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THE STRATA OF BIBLICAL HEBREW*

E. Kautzsch, one of the great Hebraists of the turn of the century, ended his preface to the 28th edition of Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar with the following statement: "historical differences have for the most part been obliterated by the harmonizing activity of the Masoretes."¹ Four decades later, one of the leading Hebraists of the next generation, G. R. Driver, described "a colloquialism that had gradually made its way into the written language and has survived there in spite of the harmonizing activities of the Massorettes."²

Except for the fact that Kautzsch saw only singular "activity" among the Masoretes and spelled Masoretes with one "s," whereas Driver wrote of plural "activities" of the Massorettes and spelled the word with double "ss," these two luminaries in the field of Hebrew studies were in essential agreement. Moreover, I suspect that their view concerning the harmonization process inherent in the Masora was or is shared by most people laboring in the field. This is a misconception of serious consequence.

The plain fact is that the Masoretes did no such thing. Rather, they simply and faithfully transmitted what they received. Accordingly, far from being monolithic in character, the language of the Hebrew Bible is filled with all sorts of variation. This is what I intend by the title of this article "The Strata of Biblical Hebrew."

Diachronic Difference

These strata are of different types. The one that is most widely recognized is the division of Biblical Hebrew (BH) along chronological grounds. Most scholars, I suppose, content themselves with a two-fold division into pre-Exilic Hebrew and post-Exilic Hebrew (the period of the Exile generally is attached to the former³). I prefer a tripartite division along the lines described by E. Y. Kutscher in his posthumous book *A History of the Hebrew Language*. Here we find the three divisions of Archaic Biblical

* An oral version of this paper was presented to the 1990 International Conference on University Teaching of Hebrew Language and Literature sponsored by the National Association of Professors of Hebrew. The session was held at Yeshiva University, New York, NY, on June 4, 1990.

1 GKC, p. vii.

2 G. R. Driver, "Hebrew Studies," *JRAS* (1948), p. 175.

3 For example, GKC, p. 12.

Hebrew (ABH), Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH), and Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH).⁴

There are a number of discriminants among these divisions. A good example of an ABH characteristic is the relative pronoun *zeh* or *zû*, as in Ps 68:9 ^ʔ*ēlôhîm zeh sînay* "God, the one of Sinai," Exod 15:13 *ʿam zû gāʾaltā* "the people whom you redeemed," Exod 15:16 *ʿam zû qānîṭā* "the people whom you created."⁵ A good example of an LBH characteristic is the increased use of pronominal suffixes attached to the verb, with a concomitant reduction in the use of the *nota accusativi* ^ʔ*et*.⁶ Thus, for example, we encounter *wattastîrêhû* in 2 Chr 22:11 vs. *wayyasîrû* ^ʔ*ôtô* in 2 Kgs 11:2.

There are a few instances of features whose development can be traced from ABH to SBH to LBH. One notable example is the syntagma which repeats a singular word to yield the idea of "every, all" (often called the *quivis* construction).⁷ The earliest usage is asyndetic, characteristic of Ugaritic and ABH. In the former I may cite *dr dr* in UT 51:III:7, 68:10, 1 Aqht 154, 1 Aqht 162, 1 Aqht 168, and *ym ym* in UT 2062:A:11, and in the latter I may cite *dôr dôr* in Exod 3:15, 17:16, *yôm yôm* in Gen 39:10, Exod 16:5, Ps 68:20, *šānāh šānāh* in Deut 14:22, *ʿîr ʿîr* in Josh 21:40, and *ʾîš ʾîš* numerous times in Leviticus, particularly in the Holiness Code. These examples antedate the introduction of *w-*, a point which dovetails with the fact that the concept "and" is an innovation in language.⁸

The SBH stage incorporates the conjunction into this construction. Thus we encounter the typical expressions *yôm wāyôm*, *dôr wādôr*, ^ʔ*eben wāʾeben* (Deut 25:13), *šēš wāšēš* (2 Sam 21:20), etc., which predominate in the Bible. The final step occurs in LBH, where the word *kol* is prefixed pleonastically to the phrase. Thus, in later texts we find expressions such as *kol dôr wādôr* in Ps 145:13,⁹ *kol yôm wāyôm* in Esth

4 E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1982), p. 12.

5 Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, p. 80.

6 R. Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Hebrew Prose* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), pp. 28-31. I concur with his evaluation of the data in G. A. Rendsburg, "Late Biblical Hebrew and the Date of 'P'," *JANES* 12 (1980), p. 66.

7 See my earlier treatment in Rendsburg, "Late Biblical Hebrew and the Date of 'P,'" pp. 68-69.

8 This can be seen in both Afroasiatic and Indo-European. For the former see C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967), p. 106, and especially nn. 1-4. For the latter see E. P. Hamp, "Albanian *edhe* 'And'," in Y. L. Arbeitman and A. L. Bomhard, eds., *Bono Homini Donum: Essays in Historical Linguistics in Memory of J. Alexander Kerns* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1981), pp. 127-131. 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: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), p. 241.

9 On this verse in particular, and with additional information including the evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls, see A. Hurvitz, *Ben Lashon le-Lashon* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1972), pp. 70-73.

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2:11, *kol ʿir wāʿir* in Esth 8:11, 8:17, 2 Chr 11:12, 28:25, 31:19.¹⁰ This usage is common in Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) and Qumran Hebrew (QH) as well.¹¹ In short, we can trace the diachronic development of this construction from ABH X-X to SBH X *wē*-X to LBH *kol* X *wē*-X. Naturally, there are numerous other examples of differences between ABH and SBH and between SBH and LBH. But since this area of variation in BH is well known, I prefer to devote more effort in the treatment below to less widely recognized issues.

Diglossia

The next topic to be discussed is diglossia. I use this term in its original definition as expressed by Charles Ferguson, namely, the co-existence of written and spoken dialects of the same language.¹² The best example of this phenomenon in the Semitic world is Arabic.¹³ In Hebrew, diglossia has been demonstrated for late antiquity, with MH representing the spoken variety and the continuum of LBH and QH representing the written variety.¹⁴ A few scholars have gone further and have proposed retrojecting this diglossia into the biblical period.¹⁵

10 See also the phrase $\kappa\lambda \epsilon\varsigma \upsilon \epsilon\varsigma$ (equals *kol ʿiṣ wāʿiṣ*) in Eteocretan inscription from c. 6th Century B.C.E. The text is discussed in C. H. Gordon, *Evidence for the Minoan Language* (Ventnor, NJ: Ventnor Publishers, 1966), p.10.

11 For MH examples see Hurvitz, *Ben Lashon le-Lashon*, pp. 70-71. (This usage is not discussed in the two standard grammars of MH by M. H. Segal: *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927]; and *Diqduq Leshon ha-Mishna* [Tel-Aviv: Dvir, 1936].) For QH see E. Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), pp. 81-82. (Qimron did not treat the issue in his dissertation: *Diqduq ha-Lashon ha-ʿIvrit shel Megillot Midbar Yehuda* [Hebrew University doctoral dissertation; Jerusalem, 1976].)

