

# HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS, EDITORIAL THEORY, AND BIBLICAL HEBREW. THE CURRENT STATE OF THE DEBATE<sup>1</sup>

Jacobus A. Naudé and Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé

Department of Hebrew  
University of the Free State  
E-mail: [naudej@ufs.ac.za](mailto:naudej@ufs.ac.za)

(Received 19/10/2016; accepted 24/10/2016)

---

## ABSTRACT

The question of diachronic change in Biblical Hebrew has been extensively examined in recent years. This article has two parts. First, it reviews the current state of the debate in light of a special session devoted to the topic at the Society of Biblical Hebrew and National Association of Professors of Hebrew in 2015. Special attention is given to the diachrony of Biblical Hebrew in light of ancient Indo-European languages, statistical methods for historical linguistics and editorial theory. Second, it responds to a recent article of Rezetko (2016) concerning syntactic evidence for diachronic change in Qumran Hebrew (Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2016a) by providing additional evidence from the cross-linguistic negative cycle and the negation of participles in Hebrew.

## INTRODUCTION

On 23 November 2015 a joint session of the Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew Section of the Society of Biblical Literature and the National Association of Professors of Hebrew took place in Atlanta during the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature on the topic “Editing the Hebrew Bible and historical linguistics”. This topic was addressed in the recent volume by Rezetko and Young (2014). Invited and

---

<sup>1</sup> We are grateful to the participants of the 2015 Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew section on “Editing the Hebrew Bible and Historical Linguistics” at the Society of Biblical Literature for the lively debate concerning the issues examined in this article. We thank Dean Forbes for stimulating conversations concerning historical linguistic methods involving statistics and computerised databases. We are grateful for the congenial disposition of the response of Rezetko (2016) and we hope that this response will contribute to keeping the discussion and progress going. This work is based on research supported in part by the National Research Foundation of South Africa (Jacobus A. Naudé UID 85902 and Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé UID 95926). The grant holders acknowledge that opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in any publication generated by the NRF supported research are those of the authors, and that the NRF accepts no liability whatsoever in this regard.

open papers discussed how the growth and change of biblical texts can challenge and contribute to the historical linguistics of Biblical Hebrew. Six articles in this dedicated section of *Journal for Semitics* are reworked papers which formed part of this session (Klein, Forbes, Naaijer and Roorda, Young, Hornkohl and Samet). Two papers (Jacobs and Dean) followed from the open call for papers after the session. This article is an exposition of the current state of the debate containing also a response to Rezetko's (2016) critical remarks on the article by Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a).

Rezetko and Young (2014) forms part of the linguistic chronology debate which already started in the 1990s (see Rezetko and Young 2014:1–5 for a contextualisation of the debate). It is a response to Miller-Naudé and Zevit (2012) which contains published papers responding to Young et al. (2008), some of which were read at sessions of the National Association of Professors of Hebrew during the annual meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature in New Orleans (2009) and in Atlanta (2010) (Rezetko and Young 2014:xiii, 2).

Contra the view of Kaufman (2014) (see also Gzella 2014) on Miller-Naudé and Zevit (2012) that the key point of the debate remains essentially without resolution and that it covers the same ground and repeats the same arguments that were presented elsewhere, the aim of this article is to demonstrate that there is advancement in our understanding of the diachrony of Biblical Hebrew and that the debate has indeed moved forward – not only by the response of Rezetko and Young (2014), but also by the 2015 session of the Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew Section. Specifically, these advancements concern the nature of language change in terms of periodisation, appropriate methodology in terms of qualitative and quantitative methods, the interpretation of data, and the role of scribal practice and text transmission. There is progress in the debate in that misunderstandings have been clarified and claims have become more nuanced.

This article is organised as follows. In the first section the current state of affairs is spelled out in the light of the contribution of each article. The second section is a response to Rezetko's (2016) response to Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a), with an

expanded discussion of the negation of the participle in order to outline the trajectory of change in Biblical Hebrew, Qumran Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew.

## **CURRENT STATE OF THE STUDY OF THE DIACHRONY OF BIBLICAL HEBREW**

### **Diachrony of Biblical Hebrew in the light of the study of Old Indo-European languages**

In the light of parallel considerations among Old Indo-European languages, Jared Klein (see Klein, this section) considers the kind of language change possible in Biblical Hebrew and how to typify the diachronic development of Biblical Hebrew. In this regard his main distinction is between microdiachronic linguistics and macrodiachronic linguistics, where the former deals with language change in the interstitial time span of generation to generation, while the latter deals with time intervals measurable not in generations, but in centuries. The former yields the basic material for change reflected in competing variants; the latter yields linguistic saltations in which the victorious variants are on display, but not the internecine competitions which produced them.

Klein demonstrates that changes in Biblical Hebrew are instances of microdiachrony. His basic assumption is that all languages have diachronic (change over time), diatopic (spoken in different places), and diaphasic (articulated in different settings) dimensions leading to variation in style or register. A further assumption of Klein is that the spoken form of the language that has been handed down in its literary form as the Hebrew Bible changed over the period of eight centuries when the corpus was composed, but its representation in the Hebrew Bible is not a thesaurus of the spoken language but rather a text which gives the impression of being a single language. As an example, he mentions that the reading of Esther or Lamentations does not represent an experience of reading a different language, or of processing a different linguistic system, as compared to perusing Genesis, Numbers, or Deuteronomy, except for an awareness of stylistic differences, relating in large part to genre, subject matter, authorship, etc. Klein's claim is that as a literary language,

Biblical Hebrew has not been completely static over the period of its use, but change could have been relatively minor. He uses as a parallel example Classical Armenian of the fifth century C.E. which served as a literary language until the seventeenth century and in which the only major linguistic change was the monophthongisation of the diphthong *au* to *o*, requiring an additional letter to represent this new vowel. Other changes were orthographic only. In this regard, he also refers to Standard Babylonian, which lasted for at least 1300 years.

As an example of macrodiachrony Klein uses the many linguistic forms found in the tenth Maṇḍala (which stands in close proximity to the second oldest text in India, the Atharvaveda, and is a parallel corpus to the Rigveda) – they do not appear elsewhere in the Rigveda, while they do appear frequently in the Atharvaveda and later. The same pertains to the Avesta, the sacred text of Zoroastrianism, where significant phonological differences differentiate the two strands of Old and Young Avestan, which are half a millennium apart. According to Klein, it might be a priori difficult to ferret out diachronic strands in Biblical Hebrew, since macrodiachronic change involves linguistic processes. He concludes that what Rezetko and Young (2014) illustrated in great detail (the kinds of variation, both lexical and grammatical, that one finds in our Biblical Hebrew texts) represents microdiachronic variation, not macrodiachronic change. Klein further concludes that the cases studied by Rezetko and Young (2014) which show no decisive pattern in Biblical Hebrew must reflect the beginnings of diachronic change, which he bases on the well-known doctrine of synchronic variation as a prerequisite to diachronic change. His view is that it is quite possible that the time period between the latest books of the Biblical Hebrew corpus and the Dead Sea Scrolls – which play an important role in Rezetko and Young (2014) – is only 100 to 150 years, and simply not sufficiently long to provide a clear picture of the competition among variants. If the Mishnah is dated to about 200 C.E., the period of nearly a half-millennium between the two corpora would have been sufficient to make clear what the winners and losers in this competition were, or at least to show us a more advanced stage of the competition.

