teousness" (p. 61). The passage in context stresses that it is *God's* action
that enables the suppliant to walk in God's path "in righteousness." Yet Ho's
comment, "Only by taking the right path and being a blameless person..."
seems to contradict the text by implying that "righteousness" accrues to the
suppliant through his own choice and efforts toward perfection. These two
and many similar passages suggest that in biblical thought "righteousness,"
the essential quality of God, also accrues to people due to *God's* activity,
not through human striving.

This book is praiseworthy for its examination of two biblical terms de-
noting "righteousness" and for stimulating the reader to further reflection
upon this vital biblical theme.

Christopher W. Mitchell
Concordia Publishing House
St. Louis, MO 63118

DIVERSITY IN PRE-EXILIC HEBREW. By Ian Young. Forschungen
zum Alten Testament 5. Pp. xv + 256. Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul
Siebeck), 1993.

In a recent article, I wrote: "To all who have ever undertaken the lin-
guistic study of the Hebrew Bible, it is abundantly clear that the text
bristles with an inordinate number of grammatical peculiarities. Although I
have no empirical evidence to substantiate the following statement, my
sense is that on a relative scale one encounters more such difficulties in the
Hebrew Bible than in comparable corpora, for example, Homer's Iliad and
Odyssey, the Qur'ān, the Avesta, Assyrian annals, etc." (Rendsburg,
"Morphological Evidence for Regional Dialects in Ancient Hebrew," in
Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew, W. R. Bodine, ed. [Winona Lake, IN:
Eisenbrauns, 1992] pp. 65-88, in particular p. 65). Naturally, much of the
diversity alluded to in the above quotation stems from the fact that the
Bible is an anthology of literature spanning about one thousand years. The
language behind these texts changed over time, and scholars thus divide
Biblical Hebrew into different periods, typically called Archaic, Standard,
and Late.

But the diversity resulting from diachronic change is only part of the
picture. For notwithstanding the very serious problem of fixing the date of
numerous parts of the Bible, it is clear that roughly contemporary books or

chapters also reveal diverse language usage. Compare, for example, Judges 5 and Exodus 15, both presumably composed in Archaic Biblical Hebrew; or Hosea and Isaiah, both presumably composed in Standard Biblical Hebrew.

The above picture stands as the springboard from which Ian Young launches his research in *Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew*. As the title of the book implies, Young is not overly concerned with the issue of Late Biblical Hebrew—he takes it as proved that this brand of Hebrew is different from Standard Biblical Hebrew—rather, he is concerned with the diversity witnessed in the language's Archaic and Standard layers. This diversity can be explained, argues Young, by redefining what we mean by the term "Biblical Hebrew," by looking at the origins of the Hebrew language, and by taking into account various sociological and historical factors concerning the people of ancient Israel.

Young begins his treatment with a discussion of the pre-Israelite period in greater Canaan and concludes that "Ugaritic and Amarna Canaanite are northern and southern variations of the same basic literary tradition" (p. 10). Lying behind this basic literary tradition is what Young terms the "prestige language" of greater Canaan, which united the very diverse population of the region. Thus, "while Akkadian operated as a prestige language on the international level, the 'Canaanite' language existed for local communication, and as a vehicle for literature" (p. 10). A first millennium dialect such as Hebrew (likewise Phoenician) is "a *continuation* of the pre-Israelite literary prestige language of Syria-Palestine" (p. 11).

Young relates the diverse historical origins of the nation of Israel to this scheme. He reviews the biblical evidence, which points to a multitude of streams (Aramean [Patriarchs], Egyptian [Lev 24:10], Midianite [Hobab], Kenizzite [Caleb, Othniel], Canaanite [Asher, Gibeon, etc.], Sea Peoples [Dan], etc.) coming together to form the Israelite nation. He assumes that "the Israelites *spoke* a widely divergent variety of dialects in the late second millennium BC" (p. 16; italics mine), but that Biblical Hebrew served the function of the literary prestige language to unify this amalgam of peoples. The specific layer of Standard Biblical Hebrew developed slightly later, in the period of the United Monarchy when "men from all over Israel met at the royal court, working as scribes, wise men, or administrators" (p. 20; see already C. Rabin, "The Emergence of Classical Hebrew," in *The Age of the Monarchies: Culture and Society*, A. Malamat, ed. [World History of the Jewish People 1/5B; Jerusalem, 1979] pp. 71-78, 293-295; Young cites this article elsewhere in the book, though oddly not in this section on the

United Monarchy). Note the emphasis on "all over Israel"; thus Standard Biblical Hebrew is not necessarily the dialect of Judah/Jerusalem, but rather once again the continuation of the compromise literary language.