12 C. A. Ferguson, "Diglossia," *Word* 15 (1959), pp. 325-340.

13 The literature is vast. As an entree see S. J. Altoma, *The Problem of Diglossia in Arabic: A Comparative Study of Classical and Iraqi Arabic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).

14 On the diglossia of Hebrew in late antiquity, see E. Y. Kutscher, "Leshon Ḥazal," in S. Lieberman *et al.*, eds., *Sefer Hanokh Yalon* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sepher, 1963), pp. 247-248; J. Fellman, "On 'Diglossia'," *Language Sciences* 34 (1975), p. 39; C. Rabin, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century," in S. Safrai and M. Stern, eds., *The Jewish People in the First Century*, Volume 2 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1976), pp. 1015-1016; and S. Lieberman, "Response to Professor Blau," in H. H. Paper, ed., *Jewish Languages: Themes and Variations* (Cambridge, MA: Association for Jewish Studies, 1978), p. 26.

On the grouping of LBH and QH as one continuum, see H. Yalon, *Megillot Midbar Yehuda: Divre Lashon* (Jerusalem: Shrine of the Book Fund and Kiryat Sepher, 1967), p. 71; Qimron, *Diqduq ha-Lashon ha-ʿIvrit shel Megillot Midbar Yehuda*; and Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. This position has been challenge recently in an important article by S. Morag, "Qumran Hebrew: Some Typological Observations," *VT* 38 (1988), pp. 148-164. The data utilized by Morag are undeniable, but in the main it is still true that QH is closer to BH than it is to MH.

15 Segal, *Grammar*, p. 11; W. Chomsky, *Hebrew: The Eternal Language* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1964), p. 161; and E. Ullendorff, *Is Biblical Hebrew a Language?* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977), p. 11 (appeared originally in *BSOAS* 34 [1971], p. 249).

Previous scholars have noted instances in the Bible of divergences from the BH norm that anticipate standard usages in MH.¹⁶ Often these examples have been used to advance the argument for the lateness of a particular book. This need not be the case, however. Instead, I prefer to explain these usages as colloquialisms which have penetrated the written compositions of the Bible. Cognate support for this approach comes from comparisons with diglossia in Arabic, as I will now illustrate.

One of the main features of both MH and colloquial Arabic is gender neutralization in the 2nd and 3rd person plural independent pronouns, pronominal suffixes, and imperfect verbs, and in the plural imperative.¹⁷ Thus, for example, in the Mishna, *hen* "they" becomes *epicene*, that is, it is used for both 3rd masculine plural and 3rd feminine plural.¹⁸ Similarly, *yiqṭēlū* is of common gender, used for both 3rd masculine plural and 3rd feminine plural (the BH 3rd feminine plural *tiqṭolnāh* is absent).

I have compiled an exhaustive list of all such occurrences in the Bible, and the number of passages evincing gender neutralization is surprising quite high. There are 4 cases with the independent pronoun, 51 with the

16 Typically, examples from Song of Songs and Qohelet have been cited (see the excellent discussion in A. Bendavid, *Leshon Miqra' u-Leshon Hakhamim*, Volume 1 [Tel-Aviv: Dvir, 1967], pp. 74-80), but in actuality anticipations of MH are distributed throughout the Bible.

17 For the pronoun in MH, see Kutscher, "Leshon Hazal," pp. 259-261; E. Y. Kutscher, "Hebrew Language, Mishnaic," *EJ* 16 (1971), col. 1596; Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, pp. 123-127; and G. Haneman, *Torat ha-Šurot shel Leshon ha-Mishna* (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University Press, 1979-80), pp. 36, 466-468. The information in Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, pp. 40-41; and Segal, *Diqduq leshon ha-Mishna*, pp. 44, 46, is incorrect. It was based on the data conveyed in printed editions of the Mishna, not on the more reliable manuscripts studied by Kutscher and Haneman.

On the imperfect and imperative verbs in MH, see Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, p. 71; Segal, *Diqduq Leshon ha-Mishna*, p. 123; Kutscher, "Hebrew Language, Mishnaic," cols. 1598-1599; Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, pp. 208-209; and Haneman, *Torat ha-Šurot shel Leshon ha-Mishna*, p. 35.

On the situation in Arabic, see Altoma, *The Problem of Diglossia in Arabic*, pp. 47-48; T. F. Mitchell, *An Introduction to Egyptian Colloquial Arabic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), pp. 26, 34-35; L. Bauer, *Das palästinische Arabisch*, 2nd edition (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1910), pp. 20, 23, 67-68; and many other similar volumes. Gender neutralization does not occur in Bedouin and Yemenite Arabic; see H. Blanc, *The Arabic Dialect of the Negev Bedouins* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1970), pp. 130, 136; and E. Rossi, *L'Arabo parlato a Šan'ā'* (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente, 1939), pp. 19-20, 26, 29. This is no doubt due to the conservatism of these dialects due to the geographic isolation of these two speech communities.

18 In the best manuscripts of the Mishna, the forms with *-n*, i.e., *ʔatten* and *hēn*, predominate, due to the general MH phonological trend of *-m > -n*, e.g., *ʔādām > ʔādān* "man." See Kutscher, "Leshon Hazal," p. 258; Kutscher, "Hebrew Language, Mishnaic," col. 1595; and Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, pp. 121-122. For a slightly different explanation, see Z. Ben-Hayyim, "Traditions in the Hebrew Language with Special Reference to the Dead Sea Scrolls," in C. Rabin and Y. Yadin, eds., *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1965), p. 210.

pronominal suffix, 28 with the imperfect, and 5 with the imperative, for a total of 88 examples.¹⁹ I note here representative examples from each category:

2pl independent pronoun

Ezek 13:(17-)20 אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם מְצַדְדוֹת (בנות) ...
(daughters) ... by which you hunt

3pl independent pronoun

Jer 5:10 הֲסִירוּ גְטִישׁוֹתֶיהָ כִּי לֹא לַיהוָה הֵמָּה
remove her shoots for they are not Yahweh's

2pl pronominal suffix

2 Sam 1:24 בָּנוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־שָׂאוֹל בְּכִינָה הַמְלַבְּשָׁכֶם שְׁנֵי עִם־עֲדָנִים
daughters of Israel, weep over Saul who clothed you in crimson
with fineries

3pl pronominal suffix

Exod 36:14 עָשִׂיתִי־עֲשֵׂרָה יְרִיעַת עֹשֶׂה אֹתָם
eleven curtains he made them

Lev 26:3 וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וְעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם
and observe my commandments and perform them

1 Sam 9:20 וְלֹא־תִנּוֹת הָאֲבָדוֹת לְךָ ... אֶל־תִּשָּׂם אֶת־לִבְךָ לָהֶם
and as for your lost jennies ... do not be concerned with them

2pl imperfect

Joel 2:22 אַל־תִּירְאוּ בַּהֲמוֹת שָׂדֵי
fear not, O beasts of the field

3pl imperfect

Lev 26:33 וְעָרֵיכֶם יִהְיוּ חָרְבָה
your cities shall be in ruin

Judg 21:21 אִם־יָצְאוּ בָנוֹת־שִׁלוֹ
if the daughters of Shiloh come out

¹⁹ My list has been culled from standard BH grammars such as GKC. I exclude still other examples which are to be explained as archaic dual forms; see G. A. Rendsburg, "Dual Personal Pronouns and Dual Verbs in Hebrew," *JQR* 73 (1982), pp. 38-58. Two recent works are devoted to the subject, though they do not ascribe the phenomenon to the colloquial interference; see R. Ratner, *Gender Problems in Biblical Hebrew* (Hebrew Union College doctoral dissertation; Cincinnati, 1983); and J. Levi, *Die Inkongruenz im biblischen Hebräisch* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1987). For my view of the latter, see *JBL* 108 (1989), pp. 499-501.

