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Diachronic Diversity in Classical Biblical Hebrew

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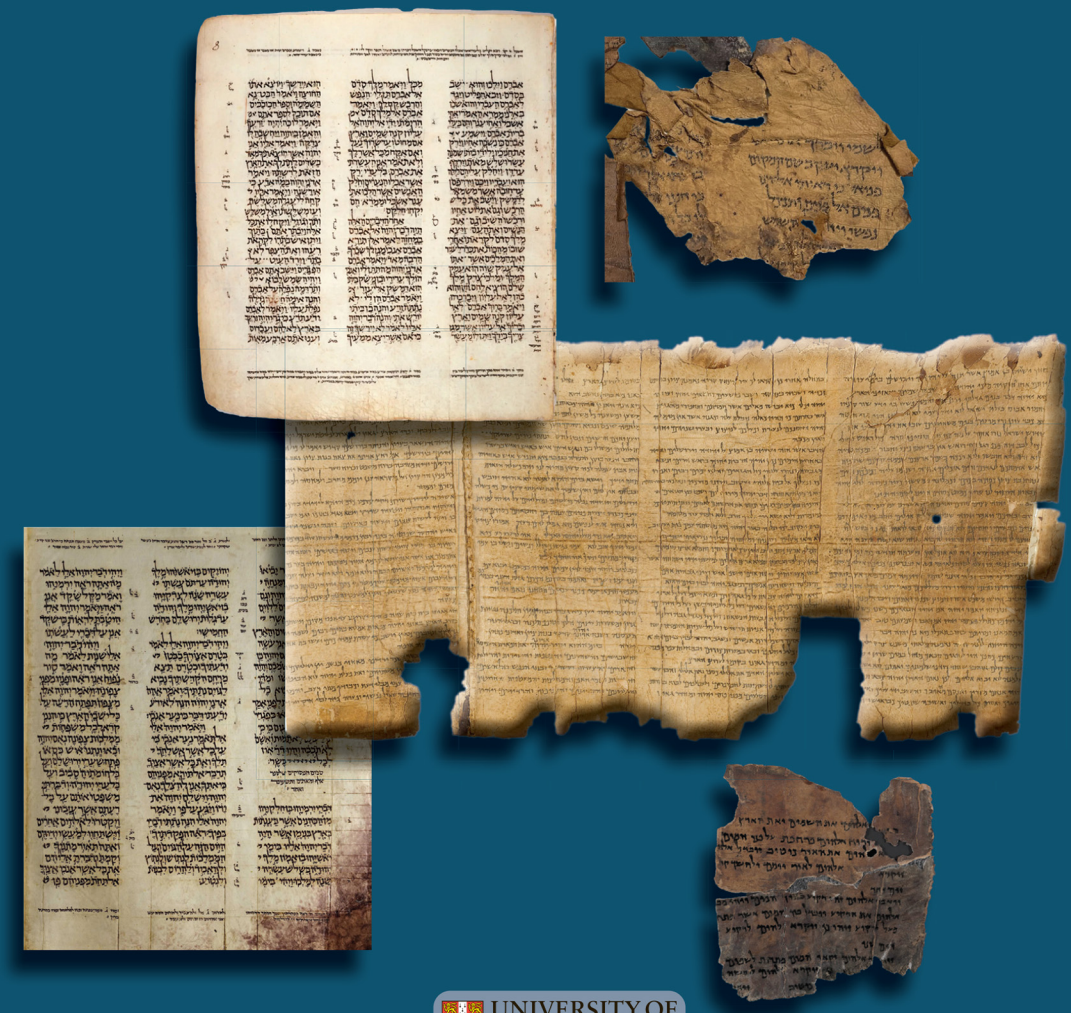

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INTRODUCTION

Despite notable objections (especially Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd 2008; Rezetko and Young 2014), the dominant paradigm of BH periodisation remains fundamentally dichotomous: Iron Age II CBH versus post-Restoration LBH (Hornkohl 2013; Hurvitz 2013). Additional strata are sometimes postulated: pre-classical ABH, ostensibly reflected in a few cases of biblical poetry (see, e.g., Mandell 2013), and late pre-exilic, exilic, and early post-exilic TBH, considered by some an intermediate stage between CBH and LBH proper (see, e.g., Hornkohl 2014a, 14–15, fn. 39; 2016a). But if recent critiques have eroded confidence in linguistic methods for periodisation of pre- versus post-exilic texts, they have drastically reduced optimism regarding finer-grain chronolectal distinctions. The problematic nature of the evidence—limited, fragmentary, ambiguous, multivalent, textually fluid, etc.—make for a daunting evidentiary situation, leading some to doubt the real-world temporal associations of the relevant periods, in favour of a paradigm according to which all apparent chronolects are deemed contemporary styles (Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd 2008; Rezetko and Young 2014).

