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*Ancient Hebrew Periodization and the Language of the Book of Jeremiah: The Case for a Sixth-Century Date of Composition*. By AARON D. HORNKOHL. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, vol. 74. Leiden: BRILL, 2014. Pp. viii + 517. \$210.

The book under review constitutes much more than its title promises. For while the focus of the research remains on Jeremiah throughout, in essence the author provides the first sustained monograph against the revisionist view of Hebrew diachronic study which has emerged in recent years. For the uninitiated, though, first some back-story:

For much of the twentieth century, commencing with the work of S. R. Driver and culminating with the work of Avi Hurvitz (whose studies have continued into the twenty-first century and indeed to the present day), Hebraists were in general agreement that the Biblical Hebrew (BH) language changed diachronically over the course of the millennium of attested texts. The changes were not as drastic as the changes from Old Egyptian to Middle Egyptian to Late Egyptian (extending over two millennia) or the changes from Old English to Middle English to Modern English (stretching over one millennium), but the changes were detectable nonetheless. Hence, as outlined by E. Y. Kutscher and as detailed by Hurvitz (the former was the main teacher of the latter), Hebraists understood that biblical texts could be placed on the continuum of Archaic BH (ABH), Standard BH (SBH), and Late BH (LBH).

This picture was challenged in a major work by Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensverd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts* (London: Equinox, 2008). The authors contend that the differences in BH are not due to diachronic development, but rather serve as testimony to two coeval literary styles, one more conservative, one more liberal (for lack of better terms). Books written in the latter, 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 former, which lacks a concentration of said developments (akin to SBH), also may be or should be dated to the Persian period—only the scribes who produced these texts adhered to a more conservative writing style.

Into this fray steps Aaron Hornkohl with the present masterful study, devoted to the book of Jeremiah, but with far-reaching implications beyond the linguistic profile of this single biblical composition. This monograph is a thorough revision and translation of the author's doctoral dissertation presented to the Hebrew University (2012), written under the supervision of Steven Fassberg.

The bulk of the book is devoted to detailed examinations of specific linguistic traits which may be used to distinguish SBH and LBH. These include nine features within the domains of orthography and phonology, twelve morphological elements, thirteen syntactic traits, and thirteen lexical items (pp. 72–355). Every issue studied receives a thorough inspection across the biblical corpus, with additional relevant information forthcoming from cognate Semitic languages and most importantly from post-biblical sources (Ben Sira, Dead Sea Scrolls, Tannaitic texts, etc.). Individual occurrences of each feature are listed, superb charts summarize the evidence in exceedingly clear fashion, explanations for the various developments are surveyed, and then the author turns his attention specifically to Jeremiah. Two illustrations of the method are provided here.

1) Hebrew attests to the two verbs  $\text{קָרַע}$   $\text{q-r}^{\text{c}}\text{-}^{\text{c}}\text{q}$  and  $\text{קָרַעַ$   $\text{z-r}^{\text{c}}\text{-}^{\text{c}}\text{q}$ , both meaning 'cry out, muster', with parallel noun forms  $\text{קָרַעַ$   $\text{q-r}^{\text{c}}\text{-}^{\text{c}}\text{q}$  and  $\text{קָרַעַ$   $\text{z-r}^{\text{c}}\text{-}^{\text{c}}\text{q}$ , respectively, 'cry, scream'. The former set (with verb and noun tallied together) predominates in the Torah, to the ratio of 27:2, while the latter set (ditto) predominates in the LBH corpus, to the ratio of 3:11. "Especially illustrative are parallel or similar formulations from classical and post-classical biblical texts" (p. 80), such as Gen. 27:34 // Esther

4:1; Exod. 3:7 // Neh. 9:9; Exod. 8:8 // 2 Chron. 18:31—all of which have  $\text{ק-צ-צ}$   $\text{š-š-q}$  in the earlier passage and  $\text{ק-צ-ט}$   $\text{z-š-q}$  in the later echo. Similarly, when one brings the Dead Sea Scrolls (both biblical manuscripts and non-biblical texts) into the picture: note, for example, the use of  $\text{קיצע}$   $\text{yiz'eq}$  ‘he cries out’ in MT Isa. 42:2 vs.  $\text{קיצע}$   $\text{yiz'eq}$  in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> 35.11; and the use of  $\text{קיצע}$   $\text{šā'āqā}$  ‘she cried out’ in MT Deut. 22:27 vs.  $\text{קיצע}$   $\text{zā'āqā}$  in 11Q19 [11QT] 66.7.

