

Late Biblical Hebrew and the Date of “P”*

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Although higher criticism has been the dominant force in Biblical scholarship for the last two centuries, the date of the so-called “Priestly Document” (hereafter simply P) is still debated.¹ Views range from Wellhausen’s conclusion of a post-Exilic P² to Kaufmann’s positing of an early P³ to Speiser’s view of a P “school with an unbroken history reaching back to early Israelite times, and continuing until the Exile and beyond.”⁴ The arguments have generally focused on such considerations as law, cult, and theology, but as R. J. Thompson noted, “The *linguistic* argument has not been advanced.”⁵

To fill that void, Robert Polzin has presented us with *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose*. In the author’s own words, “It attempts to characterize the typological nature of P’s language by linguistic means alone. I make no assumptions about the essential validity of the documentary hypothesis in any of the forms in which it has been expressed by scholars. I do assume however that if those scattered portions of the Tetrateuch called P actually represent a relatively late unified ‘source’ within it, this corpus should contain enough linguistic characteristics to indicate such a relative age” (p. 1).

Polzin begins his work with an attempt to describe Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), for it is this idiom with which P’s language is to be compared. Two principles guide his research: 1) that LBH “differs markedly” from Early (or Classical) Biblical Hebrew (EBH), and 2) that Chronicles is the “best example of what this LBH looked like” (pp.

* A review of Robert Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 12; Missoula, Mont., 1976). The work was originally written as a doctoral dissertation for Harvard University in 1971. Please note the following abbreviations: BH = Biblical Hebrew; EBH = Early Biblical Hebrew; LBH = Late Biblical Hebrew; QH = Qumran Hebrew; MH = Mishnaic Hebrew; GKC = E. Kautzsch, ed., A. E. Cowley, trans., *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford, 1974); UT = C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome, 1967).

1 The various theories are conveniently presented in R. J. Thompson, *Moses and the Law in a Century of Criticism since Graf*, VTS 19, (Leiden, 1970).

2 J. Wellhausen, *Prologomena to the History of Israel* (Edinburgh, 1885).

3 Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, ed. and trans. M. Greenberg (Chicago, 1960), 175–208.

4 E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (Garden City, N.Y., 1964), p. XXVI.

5 Thompson, *Moses and the Law*, 164.

1-2). Though no one can deny that the language of Chronicles differs in various aspects from, let us say, the language of Genesis, these two principles need to be modified. First, LBH does not differ drastically from EBH. In discussing the various aspects of Biblical Hebrew, Joshua Blau wrote, "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."⁶ It is for this reason that anyone who wishes to highlight the differences between EBH and LBH must engage in painstaking research dealing with the minutiae of the Hebrew language. Second, while Chronicles may well be the latest of all the Biblical books to take form, we should remember that it is based on earlier material. This holds not only for portions which parallel Samuel/Kings, but also for the non-parallel parts. Over twenty different sources are mentioned (see, for example, 1 Chr. 9:1, 29:29, 2 Chr. 9:29), some of which may antedate Chronicles by as many as six centuries. Keeping these points in mind, let us now turn to a point-by-point review of the significant linguistic features of the Chronicler as delineated by Polzin.

In describing the language of Chronicles, Polzin rightly omitted those passages which are duplicates of Samuel/Kings. Thus his analysis is based on the 619 non-parallel verses in 1 Chronicles and the 407½ non-parallel verses in 2 Chronicles, for a total of 1026½ verses (pp. 27-28). He divided the grammatical features of Chronicles into those which are not attributable to Aramaic influence (marked by "A") and those which are caused by Aramaic influence (marked by "B").

A.1. *Radically reduced use of ʔet with pronominal euffix* (pp. 28-31)

Polzin is correct in noting that LBH greatly prefers the use of pronominal suffixes attached to the verb to the use of the *nota accusativi* ʔet with pronominal suffixes. This point is consistently demonstrated in Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, and the DSS.

A.2. *Increased use of ʔet before noun in the nominative case: ʔet emphatic* (pp. 32-37)

One might argue with Polzin's exclusion of the use of ʔet before a nominative with a passive verb, as in Gen. 4:18, 17:5, 21:5, 27:42, 29:27, from the category of ʔet emphatic, but even if we discuss only his examples, the point is not convincing. Polzin states that there are 34 occurrences of this usage (p. 36), but apparently he only counted the number of verses in which they appear. In actuality, there are 52 occurrences of the ʔet emphatic.⁷ Of these 52 examples, only 7 appear in Chronicles, 4 occur in Nehemiah, and 1 is in Daniel. On the other hand, 18 appear in the Pentateuch and 10 occur in Joshua through Kings, none of which is later than the Elisha narratives. I would argue, therefore, that ʔet emphatic is used at the same ratio throughout Biblical Hebrew, early and late.

6 J. Blau, "The Historical Periods of the Hebrew Language," in H. H. Paper, ed., *Jewish Languages: Themes and Variations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 2.

7 Deut. 14:13-17, which Polzin apparently counts as one instance, has 10 examples of the ʔet emphatic, and several other verses he cites also have more than one occurrence.

A.3. *Expression of possession by prospective pronominal suffix with a following noun, or l^c plus noun, or šel plus noun (pp. 38–40)*

This usage is not to be considered a characteristic of LBH. As Polzin points out, it also occurs in Phoenician, Aramaic, Akkadian, and Ethiopic, and Carl Brockelmann long ago demonstrated it to be of common Semitic usage.⁸ It is also common in Egyptian, as in *m hmt-f ntr* “without him, the god,” in Sinuhe R:67–68.⁹ There are many more examples of the prospective, or anticipatory, pronoun in BH that Polzin does not cite, including many early ones, as in Exod. 2:6; Lev. 13:57; Num. 23:18; 24:3; 24:15; 32:33; Josh. 1:2; Judg. 21:7; 1 Sam. 21:14; 2 Sam. 14:6.¹⁰ In short, the prospective suffix is a common Semitic construction used by EBH and LBH alike.¹¹

A.4. *Collectives are construed as plurals almost without exception (pp. 40–42)*

As Polzin points out, EBH construes collectives as plurals too sometimes, as in Gen. 30:38; 30:39; 31:8; 33:18; Judg. 1:22; 1:23;¹² and MH construes collectives as singulars or plurals.¹³ The possibility remains that the choice to construe collectives as singulars or plurals was present throughout the history of the Hebrew language in antiquity.¹⁴ The Chronicler’s proclivity to treat collectives as plurals might be ascribed to his idiolect.

A.5. *The Chronicler exhibits a preference for plural forms of words and phrases which the earlier language uses in the singular (pp. 42–43)*

Polzin is correct on this point.