Against such an epistemologically fraught background, the topic of the present volume may seem at best ill advised, at worst a fool's errand. The main question is *Can CBH be divided into chronological sub-chronolects?* Certain preliminary considerations seem to militate against even entertaining such a question.

For one, scholars with expertise in ancient Hebrew diachrony have heretofore been content with a unified CBH chrono-

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lect sufficiently broad to encompass the Torah, the Former Prophets, and the pre-exilic Latter Prophets and Writings, declining to venture more granular chronological distinctions.[1] CBH is broadly associated with the four hundred years of the Iron Age II period, 1000–600 BCE—approximately the monarchic period, according to biblical historiography. Since, however, CBH includes traditions of content that predate that period, the reason for categorising so much material as a single chronolect must be due to linguistic similarity. And this is indeed the case. Allowing for expected language variety reflecting such factors as geography, register, genre, and group or personal style, CBH is remarkably uniform, especially the narrative sections in the Torah and Former Prophets. Based on this stylistic affinity alone, it is heuristically valid to lump the lot together as CBH.

Assuming the above association between the CBH portions of the Bible and the monarchic period, it seems likely that their production involved both the incorporation of earlier sources and the composition of new material. It is also clear that CBH material was later subjected to further literary and textual treatment. At issue here is the linguistic character of early sources in the hands of later writer-editors. However the linguistic profile of pre-monarchic sources may have differed from that of material composed in the monarchic period, the differences seem largely to have been levelled during the process of compilation, as CBH's broad linguistic homogeneity leaves very few traces of chrono-

[1] Exceptional in this regard are several studies by Elitzur (2015; 2018a; 2018b; 2019; 2022), which, though not limited to linguistic features, nevertheless propose diachronic diversity within CBH.

lectal distinctions. Further levelling may have occurred as a result of Second Temple editorial and textual activity.

Even so, CBH is not completely homogenous. This is hardly surprising. Notwithstanding the effects of secondary levelling, scholars discern non-chronological linguistic diversity in the Bible's constituent works, noting differences related to such factors as genre, source, sociolect, regional dialect, register, and literary device (e.g., Rendsburg 1990a; 1990b; 2002a; 2002b; 2006; Young 1993). Given its apparent historiographical range, it is not unreasonable to entertain the possibility that one might also discern diachronic variation within CBH. Even if detectable in only a minority of features, so as to pose no real challenge to the standard CBH–LBH dichotomy, the existence of meaningful patterns might entail reconsideration of our understanding of periodisation. The purpose of this study is precisely to investigate cases of perceptible patterns of diachronic variation within CBH and to assess their broader implications.

And, indeed, apparently meaningful patterns of language variation within CBH are discernible, with the clearest variations in usage patterns distinguishing the Pentateuch from the remaining CBH works of the Prophets and Writings.

But neither the evidence nor the explanation for the apparent distinction is straightforward. For this reason, methodology is of paramount importance. The following sections detail methodological strictures, obstacles that must be overcome, and responses to various criticisms of approach.

1.0. Methodology

Diachronic analysis and linguistic periodisation in any language are predicated on the known chronological status of control texts. In the case of ancient Hebrew, securely dated material is limited and is datable within only approximate ranges. For this reason, rigorous methodological strictures are required.

1.1. External Controls

Securely dated texts relevant to BH divide into two groups, early and late. The early evidence consists of a comparatively limited assemblage of Iron Age II Hebrew (and cognate) inscriptional material (from roughly 1000–600 BCE). Representing a later timespan is a much more extensive collection of biblical and extrabiblical Hebrew (and cognate) material from the Second Temple period (roughly 600 BCE–300 CE). Undisputed LBH sources include Esther, Daniel, Ezra–Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Late extrabiblical Hebrew material includes the DSS and other material from the Judaean Desert; Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman era epigraphy; Ben Sira; and Rabbinic material. Late extrabiblical non-Hebrew material includes various Aramaic corpora, the Syriac Peshiṭta, and Greek and Latin transcriptional material. The BA of Ezra and Daniel represents late non-Hebrew biblical evidence.