Isa 49:11

וּמִסְלֹתַי יִרְמוֹן

my highways shall be raised up

plural imperative

Amos 4:1

שִׁמְעוּ הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה פָּרוֹת הַבָּשָׁן

hear this word, O cows of Bashan

My second example of a colloquial usage which appears commonly in the Bible is the adjectival clause. As is well known, the norm in BH is for the noun and the adjective to agree, not only as to number and gender, but as to definiteness or indefiniteness as well. If the noun has the definite article, the adjective does likewise, e.g., Jon 1:2 העיר הגדולה "the big city." This is also true in classical Arabic, e.g., *al-kalbu l-kabīru* "the big dog." In colloquial Arabic, however, the definite article often is omitted from either the noun or the adjective (omission from the noun is the more common). Thus one encounters *kalbu l-kabīru* or *al-kalbu /kabīru*.²⁰

The same phenomenon occurs in MH, e.g., Ma'aserot 4:6 פול הלבן "the white beans," and Kelim 8:10 התנור טמא "the unclean oven."²¹ Again there are numerous examples of this usage in the Bible. Examples of undetermined noun with determined adjective follow:

1 Sam 6:18	אֵבֶל הַגְּדוֹלָה	"the large meadow"
1 Sam 12:23	דֶּרֶךְ הַטּוֹבָה	"the good way"
2 Sam 12:4	אִישׁ הָעֵשִׁיר	"the wealthy man"
2 Kgs 20:13	שֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב	"the good oil"
Jer 6:20	קָנָה הַטּוֹב	"the sweet cane"
Zech 4:7	הַר-הַגְּדוֹל	"the great mountain"

Examples of the reverse, with determined noun and undetermined adjective are as follows:

2 Sam 6:3	הָעֲגֵלָה הַחֲדָשָׁה	"the new cart"
Jer 2:21	הַגֶּפֶן נִכְרִיָּה	"the strange vine"
1 Chr 27:5	הַכֹּהֵן רֹאשׁ	"the high priest"

The two usages discussed here are but two of many types of colloquialisms which have penetrated MT. Most scholars are not conscious of them, but they serve as clear evidence for the existence of a spoken dialect of Hebrew in biblical times distinct from the literary standard in which the Bible is composed. Until recently, no systematic attempt had been made at collecting these colloquialisms.²² I have completed a monograph devoted

20 See, e.g., J. Blau, *Diqduq ha-'Aravit ha-Yehudit shel Yeme ha-Benayim* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), p. 161; and A. Willms, *Einführung in der Vulgärarabisch von Nordwestafrika* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), p. 55.

21 Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, pp. 182-184; Segal, *Diqduq leshon ha-Mishna*, pp. 55-56; and Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, pp. 130-131.

22 First steps were taken by G. R. Driver, "Colloquialisms in the Old Testament," in D. Cohen, ed., *Mélanges Marcel Cohen* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 232-239; and Driver, "Hebrew Studies," pp. 164-176. Of course, even Driver did not fully under-

to just this subject, in which I treat in more detailed fashion the two usages discussed above, as well as many others.²³ The cumulative effect of the evidence demonstrates the existence of diglossia in ancient Hebrew.

Regional Dialects

We turn now to the next example of variation in BH, the issue of regional dialects.²⁴ With most scholars, I assume that the vast majority of the Bible was written in Judah, in Jerusalem in particular, and/or by exiles from Judah. This holds presumably for most if not 99% of the Pentateuch; the material in Samuel and Kings concerning David, Solomon, and the succeeding kings of Judah; the prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Second Isaiah, etc.; most of Psalms; the books of Ruth, Lamentations, Chronicles, etc. But naturally there are portions of the Bible which demonstrably are non-Judahite in origin, namely the stories in Judges dealing with the northern and trans-Jordanian heroes, the material in Kings presenting the history of the northern kingdom of Israel, the prophet Hosea, certain Psalms,²⁵ etc.²⁶

An investigation into these latter sections of the Bible reveals that it is specifically in these texts where one finds a concentration of atypical grammatical forms. Most of these forms are atypical in Hebrew, but they appear in other dialects of Canaanite (e.g., Phoenician, Ammonite, Moabite, Deir 'Alla²⁷) and/or in Aramaic.²⁸ The conclusion to be reached is that in regions of Israelite settlement away from Jerusalem and Judah there was a distinct dialect (or dialects) of Hebrew with isoglosses connecting this speech to other Canaanite and Aramaic dialects. This has

stand the consequence of his findings, since he still spoke of "the harmonizing activities of the Massorettes" (as quoted above).

- 23 G. A. Rendsburg, *Diglossia in Ancient Hebrew* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1990). For an earlier, related study, see G. A. Rendsburg, "Laqfil Infinitives: Yiph'il or Hiph'il?" *Orientalia* 51 (1982), pp. 231-238.
- 24 For a larger discussion see G. A. Rendsburg, "Morphological Evidence for Regional Dialects in Ancient Hebrew," in W. R. Bodine, ed., *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, forthcoming, 1992), pp. 65-82.
- 25 For detailed discussion see G. A. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990).
- 26 Selected pericopes elsewhere as well, e.g., Nehemiah 9, as demonstrated by A. C. Welch, "The Source of Nehemiah IX," *ZAW* 47 (1929), pp. 130-137; and 2 Sam 23:1-7, for which see G. A. Rendsburg, "The Northern Origin of 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23, 1-7)," *Biblica* 69 (1988), pp. 113-121; and G. A. Rendsburg, "Additional Notes on 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23, 1-7)," *Biblica* 70 (1989), pp. 403-408.
- 27 I accept the conclusion of J. A. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Allā* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), that the Deir 'Alla texts are written in a dialect of Canaanite.
- 28 Research into many of these usages is now made easier by the important work of W. R. Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000-586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

been theorized before, most prominently by Chaim Rabin,²⁹ and already early in the 20th Century C. F. Burney made an important contribution in identifying various characteristic features of northern Hebrew.³⁰

I propose to call this brand of Hebrew "Israelian Hebrew" (IH), based on the term Israelian introduced by H. L. Ginsberg to refer to the northern kingdom.³¹ As I noted above parenthetically, it is possible if not probable that we are dealing with more than one Israelian dialect. There is no reason to assume, for example, that the people of Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan all spoke the same brand of Hebrew. But except for a few instances perhaps,³² we lack sufficient evidence to delineate, let us say, a trans-Jordanian dialect of Hebrew versus an extreme northern dialect of Hebrew. Of course, we may assume that the former is closer to Deir 'Alla, Ammonite, and Moabite, and the latter closer to Phoenician and Aramaic, but given the present state of our knowledge I am content using the term IH, keeping in mind that it is probably an umbrella for a series of sub-dialects. Collectively it stands in contrast to the BH norm, which more properly should be called Judahite Hebrew (JH), a term already inherent in the oft-cited *yĕhûdît* in 2 Kgs 18:26, 28 = Isa 36:11, 13 = 2 Chr 32:18; Neh 13:24.