A.6. *The use of an infinitive absolute in immediate connection with a finite verb of the same stem is almost completely lacking in the Chronicler; the infinitive absolute used as a command is not found at all in Chronicles (pp. 43–44)*

Polzin is correct vis-à-vis Chronicles, but the contemporary book of Esther makes wide use of the infinitive absolute (2:3, 3:13, 4:14, 6:9, 6:13, 8:8, 9:1, 9:6, 9:12, 9:16

8 C. Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen* (Berlin, 1913), 2:225–28.

9 See further A. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford, 1957), 68, 105, 109.

10 If, as I conclude, P is to be dated early, then Gen. 1:24 and Exod. 35:5 should also be cited as early examples of the prospective pronoun. Various theories have been advanced to explain *hay^etô ʔereš* in Gen. 1:24 (see, e.g., M. Dahood, *Psalms II* [Garden City, N.Y., 1968] 250, where the same words in Ps. 79:2 are discussed), but the simplest way to treat the *-ô* is to parse it as the pronominal suffix anticipating *ʔereš*. That *-ô* is masculine and *ʔereš* is usually feminine is no objection; *ʔereš* is masculine in Ezek. 21:24, Ps. 104:6, and should be taken that way in Gen 1:24 too. The expression *hay^etô ʔereš*, then, is to be compared to *napšô ʕāšēl* in Prov. 13:4 and *b^ehillô nērô* in Job 29:3, two of the passages with prospective pronoun cited by Polzin (p. 39).

11 It should also be noted that some of the examples cited by Polzin, where the pronominal suffix is the third person masculine plural $\text{—}m$, may also be parsed as enclitic *mem*; e.g., Ezek. 42:14, Psa. 49:14.

12 See *GKC*, pp. 462–63.

13 See M. H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford, 1974), 215; and idem., *Diqduq Leshon ha-Mishna* (Tel-Aviv, 1936), 183–84.

14 For a modern comparison, note that American English uses singular verbs with collective nouns but that British English uses plural verbs, viz., “the government decides today” vs. “the government decide today.”

[3x], 9:17 [2x], 9:18 [2x]). Polzin's view (p. 74) that Esther is archaistic but that Chronicles is living LBH is too simplistic. Since Chronicles is based on earlier material and Esther obviously originates in the Persian period, one might just as easily conclude that Esther is true LBH. Thus this usage should not necessarily be characterized as LBH.

A.7. *The Chronicler's use of the infinitive construct with b^e and k^e: As Segal points out, the later books of the OT show a less frequent use of the infinitive construct with b^e and k^e; and even in the cases where LBH does use the introductory infinitive construct with b^e and k^e this usage is different from earlier constructions* (pp. 45–46)

Polzin may be correct on this point, but the statistics he presents may also be used to show him to be incorrect. In the 1534 verses of Kings there are 41 examples of b^e and k^e plus the infinitive construct of bô³, kālā, rā³ā, and šāma^c (the four common verbs used by Polzin); in the 1026½ non-parallel verses in Chronicles there are 13 examples of this usage. But is it fair to include the 296½ non-parallel verses in 1 Chronicles 1–9, a document which has virtually no narrative but rather is a series of genealogical and geographic lists?¹⁵ If we subtract these verses from the total under consideration, we find that Kings has somewhat more than twice as many verses and somewhat more than thrice as many attestations of this usage. Obviously, the use of b^e and k^e with infinitive construct is still less frequent in Chronicles, but the trend is not as drastic as Polzin's figures suggest. Polzin also states that when b^e and k^e plus infinitive construct is used in Chronicles, it occurs without wayhî or w^ehāyā as in EBH. In this conclusion, he is correct.¹⁶

A.8. *Repetition of a singular word = Latin quivis* (pp. 47–51)

Polzin distinguishes the four quivis formations yôm wāyôm, l^eyôm l^eyôm, l^eša^car wāša^car, and kol ʿir wāʿir, on the one hand, and the phrase dôr wādôr, on the other. The former, he says, have the meaning "every several day," etc., but the latter connotes "forever" or "eternity." This is a distinction without a difference, for it is a translational problem that we have. Synthetically, the forms are alike, and it is incorrect to separate them because of the vagaries of the English language.

Thus, while yôm wāyôm, dôr wādôr constructions are more common in Chronicles and other late works as Polzin states, they do occur occasionally in early books. Examples are m̄ wām̄ in Exod. 10:8, šēš wāšēš in 2 Sam. 21:20 (both mentioned by Polzin), ʾeben wāʾeben in Deut. 25:13, ʾēpā w^eʾēpā in Deut. 25:13, and dôr wādôr in Deut. 32:7, Ps. 77:9, 90:1 (both psalms are dated early by Mitchell Dahood¹⁷).

Polzin also distinguishes the yôm wāyôm constructions from the same forms without waw, as in yôm yôm in Gen. 39:10, implying that the latter are early. This is correct, and for a very interesting reason. The concept "and" is an innovation in Egypto-

15 None of the 13 instances of the usage under discussion occurs in 1 Chron. 1–9.

16 But see below, p. 76.

17 Dahood, *Psalms II*, 224, 322.

Semitic as well as in Indo-European,¹⁸ and thus the asyndetic formulation will predate the syndetic one. In BH, we may point to *dôr dôr* in Exod. 3:15, 17:16, *yôm yôm* in Gen. 39:10, Exod. 16:5, Ps. 68:20, *šānā šānā* in Deut. 14:22, *ʿir ʿir* in Josh. 21:40, and *ʔiš ʔiš* in Lev. 15:2, 17:3, 17:8, 17:10, 17:13, 18:6, 20:2, 20:9, 22:4, 22:18, 24:15, 27:31, all in early works.¹⁹ In Ugaritic, the asyndeton is the only method used, such as *dr dr* in *UT* 51:III:7, 68:10, 1 Aqht:154, 1 Aqht:162, 1 Aqht:168, and *ymym* in *UT* 2062:A:11.

Polzin is certainly correct in considering the *kol ʿir wāʿir* construction a characteristic of LBH. This formation occurs mainly in Chronicles and Esther²⁰ and it is common in MH. It also occurs in an Eteocretan inscription from c. 6th century: κλ ες υ ες (equals *kol ʔiš wāʔiš*).²¹

In his postscript,²² Polzin states (p. 167) that Avi Hurvitz reached similar conclusions in his treatment of the *quivis* construction.²³ This is misleading, however, for there are some important differences. First, Hurvitz, as I have done above, did not distinguish between the forms *yôm wāyôm* and *dôr wādôr*. Secondly, Hurvitz concluded, again as I have, that only the *kol ʿir wāʿir* construction is late. He said nothing about the other *quivis* constructions being early or late.

