

The Language Environment of First Century Judaea

*Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels –
Volume Two*

Edited by

Randall Buth and R. Steven Notley

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The Language Environment of First Century Judaea

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Introduction: Language Issues Are Important for Gospel Studies

Randall Buth

The articles in this collection demonstrate that a change is taking place in New Testament studies. Throughout the twentieth century, New Testament scholarship primarily worked under the assumption that only two languages, Aramaic and Greek, were in common use in the land of Israel in the first century. Studies on the Gospels have assumed that Aramaic was the only viable language for Jesus' public teaching or for any early Semitic records of the Jesus movement, whether oral or written. Hebrew was considered to be restricted primarily to educated religious teachers and unsuitable for speaking parables to peasants, especially in the Galilee. However, during the twentieth century, specialists working in the field of Mishnaic Hebrew have proven that three languages, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, were in common use.¹ Their studies have moved Hebrew out of a restricted, marginal status within first-century language use. The articles in this volume investigate various areas where increasing linguistic data and changing perspectives impact New Testament studies. In some cases, prevalent assumptions on language use within the field of New Testament studies are challenged and found wanting. Older data have confirmed newer views when read carefully in context. Several articles go beyond the sociolinguistic questions and look at literary and interpretational questions. The fuller language background of the Gospels raises new questions that can affect the evaluation of texts and literary relationships.

Language Studies Impact Historical Understandings

Five articles relate to the general sociolinguistic situation in the land of Israel during the first century. The first article in the collection looks at the history of New Testament studies and explores why, at the end of the 19th century, scholars assumed a two-language paradigm: Guido Baltes, "The Origins of the 'Exclusive Aramaic Model' in the Nineteenth Century: Methodological Fallacies and Subtle Motives." That paradigm became a consensus to the point

¹ Recently, Steven E. Fassberg, "Which Semitic Language Did Jesus and Other Contemporary Jews Speak?" *CBQ* 74–2 (April 2012), 263–280.

that scholars did not feel obligated to defend it. The interesting question is how such a consensus could arise when the available data up until the twentieth century was so little? Guido Baltes finds that a multiplicity of factors were responsible for this state of affairs. This article is followed by his survey of epigraphic evidence, “The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era.” Only trilingual models can adequately account for the multi-register and sometimes surprising data that has accumulated during the twentieth century.

An additional support for the “trilingual perspective” comes through a careful re-investigation of the language names. Primary Greek lexica inform beginning students of the Greek New Testament that Ἑβραϊστί may mean “Jewish Aramaic.” Buth and Pierce, “Hebraisti in Ancient Texts: Does Ἑβραϊστί Ever Mean ‘Aramaic’?,” investigate that claim and demonstrate that the meaning “Jewish Aramaic” for Ἑβραϊστί cannot be justified. Standard resources still appear to reflect the defective situation described in Baltes’ first article so that many lexica and Bible translations will need correction.

Marc Turnage’s “The Linguistic Ethos of the Galilee within the First Century C.E.,” addresses the general sociological and historical issues related to the ethnic background of the Galilee. He challenges a frequently encountered opinion that the Galilee was a region that had recently been converted and Judaized and he provides a more comprehensive perspective in light of the historical and archaeological data.

Our understanding of historical attitudes within particular communities can also be enriched. Serge Ruzer, “Hebrew versus Aramaic as Jesus’ Language: Notes on Early Opinions by Syriac Authors,” shows that early Syriac authors seem not to reflect the attitudes that are associated with the late Byzantine and modern eras—namely, viewing Jesus as an Aramaic- and non-Hebrew speaker. While necessarily tentative, Ruzer’s study helps scholars to view the historical processes involved in the history of Gospel interpretation and in Syriac studies.

Literary Studies Interact with the Language Background

In “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena of Targum and Translation in the Second Temple Period and Post-Second Temple Period,” Daniel Machiela explores translation phenomena in the late Second Temple period. Targumic studies have a wide range of complicated issues with which to deal, nevertheless, Gospel studies have sometimes assumed an established, pre-Christian targumic background. Machiela’s study suggests that targums and Hebrew-to-

Aramaic translation are primarily a post-New Testament phenomenon and in some cases probably originating outside the land of Israel.

The Gospel of Mark has often been characterized as exhibiting Aramaic influence, as is illustrated in recent monographs.² Such claims require an investigation into the identification and differentiation of Aramaic and Hebrew influence within Greek documents of the period. This is addressed in the study by Randall Buth, “Distinguishing Hebrew from Aramaic in Semitized Greek texts, with an Application for the Gospels and Pseudepigrapha.” One result of this study undermines the plausibility that Mark had an Aramaic source. The same study contributes to our understanding of the linguistic profiles of Jewish Greek literature, which includes the Synoptic Gospels, in the Second Temple Period.

The amount of biblical phraseology in Luke has led to a common explanation that Luke has gathered much of his phraseology from the Greek Bible, the “Septuagint.” This explanation, of course, begs the question for another phenomenon, “non-Septuagintal Hebraisms.” Steven Notley’s “Non-Septuagintal Hebraisms in the Third Gospel: An Inconvenient Truth,” investigates Hebraisms that could not have been learned by Luke from the LXX. The existence of Hebraisms in Luke’s Gospel is a challenge to common positions on Lukan composition. If these Hebraisms are not in Mark or Matthew, then Luke would appear to have a Hebraic-Greek source that is not dependent on those two Gospels.

Language Studies Impact the Reading of Gospel Texts

Our general picture of the historical Jesus is directly affected by language. In what language did Jesus teach, and what was the make-up of his audience linguistically? The study by Steven Notley and Jeffrey Garcia, “Hebrew-only Exegesis: A Philological Approach to Jesus’ Use of the Hebrew Bible,” provides evidence that connects Jesus’ teaching directly to the Hebrew Bible. This naturally informs the reading of Gospel pericopae.

Two of the volume’s articles bring new linguistic evidence to the interpretation of Gospel texts. David Bivin’s, “Jesus’ *Petros-petra* Wordplay (Matt 16:18):

2 Maurice Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark’s Gospel*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series, 102, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and *Aramaic Sources to Q: Sources for Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (SNTSMS 122; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Is It Greek, Aramaic, or Hebrew?” finds that *Petros* is attested as a name in Hebrew (based, of course, on a Greek etymology). That detail challenges previous approaches to the issue of Peter’s name and his confession that Jesus is the Messiah, and it leads to another line of understanding for Gospel texts and the Pauline epistles.

A long-standing crux of New Testament interpretation has been the exact wording and significance of the “cry of dereliction” at the crucifixion. Randall Buth’s “The Riddle of Jesus’ Cry from the Cross: The Meaning of *ἡλι ἡλι λαμα σαβαχθάνι* (Matt 27:46) and the Literary Function of *ελωι ελωι λειμα σαβαχθάνι* (Mark 15:34),” sifts through the complicated textual and linguistic evidence. A trilingual approach provides a key understanding of how and why Matthew and Mark differ in their presentation of this cry from the cross.

Language Studies and Synoptic Criticism

The articles in this volume not only underscore the importance that language questions have for New Testament studies, they point the field down new pathways. Synoptic criticism benefits from detailed linguistic appraisals of the Synoptic Gospels. This does not mean, of course, that a Hebraism or Aramaism, by and in itself, is evidence of an older stratum or a more authentic stratum. Far from it. An Aramaic feature like Matthew’s narrative-*τότε* style can be added by Matthew himself in Greek. But “narrative *τότε*” is still a datum for synoptic criticism. Its non-occurrence in Mark and Luke must be addressed. The same can be said for items such as Mark’s *καί* style. The three impersonal *ἐγένετο* styles in Luke versus the one in Acts are also data for synoptic discussion. Features like word order, verb tense, vocabulary choice, Septuagintal profile, colloquial Greek syntax, and literary Greek syntax must be traced in individual Gospel pericopae every bit as much as traditional data like minor agreements, identical wordings, and pericope order are traced and explained.

An Invitation to the Hebrew-Aramaic-Greek Trilingual Perspective

In the many issues touched upon in this volume, it is a trilingual approach to the material that allows the authors to move beyond some of the inconsistencies and misdirections brought about by bilingual Greek-Aramaic assumptions. Up-to-date and accurate language studies are vital for a comprehensive understanding of the New Testament Gospels. One of the distinctives of the collaboration between Jewish and Christian scholars studying the Gospels

together in Israel is the elevation of Hebrew to a language of discourse. That level of language use brings with it a heightened appreciation for the broader trilingual data at play in the first century of our common era. The articles presented in this volume are an invitation to join in that discussion.

We would like to thank those who have assisted us in bringing this volume to completion, including our friends and colleagues at Brill: Loes Schouten, Mattie Kuiper and Gera van Bedaf. However, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge publicly our gratitude to Brian Becker, who indexed the ancient sources in our work with his state-of-the-art source indexing software (ReferenceIndexer.com).

Randall Buth

Jerusalem, 1 February, 2014

Sociolinguistic Issues in a Trilingual Framework



The Origins of the “Exclusive Aramaic Model” in the Nineteenth Century: Methodological Fallacies and Subtle Motives

Guido Baltes

The hypothesis that the Hebrew language had been fully replaced by Aramaic as a spoken language in the time of Jesus has often been accepted among New Testament scholars without further question. However, few today have any detailed knowledge of how and why this hypothesis came into existence in the nineteenth century and on what grounds it was established. Since the question of language use is considered to be of minor importance, students of the New Testament today readily accept the answers to the question provided to them by textbooks and introductions without doubting their factual correctness. In consequence, unlike in the early period of Aramaic research, the widespread acceptance of the “exclusive Aramaic hypothesis” today is increasingly based on second-hand knowledge: while relatively few scholars continue to investigate the linguistic, archeological and historical evidence pertaining to the language question, most others would confine themselves to the reading of scholarly literature, reiterating the “established results” of earlier generations.

This wide acceptance of established theories leads to a strangely asymmetrical situation where any claim of Aramaic prevalence or even exclusivity is accepted by biblical scholars without hesitation, while the claim of continued use of the Hebrew language, let alone a prevalence of Hebrew as a spoken language, is opposed with vigor, to the point that accusations of “linguistic Zionism” have been brought into the discussion.¹ The burden of proof seems to rest fully on the “Hebrew” side of the discussion, while the “Aramaic” side is based firmly on the grounds of “common knowledge.” A fresh look into the historical origins of the “Aramaic hypothesis” might therefore help to develop

1 Cf. Michael L. Brown, “Recovering the ‘Inspired Text’? An Assessment of the Work of the Jerusalem School in Light of ‘Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus,’” *Mishkan* 17–18 (1987): 39–64 (64); Seth Schwartz, “Language, Power, and Identity in Ancient Palestine,” *Past & Present* 148 (1995): 3–47; John Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation in Jewish Palestine in the Late Antiquity,” *JGRChJ* 4 (2007): 55–134 n. 6: “On the Zionist impulse behind many of the challenges to the Aramaic ascendancy view, see the comments in Seth Schwartz, ‘Historiography on the Jews in the “Talmudic Period” (70–640 CE),’ in *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies* (ed. Martin Goodman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 79–114.”

a better understanding of the reasons and causes that led to the establishment of the current status quo and provide a possible way out of an unnecessary stalemate in the question of language use at the time of Jesus.²

1 The Point of Origin: The “Re-discovery” of the Language of Jesus

Modern interest in the Aramaic language did not originate with the study of Jewish sources but was originally sparked by the renewed encounters of Western Christianity with the Syrian Orthodox churches of the East: here, a living dialect of Aramaic continued to be spoken both in liturgy and in daily life. In the year 1555, Johann Albrecht Widmannstadt, a leading Catholic and humanist scholar, published the first printed copy of the New Testament in Syriac. In the title, he described the language as “the Syriac language, the vernacular of Jesus Christ, sanctified through his own divine mouth and called ‘Hebrew’ by John the evangelist.”³ Three important equations had been made in this very title that would determine scholarly debates in the centuries to come and, in many cases, would be reiterated without further questioning:

1. the equation of the Syriac language with the Aramaic of Jesus’ time;
2. the equation of this “Syro-Aramaic” language with the vernacular of Jesus;
3. the equation of the term “Hebrew” in the Gospels with the Aramaic language.

This identification of the Syriac language with the “language of Jesus” would be picked up and further supported by two other influential works of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, George Amiras’s *Grammatica Syriaca sive Chaldaica*⁴ and Brian Waltons *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta*.⁵ However, commentators

2 I have done this in more detail as part of a broader study of the Hebrew background of the Gospel tradition: *Hebräisches Evangelium und synoptische Überlieferung. Untersuchungen zum hebräischen Hintergrund der Evangelien*. WUNT II/312 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011). The present essay sums up some results from the methodological considerations of that study.

3 Johann Albert Widmannstadt, *Liber Sacrosancti Evangelii de Jesu Christo Domino & Deo-Nostro. characteribus & lingua Syra; Jesu Christo vernacula, Divino ipsius ore consecrata & Joh. Evangelista Hebraica dicta, Scriptoria Prelo diligenter Expressa* (Vienna: Cymberrmann, 1555).

4 Georgius Amira and Enrico Caetani, *Grammatica Syriaca, sive Chaldaica Georgii Michaelis Amirae Edeniensis e libano* (Rome: Luna, 1596).

5 Brian Walton, *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta* (Graz, 1655).

and biblical scholars of the time would continue to use the terms “Hebrew” and “Syro-chaldaic” interchangeably and without a proper distinction. In fact, “Syro-chaldaic” was considered by many to be a local dialect of the Hebrew language.⁶ Martin Luther, in his *Tischreden*, mentions the “Hebraisms” of the New Testament and the importance of the “Hebrew language” as a tool to understand the Greek of the New Testament.⁷ In his *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen*, he refers to the Hebrew phrase דַּן יִשְׂרָאֵל (Dan 10:19) to explain the Greek phrase χαίρει, κεχαριστωμένη (Luke 1:28), the assumption not being that Luke borrowed the phrase from the Hebrew Bible, but that the angel actually spoke Hebrew with Mary, as Luther explicitly states in his comment.⁸ John Calvin, on the other hand, asserts that the “Chaldaic” language had replaced Hebrew after the exile, and adds: “When the evangelist uses the word ‘Hebrew,’ he is referring to the Chaldean or Syriac language,” while at the same time he explains the name Γαββαθα by means of the Hebrew term גַּבְהָה.⁹ Richard Simon as well equates both languages when he refers to Papias’ comment about Matthews *logia* as being written “in Hebrew, that is to say, in the language spoken among the Jews of Jerusalem, which was called Hebrew and was (in fact) Chaldee or Syriac.”¹⁰ At the end of the eighteenth century, although the terminology is still somewhat blurred, a common understanding was established that “Chaldaic” or “Syro-Chaldaic” was the language of Jesus and any references to the “Hebrew” language in the early sources must be interpreted to refer to this “Syro-Chaldaic” language. It should be noted, however, that this understanding was established prior to any critical study of historical evidence, let alone Jewish sources from the early centuries. It was, at this point, based solely on the “re-discovery” of the Syriac language and the claim of the Eastern churches that their language was in fact the “language of Jesus.”

6 E.g. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, “Neue Hypothese über die Evangelisten als bloß menschliche Geschichtsschreiber betrachtet” (1778), in idem, *Gotthold Ephraim Lessings Theologischer Nachlass* (Berlin: Voß, 1784), 45–72 (55). Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament. Erster Band* (Johann Gottfried Eichhorns Kritische Schriften 5; Leipzig: Weidmannische Buchhandlung, 1804), 12.

7 Martin Luther, *Tischreden*, WA Tr 1, 525.

8 Martin Luther, *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen*, WA 30.2, 638–39.

9 John Calvin, *Comm. in Joh.* 1.42; 19.13 and 19.17 (*JCO* 47, 31 and 413) and *Comm. in Mk* 7.34 (*JCO* 45, 462): “Wenn der Evangelist sagt, der Name Gabbata sei hebräisch, dann meint er damit die chaldäische oder syrische Sprache.”

10 Richard Simon, *Histoire critique du texte du Nouveau Testament* (Rotterdam: Reinier Leers, 1689), 47–48: “... en Ebreu, c’est-à-dire, dans la langue que parloient alors les Juifs de Jerusalem, qu’on appelloit Ebraïque & qui étoit Caldaïque ou Syriaque.”

2 Heinrich Friedrich Pfannkuche and the “Palestinian National Language”

The first critical study dedicated to the use of the Aramaic language in the time of Jesus, and the only one for another 100 years, was presented in 1798 by Heinrich Friedrich Pfannkuche.¹¹ The focus of his work, however, was not a critical distinction of Hebrew and Aramaic, but a distinction of Greek and Aramaic, based on the common assumption that Hebrew had ceased to exist as a living language since the days of the Babylonian exile. The main thrust of Pfannkuche's argument was aimed towards the hypothesis put forth in 1767 by Domenico Diodati, who had claimed that Jesus and his followers spoke Greek as their mother tongue.¹² A refutation of Diodati's hypothesis had already been published by Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi in 1772¹³ Pfannkuche, however, felt that this had not received the attention it deserved, and so he decided to reiterate the main arguments of de Rossi in an article published in German. Pfannkuche presents his arguments in order to prove the existence of a “Palestinian national language” (*palästinische Landessprache*), which he identifies exclusively as Aramaic. According to his view, Greek was used merely as a “language of fashion,” spoken by some representatives of the upper class, comparable to the French language used in European aristocratic circles of his own times (p. 404), while Hebrew had been completely out of use since the return from exile.

However, in his attempt to refute the idea of Greek being the mother tongue of Jesus, Pfannkuche severely blurs the borders between Hebrew and Aramaic: he adduces place names with בית, כפר, and עין as unambiguous evidence for the use of Aramaic (p. 420). Pfannkuche also cites Hebrew coin inscriptions

שנת א' לגאולת ישראל
 שקל ישראל
 שמעון נשיא ישראל
 שנת א' לחרות ישראל

which he dates to the Hasmonean period (while they are today known to be from the time of the Jewish revolts), and comments:

-
- 11 Heinrich Friedrich Pfannkuche, “Über die palästinische Landessprache in dem Zeitalter Christi und der Apostel. Ein Versuch, zum Theil nach de Rossi entworfen,” in *Allgemeine Bibliothek der biblischen Literatur. Achter Band, Drittes Stück* (ed. Johann Gottfried Eichhorn; Leipzig: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1798), 365–480.
- 12 Domenico Diodati, *De Christo Graece loquente exercitatio, qua ostenditur, Graecam sive Hellenisticam linguam: cum Judaeis omnibus tum ipsi adeo Christo Domino et Apostolis nativam et vernaculam fuisse* (Naples: Raymundus, 1767).
- 13 Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi, *Della lingua propria di Cristo e degli ebrei nazionali della Palestina da' tempi de' Maccabei* (Parma: Stamperia Reale, 1772).

These coins therefore prove that the Aramaic language was dominant as the national language of Palestine in the time of the Maccabees, while the ancient Hebrew language must still have been known, because the producers of these coins could not have dared to use for their coins a language which was then totally unknown in Palestine without risking to be exposed as *falsarii* (forgers) immediately.¹⁴

Pfannkuche quotes Origen’s comment about a Hebrew original of the first book of Maccabees (Origen, *Comm. in Psalm 1*, and Eusebius, *H.E.* VI.25.2) as proof that this book was written in Aramaic, based on the common assumption that the church fathers must have meant “Aramaic” when they said “Hebrew” (p. 411).¹⁵ He interprets a reference to the *πατριῶ φωνῆ* in 2 Macc 12:37 as evidence for “the general use of the Aramaic dialect among the people” (p. 407). He refers to “the few literary works written by native Palestinians in the first centuries,” which he claims had been “written for the most part in Aramaic, sometimes also in Hebrew,” giving as examples the Gospel of Matthew, the original version of Josephus’ *Jewish War*, as well as *Yerushalmi*, *Mekhilta*, *Pesiqta*, *Sifra* and *Sifre* (pp. 432–33). Any reference in the works of Josephus to the *πατριῶ γλώσση* (e.g. Josephus, *War* 1.3) is interpreted by Pfannkuche as evidence for Aramaic language use, and even where Josephus explicitly mentions the ability of many Jewish people to read and understand the Hebrew scriptures (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.264), Pfannkuche adds: “. . . in the Hebrew original with the help of the Targumim available in their national language.”¹⁶ His argumentation therefore is a classical case of *petitio principii*: because it is assumed that Aramaic was the only Semitic language still in use by the Jewish people, all evidence that points to Hebrew must be interpreted as evidence for Aramaic.

Following this line of argumentation Pfannkuche laid the foundation for a methodological weakness to be found in almost every subsequent study of the

14 Pfannkuche, “Über die palästinische Landessprache,” 408–9: “. . . so dienen doch diese Münzen auf allen Fall zum Beweise, dass die aramäische Sprache als Landessprache in Palästina zu den Zeiten der Makkabäer geherrscht haben und die althebräische noch immer bekannt gewesen sein muss, da die Verfertiger dieser Münzen, ohne augenblicklich als Falsarii entlarvt zu werden, sich die Freiheit nicht nehmen durften, eine damals in Palästina ganz unbekannte Sprache auf Münzen . . . zu gebrauchen.”

15 Origen uses the term *καθ’ Ἑβραίου*ς to denote the language and then cites the *Hebrew* titles of all the biblical books, adding the cryptic transliteration *Σαρβηθσαβαναιελ* for the original title of the book of Maccabees. Since all other titles are quoted in Hebrew, it can be assumed that this also is a Hebrew title.

16 *Ibid.*, 441: “. . . nach dem hebräischen Urtexte mit Zuziehung . . . der in der Landessprache vorhandenen Targumim.”

language situation, a weakness that would still be admitted by Joseph Fitzmyer more than 150 years later:

... the way in which claims are sometimes made for the Aramaic substratum of the sayings of Jesus, when the evidence is merely 'Semitic' in general, or, worse still, derived from some other Semitic language, e.g., Hebrew, should no longer be countenanced.¹⁷

But from where did this assumption of the death of the Hebrew language originate in the first place? Pfannkuche gives three reasons. First, he sees an inherent connection between language and nationhood and therefore concludes that the Jewish people lost their national language together with their independence as a nation in 586 B.C.E. (pp. 406 and 379). Secondly, he interprets Neh 8:8 as early evidence for the practice of targum and therefore assumes the existence of written Targumim as early as the Hasmonean era (pp. 420 and 422). Thirdly, he claims that all literature written for Palestine in the post-biblical period was written in the *Landessprache* (national language), this being of course the Aramaic language. To prove this, Pfannkuche refers to conjectured Aramaic originals of Ben Sira, 1st Maccabees (cf. above), as well as Tobit and Judith. Obviously the third argument suffers from the same argumentative circle already mentioned above. It is noteworthy that on close examination not a single piece of literature in Aramaic from the period in question was available to Pfannkuche at his time. However, the hypothesis of Aramaic exclusivity was already well established at this point and no further discussion seemed necessary. This was to remain the *status quo* for another 100 years, that is, all the way through the period that was to prove to be the formative phase of modern critical New Testament scholarship.

3 Paradigm Shifts and Unshiftable Paradigms at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century

The next steps in Aramaic studies would be taken almost simultaneously by three German scholars: Arnold Meyer, Theodor Zahn and Gustaf Dalman. Dalman had laid the important groundwork by compiling his "Grammar of

17 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Study of the Aramaic Background of the New Testament" (1975), in idem, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 1-27 (5).

Jewish Palestinian Aramaic,¹⁸ which would be followed by a textbook and a dictionary not much later.¹⁹ These works marked a watershed in Aramaic studies, since for the first time a clear distinction was made between the Jewish Palestinian dialect and the later Christian Palestinian or Syriac dialects, dialects that had to this point been used as a reference point to determine the "language of Jesus." It is still unsatisfactory, from today's point of view, that Dalman chose the Aramaic of *Onkelos* as his paradigm for the language of Jesus. However, little other material was available to him, since neither the Cairo Genizah nor Targum *Neofiti* nor the Dead Sea Scrolls had been discovered at that time.

