extent of the decrease is seriously underestimated by Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensverd, *Linguistic dating of Biblical Texts* (2 Vols.; London: Equinox, 2008), 1.101. הלך is found in the Mesha stela (KAI 181, lines 14–15), but בוא is not attested. As I showed in a previous paper, the decrease in the use of הלך is already notable in corpus B, coeval with the Hebrew inscriptions; see my paper, F. Polak, “New Means... New Ends: Scholarship and Computer Data,” R. Poswick *et al.* (eds), *Proceedings of the Fourth International Colloquium Bible and Computer: Desk and Discipline (Amsterdam, 15–18 august 1994)* (Paris: Champion, 1995), 292–312, esp 297.

Other narrative prose of the Persian period reveals a similar picture. In Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther the said verbs of motion cover 6.28% of all verbs. This figure dovetails with the shift found in the non-shared parts of Chronicles. In the narratives of Ezra and Nehemiah the frequency of הלך is higher than in the Chronistic text (23 and 17% respectively) but still significantly lower than in Genesis/Samuel. In some of the prophetic texts we encounter similar figures (Zechariah 1–8; Malachi), but in Haggai and Zechariah 12–14 הלך does not appear at all. The most frequent verb is בוא, which accounts for 50% or more of all verbs of motion (Ezra; Nehemiah; Haggai; Zechariah 12–14); in some cases the frequency of this verb is larger than 70% (Esther; Malachi). יצא is frequent in many units. In Chronicles, Esther, and Zechariah 12–14 its frequency (20% or more) is almost twice as large as the frequency of the general verb, הלך. In Zechariah 1–8, where הלך is found often (25% of the verbs of motion), יצא still is almost twice as frequent (42%). In these chapters בוא is surprisingly rare (31%).

Table IV. Intransitive Verbs of Motion: Corpus A

| Verb/Text | ChroNo nS | Ezra | Ne- hemia | Esther | Hagg | Zech 1–8 | Malachi | 12–14 |
|--------------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------|-------|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| Intrans | | | h | | | | | |
| הלך | 20 | 7 | 8 | 3 | - | 9 | 2 | - |
| % Intrans | 13.61 | 23.33 | 17.39 | 7.14 | | 25.71 | 20.00 | |
| יצא | 30 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 1 | 15 | 1 | 3 |
| % Intrans | 20.41 | 6.67 | 10.87 | 21.43 | 12.50 | 42.86 | 10.00 | 20.00 |
| בוא | 80 | 15 | 23 | 30 | 5 | 11 | 7 | 6 |
| % Intrans | 54.42 | 50.00 | 50.00 | 71.43 | 62.50 | 31.43 | 70.00 | 40.00 |
| עלה | 13 | 5 | 7 | - | 1 | - | - | 6 |
| % Intrans | 8.84 | 16.67 | 15.22 | | 12.50 | | | 40.00 |
| ירד | 4 | 1 | 3 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| % Intrans | 2.72 | 3.33 | 6.52 | | 12.50 | | | |
| Intransitive | 147 | 30 | 46 | 42 | 8 | 35 | 10 | 15 |
| All Verbs | 2039 | 532 | 651 | 643 | 119 | 456 | 248 | 169 ⁴⁸ |
| Intrns/Vrb | 7.21 | 5.64 | 7.07 | 6.53 | 6.72 | 7.68 | 4.03 | 8.88 |

How to explain these shifts in frequency? Is הלך less frequent in use because of contextual conditions? It seems to me that in some cases this explanation is beside the mark. For instance, in the

⁴⁸ As against 409 nouns, 29.24% of all content words.

narrative of early Israelite support for David, **בוא** is used with no obvious implications for the orientation:

וּמִמָּנָשָׁה נָפְלוּ עַל־דָּוִיד בָּבֹאוּ עִם־פְּלִשְׁתִּים עַל־שָׂאוּל לְמִלְחָמָה

Some Manassites went over to David's side when he *came* with the Philistines to make war against Saul (1 Chr 12:20).

The use of **בבאו** is perplexing, since David did not reach the war scene (v 21b). If we would view **בוא** as an indication of a goal orientation, we would have to posit the Philistine offensive at the centre of the narrative, which seems less likely. Could we say that the narrator represents the Philistines as more powerful than David?⁴⁹ This solution would hardly be in keeping with the narrator's perspective. In this case, then, the use of **בוא** does not indicate a specific deictic center.⁵⁰ It is to be granted that the preference for orientation towards the deictic center often serves as an expression of the central position of the king, the royal residence, the kingdom, the priests or the Temple.⁵¹ But an explanation along these lines is not always feasible.⁵² The king is not at the center of orientation when he is urged to set out for war:⁵³

כִּי אִם־בֹּא אַתָּה עֲשֵׂה חֶזֶק לְמִלְחָמָה יִכְשִׁילָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים לְפָנַי
אֲוִיב

But *go* by yourself and do it; take courage for battle, [else]⁵⁴
God will make you fall before the enemy (2 Chr 25:8).

⁴⁹ This is the point of view of Achish (1 Sam 29:6).

⁵⁰ Contrast the use of **הלך** in v 21.

⁵¹ See, e.g., 2 Chr 7:2; 8:11; 11:16; 12:4, 5; and similarly often in 1–2 Chronicles. So also Ezra 3:8; 7:8–9; Neh 1:2; 2:7 and *passim*; Esth 1:12; 2:12, and *passim*. On the other hand one notes the use of **הלך** in the description of the world wide pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Zech 8:21), influenced as it is by Isa 2:3. But in 8:2 the verb is **בוא**.

⁵² The position of the king at the center may explain the use of **בוא** to describe the king's return in 2 Chr 25:14 (see also Jonah 2:8; and almost all cases in the Esther novella), but the construction seems forced. See also 2 Chr 32:21; Ezra 8:15; Neh 4:5; 6:10; Hagg 2:16.

⁵³ Similarly 2 Chr 25:22.

⁵⁴ The NJPSV rendering assumes the omission of **למה** by haplography after **למלחמה**; see W. Rudolph, *Chronikbücher* (HAT; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1955), 278. In my view the lack of connection between the clauses is related to the elliptic style of spontaneous spoken discourse

When the narrator of the Esther scroll has Hatach returning from Mordecai to Esther, the verb used is **בוא**, but the NRSV prefers ‘to go:’

וַיְבֹא הַתֵּד וַיַּגֵּד לְאֶסְתֵּר אֶת דְּבָרֵי מֶרְדֳּכָי

Hathach *went* and told Esther what Mordecai had said (Esth 4:9).

This idiom could be connected to the use of **יצא** to describe how Hatach made his way to Mordecai in the city square in front of the palace gate (4:6). However, similar cases appear in the Jonah tale:

וַיֵּקֶם יוֹנָה לְבָרֶחַת תַּרְשִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּרֶד יָפוֹ וַיִּמָּצֵא אֲנִיָּה
בָּאָה תַרְשִׁישׁ וַיִּתֵּן שָׂכָרָהּ וַיֵּרֶד בָּהּ לְבֹא עִמָּהֶם תַרְשִׁישָׁה

But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship *going* to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to *go* with them to Tarshish (Jonah 1:3; NRSV).

The destination of the ship is indicated by **בוא (תַרְשִׁיש)**, and so is Jonah’s travel plan (**לְבֹא עִמָּהֶם תַרְשִׁישָׁה**).⁵⁵ One notes the complications in the indication of the prophet’s entrance to Nineveh:

וַיַּחֲלֵל יוֹנָה לְבֹא בְעִיר מַהֲלָךְ יוֹם אֶחָד

Jonah began to *enter* into the city, going a day’s walk (Jonah 3:4).

In this case not the orientation stands at the center, but the distance, which in corpus C would in general be indicated by **הלך**.⁵⁶

These examples indicate a second aspect of the preference for **בוא**: the use of this verb when it is not demanded by the explicit orientation.

(fragmented syntax), which is one of the characteristics of the shaping of the dialogue in Chronicles; see my paper, F. Polak, “Spontaneous Spoken Language and Formal Discourse in the Book of Chronicles,” M. Bar-Asher, D. Rom-Shiloni, E. Tov, and N. Wazana (eds) *Shai le-Sara Japhet. Studies in the Bible, its Exegesis and its Language* (Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, 2007), 395–414, esp. pp. 406–7 (Hebrew).

⁵⁵ Similarly Zech 6:10.

⁵⁶ Compare Exod 3:18, **יֵלְכֶם-נָא דֶרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים** (so also 5:3; 8:23).

The use of **יצא** often is not less perplexing. When Mordecai starts walking around in the town, the narrator uses **יצא**, centering on his point of departure, as he leaves the safety of his house:

וַיִּקְרַע מֶרְדֳּכָי אֶת־בְּגָדָיו וַיִּלְבַּשׁ שָׁק וְאַפֶּר וַיֵּצֵא בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר
וַיִּזְעַק זַעֲקָה גְדֹלָה וּמָרָה

Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and *went* through the city, wailing with a loud and bitter cry (Esth 4:1).

In Chronicles **יצא** may indicate the appearance before a group of people:

וַיֵּצֵא דָוִיד לַפְּנֵיהֶם וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אִם־לְשָׁלוֹם בָּאתֶם
אֵלַי לְעֹזְרִי ...

David went out to meet them, saying to them, "If you come on a peaceful errand, to support me ... (1 Chr 12:18).

In this instance, David is represented coming out of his stronghold (v 17), but in most cases **יצא** does not imply leaving a closed locality or a definite place.⁵⁷

וַיֵּצֵא לִפְנֵי אָסָא וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ שְׁמַעוּנִי אָסָא וְכָל־יְהוּדָה וּבִנְיָמִן

He *went out*⁵⁸ to Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin (2 Chr 15:2).

This use of **יצא** is similar to classical **נגש**, such as, for example,⁵⁹

וַיִּגַּשׁ אֵלֵיהֶם וְאֶל־כָּל־הָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר עַד־מָתִי אַתֶּם פֹּסְחִים עַל־שְׁתֵּי
הַסַּבָּפִּים

Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you keep hopping between two opinions? (1 Kgs 18:21)

⁵⁷ So also 2 Chr 19:2; 28:9. By contrast, in Gen 14:17 the king of Sodom is supposed to leave his palace in order to meet Abraham (**וַיֵּצֵא** (מֶלֶךְ־סֹדֶם לִקְרֹאתוֹ).

⁵⁸ So NRSV (=LXX); NJPSV renders "he went."

⁵⁹ So also 2 Sam 1:15; 1 Kgs 18:30, 36; 20:13, 22, 28; 22:24; 2 Kgs 2:5 and in military context, for example, 1 Sam 17:26. In prose from the Persian era this verb is rarely used (Ezra 4:2; 9:1; 2 Chr 29:31).

The first part of the book of Zechariah, in which יצא is rather frequent (15 instances; 42% of the verbs of movement) contains a vision, in which the prophet sees a scroll flying in the air, with no obvious point of departure (Zech 5:1–2). Nevertheless, in the angelic explanation its movement is indicated by יצא:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי זֹאת הָאֵלֶּה הַיּוֹצֵאת עַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ

Then he said to me, “This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land...” (Zech 5:3).

The continuation of this explanation shows how God brought out the curse, in order to let it enter the homes of the transgressors:

הַיּוֹצֵאתֶיהָ נָאִם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, וּבָאָה אֶל-בֵּית הַגִּנָּב וְאֶל-בֵּית
הַנִּשְׁבָּע בְּשֵׁמִי לִשְׁקֹר

I have sent it out, says the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of anyone who swears falsely by my name (Zech 5:4, NRSV).

This vision, then, posits the points of departure and entrance at the center of stage. The point of departure is likewise implied by the use of יצא to indicate the ‘basket coming out’ (הַאִיפָה הַיּוֹצֵאת, vv 5–6; NRSV) and the ‘two women coming forward’ (שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים, v 9; NRSV). An explicit point of departure is provided in the vision of the four chariots ‘coming out from between the two mountains’ (יֹצְאוֹת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הָהָרִים, 6:1). The angel explains:

אֵלֶּה אַרְבַּע רֻחוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם יּוֹצְאוֹת מִהִתְיַצֵּב עַל-אֲדָוֹן כָּל-הָאָרֶץ

Those are the four winds of heaven coming out after presenting themselves to the Lord of all the earth (6:5).

The rendering ‘coming out’ indicates the directions: the prophet perceives the winds, with the divine court as point of departure.⁶⁰ In the sequel, this point is implied, whereas the goal of the movement is indicated explicitly:

אֲשֶׁר-בָּהּ הַסּוֹסִים הַשְּׁחֹרִים יֵצְאוּ אֶל-אֶרֶץ צָפוֹן ... וְהִבְרָדִים
יֵצְאוּ אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַתִּימָן

⁶⁰ In v 7, ‘coming out’ (וְהֵאֲמַצִּים יֵצְאוּ) indicates the appearance, whereas the goal is indicated as לָלֶכֶת לְהַתְּלַךְ בָּאָרֶץ (NJPSV: to start out and range the earth; NRSV: to get off and patrol the earth).

The one with the black horses *is going out* to the region of the north ... the spotted ones *have gone out* to the region of the south (6:6).

A similar constellation may be detected in the vision of the two angels:

וְהָיָה הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי יֵצֵא וּמַלְאָךְ אֲחֵר יֵצֵא לִקְרֹאתוֹ

But the angel who talked with me *came forward*, and another angel *came forward to meet him* (Zech 2:7).⁶¹

In the first clause the implied point of departure is presented by the myrtles where the angel was standing (1:11), whereas the second clause indicates the destination of the second angel.

d. Orientation and Direction of Motion in corpus A

The present data concerning the use of **בוא** and **יצא** in corpus A indicate a basic preference for motion verbs with implicit orientation toward origin or goal of the movement. This preference is notable in two distinct cases:

(a) the indication of point of departure and/or goal by means of the verbs which specifically entail these orientation points, **יצא** for the point of departure, and **בוא** for the destination;

(b) a preference for these verbs when the orientation points are not mentioned explicitly, and even when the indicated motion does not fit the implied orientation.

These preferences differ from the tendencies manifest in corpus C. In this corpus, the preference for **בוא** as indication of a goal oriented movement is matched by the indication by **הלך** of any motion of the acting subject (or speaker) toward a goal that is remote from the origin. In addition, there is a clear preference for the latter verb, when the goal is not in focus.

How are we to account for these shifts? The stipulation of Aramaic influence seems pointless, since neither **בוא** **יצא** nor **הביא** can be characterized as Aramaic. It seems to me that the explanation is a tendency to prefer motion verbs with implied orientation (**יצא**, **הביא**, **בוא**) to verbs that are neutral with regard to orientation (**הלך**, **לקח**), not unlike the tendency to use specific verbs instead of **לקח**. A similar tendency may be noted in the Aramaic

⁶¹ 2:3 in most English versions (e.g., NRSV).

sections in Ezra and Daniel, where אָזל, 'to go,' is less frequent than אָתָה, 'to come,' and נָפַק, 'to go out.'⁶² In the Targum one notes a certain preference for אָתָה, for instance in the rendering אָתָה for exhortatory לָכֶּה in the MT (Gen 19:32). For נִלְכֶּה עֲדִיכֶּה (Gen 22:5) the Targum has נִלְכֶּה אַחֲרֵי. נִתְמַטִּי עַד כֹּא (Gen 24:5) is rendered as לְמִיתִי בְתָרִי (so also in the Peshiṭta),⁶³ and וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ הַלֵּךְ (26:26) as וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ אָתָה לֹוּתִיָּה. This matter obviously needs specific examination in various Aramaic dialects.⁶⁴

3. SYNTACTIC PATTERNS: VERBS OF MOTION IN DISCOURSE

The radical decrease in frequency of לָקַח and הָלַךְ involves a second phenomenon. In corpus C both verbs serve as preverb in

⁶² אָזל appears in Dan 2:17, 24; 6:19, 20; Ezra 4:23; 5:8, 15 (7 cases; movement toward the deictic center: Dan 2:17; but mostly movement toward a remote place). הָלַךְ appears rarely in *peak*: Ezra 5:5; 6:5 (depositing valuables); 7:13 (twice, remote goal). נָפַק, 'to go out,' has 6 instances (Dan 2:13, 14; 3:26; 5:5; 7:10), including the phrase פָּקוּ וְאָתוּ (3:26), with the characteristic opposition of נָפַק and אָתָה, // יָצָא and בּוֹא. אָתָה appears seven times (Dan 3:2, 26; 7:13, 22; Ezra 4:12; 5:3, 16). This verb is used side by side with אָזל in 5:15–16 with different points of orientation:

אַלֶּה מֵאַנְיָא שָׂא אֶזְל־אַחַת הָמוּ בְּהִיכְלָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם / אֲדִין עֲשֻׁבְצָר דָּךְ אָתָּא יִהְיֶה אֲשִׁיא דִּי־בֵית אֱלֹהָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם. In addition one notes 8 instances of מָטָה, 'to arrive,' also in the field of בּוֹא (Dan 4:21, 25; 6:25; 7:13, 22; in a different sense: Dan 4:8, 17, 19). In Ezra 5:15 נִשָּׂא is used in a way that matches the use of לָקַח as preverb (see below).

⁶³ Similarly 24:8, 39.

⁶⁴ The coeditors asked me to compare the Hebrew data with Akkadian and Greek. However, these languages reflect quite a different structure. In Greek the basic verb for 'to come,' ἔρχομαι, is closely related to εἶμι, 'to go,' sharing, for instance, the aorist and the perfect. Moreover, in Greek the orientation often is indicated by prepositions added to the simplex (the naked verbal stem) as a composite verb. Thus יָצָא can be rendered by ἐξ-έρχομαι and בּוֹא by εἰς-έρχομαι. In Akkadian the etymological congener of הָלַךְ, alāku, can mean 'to go,' but with a special affix, the so-called ventive, this verb indicates motion toward the deictic center, 'to come,' a meaning that can also be conveyed by bā'u, 'to pass along, to come' (the etymological counterpart of בּוֹא), kašādu, 'to reach' or erēbu, 'to enter.' The last two verbs match Aramaic מָטָה and עָלַל, respectively, both used in the Targum to render BH בּוֹא.

biverbal or biclausal constructions.⁶⁵ As noted above, I use the term *biverbal* to indicate constructions in which two verbal predicates relate to the same subject and describe one single action,⁶⁶ as imperative, or as indicative, such as, for example,

אָד שְׁמַע בְּקוֹלִי וְלֵךְ קַח-לִי

Just do as I say and go fetch them for me (Gen 27:13).

וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ

So he *went* and *got them* and brought them to his mother (Gen 27:14; NRSV)

This verse tells how Jacob obeyed his mother, and mentions explicitly that ‘he went and took.’

The same verbs occur in Rebekah’s opening instructions:

לֵךְ-נָא אֶל-הֶעֶזְאוֹן וְקַח-לִי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גִדִּי עֲזִים טָבִים וְאַעֲשֶׂה
אֹתָם מִטְעָמִים לְאָבִיךָ

Go to the flock and fetch me two choice kids, and I will make of them a dish for your father (Gen 27:9).

This order indicates one action, taking two kids from the flock. However, the description of this action is split up into two clauses, of which the first mentions the goal (the flock) and the second the direct object (two kids). This is an example of a *biclausal* construction, which is characterized by the description of one single action by preclause, with preverb as predicate, and main clause.

⁶⁵ Preverb is the term used by Ayo Bamgbose, *A Grammar of Yoruba* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 67–75. ‘Two-Verb constructions’ are discussed by M. Eskhult, ‘Marker of Inception in Biblical Hebrew,’ 21–26.

⁶⁶ The case of *שלח-הלך* (to send-to go) is exceptional in that the first clause mentions the agent who sends the addressee off, whereas the second clause shows how this person/these persons go off, e.g., *וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיֵּלֶךְ* (Gen 21:14); so also Gen 24:56; 26:31; 28:5; 30:25; 45:24; Exod 18:27; Josh 2:21; 8:9; 22:6; 24:28 (LXX, 23:28); Judg 2:6; 1 Sam 6:6; 10:25 (4QSama); 20:13; 3:21, 22, 23, 24; 1 Kgs 11:21; 2 Kgs 5:24; 6:23; Isa 6:8; Ps 81:13; 104:10; Job 38:25; and similarly Zech 1:10 (להתהלך).

a. הלך as Preverb

The question is why should the narrator use this construction? Why should the narrator insist on mentioning that Jacob ‘went and took?’ Why not use a single verb, as in Nathan’s parable, וַיִּקַּח אֶת־כֶּבֶשֶׁת הָאִישׁ הָרָאשׁ (2 Sam 12:4, ‘so he took the poor man’s lamb’)? This question relates to a large number of cases in which the narrator mentions the change of locality before the main action, such as, for example,

וַיִּפְקַח אֱלֹהִים אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתֵּרָא בְּאֵר מִים וַתִּלְךְ וַתִּמְלֵא
אֶת־הַחֲמָת מִים

Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She *went* and filled the skin with water (Gen 21:19).

וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לֵוִי וַיִּקַּח אֶת־בַּת־לֵוִי

A certain man of the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman (Exod 2:1).

וַתֹּאמֶר אָחִתּוֹ אֶל־בַּת־פַּרְעֹה הָאֵלֶּלֶךְ וְקָרָאתִי לָךְ אִשָּׁה מִיִּנְקָת מִן־הָעִבְרִית

Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women? (Exod 2:7).

וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיָּשָׁב אֶל־יִתְרֹ חָתָנוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֵלֶכָה נָא וְאָשׁוּבָה
אֶל־אֲחֵי אֲשֶׁר־בְּמִצְרַיִם

Moses went back to his father-in-law Jether and said to him, “Let me go back to my kinsmen in Egypt and see how they are faring” (Exod 4:18)

In all these verses הלך serves as a preliminary for the main action, either as preverb (Gen 21:19; Exod 2:7; 4:18), or as predicate of the preclause (Exod 2:1). The note on the marriage of the ‘man from the house of Levi’ and ‘the Levitic woman’ is most troubling, for why mention that he ‘went?’ What is the function of these notes on the change in locality?

The answer to this question is dependent on biverbal and biclausal constructions in which other lexemes serve as preverb, קום ‘to stand up,’ and סבב, ‘to turn around.’ As Dobbs-Allsopp has shown, קום often serves as preverb in order to indicate the incep-

tion of the action,⁶⁷ in an ingressive aspect. Eskhult points to a similar use of סָבַב.⁶⁸ The use of 'motion' as a metaphor for 'change' allows us to construe the use of הֵלֵךְ as preverb as an indication of radical change in the prevailing situation, rather than as merely a change in locality.⁶⁹ Thus, the Levite modifies his personal situation by marrying a woman from the house of Levi, and also brings change into the state of all 'children of Israel,' since their son is destined to save them from slavery. By the same token, by means of the 'two choice kids' her son is bringing her, Rebekah changes his situation as well as the fate of the entire family.⁷⁰ Change is implied in many cases where the imperative לָךְ, לָכֵּה, לָכוּ or the cohortative נִלְכֶּה serve to introduce a second imperative/cohortative:⁷¹

וְעַתָּה לָכוּ וְנִהְרָגוּ וְנִשְׁלָכְהוּ בְּאֶחָד הַבְּרוֹת

Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits
(Gen 37:20).

לָכוּ וְנִמְכְּרֵנוּ לִישְׁמַעֲאֵלִים וְיִדְנֵנוּ אֶל־תְּהִיבוּ

Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, but let us not do away
with him ourselves (Gen 37:27).

The biverbal and biclausal patterns are often found in corpus C, and appear in corpus B as well, but are extremely rare in corpus

⁶⁷ L. W. Dobbs-Allsop, "Ingressive *qwm* in Biblical Hebrew," *ZAH* 8 (1995), 31–54, C. S. Smith, *The Parameter of Aspect* (Studies in Linguistics and Philosophy 43; Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991), 35, 48–49. The syntactic structure of this pattern is discussed in my paper, "Linguistic and Stylistic Aspects of Epic Formulae," 293–94.

⁶⁸ Eskhult, "Marker of Inception in Biblical Hebrew."

⁶⁹ Of course, a spatial meaning is implied in passages where the location is important, e.g., Judg 21:23; 1 Sam 3:5, 6, 9; 9:3; 17:48; 28:7; 31:12; 2 Sam 11:22; 12:29; 14:30. In the Mesha inscription (*KAI* 181) one notes lines 14–15: וְאֵהֵלֵךְ בִּלְלָהּ וְאֵלְתַּחַם בֵּהּ מִבְּקַע הַשְּׁחֶרֶת עַד הַצְּהָרִים.

⁷⁰ So also Gen 22:13; 28:9; 38:11; 45:28; 50:18; Exod 4:27, 29; 12:28; Num 13:26; 32:41, 42; Deut 20:5–8; 24:2; 31:14; Josh 2:1, 22; 8:29; 9:4; Judg 15:4; 2 Sam 6:12; 21:12.

⁷¹ Similarly, e.g., Gen 19:32; 37:14; Judg 4:6, 22; 9:10, 12, 14; 10:14; 11:6; 18:2; 21:10, 20; 1 Sam 9:9, 10; 11:14; 14:1; 15:3, 6, 18; 16:1; 17:32; 20:11, 21; 22:5; 23:2, 22; 2 Sam 3:16, 21; 7:3, 5; 14:21; 15:7, 22; 18:21; 24:1, 12; 1 Kgs 1:12, 13. In particular one notes the phrase לָךְ עֲבַד אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרָיִם (1 Sam 26:19; and similarly, e.g., Deut 13:7, 14; 17:3; 29:25; Josh 23:16).

A. The indicative with locative meaning is found in the Amaziah tale (2 Chr 25:11, וַיֵּלֶךְ גִּיאַ הַמֶּלֶח וַיִּדֹּ אֶת־בְּנֵי־שַׁעִיר, 'he marched to the Valley of Salt and slew the men of Seir'). The imperative construction is found in the Esther scroll (Esth 4:6: לֵךְ כְּנוּס, 'Go, assemble all the Jews who live in Shushan'), the Nehemiah memoirs (2:17; 6:2), the account of the reading of the Torah (Neh 8:10),⁷² and in Zechariah's prophecy (Zech 8:21, 23).⁷³

The upshot is, that the decrease in the use of הלך correlates with a sharp decline in the use of biverbal and biclausal constructions with this verb.

b. לקח as Preverb

A verb that appears frequently in biclausal constructions is the verb לקח, which occurs as predicate in a series of preclauses. לקח may serve as preverb when the main clause has הלך as predicate, such as, for example:⁷⁴

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עֲבֹר לִפְנֵי הָעָם וְקַח אִתָּךְ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וּמִטֶּטֶף אֲשֶׁר הִכִּיתָ בּוֹ אֶת־הַיָּאֵר קַח בְּיָדְךָ וְהִלַּכְתָּ

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pass before the people; *take* with you some of the elders of Israel, and *take* along the rod with which you struck the Nile, and *set out* (Exod 17:5).

In this case, the elders and the rod, occurring as the object of the preclause, serve to accompany Moses in the action mentioned in the main clause. This function can be fulfilled by people ('the elders'), animals, and inanimate objects ('the rod'), such as, for example:

⁷² In Neh 8:12 the main verb appears in the infinitive, וַיֵּלְכוּ כָּל־הָעָם לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת וּלְשַׁלַּח מִנּוֹת וּלְעֲשׂוֹת שִׂמְחָה גְדוֹלָה

⁷³ On the other hand, in the prophetic texts that relate, according to their content, to the 8th-7th century BCE, one notes the imperative is frequently used: Isa 1:18; 2:3 (/Mic 4:2); 2:5; 6:9; 20:2; 21:6; 22:15; Hos 1:2, 3; 2:9; 3:1; 5:13; 5:15; 6:1; Amos 7:12, 15.

⁷⁴ So also Gen 12:19; 14:11, 12; 22:3; 24:51, 61; 34:17; 36:6; 42:33; Exod 12:32; Deut 26:2; Josh 9:11; Judg 18:24; 19:28; 1 Sam 9:3; 24:3; 26:11, 12; 2 Sam 4:7; 2 Kings 4:29; 8:8; 9:1; Jer 13:4; 36:14; 41:12; Job 42:8.

וַיֹּאמֶר קַח־נָא אֶת־בְּנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר־אֲהַבְתָּ אֶת־יִצְחָק
וְלֵךְ־לְךָ אֶל־אֶרֶץ הַמֹּרְיָה

And he said, “Take your son, your favoured one, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah” (Gen 22:2)

וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד עֶשְׂרֵה גָמְלִים מִגִּמְלֵי אֲדֹנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ וְכָל־טוֹב אֲדֹנָיו בְּיָדוֹ
וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אָרָם נְהָרִים אֶל־עִיר נַחוֹר

Then the servant *took* ten of his master’s camels and *set out*, taking with him all the bounty of his master; and *he made his way* to Aram-naharaim, to the city of Nahor (Gen 24:10).

In other words, from a point of view of case semantics, the object of the preclause provides the comitative (sociative) of the main clause.⁷⁵ This pattern is not attested in corpus A.⁷⁶

In other cases the preclause provides the object for the main clause, such as, for example,⁷⁷

וַיִּקַּח שֵׁם וַיִּפֹּת אֶת־הַשְּׂמָלָה וַיִּשְׂמֻהָ עַל־שְׁכָם שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּלְכוּ
אֲחֵרָנִית

Then Shem and Japheth *took* a garment, *laid* it on both their shoulders, and *walked* backward (Gen 9: 23; NRSV).

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵצֵי הָעֵלָה וַיִּשֶׂם עַל־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ

Abraham *took* the wood for the burnt offering and *put* it on his son Isaac (Gen 22:6).

⁷⁵ See Charles J. Fillmore, “Toward a Modern Theory of Case,” Ch. J. Fillmore, *Form and Meaning in Language. Vol. I: Papers on Semantic Roles* (Stanford, CA: Center for the Study of language and Information, 2003), 2–21, esp. pp. 6–9; “The Case for Case,” E. Bach and R. T. Harms (eds) *Universals in Linguistic Theory* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), 1–88, esp. pp. 21–32; R. E. Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse, Second Edition* (New York: Plenum Press, 1996), 153–218, esp. p. 164.