I would conclude by positing the following chronological development. The asyndeta *dôr dôr*, *yôm yôm*, etc., were used first, as in the Ugaritic texts and commonly in the Pentateuch (as well as in Ps. 68). The syndeta *dôr wādôr*, *yôm wāyôm*, etc., developed next, gradually replacing the earlier formulation (but note that *yôm yôm* occurs still in Prov. 8:34). Finally the pleonasms *kol dôr wādôr*, *kol yôm wāyôm*, etc., developed and coexisted with the above syndeta. These two forms together served the death blow to the original asyndetic construction.

A.9. *The third feminine plural pronominal suffixes: the Chronicler shows a merging of the third feminine plural suffix with the third masculine plural suffix* (pp. 52–54)

The use of *-(h)m* for the third person feminine plural pronominal suffix is not late. It occurs throughout BH, in Gen. 26:15, 26:18, 32:16, 33:13, 41:23, Exod. 2:17, 25:29, Lev. 26:3, Num. 16:18, 27:7, 36:6, Deut. 27:2, Josh. 17:4, Judg. 21:22, 1 Sam. 9:20, 2 Kgs. 18:13, Isa. 3:16, 36:1, 37:11, 60:8, Jer. 43:9, 44:2, Ezek. 1:6–26 (*passim*), Amos 4:1, Zech. 11:5, Ps. 34:20, Job 1:14–15, 39:3, Qoh. 2:6, 10:9, 11:8, 12:1, as well as in the passages cited by Polzin. I would explain these forms as characteristic of

18 See *UT*, p. 106, and especially notes 1–4; and E. P. Hamp. "Albanian *edhe* 'And,'" in Y. Arbeitman and A. R. Bomhard, eds., *Bono Homini Donum: Essays in Historical Linguistics in memory of J. Alexander Kerns* (Amsterdam, 1982). Also germane is the fact that Akkadian scribes regularly omitted the conjunction *u* in archaizing texts; see W. von Soden, *Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik* (Rome, 1969), p. 241.

19 If, as I conclude, P is to be dated early, then *ʔiš ʔiš* in Exod. 36:4, Num. 9:10, should also be included in this list of asyndeta.

20 Polzin gives 13 examples in these two books, though see Ps. 145:13 for *kol dôr wādôr*.

21 See C. H. Gordon, *Evidence for the Minoan Language* (Ventnor, N.J., 1966), 10.

22 Written several years after the completion of the dissertation, but included in the published work (pp. 167–70).

23. A. Hurvitz, *Beyn Lashon le-Lashon* (Jerusalem, 1972), 70–73.

ancient spoken Hebrew.²⁴ The same phenomenon occurs in colloquial Arabic. Whereas written Arabic uses *-hum* for the masculine and *-hunna* for the feminine, most dialects of spoken Arabic use *-hum* for both genders.²⁵ If the Chronicler uses *-(h)m* for *-(h)n*, then it may be ascribed to the influence of spoken Hebrew on his composition.

A.10. *The first person singular imperfect with -āh (the lengthened imperfect or cohortative) is found but once in the Chronicler's language* (pp. 54–55)

As Polzin admits, this usage is ubiquitous in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, and in the DSS. Though many of these occurrences lack any cohortative meaning, the point remains that the long imperfect is common in LBH. Its virtual absence from Chronicles may be explained in two ways. First, there is a relative paucity of first person expression in Chronicles. There are 40 instances of *ʔani / ʔânôki* in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, and 54 instances in the DSS, but only 12 instances of the first person independent pronoun in the non-parallel passages of Chronicles. Second, in the Hebrew diglossia of Greco-Roman times,²⁶ written Hebrew (exemplified by QH) used the long imperfect extensively but spoken Hebrew (exemplified by MH) never used it.²⁷ We may assume a similar situation at the time of the composition of Chronicles (and indeed throughout all of Biblical times²⁸), and thus the paucity of the long imperfect in this book may be another instance of colloquial Hebrew exerting influence on its author's language.

A.11. *Wayhî greatly recedes in Chronicles and in the younger language* (pp. 56–58)

The figures presented by Polzin do not show a tremendous decrease in the use of *wayhî*. In the 1534 verses of Kings there are 125 examples of this verb. Again, if we subtract the 296½ non-parallel verses in 1 Chronicles 1–9—for we should not expect to find *wayhî*, a collocation used specifically in narrative prose, in the genealogical and geographic lists which comprise these chapters²⁹—there remain 730 verses with 32 occurrences of *wayhî*. That Chronicles uses *wayhî* less than Kings is still correct, but the difference is not as great as Polzin's statistics suggest. I would point out that *wayhî* appears but 7 times in the 955 verses of Deuteronomy, a book which Polzin admits is composed in classical BH (pp. 94–95). On the other hand, *wahyi* occurs 8 times in the 121 verses of Zech. 1–8, a work roughly contemporary with Chronicles. Thus an older book such as Deuteronomy uses *wayhî* even less than Chronicles, and a later work such as Zech. 1–8 uses *wayhî* as commonly as Kings.

24 See GKC, p. 440.

25 Cf. A. Willms, *Einführung in das Vulgärarabische von Nordwest-afrika* (Leiden, 1972), 39; T. F. Mitchell, *An Introduction to Egyptian Colloquial Arabic* (London, 1956), 26; and J. Van Ess, *The Spoken Arabic of Iraq* (London, 1938), 69.

26 See S. Lieberman, "Response to Professor Blau," in Paper, *Jewish Languages*, 26; J. Fellman, "On 'Diglossia,'" *Language Sciences* 8 (1975), 39; and G. Rendsburg, *Evidence for a Spoken Hebrew in Biblical Times* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1980), 15–19.

27 Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 72; and idem, *Diqduq Leshon ha-Mishna*, 123.

28 Rendsburg, *Evidence for a Spoken Hebrew in Biblical Times*; and W. Chomsky, *Hebrew: The Eternal Language* (Philadelphia, 1964), 161.