According to Klein, a history as long as that of Hebrew requires macrodiachronic techniques to interpret real linguistic processes. Such processes have the nature of unidirectional vectors, which point outward from a starting point to an end point. What is more, they represent internal linguistic change completely independent of the dating of texts. It is, on the contrary, the dating of texts that emerges or at least may emerge from these changes. And it is precisely these kinds of changes that historical linguists should be looking for in the continuum that is Biblical Hebrew.

Klein introduces the notion of trajectory to typify linguistic change between successive stages of a language. The “late form” was in the early stages of competition with its variants within the Biblical Hebrew corpus and by the time of Mishnaic Hebrew had either clearly won out over its competitors or was in a much more advanced stage of acceptance than in the earlier period. Klein discusses several such processes, and though they collectively converge in pointing to a late date for Qoheleth, they are insufficient to establish a linguistically defined entity “Late Biblical Hebrew”. However, Klein feels comfortable in saying that the Hebrew of a book such as Qoheleth is chronologically late within the literary language.

### **Statistical methods for the study of diachrony of Biblical Hebrew**

In his essay, Dean Forbes (see Forbes, this section) shows that the results of the linguistic dating of Biblical Hebrew have exhibited limited generalisability in part because of inattention to the disruptive effects of textual noise – transmission noise (due to inadvertent or intentional alteration of texts during transmission), feature noise (due to inconsistent mark-up of text features), class noise (due to misclassification of text blocks), and unmodelled-parameter noise (due to omission of parameters from the analysis and to the problem of the overfitting of textual features to restricted texts). (Overfitting occurs when one adds more and more features the better to characterise a limited dataset.)

The criteria of distribution, linguistic opposition and extra-biblical sources determine the admissibility of evidence which must be submitted to the test of accumulation. Forbes proposes several ways of improving accumulation, namely, to

convert tallies to ratios or proportions to quantify “concentration”, to tally all instances of each feature, and to make features as reliable as possible in preparation for classification. This is sometimes in agreement with the work of Rezetko and Young (2014) and sometimes at odds. Aaron Hornkohl (see Hornkohl, this section) also expresses the need of a nuanced and finely-tuned method for quantifying accumulation.

Forbes classifies, characterises, and suggests ways of taking account of textual parameters (writer-specific [writer demographics, social dialect, and regional dialect], text-specific [composition date, text type, and genre] and transmissional [scribal influence, text cultural status, and crystallisation date]) that can affect texts, and in this he is in agreement with Rezetko and Young (2014). Forbes warns against assuming a functional form for S-curves (in agreement with Rezetko and Young (2014)) and shows how non-monopolisation, non-monotonicity, and fluctuation seriously compromise the usefulness of simple S-curves. He uses confidence interval theory to show how the fluctuations associated with small samples cause intuitive S-curves to be misleading. He shows how a small adjustment in the composition of a corpus can alter the ordering of its so-called “EBH-LBH” feature values across sub-corpora. In a pilot study, he has shown how simple seriation can be used to order the somewhat noisy Middle-English sub-corpora in time, based on a set of features. Forbes is of the opinion that language-based diachrony studies definitely should continue to be actively pursued, incorporating the insights resulting from the diachrony debate and exploiting a statistical technique known as boosting, which is a procedure that combines the outputs of many “weak” classifiers (i.e., one whose error rate is only slightly better than random guessing) to produce a powerful “committee”. Forbes contends that the relative dating of Biblical Hebrew texts is not necessarily out of reach (a claim that is fundamentally at odds with Rezetko and Young (2014:249)).

Jarod Jacobs (see Jacobs, this section) discusses three inferential statistical tools which serve to evaluate large datasets and which have proven pivotal in linguistic research, namely the Gaussian Curve, significance tests, and hierarchical clustering. By overlaying a Gaussian Curve (also known as a bell-shaped curve) onto a plot of

data the standard deviation for the dataset can be determined. Ninety-five percent of data that follow a Gaussian Curve fall within two standard deviations of the mean and should be considered statistically normal and any data point that falls outside of the ninety-five percent is considered statistically abnormal. At their most basic level, significance tests are used to test the validity of a null hypothesis. Significance tests report a percentage, the P-value. If the P-value falls below the significance level, which is set by consensus, the null hypothesis is marked as false. The significance level is arbitrarily set at five percent in many fields of study, including corpus linguistics. Hierarchical clustering is a cluster analysis method that begins with each individual in its own cluster and then combines individuals into ever bigger clusters, until finally all individual members are part of one group. This process is oftentimes visually presented with a dendrogram, which is a tree-like figure that illustrates the successive grouping steps taken in hierarchical clustering. Utilising these three statistical tools Jacobs develops an analysis of the *he-locale*, as it is used in the “biblical” Dead Sea Scrolls, Masoretic Text, and Samaritan Pentateuch and thereby sheds light on Hornkohl (2014) and Rezetko and Young (2014). The application of hierarchical clustering showed that the grouping of “EBH” and “LBH” books identified by Hornkohl (2014) for the analysis of all of the occurrences of *he-locale*, was a relevant step, but that the same grouping was not appropriate for the nonstandard use of the *he-locale*. A thorough analysis using a significance test would help to validate the statistical relevance of Rezetko and Young (2014). Jacobs demonstrates that the application of robust statistical tools can help to build upon, correct, and refine past research while opening new avenues of exploration.

Martijn Naaijer and Dirk Roorda (see Naaijer and Roorda, this section) demonstrate that although it is difficult to draw strong conclusions based on a relatively small amount of data from an ancient corpus with all its limitations, it is clear that by the use of digital versions in which one can search for morphological and syntactic features, it is possible to move forward in the study of the history of Biblical Hebrew. Naaijer and Roorda discuss the object clause from the perspective of diachronic change in Biblical Hebrew. In this regard they study three classes of

phenomena which have been used to attest a transition from Early to Late Biblical Hebrew, and found the evidence lacking in all three cases. An alternative interpretation which they did not consider is that in terms of a theory of language change and diffusion (Naudé 2000a, 2000b), these cases are instances of language changes that were not diffused.

### **Editorial theory**

In line with Rezetko and Young (2014), Ian Young (see Young, this section) describes the composition of biblical literature as a long, drawn-out scribal process of rewriting, to which many individuals contributed. He refers to this as the Text-Critical paradigm, which he contrasts with the MT-Only paradigm, which presupposes the composition of biblical books or identifiable parts of them by single authors at specific dates. According to Young, the only choice open to language scholars is to take seriously the Text-Critical paradigm for their research, which means that all biblical books are mixtures from various chronological periods. All biblical manuscripts had the opportunity of picking up a selection of Persian words, but only some of them have a significant number of Persian words. In the new framework chronology may be involved as one of the factors to explain this distribution, but it cannot be the only answer, and it cannot be an easy answer, arrived at without detailed argumentation (see also Dean, this section). According to Young the choice that is offered by Rezetko and Young (2014) has never been chronology or no chronology, but they have always stressed the extreme difficulties in attempting to make valid chronological statements about ancient Hebrew that are caused by the nature of the sources and the evidence they provide. The MT does not preserve the linguistic details used by the “original authors” any more than do other non-MT biblical texts. It is quite possible that the linguistic profiles of various MT books are simply odd. Biblical manuscripts reflect major linguistic developments away from the Hebrew of the monarchic era. According to Young it is possible that for some reason an unusual linguistic feature got stuck in the tradition, and was retained, since it had become significant. It would be interesting to look for any of these, although without sufficient



dated and localised evidence to provide anchors, it would be difficult at present to argue that a linguistic form was, for example, actually early, and not just, say, late and peculiar.