⁷⁶ The example in Job 42:8 apparently reflects the influence of Patriarchal narrative.

⁷⁷ לָקַח and שָׂם form a formulaic pair, appearing also in Gen 21:14; 28:11, 18; 31:34; Exod 2:3; 17:12; Josh 8:12; Judg 4:21; 9:48; 15:4; 1 Sam 7:12; 8:11; (17:40, 54); 19:13; 25:18; 2 Kgs 2:20; 9:13; 10:7; 20:7; Jer 39:12; 43:10; Ezek 17:5; 19:5; Job 22:22; and in cultic context: Exod 24:6; 40:20; Lev 8:26; Deut 26:2; 31:26 (compare Josh 6:18; 7:11).

In corpus A this use is not found in narrative. In prophetic texts from the Persian era one notes two instances: Hag 2:23; Zech 6:11.

A frequent formula joins לקח as preverb to its antonym נתן in the main clause,⁷⁸ such as, for example, in legal context:⁷⁹

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם צֹאן וּבָקָר וַיִּתֵּן לְאַבִּימֶלֶךְ וַיִּכְרְתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּרִית

Abraham *took* sheep and oxen and *gave* them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a pact (Gen 21:27).

וְאֶת־שְׂדוֹתֵיכֶם וְאֶת־כְּרָמֵיכֶם וְזִיתֵיכֶם הַטּוֹבִים יִקַּח וְנָתַן לְעֲבָדָיו

He will *seize* your choice fields, vineyards, and olive groves, and *give* them to his courtiers (1 Sam 8:14).

Other uses include transfer of property (Gen 20:14; 1 Sam 25:11; including the bestowal of the priestly portions of the sacrifice, Lev 7:34), handing over of a maid to the husband (Gen 16:3; 30:9; similarly 2 Sam 12:11); change of location of an object (Gen 15:10; 18:8; 21:14; 1 Sam 9:22) or a person (2 Chr 22:11); even jailing (Gen 39:20; 2 Sam 20:3; Jer 39:14). This formula is not attested in corpus A.⁸⁰

In corpus C לקח appears as preverb with a wide variety of verbs, with locative overtones, such as הביא (Gen 2:15), הניח (Gen 2:22; 27:14; 29:23; 33:11; 1 Sam 17:54; 25:35; 2 Sam 13:10), יצא (Gen 12:5; 34:26), העלה (22:13; 2 Sam 24:22), קבר (Gen 23:13; 1 Sam 31:13; 2 Sam 4:12), רדף (Gen 31:23; 2 Sam 20:6), הרים (Gen 31:45), העביר (32:24; 2 Sam 2:8), השליך (Gen 37:24; 2 Sam 18:17),

⁷⁸ So also Gen (3:6; 18:7; 30:9; 39:20; Deut 15:17; 19:12; 29:7; Josh 11:23; 13:8; Judg 14:19; 15:6; 17:4; 1 Sam 6:8; 30:11; 2 Sam 21:8–9; 1 Kgs 11:18, 35; 15:18; 18:26; 19:21; 2 Kgs 12:8, 10; Jer 32:14; 36:32; Ezek 4:1, 3, 9; 17:5, 22; 33:2; 37:19; and in cultic context: Exod 12:7; 16:33; 29:12; 29:20; Lev 8:15, 23; Num 5:17; 6:18; 16:7; 17:11; 31:29; Ezek 43:20; 45:19.

⁷⁹ The usage of a similar formula in Akkadian contracts from Ugarit, *našû-nadānu*, is well-known; see E. A. Speiser, "Akkadian Documents from Ugarit," *JAOS* 75 (1955), 154–65; J. C. Greenfield, "Našû-Nadānu and Congeners," Maria de Jong-Ellis (ed.), (*Essays on the Ancient Near East in Memory of Jacob Joel Finkelstein* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1977), 87–91.

⁸⁰ The passage in 2 Chr 22:11 (וַתִּקַּח יְהוֹשֻׁבֶעַת בְּתִימָלֶךְ אֶת־יוֹאָשׁ) בְּחָדָר בְּנֵי־הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמּוֹמְתִים וַתִּתֵּן אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת־מִינְקָתוֹ בְּחָדָר (הַמִּטּוֹת) probably reflects the primary text as against 2 Kgs 11:2; see W. Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 270.

קום (Gen 38:2; 1 Sam 20:21; 2 Sam 11:4), אסר (Gen 42:24), בוא (43:13), הציג (47:2), יצק (1 Sam 10:1; 2 Sam 13:9), קלע (1 Sam 17:49), שלף (17:51), נפל (31:4), פרש (2 Sam 17:19), תקע (18:14), הציב (18:18); with action verbs such as אכל (Gen 3:6, 22; or סעד, 18:5), סגר (Gen 2:21), כסה (24:65), עשה (31:46), שכב (Gen 34:2), שחט (37:31), קשר (38:28), משח (1 Sam 16:13), גלח (2 Sam 10:4), לוש (13:8); and with verbs of speaking, such as ברך (Gen 48:9), אמר (1 Sam 16:2; 2 Sam 14:2).⁸¹

In corpus A this pattern is rare. It is used to indicate marriage followed by child birth (1 Chr 2:19; 2 Chr 11:20, ילד).⁸² In the Esther scroll we note two cases in the scene in which Haman is ordered to honour Mordecai:

מֵהָרָקָה אֶת־הַלְבוּשׁ וְאֶת־הַסּוּס כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ וַעֲשֵׂה־כֵן לְמֹרְדֵּכַי
הַיְּהוּדִי

Quickly, take the robes and the horse as you have said, and do so to the Judean Mordecai (Esth 6:10; NRSV with slight adaptation).

וַיִּקַּח הָמָן אֶת־הַלְבוּשׁ וְאֶת־הַסּוּס וַיַּלְבֵּשׁ אֶת־מֹרְדֵּכַי וַיַּרְכִּיבֵהוּ
בְּרֶחוֹב הָעִיר

So Haman took the garb and the horse and arrayed Mordecai and paraded him through the city square (Esth 6:11).

In prophetic texts we note וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל־הַזֹּבָחִים וְלָקְחוּ מֵהֶם וּבָשָׁלוּ (Zech 14:21, 'And all those who sacrifice shall come and *take* of these and *boil* [*sc.* their meat] in it').

c. בוא as Preverb

In corpus A we encounter a number of cases in which בוא, 'to come,' opens a biclausal construction, such as, for example:⁸³

וַתְּבֹאנָה נַעֲרוֹת אֶסְתֵּר וְסָרִיסֶיהָ וַיַּגִּידוּ לָהּ

Esther's maidens and eunuchs came and informed her (Esth 4:4⁸⁴).

⁸¹ In prophetic texts one notes Isa 8:1 (כתב); 14:2; Hos 1:3; 14:3 (שוב).

⁸² So also Exod 6:23, 25; and similarly 1 Chr 14:3; 2 Sam 5:13; Jer 29:6; Hos 1:3; Ruth 4:13.

⁸³ So also Esth 4:9; and with שלח: Esth 5:10.

וַנְּבוֹא יְרוּשָׁלַם וַנֵּשֶׁב שָׁם יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה

We came to Jerusalem and remained there three days (Ezra 8:32;⁸⁵ NRSV).

וָאָבֹא אֶל־פְּחֻזַּת עֶבֶר הַנָּהָר וָאֶתַּנֵּה לָהֶם אֶת אַגְרוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ

Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters (Neh 2:9; NRSV).

In the prophetic texts we find such use with עָשָׂה (Hag 1:14), בָּנָה (Zech 6:15), לָקַח (14:21), הָכָה (Mal 3:24).

On the other hand, in corpus C this pattern is no less frequent. We note this preverb with such lexemes as, for example, יָשַׁב (Gen 13:18), הָכָה (14:7), הִגִּיד (14:13; 26:32), בָּנָה (16:2; 22:9), הָרָה (16:8), שָׁכַב (19:33, 34), פָּתַח (24:32), אָמַר (24:42; 27:18).⁸⁶ However, the relationship between the two clauses in this construction is limited to temporal succession. We do not encounter cases in which the preverb/preclause is used to modify the main clause.

d. The Use of Preverbs and Syntactic-Stylistic Typology

The differences between corpus C and corpus A in the frequency and use of biverbal and biclausal constructions have important implications for the syntactic-stylistic typology of these two corpora.

From a purely formal point of view, in the biverbal construction the preverb always serves as predicate with implied subject, such as, for example, וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־עֲלִי (1 Sam 3:8, and he rose and went to Eli), and thus is always counted as a short clause. Biclausal constructions also involve short clauses, since the semantic information is split up into two (or more) small chunks, such as, for instance,

וַיִּקַּח שִׁמוּאֵל אֶת־פֶּדֶךְ הַשֶּׁמֶן/וַיִּצַק עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ/וַיִּשְׁקֶהוּ/וַיֹּאמֶר

⁸⁴ So also 2 Chr 20:2; 29:18; also note 20:24 (פָּנָה); 24:23 (הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה); 25:18 (עָשָׂה); 28:17 (הָכָה); 30:8 (קָדַשׁ); 31:8 (רָאָה); 32:1 (חָנָה); 32:4 (מָצָא); and 1 Chr 7:23 (הָרָה-יֵלֶד).

⁸⁵ Similarly Neh 2:11; 6:11; and with הָרָה: 4:5; אָמַר: 4:6; יָרַשׁ: 9:24; בִּין: 13:7.

⁸⁶ In the sample from Isaiah-Zephaniah we note Isa 7:19 (נֹחַ); 30:8 (כָּתַב); Hos 9:10 (נֹזַר); Amos 5:19 (סָמַךְ); Mic 4:10 (נָצַל); Hab 1:8, 9 (אָסַף, עוֹף).

Samuel took a flask of oil, and poured (some) on his head and, kissed him, and said... (1 Sam 10:1)

In this sequence, the first clause includes two constituents apart from the predicate (Samuel, flask of oil), the second one constituent (his head), and the last two none, apart from the verbal predicate (with object suffix). Thus, the biverbal/biclausal patterns enable the split up of the information into small chunks.

Chunking, however, is only one aspect of the issue. The other side of the coin is that these patterns allow for a particular syntactic-semantic structure, in which the information required for the description of one action or event is spread over two clauses. In some of the main European languages, including Latin, such information would be integrated into one single sentence,⁸⁷ but the biverbal/biclausal pattern is based on the understanding that the information contained in the first clause, actually serves the second clause. Accordingly, these patterns embody a particular syntactic-semantic structure, which differs from the structures that we are accustomed to see in modern, Western languages, but which actually are partly matched by some of the phenomena subsumed under the title of “serial verbs,”⁸⁸ and attested in a number of Asiatic,⁸⁹ African, and Creole languages.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Hence Givón problematizes the term ‘single event’ and investigates, by measuring pauses in speaking, to which extent the actual speakers of serializing languages separate the clauses; see T. Givón, “Serial Verbs and the Mental Reality of ‘Event’: Grammatical vs. Cognitive Packaging,” E. C. Traugott and B. Heine (eds), *Approaches to Grammaticalization* (2 Vols.; Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1991), 1.81–127. Givón (op. cit, 120–23) places serialization of chained clauses in parataxis on a continuum between the chaining of independent clauses and the transformation of stripped-down verbs as modifiers.

⁸⁸ L. W. Dobbs-Allsop (“Ingressive *qwm*,” 37–40) actually mentions the similarity of the biverbal construction to serialization, but prefers its analysis in terms of aspect. However, the biclausal constructions involve semantic relations which in some European languages would be subsumed under the heading of ‘case,’ as shown by Givón, “Serial Verbs,” 80–83, 96–109, 121. The connection between biverbal/biclausal patterns and serialization was duly noted by Eskhult, “Marker of Inception,” 22; see also B. Isaksson, “Circumstantial Qualifiers in the Arabic Dialect of Kinderib (East Turkey),” S. Procházka and V. Ritt-Benmimoun (eds) *Between the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans. Studies on Contemporary Arabic Dialects*

4. VERBS OF MOTION AND SEMANTO-SYNTACTIC PATTERNING

It is time to summarize the results. From a syntactic point of view, the main result is that biverbal and biclausal patterns involve more than chunking and stylistic preferences. There is an underlying linguistic structure, which enables chunking and the chaining of short clauses in a semantically meaningful sequence in which the first clause affects the meaning of the second one. In other words, the characteristic style of corpus C reflects a special discourse structure, a particular semanto-syntactic system of clause chaining that is hardly used in corpus A.

From a semantic point of view, corpus A differs from corpus C in its striking preference for oriented verbs, **יצא**, **בוא**, and **הביא**, as against the more open system in corpus C, in which non-oriented verbs, such as **הלך** and **לקח**, are no less important than the oriented verb, **בוא**, and in which **יצא** does not stand out by its frequency. A differentiation of this kind transcends the realm of rhetorics, stylistics, and literary design. What is involved is no less than a basic shift in language culture, cognitive stance, and mentality.

(Wien: Lit Verlag, 2008), 251–58, esp. pp. 256–57.

⁸⁹ Some of these patterns have been described for Akkadian as “coupling;” see F. R. Kraus, *Sonderformen Akkadischer Parataxe: Die Koppelungen* (Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, N. S. 50:1; Amsterdam: North Holland, 1987), 10–37; significantly, Kraus points to similar patterns in Turkish, a language with serialization.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Bamgbose, *A Grammar of Yoruba*; Talmy Givón, “Prolegomena to Any Sane Creology,” I. F. Hancock (ed.) *Readings in Creole Studies* (Ghent: E. Story-Scientia, 1979), 3–35, esp. pp. 12–18.

PARALLELISM AND NOUN GROUPS IN PROPHETIC POETRY FROM THE PERSIAN ERA

FRANK POLAK

The point of departure for my investigation was the impression that the poetic prosody in the prophetic books from the beginning of the Persian era, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, differs from that in standard biblical poetry. An eloquent expression of this feeling is quoted in the name of Paul Hanson:

Canons and patterns that can be discerned in earlier biblical materials ... are of diminishing value as one moves into the late biblical period.[¹] In relation to the standard distinctions between prose and poetry, Haggai runs the gamut from normal prose syntax to elevated prose to lists based on syntactic and thematic repetition to fairly regular poetic meter.²

¹ I may add that this impression is underscored by Avishur's contention that in late poetic texts the way of handling the 'fixed pairs' (silver/gold; dew/rain) differs from standard poetry—Y. Avishur, "Pairs of Synonymous Words in the Construct State (and in Appositional Hendiads) in Biblical Hebrew," *Semitics* 2 (1971/72), 17–81, esp. pp. 75–79.

² P. D. Hanson, "Compositional Techniques in the Book of Haggai" (presentation at the Center for Hermeneutical Studies in the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, 24 March, 1991, quoted by Duane L. Christensen, "Poetry and Prose in the Composition and performance of the Book of Haggai," J. C. de Moor and W. G. E. Watson (ed.), *Verse in Ancient Near Eastern Prose* (AOAT 42; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1993), 17–30, esp. p. 17.

I will look into the modes of parallelism in the book of Haggai and the collections of Zechariah 1–8; 11:4–14:21, and Malachi, based mainly on syntactic-semantic patterning, in particular lexical correspondences and traditional associations ('fixed pairs'), gapping with compensation ('ballast variant'), and other poetic patterns such as climactic parallelism (expanded colon). The other end of the scale is formed by noun groups, such as syndetic junctions, e.g., "heaven and earth," and nouns in construct state, e.g., "the kingdoms of the nations." Such noun groups enable the integration within the prose clause of semantically related concepts, which in parallelism appear as corresponding members in matching cola, and thus lead to the transformation of poetry into prose.

The main result of this investigation indicates a decrease in the use of parallelism and a decline in its intricacies, accompanied by an increase in the use of syndetic junctions. But, as noted by Christensen,³ we also encounter new tendencies, that are of crucial importance for our understanding of the rhetoric of the period.

1. HAGGAI

In the book of Haggai the number of relevant passages (Hag 1:2–11; 2:2–9, 14–23) is small: with 313 content words its extent is similar to Jeremiah 5 or to Isa 1:2–31; 2:2–3 (316 content words).⁴ We note more than ten passages in syntactic-semantic parallelism ('synonymous' or 'antithetic'), e.g., שמים-ארץ:⁵

עַל-כֵּן עָלֵיכֶם בָּלְאוּ שָׁמַיִם מָטָל / וְהָאָרֶץ בָּלְאָה יְבוּלָהָ⁶

That is why the *skies* above you have withheld their moisture
and the *earth* has withheld its yield (Hag 1:10)

³ D. L. Christensen, op. cit., 17. His analysis indicates a rhythmic structure that includes both poetry and prose. Other aspects of innovation are studied by J. E. Tollington, *Tradition and Innovation in Haggai and Zechariah 1–8* (JSOTSup, 150; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

⁴ Content words include nouns, verbs, and adjectives only. Pronouns, particles, and adverbs are counted as function words.

⁵ This pair appears as a syndetic junction in Hag 2:21: אֲנִי מְרַעֵשׁ אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ. The collocation of טל-שמים appears in the blessings of Gen 27:28, 39; Deut 33:13, 28. see also note 38 below.

⁶ The forward slash in the Hebrew quotes indicates the clause boundary.

Additional traditional pairs include: **עם-גוי** (2:8);⁷ **כסף-זהב** (2:14);⁸ **מרכבה-סוס** (2:22b).⁹ We also encounter the correspondence of the following two noun junctions, **כסא ממלכות** “the throne of kingdoms”¹⁰ and **ממלכת הגוים** in 2:22a.¹¹ The phrase **והפכתי כסא ממלכות** (2:22, “And I will overturn the thrones of kingdoms”) is matched by the Phoenician curse **תהתפכ.כסא.מלכה** (the Ahiiram sarcophagus, *KAI* 1:2, “may the throne of his kingdom be overturned”) and the Ugaritic threat *lyhpk ksa mlkk* (*CAT* 1.6 VI:28, “he will overturn the seat of your kingship”). In one case the link between the two parts of the promise is provided by the traditional formula **לקח-שים**:¹²

אֶקְחֶךָ זָרְבָבֶל בֶּן־שָׁאֲלִימָאֵל עַבְדִּי נְאֻם־יְהוָה
וְשִׁמְתִּידָ כְּחוֹתָם כִּי־בָדַד בָּחֲרֵתִי נְאֻם יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת

⁷ The pair **כסף-זהב** (also Zech 6:11, see below) appears here in the conventional order in which **כסף** precedes (as against the inverse order in Zech 14:14; Mal 3:3).

⁸ In parallelism, e.g., Num 23:9; Deut 32:8, 21; 2 Sam 22:44 (=Ps 18:44); Isa 1:4; 2:4; 10:6; 42:6; 49:22; 61:9; Jer 2:11; Ezek 25:7; Zeph 2:9; Zech 8:22; Ps 33:10, 12; 96:3; 105:13; Lam 1:1.

⁹ Cf Isa 2:7; Jer 4:13; Mic 5:9; Nah 3:2; and in a cluster: Zech 6:2, 3. The pair **רכב-סוס** is found in Isa 31:1; Jer 46:9; 51:21; Ezek 26:10; Zech 9:10; Ps 20:8; and as syndetic junction: Isa 43:17; 66:20; Jer 17:25; 22:4; 50:37; Ezek 26:7; 39:20; Ps 26:7; in a cluster: Exod 15:19. **סוס** appears with the verb **רכב** in Isa 30:16; Jer 6:23; 50:42; 51:21; Hab 3:8.

¹⁰ The noun group **כסא הממלכה** is also found in Deut 17:18; 2 Sam 7:13; 1 Kgs 9:5; 2 Chr 23:20; in parallelism the sequence is **כסא-ממלכה**: Isa 9:6; in inverse order: 2 Sam 3:10; 7:16. The repetition of **ממלכות** is discussed below.

¹¹ In parallelism also in Jer 51:20, 27; Ezek 37:22; Nah 3:5; Zeph 3:8; Ps 46:7; 79:6; in syndetic junction: 1 Kgs 18:10; Isa 60:12; Jer 1:10; 18:7, 9; 27:8; Ps 105:13 (=1 Chr 16:20); 2 Chr 32:15.

¹² So also Zech 6:11 (see below), and, e.g., Gen 9:23; 21:14; 22:6; 28:11, 18; 31:34; Exod 2:3; 17:12; 24:6; 40:20; and in the Babylonian/Persian era: Jer 39:12; 43:10; 44:12; Ezek 17:5; 19:5; Job 22:22. Many more cases are quoted in my paper, F. Polak, “Epic Formulas in Biblical Narrative: Frequency and Distribution,” *Les actes du second colloque internationale Bible et Informatique: méthodes, outils, résultats (Jerusalem, 9–13 Juin 1988)* (Genève: Champion-Slatkine, 1989), 435–88, esp. pp. 449–50. On the repetition of the quoting formula see below.

On that day—declares the Lord of Hosts—I *will take you*, O
My servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel—declares the Lord—
and make you as a signet; for I have chosen you, declares the
Lord of Hosts (2: 23)¹³

Traditional phraseology appears in two verses that suggest a strong connection to the poetic tradition. First, we note the parallelism of a pair that is infrequent in biblical and Ugaritic poetry alike:

וְרַעְתֶּם הָרֶבֶה וְהָבֵא מְעֹט / אָכֹל וְאֵין-לְשִׁבְעָה / שְׁתוּ
וְאֵין-לְשִׁכְרָה

You have sowed much and brought in little; you *eat* without *being satisfied*—you *drink* without getting *drunk* (1:6).¹⁴

The pair **שתה** **אכל-שבע** is, of course, quite common,¹⁵ but we have only one example for the pairing of the roots **שבע** and **שכר** (Ezek 39:19).¹⁶

Secondly, we encounter a pattern that is close to staircase parallelism (expanded colon):¹⁷

¹³ The repetition of the phrase **נאם יהוה צבאות** is discussed on below.

¹⁴ For **לשכרה** NJPS reads 'your fill,' whereas Luther renders this noun by 'trunken.'

¹⁵ In poetic and prophetic literature one notes Num 23:24; Deut 32:38; Isa 21:5; 22:13; 36:12, 16; 62:9; 65:13; Jer 16:8; 22:15; Ezek 4:16; 12:18, 19; 25:4; 39:17–19; Amos 9:14; Zech 7:6; 9:15; Ps 50:13; Prov 23:7; Song 5:1; in prose one notes passages such as, e.g., Gen 24:54; 25:34; 27:25; Exod 24:11; 32:6; 34:28.

¹⁶ In Ugaritic this pair appears in Ilu's *mršh* text, CAT 1.114, line 16); See Y. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (AOAT 210; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker / Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 401.

¹⁷ See S. E. Loewenstamm, "The Expanded Colon in Ugaritic and Biblical Verse," *JSS* 14 (1969), 176–196; reprinted in his *Comparative Studies in Biblical and Ancient Oriental Literatures* (AOAT 204; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker / Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1980), 281–309; S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1898; 1913; repr. New York: Meridian, 1956), 363. Examples from biblical texts that undoubtedly represent the Persian (or possibly later) period are found in Qoh 1:2; Ps 113:1; the late date of the latter poem has been proven by A. Hurvitz, "Originals and Imitations in Biblical Poetry: A Comparative Examination of 1 Sam 2:1–10 and Ps 113:5–9," A. Kort and

יֵעַן מָה — נָאִם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
 יֵעַן — בֵּיתִי אֲשֶׁר־הוּא חָרַב
 וְאַתֶּם רָצִים אִישׁ לְבֵיתוֹ

Because of what? — says the Lord of Hosts, —

Because of —my house which lies in ruins,

and you all hurry to your own houses! (1:9b)

In this verse the first line brings a rhetorical question, יֵעַן מָה, and continues with the quotation formula, נָאִם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת. When we consider the answer in the second line, which opens with the same word as the question, יֵעַן, we understand that we are dealing with a variant of climactic parallelism (expanded colon).¹⁸ יֵעַן serves as repeated inception, while the characteristic interrupting phrase is found in the quotation formula.¹⁹ The second line repeats the inception, יֵעַן, and continues with the main message. In the main this is the structure of the expanded colon in Ugaritic and biblical poetry, e.g.,

כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֶיךָ — יְהוָה
 כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֶיךָ — יֵאָבְדוּ
 יִתְפָּרְדּוּ כָּל־פְּעֻלֵי אָזָן

For see, your enemies, O Lord, —

for see, Your enemies — perish;

all evildoers are scattered (Ps 92:10)

But unlike the classical pattern, in which the opening phrase is broken off, the saying of Haggai opens with a question, which is answered in the repeated phrase. Still, from the point of view of the information flow, the structure is quite similar, since it is only the

S. Morschauer (eds), *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Ivry* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1985), 115–21.

¹⁸ We could think of plain anaphora of יֵעַן, but the interrupting phrase shows that the structure is more intricate.

¹⁹ The quotation formula אָמַר קְהֵלֶת as interrupting phrase (Qoh 1:2) is mentioned by Loewenstamm, “Expanded Colon,” 195. A similar case is offered by Ps 113:1, from the Persian era (see note 17 above).

second line that gives the main information. Thus the prosodic structure of climactic parallelism provides the backbone for the game of rhetorical question and triumphant answer.

These instances indicate that the prophet was quite aware of the biblical Hebrew poetic tradition and was even acquainted with rare lexical associations.

However, we also encounter non-standard correspondences, e.g., עלה-הביא:

עָלוּ הָהָר / וְהִבְאֵתֶם עֵץ / וּבְנוּ הַבַּיִת

Go up to the hills and get timber, and rebuild the house (1:8)²⁰

The sequence of עלה (*qal*) and בוא (*hiphil*) is not found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.²¹ The verb בוא (*hiphil*), in the specialized meaning 'to bring in,' also occurs as parallel to זרע, 'to sow':

זָרַעְתֶּם הַרְבֵּה / וְהִבֵּא מְעַט

You have sowed much and brought in little (1:6)

A parallel of זרע and הביא is found only here. In the context of bringing in the harvest, the root זרע is associated with אסף (Exod 23:10, 16; Lev 25:3, 20).²² Accordingly it seems that in the description of the poor harvest הביא is a trivial substitute for אסף.²³

²⁰ וְאֶכְבְּדָה, the *Qerē* form, reflects the use of the cohortative following the imperative, a syntagm that is not reflected by the indicative of the *kethib* וְאֶכְבַּד; a similar *qerē/kethib* interchange of cohortative/indicative is found in Ruth 4:4; cf. also Josh 24:3, 8.

²¹ But one notes a number of places in which both verbs appear in the *hiphil*: Num 20:5; Judg 2:1; 1 Sam 1:24; 7:1; Jer 23:8 (וְאֶשֶׁר הִבֵּיא) lacks representation in the LXX; Ezek 37:12; 39:2. Distant sequences are found in Gen 37:28; Ezek 38:16.

²² The standard associate of זרע is קצר: Lev 25:11; Isa 37:30 (=2 Kings 19:29); Jer 12:13; Hos 8:7; 10:12; Mic 6:15; Ps 126:5; Job 4:8; Prov 22:8; Qoh 11:4. The parallel with נטע appears in Jer 35:7; Ps 107:37; in 2 Kings 19:29 (=Isa 37:30) we encounter both נטע and קצר. A lexical association אסף/הביא is found in 2 Chr 29:4; and possibly, with a big question mark, Neh 8:1; Lev 26:25.

²³ There is a clear preference for הביא in post-exilic texts. See the preceding essay in this volume.

In this verse we also meet the pair הרבה-מעט (likewise in v 9). This lexical association is rare and mostly late in the Hebrew Bible (Jer 42:2; Qoh 5:11).²⁴

In addition we note the prosodic correspondence of טל and יבול, two terms that are only vaguely related from a semantic point of view:

על-כן עליכם כלאו שמים מטל/ והארץ כלאה יבולה

That is why the skies above you have withheld *their dew*
and the earth has withheld *its yield* (1:10)

This pair also appears in the collection of Zechariah 1–8:

כי-זרע השלום הגפן תתן פריה
והארץ תתן את-יבולה/ והשמים יתנו טלם

But what it sows shall prosper: The vine shall produce its fruit
the *earth* shall yield its *produce*, and the *skies* shall provide their
dew (Zech 8:12)

But in this case one should take into account the lexical association פרי-יבול (Lev 26:4, 20; Ezek 34:27).²⁵

We conclude, then, that seven out of thirteen cases of semantically balanced lexemes in parallelism instantiate traditional correspondences. Five examples involve non-standard variants, e.g., collocations with trivial, prosaic lexemes עלה-הביא, זרע-הביא, הרבה-, זרע-הביא, or lexemes that are rarely associated and do not reveal semantic correspondence (טל-יבול). The example of an expanded colon (Hag 1:9b) likewise deviates from the standard pattern.

The last two quotes from Haggai 1 and Zechariah 8 illustrate a phenomenon that is no less important than parallelism: lexical repetition in both cola. In Haggai's prophetic explanation both cola contain a form of the verb כלא: That is why the skies above you *have withheld* their dew/ and the earth *has withheld* its yield (Hag 1:10). The promise in the prophecy of Zechariah includes three instances of the verb נתן: The vine shall *produce* its fruit, the earth shall *yield* its produce, and the skies shall *provide* their dew (Zech 8:12). The two chapters of the book of Haggai contain eight addi-

²⁴ In 2 Kings 10:8 מעט and הרבה function as adverbs, in accordance with the morphological status of הרבה.