29 Thus it occurs but twice in these 296½ verses.

A.12. *The cardinal numbers: in appositional relationship, the Chronicler prefers to place the substantive before the numeral and most always puts it in the plural. This is contrary to the older general practice of putting the number first* (pp. 58–60)

The evidence from MH and QH suggests that post-Biblical Hebrew placed the numeral (except “one”) first. In MH, this is almost always the case,³⁰ and in the DSS, it is exceedingly common. Polzin notes (p. 60) that the War Scroll places the number first 41 times versus the substantive first 3 times and that the Manual of Discipline places the number first 19 times versus the substantive first one time. Polzin’s argument for LBH is based on the following figures from Chronicles: 44 times the number is first, and 76 times the substantive is first. But a closer investigation of these 120 instances has revealed that 102 of them occur in lists and administrative documents where the substantive would normally precede the number.³¹ Of the remaining 18 occurrences, 9 times the number is first (2 Chr. 8:13, 11:21 [2x], 13:17, 13:21 [2x], 21:20, 26:17, 36:21) and 9 times the substantive is first (1 Chr. 4:42, 12:40, 2 Chr. 11:17 [2x], 11:21 [2x], 13:9, 13:21, 20:25). Obviously, LBH does not show a proclivity in one direction or the other, and the same may be said for EBH as well as for Ugaritic,³² Phoenician,³³ Moabite,³⁴ and Aramaic.³⁵

A.13. *The Chronicler shows an increased use of the infinitive construct with l^c* (pp. 60–61)

30 Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 194; and idem, *Diqduq Leshon ha-Mishna*, 100.

31 Thus, for example, the Copper Scroll from Qumran places the substantive first 60 times and number first only once. This is due to the fact that this scroll consists almost solely of lists. Similarly, since Ezra 1:9–11, 8:18–20, 8:24–27, and Neh. 7 are lists, Polzin should not use them to support his claim that LBH placed the substantive before the numeral. For an excellent example in EBH, see Josh. 12:9–24. Even in our limited corpora of Ammonite and Minoan texts, we note that substantives always precede the number in administrative documents. Thus eleven times in the 11-line Heshbon Ostrakon IV, a list of commodities (see F. M. Cross, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 13 [1975], 2), and seven times in lines 3–5 of the Hagia Triada 88 text, a list of persons (see Gordon, *Evidence for the Minoan Language*, 27). That a list of people might be counted is known also from 2 Sam. 23:39 where *kol š^elōšim w^ešib^cā* is paralleled exactly by Minoan usage; cf. R. Steiglitz, *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 14 (1971), 217–18; and C. H. Gordon, *JRAS* (1975), 153. The non-Semitic world also engaged in this practice. For an excellent example from Mycenaean Greek, see Y. Ring, *Tarbiz* 46 (1977), 141–45.

32 *UT*, p. 128.

33 J. Friedrich, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik* (Rome, 1951), p. 145; and Friedrich and W. Röllig, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik²* (Rome, 1970), pp. 157–58.

34. In the Mesha Stele, number before substantive occurs in lines 3, 8, 16, 20, and substantive before number occurs in line 28. There may have been a tendency toward the former formulation, but the latter is also attested in our very limited corpus of Moabite material.

35. This holds for Biblical Aramaic, Mandaic, Syriac, and various other dialects (as pointed out by Polzin, pp. 59–60). Only Elephantine Aramaic consistently has the number after the substantive. Are we to attribute this to the Egyptian substratum? Although the numeral regularly stands before the noun in Late Egyptian and in Coptic, with the numeral ‘two’ this situation is reversed; see A. Erman, *Neuaegyptische Grammatik* (Leipzig, 1880), pp. 60–62; J. Černý and S. I. Groll, *A Late Egyptian Grammar* (Rome, 1978), pp. 86–88; and W. C. Till, *Koptische Grammatik* (Leipzig, 1970), pp. 82–83. Since in Hebrew and in Aramaic the numeral ‘one’ follows the noun and in the local Egyptian language the numeral ‘two’ follows the noun, did the Jews of Elephantine expand this usage to include all the numerals when they wrote in Aramaic?

On this point, Polzin himself admits that the use of infinitive construct with *l^e* in Chronicles “is not significantly greater” than the same usage in Classical BH (p. 60) and that the “data is not conclusive” (p. 61).

B.1. *Material and its weight or measure: appositional order: the Chronicler often has: material weighed or measured + its weight or measure (+ number) (pp. 61–64)*³⁶

Again we must divorce those examples which occur in lists from those examples which occur in narrative. In the former, one would naturally expect to find the order of material weighed or measured plus its weight or measure, to wit, the Copper Scroll, Ezra 2, and Neh. 7, where this method is consistently used. If we look at the instances of *kikkār*, the most common of all the measures or weights in Chronicles, in the non-parallel verses, we note that the “new” order is used in 1 Chr. 22:14 [2x], 29:7, but that the “old” order is used in 1 Chr. 29:4 [2x], 2 Chr. 25:6, 27:5. The evidence from the other late books is similar: the “new” order is followed in Ezra 8:26 (2x) and the “old” order appears in Es. 3:9. It may be concluded, therefore, that LBH, like EBH, had the option of using either method.

B.2. *l^e is used very often as mark of the accusative (pp. 64–66)*

The common use of *l^e* as *nota accusativi* is a feature of LBH, but as Polzin notes it does occur in EBH too.

B.3. *Min ‘from’: the nun is often not assimilated before a noun without an article (p. 66)*

This too is a sign of LBH. To the evidence presented by Polzin add the fact that in the DSS the same usage occurs in Manual of Discipline 7:3.

B.4. *The Chronicler uses the l^e emphatic before the last element of a list (pp. 66–68)*

Emphatic *lamed* is undoubtedly an ancient form. Its common occurrence in Ugaritic suggests that classical Hebrew used it as well.³⁷ If the Chronicler uses it, it should be considered a survival and not something characteristic of LBH.

B.5. *Rabbim used attributively is placed twice in Chronicles before the substantive (p. 68)*

Two examples from late works, Neh. 9:28 and 1 Chr. 28:5, are not enough to deem this usage characteristic of LBH.

36 Those features marked by “B” are usually ascribed to Aramaic influence, but in each instance this is questionable (see Polzin’s own remarks). Since this paper is concerned with the features themselves and not with their supposed Aramaic origin, I shall refrain from discussing this problem here. Suffice it to say that more and more scholars are questioning the supposed Aramaic provenance of many Hebrew usages. See, e.g., M. Dahood, *Psalms I* (Garden City, N.Y., 1965), 261–62; idem, *Psalms II*, 98, 101, 303; and idem, *Psalms III* (Garden City, N.Y., 1970), 24–25, 67, 116, 152, 271–72, 287, 331. On the question of using even true Aramaisms to date Biblical work, see Dahood, *Psalms III*, XXXVII.