The first attempt to apply Dalman's new paradigms to the words of Jesus was then made by Arnold Meyer, who also relied on the earlier works of de Rossi and Pfannkuche.²⁰ Like his predecessors, Meyer did not further investigate the assumption of an early death of the Hebrew language; instead, he reiterated the claim that Hebrew was not a spoken language, though it was possibly still in use as a "holy ecclesiastical [*sic*] and possibly also literary language"²¹ among the learned scribes, in personal prayer and in the temple liturgy, comparable to the use of Latin among the scholars of his own time.²² Meyer sums up his claims as follows:

Thus, the knowledge of Hebrew among the common people, unless they were learned scribes . . . was limited to the memorization of a few phrases, prayers and psalms. The rest of his private, public and religious communication would have been in Aramaic.²³

18 Gustaf Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch nach den Idiomen des palästinischen Talmud und Midrasch, des Onkelostargum (cod. Sorini 84) und der jerusalemischen Targume zum Pentateuch* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1894).

19 Gustaf Dalman, *Aramäische Dialektproben: Lesestücke zur Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch zumeist nach Handschriften des Britischen Museums* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1896); Gustaf Dalman and G. H. Händler, *Aramäisch-neuhebräisches Handwörterbuch zu Targum, Talmud und Midrasch. mit Vokalisation der Targumischen Wörter nach südarabischen Handschriften und besonderer Bezeichnung des Wortschatzes des Onkelostargum* (Frankfurt a.M.: Kaufmann, 1897).

20 Arnold Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache. Das galiläische Aramäisch in seiner Bedeutung für die Erklärung der Reden Jesu* (Freiburg i.Br. / Leipzig: Mohr, 1896), 23–25.

21 *Ibid.*, 42: "... heilige Kirchen- eventuell auch Schriftsprache."

22 *Ibid.*, 74.

23 "Hiernach beschränkte sich die Kenntnis des Hebräischen beim gemeinen Mann, soweit er nicht schriftgelehrt war (...), auf das gedächtnishafte Festhalten einiger Sprüche, Gebete und Psalmen: im Übrigen vollzog sich sein häuslicher, bürgerlicher, rechtlicher und religiöser Verkehr in aramäischer Sprache." *Ibid.* 46–47.

While Meyer focused mainly on the spoken language of Jesus, Theodor Zahn, in his “Introduction to the New Testament,” published in the same year, applied the language question to the field of Gospel transmission and possible literary sources of the New Testament. Citing the results of Pfannkuche, Dalman and Meyer, he reiterated that the mother tongue of Jesus, and therefore the original language of Gospel transmission (*Ursprache des Evangeliums*), was “not Hebrew, not even a mixture of Hebrew and another language, but . . . Aramaic.”²⁴ Zahn adduced an abundance of evidence for the use of Aramaic from contemporary sources (lexical Aramaisms in the New Testament, Josephus and Philo, as well as historical records of language use from Greek sources and rabbinic literature). However, he fails to argue why the obvious use of Aramaic at the time, which is indeed undisputed, would necessarily imply the exclusion of the Hebrew language. In his list of lexical Aramaisms (pp. 9–15) a tendency is visible to include terms that could be derived from Aramaic as well as from Hebrew (ῥαββί, ῥαββουνί, αββα, πάσχα, σάββατα, σατανᾶς) and even some examples for which a Hebrew etymology is more probable than an Aramaic one (εφφαθα, ἀμήν, βεελζεβούλ, μαμωνᾶ, γέεννα).²⁵

Dalman, building in turn on the works of Zahn and Meyer, opened his own opus magnum on the language of Jesus with a programmatic statement in which he argued that the exclusive use of Aramaic was no longer a disputable issue in his day, but could be considered an established result of critical scholarship:

24 Theodor Zahn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament. Erster Band* (Sammlung Theologischer Lehrbücher 1; Leipzig: Georg Böhme, 1896), 2 and 8.

25 An in-depth study of the lexical Semitisms, using updated Aramaic and Hebrew lexica and an open trilingual language paradigm, is beyond the scope of this study. It can be shown, however, that in many cases the evidence is less conclusive than generally assumed (cf. Fitzmyer’s comment about Aramaisms, Hebraisms and Semitisms above). Also, the frequent use of the final -a in Greek transliterations as evidence for an Aramaic *status emphaticus* is a non sequitur: it is obvious from the practice of transliteration in the LXX that the final -a is a common Grecism rather than an Aramaism, cf. Gen 4:18; 10:15, 19, 27; 11:25; 13:10; 48:22; Exod 12:37; Num 34: 11.24.26 et al. The Greek forms σάββατα and πάσχα regularly transliterate Hebrew (not Aramaic) שַׁבָּת and פֶּסַח in the LXX. Of course, the choice of the forms could have been enhanced by local Greek–Aramaic interface in Egypt during the third–second centuries B.C.E. (note the Aramaic vowels in πάσχα and σίκερα “beer”). And once in use in Greek they may stay in use and become precedents for later choices and authors. But even so, they remain transliterations of a Hebrew original, and the same might therefore be assumed for transliterations in the New Testament, Josephus and Philo.

As the proof has been offered with comparative frequency of late [reference to Meyer and Zahn] that the ‘Hebraists’, i.e. the ‘Hebrew’-speaking Jews of Palestine . . . did not in reality speak Hebrew but Aramaic, it seems superfluous to raise a fresh discussion in all the details of this question.²⁶

However, he nevertheless goes on to summarize the main arguments for his “exclusive Aramaic” view as follows:

1. The “high antiquity” of the targum custom, “represented already in the second century after Christ as very ancient.”
2. The lexical Aramaisms in Josephus and the New Testament.
3. The use of Aramaic in the temple (e.g. *m. Sheq.* 5.3 and 6.5; *y. Sot.* 24b).
4. The use of Aramaic in older strata of rabbinic literature (e.g. *Megillat Ta’anit*).
5. The use of Aramaic in legal documents (e.g. *Ketubot*).
6. The change of script.
7. The artificial character of Mishnaic Hebrew.
8. The use of the term “Hebrew” for Aramaic in Josephus and the New Testament.

From today’s perspective, some of these arguments have obviously not passed the test of time: the early date of the Targumim, though less extreme than in Pfannkuch’s view, can no longer be sustained in view of recent targumic studies. It is widely agreed today that the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, used by Dalman as a reference for the language of Jesus, date to a later period. Even the date of the Palestinian Targums remains an issue of dispute. According to Ze’ev Safrai, the practice of targum in the synagogue developed not earlier than in the later part of the second century, while the literary fixture took place even later.²⁷ Yet, even if an earlier date is assumed, it need not follow

26 Gustaf Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu: mit Berücksichtigung des nachkanonischen jüdischen Schrifttums und der aramäischen Sprache erörtert* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1898), 1: “Nachdem in neuerer Zeit öfters der Beweis dafür geführt worden ist, dass die . . . ‘hebräisch’ sprechenden Juden Palästina’s . . . in Wirklichkeit nicht hebräisch, sondern aramäisch sprachen, erscheint es überflüssig, alle hierher gehörenden Einzelheiten aufs neue zu erörtern.” Translations taken from the English edition (*The Words of Jesus* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902], 1).

27 Ze’ev Safrai, “The Origins of Reading the Aramaic Targum in Synagogue,” in *The New Testament and Christian–Jewish Dialogue* (ed. Malcolm Lowe; Immanuel 24–25; Jerusalem: Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel, 1990), 187–93. An

that this would have any bearing on the question of Hebrew language use. Much more important than the actual date is the function of Targum. Dalman assumed that the only *raison d'être* for a targumic practice was the necessity of translation because no one understood Hebrew. However, more recent studies into the character and function of the targum suggest that commentary was as important as translation as a functional aspect of targum, especially in the "Palestinian" type. The existence of targum therefore does not necessarily imply a lack of Hebrew language competence, but the desire to expound the meanings of the Hebrew text without having to alter or expand it. Even in the unlikely case of an early date for the practice of targum, Dalman's first argument has lost its exclusive thrust.²⁸

The hypothesis of the artificial character of Mishnaic Hebrew, originally put forward by Abraham Geiger,²⁹ and picked up by Dalman in his argument no. 7, has also been rendered futile by a century of ongoing linguistic research into the development of Mishnaic Hebrew which does not need to be repeated here.³⁰ The change of script, on the other hand, might in fact reflect a long-term

updated overview on the issue is now available in Ze'ev Safrai, "The Targums as Part of Rabbinic Literature," in *The Literature of the Sages. Second Part: Midrash and Targum, Liturgy, Poetry, Mysticism, Contracts, Inscriptions, Ancient Science and the Languages of Rabbinic Literature* (ed. Samuel Safrai, Zeev Safrai, Joshua Schwartz and P. J. Tomson; Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum 2.3b; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006), 243–78. Concerning the date of literary fixation, cf. Stephen A. Kaufman, "Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums and their Use in the Study of First Century CE Texts," in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context* (ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara; JSOTSup 166; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 118–41.

28 The literal character of Aramaic Job from Qumran does not change the evaluation of Dalman's point because its spelling shows it to be an Eastern import. Cf. Takamitsu Muraoka, "The Aramaic of the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI," *JJS* 25 (1974): 425–43; Randall Buth, "Aramaic Targumim: Qumran," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 91–93. An Aramaic Job was apparently used all over the Middle East during the later Second Temple period. An Aramaic Job document is also mentioned in Egypt in the Old Greek to Job 42:17. It should also be noted that the only reference to the pre-70 C.E. existence of a written targum in the rabbinic literature also mentions a targum to Job (*b. Shab.* 115a; *y. Shab.* 16.1/3 (15c); *t. Shab.* 13.2; *Sof.* 5.16 and 15.2). It therefore seems that this book is indeed a special case that does not allow generalizations.

29 Abraham Geiger, *Lehr- und Lesebuch zur Sprache der Mischnah* (2 vols., Breslau: Leuckart, 1845).

30 Moshe Bar-Asher, "The Study of Mishnaic Hebrew Grammar based on Written Sources: Achievements, Problems, and Tasks," in *Studies in Mishnaic Hebrew* (ed. Moshe Bar-Asher; Scripta Hierosolymitana 37; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998), 9–42; Moshe Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic

language shift, though it is obvious from the archaeological evidence discovered in the course of the twentieth century that “square script” was used for Hebrew literature, documents and inscriptions well into the second century C.E. In fact, of all the evidence in square script available today, the overwhelming majority is written in Hebrew and not in Aramaic. Unfortunately, this evidence was still unknown to Dalman.

Of the remaining arguments, nos. 3, 4 and 5 have no claim to exclusivity: the use of Aramaic in early parts of rabbinic literature proves hardly more than the undisputed fact that Aramaic was in reality one of the languages spoken and written in the time of Jesus. However, it cannot prove that Hebrew was not used as well at that same period. The issues of lexical Aramaisms (which, as Fitzmyer commented, in many cases are simply Semitisms or even Hebraisms) and the use of the term “Hebrew” in the Greek literature remains disputed.³¹

Hebrew: An Introductory Survey,” in Safrai, Schwartz and Tomson, eds., *The Literature of the Sages. Second Part: Midrash and Targum, Liturgy, Poetry, Mysticism, Contracts, Inscriptions, Ancient Science and the Languages of Rabbinic Literature*, 567–96.

- 31 On the former, cf. the remarks made above about lexical Semitisms. On the latter, see the article on Ἑβραϊστί in this volume. It can be shown that Josephus never applies the term “Hebrew” to the Aramaic language but distinguishes carefully between “Hebrew” and “Syriac.” Scholars since the time of Pfannkuche have appealed to Josephus’ employment of the term “Hebrew” for Greek σάββατα (*Ant.* 1.33), and ἀσαρθά (3.252) as proof that he confuses the terminology. However, a closer look at the matter reveals that this argument is flawed in multiple respects. Generally, the reference to a final “a” as an identifier of Aramaic language is a non sequitur in view of the common LXX transliteration of Hebrew (!) terms, as was already shown above. More specifically, in the case of σάββατα, Josephus is not referring to the term as such, but to its etymological provenance: “. . . which word denotes rest in the language of the Hebrews.” Obviously, this statement must here exclusively refer to the Hebrew language, since the Aramaic word for “rest” is not תַּשׁבּוּת but נַוּוּ. Thirdly, even if it was assumed that Josephus had here Aramaic terms in view (while referring to their Hebrew etymology), it needs to be noted that, technically speaking, he does not label these terms as “Hebrew” or even “in the Hebrew language,” but, in one case as derived from a word “in the language of the Hebrews,” in the other case as being in use “among the Hebrews.” This choice of words differs significantly from his terminology in other places, where the reference is undoubtedly to Hebrew terms, not people (Ἑβραϊστί in *Ant.* 10.8 and 11.159; Ἑβραϊστικός in *Ant.* 1.5; 9.208; 12.36, 48; 18.345). In the two passages cited above, however, Josephus does not refer to the *language* of the terms as such, but to the *group of people* that uses the terms. Obviously, since both terms are specifically Jewish in content, Josephus could not have employed the term “Syriac people” or “Syrians” here, even if he did have the Aramaic usage of the terms in mind. Thus, even if the terms here are assumed to be Aramaic, Josephus would be saying nothing more than that *Hebrew* people sometimes used *Aramaic* names for their feasts (which were, in turn, derived from *Hebrew* roots), a fact that is obviously undisputed. The two passages

Dalman's case for the exclusivity of the Aramaic language, strong as it was at his time, has therefore been weakened severely by ongoing historical, archaeological, philological and linguistic research over the past century. Today, many of his presumptions would no longer be supported even by those who still adhere to the exclusive Aramaic hypothesis. However, the conclusions he drew from these presumptions seem to be used without adjustment in much academic discussion despite the accumulating, contradictory evidence.

4 Subtle Motives in the Genesis of the "Aramaic Hypothesis"

Looking at the history and development of the "Aramaic hypothesis," one cannot help but wonder why the idea of an exclusive use of the Aramaic language gained such a strong momentum in German and international scholarship when in fact it was based on such thin evidence. Other factors must have contributed to the widespread acceptance of the hypothesis. Indeed, some such factors can be found in the works of early Aramaic scholarship that point to the existence of a common *Tendenz* towards a theory of exclusive use of Aramaic to the expense of Hebrew:

a *The Unity of Language and Nation*

At the end of the eighteenth century, the growing movement of early romantic idealism, paired with the rise of nationalisms of various kinds, impacted

in question, therefore, do not corroborate the claim that Josephus confuses the language terminology. Other than these two, no examples for an assumed "blurred terminology" can be found in Josephus. A third passage that is often quoted in this context is *Ant.* 3.151, where Josephus refers to the priestly garments as *χαραναίαις*. However, there he does not say anything about the language of that term, and a derivation from both languages is in fact possible. To sum up: wherever Josephus uses the designation "Hebrew" or "Hebrew language" to denote a Semitic term (cf. the list of passages above), the term referred to is clearly Hebrew, not Aramaic. In other places, he might also refer to Aramaic terms (e.g. *ἑμίαν* in *Ant.* 3.156); however, he never calls them "Hebrew" or refers to them as being "in the Hebrew language." In Philo, the terminology is equally precise: different from Josephus, he always uses the term "Chaldaic" for Biblical Hebrew, not for Aramaic. In no instance does he use "Hebrew" to denote an Aramaic term or phrase. In the three disputed passages in John (John 5:2; 19:13, 17), the argument for an Aramaic derivation again rests solely on the final -a, since, etymologically, all three place names can be derived from Aramaic as well as from Hebrew. And as names, they could legitimately be called Hebrew by the Gospel writer in any case. On the doubtful use of the final -a as a language identifier, cf., however, the remarks above about lexical Semitisms.

the European societies. Along with these, the quest for a unity of nation and language was pursued, also reflected in the linguistic concepts of the time. This romantic ideal of unity of language, spirit and nation was put into words by Wilhelm von Humboldt, a leading pioneer in the philosophy of languages, in 1836:

The mental individuality of a people and the shape of its language are so intimately fused with one another that if one were given, the other would have to be completely derivable from it. For intellectuality and language allow and further only forms that are mutually congenial to one another. Language is, as it were, the outer appearance of the spirit of a people; the language is their spirit and the spirit their language; we can never think of them sufficiently as identical.³²

It is this idea of unity of nationhood and language that is fundamental for Pfannkuche’s approach: the existence of the Hebrew language for him is tied unsoluably to the national independence of the Jewish nation.³³ Symptoms of language transition and language death are therefore an integral part of the political struggles of the Jewish nation. Pfannkuche uses graphic terms like “*linguistic revolution*” (“Sprachrevolution”), “*violent deprivation of national language*” (“Entreißen der Nationalsprache”) and “*extinction of the popular language*” (“Vertilgen der Volkssprache”), and he speaks of “*purity*” (“Reinigkeit”) and “*barbarisms*” (“Barbarismen”) in language issues.³⁴ The atmosphere of revolution and national aspirations that shaped Europe at the turn of the

32 Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluß auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts* (Bonn: Dümmler, 1836), 37: “Die Geistes Eigentümlichkeit und die Sprachgestaltung eines Volkes stehen in solcher Innigkeit der Verschmelzung ineinander, daß, wenn die eine gegeben wäre, die andere müßte vollständig aus ihr abgeleitet werden können. Denn die Intellektualität und die Sprache gestatten nur einander gegenseitig zusagende Formen. Die Sprache ist gleichsam die äußerliche Erscheinung des Geistes der Völker; ihre Sprache ist ihr Geist, und ihr Geist ist ihre Sprache, man kann beide nie identisch genug sehen.” English translation in idem, *On Language: On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and Its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species* (ed. Michael Losonsky; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 46.

33 Pfannkuche, “Über die palästinische Landessprache,” 379 and 406: “Denn Behauptung der Nationalexistenz hält allemal mit der Behauptung der Nationalsprache gleichen Schritt” (“The conservation of national existence is always keeping pace with the conservation of national language”).

34 Ibid., 381, 414, 393 and 389.

nineteenth century is obviously reflected here. The death of the Hebrew language after the exile is therefore, in the eyes of Pfannkuche, in a way ushering in the death of the Jewish people as a nation and the death of Judaism as a particular religion. Aramaic, on the other hand, is presented as the old (and new) universal and transnational language, the Semitic “Ur-language that united the inhabitants of Cappadocia and Pontus, the Assyrians, Babylonians, Arameans, Hebrews, Phoenicians and Arabs into one great nation.”³⁵ For Pfannkuche, Hebrew is the language of Jewish particularism, Aramaic the language of universalism. It is therefore of deep theological relevance that Jesus and the early Church used the *Aramaic* and not the *Hebrew* language.

The same motif of Hebrew as the language of Jewish national particularism was later picked up by Abraham Geiger, though to a very different effect: He used it to advance his cause for the use of German as a liturgical language of the synagogues of his own time. Building on his earlier hypothesis of the artificial character of Mishnaic Hebrew, he argued in a subsequent work that the time had come for German Jewry to break free from the narrow confinements of the ‘artificial’ Hebrew language and turn to the ‘vernacular’ German language instead. In a résumé about language use in ancient and modern times, he called for the replacement of Hebrew by the German national language and argued:

Generally speaking, the Jewish liturgy [from 70 C.E. until modern times] had to remain in Hebrew. It was a national institution, saved from the past for a future that was to restore the past completely . . . However, we are very thankful today, that we have overcome this romanticism of pain . . . We have woken up from the dreamworld of our national past and future into the present time. Religion is breaking free from the chains that were imposed on it by this dreamworld, and the national disguise of the liturgy becomes meaningless, even a disturbance. It has to disappear, otherwise it will do harm to the newly awakened awareness. With all due respect for our past . . . we must not keep the national disguise in which it was clothed, had to be clothed. It is our religious duty to remove it and present our religion, stripped of all national barriers that used to restrict it, as a truth embracing the world as a whole.³⁶

35 Ibid., 381–82: “. . . Ursprache, welche . . . die Bewohner von Kappadocien und Pontus, die Assyrer, Babylonier, Aramäer, Hebräer, Phönizier und Araber zu einem großen Volk vereinigte.”

36 Abraham Geiger, *Unser Gottesdienst: Eine Frage, die dringend Lösung verlangt* (Breslau: Schlettersche Buchhandlung, 1868), 6: “Allein im Ganzen und Großen mußte derselbe [jüdische Gottesdienst] ein hebräischer bleiben. Er war eine nationale Institution,

Hence, the use of Hebrew, for Abraham Geiger, was a symbol of national particularism and religious traditionalism, whereas the abolition of Hebrew, for him, symbolized the spiritual renewal of the Jewish people into a religion of universal relevance. However, while this was a notion that Geiger shared with Pfannkuche and other Christian scholars of his time, for him this renewal would be implemented in the Jewish Reform movement, not in the final supersession of Judaism by Christianity as claimed by many of his Christian contemporaries.

The motif of the unity of language and nation also resonated well with the concept of "late Judaism" (*Spätjudentum*), developed by Julius Wellhausen and other scholars towards the end of the nineteenth century. The term "late Judaism," introduced by Wellhausen, suggested that Judaism as such was nothing but a temporary deviation from the original religion of Abraham and the early prophets, a deviation coming to a natural end with the Babylonian exile, while the post-exilic phenomenon of "late Judaism" was somewhat of an anachronism to be finally overcome by Jesus Christ, who restored the old religion of Israel.³⁷ For Wellhausen, the character of Judaism as a dead religion was reflected in the creation of the written canon of the Hebrew Bible:

Once we understand that the canon separates Judaism from ancient Israel, then we also understand that the written Tora separates Judaism from ancient Israel. The water that flowed freely in the past was now confined to cisterns.³⁸

gerettet aus der Vergangenheit für eine Zukunft, die dieselbe vollkommen wieder herstellen sollte... Allein wir sind unsererseits mit hohem Danke erfüllt, daß wir diese Romantik des Schmerzes überwunden haben... Wir sind aus dem Traumleben einer nationalen Vergangenheit und Zukunft in die wahre Gegenwart eingetreten, die Religion löst sich von den Fesseln ab, mit denen jenes Traumleben sie umschlungen hatte; auch die nationale Hülle des Gottesdienstes wird bedeutungslos, ja störend, sie muß sinken, wenn sie nicht die neu erstarkende Gesinnung trüben soll. Bei aller Ehrerbietung für unsere Vergangenheit... dürfen wir nicht das nationale Gewand erhalten, in welchem sie aufgetreten, auftreten mußte; es ist unsere religiöse Pflicht, dasselbe abzustreifen, unsere Religion entkleidet der beengenden nationalen Schranken in ihrer weltumfassenden Wahrheit zur Erscheinung zu bringen."

37 Cf. Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (6th ed., Berlin: Reimer, 1905), especially 399–402 and 420–24, and idem, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1905), 104–15.

38 Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 409: "Erkennt man an, daß der Kanon das Judentum vom alten Israel scheidet, so erkennt man auch an, daß die schriftliche Thora das Judentum vom alten Israel scheidet. Das Wasser, das in der Vergangenheit gequollen war, faßten die Epigonen in Zisternen."

