LINGUISTIC DATING OF BIBLICAL TEXTS: PROPONENTS, CHALLENGERS

AND JUDGES 5

by

Brian G. Felushko

B.A., The University of British Columbia, 2011

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

(Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

June 2018

© Brian G. Felushko, 2018
The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, a thesis/dissertation entitled:

“Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts: Proponents, Challengers and Judges 5”

submitted by Brian G. Felushko in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

in Religious Studies

Examinining Committee:

Dr. Sara Milstein (Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies)
Supervisor

Dr. Gregg Gardner (Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies)
Supervisory Committee Member

Dr. Lisa Cooper (Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies)
Supervisory Committee Member
Abstract

Whether the biblical texts can or cannot be dated has a significant impact on the reliability, or usefulness in using them to reconstruct Israelite history. In addition, knowing when a text was written impacts our ability to understand what its meaning was for its readers. Some biblical texts can be dated to the post-exilic period with relative confidence based on convergences between content and historically dated extra-biblical material and/or literary sources. This corpus, for most scholars, would include Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles. Beyond these, however, there is much debate about whether it is possible to even provide relative dates to any other texts. Numerous scholars, past and present, confidently assert that linguistic features can date biblical texts, on the basis of typology, to at least one of three periods: pre-monarchic, pre-exilic or post-exilic. In contrast, especially since the early 1990s, numerous linguists, Hebraists, and Hebrew Bible scholars have challenged that thesis. In large part, they reject the idea that typology indicates chronology and argue rather that it is indicative of authorial/editorial style and of genre. The purpose of this paper is, first, to summarize and explain each side in this debate. This will be followed by a linguistic analysis of Judges 5 in order to demonstrate the principle that linguistic features alone are insufficient for textual dating. This conclusion will be supported through a critique of some of the essential assumptions on each side of the debate. Finally, I will offer a path through the current impasse and towards continued study and respectful discussion that will add to our knowledge and deepen our understanding of the role of linguistic features in the dating of biblical texts.
Lay Summary

Knowing when the texts of the Hebrew Bible were written is crucial to an understanding of their reliability in reconstructing Israelite history. In addition, knowing when a text was written impacts our ability to understand what its meaning was for its readers. Some biblical texts have been confidently dated since their contents reveal people, places and events that are known from extra-biblical sources. Some scholars argue that other texts can be dated based on their linguistic features to specific periods of Israel’s history. Others argue that linguistic features are the result of style or genre only. The purpose of this paper is to summarize each side in this debate and then to analyse a reputedly old biblical text—Judges 5. The paper concludes that linguistic features alone are insufficient for the dating of biblical texts yet recommends a way forward in the continued study of linguistic dating.
Preface

This thesis is the original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Brian G. Felushko.
# Table of Contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... iii  
Lay Summary .................................................................................................................. iv  
Preface ............................................................................................................................ v  
Table of Contents .......................................................................................................... vi  
List of Abbreviations .................................................................................................... ix  
Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................... xi  
Dedication ...................................................................................................................... xii  

CHAPTER 1: Introduction ................................................................................................. 1  
  1.1 Can Biblical Texts Be Dated Linguistically? ......................................................... 1  
  1.2 When Biblical Texts Were Written Does Matter ............................................... 2  
  1.3 The Biblical Linguistic Dating Debate: An Overview ........................................ 4  

CHAPTER 2: The Linguistic Dating Model ..................................................................... 8  
  2.1 The Diachronic Strata of Biblical Hebrew ............................................................ 8  
  2.2 Methodology for Distinguishing Various Strata of BH ....................................... 12  
  2.3 Evidence in Support of the Biblical Linguistic Dating Model ......................... 14  
    2.3.1 Archaisms, Pseudo-Classicisms and the Dead Sea Scrolls ......................... 14  
    2.3.2 Loanwords ....................................................................................................... 16  
    2.3.3 Extra-Biblical Attestation ............................................................................. 18  
    2.3.4 Linguistic Comparison of Samuel–Kings to Chronicles ........................... 21  
  2.4 Problems for the Proponents ............................................................................... 21  
  2.5 Summary ............................................................................................................... 25  

CHAPTER 3: The Linguistic Dating Model Opposed ..................................................... 27
# Table of Contents

3.1 From Proponents to Challengers .......................................................... 27
3.2 The Challengers and Proponents Share Some Agreement ....................... 28
3.3 The Challengers and Proponents Disagree ........................................... 31
3.4 Summary of the Challengers’ Arguments and Their Alternative ............. 34

CHAPTER 4: Judges 5 and the Linguistic Dating Debate ................................ 41
4.1 Introductory Considerations .................................................................. 41
4.2 The Relationship of Judges 4 to Judges 5 ............................................. 42
4.3 The theme and Unity of Judges 5 .......................................................... 44
4.4 The Greek Translations ....................................................................... 45
4.5 The Existence and Characteristics of ABH ......................................... 46
4.6 An Analysis of Proposed ABH Features in Judges 5 ......................... 48
  4.6.1 Relative Pronouns (ש, ח, נ, instead of CBH רשא) ......................... 49
  4.6.2 A Prefixed Conjugation ................................................................. 50
  4.6.3 Second Person Feminine Singular with Suffix י- ......................... 51
  4.6.4 Verbal Suffixes Using the So-Called energetic Forms .................. 51
  4.6.5 Abnormal Use of the Dual ............................................................ 52
  4.6.6 The Qal Passive Verbal Conjugation ........................................... 52
  4.6.7 Lexicon: *Hapax Legomena*, Rare Words and Unusual Phrases .... 53
  4.6.8 Judges 5:30 .................................................................................. 55
  4.6.9 Overall Considerations Regarding the Proposed ABH Features ...... 56
4.7 Can Judges 5 Be Linguistically Dated? ................................................ 58

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion .............................................................................. 62
5.1 Overall Impressions ............................................................................. 62
5.2 Problems for the Proponents.................................................................63

5.3 Critique for the Challengers.................................................................65

5.4 The Current State of the Linguistic Dating Debate and Beyond.................66

Bibliography..................................................................................................70

Appendices.....................................................................................................80

Appendix A: Judges 5 Texts of the MT, LXX\textsuperscript{A} & LXX\textsuperscript{B}.........................80

Appendix B: Judges 5 Translations of the MT, LXX\textsuperscript{A} & LXX.............................87
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABH</td>
<td>Archaic Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCE</td>
<td>Before Common Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BH</td>
<td>Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca.</td>
<td>Approximately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBH</td>
<td>Classical Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>Common Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSS</td>
<td>Dead Sea Scrolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBH</td>
<td>Early Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB</td>
<td>Hebrew Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IH</td>
<td>Israeli Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBH</td>
<td>Late Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDBT</td>
<td><em>Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXX</td>
<td>Septuagint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH</td>
<td>Mishnaic Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Masoretic Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRSV</td>
<td>New Revised Standard Version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Old Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QH</td>
<td>Qumranic Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RH</td>
<td>Rabbinic Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBH</td>
<td>Standard Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Samaritan Pentateuch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBH</td>
<td>Transitional Biblical Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>verse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv.</td>
<td>verses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Sara Milstein, Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Milstein made herself available whenever I needed help with my research, writing or required redirecting. She encouraged me via her feedback to dig deeper, reconsider my efforts and to write more succinctly. While the end product is certainly my own (along with any errors), it would not have been completed without her persistent and consistent guidance and support.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Gregg Gardner, Associate Professor and the Diamond Chair in Jewish Law and Ethics at the University of British Columbia. As the second reader, I am gratefully indebted to him for his very valuable comments on this thesis. He encouraged me to make my voice heard, to rephrase some of my more emotionally laden statements and to present a more academically focused thesis.

Finally, I would also express my gratitude to the staff and graduate students of the Classical, Near Eastern, and Religious Studies department at the University of British Columbia. Each person in his/her own way has demonstrated nothing but respect, encouragement and practical assistance for me, especially in this last year, which has had more than its share of difficult life challenges.
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, partner, best friend and consistent encourager, Sarabeth. Her invincible belief in me and my abilities has never ceased to astound me. Her support for any task I decide to take on has been my rock. In the 40 plus years that we have been married, I have been either a part-time or full-time student a total of two decades. She believes in me when I do not believe in myself. She has been my number one fan and has sacrificed personally to help me reach my various educational and occupational goals. She has listened to me read, and reread, various papers and has sat through countless academic presentations and done so without even the hint of complaint. And she has, in timely ways, offered input that has made my work better and clearer. I could go on, but bottom line, I would not be at this point without her. This one, for sure, is for her!
CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Can Biblical Texts Be Dated Linguistically?

Since the beginning of critical scholarship, scholars have sought to date the text of the Hebrew Bible. Dating the text has important implications for a number of critical issues in the study of the Hebrew Bible, including understanding its historicity, transmission, authorship, intended audience, and an array of other issues. Dating the biblical text is not only important for biblical scholars, but also theologians, archaeologists, and is of great interest to the public at large, given the importance of the Hebrew Bible in Western civilization. Scholars have sought to date the biblical text in a number of ways based on the theological, historical and literary content of each text. One method that came to the forefront in the nineteenth century was to use linguistics to date the texts.¹ This generally involved an analysis of each biblical text to determine which period of Biblical Hebrew (BH) was represented by its linguistic features and on that basis to assign a date to its initial composition. While linguistic dating had been used and developed by scholars for two hundred years, in the 1990s, it came under attack. Scholars began to question the validity of this approach and offered up an alternative explanation for the linguistic variation in the Hebrew Bible that was non-chronological. The proposed weaknesses that these scholars identified has led to an ongoing scholarly debate and the question this study seeks to answer: Is it possible to use linguistic features to date the biblical texts?²


² Ian Young (1992), in an article regarding the Gezer Calendar (dated by many to the 10th c. BCE), concludes that the type of Hebrew in this inscription is not so much related to the age of the text, but to its style—that of Hebrew poetry. Since then, Young, Robert Rezetko and others have challenged the idea that biblical texts can be dated linguistically. Avi Hurvitz, Jan Joosten, Robert Holmstedt and others have responded to these
It is the thesis of this study that the linguistic features of a biblical text may, in some cases, aid in dating, but that linguistic features alone are not sufficient to allow scholars to confidently date the initial composition of a biblical text. As will be made clear, scholars on each side of the debate—the proponents and the challengers—look at the same linguistic evidence and yet come to opposing conclusions. Therefore, in this study I will examine and evaluate the arguments and evidence of the proponents (Chapter 2) and the challengers (Chapter 3). In Chapter 4, I will analyze Judges 5, one of the reputedly oldest texts in the Hebrew Bible, to demonstrate that linguistic features are insufficient, in and of themselves, to date the text. In Chapter 5, I will summarize the reasons why biblical texts cannot be dated by linguistic features alone.

1.2 When Biblical Texts Were Written Does Matter

Richard Elliot Friedman’s most recent book, *The Exodus: How It Happened and Why It Matters*, illustrates what the linguistic dating debate is about and why it matters today. He states, “Figuring out how the Bible came to be composed—who wrote the parts, who put the parts together—has been a central question of Bible scholarship for the last two centuries.” The thesis of his book is that there is a historical reality in Israel’s past that provides the foundation, or perhaps the impetus, for the Exodus story as referenced throughout the Hebrew Bible. His argument, in part, is based on texts that he dates as definitively pre-exilic in origin. He regards such texts as Exodus 15 (Miriam’s Song) and Judges 5 (Deborah’s...
Song) to be the most ancient texts in the Bible, which he contends were written in close proximity to the events they describe. Specifically, he dates these texts (along with Deuteronomy 12–26 and 32–33) to somewhere between the twelfth century and the eighth century BCE. His dating is based on linguistic features that he, along with other proponents of linguistic dating, identify as archaic in origin.5

When the texts of the Hebrew Bible were written is crucial to an understanding of their reliability, or usefulness, in reconstructing Israelite history.6 Whether the biblical texts, especially the traditionally older texts, can or cannot be dated, has a significant impact on the potential historicity of these texts. In contrast to Friedman, Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, in their book, The Bible Unearthed, date the Exodus narrative to “the second half of the seventh and the first half of the sixth century BCE.”7 For this, and other reasons, they regard the biblical narratives as historically unreliable, as do other scholars such as Niels Peter Lemche, Philip R. Davies and Thomas L. Thompson.8 Over the last thirty years intense scholarly attention has been given to the idea of the linguistic dating of biblical texts. The disagreement and debate among Hebrew language and Bible scholars illustrates how

---

5 Friedman 2017, 65; 250 n. 97. Friedman is not specific as to which linguistic features are convincingly archaic Hebrew for him, but rather references numerous scholarly articles written by proponents and states that the challenges of Young, Rezetko and Ehrensvärd have been “thoroughly rejected” by Joosten, Hendel, Miller-Naudé, and Zevit.

6 Schniedewind 2004, ch. 1. Kindle Edition. As he notes succinctly, the crucial question is not “Who wrote the Bible?” but “When was the Bible written?”

7 Finkelstein and Silberman 2002a, 68. In addition, Finkelstein and Silberman defend their conclusions in an article responding to William Dever’s review of their book. See 2002b, 63–64.

8 In contrast with Friedman, Finkelstein and Silberman note, “Biblical historians such as Thomas Thompson and Niels Peter Lemche of the University of Copenhagen and Philip Davies of the University of Sheffield, dubbed “biblical minimalists” by their detractors, have argued that David and Solomon, the united monarchy of Israel, and indeed the entire biblical description of the history of Israel are no more than elaborate, skillful ideological constructs produced by priestly circles in Jerusalem in post-exilic or even Hellenistic times” (2002a, 127–128).
important it is to determine whether or not it is possible to date biblical texts by means of their linguistic characteristics.

Friedman is adamant that the current tendency to date more of the Hebrew Bible later ignores the most recent research on the Hebrew language. It is this research that convinces him that we can distinguish pre-exilic Hebrew from post-exilic Hebrew. He challenges those who disagree, and thus date all biblical texts to the post-exilic period, to defend their dates by dealing with the evidence presented by the proponents of the linguistic dating model. Friedman’s conclusions and his challenge to those who disagree demonstrate just one example of what is at stake in the linguistic dating debate. In this case, whether or not there is any historical core to the Exodus impacts our understanding of Israel’s origin story which is repeated and referenced throughout the entire Hebrew Bible.

1.3 The Linguistic Biblical Dating Debate: An Overview

This debate has been carried on through scores of journal articles, conference presentations, encyclopedia entries, edited volumes and monographs, as well as scholars’ blogs and website posts. The seeds of the debate were sown in the mid 1990s but came to full view starting in 2003 with the publication of Biblical Hebrew: Studies In Chronology and Typology, edited by Ian Young. Over the past fifteen years, scholars have attempted either to explain and defend the linguistic dating of biblical texts or to refute that theory and present alternatives. While the two sides of this debate agree on certain aspects of BH, they come to

---

9 Pre-exilic Hebrew is most often known as Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH), but also as Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) and sometimes as Early Biblical Hebrew (EBH). Depending on the scholar, any of the above can be considered inclusive of Archaic Biblical Hebrew (ABH) if they have concluded such a stratum/register actually exists. Post-exilic Hebrew is most often known as Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH). For some scholars, LBH is inclusive of Qumranic Hebrew (QH) and even Mishnaic Hebrew (MH), but others refer to the latter two separately from LBH. See J. Naudé 2010, 3.
very different conclusions about their value for dating, despite the fact they examine the same texts.

The proponents of the linguistic dating theory hold to the tripartite division of BH and contend that each type occupies a very specific chronological period.\textsuperscript{10} Archaic Biblical Hebrew (ABH) can be found mostly in the poetry of the Pentateuch, written in the pre-monarchic period (ca. 1200–1000 BCE). Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH) was primarily written during the monarchic period (ca. 1000–586 BCE). Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH) was the literary language of post-exilic Judea (539 BCE–70 CE).\textsuperscript{11} Their theory is based on the assumption that by means of linguistic analysis it can be determined which books, or portions thereof, can be attributed to each of the above periods. The proponents use the linguistic features of the texts acknowledged as post-exilic by most scholars as features of LBH. For example, a text that predominantly features LBH is determined to have had its origin in the post-exilic period, even if there are some features of CBH or ABH in the text. And a text that is dominated by CBH or ABH features is considered pre-exilic even if there are a few LBH features found within. If this reasoning seems somewhat circular, that is exactly one of the arguments that the opponents of linguistic dating make.\textsuperscript{12} The common debate terminology for this reasoning is that “typology equals chronology.”

The challengers’ main critique is that the specific typology (i.e., ABH, CBH or LBH) of a text cannot be assuredly identified. Moreover, even if a text exhibits mostly one type of

\textsuperscript{10}Kutscher 1982, 12.

\textsuperscript{11}Some scholars advocate for the designation of Transitional Biblical Hebrew (TBH) covering the period just prior to the exile to just after the return. See Hornkohl 2013, 322. However, others deny a specific transitional period in the development of BH.

\textsuperscript{12}Davies 2003, 153.
BH, this cannot be equated to a specific chronological period because these different types co-existed over a large part of both pre- and post-exilic periods. They acknowledge that BH changed over time, but that the distinct periodization of BH, as outlined by the proponents, is faulty. They propose that in the later pre-exilic and through most of the post-exilic periods authors and redactors had multiple types of BH at their disposal. For example, a text that has CBH features cannot with certainty be dated as pre-exilic in origin because the linguistic features of all types of BH were accessible to post-exilic scribes. The challengers also stress the impact that the transmission process of biblical texts has had on the linguistic features. They propose that even if a text was initially composed in the pre-exilic period, due to later scribal amendments, as will be later discussed, it would be impossible to determine the beginning period of any text. All we possess are biblical texts that date from the third century BCE at the earliest and these, they contend, have been significantly impacted by scribal redaction.