Aaron Hornkohl (see Hornkohl, this section) shows that although the accepted ancient Hebrew diachronic paradigm and the standard linguistic approach for the periodisation of biblical texts are today heavily criticised, much of this textual argument is abstract, since the effect of secondary intervention on the stability of diachronically significant features has been studied in detail in the case of only a few texts and the investigations reach conflicting conclusions. Hornkohl compares Pentateuchal material from the MT and Qumran, concluding that preservation of diachronically meaningful detail is still very much the norm and differences between editions of the Torah often indicate the linguistic conservatism of one edition, here the MT, as opposed to linguistic development of the other, here the Qumran material. The extent to which this holds or does not hold for other biblical material represented in both traditions is clear only in the case of a few books and manuscripts. The rest await examination.

Nili Samet (see Samet, this section) examines the validity of the MT as a basis for linguistic discussion from the perspective of Masoretic vocalisation. Having its roots in a centuries-long oral system, vocalisation is at the highest risk for “oblivious changes”, thus being the weakest link of the Masoretic tradition. As such, vocalisation could be considered an “edge-case” of the greater problem of the authenticity of the entire system. If vocalisation turns out to reflect original traditions, then the system’s more stable components, as manifested in the consonantal text, are even more likely to testify to the language of the biblical text in the period when it was authored and edited. Samet shows, in three different cases, that the Masoretes preserved the difference between CBH and LBH pronunciation of certain forms, although they were probably unaware of the historical nature of these different pronunciations and of their diachronic dimension. These differences cannot be deduced from the consonantal text; they are revealed only through vocalisation and the conclusion therefore is that a strong and stable oral Masoretic tradition accompanied the written one. Both were

transmitted for many centuries, and they were, in many cases, precise to the extent that they could reflect dialectological differences within Biblical Hebrew. Next to the majority of forms, whose vocalisation usually reflect original traditions, scholars have also identified cases where the vocalised text seems to enforce late readings on early consonantal forms. According to Samet this latter phenomenon in no way overshadows the overall accuracy of the vocalisation found in the MT, despite the fact that the exact statistical relation between these two opposite tendencies is yet to be studied.

Richard Dean (see Dean, this section) demonstrates that many features which have historically been identified as Aramaisms were not stable during the transmission of the Bible, as the presence or absence of Aramaic elements varies between the Masoretic Text and the biblical Dead Sea Scrolls. It is thus argued that the presence of Aramaisms is not a reliable criterion for linguistic dating, as Aramaisms could often reflect Aramaic influence during a stage of the text's transmission, rather than the time of its composition. It is only with extreme caution and careful investigation of alternative explanations that one should consider using "Aramaisms" as linguistic evidence, and even then it should by no means be the only evidence taken into account. The days of isolated Aramaic features constituting proof of a late date of composition are over.

The next section is a response to Rezetko's (2016) critical remarks on the article by Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a).

## **RESPONSE TO REZETKO (2016)**

### **Background**

The article by Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a) is based on a paper read at a Qumran conference hosted by the Department of Old Testament Studies in the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Theology on 28 and 29 May 2015. In this article Naudé and Miller-Naudé examine how Qumran Hebrew can contribute to the knowledge of historical Hebrew linguistics. The premise of the paper is that Qumran Hebrew reflects

a distinct stage in the development of Hebrew which sets it apart from Biblical Hebrew. It is further assumed that these unique features are able to assist in understanding of the nature of the development of Biblical Hebrew in a more precise way. Evidence from the syntax of participial negation at Qumran as opposed to Biblical Hebrew supports this claim.

The main point of the response by Rezetko (2016:1) is that although Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a) offer some interesting and valuable data and analysis, several of their comments on Young (2003a), Young et al. (2008), and Rezetko & Young (2014) need clarification, and the data presented by them do not (yet) establish or support Qumran Hebrew as a distinct stage in the development of Hebrew (that is, clarifications are needed about language development and periodisation). The response to Rezetko (2016) offered here is preliminary and partial, given the short timeframe available to provide a response.

Concerning the first issue, Rezetko (2016:2) emphasises the references to Young (2003a), Young et al. (2008), and Rezetko & Young (2014) in both the introduction and conclusion and their summaries over two pages prior to the discussion of data: “Introduction: ‘The premise of this paper is that Qumran Hebrew reflects a stage in the development of Hebrew which has unique features (contra Rezetko & Young 2014; Young, Rezetko & Ehrensverd 2008). It is further assumed that these unique features are able to assist us to understand the nature of the development of Biblical Hebrew in a more precise way’. Main body: “Challenges to the chronological model”: discussions of Young (2003a), Young et al. (2008), Rezetko & Young (2014). Conclusion: “As we conclude, we examine briefly this claim [by Gregor Geiger], because if true, it would provide support to Rezetko and Young’s claims (2014) that the differing constructions in Hebrew relate only to language variation and style rather than to syntactically different functions or to diachronic development” (Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2016a:8).

Concerning the second issue, Rezetko (2016:2) detects four main points in the article. First, Qumran Hebrew (QH) has unique linguistic constructions. Second, QH’s unique linguistic constructions relate to syntactically different functions or to

diachronic development rather than to only language variation and style. Third, QH reflects a distinct stage in the development of Hebrew between Biblical Hebrew (BH) and Mishnaic Hebrew (MH). Fourth, QH's unique linguistic constructions can help to understand the development of BH.

Rezetko's (2016:2) evaluation that J. Naudé's disagreement is not only with Young et al. (2008) is fair: "He has written several pieces (Naudé 2010, 2012a, 2012b) in recent years that seek to evaluate the ongoing discussion and establish a mediating ground between 'Hurvitz et al.' and 'Young et al.' In his estimation, the assumptions, descriptions, and explanations of the language phenomena on *both sides* are psychologically unreal or unfeasible."

### **Clarifications on the reading of Young (2003a), Young et al. (2008), and Rezetko & Young (2014)**

The first clarification Rezetko (2016:3) offers concerns Young (2003a), about which Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a:3) say: "In a collection of essays edited by Young (2003a), the chronological model was challenged by the claim that all biblical literature has its origin in the Persian era or later. Davies (2003) argues that Persian-period scribes wrote several varieties of Hebrew, and therefore it is conceivable that classical Hebrew was one of these." Rezetko (2016:3) says:

The statement about 'the claim that all biblical literature has its origin in the Persian era or later' does not apply to most of the authors and essays in the volume, *including J. Naudé's essay in the latter part of the book, in the section 'Challenges to the Chronological Model.'* The claim certainly does not apply to us either, in any of our publications. Rather, in short, we have argued, first, that the production of biblical writings was complex and lengthy, occurring from the preexilic to the postexilic period and, second, that Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH) continued to be used for writing and editing alongside Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH) in the postexilic period. The Naudés seem to recognise our perspective on this

issue (4), but given the recurrent misunderstandings of our work, I thought it should be clarified again here (original emphasis).