The death of the Hebrew language after the exile therefore could be interpreted within this framework as a natural reflection of the impending “death” of Judaism and its replacement by the new, old religion of Jesus and the prophets. In assuming Aramaic sources for the Gospel of Mark as well as for the *Logienquelle* Q, Wellhausen therefore seeks to separate the Gospels from the biblical canon as well as from Jewish literature in general, even to the point of preferring Christian Aramaic over Jewish Aramaic sources as a reference point. He considered the latter to be “specifically rabbinic” in character and therefore different from the language of the Galilean people. It would be wrong, he comments, to presume that the “pedants” had already shaped the language of the people at the time of Jesus:

The Rabbis rose to be the autocrats only after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the people had shrunk to a sect.³⁹

Gustaf Dalman, in turn, disagreed with Wellhausen on the use of Jewish Aramaic as a reference point. However, he nonetheless shared the idea that the use of Aramaic had a theological implication, reflecting the downfall of Judaism and divine judgment of the Jewish people. When he was asked to continue the legacy of Franz Delitzsch, who had worked on his famous Hebrew translation of the New Testament for much of his lifetime, Dalman took up the task with some hesitation, chiefly because he did not share Delitzsch's conviction that Hebrew could in fact have been used by Jesus or the authors of the New Testament.⁴⁰ Commenting on the language question, he argued:

It is no coincidence, but a consequence of the judgment conjured up by Israel upon herself, that the word of the fulfilled New Covenant did not return to her as a Hebrew original, but as a translation from the Greek. May this new offer of salvation in the Hebrew tongue, in which Christ comes once again . . . to his people, not again be a cause of judgement to them, but a cause of salvation!⁴¹

39 Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, 41: “Die Rabbinen sind erst nach der Zerstörung Jerusalems Alleinherrscher geworden, als das Volk zu einer Sekte zusammengeschrumpft war.” Cf. also pp. 38–40.

40 Gustaf Dalman, “Das hebräische Neue Testament von Franz Delitzsch,” *Hebraica* 9 (1893): 226–31 (228).

41 Dalman, *Das hebräische Neue Testament*, 230: “. . . es ist auch nicht Zufall, sondern Folge des von Israel über sich heraufbeschworenen Gerichts, dass das Wort des erfüllten Neuen Bundes nicht als hebräisches Original, sondern als Übersetzung aus dem Griechischen

For Pfannkuche and Geiger, as well as for Wellhausen and Dalman, the transition from Hebrew to Aramaic was much more than just a sociolinguistic phenomenon. Sharing a common ideal of unity of language, nation and spirituality, the downfall of the Hebrew language did also signify the downfall of the Jewish people as a nation. For all of them, the transition into a new language signifies a spiritual renewal that transgresses and dissolves boundaries of national identity.

b *The Language of the Learned and the Bias for the Unlearned*

Among the reasons why Jesus must have spoken the Aramaic language, Pfannkuche lists the fact that Jesus spoke primarily to the unlearned and the "common people":

It is an undisputed fact that Jesus, whose sphere of influence was primarily among the common people, who were less "mis-educated" (*verbildet*) than the higher classes and therefore more open for pure moral principles, used the Aramaic language in his discourses.⁴²

Pfannkuche does not give an explanation on what grounds he bases this assumption. He mentions the phrase *ἄνθρωποι ἀγράμματοί εἰσιν καὶ ἰδιῶται* (Acts 4:13), however he fails to explain how any conclusions could be drawn from this characterization of two of Jesus disciples as to the general character of Jesus' audiences. Even a superficial survey of the Gospel narratives definitively shows Jesus in a number of conversations with educated people, perhaps even more frequently than with people specifically described as poor or uneducated. In most cases, however, the Gospels speak about groups, crowds or multitudes of people without further reference to their social or educational status.

Nevertheless, the motif of a bias for the unlearned in the ministry of Jesus frequently reappears in later discussions of language use. While Pfannkuche had used the motif to argue for the use of a Semitic language (in this case, Aramaic) and against the use of Greek, in the later literature it would be used

nun wieder zu ihm zurückkehrt. Möchte aber diese neue Anbietung des Heils in hebräischer Zunge, durch welche Christus zum zweiten Male . . . unter sein Volk tritt, ihm nicht aufs Neue zum Gericht, sondern zum Heile ausschlagen!"

42 Pfannkuche, "Über die palästinische Landessprache," 430: "Es ist eine unbestreitbare Thatsache, daß Jesus, dessen Wirkungskreis vorzüglich unter dem gemeinen, weniger, als die höhern Stände verbildeten, und ebendeshalb für reinere moralische Grundsätze empfänglichen Volke war, . . . sich in seinen Lehrvorträgen der aramäischen Sprache bediente."

to argue for the use of Aramaic as opposed to Hebrew. In the eyes of Arnold Meyer, Hebrew was a language exclusively used by the learned (“nur Sprache der Gebildeten”), while Aramaic was the language of the people (“volkstümliche Sprache”).⁴³ Jesus, for him, was “not a man of letters, but of living spirit . . . he does not look like a scribe, he was not a theologian but a man of the masses.”⁴⁴ In his opinion, the simple teachings of Jesus do not necessitate any first-hand knowledge of the Hebrew Bible or apocalyptic literature; in fact, Jesus himself would probably not have been able to read the Hebrew Bible.

Theodor Zahn builds a case on the term לְשׁוֹן חֲכָמִים, interpreting it as qualifying Hebrew as a “language of the learned.”⁴⁵ He contrasts this with the rare term לְשׁוֹן הַדְּיוֹט (*b. Baba Mez.* 104a), which he interprets to denote the language of the unlearned (i.e. Aramaic). However, it is obvious that לְשׁוֹן הַדְּיוֹט has a different meaning in *Baba Meziyah*, and it is never contrasted with לְשׁוֹן חֲכָמִים. Moreover, the term לְשׁוֹן חֲכָמִים in rabbinic language does not refer to the educational level of those who speak it, but to the period of time it came into use. The contrast is between לְשׁוֹן חֲכָמִים (i.e. Mishnaic Hebrew) and לְשׁוֹן הַקּוּדֶשׁ (i.e. Biblical Hebrew), not between לְשׁוֹן חֲכָמִים and לְשׁוֹן הַדְּיוֹט.

That Wellhausen drew a similar dividing line between Jesus and the rabbis and projected this unto the issue of language use has already been shown above. In a similar way, Dalman echoes the motif of the learned and the unlearned: after having established the claim that Jesus, as a Galilean, would by default have had little contact⁴⁶ with the Jewish sages and their teachings,⁴⁶

43 Meyer, *Muttersprache*, 40.

44 Meyer, *Muttersprache*, 56–57: “. . . kein Mensch des Buchstabens, sondern des lebendigen Geistes . . . Jesus sieht nicht aus wie ein Schriftgelehrter, er war kein Theologe, sondern ein Volksmann.”

45 Zahn, *Einleitung*, 17.

46 Dalman, *Worte Jesu*, 8. The claim that Galilee was far removed from Jewish cultural and religious life was already frequent in the time of Dalman and later on led to the preposterous claims of German scholars as to the pagan or even Aryan character of the population of Galilee, including the person of Jesus himself; cf. Walter Grundmann, *Jesus, der Galiläer, und das Judentum. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts zur Erforschung des jüdischen Einflusses auf das deutsche kirchliche Leben* (Leipzig: G. Wigand, 1940). The literary and archaeological evidence, however, points in the opposite direction; cf. Samuel Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century,” in Lowe, ed., *The New Testament and Christian–Jewish Dialogue*, 147–86, who concludes that “apart from Jerusalem, Galilee was in all respects equal to or excelled all other areas of the Land of Israel where Jews lived” (186). Cf. also Carsten Claußen, Jörg Frey and Mordechai Aviam, *Jesus und die Archäologie Galiläas* (Biblich-theologische Studien 87; Neukirchen–Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2008).

he goes on to claim that Jesus therefore must have used Aramaic to address his followers, if he wanted them to understand:

Of Him, least of all, who desired to preach the gospel to the poor, who stood aloof from the paedagogic methods of the scribes, is it to be expected that He would have furnished His discourse with the superfluous, and to the hearers perplexing, embellishment of the Hebrew form?⁴⁷

Obviously, the widespread motif of an assumed dichotomy between the learned and the unlearned, the Jewish teachers and Jesus, as well as Hebrew and Aramaic in the works of Meyer, Zahn, Dalman and Wellhausen serves a common interest: the desire to draw a clear dividing line between Judaism and Christianity, with an additional emphasis on the freshness and the popularity of the latter, in contrast to a Jewish religion that was perceived to be remote from the people and governed by a minority of traditionalist scholars.

How well this picture can be based on the sources, however is questionable; none of the authors provides any evidence either for the assumption that Jesus was mainly involved with the unlearned, or that the Jewish teachers were particularly distanced from the people. The New Testament, on the other hand, provides us with a picture of Jesus that is very much in interaction with the learned of his day: he is found debating with the scribes in the temple of Jerusalem as a young boy; later on, he is involved in extended discourses with Pharisees and scribes as well as with the Sadducees. In his teachings, he relies extensively on the Hebrew scriptures and seemingly draws from some of the same haggadic and halakic traditions as later rabbinic literature. On the other hand, we have little evidence that the scribes and Pharisees were particularly remote or distanced from the common people. To the contrary, the rabbinic sources testify that many of the rabbis came exactly from the poorer strata of the population, and Josephus states that among all the Jewish groups, it was the Pharisees who had the greatest popularity among the masses (*Ant.* 13.288 and 298).⁴⁸

47 Dalman, *Worte Jesu*, 9–10: "Von ihm, der das Evangelium den Armen predigen wollte und der Lehrweise der Schriftgelehrten fernstand, ist am wenigsten zu erwarten, dass er seine Rede mit dem überflüssigen und den Hörer verwirrenden Schmuck der hebräischen Form versehen hätte." Translation quoted from the English edition, *The Words of Jesus*, 11–12.

48 Cf. Malcolm Lowe, "The Critical and the Skeptical Methods in New Testament Research," *Gregorianum* 81 (2000): 693–721 (726).

c *The Language of the Religious Establishment and the Language of the Lay People*

Similar to the phenomenon observed in the preceding paragraph, however with a different nuance, is the assumed contrast between the religious establishment and the lay people. Here, it is probably the rise of confessionalism in Europe, the fervent opposition of German Protestantism against the Ultra-montanist Roman Catholic movement and the resulting “*Kulturkampf*” between (Protestant) liberalism and (Catholic) traditionalism within German society that has shaped some of the concepts to be addressed here. That such parallels are indeed drawn becomes obvious, when Meyer calls the Hebrew language the “church language” (*Kirchensprache*), or when Wellhausen equals the post-exilic Jewish establishment with the Catholic Church:

Mosaic theocracy, the leftover of a state already perished, . . . is essentially akin to the ancient Catholic church, whose mother she was indeed. It may be aesthetically offensive to speak of the “Jewish church,” however it is not historically untrue.⁴⁹

The use of an analogy between the use of Latin as an ancient Church language as opposed to German as the mother tongue to explain the relationship of Hebrew and Aramaic in the time of Jesus is probably also based on this equation.⁵⁰ Dalman even suggests an intentional removal of the use of the Aramaic mother tongue in the Jewish synagogues, promoted by the religious leadership:

49 Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 421: “Die mosaische Theokratie, das Residuum eines untergegangenen Staates, . . . ist ihrem Wesen nach der alkatholischen Kirche nächstverwandt, deren Mutter sie in der Tat gewesen ist. Ästhetisch anstößig mag es sein wenn man von der jüdischen Kirche redet, historisch unrichtig ist es nicht . . .”

50 Meyer, *Muttersprache*, 74. The analogy of the use of Latin in medieval Europe is frequently applied inaccurately and inappropriately in discussions about the roles of Hebrew and Aramaic during the Second Temple period. The two different registers of Hebrew must be included in the analogy in order for it to be explanatory and descriptive. During the Second Temple period Hebrew had developed a “low register” Hebrew in distinction from a high-register literary Hebrew. The true Latin situation in late antiquity and medieval Europe included a classical Latin that is distinguished from spoken vulgar Latin dialects, the predecessors to the Romanic languages. Mishnaic Hebrew during the Second Temple period is none other than the analogical equivalent of “vulgar Latin.” In a diglossic framework, the existence of a low-register Mishnaic Hebrew stands as a primary witness against the “Exclusive Aramaic” model. This is all the more evident after the Qumran discoveries, where it is obvious that a “high” Hebrew could be used when so desired.

The more the scribes obtained unlimited control of the Jewish religious system, so much the more did divine worship adopt the form prescribed by the learned, and specially calculated only for themselves. During the progress of this transition the popular language was gradually extruded from public worship.⁵¹

Jesus, in the framework of this paradigm, becomes an early prototype of Martin Luther, translating the ancient traditions of his faith from a language no longer understood but imposed on the people by a powerful religious establishment, into the mother tongue of the people, thereby at the same time unleashing a spiritual reformation that freed the faithful believers from the bondages of ecclesiastical traditions and empowered the lay people in their struggle against the corrupted clerical establishment. Obviously, parallels with the struggle of German Protestant liberalism against the dominion of Catholic cultural traditionalism in the nineteenth century were not unintended or without influence in the use of this analogy.

d *The Language of the Bible and the Language of Babel*

Still another facet of the socio-political context which gave rise to the “exclusive Aramaic hypothesis” might be found in the rivalry of European nations in the archaeological exploration of the Middle East at the turn of the century.⁵² While France and England had for some time been substantially involved in biblical archaeology in the Holy Land, the newly established German nation felt a need to stake her own claims on the fields of archaeology. However, since the majority of biblical lands, including Egypt, had already been at the focus of French, British and American archaeological campaigns, Germany decided to break new grounds in Ashur and Babylonia. In 1898, the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft* was founded and one of Germany’s leading Semitists, Friedrich Delitzsch, was invited soon after to lay out a vision for German archaeological endeavors. He did so in a series of lectures presented to an academic audience, including Kaiser Wilhelm II and his wife, Kaiserin Auguste Victoria, in the years 1902–1904. These lectures, titled “Babel und Bibel,” sparked an international

51 Dalman, *Worte Jesu*, 9: “Je mehr die Schriftgelehrten die unumschränkte Leitung des jüdischen Religionswesens in die Hand bekamen, desto mehr hat auch der Gottesdienst die von den Gelehrten geforderte und für sie eigentlich nur berechnete Gestalt angenommen. In diesem Wandlungsprozess wurde allmählich die Volkssprache aus dem Gottesdienste verdrängt.” Translation cited from p. 11 of the English edition.

52 Cf. Bill T. Arnold and David B. Weisberg, “A Centennial Review of Friedrich Delitzsch’s ‘Babel and Bibel’ Lectures,” *JBL* 121 (2002): 441–57.

controversy due to their critical stance on Biblical literature. However, they laid important foundations for a German preoccupation with Babylonian and Assyrian culture in the decades to come. Delitzsch made it clear at the outset of his lectures, that he understood his task in the political framework of his time, referring to a “rivalry among the nations” and “ever-growing, self-sacrificing interest . . . in the excavations in Assyria and Babylonia.”⁵³

The main thrust of his argumentation, then, was to prove the superiority of the Assyrian and Babylonian cultures over the biblical culture of Israel: not only were they more ancient, but they were also more advanced in their religious concepts, while the religion of Israel, in the eyes of Delitzsch, was but a dim reflection of the grandeur of her neighbors. These conclusions are then also transferred to the New Testament era as a paradigm by which to understand and interpret the relationship of Jesus to the Judaism of his time. After establishing the partially non-Semitic character of the Babylonian people and describing Ashurbanipal’s wife as “a princess of Aryan blood and blond hair.”⁵⁴ Delitzsch concluded that the same was to be assumed for the population of Samaria and Galilee at the time of Jesus:

This assessment of a Babylonian (and therefore not purely Semitic) character of the Samaritan–Galilean mixed population will prove to be, it seems to me, very valuable also for future New Testament scholarship. Many of the conceptions, words and actions of Jesus, the Galilean, urges us instinctively to seek for Babylonian comparisons.⁵⁵

According to this line of argument, the “Good Samaritan” is transformed into a “Good Babylonian” and also the *magi* in Bethlehem are presumably arriving from Babylonia.⁵⁶ In a later publication, Delitzsch suggested the total

53 Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel und Bibel. Ein Vortrag* (Helsingfors: J. C. Hinrichs, 1902), 3.

54 Delitzsch, *Babel und Bibel*, 19–20.

55 Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel und Bibel. Dritter (Schluss-)Vortrag* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1905), 11: “Diese Feststellung des babylonischen (und schon deshalb nicht rein semitischen) Charakters des samaritanisch-galiläischen Mischvolkes dürfte sich, wie mir scheint, in Zukunft auch für die neutestamentliche Forschung als der Berücksichtigung wert ausweisen. Gar manches in den Anschauungen, Aussprüchen und Taten Jesu, des Galiläers, drängt unwillkürlich zu babylonischen Vergleichen . . .” For the frequent claim of a non-Jewish character of Galilee, cf. the remarks above.

56 Delitzsch, *Babel und Bibel. Dritter (Schluss-)Vortrag*, 23, 48 and 56–57.

removal of the Hebrew Bible from the Christian canon and its replacement by Schwaner’s “*Germanen-Bibel*.”⁵⁷

Obviously, not all scholars of his time shared the views of Friedrich Delitzsch. Nevertheless, his voice was not a singular phenomenon either. Delitzsch’s lectures on the superiority of the Babylonian over the Hebrew culture and religion found broad support not only in the eyes of the Kaiser, but also among biblical scholars of his time. The general concept of Judaism, and the Hebrew canon, as an inferior deviation of the older Abrahamic religion was close to that of Wellhausen, and the suggestion to remove the Hebrew scriptures from the Christian Bible was advanced in very similar words by Adolf von Harnack.⁵⁸ The striking paradigm shift within one generation of scholars—from Franz Delitzsch, who was a leading scholar in Hebraic and Judaic studies, praised by many of his Jewish colleagues at his time, to his son Friedrich, who put much effort into the demonstration of Hebrew inferiority and Babylonian supremacy—might well reflect a general tendency in German scholarship. This, in turn, might have contributed to the rapid advance of the “exclusive Aramaic” paradigm within German scholarship, which offered them a ready tool to move Jesus further away from his Jewish context and closer to a non-semitic, universalist and, at the same time, more ancient and more developed religious framework. The ancient religion of Abraham, the wandering Aramean from Chaldea, was finally restored by Jesus, the Aramaic-speaking wanderer from Galilee, leaving behind the narrow confinements of Mosaic religion and Jewish tradition, enclosed (if not buried) in the biblical canon and the Hebrew language.

57 Friedrich Delitzsch, *Die große Täuschung. Kritische Betrachtungen zu den alttestamentlichen Berichten über Israels Eindringen in Kanaan, die Gottesoffenbarung vom Sinai und die Wirksamkeit der Propheten (Erster Teil)*, Stuttgart/Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1920), 95.

58 Adolf von Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott. Eine Monographie zur Geschichte der Grundlegung der katholischen Kirche* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1921), 217: “Das Alte Testament im 2. Jahrhundert zu verwerfen war ein Fehler, den die große Kirche mit Recht abgelehnt hat; es im 16. Jahrhundert beizubehalten war ein Schicksal, dem sich die Reformation noch nicht zu entziehen vermochte; es aber seit dem 19. Jahrhundert als kanonische Urkunde im Protestantismus noch zu konservieren ist die Folge einer religiösen und kirchlichen Lähmung” (“To reject the Old Testament in the second century was an error the Church rightly resisted; to maintain it in the sixteenth century was a destiny the Reformation could not escape; but still to preserve it in the nineteenth century as one of the canonical documents of Protestantism is the result of religious and ecclesiastical paralysis”).

5 Conclusions

It would be superficial and foolish to say that the rise of the exclusive Aramaic hypothesis was only a result of the different ideological and socio-political tendencies of the eighteenth and nineteenth century sketched out in this article. The purpose of this study was not in any way to discredit the achievements of outstanding scholars like Dalman, Wellhausen, Zahn or even Delitzsch. However, it is obvious that these scholars, as every other in any given period, were children of their time.⁵⁹ And it would therefore likewise be foolish to assume that they remained completely untouched by the socio-political circumstances that surrounded them.

It is obvious, from today's perspective, that some of the conclusions of early Aramaic scholarship were based on wrong presumptions and on weak evidence. This is not a fault of these scholars but a natural result of progressing research and new evidence discovered in the twentieth century. We know today that the language of the Syriac Church was never the "language of Jesus." However, it was exactly this idea that shaped the minds of scholars well into the nineteenth century. We know today that written Targums cannot be dated into pre-Christian times. However, for scholars of the nineteenth century they were the main point of reference not only for the identification of the dialects to choose, but for the general assumption that Hebrew was no longer spoken at the time of Jesus. We know today that Geiger's thesis of an artificial character of Mishnaic Hebrew was a misconception. However, this knowledge is the result of a century of linguistic research into the history of the Hebrew language.⁶⁰ We have today at our hands a large library of extant literature, doc-

59 However, even during that period, some scholars were already taking a different road. This is demonstrated by the voluminous work of Alfred Resch, *Aussercanonische Paralleltexzte zu den Evangelien* (TU 10; Leipzig: Hinrichs 1893–1897). Resch was, in his time, an early advocate for a complex trilingual reality in first-century Palestine and assumed that Jesus might have used all three languages depending on situation, location and addresses. However, for the written pre-synoptic Gospel tradition, he assumed a Hebrew language background to be more probable than an Aramaic one. Based on a meticulous study of Agrapha, apocryphal traditions, textual variants and synoptic comparison charts, Resch came to the conclusion that a Hebrew source (of more or less proto-Matthean character) must have laid at the foundation of all three Synoptic Gospels. For an overview of other early approaches to a Hebrew (rather than Aramaic) background of the Gospel tradition, cf. Baltes, op. cit. (cf. n. 2), pp. 44–67.

60 Today, scholarship on the development of Hebrew views Mishnaic Hebrew during the Second Temple more along the lines of a diglossic, register distinction between high

uments and inscriptions from the Second Temple period, on stone, papyrus, sherds and parchment, written for the most part in Hebrew, but to some lesser degree also in Aramaic. The scholars of the nineteenth century had none of these and therefore had to base their assumptions exclusively on conjectures about no-longer-existing (sometimes, from today's perspective, never-existing) works of literature.

In this study, I have therefore tried to search for possible reasons why bold claims for the exclusive use of the Aramaic language could fall on such fertile ground and why they were so readily accepted in the late nineteenth century, while obviously so little hard evidence was available. The reasons, as suggested here, might be found in the general theological and socio-political and religious framework in which these hypotheses were conceived. Certain connotations of national, cultural, social and religious identity were obviously closely tied to the languages of Aramaic and Hebrew. Indeed, while these might not have been consciously employed by the authors to advance their arguments, most probably they subtly supported presumptions made on other grounds. These connotations include the dichotomies of nationalism vs. universalism, the learned vs. the unlearned, clerics vs. laymen, Babel vs. Bible, and "late Judaism" vs. "early Christianity." In addition, the romantic ideal of a monolingual society necessitated a choice of one language against the other, leading to the eventual establishment of an exclusive Aramaic model.

Ongoing historical, archaeological, linguistic and philological work in the course of the twentieth century has shown that the models of the nineteenth century were too simple and the historical reality in the land of Israel was more complex than assumed by the scholars of this era. The use of Hebrew and Aramaic in the time of Jesus cannot easily be divided along the dividing lines sketched above. Both languages were used to express nationalist as well as universalist ideas, both languages were used by the learned and the unlearned, by the religious and the non-religious, the establishment and the opposition, within early Judaism as well as early Christianity. The evidence from texts and inscriptions of the period in question, made available through the archaeological discoveries of the twentieth century, reveals an overwhelming use of Hebrew in literary contexts and a more or less even distribution of Hebrew and Aramaic in non-literary contexts.⁶¹ In addition, sociolinguistic research has shown that the romantic ideal of a monolingual society, pursued by scholars

Hebrew (like most of the Hebrew found at Qumran) and low Hebrew (as is seen in the Bar Kokhba letters, inscriptions and Tannaitic literature).