The gap that exists between the two sides of the debate is clear. The proponents understand that the challengers are arguing against any convincing connection between typology and chronology. And the challengers clearly state, primarily for the reasons noted above, that most linguistic features are, in fact, “devoid of any diachronic value or are explicable by (strictly speaking) non-chronological facts such as dialect, diglossia, and editorial and scribal activity.” This study will demonstrate that there are weaknesses and strengths in the arguments on both sides of the debate. Thus, instead of opting for an “either/or” approach regarding the usefulness of linguistic dating theory, a “both/and”

13 Hurvitz 2006, 192.
14 Rezetko 2003, 222.
methodology is more consistent with the evidence. In other words, while linguistic features alone are insufficient evidence, that does not mean that they are necessarily inconsequential in efforts to date biblical texts.
CHAPTER 2: The Linguistic Dating Model

2.1 The Diachronic Strata of Biblical Hebrew

The creation of BH strata that are defined chronologically is not a modern phenomenon, but rather is a concept that has been maintained, defended and promoted through the research of numerous recent scholars. Since the seventeenth century distinct historical phases of BH have been recognized by the majority of scholars, due to the linguistic differences between pre- and post-exilic Hebrew.\(^{15}\) The observations and conclusions regarding the proponents’ perspective in this study are based primarily on the research of Avi Hurvitz, Jan Joosten, Robert Polzin, Mark Rooker, Angel Sáenz-Badillos, Gary Rendsburg, Tania Notarius, Steven Fassberg, Ron Hendel, Alice Mandell, Robert Holmstedt, Aaron Hornkohl and Willian Schniedewind. These scholars are convinced that the tripartite chronological stratification of BH continues to be justified by the evidence.\(^{16}\)

Most Hebrew scholars identify three main stages of BH: (1) ABH is found in the poetic texts of the Pentateuch and the Early Prophets; (2) CBH is mostly prose and is considered the language of the pre-exilic texts; (3) LBH, while found to a much lesser degree in some pre-exilic texts, is the dominant language of the post-exilic texts.\(^{17}\)

In this estimation, ABH has certain distinct characteristics and is thought to belong to the pre-monarchic period of Israelite history due to its linguistic parallels with Ugaritic, Amarna, Canaanite and Old Aramaic.\(^{18}\) The commonalities between ABH and Proto-

---

\(^{15}\) Hornkohl 2013, 315; Young 2003, 1.

\(^{16}\) As Joosten states, “… the basic parameters established in Gesenius’s monograph continue to be valid today. This is not because Hebraists are a traditionalist and unimaginative bunch but because the data on which the approach is based speak out with particular clarity” (2016a, 321).

\(^{17}\) See Cook 2012, 83; Groom 2003, 31; Hurvitz 2012, 329; Schniedewind 2013, 6; Wright 2003, 129.

\(^{18}\) Hurvitz 2012, 330.
Northwest Semitic forms are indicative of a phase of Hebrew which preceded the development of CBH. The main passages which are considered to have been written in ABH include Genesis 49, Exodus 15, Numbers 23–24, Deuteronomy 32–33, Judges 5, 1 Samuel 2:1–10, 2 Samuel 22/18, Habakkuk 3 and Psalm 78. Scholars acknowledge that the corpus of ABH is small and, like the rest of the biblical texts, has been altered through the processes of copying and editing yet “still clearly preserves certain archaic features.” These specific characteristics of ABH will be discussed in Chapter 4.

CBH (or for some SBH or EBH) is thought to dominate the pre-exilic period. Proponents consider the following biblical books to be permeated with CBH features: the Deuteronomistic History, First Isaiah (1-39), Hosea, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah and various Psalms. Some LBH features are found in pre-exilic texts but with much less frequency when compared to those texts considered to be post-exilic compositions. The infrequent appearances of LBH features in texts dominated by CBH features is not considered by proponents to denote late authorship, since a pre-exilic author could have used features atypical of CBH, but that later would become a regular feature of LBH. For example, לֶשׁ (power, majesty, ruler) occurs in Gen 42:6, but is also used in Eccl 8:8; 10:5; Dan 2:10, 15; 4:17, 25, 32; 5:21, 29; Ezra 7:24. Also, נָדָר (wealth, riches,

19 Mandell 2013, 325.
20 Schniedewind 1993, 57.
21 CBH is also referred to by some scholars as Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) and still others refer to it as Early Biblical Hebrew (EBH).
22 Hornkohl 2013, 321; Joosten 2016b, 17.
23 Hornkohl 2013, 321.
possessions) occurs in Josh 22:8, but is also used in Eccl 5:19; 6:2; 2 Chr 1:11. Based on predominate linguistic features in biblical texts, dated inscriptions and ostraca, Sáenz-Badillos maintains that right up until 586 BCE the Hebrew demonstrated is CBH.\textsuperscript{24}

Scholarly consensus identifies the following texts as having been written in the post-exilic period, due to specific historical settings and references contained within each text: Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles, Second Isaiah (40–66), Haggai, and Zechariah.\textsuperscript{25} For example, under the guise of prophecy, Daniel 8:21–22 refers to the king of Greece (clearly Alexander) who is broken and “four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power” (clearly referring to Alexander’s empire being divided between Lysimachus, Cassander, Ptolemy and Seleucus). According to Hebrew scholars, these books demonstrate “the distinctive linguistic profile of Persian-period Biblical literature [and thus] unambiguously typifies its language as LBH, and not CBH.”\textsuperscript{26} Hurvitz has determined that there are four principle types of LBH linguistic features: (1) Persian loanwords,\textsuperscript{27} (2) Examples of Late Aramaic interference,\textsuperscript{28} (3) Rabbinic Hebrew elements,\textsuperscript{29} and (4)

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 113.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Hurvitz 2012, 330.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Hurvitz 2014, 4.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Examples of Persian loanwords include: נֹכְרַדֲא ‘Daric’ (Ezra 8:27; 1 Chr 29:7); תָדּ ‘law, decree’ (Est 1:13; Ezra 8:36) – 22 times in Esther, once in Ezra. (Hurvitz 2014, 31, 101).
\item \textsuperscript{28} Examples of Aramaic influence include: תֶרֶגִּא ‘letter’ (Est 9:29) vs. רֶפֵס ‘letter’ (1 Kgs 21:8); כיְ ‘how?’ (Dan 10:17) vs. כֵּא (Ex 6:12) (Hurvitz 2012, 332).
\item \textsuperscript{29} An example of proto-RH in LBH texts include: בַּשָּׁקַבּ ‘request’ (Est 5:8) vs. בַּלֶּשׁ (1 Kgs 2:16) (Hurvitz 2014, 74).
\end{itemize}
Independent, inner-BH developments.⁴⁰ Rooker lists 14 commonly-proposed LBH features that he compiled based on his own research and that of Kropat, Hurvitz, Polzin and Talshir.⁴¹

Many proponents of linguistic dating see the sixth century BCE as a major turning point with regard to the development of BH. The destruction of Judahite society and the exile of most of their literate people to Babylon is theorized to have brought about rather abrupt and permanent changes in their native language, as they were immersed in an Aramaic and then a Persian-speaking population. However, some Hebrew scholars identify a form of BH that contains features of both CBH and LBH, which they call Transitional Biblical Hebrew (TBH). These writings are said to date from the close of the First Temple Period through the Exile until the period of the Restoration, or approximately 600–450 BCE.⁴² They include 2 Kings 24–25, Second Isaiah (40–55), Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Lamentations.⁴³ Hornkohl classifies Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi as TBH, not LBH. However, other scholars dispute the existence of TBH as a separate stratum. For example, Robert Holmstedt states that he agrees with Jacobus Naudé that “the notion of a ‘transitional’ stage between SBH and LBH is not justifiable.”⁴⁴ Since the nature and relationship of CBH and LBH are the crux of the

---

⁴⁰ Hurvitz 2012, 331.
⁴¹ Rooker 1994, 144. These include: collectives construed as plurals; preference for plural forms of words and phrases that the earlier language used in the singular; increased use of the נָּבָּה before a noun in the nominative case; the use of כֹּּּ for כֹּּּ; repetition of a singular word; substantive occurring before the numeral and in the plural; order of material weighed or measure + its weight or measure; radically reduced use of נָּבָּה with pronominal suffix; less frequent use of the infinitive absolute in immediate connection with a finite verb of the same stem or as a command; more frequent use of the infinitive construct with יִהְיַּה and יִהְיַּה and not preceded by יִהְיַּה; avoidance of waw consecutive; use of the participle with יִהְיַּה; frequent use of יִהְיַּה as mark of the accusative; and use of רֶשֲׁא for יִכּ.⁴² Hornkohl 2017, 2.
⁴³ Rezetko and Young 2014, 11.
⁴⁴ Holmstedt 2006, 7.
debate and because many proponents do not see TBH as a defined stratum in BH, it will not be discussed further in this study.

2.2 Methodology for Distinguishing the Various Strata of BH

Numerous challengers of linguistic dating, in spite of their differences with Hurvitz, have many positive things to say regarding his contributions to the study of historical linguistics and the Hebrew Bible. They acknowledge his prominence and productivity in the defense of linguistic dating. Mostly they credit Hurvitz with the development of a reliable methodology. In particular, he has insisted upon certain criteria that must be met in order to determine whether a particular linguistic feature is late.

As Hurvitz examined texts thought to have been composed in the post-exilic period, he discovered both archaisms and neologisms. Archaisms preserved older modes of expression. Neologisms are linguistic innovations specific to the late biblical period. However, not every linguistic feature that is inconsistent with CBH is necessarily a late development. In order to identify if a certain feature is late, it must meet the following four criteria.35

1. Distribution: the proposed feature must be “exclusively, or predominantly” found in texts that are accepted as post-exilic (e.g., Esther, Daniel, Ezra, etc.).

2. Opposition: if the proposed feature is late then it will have an equivalent in the earlier texts that is predominantly CBH in nature.

3. Extra-biblical attestation: if the proposed feature is indeed late, then it will be well attested in Second Temple sources outside the Bible (e.g., the Elephantine papyri, Ben Sira, the Dead Sea Scrolls, etc.)

4. Accumulation: A text cannot be deemed to be late if only a few features contained within the text meet the above criteria. Instead the text must contain “a heavy accumulation of neologisms” to be considered post-exilic. Hornkohl adds that the presence of these features in a text should not be able to be explained by another means such as “dialect, register, genre or literary strategy.”

A text lacking a preponderance of late features is thus considered, by the proponents, to most likely be CBH or, possibly, ABH. Eighty examples of how Hurvitz utilizes this methodology to identify and confirm linguistic features that are distinctly LBH can be found in *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*. For example, the first word in Hurvitz’ lexicon is תרגם (letter, epistle, edict).

1. Distribution (i.e., found in texts that are post-exilic): Est 9:26, 29; Ezra 4:11; 5:6; Neh 2:7, 8, 9; 6:5, 17, 19; 2 Chr 30:1, 6.

2. Opposition (i.e., equivalent feature in early texts): רפס is found at least 188 times throughout the Hebrew Bible. As Hurvitz notes, “Evidently, תרגם did not instantly and fully eliminate its Classical counterpart רפס. The co-existence of the two in LBH is particularly conspicuous in the book of Esther…”

3. Extra-biblical attestation: Hurvitz notes that תרגם is found in numerous post-exilic texts including the Targum Neofiti (3 times), Targum Jonathan (23 times), Mishnah Mo’ed Qatan, Mishnah Ohalot and Mishnah Gittin.

---

36 Hornkohl 2013, 320.

4. Accumulation: accumulation is only one of the many linguistic features considered by means of the above three criteria to be LBH that help determine that Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles are post-exilic texts.

2.3 Evidence in Support of the Biblical Linguistic Dating Model

2.3.1 Archaisms, Pseudo-classicisms and the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

As will be seen in Chapter 3, even scholars who challenge the linguistic dating model acknowledge that there are indeed at least two distinct types of BH and that one is typologically older than the other. However, does that necessarily mean that texts which principally demonstrate CBH features were written earlier than texts that chiefly demonstrate LBH features? The proponents’ answer to that question is a simple, yet emphatic, “Yes!” Schniedewind states the rationale:

One oft-repeated misconception is that later writers could accurately imitate earlier linguistic exemplars. To be sure, there are examples of later scribes imitating earlier style, but these imitations are always just that—imitations. Ancient scribes did not have the historical or linguistic tools to imitate earlier text-artifacts with complete precision. Linguists who are proponents of linguistic dating claim that “archaizing is quite transparent.”

There are texts written in the post-exilic period that employ CBH features, but according to the proponents, they are clearly imitations that failed. The indication of that failure lies in the presence of far too many LBH features. Thus, they challenge their critics regarding the claim that post-exilic authors/editors could produce flawless CBH noting that such an assumption lacks any substantive proof. The proponents claim that they cannot find

38 The goal of this section is to present the evidence or rationale for the proponents’ confidence that linguistic features can be used in dating biblical texts without any critique. A critique of their arguments can be found in 2.4 Problems for the Proponents.


40 Hornkohl 2017, 3.
any post-exilic text, confidently dated on non-linguistic grounds, which linguistically hides the reality that it originated in the Second Temple period.

In his examination of the DSS, Joosten states that these archaizing attempts can be clearly seen in that the authors/editors could not help but use at least some vocabulary and syntax common to the post-exilic period. These purposeful attempts at archaizing can be seen in both the biblical texts as well as the sectarian texts (e.g., the Damascus Document and the Temple Scroll). Joosten notes that later supplements to the Pentateuch attempted to imitate the CBH style of the pre-exilic authors but give themselves away with the inclusion of LBH features.41 Hornkohl indicates that “nearly all post-exilic writers attempted to archaize” with some demonstrating reasonable competency in the classical style, while others strayed more frequently.42

Joosten explains that even in their attempts to use CBH features the post-exilic authors also give themselves away in that they created features often referred to by the proponents as pseudo-classicisms. These are attempts to use archaic features but their use clearly demonstrates that the authors had lost the initial meaning of these words and/or expressions. Pseudo-classicisms, where ancient words contained in older scriptural texts which had fallen out of use were newly reinterpreted in later texts, are rare.43 For example, יָלָל ‘to fill someone’s hand’ meant ‘to ordain to a sacred office’ as per Judg 17:5 versus 2 Chr 13:9; 29:31, where it is a figure of speech meaning ‘to give offerings.’ The presence of

41 Joosten 2016a, 332–333. E.g., Joosten suggests that Gen 12:10–20 “was composed at the end of the fifth century by an author who had a good grasp of Pentateuchal style” whereas Exod 36 is a supplement that demonstrates the LBH feature of תָחֶא – preposition – בשם (2016a, 333).

42 Hornkohl 2013, 317.

these pseudo-classicisms not only gives away the period in which the text was composed but also provides evidence of the diachronic evolution of BH. Post-exilic writers and editors used words and expressions common in CBH texts but do so, at times, without a proper understanding of their meaning. If the intention was to deliberately create a new meaning for the CBH feature, then obviously the scribes were not trying to reproduce CBH. Either way, this, the proponents say, demonstrates that CBH and LBH did not co-exist for any significant length of time.

The Qumran texts have been confidently dated to a narrow range deep within the post-exilic period. The proponents of the linguistic dating model regard these texts as demonstrating the distinction between those texts which are truly pre-exilic CBH and those imitators which are actually post-exilic archaized texts. For the proponents, the Hebrew of Qumran shows that these post-exilic scribes attempted to imitate the Hebrew of pre-exilic texts. While some scribes demonstrated greater skill than others, some of the linguistic features they used provide evidence that they were authoring and/or editing these texts in the post-exilic period.44

2.3.2 Loanwords

The presence of loanwords provides very helpful clues with regard to the dating of texts, as per Hurvitz’ methodology. What the proponents explain is that these loanwords are unequally distributed throughout the texts of the Hebrew Bible. That indicates to these scholars that the texts were composed at various times throughout Israel’s history, since the

44 Joosten 2010, 359–61. E.g., Esther demonstrates greater skill than most, yet numerous linguistic features (such as Aramaic and Persian loanwords and lexical and syntactical neologisms) reveal the late date of composition (Hurvitz 2006, 204–205). Examples of Persian loanwords in Esther: סִינָנָה ‘treasuries’ (3:9); רֵצָה ‘command, decree’ (1:13); סָגְתִיפֵת ‘edict, sentence’ (1:20). (Hurvitz 2014, 5).
impact of these languages on Hebrew did not occur in the same time period. If these texts are all the result of post-exilic authorship, they claim, then loanwords would be much more equally distributed throughout the texts that comprise the Hebrew Bible.

Scholars note that BH has loanwords from four languages: Akkadian, Aramaic, Persian and Egyptian. Akkadian was the *lingua franca* of the ancient Middle East during the Late Bronze Age, and probably impacted Hebrew via Canaanite to some degree. However, most loanwords of Akkadian origin are found in late texts through Persian influence. For example, נָתיִבּ (palace) occurs in Est 1:5; 7:7 and שִׂרְבַּצ (scepter) occurs in Est 4:11; 5:2; 8:4. Persian loanwords are found throughout the undisputed post-exilic biblical texts but are not found in the Pentateuch at all, nor in the Prophets. For example, נוֹכְּרַדֲא (drachma) occurs in Ezra 8:27; 1 Chr 29:7, רבִּגּ (treasurer) occurs in Ezra 1:8; 7:21, and תָדּ (decree, edict) occurs 18 times in Esther and several more times in each of Daniel and Ezra.

Aramaic and Hebrew have interacted and impacted each other throughout Israel’s history and evidence of Aramaic can be detected in both pre- and post-exilic biblical texts. Passages within both pre- and post-exilic texts demonstrate how Aramaic grew in its comprehension and use starting as early as the monarchical period (2 Kgs 18:26–27) through the post-exilic period (Ezra 4:6–7; Neh 13:23–24). Some Aramaisms are devoid of chronological implications in that they do not necessarily reflect authorship in the late biblical era, specifically: (1) those that appear in poetry in the Pentateuch and Former

---

45 Eskhult 2003, 11.
46 Eskhult 2003, 12.
48 Hurvitz 2003, 24–25. For example: נוֹכְּרַדֲא (Aramaic) vs. נוֹכְּרַדֲא (Hebrew), both meaning “witness pile.”
Prophets since they have strong connections with Ugaritic, (2) those which are evidence of popular speech, and (3) those used in narrative by Aramaic characters within the text (e.g. 2 Kgs 6:8–19). However, some Aramaisms are indicative of later authorship.

Of the four types of loanwords found in biblical texts that help determine dating, Persian is the most indicative of post-exilic authorship, according to the proponents. Aramaic can be used, with some caution, to help date texts due to its long and ongoing relationship with Hebrew.