By reading the full context in Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a:3) it is clear that the claim that all biblical literature has its origin in the Persian era or later is attributed only to Davies (2003) and not to the other authors. Their main paragraph on Young (2003a) is even more explicit than the abovementioned exposition of Rezetko. It refers to the concluding chapter of Young (2003b):

Young (2003b:314–317) provides the following outline based on the work of Talshir (2003:251–275): a) Early Biblical Hebrew continued to be the language of Yehud until the Persian period, especially in those sources without an eastern bias, such as Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi; b) Late Biblical Hebrew is connected with the eastern diaspora; proto-Late Biblical Hebrew features first began to make their presence felt strongly in literary Hebrew associated with the exiles in the eastern diaspora (Ezekiel being the first example); c) in the days of the Second Temple period, political separation saw the development of a separate dialect, Tannaitic (Mishnaic) Hebrew in the lowlands, whilst in Yehud proper, Hebrew remained more conservative. Although neither Qumran Hebrew nor Mishnaic Hebrew is identical to Late Biblical Hebrew, there are important isoglosses which they share with Late Biblical Hebrew in opposition to Early Biblical Hebrew (see also Rezetko 2003).

According to Rezetko (2016:3–4) the second clarification concerns the somewhat mixed messages about the matter of style made by Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a:8). Rezetko (2016) states:

In the conclusion, they say: ‘As we conclude, we examine briefly this claim [by Gregor Geiger], because if true, it would provide support to Rezetko and Young’s claims (2014) that the differing constructions in Hebrew *relate only to language variation and style* rather than to syntactically different functions or to diachronic development’ (8;

emphasis added). Similarly, earlier in their conclusion to the survey of our publications, they say: ‘In the following sections, we examine one aspect of Hebrew syntax within Qumran Hebrew, namely the syntax of the negation of the participle in order to discover to what extent Qumran Hebrew is the same or different from Biblical Hebrew ... and whether linguistic variation *should be attributed solely to style*’ (4; emphasis added). Such statements would be misleading if taken out of context because, as they correctly observe elsewhere: ‘They [Rezetko and Young] *do not attribute all variation to style*, but they keep the explanation on the table (Rezetko & Young 2014:408)’ (8). In fact, we have argued repeatedly in favor of many linguistic changes (“diachronic development”) in BH, but at the same time we have also argued that the (ongoing) changes that are attested are not very helpful for the linguistic dating or periodisation of biblical writings.

In light of this clarification by Rezetko, the difference between the terms “diachronic change” and “stylistic variants” as used in Rezetko (2016:324) and Rezetko and Young (2014:599) is not clear and needs further discussion and explanation. According to a theory of language change and diffusion as described in Naudé (2012:72–75) a linguistic/diachronic change is idiolectic (individual dimension) and if it diffuses (sociological dimension), it follows a diachronic cycle or trajectory (chronological dimension). In contrast, (stylistic/idiolectic) variants which show no diffusion or do not follow a diachronic cycle or trajectory in Biblical Hebrew reflect the beginnings of diachronic change, which is based on the well-known doctrine of synchronic variation as a prerequisite to diachronic change (see also Klein, this section). The diachronic cycles for Hebrew have not yet been studied sufficiently and editorial theory (the so-called new philology) is not yet worked out.

According to Rezetko (2016:5), Young et al. (2008:129–139, 271–276) and Rezetko & Young (2014: 245–403) do regard Qumran Hebrew as a development in *grosso modo* from Biblical Hebrew, but on the basis of several avenues of research, including tests of rates of accumulation (or non-accumulation) of Late Biblical

Hebrew language and variationist analysis of numerous lexical and grammatical features in the Hebrew Bible, Ben Sira, and the Dead Sea Scrolls they have concluded that Qumran Hebrew is not a direct continuation of Late Biblical Hebrew, because very often Qumran Hebrew writings resemble Classical Biblical Hebrew more than Late Biblical Hebrew in their regular selection of “early” versus “late”. Rezetko (2016:5) states further that this conclusion coheres fairly well with some of J. Naudé’s statements elsewhere about language change and diffusion in Biblical Hebrew and also with the data that the Naudés cite in their two articles on ׀ and ׀ as negators of the participle in Biblical Hebrew and Qumran Hebrew. However, in what follows the second issue raised by Rezetko (2016:1), namely that the data presented by Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016) do not (yet) establish or support Qumran Hebrew as a distinct stage in the development of Hebrew, is addressed.

### **Negation of the participle in light of the negative existential cycle**

In this section we wish to further expand several issues relating to diachronic change in the negation of the participle in Hebrew (see Miller-Naude & Naude 2015, and Naude & Miller-Naude 2016a). In doing so, we respond preliminarily to several questions and objections raised by Rezetko (2016) and attempt to illustrate from a few constructions involving the negation of the participle how a carefully chosen linguistic feature that reflects structural, syntactic change can be used to show a trajectory of diachronic change within typological parameters, namely, the chronological dimension of a theory of language change and diffusion as described in Naudé (2012a:73) with the phrase the “diachronic cycle”. We do not argue that such changes can be used to assign dates to texts, especially since linguistic change necessarily involves variation and thus overlapping constructions. What we do argue, however, is that if a feature reflects deep, syntactic structure, it can be used to place related constructions in a typologically related diachronic seriation.

As preliminary to the discussion below, we briefly describe the concept of negative scope (as presented in Snyman 2004; Snyman & Naudé 2003; Naudé and Rendsburg 2013; Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2015; and Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2016a).

There are two kinds of negative scope in Biblical Hebrew. In the first kind of negative scope, the negative is applicable to the entire predication; this is referred to as “sentential negation”:

(1) Jeremiah 23:21

לֹא־שְׁלַחְתִּי אֶת־הַנְּבִיאִים

I did *not* send the prophets.

In the second kind of negative scope, the negative is applicable only to a single constituent; this is referred to as “constituent negation”:

(2) Genesis 45:8

וְעַתָּה לֹא־אַתֶּם שְׁלַחְתֶּם אֹתִי הֲנֵה כִּי הָאֱלֹהִים

And now it was *not you* who sent me here, but rather God.

In verbal predications, negative scope occurs at the beginning of the sentence, immediately preceding the verb. By contrast, constituent negation occurs immediately before the constituent that it negates. The scope of the negative has important ramifications for the semantic interpretation of the sentence. In (1) above, the sentence indicates that God did not send the prophets; whereas in (2), the sentence does not deny that Joseph was sent, but only that it is not his brothers, his addressees, who effected the sending.

In 1991, Croft published a seminal article which presents evidence for a cross-linguistically observed cycle of change involving the negative existential marker. Croft argues for the “dynamicization of synchronic typologies” (1991:1–2) whereby a trajectory (or cycle) of change can be identified. In this way, historical linguistics can be expanded to allow “the use of data from a geographically and genetically wide range of languages for which philological evidence is not available and internal reconstruction may be difficult due to a lack of a sufficient range of data” (1991:24–25).

The negative existential cycle identified by Croft consists of three stable synchronic states linked by three stages of synchronic variation. Synchronically, there are three stable types of negative existentials present cross-linguistically in languages.