Let me now illustrate some characteristics of IH, of both a grammatical and a lexical nature. A unique 3mpl pronominal suffix occurs in 2 Kgs 9:18 in the expression *'ad hēm* "unto them." The typical reaction of exegetes to this usage has been emendation to the expected form *'ādēhem*.³³ However, this apparent anomaly in BH is paralleled in another Canaanite dialect. In the Mesha Stele, line 18, we read *w³shb.hm* "I dragged them," with a very clear word-divider separating the two words. W. R. Garr commented that "the objective suffix was probably a

29 C. Rabin, "The Emergence of Classical Hebrew," in A. Malamat, ed., *The Age of the Monarchies: Culture and Society* (World History of the Jewish People 4/2; Jerusalem: Massada Press, 1979), pp. 71-78, 293-295; and C. Rabin, "Leshonam shel 'Amos ve-Hoshea'," in B. Z. Luria, ed., *Iyyunim be-Sefer Tre-Asar* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sepher, 1981), pp. 117-136.

30 C. F. Burney, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), pp. 208-209; and C. F. Burney, *The Books of Judges* (London: Rivingtons, 1918), pp. 171-176. These two books have been reprinted in one volume with a prolegomenon by W. F. Albright (New York: Ktav, 1970). On Kings, see now also M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1988), p. 9.

31 H. L. Ginsberg, *The Israelian Heritage of Judaism* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1982) and S. Gevirtz, "Of Syntax and Style in the 'Late Biblical Hebrew' - 'Old Canaanite' Connection," *JANES* 18 (1986), p. 25 and n. 1, independently adduced the same term.

32 Here I would include the famous "shibboleth" incident. See now G. A. Rendsburg, "More on Hebrew *šibbōlet*," *JSS* 33 (1988), pp. 255-258; and G. A. Rendsburg, "The Ammonite Phoneme /ʔ/," *BASOR* 269 (1988), pp. 73-79. For another possible instance, see the discussion on *'ad hēm* in 2 Kgs 9:18 below.

33 Thus, e.g., GKC, p. 108; Burney, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings*, p. 299; *BHS*, *ad loc.*; and J. Gray, *I & II Kings* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), p. 545. See also Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, p. 110.

form of the independent pronoun in Moabite; the plural suffix had not yet been fused to the verb."³⁴ This is exactly what appears in *ʿad hēm* in 2 Kgs 9:18. Furthermore, as J. C. L. Gibson astutely noted,³⁵ in later dialects of Aramaic the 3mpl independent pronoun is similarly used.³⁶

In light of this evidence there is no reason to emend MT at 2 Kgs 9:18. Rather, we are dealing with a dialectal variation characteristic of IH, which perhaps may be further localized to Transjordan. The context of 2 Kings 9 places us in that region. The specific words *ʿad hēm* are spoken by a watchman from Jezreel, but the central character of this pericope is Jehu. Although we do not know exactly whence Jehu hailed, it is clear that he has Transjordanian connections. For example, in 1 Kgs 19:16 the Gileadite prophet Elijah is instructed by God to anoint Jehu, and in 2 Kgs 9:1-6 Jehu eventually is anointed king by Elisha in Ramoth-gilead. In short, it is not coincidental that *ʿad hēm* occurs in an Israelian story and that it is most closely paralleled by Moabite usage. The two passages mutually elucidate each other and confirm that we are dealing with a non-Judahite construction.

Another example of an IH feature is the feminine singular nominal endings *-at* (in the absolute state) and *-ōt*. The former may be demonstrated in Ammonite, Moabite, and Deir ʿAlla,³⁷ while the latter is attested in Phoenician.³⁸ I will return later to a full treatment of *-at*. For the nonce let me note its appearance in the following northern contexts: *šipʿat* "multitude" in 2 Kgs 9:17, in a story about the northern kings Jehoram and Jehu; and *mēʿat* "hundred" in Qoh 8:12, a book replete with northern features.³⁹ In the Psalms, note *gaʿāwat* "haughtiness" in Ps 10:2,

34 Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000-586 B.C.E.*, p. 112.

35 J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, Volume 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 81.

36 See, e.g., F. Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974), p. 54; and C. Brockelmann, *Syrische Grammatik* (Leipzig: VEB Verlag, 1960), p. 49.

37 Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000-586 B.C.E.*, pp. 93-94. The ending *-at* may also exist in Edomite; see F. Israel, "Miscellanea idumea," *RBI* 27 (1979), p. 183.

38 J. Friedrich and W. Röllig, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970), pp. 29-30, 106-107; and S. Segert, *A Grammar of Phoenician and Punic* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1976), pp. 74, 87. The length of the *o* vowel is unclear. For full discussion of all the pertinent data, notwithstanding a contrary conclusion, see A. Dotan, "Stress Position and Vowel Shift in Phoenician and Punic," *IOS* 6 (1976), pp. 71-121.

39 See M. Dahood, "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence in Qoheleth," *Biblica* 33 (1952), pp. 30-52, 191-221; M. Dahood, "The Language of Qoheleth," *CBQ* 14 (1952), pp. 227-232; and M. Dahood, "The Phoenician Background of Qoheleth," *Biblica* 47 (1966), pp. 264-282. Dahood overstated the case and used some incorrect examples, but his overall conclusion as to the northern origin of Qoheleth is correct. See now J. R. Davila, "Qoheleth and Northern Hebrew," in E. M. Cook, ed., *Sopher Mahir: Northwest Semitic Studies Presented to Stanislaw Segert = Maarav* 5-6 (1990), pp. 69-87; and G. A. Rendsburg, "The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew," in L.

I. A. Levine, ed., *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Galilean Studies in Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, forthcoming) - The Galilee

(New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1992), pp. 225-240.

mēnāt "portion" in Ps 16:5, *nahālāt* "heritage," in Ps 16:6, *ḥayyat* "beast" in Ps 74:19, and *šēnat* "sleep" in Ps 132:4, all in poems with a concentration of IH elements.⁴⁰

There are also examples of the feminine singular nominal ending *-ôt* in the Bible. The nouns *ḥokmôt* "wisdom" in Prov 1:20, 9:1, and *ḥakmôt* "wise lady" (Judg 5:29, Prov 14:1)⁴¹ appear in an unmistakably northern poem⁴² and in a book with many Phoenician influences.⁴³ In the Psalms, I would cite *šēmāḥôt* "joy" in Ps 16:11, 45:16, *yēdīdôt* "love" in Ps 45:1, *yēšū'ôt* "salvation" in Ps 53:7, *'ôlôt* "iniquity" in Ps 58:3, *bēḥēḥôt* "beast" in Ps 73:22, *ḥēmôt* "wrath" in Ps 76:11 (see also Prov 22:24), and *'ēdôt* "testimony" in Ps 132:12.⁴⁴ Finally, there is *hōlēlôt* "madness" in Qoh 1:17, 2:12, 7:25, 9:3. These examples of feminine singular nominal *-at* and *-ôt* are clear evidence for an opposition between IH and JH (where the corresponding form is *-ah*).