2.3.3 Extra-Biblical Attestation

According to Hurvitz’s methodology, verification of the diachronic stage of Hebrew in a biblical text must reference appropriately dated extra-biblical sources, literary and/or archaeological. The proponents acknowledge that the biblical corpus, such as we possess, was produced through a very complex and convoluted process of transmission, involving various degrees of redaction. Therefore, a chronology of these texts requires the corroboration of non-biblical sources. The proponents’ consistent claim is that the extra-biblical evidence is proof of the diachronic nature of BH and specifically justifies their claim that CBH is definitely pre-exilic in origin and that LBH is post-exilic.

---


50 Eskhult claims that “Egyptian loanwords are fewer and more elusive in terms of time of entrance” (2003, 12). In all my research to this point, I have not found any proponents who address the topic of Egyptian loanwords let alone their impact on the linguistic dating model.


52 For example, Fassberg (2016, 10) states: “The early and late extra-biblical documentation in Hebrew from controlled archaeological digs shows beyond any reasonable doubt that there are chronological linguistic differences as well as dialectal ones. The Hebrew inscriptions from the First Temple Period line up with the Hebrew of the pre-exilic books of the Bible, and the Hebrew of Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira from the Second Temple Period share much in common with the Hebrew of books from the post-exilic period.” Joosten notes that there is a close relationship between CBH and the language of pre-exilic inscriptions which “shows that
However, with regard to the pre-monarchic period, Schniedewind states that the inscriptions are few and very short or fragmentary. This indicates to him that “this was a formative period in the development and spread of the alphabet.” Given the paucity of early inscriptions, it seems that an accurate description of archaic Hebrew would be difficult to confidently generate. Inscriptions dating to the early monarchic period (1000–840 BCE) provide more examples of early Hebrew. Most proponents refer to the earliest stage of Hebrew in the biblical texts as ABH. Schniedewind issues a caution in that the epigraphic evidence is still quite sparse and thus only relative chronology can be determined. Therefore, the linguistic qualities of ABH, which differ from CBH, can only be identified broadly.

In the First Temple period (mid 10th c.–586 BCE), proponents acknowledge that the number of inscriptions is relatively small yet claim that these are nonetheless significant due to essential equivalence with CBH. Hurvitz states, “It [i.e., extra-biblical evidence] conclusively demonstrates that, by and large, there is far-reaching linguistic uniformity underlying both the pre-exilic inscriptions and the literary biblical texts written in classical

---

53 In this book, Schniedewind references dates and discusses the following inscriptions: the Lachish Ewer Bowl, ca. 1350–1200 BCE; the Izbet Sarta Ostracon, ca. 1200–1050 BCE; the Beth-Shemesh Ostracon, ca. 1200 BCE; the Tell es-Safi Inscription, ca. late eleventh or early tenth century BCE; the Manachat Ostracon, ca. 1100 BCE; the Khirbet Qeiyafa Inscription, ca. late eleventh or early tenth century BCE (2013, 63–66).

54 These include: the Gezer Calendar, ca. tenth or early ninth century BCE; the Tell ‘Amal Storage Jar, ca. some point in this period; the Tell Zayit Abecedary, ca. tenth century BCE; the Tell Rehov Inscriptions, ca. tenth and ninth centuries BCE; the Early Arad Letters, ca. tenth century BCE (Schniedewind 2013, 66–69).

55 Schniedewind 2013, 71–72. These qualities of ABH will be examined in more detail in Chapter 4 of this paper, with specific regard to Judges 5.

This is one of the key points of contention in this debate, which will be examined from the challengers’ perspective in Chapter 3.

Proponents share that same confidence regarding the extra-biblical sources of the Second Temple period (DSS, Ben Sira, Bar Kokhba letters and Mishnaic Hebrew) and their consistency with post-exilic biblical texts. In his book, *A Concise Lexicon of Late Biblical Hebrew*, Hurvitz lists eighty lexical features to which he has applied his methodology and thus concluded that these are indeed LBH features. Part of his examination involved comparing post-exilic extra-biblical uses of each linguistic feature—which he lists in a separate section under each entry. He divides his sources into two groups of texts which he titles as: (1) ‘Renderings, Paraphrases and Glosses,’ found largely in the corpus of Aramaic Targumim of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, and (2) ‘Independent Use,’ which includes DSS texts and early Rabbinic texts. The DSS scrolls have been dated to between the third and first centuries BCE. Proponents have found that the Hebrew of both the biblical and sectarian texts is characterized by features, some of which are common to LBH and others that are modeled on usage that is attested in LBH. This includes the use of archaizing and pseudo-classicisms, all of which are distinctively absent in the CBH of pre-exilic texts.

---

57 Hurvitz 1997b, 308 (*emphasis mine*).

58 Hurvitz 1997a, 310–11.

59 Hurvitz 2014, 14–15. For example, יָרְשִׁי “land of Israel” while found in earlier books (1 Sam 13:19; 2 Kgs 5:2, 4; 6:23), is more frequently found in later books (Ezek 27:17; 40:2; 47:18; 1 Chr 22:2; 2 Chr 2:16; 30:25). Hurvitz then lists numerous occurrences of this idiom in the Targums, the DSS and the Mishnah (2014, 42–44).

60 “Examples include: יָשָׁב ‘desire’ used with the meaning ‘return’, תִּשְׂמָח ‘pit’ used in the meaning ‘corruption’, and יָסָר ‘to consent’ meaning ‘to share.’” See Joosten, “Late Biblical Hebrew,” [https://www.academia.edu/34162782](https://www.academia.edu/34162782).
2.3.4 Linguistic Comparison of Samuel–Kings to Chronicles

Numerous proponents reference a comparison of Samuel–Kings with Chronicles in support of the thesis that LBH is measurably different from CBH. The author of Chronicles used Samuel and Kings as sources but ‘modernized’ numerous linguistic features as he replaced CBH features with LBH features to convey similar meaning. For the proponents, this reveals that LBH was the dominant (or only) register of Hebrew in use in post-exilic times. Sáenz-Badillos agrees,

If we begin by comparing writings that we know for certain to be post-exilic, such as 1 & 2 Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, with parallel pre-exilic texts, like Samuel–Kings (which runs parallel to Chronicles), we can discover many differences between the two periods…The Book of (1 & 2) Chronicles is especially instructive about the nature of LBH, as on many occasions it rewrites passages from Samuel–Kings, bringing the language up to date and adapting it to post-exilic usage.

That Chronicles is post-exilic is confirmed by references to people and events found in other biblical texts that date to the Second Temple period as well as a focus that reflects post-exilic theological concerns. Thus, proponents unanimously claim that the linguistics of Chronicles confirms post-exilic authorship, as the CBH features of Kings are changed in order to conform to LBH standards.

2.4 Problems for the Proponents

There are certain assumptions upon which the proponents base their linguistic dating conclusions that the challengers have rejected as unproven. Even some scholars who agree that linguistic features have the potential to inform chronology, see these assumptions as

61 Rooker 1994, 142.
63 Hurvitz 2006, 195.
problematic. First, by their own admission, the realities of textual transmission and redaction have had a significant impact on the texts we possess. Joosten acknowledges that early biblical texts may have been complemented, combined with another text or even entirely rewritten, so that some of the texts that Hebrew scholars analyze may bear little resemblance to a “now lost original.” That admission is consistent with what scholars have learned about the transmission of texts in the broader Near Eastern context.

David Carr explains that much has been gained through comparative studies. These have allowed scholars to study the ancient texts of other cultures that have been so preserved in various manuscripts that they are able to see how the text has grown through different stages by various methods. He notes that the kinds of changes by which scribes modified ancient traditions include: joining separate stories into one narrative, blending/conflating parallel narratives, expanding on existing texts, and rewriting an earlier narrative to purposely replace the older narrative. Biblical scholars have found examples of each of these methods within the biblical texts. A good example of revision can be seen, as noted above, when comparing Samuel–Kings to Chronicles. We can see revision and expansion of large sections of Samuel–Kings. Another example would be the Masoretic Text (MT) version of Jeremiah which is twenty percent longer than an Old Greek version and some of the Hebrew versions found at Qumran.

Thus, the challenge when using linguistic features to date biblical texts is to decipher which linguistic features have been added or adapted from the initial composition at a later

---

64 See also Hornkohl (2017, 2) who acknowledges “the data are (1) extremely limited, (2) often ambiguous, (3) fragmentary, and/or (4) problematic in other ways.” As well, note Cohen (2016, 119).


66 Carr 2016, 105.
time and which linguistic features have been retained. As we will see in Chapter 3, the
challengers claim that the proponents minimize this obstacle. One is certainly inclined to
agree with the challengers when proponents acknowledge the difficulties yet state that all
dating methods are “imprecise…involving a measure of subjectivity.” Also, there is
definite minimizing when a proponent labels this criticism as a “pessimistic textual
approach” because the MT is “sufficiently clear and authentic to permit meaningful linguistic
discussion leading to sound diachronic conclusions.” Yet, the earliest MT manuscript we
possess dates to the tenth century CE.

The challengers’ critique regarding textual transmission seems valid and thus needs
to be argued with more than verbal reassurances by the proponents that they can distinguish
“original” linguistic features from those that have been revised, replaced or added by post-
exilic editors. For example, Cook does acknowledge the challengers’ concerns but states that
while the extensive scribal activity makes it more difficult, it is not impossible to obtain
credible linguistic data. It is evident that the challenges of textual transmission and
redaction are recognized as obstacles but, for the proponents, not ones that are
insurmountable. For proponents, accurate linguistic information has been preserved
consistently and obviously enough throughout the biblical corpus to be able to draw
conclusions as to the chronology of each text, even for those texts that cannot be dated by
other means.

---


68 Hornkohl 2017, 4–5.

However, minimizing the issues that textual transmission and redaction raise simply does not answer the questions about the linguistic features that occur in our oldest manuscripts. For example, is a seemingly old word truly archaic, or is it an archaism or a pseudo-classicism? Why are there features of LBH in texts which are accepted on other grounds as pre-exilic in origin? With what frequency do LBH features need to occur in a text before throwing doubt on the date of a text that is considered pre-exilic or concluding the text may be pre-exilic, but has been so redacted that its origin cannot be determined? The extensive and convoluted process involved in the transmission of biblical texts is perhaps the single most difficult obstacle facing the proponents. It is one of the reasons given by Cross, in 1997, for doubting some of the conclusions that he and Freedman had reached in 1975 regarding their *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*.70

Second, the proponents’ argument is based on the assumption that at any given time—whether pre-monarchic, pre-exilic or post-exilic—the authors, scribes and/or editors had only one type of Hebrew available to them. The idea of such strict periodization of BH is a much-debated subject.71 Young raises numerous important questions about periodization of any language which cannot be ignored, especially concerning how to determine end points, duration, and the extent of heterogeneity.72 The reality, according to many scholars, is that different forms of Hebrew existed during the same periods and perhaps even in the same geographical areas.73

---

70 Freedman and Cross 1997, viii.
71 Notarius 2014, 394.
72 Young and Rezetko 2014, 49–57.
73 Naude 2003, 189. More will be said about the problem of periodization later.
Third, the quantity and quality of the extra-biblical evidence that relates to each
diachronic period varies considerably. The proponents recognize the paucity of evidence for
the pre- and early monarchic period, as already noted. While the extra-biblical attestation
improves in quantity for the rest of the monarchic period, as will be seen in Chapter 3, the
consistency the proponents claim is seriously challenged by other scholars. How well defined
is CBH as distinct from LBH if numerous scholars can look at exactly the same inscriptions
and come to completely opposite conclusions?

Fourth, given the presence of CBH features in reputedly post-exilic texts there is
reason to question the claim that post-exilic scribes could not author or edit texts using CBH.
As we have seen, the proponents note that some of the scribes were quite adept at producing
CBH-like texts. However, the explanation that some post-exilic scribes were better imitators
than others, does not strike one as a provable statement. These, and other issues raised by the
challengers, as we shall see in Chapter 3, certainly give one pause before joining the
proponents in equating typology with chronology.

2.5 Summary

The problems which the challengers have brought to scholarly attention regarding the
diachronic approach are having an impact. Several linguistic dating proponents recognize
that the linguistic diversity demonstrated in BH is not always best explained diachronically
but agree that at least some diversity is best explained by one or more of the following:
individual styles, regional dialects, social registers, literary genres and literary strategies. Even Hurvitz states that “Not every deviation from CBH should be explained

---

A growing number of scholars agree. Aaron Hornkohl, a consistent proponent of linguistic dating, leans in that direction when he writes “that evidence of textual and/or literary development on the one hand, and of linguistic development, on the other, can be integrated in a mutually beneficial fashion towards the resolution of textual cruxes and diachronic puzzles.”

Still there are die-hard proponents who answer the question, “Can linguistics be used to date biblical texts whose date of origin cannot otherwise be confirmed?” with an unmistakeable, “Yes, they can!” With the proponents’ perspective clearly in mind, let us turn to the challengers and see what viable explanations, other than chronology, have been offered for the linguistic diversity that is evident in the texts of the Hebrew Bible.

---

75 Hurvitz 2014, 9.

76 Hornkohl, Aaron D. “All Is Not Lost: Linguistic Periodization in the Face of Textual and Literary Pluriformity.” https://www.academia.edu/15301422/.

77 For example, Hurvitz (2006, 201) states, “The distinctive linguistic nature of these late elements makes them… valid chronological markers which may be utilized… for dating purpose in approaching biblical texts whose historical age is debated.”
CHAPTER 3: The Linguistic Dating Model Opposed

3.1 From Proponents to Challengers

It is important to place the emergence of the challengers into context. Rezetko and Young see the seeds of the debate being sown in the 1990s with the maximalist/minimalist controversy and the writings of Ernest Knauf, Philip Davies and Frederick Cryer. These scholars seemed to undermine the consensus idea that ABH developed into CBH which developed into LBH and thus doubted that these are chronologically distinct strata of BH.78 Rezetko notes that some scholars of this time period began to publish articles that raised questions regarding the validity of linguistic dating.79 Young wrote an article on the Gezer calendar in 1993. At the time he did not see himself questioning linguistic dating but rather as offering explanations on a few forms of ABH. It was not until 2003, with the publication of Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology, the debate began in earnest. The point of this contextualization is to demonstrate what the challengers contend, that they did not set out to challenge linguistic dating. Rather as they did their research, checking data carefully, they discovered that one presumed fact after another, in support of linguistic dating, proved unconvincing.

In “The Contemporary Debate over Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts,” Martin Ehrensvärd states that, while a student of Hurvitz in 1997, he wrote an article in which he critiqued Fred Cryer’s 1994 paper which supported the linguistic uniformity of the HB.80

---

78 Rezetko and Young 2014, 1. Prior to the early 1990s much of the discussion “centered mainly on the nature and date of the Priestly material in the Pentateuch.”


80 Ehrensvärd 2016, 60–67. His support of the linguistic uniformity of the Hebrew Bible was from a 1997 article before he changed his mind about the veracity of the linguistic dating model.
Ehrensvärd highlights the similarity between the Hebrew in the pre-exilic inscriptions and that of Genesis—Kings, thus demonstrating support of the linguistic dating model.\textsuperscript{81} However, as he continued his studies, his perspective on linguistic dating completely changed. In his PhD dissertation in 2002 and a follow up article in 2003, he argued against the thesis he originally intended to prove. His switch from proponent to challenger was complete when he co-authored with Ian Young and Robert Rezetko in 2008. Since these scholars did not set out to undermine the validity of linguistic dating but are today among its most vocal and prolific challengers, the question arises: Why did they change their position?

3.2 The Challengers and Proponents Share Some Agreement

Numerous challengers heap praise on Avi Hurvitz for introducing his methodology to the historical linguistic study of BH.\textsuperscript{82} In defense of their approach in *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts (LDBT)*, Rezetko and Young respond, “… our method was, in fact, Hurvitz’s method … *LDBT* openly embraces Hurvitz’s criteria of distribution, opposition, extra-biblical attestation and (especially) accumulation…”\textsuperscript{83} They had no problem with the proponents’ methodology. In fact, in using it, when they presented a conclusion which countered the proponents’ position, at least their methodology could not be questioned.

Young, Rezetko and Ehrensvärd did not disagree when it came to the scholarly consensus that the core LBH books are Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles. They agree with the proponents that the linguistic features found within these books are examples

\textsuperscript{81} Ehrensvärd 1997, 37–38.

\textsuperscript{82} E.g., Jacobus Naudé states, “Hurvitz’s most important contribution to the diachronic study of BH has been his persistent effort to develop an objective methodology. In particular, the criteria of distribution, opposition and extra-biblical attestation are used to determine if a particular linguistic feature is late” (2010, 5).

\textsuperscript{83} Rezetko and Young 2014, 587.
of a fully developed post-exilic Hebrew. As previously noted, the reason for the consensus has to do with the fact that the contents of these books—i.e., the events described, the persons and nations referenced—demonstrate post-exilic authorship. This seems to be the one point of complete agreement with the proponents.

Both challengers and proponents agree that the biblical texts have undergone a complex transmission process. Internal evidence demonstrates that texts from various sources have been combined to create the manuscripts we possess. The fact that there are significant differences between manuscripts of the same text shows evidence of editing processes that include joining, blending, expanding and rewriting. As Ulrich demonstrates throughout his book, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, not only has each of the biblical books gone through many different literary editions but there are several examples of biblical texts existing simultaneously in multiple editions. Comparative studies, such as those done by Karel van der Toorn, have provided insight into how ancient Near Eastern scribes attempted to both preserve and alter the texts they were copying.

Hendel, a proponent, acknowledges what the majority of biblical scholars today espouse, namely that “the original text” is buried within the oldest manuscript and is “usually not the product of a single author, but a collective production, sometimes constructed over centuries.” What we have in our possession with which to perform linguistic analyses are

---

84 Young, Rezetko and Ehrensvärd 2010, 3–4. See also Joosten 2016a, 325.
88 Hendel 2008, 322.
manuscripts that have been copied and rewritten many times over. Emanuel Tov, in his classic monograph, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, states, “…the textual evidence does not point to a single ‘original’ text, but a series of subsequent authoritative texts produced by the same or different authors … the original text(s) remain(s) an evasive entity that cannot be reconstructed.” While scholars on both sides of the debate agree that this complex transmission process presents challenges, as noted earlier, they disagree regarding how much of an obstacle this is to linguistic dating. The challengers accuse the proponents of minimizing the impact and state clearly that the initial composition or original text has been lost through a variety of scribal amendments that occurred over generations.