Type A languages are those in which the marker of standard verbal negation is also used to negate existential sentences. Type B languages are those in which there are separate negators for verbal negation and for existential negation. Type C languages are those in which the negative existential marker is also used for verbal negation. There are also three synchronic types of languages which exhibit synchronic variation with respect to negative existentials (Veselinova 2016:143–146). Type A ~ B languages are those in which there is a separate negative existential marker, but it is restricted to a specific context; verbal negation is used in other contexts to negate existentials. Type B ~ C languages are those in which there is a separate negative existential marker and a separate verbal marker, but the negative existential marker is also used to negate some verbal sentences. Type C ~ A languages are those in which in addition to being used to existential sentences and verbal sentences, the negative existential marker is also beginning to be used to negate sentences with the positive existential marker as well. Based upon extensive cross-linguistic studies (see Croft 1991; Veselinova 2013 and 2016), the negative existential cycle has been shown to represent cross-linguistic tendencies for historical linguistic change involving the negative marker of existential negation. Languages differ with respect to how the various stages of the cycle are realised, the time involved in each stage, whether the cycle is completed (and subsequently renewed) and the degree of overlap between stages. The cycle should not be viewed as absolute but rather as representing a diachronic pathway or trajectory commonly instantiated by languages.

The evidence for the negative existential cycle in Hebrew cannot be presented in detail here, but a broad outline can be given. In Biblical Hebrew, there is a negative existential marker, אֵין (usually vocalised as a construct form אֵינְךָ), which is used to negate nominal (verbless) sentences. The negative marker אֵל, by contrast, is used as the standard verbal negator. However, the negative existential marker is also used to negate some verbal predications, most prominently participial predications, as illustrated in (3):

(3) Psalm 33:16

אֵין־הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹשֵׁעַ בְּרַב־חַיִּל

The king is not saved by the size of (his) army.

The use of אֵין to negate participial predications is not absolute, however, since לֹא may also be used to negate sentences with participles:

(4) Deuteronomy 29:13

וְלֹא אִתְּכֶם לְבַדְכֶם אֲנֹכִי כָרַת אֶת־הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת וְאֶת־הָאֵלֶּה הַזֹּאת:

And not with you alone I am cutting this covenant and this oath.

In terms of Croft's diachronic typology of the negative existential cycle, the Hebrew Bible overwhelmingly exhibits stage B ~ C: the dedicated negative existential marker is expanding its domain of use from existential sentences to verbal sentences. The fact that the participle has both nominal and verbal characteristics (Andersen & Forbes 2007; 2012:33–35) undoubtedly facilitates the expansion of the negative existential from purely nominal predicates to participial predicates.

The syntactic contexts in which לֹא negates participles has been explored in detail in Miller-Naudé & Naudé (2015). These include the sentences in which the participle is the predicate of the sentence and the negative has scope over a single constituent (as in [2]) and sentences in which לֹא negates a constituent consisting of a participle that is functioning nominally. In only a few cases does לֹא have sentential negation when its predicate is a participle (e.g., Job 12:3; Psalm 78:37; see Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2015:187–189). What is important, then, is that the negation of the participle by אֵין and לֹא is not in completely free variation, but rather their use is usually syntactically motivated.

Stage B ~ C that is observed in Biblical Hebrew can be seen in Epigraphic Hebrew (which can be dated paleographically) – אֵין negates both nominal (verbless) sentences (5a) and participles (5b):

(5a) Silwan 1.1<sup>2</sup>

אֵין [פ]ה כספ

There is no silver here

<sup>2</sup> See also Lachish 4.5.

(5b) Lachish 4.7–8<sup>3</sup>

אֵינִי שֹׁלֵחַ

I am not sending

There is an additional construction in which אֵין functions as a negator of verbal constructions in Biblical Hebrew, namely with infinitives prefixed with the preposition *lamed* to indicate prohibition (e.g., Esther 4:2 contrast אֵל in Amos 6:10) or impossibility (e.g., Qoh 3:14 contrast אֵל in Judg 1:19) (see GKC §114I; Carmignac 1974).

Purported examples of אֵין negating constructions with finite verbs are very rare. One example identified by Clines (1993/I:220) is found in Proverbs 5:17:

(6) Proverbs 5:17

יְהִיוּ לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ וְאֵין לְזָרִים אֶתְּךָ:

They will be (or, let them be) yours alone, and not for strangers with you.

The verse comprises two poetic lines in which the first line provides a positive statement and the second gives a contrasting negative statement. The negative existential can be understood as negating the verbal predication only if the verb in the first line is understood as elided in the second line. Alternatively, the two lines exhibit alternative ways of expressing possession in Biblical Hebrew – the first line uses a finite form of the verb הִיהָ “be” with a prepositional phrase headed by the preposition *lamed* whereas the second line uses the negative existential אֵין with a prepositional phrase headed by *lamed*.

A second purported example identified by Clines (1993/I:220) is Jeremiah 38:5:

(7) Jeremiah 38:5

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ צִדְקִיָּהוּ הִנֵּה־הוּא בְיַדְכֶם כִּי־אֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹכֵל אֶתְכֶם דְּבַר:

King Zedekiah said, “He is in your hand for there does not exist the king prevailing with you in anything!”

<sup>3</sup> See also Arad 40.13-14.

The pragmatics of the sentence are unusual in that “the king” has as its referent King Zedekiah, who is indicating his own inability to withstand the advice of his counsellors.

Stage A, in which the standard verbal negator is also used for existential predicates can be illustrated from Biblical Aramaic in which the existential particle אִתִּי is negated by the standard verbal negative לֹא (e.g., Dan 2:10, 3:29, 4:32). Stage B can then be illustrated by Targumic Aramaic in which the standard verbal negative and the positive existential have become fused into a new negative existential marker לֹאִיתִ. For Hebrew, Stage A is possibly attested in Biblical Hebrew in a single example:

(8) Job 9:33<sup>4</sup>

לֹא יֵשׁ-בֵּינֵינוּ מוֹכֵיחַ

There does not exist between us an arbiter.

This construction of the ordinary verbal negator before the positive existential marker does not seem to be attested in later stages of Hebrew.<sup>5</sup>

In post-Biblical Hebrew, there is further expansion of the use of the negative existential marker for the negation of verbal constructions. Here we mention a few of the new constructions that are attested.

In Qumran Hebrew, it is possible for אֵין to negate an infinitival clause:

(9) 1QM 18.2

וּנְפְלוּ בְנֵי יַפֶּת לֹאִין קוּם

And the sons of Japheth will fall so that it is impossible to rise (lit. so that there is not a rise).

<sup>4</sup> The BHS apparatus suggests reading לֹאִין “if only” before the positive existential marker יֵשׁ (as in Num 22:29 and Job 16:4) rather than the negative marker (see also HALOT s.v. יֵשׁ).

<sup>5</sup> In the Mishnah, there is a single example of לֹא preceding יֵשׁ but the construction is rather that of the interrogative plus the negative marker meaning “is it not the case that there are” (with the pragmatic sense “it is certainly the case that there are”):

וְהֲלֹא יֵשׁ שְׂאִינָן מוֹסְקִין [זִיתִיהוּן] אֲלֵא לְאַחַר רְבִיעָה שְׁנִיָּה  
 “But are there not some [farmers] who pick the olives only after the second rain [falls]?”  
 (*m. Pe’ah* 8.1).