Given the strong preference for  $\text{ק-צ-ט}$   $\text{z-š-q}$  in Aramaic dialects, the trend from  $\text{ק-צ-צ}$   $\text{š-š-q}$  to  $\text{ק-צ-ט}$   $\text{z-š-q}$  in Hebrew sources is explicable. In Jeremiah, the ratio of the two roots is 7:14, which Hornkohl interprets exactly as one would expect: on the way to LBH with its preference for  $\text{ק-צ-ט}$   $\text{z-š-q}$ , but still clinging to a sustained use of  $\text{ק-צ-צ}$   $\text{š-š-q}$  as per SBH—which is to say, Jeremiah serves as a representative of Transitional BH (TBH) dated to the sixth century B.C.E.

2) Hebrew exhibits a rather unique linguistic phenomenon, with two forms of the 1.c.sg. personal pronoun,  $\text{אני}$   $\text{'ānōkī}$  and  $\text{אני}$   $\text{'ānī}$ , both ‘I’. The distinction between the two forms, especially in classical BH narrative, where both appear side-by-side, continues to exercise scholars, though several clear trends are visible nonetheless. The prime one is the obvious predominance of the latter form in LBH, as witnessed by the ratio of 3:76 in Esther-Daniel-Ezra-Nehemiah-Chronicles, especially when compared to such ratios as 17:12 in Judges and a precise 50:50 in Samuel.

The data for Jeremiah are 37:54, with “each form coming in a variety of genres throughout the book’s various apparent component parts” (p. 110). On the one hand, then, “in terms of absolute numbers the relative regularity of  $\text{אני}$   $\text{'ānōkī}$  in Jeremiah contrasts with the form’s rarity in LBH proper and other late material, arguably highlighting Jeremiah’s linguistically transitional character” (p. 111). On the other hand, Hornkohl observes that 35 of the 37 instances of  $\text{אני}$   $\text{'ānōkī}$  in Jeremiah occur in divine speech, “a fact that would seem to indicate that use of the form in question was no longer natural, but had become archaistic, especially associated with formal speech contexts” (ibid.), thereby suggesting “the affinity of the book’s language to post-classical Hebrew is nonetheless manifest” with regard to this specific feature (ibid.).

The results of all this work are clear: “On the basis of a detailed examination of over forty linguistic features—representing the full spectrum of linguistic categories: orthography, phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon—the conclusion of the present study is that, though likely composite, the extant book of Jeremiah was written in a form of TBH, the literary medium employed in works composed in the span of time linking the First and Second Temple Periods, probably approximately coterminous with the 6th century BCE” (p. 371). Beyond this statement, Hornkohl is able to finesse the matter further, by noting that the linguistic profile of Jeremiah is more classical than other TBH texts such as Ezekiel, Haggai, and Zechariah, just as one would expect, given the floruit and location of the prophet. In sum, the book serves as a strong response to the Young-Rezetko-Ehrensverd approach noted above.

The book of Jeremiah has a more complicated literary history than most biblical books, because it was transmitted in two versions, a longer one represented by Masoretic Text (MT) and a shorter one represented by the Greek edition—with the former containing about one-sixth more material. This fact has led some scholars to theorize that the MT “pluses” derive from a later time period, added and interpolated into the earlier shorter version by a post-Jeremiah scribe. Hornkohl addresses this important issue in fine fashion: for each of the forty-seven features studied, he includes a short summary of the evidence as distributed between the two versions, the shorter reconstructed *Vorlage* of the Greek and the longer MT. All of this work, then, is summarized in a separate chapter (pp. 356–69), in order to determine whether the “pluses” in the MT are from the same period as the shorter version or whether they represent new material composed at a later period.

The results are clear: from a linguistic perspective, the “pluses” are only slightly later than core Jeremiah; hence, they do not reflect “a late post-exilic composition, but [rather], like the rest of Jeremiah, a product of the transitional period” (p. 369).