²⁵ זרע and פרי are associated in 2 Kgs 19:29 (=Isa 37:30); Ps 21:11; 107:37 (see also Gen 1:11, 12, 29; Lev 27:30).

tional cases of repetitive parallelism, including verbs, חזק (2:4), a pair of verbs, בא and היתה (2:16a/b), or nouns, בית (1:4), ממלכה (2:22a), רִכָּב (2:22b).²⁶ We note two cases in which repetition involves both noun and verb:

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לְאֵמֹר / הֵעָם הַזֶּה אָמְרוּ
לֹא עָתִידָא עֵת־בֵּית יְהוָה לְהִבְנוֹת

Thus *says* the *Lord* of Hosts: These people *say*, “The time has not yet come for the House of the *Lord* to be rebuilt” (1:2)²⁷

וְאֲנִי מְרַעֵשׁ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־הַחֲרָבָה
וְהִרְעֵשְׁתִּי אֶת־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם וּבָאוּ חֲמֹדַת כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם

I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.
I will shake all the nations, and the precious things of all the
nations shall come here (2:6–7)

With nine instances the frequency of repetition in parallelism is only slightly lower than the figure for synonymous/antithetic parallelism (13 cases). Although repetition is not irregular in parallelism (as pointed out by Moshe Held),²⁸ the present numerical constellation is surprising, and thus joins the evidence for non-standard variants of parallelism.²⁹

In addition, the prophetic collection of Haggai contains a number of long syndetic noun groups. The most obvious example is presented by the description of economic misfortune, which includes a sequence of two traditional phrases, והדגן והתירוש והיצהר,³⁰ and אדם ובהמה,³¹ and a fixed pair ארץ-אדמה:³²

²⁶ Not counting the repetitive use of כנף in Haggai’s halakhic inquiry (Hag 2:12), since this is a prose section.

²⁷ The LXX reads οὕτως αἱρεῖται ὁ λαός, either a condensation on the part of the translator, or reflecting בית לא בא עת בית. The MT may represent a doublet of לא בא עת בית and לא עת בית.

²⁸ M. Held, “The ‘YQTL-QTL’ (‘QTL-YQTL’) sequence of identical verbs in Biblical Hebrew and in Ugaritic,” M. Ben-Horin, B. D. Weinryb, S. Zeitlin (eds), *Studies and Essays in Honor of Abraham A. Newman* (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 281–90; idem, “The Action-Result (Factitive-Passive) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic,” *JBL* 84 (1965), 272–82.

²⁹ A number of verses are characterized by the presence of a certain symmetry, without proper balance or semantic equivalence, e.g., 1:6b, 8b.

³⁰ In parallelism: Hos 2:10, 24; Joel 1:10; in syndetic noun phrases also

וְאֶקְרָא חֹרֵב עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְעַל־הַהָרִים
 וְעַל־הַדָּגָן וְעַל־הַתִּירוֹשׁ וְעַל־הַיֵּצֶהָר וְעַל אֲשֶׁר תּוֹצִיא הָאֲדָמָה
 וְעַל־הָאָדָם וְעַל־הַבְּהֵמָה וְעַל כָּל־יִגְיעַ כֶּפֶץ

and I have summoned fierce heat upon the land and upon the hills, upon the grain and wine and oil and upon all that is produced by the ground *upon man and beast*, and upon *all the fruits of labour* (Hag 1:11)

The long enumeration at the heart of this picture is based on a series of entities affected, structured along the lines of the common pairs. “The grain and wine and oil” are set off from “the land and the hills,” while the mention of “man and beast” opens a new line. The common pair “land-ground” provides the opening for the entire series, “upon the *land* and upon the hills,” and the closure for its first part, “all that is produced by the *ground*.” Hence this enumeration could be construed as an instance of parallelism (or more exactly, line parallelism). In that case the phrase “and I have summoned fierce heat” (וְאֶקְרָא חֹרֵב) in the first colon would do double duty, as it binds all three clauses. In classical parallelism a construction of this type involves ellipsis of a syntactic constituent in the one colon (mostly predicate or subject of the coordinate sentence),³³ and rhythmic balancing by means of an expansory element that serves, technically speaking, as compensation, e.g.,³⁴

Jer 31:12; Joel 2:19; and in prose Deut 7:13; 11:4; 12:17; 14:23; 18:4; 28:51; Neh 5:11; 10:40; 13:5, 12; 2 Chr 31:5; 32:28.

³¹ This noun group appears infrequently in parallelism: Ezek 32:13; Zech 8:10; Ps 49:13, 21; Qoh 3:21; in inverse order: Hab 2:17; Ps 104:14; and in syndetic noun groups: Zech 2:8; Zeph 1:3; Ps 36:7; and in merism: Jer 33:12; Jer 50:3; 51:62; Ps 135:8; and in a syntagmatic combination: Qoh 3:19. In prose one notes syndetic noun groups: Exod 8:13, 14; 9:9, 10, 19, 22; Lev 7:21; 27:28; Num 8:17; 18:15; 31:11, 26, 47; Jonah 3:7, 8; and in meristic patterns: Gen 6:7; 7:23; Exod 9:25; 12:12; 13:15; in prophetic semi-poetic discourse: Jer 7:20; 21:6; 31:27; 32:43; 33:10; 36:29; Ezek 14:13, 17, 19, 21; 25:13; 29:8, 11; 36:11 and in syntagmatic combinations Gen 2:20; Lev 1:2.

³² In parallelism: Isa 1:7; Amos 3:5; Ps 105:35; and similarly: Ezek 11:17; 20:38; 34:13, 27; 36:24.

³³ See Cynthia L. Miller, “The Relation of Coordination to Verb Gapping in Biblical Poetry,” *JSOT* 32 (2007), 41–60.

³⁴ See David T. Tsumura, “Vertical Grammar of Parallelism in Hebrew Poetry,” *JBL* 128 (2009), 167–181, esp. 172–74; Wilfred G. E. Wat-

אֶסְרִי לִגְפֹן עֵירָה [עִירוֹ] / וְלִשְׂרָקָה בְּנֵי אֶתְנֹ
כִבֵּס בַּיִין לְבָשׁוֹ וּבְדָם-עֲנָבִים סוֹתָה [סוֹתוֹ]

He ties up his foal to the vine, his donkey's *colt* to a choice vine
He washes his garment in wine, His robe in *blood of grapes* (Gen
49:11; mainly NRSV).³⁵

The verbal predicate “he ties up” in colon a does double duty as it is the predicate of both clauses, and is not matched by a corresponding element in colon b, which consequently contains one rhythmic component less than colon a. From a prosodic point of view, the rhythmic balance is preserved by means of an expanded slot, בְּנֵי אֶתְנֹ, “his donkey colt,” in which בְּנֵי functions as filler. By virtue of this expansion colon b contains three accented vocables, like colon a. In prosodic analysis the ellipsis of the predicate in colon b is called “gapping,” and the compensation by expansion “ballast variant.” In the second line the predicate doing double duty is כִּבֵּס “he washes” in colon a, which has no counterpart in colon b, where the expanded phrase וּבְדָם-עֲנָבִים (“in blood of grapes”) supplies the compensation. Patterns of this type belong to the hallmarks of classical biblical (and Ugaritic) poetry, and may result in long noun stretches, which, however, must be construed as cola in parallelism, such as, for example,

אָשִׁים בְּעֶרְבָה בְּרוֹשׁ / תִּדְהָר וּתְאֲשׁוּר יִחֲדוּ

I will set cypresses in the desert, box trees and elms as well (Isa
41:19).³⁶

The predicate of the first colon is compensated by the expansion יִחֲדוּ (“as well”) rounding off the series of nouns and closing colon b. Thus, the noun phrase בְּרוֹשׁ וּתְאֲשׁוּר יִחֲדוּ consists of two parallel parts, בְּרוֹשׁ (“cypresses”) in colon a, and the phrase

son, *Classical Hebrew poetry: A Guide to its Techniques* (JSOTSup 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 343–46; Jan P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Poetry: An Introductory Guide* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 73–75; the poetic use of such increment for highlighting, emphasis and intensification is discussed in Robert Alter, *the Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 18–23.

³⁵ The Hebrew words in brackets reflect the *Qerē*.

³⁶ The nouns in this verse function as collectives (GK § 123b).

יָחִידוֹ תִּדְהָר וּתְאָשׁוּר יָחִידוֹ (“box trees and elms as well”) in colon b, in spite of the apparent uniformity of the noun phrase.³⁷

However, this type of patterning setting does not appear in the description of economic calamities in Haggai’s prophecy (Hag 1:11). In the latter, the noun phrase is not balanced in any way. Even though it is possible that the noun groups at the end of cola b–c serve to round off these cola as concluding phrases, וְעַל אֲשֶׁר (colon b) and וְעַל כָּל־יָגִיעַ כְּפִים (colon c), the construction does not yield any equilibrium. Accordingly this pattern is best described as a structured syndetic noun group with features of gapping and compensation.

I discern a similar structure in the announcement of the shock of divine intervention:

וְאָנִי מְרַעֵשׂ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־הַחֲרָבָה

I will shake *the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land*
(2:6)

Although this noun group consists of two sets of contrasting terms, heaven and earth, sea and dry land, and thus could be split up into two parallel cola, a structure of this kind hardly recommends itself, since we do not find any elements balancing the opening phrase וְאָנִי מְרַעֵשׂ. Though terms שָׁמַיִם and אֶרֶץ are traditional associates in parallelism,³⁸ and יָם and חֲרָבָה also are found together (Exod 14:21),³⁹ this verse does not present any rhythmic balance, and thus contains a series of nouns in syndetic junction. One also notes cases in which linguistic considerations preclude a structural patterning as cola in parallelism:

³⁷ By the same token, in Ps 69:35 the series of nouns is rounded off by the phrase וּכְלֵי רִמְשׁ בָּם; also cf. Hos 2:13.

³⁸ E.g., Isa 1:2; 49:13; 51:13; Ps 76:9; Zech 12:1; Dan 8:10. We note a large number of syndetic noun phrases in prose, e.g., Gen 1:1; 2:1, 4; 14:19, 22 (קְנָה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ); Deut 3:24; 10:14; 11:21; 1 Chron 29:11; 2 Chron 6:14; and in poetry: Isa 65:17; Jer 33:25 (> LXX); 51:48 (>LXX); Joel 3:3; 4:16; Ps 69:35; Ps 113:6; and the phrase שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ: Ps 115:15; 121:1; 124:8; 134:3; 135:6; 146:6. In syntagmatic connection: Isa 55:9; Ps 102:20; 103:11; Lam 2:1. Apart from Ps 69:35 most poetic passages with the syndetic noun phrase are preferably considered late.

³⁹ Clauses in which יָם combines syntagmatically with the root חָרַב are found in Isa 19:5; 50:2; 51:10; Jer 51:36; and in parallel clauses, but not in the corresponding slot, Nah 1:4; Ps 106:9; Job 14:11.

הַעוֹד הַזֶּרַע בְּמִגְרָה וְעֵד־הַגֶּפֶן וְהַתְּאֵנָה וְהַרְמוֹן וְעַץ הַזֵּית לֹא
נִשָּׂא

While the seed is still in the granary, and the *vine, fig tree, pomegranate, and olive tree* have not yet borne fruit (v. 19).⁴⁰

Three traditional lexical associates of the vine, the granate, and the fig,⁴¹ growing on trees, like the olive, are not to be assimilated to the seed in the granary. Thus the second clause of this verse includes a series of no less than five nouns. A long list of addressees is found in the opening of the second diatribe (2:2; similarly 2:4).⁴² One also notes short noun phrases, part of them semantically related, *בְּשֹׁפֹן וּבִירְקוֹן וּבְבֶרֶד* (2:17); *מִן־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְמֵעַלָּה מִיּוֹם עַשְׂרִים* (2:17); *חֶזֶק מִמְּלָכוֹת הַגּוֹיִם* (v 22a); *בְּסֵא מִמְּלָכוֹת* (v 18); *וְאֶרְבָּעָה לְתַשְׁיַעִי* (v 22a); *חֶזֶק מִמְּלָכוֹת הַגּוֹיִם* (v 22b); *מִרְכָּבָה וְרִכְבִּיָּה* (v 22b); and part of them not: *חֶמְדַּת כָּל הַגּוֹיִם* (2:7); *כְּבוֹד הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה הָאֲחֵרוֹן* (v. 9); *וְרִבְבָּל* (v. 14; so also 17b); *וְרִבְבָּל פַּחַת־יְהוּדָה* (v 21); *בֶּן־שָׂאֵל לְתִיאֵל עַבְדִּי* (v 23). Altogether we note seventeen noun phrases.

The relative prominence of extended noun groups (17 examples), repetition based parallelism (9 instances), and non-standard pairs (5 cases) may indicate a certain decline in prosodic technique. The absence of gapping with compensation ("ballast variant"), a phenomenon that is frequent in Ugaritic and biblical poetry alike, is an eloquent witness to this decline. I admit that many units in prophetic poetry do not contain ballast variants, and indeed ellipsis without compensation is frequent in, for instance, Isaiah 1–32,⁴³ but the extremely long noun phrases found in some verses indicate

⁴⁰ In this verse *עַד* equals *עוֹד* as in Aramaic; see A. Hurvitz, "The date of the Prose-Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered," *HTR* 67 (1974), 17–34, esp. 26–27. One may wonder whether the differentiation between *עוֹד* in colon a and *עַד* in colon b is not artificial and secondary. Anyway, the distinction is preserved by the vocalization tradition of the MT.

⁴¹ One notes the traditional association of *גֶּפֶן־תְּאֵנָה־רְמוֹן*: Deut 8:8; Joel 1:12; Song 6:11; 7:13; and of *תִּירוֹשׁ* and *יְצֹהַר* (e.g., Deut 7:13; Jer 31:12; Hos 2:10, 24; Joel 1:10; 2:19, 24).

⁴² Outside of the present sample one notes the long noun junctions of 1:12, 14 and in v 13 the phrases *יְהוָה מְלֹאֲךְ יְהוָה*, *חֲצִי מְלֹאֲךְ יְהוָה* (the latter not represented in the LXX).

⁴³ Note, for instance, Isa 1:26–27; 2:4b; cases of gapping with compensation: 1:3a, 4a; 2:3b, 4a.

the problematic nature of gapping patterns, a phenomenon also encountered in Zechariah 1–8; 11–14.

But it would be too one-sided to view the prosody of this collection exclusively as evidence for the decline of classical Hebrew prosody. First, the prosaic accent of the repeated divine admonition creates a biting immediacy:

וְעַתָּה כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שִׁימוּ לִבְכֶּם עַל־דִּרְכֵיכֶם
כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שִׁימוּ לִבְכֶּם עַל־דִּרְכֵיכֶם

Now thus said the Lord of Hosts: Consider how you have been faring! ... (1:5).

Thus said the Lord of Hosts: Consider how you have fared (v 7).

By the same token we note the exhortation **אֲנִי אִתְּכֶם נָא־יְהוָה** (1:13: 'I am with you—declares the Lord'), or the exclamation **הֲלוֹא כִמְהוּ כְּאֵין בְּעֵינֵיכֶם** (2:3b: 'Is it not as naught in your eyes?').⁴⁴ This exclamation completes a series of questions that are quite remote from poetry, but nevertheless embody considerable rhetorical power. Thus the prosaic elements are more than merely not poetic.

In addition, in many passages we encounter a relatively new phenomenon: the doubling of a quotation formula claiming divine origin and authority for the prophetic statement. Thus the saying **אֵלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת** has **אֵלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת** as its parallel in the next line:

גָּדוֹל יְהִיָּה כְבוֹד הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה הָאֲחֵרוֹן מִן־הָרִאשׁוֹן / אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
וּבְמָקוֹם הַזֶּה אֶתֵּן שְׁלוֹם / נָא־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former one, says the LORD of Hosts; and in this place I will grant prosperity—declares the Lord of Hosts (Hag 2:9)

We also encounter verses, in which the phrase **אֵלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת** is repeated:

וְעַתָּה חֲזַק זִרְבָּבֶל נָא־יְהוָה / וְחֲזַק יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־יְהוֹצָדָק הַכֹּהֵן
הַגָּדוֹל וְחֲזַק כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ נָא־יְהוָה

⁴⁴ H. G. Mitchell, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai and Zechariah*, 59; in H. G. Mitchell, J. M. P. Smith, and J. A. Bewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, (ICC; New York; Scribner, 1912).

But be strong, O Zerubbabel—*declares the Lord*—be strong, O high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak; be strong, all you people of the land, *declares the Lord* (2:4)⁴⁵

בְּיוֹם הַהוּא -נֹאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת- אֶקְחֶךָ זְרֻבְבָּל בֶּן-שָׁאֲלֻתִיָּאֵל
עַבְדִּי / נֹאֵם יְהוָה וְשִׁמְתִּיךָ כְּחוֹתֶם כִּי-בָדַד בְּחַרְתִּי / נֹאֵם יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת

On that day—*declares the Lord of Hosts*—I will take you, O My servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel—*declares the Lord*—and make you as a signet; for I have chosen you—*declares the Lord of Hosts* (v 23)⁴⁶

In all three cases the quoting formula closes a phrase, and sets it off from the next clause. This pattern shows that the iteration of this phrase in parallel cola/lines should not be discarded as a mere expansion or even dittography. The repeated indication of the divine origin of the declaration is to enhance the authority of the demands from the leaders and the people (2:4), of the royal promise to Zerubbabel (2:23), and of the predictions of the glory destined to adorn the future temple (2:9).⁴⁷ Repeated use of the parallelism or the repetition pattern for the divine quotation formula is found sporadically in other prophetic texts,⁴⁸ but its frequent use in the collection of Haggai is noteworthy. Hence it is important to note that similar patterns are found in Zechariah and Malachi, e.g.,⁴⁹

וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלֶיָּהֶם כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
וְאָשׁוּב אֵלֵיכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת / שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי נֹאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת⁵⁰

⁴⁵ The repetition of *חזק* is discussed above.

⁴⁶ The use of the *לקח-שים* formula is discussed above.

⁴⁷ In consecutive verses the parallelistic pattern is found in Hagg 1:8–9, but these verses do not constitute one discourse unit; similarly: Isa 66:21–22; the repetition pattern is found in Jer 3:13–14; 9:23–24; and in a prosaic reminiscence: 2 Kgs 9:26. In Amos 9:12–13 the repetition crosses the boundaries of the subunits.

⁴⁸ Parallelism: Jer 25:8–9; repetition pattern: 1 Sam 2:30 (opening of the threat itself); Isa 14:22–23; 52:5; Jer 3:12; 9:23–24.

⁴⁹ So also Zech 1:16; 8:6; on the repetition of *אמר יהוה* in Mal 1:13; 2:16 see below. On the other hand, in Zech 2:9–10; 3:9–10 the repetition crosses the boundary of two different units of discourse.

⁵⁰ In the LXX the phrase *נֹאֵם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת* lacks representation. But

Say to them further: Thus *said* the Lord of Hosts
Turn back to me, *declares the Lord of Hosts*, and I will turn back
to you, *said* the Lord of Hosts (Zech 1:3)

This passage involves an additional prosodic pattern, the repetition of the same verbal stem in different tense.⁵¹

אֶהְבֵּתִי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה / וְאָמַרְתֶּם בְּמֶה אֶהְבֵּתֵנוּ
הֲלוֹא-אֵךְ עָשׂוּ לִיעֶקֶב נְאֻם-יְהוָה / וְאָהֵב אֶת-יַעֲקֹב

I have shown you love, *said the Lord*. But you say, "How have
You shown us love?"

After all, *declares the Lord*, Esau is Jacob's brother; yet I have ac-
cepted Jacob (Mal 1:2).

Remarkably, this pattern appears repeatedly in the Jeremianic diatribes concerning prophetic inspiration and authority (Jer 23:4–5, 23–24, 28–29, 30–32; so also 8:12–13), in the small unit concerning the divine promise of ultimate salvation (31:16–17, 32–33;⁵² so also 3:12–13; 29:19; 33:13–14), and in the prophecies concerning Elam and Babylon (25:8–9; 49:38–39; 51:24–25). In most of these cases one of the phrases,⁵³ a part of a verse,⁵⁴ or the entire verse,⁵⁵ lacks representation in the Septuagint, and thus belongs to the secondary revision of the Jeremiah text, as testified to by the MT.⁵⁶ Still, we note a number of cases in which the repetition pattern is found in the Septuagint as well (3:12; 23:4–5, 28–29; 31:32–33),⁵⁷ and thus could not be attributed to the secondary redaction.

even then, the inclusio of **אָמַר יְהוָה** is preserved.

⁵¹ See note 60 below.

⁵² In Jer 9:23–24; 31:37–38 the repetition pattern crosses the boundary of the subunit.

⁵³ E.g., Jer 23:24, 32; 31:16; 49:38; 51:25.

⁵⁴ Verse parts containing the quotation phrase are lacking representation in the LXX of Jer 25:9; 23:32; 31:17.

⁵⁵ E.g., Jer 8:13; 29:19; 33:14.

⁵⁶ See E. Tov, "Some Aspects of the Textual and Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah," P.-M. Bogaert (ed.) *Le Livre de Jérémie. Le prophète et son milieu. Les oracles et leur transmission* (BETL, LIV; Leuven: Peeters, 1981), 145–167.

⁵⁷ On the repetition pattern in Jer 23:29 and its representation in the LXX see my paper, F. Polak, "Jer 23:9—An Expanded Colon in the LXX?," *Textus* 11 (1984), 119–23.

Hence the repetition of the divine quotation formula is one of the rhetorical elements of Jeremiah's struggle for the recognition of his inspiration and the authority of his prophecies. In the prophetic collection of Haggai, where this pattern recurs three times in two consecutive chapters, and in the collections of Zechariah 1–8 and Malachi, repetition of the divine quotation formula turns into a distinct prosodic pattern, which also stands out in the secondary redaction of the Jeremianic collection.⁵⁸

The concentration of this pattern in the prophetic texts from the Persian era suggests a renewed endeavour to buttress the authority of the prophet in the context of conquest, exile, foreign domination, and reconstruction.⁵⁹

On balance, then, we may detect a certain decline in prosodic technique in the book of Haggai. But we also note a tendency to renew the traditions of parallelism, to enrich it with new pairs, and to use parallelism and repetition patterns for highlighting divine quotation formulas, **אמר יהוה** and **נאם יהוה**. The use of prose phrases makes for a new immediacy.

Of course, these effects could represent the personal penchant of the prophet and/or his tradition/redaction circle, or the rhetorical preferences in this specific context. An assessment of the socio-cultural background requires the study of additional prophetic collections.

2. ZECHARIAH 1–8

Although the prophetic texts in Zechariah 1–8, which contain 1287 content words, are four times as large as the Haggai collection, it is not always easy to assess their import since most texts are couched in rhythmic prose, not unlike the so-called 'prose speeches' in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The opening of the book stands out by a mixture of prose and prosody. The opening proclamation, **קִצְף יְהוָה** (v 2, The Lord was very angry with your fathers) is marked by an internal object that creates a *figura etymologica*, but does not manifest any poetic prosody. However, the ensuing prophetic exhortation contains a repetition of different forms of the

⁵⁸ If one attributes the collection of Jeremiah 30–31 to the exilic period, the passage of Jer 31:32–33 would also represent this tendency.

⁵⁹ To this context one could also attribute Isa 14:22–23; 52:5; 66:21–22; Amos 9:12–13.

same verb in two cola in parallelism. This structure is close to patterns well-known from biblical and Ugaritic poetry:⁶⁰

שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי נָאִם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת / וְאֶשׁוּב אֲלֵיכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

*Turn back to me, declares the Lord of Hosts, and I will turn back to you, says the Lord of Hosts (Zech 1:3)*⁶¹

A similar pattern is found in a number of passages, e.g.,

יִסְרְתֵנִי / וְאֶסָּר כְּעֵגֶל לֹא לָמַד
הִשְׁיבֵנִי / וְאֶשׁוּבָה כִּי אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי

You have chastised me, and I am chastised like an untrained calf. Let me return, and I will return, for you, O Lord, are my God (Jer 31:18)

Like the passage from Zechariah 1, this verse uses the imperative with cohortative. A pattern with the same verbal root in two different stems (*hiphil* and *niphal*) is found in another passage in the Zechariah collection:

וַיָּשָׁב הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי וַיַּעֲרֵנִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִעוֹר מִשְׁנָתוֹ

*The angel who talked with me came back and woke me as a man is wakened from sleep (Zech. 4:1)*⁶²

The use of this repetition pattern demonstrates both the prophet's place within the tradition and free innovation, in particular in the intermingling of poetic form and prosaic style.

The opening proclamation of this collection continues as prose:

⁶⁰ So also Mal 3:4 (on which see below); Jer 17:14 (likewise with the imperative); 31:4; Ps 19:13–14; 69:15; and in Ugaritic CAT 1.17 VI 26–28. However, where the Zechariah passage has two *qal* forms, the other examples for this pattern use the same root in two different stems, *qal* and *niphal* (Jer 17:14a; 31:4); *hiphil* and *niphal* (17:14b; 31:18b); *piel* and *niphal* (Jer 31:18a). See U. M. Cassuto, "Biblical and Canaanite Literatures," U. M. Cassuto, *Biblical and Oriental Studies* (2 Vols; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1973–75), 2.16–59, esp. pp. 58–59 (originally in Hebrew, 1942); M. Held, "The Action-Result (Factitive-Passive) Sequence of Identical Verbs."

⁶¹ The parallelism of the two divine quotation formulae is discussed above.

⁶² So also Ps 57:9; 108:3.

אֶל־תְּהִיוּ כְּאֲבֹתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר קָרְאוּ־אֲלֵיהֶם הַנְּבִיאִים הָרִאשִׁימִים
לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שׁוּבוּ נָא מִדְּרֹכֵיכֶם הָרָעִים
וּמַעֲלָלֵיכֶם הָרָעִים וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ וְלֹא־הִקְשִׁיבוּ אֵלַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה

Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets called, saying, "Thus says the Lord of Hosts: Come, turn back from your evil ways and your evil deeds," but they did not obey or give heed to me, declares the Lord (1:4)

This saying embodies an extremely intricate syntactic structure: the opening call **אֶל־תְּהִיוּ כְּאֲבֹתֵיכֶם** serves as the peg for the main admonition, which is placed in a relative clause, **אֲשֶׁר קָרְאוּ־אֲלֵיהֶם הַנְּבִיאִים הָרִאשִׁימִים**. Embedded within the relative clause we find the divine quotation formula, **כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת**, and the quotation itself: **שׁוּבוּ נָא מִדְּרֹכֵיכֶם הָרָעִים וּמַעֲלָלֵיכֶם הָרָעִים**. And still within the relative clause the saying continues to describe the reaction of the fathers, **וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ וְלֹא־הִקְשִׁיבוּ אֵלַי**. Structures of this kind of complexity are not easily found in prophetic discourse. The Jeremianic prose speeches include a number of passages from which the present saying draws inspiration (Jer 18:11; 25:4–5; 35:15),⁶³ but do not contain anything like this type of structure. We encounter an example in the Isaian metaphor:

וְתִהְיֶה לָכֶם חֲזוֹת הַכָּל בְּדַבְרֵי הַסֵּפֶר הַחֲתוּם אֲשֶׁר־יִתֶּנּוּ אֹתוֹ
אֶל־יְדֵיכֶם סֵפֶר לֵאמֹר קְרֹא נֹאֲזָה וְאָמַר לֹא אוֹכֵל כִּי חֲתוּם הוּא
וְנָתַן הַסֵּפֶר עַל אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַע סֵפֶר לֵאמֹר קְרֹא נֹאֲזָה וְאָמַר לֹא
יָדַעְתִּי סֵפֶר

All prophecy has been to you like the words of a sealed document, which one hands to one knowing to read, saying "read this," but he will say, "I cannot, for it is sealed." And the document is handed to one not knowing to read, saying "Read this," and he says, "I don't know to read" (Isa 29:11–12).

In this case the handing of the document is recounted in a relative clause, **אֲשֶׁר־יִתֶּנּוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־יְדֵיכֶם סֵפֶר**, which is continued by

⁶³ In particular one notes the call **שׁוּבוּ־נָא אִישׁ מִדְּרֹכֵי הָרָעָה וּמִרָעָה** (Jer 25:5; similarly 18:11; 35:15). The reproduction of this call as a quote from prophetic discourse is found in 25:5 and 35:15. See, e.g., A. Petitjean, *Les oracles du Proto-Zacharie. Un programme de restauration pour la communauté juive après l'exil* (Paris: Gabalda; Louvain: Imprimerie Orieoentale, 1969), 39–40.

the request to read it, in direct discourse. But here the relative clause breaks off. Its logical continuation, the answer of the addressee, is to be analyzed as an independent clause, for its subject, the addressee, differs from the indefinite subject of the preceding relative clause. This sentence, then, turns from hypotactic into paratactic. Its continuation in the next verse is purely paratactic. By contrast, in the saying from Zechariah 1, the subject of the last clause, *וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ וְלֹא-הִקְשִׁיבוּ אֵלַי*, is identical with the fathers of the opening admonition, *אֶל-תְּהִיוּ כְּאֲבֹתֵיכֶם*. Thus the last clause still continues the relative clause. This highly complex construction represents learned prose rather than prophetic poetry.

A number of syndetic junctions fit the nature of prose. In particular one notes longer junctions. See the following:

סוֹסִים אֲדָמִים שָׂרָקִים וּלְבָנִים (1:8)

אֶת-יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֵת עָרֵי יְהוּדָה (1:12),

and similarly, in 8:15

אֶת-יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת-בֵּית יְהוּדָה⁶⁴

and

אֶת-יְהוּדָה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל וִירוּשָׁלַם (2:2)⁶⁵

מֵרֵב אָדָם וּבְהֵמָה (2:8; parallelism: 8:10)⁶⁶

כְּאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם (2:10; 6:5)⁶⁷

תְּשֹׂאוֹת חֵן חֵן (4:7)

עַל-יָמִין הַמְּנוּרָה וְעַל-שְׂמֹאלָהּ (4:11)

אֲדוֹן כָּל-הָאָרֶץ (4:14; 6:5)

אֶל-בֵּית הַגָּנֹב וְאֶל-בֵּית הַנִּשְׁבָּע בְּשֵׁמִי לִשְׁקֹר (5:4)⁶⁸

⁶⁴ As junction, e.g., Isa 3:1; Jer 4:3; 7:17, 34. In parallelism, e.g., Isa 3:8; 5:3; 22:21; 40:9; 44:26; Jer 4:4, 5, 16.