37 See Dahood, *Psalms III*, 406–7; idem, *Ugaritic-Hebrew Philology* (Rome, 1965), 22; A. C. M. Blommerde, *North-west Semitic Grammar and Job* (Rome, 1969), 31; and G. R. Driver, “Affirmation by Exclamatory Negation,” *JANES* 5 (1973), 107–14.

B.6. *Use of 'ad l^e* (p. 69)

This apparently is a trait of LBH. It should be remembered, however, that the piling up of prepositions also occurs in Phoenician,³⁸ and that Egyptian *r*, cognate to Hebrew *l^e*, also means 'until' as well as 'to,' 'for,' etc.³⁹

By now, the reader will have realized that my definition of LBH is somewhat different from Polzin's. Of the 19 usages listed by Polzin, I would point to only the following as certainly characteristic of LBH:

A.1. Radically reduced use of *ʔet* with pronominal suffix.

A.5. The Chronicler exhibits a preference for plural forms of words and phrases which the earlier language uses in the singular.

A.7b. When the infinitive construct with *b^e* and *k^e* is used, it occurs without *wayhi* or *w^ehāyā*.⁴⁰

B.2. *l^e* is used very often as mark of the accusative.

B.3. *min* 'from': the *nun* is often not assimilated before a noun without an article.

Thus there are a handful of usages which no doubt separate LBH from EBH. But as a whole, the two idioms are not very different.⁴¹ It is worthwhile to recall Blau's observation quoted earlier,⁴² and to cite William Chomsky's observation:⁴³

The Hebrew people were thrown into contact and collisions with other people. Its vocabulary was considerably enriched by the admission of numerous foreign words borrowed from the many peoples among whom they dwelt. Yet the original linguistic pattern of Hebrew remained more or less intact. Thus we speak of biblical Hebrew as a unitary phase of the language, distinguished by typical characteristics of grammar and style. Yet, the interval between the earliest biblical documents, such as the Song of Moses or the Song of Deborah, on the one hand, and the books of Koheleth and Esther, on the other, is as long as the interval separating the period of Alfred the Great from our own day.⁴³

I would suggest that one of the reasons for the conservative nature of LBH (as well as for Hebrew in general) was the relative isolation of its users in the hills of Judah and Samaria. It is a well established linguistic fact that languages used in isolated areas tend to change more gradually; e.g. compare Icelandic among the Germanic languages.

Having so described LBH, Polzin next attempts to characterize the language of P in order to compare it to the language of Chronicles. In delineating P, Polzin rightly used "only those passages commonly agreed to be P" by S. R. Driver, Otto Eissfeldt, Martin Noth, and others (p. 87). He further subdivided P into those passages which are considered the "groundwork of P" (P^g) and those passages which are considered "secondary additions" (P^s). Omitted from the discussion are the legal sections of P such

38 Friedrich and Röllig, *Grammatik*, p. 127.

39 Gardiner, *Grammar*, p. 126.

40 But see below, p. 76.

41 I exclude, of course, the lexicographical evidence. LBH has many borrowings from Persian and other languages which EBH lacks.

42 See above, p. 66.

43 Chomsky, *Hebrew*, 30-31.

as the Holiness Code of Lev. 17–26, for, as Polzin correctly states, these corpora of laws “do not seem to be appropriate as objects of an analysis based on grammatical / syntactic features derived from the narrative genre of the Chronicler’s work” (p. 87).

Before beginning his detailed analysis of P^s and P^s, for the sake of comparison, Polzin includes a brief analysis of samplings from JE,⁴⁴ the Deuteronomist,⁴⁵ and the Davidic Court History⁴⁶ (pp. 90–95). Polzin concludes that these three corpora “present a unified picture of classical BH standing in marked contrast to the LBH of the Chronicler” (p. 95). He then tries to place P (or more specifically P^s and P^s) in the history of the Hebrew language with JE, the Deuteronomist, and the Court History at one end (= EBH) and Chronicles at the other (= LBH).

Beginning with P^s, Polzin notes that this document shares many features with EBH, but that four features set it apart, namely, A.3, the prospective pronominal suffix, A.4, collectives are construed as plurals, A.9, the use of *-(h)m* for the third person feminine plural pronominal suffix, and A.6, the decreased use of the infinitive absolute. The first of these usages, A.3, has been shown to be a common Semitic usage, and more importantly, I have given many examples of this usage in EBH. The same holds for the third of these usages, A.9; the number of passages where *-(h)m* is used for the third person feminine plural in EBH is considerable. Moreover, of the five examples cited by Polzin, only Exod. 25:29 is cogent. In Exod. 28:11, 28:14, 28:26, 28:27, the suffix is not the third person feminine plural, but rather the third person common dual cognate to Arabic *-humā* and Ugaritic *-hm*.⁴⁷ Note that the antecedents are, respectively, “two stones,” “two chains,” “two rings,” and “two rings.”

In the second of these usages, A.4, the evidence is not conclusive. Whereas Chronicles is virtually consistent in construing collectives as plurals, in P^s this is the case only half the time. The figures presented by Polzin show that P^s agrees with JE and the Court History on this point, not with Chronicles (p. 98). Thus, only with the fourth usage, A.6, does P^s accord with Chronicles. But as I pointed out, since Esther uses the infinitive absolute extensively, the fact that P^s uses this form sparingly should not be used in attempting to date this document.

Polzin concludes his section on P^s as follows:

All of the data which we have indicated above gives us enough evidence to place P^s in a typological relationship between classical BH and the LBH of Chronicles. Our data indicates that P^s represents a typological stage in the historical development of biblical Hebrew prose when the main features that separate LBH from classical BH have only begun to make their presence felt on its language. P^s is still predominantly classical, but we see already present in four of its features some of the influences that later will form the special character of LBH (p. 100).

44 Culled from Exodus and Numbers.

45 Culled from Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings.

46 Culled from 2 Sam. 13 through 1 Kgs. 1.

47 See G. Rendburg, “Dual Personal Pronouns and Dual Verbs in Hebrew” (forthcoming); E. F. Campbell, *Ruth* (Garden City, N.Y., 1975), 65; R. G. Boling, *Judges* (Garden City, N.Y., 1973), 276; and P. K. McCarter, *1 Samuel* (Garden City, N.Y., 1980), 135.

The evidence I have presented above shows that this conclusion needs to be modified. In every aspect, the language of P^s is classical BH.

Polzin next analyzes the language of P^s. Here he noted eight features which link this document with LBH, namely, A.3, the prospective pronominal suffix, A.4, collectives are construed as plurals, A.9, the use of *-(h)m* for the third person feminine plural pronominal suffix, A.7b, the infinitive construct with *b^e* or *k^e* occurs without *wayhî* or *w^ehāyā*, A.11, *wayhî* greatly recedes, A.12, the substantive precedes the cardinal number, B.1, the material weighed or measured precedes its weight or measure, A.2, the use of *ʔet* before a nominative. Let us discuss each of these points individually.