The linguistic evidence of these control groups can be utilised to assess the diachronic status of the Hebrew of biblical (and extrabiblical) texts of unknown date. Since, however, the cache of early comparative data is relatively small, disproportionate evidentiary significance necessarily attaches to the Second Temple material. In effect, the question becomes *Based on concentrations*

of late linguistic features distinctive of Second Temple texts, can a composition of unknown date be affirmatively proven late based on its inclusion of such a concentration?

1.2. Isolating Diagnostically Late Linguistic Features

To avoid impressionistic arguments grounded in mere intuition, the gold-standard methodology employed by Hebraists consists of a three-pronged procedure to isolate late linguistic features for inclusion in an inventory of language elements positively diagnostic of Second Temple Hebrew. The three criteria are (1) late biblical distribution, (2) classical biblical opposition, and (3) extrabiblical confirmation (Hurvitz 2013, 334–35; 2014, 9–10). While these criteria may be applied to features from any domain of the language—phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, onomastics, pragmatics, semantics, sociolinguistics—for purposes of illustration, an onomastic example will suffice: the proper name יֵשׁוּעַ 'Yeshuaʿ', a late contraction (involving elision of *heh* and dissimilation of *o*- and *u*-vowels) of יְהוֹשֻׁעַ 'Joshua' (Hurvitz 2014, 130–32).

1.2.1. Late Biblical Hebrew Distribution

For consideration as potentially diagnostic of LBH, a given linguistic feature must satisfy the criterion of exclusive or predominate late distribution. For example, use of the form יֵשׁוּעַ in BH (29×) is restricted to late texts: Ezra (10×); Nehemiah (17×); Chronicles (2×). On this basis, one may proceed to the next criterion.

1.2.2. Classical Biblical Hebrew Opposition

Having established a given feature's late biblical distribution (see §1.2.1, above), the criterion of classical biblical opposition helps to ensure that its absence from CBH material is meaningful, and not an accident of the Bible's limited linguistic coverage. Returning, then, to the example יֵשׁוּעַ, its alternative יְהוֹשֻׁעַ is frequent in CBH texts (217×; it also occurs in LBH 1 Chron. 7.26), demonstrating ample opportunity for use of יֵשׁוּעַ outside LBH. Its absence from CBH is thus shown not to be a chance result of the narrow confines of the biblical corpus, but diachronically significant—apparently indicating that the late form יֵשׁוּעַ was not yet available when CBH writers composed their works.

The relevant distinction between CBH and LBH is especially conspicuous when comparing (1) and (2):

(1) '…according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by Joshua the son of Nun (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן־נוּן)' (1 Kgs 16.34).

(2) '…for from the days of Yeshua the son of Nun (יֵשׁוּעַ בִּן־נוּן) to that day the people of Israel had not done so.' (Neh. 8.17)

1.2.3. Extrabiblical Confirmation

Especially relevant in the case of rare biblical features, satisfying the criterion of extrabiblical confirmation demonstrates that a given apparently late feature is not just narrowly characteristic of one or a few biblical writers, but broadly characteristic of the Second Temple linguistic milieu. One also verifies its absence from early inscriptions, confirming it to be uncharacteristic of Iron Age II. The form יֵשׁוּעַ is evidenced in late extrabiblical Hebrew (QH; JDH; DSSBH; Ben Sira), Second Temple Aramaic (BA;

JDA; Syriac), and ancient transcriptional material (LXX; NT; Vulgate), but missing from Iron Age II epigraphy. Its classical biblical absence and late biblical distribution are thus corroborated by similar situations, respectively, in pre- and post-exilic extrabiblical sources.

1.3. Linguistic Periodisation on the Basis of Accumulation

Since linguistic diversity in BH reflects diachronic as well as non-diachronic factors—both primary and secondary—such that certain features especially characteristic of LBH occasionally crop up elsewhere in BH, the linguistic periodisation of a composition may be established only on the basis of an *accumulation* of diagnostically late features relative to its length (Hurvitz 2013, 335; 2014, 10–11). The presence of late features in a text of unknown chronological provenance in anything less than a significant *concentration* is open to any number of non-diachronic explanations, whether linguistic (dialect, register), stylistic (genre, style switching), or secondary (redactional, textual).

2.0. The Problem of External Pre-Monarchic Hebrew Evidence

Adherence to the above methodological guidelines helps to compensate for the relative paucity of Iron Age II, i.e., monarchic era, data, but a more significant evidentiary gap faces researchers focusing on pre-monarchic Hebrew, as there is little to no extrabiblical Hebrew source material from before 1000 BCE to which ostensible early CBH may be compared.