In rabbinic texts, especially halakhic texts, the plural participle may be used with אֵין to express an impersonal and permanent prohibition alongside לֹא with the imperfect singular (Pérez Fernández 1997:139, 174; Segal 1927:158–159; Azar 2013:702, 703, 704):

- (10) Berakot 5.1 (cited in Pérez Fernández 1997:174, Segal 1927:159)

אֵין עומדים להתלל

No one must stand to pray

The use of שׁוּ with the plural participle similarly expresses a general, impersonal, positive statement (Pérez Fernández 1997:134):

- (11) יש אמרים

there are those who say (lit. there exist [those] saying)

In Rabbinic Hebrew, the participle and nominal (verbless) clauses continue to be negated by אֵין but לֹא is used in several identifiable syntactic and semantic contexts. When the negative sentence with the participle immediately follows an affirmative sentence (or negative sentences) and provides a contrast to some aspect of it:

- (12) *Mishnah Shevu'ot* 7.1 (cited in Azar 2013:701 and Segal 1927:162)

נשבעים ולא משלמים

They take an oath but they do not pay

Another context involves two or more negative sentences which are semantically related in the sense of “neither ... nor”:

- (13) *Mishnah Bava Batra* 8.1 (cited in Azar 2013:701 and Segal 1927:162)

לֹא נוחלים ולא מנחים

Neither do they inherit nor do they bequeath

These macro-syntactic constructions with לֹא in place of אֵין can be seen as an extension of the use of לֹא for constituent negation in which the focus is on a particular constituent of the sentence. The use of לֹא to express constituent negation continues prominently in Rabbinic Hebrew and may even occur in a sentence in which לֹא also provides sentential negation:

(14) *Mishnah Shabbat* 1.2 (cited in Azar 2013:702)

לא יכנס לא למרחץ ולא לבורסקי ולא לאכל שלא לדין

He may not enter – not a bath-house and not a tannery and not to eat and not for judgment.

We have seen extensive evidence for stages B ~ C and C of the negative cycle, including further expansion of the use of the negative existential marker to negate various kinds of verbal constructions in post-biblical Hebrew. Is there any evidence for stage C ~ A in which the negative existential is used not only for verbal predications, but also to negate the affirmative existential? There is only one example of which we are aware in Biblical Hebrew which may point to this stage:

(15) Psalm 135:17

אָזְנֵי־לֵהֶם וְלֹא יִאָזְנֶנּוּ אֶף אֵין־יִשְׁרֹיחַ בְּפִיהֶם:

They have ears, but they cannot hear; nor is there breath in their mouth (lit. there does not exist the existence of breath in their mouth).

In this verse, a nominal (verbless) sentence is formed both with the positive existential  $\text{וְ}$  and preceded with the negative existential  $\text{אֵין}$ .<sup>6</sup> Although it is possible to understand the sentence as marginally grammatical (or ungrammatical) in its use of the negative existential to negate a sentence formed with the positive existential, the poetic license employed by the psalmist points to the last stage of the negative cycle. It is also possible that the sentence reflects a change in the language which was not successfully diffused through the language (see Naudé 2012).

The negative existential cycle, which we have outlined in broad strokes for Hebrew in this section, provides a means to use stages of synchronic variation within a diachronic trajectory. Such a diachronic trajectory acknowledges synchronic variation, transitional stages and overlapping constructions, all of which reflect the ways in which languages change over time.

<sup>6</sup> In 1 Samuel 21:9, a positive existential sentence is preceded by  $\text{אֵין}$ , whose identification is uncertain. It might be an alternate spelling of the negative existential marker (the reading of some manuscripts) or it might be a mistaken pointing for the interrogative marker  $\text{אֵין}$  (“where?”).

## Negation of the participle and left dislocation

In this section we revisit the question of diachronic change exhibited in the negation of the participle with special references to constructions involving left dislocation as discussed preliminarily in Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016a). Here we wish to provide additional evidence that seemingly small changes involving left dislocation constructions reflect change in syntactic structures. The evidence for syntactic change in left dislocation thus provides *qualitative* evidence of language change, thus mitigating the need for *quantitative* evidence (*pace* Rezetko 2016). Furthermore, some constructions which seem to be variants in terms of the negative cycle can be shown to be diachronically rather than synchronically related on the basis of syntax.

There are three types of constructions in which the participle is negated with אֵין in Biblical Hebrew (see Miller-Naudé & Naudé 2015 for additional details). In the first type, the subject is a pronominal suffix on the negative existential marker and the participle with its objects and adjuncts follow:

(16) 1 Samuel 19:11

אם-אֵינְךָ מְמַלֵּט אֶת-נַפְשְׁךָ הַלַּיְלָה מִחַר אֶתָּה מוֹמֵת:

If you do not rescue your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed.

The construction may be modified in two ways. If a constituent is moved out of its normal position within the sentence and placed at the beginning of the sentence, the construction is referred to as topicalisation:

(17) Esther 3:8

וְאֶת־דְּתֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵינָם עֹשִׂים

The commandments of the king they are not doing [ ].

The object constituent has been moved out of its normal position in the sentence and occurs at the beginning of the sentence before the negative existential marker. Note that there is no object constituent remaining in the core sentence as indicated by the empty square brackets; this is one of the crucial syntactic features of topicalisation.

Another way in which the construction can be modified is through left dislocation. In this construction, a constituent appears outside the initial boundary of the sentence and is resumed within the sentence:

(18) Jeremiah 38:4

כִּי הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה אֵינָנוּ דֹרֵשׁ לְשָׁלוֹם לְעַם הַזֶּה כִּי אִם-לְרָעָה:

Because this man (he) is not seeking the welfare of this people but rather their harm.

The subject constituent is left dislocated and a resumptive subject pronoun is suffixed to the negative existential. (For the syntactic and semantic features of topicalisation and left dislocation in Biblical Hebrew, see Naudé 1990 and Holmstedt 2014). For the remainder of this discussion we set aside topicalisation because the left dislocated structures are most important in terms of showing trajectories of change.

The same constructions occur in Qumran Hebrew:

(19) 4Q396 f1–2i:1

אִי־נָם שׁוֹחֲטִים בַּמִּקְדָּשׁ

They do [no]t slaughter in the temple.

(20) 4Q394 f8iv:5 – left dislocation

וְאִף הַמוֹצְקוֹת אֵינָנָם מִבְּדִילוֹת בֵּין הַטְּמֵא [ל]טְהוֹר.

And indeed the streams of liquid (they) do not divide between the impure and the pure.

These constructions are also found in Mishnaic Hebrew:

(21) *Yebam.* 11:5

וְאֵינָן אוֹכְלִים בַּתְּרוּמָה

And they do not eat the heave offering.

(22) *Pe'ah* 6:8 – left dislocation

הָעֵמֶר אֵינּוּ מְצִיל לֹא אֶת הָעֵמֶר וְלֹא אֶת הַקָּמָה.

A [single] sheaf (it) does not rescue either [another] sheaf nor a standing sheaf...



Additional examples from Qumran Hebrew exhibit innovations in these constructions. Instead of a pronominal suffix on the negative existential, an independent personal pronoun can be used:

(23) 4Q372 f1:17–18

ואין אתה צריך לכל גוי ועם לכל עזכה

You have no need of any people or nation for any help

This innovation has diffused and is also found in Mishnaic Hebrew:

(24) *Ned.* 8:7

אם אין אתה בא ונוטל לבניך בור אחד של חיטין ושתי חביות של יין,

If you do not come and collect for your children one kor of wheat and two jugs of wine...