A.3. As stated twice, the prospective pronominal suffix occurs throughout BH and indeed throughout Semitic.

A.4. P^s construes collectives as plurals 15 out of 21 times (p. 103). In Chronicles, this usage is consistently followed, so P^s falls short of true LBH.

A.9. As stated twice, *-(h)m* for the third person feminine plural suffix occurs repeatedly in EBH. Moreover, 3 of the 6 examples cited by Polzin are to be parsed as third person common dual suffixes. Consider Exod. 39:7, where the antecedent is "lazuli stones," but, as the corresponding passage in Exod. 28:9 shows, there were *two* stones; Exod. 39:18, where the antecedent is "*two* settings" (or "*two* ends" or "*two* cords"); and Exod. 39:20, where the antecedent is "*two* rings."⁴⁸ The same dual suffix also occurs in Exod. 30:4, also ascribed to P^s.

A.7b. Here Polzin is correct: P^s accords with Chronicles on this point.

A.11. The paucity of *wayhî* (and *w^ehāyā*) in P^s is not a sign of lateness. As stated earlier, Deuteronomy uses *wayhî* only 7 times in 955 verses, but this does not make it a late work, a point which Polzin himself acknowledges (pp. 94–95).

A.12. Polzin writes that if we exclude the lists of P^s, where we naturally expect to find the substantive preceding the cardinal,⁴⁹ then "P^s places the substantive first almost one-half of the time" (p. 107).⁵⁰ This choice was prevalent throughout the history of the Hebrew language as well, as in the kindred languages of Ugaritic, Phoenician, Moabite, and Aramaic.⁵¹

B.1. Again we should exclude those passages which occur in lists, where the order of material weighed or measured plus its weight or measure would naturally be found. The only passage which should be analyzed, therefore, is Exod. 29:40, where once the "new" order is used and twice the "old" order is used (p. 110). This accords with Hebrew usage throughout its history, that is, the author had the choice of either method.

A.2. As argued above, the use of *ʔet* before a nominative is not a sign of LBH.

Polzin concludes that the language of P^s is "in a typological position after P^s and prior to the LBH of the Chronicler" (p. 112). But of the eight characteristics which P^s purportedly shares with LBH, only one holds up to further testing. One may decide that the appearance of this one feature—the infinitive construct with *b^e* or *k^e* occurring without *wayhî* or *w^ehāyā*—in P^s is enough evidence to allow Polzin's conclusion to

48 See the references in n. 47.

49 See above, p. 71.


50 Even if we do not exclude the lists of P^s, we find that 79 out of 134 times the number precedes the substantive (p. 107).

51 See notes 32–35.

stand. I would argue, however, that since everything else in the language of P^s points to an early composition, we should reverse our earlier conclusion that feature A.7b is exclusively LBH. Its nine-fold use in P^s (Exod. 30:8, 30:20, 40:32 [2x], 40:36, Num. 1:51 [2x], 9:19, 9:22) suggests that it was used in EBH as well.

The language of P^s, like that of P^g, is therefore classical BH. This is further evidenced by noting that P (both P^g and P^s) favors the use of *’et* with pronominal suffixes more than any other prose work in the Hebrew Bible (as noted by Polzin, pp. 100, 111), and that two other signs of LBH, the frequent use of *l’* to mark the accusative and *min* before an anarthrous noun, are exceedingly rare in P.

Here it should be noted that Polzin never proposes dates for the composition of P^g and P^s. He only states that P^g is later than JE, the Deuteronomist, and the Court History, that P^s is later than P^g, and that Chronicles is later than P^s. His work includes the following graph conveniently presenting his conclusion (p. 112):⁵²

JE	Court Hist.	Dtr.	P ^g	P ^s	Chr
			4 features of LBH already present	8 features of LBH already present	LBH
Classical BH					

I believe I have shown that the language of P is also classical BH and that this schema needs to be modified accordingly.

It is appropriate to ask whether or not I even believe that the date of P can be determined by linguistics means. The answer is yes. Indeed I have used the very data presented by Polzin to show that P is early. Since I have been critical of much of the author's work until now, I should state here that Polzin has done a great service to the scholarly community. I wrote earlier that anyone who wishes to engage in this type of research must do painstaking work dealing with the minutiae of the Hebrew language. In this regard, Polzin has performed his task well. His analysis of the language of Chronicles and the language of P far surpasses earlier work done on the subject. It is in the interpretation of his findings that I believe he has faltered.

There is still other linguistic evidence which may be used in deciding the date of P. Avi Hurvitz compared nine different terms common in early Hebrew with their late Hebrew equivalents and in each instance showed that P uses the former.⁵³ Polzin discusses Hurvitz's study in a postscript (pp. 168-169). While he accepts Hurvitz's findings, he tries to argue that "a demonstrably late corpus can systematically and successfully utilize all nine of Hurvitz's classical technical terms to the exclusion of their LBH counterparts" (p. 169). Although one must admit that this is possible, it is highly unlikely. Polzin's statement is further weakened by my arguments above that P is not "demonstrably late."

⁵² I present the graph in less detail. One might assume that Polzin proposes to date P to the Exilic and / or post-Exilic era. But since he does not expressly say so, it is better not to discuss the matter.

⁵³ A. Hurvitz, "The Evidence of Language in Dating the Priestly Code," *RB* 81 (1974), 24-56. See also Hurvitz, "The Usage of *šēš* and *būš* in the Bible and its Implications for the Date of P," *HTR* 60 (1967), 117-21; and idem, *Tarbiz* 40 (1971), 261-67.

The early composition of P may also be exhibited in another manner. Earlier, I noted that on nine occasions (Exod. 28:9, 28:11, 28:14, 28:26, 28:27, 30:4, 39:7, 39:18, 39:20) P uses the third person common dual suffix *-(h)m*. Although such forms are occasionally used in late works (see the verses cited below), such a high concentration of dual forms in P points to its early date. Elsewhere I have collected the 43 examples of this usage in the Bible,⁵⁴ and the breakdown of their occurrences follows:

Early Works

"P" (see the verses cited above)	9
"JE" (Gen. 18:20; 19:9; 31:9; Exod. 1:21)	4
Judges (16:3 [2x], 19:24 [3x])	5
1 Samuel (6:7 [3x], 6:10 [2x], 6:12)	6
Ruth (1:8, 1:9, 1:11, 1:13, 1:19, 4:11)	6

Works of Undetermined Date

Proverbs (6:21 [2x])	2
Song of Songs (4:2 [2x], 6:6 [2x])	4

Late Works

Jeremiah (33:24)	1
Ezekiel (23:45, 23:46, 23:47 [2x])	4
Zechariah (5:9)	1
Qoheleth (2:10)	1

That the later works of the Bible show a marked decrease in the use of the third person common dual suffix is to be expected. The dual is a survival in Egypto-Semitic which is on its way out.⁵⁵ Thus a work such as P, which uses these forms relatively frequently, is to be dated early, and thus it is included in the above chart with JE, Judges, Samuel, and Ruth.