61 Cf. my other contribution to the present volume on the epigraphic evidence, "The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era."

of the nineteenth century, is incompatible with empirical realities. To the contrary, bilingualism or even multilingualism should be considered the norm, as André Martinet, a pioneer in the research of language contact and bilingualism, has pointed out in his introduction to Uriel Weinreich's benchmark book on language contact:

There was a time when the progress of research required that each community should be considered linguistically self-contained and homogeneous... By making investigators blind to a large number of actual complexities, [this approach] has enabled scholars, from the founding fathers down to the functionalists and structuralists of today, to abstract a number of problems, to present for them solutions perfectly valid in the frame of the hypothesis... Linguists will always have to revert at times to this pragmatic assumption. But we shall now have to stress the fact that a linguistic community is never homogeneous and hardly ever self-contained... linguistic diversity begins next door, nay, at home, and within one and the same man.⁶²

Based on this insight, there is no need, and probably no right, to establish an exclusive Aramaic, or, if such ever existed, an exclusive Hebrew model for the language situation in the land of Israel at the time of Jesus. Since all the evidence points in the direction of a continued use of both languages well into the second century, obviously side by side with Greek, New Testament scholars should move beyond the boundaries set up by the paradigms of early Aramaic scholarship and employ a multidimensional,⁶³ trilingual model when mapping out the linguistic landscape of the Jewish society in the Second Temple period.

Fortunately, many of the concepts and presuppositions described in this study have already been abandoned. We can only hope that the boldness of the claims based upon them that are still made even today concerning the exclusive use of Aramaic, and the vigor and suspicion that targets those who naturally employ the Hebrew language in their daily work on New Testament texts will likewise be recognized as anachronisms whose time has passed.

62 André Martinet, "Introduction," to Uriel Weinreich, *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems* (New York: Linguistic Circle of New York, 1953), vii.

63 Hebrew is attested in two distinct registers, Greek was also attested in registers ranging from Josephus to some of the Greek papyri in the Judean desert, and Aramaic can be distinguished in various dialects.

The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era

Guido Baltes

The widespread conviction among New Testament scholars that Aramaic, and not Hebrew, should be considered the “Jewish vernacular” of the first century C.E. and therefore the “mother tongue of Jesus,” was shaped in the nineteenth century by prominent scholars like Abraham Geiger and Gustaf Dalman, who were, without doubt, experts in their field. However, the textual evidence they could base their conclusions on was thin at that time: no literature, neither Hebrew nor Aramaic, was extant from the period in question and archaeological research in the land of Israel had only just begun. Geiger had to base his thesis about the artificial character of Mishnaic Hebrew solely on the text of the Mishnah itself.¹ Dalman, in his influential work *Die Worte Jesu* (*The Words of Jesus*), had to build his theses on the lexical Semitisms within the works of Josephus and the New Testament, the Aramaic parts of early rabbinic literature and on the assumption that targum was already an “ancient practice” in the early second century C.E., since no Aramaic texts from the period in question were available to him.² Hence, two prominent Aramaic scholars of our time have described the situation as follows:

The position of Aramaic in our period was long a somewhat ironic one. The central importance of the language was universally recognized, and many scholars . . . supposed it to be the Semitic vernacular of Palestine to the virtual exclusion of Hebrew; yet actual texts in Aramaic from our period have until recently been very scanty.³

1 Abraham Geiger, *Lehr- und Lesebuch zur Sprache der Mischnah. Band 1: Lehrbuch zur Sprache der Mischnah* (Breslau: Leuckart, 1845).

2 Gustaf Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu: mit Berücksichtigung des nachkanonischen jüdischen Schrifttums und der aramäischen Sprache erörtert* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1898). On the history of early Aramaic scholarship, see my other contribution to the present volume. “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’ in the Nineteenth Century: Methodological Fallacies and Subtle Motives.”

3 James Barr, “Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek in the Hellenistic Age,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism* (ed. W. D. Davies and Louis Finkelstein; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 79–114 (91).

Between the final redaction of Daniel (ca. 165 B.C.E.), in which roughly six chapters are written in Aramaic, and the first rabbinical writings, Mēgillat Ta'anit, dating from the end of the first Christian century, there had never been much evidence of the use of Aramaic in Palestine prior to the discovery of the Qumran scrolls and fragments.⁴

This situation has changed dramatically in the course of the past century. Starting with the discoveries in the Cairo Genizah, and continuing with the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Bar Kokhba letters and other documentary texts from the Judaeen desert, the landscape of Hebrew and Aramaic literature from the Second Temple period has changed dramatically. In addition, ongoing archaeological work has brought to light a vast number of inscriptions, ostraca and other epigraphical material.

While the documents from the Judaeen Desert have been subject to intensive study and scholarly debate not only among archaeologists, linguists and also biblical scholars, the inscriptions and ostraca have largely been neglected by New Testament scholarship. This is probably due to their meager theological content and the lack of any direct links to New Testament literature, with a few exceptions like the "Pontius Pilatus" inscription from Caesarea, a few "qorban" inscriptions, the ossuary of "Alexander, son of Simon, from Cyrene," or, for those with a more sensational interest, the famous "Jesus ben Joseph" ossuary from Talpiot, together with its companion, the "James Ossuary."⁵

What has largely gone unnoticed, meanwhile, are the conclusions drawn by archaeologists, epigraphists and palaeographers concerning the language use in the epigraphic material discovered over the past century. Martin Hengel, in an article published in 1996, analyzed in depth the use of Greek in these Jewish inscriptions.⁶ However, he leaves aside the issue of Hebrew versus Aramaic. Leading Israeli epigraphist Joseph Naveh had addressed that question earlier, but only very briefly in a short article published in Hebrew that has probably

4 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D." (1970), in idem, *Wandering Aramaean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 29–56 (39).

5 Although the legal charges of forgery against Oded Golan have been dropped following the court decision of March 2012, the academic debate on the authenticity of the inscription (or parts thereof) remains open.

6 Martin Hengel, "Zum Problem der 'Hellenisierung' Judäas im 1. Jahrhundert nach Christus," in *Judaica et Hellenistica: Kleine Schriften I* (ed. Martin Hengel et al.; WUNT 90; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 1–90. English version: *The 'Hellenization' of Judaea in the First Century after Christ* (London: SCM, 1989).

not been noticed by most New Testament scholars. He sums up the conclusions to be drawn from the evidence available at his time as follows:

The Aramaic language gradually replaced Hebrew to become the dominant language [i.e. in the course of the Second Temple period and until 135 C.E.]. The Hebrew language and script was mainly used in matters of national or religious relevance. However, it also continued to be used in daily life. This picture, emerging from the epigraphic evidence, fits well with the picture reflected by the literary sources . . . Although the Jews began to develop their own specific Aramaic dialect, many also continued to speak Hebrew. Hebrew had the status of a national language: it was the language of literature and religion and the language to express national identity (e.g. on the coins).⁷

Very similar conclusions can be found in most of the major excavation reports from Qumran, Masada, Beth She'arim and Jerusalem. Unfortunately, this insight has still not found its way into the field of New Testament scholarship. As recent as 2004, Klaus Beyer reiterated his claim that Hebrew was not a spoken language in any part of the country at the time of Jesus:

It is therefore improbable that Hebrew continued to be spoken in any remote part of the country until the time of Jesus. Definitely, the scribes have not taken their literary Mishnaic Hebrew [*neuhebräische Schriftsprache*] from there.⁸

Hebrew was nobody's mother tongue from at least 300 B.C.E. until 1880 C.E.⁹

7 Josef Naveh, "Hebrew versus Aramaic in the Epigraphic Finds of the Second Temple—Bar-Kokhba Period," *Leshonenu* 56 (1992): 301–16 (Hebrew with English summary), 301 and 315 (translation mine).

8 Klaus Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer samt den Inschriften aus Palästina, dem Testament Levis aus der Kairoer Genisa, der Fastenrolle und den alten talmudischen Zitaten* (2 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984 and 2004), 1:58: "Deshalb ist es unwahrscheinlich, daß das Hebräische in irgendeinem abgelegenen Gebiet bis zur Zeit Jesu gesprochen wurde. Ausgeschlossen ist aber, daß die Schriftgelehrten sich von dort ihre neuhebräische Schriftsprache geholt hätten . . ."

9 *Ibid.*, 2:31: "Das Hebräische war von spätestens 300 v.Chr. bis 1880 n.Chr. niemandes Muttersprache."

A similar claim on Aramaic exclusivity has been made by Maurice Casey.¹⁰ Few scholars today would go as far as Beyer and Casey, however. A more “moderate” view, one that allows *some* use of Hebrew in specifically religious contexts or secluded circles, is today probably shared by the majority of New Testament scholars. It has recently been presented by Ingo Kottsieper with explicit reference to the epigraphic evidence:

From all the evidence discussed . . . there can be little doubt that Hebrew was superseded by Aramaic as the commonly spoken language during the Persian era. Nevertheless, Hebrew was still in use in religious circles and in the realm of the temple, not only for traditional texts, but also for new texts and probably also as the lingo of these communities.¹¹

However, the “evidence discussed” by Kottsieper, whose main focus is on the Persian era, is scarce in regards to the first and second centuries C.E.; he mentions the use of Hebrew in the letters of Bar Kokhba, which he explains as “part of the ideology of the rebels” (p. 114). He also adduces the Hebrew ostraca from Masada, which he views as a result of “priestly influence on the groups in Masada” (p. 115). For other Hebrew inscriptions from the first century, Kottsieper argues: “They could either belong to members of priestly or religious circles or show the influence of language politics during the Jewish war” (p. 115). However, does such reasoning, very common also among New Testament scholars, in fact do justice to the sources? The problem with this approach, as with many others of this kind, is that, for reasons of brevity, the authors often give selective evidence without painting the full picture. The reader often gets the impression that the use of Hebrew in the epigraphic sources is the exception, while the use of Aramaic is the rule. However, this impression is based for the most part on the selective character of the evidence provided.

The purpose of the present study is therefore to provide the reader with a comprehensive statistical overview of language use in the epigraphic sources. Since the publication of Naveh’s article, a great number of new inscriptions have been published, including the first two volumes of the long-awaited

10 Maurice Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark’s Gospel* (SNTSMS 102; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 79.

11 Ingo Kottsieper, “‘And they did not care to speak Yehudit’: On Linguistic Change in Judah During the Late Persian Era,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (ed. Oded Lipschitz, Gary N. Knoppers and Rainer Albertz; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 95–124 (118).

“Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae” and the final volumes of the “Discoveries in the Judaean Desert” series, as well as new material from recent excavations. This puts us in a position to present a new and updated overview on the issue, including statistics on the various corpora.

As will be seen, this task is impeded by a number of challenges, ranging from the absence of a complete up-to-date catalogue of epigraphic sources to the coincidental character of the material available and the disputability of language classification and dates of origin in many cases where inscriptions are either too short or too fragmentary to allow a clear verdict. Also, a survey like this must, by default, stay superficial; the purpose is to draw a broad map of language use without getting into the complex details of content and sociolinguistic context.¹² However, references to the sources are given, so that interested readers can look up the evidence themselves and make their own judgments that may, in details, differ from mine. Despite the obstacles, a general picture will emerge from this statistical survey that hopefully will help students of the New Testament and Second Temple Judaism to develop their own view on the complex issue of language use.

1 The Material

A comprehensive catalogue of Jewish inscriptions from the land of Israel does not exist. The most recent collection covering the whole land of Israel, the “Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum” (CIJ), dates back more than half a century and does in many respects not meet modern methodological standards.¹³ Work is still in progress on a successor, the “Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae” (CIIP), of which the first two volumes have just recently appeared in print, while nine volumes are projected altogether.¹⁴ The estimated number

12 I have done this in more detail as part of a broader study of the Hebrew background of the Gospel tradition: *Hebräisches Evangelium und synoptische Überlieferung. Untersuchungen zum hebräischen Hintergrund der Evangelientradition* (WUNT 2/312; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

13 Jean Baptiste Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum. Recueil des Inscriptions Juives qui vont du II^e siècle avant Jésus-Christ au VII^e siècle de Notre Ère. Vol II: Asie—Afrique* (Sussidi allo studio delle antichità cristiane III; Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Christiana, 1952).

14 Hannah M. Cotton, Leah Di Segni, Werner Eck et al., *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*. Vol. 1, *Jerusalem, Part 1: 1–704* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010). Part 2: 705–1120 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2011). Vol. 2: *Caesarea and the Middle Coast: 1121–2160* (Berlin / New York: de Gruyter 2011).

of 10,000 texts in the CIIP, compared to the 533 texts compiled in the CIJ, gives us a vague idea of how drastically the epigraphic landscape has changed in the past 50 years.¹⁵

Until the final completion of the CIIP, we therefore still have to turn to a number of separate catalogues, collections and excavation reports to get a rough idea of language use in the epigraphic material of the period in question. The following material from major excavations and publications has been included in this survey:

(a) The “Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum,” though outdated, still offers the broadest and most diverse collection of inscriptions from across the land of Israel. Among the 535 samples (CIJ 882–1414),¹⁶ three groups stand out as separate corpora: 178 ossuary inscriptions from Jerusalem (CIJ 1210–1387), 169 inscriptions from the Beth She’arim necropolis (CIJ 993–1161), dating from the late second century to the fifth century C.E., and 69 inscriptions from the Joppa necropolis (CIJ 892–960), dating from the late second and third centuries C.E. Of the remaining 117 inscriptions, 48 are without date, and some others are dated only very vaguely.¹⁷

15 It should be noted, however, that the CIIP will also include the non-Jewish material as well as inscriptions from the Arabian peninsula.

16 According to Frey’s numbering, they should be 534 samples. However, some of the inscriptions have been regrouped differently in view of later research. For example, CIJ 1393 a/b are probably two separate inscriptions (now CIIP 347 and 357), while CIJ 1215, 1217 and 1226 are probably part of the same inscription (now CIIP 421). CIJ 1286 is probably a recent forgery; cf. Rachel Hachlili, *Jewish Funerary Customs, Practices and Rites in the Second Temple Period* (JSJSup 94; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 175. Re-evaluations and uncertainties like these lead to slight deviations from exact mathematical numbers throughout this article.

17 For one of the Hebrew inscriptions from the basement of the Al-Aqsa Mosque (CIJ 1399), a possible range of dates from pre-70 C.E. to the Middle Ages (!) is given. Palaeographic dating is not employed throughout the CIJ. Apart from the ossuary inscriptions, a possible dating to the first centuries B.C.E. or C.E. is proposed by Frey for 14 other inscriptions: CIJ 891, 989, 1173, 1388, 1390, 1399, 1400, 1402, 1403, 1404, 1407, 1408, 1412 and 1413. For CIJ 989 and 1403, however, a later date is much more probable, and for CIJ 1399, a late date is next to certain. The latter has therefore been excluded from the statistics for the 1st century inscriptions. For the ossuary inscription CIJ 1389, no date is given by Frey. However, already Clermont-Ganneau, who is adduced by Frey as his source, had proposed a date of 200 C.E. or later. Therefore, it is also excluded from the 1st century inscriptions. CIJ 1300, 1394 and 1395 (CIIP 460, 137 and 138) are not dated by Frey, but a 1st century C.E. provenance is assumed by the editors of CIIP.

(b) Volume 1.1 of the CIIP contains, according to the layout of the series, all inscriptions found in the Jerusalem area that can be dated before 70 C.E. Most of these are ossuary and funerary inscriptions (CIIP 1, 11–608), most others are ostraca and domestic utensils like engraved vessels, pottery stands, stone weights, and so on (CIIP 609–704). CIIP 1–10 are other inscriptions from public areas.¹⁸ Volume 1.2 contains only inscriptions later than 70 C.E. and therefore has been excluded from this survey as a whole. In contrast, Volume 2 has been included, because it contains inscriptions from all eras, collected from Caesarea and the surrounding coastline. However, other than Vol. 1, the majority of the finds in Vol. 2 can not be dated with certainty before or after 70 C.E.¹⁹

(c) Outside of Jerusalem, the excavations at Masada have probably yielded the largest number of inscriptions from the Second Temple period. The final excavation reports list a total of 941 inscriptions: 700 in Hebrew or Aramaic, 2 in Nabatean, 105 in Latin, 101 in Greek, 6 in Latin and Greek (bilingual) and 27 which cannot be clearly identified as being either Greek or Latin. However, the impressive numbers are misleading, since 301 of the 700 inscriptions in Jewish script (Mas 1–301) contain no more than one letter each. Another 139 samples (Mas 302–440) contain names and list of names, much like the ossuary inscriptions from Jerusalem, and are only of limited value for language studies. Most of the Latin material is dated to the time of Herod the Great, some of it also to the period of Roman occupation after 74 C.E. The Greek material originates both from Herodian times (26 B.C.E.–66 C.E.) and from the time of the Jewish revolt (66–73 C.E.). At least one document (Mas 742) and two ostraca

18 Although CIIP 1.1 contains 704 inscriptions, in the overview a total of 707 are listed because some of the CIIP inscriptions combine multiple inscriptions from older corpora and vice versa (cf. n. 16).

19 Out of a total of 1023 inscriptions, about 400 are explicitly dated by the editors. Roughly 100 others are implicitly dated with reference to their context or content (e.g. Christian symbolism). Using these criteria, only 43 inscriptions are dated by the editors to a period of the 1st centuries B.C.E./C.E. If all inscriptions were counted for which such a date is *possible*, while not explicitly or implicitly stated (and in many cases not probable), the number would rise to 570. However, for the purposes of the present study, the decision to include or exclude these in the count for the New Testament era does not make much of a difference, since the vast majority of these 570 are either Greek or Latin: Out of a total of 12 Hebrew/Aramaic and 8 bilingual Greek-Hebrew/Greek-Aramaic inscriptions, none are dated explicitly to a time before 100 C.E., while 11 are too fragmentary to be dated at all (6 Hebrew/Aramaic: CIIP 1431, 1549, 1610, 1677, 1678 and 2078, 5 bilingual Greek-Hebrew/Greek-Aramaic: CIIP 1571, 1602, 1662, 1675 and 2079) and therefore could *theoretically* be from the New Testament era. However, this would not change the results of this study in a significant way.

(Mas 793 and 794) are dated to Byzantine times. The Hebrew and Aramaic material (Mas 1–701 and Mas 1p), however, can safely be dated to a period before the fall of Masada in 73 C.E.²⁰

(d) The excavations at Herodion have yielded a total of 63 inscriptions and ostraca, 28 of which are dated by the excavators to the first or early second century.²¹ Some of these (Herodion 14, 20, 22, 31, 32, and 43), however, contain no text, but only drawings and symbols.

(e) Inscriptions from Beth She'arim that were discovered during the first phase of excavations in 1936–1940 have been included in the CIJ (993–1161). However, further excavations during the years 1953–1958 brought to light more burial caves and inscriptions. The total number of inscriptions, published in the final reports, rose to 290, dating from the late second century to the fifth century.²² In spite of the late date, this collection is particularly interesting because of a relatively large number of Hebrew inscriptions, probably originating from “a circle of scholars and their families who remained fluent in Hebrew at a time when the general populace spoke Aramaic or Greek.”²³

(f) A number of ossuary inscriptions not included in the CIIP due to their provenance from outside Jerusalem, their disputed dating or their recent

20 701 Inscriptions in “Jewish script” (Mas 1–701) have been published by Yigael Yadin and Josef Naveh, “The Aramaic and Hebrew Ostraca and Jar Inscriptions,” in *Masada*. Vol. 1, *The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965: Final Reports* (ed. Yigael Yadin; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989), 1–70. Mas 514 and 515 are identified as Nabatean. The Greek and Latin inscriptions have been published by Hannah M. Cotton, Joseph Geiger and David J. Thomas, *Masada II: The Yigael Yadin Excavation 1963–1965 Final Reports. The Latin and Greek Documents* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989). One additional, unclassified Hebrew or Aramaic fragment is listed by Tov as Mas 1p in *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and an Introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series* (ed. Emanuel Tov; DJD 39; Oxford: Clarendon, 2002), 226 (cf. below). Biblical and Bible-related material from Masada in Hebrew and Aramaic has been published by Shemaryahu Talmon, “Hebrew Fragments from Masada,” in *Masada VI: Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965 Final Reports* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1999), 1–148. However, because of their literary character, these have not been included in the present study.

21 Emmanuele Testa, *Herodion*. Vol. 4, *I graffiti e gli ostraka* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum: Collectio Maior 20/4; Jerusalem: Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 1972).

22 Benjamin Mazar, *Beth She'arim: Report on the Excavations during 1936–1940*. Vol. 1, *Catacombs 1–4* (Jerusalem: Masada, 1973). Moshe Schwabe and Baruch Lifshitz, *Beth She'arim*. Vol. 2, *The Greek Inscriptions* (Jerusalem: Masada, 1974). Nahman Avigad, *Beth She'arim. Report on the Excavations during 1953–1958*. Vol. 3, *Catacombs 12–23* (Jerusalem: Masada, 1976).

23 Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, 3:131–32.

discovery have also been included in this survey. Among these are a number of ossuaries from the “Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries” (CJO),²⁴ one late inscription from Nazareth, two from a burial cave in Horvat Kishor in the Judean Shephelah,²⁵ one from a private collection²⁶ and two recent finds,²⁷ altogether 31 additional ossuary inscriptions.²⁸

- 24 Levi Yizhaq Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries in the Collections of the State of Israel* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1994). Not included in CIIP are Nos. 130 (probably a recent forgery?), 282 (probably from third century C.E.?), 552 and 557 (from El-Jib), 610 (from Ben Shemen), 678, 682 and 865 (from Kibbutz Lahav), 773, 777, 778, 782, 783, 787, 789, 793–796 and 800 (from Jericho), 145 (from Kfar Baruch), 425 (from Qiryat Tiv'on). For the statistical data of language use within the CJO, I am indebted to David Bivin, who kindly provided me with the data he collected and which I have re-checked with the original and with the CIIP (e.g. CIIP 33 and 41 provide inscriptions not seen or not mentioned by Rahmani, CJO 147 resp. CJO 203).
- 25 Boaz Zissu, “The Cave of ‘Yudan Shaul’ at Horbat Kishor, Southern Judean Shephela,” *Atiqot* 46 (2004): 27–35 (Hebrew) and 129* (English summary). The cave contained 16 ossuaries, bearing two inscriptions, one in Greek (“OHO”) and one in Jewish Script (יודן שאול), probably the name “Yuda(n) Shaul.”
- 26 The inscription בת יהוחנן מריה (“Maria bat Johanan”), published by Ada Yardeni in her *Textbook* (see below) at 1:233 and 2:81, is not to be found in the CIIP, probably due to the unknown provenance.
- 27 The first one has been published by Yuval Baruch and Danit Levi, “The Tomb and Ossuary of Alexa Son of Shalom,” *IEJ* 61 (2011), 96–105. The report presents a two-line inscription in Middle Hebrew, though mentioning a name with an Aramaic patronym: (a) אלכסא אלכסא בר שלום ברית אלכסא (b) ארור שיטלני ממקומי ‘Alexa bar Shalom berat Alexa // Cursed is the one who casts me from my place’. The provenance of the second ossuary is not clear, it is possible that it was discovered during an illegal grave robbery in the Elah valley, cf. Boaz Zissu and Goren Yuval, “The Ossuary of Miriam Daughter of Yeshua Son of Caiaphas, Priests [of] Ma'aziah from Beth ‘Imri,” *IEJ* 61 (2011), 96–105. The inscription reads מרים ברית ישוע בר קיפא בהנמ מעזיה מבית אמרי. A connection with the so-called “Caiaphas tomb” in Jerusalem (CIIP 461–465) as well as the historical figure of the High Priest Caiaphas remains to be further investigated, however it is highly probable.
- 28 The comprehensive catalogue of Jewish ossuaries from Galilee compiled by Mordechai Aviam and Danny Syon, “Jewish Ossilegium in Galilee,” in *What Has Athens to Do with Jerusalem? Essays on Classical, Jewish, and Early Christian Art and Archaeology in Honor of Gideon Foerster* (ed. Leonard V. Rutgers; Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion 1; Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 151–87, does not yield additional data: it lists 75 ossuaries with three inscriptions, two of them Greek and already included in the CJO (No. 20 = CJO 145 and No. 18 = CJO 425). The third inscribed ossuary mentioned (No. 22) is probably a mistake of the authors: Reference is made to an inscription from Nazareth, originally published by Bellarmino Bagatti, *The Excavations at Nazareth*. Vol. 1, *From the Beginning until the Twelfth Century* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1969), 247–248. However, the inscription was found on a column and has no connection whatsoever to

g) In addition to the ossuary inscriptions, other inscriptions not covered by the corpora mentioned above, include finds from Qiryat Shmuel near Tiberias,²⁹ Khirbet el-Ein³⁰ and Horbat Lavnin³¹ in the southern Judean Shephelah, Horvat Maon in the Hebron hills,³² Jatt,³³ Khirbet Kharuf,³⁴ Moza,³⁵ Karm er-Ras³⁶ and an unpublished Sarcophagus inscription from the north of Jerusalem, announced by the IAA in 2008,³⁷ have been included in this survey, a total of ten inscriptions altogether.