The above description leads Young to accept the existence of diglossia in ancient Hebrew. The colloquial language of biblical times had much in common with what emerged later on as Mishnaic Hebrew, and it also was colored by Aramaic influence.

Young's views concerning the relationship between Hebrew and Aramaic require further comment here. Because of the heavy Aramaic stratum in early Israelite origins, there is a significant Aramaizing element in Archaic Biblical Hebrew. By contrast, Standard Biblical Hebrew, representing the high variety of the language, studiously avoids features associated with Aramaic, presumably for nationalistic-political reasons. But these Aramaic elements continue in the low variety of Hebrew, that is, in the spoken or colloquial dialect(s). In Young's words, "Aramaic influenced Hebrew 'from the ground up'" (p. 86). When Standard Biblical Hebrew passed into Late Biblical Hebrew, the Aramaizing trend became prominent again. It is seen fully blown in Mishnaic Hebrew still later.

It is into the above reconstruction of the history of ancient Hebrew that Young next fits the evidence from individual biblical books whose date and provenance have been the focus of scholarly debate. The most space is devoted, not surprisingly, to Qohelet and Song of Songs. Young concludes that Qohelet is pre-exilic, that the author was a lecturer in a Jerusalem wisdom school, and that he couched his lectures not in Standard Biblical Hebrew, but in a register approximating the spoken dialect. He similarly claims that Song of Songs is pre-exilic, but that it witnesses to "a type of local Northern literary dialect" (p. 165).

Young builds towards these conclusions with a clear and concise presentation of the available evidence. I am hard pressed to think of a single datum that he did not utilize in his arguments. In addition, there are cogent discussions of the other Canaanite dialects (Moabite, Phoenician, Deir 'Alla, etc.) and of various issues bearing on the pronunciation of ancient Hebrew.

How are we to judge Young's conclusions? Do they result from the evidence at our disposal? The answer, in my opinion: in some cases, yes; in most cases, no.

I am in general agreement with Young's view that Ugaritic and Amarna Canaanite represent the literary prestige language of second millennium Canaan and that Biblical Hebrew is a continuation thereof. Standard

Biblical Hebrew, however, is not the product of "men from all over Israel," but rather very clearly the local literary language of Jerusalem. We can contrast this language with the language evidenced in the stories of the northern kings in the books of Kings. Here we have another dialect altogether, what I call Israelian Hebrew, the literary standard of the northern kingdom. While I have not yet published the results of my detailed study of Kings, the reader can consult my already published works on regional dialects of ancient Hebrew for a portion of the evidence.

I, of course, agree that Hebrew was characterized by diglossia, and Young cites freely from my 1980 dissertation on the topic (*Evidence for a Spoken Hebrew in Biblical Times* [Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1980]). Unfortunately, however, my thoroughly revised 1990 book on the subject must have appeared too late for Young to utilize its results (*Diglossia in Ancient Hebrew* [AOS 72; New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1990]). For example, Young states: "the mass of data collected by G. Rendsburg from all types of Hebrew indicates that it would probably be more correct to say that records of speech in BH are more likely to attract colloquial idioms, even though they may be put into a literary form....Rendsburg's work could have been even more interesting if he had attempted to classify the occurrences of colloquialisms according to the context in which they are found" (p. 76). My 1990 book attempted just such a classification and in fact came to the opposite conclusion: "those portions of [narrative prose] which purport to be the *ipsissima verba* of the speakers do not yield a greater tendency for the inclusion of spoken forms....Accordingly, we conclude that when reproducing the dialogues of the Biblical characters, the authors couched their words not in colloquial Hebrew but in the standard idiom reserved for literary composition....this is analogous to the direct quotations in the Qur'an which appear in classical Arabic, not in the colloquial" (Rendsburg, *Diglossia*, p. 161).