Consider, by way of example, the onomastic distinctiveness of biblical sources depicting pre-monarchic historiography, as discussed below, ch. 1. The scarcity of theophoric names containing the morpheme *yahu* in the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, and Samuel distinguishes this material from both biblical material that deals with the monarchic age and Iron Age II epigraphy, not to mention later Hebrew (and cognate) sources. It is tempting to conclude that the onomasticon of Genesis–Samuel reliably preserves pre-monarchic naming traditions in which *yahu* names were yet to gain popularity. While this may indeed be the case, one must acknowledge that a lack of contemporary external control texts confirming a lack of *yahu* names in the pre-monarchic onomasticon, in the form of Bronze Age (pre-1200 BCE) or Iron Age I (1200–1000 BCE) Hebrew inscriptions, is an obstacle of considerable significance—though the existence of contemporary cognate evidence sometimes partially compensates for the absence of relevant Hebrew evidence (see, e.g., ch. 1, §3.0; ch. 2, §3.0).

Indeed, much of the evidence analysed in this volume shows the typological priority and/or special conservatism of the Hebrew of the Torah compared to other CBH works, but confirmatory external evidence of the antiquity of the Torah's language is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, to adduce.

3.0. The Polyvalence of the Linguistic Testimony of the Tiberian Biblical Tradition

Another challenge is the composite nature of the linguistic testimony presented by the Tiberian Masoretic tradition. In any given

text, this may consist of associated, but potentially distinct, layers of tradition, including strictly consonantal form, partial marking of vowels via *matres lectionis*, vocalisation signs, cantillation accents, and paratextual Masora. Though interrelated, allowance must be made for the possibility that these components reflect dissonant layers of linguistic tradition. The *ketiv-qere* mechanism formally acknowledges hundreds of cases of divergence between the written and pronunciation components of the Tiberian tradition, Masoretic treatises note additional cases, and scholars have identified still more (many conveniently collected in Hornkohl 2023). Obviously, such polyphonic, and at times discordant, linguistic testimony, sometimes comprising diachronically distinct 'witness statements', complicates historical linguistic research. The proper response is neither to ignore the complexity nor summarily to abandon all hope of meaningful results, but to meet the challenge head on by disentangling the disparate strands of evidence and constructing a historical narrative that comprehends them.

4.0. Literary Development and Textual Fluidity

Some scholars, emphasising the complicated compositional development of biblical texts and the vagaries of their transmission as reconstructed on the basis of comparison with ancient textual witnesses, express extreme pessimism regarding the possibility of a diachronic approach to BH and of the linguistic periodisation of biblical texts (e.g., Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd 2008, I:341–60; Carr 2011, 131–32; Rezetko and Young 2014, 59–116). There is no denying the reality of such complications nor the

challenge that they constitute for diachronic approaches. If secondary interventions are so pervasive as to have obfuscated the original linguistic profile of biblical compositions, then diachronic linguistics is out of the question. But it is methodologically indefensible to prejudge the evidence as irremediably obscured without having first investigated it. The historical reliability of the data relative to each feature must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. As it turns out, and as diachronically sensitive Hebraists have repeatedly pointed out, extreme pessimism regarding the accessibility of solid historical linguistic data proves unwarranted, as it is contradicted by period-specific distribution patterns in the case of numerous linguistic features. Had the admittedly complex compositional and transmissional processes that biblical texts undoubtedly underwent irretrievably distorted their chronolectal profiles, one would not detect discernible diachronic accumulations (or absences) of diagnostically late features in specific texts. The fact that one does demonstrates that secondary developments, while not to be ignored, were not so extensive as to obliterate useful amounts of primary data. In sum, in pursuing the diachronic approach to BH and the linguistic periodisation of biblical compositions, one does not shy away from compositional and textual complexity, but neither does one make of it more than it is—a complication to be acknowledged and tackled feature-by-feature.

5.0. The Question of Late Imitation of Classical Style

On the basis of the unambiguously late linguistic profile of all compositions solidly dated to the Second Temple period on non-linguistic grounds, there is broad consensus among diachronically sensitive Hebraists that the ability to reproduce passable CBH was not common among Second Temple writers. Late writers consistently betray the linguistic milieu in which they wrote in the form of post-classicisms, not just occasionally, but in unmissable accumulations. This includes texts couched in biblical style, e.g., the Temple Scroll (11Q19), presented as the words of God revealed to Moses at Sinai (Qimron 1978a; 1980, 239ff; Yadin 1983, I:34; Hornkohl 2016b; 2021a), Ps. 151 (11Q5 28), pseudepigraphically ascribed to King David (Carmignac 1963, 377; Hurvitz 1967; Polzin 1967; Schuller 1986, 9; Smith 1997), and so-called Reworked Pentateuch/Rewritten Bible scrolls, e.g., 4QReworked Pentateuch (4Q158; 4Q364–367) and 4QCommentary Genesis A (4Q252), where even small additions and bridging material exhibit appreciable accumulations of late features (Hornkohl 2016b; 2021a).