⁶⁵ Similarly Mal 2:11; as a junction, *יִשְׂרָאֵל-יְהוּדָה*, e.g., Jer 5:11; 50:4; 51:5 and *passim* in Jeremianic prose speeches (and as a syntagmatic combination: 3:11, 18); Ezek 9:9; 27:17; 37:16; Zech 11:14; in parallelism: Isa 5:7; 11:12; 48:1; Jer 12:14; 23:6; 50:20; Hos 4:15; 5:5; 8:14; 12:1; Mic 1:5; 5:1; Ps 76:2; 114:2; Lam 2:5.

⁶⁶ Similarly Hag 1:11; see note 31 above.

⁶⁷ Similarly Jer 49:36; Zech 12:1; Dan 8:8; 11:4; in parallelism: Ps 33:6; Prov 30:4; and freely: Jer 10:13; 51:16; Ezek 8:3; Job 26:13.

אֶל-כָּל-עַם הָאָרֶץ וְאֶל-הַכֹּהֲנִים (7:5)

מִשְׁפַּט אֱמֶת (7:9) and similarly

אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפַּט שָׁלוֹם (8:16)⁶⁹

וְאֶלְמִנָּה וַיְתוֹם גֵּר וְעָנִי (7:10)

מֵאָרֶץ מִזְרַח וּמֵאָרֶץ מְבֹאָה הַשָּׁמֶשׁ (8:7)

בֵּית יְהוּדָה וּבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל (8:13)

צוֹם הָרְבִיעִי וְצוֹם הַחֲמִישִׁי וְצוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וְצוֹם הָעֶשְׂרִי (8:19)

לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וּלְשִׁמְחָה וּלְמַעֲדִים טוֹבִים (8:19)

וְהָאֱמֶת וְהַשָּׁלוֹם (8:19)

עַמִּים וַיִּשְׁבִּי עָרִים רְבוֹת (8:20)

עַמִּים רַבִּים וְגוֹיִם עֲצוּמִים (8:22);

עֲשָׂרָה אֲנָשִׁים מְכַל לְשָׁנוֹת הַגּוֹיִם (8:23)

Noun pairs in junction (and construct state) are frequent, see, for instance, the following:

בְּדַרְכֵינוּ וּבְמַעַלְלֵינוּ (1:6; similarly v 4)⁷⁰

לִירוּשָׁלַם וּלְצִיּוֹן (1:14)⁷¹

אֶל-תַּחַת גִּפֶּן וְאֶל-תַּחַת תְּאֵנָה (3:10)⁷²

וְאֶת-עֲצֵיו וְאֶת-אֲבָנָיו (5:4)⁷³

⁶⁸ On the sequence of ‘stealing’ and ‘perjury’ in v 3 see below.

⁶⁹ The association of **משפט** and **אמת** appears in Isa 16:5; 42:3; 59:14, 15; 61:8; Jer 4:2; Ps 19:10; 89:15; 111:7; 119:43, 160; Neh 9:13.

⁷⁰ As junction, e.g., Jer 4:18; 7:3, 5; Ezek 36:31; Hos 4:9 12:3.

⁷¹ As junction, e.g., Isa 10:12, 32; 24:32; Joel 3:5. In parallelism: Zech 8:3; 9:9; 2 Kings 19:31 (=Isa 32:22); Isa 2:3; 4:3, 4; 30:19; 31:9; 33:20; 40:9; 41:27; 52:1, 2; 62:1; 64:9; Jer 26:18; 51:35; Joel 4:16–17; Amos 1:2; Mic 3:10, 12; 4:2, 8; Zeph 3:14, 16; Ps 51:20; 102:22; 128:5; 135:21; 147:12; Lam 1:17; 2:10, 13.

⁷² See note 34 above.

⁷³ In poetry cf. Isa 60:17; Qoh 10:9; so also in “elevated” prose (2 Kings 19:18 = Isa 37:19; Jer 3:9; Ezek 20:32; Deut 4:28; 28:36, 64; 29:16; 2 Kings 18:1); in ‘technical’ prose: 2 Sam 5:11; 2 Kgs. 12:13; 22:6; 1 Chr 22:14, 15; 2 Chr 2:13; 9:10; 34:11; see also H. J. van Dijk, *Ezekiel’s Prophecy on Tyre* (Ez 26,1 – 28,19) (AnBib 20; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute,

בֵּין הָאָרֶץ וּבֵין הַשָּׁמַיִם (5:9)⁷⁴

כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב (6:11)⁷⁵

יִשְׁכַּת וּשְׁלֹוּה (7:7)⁷⁶

מִשְׁפַּט אֲמַת (7:9)

וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים (7:9)

מַעֲבֵר וּמָשָׁב (7:14)⁷⁷

זִקְנִים וְזִקְנוֹת (8:4)

יְלָדִים וְיִלְדוֹת (8:5)

בְּאֲמַת וּבַצִּדְקָה (8:8)⁷⁸

וְלִיצָא וְלִבָּא (8:10)

וְהָאֲמַת וְהַשְּׁלוֹם (8:19)⁷⁹

In addition we note non-traditional junctions, e.g., בְּחַמִּישִׁי בַּחֲבִיבִי (7:5) and verb pairs, e.g., רָנִי וְשִׂמְחִי (2:14).⁸⁰

1968), 24; M. Dahood and T. Penar, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Parallel Pairs," L. R. Fisher (ed.), *Ras-Shamra Parallels* (AnOr 49; 3 vols; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1972), 1.73–382, esp. p. 302; Avishur, *Pairs*, 593–94.

⁷⁴ The pair אֶרֶץ/שָׁמַיִם appears here in inverse order, unlike the instances of Hag 1:10; 2:6. In poetry the inverse order is found in Judg 5:4; 2 Sam 22:8; Isa 40:22; 45:12; 48:13; 51:6; Jer 4:23, 28; 10:12; 51:9, 15; Hos 4:3; 2:10; Ps 8:2; 68:9; 85:12; 102:26; Job 28:24; 35:11; Prov 3:19. In general, this is the order when the point of departure is found on earth. Only in few cases could one discern diachronic chiasm, e.g., Ps 148:13.

⁷⁵ On Hag 2:8 see above.

⁷⁶ Similarly: Jer 49:31; 1 Chr 4:40.

⁷⁷ Similarly, as a junction: Ezek 35:7; Zech 9:8; and in parallelism: Mic 2:8; Ps 104:9.

⁷⁸ Similarly, as a junction: 1 Kgs 3:6; Isa 48:1; Jer 4:2; in parallelism and inverse order: Isa 59:14; Psa 40:10; 119:142; Prov 11:18.

⁷⁹ Similarly אֲמַת וְשָׁלוֹם as junction: 2 Kings 20:19 (=Isa 39:8); Jer 14:13 (construct state); 33:6; Esth 9:30; in parallelism: Mal 2:6; Ps 85:11 (see also Jer 28:9).

⁸⁰ The present case is not to be analyzed as half-line parallelism, since this pair occupies the first half of the colon and the second half mentions the addressee, בֶּת־צִיּוֹן. For this pair in parallelism see Zeph 3:14; Ps 5:12; 32:11; 92:5; and in junction: Ps 35:27; 67:5; 90:14; Prov 29:6.

The incidence of noun groups in junction (altogether 39 cases), though not as striking as in Haggai 1–2,⁸¹ indicates a penchant for coupling while maintaining the syntactic order of the prose clause, with no balancing of cola in parallelism. This is another aspect of the intermingling of prose and poetry. A mixture of this type also enables the junction of two equivalent infinitive clauses in a sequence that resembles parallelism:

נִלְכֶּה הַלֹּדֶד / לְחַלּוֹת אֶת־פָּנֵי יְהוָה
וּלְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת / אֵלֶיךָ גַּם־אֲנִי

Let us go and *entreat* the favour of the Lord, and *seek* the Lord of Hosts; I will go, too (8:21)

Since both infinitive clauses are dependent on the same verb, נִלְכֶּה הַלֹּדֶד, this construction cannot be characterized as full parallelism. In particular, the clause אֵלֶיךָ גַּם־אֲנִי which is independent from the infinitive clauses, is a semantic, but not a syntactic parallel for the opening clause נִלְכֶּה הַלֹּדֶד.

We encounter a similar sequence in the next verse:⁸²

וּבָאוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְגוֹיִם עֲצוּמִים
לְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בִּירוּשָׁלַם / וּלְחַלּוֹת אֶת־פָּנֵי יְהוָה

Large peoples and the enormous nations will come to *seek* the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem and to *entreat* the favour of the Lord (8:22).

When we pass to semantic-syntactic parallelism, we note a number of unexpected correspondences, e.g., טוב־נחם:

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עוֹד תִּפּוּצִינָה עָרֵי מְטוֹב
וְנַחֲם יְהוָה עוֹד אֶת־צִיּוֹן וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם

Thus said the Lord of Hosts: My towns shall yet overflow with *bounty*.

For the Lord will again *comfort* Zion; He will choose Jerusalem again (1:17).

This pair is matched by the junction

⁸¹ In Haggai 1–2 noun groups in junction form 5.41% of the text, relative to the number of content words, as against 3.03% in Zechariah 1–8.

⁸² The Isaianic connections of these verses are discussed below.

דְּבָרִים טוֹבִים דְּבָרִים נַחֲמִים

kind words, comforting words (1:13).

One notes the contrast between קנאה, zeal, and קצף, rage:

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת קִנְאָתִי לִירוּשָׁלַם וּלְצִיּוֹן קִנְאָה גְדוֹלָה
וְקִצְף גְּדוֹל אֲנִי קִצְף עַל-הַגּוֹיִם הַשְׂאֲנָנִים

Thus said the Lord of Hosts: I am very zealous for Jerusalem,
for Zion.

and I am very angry with those nations that are at ease (1:14–
15).

An intricate pattern of parallel clauses characterizes the divine
promise to Joshua, the high priest:

אִם-בִּדְרָכֵי תֵלֵךְ וְאִם אֶת-מִשְׁמְרָתִי תִשְׁמֹר
וְגַם-אֶתְּהָ תִדְּרִין אֶת-בֵּיתִי וְגַם תִּשְׁמֹר אֶת-חֲצָרֵי
וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ מֵהַלְכִּים בֵּין הָעַמִּידִים הָאֵלֶּה

If you walk in my paths and keep my charge,
you in turn will rule my house and guard my courts
and I will permit you to move about among these attendants
(3:7).

The parallelism of house and court (בית-חצר) is classical in
Ugaritic, Phoenician, and biblical Hebrew.⁸³

The famous admonition of Zerubbabel represents antithetic
parallelism:

לֹא בְחֵיל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם-בְּרוּחִי אֶמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

Not by *might*, nor by *power*, but by my *spirit*, says the Lord of
Hosts (4:6)⁸⁴

⁸³ Avishur, "Pairs of Synonymous Words," 23–24; apart from the obvious prose passages (e.g., Exod 25:31; 1 Kgs 7:8) see Ps 92:14; 135:2; and in inverse order: Ps 65:5; 84:11; as construct state: Ps 116:19; 135:2; and as a junction: Exod 8:9. In Phoenician cf. *KAI* 27:6–7: **בַּת אַבְא בַל תַּבְּאֵן וְחָצֵר** **בַּת אַבְא בַל תַּדְּרַכְנָא** the house I enter, you shall not enter, and the courtyard where I tread, you shall not tread.

⁸⁴ The parallel of **חֵיל** and **כֹּחַ** is matched by Ps 33:16. For a connection with **רוּחַ** see Mic 3:8: **וְגִבּוֹרָה וְיִשְׁפָּט וְיִהְיֶה וְיִשְׁפָּט וְיִהְיֶה** "I am filled with strength by the spirit of the Lord, and with judgment and courage."

Altogether we note 23 instances of semantic-syntactic parallelism: נחל-בחר (2:16); גנב-נשבע (5:3);⁸⁵ ימין-שמאל (4:3);⁸⁶ הר-מישור (4:7);⁸⁷ שמים-ארץ and יצא-התיצב (6:5); צפון-תימן (6:6);⁸⁸ אכל-שתה (7:6); קנאה-חמה (8:2);⁸⁹ ציון-ירושלים (8:3);⁹⁰ לא היה-אין (8:3);⁹¹ אדם-אמת-משפט (v 13b);⁹³ אמת-משפט (8:10);⁹² קללה-ברכה (8:13); ירא-חזק (v 13b);⁹³ אמת-משפט (8:16);⁹⁴ אהב-שנא (8:17);⁹⁵

Epic formulae may also serve to create a balance between two cola:⁹⁶

וְלָקַחְתָּ כֶּסֶף-וְזָהָב / וְעָשִׂיתָ עֲטָרוֹת / וְשַׂמְתָּ בְּרֹאשׁ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
בֶּן-יְהוֹצָדָק

Take silver and gold and make crowns. Place one on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak (6:11).

We encounter one case of gapping with compensation, a form not fully developed in Haggai 1–2:

וְנִקְרָאָה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר-הָאֱמֶת / וְהָרִי הָיָה צְבָאוֹת הָרַקְדִּישׁ

⁸⁵ This sequence is based on the series of felonies in Hos 4:2; Jer 7:9; and the Decalogue. On the repetition of the phrase מִזֶּה כְּמוֹהָ נִקְּה see below.

⁸⁶ In parallelism, e.g. Isa 9:19; Ezek 1:10; 16:46; 39:3; Job 23:9; and in junction, e.g., Isa 54:3; Jona 4:11; Zech 4:16.

⁸⁷ This contrast is also found in Isa 40:4; 1 Kgs 20:3.

⁸⁸ The pair צפון/תימן appears in Deut 3:27 as junction; and in parallelism: Isa 43:6; Song 4:16; On the repetition pattern (יצא/יצא) see below.

⁸⁹ See also Prov 6:34; 27:4; Ezek 5:13; 16:42; 23:25; and as junction: 16:38; 36:6. Within a pericope one notes Deut 32:21, 24, and in prose Num 25:11.

⁹⁰ See note 65 above. These terms appear in junction, in inverse order, in Zech 1:14.

⁹¹ אין and לא appear in parallelism in Isa 3:7; Qoh 1:11.

⁹² See n. 31 above on Hag 1:11.

⁹³ See Deut 31:6; Josh 10:25; Dan 10:19; and in inverse order: Isa 35:4.

⁹⁴ For the association of משפט and אמת (also in Zech 7:9) see note 62 above.

⁹⁵ Similarly Isa 61:8; Ezek 16:37; Hos 9:15; Mic 3:2; Ps 11:5; 45:8; Ps 97:10; Ps 119:13, 163; Prov 1:22; 8:36; 9:8; 12:1; 13:24; 14:20; 27:6; Qoh 3:8.

⁹⁶ Similarly Hag 2:23 (see above, and note 12).

Jerusalem will be called the City of Faithfulness, and the mount of the Lord of Hosts the Holy Mount (8:3b).

One notes the ellipsis of the verbal predicate in the second colon rhythmically balanced by the long subject, **וְהָרִי הָיָה צְבָאוֹת**. The present instance of this pattern may be related to similar patterns in the Isaianic prophecies concerning Jerusalem (Isa 1:26b; 2:3).⁹⁷ The renaming of Jerusalem is an Isaianic theme as well (Isa 1:26).⁹⁸

Probably, then, these sayings were among the sources of inspiration for the divine promise in Zechariah's vision and its gapping pattern.

This collection also includes a case of parallelism between two phrases, a positive injunction to exert justice, and an admonishment to refrain from wrongdoing:

מִשְׁפָּט אֱמֶת שְׁפֹטוּ / וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים עֲשׂוּ אִישׁ אֶת-אֶחָיו
וְאַלמָנָה וְיָתוֹם גֵּר וְעֵנִי אַל-תַּעֲשֹׁק / וְרַעַת אִישׁ אֶחָיו
אַל-תַּחֲשְׁבוּ בְלִבְבְּכֶם

Execute *true* justice; deal *loyally* and compassionately with one another.

Do not *defraud* the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the poor
and do not plot evil against one another (7:9–10).

Within the first line one notes the traditional pair **חֶסֶד-אֱמֶת**.⁹⁹ The contrast between the exhortation to do justice (**מִשְׁפָּט**) and to refrain from tort (**אַל תַּעֲשֹׁק**) is likewise traditional.¹⁰⁰ A more complicated picture is presented by the description of Jerusalem's disobedience:

וַיִּמָּאֲנוּ לְהִקְשִׁיב / וַיִּתְּנוּ כְתָף סָרְרַת / וְאַזְנוֹיָהֶם הִקְבִּידוּ מִשְׁמוֹעַ

⁹⁷ Isa 2:3 is also echoed by Zech 8:21–22; see Petitjean, *Les oracles du Proto-Zacharie*, 370–71. From a semantic, syntactic, and prosodic point of view the attribution of the Isaianic Jerusalem visions to the post-Alexander period is less than likely.

⁹⁸ The lexical association **צדק/אמת** appears in, e.g., Isa 16:5; Ps 15:2; 45:5; 85:11–12; 89:15; 119:142, 160. For **צדקה/אמת** see Zech 8:8 and n. 79 above.

⁹⁹ In a context that also mentions **צדק/צדקה** one notes Isa 16:5; Jer 9:23; Hos 2:21; 12:7; Mic 6:8; Ps 89:15; see also Ps 101:1; 119:49.

¹⁰⁰ See Jer 22:3 (possible the prototype for our verse); Ps 72:4 (and with **חמס**: Ezek 7:23; 45:9; Job 19:7).

But they refused to pay heed. They presented a balky back and turned a deaf ear (7:11).

The association of כבד and 'refusal' is found in the Plagues cycle (Exod 7:14); the connection between סרר and disobedience appears in the law of the rebellious son (Deut 21:18, 20).¹⁰¹ The present image is continued by an additional image of intractability, מְשֻׁמוֹעַ (Zech 7:12, "They hardened their hearts like adamant"), echoing the prophetic metaphor (Jer 17:1). But at this point the accusation continues in prose style: וְאֶת־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת ("against heeding the instruction and admonition that the Lord of Hosts sent to them"). The next line, however, returns to poetry:

וְיְהִי כְאֲשֶׁר־קָרָא וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ/ בֶּן יִקְרָאוּ וְלֹא אָשָׁמַע אָמַר יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת

Even as he *called* and they would not *listen*, "So, let them *call* and I will not *listen*," says the Lord of Hosts (7:13).¹⁰²

כְּאֲשֶׁר זָמַמְתִּי לְהָרַע לָכֶם ... אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְלֹא נַחֲמָתִי
כִּן שִׁבֵּתִי זָמַמְתִּי בַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה לְהִיטִיב אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאֶת־בֵּית
יְהוּדָה

Just as I *planned to afflict you* and did not relent ... said the Lord of Hosts, so, at this time, I have turned and *planned to do good* to Jerusalem and to the House of Judah (8:14–15).

The sequence of this verse matches the Jeremicanic threat, עַל כִּי־דִבַּרְתִּי זָמַתִּי וְלֹא נַחֲמָתִי וְלֹא־אָשׁוּב מִמְּנָה (Jer 4:28; Because I have spoken, I have planned, And I will not relent or turn back from it).¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ The present verse is echoed by/echoes the historical survey (Neh 9:29).

¹⁰² For the association שמע/קרא see also Isa 48:12; 60:18; 65:12, 24; 66:4; Jer 7:13, 27; 29:12; Ezek 8:18; Amos 4:5; and frequently in psalms: Jonah 2:3; Ps 4:2, 4; 17:6; 18:7; 27:7; 34:7.

¹⁰³ The LXX on Jeremiah 4:28 reflects the order: Because I have spoken, and will not relent, I have planned, and will not turn back from it. The first colon of this sequence fits the first line of the promise in Zech 8:14, whereas the second line of the promise (v 15) represents the second colon of the LXX sequence in inverse order.

Accordingly, with 24 instances, parallelism in this collection is proportionally less developed than in the book of Haggai, where a far smaller sample yields 13 cases of parallelism.¹⁰⁴ This said, repetitive parallelism is proportionally as frequent in this collection (around 30 cases) as it is in Haggai (8 cases). I note some remarkable instances:

לְכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה שׁוּבְתִי לִירוּשָׁלַם בְּרַחֲמִים
בֵּיתִי יִבְנֶה בָּה נֶאֱם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְקוֹ יִנָּטֶה עַל־ירוּשָׁלַם

Assuredly, *thus said the Lord*: I return to *Jerusalem* in grace. My House shall be built in her—*declares the Lord of Hosts*—the measuring line is being applied to *Jerusalem* (Zech 1:16).

This verse also presents an additional example of the parallelism of divine quotation formulae, one as an opening phrase, and one preceding the final colon and climax. The combination of repetitive parallelism and quotation formulae in parallelism is also found in 8:6:

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת כִּי יִפְּלֵא בְּעֵינַי שְׂאֲרֵית הָעָם הַזֶּה בַּיָּמִים
הָהֵם
גַּם־בְּעֵינַי יִפְּלֵא נֶאֱם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

Thus said the Lord of Hosts: Though it will seem impossible to the remnant of this people in those days, shall it also be impossible to me?—declares the Lord of Hosts (Zech 8:6).

In general, we note repetitions based on nouns, אֶרֶץ (1:11;¹⁰⁵ 7:14);¹⁰⁶ יָדִים (4:9); אֶרֶץ צָפוֹן (6:8); רְחֻבוֹת (8:5); שָׁכַר (v 10); אִמָּת (v 16). Other cases are based on verbs: קָצַף (1:15); נָגַע (2:12); עָמַד (3:1); גָּעַר (3:2); יָשַׁב (7:7);¹⁰⁷ הִלָּךְ (8:21). We note one case of repetition of a particle with suffix:

נִלְכָּה עִמָּכֶם כִּי שָׁמַעְנוּ אֱלֹהִים עִמָּכֶם

¹⁰⁴ In Haggai we find 4.15% of cases of syntactic-semantic parallelism relative to the number of content words, as against 1.86% in Zechariah 1–8.

¹⁰⁵ In 1:11 one notes the contrast between movement (11a) and rest (11b).

¹⁰⁶ In 7:14 one notes the repetition of the root שָׁמַע in the verbal form שָׁמְעָה and the noun שְׁמָה.

¹⁰⁷ On the junction יִשְׁבַּת וְשָׁלוֹה see above.

Let us go *with you*, for we have heard, God is *with you* (Zech 8:23).

In one case a complete phrase is repeated:

כִּי כָל־הַגֵּנֵב מִזֶּה כְּמוֹהַ נִקָּה / וְכָל־הַנִּשְׁבָּע מִזֶּה כְּמוֹהַ נִקָּה

For everyone who has stolen, as is forbidden on one side of the scroll, has gone unpunished; and everyone who has sworn falsely, as is forbidden on the other side of it, has gone unpunished (Zech 5:3).¹⁰⁸

The sustained repetition in adjacent clauses creates a balance that is not unlike semantic parallelism:¹⁰⁹

בַּמֶּרְכָּבָה הָרִאשֹׁנָה סוּסִים אֲדָמִים / וּבַמֶּרְכָּבָה הַשֵּׁנִית סוּסִים
שְׁחֹרִים:
וּבַמֶּרְכָּבָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית סוּסִים לְבָנִים / וּבַמֶּרְכָּבָה הָרְבִיעִית סוּסִים
בְּרָדִים אֲמָצִים

The *horses* of the first *chariot* were bay, the *horses* of the second *chariot* were black; the *horses* of the third *chariot* were white, and the *horses* of the fourth *chariot* were spotted, dappled (Zech 6:2–3).

אֵלֶּה הַקֶּרְנוֹת אֲשֶׁר־זָרוּ אֶת־יְהוּדָה בְּפִי־אִישׁ לֹא־נִשָּׂא רֹאשׁוֹ
וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלֶּה לְהַחֲרִיד אֹתָם לִידוֹת אֶת־קֶרְנוֹת הַגּוֹיִם
הַנִּשְׂאִים קֶרֶן אֶל־אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה לְזִרוֹתָהּ

Those are the *horns* that *tossed* Judah, so that no man could raise his head; and these men have come to throw them into a panic, to *cast down* the *horns* of the nations that raise a *horn* against the land of Judah, to *toss* it (Zech 2:4).

This repetition pattern encompasses both the noun, קרן/קרנות and the verb, זרה, found both in opening and closure. The second line combines קרנות with a synonymous verb, ידה, to cast. Actually the set up for the repetition pattern is found in the opening of the scene, with the introduction of the four horns, and the explanation that “those are the horns that tossed Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem” (vv 1–2). In this case, then, a simple prose pattern evolves into a semipoetic structure.

¹⁰⁸ See above and also note 86.

¹⁰⁹ So also 6:6–7.

Thus in the present collection both semantic-syntactic parallelism (24 cases) and syndetic noun (and verb) phrases (39 cases) are less frequent than in Haggai 1–2. Unlike this book, we note one clear case of gapping with compensation, but like this book, the collection of Zechariah 1–8 is characterized, to a certain extent, by the intermingling of prose and poetry. Another common feature is the use of the divine quotation formulae in parallelism, adding weight to the divine authority of the prophetic saying. The allusions to the Isaianic vision of a future Jerusalem (8:3) suggest a profound awareness of the prophetic tradition.

What is the status of poetic prosody in the other collections in this corpus? This issue forms the subject of the last chapter of the present study.

3. ZECH 11:4–14:21 AND MALACHI

a. Zech 11:4–14:21

The closing section of the book of Zechariah (including 11:4–17, a section that from a syntactic-stylistic point of view is similar to ch. 13) includes 738 content words and thus is 2.36 times as large as Haggai 1–2. Semantic-syntactic parallelism is less frequent than in Haggai (17 cases, as against 13 in Haggai 1–2),¹¹⁰ but we note particular correspondences, e.g.,

הוּ רֵעִי הָאֵלֶּלִי / עֶזְבִּי הַצֹּאן / חָרַב עַל-זְרוּעוֹ וְעַל-עֵינַי יָמִינוּ
זָרְעוֹ יָבוֹשׁ תִּיבָשׁ / וְעֵינַי יָמִינוּ כָּהֵה תִכְהֶה

Woe, the *worthless shepherd* who *abandons the flock*! Let a sword descend upon his *arm* and upon his *right eye*!

His arm shall shrivel up; His right eye shall go blind (Zech 11:17).

The coupling of arm and eye, shrivelling and blindness is unique in biblical literature. One notes the near-gapping with compensation in 17a, חָרַב עַל-זְרוּעוֹ וְעַל-עֵינַי יָמִינוּ, where the expansion of

¹¹⁰ One notes עֵינַי-עוֹרוֹן (12:3); עֵינַי-עוֹרוֹן (12:4; cf. Deut 28:28); כֶּסֶף-זָהָב and צֶרֶף-בָּחוֹן (13:8); יָפְרָתוֹ יִגְעוּ-יִוָּתֵר (13:2); אֲכָרִית-לֹא יִזְכְּרוּ (13:9a; cf. Ps 66:10); עַמִּי-אֱלֹהִי and קָרָא-עֵנָה (v 9b); וְנָשְׁסוּ וְנִלְכְּדָה הָעִיר / וְהָנָשִׁים תִּשְׁגֹּלְנָה (14:2; cf. Isa 13:16); and less structured: 14:2, 4–5, 6–7, 10. Thus parallelism is found in 2.03% of the text in Zechariah 11–14, as against 4.15% in Haggai 1–2, and 1.86% in Zechariah 1–8.

עין by מינו compensates for the lack of the subject (חֶרֶב in the opening of the clause). However, in view of the syndetic construction this clause could hardly be treated as a bi-colon.

Other original forms of parallelism include 12:6 (בְּעֵצִים / וּכְלָפִיד אֵשׁ בְּעֵמִיר) “like a *flaming brazier* among *sticks* and like a *flaming torch* among *sheaves*,” although these phrases are dependent on the opening of the verse); 12:10 (וְהָמָר עָלֵיו / כְּמִסְפַּד עַל-הַיָּחִיד כְּהָמָר עַל-הַבְּכוֹר “and they shall *wail* over them as over a *favourite son* and *show bitter grief* as over a *first-born*”).

Apart from a number of more traditional cases of parallelism (12:4; 13:9), one notes another case of near-gapping with compensation:

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִגְדַּל הַמִּסְפָּד בִּירוּשָׁלַם כְּמִסְפַּד הַדָּד־רִמּוֹן בְּבִקְעַת
מִגְדּוֹן

In that day, the *wailing in Jerusalem* shall be as great as the *wailing*
for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo (Zech 12:11).

In this syntactic construction the noun phrase that serves as modifier, בְּבִקְעַת מִגְדּוֹן, corresponds with the subject in the first half of the clause, הַמִּסְפָּד בִּירוּשָׁלַם. Thus the expanded form, הַדָּד־רִמּוֹן בְּבִקְעַת מִגְדּוֹן, balances the lack of the predicate.

By the same token we note the balancing in the description of the expected tribute:

וְאֶסַף חֵיל כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם סָבִיב / זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וּבִגְדִים לְרֵב מְאֹד

and the wealth of all the nations shall be collected—gold, silver, and garments in great abundance (14:14; NRSV)

The predicate וְאֶסַף is doing double duty, while the traditional triad חֵיל כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם סָבִיב matches the phrase זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וּבִגְדִים in colon a.¹¹¹ The phrase לְרֵב מְאֹד which closes colon b, forms the compensation for the predicate in colon a.

A similar construction may be noted in a series of noun clauses:

¹¹¹ Cf. כְּלִי-כֶסֶף וְכֵלֵי זָהָב וּבִגְדִים (Gen 24:53; and similarly 2 Kgs 5:5; 7:8).

וְהָיָה הַנֶּכְשֵׁל בָּהֶם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כְּדָוִד / וּבֵית דָּוִד כְּאַלְהִים
כְּמֵלֶאכֶד יְהוָה לְפָנֵיהֶם

and the feeblest of them shall be in that day like David, and the House of David like a god, like an angel of the Lord, at their head (Zech 12:8)

The appositional phrase “like an angel of the Lord” in the second colon counterbalances the predicate phrase “shall be in that day” in the first colon.