The challengers agree with the proponents that scholars of BH need the more objective testimony of extra-biblical inscriptions and writings to serve as a chronological benchmark. They also accept that there are relatively few inscriptions from the First Temple period but many more from the Second Temple period. The challengers, while agreeing on the value of this extra-biblical evidence, question the consistency of that evidence with respect to any one type of BH, as will be discussed below.

Numerous proponents have charged the challengers with not admitting to any significant linguistic change in BH from the pre-monarchic through the Hellenistic period of Israel’s history. The challengers, however, state that they are in complete agreement that BH changed in obvious ways over time. Young, Rezetko and Ehrensvärd quote two key proponents, Joosten and Fassberg, who each have stated that these challengers “are happy to

---

89 Tov 2012, 167.

90 See Hurvitz 1973, 75.

91 Young 2013, 13–23.
do away with”, or “appear to deny” that the Hebrew language developed and changed over time. They deny that critique as a complete misunderstanding of their position. Thus, they agree with their fellow scholars that there is detectable diachronic change in BH. Rather, the challengers’ objection revolves around the nature of the diachronic change, as will be discussed further.

Philip Davies also acknowledges that there is a known scholarly consensus that two types of BH exist that are distinguishable by vocabulary and syntax and that they exhibit a diachronic relationship. He states, “Classical Biblical Hebrew is closer to Iron Age Judaean inscriptions than post-Classical Hebrew/Late Biblical Hebrew.” The difference, therefore, between the challengers and the proponents lies in some basic, foundation points of interpretation.

3.3 The Challengers and Proponents Disagree

The disagreement centers mostly around the assumptions through which the linguistic features are examined and analyzed. Davies refers to these as “hidden assumptions,” implying that Hurvitz and other proponents are either not aware of, or have not clearly revealed, their assumptions. As I understand them, the proponents’ assumptions that the challengers strive to make clearly known and critique are as follows.

First is the assumption that the complex and convoluted process of textual transmission has only had a minimal impact on scholars’ ability to confidently determine

---

92 Young et al 2016, 2.
93 Ehrensvärd 2016, 64.
94 Davies 2003, 152.
95 Davies 2003, 153.
what the initial linguistic forms are. However, challengers such as Naudé conclude that those who strive to date biblical texts based on linguistic features “overlook nearly without exception important aspects of those texts, namely, their literary complexity and textual fluidity.”96 The challengers ask how it is possible to determine the date of the original when we cannot be sure what the author’s original words were. The texts, they say, are composite productions which utilize language from the many layers of redaction and transmission. To the challengers, the proponents’ linguistic dating theory is dependent on the assumption that the linguistic details of the biblical texts have not been significantly changed from when they were first authored. According to the proponents, the texts preserved in the MT are close to what was originally written.97 This is an assumption that the challengers strongly oppose. Rezetko and Young have consistently argued that the texts of the Hebrew Bible that we currently possess “do not provide evidence even for the original shape of the biblical compositions, and much less for the linguistic features used by the authors.” Thus, they contend, that the linguistic features that can be subjected to analysis are a compilation of features from various authors and editors who contributed to these texts over centuries.98

In this respect, the challengers often reference Emanuel Tov. They are in agreement with numerous comments he makes about the impact of textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible on the possibility of restoring the “original text” or whether there even was an original text. Certainly, scribal changes, intentional or unintentional, have so impacted the texts that it

---

96 Naudé 2010, 8.

97 Hurvitz 1973, 75. See also Homkohl, “All is Not Lost,” 34–35n.40.

would seem highly unlikely to be able to restore any original text, even if one existed.99 This is something with which the proponents certainly disagree.

A second assumption of the linguistic dating model is the idea that post-exilic authors and/or redactors tried to write CBH but failed in their attempts to do so.100 Yet, to the challengers, it is an assumption that has never been proven. They see the inclusion of some LBH features in texts that are mostly written in CBH not as a scribal attempt at imitation that failed but rather the result of the scribes using those that were available to them at that time.101 There are several writings included in the Hebrew Bible and the Qumran Scrolls which are acknowledged to be of late authorship, but which have no LBH features—specifically, Zechariah, Haggai, Second Isaiah, Ruth, Joel, and Ben Sira were written in the same Hebrew that we see in Genesis–Kings.102 These authors apparently had little problem writing in CBH.

Ehrensvärd explains that CBH was in use during and after the exile and thus co-existed as a register with LBH.103 He quotes numerous proponents of the linguistic dating model whose assessments of the Hebrew in reputedly late exilic and post-exilic books (e.g., Second Isaiah, Joel, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi) are very consistent with CBH. In his examination of Zechariah 1–8 (which he states was written in 520 BCE at the earliest), he found 13 features which display EBH characteristics. In addition, he found LBH forms

---


100 Ehrensvärd 2003, 165, 172.

101 Rezetko and Young 2014, 599.

102 Ehrensvärd, 2016, 62. Typically, these books, or portions of books, are dated to the post-exilic period due to the nature of their content—the events described, persons, places and nations referenced.

103 Ehrensvärd 2003, 175.
occurring with less frequency than in texts from Samuel–Kings. The proponents agree that these books are mostly representative of CBH with but few LBH features. They explain that while most post-exilic authors/editors could not imitate CBH well, thus revealing that LBH was their “native” language, some were better imitators than others. The challengers reject that explanation, but rather state that CBH and LBH co-existed until the late post-exilic period. Thus, post-exilic authors/editors could make a conscious choice whether to write in a more CBH or LBH style.

A third linguistic dating assumption critiqued by the challengers has to do with the periodization of BH. The proponents see a very recognizable difference between CBH and LBH features. They also judge that both CBH and LBH texts each show significant internal uniformity. The challengers, however, consider the linguistic differences to be subtler and the textual uniformity less obvious. As noted above, while some of the differences between CBH and LBH might be explained by diachronic change, the challengers focus on the issue of style. Naudé, in agreement with Young, states that those who authored texts exhibiting primarily CBH features had “a tendency to conservatism” in their linguistic choices and those who authored texts exhibiting primarily LBH features had “a less conservative attitude.”

The former restricted themselves to those features they considered to be literary language while the latter did not do so. Also, the challengers suggest that the conservative authors/redactors had a traditional attitude toward the Torah and thus their texts exhibited

---

104 Ehrensvärd 2006, 179, 185. Talshir (2003, 254) argues the point made by proponents that there is a substantial linguistic change with the return of the exiles in the late sixth century BCE. He states, “While several late traits appear in books such as Haggai, Zechariah and Deutero-Isaiah, their language does not really diverge from CBH.”

105 Rezetko and Young 2014, 599.

predominately CBH linguistic features.\textsuperscript{107} The determination of which scribes had “a tendency to conservatism” and those who had “a less conservative attitude” seems, to me, to be quite speculative. The challengers do not clearly establish how they are able to determine, with certainty, the “attitudes” of the many layers of scribes toward the Torah.

The challengers understand the proponents to insist that CBH was replaced by LBH over a very short period of time—i.e., the period of the exile. Thus, at any one time, there was only one type of Hebrew in use by the biblical writers/editors.\textsuperscript{108} However, the challengers consider the evidence of LBH features in reputedly early texts and CBH features in reputedly late texts as proof that these two types of BH co-existed for a much longer period of time.\textsuperscript{109} Authors and editors were not restricted to using only one type of Hebrew as they wrote and/or redacted these texts. They argue that not all pre-exilic Israelites, nor all post-exilic Judahites, spoke or wrote identical forms of Hebrew. There would have been lexical and syntactical variations among the literate population based on differences in dialect as well as time. In the post-exilic period Judah’s population would have consisted of native Judahites, descendants of northern Israelites (descendants of the refugees from the Assyrian destruction of Samaria), returning exiles from Mesopotamia, as well as numerous peoples from neighboring territories. While Hebrew was still the main language of the local

\textsuperscript{107} Young and Rezetko 2014, 599. Also, Young et al note that differences between EBH/CBH and LBH have to do much more with issues of lexicon rather than grammar (2008, Vol. 1: 114). They list almost “500 lexical and grammatical items which are thought to be characteristic of LBH texts and thus the final chronological stratum of BH” in Chapter 4 of Vol. 2.

\textsuperscript{108} Davies 2003, 153.

\textsuperscript{109} See Naudé (2010, 8-9), who concurs, stating that, “There is no sharp linguistic contrast between EBH and LBH. All EBH books have LBH features, just not the concentration found in core LBH books. Likewise, EBH continued in the post-exilic period, as demonstrated by the EBH language of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, but also Second and Third Isaiah, Joel, and some late Psalms. Furthermore, despite dating to the second and first centuries BCE, respectively, Ben Sira and the Qumran Pesher Habakkuk are in EBH.”
people, various dialects would have been present, and the influence of Aramaic would have, no doubt, measurably increased.\footnote{Davies 2003, 160–62. See also Gary Rendsburg, who has published numerous studies regarding the northern dialect of ancient Hebrew or Israelite Hebrew (IH), contends that CBH should be called Judahite Hebrew (JH) and states that there were several subdialects of IH including: Ephraimitic, Galilean, and Gileadite, to name a few. See Rendsburg, Gary, “A Comprehensive Guide to Israelite Hebrew: Grammar and Lexicon,” \url{https://doi.org/10.5356/orient1960.38.5}.}

Naudé notes that over time “languages are constantly, pervasively, and systematically changing. The result is linguistic variation, different ways of saying the same thing … the process of change and diffusion is a continuous process. Consequently, no variety of BH can be viewed exclusively as Hebrew in transition.”\footnote{Naudé 2003, 213-14. His opinion is in contrast to those scholars who see a specific register of BH called Transitional Hebrew (TH). According to Hornkohl, this form of Hebrew was used by biblical authors from the close of the First Temple period, through the exile, until the period of the Restoration under Ezra and Nehemiah—about 150 years. TH was the register used by the authors of the latter part of the book of Kings, Jeremiah, Second Isaiah (40-66), Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Lamentations (Hornkohl 2014, 322).} It is his opinion, therefore, that different forms of Hebrew can exist in the same time period and even in the same geographical location. He concludes that it would be unwise to assume that there existed “a uniform kind of Hebrew at any one period.”\footnote{Naudé 2003, 189.} The ability to date biblical texts linguistically requires a rather strict and definitive periodization of the Hebrew language in general and of BH in particular. This periodization has been accepted as fact by many BH scholars as evidenced by Hornkohl’s 2012 article, “Biblical Hebrew: Periodization” in The Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics. As Rezetko and Young explain, “Language periodization seems like an intuitive and even innocent idea.”\footnote{Rezetko and Young 2014, 50.} Yet, the idea of strict and definitive periodization of BH has some serious problems that must be addressed—namely with regard
to endpoints, duration, and heterogeneity vs. homogeneity. Periodization of BH as presented by the proponents is not only refuted by the challengers but also by linguists in general.\(^{114}\)

Finally, a key issue over which there is clear disagreement has to do, not with assumptions but, with the nature of extra-biblical evidence. Young states that the proponents “have completely misunderstood the nature of the evidence” because they are stuck in the traditional model that seeks to explain all extra-biblical evidence in terms of a linear diachronic model.\(^{115}\) He argues that much of the earliest inscriptive evidence (E.g., Siloam Tunnel, Gezer Calendar, Samaritan ostraca) reveals many previously unknown linguistic features, that are very unlike CBH.\(^{116}\) Also, he notes that some pre-exilic inscriptions contain a number of LBH linguistic features.\(^{117}\) He sees so many problems due to the paucity of extra-biblical sources, especially lacking during the sixth to third centuries BCE, that he questions whether the inscriptions are relevant at all regarding the discussion of the identification of distinct strata of BH.\(^{118}\) This seems to be an overstatement, as surely the extra-biblical evidence has some relevance and should not be dismissed even if it cannot be easily reconciled with either position.

---

114 Klein (2016, 876–77) asks the question, “Is it possible to produce a scientifically demonstrable, as opposed to an intuitional, periodization of BH that is based on more than just one or two features?” He concludes, “As an outsider, my view is that we may have to be satisfied with something less than this…the more or less closed nature of the BH literary language affords us few opportunities to see real diachronic change at work.”

115 Young 2013, 13.

116 Young 2003, 13–17. Young states that the spelling on the inscriptions is different than any known biblical text—i.e., much less use of waw and yod to mark vowels and the third person suffixes are different than any biblical text. Also, 25% of the words in the Siloam Tunnel inscription are forms not found in the HB.

117 E.g., Young states that סנכ “to gather” is quite rare in the biblical text and is generally restricted to the undisputed post-exilic texts.

118 Young 2003, 279–281. Young concludes (2005, 344) that the extra-biblical sources demonstrate an independent type of ancient Hebrew, not a “mere adjunct of SBH.”
3.4 Summary of the Challengers’ Arguments and Their Alternative

According to the challengers, the datable extra-biblical sources cannot tell us much about the state of BH. There is so little evidence available and there is much in the extra-biblical inscriptions and texts that is unlike BH. Apart from this, the assumptions upon which the proponents build their argument for the viability of linguistic dating are problematic. These key “unproven” assumptions include: (1) That the transmission process of the biblical texts had a minimal impact on the “original” linguistic features, (2) The idea that post-exilic writers/redactors were unable to produce texts in CBH without obvious uses of their LBH language, and (3) That there was a very distinct periodization of BH with very little overlapping of registers. Thus, the challengers conclude that the texts we possess cannot, with certainty, be understood as those of the initial authors.¹¹⁹ These critiques appear to be valid. Whereas the proponents claim that their own criticisms of the challengers’ conclusions have not been sufficiently addressed, it appears that the challengers could (and some do) make the same claim regarding the proponents’ lack of response to their critiques.

The challengers maintain that, if one were to follow through logically with the assumptions of the linguistic dating model, the linguistic evidence would point to a post-exilic origin for all biblical texts. This, of course, contradicts what the proponents maintain.¹²⁰ The challengers’ “better model” is that LBH and CBH are two styles/types of BH that existed both in the First and the Second Temple periods.¹²¹ Therefore, the authors/redactors could make choices as to which register to use. Nonchronological factors

¹¹⁹ Ehrensvärd 2006, 177; Young 2005, 351.

¹²⁰ Young et al 2010, 2.

¹²¹ Young et al 2010, 9.
such as dialect, diglossia and genre are factors that impact an author’s or editor’s style choice.\textsuperscript{122} In Ezekiel, Young finds numerous LBH forms there that are also found in CBH texts, though with much less frequency. This helps prove to him that LBH also existed in pre-exilic and exilic periods.\textsuperscript{123} As well, given that LBH and CBH co-existed over a significant period of time, the challengers contend it is impossible to determine the dating of a particular text based on its linguistic features. In fact, their overall assessment of the linguistic dating model is that it is “anachronistic and irrelevant” to try to determine the “original date” when a specific biblical book was composed. They maintain that every biblical text, except for the very latest “core LBH books” are the result of centuries-long, complicated and convoluted transmission and editing processes.\textsuperscript{124} The challengers conclude that not only are the proponents’ assumptions flawed, but so is their goal and purpose.

Yet do the challengers take their arguments and conclusions too far and thus refuse to acknowledge that in some contexts linguistic features could be used to aid the relative dating of texts? Could it not be that a scribe’s choice of style might best explain certain features in a text, while at the same time, the period in which the text was authored or redacted might also explain the linguistic features used? My answer to that question will be presented in Chapter 5. Regardless, as Holmstedt notes, the critiques offered by Young, Rezetko, Ehrensvärd and others has “vigorously questioned the status quo” which has forced introspection and deeper investigation into the entire field of BH.\textsuperscript{125} Now, keeping both the proponents’ and the

\textsuperscript{122} See Rezetko 2003, 249. “Diglossia is a situation in which two languages (or two varieties of the same language) are used under different conditions within a community, often by the same speakers” (https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/diglossia).

\textsuperscript{123} Young 2005, 346–47.

\textsuperscript{124} Young \textit{et al} 2010, 14.

\textsuperscript{125} Young \textit{et al} 2011, 27–28.
challengers’ arguments and conclusions in mind, let us see how we can understand the relevance of the distinctive linguistic features found in one of the reputedly oldest compositions in the Hebrew Bible: Judges 5, Deborah’s Song.
CHAPTER 4: Judges 5 and the Linguistic Dating Debate

4.1 Introductory Considerations

A survey of scholars reveals that the majority regard Judges 5 to be among the oldest texts in the Hebrew Bible. Judges 5, along with Genesis 49, Exodus 15, Numbers 23–24, Deuteronomy 32–33, 1 Samuel 2 and 22–23, Psalms 29 and 68, and Habakkuk 3, are widely considered to form a separate corpus of archaic poetry. Most who argue for the antiquity of Judges 5 reference the nature of the linguistic features as one of the reasons, if not the main reason, for such a conclusion. They understand that there are numerous features, both lexical and grammatical, that are clearly distinct from, and older than, CBH. Based on this evidence, some scholars consider the poem, at least in part, to be pre-monarchic in origin, dating it as early as the thirteenth century BCE. However, in recent studies, some scholars have questioned such an early date, even when considering the linguistic features, and instead date the poem’s initial composition to the post-exilic period. These discrepancies led Ernst Knauf to conclude that perhaps “the data base as provided by Judg 5:2–30 is insufficient in quantity or quality.” As will be made clear, this study does not see either of the above possibilities as the reason for the discrepancy in dating Judges 5, but rather it is due to the inability of linguistic features alone to determine the dating of any text. Before examining the linguistic features of Judges 5, it is important to consider its relationship to Judges 4, the possible theme, the question of unity and the impact that the Greek translations have on our understanding of the Hebrew text. Each of these issues may have an impact on dating the initial composition of Judges 5.

126 Smith 2014, 211.

4.2 The Relationship of Judges 4 to Judges 5

At first reading, it is obvious that Judges 4 and 5 are telling the story of the same event—Israel’s victory, led by Deborah and Barak, over the forces of Jabin, king of Canaan, and the assassination of his general, Sisera, by Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. More specifically, Yahweh sells the Israelites into the hand of King Jabin who oppresses them for twenty years. They cried out to Yahweh for help and he speaks through Deborah—a prophetess who was judging Israel—to call Barak to lead 10,000 troops against Sisera. Barak says he will do it only if Deborah accompanies him. She then predicts that Barak will not get the glory for the victory but rather that “the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman” (4:8). During the battle, Yahweh throws Sisera and his troops into a panic; Barak pursues and annihilates the retreating army (4:12–16, cf. 5:19–21). Sisera escapes and finds refuge in the tent of Jael, “the wife of Heber the Kenite” because “there was peace between King Jabin…and the clan of Heber the Kenite” (4:17–18, cf. 5:24). Jael appears to be a safe host but murders him in his sleep. Barak arrives to find “Sisera lying dead, with a tent peg in his temple” (4:18–22, cf. 5:25–27). The result for Israel is that King Jabin was eventually destroyed and the land had peace for forty years (4:23–24, cf. 5:31).