Critics of linguistic approaches to periodisation question the assumption that late scribes could not produce good CBH. After all, Muslim scribes steeped in Qurʾanic Arabic could write flawless Classical Arabic long after the 7th century CE (Blau 1997, 28). Likewise, 19th-century Jewish writers composed works in passable BH during the *Haskala*. Might not Second Temple writers have been similarly possessed of such imitative powers?

The problem is one of historical context. The aforementioned late Muslim and Jewish writers worked in environments in which their respective scriptural chronolects had been canonised and were universally recognised and accepted. By most accounts, this was not the situation of Second Temple Judaism… especially if one holds that large portions of the Hebrew Bible, including the Pentateuch, were still in a process of composition in this period. And even if sizeable parts were in existence, neither their broad acceptance nor accessibility may be assumed.

As an extensive composition of disputed date, the Priestly source may serve as a useful example. Considered since Wellhausen's time a programmatic exilic or post-exilic account of Israelite history, legislation, polity, and cult, as a historical source, it has long been regarded with extreme suspicion, thought to project back into the Mosaic era ideological anachronisms reflecting much later times. The question is how much of P was newly composed in Second Temple times and how much pre-dated its purported fusion with other Pentateuchal sources. Having noted contemporary consensus on the pre-exilic provenance of other Pentateuchal sources, Wellhausen (1885, 9–10) remarks as follows on P:

> It is only in the case of the Priestly Code that opinions differ widely; for it tries hard to imitate the costume of the Mosaic period, and, with whatever success, to disguise its own…. The Priestly Code… guards itself against all reference to later times and settled life in Canaan…: it keeps itself carefully and strictly within the limits of the situation in the wilderness, for which in all seriousness it seeks to give the law. It has actually been successful, with its movable tabernacle, its wandering camp, and other archaic

> details, in so concealing the true date of its composition that its many serious inconsistencies with what we know, from other sources, of Hebrew antiquity previous to the exile, are only taken as proving that it lies far beyond all known history, and on account of its enormous antiquity can hardly be brought into any connection with it.

Wellhausen says precious little about language (cf. 1885, 390, ch.IX.III.2). By contrast, specialists who have focused on P's terminology often emphasise its antiquity (Grintz 1974–1975; Rendsburg 1980; Hurvitz 1974a; 1982; 1983; 1988; 2000; Zevit 1982; Paran 1983; Milgrom 1970; 1978; 1991–2001, 5–13 *et passim*; 1992, 458–59; 1999; 2007). For such experts, P's pre-exilic linguistic profile stands as insurmountable evidence of its early date. By contrast, for scholars convinced of P's late provenance, its language serves as a prime example of the possibility of successful linguistic archaising over long stretches of text (Cross 1973, 322–23; Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd 2008, II: 15–16, and the scholarship mentioned there).

In this connection, a crucial question revolves around the nature of the exemplar(s) that P might have imitated. The obvious candidates are the other Pentateuchal sources. But the very fact that source critics can so easily distinguish P from J, E, D, and H implies that these were not P's models. Nor could it have been Ezekiel, Ezra–Nehemiah, or Chronicles, whose linguistic profiles P's chronolect typologically predates. One is left with the possibility that P imitated an early source or sources characterised by pre-exilic cultic concerns and phraseology. But is this not tantamount to affirming the existence of early Priestly material? Indeed, Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd (2008, II:16–17) list

several revisions of the Documentary Hypothesis that posit both a pre-exilic P and a lengthy period of Torah compositional development extending into the Persian Period. They reasonably conclude: "*Early material in P does not prove that the Priestly Source is early*" (17, italics in the original). Yet this surely depends on the extent of P's early material. The more substantial the proportion of early material in P, the less potentially flawless Persian Period CBH material it presents. The simplest explanation for its comparatively classical linguistic profile is that a significant majority of P is pre-exilic.

We face contradictory claims—on the one hand, that late writers could not compose flawless CBH; on the other, that CBH and LBH were contemporary styles, equally available to writers during the Second Temple period. The amount and nature of the data virtually preclude verification or falsification. Given the extant evidence, the approach adopted here is that CBH and LBH are literary reflections of genuine First and Second Temple chronolects and that certain exceptional late writers might, over short spans of text, passably simulate CBH. As exceptions, such cases do not disprove the general validity and viability of the framework.