I can also present examples of lexical items which are characteristic of IH. One such item is *pls* "weigh, make level, straighten." This root is relatively rare in Hebrew, but it appears more commonly in Northwest Semitic languages used to the north of Israel. In Phoenician it appears as a noun meaning "architect,"⁴⁵ and it is a common element in personal names.⁴⁶ It also appears in Ugaritic and Amorite personal names.⁴⁷ Its distribution in the Bible correlates with these northern affinities. Hebrew

40 For these psalms, see Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms*.

41 These forms often are mistaken for plurals, but note that they bear feminine singular verbs and are the antecedents of feminine singular pronominal suffixes.

42 See already Burney, *The Book of Judges*, pp. 171-176.

43 W. F. Albright, "Some Canaanite-Phoenician Sources of Hebrew Wisdom," in M. Noth and D. W. Thomas, eds., *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East* (SVT 3; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), pp. 1-15; and Ginsberg, *The Israelian Heritage of Judaism*, p. 36. See also Y. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), p. 440 and n. 6, who utilizes Ugaritic evidence to argue for the northern origin of Proverbs (at least chapters 1-9).

44 Again, for details see Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms*. Note especially the two instances in Psalm 45, long recognized as a northern composition (see especially *šôr* "Tyre" in v. 13).

45 R. S. Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978), pp. 264-265.

46 F. L. Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1972), pp. 73, 97, 140-141, 176, 391.

47 Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 468; F. Gröndahl, *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967), pp. 172-173; and H. B. Huffmon, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), p. 255.

I should add here a word about Ugaritic. H. L. Ginsberg, "The Northwest Semitic Languages," in B. Mazar, ed., *Patriarchs* (World History of the Jewish People; New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970), pp. 102-106, has garnered a considerable amount of evidence to justify gathering Ugaritic and Phoenician into a "Phoenic group" within the Northwest Semitic sphere. In light of this analysis, it seems reasonable to utilize Ugaritic material to establish connections between IH and languages used to the north of Israel.

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pls occurs in Isa 26:7, Ps 58:3, 78:50, Prov 4:26, 5:6, 5:21. The two psalms cited are northern poems,⁴⁸ and three of these attestations are in the northern book of Proverbs (see above). This leaves only one instance, Isa 26:7, in a decidedly Judahite context, but this does not upset the overall conclusion: *pls* is a verb distinctive of IH.⁴⁹

Other examples of IH vocabulary items are concentrated in Psalm 141, first recognized as a northern poem by Ginsberg.⁵⁰

- 1) The *hapax legomenon* *dal* "door" (v. 3) is paralleled by Phoenician dl.⁵¹
- 2) The atypical plural form ʔiʕim "men" (v. 4) corresponds to Phoenician ʔʕm . It appears elsewhere in the Bible in Prov 8:4 (a northern text) and Isa 53:3.⁵²
- 3) The negative particle *bal* (v. 4) is the only term used in Phoenician⁵³ and it is common in Ugaritic.⁵⁴ Elsewhere in the Bible, while *bal* does occur in Judahite contexts, it predominates in northern texts such as northern Psalms, Hosea, and Proverbs.
- 4) The verb *lhm* "eat" (v. 4) corresponds to the commonest verb in Ugaritic for "eat"⁵⁵; it is attested to elsewhere in the Bible in Prov 4:17, 9:5, 23:1, 23:6.⁵⁶

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48 See Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms*. For Psalm 78 and for the Asaph collection in general, see M. J. Bus, "The Psalms of Asaph and Korah," *JBL* 82 (1963), pp. 382-392, in particular p. 384; and H. P. Nasuti, *Tradition History and the Psalms of Asaph* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988). The latter does not specifically label these psalms as northern compositions, but he places them in the "Ephraimite tradition stream."

49 On one JH usage vs. five IH occurrences, compare the methodology of M. Tsevat, *A Study of the Language of the Biblical Psalms* (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1955). Note as well that there are clear examples of Britishisms, e.g., "flat" for apartment and "lift" for elevator, that even American writers occasionally employ.

50 H. L. Ginsberg *apud* W. F. Albright, "Recent Progress in North-Canaanite Research," *BAŠOR* 70 (1938), pp. 23-24, n. 22.

51 Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages*, p. 71, cited only the plural form *dlht*. For the singular *dl*, see Friedrich and Röllig, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*, p. 116.

52 This may be another instance of an IH feature in a Judahite text. On the other hand, it may be explained according to the theory of C. H. Gordon, "North Israelite Influence on Postexilic Hebrew," *IEJ* 5 (1955), pp. 85-88.

53 Friedrich and Röllig, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*, p. 125; Segert, *A Grammar of Phoenician and Punic*, p. 159; and Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages*, p. 46. See also Ginsberg, "The Northwest Semitic Languages," p. 109.

54 Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 372.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 427.

56 It may also occur in Deut. 32:24; see further Rendsburg, "The Northern Origin of 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23, 1-7)," p. 117, n. 32. Deuteronomy 32 is probably a northern composition as well; see O. Eissfeldt, *Das Lied Moses Deuteronomium 32, 1-43 und das Lehrgedicht Asaphs Psalm 78 samt einer Analyse der Umgebung des Mose-Liedes* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1958).

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- 5) The noun *man^cammêhem* "their delicacies" (v. 4) is another *hapax legomenon* paralleled in Phoenician.⁵⁷
 - 6) The root of this word, *n^cm* "good, pleasant," occurs again in *nā^cēmū* "are sweet" (v. 6). In a previous study, I have presented the evidence for regarding this vocable as an IH trait.⁵⁸
 - 7) Finally, the root *hlm* "strike" (v. 5) is another IH feature. The verb *hlm* occurs in Ugaritic and Phoenician⁵⁹ (they are the only Semitic cognates), and the other biblical attestations are Judg 5:22, 5:26 (Song of Deborah), Isa 16:8 (address to Moab), Isa 28:1 (address to Ephraim),⁶⁰ Prov 23:35 (northern text), Isa 41:7.⁶¹ Furthermore, two nouns derived from the root *hlm* occur only in northern texts: *halmût* "hammer" in Judg 5:26 and *mahālûmôt* "blows" in Prov 18:6, 19:29.
- ← The picture which emerges from this discussion is clear: Psalm 141 is an exemplar of a northern poem, replete with IH lexical features.⁶²

Style-Switching

The next issue to be discussed is style-switching. This phenomenon has been treated recently by S. A. Kaufman, who noted that in a number of famous instances the speech of Transjordanians is tinged with unusual grammatical forms and rare lexical items, many of which are typically classified as Aramaisms.⁶³ He is undoubtedly correct that in these texts

57 Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages*, p. 187.