The left dislocated forms of this construction also appear in Qumran Hebrew in another variation—namely, with independent subject pronouns rather than pronominal suffixes on the negative existential:

(25) 11Q 19 35:6 (= 11QT)

והוא אין הוא לבוש בג[די הקודש

And he not he is dressed with the sacred vestments.

The left dislocated construction in Mishnaic Hebrew exhibits an independent personal pronoun dislocated but a pronominal suffix on the negative existential:

(26) *Ta'an.* 4:2

והוא אינו עומד על גביו

And he not he is standing by its side.

What is important is that the constructions found in Biblical Hebrew all continue in Qumran Hebrew and in Mishnaic Hebrew. However, new constructions are appearing alongside the ones in Biblical Hebrew and those changes are diffusing and persisting into Mishnaic Hebrew. (In future research we will explore how these variants reflect structural differences.) These new constructions with independent subject pronouns

are not attested in the Hebrew Bible. There is, however, one similar example with independent subject pronouns in Biblical Hebrew:

(27) Nehemiah 4:17

וְאִין אֲנִי וְאֶחָי וְנַעֲרֵי וְאֲנָשֵׁי הַמְשָׁמֵר אֲשֶׁר אַחֲרַי אִין־אֲנַחְנוּ פִּשְׁטִים בְּגִדֵינוּ  
אִישׁ שָׁלַחוּ הַמַּיִם:

But not I, nor my brothers, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me – (it was) **not we** who took off our clothes at the water [but the others did]

This example is striking because it involves both constituent negation of the subject with the first person plural independent pronoun conjoined to additional noun phrases and left dislocation with the subject resumed in the sentence proper (see Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2015). It is also the only example in the Bible which uses an independent subject pronoun for the dislocated element and the resumed element. In this respect, the example exhibits an early change which was diffused and persisted in Qumran Hebrew and into Rabbinic Hebrew.

In the second construction in Biblical Hebrew, the negative existential marker is following by an explicit noun phrase subject and the participle with its objects and/or adjuncts:

(28) Isaiah 57:1

הַצְדִּיק אָבָד וְאִין אִישׁ שָׁם עַל־לֵב

The righteous person perishes and no one considers (lit. puts it on the heart).

In Qumran Hebrew, this construction is also attested:

(29) 4Q277 f1ii:11

וְאִין יָדָיו [וְ] שֵׁט [וְ] פוֹת בְּמִים

... and his hands are not washed with water

The construction is also found in Mishnaic Hebrew:

(30) *Shabbat* 5:4

אִין חֲמוֹר יוֹצֵא בְּמִרְדַּעַת בְּזִמְן שְׂאִינָה קְשׁוּרָה לוֹ

A donkey does not go out with its saddle cloth when it is not tied to him.

With a dislocated subject constituent, constructions of this type would take the shape of (18), above.

In the third construction, the negative existential negates a participle without any explicit subject:

(31) 1 Samuel 11:3

וְאִם־אֵין מוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְנוּ וְיֵצְאוּ אֵלֵינוּ:

... If no one delivers us, then we will go out to you.

The negative existential marker is syntactically in construct with a null (or, zero) noun phrase subject (for the argumentation, see Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2015 and Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2016a). The subject is not referential, but rather indefinite. The scope of negation is only the subject constituent. This construction then contrasts with the previous constructions in which the scope of negation is the sentence.

The construction is also attested in Qumran Hebrew:

(32) 11Q19 LIX:8 (= 11QT)

וְאִין מוֹשִׁיעַ מִפְּנֵי רַעַתְמָה

...and no one saves (them) because of their wickedness

In Mishnaic Hebrew, a singular participle may occur in this construction, but most often the participle is plural:

(33) *Ta'an.* 1:2

אֵין שׁוֹאֵלִין אֶת הַגְּשָׁמִים אֶלָּא קְמוּדָ לְגֶשְׁמִים

They do not ask for rain except near to (the time of) the rains.

As indicated above in the discussion of (10), the plural participle in this construction acquires an additional semantic and pragmatic nuance not present in Biblical Hebrew, namely, that of a prohibition.

In this section, we have demonstrated that the negation of the participle with the negative existential occurs in a number of different syntactic constructions. Some of

these constructions are stable through time, being found in Biblical Hebrew, in Qumran Hebrew and in Mishnaic Hebrew. Alongside them, new constructions develop. Some of them represent changes which diffuses and persists in Qumran Hebrew and in Mishnaic Hebrew; others are present only in Qumran Hebrew and do not continue. Taken together with the evidence of a negative cycle which dynamicises synchronic states, it is possible to identify features that change and diffuse in the history of the Hebrew language and which may assist to define distinct stages in the development of Hebrew.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD**

The diachrony debate has made advances on several fronts.

### **The kind of language change possible in Biblical Hebrew and how to typify the diachronic development of Biblical Hebrew**

In this regard macrodiachronic techniques to interpret real linguistic processes (which have the nature of unidirectional vectors which point outward from a starting point to an end point) need to be explored in the continuum that is Biblical Hebrew (see Klein, this section). This is in line with a theory of language change and diffusion as described in Naudé (2012:72–75) where a linguistic/diachronic change is idiolectic (individual dimension) and, if it diffuses (sociological dimension), it follows a diachronic cycle or trajectory (chronological dimension) between successive stages of a language. Rezetko and Young (2014) is concerned not with macrodiachronic change, but with microdiachronic variation, which reflects the beginnings of possible (macro)diachronic changes.

### **Statistical methods for the study of the diachrony of Biblical Hebrew**

The application of robust statistical tools can help to build upon, correct, and refine past research while opening new avenues of exploration (see Forbes, this section; Jacobs, this section; Naaijer and Roorda, this section).

**The role of editorial theory (the so-called New Philology) in the study of Biblical Hebrew and of Biblical Hebrew texts (see Young, this section; Hornkohl, this section; Samet, this section; Dean, this section).**

According to Lied (forthcoming), New Philology is a philological perspective within the larger field of editorial theory which provides a model broadly conceived for understanding texts, text production and transmission and for exploring texts in their manuscript contexts (see also Suarez & Woudhuysen 2010, 2013 and Walsh 2010).<sup>7</sup> It is a reaction to the established paradigms of classical and modern philology where the dominant focus was on a reconstructed, hypothetical text which is to be interpreted in light of the historical context in which the text was assumedly produced. By contrast, New Philology considers each individual manuscript as a meaningful, historical artefact and sees the texts found in these manuscripts as potentially interesting in their own right. The aim of New Philology is to study texts as (1) integral parts of historically existing manuscripts, and (2) to interpret the texts in light of the context of the manuscript and its historical usage (Lied forthcoming and Naudé & Miller-Naudé 2016b).