6.0. Distributional Variety of Features Typical of the Classical Biblical Hebrew Sub-chronolects

In the majority of the cases discussed in this volume, linguistic diversity within pre-exilic Hebrew divides the CBH of the Pentateuch from that of the non-LBH Prophets and Writings. This applies to 1st-person *wayyiqṭol* morphology (ch. 2), *qal* versus *hifʿil*

forms of יס"ף (ch. 3) (but see below), construct מְאַת versus absolute מֵאָה ‘hundred’ (ch. 4), *qal* internal passive versus *nifʿal* morphology (ch. 5), צע"ק versus זע"ק (ch. 6), 1CPL נַחְנוּ versus אֲנַחְנוּ (ch. 7), FS הוא versus הִיא (ch. 8), FPL ן- versus נָה- (ch. 9), נער versus נערה with feminine singular referent (ch. 10), abstract nouns ending in *-ūt* (ch. 11), and orthography (ch. 12).

Exceptional in this regard is the onomasticon with and without *yahu* names (ch. 1), from the perspective of which the watershed appears to divide the pre-monarchic naming traditions seen in Genesis–Samuel and the monarchic traditions in such books as Kings, Isaiah, and Jeremiah.

In the specific case of *qal* versus *hifʿil* forms of יס"ף (ch. 3), though the shift to *hifʿil* had clearly taken place by the time of LBH, evidence of secondary orthographic development in the Prophets makes it difficult to pinpoint more precisely the historical depth of the development (see below, §8.0).

7.0. Early Variation versus Secondary Contemporisation

The prevalence of feature sets exhibiting inner-CBH diversity separating the Torah from the rest of CBH may seem to some suspicious. Since CBH as a whole, whatever its content, patterns as a chronolect of Iron Age II, approximately 1000–600 BCE, it is not immediately obvious that the Torah should necessarily be distinguished by typologically early features. The fact that it is *might* result from its incorporation of pre-monarchic traditions preserving facets of especially ancient linguistic profiles. Circumstantial evidence ostensibly indicating the early crystallisation of the

Torah's textual and linguistic traditions include, inter alia, its 3rd-century BCE translation into Greek, the comparatively infrequent incidence of *ketiv-qere* dissonances in the Pentateuch (Barr 1981, 32–33; Tov 2004a, 204, fn. 25); the disproportionate representation of Torah texts among the palaeo-Hebrew DSS (Tov 2004b, 246); and the occurrence at Qumran and in the Judaean Desert of long scrolls apparently containing multiple books of the Torah (Tov 2004b, 75). Tov (2004b, 252–53; 2012, 188–89) emphasises that the Torah in general did not escape levels of textual and linguistic fluidity seen in other biblical (and non-biblical) material. He also notes, however, that "[t]exts written in the paleo-Hebrew script were copied more carefully than most texts written in the square script…" and that "…these manuscripts were copied with equal care as the proto-Masoretic scrolls" (Tov 2004b, 253). Since Pentateuchal material is common in both groups, this comes as empirical evidence of the relative stability of the textual and linguistic tradition of the Torah in the proto-Masoretic tradition.

Yet, it is worth considering an alternative hypothesis: namely, that the CBH found in the Pentateuch, Prophets, and Writings was once more homogenous in regard to the features discussed in this volume and only secondarily diverged, in the course of redaction and transmission. Specifically, while the linguistic antiquity of the Torah was preserved thanks to its early consolidation and perceived sanctity, the CBH of the Prophets and Writings was treated less conservatively, being allowed to shift, even if only slightly, in the case of certain details, under the

pressure of the conventions of a changing literary register, as seen in LBH and other late forms of classical Hebrew.

Such an alternative hypothesis is regularly entertained in the treatments of features included in this volume. In some cases, especially those in which differences are largely restricted to the written tradition, an explanation involving secondary contemporisation excluding the Pentateuch often seems as likely as one assuming more deeply rooted diversity. In others, though, the evidence seems to preclude such an explanation. A theory of secondary development fails to explain apparent diachronic variation involving onomastica with and without *yahu* (ch. 1), the trivalent character of 1st-person *wayyiqṭol* morphology (ch. 2), construct מְאַת versus absolute מֵאָה 'hundred' (ch. 4), *qal* internal passive versus *nifʿal* morphology (ch. 5), and צע"ק versus זע"ק (ch. 6).