The prose story (Judges 4) is more detailed in most aspects and more easily interpreted than its poetic counterpart (Judges 5). The two accounts converge and diverge and thus raise the question upon which source(s) each account was relying. This question is important in that the answer at which one arrives may have some level of impact on dating Judges 5. Logically, there are only a few options possible: (1) Judges 5 is the initial story which Judges 4 uses as it source, (2) Judges 4 is the initial account which the author of Judges 5 uses as inspiration for the poem, (3) each chapter depends on the same but unknown
source, or (4) each chapter represents an independent source. The majority of scholars favour the first option, but some have made persuasive arguments for each of the other options.\textsuperscript{128} The rationale for the first option varies somewhat among scholars. Most explain that Judges 4 is a unified prose account and that it elaborates on gaps that exist in, and answers questions that arise from, the poetic version.\textsuperscript{129} Most are certain that the language of Judges 5 predates that of Judges 4. Thus, the author of Judges 4, perceiving the poem’s antiquity, consciously updates the language to make Judges 5 more intelligible to his readers, by substituting ABH with more common linguistic features.\textsuperscript{130} Baruch Halpern argues that Judges 4 comes directly “…from SongDeb [i.e., Judges 5] or from questions and assumptions arising from SongDeb.”\textsuperscript{131} Even so, possible answers to the question as to why the redactor of the book of Judges would include two somewhat divergent accounts back-to-back could also impact our conclusions as to both the relationship of Judges 4 and 5 and the dating of Judges 5.

\textsuperscript{128} Milstein 2010, 182. See also Mayfield (2009, 308–321) who conducted a comprehensive survey of scholarship (dating from 1990–2008) on this topic. Of the more than one hundred scholarly articles, chapters and books he researched, the vast majority concluded that the author of Judges 4 used Judges 5 as the model for the prose account. The minority favoured either the one author theory, the common source theory or that Judges 5 is the poetic version of Judges 4.

\textsuperscript{129} E.g., Milstein 2010, 167–168.

\textsuperscript{130} E.g., Smith 2012, 210–211. Smith notes, “Judges 5 shows some forms that would have seemed old for the prose composer of Judges 4, for example, the old energetic indicative form רָנְיָ֖שׁ (5:26) compared with the common prose חַ֣קִּתַּו (4:21). A similar case might be made for לֶפֵ֥ס and הָֽאְמֶח in 5:25 versus דֹ֧וֹנ in 4:19.”

\textsuperscript{131} Halpern 1983, 395. See also Robert Kawashima (2001, 157–159) agrees with Halpern (and others), who states, “… we can, through a combination of direct and indirect means, account for the story’s [i.e., Judges 4] details almost entirely in terms of the song [i.e., Judges 5]. It would take excessive ingenuity (and credulity), on the other hand, to imagine the song depending on the story in the same way.”
4.3 The Theme and Unity of Judges 5

Most scholars regard Judges 5 in its entirety as a redacted text in which the oldest portion consists of vv.14–30 only. Judges 5:1 is a bridge between the two chapters with both vv. 2–13 and v. 31 added by the author/redactor of the book of Judges. According to Milstein, vv. 2–13 is an example of “revision through introduction” in order to identify the tribes listed in the archaic portion with “Israel” (found seven times in vv. 2–13) and “the people of the Lord” (twice in vv. 2–13). Also, through this introduction Yahweh is established as the one who is responsible for the victories that follow. It is Smith’s opinion that of the ABH features which are identified in vv. 14–30 none are found in vv. 2–13, indicating that this portion of the text was added by a later author/redactor. Echols is in agreement since “the original poem is essentially profane…the victory is portrayed as essentially the result of human effort.” This perspective adds weight to the theory that vv. 2–13 was added later to help the readers see that while Yahweh used Deborah, Barak, various tribes and Jael to achieve the victory over Sisera and his army, the victory was Yahweh’s. He purposed, planned and empowered it. Thus, it is Yahweh whom Deborah and Barak join in song to praise (v. 1).

A different perspective is offered by Gregory Wong. In his article, “Song of Deborah as Polemic,” he argues that Judges 5 is a unified whole based on his theory that its theme is a polemic against non-participation. He elaborates on five internal indications in

---


133 Smith 2012, 200. Note that other scholars, while not denying the later addition of vv. 2–13 still find a few proposed ABH features in these introductory verses.

134 Echols 2005, 149–150.

support of this theory and claims that his findings help illuminate the composition date of Judges 4 and its relationship to Judges 5. He proposes that the polemic against non-participation found in Judges 5 is entirely absent in Judges 4, suggesting that neither the prose nor the poem is derived from the other but that they were each independently composed, from the same or similar sources, each for its own purpose. If the polemic of non-participation is correct, then the composition date of Judges 5 must be relatively close to the time of the event, otherwise its rhetorical purpose would remain unfulfilled. This, and other minority opinions, demonstrate just how challenging this chapter’s linguistic features, organization, and development are to understand. Taking into account the various scholarly options, the following linguistic analysis of Judges 5 is based on: (1) Judges 4 postdates Judges 5 and thus uses the poem as its source, and (2) Judges 5, in the form we possess today, is a redacted text in which the most archaic portion is found in vv.14–30.

4.4 The Greek Translations

There are two Septuagint versions of the book of Judges, usually referred to as LXXA and LXXB. This is important because while LXXA and LXXB are similar in many places, and virtually identical in others, when it comes to Judges 5 there were Hebrew words and phrases that seem to have caused the Greek translators lots of trouble, resulting in a text that

---

136 Wong 2007, 19.
137 Wong 2007, 20–22.
138 Smith 2012, 197.
139 The translations in Appendix B of both Hebrew and Greek texts are my own and are intentionally literal in an effort to better convey the Hebrew and Greek structure. The translator of Judges in the New English Translation of the Septuagint (Satterthwaite 2007, 195) notes that “[the] A text was based upon Codex Alexandrinus (A) and two groups of manuscripts representing the recensions of the LXX associated, respectively, with Origen (ca. 185–253 CE) and Lucian (ca. 250–312 CE). [The] B text was based upon Codex Vaticanus (B).”
is incoherent in places. Satterthwaite comments that rare Hebrew words seem to have caused
the translators to make their best guesses as they tried to create a comprehensible Greek
text.\textsuperscript{140}

Therefore, it is important to pay attention to places where LXX\textsuperscript{A} and LXX\textsuperscript{B} differ
significantly from each other, where they agree with each other but differ significantly from
the Hebrew text or where the Greek translations seem to not make sense contextually. By the
time Judges was translated from Hebrew into Greek, in the mid-first century BCE, the
meaning of those Hebrew words and phrases may have been lost to the translators who had
to make their best guesses.\textsuperscript{141} In other words, these differences and apparent translation
difficulties could be indicative of truly archaic Hebrew vocabulary and grammar.

4.5 The Existence and Characteristics of ABH

All living languages transform over time due to both external influences and internal
processes. The Hebrew that was spoken and written throughout the period of biblical
authorship, transmission and redaction was no different. As previously noted, there is no
scholar on either side of the linguistic dating debate who disagrees with the idea that
different types of Hebrew existed over time. The most basic point of contention between the
proponents and the challengers is whether or not different typologies indicate distinct and
separate chronologies.

Most scholars do not question the existence of older linguistic features in so-called
archaic Hebrew poetry, such as Judges 5. Rather, the controversy surrounds what the
presence of those features means in terms of the origin of each text. The proponents of

\textsuperscript{140} Satterthwaite 2007, 197.

\textsuperscript{141} Jobes and Silva 2000, 45.
linguistic dating conclude that the linguistic features of Judges 5 reflect an ancient
chronology since the text reputedly reflects an event in Israel’s history that predates the
monarchy. The author/redactor of Judges inserted this event (via chapters 4 and 5) at a time
when it seems that Israel was not yet a nation, but perhaps existed as a loose federation of
tribes or clans.

Various scholars have offered their understanding of which linguistic features are
particular to ABH. The scholars referenced in the footnote below agree that ABH exists and
texts that consistently utilize ABH features can be evaluated, to some degree,
chronologically.\textsuperscript{142} Young and other challengers look at exactly the same linguistic features
the proponents do but instead of attributing a concentration of these in any given text to a
relative date of authorship, they attribute it to authorial style or genre. The vast majority of
scholars concur that ABH does exist in that it is demonstrated by unique linguistic features.
However, to some it means ‘archaic’ in chronological terms, whereas to others it means
‘archaic’ in terms of style and/or genre only.

Based on agreement among the various scholars, these are the most consistently
proposed ABH features that occur in the Hebrew Bible:

1. Archaic pronominal and verbal suffixes.
2. Archaic verbal forms of the suffix tense.
3. Retention of case endings.
4. Verbal suffixes using the so-called energic forms.
5. The enclitic mem.

\textsuperscript{142} E.g., Schniedewind 2013:71–72; Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 56–62; Pat-El and Wright 2013, 400–410; Mandell
6. A prefix conjugation.
7. The *qal* passive verbal conjugation.
8. Relative pronouns (ש, ז, המ instead of CBH רשׁא).
10. Lexicon: hapax legomena or rare words.
11. Defective orthography.\(^{143}\)
12. Retention of final י or ו in verbs originally III-weak.\(^{144}\)
13. Extra vocalic endings on nouns and certain verbal forms.
14. The relative omission of conjunctions, the definite article -ן and the accusative marker -תא.

My study found possible examples of some, but not all, of these features in Judges 5. The most significant ones that appear in our text will be explained in the discussions throughout the following section (4.6) and its numerous subsections.

### 4.6 An Analysis of Proposed ABH Features in Judges 5

Most scholars understand Judg 5:2–13 to be a later editorial introduction. Smith argues that it was composed and added to the original poem in the ninth century BCE and thus “recalls the past in light of the composer’s present.”\(^ {145}\) He, and numerous other scholars, consider the remainder of the poem to be pre-monarchic or early monarchic in origin.

However, since there are a few proposed ABH features in the editorial introduction,

---

\(^{143}\) Schniedewind notes that pure vowel letters were not used in ancient Hebrew inscriptions (2013, 72) and were not introduced until the 8\(^{th}\) century BCE (2013, 9).

\(^{144}\) Ross (2001, 259) notes, “Most verbs that end in with י were originally III-Yod verbs (or rarely III-Waw verbs).”

examples from vv. 2–13 will be included in the following analysis. The sections that follow represent specific characteristics of archaic features proposed by those in support of using linguistic features to date Judges 5 and/or by those who challenge that ABH features indicate its archaic origins. For each characteristic, specific examples will be identified and analyzed.  

4.6.1 Relative Pronouns (ש, ז, הז instead of CBH אָשָׁר)

Some scholars point to הָ֑והְי הֶ֣ז יַ֔ניִס, “Yahweh, this one of Sinai” in v. 5 as an ancient title for Yahweh. However, other scholars disagree since there is no other place where Yahweh is referred to as the God of Sinai. Serge Frolov states that if this is translated as “Yahweh, which is of Sinai” or “Yahweh, this one of Sinai” then הז “this, that, which” functions in a way that is more indicative of a pre-SBH linguistic stratum than biblical and post-biblical Hebrew. However, he argues that it is not clear that these three words belong in the same clause but suggests instead that this should be read as “…mountains melted before Yahweh; this Sinai before Yahweh the God of Israel.” Thus, Frolov concludes that it is unlikely that הז is “used here as a relative or determinative rather than a demonstrative pronoun.” Both LXXA and LXXB are agreement, reading τοῦ τοῦ Σινα “this Sinai.”

In v. 7 the relative pronoun ש, “which, that; since, because” is found twice attached to a form of the verb стоּנ, “to stand, arise.” It seems strange, however, that this is proposed as a feature of ABH when it occurs at least 142 times in the Hebrew Bible and most of time in

---

146 For the full Hebrew and LXX texts see Appendix A. For the translations of the Hebrew and LXX texts see Appendix B.

147 Frolov 2011, 166.

148 Frolov 2011, 166. See also Lindars 1995, 234.
texts that are considered anything but early in origin, predominantly Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.¹⁴⁹

4.6.2 A Prefixed Conjugation

Scholars also note the presence of an aspect of verbal syntax known as a yaqtul preterite.¹⁵⁰ Williams explains that this feature appears in old poetry, looking like the imperfect or jussive, yet referring to the past. He states that this understanding is controversial.¹⁵¹ Smith points out that Robertson noted a number of yaqtul preterites in Judges 5 and considered them to be among the main criteria of antiquity.¹⁵² These include: יָ֔כְלֵי “they came” in v. 6, רוּ֖גָי “live as a foreigner” and נוֹֽכְּשִׁי “dwell” in v. 17, חָנְנָלְשִׁתּ “stretched out” in v. 26, חָנְנָלְנָא “answered” and בָּיֵֽשָׁתּ “return” in v. 29.¹⁵³ Frolov points out that at least three of these verbs could be understood as conveying “frequentative or habitual [action]…in line with its standard use in BH.”¹⁵⁴ That leaves only three of these verbs that are best

¹⁴⁹ Not all date the Song of Solomon as post-exilic in origin. David Carr (2011, 447), after he examines various theories, states that based on linguistic features one could argue for “either an early or a late dating of the book” and that the oldest text we possess “is a Hellenistic product.” However, he argues based on non-linguistic features that there are “the possible faint outlines of early pre-exilic material.” However, as far as I have been able to detect, the challengers of linguistic dating and most proponents of linguistic dating see the Song of Solomon as post-exilic in origin.

¹⁵⁰ Mandell explains that this feature has survived from early Northwest Semitic and is rare or no longer attested in SBH (2012, 327). She also states that this prefix conjugation is a survival of the NWS preterite to express competed actions.

¹⁵¹ Williams 2012, 74.

¹⁵² Smith 2014, 213. These include יָ֔כְלֵי "walked" (v. 6); רוּ֖גָי “live as a foreigner” (v. 17); נוֹֽכְּשִׁי "dwell" (v. 17); חָנְנָלְשִׁתּ "stretched out" (v. 26); חָנְנָלְנָא "answered" (v. 29); and בָּיֵֽשָׁתּ "return" (v. 29).

¹⁵³ A special note on חָנְנָלְשִׁתּ, related to translation, but not directly to ABH. Almost all commentators point out that חָנְנָלְשִׁתּ (literally, “they reached out”), given the context, has been pointed incorrectly. Thus, it is regularly translated to fit the context: “she reached out.” Butler notes that it is likely is a third person, feminine, singular with an energetic न and should be pointed as follows: חָנְנָלְנָא See Butler 2009, 121; cf. Boling 1975, 114; Echols 2008, 41.

¹⁵⁴ Frolov 2011, 169.
translated in the past tense. Also of note, in the whole of Judges 5 the regular perfect conjugation is used predominantly to express past action.

4.6.3 Second Person Feminine Singular with Suffix יִתְּמַ֥קּ

An oft-cited feature is יִתְּמַ֥קּ “you arose” in v. 7. Many scholars understand this to be an example of an archaic second feminine singular perfect form (i.e., “you arose”), while others see it as a first common perfect. Even if it is an example of the second feminine singular perfect, this feature is also attested in later books, such as in Jer 2:33; 3:4, 5; 31:21; Ezek 16:18, which are not regarded as early in origin. Frolov is convincing when he states that since Deborah is identified as a singer of the song in 5:1, then it is also more appropriate to understand יִתְּמַ֥קּ as first person singular.

4.6.4 Verbal Suffices Using the So-Called Energic Forms

The verb הָנְחַ֔לְשִׁתּ "she stretched out" in v. 26 is also seen by some scholars as an example of the energetic indicative—another presumed archaic feature—although it is improperly pointed in the MT. As pointed, this verb is Qal imperfect third feminine plural. However, the subject is obviously Jael and thus the verb should be pointed third feminine singular, הָנָּחַלְשִׁתּ. Frolov refers to this proposed ABH feature as “energetic nun in a singular feminine verb.” According to Mandell, this feature is the result of “the retention of a nun between the verbal ending and a pronominal suffix on prefix conjugation verbs.”

---

155 Webb (2012, 195 n. 44) states that the form of this verb is ambiguous and while it could be understood as an archaic second feminine, given the fact that Deborah is said to be one of the singers in 5:1, there is nothing unexpected about a first person verb here and recourse to reading the ending in a way that is rare in biblical Hebrew is unwarranted.” See also Block 1999, 226 n. 359.

156 Frolov 2011, 167.

157 Bulter 2009, 121. See also Frolov 2001, 168; Lindars 1995, 278.


159 Mandell 2102, 327.
convinced that the jury is out on this feature, as to its antiquity, given that some scholars reference its use in various post-exilic texts such as Prov 18:14; Ps 8:5; Mic 6:6.\textsuperscript{160}

\textbf{4.6.5 Abnormal Use of the Dual}

In v. 30 there are two examples of the proposed archaic use of the dual: לָםִיַ֨תָמָּא “two wombs” and לָםִיַ֨תָמְקִר “two embroidered cloths.” Cross and Freedman state that the dual in later Hebrew is restricted to body parts or other naturally occurring pairs.\textsuperscript{161} Frolov points out instances to the contrary (albeit only a few), such as לָםִיַ֨תָמַּא “two cubits” in Exod 25:10 (and six other places in Exodus) and לָםִיַ֨תָנְשׁ “two years” in at least 12 passages from throughout the biblical corpus. But does Frolov’s observation negate Cross’ and Freedman’s assertion regarding the use of the dual? According to C. L. Seow, “Not every noun has a dual form. Indeed, the dual is restricted to the following: (1) Nouns that come in natural pairs, (2) Certain expressions of time, and (3) Measures of two.”\textsuperscript{162} Since “two wombs” and “two embroidered cloths” do not qualify as natural pairs, or expressions of time or measures, it is possible that these uses of the dual are, indeed, examples of ABH, not SBH as Frolov contends.