Repetitive parallelism is slightly less frequent than in Haggai 1–2 (12 cases), e.g.,

מִשְׁפַּחַת בֵּית-לֵוִי לְבָד וּנְשֵׂיהֶם לְבָד / מִשְׁפַּחַת הַשֻּׁמְעִי לְבָד
וּנְשֵׂיהֶם לְבָד

the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves/ the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves (Zech 12:13).

One notes also 12:3: מַעֲמָסָה-עַמָּסִיָּה; v 8: כְּדָוִד-בֵּית דָּוִד; 14:3: וְנִלְחַם-הַלְחָמוֹ; 14:12: תִּמְקַח-תִּמְקָנָה; and so also 14:4, 8, 9, 11, 13.

Complex junctions are frequent. See, for instance,

עַל-יָמִין וְעַל-שְׂמֹאל (12:6);

תַּפְאֶרֶת בֵּית-דָּוִד וְתַפְאֶרֶת יֵשׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם

(v 7; similarly v 10; 13:1);

כְּאַלְהִים כְּמֵלֶאכֶד יְהוָה (12:8);

רוּחַ חַן וְתַחֲנוּנִים (12:10);

כְּמִסְפַּד הַדָּד־רִמּוֹן בְּבִקְעַת מִגְדּוֹן (12:11);

מִשְׁפַּחַת מִשְׁפַּחַת לְבָד וּנְשֵׂיהֶם לְבָד

(12:14; and similarly vv 12–13);

לְחֹטָאֵת וּלְנֶדֶה (13:1);

אֶת-הַנְּבִיאִים וְאֶת-רוּחַ הַטְּמָאָה (13:2);

אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ יִלְדִּיו (13:3a,b);

הַסּוֹס הַפָּרֶד הַגָּמֶל וְהַחֲמוֹר וְכָל-הַבְּהֵמָה (14:15);

חֲטָאֵת מְצָרִים וְחֲטָאֵת כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם (14:19)

The last section of Zechariah, then, presents a picture that is very similar to the other sections in this small corpus.

b. Malachi

Although the sample is small (739 content words, 2.36 times as large as the Haggai text), the findings for Malachi deviate in a few respects from the results for Haggai-Zechariah 1–8. With 20 instances semantic-syntactic parallelism is *grosso modo* as frequent as it is in Zechariah 1–8.¹¹² See, for instance,

אהב-שנא (Mal 1:2–3);
 מדבר-שממה (1:3);¹¹³
 בנה-הרס (1:4);¹¹⁴
 כבוד-מורא (1:6);¹¹⁵
 גאל-בזה (1:7, 12);¹¹⁶
 חפץ-רצה (1:10);¹¹⁷
 אמת-עִלָּה (2:6a);¹¹⁸
 פה-שפתים (2:6a, 7);
 ירא-חתת (2:5);
 דרך-תורה (2:8, 9);¹¹⁹
 בגד-תועבה (2:11);
 יהודה-בישראל ובירושלים (2:11);

¹¹² In Malachi parallelism is found in 2.71% of the text, as against 2.03% of the text in Zechariah 11–14, 4.15% in Haggai 1–2, and 1.86% in Zechariah 1–8.

¹¹³ In parallelism: Isa 64:9; Ezek 6:14; Joel 4:19; Zeph 2:13 (in inverse order); and in construct state: Jer 12:10; Joel 2:3. This pair seems to replace **מדבר-ישימון**, Deut 32:10; Isa 43:19–20; Ps 78:40; 106:14; 107:4.

¹¹⁴ Similarly Ps 28:5; Job 12:14; Prov 14:1; Jer 1:10; 24:6; 31:28; 42:10; 45:4 (and cf. Ezek 35:36).

¹¹⁵ Note Isa 25:5; 29:13 (and cf. Ps 15:4; 22:24).

¹¹⁶ With this pair contrast the association **תעב-בזה** (Isa 49:7).

¹¹⁷ Similarly Ps 51:18; 147:10.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Ezek 18:8.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Isa 42:24; Ps 119:1, 29; Prov 6:23.

פנה-לקח (2:13);

בוא-ראה (3:2);

טהר-זקק (3:3);

שנה-כלה (3:6);

ארר-קבע (3:9);

גוי-ארץ (3:12);¹²⁰

בער-להט (3:19).

We note around twenty instances of repetitive parallelism. See, for instance,

אהב and אמר (1:2);

נגש (1:8);

גָּדוֹל שְׁמִי בְּגוֹיִם (1:11);

אמר (1:13; 3:13);

ארר (2:2);

אב and אחד (2:10);

אשת נעור־ךְ ואשת ברית־ךְ (2:14)

יגע and אמר (2:17);

קבע (3:8);

יִרְאֵי יְהוָה (3:16);

חמל (3:17); היום.¹²¹

Repetitive parallelism of noun and verb is instantiated by the phrase מוֹרָא וַיִּירָאֵנִי “reverence, and they revered me” in 2:4 and so also דִּבְרֵיכֶם-נִדְבַרְנוּ. In some case we note the use of the same verb in different forms:¹²²

שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי וְאֶשׁוּבָה אֲלֵיכֶם

Turn back to me, and I will turn back to you (Mal 3:7).

¹²⁰ Cf., among others, Isa 14:9; Jer 10:10; 50:46; 51:27, 41; Hab 3:6, 12; Ps 2:8; 22:28; 46:11; 67:3; 82:8.

¹²¹ In line parallelism one notes 1:6a.

¹²² On this pattern in Zechariah 1:3 see above.

The announcement of the divine entrance is built on a repetition pattern with different tenses (*yiqtol*/participle: (יבוא-בא):

וּפְתָאֵם יְבוֹא אֶל־הִכְלוֹ הָאֵדוֹן אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם מְבַקְשִׁים
וּמִלְאֵךְ הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם חֹפְצִים הִנֵּה בָא

The Lord whom you seek shall come to his Temple suddenly,
and the angel of the covenant that you desire, see, he is coming
(Mal 3:1)

The expanded expression “angel of the covenant” balances and compensates the phrase “to his Temple” in the parallel line.

By the same token one notes the repetition of the verbal predicate וְהִבָּאתֶם, combined with the repetition of the divine quotation formula אָמַר יְהוָה, in parallel with ואמרתם:¹²³

וְאָמַרְתֶּם הִנֵּה מִתְּלָאָה וְהִפְחַתֶּם אוֹתוֹ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
וְהִבָּאתֶם גְּזוֹל וְאֶת־הַפֶּסֶח וְאֶת־הַחוּלָה / וְהִבָּאתֶם אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה
הָאֲרֻצָּה אוֹתָהּ מִיָּדְכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה

You say, “Oh, what a bother!” And so you degrade it,¹²⁴ *said* the Lord of Hosts, and *you bring* the stolen, the lame, and the sick; and *you bring* such as an oblation. Will I accept it from you?—*said the Lord* (Mal 1:13).

כִּי־שָׂנֵא שְׁלַח אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְכִסָּה חֲמָס עַל־לְבוּשׁוֹ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

For I detest divorce, *said the Lord*, the God of Israel, and covering oneself with lawlessness as with a garment, *said the Lord* of Hosts (Mal 2:16)

Noun groups are not particularly frequent, but one notes, for instance,

מִמְזֻרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ וְעַד־מְבוֹאוֹ (1:11);
מִקָּטָר ... וּמִנְחָה טְהוֹרָה (1:11);
גְּזוֹל וְאֶת־הַפֶּסֶח וְאֶת־הַחוּלָה (1:13);
הַחַיִּים וְהַשְּׁלוֹם (2:5);

¹²³ On the cases in Mal 1:2; Haggai-Zechariah 1–8 see above.

¹²⁴ See, e.g. J. M. P. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the book of Malachi*, 33 in H. G. Mitchell, J. M. P. Smith, and J. A. Bewer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*.

(2:9) נִבְזִים וּשְׁפָלִים; (2:6) בְּשָׁלוֹם וּבְמִישׁוֹר
 (2:11) בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וּבִירוּשָׁלַם
 (2:12) עַר וְעֵנָה
 (2:13) בְּכִי וְאַנְקָה
 (2:14) חֲבֵרֶתֶד וְאַשֶׁת בְּרִיתֶד
 (3:2) כָּאֵשׁ מְצָרָף וּכְבָרִית מְכַבְּסִים
 (3:3) מְצָרָף וּמִטְהָר כֶּסֶף
 (3:3; inverse order of the fixed pair) כֹּזֵהב וְכַפָּסָף
 (3:4) מְנַחַת יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם
 (3:4) כִּימֵי עוֹלָם וּכְשָׁנִים קִדְמָנִיזֹת
 בַּמְכַשְׁפִּים וּבַמִּנְאָפִים וּבַנְשֻׁבָעִים לְשָׁקֵר וּבַעֲשָׂקֵי שְׁכֵר־שָׁכִיר
 (3:5) אֶלְמָנָה וַיִּתּוֹם וּמִטִּי־גֵר
 (3:8) הַמַּעֲשֵׂר וְהַתְּרוּמָה
 (3:16) לִירְאֵי יְהוָה וּלְחַשְׁבֵי שָׁמוֹ
 (3:19[4:1]). כָּל־יָדִים וְכָל־עֹשֶׂה רָשָׁעָה

A special case is the coupling of ‘root and branch’:

וְלֵהֵט אֹתָם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵעֻזְב לָהֶם
 שְׂרֵשׁ וְעֵנָף

and the day that is coming—said the LORD of Hosts—shall burn them to ashes and leave of them neither *stock* nor *boughs* (Mal 3:19 [ET, 4:1]).

In this verse the phrase שְׂרֵשׁ וְעֵנָף replaces the classical pair, שְׂרֵשׁ-פְּרִי, attested also in Phoenician.¹²⁵

What is remarkable is the use of gapping and compensation, rare, but definitely present:¹²⁶

¹²⁵ See *KAI* 14, lines 11–12, and e.g., 2 Kings 19:30; Isa 14:29; Hos 9:16; Amos 2:9 H. L. Ginsberg. “‘Roots Below and Fruit Above’ and Related Matters,” D. W. Thomas and W. D. McHardy (eds) *Hebrew and Semitic Studies Presented to Godfrey Rolles Driver* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 72–76, esp. p. 72. A similar replacement is found in Ezek 19:10: פְּרִיָה וְעֵנָפָה.

¹²⁶ Similarly Mal 1:4b; 3:18.

וְאֲשִׁים אֶת־הָרִיו שְׁמָמָה / וְאֶת־נְחֻלָּתוֹ לְתַנּוֹת מִדְּבָר

I have made his hills a desolation, his territory a home for
beasts of the desert (Mal 1:3).

תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת הָיְתָה בְּפִיהוּ / וְעוֹלָה לֹא־נִמְצְאָה בְּשִׁפְתָיו

Proper rulings were in his mouth, and nothing perverse was on
his lips (Mal 2:6).

In general, then, the book of Malachi embodies the same attitude to poetry, the same restricted technical skill as the collections of Haggai; Zechariah 1–8, and Zechariah 11–14. Only the handling of gapping with compensation reveals more mastery than these collections.

4. POETIC PROSODIC IN HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI

In conclusion, the collections of prophecies from the first part of the Persian era are characterized by a partial preservation of the ancient tradition. Syntactic-semantic parallelism in the full sense of the word is less frequent than it is in the classical collections. We note a relatively high incidence of syndetic junctions of semantically related terms, and of parallelism based on repetition of one and the same lexeme. These features indicate a retreat of the technical skill in handling the prosodic characteristics of parallelism. This conclusion is corroborated by the imperfect use of gapping in Haggai and Zech 11:4–14:21, and its infrequent appearance in Zechariah 1–8. In addition one notes a certain dependence on well-established poetic traditions, such as found in the Jeremianic and Isaianic collections.¹²⁷ However, the recognition of a decline in prosodic technique should not close our eyes to new developments. The use of prose style, or a mixture of prose and poetry, is not only a lack of technique. It also enables direct communication with the audience in a way not possible in poetry. Prose utterances can be biting and convey a sense of urgency. The frequent use of divine quotation formulae in parallelism indicates a need to underline the authority of the prophetic message. Thus repetition of divine quotation formulae and the use of prose serve the prophet in

¹²⁷ See, e.g., J. Kessler, *The Book of Haggai. Prophecy and Society in Early Persian Period* (VTSup 91; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 153–57; Petitjean, *Les oracles du Proto-Zacharie*, 441–44.

his struggle for the recognition of his authority in this small and embattled community.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BOOK OF SAMUEL IN THE PERSIAN PERIOD AND BEYOND?

ROBERT REZETKO

1. INTRODUCTION

The language of the book of Samuel is usually thought to reflect the type of Biblical Hebrew (BH) that was written in ancient Israel in the pre-exilic period (prior to 586 BCE). Thus Samuel, together with most of Judges and Kings, and the so-called Yahwist Source in the Pentateuch, are considered the best exemplars of Early Biblical Hebrew (EBH). Accordingly, Wellhausen said, “With regard to the Jehovistic document, all are happily agreed that, substantially at all events, in language, horizon, and other features, it dates from the golden age of Hebrew literature, to which the finest parts of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and the oldest extant prophetic writings also belong,—the period of the kings and prophets which preceded the dissolution of the two Israelite kingdoms...”¹ Similarly, Driver remarked, “The purest and best Hebrew prose style is that of JE and the earlier narratives incorporated in Jud. Sam. Kings: Dt. (though of a different type) is also thoroughly classical...”² Many others, including the standard BH grammars of Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley and Joüon-Muraoka, as well the great Israeli scholar Hurvitz, make use of similar nomenclature and description.³ Yet nowadays it is well known that scholars of the Hebrew

¹ J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (repr. of 1885 edn; Atlanta: Scholars, 1994), 9.

² S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (9th edn; Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), 505; cf. 123–26.

³ W. Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (ed. and rev. by E. Kautzsch;

Bible stand at odds over the dates of the writings in the Pentateuch and Former Prophets.⁴ In this essay we shall look at the case of the book of Samuel. The aim is to cast a shadow over the view that this book's *linguistic profile* is confirmation that it was written in a pre-exilic "golden age" of biblical language and literature.⁵

2. SPARSE EVIDENCE AND SCHOLARLY HYPOTHESIS ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

To begin we observe that talk about Samuel's language means primarily the language in the Masoretic Text (MT). This version of Samuel, known through medieval sources like the Aleppo and Leningrad codices, is our principal witness to the book's language. There is limited evidence for the book's linguistic makeup dated to earlier periods. On the one hand, we have Septuagint manuscripts of Kingdoms. The earliest and most important, Codex Vaticanus, dates to the fourth century CE. This Greek testimony is important, but all said and done, it gives mainly indirect access to Samuel's Hebrew language, for the obvious reason that it is in Greek. On the other hand, we have four Qumran scrolls of Samuel. This evidence presents us with another problem. 1Q7/1QSam (uncertain date), 4Q52/4QSam^b (third century BCE), and 4Q53/4QSam^c (first century BCE) consist of 43 fragments attesting portions of 16 chap-

rev. and trans. by A. E. Cowley; 2nd edn; Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), §21–22, 12–17; P. Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (trans. and rev. by T. Muraoka; SubBib, 27; 2nd edn; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2006), §3, 8–11; A. Hurvitz, "The Relevance of Biblical Hebrew Linguistics for the Historical Study of Ancient Israel," *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, July 29–August 5, 1997: Division A: The Bible and Its World* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1999), 21*–33* (26*–27*).

⁴ See the survey of scholarship in I. Young, R. Rezetko, and M. Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts, Volume 1: An Introduction to Approaches and Problems, Volume 2: A Survey of Scholarship, a New Synthesis and a Comprehensive Bibliography* (BibleWorld; London: Equinox, 2008), 2.1–70.

⁵ Observe, for example, that, while he pays attention to non-linguistic criteria, Halpern (among others) makes it clear that in his mind it is the *linguistic evidence* that "shows conclusively that the text [of Samuel] was written before the 6th century" (B. Halpern, *David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* [Bible in Its World; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 59).

ters. The situation with 4Q51/4QSam^a is only slightly better. This scroll, dated to the first century BCE, attests portions of 50 chapters, but it still gives access to less than 15% of the book of Samuel. We could continue this discussion with talk about other Greek, Latin, Aramaic, and Syriac sources, but this would be beside the point: We have no manuscript evidence for the Hebrew language of Samuel in the First or Second Temple periods prior to the Qumran scrolls. And conjecture on the (early) origin and nature of MT does not change this fundamental fact. Our oldest manuscript evidence for Samuel dates centuries, perhaps many centuries, maybe even a millennium, after the origin of the book or its constituent parts.⁶ Consequently, any discussion of Samuel's language in the monarchic or Babylonian or Persian or even Hellenistic period is speculative.

3. LINGUISTIC DATING IN TEXT-CRITICAL AND LITERARY-CRITICAL CONTEXTS

Notwithstanding my remarks thus far I am not saying that *a* book of Samuel could not have existed in the Persian period or even earlier. In my opinion Grabbe (among others) has argued plausibly that much of what became the Hebrew Bible may have been complete in basic form by the end of the Persian period (c. 330 BCE).⁷ Nevertheless, this does not mean that these biblical writings stopped developing at textual and literary levels. Rather, the growing consensus is that Samuel, like most and perhaps all biblical literature, had a long and complex history. Samuel is not early or late, but rather, both early *and* late.

Elsewhere I review scholarship on the textual and literary history of Samuel and I discuss a dozen factors suggesting that the versions of the book known to us are products of a rolling corpus.⁸

⁶ For a recent survey of the textual evidence for the book of Samuel, see R. Rezetko, *Source and Revision in the Narratives of David's Transfer of the Ark: Text, Language and Story in 2 Samuel 6 and 1 Chronicles 13, 15–16* (LHBOTS, 470; London: T&T Clark International, 2007), 31–38.

⁷ L. L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period. Volume 1. Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah* (LSTS, 47; London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 331–43; “The Law, the Prophets, and the Rest: The State of the Bible in Pre-Maccabean Times,” *DSD* 13 (2006), 319–38 (321–27).

⁸ Rezetko, *Source and Revision*, *passim*, especially 7–14, 31–38.

Most arguments relate to MT Samuel's internal shape and content. One of the most compelling pieces of evidence, however, results from close comparison of the book's content and wording in different existing witnesses. These include the MT, Qumran scrolls, Septuagint manuscripts, and others, and also synoptic portions of Chronicles in its own textual traditions. This "polyglot" approach to Samuel enables us to appreciate more fully the final phases of the book's textual and literary development.

So, if the earliest known witnesses to Samuel are evidence for the book's latest compositional stages, then attempts to date the book to the pre-exilic period on the basis of its language face overwhelming obstacles. Elsewhere Young, Ehrensävär, and I look closely at this particular issue, that is, the interface of linguistic analysis with textual and literary approaches to the Hebrew Bible.⁹ The following points are several key ones.

First, the view that biblical books and texts were fluid in the Second Temple period and stabilized only near the end of the first or beginning of the second century CE is hardly dismissible as conjecture. Nevertheless, discussions of the linguistic dating of biblical books regularly consider only MT's language and they take for granted that it corresponds to the language of original biblical compositions.¹⁰ Related to this point, we argue that endeavours to date biblical books or texts should not prioritize the evidence of those books' language over evidence regarding the production and transmission of those same books. A balanced approach to dating biblical *books* involves working with the outcomes of textual, literary, and linguistic analyses.

Second, if Samuel had a long and complex history of development, then any text of this book cannot be taken as witness to the exclusive linguistic profile of written Hebrew in a period narrower than the span of time in which the book was written. In other words, if Samuel, written in EBH, was written, shall we say, from the early monarchic to the late post-monarchic period, then

⁹ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensävär, *Linguistic Dating, passim*, especially 1.63–64, 309–11, 341–60; 2.100–102.

¹⁰ See, for example, A. Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship Between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem* (CahRB, 20; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1982), 18–21; "The Recent Debate on Late Biblical Hebrew: Solid Data, Experts' Opinions, and Inconclusive Arguments," *HS* 47 (2006), 191–210 (210 n. 69).

the book's EBH language as a whole represents written Hebrew in both the monarchic and post-monarchic periods. Conversely, if any text of Samuel is accepted as witness to the exclusive linguistic profile of written Hebrew in, for example, the monarchic period, then one must show that that text either belongs to that period entirely or represents the language of that period only. The first option is unprovable since the earliest extant manuscript evidence for Samuel is the Qumran scrolls. The second possibility is falsifiable since there are post-exilic works which, like Samuel, in their MT forms, show a low accumulation of typical Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH) linguistic features. Examples of such works are Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, and in all probability P in the Pentateuch, Third Isaiah, Joel, certain Psalms, the prose tale of Job, and Ruth.¹¹ Furthermore, Young has argued that the Qumran Peshier Habakkuk, despite dating to the first century BCE, is written in EBH.¹²

4. EARLY BIBLICAL HEBREW AND LATE BIBLICAL HEBREW EACH AS A COHESIVE LINGUISTIC ENTITY

At this point we shall turn a corner and overlook the problem that our earliest manuscript evidence for the Hebrew language of Samuel is the Qumran scrolls. We shall also disregard the likelihood that the earliest witnesses to Samuel are evidence for the latest stages of the book's textual and literary development. Instead, we shall take for granted that MT Samuel's language, in its consonantal framework, is equal on the whole to the language of an original book of Samuel. Based on this assumption, does MT Samuel's linguistic profile confirm that the book was written in a pre-exilic "golden age" of biblical language and literature?

In effect we have answered this question already, since if there are (mostly) undisputed post-exilic works written in EBH, then from a linguistic standpoint Samuel too could have been written in

¹¹ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, *passim*, especially 1.132–41 and the surveys of the language of these books in 1.106–109, 119–29, and 2.11–17, 33–35, 42, 46–56, 58–60, 68. See also I. Young, "Is the Prose Tale of Job in Late Biblical Hebrew?," *VT* (forthcoming).

¹² I. Young, "Late Biblical Hebrew and the Qumran Peshier Habakkuk," *JHS* 8 (2008), Article 25; cf. Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.271–79. The peshier, of course, does contain some of the usual Qumran Hebrew features.

the post-exilic period. All the same, we shall survey this issue from other perspectives. The following remarks focus on problems with EBH and LBH as cohesive linguistic entities, each one in its own right. "EBH" refers mainly to Genesis–Kings whereas "LBH" has reference mostly to Esther–Chronicles.

Biblical Hebrew reflects an astonishing degree of linguistic homogeneity.¹³ Thus, for example, Blau describes archaic, early, and late linguistic layers and says, "Yet, as a rule, the differences between these layers are unexpectedly slight; and Biblical language, though stemming from all parts of Erets Israel over a very long period, is surprisingly uniform..."¹⁴ So, EBH and LBH are largely identical in their linguistic profiles. How are they different? This question is answerable from several angles. For example, Hurvitz argues that LBH is characterized by linguistic mixture, a shifting proportion of traditional (or early) characteristics and innovative (or late) features. The latter, also called neologisms, includes certain linguistic "flavours" that are uncommon or non-existent in EBH, such as late Aramaic influences or Aramaisms, popular Hebrew features or Mishnaisms, and Persian and Hellenistic loanwords and loan-translations. In his view, in any given late book, equivalent EBH and LBH features compete, coexisting peacefully as synonymous expressions, or an LBH item has completely displaced its rival EBH counterpart.¹⁵

Let us simplify this description for the purposes of this essay. First, EBH and LBH may differ from each other because one corpus has more examples of a particular lexical or grammatical feature that *is* found in both corpora. Second, EBH and LBH may differ from each other because one corpus attests a particular lexical or grammatical feature that *is not* found in the other corpus.

¹³ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensävär, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.12–13, 45–48, 345–47.

¹⁴ J. Blau, "The Historical Periods of the Hebrew Language," H. H. Paper (ed.), *Jewish Languages: Theme and Variations* (Cambridge, MA: Association for Jewish Studies, 1978), 1–13 (2); *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Porta Linguarum Orientalium, 12; 2nd edn; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 2; "Hebrew Language and Literature," E. M. Meyers (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* (5 vols; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.5–12 (7).

¹⁵ See the survey of this aspect of Hurvitz's scholarship in Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensävär, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.14–15, 19–20.

Young, Ehrensivärd, and I have included in our book a lengthy table of LBH linguistic features.¹⁶ It includes all lexical and grammatical items cited in a dozen of the most important monographs related to the history of Biblical Hebrew published from 1909 to 2006. Alongside each item, in separate columns, we give page references to these publications, and in addition, next to each LBH lexical item, in a separate column, we list possible EBH counterparts. The table consists of 88 grammatical features and 372 lexical items.

How do the 460 LBH linguistic features in our table map to the two main differences between EBH and LBH that were described above? As for grammatical items, no well-attested LBH grammatical feature appears exclusively in LBH or serves as a clear-cut substitute for a feature that is found regularly in EBH only. In other words, these features are found in EBH but they occur more frequently in LBH. Remarks by Rabin, Eskhult, and Ehrensivärd validate this finding.¹⁷ Turning to the much larger number of lexical features, only ten items that are well-attested in LBH, occurring ten times or more, do not appear in EBH. These include **אגרת** (“letter”), **בזה** (“spoil”), **בירה** (“palace”), **יקר** (“honour”), **כתב** (“letter”), **מצלתיים** (“cymbals”), and several others. If we include many items that occur only one to nine times in LBH and not in EBH, we find that most occur only several times and then in only one or few LBH books, and in most cases the lexeme itself occurs in EBH or even LBH in a different stem, meaning, referent, or syntagm. Furthermore, most LBH lexical features do not replace their EBH counterparts, which also appear in LBH books, and most LBH lexical features are undoubtedly not late in the absolute sense. I shall end this sketch here. In short, EBH and LBH differ from each other mainly in the degree to which they exhibit the same fea-

¹⁶ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensivärd, *Linguistic Dating*, 2.160–214.

¹⁷ C. Rabin, “Hebrew,” E. L. Sukenik *et al.* (eds), *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (9 vols; Jerusalem: Bialik, 1950–88 [1971]; Hebrew), vol. 6, cols. 51–73 (70); M. Eskhult, *Studies in Verbal Aspect and Narrative Technique in Biblical Hebrew Prose* (AAUSSU, 12; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1990), 14, 119; M. Ehrensivärd, “Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts,” I. Young (ed.), *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology* (JSOTSup, 369; London: T&T Clark International, 2003), 164–88 (168 n. 18).

tures, or stated differently, the difference is one of tendency, statistical divergence, or rate of accumulation.¹⁸

We shall now look at several other major problems with attempts to date biblical texts linguistically. A first problem is *overestimation of linguistic contrast* between books written in EBH and LBH. In practice this often means that the number of typical LBH features regularly found in EBH books is underestimated. This is true for MT Samuel. Discussions like Rofé's of 1 Samuel 17 and Ehrens-värd's of 1 Samuel 1–2 have highlighted an unexpected number of characteristic LBH features in particular chapters.¹⁹ Driver also mentions many 'non-Classical' linguistic items in MT Samuel, regardless of one's view on his explanations.²⁰ In fact, a closer look shows that many chapters in Samuel have a surprising accumulation of typical LBH lexical and grammatical features.²¹ Consider, for example, MT 2 Samuel 6:²²

¹⁸ More detailed discussion of the issues mentioned in this paragraph can be found in Young, Rezetko, and Ehrens-värd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.111–19.

¹⁹ A. Rofé, "The Battle of David and Goliath: Folklore, Theology, Eschatology," J. Neusner, B. A. Levine, and E. S. Frerichs (eds), *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 117–51 (128–31); Ehrens-värd, "Linguistic Dating," 184–85.

²⁰ S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel: With an Introduction on Hebrew Palaeography and the Ancient Versions, and Facsimiles of Inscriptions and Maps* (2nd edn; Oxford: Clarendon, 1913). One of many linguistic features discussed by Driver, שָׁל in MT 2 Sam 6:7, is mentioned below.

²¹ For other examples see the lists and discussions of features in 1 Sam 13:1–14:9 and 2 Sam 6:1–7:12 and 22:1–51 which are given in Young, Rezetko, and Ehrens-värd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.103–105, 134, 135, as well as remarks on Samuel in the chapter of case studies in 2.106–59 and in the examples given in R. Rezetko, "Dating Biblical Hebrew: Evidence from Samuel–Kings and Chronicles," I. Young (ed.), *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology* (JSOTSup, 369; London: T&T Clark International, 2003), 215–50 (221–38). I have begun a long-term project on Samuel in which I will thoroughly document all "late" language in this book.

²² For complete discussions of the features mentioned here see Rezetko, *Source and Revision, passim* (see the master list on p. 77 n. 155). In the brief discussion that follows I do not give text-critical data nor differentiate primary and secondary LBH features in MT 2 Samuel 6. As mentioned above (section 3 with n. 10), an MT-only approach is advocated by

LBH features known to EBH but found more often in LBH:

Confusion in the use of prepositions **אל** and **על** (see **אל-עגלה** v 3); **אל-ארון** (v 6; disputable, but see the versions); **על-עיר** (v 10).²³

Wegatalti in place of *wayyiqtol*: **והיה** (v 16); **ושחקתי** (v 21).²⁴

Periphrastic **היה** + participle: **והיה...בא** (v 16).²⁵

ל in place of **את** for expression of the direct object: **ותבו לו** (v 16).²⁶

most proponents of the chronological model of EBH and LBH. This means, for the purpose of linguistic analysis, that LBH features in EBH books should be taken as original to those texts. Note, for example, the following comment by Hurvitz: “I *Textual Criticism* Our study is based upon MT (= Massoretic Text) as we have it today....II *Source-Critical Analysis* As in the case of the above reservation, here too we avoid basing our discussion on reconstructed texts,...To sum up: *in the framework of this discussion* [of the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel] *we seek to deal exclusively with biblical texts in the way in which they have crystallized and in the form in which they now stand—regardless of textual alterations, literary developments and editorial activities which they may or may not have undergone during their long transmission*” (Hurvitz, *Linguistic Study*, 19–21).