58 Rendsburg, "Additional Notes on the 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23, 1-7)," pp. 403-408.

59 Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 390; and Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages*, p. 81.

60 On the use of *hlm* in addresses to Moab and Ephraim by the Jerusalemite prophet Isaiah, see below on style-switching.

61 This would be the only non-IH usage, but see above, n. 52.

62 On *yānī* "my wine" in v. 5, see G. A. Rendsburg, "Monophthongization of *ay/aw* > *ā* in Eblaite and Northwest Semitic," in C. H. Gordon and G. A. Rendsburg, eds., *Eblaitica: Essays on the Ebla Archives and Eblaite Language*, Volume 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), pp. 91-126, especially pp. 106-107.

63 S. A. Kaufman, "The Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Panel Sessions: Hebrew and Aramaic Languages; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1988), pp. 54-55. Similar techniques are well known from other literatures. See, e.g., F. C. Robinson, "Some Aspects of Maldon Poet's Artistry," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 75 (1976), pp. 25-28, who discussed Scandinavianisms in the speech of the Vikings in the Old English poem "The Battle of Maldon." I am indebted to my former student Ann Crook (now of the University of Michigan) for bringing this example and this article to my attention.

Kaufman borrowed the term "style-switching" from the field of linguistics, where actually it means something slightly different. In linguistics "style-switching" refers to speakers actually switching their speech given a particular situation (e.g., from Flemish to French in the case of a bilingual Belgian). If one were to be pedantic, one might wish to call the phenomenon treated by Kaufman "literary style-switching."

Another term which is used is "dialect representation," but this too refers to something slightly different, namely, an author's use of a particular dialect of a language in

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“we have not to do with late language or foreign authors, but rather with the intentional stylistic representations of Trans-Jordanian speech on the part of Hebrew authors within Hebrew texts.”⁶⁴ Kaufman’s examples are the book of Job, the Balaam oracles, the Massa material in Proverbs 30-31, and the Dumah oracle in Isa 21:11-12.

I hardly need to comment on Job. Already Ibn Ezra and Rashi realized the Aramaic nature of this book (for the former it was the whole book [see his comment at 2:12], for the latter it was the speeches of Elihu [see his comment at 36:2]) and modern scholars have opined similarly.⁶⁵ Instead, I would like to present examples from the other pericopes mentioned.

In the Balaam oracles, there are a number of items which are included to portray Balaam as an Aramean. I cite two, one lexical and one grammatical. The lexeme is *rōbaʿ* “dust-cloud” in Numb 23:10, with cognates in Aramaic, Akkadian, and Arabic.⁶⁶ The impression one receives is that a Hebrew reader (at least an educated one) would have recognized *rōbaʿ* as a “word of the east,” associated with Aram Naharaim, Balaam’s home in northern Mesopotamia. My grammatical example is the form *harērê* “mountains of” in Numb 23:7 (instead of the usual Hebrew plural *hārê*. This form is the reduplicatory plural (i.e., the final consonant of a geminate stem is repeated) best known from

the mouths of certain characters in a literary work. This is especially common in the portrayal of blacks in American literature; see, for example, L. Hungerford, “Dialect Representation in *Native Son*,” *Language and Style* 20 (1987), pp. 3-15.

Dialect representation is different from Kaufman’s characters who speak a *foreign* language without actually having them speak said language. Should Kaufman’s style-switching thus be called “language representation”?

64 Kaufman, “The Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof,” p.55.

65 The most extreme view is that of N. H. Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job* (Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1957), following Ibn Ezra, that the Hebrew is a translation of an Aramaic original. On p. 111, however, Tur-Sinai anticipated the current discussion of style-switching: “it has been suggested, *inter alia*, that the author deliberately put in the mouth of Job and his friends, natives of Aram and Edom, expressions from the language of the East -- a view to which I, too, formerly adhered.”

66 For the most recent discussion, see S. Morag, “Rovde Qadmut,” *Tarbiz* 50 (1980-81), pp. 9-10.

Aramaic.⁶⁷ Other biblical examples occur in northern contexts as well (Judg 5:14, 5:15, Neh 9:22, 9:24, Song 2:17, 4:6, 4:8, etc.).⁶⁸

In the Massa poetry there are two very obvious examples which can be put forward. They are the noun *bar* "son" in Prov 31:2 (3x) and the plural form *mēlākīn* "kings" in Prov 31:3. A less obvious example is the use of *meh* "what" in Prov 31:2 (instead of standard Hebrew *mah*) before a non-laryngeal consonant; this usage occurs in the Bible predominantly in non-Judahite settings.⁶⁹

Within the short Dumah oracle of Isaiah, the prophet reproduces the speech of a watchman from this region, located in the Syrian Desert to the east of Canaan. There are several non-Judahite features which indicate that style-switching is operative. An important grammatical trait is the retention of the *yod* in IIIy verbs, as in *tib^cāyūn* "inquire," *bē^cāyū* "inquire," and *ʔētāyū* "come," all in Isa 21:12. This feature appears elsewhere in the Bible in northern compositions (Deut 32:37, Ps 36:8, 36:9, 77:4, 78:44, 83:3, Prov 26:7) and in other instances of style-switching (Numb 24:6 [Balaam], Isa 17:12 [address to Damascus], Job 3:25, 12:6, 16:22, 19:2, 30:14, 31:38 [all in the mouth of the protagonist]).⁷⁰ Furthermore, the retention of *yod* in IIIy verbs is a feature of Aramaic.⁷¹ An example of a lexical selection indicative of style-switching in this passage is the two-fold use of the verb *b^cy* "seek." These are the only occurrences of this usage in the Hebrew sections of the Bible,⁷² but it is a very common verb in Aramaic. One need go no further than the Aramaic sections of the Bible to demonstrate this. In light of this evidence, I agree with Kaufman's conclusion that the "Arabs" of the

67 S. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Leipzig: VEB Verlag, 1975), pp. 537, 546.

68 See E. Y. Kutscher, "Ha-Šafa ha-ʿIvrit u-Venot Livyata be-Meshek ha-Dorot," *Hadoar* 47 (1968-69), pp. 507-509 (reprinted in E. Y. Kutscher, *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies* [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1977], p. 10). For lengthier treatment see Rendsburg, "Morphological Evidence for Regional Dialects in Ancient Israel." For Song of Songs as a northern book, see S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), pp. 448-449; and Y. Avishur, "Le-Ziqā ha-Signonit Ben Shir ha-Shirim ve-Sifrut ʾUgarit," *Beth Miqra* 59 (1974), pp. 508-525.

69 Rendsburg, "Morphological Evidence for Regional Dialects in Ancient Israel."

70 Job and Balaam are discussed immediately above. On Deuteronomy 32, see above, note 56. On the Psalm passages, see Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms*. On Proverbs, see above, note 43. On non-Judahite features in the prophetic addresses to Israel's neighbors, as in Isa 17:12, see below.

71 See, e.g., *yhywn* "they will live" in line 8 of the inscription published by A. Caquot, "Une inscription arameene d'époque assyrienne," in *Hommages à Andre Dupont-Sommer* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1971), pp. 9-16. For the *yod* retaining consonantal force in some forms in Biblical Aramaic, see F. Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974), pp. 51, 66.