⁵⁴ Rendsburg, "Dual Personal Pronouns" (see n. 47 above).

⁵⁵ Thus, e.g., Old Egyptian and Middle Egyptian use dual pronouns commonly (see E. Edel, *Altägyptische Grammatik* [Rome, 1955/1964], pp. 70–80, and Gardiner, *Grammar*, pp. 39, 58–60, 66), but Late Egyptian uses them not at all. Similarly, dual personal pronouns are used in Akkadian but are not attested natively after the 20th Century (see R. M. Whiting, "The Dual Personal Pronouns in Akkadian," *JNES* 31 [1972], 331–37; idem, "More About Dual Personal Pronouns in Akkadian," *JNES* 36 [1977], 209–11; and W. L. Moran, "The Dual Personal Pronouns in Western Peripheral Akkadian," *BASOR* 211 [1973], 50–53). Their occurrence in the Amarna letters was correctly ascribed by Moran, p. 53, to "the tenacity and conservatism of the western scribal tradition," a fact reflected in the wide use of the dual in the roughly contemporary Ugaritic texts. In the Indo-European world, we may note that Homeric $\omega\tilde{\omega}\tilde{\iota}$, cognate to Egyptian and Ugaritic *-ny*, is absent from Classical and later Greek.

There is still another characteristic of P which suggests an early composition. I speak of its use of the third person common singular independent pronoun הוּא. As is well known, only in the Pentateuch is epicene הוּא used, that is, when used for "she" it is pointed הוּא as a *qre perpetuum*.⁵⁶ This usage has never been satisfactorily explained; indeed the question is seldom even addressed. But one thing is certain: in its use of epicene הוּא, P alligns itself grammatically with the remainder of the Pentateuch. Were P to be dated late, we would not expect to find היא used for the third person feminine singular pronoun. The same may also be said of the book of Deuteronomy. In fact, typologically the entire Pentateuch may be considered a unified work and may be dated to a time earlier than the composition of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel. This is not to say that writers of the Davidic period did not add such phrases as the boundaries given in Gen. 15:18,⁵⁷ but as a whole the Pentateuch is ancient.⁵⁸

To return to the question of epicene הוּא: although no other Semitic language exhibits this usage,⁵⁹ I suggest that earliest Hebrew employed a common form for the third person singular pronoun. This Hebrew was presumably that spoken in the hills of Judea and Samaria and may therefore have preserved an ancient feature. The origin of this usage may be sought in a non-Semitic substratum of the Palestinian hill country. We know, for example, that a Hittite enclave existed in Hebron in Abraham's time,⁶⁰ and that a Hurrian enclave lived in Jerusalem in David's time.⁶¹ The Jebusites themselves

56 The third person feminine singular היא occurs sporadically, in Gen. 14:2, 20:5; 38:25; Lev. 11:39; 13:10; 13:21; 16:31; 20:17; 21:9; Num. 5:13; 5:14.

57 See C. H. Gordon, "The Patriarchal Narratives," *JNES* 13 (1954), 56.

58 The reader will realize that I am unsympathetic to the entire documentary hypothesis. But since Polzin's work is not concerned with higher criticism *per se*, a discussion of this approach to the Hebrew Bible would be inappropriate. Rather, like Polzin, I accept the fact that "if those scattered portions of the Tetrateuch called P actually represent a relatively late unified 'source' within it, this corpus should contain enough linguistic characteristics to indicate such a relative age" (p. 1). Polzin has argued that the language of P does reflect a late date, and I am suggesting that it does not. Thus I continue to use the siglum "P"—for the sake of convention and simplicity—even though I do not believe that an Israelite priest or priestly school is necessarily responsible for those passages so designated.

59 But Old Babylonian does use epicene forms for the third person singular independent oblique pronouns, *šuaṭi* for the genitive-accusative and *šuašim* for the dative, at least in official language. Cf. von Soden, *Grundriss*, p. 41.

60 See Gen. 23, and recall Ezek. 16:3, "your mother was a Hittite."

61 The ruler of Jerusalem in 2 Sam. 24:16–24 is called *hā'awarnā* or *'arawnā*, reflecting both variants of the Hurrian word for "lord," *iwri* and *irwi*, with the Hurrian postpositive article *-ne*. (A third variant, *ʾornān*, occurs in 1 Chr. 21:15–28; 2 Chr. 3:1.) That the word is a common noun and not a personal name is indicated by the form in 2 Sam. 24:16 with the Hebrew definite article. (On this question of redetermination, see Y. Arbeitman and G. Rendsburg, "Adana Revisited," *Archiv Orientalni* [forthcoming], n. 11, and the relevant part of the text. To the examples cited there, add those mentioned by H. L. Ginsberg, "Ugaritico-Phoenician," *JANES* 5 [1973], 136, n. 23.) The Hurrian ruling class in Jerusalem dates back at least to the Amarna period, for the king of the city in El Amarna letters 285–90 bears the name ARAD-*hipa*, "servant of Hep/ba." One of David's heroes from nearby Shaalbim (located 17 miles northwest of Jerusalem at the very foot of the Jordan hills) is named "Eli-hep/ba" (Masoretic *ʾelyahbā*) in 2 Sam. 23:32; 1 Chr. 11:33; cf. B. Maisler (Mazar), *Untersuchungen zur alten Geschichte und Ethnographie Syriens und Palästinas* (Giessen, 1930), 38; and Y. Arbeitman, "Luwio-Semitic *Mischname* Theophores in the Bible, on Crete, and at Troy," *Scripta Mediterranea* 3 (1982), see Id. The inclusion of Hep/ba, the chief Hurrian goddess, in these names points to a strong Hurrian influence in early Israelite Judea. According to the Septuagint, the Hurrians were even more widespread, having lived in Schechem (Gen. 34:2, where the Masoretic text has "Hivite") and in Gibeon (Josh. 9:7, where the Masoretic text has "Hivite") as well.