\textbf{4.6.6 The Qal Passive Verbal Conjugation}

Numerous scholars identify יָדַּשׁ “destroyed” in v. 27 as a Qal passive participle, based on its vowel pointing in the MT, and they understand the Qal passive to be an ABH

\textsuperscript{160} Smith 2012, 202–203.

\textsuperscript{161} Cross and Freedman 1997, 13.

\textsuperscript{162} Seow 1995, 19. See also Williams (2012, 2), “A dual noun may refer to two of something that does not naturally come in just pairs. Examples include…two hundred…two years…two cubits, and…two days.”
feature. Williams notes that while BH has no distinct Qal passive, other Semitic language
do have stems that correspond. Thus it seems likely that this is an ABH feature.

4.6.7 Lexicon: Hapax Legomena, Rare Words and Unusual Phrases

These thirty verses of Deborah’s Song are home to several hapax legomena and not a few rare words and phrases, all of which indicates to most scholars an early origin, especially of the “core” poem, vv. 14–30. The other indication that these may be ABH features is the apparent difficulty the Greek translators had in determining the meaning of certain words and phrases, as seen in some translations that have little connection to the context as well as in the differences LXXA and LXXB. However, not all rare words are necessarily indicative of ABH since they occur in texts that are acknowledged as exilic or post-exilic (based mostly on content). Also, some words are rare as nouns, but they are formed from a root or verb that is reasonably common and found in late texts. A good example of this is found in v. 3

However, consideration does need to be given to the following words and phrases:

- v. 6 – טרקוקות “crooked” occurs also, but only, in Ps 125:5.
- v. 10 – ידועך “white” is a hapax legomenon.
- v. 16 – פִּישְׁפִּים “sheepfolds, saddlebags, burden” occurs in Gen 49:14 with equal uncertainty as to translation. LXXA translated it as μοσφοθωμ “saddlebags” and LXXB translated it as διγομίας “double load.”

---

163 Mandell 2012, 327.

164 Williams 2012, 65. See also Seow (1995, 323), “A few verbs which are frequently confused with Pual and Hophal are, in fact, vestiges of an old Qal Passive verbal pattern.”
• v. 17 – נֶפֶךְ “harbor” is a *hapax legomenon*. LXXA translated it as διακοπάς “channels” and LXXB translated it as διεξόδους “outlets.”

• v. 21 – נְרֵפֵם “swept them away” is a *hapax legomenon*.

• v. 26 – נְלֵקָה “hammer” and נְמָך “to strike” are *hapax legomena* in the biblical corpus. Lindars explains that נְמָך is the Aramaic form of the other verb פָּשָׁח “to smash” found also in this verse.165

• v. 27 – נְשֵׁא “where.” Most scholars see this as an archaic use of the word.166 Block thinks that the MT has pointed this incorrectly as ב plus רשׁא (i.e., the preposition with the relative particle), but instead it is an archaic noun meaning “place” cognate to the Aramaic word רַתא.167

• v. 28 – נָקִיב (Piel imperfect third feminine singular of בָּבַי “cried out”), “cried out” is a *hapax legomenon*. LXXA translated it as ἐπιβλέπουσα “carefully peered” and the LXXB does not appear to have the Hebrew word in its text or simply does not translate it. Both facts may point to this as an ABH lexical feature.

• v. 28 – נָקִיב “lattice” is found only here and in Prov 7:6 where it is also paired with נוֹלַח “window.” Its rarity is perhaps the reason LXXB translated it with τοξικός “the gap” (or “arrow slit”), which is a *hapax legomenon* in the Septuagint.168

• v. 29 – נָכַח “wise one(s)”. Rendsburg suggests that this is not the feminine plural of נָכַח but is an Israeli Hebrew feminine singular nominative with the ending נ-.  

165 Lindars 1995, 278.


167 Block 1999, 241 n. 444.

168 Chamberlain 2011, 168.
which he considers to be early. However, Lindars points out that if תֹ֥מְכַח is singular, then תֹ֥מְכַחְתָּה would need to be understood as a third feminine singular verb with a third feminine singular suffix. However, the “MT plural can be retained and the verb treated as a plural without suffix,” as in the translation in Appendix B.

- v. 30 – contains several phrases which are unusual for BH and were apparently difficult for the Greek translators to understand. This verse is worthy of some focused consideration as follows.

### 4.6.8 Judges 5:30

**MT**: “Are they not finding [and] dividing the plunder, a womb or two for every man, plunder of dyed garments for Sisera, plunder of dyed, embroidered garments, a dyed garment embroidered for necks as plunder.”

**LXXA**: “Will they not find him dividing the plunder? Being friendly to friends for a head of a strong one. Sisera’s plunder of dyed cloths, plunder of dyed embroidery, dipped embroidery around his neck as plunder.”

**LXXB**: “Will they not find him dividing plunder? Compassion he will have to the head of man; plunder of dyed garments for Sisera, plunder of embroidered dyed garments, these embroidered dyed garments, plunder on his neck.”

The phrase מַחַ֤רְמַיָּתָּנָּה translated by most English translations as “a maiden or two” literally means “a womb or two,” from the noun מַחַ֤ר. The LXXA translation, φιλιάζων φιλοίς, literally means “showing friendship to friends” and the LXXB translation, οἰκτίρμον οἰκτιρήσει, means “being compassionate he will show compassion.” However, neither translation seems to fit the context of plunder. Was the literal meaning of מַחַ֤ר lost to the Greek translators?

Also, the phrase לַרְגַּעְדֵּר “for the head of a man” is found only here in

---

169 Rendsburg 2012, 343.

170 Lindars 1995, 283.

171 מַחַ֤ר appears as a noun meaning womb at least 30 times in the Hebrew Bible. However, some form of מַחַ֤ר as a verb meaning “to have compassion, to show pity, to love” is found at least 47 times. And, some form of מַחַ֤ר as a noun meaning “compassion, mercy, pity” occurs at least 40 times. In Judg 5:30 what occurs is מַחַ֤ר מִיַתָּמֲחַר.
the Hebrew Bible and is used in a distributive sense, thus “for each man.” Lindars points out that "dyed cloth" is also found only this once in the biblical corpus in its noun form. As previously noted, here we have two examples of the archaic use of the dual קֹרֶחָה "two wombs" and מהַטָּה "two pieces of embroidered cloth." The challenge with the last phrase is clear, לָלָשׁ "for the necks of plunder." Most commentators choose to repoint לָלָשׁ as "plunderer." The challenge of this phrase can be seen in the difference between LXXA and LXXB translations.

4.6.9 Overall Considerations Regarding the Proposed ABH Features in Judges 5

As noted throughout this section, those who challenge either linguistic dating in general or the pre-monarchic dating of Judges 5 (and other so-called archaic poetry in the Hebrew Bible) present evidence that casts doubt on understanding these proposed ABH features as chronologically archaic. Smith notes that with almost every example these features also occur in texts that are dated to pre- or even post-exilic texts. Therefore, he does not find the linguistic evidence sufficient, in and of itself, to establish the antiquity of Judges 5. However, not all scholars share Smith’s skepticism. Angel Sáenz-Badillos declares that the poetry of the Hebrew Bible “employs a language which differs in various ways from the language of prose, reflecting in general, an earlier stage of Hebrew and with a

---

which all modern translators understand to mean literally, “a womb [or] two wombs.” Given the context of war and plunder, it is unclear to me why the ancient Greek translators chose to translate this with words that meant “being friendly to friends” LXXA and “a compassionate one will be compassionate.”

172 Echols 2008, 42. See also Block 1999, 242 n. 455.


175 See Smith 2014, 216–218 for a detailed listing of his concerns about using linguistic features alone to date Judges 5.
closeness in language, style, and content with neighbouring dialects, especially those to the North.”

He states that in spite of orthographic changes over time (i.e., due to the processes of redaction and transmission) the poetic texts “clearly preserve certain archaic features.” In light of the examples cited, for Judges 5 this seems clear.

Even a casual perusal of various versions of the Hebrew Bible and scholarly translations of the Hebrew text demonstrates that there are many words and expressions in Judges 5 that are uncertain in meaning and difficult to translate. What is true for modern translators was also true for those ancient scholars who translated the Hebrew into Greek, for in doing so they appear to have made numerous errors. Echols makes the point that the Greek translators obviously had great difficulty with the text to the point that “the state of the Old Greek attests to the Song’s antiquity.” Surely it is clear from Judges 5, whether one is trying to support or challenge the validity of linguistic dating, especially with regard to proposed archaic poetry texts, that the LXX translations need to be taken into account.

---

176 Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 56.
177 Sáenz-Badillos (1993, 57) provides examples of these “certain archaic features” including both grammatical and lexical items. The grammatical items that pertain to Judges 5 have already been discussed in this paper. He provides little explanation as to why he considers the lexical items listed to be archaic, except that “some of the roots peculiar to archaic poetry are also found in other Northwest Semitic dialects” (1993, 61).
178 Lindars 1995, 222.
179 Echols 2008, 59. E.g., עֹרְפִּים (v. 2) – “when hair is loosed” (MT), or “when leaders lead” (LXX)
 or “There was revealed a revelation” (LXX); יַעֲרֹפָא (v. 7) – “peasantry” (MT & LXX) or “mighty ones” (LXX); יָשַׁנְפֵּךְ (v. 7) – “when I arose” or “then you arose” (MT) or “she arose” (LXX) or “Deborah would arise” (LXX); םִיַ֔תְּפְּשִׁים (v. 8) – “God chose new ones” (MT) or “They chose new gods” (LXX & LXX); יֵשַׁנְפֵּךְ (v. 8) – “war” (MT & LXX) or barely (LXX); יַעֲרֹפָא (v. 10) – “saddle blankets” (MT) or “covered chariots” (LXX) or “tribunal” (LXX); יָחָלֹֽן (v. 11) – hapax legomenon “watering troughs” (MT) or “those who rejoice” (LXX) or “those who draw water” (LXX); יַעֲרֹפָא (v. 16) – “sheepfolds” (MT & LXX) or “double load” (LXX); יַעֲרֹפָא (v. 17) – hapax legomenon “harbor” (MT) or “channels” (LXX) or “outlets” (LXX).
4.7 Can Judges 5 Be Linguistically Dated?

There is evidence of ABH features present throughout the entirety of Judges 5 and especially in vv. 14–30. While the long-held view that the origin of this song can be dated to the pre-monarchic period, perhaps as early as the thirteenth century BCE, the linguistic features used in support of an early date have been challenged especially within the last twenty-five years. The scholars who have written during this time of the linguistic dating debate have taken the critiques into consideration, as well as more recent archaeological and literary research. The opinion of many is still that Deborah’s Song, at least the “original” poem (vv. 14–30), is pre-monarchic. The clustering and variety of ABH features, as detailed above, figure significantly toward that conclusion. These features plus other facts related to content support an early date.

These other features of the poem include what Smith calls linguistic-cultural features. He states that these “belong to the tenth-century composer’s introduction reflecting on conditions in the Iron I period before kings.”180 Of particular significance is the listing of “tribes” as detailed in vv. 14–18.181 In spite of some creative interpretations by a few scholars, the author of Judg 5:14–18 seems unaware of the twelve-tribe system.182 The tribes (or groups) that are listed, in order, include: Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir, Zebulun, Issachar, Reuben, Gilead, Dan, Asher and Naphtali. Missing from the twelve-tribe system are Judah, Simeon, Levi, Manasseh and Gad unless, like some scholars insist, Machir is equated with

---

180 Smith 2014, 223.
181 See Lindars (1995, 215) who suggests that the list of ten tribes provides the best means of dating the poem.
182 De Moor (1993, 493), with some specific repointing of the MT, claims that Judges 5 lists all twelve tribes in the same order as found in Genesis 49. I have yet to find another scholar who agrees with his reworking of the text.
Manasseh and Gilead with Gad. Six of the groups apparently participated in the battle with special mention given to Zebulun and Issachar in v. 18. Four tribes, according to most interpreters but certainly not all, are chastised or at least questioned for their non-participation. These include Reuben, Gilead, Dan and Asher. An additional group, Meroz, is strongly rebuked for not coming to the aid of Yahweh in v. 23. Even the location of the Meroz rebuke within Judges 5 and that it is twice cursed, seems to be set up as a contrast to Jael in vv. 24–27 who is praised twice.\(^{183}\) Meroz (a Canaanite city?) fails to aid in Yahweh’s battle, whereas Jael, a non-Israelite and wife of Heber the Kenite, gains the final victory in her assassination of Sisera. Taken as it appears in Judges 5, this listing of ten tribes/groups prefigures the twelve-tribe system and provides non-linguistic evidence of the possible pre-monarchic origin of the “core” poem (vv. 14–30).

While the linguistic features alone do not specify an Iron I date, they also do not argue against such a conclusion. Scholars such as Mark Smith, Tania Notarius, Charles Echols, Barnabas Lindars and Sara Milstein, among others, appear to agree with the challengers that linguistic features alone are not sufficient to date this text. However, when the linguistic evidence is combined with historical content they arrive at dates of origin that reach into the eighth century at the latest.\(^{184}\) Smith dates the origin of the “old poetry” (vv. 14–30) to the pre-monarchic period but dates the final composition of Judges 5 in its entirety to the early monarchic period (i.e., down to the ninth century BCE).

The conclusion that best fits with this study’s analysis is that there are sufficient linguistic and cultural features is to indicate that the archaic “core” of Judges 5 existed in oral

\(^{183}\) De Hoop 2009, 161.

tradition in the pre-monarchic period but was committed to writing in the early monarchy of the ninth or eighth centuries. As Knauf suggests, it was probably redacted (adding vv. 1–13 and v. 31) when it was incorporated into the book of Judges in the post-exilic period. The rationale for these dates, as stated by Knauf, is that “the linguistic data retrieved from Judges 5 are in perfect accordance with... how a 10th century Israelite text should look, if preserved and transmitted within the biblical tradition.” However, the difficulty with Knauf’s strongly-worded conclusion is in trying to determine where the scribes faithfully preserved the text and where the redactors changed the text (i.e., updated, added, deleted, etc.).

So, can Deborah’s song be dated linguistically? The answer is both “Yes” and “No.”

Alone, most of the ABH linguistic features can be challenged as to whether or not they assuredly represent a pre-monarchic origin. Many of the issues brought up by the challengers cannot simply be ignored or lightly dismissed. The issue of style, genre, the nature of our sources and the convoluted and complicated transmission of the text raise questions about what it is we are truly evaluating. While typology (i.e., ABH features) does not necessarily always equate to a specific chronology (i.e., pre-monarchic date) for the entire chapter, neither can it be categorically stated that it is never the case that typology demonstrates links to chronology. I concur with those who would answer the above question as follows: “Yes,

185 Knauf 2005, 180. Knauf has a reputation among other scholars of being a minimalist, yet in this article, “Deborah’s Language: Judges Ch. 5 in its Hebrew and Semitic Context,” he definitively states that the core text of Judges 5 is from the early monarchy at the latest and even chides those scholars of the present generation with these words: “Previous generations of biblical scholars indulged in the invention of “ancient traditions” where they were dealing, in most cases, with post-exilic theological constructs. As a result of the necessary opposition to that attitude, the present generation seems unable to recognize as archaic text when it jumps at them. Semitic philology is summoned to the rescue” (pg. 180). I take it from this that he agrees, from a content perspective, that much of the biblical text represents not ancient traditions, but post-exilic theological constructs. However, he still holds that there are some (probably few) archaic texts that the present generation of scholars is overlooking.

Deborah’s Song, or at least its core (vv. 14–30), can be dated with the aid of linguistic features—to the pre-monarchic period at the earliest and the early monarchic period at the latest—but not by ABH linguistic features alone.”
CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

5.1 Overall Impressions

This study has focused on research regarding Hebrew linguistic features and dating that has been published in the last twenty-five years for two reasons. First, the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls has altered our understanding of the state of biblical texts in the centuries just prior to the Common Era. These manuscripts demonstrate the fluidity and pluriformity of the biblical texts and thus have generated tremendous insight into how the biblical texts were transmitted throughout the centuries. Second, while there were discussions about the dating of biblical texts prior to the 1990s, it was during the early part of that decade that the generally accepted idea (i.e., that biblical texts could be dated linguistically) began to be strongly and consistently challenged.\footnote{See Barmash 2017, 47.}

As numerous scholars have noted, both in published works and in informal comments, the debate has reached a place where it seems that the die-hard proponents and the never-say-die challengers are no longer in dialogue. Na’ama Pat-El and Aren Wilson-Wright have stated it correctly, when they wrote in 2013, “The debate over linguistic dating is at an impasse; yet shows no signs of abating. This is not due to an unsolvable dispute or a lack of relevant evidence, but rather a matter of two approaches completely at odds…Despite an abundance of articles and books on the topic, scholarly dialogue is absent.”\footnote{Pat-El and Wilson-Wright 2013, 410.} As already noted, Hurvitz in 2014 expressed the same hopelessness when he wrote, “Indeed, no common ground for a potentially meaningful dialogue in this connection [i.e., between the
two opposing parties] seems to be in sight at the moment.” What is the reason for such a stalemate? From my review of the research, the two sides do not disagree with regard to the linguistic features themselves but rather in terms of how to interpret or explain these linguistic features. Many of the assumptions upon which the explanations of both camps rely are irreconcilable. I conclude that several of these assumptions, on both sides of the debate, are unproven and perhaps are even unprovable. Let us review a few of the most problematic assumptions for both the proponents and the challengers of the linguistic dating model in order to clearly contextualize my rationale.

5.2 Problems for the Proponents

There are certain assumptions upon which the proponents base their linguistic dating conclusions that the challengers have rejected as unproven. There are even some scholars who agree that linguistic features have the potential to aid in the dating of texts who regard these assumptions as problematic.

First, while proponents acknowledge that the texts we have are the product generations of scribal copying and editing, they appear to minimize the challenge this reality brings when it comes to analyzing linguistic features chronologically. The possible and/or proposed answers to the questions I raised in Chapter 2 regarding how to distinguish linguistics features as archaic or archaisms or pseud-classicisms are debated by Hebrew and biblical scholars on all sides of the linguistic dating discussion. I would emphasize again that the extensive and convoluted process involved in the transmission of biblical texts is perhaps the single most difficult obstacle facing the proponents.