²³ M. F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition: The Language of the Book of Ezekiel* (JSOTSup, 90; Sheffield: JSOT, 1990), 127–31; A. Sáenz Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (trans. J. Elwolde; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 117, 120, 138, 143. In this and the following half-dozen notes I shall only cite this pair of authors regarding the “lateness” of the particular linguistic feature mentioned.

²⁴ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 100–102; A. Sáenz Badillos, *History of Hebrew*, 120, 123–24, 129, 144. For a past rather than future reading of **ושחקתי** in v 21 see NRSV; J. P. Fokkerman, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel: A Full Interpretation Based on Stylistic and Structural Analyses. Volume 3. Throne and City (II Sam. 2–8 & 21–24)* (SSN, 27; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990), 380; Rezetko, *Source and Revision*, 250–51.

²⁵ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 108–10; Sáenz Badillos, *History of Hebrew*, 121, 127, 129, 144.

²⁶ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 97–99; Sáenz Badillos, *History of Hebrew*, 120. Note that Polzin cites only (!) the parallel instance in 1 Chr 15:29 as LBH (R. Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* [HSM, 12; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1976], 65).

Masculine plural suffix for feminine (gender incongruence or neutralization): האמהות...עמם (v 22).²⁷

Additional selected observations:

Verb + pronominal suffix in place of verb + את + pronominal suffix is thought to increase in LBH. We find verb + pronominal suffix in vv 3, 4, 7, 10, and verb + את + pronominal suffix in vv 17, 21.²⁸

The double plural construct-chain is considered a characteristic of LBH. However, usage suggests that עצי ברושים in v 5 is a doubtful example since the plural *nomen rectum* is standard in this phrase and in most others with עצי.²⁹

The noun צלצלים in v 5 occurs elsewhere only in Ps 150:5 (twice). This doxology at the end of the Psalter is often considered post-exilic.³⁰

Driver remarks on the noun של in v 7: “שלה is a very rare root in Hebrew...השל here is commonly...explained from this root ‘because of the error:’ but (1) שלה is scarcely a pure Hebrew word: where it occurs, it is either dialectical (2 Ki. 4) or late (2 Ch.); so that its appearance in early Hebrew is unexpected; (2) the unusual apocopated form (של for שלי) excites suspicion.”³¹

We should emphasize that if some, most, or all of these features are really late absolutely, as scholars often assert, then we should conclude that Samuel’s story is itself late. Conversely, if these features are not really late absolutely, then we should not call them late when they appear, even if more frequently, in undisputed post-

²⁷ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 78–81; Sáenz Badillos, *History of Hebrew*, 119.

²⁸ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 86–87; Sáenz Badillos, *History of Hebrew*, 119, 126, 145.

²⁹ Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew*, 75–77; Sáenz Badillos, *History of Hebrew*, 117–18.

³⁰ See, for example, A. A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms. Volume 2. Psalms 73–150* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 955; H.-J. Kraus, *Psalms 60–150: A Continental Commentary* (trans. of 1989 edn. by H. C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 570.

³¹ S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text*, 267–68.

exilic books. Also, by the way, another interesting observation is that a mapping of common nouns, adjectives, and verbs in Samuel to the rest of the Bible shows that Samuel shares five times more distinctive lexemes with the Latter Prophets and Writings than with the Pentateuch and the rest of the Former Prophets, but this is a discussion for another occasion.

A second problem is *overestimation of linguistic uniformity* in EBH books on the one hand and in LBH books on the other. I shall illustrate this problem, and also the previous one, by summarizing three grammatical issues. Complete discussions of these examples and dozens more appear in mine, Young's, and Ehrensverd's book. I have chosen these particular examples because they illustrate the issues at hand and because they are upheld as clear illustrations of EBH versus LBH, i.e. 'early' BH and 'late' BH, in recent issues of the journal *Hebrew Studies*, in which scholars debate linguistic development in Biblical Hebrew.

Eskhult, following in others' footsteps, says regarding LBH, "The *infinitive absolute* for command is totally avoided."³² This absence is often connected to other trends in the use or non-use of infinitives absolute in biblical and post-Biblical Hebrew. We have found 61 cases of imperatival infinitives absolute in Biblical Hebrew. First, more than half of all biblical books lack imperatival infinitives absolute. This includes most undisputed post-exilic books. Undoubtedly this observation has led scholars to think that the feature declines in post-exilic Biblical Hebrew. However, Judges, and most prophetic books usually considered pre-exilic, also lack this feature, despite the fact that these books have many imperatives proper. Second, in books with imperatival infinitives absolute, there is possibly a single example in each of the undisputed post-exilic books of Zechariah and Nehemiah, and also in Qoheleth, a book dated by many scholars to the post-exilic period. Some dispute these examples, but a recent Ph.D. thesis by Callahan, which examines all infinitives absolute in Biblical Hebrew from a formal linguistic perspective, accepts these as legitimate ex-

³² M. Eskhult, "Verbal Syntax in Late Biblical Hebrew," T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde (eds), *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (STDJ, 36; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 84–93 (90); cf. J. Joosten, "The Distinction Between Classical and Late Biblical Hebrew as Reflected in Syntax," *HS* 46 (2005), 327–39 (336).

amples.³³ Likewise, we find only one example in each of Genesis, Leviticus, Joshua, Amos, Nahum, and also, to our surprise, Samuel. Third, turning to books with more than one imperative infinitive absolute, we find that Jeremiah and Ezekiel, generally dated near the Exile, have the highest number of cases in biblical literature. This is surprising since if, as the chronological theory asserts, this feature disappears over time, then we might expect these books to have fewer examples than EBH books. This is not the case. Space prevents me from reflecting on other related issues such as frequency of imperative infinitives absolute compared to total imperatives proper, distribution in pentateuchal sources, two cases only in synoptic Samuel–Kings and Chronicles, and text-critical evidence for interchanges between imperative infinitives absolute and imperatives proper. In short, it is impossible to fit the standard diachronic view to the full extent of the biblical data.³⁴

Joosten argues that “in Late Biblical Hebrew the different [verb] forms are used promiscuously. This explains the use of *wetiqtol* in Late Biblical Hebrew. Second person non-volitive modal verbal forms preceded by *waw* may, in Late Biblical Hebrew, turn up as *wegatal*, as would be normal in Classical Biblical Hebrew, but also as *wetiqtol*...In volitive statements, *waw* + second person may, in Late Biblical Hebrew, turn up as *waw* + imperative, in accord with Classical Biblical Hebrew usage, but Late Biblical Hebrew may also use *wetiqtol*...”³⁵ *Waw* + second person *yiqtol* appears nine times in core EBH and LBH books. In EBH we find it twice, once in Exodus, and once in Numbers according to the MT. In LBH we find the form seven times, four times in two verses in Daniel and three times in two verses in Chronicles. In addition, three other examples should be excluded on the grounds of genre: one in Exodus, which Joosten also excludes, one in Kings, which he does not mention, and one in Nehemiah, which he includes but we argue that it should be excluded. Either way our argument is unaffected. What should we make of this data? First, *wetiqtol* is not a late feature, as Joosten also points out. Second, *wetiqtol* is a marginal phe-

³³ S. N. Callaham, “The Modality of the Verbal Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew” (Ph.D. thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006).

³⁴ For a detailed treatment of this linguistic issue see Young, Rezetko, and M. Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 2.128–32.

³⁵ Joosten, “Distinction Between,” 333–34; cf. 330–36.

nomenon in both EBH and LBH. Thus, for example, Chronicles has nearly 90 mostly non-synoptic cases of second person *weqatalti* and *waw* + imperative as opposed to three instances in two verses of *wetiqtol*. Third, many disputed and core post-exilic books have second person *weqatalti* and/or *waw* + imperative but they have no cases of *wetiqtol*. This is true for Joel, Jonah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Ruth, Song of Songs, and Qoheleth, but we shall overlook these since one could claim that they are disputed in date and/or poetic in character. These claims, however, are not pertinent to Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah, which have more than 20 cases of second person *weqatalti* and *waw* + imperative yet they do not have even a single example of *wetiqtol* in their place. Therefore, we conclude that Joosten is mistaken to call *wetiqtol* a feature of “the Late Biblical Hebrew corpus.” To the contrary, it is an unconventional alternative construction in two LBH books just as it is in two EBH books. We must contextualize this: If the absence of *wetiqtol* from Genesis and Samuel is related to chronology then what about its non-appearance also in Esther and Ezra?³⁶

Finally, I wish to remark briefly on Polak’s research on Biblical Hebrew stylistics.³⁷ Polak’s publications have made a major contribution to the way we should perceive different styles in biblical compositions. Furthermore, his analysis is doubtlessly the most sophisticated assembly of data in favour of mostly traditional datings of biblical books. He calls attention to four independent parameters that, he argues, converge to support a thesis of linguistic development from EBH to LBH: first, differences between an earlier oral-like rhythmic-verbal style and a later “writerly”-type complex-nominal style; second, shifts in certain aspects of the lexical register from EBH to LBH, related to epic formulas, certain verb lexemes, and references to writing; third, the presence of late lexical and grammatical features in LBH writings; and fourth, correlations between his findings and extra-biblical sources. His analysis of

³⁶ For related discussion of *wetiqtol* and *weqatalti* see Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 2.141–49.

³⁷ Several of his recent publications dealing with this topic are F. H. Polak, “Sociolinguistics and the Judean Speech Community in the Achaemenid Empire,” O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp (eds), *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 589–628; “Sociolinguistics: A Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Tradition,” *HS* 47 (2006), 115–62.

these factors leads to four more-or-less chronologically successive Biblical Hebrew classes or styles: classical style, transitional classical style, late pre-exilic and exilic style, and post-exilic style. Polak's hypothesis is challenging to appreciate in its breadth of details and certainly more demanding to refute. Even so, Young, Ehrensivärd, and I have given it our best effort in our book.³⁸ We conclude that Polak has indeed discovered that certain biblical narratives have an oral style that is closer to speech than writing, but in our view the lower level of syntactic complexity in these narratives is an issue of synchronic style rather than diachronic change.

Space permits me to summarize only one of six aspects of our critique: the distribution in biblical sources of certain noun-verb and nominal-finite verb ratios, which are indirect indicators of tendency toward subordination. We have put together a sortable table of more than 200 noun-verb and nominal-finite verb ratios for particular pericopes, chapters, and sections of biblical prose and poetry. Many of these figures were published by Polak. We think the sum of his statistics undermines the claim that there is a clear division between pre-exilic and post-exilic narratives. For example, he finds low noun-verb ratios in Jonah, the prophetic prose of Zechariah, the prose tale of Job, Ruth, and the memoirs of Nehemiah. We are dissatisfied with his explanations for the unexpected low ratios in these post-exilic books. For instance, in the cases of Zechariah, Job, and Nehemiah, he suggests that elevated nominal-finite verb ratios counteract the low noun-verb ratios. However, in all three cases these nominal-finite verb ratios are lower, albeit only slightly, than his typical figure of 30% or greater for post-exilic books. More significantly, some pre-exilic and exilic samples, such as Judges 17–21, have noun-verb and nominal-finite verb ratios that are close to those found in these three post-exilic books. In addition, the argument that in post-exilic texts a high nominal-finite verb ratio mitigates a low noun-verb ratio is debatable, since not all post-exilic texts have high nominal-finite verb ratios. For example, Joshua 4, which fits in Polak's transitional classical style, has a noun-verb ratio of 74% and a nominal-finite verb ratio of 17%. But, non-synoptic 2 Chronicles 14–15, which has a lower proportion of discourse than Joshua 4, has a comparable noun-verb ratio

³⁸ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensivärd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.32–37, 95–102; 2.80–83.

of 73% but a lower nominal-finite verb ratio of 12%. Another interesting case is the priestly corpus (or stratum) in the Pentateuch. Polak's stylistic analysis suggests that it developed from the eighth century into the Persian era and that H preceded P. Yet the lexical and thematic research undertaken by Hurvitz and Milgrom suggests that the priestly corpus was complete prior to the time of the prophet Ezekiel and that P preceded H. Finally, to finish up with Samuel, Polak argues that the narratives in this book reflect the classical style which he dates to the late tenth through early eighth century BCE. This conclusion is based on the parameters described above, including low noun-verb and nominal-finite verb ratios. We find his view difficult to sustain from literary-critical and text-critical standpoints. Furthermore, we have pinpointed chapters in Samuel, and in other EBH books, in which the ratios and syntactic complexity fit better with his post-exilic samples. Compare, for example, 2 Samuel 6 and non-synoptic 2 Chronicles 29, chapters with similar prose-discourse ratios, and both with noun-verb ratios of 75% and nominal-finite verb ratios of 20–21%. To sum up, Polak's fascinating discovery regarding style does not convert smoothly into a clear-cut chronological scheme.

5. CONCLUSION

Space keeps me from addressing other significant issues such as the interface between an EBH linguistic profile and evidence of late editorial shaping in Samuel, or text-critical and synoptic evidence for scribal intervention in Samuel's language.³⁹ Let us return then to the title of this essay: What happened to Samuel in the Persian period and beyond? This question is only answerable on textual and literary and other grounds. My focus here has been Samuel's language. On this basis, that the book or its constituent parts were wholly written or radically edited in the post-exilic period, are possibilities that Samuel's (EBH) linguistic profile is *not* capable of disproving. In conclusion, Samuel's language should not be cited as an obstacle to arguments that the writing of the entire book or major sections therein (e.g. the so-called "Succession Narrative" or "Court History") post-date the collapse of the Davidic monarchy.⁴⁰

³⁹ These matters receive attention in Rezetko, *Source and Revision*, and Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*.

⁴⁰ For proponents of such views, which are increasingly common and

considered credible within the guild, see the discussions of Samuel and the Deuteronomistic History in Rezetko, *Source and Revision*, 7–14, and Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 2.18–23.

WHAT IS 'LATE BIBLICAL HEBREW'?

IAN YOUNG

1. COMPETING MODELS: CHRONOLOGICAL AND STYLISTIC

The dominant explanation for linguistic variation in Biblical Hebrew (BH) among scholars of the Hebrew language has been chronology. The consensus view has held that BH can be divided into at least two discrete historical periods, which we shall here call Early Biblical Hebrew (EBH) and Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH). EBH, according to the most widely held view, is the language of the pre-exilic or monarchic period, down to the fall of the kingdom of Judah to the Babylonians in 586 BCE. The exile in the sixth century BCE marks a transitional period, the great watershed in the history of BH. After the return from exile in the late sixth century BCE, we have the era of LBH.¹ Thus, EBH developed into LBH. Biblical texts can, therefore be dated on linguistic grounds because LBH was not written early, nor did EBH continue to be written after the transition to LBH.

¹ Major studies representing this view include A. Hurvitz, *The Transition Period in Biblical Hebrew: A Study of Post-Exilic Hebrew and its Implications for the Dating of Psalms* (Hebrew; Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1972); A. Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem* (CahRB, 20; Paris: Gabalda, 1982); M. F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition: The Language of the Book of Ezekiel* (JSOTSup, 90; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); R. M. Wright, *Linguistic Evidence for the Pre-exilic Date of the Yahwistic Source* (LHBOTS, 419; London/ New York: T. & T. Clark, 2005); and the articles comprising the first half of I. Young, ed., *Biblical Hebrew Studies in Chronology and Typology* (JSOTSup, 369; London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2003).

The chronological view of BH has in recent decades been most clearly presented and developed by the great Israeli scholar, Avi Hurvitz.² In contrast to this chronological approach, a new approach has been emerging over the past few years, which argues that EBH and LBH are styles which co-existed for much, if not all, of the biblical period.³ Although it might at first glance appear that the new paradigm is a rejection of Hurvitz's theories, closer inspection reveals that this is not so. Most of the elements of Hurvitz's *system* are accepted by proponents of the new model. Thus, for example, Hurvitz's demonstration that the appearance of "Aramaisms" in BH works has no inherent chronological meaning is clearly a major advance over much earlier (and later!) scholarship,⁴ as is his discovery that the language of Ezekiel has more in common with LBH than other prophetic books.⁵ Most importantly,

² See for example the major works cited in the previous note. A detailed discussion of the work of Hurvitz and a full bibliography of his publications can be found in I. Young, R. Rezetko, and M. Ehrens-värd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts Volume 1: An Introduction to Approaches and Problems; Volume 2: A Survey of Scholarship, a New Synthesis and a Comprehensive Bibliography* (Bible World; London: Equinox, 2008), 1.12–23; 2.242–45.

³ P. R. Davies, "Biblical Hebrew and the History of Ancient Judah: Typology, Chronology and Common Sense"; M. Ehrens-värd, "Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts"; R. Rezetko, "Dating Biblical Hebrew: Evidence from Samuel-Kings"; I. Young, "Late Biblical Hebrew and Hebrew Inscriptions," I. Young, *Biblical Hebrew Studies in Chronology and Typology*, 150–63, 164–88, 215–50, and 276–311 respectively; and J. Naudé, "A Perspective on the Chronological Framework of Biblical Hebrew," *JNSL* 30 (2004), 87–102 represent early steps in this direction. I. Young, "Biblical Texts Cannot be Dated Linguistically," *HS* 46 (2005), 341–51; M. Ehrens-värd, "Why Biblical Texts Cannot be Dated Linguistically," *HS* 47 (2006), 177–89; R. Rezetko, "'Late' Common Nouns in the Book of Chronicles," R. Rezetko, T. H. Lim, and W. B. Aucker (eds), *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A. Graeme Auld* (VTSup, 113; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 379–417; and especially Young, Rezetko, and Ehrens-värd, *Linguistic Dating*, represent a more developed approach.

⁴ A. Hurvitz, "The Chronological Significance of 'Aramaisms' in Biblical Hebrew," *IEJ* 18 (1968), 234–40; A. Hurvitz, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the Biblical Period: The Problem of 'Aramaisms' in Linguistic Research on the Hebrew Bible," I. Young, *Biblical Hebrew Studies in Chronology and Typology*, 24–37.

⁵ Hurvitz, *Ezekiel*.

Hurvitz has established sounder methodological principles for describing linguistic relationships between biblical books. Hurvitz did not, however, invent the idea of a chronological division between early and late Hebrew. It is clear that he inherited this idea from earlier scholarship. However, he has remained content to see his own scholarly contributions in the old, chronological framework. I would suggest that the new paradigm is an outgrowth of the rigorous application of Hurvitz's own principles, which leads, however, to a breaking of the old chronological model.

As I mentioned, one of Hurvitz's most important contributions to scholarship is his insistence on a careful methodology.⁶ For an individual linguistic item to be considered characteristic of LBH it must have a *distribution* among the core LBH books of Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles. Hurvitz's basic starting point, which I think is uncontroversial, is that these books are post-exilic and therefore their language represents samples of post-exilic Hebrew. The other key element in Hurvitz's methodology is that not only must the linguistic element be evidenced in the LBH books, it must exhibit a *linguistic opposition*; in other words it must be used in the same contexts as other forms in the core EBH books, especially the Pentateuch and Joshua-Kings. This crucial step ensures that we really do have variant language, not just linguistic forms that had no opportunity to appear in EBH books. Hurvitz has a third criterion, *external attestation*, which tries to demonstrate that the form really is late by finding whether it occurs in late, mostly post-biblical Hebrew and Aramaic. This last criterion, however, promises more than it delivers. Given that the overwhelming majority of extra-biblical Hebrew and Aramaic dates to the post-exilic period or later it is virtually inevitable that BH linguistic forms—late or otherwise—will be attested in "late" extra-biblical sources. I believe, in any case that the excellent criteria of distribution and opposition are enough to demonstrate that a form is characteristic of the core LBH books.

Hurvitz and I therefore share the same starting point. Hurvitz's basic presupposition is that the core LBH books of Esther,

⁶ For the criteria discussed here, see the references to Hurvitz's work in note 1, and add A. Hurvitz, "Linguistic Criteria for Dating Problematic Biblical Texts," *Hebrew Abstracts* 14 (1973), 74–79. A detailed introduction to Hurvitz's methodology can be found in Young, Rezetko, and Ehrens-värd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.12–23.

Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles faithfully reflect post-exilic Hebrew. This is a faultless presupposition, given the evident dates of all these texts based on their internal references to at least the beginning of the Persian period. I also accept that there are a number of significant links between the language of each of the core LBH books, as established by earlier research on LBH. It *is* possible, of course, that the presupposition of a link between the books has led scholarship to focus on finding such links, and that if scholars had expended the same amount of energy on finding links between, say, Chronicles and Jeremiah, they would have found just as many. However, while this possibility must be seriously considered by future scholarship, I am willing to say that I believe that there is a special linguistic relationship between the core LBH books. Thus, as a starting point, I do believe that LBH exists, in the sense of referring to the specific linguistic features of the core LBH books.

Hurvitz and I travel together on to the next point too, although our paths will shortly part. If we may make a crude division, there are three categories of biblical books linguistically. First, the core LBH books we have discussed. Second, there are the books that are considered to be the primary representatives of EBH, what I would call the core EBH texts. Examples in this category are the Pentateuch or Joshua-Kings. Third, there are the other books which are neither core EBH nor core LBH, but may turn out later to have a linguistic relationship with one of these groups, like Ezekiel or Job. Hurvitz and I both agree that characteristic features of LBH are not only found in this third group of texts, but in fact LBH linguistic items are found in core EBH texts. Thus, for example, the form מְלָכוּת “kingdom” is clearly a characteristic of LBH. It occurs 91 times in the Hebrew Bible, 78 of them in the core LBH books, and a further six times in LBH-related psalms and Qoheleth. So it has a very strong LBH distribution, and an impeccable linguistic contrast with other BH words for “kingdom” like מַמְלָכָה. Yet, still, the remaining 7 of those 91 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible are found in EBH texts like Samuel and Kings.⁷ It is the phenomenon of the appearance of LBH linguistic items in EBH texts that leads to Hurvitz’s final and most important criterion when it comes to dating texts: *accumulation*. This states that a text can only

⁷ Num 24:7; 1 Sam 20:31; 1 Kgs 2:12; Jer 10:7; 49:34; 52:31; Ps 45:7.

be considered LBH if it exhibits an "accumulation" of LBH features, identified using the above criteria of distribution and linguistic contrast.

Here Hurvitz and I part ways. It seems to me that Hurvitz has not adequately come to terms with the results his own methods have produced. In particular I think it is evident that Hurvitz has underestimated the amount of LBH in EBH texts. Further, he has overestimated the linguistic contrast between EBH and LBH. It is in fact the case that only a very small number of well-attested LBH linguistic items do not also occur in core EBH texts.⁸

In regard to the amount of LBH in core EBH texts, we come to the problem that no one has specified how much of an accumulation is necessary for a text to be considered LBH, nor how such an accumulation should be measured. I note, however, that in his study on the Prose Tale of Job, Hurvitz considered the appearance of seven LBH linguistic items in 749 words of text enough of an accumulation to indicate a post-exilic date for the Prose Tale.⁹

In response to this problem, in collaboration with Robert Rezetko and Martin Ehrensverd, I developed a simple test of accumulation. Plainly put, this counts how many different LBH features occur in a given stretch of text. Where possible, this stretch of text will be of 500 words length, or to be more precise 500 Hebrew graphic units, so that samples will be comparable. Within this sample I count how many different LBH features there are. I do not count repetitions of the same feature since once an author has demonstrated the possibility of using a particular LBH form, there is no reason why it cannot be repeated as often as the opportunity presents itself.¹⁰

⁸ For detailed substantiation of this important fact see Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.83–87, 111–19.

⁹ A. Hurvitz, "The Date of the Prose-Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered," *HTR* 67 (1974), 17–34 (32).

¹⁰ For more on the methodology, see Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.130–31.

LBH Features in BH Texts in 500 Word Samples¹¹ (Descending Order)

| Text | Number of LBH Features | |
|--|------------------------|--|
| Ezra 1:1–11; 9:1–10:29 | 25 | |
| Daniel 1:1–20; 11:44–12:13 | 24 | |
| 2 Chronicles 30:1–31:4 | 22 | |
| Nehemiah 1:1–2:17 | 20 | |
| Esther 5:1–6:13a | 17 | |
| Qoheleth 1:1–2:9; 6:1–12 | 15 | |
| Temple Scroll (11Q ^{Ta}) 57:7–59:21 | 13 | |
| Damascus Document | 12 | |
| Arad Ostraca | 9 | |
| Community Rule (1QS) 1:1–3:2 | 9 | |
| War Scroll (1QM) 1:1–2:11a; 2:16–3:6 | 9 | |
| 1 KINGS 22:6–34 | 8 | |
| Ezekiel 18:1–19:3 | 7 | |
| Ben Sira 41:2–44:4 | 7 | |
| 1 SAMUEL 13:1–14:9 | 6 | |
| 2 SAMUEL 6:1–7:8 | 6 | |
| 1 KINGS 2:1–29 | 6 | |
| Joel 1:1–2:19 | 6 | |
| 2 SAMUEL 22:1–51 | 6 (7.9) ¹² | |
| PSALM 18:1–51 | 6 (7.6) ¹³ | |
| Job 1:1–2:11a | 6 | |
| Pesher Habakkuk 5:3–12:13 | 6 | |
| HABAKKUK 1:1–3:4 | 5 | |
| GENESIS 24:1–36 (J) | 4 | |
| Ben Sira 41:13–44:17 | 4 | |
| Zechariah 1:1–3:1a | 3 | |
| EXODUS 6:2–12; 7:1–13; 9:8–12; 12:1–7b(P) | 1 | |

KEY

Core LBH in bold:
**Esther, Daniel, Ezra,
Nehemiah, and Chronicles**

Core EBH in caps and bold:
**PENTATEUCH, JOSHUA-
KINGS, “PRE-EXILIC”
PROPHETS AND PSALMS**

¹¹ Data from Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensward, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.129–36, which includes full documentation of all the LBH forms counted, as well as additional samples from synoptic Chronicles. As indicated there, the passages were chosen somewhat at random. An important factor in the choice was the presence of long stretches of text free of uncongenial material such as lists. We sampled each of the core LBH books, and included at least one sample from each of the core EBH elements, i.e. sources of the Pentateuch, books of the Deuteronomistic History, EBH prophets, and EBH poetry.

¹² Since 2 Samuel 22 contains only 382 words, the figure in parentheses gives the projected number of LBH features in a 500 word sample.

¹³ Since Psalm 18 contains only 394 words, the figure in parentheses gives the projected number of LBH features in a 500 word sample.

The table is very clear. The first surprise is that *every* sample done so far includes LBH features. The only difference is the degree of accumulation of them. The core EBH and core LBH books are at different ends of the scale in terms of the amount of accumulation of these LBH features. Thus, while the highest core EBH sample, 1 Kings 22, has eight different LBH features, the lowest LBH sample, Esther 5–6 has 17, more than twice as many as 1 Kings 22, while all the other core LBH samples have yet higher numbers of LBH features.

A basic contention of Hurvitz's methodology is therefore vindicated. The primary characteristic of EBH books that marks them apart from the core LBH books is a relatively low accumulation of LBH linguistic features. However, Hurvitz's chronological interpretation, seeing accumulation as reflecting pre-exilic as opposed to post-exilic Hebrew, does not adequately comprehend the data. From the table above it will be evident that such a low accumulation as is found in core EBH books is a characteristic also of works doubtless composed in the post-exilic period. Zechariah 1–8 is, according to the biblical text, a prophet of the early post-exilic period. Joel too is often seen as post-exilic. Even more surprising in light of the expectations created by the chronological approach is the low number of LBH links in Ben Sira from the second century BCE and in the Qumran Peshier Habakkuk from the first century BCE. Thus far, in fact, as can be seen, a non-biblical work at Qumran with a LBH-like accumulation of LBH features has not been found.

Thus while Hurvitz is perfectly correct to describe LBH as post-exilic Hebrew, he is incorrect to imply that it was the *only* sort of post-exilic Hebrew. Now that we have arrived at a clearer definition of EBH and LBH, we can see that EBH was also a style of Hebrew in the post-exilic period.

At this point it is appropriate to reflect on the way Hurvitz and I differ in regard to basic terminology. When Hurvitz refers to LBH, he means straightforwardly "Late" BH. When he refers to a LBH linguistic feature, he means it is a chronologically late linguistic development. When he talks of "Early" or "Late" BH texts, he means that those texts' language dates them to the pre-exilic (EBH) or post-exilic (LBH) eras.

I argue that the evidence undermines these chronological assumptions. First, in regard to linguistic features, how can linguistic forms that appear in "Early" BH texts still be labelled as LBH? As

we have seen, very few well-attested LBH linguistic forms are not also attested in EBH texts.¹⁴ If they are genuinely late, then all these EBH texts are also late. If the linguistic features are not actually late, their appearance and the frequency of their appearance in various literary Hebrew texts must be a question of the stylistic choice of the author, rather than related to chronology. We must constantly bear in mind that we are dealing with literary Hebrew when looking at biblical texts. We are not dealing with a natural language, developing organically over time as natural languages normally do. Rather, we are dealing with various scribal renditions of a high literary dialect whose relationship with contemporary forms of spoken Hebrew is indirect at best.¹⁵

But could these LBH linguistic forms in EBH texts not just be the result of later scribal reworking of the texts? Hurvitz himself insists that we must deal with the texts as they now stand,¹⁶ but the question must be faced. The first part of the answer is that yes, the linguistic profiles of the current texts have been shaped by later scribal work.¹⁷ Yet this textual uncertainty causes much greater problems for a chronological rather than a stylistic interpretation of the evidence. For, in regard to chronology, the evidence of textual change makes the argument that the linguistic profiles of the current texts are evidence of the original language, and hence date, of those texts rather tenuous. On the contrary, if two texts of the same book have different linguistic profiles—like the EBH MT form of Isaiah and its more LBH form in the Qumran 1QIsa^a¹⁸—this rather strongly shows that the accumulations of so-called LBH forms in the book are due to the different stylistic tastes of scribes as well as authors, rather than evidence of the date of that text's composition.