I have serious reservations regarding the persistence of Aramaisms in the spoken dialect of the Standard Biblical Hebrew period. The famous passage 2 Kgs 18:26 suggests just the opposite. The officials—and presumably the *literati* who provided us with most of the biblical material—of Jerusalem understood Aramaic in 701 B.C.E., but the average individual did not. The Aramaic elements (or what appear to be Aramaic elements) in Archaic Biblical Hebrew are to be explained through a variety of means: elements inherited from the common stock of Northwest Semitic but which died out in Hebrew/Canaanite, features of style-switching (assuming that the Balaam oracles are to be classified as Archaic Biblical Hebrew [not a

definite conclusion, but assumed by many]), and traits associated with
Israelian Hebrew which shared numerous isoglosses with Aramaic (see
Judges 5 especially). The Aramaisms in Late Biblical Hebrew are instances
of real Aramaic influence, as Aramaic became the *lingua franca* of the
Near East. And the many Aramaic features, real or apparent, in Mishnaic
Hebrew are due to the fact that it is a Galilean dialect, that is, here again we
are dealing with isoglosses shared by northern Hebrew and Aramaic (see,
G. A. Rendsburg, "The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew," in *The
Galilee in Late Antiquity*, L. I. Levine, ed. [New York: Jewish Theological
Seminary, 1992] pp. 225-240). However, Young's assumption that the
Aramaic elements notable in Archaic and in Late Biblical Hebrew are di-
rectly related to each other, through some sort of continuity rooted in the
spoken Hebrew of the times, is hypothetical in the extreme, unproved, and
for that matter unprovable.

Finally, as to the date of Qohelet and Song of Songs: There have been
several recent attempts to date these two books to the pre-exilic period, so
that Young's efforts in this direction do not stand in isolation. But with all
due respect to the grand master of Hebrew studies, Chaim Rabin, the *sim-
plest* explanation for the presence of *pardēs* and *pitgām* in these books is
borrowing in the Persian period (cf. C. Rabin, "The Song of Songs and
Tamil Poetry," *Studies in Religion* 3 [1973] pp. 205-219; curiously, this
work is not cited by Young). Furthermore, these words are not the sole
criterion for dating these two biblical books to the post-exilic period;
Qohelet in particular, but Song of Songs too, include many features paral-
leled only in works of the Persian period. For further discussion see A.
Hurvitz, *"Ha-Lashon ha-'Ivrit ba-Tequfah ha-Parsit,"* in *Shivat Sion -
Yeme Shilton Paras*. [*Ha-Historiyah Shel 'Am Yisra'el*; Jerusalem, 1983]
pp. 210-223, 306-309.

Bibliographic note: an occasional work in modern Hebrew is cited in
Young's bibliography, but numerous important works in this language
were not utilized. For example, Moshe Bar-Asher and Abba Bendavid are
not cited at all, while only English-language studies by scholars such as
Ze'ev Ben-Hayyim, Joshua Blau, and Shelomo Morag are listed. Surely
there is much to gain from reading this important body of scholarship;
consider, for example, the amount of useful material on diversity included
in A. Bendavid, *Leshon Miqra' u-Lshon Hakhamim*. (2 vols; Tel-Aviv:
Dvir, 1967-71).

In sum, in so far as this book brings together a wide array of data con-
cerning the early history of the Hebrew language and its Northwest Semitic

setting, it is a useful work. In addition, personally it is gratifying to see a fellow scholar grappling with the issues of diglossia and regional dialects. But the broad sweeps attempted in this book and the specific dating of Qohelet and Song of Songs will need to be treated critically.

Gary A. Rendsburg
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853

THE UNITY OF THE HEBREW BIBLE. By David Noel Freedman. Pp. viii + 125. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991. Cloth, $22.95.

Freedman's title tells all, except for its use of the declarative mode. This is really the educated suggestion of one of the most productive and brilliant of modern biblical scholars for why he sees a strong organizational plan in the compilation of the Hebrew Bible in its final form. The basic argument was given as three lectures at the University of Michigan in 1988, but these have been revised and clearly expanded in their present form. He divides his treatment into three parts: the "Primary History" (Genesis-2 Kings), the Latter Prophets, and the Writings, but finds very close links between the final redaction of the Pentateuch and that of the Prophets, which suggest that they cannot be discussed separately from one another.

The author's basic premise is that we lack much in the way of external supportive evidence for how the thirty-nine books of the Hebrew canon were put together and published, so we must rely on what internal evidences we can detect. For Freedman, the major criterion is *symmetry*. It operates primarily on the macro-level through parallel or balanced structures in the organization of the books, or in balanced sets of numbers. He finds plenty of both and therefore believes that there were deliberate and purposeful decisions made about compiling and grouping the books into a unified whole. Some of his more significant insights can be briefly listed:

(1) Word counts reveal there are about 80,000 words in the Pentateuch; 70,000 in the Former Prophets; 72,000 in the Latter Prophets; 78,000 in the Writings (without Daniel); these all stand in some intentional balance with each other. (2) Although the Former and Latter Prophets belong together in the traditional second part of the TaNaK and balance each other with four books each, they also can be divided so that the Former Prophets belong with the Pentateuch to make up the Primary History, while the