---


190 See also Davies 2003, 152.
Second, the proponents’ argument is also based on the concept of the strict periodization of BH: the assumption that at any given time—whether pre-monarchic, pre-exilic, exilic or post-exilic—the authors/redactors had only one type of Hebrew available to them. The questions raised by the challengers demonstrate the critical nature of this much debated issue. In several more recent articles, written by linguists, there is a consensus that periodization, as presented by the proponents, is an abstraction. Multiple registers of any language in any place and time can, and often do, exist simultaneously. Therefore, this would be true of Hebrew in the period during which the biblical texts were being authored and/or edited. I have come to a conclusion, which is in agreement with many scholars, that different forms of Hebrew existed during the same periods and perhaps even in the same geographical areas.191

Third, the proponents claim that post-exilic scribes could not author or edit texts using CBH. Yet even they acknowledge that some of these scribes were quite adept at producing CBH-like texts. It would seem that this assumption is just as much “theory-driven” as they claim the challengers’ opposing assumption (i.e., that post-exilic scribes could compose CBH-like texts) to be.

These, and other issues raised by the challengers certainly should give one pause before joining the proponents in equating typology with chronology. The linguistic features in texts we possess are inconclusive at best for dating the initial composition of said texts. As I pointed out in Chapter 4, while Judges 5 contains some features that are regarded by many as ABH-like, these linguistic features cannot stand on their own. While most scholars still regard Judges 5 to contain remnants of archaic Hebrew, other features (historical-cultural)

---

191 Naude 2003, 189.
present within the poem need to be taken into account in order to make a convincing argument that even the core text (vv. 14–30) can be understood to be truly archaic. Far too many biblical texts have various combinations of CBH and LBH features. As has been noted, some texts presumed, by means other than linguistic features, to be post-exilic have more CBH features than LBH, and vice versa for some other texts presumed to be pre-exilic.

5.3 Critique for the Challengers

In striving to undermine the arguments made by the proponents, at least one challenger has made an important acknowledgement. In his review of Dong-Hyuk Kim’s 2013 monograph, Rezetko states, “I am willing to admit, however, that in our zeal to disprove the possibility of linguistic dating, we have sometimes used unpropitious language, misjudged or underplayed the potential relevance of different proportions of linguistic variables in biblical writings, and in some instances even over-argued our synchronic or stylistic interpretation.” I would agree that the challengers have overstated their conclusions at times, not recognizing that many of their own assumptions are open to critique as they are certainly far from proven facts; e.g., the assumption that post-exilic scribes could write in CBH that cannot be distinguished from pre-exilic CBH. This is an assumption the proponents say is purely theory driven; i.e., lacking evidential support. Also, the idea that style explains the use of older features is no more proven by the challengers than is the

---

192 Smith notes (2014, 219–220) that poems such as Genesis 49, Numbers 23–24, 1 Samuel 2 and Exodus 15 can all be dated from as early as Iron I–IIA (i.e., 1200–900 BCE), but not on linguistic features alone. Combined with linguistic features he states that “features with a linguistic-cultural interface lie at the heart of the matter of dating Judges 5” as well as the other “archaic” poetry in the Hebrew Bible. He cites other scholars whose works pursue this line of research, which I have yet had the opportunity to read.

193 See http://www.jhsonline.org/reviews/reviews_new/review678.htm under the heading: Evaluation—Language change.

194 Hornkohl 2017, 3.
proponents’ claim that chronology is the always the most appropriate explanation for appearances of older linguistic features.195

By taking an “either/or” approach, the challengers have minimized the possibility that linguistic features could be, in some situations, used to support the relative dating of texts. Most scholars agree that the absolute dating of texts requires more evidence from within and, if possible, from outside the biblical corpus.196 With regard to Judges 5 (and other presumed archaic poetry), the limitations of the challengers’ overstating approach can be clearly seen in Robin Vern’s monograph, Dating Archaic Biblical Hebrew Poetry. She states that what her research proves “is the lack of relevance of linguistic evidence as a tool for the early dating of certain ABH poetry. Consequently, the research purportedly indicating that linguistic evidence can be used for dating biblical Hebrew to the early period must finally be set aside.”197 My study, at this point, would challenge that kind of exclusionary conclusion. Rather as demonstrated in Judges 5, linguistic features can be used hand-in-hand with evidence of archaic historical-cultural references. Linguistic features can help to more clearly focus in on, at least, relative dating of a text, if not, absolute dating.

5.4 The Current State of the Linguistic Dating Debate and Beyond

My conclusion may seem to be safe and noncomittal, but it strikes me as the best way to take into account the real state of the biblical texts. Tania Notarius states that she does “not recall any serious biblical scholar arguing for an exclusive linguistic dating of biblical


196 Waltke and O’Connor (1990, 15) state that while “absolute dating cannot be derived from linguistic evidence…abundant material for dating studies exists, both within the biblical corpus and outside it.” Among that “abundant material” for relative dating is the linguistic evidence.

197 Vern 2011, 2.
texts." She also references other biblical scholars such as Shalom Paul and Alexander Rofé who bring linguistic features along with all other available evidence together for the purposes of dating biblical texts. As noted in Chapter 4, numerous scholars date the core poem of Judges 5 to the pre-monarchic period but only with the helpful addition of archaeological, historical and literary evidence.

There are some scholars who question both the proponents’ and the challengers’ conclusions regarding the use of linguistic features for dating purposes. Smith states that he does not accept “Young’s approach in which he argues that there can be no dating by linguistic features and that such variation is to be attributed to different style” because Young has not demonstrated, but only assumed, that style is the operative factor. However, neither does Smith agree with the conclusions reached by Cross and Freedman, Robertson, and others. Cross, in a later work, states, “I have become less certain of the results of our work, given the problem of the long transmission of the text of these poems, only partially overcome by modern text-critical methods, and perhaps more serious, our uncertain knowledge of the details of the Hebrew language in which the poems were composed.” These quotes are important in that they demonstrate that the challengers’ critiques have raised important questions that even some previous stalwarts of linguistic dating are acknowledging as vital considerations and are impacting their research. What I see from the more current articles is that, while there are still scholars arguing at the more extreme ranges

---

198 Notarius 2014, 395.
200 Smith 2014, 218.
of the debate, there are many who are raising serious questions about both the proponents’ and challengers’ assumptions and are offering an alternative to “either/or” conclusions.

It seems clear to me that the approach to linguistic dating cannot be an “either/or,” but that it needs to be “both/and.” From my analysis of Judges 5, I have concluded that linguistic features must be taken into consideration along with textual content, and extra-biblical evidence including archaeological discoveries, literary evidence and comparative studies, in order to help us suggest relative dates for the biblical texts.\textsuperscript{202} Notarius states,

 Strict linguistic change analysis is an indispensable component of theorizing the chronology of Biblical Hebrew…Text-Dating need not be the overarching goal of historical linguistics, but the results of the linguistic change analysis may be usefully integrated into the dating process alongside other historical and philological data as part of the hermeneutic circle.\textsuperscript{203}

Until recently, the linguistic dating debate appeared to be irreconcilably polarized. The interpretations of the linguistic features and the conclusions reached by those at the extreme ends of the debate continuum stood in determined opposition. At this time, however, a way forward is being forged as an increasing number of scholars are encouraging everyone to take a step back from entrenched theoretical positions. The way forward is for all scholars, on all sides of the debate, to reassess carefully and objectively what we have, what we think

\textsuperscript{202} Cross and Freedman in the second edition of \textit{Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry}, twenty-two years after their first edition agree when they state, “The need for an adequate treatment of the evolution of Hebrew orthography has long been recognized, as well as its important value in textual analysis and reconstruction, and the dating of biblical materials” (1997, 21). In their \textit{Postscriptum} they conclude, “New data, especially from the Qumran scrolls, and the text-critical resources they provide, suggest unexpected complexity in the orthographic revision and development in the textual families which lie behind the Masoretic text…Archaic orthographies have survived, but most frequently in misunderstood archaic poetry, preserved in disturbed contexts…as a dating device [there] needs [to be] supporting evidence from other sources…” (126–127).

\textsuperscript{203} Notarius 2014, 396–397. The “hermeneutic circle” is described by Jean Grondin in the \textit{Blackwell Companion to Hermeneutics} pp. 299-305 and is defined as “the idea that we always understand or interpret out of some presuppositions” and that “the circle is that of the whole and its parts: we can only understand the parts of a text, or any body of meaning, out of a general idea of its whole, yet we can only gain this understanding of the whole by understanding its parts…there is no such thing as understanding without presuppositions” (2016, 299).
we know and how we think we know it. I would also suggest that the inclusion of even more generally trained linguists be encouraged to provide a, perhaps, less biased analysis of BH linguistic features. In so doing, and through ongoing dialogue, discussion and respectful debate, we will better understand just how linguistic features of BH might play an important, though not singular, role in the relative dating of, at least some, biblical texts.

---

204 See Klein’s and Holmstedt’s articles in the Bibliography.
Bibliography


Young, Ian, Robert Rezetko and Martin Ehrensvärd. 2016. “Do We Really think that Ancient Hebrew had No Chronology?” [https://www.academia.edu/24578417/](https://www.academia.edu/24578417/)


Appendix A: Judges 5 Texts of the MT, LXX⁴ & LXX⁵

Judges 5:1

LXX: Καὶ ἦσαν Δεββώρα καὶ Βαρακ υἱὸς Αβίνεεμ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἑκείνη καὶ εἶπεν

LXX: Καὶ ἦσαν Δεββώρα καὶ Βαρακ υἱὸς Αβίνεεμ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἑκείνη λέγοντες

Judges 5:2

LXX: ἔστασαν άρξαςθαι ἐπὶ Ἰσραήλ, ἐν προαιρέσει λαοῦ εὐλογεῖτε τὸν κύριον.

LXX: Απεκαλύφθη ἀποκάλυμμα ἐπὶ Ἰσραήλ· ἐν τῷ ἐκουσιασθῆναι λαὸν εὐλογεῖτε κύριον.

Judges 5:3

LXX: ἐστασαν τοῦ εὐλογεῖν Ἰσραήλ, καὶ ἐστασαν ὕποι ἔμοι, ἔγω τῷ κυρίῳ ἑσομαι, ψαλῶ τῷ θεῷ Ἰσραήλ.

LXX: ἐστασαν, βασιλεῖς, ἐνοτίζεσθε, συμπάν δύνατοι· έγώ τῷ κυρίῳ ἑσομαι, ψαλῶ τῷ θεῷ Ἰσραήλ.

Judges 5:4

LXX: κύριε, ἐν τῇ ἐξόδῳ σου ἐκ Σημ, ἐν τῷ ἀπαίρειν σε ἐξ ἄγρου Εδωμ γῇ ἐσείσθη, καὶ ὁ οὐρανός εξεστάθη, καὶ αἱ νεφέλαι ἐσταζαν ὕδωρ ἐν τῇ ἐξορίᾳ σου ἐκ Σημ, ἐν τῷ ἀπαίρειν σε ἐξ ἄγρου Εδωμ γῇ ἐσείσθη, καὶ ὁ οὐρανός ἐσταζαν ὄροι, καὶ αἱ νεφέλαι ἐσταζαν ὕδωρ.

Judges 5:5

LXX: ἄφη ἐσαλεύθησαν ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου, τοῦτο Σινα ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου θεοῦ Ἰσραήλ.

LXX: ἀφη ἐσαλεύθησαν ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου Ελωι, τοῦτο Σινα ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου θεοῦ Ἰσραήλ.
Judges 5:6

LXX\(^a\): εν ημεραις Σαμαγαρ υιου Αναθ, εν ημεραις Ιασυλ έξελιπον βασιλειας και επορευθησαν τριβους, επορευθησαν οδους διεστραμμενας.

LXX\(^b\): εν ημεραις Σαμαγαρ υιου Αναθ, εν ημεραις Ιασυλ έξελιπον οδους και επορευθησαν ατραπους, επορευθησαν οδους διεστραμμενας:

Judges 5:7

LXX\(^a\): ἐξέλιπεν φραζων εν τῷ Ἰσραήλ, ἐξέλιπεν, ἦσος οὔ ἐξανάστη Δεββωρα, ὅτι ἁνάστη μήτηρ εν τῷ Ἰσραήλ.

LXX\(^b\): ἐξέλιπον δυνατοι εν Ἰσραήλ, ἐξέλιπον, ἦσος οὔ ἁναστῆ Δεββωρα, ἦσος οὔ ἁναστῆ μήτηρ εν Ἰσραήλ.

Judges 5:8

LXX\(^a\): ἤρετισαν θεους καινους ως άρτον κριθινον· σκέπην εαν ίδω σιρομαστων εν τεσσαράκοντα χιλιασιν.

LXX\(^b\): ἐξελέζαντο θεους καινους· τότε ἐπολέμησαν πόλεις αρχοντων· θυρεος εάν ὀφθη και λόγχη εν τεσσαράκοντα χιλιασιν εν Ἰσραήλ.

Judges 5:9

LXX\(^a\): ἡ καρδια μου επι τα διατεταγμενα τοι Ἰσραηλ· οι δυνασται του ραου, ευλογητε των κυριων.

LXX\(^b\): ἡ καρδια μου εις τα διατεταγμενα τοι Ἰσραηλ· οι έκουσιαζομενοι εν λαω, ευλογητε κυριον.

Judges 5:10

LXX\(^a\): ἑπιβεβηκοτες επι υποζυγιον, καθημενοι επι λαμπηνων,
LXXB: ἐπιβεβηκότες ἐπὶ ὅνον θηλείας μεσημβρίας, καθήμενοι ἐπὶ κριτήριον καὶ πορευόμενοι ἐπὶ ὄδους συνεδρόν ἐφ’ ὁδὸν.

Judges 5:11

LXXB: λαὸς Κυρὶος σφραγίζει τοὺς εἰς τὰς πόλεις αὐτοῦ ὁ λαὸς κυρίου.

Judges 5:12

LXXB: διηγεῖται ἀπὸ φωνῆς ἀνακρουομένων ἀνά μέσον υδρευομένων· ἐκεῖ δόσουσιν δικαιοσύνην κυρίῳ. δικαιοὶ ἐνίσχυσαν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ· τότε κατέβη εἰς τὰς πόλεις αὐτοῦ ὁ λαὸς κυρίου.

Judges 5:13

LXXB: τότε κατέβη κατάλειμμα τοῖς ἰσχυροῖς, λαῶς κυρίου κατέβη αὐτῷ ἐν τοῖς κραταιοῖς.
Judges 5:15

LXX⁵: ἐν Ἰσσαχαρ μετὰ Δεββωρας ἐξαπέστειλεν πεζοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν κοιλάδα. ἦν τί σὺ κατοικεῖς ἐν μέσῳ χελέων; ἔξετειν ἐν τοῖς ποσίν αὐτοῦ. ἐν διαρέσεσιν Ρουβὴν μεγάλοι ἀκριβασμοὶ καρδίαις.

LXX⁶: καὶ ἀρχηγοὶ ἐν Ἰσσαχαρ μετὰ Δεββωρας καὶ Βαρακ, οὗτος Βαρακ ἐν κοιλάσιν ἀπέστειλεν ἐν ποσίν αὐτοῦ. εἰς τὰς μερίδας Ρουβὴν μεγάλοι ἐξικνούμενοι καρδίαιν.

Judges 5:16

LXX⁵: ἔστη τὸν κάτωκτον Ὑβρίστας κατασκεύασεν καὶ ἔτεινεν καὶ ἔστη ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀκριβασμοῖς τῷ χρόνῳ καρδίαιν.

LXX⁶: εἰς τί ἐκάθισαν ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς διοχής τοῦ κατασκεύασμας, εἰς διαρέσεις τὰς μερίδας Ρουβὴν μεγάλοι ἐξετάσμενοι καρδίαιν.

Judges 5:17

LXX⁵: ἐστὶ τῷ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου κατασκεύασον· καὶ Δαν ἦν τί παροικεὶ πλοίοις; Ἀσηρ παρόκησαν παρ᾿ αἰγαλῶν θαλάσσων καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς διακοπὰς αὐτοῦ κατασκεύασαν.

LXX⁶: Γαλααδ ἐν τῷ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου ἐσκήνωσεν καὶ Δαν εἰς τί παροικεὶ πλοίοις; Ἀσηρ ἐκάθιεν παραλίαν θαλάσσων καὶ ἐπὶ διεξόδοις αὐτοῦ σκηνώσει.

Judges 5:18

LXX⁵: Ζαβουλων λαὸς ὀνείδισας ψυχήν αὐτοῦ εἰς θάνατον καὶ Νεφθαλιμ ἐπὶ ψυχὴ ἄγροι.

LXX⁶: Ζαβουλων λαὸς ὀνείδισεν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ εἰς θάνατον καὶ Νεφθαλὶ ἐπὶ ψυχή ἄγροι.

Judges 5:19

LXX⁵: ἤλθον βασιλεῖς καὶ παρετάξαντο. τότε ἐπολέμησαν βασιλεῖς Χανααν ἐν Θενναῖ ἐπὶ ὕδατος Μαγεδῶν πλευρεῖς ἀργυρίου οὐκ ἐλαβον.

LXX⁶: ἔλθον βασιλεῖς καὶ παρετάξαντο. τότε ἐπολέμησαν βασιλεῖς Χανααν ἐν Θενναῖ ἐπὶ ὕδατος Μαγεδῶν πλευρεῖς ἀργυρίου οὐκ ἐλαβον.
LXX^B: ἠλθον αὐτῶν βασιλεῖς, παρετάξαντο, τότε ἐπολέμησαν βασιλεῖς Χανααν ἐν Θανααχ ἐπὶ Παταρί. δῶρον ἀργυρίου οὐκ ἔλαβον.

Judges 5:20

LXX^A: έκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπολέμησαν ἀστέρες, ἐκ τῆς τάξεως αὐτῶν ἐπολέμησαν μετὰ Σισαρ.

LXX^B: εξ οὐρανοῦ παρετάξαντο οἱ ἀστέρες, ἐκ τρίβων αὐτῶν παρετάξαντο μετὰ Σισαρ.

Judges 5:21

LXX^A: χειμάρρους Κισων ἔξεβαλεν αὐτοὺς, χειμάρρους καδημία, χειμάρρους Κισων· καταπατήσει αὐτοὺς ψυχή μου δυνατή.

