

heir will ascend the throne. As Charpin acknowledges, these are still part of agreements between individuals. He also mentions that the treaty between Hattusili III and Ramesses II constantly uses the phrases the land of Hatti and the land of Egypt.

The evidence does not convince me. The Hattusili-Ramesses treaty's preamble clearly states that it was an agreement between two men who sought "[great] peace and great [brotherhood] between them forever" (Beckman 1996: 91). More importantly, there is evidence for the renewal of treaties when a new generation of kings came onto the throne in the case of Hatti and Amurru. Around 1260 Hattusili III of Hatti concluded a treaty with Bentešina of Amurru, probably triggered by the fact that the Hittite had reinstated the latter on his throne (Beckman 1996: no. 16). Some thirty years later, the sons of both parties, Tudhaliya IV and Šaušga-muwa, renewed that treaty—nothing in the historical introduction suggests that there had been a rift between the two states (Beckman 1996: no. 17). To me, it seems that the "l'état c'est moi" dogma survived into the second half of the second millennium BC. Kings, not states, concluded treaties.

Reading through the fascinating quotations from the early second-millennium correspondence, a contrast with the Amarna letters struck me. As I have written before, the latter lack any substantive diplomatic discussion and the writers mostly fuss about not being given enough gold and respect (Van De Mieroop 2011: 257). That is not the case at all in the earlier letters in which the correspondents talk about serious matters, such as alliances and betrayals, military plans, war and peace. We encounter diplomacy at the highest level here, which is very different from the obsession with gifts and women (not that the Old Babylonian rulers ignored those). There is a rich body of evidence here that can be mined for a deeper study of international relations at the time. I hope Charpin's book will inspire scholars to take on that task.

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How Old Is the Hebrew Bible? By RONALD HENDEL and JAN JOOSTEN. The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library. New Haven: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2019. Pp. xvi + 221. \$45.

Scholars of the Bible and the Hebrew language continue to debate the question announced in the title of this book. For much of the twentieth century, commencing with the work of S. R. Driver (whose work began in the nineteenth century) and culminating with the work of Avi Hurvitz (whose studies continue into the twenty-first century and indeed to the present day), Hebraists were in general agreement that Biblical Hebrew (BH) changed diachronically over the course of the millennium of attested texts. In light of this model, scholars have been able to situate individual compositions on the chronological continuum of Archaic BH (ABH) > Standard BH (SBH) > Transitional BH (TBH) > Late BH

(LBH). Representative texts are, respectively, Judges 5, Samuel, Jeremiah, and Ezra (the former poetry, the latter three in whole or in part prose). As specialists will realize, TBH is a relatively new subject of inquiry, but it has gained a firm footing in the scholarly world, due mainly to the work of Hornkohl 2014 (see my review, Rendsburg 2018).

This picture was challenged in a major work published in 2008 by Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts*, 2 vols. (London: Equinox, 2008) [*LDBT*]. Notwithstanding the title of their project, these authors contend that the linguistic dating of biblical texts is infeasible, due to a variety of complicating factors (textual transmission, etc.). If anything, they argue that the differences discernible in the various varieties of BH are not due to diachronic development, but rather serve as testimony to two coeval literary styles, one more liberal, one more conservative (for lack of better terms) (see *LDBT*, 1: 70, 2: 96–99). Books written in the former, with a heavy influence of Aramaic, presence of Persian loanwords, and so on (akin to LBH in the customary view) are clearly dated to the Persian period; but books composed in the latter, which lacks a concentration of said developments (akin to SBH) also may be or should be dated to the Persian period—only that the scribes who produced these texts adhered to a more conservative writing style.

The Young-Rezetko-Ehrensverd approach serves as one of the stimuli for the book under review, but there is also a second factor, in fact, a most distressing one. For as the authors of the present volume state, “A number of learned works on the literary history of the Hebrew Bible have appeared in recent years, but most ignore or dismiss the relevance of linguistic inquiry” (p. 5).

And thus it came to pass that Jan Joosten and Ronald Hendel conceived of this slender volume, as a corrective to the present state of biblical studies. In sum, the authors adhere to the former model described above, they provide copious evidence in support of their position, and they contend with the latter model described above (though in direct fashion mainly in appendix 2 [pp. 135–44]). In their own words, “the two corpora [i.e., SBH and LBH] must have been produced at some temporal distance for their language to have grown so far apart” (pp. 41–42).

But more importantly perhaps, as intimated above, the book is intended for those biblical scholars who have not been able to access the fine details of the inner debate within the field of Hebrew linguistics, but who desire—nay, require—an introduction to the subject.

To this reviewer’s mind, the authors succeed admirably, as their book allows the scholar and the student less conversant in Hebrew linguistics to follow the debate in clear and concise fashion. I also should observe that Hendel and Joosten pay greater attention to matters of syntax (verb usage, etc.) than one typically finds in the scholarly literature (which normally focuses on lexical and morphological issues).