8.0. Linguistic versus Orthographic Explanations

Related to the question of whether the distinctiveness of the CBH of the Pentateuch vis-à-vis CBH outside the Pentateuch is rooted in the earliest layer of tradition or resulted from secondary development is the matter of truly linguistic versus merely orthographic diversity. The main problem is the vocalic opacity of defective orthography and the ambiguity of *plene* spelling, coupled with the possible secondary status of the pronunciation(s) reflected by *matres lectionis* and the vocalisation tradition.

For example, in the Pentateuch, when it comes to 1st-person *wayyiqṭol* morphology, III-*y* verbs are regularly represented by short forms, e.g., ואעש (18 of 21 cases; see below, ch. 2, §1.0, Table 3). In the case of *hifʿil* and *qal* II-*w/y* forms, this is also true

of 1CPL forms, where orthography and vocalisation regularly agree on short morphology, e.g., וְנֶגַּשׁ (Gen. 43.21) and וְנֶגַּשׁ (Deut. 2.1) (7 of 8 relevant cases), but not of 1CS forms, where the orthography seems to presuppose short morphology, but the vocalisation reflects long morphology, e.g., וָאֲשַׁלְּחָה (Deut. 9.21) and וָאָקֵץ (Lev. 20.23) (6 of 8 relevant cases; see Hornkohl 2023, 431–33, for discussion). In the CBH Prophets and Writings, by contrast, long morphology is relatively common in all verb classes, comprising around half of all occurrences (see below, ch. 2, §3.0). In this volume and elsewhere (Hornkohl 2023, 397–99, 414–19), short and long 1st-person *wayyiqṭol* spellings are, on the basis of such evidence, and notwithstanding a degree of uncertainty and a few 1CS counterexamples with apparent secondary vocalisation, construed as linguistic, rather than mere orthographic, variants. In other words, just as III-*y* short ואעש is assumed to differ morphologically from long ואעשה, so too are short ואשלח and ואקם considered morphologically distinct from long ואשליך and ואקום, respectively.

A measure of doubt similarly attaches to some defective and *plene (way)yiqṭol* spellings of י"ס, such as ויסף and ויספו, which are variously interpretable as *qal* or *hifʿil*, the latter with long or short morphology (see below, ch. 3).

The degree of uncertainty only increases when it comes to the features discussed in chs. 8–11. Here, from the perspective of the combined written-reading Tiberian tradition, Pentateuchal and non-Pentateuchal forms differ only in terms of the written component, while, in terms of the pronunciation tradition, they are indistinguishable. Thus, in the case of FS הוא versus היא (ch.

8), FPL ן- versus נָה- (ch. 9), and נער versus נַעֲרָה with feminine singular referent (ch. 10), a scholar might legitimately side with the vocalisation tradition and view the spellings as no more than unorthodox written representations of standard pronunciations.

According to the approach adopted in the present study, by contrast, a non-standard written form for which the traditional vocalisation demands the standard pronunciation is not uncritically dismissed as a mere spelling variant. Rather, the possibility that the written tradition reflects a distinct pronunciation tradition is seriously entertained. This means that the unorthodox Pentateuchal written forms of the features discussed in chs 8–11 are interpreted as linguistically divergent from the more standard forms found elsewhere in CBH, reflecting a pronunciation tradition different from that preserved in the received Tiberian pronunciation component—this notwithstanding the levelling effect of the Tiberian vocalisation, which has brought the written forms into phonological conformity with standard pronunciation.

9.0. Inner-Pentateuchal Diachronic Variation

It is instructive at this juncture to revisit the useful example of the Priestly source briefly explored above (§5.0). While there is broad agreement among Hebraists that P is not written in LBH, not all scholars consider it a manifestation of CBH proper. For instance, on the basis of various grammatical developments, Polzin (1976, 85–122, but cf. 168–69) sees the core Priestly material as transitional between the CBH of the combined JE material, D, and the Court History, on the one hand, and LBH Chronicles, on the other. Subsequent investigation of TBH, however, has helped

to establish a more accurate diachronic contextualisation for P. Hurvitz (1982) shows that the Hebrew of P antedates that of Ezekiel, and Rooker (1990) and Hornkohl (2014a) show, respectively, that the Hebrew of Ezekiel and of Jeremiah are transitional between CBH, including P, and LBH. Shin (2007) convincingly does the same for Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; Dobbs-Allsopp (1998) does so for Lamentations; and Paul (2012) and Arentsen (2020) make a strong TBH case for Second Isaiah (chs 40–66). P may lie somewhere between more prototypical CBH and TBH compositions (but see below), but with the category of TBH so crowded with compositions presenting linguistic profiles typologically more advanced than P's, and with P's Hebrew more similar to that of the core CBH books than that of the TBH material, P is arguably better considered an instantiation of CBH than of TBH.