72 In two other places, Isa 30:13, 64:1, the root *b^cy* means "swell, boil." In Obad 6 it may mean "seek," though even here a non-Judahite usage may be indicated since the prophet is addressing Edom.

Syrian Desert are "well placed geographically to have an Aramaic or Aramaic-like language."⁷³

We can go further still. Not only is the speech of Arameans and Transjordanians in the Bible laced with Aramaic forms and lexemes, entire stories can be so written. Thus, as Jonas Greenfield has pointed out, not only do the conversations of Laban and Jacob and of Jacob and his wives contain a significant number of Aramaisms, the narrative as a whole reflects Aramaic usage.⁷⁴ Greenfield's example of style-switching in the course of the narrative is *wayyadbēq* in Gen 31:23, predicated of Laban when he overtook Jacob. This usage, unique in the Bible, is attested in Aramaic. Another example, I believe, is the *hapax legomenon lûz* "almond" in Gen 30:37. In telling the tale of a story set in Aram, the writer opted to use not the Hebrew word *šāqēd* "almond," but instead colored his narration in an Aramaic fashion by using the Aramaic word *lûz* (note that the Targumim typically use *lûzā*⁷ to translate Hebrew *šāqēd*_א).

It should be noted that style-switching does not necessarily need to be a consistent technique. In fact, one rarely finds a completely consistent employment of this device. Thus, for example, in the aforementioned Massa poetry, immediately after *mēlākîn* in Prov 31:3 one finds the standard form *mēlākîm* twice in Prov 31:4. I would like to quote Lynda Hungerford's remarks concerning the similar phenomenon of dialect representation in literature:

From a linguistic perspective, art is no substitute for life. Although an author may use actual features of a dialect when he is representing it, he must be selective if he is to stay within the reader's tolerance for distraction. Thus, to represent a dialect in fiction an author selects features he believes the reader will recognize as being typical of the dialect and uses them systematically in the speech of his characters.⁷⁵

The style of the biblical authors was similar to that described by Hungerford, in that the Massa material, for example, presumably includes only a few easily recognizable elements of Massa speech. If the real language of Massa was reproduced, then the Hebrew readers would have been distracted to the point of (perhaps) skipping the material. On the other hand, the authors did not systematically utilize the features they selected, as the employment of both *mēlākîn* and *mēlākîm* indicates. Presumably, only an occasional use of a particular form or word was deemed necessary for the creation of foreignness desired by style-switching.

73 Kaufman, "The Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof," p. 56.

74 J. Greenfield, "Aramaic Studies and the Bible," in J. A. Emerton, ed., *Congress Volume Vienna 1980* (SVT 32; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), pp. 129-130.

75 Hungerford, "Dialect Representation in *Native Son*," p. 5.

Addressee-Switching

Finally we come to our last example of the strata of BH, which I propose to call "addressee-switching." By this term, I intend the prophetic addresses to Israel's neighbors which are colored by the language or dialect of the addressee. This is only slightly different from style-switching, but different enough, I believe, to merit its own term and category. Style-switching is the intentional reproduction of the speech of Israel's neighbors when they (i.e. the non-Judahites) are speaking. Addressee-switching refers to Judahite prophets adopting the speech of Israel's neighbors when they themselves (i.e. the Judahite prophets) are speaking. To introduce still another term, I would subsume both of these rhetorical devices under the umbrella term code-switching.⁷⁶

Previous scholars have already drawn attention to the prophets' very accurate knowledge of the surrounding nations.⁷⁷ It is, therefore, not unexpected to discover that the prophets could incorporate into their addresses forms and lexemes representative of their addressees. Examples of this phenomenon are relatively common. The examples sketched in the following paragraphs represent, I believe, only the tip of the iceberg.

Above I discussed the use of the feminine singular nominal ending *-at* in Israelian compositions. Now I would like to point out two additional examples: *yītrat* "abundance" in Jer 48:36 and *tēhillāt* "praise" in Jer 49:25Q in speeches aimed at Moab and Damascus, respectively.

Above I mentioned that *nʿm* "good" is an Israelian usage. Note as well that it occurs in Isa 17:10 in the address to Damascus and in Ezek 32:19 in the address to Egypt. Concerning the latter, given the close ties between Egypt and Byblos from at least the 3rd Millennium B.C.E., whatever Canaanite may have been known in Egypt was probably of the Phoenician dialectal type.

One example of the retention of the *yod* in IIIy verbs occurs in a prophetic address to a northern neighbor: *yehēmāyûn* "roar" in Isa 17:12, delivered to Damascus.

The word *hēkal* "temple" in the Bible is well documented in JH, but with the meaning "palace" (which it bears in Ugaritic and Phoenician) it is limited in the Bible to IH (e.g. 1 Kgs 21:1, Hos 8:14, Amos 8:3).⁷⁸

Accordingly, the instance of *hēkal* "palace" in Joel 4:5 is significant, since it occurs in the prophet's message to Tyre and Sidon.

⁷⁶ In my book *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms*, I did not differentiate code-switching, style-switching, and addressee-switching. Upon further reflection, however, I believe that this new taxonomy has significant advantage of clarity.

⁷⁷ See, e.g., P. Machinist, "Assyria and Its Image in the First Isaiah," *JAOS* 103 (1983), pp. 719-737.

⁷⁸ Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms*, pp. 47-48.

The verb *ksh* "cut down" is rare in Hebrew, though common in Aramaic. In the Bible *ksh* occurs only in Ps 80:17, a northern poem,⁷⁹ and in Isa 33:12 in the prophet's address to Assyria. Since we know that the Assyrians used Aramaic widely during the 8th Century,⁸⁰ it is likely that Isaiah consciously selected the verb *ksh* as a form of addressee-switching.

As was the case with style-switching discussed above, there is also no consistency with addressee-switching. The Hebrew prophets needed only to be selective in choosing certain linguistic features to be incorporated into their speeches directed at the foreign nations. Too many of these elements would have exceeded their Israelite readers' tolerance for distraction.

The technique of addressee-switching is still a recent discovery. As I stated above, I am sure that other examples of this phenomenon are to be found in the Bible. In the years ahead, scholars investigating the prophetic addresses to the foreign nations will undoubtedly uncover further instances of this rhetorical device.

Summary

In this article I have attempted to delineate what I consider to be the major variations within BH. Within the biblical corpus we find evidence of diachronic differences, diglossia, regional dialects, style-switching, and addressee-switching. Sometimes a particular linguistic phenomenon shows up in more than one of these categories. I would like to conclude with two such examples, one grammatical and one lexical. These presentations will demonstrate the full range of possibilities that a scholar of BH must consider in studying the language.