Space considerations allow me to focus on two chapters only, one from each author (based on information conveyed in the preface, for while the book is a joint venture, the authors also outline who is chiefly responsible for which chapter and which appendix [p. x]).

A singularly significant contribution is chapter 5, entitled “Inscriptions and Preexilic Hebrew Literature” (pp. 60–72) (written chiefly by Joosten). Time and again, we learn that linguistic features that appear in the corpus of Hebrew inscriptions dated roughly 1000–586 BCE align with SBH, though not with LBH. Thus, for example, the particles פן ‘lest’, טרם ‘before’, and לקראת ‘toward’ appear both in the Arad inscriptions (the first two) and the Siloam inscription (the third one) *and regularly* in SBH, but hardly ever in LBH sources. In light of such documentation, it is difficult to argue that the narratives of Genesis through Kings, in which these vocables appear throughout, could have been written during the Persian period, the heyday of LBH (*pace* Young-Rezetko-Ehrensverd). To be sure, these three scholars would counter (and have countered) that a late author nonetheless could have composed Genesis or Judges or Samuel, using the earlier style. But the accumulation of data, including significant syntactic constructions, militates strongly against that position.

Another prominent portion of the book is chapter 8, entitled “Consilience and Cultural History” (written chiefly by Hendel). The author nicely weaves together both cultural and linguistic perspectives to argue, for example, that Judges 5 “is a very early text, composed in the premonarchical or early monarchical period. It belongs to the oldest age of biblical literature” (p. 104). And while once upon a time such was standard teaching in the field of biblical studies, more recently several scholars have

argued for a late date for the Song of Deborah (see Mayfield 2009: 325). As Hendel makes abundantly clear, such a position is totally untenable, as it flies in the face of *both* the linguistic and cultural material underlying the poem.

As an example of the former, note the presence of the dual forms שְׁתֵּי לָשׁוֹנֹת ‘two lasses’ and שְׁתֵּי מְבִרְיֹת ‘two embroideries’ (both in v. 30), which hark back to a time when the dual was productive for all nouns—as opposed to SBH/TBH/LBH/etc., when only naturally occurring body parts (יָדַי ‘hands’, etc.), temporal markers (שְׁתֵּי יָמִים ‘two days’, etc.), numerals (שְׁתֵּי מֵאוֹת ‘two hundred’, etc.), and certain other words (e.g., מִלֵּי־אֲבָנִים ‘millstones’, comprised of an upper riding stone and a lower fixed stone) bore the dual ending. For a cultural marker in the Song of Deborah, note the autonomy of the individual tribes, with no mention of king, standing army, political unity, etc.

Within weeks of the present book’s publication, Young and Rezetko (2019) already had published a long review essay online, in which they are critical of the manner in which Hendel and Joosten represent their (that is, Young and Rezetko’s) position, among other critiques. Their essay is required reading for anyone interested in the subject covered by Hendel and Joosten, even as I accede to the view held by the present authors, and not by their interlocutors.

I must raise one bugaboo, albeit directed more toward the publisher than the authors. The book includes 567(!) endnotes, spanning thirty-six pages of text, all gathered at the end of the book (pp. 145–80). Reading and assessing the book properly thus requires a lot of (annoying) back-and-forth page-turning for the reader. Yale University Press is not alone in using this format, for I have observed the same practice with other publishers, especially university presses. Is there some reason why a book such as this cannot be produced with footnotes? Do readers of other books experience the same exasperation? Am I missing something here?

But back to the main point: One hopes that Hendel and Joosten’s efforts to produce a readable book on the subject of Hebrew diachrony will not fall upon deaf ears, but rather will provide an entrée into the subject for the current and next generation of biblical scholars. With this volume now at hand, written by two leading authorities, there can no longer be an excuse for simply ignoring or dismissing the linguistic evidence when it comes to the dating of biblical texts. Such has happened far too often in the field of biblical studies, as the present reviewer himself has observed and decried.

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The Dialectical Forge: Juridical Disputation and the Evolution of Islamic Law. By WALTER EDWARD YOUNG. Logic, Argumentation and Reasoning, vol. 9. Cham, Switzerland: SPRINGER, 2017. Pp. xiv + 643. \$149.99, €124.79 (cloth); \$109, €101.14 (ebook).

Some people disagreed with me on this point, so I debated them, and they put forward some of the arguments that I mentioned in the discussion on this point of law. I paraphrased [their position], and they answered me with what I have summarized here; however, I am not sure whether I might have clarified my own position when writing it down beyond what I actually uttered when I was speaking. I do not like to report anything other than what I actually said, even when I am only paraphrasing what I said.