The second part of the answer to the question whether all the LBH forms in EBH texts could be later additions is that despite the undoubted linguistic changes due to scribal transmission in our

¹⁴ See above, note 8.

¹⁵ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 2.94–96.

¹⁶ E.g. Hurvitz, *Ezekiel*, 19.

¹⁷ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.341–60; 2.100–101, with references to earlier studies.

¹⁸ E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll* (1QIsa^a) (STDJ, 6; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974); see also 4QCant^b: I. Young, "Notes on the Language of 4QCant^b," *JJS* 52 (2001), 122–31.

texts, we have objective evidence of the presence of LBH linguistic elements in the monarchic period. A surprisingly large number of so-called LBH forms have been found in pre-exilic inscriptions.¹⁹ In fact, in the table above, it can be seen that the pre-exilic Arad ostraca have more LBH items than any core EBH text sampled, and more than several extra-biblical texts from very late in the Second Temple period such as Ben Sira and the Qumran Peshar Habakkuk. LBH forms were available to be used in an early period, and yet even in a chronologically late period some authors and scribes chose to write in a style that generally avoided using them.

LBH is thus not simply post-exilic Hebrew. It is *one* sort of BH in the post-exilic period alongside EBH. Both EBH and LBH use the same linguistic forms, just to different degrees. Rather than a linear progression model, which is incompatible with the evidence, a better model sees LBH as merely one style of Hebrew in the Second Temple and quite possibly First Temple periods. Like LBH, EBH is a style with roots in pre-exilic Hebrew, which continues throughout the post-exilic period. These two general language types, EBH and LBH, are best taken as representing two tendencies among scribes of the biblical period: conservative and non-conservative. The authors and scribes who composed and transmitted works in EBH exhibit a tendency to conservatism in their linguistic choices, only rarely using forms outside a narrow core of what they considered literary forms.²⁰ At the other extreme, the LBH authors and scribes exhibited a much less conservative attitude, freely adopting a variety of linguistic forms in addition to (not generally instead of) those favoured by the EBH scribes. Between extreme conservatism (e.g. Zechariah 1–8) and extreme openness to variety (e.g. Ezra), there was probably a continuum into which other writings may be placed (e.g. the Temple Scroll, Ezekiel).

¹⁹ Young, "Hebrew Inscriptions"; Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.143–72.

²⁰ We stress that we use "conservative" here in the sense of "moderate, cautious, avoiding extremes" rather than conservatism in the sense of favouring an older style. EBH may or may not be an older style, but the evidence currently to hand indicates the likelihood that both the conservative and non-conservative styles co-existed throughout the period of the composition of the biblical literature.

2. WHAT IS LATE BIBLICAL HEBREW?

LBH is therefore one style of BH. It is best attested in the post-exilic period since it is best exemplified by the core LBH books of Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Previously the question of why these books were written in this sort of Hebrew was easy to answer. They were written in LBH since this was the only sort of Hebrew in the post-exilic period. Even when trying to write "pure classical Hebrew," authors in the post-exilic period inevitably failed, leaving tell-tale traces of their actual date in the form of LBH linguistic items. We have seen that this argument cannot work except insofar as it leads to the conclusion that *all* the biblical texts were written in the post-exilic period, since all BH texts contain LBH linguistic features. The model of the author who tries to write Classical Hebrew but does not avoid traces of LBH seems to me to be a good description of the EBH authors who, we recall, are distinguished from the LBH authors merely by the lesser degree they use LBH linguistic items. Such a late dating of all BH literature is a logical outcome of the chronological approach to BH. I invite any who so wish to go down that road, but even if that were the right conclusion,²¹ we would still have to inquire as to why the LBH authors used the LBH linguistic forms to a much greater degree than the EBH authors. Chronology cannot provide us with a solution for the distinctive language features of the LBH books. EBH was also written in the post-exilic period. So why did these other authors write in LBH?

We have seen that the problem of the peculiarity of the LBH books is even more acute than previously thought. A high accumulation of LBH features is the key characteristic of the core LBH books. There is, of course, a certain degree of circularity in this, since the LBH linguistic forms are by definition characteristic of the core LBH books, but nevertheless as I said above, I do believe these books share some distinctive features. However, no other biblical book or passage shares as high an accumulation of such features as any one of them. Even Qoheleth, which routinely is included with the LBH books, is still below the lowest accumulation from a core LBH book. Other texts like Ezekiel are at the upper end of EBH. At Qumran too, the Temple Scroll has a relatively

²¹ The LBH forms in the pre-exilic inscriptions would seem to undercut the logic of this argument.

high accumulation yet still is some distance away from a LBH accumulation. The other Qumran and Ben Sira samples we have done cluster at the higher end of the EBH scale, even further from the core LBH books. Not only is LBH not the only style of post-exilic Hebrew, it may not even be one of the major styles of post-exilic Hebrew.

If it is correct that these five books share similar linguistic features, then a reasonable explanation for this phenomenon is that the books stem from a similar setting. However, we must tread carefully here. I have already mentioned above that the linguistic profiles of the biblical books were subject to change during scribal transmission. Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles are very badly represented at Qumran. In the fragments of Hebrew Daniel, even though exhibiting a great deal of linguistic variation, including various examples involving LBH forms, I have not been able to detect any systematic altering of the LBH linguistic profile of the book. But the fact that such large-scale linguistic alteration of the LBH books is not attested in our extremely fragmentary textual evidence does not demonstrate that it could not have happened. The relationship between the linguistic profiles of the MT forms of the LBH books could conceivably reflect something that happened to them during their scribal histories, not necessarily the original circumstances of their composition. However, I remain optimistic that not in detail, but in general character, the language of the biblical books was not totally altered.

Based on this rather optimistic text-critical presupposition, my first attempt to explain what LBH is, if not simply "late Hebrew," was geographical.²² I noticed that four out of the five core LBH books have heroes who operate in the eastern diaspora. Both Esther and Daniel are set entirely in the eastern diaspora, and we hear of the activities of Ezra and Nehemiah in both east and west. I connected these eastern links with the fact that the prophetic book with the most links with LBH, Ezekiel, has a hero active in the eastern diaspora. I suggested therefore that LBH could be the style of BH favoured in the eastern diaspora during the post-exilic period, whereas EBH continued as the style favoured in the west.

²² I. Young, "Concluding Reflections," I. Young, *Biblical Hebrew Studies in Chronology and Typology*, 314–17.

I must say that I still quite like this theory, and some of my more recent research has strengthened it. I was worried at the time about trying to explain how LBH eventually established itself in the west, as evidenced by the Qumran scrolls. However, I now no longer see a direct relationship between the Qumran texts and LBH since, as we have seen, no Qumran text exhibits a LBH-like high accumulation of LBH features.²³ So I think it remains worth considering whether the peculiar isolation of the LBH books in their linguistic style is due to geographic isolation from the Jewish homeland.

However, I can think of the following problems with this neat theory that LBH is a feature of the eastern diaspora. One is that most scholars do not see Chronicles as eastern.²⁴ Recently, however, R. F. Person has argued that Chronicles is indeed an eastern, competing version of the Dtr history as revised in the west.²⁵ More difficult is that the last chapters of Daniel are usually considered to have a second century BCE origin in the western homeland.²⁶ Nevertheless, a migration of an originally eastern Daniel group to the homeland has also been argued on other grounds by various scholars.²⁷ What about the existence of LBH in pre-exilic Judah, and the possibility that works in the LBH style could have been produced in the pre-exilic period?²⁸ It is in fact the case that no work that could be considered to originate in the pre-exilic period exhibits the

²³ See the comments above and in more detail: Young, Rezetko, and Ehrens-värd, *Linguistic Dating*, 1.250–79.

²⁴ See e.g. R. W. Klein, *1 Chronicles* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 17. F. Polak, “Sociolinguistics: A Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Hebrew,” *HS* 47 (2006), 123 n. 37 uses the convergence of the language of Chronicles with that of Ezra-Nehemiah as an argument against the theory that LBH is eastern.

²⁵ R. F. Person, Jr., “The Deuteronomic History and the Books of Chronicles: Contemporary Competing Historiographies,” R. Rezetko, T. H. Lim, and W. B. Aucker (eds), *Reflection and Refraction*, 315–36.

²⁶ J. J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 25–26, 71. Cf. the quote in the following footnote.

²⁷ J. J. Collins, *Daniel*, 70–71 says: “In the case of Daniel, the prehistory... must be sought in the bearers of the tales of chaps. 1–6 rather than in the later prophets. Here, too, the evidence points to an eastern matrix for the tradition, although the visions were certainly composed in Israel.”

²⁸ Young, Rezetko, and Ehrens-värd, *Linguistic Dating*, 2.89–91.

LBH style strictly speaking. However, Qoheleth, which presupposes direct contact with the monarchy,²⁹ has a very high accumulation of LBH features, albeit not quite in the range exhibited by the core LBH books.³⁰ I argue that Qoheleth consciously chose a non-traditional style of language as a vehicle for his anti-traditional message, and hence he utilized many linguistic features not normally used in literary Hebrew. Qoheleth forces us to admit that a LBH-like style could be produced even in pre-exilic times.³¹ However, as far as our present evidence goes, the LBH style proper was a post-exilic phenomenon. My original proposal was based on the acceptance of the idea that Ezekiel is in LBH. As it turns out, Ezekiel may have a higher accumulation of LBH features than other prophetic books, but this merely places it at the upper end of EBH (see the table, above). So my original starting point is considerably lessened in its force.

In view of these considerations, I would now formulate my geographical theory somewhat differently. LBH linguistic features were available to pre-exilic writers, but it was only in the eastern diaspora in the post-exilic period that a style developed fully open to their literary use. Ezekiel is not in LBH, but its eastern connections may be an explanation for its unusually high accumulation of LBH features for a prophetic book. If the last chapters of Daniel are western, then it shows that the style eventually migrated to the west. The knowledge of this style, and the influence of a book like Daniel may be one factor that helps to explain why some Qumran Hebrew documents have a somewhat higher accumulation of LBH

²⁹ See I. Young, *Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew* (FAT, 5; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck]), 140–57; Young “Biblical Texts,” 347–48; M. A. Shields, *The End of Wisdom A Reappraisal of the Historical and Canonical Function of Ecclesiastes* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 22–27; cf. Ch. Rabin, “The Song of Songs and Tamil Poetry,” *JR* 3 (1973–74), 216.

³⁰ The Qoheleth sample on the table above has 15 LBH forms, slightly lower than the lowest core LBH sample, from Esther, with 17.

³¹ In fact, Qoheleth’s linguistic choices do not only involve LBH forms, and they mean that his Hebrew overall is quite far from standard literary Hebrew, whether EBH or LBH which are more similar to each other than to Qoheleth, see Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, 2.77. The same may be said about the language of the Song of Songs.

features than EBH. However, outside Daniel, so far there is no evidence of the continuation of the LBH style proper in the west.

Thus, I must admit that I still like my geographical explanation of LBH, although I do worry that it is rather too simple and is perhaps too naïve about the processes involved in creating the biblical books. Furthermore, I do not think that either geography or chronology is essential to explain LBH.

In the Persian period, which is notorious for the absence of virtually any extra-biblical evidence for Hebrew, we may have an analogy to the use of different styles of Hebrew for different functions. Scholars commonly recognize two styles of Achaemenid period Aramaic, which E. Y. Kutscher dubbed Western and Eastern Aramaic.³² The eastern style is especially characterized by its syntax. Thus, for example, there is the tendency for the object of the sentence to precede the predicate, as in: "It is time repairs to make" (Cowley 26:9).³³ The ability to vary syntax in different contemporary styles is contrary to the claim of some scholars of BH that whereas vocabulary choice can be conscious, syntax is largely unconscious and therefore inevitably betrays the linguistic background of the author. Besides various syntactical features, the eastern style also has some notable lexical characteristics, in particular a great many Akkadian and Persian loanwords and loan-translations.

The two styles, despite their names, are produced at the same time, in the same communities, but are generally used for different purposes. For example, the fifth century BCE letters of Yedaniah,

³² E. Y. Kutscher, "Aramaic," T. A. Sebeok (ed), *Current Trends in Linguistics*. Volume 6: *Linguistics in South West Asia and North Africa* (The Hague-Paris: Mouton, 1970), 362; M. L. Folmer, *The Aramaic Language in the Achaemenid Period: A Study in Linguistic Variation* (OLA, 68; Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 709–10. Note recently, valuable discussions in F. H. Polak, "The Daniel Tales in Their Aramaic Literary Milieu," A. S. van der Woude (ed), *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings* (BETL, 106; Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 258–60; F. H. Polak, "Sociolinguistics and the Judean Speech Community in the Achaemenid Empire," O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp (eds), *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 592–96.

³³ In other words the eastern style sounds a bit like Jedi master Yoda in the Star Wars movies! The reference is to the numbering of the Elephantine papyri in: A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923).

the head of the Jewish community in Elephantine in Egypt in the fifth century BCE, which are directed to the Persian authorities are written in the Eastern style. As Folmer notes: "Both C[owley] 30 and C31 give the impression that the scribe tried hard to write in the official style of the royal chancelleries as is reflected in the Arsham correspondence."³⁴ In contrast, the private letters from Elephantine, or other sites in Egypt such as Hermopolis (ca. 500 BCE), represent the western style which is in greater continuity with Old Aramaic than the eastern style. Even more conservative toward the Old Aramaic style than the private letters are the legal documents from the same milieu, which deal with local matters such as marriage, divorce, and land transfers.

Like EBH and LBH, both the eastern and the western styles of Persian period Aramaic generally share the same linguistic features; they are just more common in the eastern style. Kutscher's characterization of the eastern style several times uses the phrase "an excessive use of [feature X]."³⁵ Many documents in the western style can successfully avoid using features of the eastern style, such as Persian loanwords, even though they were available to them. This well-documented, and well-dated, feature of Persian period Aramaic provides, I think, a useful analogy to the use of multiple styles of Hebrew in the Persian (and probably other) periods. It shows us that it is not essential to posit chronological or geographical distance to explain the use of different styles of language. The important factor was the perceived audience or purpose of the document. Thus, picking up some ideas from Ehud Ben Zvi,³⁶ what we may have is a conscious attempt to distance this style of literature from literature produced in the EBH style. Rather than geographical or chronological distance, we would have rather intellectual or ideological distance.

What is LBH, then? It is one style of literary Hebrew, which in its definitive form is only attested in the core LBH books of Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Why these books are written in this style is a matter for further investigation. Chronology does not seem to be the reason. Instead I have suggested that two fruitful lines for further enquiry are the possibility of an

³⁴ Folmer, *Aramaic Language*, 727.

³⁵ E.g.: "Excessive use of the genitive construction +zy" (Kutscher, "Aramaic," 362).

³⁶ Personal communication.

east/west geographical split, and the use of multiple styles of Aramaic in the Persian period.

THE COMMUNICATIVE MESSAGE OF SOME LINGUISTIC CHOICES

EHUD BEN ZVI

There is an emphasis in present SBH/LBH research¹ on whether one may or may not date texts on linguistic grounds alone. Being a historian who deals in the main with texts and intellectual discourses, on what can be learned about the latter on the basis of reconstructions of readings of texts and the significance of their reading, my main contribution is probably to bring a slightly different set of questions to the present mix of SBH/LBH. Not surprisingly, my basic questions are, “What did it do to the ancient readers that a text was written in SBH or LBH, or Aramaic, for that matter? What did they learn about the text by the fact that it was written in one or another language? What can we learn about the socio-cultural ‘system’ out of which texts emerged in Yehud, and about its ideological matrix by examining, from a general overview, which texts were written, and read and reread in which language?”

Clearly, linguistic choices are never free of connoted meanings. Whether it is intentional or not, whether it is in ways that are known or unbeknownst to speakers or writers, linguistic choices convey meanings.² Linguistic choices are never completely free choices. Linguistic choices emerge out of a linguistic system that

¹ By “SBH” (standard biblical Hebrew), I am referring to what other contributors to this volume have called “EBH” (i.e. early biblical Hebrew). Both terms, namely SBH and EBH, are used in current research.

² And, one may say, provide important information to those who wish to understand the world of the participants in the communication, be it oral or written. The fact that users are often unaware of the choices they made may even facilitate research into the socio-cultural system that prefers or dis-prefers certain options in particular circumstances.

bears, among others, on social and ideological matters, constructions of self and other, and even symbolic power. It is from this starting point that the present chapter evolves.

The present study begins with two simple observations. The first one is that the basic core of texts, at least for the (ideologically) Jerusalem-centred literati, in Persian Yehud—and its continuation in early Hellenistic Yehud—consisted of three collections or, better, mental library shelves),³ namely, the pentateuchal books, the so-called deuteronomistic history, and the prophetic books. The books in this central “triad” informed each other and evolved together; for it is not separate books per se that evolve within a community, but the general discourse of the community. Members of that community (i.e., the literati) were not and could not have been single book centered, but repertoire centered. Moreover, it is only books as they were reread in the light of other authoritative books in their repertoire that became authoritative. For instance, it is reasonable to assume that the pentateuchal books as read in ways informed by the Jerusalem-centred prophetic and (dtr.) historical books stood at the core (and at the service) of the Jerusalemite temple, not as likely read in Samaria.⁴

The second observation is that despite all their stylistic differences, none of the books in the mentioned triad was written in LBH, or Aramaic, for that matter, a common language of the period. In fact, they were all inscribed in what may be labelled the

³ The metaphor of “mental shelves” in a library evokes and reflects better a situation in which even the same Yehudite readers at different times or circumstances may associate the same book with one or another set of books in their repertoire. Thus, for instance, Deuteronomy could be seen as both pentateuchal and as an integral part of the dtr. historical collection; the pentateuchal and the dtr. historical collection could be seen as both separate and as constituting a “primary history;” Ruth could be seen as both part of a historical collection and independent; depending on the context of the reading. Since “redactors” re-working the text were also readers, one may assume that these multiple perceptions were likely to affect their work as well. This issue, however, stands beyond the scope of this chapter.

⁴ I elaborated on this matter, in E. Ben Zvi, “Towards an Integrative Study of the Production of Authoritative Books in Ancient Israel,” Diana V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi (eds), *The Production of Prophecy. Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud* (London: Equinox, 2009), 15–28.

SBH range.⁵ Such a selection of language could not but influence the communicative meaning of these works, as perceived by their historical readerships in the Persian and early Hellenistic period.⁶

⁵ This is not to deny that there are differences within these books. The language of Ezekiel is not the same as that of Isaiah or Amos. I am aware of the debate concerning Haggai and particularly Zechariah and Malachi. See I. Young, R. Rezetko, and M. Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts* vol. 2 [London: Equinox, 2008], 46–48; 67–68; A. Hurvitz, “The Recent Debate on Late Biblical Hebrew: Solid Data, Experts’ Opinions, and Inconclusive Arguments,” *HS* 47 (2006), 191–210 (206–07) and bibliography cited there; cf. I. Young, “Late Biblical Hebrew and Hebrew Inscriptions,” I. Young (ed.), *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology* (JSOTSup, 369; London: T. & T. Clark International, 2003), 276–311 (279, 285, *passim*). It is clear, however, that LBH features in Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are not as prominent as in LBH books such as Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, or Esther, and as importantly, as in Ezekiel. For the present purposes, and given the emphasis here on the communicative message that ancient readerships developed through their interaction with the text, it is worth stressing that the ancient Yehudite literati, although highly sophisticated readers, were not linguistic experts who have undergone a rigorous academic training. From their perspective, the language of the books of Isaiah (1–66), Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi more likely seemed to belong to the general ‘SBH tent,’ as it were and as the other prophetic books in their repertoire, than to the LBH tent—which not incidentally, contains no prophetic books; on the matter, see below.

I am also aware that the ancient literati did not have a term for what we may label “the SBH tent.” But people may have concepts for which they have no clear term; a point I have made elsewhere several times. See my “On the term ‘Deuteronomistic’ in Relation to Joshua-Kings in the Persian Period” (forthcoming in a FS)—obviously, the current term ‘deuteronomistic’ did not exist in the discourse of Yehud. For a good examination of the general question as exemplified in a case that has nothing to do with ancient Israelite history; see G. Prudovsky, “Can We Ascribe to Past Thinkers Concepts They Had No Linguistic Means to Express?,” *History and Theory* 36 (1997), 15–31.

The differentiation between what I call the SBH tent and LBH has a long history in Hebrew Bible research. Cf. but note as well the strong evaluative comments and, one may say, common prejudices of a bygone era:

In order properly to estimate the *Hebrew* of Daniel, it must be borne in mind that the great turning-point in Hebrew style falls in the age of *Nebe-*

The basic evidence that from the perspective of the readership all the books in the “triad” were inscribed in a language that is distinguishable from ‘classical’ LBH and Aramaic, but shared in the large ‘SBH tent’ conveyed to the literati a sense of boundaries and of texts that belong to one kind of corpus. This is to be expected, given the historical considerations mentioned above. To explore further the communicative meaning of these (systemic) choices one has to deal not only with what is included inside the created

miah. The purest and best Hebrew prose style is that of JE and the earlier narratives incorporated in Jud. Sam. Kings: Dt. (though of a different type) is also thoroughly classical: Jer., the *latter* part of Kings, Ezekiel, II Isaiah, Haggai, show (though not all in the same respects or in the same degree) *slight* signs of being later than the writings first mentioned; but in the “memoirs” of Ezra and Nehemiah (i.e. the parts of Ezra and Neh. which are the work of these reformers themselves ...), and (in a less degree) in the contemporary prophecy of Malachi, a more marked change is beginning to show itself, which is still more palpable in the Chronicles (c. 300 B.C.), Esther, and Ecclesiastes... [Chronicles] may be said to show the greatest uncouthness of style... (S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* [13th ed.; New York: Scribner’s, 1908], 504–05; available for open access at <http://www.archive.org/details/introductiontoli1908driv>; italics in the original).

It may be mentioned already that the logic of the argument advanced here tends to create an anticipation for some degree of difference between Ezekiel, and Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi on the one hand and the other prophetic books on the other; and between Ezekiel and the other three. The fact that the differences between Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi and the other prophetic books are relatively muted raises an interesting issue that is addressed below.

⁶ To state the obvious, it might be claimed that there was never a systemic choice between SBH and LBH in Persian (or early Hellenistic) Yehud, because the two never co-existed, in temporal terms. Such a claim is very unlikely given, among others, the usual dates given to the production and re-working of books written in SBH (including those in the ‘triad’), the presence of LBH features in SBH texts, and the date of a clearly LBH text such as Chronicles (late Persian Period, at the latest, early Hellenistic period). In addition, even if for the sake of the argument, one would accept such a claim, it would still have to deal with the matter that the literati certainly knew, understood, and read and reread works in SBH at the time in which only LBH would be existing. Such a situation would only make the significance of linguistic profiles of books even more poignant.

boundaries, but also outside them, and, as well, with potential subdivisions within the 'insiders.'

To begin exploring the former, a general overview of the linguistic situation in Yehud is necessary. But a potential counter-argument must be dealt with first. There is a tradition in scholarship that maintains that the (or most of the) books in the mentioned 'triad' show SBH simply because their forerunners or their sources were written in monarchic Judah and SBH was the language of monarchic Judah. This tradition has led to a tendency to consider the linguistic situation in Yehud as basically irrelevant for the study of the books involved in this claim. This is not the place to discuss the linguistic situation in monarchic Judah, but suffices to say that even if for the sake of the argument one were to grant the validity of the position advanced by this research tradition, it would explain only, and for that matter, only partially, the genesis of the mentioned feature (i.e., that no book in the triad belongs to the LBH tent). The mentioned position will certainly not explain the meaning that the feature conveyed in postmonarchic and in particular Yehud times. To understand the meaning communicated by the use of SBH in books read and reread in Yehud, one would have to consider the linguistic situation in Yehud. One should keep in mind that the use of a particular language in a certain type of document is a socio-cultural endeavour that takes place within a general socio-cultural setting, and that shared choices of languages create linguistic communities and imply a process of linguistic socialization. Linguistic choices may legitimize certain ways of writing but not others; evoke some texts, but not others. These choices are involved in processes in which social, religious, and cultural power is negotiated and worlds imagined.

Moreover, for reasons I developed elsewhere, I locate the development of the concept of prophetic book and most (if not all) of the prophetic books in the Persian period.⁷ This does not mean that I deny the possibility that the text of some of these books (e.g., Jeremiah; Ezekiel; Zechariah) although originating in the Persian period, may have continued to evolve after the collapse of the rule

⁷ See, E. Ben Zvi, "The Concept of Prophetic Books and Its Historical Setting," Diana V. Edelman and E. Ben Zvi (eds), *The Production of Prophecy. Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud* (London: Equinox, 2009), 73–95, and my previous works on Jonah, Micah, Hosea, Obadiah, and Zephaniah.

of Darius III, and reached eventually their present masoretic form in the Hellenistic period (cf. the present debate about some texts within Genesis, even as most scholars agree that the Pentateuch emerged in a Persian context). Likewise, the position that the pentateuchal and (dtr.) historical books in their present compositional form go back to the Persian period is widely accepted.⁸ I date Chronicles to the late Persian period, though admittedly it could have been composed in the early Hellenistic period.⁹

We can now proceed to a general, and relatively brief overview of the linguistic situation in Yehud that suffices to provide the necessary background to the present endeavours. There is no doubt that Aramaic was the *lingua franca* of the area, and the language of the administration. Even the name of the province, Yehud, points

⁸ See, for instance, T. Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2005).

It is worth stressing that some scholars locate the production of prophetic, historical, or pentateuchal books/texts outside Yehud, mainly in Babylonia. It is impossible to address these matter here; it suffices for the present purposes that whether some precursors of the present books originated in Babylonia or not, the versions we have are all fully Jerusalemized, that is, they are part and parcel of the “authoritative” repertoire of a Jerusalem-centred group and its ideological discourse—in the case of pentateuchal texts, due to their reading in the light of the dtr. historical collection and the prophetic books; the matter is beyond the scope of this essay.

⁹ This is consistent with current tendency to date it either to the late Persian or the very beginning of the Hellenistic period (i.e., in the 4th century BCE). See, among many others, H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (NCBC, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1982), 15–17; S. J. De Vries, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (FOTL, 11; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1989), 16–17; S. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.; Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), pp. 23–28; J. E. Dyck, *Theocratic Ideology* (Biblical Interpretation Series, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1998), 31–33; I. Kalimi, *Ancient Israelite Historian*, 41–65; G. N. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9* (AB, 12; New York, NY: Doubleday, 2004), 101–17; R. W. Klein, *1 Chronicles*, (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 13–17. One may note that there is no direct or indirect reference to the Diadochi wars, which certainly impacted Palestine at the time. (Should readers of this essay wish to shift the literati community whose reading I am reconstructing away from Persian Yehud and into the early Hellenistic period—after all, it must be pre-Maccabean—the main argument I am advancing will remain unaffected.)

to that linguistic situation. Scribes in Yehud, most likely used 'official Aramaic,' as did their counterparts in Samaria,¹⁰ when they wrote documents as part of their administrative duties. There is no doubt also that the literati in Yehud knew also how to write and read (what we may call 'religious texts') in SBH and it is likely that SBH was used in the cultic sphere.¹¹

¹⁰ In fact, "the language of the Samaria Papyri is even more consistently conservative in its conformity to the norm of Official Aramaic than the language of the other two corpora [Elephantine legal papyri and the Arsames correspondence]." See D. M. Gropp, "The Samaria Papyri from Wadi Daliyeh," D. M. Gropp, J. C. VanderKam, and M. Brady (eds), *Wadi Daliyeh II and Qumran Cave 4, XXV/III. The Samaria Papyri from Wadi Daliyeh and Miscellanea, part 2* (DJD, 28; Clarendon: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001), citation from p. 4.

¹¹ W. M. Schniedewind seems to argue that written Hebrew (referring to SBH) died in the Persian period, that Aramaic scribal training completely overtook the Hebrew tradition and that Hebrew was revived in the Hellenistic period, a time in which it becomes important as religious language. See Schniedewind, "Aramaic, the Death of Written Hebrew, and Language Shift in the Persian Period, S. L. Sanders (ed.), *Margins of Writing, Origins of Cultures* (Oriental Institute Seminars, 2; Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2006), 137–47. Such an argument is highly problematic. First, it requires not only that no substantial text was written in Hebrew during the entire Persian period—in itself a very unlikely possibility given books such as Zechariah, Haggai, Isaiah and for that matter Chronicles, and the dating of much of biblical literature to that period by many scholars, though not necessarily Schniedewind—but also that no one read, reread, edited (?), or interpreted any Hebrew text or book till the Hellenistic period. If so, how was continuity maintained? In relation to spoken Hebrew and non-elite or non-scribal groups, Schniedewind explicitly maintains that "Hebrew was not widely spoken even among the rural populations in Persian Yehud." Reconstructions of the spoken language of rural areas are difficult (see below), but his thesis raises the question why would the people of Benjamin who remained in the land after 586 BCE and those in the areas of Bethlehem and Beth-Zur cease speaking their own language in a relatively short period of about three generations and particularly in the realm of home, family, and local matters? Schniedewind seems to emphasize rural settlement discontinuity. This is true in the area of Jerusalem, but a significant level of population continuity holds true for most of the areas in which most of the population of (neo-Babylonian Judah and) Yehud lived, that is, Benjamin.