My grammatical example, which has been raised earlier twice, is the retention of *-at* in feminine singular nouns. Above I noted that it occurs in Ammonite, Moabite, and Deir 'Alla, and that it is a feature of IH as well. Examples of *-at* in IH are 2 Kgs 9:17 *šip'at* "multitude," Ps 10:2 *ga'awat* "haughtiness," Ps 16:5 *mēnāt* "portion," Ps 16:6 *naḥālāt* "heritage," Ps 74:19 *ḥayyat* "beast," Ps 132:4 *šēnat* "sleep," Qoh 8:12 *mē'at* "hundred," etc. I also noted that it is twice used in addressee-switching: Jer 48:36 *yitrat* "abundance" addressed to Moab and Jer 49:25Q *tēhillāt* "praise" addressed to Damascus.

79 *Ibid.*, pp. 73-81, in particular p. 79. See already C. A. Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, Vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), p. 203; H. Gunkel, *Die Psalmen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1926), p. 353; B. Z. Dinaburg, "Pereq bi-Thillim mi-Zemano shel Hoshea' ben 'Elah," *Qoveš ha-Hevra ha-'Ivrit le-Ḥaqirat 'Ereš Yiśra'el ve-'Atiqoteha* (=JJPEs) (1928), pp. 250-261; O. Eissfeldt, "Psalm 80," in *Geschichte und Altes Testament: Albrecht Alt zum 70. Geburtstag dargebracht* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1953), pp. 65-78; and M. J. Dahood, *Psalms II* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), p. 255.

80 For recent discussion, see H. Tadmor, "Al Meqomah shel ha-'Aramit be-Mamleket 'Ashur: Shalosh He'arot 'al Tavit shel Sargon," *Eretz-Israel* 20 (1989) (Yigael Yadin Volume), pp. 249-252.

However, the picture is more complicated, because, as is well known, feminine singular nouns ending in *-at* occur elsewhere. In surveying the other occurrences of this usage, it is useful to begin with *zimrāt* “strength/song” in Exod 15:2. Since Exodus 15 is by most accounts one of the oldest samples of Hebrew poetry in the Bible,⁸¹ and since comparative Semitics teaches that *-at* is an older form than *-āh*, we may explain this use of *-at* as archaic poetic diction. The form *zimrāt* occurs again in Is 12:2, Ps 118:14, but these passages simply are quoting Exod 15:2. Thus, the feminine singular nominal ending *-at* must also be considered a feature of ABH.

Gen 49:22 (bis) *pôrāt* “fruitful” (?) presents us with two choices. Some scholars believe Genesis 49 also to be an old Hebrew poem, in which case this instance would be akin to *zimrāt* in Exod 15:2. Other scholars, however, have questioned whether or not Genesis 49 should be included in the corpus of ancient Hebrew poetry.⁸² If this position is taken, then *pôrāt* should be explained as a feature of IH. Note that this form occurs in the section about Joseph, one/two of the northern tribes. There are other characteristics of IH in Genesis 49, specifically in the sections about the northern tribes, e.g., the root *nʿm* “good” in Gen 49:15 (Issachar), the root *špr* “beautiful” in Gen 49:21 (Naphtali),⁸³ and the syntagma *baʿālê hiššîm* in Gen 49:23 (Joseph).⁸⁴ In short, the retention of the feminine singular nominal ending *-at* in *pôrāt* in Gen 49:22 can be explained either as an indication of ABH or of IH (or perhaps both).

Other examples of *-at* in the Bible are borrowings. Thus, for example, *qěšāt* “end” in Dan 1:2, 1:5, 1:15, 1:18, Neh 7:20, is an Aramaism, and *barqat* “emerald” in Ezek 28:13 is most likely an Akkadianism (cf. Akkadian *barraqtu*).

The lexical example which fits into different categories is *hārûš* “gold.” This word occurs in the Bible seven times: once in Ps 68:14, five times in Proverbs (3:14, 8:10, 8:19, 12:27, 16:16), and once in Zech 9:8. Psalm 68 is a bit like Genesis 49 in that some scholars consider it an ancient poem,⁸⁵ while others date it to a later period.⁸⁶ If the former opinion is accepted, then I would explain *hārûš* in Ps 68:14 as an indication of ABH. This conclusion could be supported by the fact that the expression *yěraqraq hārûš* occurs only here and in Ugaritic in slightly different form as *yrq hrš* in UT Krt 138, 283. Earlier I commented on Proverbs as a northern

81 Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry*, pp. 153-156.

82 E.g., *Ibid.*, p. 155.

83 On *špr*, see Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms*, p. 31.

84 On this “double plural” usage, see Gevirtz, “Of Syntax and Style in the ‘Late Biblical Hebrew’ -- ‘Old Canaanite’ Connection,” pp. 28-29; and S. Gevirtz, “Asher in the Blessing of Jacob (Genesis xlix 20),” *VT* 37 (1987), p. 160.

85 E.g., W. F. Albright, “A Catalogue of Early Hebrew Lyric Poems (Psalm 68),” *HUCA* 23 (1950-51), pp. 1-39, especially p. 23.

86 E.g., Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry*, who did not include it in his corpus of early poetry.

book; accordingly the five uses of *ḥārûš* in that book are to be understood as an IH element. Finally, in Zech 9:3, the prophet specifically chose to use *ḥārûš* when speaking about Tyre and Sidon in an effort at addressee-switching.⁸⁷ As is well known, *ḥrš* is the word for “gold” in Phoenician⁸⁸ (*zḥb* occurs not at all). In short, *ḥārûš* “gold” occurs only seven times in the Bible, and yet it is distributed in the strata of BH as evidence of ABH, IH, and addressee-switching.

Historical dialectology is a burgeoning new field in general linguistics with much exciting work currently under way.⁸⁹ The study of BH can be a part of this development, as I hope to have demonstrated in the present article.

87 See already F. C. Fensham, “Remarks on Keret 54-59,” *JNSL* 3 (1974), p. 29.

88 Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages*, p. 114.

89 Witness the excellent collection by J. Fisiak, ed., *Historical Dialectology: Regional and Social* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988). The article of most interest to Semitists (Afroasiaticists) is W.-P. Funk, “Dialects Wanting Homes: A Numerical Approach to the Early Varieties of Coptic,” pp. 149-192.

THE STRATA OF BIBLICAL HEBREW
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Note: 1) article appeared without author seeing proofs.
2) article appeared in late 1993.

CORRECTIONS

- P. 82, n. 8, line 7: read: Grundriss
- P. 82, n. 9, line 2: read: Sea
- P. 86, line 14, end: read: al-kalbu kabīru
- P. 88, n. 31, line 2: read: 1982). S. Gevirtz
- P. 88, n. 32, line 3: read: /T/ [Roman (not Italic),
with underscore, representing phoneme /θ/]
- P. 89, n. 39, lines 8-9: read: L. I. Levine
- P. 90, line 9: read: bēhēmôt
- P. 90, line 14: read: -āh
- P. 90, n. 41: read: verbs and/or they are
- P. 91, line 9: read: dl
- P. 91, n. 52, line 1: read: other
- P. 92, lines 13-14 should not be indented
- P. 92, n. 63, line 8: read: Anne Krook
- P. 95, line 16: read: šāqēd).

UPDATED NOTES

- P. 87, n. 24: article appeared in 1992, pp. 65-88.
- P. 89, n. 39, end: read: The Galilee in Late
Antiquity (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary,
1992), pp. 225-240.