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- the ossuaries also mentioned by Bagatti on p. 247. The inscription reads (in Hebrew) "Soam, Son of Menahem, may his soul find rest." and already appears in the CIJ as CIJ 988. According to Bagatti (p. 247), it can be dated paleographically to the fourth–sixth century C.E.
- 29 Fanny Vitto, "A Jewish Mausoleum of the Roman Period at Qiryat Shemu'el, Tiberias," *Atiqot (English Series)* 58 (2007): 7–29. The Greek inscription reads ΣΧΙΩΝ, the meaning of which is unclear.
- 30 Boaz Zissu, "A Burial Cave with a Greek Inscription and Graffiti at Khirbat el-Ein, Judean Shephelah," *Atiqot (English Series)* 50 (2005): 27–36. The inscription cannot be deciphered and may be a magical incantation.
- 31 Boaz Zissu, "Horbat Lavnin," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot—Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 113 (2001): 104 (Hebrew) and 154 (English summary). The inscription contains the Hebrew letters פ"י and the Greek word ΘΕΟΣ, written backwards.
- 32 David Amit and Zvi Ilan, "The Ancient Synagogue at Ma'on in Judah" *Qadmoniot* 23 (1990): 115–25 (Hebrew). The inscription reads גור הפ"ר in Paleo-Hebrew script.
- 33 Marwan Masarwa, "Jatt: Final Report," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 116 (2004), published online at <http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il>. One inscription contains the names CAPAC, BEPENIKHC, MAPIMHC and ΙΥΣΤΙΝΟΣ, the other one the name AMΩC.
- 34 Shahar Batz, "Khirbat Kharuf," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 116 (2004): published online at <http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il>. The inscriptions mentioned have only decorative character.
- 35 Carsten Peter Thiede and Egon H. E. Lass, "Moza: Final Report," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 117 (2005), published online at <http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il>. Undecipherable fragments of an inscription in Hebrew script were found on one ostrakon.
- 36 Alexandre Yardenna, "Karm er-Ras (Areas H,J)," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 120 (2008), published online at <http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il>. The publishers mention "a marble fragment that had an inscription mentioning the tenth legion—no doubt a relic from the Roman period," but the actual text is not presented.
- 37 The find was announced in a press release of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Oct. 6, 2008: "Excavations north of Jerusalem reveal sarcophagus fragment inscribed 'Son of the High Priest.'" Online at: http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Early+History+-+Archaeology/Excavations_north_Jerusalem_reveal_sarcophagus_fragment_6-Oct-2008.htm?DisplayMode=print (cited March 15, 2009). The fragmentary Hebrew inscription reads בן הכהן הגדול ("son of the high priest").

(h) The non-literary texts from the Judaeen Desert, which had been published in a variety of different places, have meanwhile been systematically collected and listed in the final indices of the DJD series. These include 564 letters, contracts, legal documents, deeds, and other non-literary fragments on ostraca, papyrus and parchment, originating from Wadi Muraba'at (Mur 1–173), Wadi Mishmar (1Mish 1–8), Wadi Se'elim (34Se 1–5), Wadi Ghweir (1–2), Wadi Nar (1–5) and Wadi Sdeir (1–4), Nahal Hever (5/6Hev 1–64, 8Hev 1–7 and XHev/Se 1–169), Jericho (Jer 1–19), Qumran Caves 3, 4 and 6, Khirbet Qumran (KhQ 1–3) and Masada (Mas 1–951). These texts are, for the most part, not inscriptions in the strict sense of the word, however they also form part of the epigraphic evidence from the first and early second centuries. Dividing lines are not easy to draw, for instance, between the “letters on bread supply” from Masada (Mas 557–584) and the letters of Bar Kokhba, or between a receipt for dates written on an ostrakon in the Jewish Quarter (Jewish Quarter 24) and a receipt for a date crop written on papyrus in Jericho (Jer 7). For reasons of clarity and completeness, the non-literary material from the DJD series has therefore been included in this survey; however, the main emphasis will be on the inscriptions and ostraca.³⁸ Within the corpus of non-literary texts from the DJD series, two specific subsets of texts are identified separately in this survey: the so-called Bar-Kokhba letters,³⁹ and the economic documents, for which a detailed study of language use has been offered by Hanan Eshel.⁴⁰

38 For a list of all non-literary texts published in the DJD series; see A. Lange and U. Mittmann-Richert, “Annotated List from the Judaeen Desert Classified,” in Tov, ed., *The Texts from the Judaeen Desert*, 115–64. For the present study, categories 1.10–1.13, 3–5 and 7 have been included. In addition, the halakic letter 4QMMT has been included. It is listed in the index among the religious texts (category 1.3.5) for reasons of content. However, since it differs from the literary texts both in terms of genre and of language, it is also listed among the letters (category 1.12). The finds from Wadi Daliyeh (category 2) have not been included, since they date to the fourth and fifth centuries B.C.E. The finds from Masada (category 6) have not been included, because this category includes only a selection of finds from Masada. In the present study, the complete statistics for Masada have therefore been extracted from the official excavation reports and not from the DJD index. Language classification of DJD follows the list of Aramaic texts compiled by Emmanuel Tov, “Lists of Specific Groups of Texts from the Judaeen Desert,” in Tov, ed., *The Texts from the Judaeen Desert*, 221–26.

39 Cf. nn. 73 and 74 below.

40 Hanan Eshel, “On the Use of Hebrew in Economic Documents from the Judaeen Desert,” in *Jesus' Last Week* (ed. R. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage and Brian Becker; Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 245–58.

(i) Some popular textbooks of Aramaic and Hebrew texts offer a selection of inscriptions and materials from the corpora listed above.⁴¹ However, they also contain some material not covered by these corpora, and this has been included in this survey. In addition, the lists of epigraphic and documentary material used for the preparation of recent dictionaries of Aramaic and Hebrew have been included completely.⁴² In sum, these collections add a total of 27 more inscriptions to the survey. It must be noted, however, that the inclusion of the textbooks and dictionaries has a slightly distortive effect on the statistics, since Aramaic texts are much more prominently featured by the selective nature of these collections.⁴³

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- 41 Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts: Second Century B.C.–Second Century A.D.* (Biblica et Orientalia 34; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1978); Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte*: included are the texts classified by Beyer as M, V, I, and y; Ada Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic, Hebrew, and Nabatean Documentary Texts from the Judean Desert and Related Material*. Vol. A, *The Documents* (Jerusalem: Ben-Zion Dinur Center for Research in Jewish History, 2000). Joseph Naveh, *On Sherd and Papyrus: Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from the Second Temple, Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992 [Hebrew]).
- 42 *Academy of the Hebrew Language (AHL) Database Project: Materials for the Dictionary* (Jerusalem: Academy for the Hebrew Language, 1988); David J. A. Clines, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (6 vols., Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 1993–2006); Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003). *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon (CAL)*, available online at <http://calh.cn.huc.edu/>.
- 43 The fact that New Testament scholarship in the twentieth century has generally been much more interested in the study of the Aramaic rather than the Hebrew language is reflected by the nature of the textbooks available: While Aramaic texts and inscriptions have been diligently collected and published by outstanding scholars in the field (e.g. Fitzmyer/Harrington and Beyer), no comparable work has been done so far for the Hebrew material. Therefore, the textbooks and dictionaries provide us, in addition to the corpora mentioned above, with 18 additional Aramaic texts, but only three additional Hebrew texts, as well as six samples in Jewish script that could be either Aramaic or Hebrew or both. Especially the collection of ten Jewish Aramaic Ostraca of unknown provenance, included by Yardeni, *Textbook*, 1:191–98, many of which would not be identifiable as Aramaic were they not within the collection, blurs the statistics of the “other inscriptions” in the overview significantly. For reasons of comprehensiveness, the details of the remaining 17 inscriptions added from textbooks and dictionaries will be given here: Hasmonean Hyrkania Inscription (MPAT 37, Beyer I 4); storage jar inscribed בלזמה / בלזם (“balsam,” MPAT 66, Beyer yXX); jar inscription קרבנ (“qorban,” AHL 385, possibly the same as CIIP 8 / Beyer yJE 32?); two stone inscriptions (Yardeni 1:225/Beyer yXX1 and Yardeni 1:226); ostracon from Aroer, East Jordan (Yardeni 2:212 / Beyer yRO 1); jar inscription from Qumran (Yardeni 1:219); three inscriptions from Ein Farah (Beyer ySW3–4); inscription on jar handle from Jelem/Galilee (Beyer gJL 1); plate from Jericho (Beyer yJR

Together, all these publications contain a total of 3819 texts: 607 ossuary inscriptions, 605 ostraca, 1731 other inscriptions, 609 documentary texts (among them 41 letters) and 268 other texts and fragments (among them 16 biblical fragments, 8 other literary fragments, as well as unidentifiable or unclassified material from DJD). For 2323 of these texts, a possible origin from a period roughly between 100 B.C.E. and 135 C.E. is suggested in the literature.⁴⁴

2 Criteria of Classification

The three main languages used in the epigraphic material from the land of Israel are Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew.⁴⁵ However, the distinction between the latter two is not always easy. Especially in the case of ossuary inscriptions and ostraca, the limited content often does not allow a further qualification of language. Even where the use of terms like *בן* or *בת*, *בר* or *אשת*, *ברת* or *אתת* seems to point to one or the other language, the evidence is not as conclusive as it seems: in a number of cases, names with a *בר* patronym are used within inscriptions or texts that otherwise have clearly Hebrew vocabulary or grammar.⁴⁶ In contrast, only one example exists for the employment of a *בן*

2a.b); Bar Kokhba weight (Yardeni 1:185); unclassified fragments from Judaeian Desert and Muraba'at (Yardeni 1:57 and 1:187, both possibly also included in DJD 39?); cave inscription from Wadi Garaba (Beyer yWG 1); Hosea Seal (AHL 232); cf. Eleazar Sukenik, "A Stamp of a Jewish Wine-Merchant from the Vicinity of Jerusalem," *Qedem* 1 (1942): 20–23; tomb inscription *בן יני קבר מנשה* ("tomb of Menashe ben Jannai," AHL 424), cf. Benjamin Mazar, "A Hebrew Inscription from 'Illâr," *Bulletin of the Israel Exploration Society* 18 (1954): 154–57.

44 Only the latter have been specified further in the lower part of Table 1, leading to different numbers than those given here, where *all* inscriptions from the corpora listed above, regardless of their date, have been counted.

45 For less frequent languages and language combinations, cf. n. 56 below.

46 Most obviously in the recently discovered Hebrew Inscription mentioning "Alexa", cf. n. 27 above. Shorter inscriptions and texts of similar character are found in Mur 22, 29 and 30; 4Q348; CIIP 244/CIJ 1308 (יהודה הספר. יהודה בר אלעזר הספר); CIIP 534/CJO 871 (יהוסף בר חנניה. יהוחנה. יהוחנה ברת יהוחנן בר תפלוס הכהן הגדול) and CIIP 86/CJO 893 (חנניה בר יהונתן הנזיר); CIIP 70 and 72 (מתיה בר הקוה); CIIP 188 (חנניה בר הנזיר). A special case are inscriptions CIJ 994 and 1131 from Beth Shearim (הקבר שלום אנתת חנניה בר יהונתן הנזיר), "This tomb belongs to Rabbi Isaak bar Maqim, peace!"; *שלום אנתת חנניה בר יהונתן הנזיר*. This tomb belongs to Rabbi Isaak bar Maqim, peace!"; *שלום אנתת חנניה בר יהונתן הנזיר*. A special case are inscriptions CIJ 994 and 1131 from Beth Shearim (הקבר שלום אנתת חנניה בר יהונתן הנזיר), "This tomb belongs to Rabbi Isaak bar Maqim, peace!"; *שלום אנתת חנניה בר יהונתן הנזיר*. here we have a circle of families that deliberately chose to use Hebrew even as late as the second century C.E. However, they still bear "Aramaic" names with *bar*; Masada 667 (אלעזר בר הספר) is classified by the editors as a forgery produced by one of the excavators.

patronym within an Aramaic context.⁴⁷ Some have argued that the use of בר in these Hebrew contexts betrays the real language of the writer, whereas the Hebrew language was artificially chosen due to religious or nationalistic reasons.⁴⁸ Beyer, in his textbook, explains הנייר הספר, הגדול הכהן as “religious titles” and hence classifies the inscriptions using these titles as Aramaic, based on their use of בר and ברת.⁴⁹ While, however, it is certainly true that הכהן הגדול is a religious title, this is much less evident for נייר or ספר. Certainly, Beyers argument does not apply to the case of the recent find of the Hebrew “Alexa” inscription from Qiryat Shemuel. Also, the later evidence from Beth She’arim demonstrates that even within a community that deliberately chose to continue the use of Hebrew in the late second century, family names with בר were retained.⁵⁰ In both cases it is obvious that Hebrew was the language chosen for the inscription, while the names mentioned bore בר patronyms. It is therefore more probable, as Rahmani suggests, that בר was used interchangeably with בן in the Hebrew of the period, so that the usual form of the patronym was retained even when a different language was employed.⁵¹ The fact that the word בר could lose its semantic content and become an integral part of the family name is demonstrated by the inscription מרתא בר פפיס (CIIP 505/CJO 256), a female name with a בר patronym.

In the present study, the use of אשת/אתת, ברת/בת, בן/בר, and so on will therefore be used as a “secondary language marker,” distinguished from “primary language markers” such as the use of specific lexical, grammatical or syntactical features of Aramaic or Hebrew language. The inscriptions listed in the paragraph above, which contain *primary markers* of Hebrew and *secondary markers* of Aramaic, will be listed as bilingual (ah), although they are much more likely to be Hebrew, as was shown. The longer texts from the DJD series, which are obviously written in Hebrew, but contain names with בר, will be classified as Hebrew. Greek transliterations of Hebrew or Aramaic words will be classified as Hebrew or Aramaic, not as Greek.⁵² Obviously, in some cases classifications are a matter of individual judgment; for example, יהונתן קדרה (CIIP 51/CJO 222) is interpreted frequently as Aramaic for “Jonatan, the pot (or pot-bellied).” Rahmani, however, suggests that it could also be derived from

47 XHev/Se 8, a bilingual deed written in Hebrew on the outside and Aramaic on the inside, in which the name שמעון בן כוסבה is referred to in the first line of the Aramaic part.

48 Cf. Kottsieper, “*And they did not care . . .*,” 114; similarly Klaus Beyer, *Texte*, 1:58.

49 Beyer, *Texte*, yJE 28, 29, 30, 39, 44.

50 Cf. n. 46 above.

51 Cf. Rahmani, *Catalogue*, 201.

52 CIJ 992, CJO 552 and Beth She’arim 148 are Hebrew, CIJ 998 and 1121 (both from Beth She’arim) and Beyer, *Texte* I, 353 (yWG 1) are Aramaic in Greek script.

Hebrew and mean “Jonatan, the baker.” For CIIP 647 from the City of David, Naveh, in his official excavation report, gives the Hebrew reading חנניה בן קורשא (“Hananiah from Kursi”), while Yardeni in her *Textbook* reads Aramaic סר רבה מן קודשא (“the great/elder from the holiness?”).⁵³ In many cases, it is not easy to decide whether a word should be read as a name or as a lexical item. Thus, however, גרידא (Mas 432), מלתא (Mas 438), צידא (Mas 440), פסולא (Mas 455), קצבא (Mas 512), appearing in name lists, are classified as Aramaic inscriptions by the editors of the CAL (and therefore also in the present study), while they could also be simply personal names. Sometimes, attempts can be made to determine a language from the context in which an inscription was found. Thus, Beyer classifies בני אלעזר (CIIP 378/CIJ 1357) and בני חנן (CIIP 379/CIJ 1360) as Aramaic because other ossuaries in the same tomb were inscribed in Aramaic.⁵⁴ However, such conclusions must remain doubtful in view of other family tombs which contained Hebrew and Aramaic inscriptions side by side, for example, the Kallon family in Katamon (CIIP 366–372/CIJ 1350–1355), the Goliath family in Jericho (CJO 782–803) or the Akeldama tombs (CIIP 288–311). In other cases, such a “group classification” is more obvious: hence, all 28 “Letters of bread supply” from Masada (Mas 557–584) and all 10 “Jewish Aramaic Ostraca” from Yardeni’s collection⁵⁵ are classified as Aramaic, although many of them do not have clear language markers in them (these two rather coincidental cases which slightly distort the statistics therefore should be considered when comparing the data in the overview). In general, language classification will always be a matter of dispute in some cases. However, the purpose of this study is not necessarily to provide the exact classification of all epigraphic material; rather, it is to offer a general idea of language distribution which will not be greatly changed by the relatively small number of disputable classifications. Wherever available (e.g. in the DJD series), language classifications of the editors are followed. For the other material, primary and secondary language markers, as defined above, are used to create the following language categories:

- g: Greek
- j: “Jewish script” (Aramaic or Hebrew)
- l: Latin
- o: Other language classifications⁵⁶

53 Yardeni, *Textbook*, 1:211.

54 Beyer, *Texte*, 2:341–42.

55 Yardeni, *Textbook*, 1:191–98.

56 122 texts are written in Latin, mainly from Masada (cf. Cotton, *Masada II*) and the coastal area (CIIP), some also from Wadi Muraba’at (Mur 158–163) and one on an ossuary

For a more detailed evaluation of the “Jewish script” material, the following sub-categories are used:

- a1: primary language markers for Aramaic
- a2: secondary language markers for Aramaic
- h1: primary language markers for Hebrew
- h2: secondary language markers for Hebrew
- n: neutral (“Jewish script,” but non-distinguishable Hebrew or Aramaic)
- ah: bilingual Aramaic and Hebrew (bearing language markers of both)

Bilingual Greek-Semitic inscriptions are marked as follows:

- ga: bilingual Greek and Aramaic (a1 or a2 in the Aramaic part)
- gh: bilingual Greek and Hebrew (h1 or h2 in the Hebrew part)⁵⁷
- gn: bilingual Greek and Jewish Script (n in the Jewish script part)

Using these categories, the statistical data presented in Table 1 has been extracted from the epigraphic material.⁵⁸

(CIIP 40/CJO 202). For reasons of space, 115 inscriptions and texts from smaller language groups have been summed up as “other” in one column in the overview: two bilingual Greek-Latin papyri and four bilingual Greek-Latin “tituli picti” were found at Masada (Mas 748–49 and 924–27), one bilingual Greek-Latin inscription comes from Caesarea (CIIP 1389). Twenty-seven inscriptions from Masada (Mas 915–923 and 928–945), nine inscriptions from Caesarea (CIIP 1744, 1845, 1913, 1922, 1942, 1943, 2041, 2048, 2049) as well as one inscription from Karm er-Ras (cf. n. 36) are not clearly identifiable Greek or Latin (Mas 915–923 and 928–945). Nine inscriptions are written in Palmyrene script (Beth She’arim 12, 17, 18, 83, 86, 94, 101, 132 and CIIP 79/CJO 579), two are bilingual Greek and Palmyrene (Beth She’arim 126 and 130). Twenty texts, all from the Judaean Desert, are written in Nabatean (4Q343, 5/6Hev 1–4, 6, 9, 36, 38, 39, XHev/Se 2–3 and XHev/Se Nab2–6, Mur 71 and Masada 514–515). Five inscriptions are probably Samaritan (CIJ 1168, 1187 and 1188, CIIP 1126 and 1716), two are bilingual Greek and Samaritan (CIJ 1167 and 1186). Two inscriptions are written in Phoenician script (CIIP 2139 and 2152), one in Middle Persian (CIIP 1724). 5 late fragments from the Judaean Desert (Mur 169–173) are written in Arabic. The language of 26 additional inscriptions can not clearly be identified (three ossuaries from Jerusalem: CIIP 383/CIJ1364/CJO 78, CIJ 1347 and 1349; four inscriptions from Beth Shearim: CIJ 1103–1105 and 1120; two fragments from the Dead Sea: Mur 53 and 54; as well as 17 inscriptions from CIIP 2 not specifically listed here for reasons of space.)

57 In only one case (CIIP 411/CIJ 1373), a trilingual inscription has been preserved. However, the Aramaic part was obviously added at a later stage (see discussion below).

58 In the upper part of the table, statistics are given according to each corpus or location separately. For CIIP and CIJ, the total numbers of the corpora are given in lines 1 and 3,

TABLE 1 *Language Distribution in Major Epigraphic Corpora*

Corpora:	Σ	Bilingual (Greek-Aramaic and Greek-Hebrew)													"Jewish script" only (Aramaic and/or Hebrew)				
		g	j	i	o	ga	gn	gh	a1	a2	n	h2	h1	ah					
CIJ	535	249	206	—	22	6	37	15	38	33	77	26	25	7					
CIJ (ca. 100 B.C.E.—135 C.E.)	202	67	115	—	3	4	9	4	11	21	51	20	8	4					
CHP 1.1 and 2	1730	971	433	241	33	6	33	13	37	90	218	40	34	14					
CHP (ca. 100 B.C.E.—70 C.E.)	726	271	398	11	2	6	25	13	35	86	196	40	27	14					
Masada	941	101	700	105	35	—	—	—	48	27	597	12	13	3					
Herodion	57	41	15	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	7	—	5	1					
Beth She'arim	290	201	52	—	14	1	15	7	3	2	23	4	18	2					
Additional ossuary inscriptions	31	11	16	—	—	4	—	—	2	4	7	1	1	1					
Additional other inscriptions	37	5	30	—	1	—	1	—	16	1	9	—	4	—					
DJD: non-literary texts	564	285	227	6	25	7	13	1	71	2	53	—	98	3					
DJD: "Bar Kokhba-letters" only	27	3	24	—	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	15	—					
DJD: "Econ. Documents" only	87	23	37	—	9	5	13	—	22	—	2	—	12	1					
Total	3819	1683	1544	352	115	19	72	27	208	136	925	62	188	25					
Total (ca. 100 B.C.E.—135 C.E.)	2323	680	1393	122	60	16	39	14	176	123	870	56	147	21					

(Continued)

TABLE I
(Continued)

	Total	Bilingual (Greek-Aramaic and Greek-Hebrew)										"Jewish script" only (Aramaic and/or Hebrew)			
		g	j	i	o	ga	gn	gh	a1	a2	n	h2	h1	ah	
Genres (ca. 100 B.C.E.–135 C.E.): Σ	602	200	349	2	4	9	25	13	25	87	173	35	16	13	
Ossuary inscriptions	565	32	511	22	—	—	—	—	19	16	458	11	7	—	
Other inscriptions	294	99	158	15	21	—	1	—	25	18	87	9	17	2	
Letters	41	4	36	—	1	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	22	—	
Documentary texts	553	164	261	83	25	6	13	1	85	2	134	1	33	6	
Other (incl. unclassified)	269	181	78	—	9	1	—	—	8	—	18	—	52	—	

3 General Observations

From the statistical overview of language use the clear picture emerges of a trilingual society in which Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew are used side by side and even in close interaction with each other. None of the three languages can be said to be dominant. Generally speaking, there is a prevalence of the Semitic languages over Greek (at least in the NT era) and, within the Semitic languages, a prevalence of Aramaic over Hebrew, however not to a significant degree. It cannot be said that a ratio of 25 Aramaic vs. 16 Hebrew ossuary inscriptions, or 19 Aramaic vs. 7 Hebrew inscriptions,⁵⁹ has any statistical relevance for an overall assessment of language use in the first century. Certainly, the claim that Hebrew was fully replaced by Aramaic in the New Testament era cannot be based on such epigraphical evidence.