Even so, on the basis of the prevailing JEDP relative dating of the Documentary Hypothesis (Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd 2008, II:12), one might expect P to pattern typologically later than the other Pentateuchal sources as well other CBH texts. To cite a rather famous example, some take P's nearly exclusive use of the 1cs independent subject pronoun אֲנִי instead of אָנֹכִי 'I' as evidence of the source's relative lateness—in line with LBH and other post-exilic forms of Hebrew and with Aramaic (Giesebrecht 1881, 251–58; S. R. Driver 1898, 155–56, n. †; cf. Hornkohl 2014a, 108–11, especially fn. 4, for counterarguments and bibliography).

Similarly, Hendel (2000) argues "the complementary distribution of *yālad* (*Qal*) for 'beget' in the J source and *hôlîd* (*Hiphil*)

for ‘beget’ in the P source is attributable to a diachronic development in Classical Biblical Hebrew,” i.e., not diachronic development between CBH and LBH. On the other hand, he dates P to the time of the Exile or the early Persian Period (Hendel 2000, 46).

To clarify this matter, the phenomena discussed in this volume were subjected to source-critical analysis, relying on the identification of sources given by Friedman (1989, 246–55). This seemed particularly appropriate in cases of features where typological alternants occurred within the Torah. The results of the source-critical analysis of the twelve phenomena treated herein are somewhat equivocal, but certainly do not point unambiguously to P’s relative lateness, whether in the Pentateuch, specifically, or in CBH, more generally. In several instances, no discernible differences between sources could be detected. This applies to onomastica with and without *yahu* names (ch. 1), 1st-person *wayyiqtol* morphology (ch. 2), צע"ק versus זע"ק (ch. 6), 1CPL נַחְנוּ versus אֲנַחְנוּ (ch. 7), FS הוא versus הִיא (ch. 8), and נער versus נַעֲרָה with feminine singular referent (ch. 10).

In other instances, various typologically significant tendencies emerge, P patterning with a CBH profile slightly later than that of one or more of the other Pentateuchal sources. Thus, in the case of *qal* internal passive versus *nifʿal* morphology (ch. 5), J is typologically early in its preference for *qal* passive morphology, while P and E both show statistically similar patterns of mixed usage, while no Pentateuchal source conforms to the *nifʿal* dominance of key verbs seen in CBH outside the Pentateuch.

When it comes to FPL ־ן versus ־נָה (ch. 9), all sources with more than a single case show some degree of mixing vowel- and consonant-final morphology, J and E presenting more balanced usage, P exhibiting definite preference for ־נה, though with widely divergent distributions depending on book (consistently ־ן in Genesis–Exodus and ־נה in Leviticus–Numbers).

In ch. 11, if lexemes ending in *-ūt* are to be deemed especially characteristic of late forms of ancient Hebrew, then their Pentateuchal concentration in P may be significant.

Finally, with regard to several features, P stands out as typologically early. This holds for *qal* versus *hifʿil* forms of י"סף (ch. 3), construct מְאַת versus absolute מֵאָה ‘hundred’ (ch. 4), 1CPL נַחְנוּ versus אֲנַחְנוּ (ch. 7), and orthography (ch. 12).

10.0. Structure of the Monograph

The features discussed in this volume have been divided into two groups. The first group is presented in Part I, which consists of six chapters, each dedicated to a set of variants that reflect inner-CBH typological diversity perceptible in the combined Tiberian written and reading biblical tradition, i.e., in both its consonantal and pronunciation components. In practice, this means that the linguistic variation is sufficiently rooted in the consonantal text that divergences could not be levelled, or could be only partially levelled, in the pronunciation prescribed by the vocalic component. In some cases, orthographic intervention, in the form of the addition of internal *matres lectionis*, seems to indicate relatively early secondary linguistic development that obscured more ancient linguistic detail.

In Part II, the second group of features is represented by four chapters on sets of alternants that are here considered linguistic in nature, but could legitimately be deemed mere orthographic variants, as well as a final chapter on orthography. In these cases, inner-CBH variation is perceptible only at the level of the written component of the Tiberian biblical tradition, including consonants and *matres lectionis*, but is not manifest on the level of vocalisation. Indeed, from the perspective of the oral reading component, no variation obtains, the pronunciation tradition levelling all variants in line with the standard BH forms (see above, §8.0).