On the population and population distribution in Yehud in general

This said, it is a matter of debate whether Aramaic or some dialect of Hebrew—whose character is in itself also a matter of

and Benjamin in particular see, for instance, O. Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005); idem, "The History of the Benjamin Region Under Babylonian Rule," *TA* 26 (1999), 155–90; idem, "Demographic Changes in Judah between the 7th and the 5th Centuries BCE," O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp (eds), *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 323–376; C. E. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study* (JSOTSup, 294; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); idem, "Ideology and Archaeology in the neo-Babylonian Period: Excavating Text and Tell," *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, 301–22; E. Stern, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, II: The Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian Periods (732–332) B.C.E.* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 321–26. On the general issue of the Benjaminite area during the neo-Babylonian period see also, among others, J. Zorn, "Tell en-Naşbeh and the Problem of the Material Culture of the 6th Century," *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, 413–447; idem, "Estimating the Population Size of Ancient Settlements: Methods, Problems, Solutions and a Case Study," *BAJOR* 295 (1994), 31–48; J. Zorn, J. Yellin, and J. Hayes, "The M(W)SH Stamp Impressions and the Neo-Babylonian Period," *IEJ* 44 (1994), 161–183 and the survey and bibliography in L. L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period, Volume 1 Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah* (LSTS, 47; London: T & T Clark, 2004), 22–30. In addition to Benjamin, the Bethlehem-Tekoa and, perhaps, the Beth Zur areas, are often mentioned among the regions in which a settlement remained. See O. Lipschits, "The Rural Settlement in Judah in The Sixth Century B.C.E.: A Rejoinder "Demographic Changes in Judah," *PEQ* 136 (2004), 99–107 and bibliography cited. It should be mentioned that there is considerable debate about the archaeology of the Persian period—Lipschits's article itself was a rejoinder to A. Faust, "Judah in the Sixth century B.C.E.: A Rural Perspective," *PEQ* 135 (2003), 37–53. There is a substantial debate concerning particular sites such as Beth Zur, Gibeon, and in general about the extent of settlement in the Persian period and its total population. Among recent works on these matters, see I. Finkelstein, "Archaeology and the List of Returnees in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah," *PEQ* 140 (2008), 1–10; and idem "Jerusalem in the Persian (and Early Hellenistic) Period and the Wall of Nehemiah," *JSOT* 32 (2008), 501–520. It is worth noting that the main gist of the arguments advanced here would not be affected if the position argued by Finkelstein is accepted.

debate—was the most common spoken language in private settings, and if this was the case, the question becomes, for whom?

A well-known summary of a common position on these matters is Rabin's,

[t]he Jewish community in the Persian period was thus, it appears, trilingual, using Aramaic for purposes outside communication and for limited literary genres for internal consumption, Biblical Hebrew for normal literary composition; and in all probability, an older form of Mishnaic Hebrew as a purely spoken vernacular.¹²

Schaper modifies Rabin's position. According to him,

“[t]wo languages were in constant use in Achaemenid Judah: Aramaic and Hebrew... [w]hereas Aramaic was used both in speaking and in writing, contemporary Hebrew seems to have existed only as a spoken vernacular of the lower classes... I say ‘contemporary Hebrew’ because there was another form of Hebrew which was indeed used in writing, i.e., the somewhat artificial language commonly referred to as Late Biblical Hebrew.”¹³

Since Schaper grounds his discussion on texts such as Neh 8:8, it is clear that he is actually referring to the late Persian period.¹⁴ Kottsieper has recently discussed the use or lack thereof of Hebrew in Yehud. He explicitly and carefully refers only to the late Persian period as he concludes that the commonly spoken language was a vernacular dialect of Aramaic (which he associates with ‘the language of Ashdod’),¹⁵ and that Hebrew was not anymore a com-

¹² Ch. Rabin, “The Historical Background of Qumran Hebrew,” Ch. Rabin and Y. Yadin (eds), *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Scripta Hierosolymitana, IV; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1958), 144–61; citation from p. 152.

¹³ J. Schaper, “Hebrew and Its Study in the Persian Period,” W. Horbury (ed.), *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yehuda* (T&T Clark: Edinburgh, 1999), 15–26; the quote is from p. 17.

¹⁴ I bracket, for the present purposes, the question of the ‘historicity’ of Neh 8:8.

¹⁵ But see also A. Lemaire, “Ashdodien et Judéen à l’époque perse: Ne 13,24,” K. van Lerberghe and A. Schoors (eds), *Immigration and Emigration within the Ancient Near East. Festschrift E. Lipiński* (OLA, 65; Leu-

monly spoken language, even as it was used as a religious language in the relevant circles, and as such had its own development.¹⁶ Significantly, his analysis leads to the clear conclusion that in the early Persian period, Hebrew was spoken and that the process that led to its replacement with the language of Ashdod was a lengthy one that was beginning to become complete only by the time referred to in Neh 13:24.

Of course, one may raise the question of whether the process that led to the rise of the Jerusalem temple, and the achievement of significant prestige by its leadership¹⁷ impacted the linguistic scenario of Yehud, in particular in terms of written 'religious' language. Moreover, in this regard, the opposition between written and oral Hebrew might be a bit overstated. Written texts using 'written' Hebrew were read aloud and meant to be read aloud,¹⁸

ven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oriëntalistiek, 1995), 153–163. For the position that “the language of Ashdod” is a Hebrew dialect spoken in the lowlands that “later became the language of the sages who lived in the same area: Gizmo, Lod, Emmaus, and Yavneh” see D. Talshir, “The Habitat and History of Hebrew During the Second Temple Period,” *Biblical Hebrew. Studies in Chronology and Typology*, 251–75; citation from p. 263.

¹⁶ See I. Kottsieper, “‘And They Did Not Care to Speak Yehudit’: On Linguistic Change in Judah during the Late Persian Era,” O. Lipschits, G. N. Knoppers, and R. Albertz (eds), *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (Winona Lake, Ind., Eisenbrauns, 2007), 95–124.

The strength of the argument for the disappearance of spoken Hebrew, even in the setting of family life, depends to some extent on the strength (or weakness) of the argument for historical continuity between the Hebrew languages of the early Persian period and later forms of Hebrew such as Qumranic and Mishnaic Hebrew. The matter is, however, not directly relevant to the discussion here.

¹⁷ See Elephantine Papyri, B19 = TAD A4.7 = Cowley 30; B20 = TAD A.4.8 = Cowley 31. TAD refers to B. Porten and A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* (4 vols.; Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1986–99). The “B” numbers refer to B. Porten, *The Elephantine Papyri in English: Three Millennia of Cross-Cultural Continuity and Change* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).

¹⁸ At the very least in addition to a possible silent reading. On these matters, see E. Ben Zvi, “Introduction: Writings, Speeches, and the Prophetic Books-Setting an Agenda,” E. Ben Zvi and M. H. Floyd (eds), *Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy* (SBLSymS, 10 Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 1–29, esp. pp. 16–18, 21–24).

and at least some of them were read aloud to the public. They played a role in oral and aural circumstances, and moreover, since they were written in a society in which communication was for the most part oral, often reflect oral dictions and forms of communication.

All in all, it seems that more or less a general consensus develops regarding the existence of at least three languages (Aramaic, spoken Hebrew, and written SBH) in the general milieu of the early Persian period—despite the meagre population in Yehud—and thus, necessarily of a system of linguistic choices, that is, a process of socialization that enabled at least the multilingual members of the community (including its elite and scribes) to discern which language to use for which purpose. In other words, there was a system in which meaning was encoded in a socially agreed upon way by means of language and in which the very same people could partake in and even constitute diverse linguistic communities.

Although these considerations hold true for even a situation involving only three linguistic choices, more were likely to have been available within the early Yehudite milieu. There was official written Aramaic but likely some spoken Aramaic, particularly in the Western areas of the province, which incidentally was not identical with the dialect of the few who returned to Yehud from Babylonia. The spoken Hebrew of Benjamin may have been some kind of proto-Mishnaic Hebrew (influenced by Israelian Hebrew) or (proto) LBH.¹⁹ Given the known linguistic cantonization of Palestine in antiquity, one cannot simply assume that the spoken Hebrew in Benjamin had to be identical with the Judahite Hebrew that likely survived in the rural areas in the environs of Bethlehem or Beth Zur areas, at least, during the early Persian period. Moreover, since several groups (including former Benjaminites [e.g., the

¹⁹ See, for instance, E. A. Knauf, "Bethel: The Israelite Impact on Judean Language and Literature," O. Lipschits and M. Oeming (eds) *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 291–349 (309–18); cf. F. H. Polak, "Sociolinguistics and the Judean Speech Community in the Achaemenid Empire," *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, 589–628; G. A. Rendsburg, "The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew," L. I. Levine, *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York/Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 225–40. (Most of the important sociolinguistic insights advanced by Polak do not depend on the validity of his dating of key texts.)

Aaronides?], some returnees, etc.) may have settled in Jerusalem, it is difficult to assess the spoken linguistic profile of the community there during the early Persian period.

To complicate matters further, some kind of written Hebrew (often called, transitional) that showed a substantial number of LBH features (e.g., Lamentations²⁰) seems to have been used among postmonarchic literati and co-existed at least for a while with SBH as a written (and read aloud, see below) Hebrew.²¹

In sum, these considerations lead us to the conclusion that multiple linguistic entities and identities co-existed in early Persian Yehud, despite its low population.²² This observation is already meaningful in terms of historical reconstruction. It attests to a lack of a totalizing thrust aimed at bringing together all linguistic expressions, from family setting to administration, from contracts to religious literature into one single, 'authorized' linguistic form.²³

This observation is particularly consistent with the background information provided by some features of the core repertoire of the intellectual elite in Yehud. A society ideologically shaped by and around books that ubiquitously and systematically carried multiple images and ideas and by doing so contributed to increased social cohesion, is a society that is likely to live comfortably with multiple linguistic profiles, rather than one single 'authorized' linguistic form for all use.

²⁰ See F. W. Dobbs-Allsop, "Linguistic Evidence for the Date of Lamentations," *JANES* 26 (1998), 1–36 and cf. I. Young, R. Rezetko, and M. Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating*, vol. 2, esp. pp. 65–66, 91. There is continuous debate about the date of Lamentations. It is possible and even perhaps likely that it was written and perhaps publicly read close to the actual, even if very low-scale, rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the city itself.

²¹ On Ezekiel, see below.

²² Of course, some of these multiple, linguistic identities co-existed within the same person. For instance, a scribe may have expressed himself (less likely, herself) differently depending on the context of his linguistic interaction; a literate person may have written a (or in, i.e. reworked a) "religious" and "authoritative" text in a language different from the one in which he would speak at home and different from the written language he would use for administrative documents; the same person could use a more local "dialect" in one context but not in another.

²³ Contrast with Neh 13:23–25.

Further, in a society in which its literati wrote varied texts, including Psalms, historical books (some of which carried a Mosaic-like voice), prophetic books, each with its own voice, and Proverbs, as well as simply administrative texts, language is used to shape a contingent speaker/author 'identity mode' that varies according to the case.²⁴

At the same time, there were limits. Just as there were clear limits to multivocality concerning central ideological tenets (e.g., those associated with Jerusalem, Zion, and the Temple; or YHWH's basic relationship with Israel) there were limits to linguistic choices. The community's key ideological books, be them pentateuchal, prophetic, or historical, all—and despite their differences—conveyed a sense of belonging to the linguistic tent (or range) of SBH, which thus becomes to be construed as a representation of the authoritative, religious language.

Of course, on the one hand, this tent contains the written language used by the Yehudite literati when they turn themselves into, or one may say 'officiated themselves as' the linguistic and theological community that shaped, read, and reread these texts. But on the other, and much more importantly from their perspective, this tent contains the language of YHWH's central instructions and words to Israel, and by extension and from the literati's ideological viewpoint, a godly, divine language shared by themselves and YHWH, and binding them together. From this perspective, it is particularly important that this is not a *lingua franca*, even among literati. It is certainly not a language used by non-Israelite sages or literati. It is a local and unique language, like their temple and the ideological world centered on it (and its traditions), that they espoused. The 'nations' do not know SBH, just as they do not know YHWH, or for that matter, the deity's ways and the grounding of their own experienced world in the divine economy and will. Only those who can master SBH and therefore can read the core texts in the repertoire of the Jerusalemite literati can begin to understand these matters.

But as the language of the books within the 'triad' became so central to the discourse of the community (or at least its literati),

²⁴ To be sure, this holds true for everyone who changes his diction according to circumstances in which s/he utters or writes her/his words, but one has to keep in mind that it seems that the linguistic choices open to people in ancient Yehud were quite abundant.

their level of 'sacrality' (i.e., of difference from the rest) emerged and boundaries began to set around them.²⁵ By the late Persian period (or early Hellenistic at the latest), from the perspective of the Jerusalemite center the books in the 'triad' either turn into scripture to be interpreted or 'classical' texts to be imitated, or books written in a genre so 'sacred' that no new books can be composed in it,²⁶ or a combination of the above. Chronicles, a product of that time, attests to many of these features concerning pentateuchal and now 'classical' historical books.²⁷ Admittedly, less can be learned about the prophetic corpus from Chronicles, but clearly around the late Persian (or early Hellenistic) the writing of new prophetic books ceases.²⁸

A discourse that disallows the creation of new sacred pentateuchal, prophetic, or (dtr.) historical books is also a discourse that calls for closure in the production of new books in SBH, because the latter came to be directly and closely associated with that core repertoire and its claims for centrality and ideological authority. But

²⁵ Cf. the case of the genre of "gospel." Even the writing of literature in the "traditional/sacred" genre of gospel ceased at some point. The process was, of course, far faster and easier in the case of a small community around an undersized temple in a minute province (i.e., Yehud) than in the case of multiple and quite independent Christian communities all over the eastern Roman empire. The center has far more control over the production of works in Yehudite Jerusalem.

²⁶ It is important to stress that editing and slightly reworking existing works—some of which may have already appeared in more than one form/version—could continue. After all, this was likely perceived as an activity that reflected the spirit of the book's voice. Cf. N. G. Cohen, "From 'Nabi' to 'Mal'ak' to 'Ancient Figure,'" *JSS* 36 (1985), 12–24.

²⁷ Cf., among others, J. Van Seters, "Creative Imitation in the Hebrew Bible," *JR* 29 (2000), 395–409; E. Ben Zvi, "Revisiting 'Boiling in Fire' in 2 Chr 35.13 and Related Passover Questions Text, Exegetical Needs, Concerns, and General Implications" I. Kalimi and P. J. Haas (eds), *Biblical Interpretation in Judaism and Christianity* (LHBOTS, 439; London and New York: T. & T. Clark, 2006), 238–50.

²⁸ In the restrictive sense of books that follow the genre that characterizes the fifteen prophetic books (Isaiah–Malachi); but clearly *not* in the sense of books associated in society with a 'prophetic spirit.' The latter continues. It is worth stressing also that the present discussion is limited to the Persian period and its likely continuation in the *early* Hellenistic period.

the literati continued to write, so there was a need for an alternative written Hebrew. It is not by chance then that Chronicles was written in LBH, even if much of it goes back to sources written in SBH. The use of LBH in Chronicles conveys a claim that the book is less authoritative (and secondary) to those in the 'triad.'²⁹

The usage of SBH as the language of the most authoritative/classical texts likely carried a secondary, but related connotation. The use of SBH evoked associations with Judah, its monarchic past, and by extension Israel's Mosaic past within the discourse of Yehud. LBH carried associations with a later period, with postmonarchic Israel. As corollary of the ideological centrality of the concept of (full) exile and (partial) return in Yehud, all Yehudites come to be construed as 'returnees,' and in fact, returnees from Babylonia.³⁰

It is not surprising therefore that whether it was a linguistic outcome of an inner Judahite development or not, LBH likely conveyed or reflected an (implicit) ideologically construed, *connoted* connection between not only post-monarchic times, but also with exilic and particularly, Babylonian Israel.³¹ Key books in this regard

²⁹ To be sure, paradoxically, the claim to be secondary to the triad allows the book to re-signify the authoritative corpus according to the Chronicles' own ideological viewpoint, which at times contradicted either the plain language of some text or its basic ideological assumptions (e.g., the role of kings in Deuteronomy). In other words, Chronicles, by virtue of being secondary, is able to present an authoritative reading of the (authoritative) texts of "the triad." This is not the place to expand on how Chronicles dealt with authoritative texts. The matter is being discussed in the EABS research group out of which this volume evolved. My own position on the matter is elaborated in my "How Did Chronicles Deal with Authoritative Literature of its Time," paper presented at the 2008 meetings of the EABS and the SBL. This matter is being presently discussed by the EABS research program and a volume on this subject is in the works.

³⁰ I expanded on these matters in E. Ben Zvi, "Total Exile, Empty Land and the General Intellectual Discourse in Yehud," E. Ben Zvi and C. Levin (eds), *Concept of Exile in Ancient Israel & its Historical Contexts* (Berlin, de Gruyter; forthcoming).

³¹ As it is well-known, D. Talshir has proposed that LBH replaced SBH as the (main) language of Yehud by mid-fifth century, when Ezra and his group came to Judah. According to him, LBH is not the result of a local Yehudite development based on some spoken form of proto-

are not only Ezra-Nehemiah—which is to state the obvious, but also Lamentations and Ezekiel, which although written in SBH, show a clear increase in the occurrence of LBH features.³²

Given the characterization of Ezekiel, it is not so difficult to understand the rhetorical value of an ‘eastern flavour’ in that book. This said, the matter has some significant implications. The presence of some ‘eastern flavour’ in the voice of Ezekiel created by the increased use of LHB features is another instance in which the voices of the individual prophetic characters are (partially) shaped according to the ‘stories’ about them advanced in the prophetic books.³³ This consideration serves to explain why Ezekiel but not

mishnaic Hebrew that in turn was influenced by Israelian Hebrew, nor a dialect that evolved in Judah out of SBH under the influence of Aramaic. Instead, he maintains, LBH is a dialect that evolved out of SBH in Babylonia and was brought to Judah by the Ezra returnees. According to him, LBH became the dominant language in Yehud/Judah, because of the influence of these returnees. The influence, however, did not reach to the lowlands, in which a different dialect of Hebrew, and significantly the one that eventually led to Mishnaic Hebrew, was spoken. He proposes that this dialect increasingly encroached on LBH within the borders of Judah from the time of the Maccabees on. See D. Talshir, “Habitat and History of Hebrew.” For a different position, see, for instance, G. A. Rendsburg, “The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew,” L. I. Levine, *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York/Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 225–40.

³² This is the reason that scholars who support a diachronic model of shift from SBH to LBH refer to their Hebrew as transitional Hebrew.

³³ For instance, the language of Hosea carries some ‘odd’ features that the intended readership of the book was likely supposed to understand as pointing at an Israelian Hebrew flavor. See E. Ben Zvi, *Hosea* (FOTL 21A/1; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 16–17 and bibliography. Of course, the literary (and ideological) characterization of personages according to the way in which they speak is attested also in books other than the prophetic. For instance, some texts chose to convey the foreign origin of a speaker by the association of his/her speech with (actual or ‘fictional’) ethnolects. See, for instance, M. Cheney, *Dust, Wind and Agony: Character, Speech and Genre in Job* (ConBOT, 36; Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1994), 203–75. See also Isa 21:11–12 and cf. I. Young, “The diphthong *ay in Edomite,” *JSS* 37 (1992), 27–30. Conversely, some texts wish to convey an Israelitized image of a foreigner by associating her/him with ‘typical’ Israelite speech, as construed through the voices of Israelite characters in the book (see E. Ben Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of*

Deutero-Isaiah carries an increased number of LBH features; that is, in the case of the latter the association of the text with the character Isaiah of Jerusalem, as his linguistic profile as understood by the relevant literati, trumped any consideration aimed at communicating a Babylonian atmosphere.

These considerations help to explain also why no prophetic (or pentateuchal or so-called dtr. historical) books were written in LBH, and more importantly, why the linguistic profile associated with the prototype of prophetic book remained consistently SBH during the Persian period and thereafter.

In the case of Lamentations, the linguistic selection of some eastern diasporic flavour may have reinforced, in a subtle, connoted way, the sense of deep chasm between the present and the monar-chic past construed by Lamentations and conveyed by the book to its intended readership, as they remember, re-enact, as it were, and cope with their loss through their reading (and hearing) of this text. In both cases, the LBH/eastern flavour set and evoked images of continuity and discontinuity. It communicated a sense of a bridge between the old and new, which calls attention to that which has to be bridged, the chasm of 587 BCE, or as seen within the usual discourse of the Jerusalemite centered literati of Yehud, the chasm created by exile.

To sum up, the shift from SBH to LBH as the language of writing religious texts conveyed at some point in the late Persian period an ideological image of conceptual clusters and boundaries. On the one hand, texts associated with 'Judahite' language and characters (including, by extension and appropriation the figure of Moses, but certainly not that of Ezra). These texts appeared in the mentioned triad of collections (or mental shelves) and stood at the ideological core of the 'text-centered' community construed (and imagined) by the literati in the late Persian period. These books were associated with earlier times, from an era preceding the settlement in the land to the loss of the land and exile. On the other hand, texts associated with LBH were considered to be less central to the community,³⁴ outside the triad mentioned above, later, and

Chronicles [London: Equinox, 2006], 270–88).

³⁴ Even as they try to co-opt and control the meaning of the core texts.

as all postmonarchic Israel within this discourse,³⁵ as carrying a strong Babylonian returnee voice.

Lamentations and Ezekiel belong to the first group, but their increased number of LBH features likely carried an eastern flavour, and especially so in the case of Ezekiel. The latter, however, as a prophetic book could not end up in the LBH tent; it had to remain within that of SBH.³⁶

This genre restriction explains why Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, although containing some LBH features, had also to end up conveying a sense of linguistic consistency with the other prophetic books, that is, to remain in the SBH tent. In the case of these books, and from an overview perspective on communal (or systemic) preferences and messages conveyed by linguistic choices, the central issue is about where the balance was struck between messages of continuity and discontinuity, between a tendency to emphasize the chasm of the exile on the one hand, and to bridge it on the other. If the balance would have followed the well-known trend in some rabbinic literature to construe a marked caesura between first and second temple periods, then Jeremiah would have been construed as the last prophet (see *Pesiq. Rab. Qah.* 13.14),³⁷ and, accordingly the book of Jeremiah as the last prophetic book. Then at least in principle, books like Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi could have developed an unequivocal LBH sense. Yet, this would have set them apart from the other prophetic books, something which the very contents of these books clearly stood against, and imbued them with less authority.

³⁵ See E. Ben Zvi, "Total Exile, Empty Land and the General Intellectual Discourse in Yehud," and previously, "Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel as Conveyed by the Use of the Term 'Israel' in Postmonarchic Biblical Texts," S. W. Holloway and L. K. Handy (eds), *The Pitcher is Broken. Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström* (JSOTSup 190, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1995), 95–149.

³⁶ One may consider the case of Ezekiel as a demonstration of the farthest a prophetic book could go towards LBH, given the constraints of the genre of prophetic book.

³⁷ See A. A. Wieder, "Josiah and Jeremiah: Their Relationship According to Aggadic Sources," M. A. Fishbane and P. R. Mendes-Flohr (eds) *Texts and Responses: Studies presented to Nabum N. Glatzer on the Occasion of his Seventieth birthday by his Students* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 60–72.

Chronicles presents itself as later than the so called deuteronomistic history (and the primary history for that matter). Its LBH profile conveys a sense that Chronicles is a post-monarchic history (see 2 Chr 36:23), and as such—in the context of the intellectual discourse within which it emerged—it could only be imagined as a history written by returnees (see 2 Chr 36:20, and the general topos of the total exile). Although Chronicles did not emphasize the exile, it still comes out as a book of ‘returnees’ and therefore, of ‘easterns.’³⁸

In sum, the preceding considerations point out that linguistic choice between LBH and SBH carried important messages about, among others, distinctions of textual authority, related associations or disassociations with earlier periods and ‘the land,’ or the land that led to the land (e.g., Sinai) as opposed to ‘the land’ that represents the loss of ‘the land.’ The texts in SBH are lionized and connected to Mosaic and Judahite/Yehudite voices rather than Babylonian, and the latter are marginalized. Even if Ezra, the newcomer from the East, is construed and lionized as the one who restores ‘Torah,’ his ‘Torah’ would not carry an Eastern, but a Mosaic/Judahite/Yehudite flavour.³⁹

Some potential counter-arguments should be addressed at this point. For instance, it might be argued that we are not facing a matter of linguistic choices between SBH and LBH and that SBH is simply the Hebrew of books written in Yehud and LBH of those in the Eastern diaspora. To be sure, Esther, even if it comes from a period likely later than the Achaemenid, provides a good example of a book in which an eastern diasporic situation stands at its very center. In fact, it is difficult to imagine that a text such as Esther be written in Jerusalem, by and for its literati.⁴⁰ But Chronicles, a text

³⁸ In addition, Chronicles could not compete for the same slot as the “classical” history, and therefore, SBH, authoritative history that served as its source.

³⁹ Cf. the rabbinic traditions that associate the end of prophecy with Ezra, or the return and establishment of the “torah” with him. Even when these texts are associated with a “lionized” Ezra, by necessity they point back to pre-Ezra times and the voices that populated them.

⁴⁰ See, as mentioned above, the lack of any mention of Jerusalem and the fate of its temple even as it relates a planned mass extermination of all the Jews in the entire Persian Empire—contrast with Judith, and see also the ref. to the temple in the LXX additions to Esther. Contrast with the

written in LBH, is not only a Jerusalem centered book, but also one that was most likely written in Yehud and Jerusalem. There is no reason to associate it with an eastern diasporic group actually living in Babylonia or anywhere except Yehud. In fact, although it construes all non-Yehudite Israel as Israel, it also construes them as marginal Israel.⁴¹ The conclusion from these two examples is: from the presence of, or better the selection of LBH as the language of a book one cannot learn about its historical composition in the Eastern diaspora.

Alternatively, it might be argued that choices of either SBH or LBH as the language of a text were grounded on sociological settings and that the latter was used by an originally diasporic, separate social group settled in Jerusalem that shaped and communicated to others (embodied as it were) its own separate character within its society by selecting LBH as the language of their writing (cf. the use of Qumranic Hebrew as a written language). Such a position is theoretically possible. But sectarian models that might work in a very large city as Late Second Temple Jerusalem do not work in a very small Jerusalem of the early Persian period. Models of social integration between the newcomers (which in any case were never many) and the local population are far more likely to reflect the long term historical processes in Yehud. To be sure, one can imagine that some recently arrived immigrant might have had some problems, but the tendency in such a small society would have been towards integration. In fact, the tendency to integration worked out even stronger differences, and integrated Benjaminites not only into Yehud, but led it to assume a cultural memory of total exile that stood against their own memory.⁴²

Additional considerations undermine this potential approach. For instance, Haggai never separates the community between those who remained and those who came back, and Ezra-Nehemiah is more likely to be the exception, than the rule—and even there the matter is far more complex, since the book construes all Yehudites (including Benjaminites) as returnees. All in all, if it is not reason-

Jerusalem centredness of the books composed by and for Jerusalemite literati.

⁴¹ I expanded on this matter, in my *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles*, 195–209.

⁴² I expanded on this particular matter elsewhere (E. Ben Zvi, “Total Exile, Empty Land and the General Intellectual Discourse in Yehud”).

able to assume the existence of multiple, longstanding, socially separate groups of literati in Yehud, each with their own characterizing language, this would apply to claims of separate deuteronomistic or Isaianic schools as much as it applies to claims of an enduring socially separate Eastern diasporic group in Jerusalem.⁴³

One may add that if there was such a group, and if as usually assumed this group exercised power in Yehud—because it was either sent or supported or both by the imperial Persian centre—then how can one explain that SBH was selected and maintained as the most authoritative books? One may counter, of course, by assuming that this group did not exist in the early Persian period or was powerless then, but became important only after the historical mission of Ezra-Nehemiah, but if one does so, not only does one enter into all the difficulties associated with reconstructing history from Ezra-Nehemiah, but one would have to explain why Chronicles—which in my opinion is earlier than Ezra-Nehemiah—was written in LBH given that it is so diametrically opposed to Ezra-Nehemiah on central issues.⁴⁴

Moreover, such a proposal would have to take into consideration a book such as Ezekiel and to some extent Lamentations. Should we assume that it was written by a separate, earlier group of returnees who kept themselves socially separate in early Persian Yehud and whose particular selection of linguistic flavour was taken up, and fully developed as the central linguistic selection for writing books by a second, much later and unrelated wave of immigrants who came from diasporic communities that remained in Babylon, and lived in at least some isolation from those in Yehud? In addition, how to explain the LBH features in other texts?

To conclude, this study has explored some of the likely communicative messages of the selection of the 'SBH tent' for the books in the core triad, and of LBH for other texts. It has shown that of all the potential linguistic choices that existed for the Jerusa-

⁴³ More developed arguments for the integrative character of the discourse of Yehud, and the integrative character of its society, appear in E. Ben Zvi, "Towards an Integrative Study," and cf. "On the term 'Deuteronomistic.'" The considerations made in this chapter suffice, at least in my opinion, for the present purposes.

⁴⁴ To be sure, one may maintain that the linguistic profile of CHR was changed (as was the case with 1QIsa^a). Although this is possible, there is no proof that such is the case.

lem-centred literati when the present prophetic, pentateuchal, and the so-called *dtr* history emerged—and which involved more than one dialect of Hebrew and Aramaic—there was a clear systemic preference for SBH when it came to core texts. SBH was not simply another linguistic profile to be selected among many others in Persian Yehud. It was, from the perspective of these literati and likely those who accepted their ideological tenets, a prestige language that stood as an alternate to everyday language, both written and spoken. As such, it was a language ideologically marked by closeness with YHWH, through interaction with their godly texts.⁴⁵ As SBH involved and evoked a sense of closeness with YHWH, it also involved identification with a concept of (transtemporal) Israel, its relationship with YHWH, its constitutive memories, hard lessons and hopes for an utopian future (see prophetic books). This systemic preference both reflected and contributed to the shaping of the intellectual discourse of the period and a formal hierarchization of books within the repertoire of the community, just as LBH texts such as Chronicles, contributed to the production of “the meaning” of the authoritative texts, by re-shaping their readings as it informed them.

The present study neither addresses nor is meant to address the real origin of, or the basic generative processes that led to LBH linguistic features (Palestine—if so which region, and when; Babylon, both?) and its relation to other variants of Hebrew remains open. It shows, however, the potential of asking questions somewhat different from that usually asked in the field, and the possible contribution of intellectual historians to this area.

⁴⁵ Cf. B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (rev. ed.; London/New York: Verso, 2006), esp. pp. 12–15. Anderson discusses “sacredness of language” and its role in shaping pre-modern communities.

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