It should be kept in mind that any conclusion from epigraphic data, especially from inscriptions, as to the language use of the writer must be drawn with caution: in the case of ossuary inscriptions, for example, the language used could be a reflection of the language spoken by (a) the person buried in the ossuary, (b) the person who commissioned the inscription, for example, a family member, (c) the person who decorated the ossuary, (d) the intended

while only the respective subset of these corpora that can be dated with some certainty to the period between 100 B.C.E. and 70/135 C.E. is specified in rows 2 and 4 respectively. The “additional (ossuary) inscriptions” in rows 8 and 9 are collected from the various textbooks, dictionaries and recent finds mentioned in paragraphs (f), (g) and (i) above, cf. nn. 24–37 and 41–42. Row 10 includes all non-literary texts from the DJD series as specified in paragraph (h), cf. n. 38, while row 11 and 12 list the two subsets specified in nn. 39 and 40. Row 13 contains the total number of texts from all the corpora listed. Due to a significant overlap in the different corpora (195 inscriptions from CIJ are included in CIIP, 160 inscriptions from Beth She’arim are included in CIJ, rows 2 and 4 are subsets of row 1 and 3, rows 11 and 12 are subsets of row 10), the totals in row 13 are not equal to the sum of the rows above. For some other smaller numerical inconsistencies within the table, cf. nn. 16 and 18 above. Row 14 confines the totals of row 13 to those inscriptions that can be dated with some certainty to the period specified and is therefore a subset of row 13. Details about dating are given in the descriptions of the separate corpora above. In the second page of the table, the totals of row 14 are further specified by genre. In the last row of the table, “other” genres are summed up, among them 16 fragments of biblical texts (15 in Biblical Hebrew, one in Greek), eight other literary texts from the DJD series (three in Hebrew, five in Greek) and 245 unidentifiable or unclassified texts (mainly from the DJD series, some also from Masada: Mas 1p, 666, 669 and 673). The abbreviations of the different language codes used in the table are explained on pp. 16 and 17 above.

59 Considering the fact that 10 of the 19 come from a rather coincidental inclusion in Yardeni’s *Textbook*; cf. above n. 43.

reader of the inscription or (e) it could simply be the language perceived to be culturally appropriate for the occasion.⁶⁰ As an example, the Aramaic warning formulas against grave robbery (CIIP 460/CIJ 1300, CIIP 359/CIJ 1334, CIIP 375/CIJ 1359) do not necessarily reflect the language of the deceased, his family or the writer; Aramaic was probably chosen in view of possible intruders. The word שלום, frequently added to Greek inscriptions in the Joppa and Beth She'arim necropolis and in Caesarea, was probably a cultural or religious convention and does not necessarily reflect a knowledge of Hebrew or Aramaic on the part of the writer or the deceased, a fact that might be reflected in the repeated misspelling בשולם לעולם and שולם in one inscription (Beth She'arim 5).⁶¹ On the other hand, the use of ברי instead of בני in the Kallon family tomb (CIIP 368/CIJ 1352b, see below) might betray a lack of knowledge of Aramaic (the plural of בר is בני, not ברי.) The parallel use of Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew in the Bar Kokhba letters does not necessarily reflect the language preferences of the writers, but possibly also those of the intended readers. In many of the contracts and economic documents, Aramaic might have been chosen because of its function as a *lingua franca* even beyond the boundaries of Jewish society. On the other hand, Hebrew might have been chosen for the "Halakic Letter" (4QMMT) because of its religious content. Whatever the case, in all these instances the multilingual character of the society and the multiple levels of language interaction and language contact existing in it are reflected.

4 The Character of the Inscriptions

As already mentioned above, the vast majority of inscriptions are found on ossuaries and ostraca, most of which seldom contain little more than a name, in many cases even less (e.g. Mas 1–301). Longer inscriptions appear mainly from the second century onwards. Jonathan Price, in his overview of Jewish epigraphy from the land of Israel,⁶² sees two possible reasons for this

60 Cf. Jonathan J. Price and Haggai Misgav, "Jewish Inscriptions and Their Use," in *The Literature of the Sages. Second Part, Midrash and Targum, Liturgy, Poetry, Mysticism, Contracts, Inscriptions, Ancient Science and the Languages of Rabbinic Literature* (ed. Samuel Safrai, Zeev Safrai, Joshua Schwartz and P. J. Tomson; Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum 2.3b; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006), 461–83 (468).

61 Beyer, *Texte I*, 58, suggests that the repetition of the same mistake in one inscription might point to the fact that the scribe did not speak Hebrew himself but had learned to write this phrase, however wrongly.

62 Price, *Jewish Inscriptions*, 469–70.

phenomenon: either the Jewish “epigraphic habit,” that is, the custom of producing representative inscriptions, only began in the late second century, at a time when the Roman “epigraphic habit,” strongest in the first and second centuries, had already started to decline, or most Jewish inscriptions from earlier times had been destroyed or lost during the wars and the following period of Roman occupation. The majority of “h1” and “a1” inscriptions from before 135 C.E. therefore consist of names, supplemented with titles, places of origin, nicknames, functions or information on family relations, which contain lexical, grammatical or syntactical language identifiers. Only nine Aramaic inscriptions and four Hebrew inscriptions are somewhat longer examples extant from that period.⁶³ From later periods, we have, for example, the more elaborate Hebrew tomb inscriptions from Beth She’arim and a number of longer Aramaic Synagogue inscriptions. Only the letters and ostraca from the period before 135 C.E., though they are fewer in number, provide us with more content, and they have therefore been subject to more intensive studies for some decades now. The present study, however, does not focus on the content but on the language.

5 Phenomena of Language Contact, Bilingualism and Trilingualism

Of special importance for the study of the language situation are the phenomena of language contact, bilingualism and, in some cases, trilingualism. Here, we can see how the three major languages were not only used within different sectors of society separate from one another, but how multiple languages were used by one person or one group of persons simultaneously. The use of Aramaic בַּר patronyms in Hebrew inscriptions and texts, which is probably a consequence of language contact rather than bilingualism, has already been mentioned above. Other observations of language contact can be made: much has been written on the interference of Aramaic on Middle Hebrew as it appears in the Bar Kokhba letters and other documents from the Judean Desert. However, the interpretations differ: Is the level of Aramaic interference a proof that the writer is not a native speaker of Hebrew (comparable with a native German speaker writing a letter in English and betraying his mother

63 Aramaic (a1): CIIP 460, 602, 605, 620, 623, Beyer ySW3–4; yWG1 and, “highly hypothetical,” Mas 674. Hebrew (h1): the recent Qiryat Shemuel inscription (cf. above), CIIP 10, 137 and 693. CIJ 1399 is very vaguely dated by Frey and probably from a much later period. CIJ 1286, similar in content to CIJ 1285, is probably a modern forgery. Cf. Hachlili, *Jewish Funerary Customs*, 175.

tongue by mixing in German idiom)? Or is it a sign of interference from an international *lingua franca* into the writer's mother tongue (comparable to a native German speaker writing in German and mixing in a number of common Anglicisms)? In any case, the evidence shows that Hebrew and Aramaic were alive and in close contact with one another.

The family tomb of the Kallon family in Katamon (CIIP 366–372/CIJ 1350–1355) is a striking example of multiple language use within one family. The inscriptions read:

CIIP 366a/CIJ 1350a: יהוסף בר שמעון

CIIP 366b/CIJ 1350b: ΙΩΣΗΠΟΣ ΚΑΛΛΩΝ

CIIP 367a/CIJ 1351a: יהועזר בר שמעון בר קלון

CIIP 367b/CIJ 1351b: יהועזר בר שמעון בן קלון

(the last four words were added later)

CIIP 368a/CIJ 1352a: מרים יועזר שמעון בני יחזק בן קלון מן בני ישבאב

CIIP 368b/CIJ 1352b: מרים יועזר ושמעון בני יחזק בר קלון מן ברי ישבאב

(note: ברי instead of בני!)

CIIP 369a/CIJ 1353a: שלמציון ברת גמלא

CIIP 369b/CIJ 1353b: שלמציון אתת יהועזר בר קלון ברת גמלא

CIIP 370 (not listed by CIJ): יה בר שמעון בר קלון

CIIP 371a/CIJ 1354a: שמעון בר יועזר בר קלון

CIIP 371b/CIJ 1354b: שמעון בר יועזר בר קלון

CIIP 371c/CIJ 1354c: ושמעון בר יועזר

CIIP 372a/CIJ 1355a: ΣΙΜΩΝΟΣ

CIIP 372b/CIJ 1355b: ΙΩΣΗΠΟΣ Κ[Α]ΛΛΩΝΟΣ

CIIP 372c/CIJ 1355c: ΣΙΜΩΝΟΣ ΚΑΛΛΩΝΟΣ

CIIP 372d/CIJ 1355d: ΙΩΣΗΠΟΣ ΚΑΛΛΩΝΟΣ

As already stated, it is impossible to know who chose the languages employed here: Was it the deceased themselves, their families or the artisan? Whatever the case, it is obvious that the three languages were used within that family or in their immediate surroundings. In 367b, the secondary addition of *בר שמעון בן קלון* was either a deliberate alteration of 367a or a matter of negligence. On the other hand, the choice of Hebrew *בן* in 368a and Aramaic *בר* in 368b, including the non-Aramaism *ברי*, was obviously deliberate. The *faux pas* in 368b could be an indication that the writer knew Hebrew better than Aramaic. A similar case of a trilingual family is the Goliath family tomb in Jericho (CJO 782–803).

In another case (CIIP 411/CIJ 1373), an inscription that was originally written in Hebrew and Greek (parts a and b) was later extended with an Aramaic addition (part c). Also here, we see that the three languages were employed without hesitation side by side: whoever added the Aramaic line to the inscription

did not bother to use one of the languages already present in the inscription, but made his own language choice:

CIIP 411a/CIJ 1373a: חנין הבשני

CIIP 411b/CIJ 1373b: ANIN ΣΚΥΘΟΠΟΛΕΙΤΗΣ

CIIP 411c/CIJ 1373c: בר אנין עניה. אבא קבר בריה (יהוסף)

A similar case of later addition is found on two ostraca at Masada (Mas 458 and 460), where the original Hebrew wording לקודש was apparently changed at a later stage into Aramaic by adding the final א. We cannot know the reasons for this “translational addition,” but obviously it was motivated by functional, situational or individual reasons. Theories of language death and language replacement cannot account for such phenomena.

Some bilingual Aramaic–Hebrew inscriptions give the impression that their writers wanted to make a specific point by placing the two versions side by side. Otherwise, it is difficult to imagine why they would repeat exactly the same wording with only one or two letters changed, since any Aramaic speaker would have been able to read and understand the Hebrew line and vice versa. Nevertheless, the inscriptions are given in both versions in full length:

CIIP 237a/CIJ 1255a: יהודה בן תודוס

CIIP 237b/CIJ 1255b: יהודה בר תודוס

CIIP 368a/CIJ 1352a: מרים יועזר שמעון בני יחזק בן קלון מן בני ישבאב (Kallon family)

CIIP 368b/CIJ 1352b: מרים יועזר ושמעון בני יחזק בר קלון מן ברי ישבאב

CIIP 446a: חנניה בר שמעון

CIIP 446b: חנניה בן שמעון

For the following two examples, it is less clear whether the slightly altered repetition of the same word reflects a case of bilingualism:

CIIP 54a/CJO 200a: סמונ בנה הכלה

CIIP 54b/CJO 200b: סמונ בנא הכלה

Storage Jar Inscription (Beyer yXX, MPAT 66): בלזם / בלזמה

Finally, another bilingual Aramaic–Hebrew inscription, from Arnona in the southeastern part of Jerusalem, should be mentioned (CIIP 466). It is similar in content to the Aramaic inscription of Jebel Hallet et-Turi (CIIP 287), but a Hebrew translation is added:

- a) כל אנש מתהנא בה קרבן (anybody who will benefit/take gain from it—qorban!)
- b) כל אש קרבן (everybody—qorban!)
- c) ק (abbreviation for qorban?)

Obviously, the Aramaic part of this inscription has been written carefully and with intent, while the Hebrew part is strangely casual, probably an abbreviated translation of the Aramaic original. This corresponds to the observation made about many of the bilingual Greek–Aramaic and Greek–Hebrew inscriptions, where the Greek part is mostly written carefully while the Aramaic and Hebrew parts often give a rough and sometimes casual translation, probably summarizing the content for unlearned readers. If this analogy is correct, then the inscription from Arnona is rare evidence for a situation in which Aramaic was believed by the writer to be the language of the learned and the language appropriate for a solemn inscription with religious overtones, while Hebrew was perceived by him to be the language of the unlearned for whom translation needs to be offered. This evidence would then run contrary to the frequent presumption that Hebrew was the language of the learned, whereas Aramaic was the language of the unlearned.

Though the concept seems anachronistic, some ancient form of “political correctness” could be assumed behind all these examples of bilingual inscriptions, reflecting not only Hebrew–Aramaic bilingualism on the side of the writer but probably a Hebrew–Aramaic diglossia within the society producing such inscriptions.⁶⁴

6 The Evidence of Coin Inscriptions

Coin inscriptions have been excluded from the present survey, since they are of a different nature, and the large number of finds would obviously distort the statistics. However, the coins add another important aspect to the landscape of language use which can be summed up briefly: all Jewish coin inscriptions, from the Hasmonean period to the Bar Kokhba revolt, are written in Hebrew language and Paleo-Hebrew script, with one exception only—one particular series of coins, minted by Alexander Jannaeus (78 B.C.E.), bore an Aramaic inscription in square script. This coin, however, can hardly be evidence for a

64 This terminology of Hebrew//Aramaic diglossia would be employed in addition to a high Hebrew//low Hebrew diglossia that existed at the time. See below on definitions of diglossia.

general change of language use during that period, because Jannaeus at other times also issued Hebrew coins. It is therefore more probably that Jannaeus had political reasons for his decision to mint an Aramaic coin at one point in his reign.⁶⁵

7 Conclusions

In 1959 Charles A. Ferguson introduced the sociolinguistic term “diglossia” to describe societies in which more than one language form is prevalent, labeling as “high variety” (H) the language register that is used in literature, newspapers, churches and politics, and as “low variety” (L) the language spoken in personal communication and daily matters.⁶⁶ Joshua Fishman later expanded this concept to differentiate between four possible scenarios:

Sector 1: Diglossia with bilingualism (e.g. Switzerland, Ireland, Arabic-speaking countries, Africa)	Sector 2: Bilingualism without diglossia (e.g. USA, Germany)
Sector 3: Diglossia without bilingualism (e.g. Czarist Russia, Canada)	Sector 4: No diglossia, no bilingualism (i.e. monolingual communities in contact)

65 Cf. Naveh, *On Sherd and Papyrus*, 23.

66 Charles A. Ferguson, “Diglossia,” *Word* 15 (1959): 325–40. Diglossia needs to be distinguished from bilingualism. Bilingualism commonly refers to the ability of an individual to use more than one language. Diglossia, on the other hand, primarily refers to a community that uses two dialects or “registers” of the same language. As classic examples of diglossia there is standard “written” Arabic against various spoken Arabic dialects, and “written” German against spoken varieties like Swiss-German. This definition of diglossia can be expanded to include situations where two distinct languages are in a di-glossic relationship.

More importantly for New Testament studies, Hebrew itself existed in two registers by the end of the Second Temple period. The present study does not distinguish the registers because the differences are mostly invisible at the level of short inscriptions and graffiti. (Cf., however, the Qiryat Shemuel discovery mentioned above: ארור שיטלני ממוקומי “Cursed is the one who casts me from my place.”) Any theory of “Aramaic exclusivity” must explain how and why Mishnaic Hebrew developed as an apparent low register of a diglossia.

Leaving aside the Greek language for a moment, and focusing only on the relationship of Hebrew and Aramaic, the following observation can be made: traditionally, New Testament scholarship has sought to place the Jewish society of Jesus' times in sector 4: starting with the influential work of Heinrich Friedrich Pfannkuche,⁶⁷ continuing with the works of Arnold Meyer and Gustav Dalman,⁶⁸ scholars have sought to identify the (one) mother-tongue of Jesus or the (one) Jewish vernacular.⁶⁹ Few scholars today would hold such an opinion, but the verdict of these "sages" remains influential to this day.⁷⁰ Linguists, archeologists, and most biblical scholars have changed their views and readily accept the fact that Hebrew as well as Aramaic were spoken and written in the time of Jesus. The present volume is a reflection of this important paradigm shift. It was especially the wealth of new epigraphic material, foremost the manuscripts from Qumran and the documents from the Judaeian desert, that caused scholars such as Matthew Black and John A. Emerton to change their opinion in view of the new evidence available.⁷¹

Having said that, there still remains a common conviction that Hebrew was used only in specific geographical areas (e.g. Judaea) or specific groups of society (the priests, the Pharisees, the Essenes, the learned, the religious). To speak in Fishman's terms, this would now place the Jewish society in Sector 3: certain "pockets" of society (Fitzmyer) would speak and write Hebrew, while others (presumably the vast majority) would speak and write Aramaic. However, in view of the epigraphic evidence, even this assumption cannot be reconciled with the data. What emerges clearly from the epigraphical evidence is a picture of a society that fits Fishman's Sector 1: Aramaic and Hebrew are used

67 Heinrich Friedrich Pfannkuche, "Über die palästinische Landessprache in dem Zeitalter Christi und der Apostel. Ein Versuch, zum Theil nach de Rossi entworfen," in *Allgemeine Bibliothek der biblischen Literatur. Achter Band, Drittes Stück* (ed. Johann Gottfried Eichhorn; Leipzig: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1798), 365–480.

68 Arnold Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache. Das galiläische Aramäisch in seiner Bedeutung für die Erklärung der Reden Jesu* (Freiburg i.Br. / Leipzig: Mohr, 1896). Gustav Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu: mit Berücksichtigung des nachkanonischen jüdischen Schrifttums und der aramäischen Sprache erörtert* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1898).

69 Cf. my essay on the origins of the Aramaic hypothesis in the nineteenth century in the present volume.

70 Cf. the statements of Fitzmyer, Beyer, Casey and Kottsieper in the introductory paragraph.

71 Cf. the verdict of Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3d ed., Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 48–49. Also compare the view of John A. Emerton, "Did Jesus Speak Hebrew?," *Journal of Theological Studies* ns 12 (1961): 193–94 and 201–2, with his view stated later in John A. Emerton, "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew in the First Century A.D. and the Language of Jesus," *Journal of Theological Studies* ns 24 (1973): 19–20.

side by side in all spheres of society and in many cases both languages are even used within a family or by one and the same person (i.e. diglossia with bilingualism).⁷² No significant preference for Hebrew or Aramaic can be identified in any specific geographical area, nor can any significant distinction be made for any specific group of society or social function: Hebrew as well as Aramaic is used on ossuaries, in tombs, on ostraca, in letters, legal and economic documents.

What can be said, though, is that, in general, Aramaic is used slightly more frequently than Hebrew in the epigraphic sources. However, the margins of difference are small and allow no general conclusion about language dominance. In the case of letters and coins, for example, the case is reversed. Only in the case of documentary texts from the Judean Desert is there a clearer prevalence of Aramaic. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that the material catalogued here is too coincidental and the margins of difference too small that the scale could not be tipped by any new archeological discovery in the future.

The discovery of the so-called Bar Kokhba letters is a vivid example of how the coincidental character of finds can easily lead to premature conclusions which might then be challenged by any subsequent discovery of additional material. In 1960 Joseph Tadeusz Milik published eleven letters from the Bar Kokhba revolt, all of which were written in Mishnaic Hebrew. He concluded that these finds proved “beyond reasonable doubt that Mishnaic Hebrew was the normal language of the Judean population in the Roman period.”⁷³ Yet, in the very next year, 16 more “Bar Kokhba-letters,” dating a little earlier than those published by Milik, were discovered by Yigael Yadin in the so-called Cave of Letters.⁷⁴ Of these, nine were written in Aramaic, four in Hebrew and two

72 There is an additional, prototypical diglossia within Hebrew itself consisting of high register and low register dialects, which would appear to fit Fishman's Sector 1.

73 Joseph Tadeusz Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (SBT 26; London: SCM, 1959), 130, 131. In addition to the letters, Milik adduced also the Copper Scroll from Qumran as evidence for the use of Mishnaic Hebrew. The letters were later published as “Textes Hébreux et Araméens,” in *Les Grottes de Muraba'at* (ed. Joseph Tadeusz, Pierre Benoit and Roland de Vaux; DJD 2; Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 67–205, and subsequently labeled “Mur 42–52” in the DJD series.

74 Yigael Yadin, “The Newly-Found Bar Kokhba Letters,” *International Communication Gazette* 7 (1961): 158–62; idem, *The Finds from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters* (Judean Desert Studies 1, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society 1963); Yigael Yadin, Jonas C. Greenfield, Ada Yardeni and Baruch A. Levine, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters*. Vol. 2, *Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabatean-Aramaic Papyri* (Judean Desert Studies 3; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2002). These letters were

in Greek. These new finds challenged Milik's view that *only* Hebrew could be considered to be the "normal language" of the population. From the fact that all three languages were used in the earlier documents, while only Hebrew was used in the later ones, Yadin in turn concluded that the use of Hebrew was artificially introduced by a "special decree" of Bar Kokhba in the course of the rebellion for reasons of national identity.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, this view was again challenged by the later publication of more Hebrew documentary texts and letters that could be dated to the first revolt and even to the pre-66 period.⁷⁶ These examples show how quickly the statistical weight for one or the other language can change with the discovery of even a few new texts. Therefore, the most important conclusion to be drawn from the material is that no firm claims should be made about the dominance of one language or another. The evidence clearly points to the direction of a bilingual and of a trilingual society with the close interaction of all three languages: Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew.

Some widespread misconceptions about the use of Hebrew and Aramaic in the time of Jesus should be reconsidered:

First and foremost, the assumption of the death of spoken Hebrew after the Babylonian exile can no longer be upheld in view of the epigraphic evidence. Hebrew was obviously a living language in the first century C.E. and continued to be so well into the second century. It seems from the numerical data that it was used less frequently than Aramaic; however, as has already been said, the material collected here is too coincidental and the margins of difference too small to make any secure claims in that direction. From the character of the Hebrew used and the increasing evidence of language interference especially during the Bar Kokhba revolt, it can nonetheless be concluded that towards the end of the period studied here an influence of Aramaic on Hebrew speakers is becoming more obvious, eventually leading to the nearly complete replacement of Hebrew by Aramaic as a spoken language in the course of the second century C.E. An early sign of such a development might be reflected in the languages used in the economic documents from the Judaeian desert that have

first published as p.Yadin 49–64, but later renamed as 5/6Hev 49–64. Two other letters from a different collection, labeled as XHev/Se 30 and 67, were later considered to have come from the same cave. XHev/Se 30 as well as 5/6Hev 49–51 and 61 were written in Hebrew, 5/6Hev 53–58, 60 and 62–63 in Aramaic. 5/6Hev 52 and 59 as well as XHev/Se 67 were written in Greek.