What is often misunderstood is that a theory of language change and diffusion (Naudé 2012a:61–81) is not concerned with the MT *per se* (*pace* Rezetko and Young 2014:106). Rather it is interested in discerning the abstract structures of language as reflected in manuscripts. In addition, the shift in textual theory reflected in editorial theory (New Philology) means that each manuscript in its context is a valid object of inquiry rather than simply a witness to be used in the reconstruction of a putative “original” text. These two factors, which appear to be in contradiction, in fact point to a way forward. On the one hand, we must reconstruct how the Hebrew language as an abstract system of signs developed by positing abstract trajectories of change based on cross-linguistic parameters which will allow us to ferret out the abstract structures of

---

<sup>7</sup> Editorial theory and its relationship to philology and linguistics was explored in Miller-Naudé and Naudé (2016). Naudé & Miller-Naudé (2016b) uses editorial theory in an innovative way to put the oral-scribal-editing process of the Bible into the frame of media history; this is part of a project in process on editorial theory. See also Naudé (2012a:74) for the difficulties of historical linguistic analysis of the Hebrew Bible, which was “heavily mediated” in that the manuscripts were “transmitted through multiple editors and copyists”. A further issue is the spoken versus written language (Naudé 2012a:73).

the linguistic features at various stages and seriate them. On the other hand, we must take seriously the varieties of language discerned in the manuscript traditions as reflecting the heterogeneous varieties of the language.<sup>8</sup> By attending to both aspects of language, we will be able to move forward in describing the historical developments in Hebrew from its earliest attestations to the present time.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andersen, F A & Forbes, A D 2007. The participle in Biblical Hebrew and the overlap of grammar and lexicon, in Maleno and Miano 2007:185–212.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2012. *Biblical Hebrew grammar visualized*. Linguistics Studies in Ancient West Semitic 6. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Azar, M 2013. Syntax: Rabbinic Hebrew, in Khan 2013/3:699–707.
- Carmignac, J 1974. L'emploi de la négation ׀א dans la Bible et à Qumran, *Revue de Qumran* 8:407–413.
- Clines, D J A (ed.) 1993. *The dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Vol. 1: א. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Croft, W 1991. The evolution of negation, *Journal of Linguistics* 27:1–27.
- Davies, P 2003. Biblical Hebrew and the history of ancient Judah, in Young 2003:150–163.
- Gesenius, W, Kautzsch, E & Cowley, A E 1910. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. 2nd English edition. Oxford: Clarendon. (GKC)
- Glinert, L 2013. Negation: Modern Hebrew, Khan 2013/2:811–814.
- Gzella, H 2014. Review of Miller-Naudé & Zevit 2012, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 71:810–816.
- Holmstedt, R D 2014. Critical at the margins: edge constituents in Biblical Hebrew. *Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt* 17:109–156.
- Hornkohl, A D 2014. *Ancient Hebrew periodization and the language of the book of Jeremiah: the case for a sixth century date of composition*. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics. Leiden: Brill.
- Khan, G (ed.) 2013. *Encyclopedia of Hebrew language and linguistics*. 4 volumes. Leiden: Brill.
- Kaufman, S A 2014. Review of Miller-Naudé & Zevit 2012, *Review of Biblical Literature* 07/2014.
- Köhler, L & Baumgartner, W 1994–1999. *The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament*. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill. (HALOT)
- Lied, L I (forthcoming). Between 'text witness' and 'text on the page': trajectories in the history of editing the Epistle of Baruch, in Lied and Lundhaug (forthcoming).
- Lied, L I and Lundhaug, H (eds) forthcoming. *Snapshots of evolving traditions: Jewish and Christian manuscript culture, textual fluidity, and New Philology*. Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur. Berlin: De Gruyter.

<sup>8</sup> In this regard, electronic text analysis utilising the most recent methodological advances in corpus linguistics and statistics combined with a theory of language change and diffusion holds great promise for future research (see Naudé 2008).

- Maleno, S and Miano, D (eds) 2007. *Milk and honey: essays on ancient Israel and Bible in appreciation of the Judaica Studies Program at the University of California, San Diego*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Miller-Naudé, C L & Naudé, J A 2015. Negation and the participle in Biblical Hebrew. *Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt* 19:165–199.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016. The disciplinarity of linguistics and philology for the study of Biblical Hebrew. Conference presentation Southern African Society for Near Eastern Studies, 7 September 2016.
- Miller-Naudé, C L & Zevit, Z (eds) 2012. *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Naudé, J A 1990. A syntactic analysis of dislocations in Biblical Hebrew, *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 16:115–130.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000a. Diachronic syntax and language change: the case of Qumran Hebrew, *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 18:1–14.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000b. Qumran Hebrew syntax in the perspective of a theory of language change and diffusion, *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 26/1:105–132.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008. The role of pseudo-translations in early Afrikaans travel writing, *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 26:97–106.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2010. Linguistic dating of Biblical Hebrew texts: the chronology and typology debate, *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 36:1–22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012a. Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew and a theory of language change and diffusion, in Miller-Naudé and Zevit 2012:61–82.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2012b. The complexity of language change: the case of Ancient Hebrew. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 30:395–411.
- Naudé, J A & Rendsburg, G A 2013. Negation: Pre-Modern Hebrew', in G. Khan, (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, 2:801–811. Leiden: Brill.
- Naudé, J A & Miller-Naudé, C L 2016a. The contribution of Qumran to historical Hebrew linguistics: evidence from the syntax of participial negation, *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, June 2016. Available: <http://www.hts.org.za/index.php/HTS/article/view/3150>. [Accessed 2016/09/30.]
- Naudé, J A & Miller-Naudé, C L 2016b. The translation of *biblion* and *biblos* in the light of oral and scribal practice, *In die Skriflig / In Luce Verbi* 50/3a:2060. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ids.v50i3.2060>. [Accessed 2016/09/30.]
- Pérez Fernández, M 1997. *An introductory grammar of Rabbinic Hebrew*. Trans. John Elwolde. Leiden: Brill.
- Rezetko, R 2016. Thoughts on language periodization with a response to Jacobus A. Naudé and Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé, “The Contribution of Qumran to Historical Hebrew Linguistics: Evidence from the Syntax of Participial Negation,” *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, 2016. Available: <http://independent.academia.edu/RobertRezetko>. [Accessed 2016/09/15.]
- Rezetko, R & Young, I 2014. *Historical linguistics and Biblical Hebrew: steps towards an integrated approach*. Atlanta: SBL.
- Segal, M H 1927. *A grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Snyman, F P J 2004. *The scope of negative lō' in Biblical Hebrew*. Acta Academica Supplementum 3. Bloemfontein: UFS-SASOL Library.
- Snyman, F P J & Naudé, J A 2003. Sentence and constituent negation in Biblical Hebrew, *Journal for Semitics* 12/2:237–267.

- Suarez, M & Woudhuysen, H R 2010. *The Oxford companion to the book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2013. *The book: a global history*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Van Gelderen, E (ed.) 2016. *Cyclical change continued*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Veselinova, L 2013. Negative existentials: A cross-linguistic study, *Rivista di Linguistica* 25/1:107–145.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2016. The negative existential cycle viewed through the lens of comparative data, in van Gelderen 2016:139–187.
- Walsh, M 2010. Theories of text, editorial theory and textual criticism, in Suarez and Woudhuysen 2010:156–163.
- Young, I 2003a. *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in chronology and typology*. JSOT Supplement 369. London: T & T Clark.
- Young, I 2003b. Late Biblical Hebrew and Hebrew inscriptions, in Young 2003a:276–311.
- Young, I, Rezetko, R, & Ehrensverd, M 2008 *The linguistic dating of biblical texts*. London: Equinox.