LXX^B: χειμάρρους Κισων ἔξεσυρεν αὐτοὺς, χειμάρρους ἀρχαῖον, χειμάρρους Κισων· καταπατήσει αὐτοὺς ψυχή μου δυνατή.

Judges 5:22

LXX^A: τότε ἀπεκόπησαν πτέρναι ἵππου, αμαδαρωθ δυνατῶν αὐτοῦ.

LXX^B: τότε ἐναπόδισθησαν πτέρναι ἵππου, σπουδῇ ἔσπευσαν ἱσχυροί αὐτοῦ.

Judges 5:23

LXX^A: καταράσασθε Μαρω, εἶπεν ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου, καταράσει καταράσασθε τοὺς ἐνοίκους αὐτῆς, ὅτι οὐκ ἠλθοσαν εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν κυρίου· βοήθος ἦμων κύριος ἐν μαχηταῖς δυνατὸς.

LXX^B: καταράσθησε Μηρώ, εἶπεν ἄγγελος κυρίου, καταράσθησε, ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κατοικῶν αὐτήν, ὅτι οὐκ ἠλθοσαν εἰς βοήθειαν κυρίου, εἰς βοήθειαν ἐν δυνατοῖς.
Judges 5:24

LXX\(^A\): εὐλογηθείη ἐκ γυναικῶν Ιαπή γυνὴ Χαβερ τοῦ Κιναίου, ἐκ γυναικῶν ἐν σκηνῇ εὐλογηθείη.

LXX\(^B\): εὐλογηθείη ἐν γυναιξίν Ιαπή γυνὴ Χαβερ τοῦ Κιναίου, ἀπὸ γυναικῶν ἐν σκηναῖς εὐλογηθείη.

Judges 5:25

LXX\(^A\): ὁδώρ ἠττήσεν αὐτὴν, καὶ γάλα ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ, ἐν λακάνῃ ἰσχυρὸν προσήγγισεν βούτυρον.

LXX\(^B\): ὁδώρ ἠττήσεν, γάλα ἔδωκεν, ἐν λεκάνῃ ὑπερεχόντων προσήγγισεν βούτυρον.

Judges 5:26

LXX\(^A\): τήν χεῖρα αὐτῆς τῆς ἀριστερᾶν εἰς πᾶσαν Ἀζείνεν, τήν δεξίαν αὐτῆς εἰς ἀποτομίας κατακόπτων καὶ ἀπέτεμεν Σίζαρα, ἀπέτρυψεν τήν κεφαλήν αὐτοῦ καὶ συνέθλασεν καὶ δηλώσεν τήν γνάθον αὐτοῦ.

LXX\(^B\): χεῖρα αὐτῆς ἀριστερᾶν εἰς πᾶσαν Ἀζείνεν καὶ δεξιὰν αὐτῆς εἰς σφῦραν κοπίων τοῦ κατακλίθησεν Σίζαρα, δηλώσεν κεφαλήν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπάταξεν, δηλώσεν κρόταφον αὐτοῦ.

Judges 5:27

LXX\(^A\): ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτῆς συγκάμψας ἦσεν, ἱκομήθη μεταξὺ ποδῶν αὐτῆς· ἐν δὲ ἐκαμψεν, ἐκεῖ ἦσεν ταλαιπωροῦσα.

LXX\(^B\): ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτῆς κατεκλύθη, ἦσεν καὶ ἱκομήθη· ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτῆς κατακλύθη ἦσεν· καθὼς κατεκλύθη, ἐκεῖ ἦσεν ἐξοδευθεῖς.
Judges 5:28

LXX\(^A\): διὰ τῆς θυρίδος διέκικτεν ἡ μῆτηρ Σίσαρα διὰ τῆς δικτυωτῆς ἐπιβλέπουσα ἐπὶ τοὺς μεταστρέφοντας μετὰ Σίσαρα. Διὰ τὶ ᾲχνάτισέν τὸ ἄρμα αὐτὸ παραγενέσθαι; διὰ τὶ ἔχρονισαν ἵνα ἄρματον αὐτοῦ;

LXX\(^B\): διὰ τῆς θυρίδος παρέκκυψεν μῆτηρ Σίσαρα ἐκτὸς τοῦ τοξίκου, διότι ἰσχύνθη ἄρμα αὐτοῦ, διότι ἔχρονισαν πόδες ἄρματον αὐτοῦ.

Judges 5:29

LXX\(^A\): σοφαί ἱρθοσῦν αὐτῆς ἀνταπεκρίναντο πρὸς αὐτήν, καὶ αὐτὴ ἀπεκρίνατο ἐν ῥήμασιν αὐτῆς

LXX\(^B\): αἱ σοφαί ἔρχοντο νὰ αὐτῆς ἀπεκρίθησαν πρὸς αὐτήν, καὶ αὐτὴ ἀπέστρεφεν λόγους αὐτῆς ἐκτὸς.

Judges 5:30

LXX\(^A\): Οὐχὶ εὔρήσουσιν αὐτῶν διαμερίζοντα σκῦλα; φιλιάζων φίλοις εἰς κεφαλῆς δυνατοῦ· σκῦλα βαμμάτων Σίσαρα, σκῦλα βαμμάτων ποικιλίας, βαφή ποικίλων περὶ τράχηλον αὐτῶν σκῦλον.

LXX\(^B\): Οὐχὶ εὗρήσουν αὐτῶν διαμερίζοντα σκῦλα; σκῦλα βαμμάτων τῷ Σίσαρα, σκῦλα βαμμάτων ποικιλίας, βαμμάτων ποικιλτῶν αὐτά, τῷ τραχύλῳ αὐτῶν σκῦλα.

Judges 5:31

LXX\(^A\): οὕτως ἀπόλοιπον πάντες οἱ ἔχοροι σου, κύριε· καὶ οἱ ἀγαπώντες αὐτῶν καθὼς ἢ ἀνατολή τοῦ ἡλίου ἐν δυναστείᾳ αὐτοῦ. Καὶ ἠσύχασαν ἢ γῆ τεσσαράκοντα ἐτη.

LXX\(^B\): οὕτως ἀπόλοιπον πάντες οἱ ἔχοροι σου, κύριε· καὶ οἱ ἀγαπώντες αὐτῶν ὡς ἔξοδος ἡλίου ἐν δυνάμει αὐτοῦ. Καὶ ἠσύχασαν ἢ γῆ τεσσαράκοντα ἐτη.
Appendix B: Judges 5 Translations of the MT, LXX\textsuperscript{A} & LXX\textsuperscript{B}

**Judges 5:1**

MT: And Deborah sang, and Barak, son of Abinoam, on that day, saying…

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: And Deborah sang and Barak, son of Abinoam, on that day, and said…

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: And Deborah and Barak, son of Abinoam, sang on that day, saying…

**Judges 5:2**

MT: When long hair was loose in Israel, when people volunteered – praise Yahweh.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: With leaders leading in Israel, with the choice of the people – praise the Lord.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: A revelation was revealed in Israel; when the people volunteered – praise the Lord.

**Judges 5:3**

MT: Listen, kings. Give ear, princes. I to Yahweh, I will sing, I will make music to Yahweh, God of Israel.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: Listen kings, pay close attention mighty satraps, I will sing to the Lord, I will sing a psalm to the God of Israel.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Listen, kings and pay close attention, satraps; I am for the Lord, I am. I will sing; I will sing a psalm to the Lord, to the God of Israel.

**Judges 5:4**

MT: Yahweh, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, also the heavens dripped, even the clouds dripped water.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: Lord, in your departure from Seir, in your marching away from the plain of Edom, the land was shaken and the heaven was shaken and the clouds dropped water.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Lord, in your departure from Seir, when you set out from the field of Edom, the earth was shaken, and the heaven dripped dew and the clouds dripped water.
Judges 5:5

MT: Mountains melted from before Yahweh, this Sinai, from before Yahweh, God of Israel.

LXXA: Mountains were shaken from the face of the Lord, this Sinai from the face of the Lord God of Israel.

LXXB: Mountains were shaken before the face of the Lord my God, this Sinai, from before the face of the Lord God of Israel.

Judges 5:6

MT: In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, roads ceased and those who travelled on paths were travelling on crooked roads.

LXXA: In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, kings ceased, and they travelled paths; they travelled ways that were twisted.

LXXB: In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, they travelled roads and they travelled paths; they travelled ways that were twisted.

Judges 5:7

MT: Peasantry ceased in Israel, ceased until I arose, Deborah, I arose as a mother in Israel.

LXXA: Peasantry ceased in Israel, ceased until Deborah arose, since she arose a mother in Israel.

LXXB: Mighty ones were lacking in Israel; they ceased until Deborah arose, until she arose a mother in Israel.

Judges 5:8

MT: He [i.e. Israel] chose new gods, then war [was at] gates. A shield did not appear, or a lance, among forty thousand in Israel.

LXXA: They chose new gods, like bread made of barley, if I saw a cover of spears among forty thousand.

LXXB: They chose new gods; then the rulers’ cities waged war. A shield, if it was seen, and a spear among forty thousand in Israel.
**Judges 5:9**

MT: My heart is for those who command Israel, those among the people who volunteer – praise Yahweh.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: My heart is for those who are being commanded in Israel; the mighty ones of the people – praise the Lord.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: My heart is for what was commanded in Israel. Those who willingly volunteer among the people. Praise the Lord

**Judges 5:10**

MT: Those who mount white donkeys, who sit on carpets and who are travellers on the way – consider.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: Those who have mounted donkeys, sitting in covered chariots,

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Those who have mounted a female donkey at midday, sitting on tribunal and travelling on roads to help on the way.

**Judges 5:11**

MT: Greater than the sound of those who are divided between watering places, there they commemorate the righteousness of Yahweh, the righteousness of his peasantry in Israel. Then the people of Yahweh went down to the gates.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: Speak a sound of those who play instruments in the midst of those who rejoice; there they will attribute righteousness to the Lord. The righteous prevailed in Israel. Then the people of the Lord went down to his cities.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Explain from a voice of those who play instruments, in the midst of those who draw water; there they attribute righteousness to the Lord. Increase righteousness in Israel. Then the people of the Lord went down into the cities.

**Judges 5:12**

MT: Arise, arise, Deborah, arise, arise, sing a song. Get up Barak and take your captives captive, son of Abinoam.
LXX\textsuperscript{A}: Arise, arise, Deborah, raise up myriads together with the people; arise, arise, speak with a song. Strengthening, rise up, Barak and Deborah strengthen Barak. Take captive your captives, son of Abinoam.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Arise, arise, Deborah! Arise, arise, speak a song. Rise up, Barak, and take captive your captives, son of Abinoam.

**Judges 5:13**

MT: Then a remnant went down to the nobles, the people of Yahweh came down to me with warriors.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: When was his strength magnified? Lord, humble for me, those who are stronger than I.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Then a remnant went down to the mighty. The people of the Lord went down to him with the strong.

**Judges 5:14**

MT: From Ephraim, [with] their root with Amalek, after you Benjamin with your people. From Machir those who command went down and from Zebulun those who seize an officer’s staff.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: The people of Ephraim punished them in your brother Benjamin’s valley, with your people. From me, Machir went down searching, and from Zebulun the Lord waged war for me with the strong, from there with a staff of those who prevail in command.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: From me Ephraim uprooted them in Amalek, after you, Benjamin with your people. With me Machir went down searching and from Zebulun dragging with a rod of a scribe for declaration.

**Judges 5:15**

MT: And the princes of Issachar [were] with Deborah, and thus Issachar [with] Barak was sent into the valley at his feet. Among the divisions of Reuben [there were] great searchings of heart.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: In Issachar with Deborah he sent his infantry into the valley. For what reason do you dwell in the middle of the shores? He stretched out with his feet. In the divisions of Reuben [there were] great searchings of the heart.
LXXB: And leaders in Issachar were with Deborah and Barak, thus Barak in valleys sent at his feet. For the portions of Reuben there were great reachings of heart.

**Judges 5:16**

MT: Why do you remain among the saddlebags to hear the hissing of the herds? For the divisions of Reuben [there were] great searchings of heart.

LXXA: For what reason do you sit in the midst of the saddlebags to hear the bleating of those who arouse? Of the passing over into the things of Reuben [there were] great explorations of heart.

LXXB: For what do they sit in the midst of the double load of those who hear the hissing of messengers? For divisions of Ruben, [there were] great examinations of heart.

**Judges 5:17**

MT: Gilead remained on the other side of the Jordan. And Dan, why do you sojourn on ships? Asher remained at the coast of the seas and in its harbours he dwelled.

LXXA: Gilead dwelled across the Jordan. And Dan, for what reason do you dwell in ships? Asher lived by the shore of the seas and by its channels he settled.

LXXB: Gilead was camped across the Jordan. And Dan for what [reason] is he dwelling in ships. Asher sat by the coast of the seas and will camp by its outlets.

**Judges 5:18**

MT: Zebulun, a people [who] scorned its life to death, and Naphtali on the heights of the field

LXXA: Zebulun, a people reproaching its life for death and Naphtali on the heights of a field.

LXXB: Zebulun, a people [who] scorned its life to death, and Naphtali on the heights of a field.

**Judges 5:19**

MT: They came. Kings engaged in battle. Then they battled the kings of Canaan at Tanaach by the waters of Meggido. Unjust silver they did not take.
LXX\textsuperscript{A}: Kings came and set up for battle. Then kings of Canaan waged war at Tanaach at the water of Megiddo. An excess of silver they did not take.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Their kings came; they lined up for battle, then the kings of Canaan fought at Tanaach at the water of Megiddo. A gift of silver they did not take.

**Judges 5:20**

MT: From the heaven the stars engaged in battle. From their courses they engaged in battle with Sisera.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: From the sky, stars waged war, from their orders they waged war against Sisera.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: From the sky the stars lined up for battle, from their paths they lined up for battle with Sisera.

**Judges 5:21**

MT: The stream of Kishon swept them away, a stream of torrents, the stream of Kishon. My soul march on [in] strength.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: A brook of Kishon carried them away; a brook of antiquity, a brook Kishon. My mighty soul trampled them.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: A brook of Kishon swept them away, a brook of old, a brook of Kishon. My strong soul tramples him.

**Judges 5:22**

MT: Then the hooves of horses beat from galloping, galloping of his mighty ones.

LXX\textsuperscript{A}: Then the tendons of a horse cut, galloping of his mighty ones.

LXX\textsuperscript{B}: Then heels of a horse were held back, his mighty ones hastened in pursuit.

**Judges 5:23**

MT: Curse Meroz, said the messenger of Yahweh, certainly curse her inhabitants because they did not come to the aid of Yahweh, to the aid of Yahweh with the warriors.
LXXA: Curse Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, with cursing, curse her inhabitants, because they did not come to the assistance of the Lord. The Lord is our helper, mighty among warriors.

LXXB: Curse Meroz, said the messenger of the Lord, curse. Cursed are all who dwell in it, because they did not come to the assistance of the Lord, to the assistance with the mighty ones.

**Judges 5:24**

MT: Blessed among women is Jael, wife of Heber the Kenite, among women in a tent, she is blessed.

LXXA: May Jael be blessed among women, wife of Heber the Kenite, of women in a tent may she be blessed.

LXXB: May Jael of women be blessed, the wife of Heber the Kenite, from women in tents may she be blessed.

**Judges 5:25**

MT: Water, he asked. Milk she gave. In a bowl of lords she offered curd.

LXXA: He asked her for water, but she gave him milk, in a bowl of mighty ones she brought butter near.

LXXB: He asked for water; she gave milk; in a dish of the best ones she offered butter.

**Judges 5:26**

MT: Her hand for the peg, she stretched out and her right hand for the labourer’s hammer. And she hammered Sisera. She crushed his head and she smashed and she pierced his temple.

LXXA: She stretched out her left hand for a peg, her right hand for laborers’ instrument, and she decapitated Sisera, she scalped his head and she shattered and pierced his jaw.

LXXB: She stretched out her left hand for a peg and her right hand for a laborers’ hammer and she hit Sisera with the hammer. She drove a nail into his head, and she struck. She drove a nail into his temple.
**Judges 5:27**

MT: Between her feet he slumped, he fell, he laid down. Between her feet he slumped, he fell. In the place he slumped, there he fell, destroyed.

LXX\(^A\): In between her feet, having bent over, he fell; he lay down between her feet. Where he bent over, there he fell, wretched one.

LXX\(^B\): In between her feet he was rolled down, he fell and he laid down; between her feet he was made to sit, he fell; just where he was made to sit, there he fell, having departed.

**Judges 5:28**

MT: Through the window she looked down and she cried aloud, the mother of Sisera, through the lattice, “Why is his chariot delayed in coming? Why are the hoofbeats of his chariots detained?”

LXX\(^A\): Through the window, the mother of Sisera bent down to see; through the lattice, she carefully peered at those returning with Sisera. For what reason was his chariot the last to appear? For what reason was the track of his chariots delayed?

LXX\(^B\): Through the window Sisera’s mother looked out of the loophole. “Why has his chariot been delayed? Why has the footsteps of his chariots been delayed?”

**Judges 5:29**

MT: Her wisest noble women answered. Even she returned her words to herself.

LXX\(^A\): The wise of her leading women replied to her, even she answered to her words.

LXX\(^B\): Her wise leading women answered her, even she turned her words to herself.

**Judges 5:30**

MT: “Are they not finding [and] dividing the plunder, a womb or two for every man, plunder of dyed garments for Sisera, plunder of dyed, embroidered garments, a dyed garment embroidered for necks as plunder.”

LXX\(^A\): “Will they not find him dividing the plunder? Being friendly to friends for a head of a strong one. Sisera’s plunder of dyed cloths, plunder of dyed embroidery, dipped embroidery around his neck as plunder.”
LXXB: “Will they not find him dividing plunder? Compassion he will have to the head of man; plunder of dyed garments for Sisera, plunder of embroidered dyed garments, these embroidered dyed garments, plunder on his neck.”

Judges 5:31

MT: Thus, will all your enemies perish, Yahweh. And those who love him are like the coming of the sun in its strength. And the land had peace for forty years.

LXXA: Thus, may all your enemies be destroyed, Lord. And the ones who love him [will be] as the rising of the sun in its dominance. And the land was at rest for forty years.

LXXB: Thus, may all your enemies be destroyed, Lord. And those who love him as the departure of the sun in its power. And the land was at rest for forty years.