75 Y. Yadin, *Bar-Kokhba* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971), 181.

76 The latter are 4Q358, 6Q26, KhQ1, Mur 22, 29 and 30 and probably 4Q345; cf. Hannah Cotton and Ada Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Documentary Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites* (DJD 27; Oxford: Clarendon, 1997) and Eshel, "On the Use of Hebrew."

been studied in more depth by Hanan Eshel: While Hebrew was employed for documents in the pre-66 period as well as during the two Jewish revolts, no such Hebrew document was found from the period between the two revolts. On the other hand, the number of Aramaic and Greek documents rose significantly during that period. Eshel attributes this to “the spiritual quandary and national crisis brought about in the wake of the destruction of the Second Temple.”⁷⁷

Second, the assumption that Aramaic was more prevalent in Galilee while Hebrew was more prevalent in Judaea cannot be based on epigraphic evidence. It might still be proven true from literary or other historical sources, but the epigraphic evidence in itself does not support such a claim, simply because material of that period from the Galilee is too scarce: of the 175 texts classified as “א” in this study and dating to pre-135 C.E., only one originates from Galilee.⁷⁸ Of the texts classified as “ה,” none originates from Galilee. The widespread conviction that Aramaic inscriptions are more frequent in Galilee is probably based on the synagogue inscriptions of later centuries, a time for which there is no dispute among scholars that Hebrew had been replaced by Aramaic as a spoken language. However, it should be noted that we also have 18 Hebrew inscriptions from Beth She’arim dating to that later period. An interesting detail should be noted though: among all the places of origin mentioned on ossuary inscriptions, place names from the north of the country are more frequent than others, and in most cases these are, paradoxically as it may seem, given in Hebrew: הגלילי (“the Galilean,” four times: Mas 404, Mur 52, CIIP 693/CIJ 1285) and הבשני (the “Beth-Sheanite,” three times: CIIP 410–412/CIJ 1372–1374), הגדריאן (“The Gadarene”?, Mas 420). On the other hand, the only place name originally from Judaea, apart from Jerusalem, appears in an Aramaic inscription: יהוד בר שבט מין בת אלון (“Yehud son of Shevat from Beth Alon,” possibly referring to Beth Allonim near Hebron, CIIP 43/CJO 293).⁷⁹

Hence, if, and only if, these inscriptions can tell us anything about language use in the places of origin mentioned here, then there is a certain irony in the fact that there is at least some evidence for Hebrew speakers from the Galilee and the Decapolis, while evidence for Aramaic-speakers from these regions is still missing.

77 Eshel, “On the Use of Hebrew,” 258. One might also compare the decline in the public use of German in the Midwestern USA during World War I and following.

78 Beyer gJL 1, a jar inscription from Jeleme. The Aramaic mosaic inscription from Sepphoris (CIJ 989), dated by Frey between the first and fourth century, probably is best dated towards the end of that range.

79 Most other identifiable place names are from the diaspora.

Third, the assumption that Hebrew was exclusively used for religious purposes while Aramaic was used for all other matters, cannot be verified from the epigraphic sources. Indeed, there is a preference for Hebrew in religious contexts: examples are the three inscriptions mentioning הגדול הכהן,⁸⁰ another inscription mentioning שמעון הכהן (CIIP 259/CIJ 1317), the קרבן inscription found near the Temple Mount (AHL 385), the תמד stamp of a wine merchant (AHL 223),⁸¹ the inscription mentioning the התקיעה בית ("the house of the trumpeters") from the Temple Mount (CIIP 5), the priestly shares from Masada (Mas 441–461) and the halakic letter 4QMMT from Qumran. However, it cannot be argued that the use of Hebrew was obligatory in such religious contexts, since we do have several Aramaic inscriptions mentioning priests (CIIP 434/CIJ 1221, CIIP 25 and 530) and even a high priest (כהנא רבא, Mas 461), three Aramaic קרבן inscriptions,⁸² and possibly an Aramaic reference to the second tithe (Mas 671). The use of Hebrew in religious contexts was therefore obviously still a matter of individual choice and far from being a fixed tradition or convention. On the other hand, we also have a number of Hebrew inscriptions and documents from clearly non-religious contexts: the בני הזיר inscription (CIIP 137/CIJ 1394) is probably a list of wages for workers. Most of the Hebrew ossuary inscriptions (h1 and h2) have no religious content whatsoever. To the contrary, the nickname used in CIIP 565/CJO 821 (מרים אתת העגל, "Maryam, wife of 'the calf'"), if it is meant in a derogatory sense,⁸³ is a proof that Hebrew could be used in quite unholy ways. Titles like הצייד ("the hunter," CIIP 693/CIJ 1285), הנהוּתם ("the baker," Mas 429), החרש ("the artisan," CIIP 173), תרפת הנשבה ("the captive physician"?, CIIP 363/CJO 80) or בנה ("builder," CCIP 54/CJO 200) can hardly be classified as "religious." The same is probably true for הספר ("the scribe," CIIP 86/CJO 893), which denotes an administrative occupation and not a religious one.⁸⁴ Also, the places of origin, already mentioned above, are more frequently added in Hebrew than in Aramaic, obviously without any religious or national connotation. Finally, the Hebrew Bar Kokhba letters and documentary texts from the Judaean Desert make it clear that Hebrew was also used in

80 CIIP 534/CJO 871, CCIP 701 and the recently discovered בן הכהן הגדול sarcophagus inscription from the north of Jerusalem (see above).

81 This inscription might have a religious (respectively halakic) significance if it refers to a special classification of inferior wine frequently mentioned in rabbinic sources, e.g. *m. Hul.* 1.7.

82 CIIP 17/CIJ 1407, CIIP 287 and 466.

83 As suggested by Hachlili, *Jewish Funerary Customs*, 225, who gives also other examples of derogatory nicknames, for example, בן הרצחן ("son of the murderer"), also in Hebrew.

84 *Ibid.*, 215.

military, economic and legal contexts, while the coin inscriptions reflect a use of Hebrew for political or administrative purposes. To conclude: while there is indeed a certain prevalence of Hebrew within contexts of religious or national relevance, and on the other hand, a prevalence of Aramaic in economic and administrative matters, in neither case is this to the total exclusion of the other language.

Fourth, the assumption that Hebrew was used by the learned population, while Aramaic was used by the unlearned, as well as the opposite, cannot be based on the epigraphic evidence either, simply because we do not know enough about the social status of the people behind the inscriptions and documents. Probably most of the inscriptions and documents originate from the middle or upper classes of society, since the lower classes would not have the money or means to produce documents or prestigious inscriptions. Even in the case of casual graffiti, we cannot determine the social status of their authors. Certainly, no sociological pattern of language distribution can be extracted from the evidence.

These conclusions drawn from the epigraphic material of the land of Israel might appear disappointing at first glance since they are predominantly negative in essence: the language distribution within the inscriptions and documents is too evenly divided and too diverse to make any certain claims on geographical, functional or sociological language peculiarities. However, it might be just this non-existence of clear results that is the most important result of this study: too easily New Testament scholars have looked for simple patterns and ready answers to explain the complexity of a reality two thousand years separated from ours. Too quickly, scholars of the past (and present) have made claims about language use that were not based on the material on the ground, but on theological or ideological preconceptions. Too negligently, we have separated ourselves from the fruitful studies of our colleagues in the fields of archaeology, linguistics, and history. Today, however, in a time of increasing interdisciplinary interaction, we find that our judgments should be more careful, our claims more humble and the picture we draw of the past more complex than it has been until now. The epigraphic evidence from the first century presents us with a complex picture of a trilingual society in which Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew not only exist side by side, but exist closely intertwined and in living contact with each another.

Hebraisti in Ancient Texts: Does Ἑβραϊστί Ever Mean “Aramaic”?*

Randall Buth and Chad Pierce

There is a methodological problem with the lexical entry Ἑβραῖς in the standard lexicon for New Testament studies. Under Ἑβραῖς BDAG says “the Hebr[ew] language Ac[ts] 21:40; 22:2; 26:14; Papias (2:16). These pass[ages] refer to the Aramaic spoken at that time in Palestine.”¹ The present study will investigate the claim of BDAG. It will be shown that there is reliable, lexicographical and contextual support for the meaning “Hebrew language” for the word group Ἑβραῖς, Ἑβραϊστί, Ἑβραϊκή and especially for the passages cited in BDAG. It also will be shown that there is no methodologically sound support for the meaning “Aramaic language.” This is a classic example where *a priori* assumptions have led a field to ignore the evidence and to misread it.

The present study focuses on the meaning of Ἑβραῖς and the language that it references in various Greek authors during the Second Temple period up to the beginning of the Byzantine period. This essay does not deal with which language(s) Jewish teachers used for teaching in the first century, nor which language was most common in the markets in Capernaum or Jerusalem, nor which language was Jesus’ first language, nor when and where Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew were used, nor the relative percentages of usage of Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew. Our quest is more modest and more reliably achieved: To which language or to which languages did Ἑβραῖς, Ἑβραϊστί, Ἑβραϊκή refer?

For the past 450 years, the idea that the Ἑβραῖς, Ἑβραϊστί, Ἑβραϊκή group of words could refer to Aramaic in the first century has grown and solidified. The late nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed a continuation and

* The present study arose out of an on-going discussion and correspondence. This work is one of joint authorship and mutual responsibility.

1 Frederick William Danker, editor and reviser, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition (BDAG)*, based on *Walter Bauer’s Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, 6th edition (ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann) and on previous English editions by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

expansion of such an Aramaic hypothesis.² One of the influential scholars to advocate an Aramaic understanding of Ἑβραΐς was Gustaf Dalman. In his work *Jesus–Jeshua*, Dalman concluded that Aramaic had become the language of the Jews to such an extent that Aramaic words were designated “Hebrew.”³

New Testament scholarship since Dalman’s day, although acknowledging that Ἑβραΐς literally means “Hebrew,” has continued this trend. As an example, Joseph Fitzmyer asserts two reasons why Ἑβραϊστί means *Aramaic*. First, he claims that “Greek writers of a later period refer to the language [Aramaic—RB/CP] as Συριστί or Συριακή. When, however, Greek writers of the first century refer to the native Semitic language of Palestine, they use Ἑβραϊστί, ἑβραΐς διάλεκτος, or ἑβραϊζών. As far as I can see, no one has yet found the adverb *aramaïsti*.”⁴ Second, he makes the claim “As is well known, it [ἑβραϊστί *et al.*—RB/CP] is used at times with words and expressions that are clearly Aramaic.”⁵

This study will demonstrate that Ἑβραΐς means Hebrew. It will address the claims that allegedly support an Aramaic understanding of Ἑβραΐς. It also will demonstrate that Ἑβραΐς only means Hebrew, and it will challenge both of the assumptions, represented by Fitzmyer, supporting an Aramaic understanding of Ἑβραΐς. First, it will show that there is a clear distinction in the writings of ancient Greek authors between the Hebrew and Aramaic languages beginning in the Persian period through at least the third century C.E. Second, it will determine whether any words labeled as Ἑβραΐς are in fact Hebrew or Aramaic. Thus, it will refute the claim that Greek writers commonly used the term to describe Aramaic.⁶

2 For a discussion of the history of the hypothesis of Aramaic replacing Hebrew as the language of the Jewish people, see Guido Baltes’ contribution to the present volume, “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’ in the Nineteenth Century” (pp. 9–34).

3 Gustaf Dalman, *Jesus–Jeshua: Studies in the Gospels* (trans. P. Levertoff; New York: KTAV, 1971, originally published in 1898). See also Arnold Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache: Das galiläische Aramäisch in seiner Bedeutung für die Erklärung der Reden Jesu* (Freiburg i.Br./Leipzig: Mohr, 1896).

4 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 43. His comment on *aramaïsti* is ill-conceived and misleading since Greek already had a good word for “Aramaic,” Συριστί from pre-Christian times. In fact, as far as we can tell, Greek never called Aramaic *Ἀραμαϊστί, so its lack in first century Greek authors is simply correct Greek usage and to be expected.

5 *Ibid.*, 43.

6 Dalman, *Jesus–Jeshua*, 15: “Aramaic became the language of the Jews to such an extent that the Gospel of St. John *as well as Josephus* [italics ours—RB/CP] found it possible to designate such Aramaic words . . . as Hebrew.”

1 Ἑβραΐς and the Book of Acts

The book of Acts provides an interesting starting point for examining the term Ἑβραΐς/Ἑβραϊστί. The contexts provide enough signals for determining to which language the term referred.

Ἑβραΐς is found in Acts 21:40 and 22:2. After a riot developed around him in the temple, Paul requests that he be allowed to speak to the Jewish crowd. Acts 21:40–22:2 reads:

When he had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the people for silence; and when there was a great hush, he addressed them *in the Hebrew language* (τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ), saying: “Brothers and fathers, listen to the defense that I now make before you.” When they heard him addressing them *in Hebrew* (τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ), they became even more quiet. (NRSV)

While the word Ἑβραΐς literally means “Hebrew” (Phil 3:5), many commentators suggest that “in the Hebrew dialect” refers to Aramaic.⁷ Translations have made this explicit. The NRSV of Acts 21:40 and 22:2 translates Ἑβραϊδὶ “in Hebrew” in the main text but then includes a footnote clarifying, “that is, Aramaic.” The NIV translates Ἑβραϊδὶ “in Aramaic” in the main text with a footnote saying, “or possibly in Hebrew.” The Jerusalem Bible translates “Hebrew” with a footnote “i.e., Aramaic.” TOB translates *hebraïque*, with a footnote “c’est-à-dire, probablement, en Araméen.” Newcomers to the field of New Testament studies might reasonably conclude that the evidence for “Aramaic” must be quite strong and unambiguous for such a seeming consensus to rewrite “Hebrew” as “Aramaic.”

Dalman concluded that “the ‘Hebrew’ speech of St. Paul to the Jews who were gathered in the temple (Acts xxi. 40; xxii. 2) . . . [was] doubtless in Aramaic.”⁸ Regarding Acts 21:40 and 22:2, Fitzmyer claims that Paul is “undoubtedly” speaking Aramaic.⁹ While some have challenged these assumptions,¹⁰ New

7 For examples of these commentators, see M. Parsons, *Acts* (Paedia: Commentaries on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 306; and R. Pervo, *Acts* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2009), 184.

8 Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 15.

9 Joseph A Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 701.

10 For examples of those who read Ἑβραΐς as signifying Hebrew, see J. M. Grintz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple,” *JBL* 79 (1960):

Testament scholarship has by and large followed the position exemplified by Dalman.

John Poirier has pointed out that a primary clue for understanding the events in Acts 21–22 is found in Acts 21:33–39.¹¹ Following a Jewish riot, the Roman tribune hears Paul ask a question in Greek and answers with a surprised question of his own: Ἐλληνιστὶ γινώσκεις; (“Do you know how to speak Greek?”). According to Poirier this little exchange points to a language switch and tells us that the previous riot and interrogations were not taking place in Greek, at least not with Paul. Presumably, the language of the Roman crowd control and of the interrogation was Aramaic, an international *lingua franca* known by many of the Roman soldiers who were recruited from the eastern Mediterranean areas.¹² Assuming that Paul had spoken something before Acts 21:37, the tribune’s surprise at hearing Greek from Paul tells us that the previous interrogation was probably not in Greek. Then, after the riot in one language, and the exchange in Greek between Paul and the tribune, a third language is recorded and labeled Hebrew. That third language would not be Aramaic (already used in the interrogation) or Greek, so the label Hebrew would be correct as written. All of this follows naturally from the context, if Paul had been speaking with the Romans before the conversation with the tribune in 21:37. However, even if Paul had been silent during this time before Acts 21:37, the context suggests that the language mentioned in Acts 22 is still most probably Hebrew.

In Acts 22:2 the crowd listened more intently to Paul, because he was speaking Ἑβραϊδὶ. Some scholars have argued that the crowd was surprised that Paul spoke Aramaic rather than Greek.¹³ However, there was nothing remarkable about Jews from the Diaspora speaking Aramaic. Aramaic was known and used far and wide across the Middle East with not a few Greek-Aramaic multilinguals. It is much more probable that the astonishment came because Hebrew was being spoken by someone from the Diaspora. This Hebrew was not just a “tourist Hebrew” or “religious-use Hebrew,” but apparently an articulate and

32–47, and S. Safrai, “Spoken Languages in the Time of Jesus,” *Jerusalem Perspective* 4, no. 1 (1991): 3–8, 13.

- 11 John C. Poirier, “The Narrative Role of Semitic Languages in the Book of Acts,” *Filología Neotestamentaria* 16 (2003): 107–16. Poirier concluded that the riot was in Aramaic and that Paul’s speech in Acts 22 was in Hebrew.
- 12 The use of Aramaic among Roman soldiers is found in Josephus’ account of the siege of Gamla in *War* 4.37–38. A more detailed description of this episode will be discussed below. Either Aramaic or Greek would be reasonable choices for addressing a Jewish crowd mixed with local Jews and those from the diaspora (Acts 21:27–36).
- 13 Pervo, *Acts*, 184; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 701.

fluent Hebrew. The crowd was sufficiently surprised so that they stopped to listen. All of this can be argued from language shifts in the context. We note that Luke called this language Ἑβραϊδι διαλέκτῳ “in Hebrew.” After finishing our discussion on Acts 21–22, we will demonstrate that our understanding of this context is consistent with the use of Ἑβραϊστί/Ἑβραΐς in Greek literature of the Greco-Roman era.

The reason for the switch to Hebrew in this context has received some attention. John Poirier suggests that Paul spoke Hebrew rather than Aramaic in order to keep the content of his speech secret from the Roman authorities.¹⁴ After Paul completes his speech to the crowd, Acts 22:24 records that the tribune questions why the crowd has reacted so negatively to Paul’s words. Poirier has correctly noted that both the tribune and his coterie would probably have been able to understand Aramaic. Poirier claims that the fact that he was not able to understand Paul’s speech further supports the theory that Paul spoke in Hebrew.¹⁵ However, while secrecy is a possible factor in Paul’s language choice, we must remember that understanding a communication requires more than knowing the words and language, it requires knowing the cultural background and context. The Romans would presumably have been in the dark about the reason for the crowd’s anger, whether Paul spoke in Hebrew or Aramaic or Greek. We would add that Paul had mentioned being in the temple previously (Acts 22:17), without causing a riot. It was the seemingly innocuous statement that he would travel to Gentile areas that caused an uproar, and this would likely have confused a Roman officer in whatever language he had been listening. So the tribune ordered an investigation by scourging (Acts 22:24).

Daniel Marguerat suggests that Paul switched to Hebrew at the temple in order to demonstrate his commitment to the Jewish religion amid charges that he broke the Jewish law by bringing a Gentile beyond the appropriate boundary.¹⁶ This provides a reasonable and culturally appropriate motivation for Paul’s speech in Hebrew. As a corollary, this motivation also supports the conclusion that Hebrew was the language of the speech in Acts 22.

Taken together, these arguments point to the contextually sound conclusion that Paul’s speech to the crowd in Acts 22 was in fact in Hebrew rather than

14 Poirier, “The Narrative Role,” 109–11. See also John C. Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation in Jewish Palestine in Late Antiquity,” *JGRChJ* 4, no. 3 (2007): 80. For such a use of Hebrew, see the discussion on *4 Macc* 12:8–9 below.

15 Poirier, “The Narrative Role,” 112, 113.

16 Daniel Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the “Acts of the Apostles”* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 197.

Aramaic. This conclusion will be strengthened by external references to Ἑβραῖς in early Jewish and Christian literature where Ἑβραῖς means Hebrew and cannot be established to mean Aramaic. So both the context and Luke's choice of wording point directly to Hebrew.

2 The Use of Ἑβραῖς in Early Jewish and Christian Literature

a *The Septuagint*

In order to better understand the use of Ἑβραῖς in Acts, it is beneficial to observe how the word was used in other early Jewish and Christian literature. The LXX consistently distinguishes between Aramaic and Hebrew. Furthermore, there is no instance in which Ἑβραῖς refers to Aramaic. The first example of a clear distinction between the languages can be found in 2 Kgs 18:26–28. The LXX's rendering of 2 Kgs 18 preserves the differentiation in the Hebrew text between Hebrew and Aramaic. This is expressed in a dialogue between the officials of the Assyrian King Sennacherib and the Judean king Hezekiah. Second King 18:26–28 reads:

Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in the Aramaic language (Συριστί), for we understand it; do not speak to us in the language of Judah (Ιουδαϊστί) within the hearing of the people who are on the wall." But the Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the people sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and to drink their own urine?" Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah (Ιουδαϊστί), "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria!"

In this story Eliakim, one of Hezekiah's officials, requests that the Assyrians speak in Aramaic (Συριστί) rather than in Hebrew (Ιουδαϊστί), so that the common people would not be able to understand the conversation. The word Ιουδαϊστί is used here to refer to the language of Kingdom of Judah, the main dialect of Classical Hebrew. The Hebrew language as a whole was named "the language of Canaan" (שפת כנען) in Isa 19:18. The *rabshakeh*, the Assyrian official, ignores this request and speaks to the Judeans in Hebrew (Ιουδαϊστί). It is evident that at the time of the composition of the LXX, the translators understood a difference between Hebrew (Ιουδαϊστί) and Aramaic (Συριστί). This

passage demonstrates that Jewish Greek writers distinguished between the Hebrew and Aramaic languages before the Christian era.¹⁷ Furthermore, this distinction in Greek contradicts Fitzmyer's surmise that Greek writers in the first century lacked a good word for Aramaic. There is no attestation of *aramaisti* anywhere in Greek because Συριστί already existed.

Wherever it is discernible in the LXX, Ἑβραΐς never describes Aramaic, only Hebrew. *Fourth Maccabees* relates the stories of the martyrdoms of Eleazar, as well as the seven brothers and their mother (presumably drawn from 2 Macc 7), at the hands of Antiochus IV. Chapter 12 records the martyrdom of the seventh and youngest brother. After Antiochus tries to persuade the youngest son to renounce his Judaism and thus to spare his life, 4 Macc 12:7 states that "his mother encouraged him in the Hebrew voice" (τῆς μητρὸς τῆ Ἑβραϊδὶ φωνῇ προτρειψαμένης αὐτόν). Similarly, 4 Macc 16:15 recounts the words spoken by the mother to the seven young men before their deaths: "you were speaking to them in Hebrew" (ἔλεγεσ τοῖς παισὶν ἐν τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ φωνῇ).

Although it is possible that Antiochus used a translator, it appears that all of the Jews mentioned in the story understood the common language spoken by the Seleucid king. The specific references that something was said "in Hebrew" suggests that Hebrew was not a language in common between Damascus and Jerusalem that was being used in the main body of discussion. Rather, it indicates that the young men and the mother switched from one language, presumably Aramaic, to Hebrew. While the text itself does not indicate the reason for the change, it is possible that Hebrew was used by the Jews to keep Antiochus and his company from understanding their conversations.¹⁸ The popular language around Damascus was Aramaic and Antiochus' officers can be presumed to be Aramaic speakers, whether or not they were using Aramaic or Greek in the conversation up to this point. Therefore, the switch to Hebrew would have kept the conversation between the mother and her child out of the understanding of the enemy soldiers. The use of Hebrew is also heightened in this context because it is associated with staying true to Jewish laws and customs in the midst of foreign persecution. In this context, Ἑβραΐς fits a Hebrew

17 The parallel accounts in the LXX of 2 Chr 32:18 and Isa 36:11–13 also differentiate between Hebrew (Ιουδαϊστί) and Aramaic (Συριστί). Ιουδαϊστί is also used to describe the Hebrew language in Neh 13:24 (καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτῶν ἤμισυ λαλοῦντες Ἀζωτιστί καὶ οὐκ εἰσιν ἐπιγινώσκοντες λαλεῖν Ιουδαϊστί). When Josephus discusses these stories he uses the more generic Ἑβραϊστί.