may be of non-Semitic, perhaps even Hurrian, origin.⁶² Both of these languages, Hittite and Hurrian, do not distinguish gender for the third person singular pronoun,⁶³ a fact which may explain the Hebrew epicene הוּא. We should not be shocked that the language of a non-Semitic substratum could have had such an effect on a Semitic language. For example, of all the Semitic languages, only Aramaic has a postpositive article, most probably the result of the Hurrian substratum.⁶⁴ Similarly, spirantization of *b g d k p t* in Hebrew, Phoenician, and Aramaic has been ascribed to the influence of Hurrian phonetics.⁶⁵ It has also been suggested that the widespread gender confusion in the Nuzi dialect of Akkadian is the result of Hurrian interference.⁶⁶ These are but a few of the effects that Hurrian had on the Semitic languages, and I am suggesting that the use of epicene הוּא in the Pentateuch is another. To cite but one example with another non-Semitic substratum, the placing of the verb at the end of the sentence in Akkadian is doubtless due to Sumerian influence.⁶⁷

Once the Israelites began to spread out and come in greater contact with other Canaanite dialects, they adopted the widespread use of הִיא for the third person feminine singular and limited הוּא to the masculine. It is impossible to pinpoint the date of this transition, but the Davidic period may be posited as a *terminus ad quem*. In the international empire controlled by the Israelites, the gender distinction was obviously predominant and the epicene הוּא fell by the wayside. This explanation is only hypothetical, but it is more in keeping with the evidence than other conjectures so far proposed.⁶⁸

There is, moreover, one verse in the Pentateuch which bears this out. Genesis 14 is a document of unquestionably early date,⁶⁹ and thus many of its onomastic entries had to be updated by later glosses (see verses 2, 3, 7, 8, 17).⁷⁰ In one instance, verse 2, the

62 In 2 Sam. 24:16, *hāʾawarnā* is called "the Jebusite." The same epithet is used of *ʾornān* in 1 Chr. 21:15; 21:18; 21:28; 2 Chr. 3:1.

63 The various Hittite forms, all epicene, are discussed in Friedrich, *Hethitisches Elementarbuch* (Heidelberg, 1940), 26–27. The Hurrian oblique enclitic forms (no independent forms of the third person have been attested), also epicene, are discussed in idem, "Churritisch," in *Altkeinasatische Sprachen, Handbuch der Orientalistik, Abteilung 1 / Band 2, Abschnitt 1–2, Lieferung 2* (Leiden, 1969), 15.

64 As pointed out to me by C. H. Gordon.

65 See E. A. Speiser, "Hurrians and Hittites," in idem, ed., *The World History of the Jewish People*, (Givatayim / Ramat-Gan, 1964), 1: 160.

66 See C. H. Gordon, "The Pronoun in the Nuzi Tablets," *AJSL* 51 (1934), 21; and idem, "The Dialect of the Nuzi Tablets," *Orientalia* 7 (1938), 231.

67 See von Soden, *Grundriss*, p. 183.

68 Compare, e.g., *GKC*, p. 107; Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Lexicon*, 214–15; J. Barth, *Die Pronominalbildung in den semitischen Sprachen* (Leipzig, 1913; reprint; Hildesheim, 1967), 14; and S. A. Birnbaum, "The Leviticus Fragments from the Cave," *BASOR* 118 (1950), 25.

69 See Speiser, p. 106, where a mid-second millennium date is offered; and N. M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis* (New York, 1970), 111–12. I am not convinced by studies such as M. C. Astour, "Political and Cosmic Symbolism in Genesis 14 and in its Babylonian Sources," in A. Altmann, ed., *Biblical Motifs* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), 65–112, which date this chapter much later. See also M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* (Stuttgart, 1948), 170 [English translation: M. Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions*, trans. B. W. Anderson (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 154].

70 See Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, 112; and Y. Aharoni, "Tamar and the Roads to Elath," *IEJ* 13 (1963), 32.

gloss has הִיא. That is to say, the later editor used הִיא because he was writing at a time when this form was already entering Hebrew. That it had not totally displaced feminine הִיא may be gathered from the fact that the older form is still used in the glosses in verse 7 and 8. Thus we may tentatively date the glosses in Genesis 14 to the transitional period in which הִיא was gradually replacing הִיא for the third person feminine singular. Of the ten other attestations of הִיא in the Pentateuch, however, no similar conclusion may be reached.

These are some of *linguistic* methods which I believe can be used for dating the Pentateuch. A revaluation of the data analyzed by Polzin has shown that P is early. Hurvitz's study of various technical terms agrees with this conclusion. The relatively common use of the third person common dual pronoun and the very widespread use of the third person common singular pronoun also point to P's antiquity.

The remainder of Polzin's book is dedicated to compiling a tentative list of LBH lexicographic features. Polzin is correct in stating "that grammar and syntax provide a more reliable basis for chronological analysis than do lexicographic features of a language" (p. 123). Nevertheless, an important conclusion for the dating of P may be drawn from lexicographic study. Among the many words which Polzin includes as characteristic of LBH are a number of borrowings from Persian. Here may be cited *ʔiggeret, ganzak*,⁷¹ *zan, ništʔwan, parbār / parwār*, and *tiršātā*, and there are still others that Polzin did not cite. It is striking that none of these borrowings occurs in the Pentateuch, even in P. Indeed, the one time that the Masoretes tried to introduce a Persian loanword into the Pentateuch—through their division of *ʔšdt* in Deut. 33:2 into *ʔēš* and *dāt* (< Persian *dāta* 'law')—the scholars are unanimous in rejecting the Masoretic reading.⁷² Were P composed in the Persian period—as is widely assumed—we would expect to find at least a few of the Persian borrowings so prevelant in Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles, and Daniel. This is but another line of evidence which points to the antiquity of P and indeed of the whole Pentateuch.

Addendum

After this article was completed, Avi Hurvitz was kind enough to show me the proofs of his forthcoming *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship Between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel* (= Cahiers de la Revue Biblique 19: Paris, 1980). Included is an appendix (ibid., 163–70) devoted to a critique of Polzin's book, in which may be found many of the same conclusions I have reached. Hurvitz and I agree, for example, that A.7a and A.11 do not take into account the high proportion of technical matter included, that the argument for A.12 is weakened by not considering the lists and administrative documents involved, and that A.9 occurs throughout BH and not just in LBH. I thank Prof. Hurvitz for sharing the proofs with me.

71 The root *gnz* may be Aramaic, but the affirmative *-ak* is certainly Persian.

72 See G. Rendsburg, "Hebrew *ʔšdt* and Ugaritic *išdym*," *JNSL* (forthcoming).