Notwithstanding the remarkable amount of data presented in this work, in one instance I would have preferred some additional discussion. I refer to the unusual form  $\text{ממלכות}$   $\text{mamləkūt}$  ‘kingdom’, which appears in Jer. 26:1 and 8x elsewhere in the Bible. The word is mentioned on p. 71, with the assertion that the form is “not necessarily characteristic of any diachronic layer of ancient Hebrew,” with further mention of the word relegated to a footnote (p. 319 n. 68) within the discussion of the related word

מַלְכוּת *malkut* 'kingdom'. Incidentally, p. 70, line 11, represents the only mistake in this very technical book which caught my eye: Jer. 27.1 there should read Jer. 26.1.

To repeat: Hornkohl has written a masterful study about the linguistic profile of the book of Jeremiah, but the data and the conclusions reverberate far beyond the specific focus of this monograph. I for one will consult this book for years to come.

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*Ezra and the Law in History and Tradition*. By LISBETH S. FRIED. Columbia, S.C.: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PRESS, 2014. Pp. xii + 258, illus. \$59.95.

This book is published in South Carolina's series, "Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament," which portrays the histories of biblical figures' reception in religious tradition as well as their depiction in biblical texts. Fried approaches this task systematically by writing a chapter on each stage of Ezra's portrayal, from reconstructing the historical Ezra and contrasting him with the biblical Ezra (chapters 2–3) to summarizing and contesting modern critics' assessments of Ezra and of the Torah (chapter 9). The chapters in between chart this character's development and transformation in Jewish, Christian, Samaritan, and Muslim traditions. The result is a fascinating case study of religious imagination in the service of apologetics and polemics.

Fried has published extensively on the history of the Persian period, and her reconstruction of the historical Ezra (chapter 2) recaps her previous work. She thinks there is an authentic source behind the letter of the Persian emperor, Artaxerxes, authorizing Ezra's mission (Ezra 7:12–16). Fried draws many conclusions about Ezra from this letter. The most interesting is that Ezra's commission to appoint judges refers only to ethnic Persians, so his commission involves the imperial administration, not the internal affairs of Judea and Judean law. Fried does think that Ezra may have impacted the Jerusalem community through the tax exemption for the temple and cultic personnel (7:24). This exemption would have meant release from corvée labor of the kind that Nehemiah imposed to build Jerusalem's walls (Neh. 3). She also thinks that the complaint about mixed marriages in Ezra 9:1a may derive from an authentic Ezra memoir. Fried draws on well-documented Athenian marriage laws of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE as well as the scanty evidence from the Persian Empire to argue that mixed marriages were severely discouraged in both empires because of fear of foreign alliances through marriage (pp. 22–27). She therefore concludes that the story of mass divorce is historically plausible.

Otherwise, the depiction of Ezra in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah was entirely fabricated by the biblical writers working in the early Hellenistic period at the end of the fourth century BCE. After untangling the chronology to place Ezra after the time of Nehemiah (pp. 28–33), Fried argues that multiple writers reworked the material to cast Ezra as a priest and scribe mandated by the empire to teach the Torah in Judea. The story of Ezra's public reading of the Torah (Neh. 8) was then added as the climax to this account. Fried observes that the stories depict the Torah as an oracular device (7:10) and as "the physical sign of YHWH's presence" (p. 38) to "evoke in the mind of the reader awe and veneration for the Torah scroll, indeed not for its contents (which the reader does not know) but for the scroll itself" (p. 43). Fried proceeds to contextualize literarily this depiction of Ezra in comparison to the Exodus story and 2 Kings. It would have been helpful also to contextualize the biblical account within early Hellenistic-period politics as she contextualizes the historical Ezra. She does not explain who would have wanted to promote the biblical depiction of Ezra and why.

Chapter 4 describes 1 Esdras, a third-century-BCE Greek rewriting of Ezra combined with the end of Chronicles and Nehemiah 8. This account omits the character Nehemiah entirely, along with his criticisms of priests for intermarriage, so 1 Esdras clearly expresses priestly interests. Fried points out that this rearrangement makes Torah reading the climax and conclusion of the work. 1 Esdras thus presents Torah observance as the solution to the problem of sin and divine punishment.