18 Cf. Poirier, "Narrative Role," above. While Poirier's secrecy motif in Acts 22 is unnecessary, his reasoning here is on target.

reference better than Aramaic and, more importantly, this passage cannot be used as support for the assumption that Ἑβραῖς could mean Aramaic.¹⁹

The synonym Ἑβραῖστί is used one time in the LXX. The Greek prologue to the translation of Ben Sira refers to the original language of the book and indicates that what was once spoken in Hebrew (Ἑβραῖστί) is not as effective when translated into another language (οὐ γὰρ ἰσοδυναμεῖ αὐτὰ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς Ἑβραῖστί λεγόμενα καὶ ὅταν μεταχθῆ εἰς ἑτέραν γλῶσσαν). The Hebrew fragments of Ben Sira, discovered in the Cairo Genizah, Qumran cave 2, and Masada, indicate that in the second century B.C.E., the date ascribed to Ben Sira and its translation, Ἑβραῖστί undeniably designates Hebrew and again there is no support for it to refer to Aramaic.²⁰

In addition to the aforementioned examples in which Ἑβραῖς signifies Hebrew, it is also important to note the instances in the LXX in which the Aramaic language is clearly identified. Nowhere in the LXX is Ἑβραῖς used for Aramaic. Ezra 4:7 records a letter that was written to King Artaxerxes in Aramaic (ἔγραψεν ὁ φορολόγος γραφήν Συριστί καὶ ἡρμηνευμένην). Similarly, Dan 2:4 records the Chaldeans speaking to the king in Aramaic (καὶ ἐλάλησαν οἱ Χαλδαῖοι πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Συριστί Κύριε βασιλεῦ, τὸν αἰῶνα ζήθι).²¹ In the Old Greek version of Dan 2:26, Aramaic might also be called Χαλδαῖστί (ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς εἶπε τῷ Δαναῖ ἑπικαλουμένῳ δὲ Χαλδαῖστί Βαλτασαρ) but Akkadian (Assyro-Babylonian) would seem more likely as Χαλδαῖστί.²²

In the colophon to Job in the Greek Bible we have another important reference to Aramaic. Job 42.17b LXX reads: Οὗτος ἐρμηνεύεται ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς βίβλου (“This is being translated from the Aramaic book”). This is a statement of the translator that he did not rely (solely?) on the Hebrew text of Job, a Hebrew dialect that has long been noted as special.²³ We are fortunate to have two stories

19 *Fourth Maccabees* was probably composed in the first centuries B.C.E. or C.E. For a discussion on the date of *4 Maccabees*, see J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 202–4.

20 For a discussion on the date of Ben Sira, see D. Williams, “The Date of Ecclesiasticus,” *VT* 44, no. 4 (1994): 563–66.

21 Behind the Greek Συριστί at Dan 2:4 we find אַרְמֵי. It is irrelevant to our discussion whether or not אַרְמֵי was a gloss to the original book. No form of Ἑβραῖς is used for Aramaic in Greek *Daniel*, Συριστί is used.

22 The fact that Συριστί is used at Dan 2:4 for Aramaic suggests that Χαλδαῖστί refers to Akkadian (Babylonian). See also Dan 1:4 in which the Old Greek text uses διάλεκτον Χαλδαϊκὴν and Theodotion records γλῶσσαν Χαλδαίων to refer to what appears to be Assyro-Babylonian.

23 Origen appeared to be troubled by this statement because he thought that it referred to the canonical text (Hebrew) and he knew that Συριστί did not actually mean “Hebrew.”

concerning Gamaliel in the first century and a “translation to Job.” These help to explain this unique Greek Bible translation process. Two Aramaic copies of Job have also been found at Qumran (4Q146 ar Job, 11Q ar Job). It appears that there was an Aramaic translation of the book of Job that was in fairly wide circulation in the late Second Temple times.²⁴ The only thing that concerns us here is the name of the language. The Greek version of Job called it “Aramaic” (Συριακή).

Thus, consistently throughout, the LXX clearly distinguishes between Hebrew and Aramaic, and there is no evidence to cause us to consider Ἑβραϊκὴ as anything other than “Hebrew.”

The transliteration of Hebrew words and names is one more phenomenon in the Old Greek Bible that needs discussion before moving on to other texts and authors. There are transliterated words in the Greek Bible that end in [-α], an ending that resembles the common Aramaic suffix [-א], “the.” There are six different ways that a Greek citation form could have a final *alpha*, and the first five of these may refer to a Hebrew source text: (1) euphony; (2) assimilation to a commonly known Aramaic form; (3) a loanword in Hebrew with an Aramaic etymology; (4) a borrowed name that carried an *alpha*; (5) a “Hebrew” name that carries an *alpha*; (6) Aramaic as the original source, with *alpha*.

(1) For euphony. Names may have –a in the LXX even though they are without an Aramaic precedent. Μαθουσαλα מְתוּשָׁלַיִם, Σιδωνα צִידוֹן (Syr. ܣܝܕܘܢ), Γεραρα (גֵּרָר, “to Gerar,” גֵּרָר), Οδορρα יהודור (dropping “m”), Θαρα ταρα (the first “a” preserves

The Targums were a relatively new feature in Origen's day and he may have been unaware that a pre-Christian Aramaic targum to Job existed or that it would be used by translators. Accordingly, he tried to explain why a Hebrew text might be called “Aramaic” (which is the opposite of the phenomenon alleged by modern scholars for Ἑβραϊστί). Origen, *Homiliae in Job*, states: Συριακήν νῦν τὴν Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον καλεῖ, ἐπειδὴ καὶ Συρίαν τὴν Ἰουδαίαν, καὶ Σύρους οἱ πολλοὶ τοὺς Παλαιστινοὺς ὀνομάζουσιν (“He now calls the language of the Hebrews ‘Syrian,’ since even Judea is called Syria, and many call the Palestinians ‘Syrians’”). We wish to thank Ken Penner for calling our attention to this reference. By means of a *qal va-Homer* argument, it also reinforces the fact that Συριστί would certainly be appropriate for Aramaic.

24 The origin of the pre-Christian Job targum was probably in the East. See also Takamitsu Muraoka, “The Aramaic of the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI,” *JJS* 25 (1974): 425–43. See also Eibert Tigchelaar, “Aramaic Texts from Qumran and the Authoritativeness of Hebrew Scriptures: Preliminary Observations,” in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism* (ed. Mladen Popović; JSJSup 141; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 155–71 (160): “linguistic analysis suggests that the Targum of Job (4Q157; 11Q10) originated in the East.” Tigchelaar adds a footnote “T. Muraoka, . . . (1974): 425–43; a position which is still held by Muraoka today.”

a different dialect of Hebrew), Σοδομα . . . Ζογορα δαμ . . . צער, Αμορραιων האמרי (note the gentilic Greek -αι- vowel), Σοαγαθα סכתה (directional [-α] preserved in a Greek name), Σαβαθα שבטן (-n deleted), Χεναρα כנרת (-t deleted), and Οζα עזן (-n deleted).²⁵ Greek words, other than proper names, prefer to end in the final consonants ν, ρ, σ. The Greeks apparently did not like the sound of words ending in other consonants.²⁶ Often, either the final consonant would drop off, or the vowel “α” would be added to ease pronunciation.²⁷

(2) Assimilation to a commonly known Aramaic form. Hebrew words like יֶשֶׁבֶר (“beer”) and פֶּסַח (“passover”) have forms like σιχερα and πασχα in the LXX translation. Euphony might seem applicable to explain the [-α], but it is an insufficient explanation. The shape of the word πασχα with CVCCV (C = consonant, V = vowel) fits Aramaic over Hebrew, and the vowel of “e” in σιχερα does not fit Hebrew as closely as Aramaic. These and other Semitic forms look like the LXX translators chose a form that was also circulating in a bilingual Aramaic–Greek environment in Alexandria.²⁸ This is not surprising since Greek and Aramaic interfaced all over the Middle East from the Indus Valley to the Nile and especially within Jewish communities where Jewish religious terms would be needed in Greek. In the case of the LXX it is important to remember that they chose these citation forms in their translation while working from the Hebrew text.²⁹ Furthermore, the shape of a citation form does not determine the ultimate source language, nor the language that an author

25 See Guido Baltes’ contribution to the present volume, “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’ in the Nineteenth Century,” n. 25 : “the frequent use of the final -a in Greek transliterations as evidence for an Aramaic *status emphaticus* is a non sequitur: it is obvious from the practice of transliteration in the LXX that the final -a is a common Grecism rather than a unique Aramaism, cf. Gen 4:18; 10:15, 19, 27; 11:25; 13:10; 48:22; Exod 12:37; Num 34:24.11.26 et al.”

26 Such a tendency was not absolute. For a counter-example, the Greek transliteration εφουδ comes from the Hebrew אֶפֶד in Judg 8:27; 17:5; 18:14, 17, 18, 20; 1 Sam 2:18, 28; 14:3, 18; 22:18; 23:6.

27 H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (rev. ed; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), §133, 33; and R. Funk, *Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (rev. ed; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §141 (3), 78: “Σάββατα = שַׁבָּת + α to make it pronounceable in Greek; accordingly first σάββατα in the Hexateuch, thereafter also σάββατον.”

28 The word σάββατα is already found in a papyrus from the mid-third century B.C.E., P.Cair. Zenon 4 59762. For an image: <http://ipap.csad.ox.ac.uk/PCZ-colour/300dpi/P.Cair.Zen. IV.59762.jpg>.

29 While the Exodus translators chose πασχα, the translators of Chronicles chose φασεα (2 Chr 30:1, 2, 5, 15, 17, 18), and φασεχ (2 Chr 35:1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18), and Jer 38:8 has φασεα.

may be referring to. An Aramaic-friendly citation form in Greek does not make a word Aramaic. See below for examples of this principle with Babel, Persian, and even with Jesus in Aramaic and English.

(3) Loanwords. A word whose etymology may trace back to Aramaic but that has become a part of the Hebrew language may also produce an [-α] ending in a transliteration: Αββα (אבא “father,” a word that entered Hebrew during the Second Temple period, though it was also used as a name already in the Old Greek of the Hebrew Bible (Αββα θυγάτηρ Ζαχαρια, 2 Chr 29:1).³⁰

(4) Names and place-names, a borrowed name that carried an *alpha*. Proper names are a special kind of loanword. Names may come from any language, including Aramaic, and be assimilated into Hebrew. Names cross source language boundaries with unpredictable amounts of assimilation or preferred shapes. For example, in the Hebrew Bible we have a name בָּבֶל, *Babel*, regularly transcribed as Βαβυλών in Greek.³¹ Babel בבל is treated like a Hebrew name in the Bible, so much so, in fact, that its meaning is interpreted according to Hebrew vocabulary, where the verb בָּלַל/יָבַל, “to mix with a liquid; confuse,” is used to explain the meaning of the name. In this case we can truly call the name *Babel* “Hebrew.” However, after the discovery of Akkadian texts we can now confidently say that the name was originally Akkadian *bab-ilu* and meant “gateway of God.” If someone explains the name Babel/Babylon as “gateway of God,” then they are treating the name as Akkadian *bab-ilu*, not Hebrew or Greek, regardless of the citation form or intervening history of transliteration. If someone explains the name as “confusion,” then they are probably treating the name as Hebrew and following Gen 11 and/or later Hebrew and Aramaic בבל (“to confuse”).

This process of crossing language boundaries can work in many directions. For example, the Chronicler, though writing Hebrew, uses an Aramaic form of the name “Damascus” in Hebrew, דרמשק. However, the Greek translator continued to use the Greek form Δαμασκός, closer to the older “Hebrew” form of

30 A couple of Mishnaic Hebrew examples will suffice: אבא גדול מאביך (“[my] father is bigger than your father!,” *m. Sanh.* 4:5); אמר רבן שמעון בן גמליאל: נוהגין היו בית אבא שהיו נותנין כלי לבן לכובס נכרי שלשה ימים קדם לשבת (“Rabban Shim’on b. Gamliel said, ‘[my] father’s house had a practice that they used to give white clothes to a gentile laundryman three days before Shabbat,’ *m. Shab.* 1:9).

31 The LXX uses Βαβυλών [< Akkadian/Neo-Babylonian *bab-ilani* “gate of the gods”] at Gen 10:10 and frequently in the Hebrew Bible, but at Gen 11:9 the LXX translates the name in order to bring out the popular Hebrew etymology: Σύγχυσις, ὅτι ἐκεῖ συνέχεεν κύριος τὰ χεῖλη (“*Synxysis* [Confusion], because there the Lord confused the languages...”). One can truly say that the LXX is based on Hebrew at Gen 11:9, rather than Akkadian. However, Βαβυλών is a Greek adaptation that is based on Akkadian, not Hebrew.

σαβαχθάνι); Acts 1:19 (ακελδαμαχ חקל-דמא, “field of blood”); and 9:36, 40 (ταβίθα אטביתא, “gazelle”). Incidentally, none of these were called “Hebrew” by a New Testament author.

There is also newer, more local evidence than the LXX on the use of names. The *Bar-Kokhba* letters, which date to the early second century C.E. contain works composed in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The Hebrew letter, Naḥal Ḥever 49, contains two “Aramaic names,” בר כוסבא and מסבלא.³⁷ In Naḥal Ḥever 54 we have the opposite phenomenon, a “Hebrew title” in an Aramaic letter ישראל על הנסי על ישראל (“Shimon bar Koseba the leader of Israel”).³⁸ In Muraba‘at 30 we have Aramaic names in a Hebrew letter: הותמים . . . יהוסף שמעון בר סימי (“signatures: Yonatan fils de Yoseph, Sim‘on fils de Simai . . .”).³⁹ The list of false prophets in 4Q339 composed in Aramaic uses the Hebrew בן for “son” rather than the more expected בר.⁴⁰ The names cross language boundaries. Before proper names can be relied on as evidence that Ἐβραϊστί can mean “Aramaic,” we need to find examples of the unquestioned use of Ἐβραϊστί for common words in early Jewish or Christian literature.

37 E. Y. Kutscher, “The Language of the Hebrew and Aramaic Letters of Bar Koseba and His Contemporaries, first article: the Aramaic Letters, second article: the Hebrew Letters” (Hebrew), in *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies* (ed. Z. Ben-Hayyim, A. Dotan, and G. Sarfatti; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1977), 36–70 (55).

38 Ibid., 38. More recently an Aramaic document has been published that incidentally keeps a Hebrew name. Esther Eshel, Hanan Eshel, and Ada Yardeni, “A Document from ‘Year Four of the Destruction of the House of Israel’: A Rare Testimony of Religious Decisions After the Bar Kochba Rebellion?” (Hebrew) *Cathedra* 132 (2009): 5–24; Moshe Bar Asher, “Concerning the Language in the Document from Bet ‘omer” (Hebrew), *Cathedra* 132 (2009): 25–32. Lines 1–3 of the text have a Hebrew name העלינה in an Aramaic sentence that reads:

בתרי <ן> עשר לכסילו שנת ארבע לחרבן בית ישראל
בית עמר מרים ברת יעקוב מסעלב ארמלת
שאול בר שמעון שועל מענב העלינה אמרת

“In the twelfth of Kislev, year four of the destruction of the house of Israel at Bet ‘omer, Miryam daughter of Ya‘aqov from Sha‘alav, the widow of Shaul son of Shim‘on [of the house of] Shu‘al from ‘Enav the Upper, said . . .”

Somewhat unexpectedly, the content of the declaration, lines 4–10, is in Hebrew, although with two apparently legal loanwords from Aramaic (התקבלת, “I have received,” שאיוהב, “who gives”).

39 J. T. Milik, “Textus hébreu et araméens,” in P. Benoit et al., eds., *Les grottes de Murabba‘at* (DJD 2; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 145–46.

40 M. Broshi and A. Yardeni, “4Q339: List of False Prophets,” in *Qumran Cave 4 XIV Parabiblical Texts Part 2* (ed. M. Broshi et al.; DJD 19; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 77–79.

The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible is an important witness for transliterations and citations from a Hebrew text. The options and patterns are more varied than often assumed and need treatment beyond the superficial assumptions frequently seen in New Testament studies. In particular, points 2 through 4 above are situations where the shape of the Greek may show some contact with Aramaic in a multilingual environment, even though a translator is working from Hebrew or discussing a Hebrew text. Proper names are especially problematic for New Testament studies because they pass over language boundaries and their etymological shape cannot be used conclusively for identifying a language being discussed.

Finally, imagine a situation where an ancient Greek wrote that “the king’s name was Ἀρθασασθα, which means ἐν τῇ Περσικῇ ‘whose reign is through truth.’”⁴¹ Then, suppose that a modern scholar comes along and says that the Greek transcription is actually taken from the LXX of Ezra 4:7 (Hebrew) and 4:8 (Aramaic) rather than common Greek Ἀρταξέρξης (Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.1.1 Ἀρταξέρξης) or from the Persian itself. Therefore ἐν τῇ Περσικῇ/Περσιστί means “Hebrew or Aramaic” rather than Persian. Scholars would quickly point out the fallacious conclusions. Again, what should one say, if an ancient Greek historian said that Ἀσσηρος is Persian (Περσιστί) for “ruling over heros,”⁴² and then a later scholar says that that shows that Περσιστί really means “Hebrew” because Ἀσσηρος is from a Hebraized form of the name (Ezra 4:6) rather than common Greek Ἑξέρξης or Persian *Xšayaršā* (approximately *Χισαίάρσα*). Translators already did something similar in Aramaic. Christian Palestinian Aramaic (CPA, late first millennium C.E.) uses יסוס for Hebrew/Syriac ישוע. The name יסוס is obviously based on an intervening Greek form Ἰησοῦς, which further hides the “salvation-ישוע” wordplay underlying Matt 1:21, ויתקרא שימה יסוס הו גר יחא קהלה, מן סיבלתהון, “you shall call his name *Yesous* for he will give his assembly life from their sins/follies.” But this does not change the fact that the name יסוס is Hebrew, and now in CPA it is also Aramaic. Preachers do something similar today and may say that “Jesus” means “salvation” in Hebrew.⁴³ But no one says that “in Hebrew” means English just because the preacher used a citation form

41 According to *Encyclopedia Iranica*, “whose reign is through truth” (<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/artaxerxes-throne-name-of-several-persian-kings-of-the-achaemenid-dynasty> [retrieved 12 February 2012]).

42 *Encyclopedia Iranica*, “with the primary meaning ‘ruling over heroes’” (<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/xerxes-1-name> [retrieved 12 February 2012]).

43 The names ישוע and יהושע actually come from a root ע.ו.ש, not ע.ש.י. “salvation.” Matthew 1.21 reads: “he shall save his people from their sins,” is a popular etymology based on the similar sounding word ישועה.

of the name in English “Jesus.” That is the kind of misreading that is frequently applied to Greek transliterations of names and words in the LXX, Josephus, Jewish literature, and the New Testament. Scholars seem to miss the full logic of a speaker because Hebrew and Aramaic are so close that the meanings of their names and words are often transparent in both languages (like *golgolet*, “skull,” to be discussed below). But sometimes the illogical claim of the scholarly hypercritical “rereading” becomes visible and can be exposed, exactly as will be discussed below with Josephus on “*shabbat*,” where Aramaic does not provide the correct etymological meaning. The meaning of the ancient author must be carefully ascertained in context, and it may be different from the history of a word’s shape or its citation form.

An example of the above misapplication of logic occurs in the otherwise useful article by André Pelletier.⁴⁴ He correctly shows that the LXX Greek transliterations are primarily based on Aramaic forms that were common in a Greek-Aramaic community in Egypt. However, he incorrectly uses that observation for dismissing the claims of Jehoshua Grintz:

A lui seul, ce texte de Josèphe (*AJ* III 252) dément formellement la théorie de J. M. Grintz, selon qui, là où nos textes disent “en hébreu, en langue hébraïque, en langue des Hébreux,” il s’agirait toujours bel et bien de l’hébreu biblique, à l’exclusion de toute autre langue et spécialement de l’araméen.⁴⁵

By itself, this text of Josephus (*Antiquities* 3.252 [Pentecost, which the Hebrews call ἀσραθα—RB/CP]) formally refutes the theory of J. M. Grintz, according to whom, wherever our texts say “in Hebrew, in the Hebrew language, in the language of the Hebrews,” it always, well and truly, deals with Biblical Hebrew, to the exclusion of any other language and especially Aramaic.

Those are strong words by Pelletier, but are they appropriate? We may ask: Who is right, Pelletier or Grintz? Several points are telling. First, Grintz included both Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew together when he talked about Hebrew, not just Pelletier’s “Biblical Hebrew.” Grintz was aware of subtleties of a multilingual situation that seem to have escaped Pelletier. Second, the pure Hebrew forms cited by Pelletier (μεχωνωθ [“bases,” *Ant.* 8.85], Αναθωθ [place name], p. 437) as proof that Josephus could not have referred to Hebrew when

44 André Pelletier, “Σαββατα: Transcription grecque de l’Araméen,” *VT* 22 (1972): 436–47.

45 *Ibid.*, 437.

citing *σαββατα* or *ασαρθα*, appear to reflect words for which no Aramaicized citation forms were available. Third, Grintz never denied that some of the forms that Josephus cited are Aramaic by form:

It is true that Josephus sometimes cites words and names in their Aramaic form, . . . Asartha (III.10.6 §252) for Pentecost . . . [this is—RB/CP] a natural inclination on the part of Josephus to use the Aramaic forms as being more adaptable to the special transliteration he chose for his Greek readers (both languages making use of vowel-endings).⁴⁶

Fourth, specifically on *shabbat* Grintz quoted Josephus and pointed out the obvious:

Ant[iquities] 1.1 §33: “. . . *σαββατα* . . . For which reason we also pass this day in repose from toil and call it the sabbath, a word which in the Hebrew language means ‘rest.’” Josephus derives, as had the Bible, the word sabbath from the Hebrew *שבת*. In Aramaic the verb *שבת* does not exist. Aramaic translators use instead: *נח*.

Grintz is entirely correct on *Sabbath*. Josephus was referring to the Hebrew language when he gave the meaning of “Shabbat” as “rest,” even though he used a citation form from Aramaic that was more amenable to Greek and that was already in widespread use in Greek.⁴⁷ This undermines Peletier and directly supports Grintz because the actual word *שבת*⁴⁸ did not mean “rest,

46 Grintz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language,” 44.

47 As for *ασαρθα*, the word *עֲצֻרָת*, “assembly,” was a Hebrew word that had been borrowed in Aramaic and was used by Jews for major feasts. Payne Smith (J. Payne Smith [Mrs. Margoliouth], *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, founded upon the *Thesaurus Syriacus* of R. Payne Smith, D.D., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903) recognizes the loan status: “*ܥܘܘܪܐ* f. Heb. a religious assembly.” The Hebrew verb means to “restrain, stop walking, stop movement” and fits the religious nature of a Jewish holiday. The Aramaic verb referred to “crushing, squeezing.”

48 In Aramaic the word was *שבתא*, already in the Persian period. The Aramaic form only comes from adding an article, “the Shabbat.” *שבתא* was not the most neutral, basic form at that time. We have five fifth-century B.C.E. papyri with the form *שבה*, “Shabba.” *יום שבה*, “the day Shabba” (TAD D7.10, line 5), *שבה* (TAD D7.12 line 9), *מחר בשבה*, “tomorrow on Shabba” (TAD D7.16, line 2), *בשבה*, “on Shabba” (TAD D7.28, line 4), *עד יום שבה*, “until the day of Shabba” (TAD D7.35, line 7). There are two with *[. . . שבתא]* “the [first, second . . .] Shabbat of the month Pauni” (North Saqqara 72, twice). This also contradicts the statement of Dupont-Sommer quoted by Pelletier: “sans doute plus fréquent

cessation” in Aramaic. *Shabba* was only a borrowed name in Aramaic. A better perspective is reached when we view the options that were available for Jews in Alexandria when making their choices. Greek *Shabbat* from Hebrew and Aramaic could have been σαββαθ (σαββατ) שבב, ασαββαθ (ασαββατ) שבבה, σαββα שבב, or σαββαθα (σαββατα) שבבא. The Jews in Egypt did not chose the simple Aramaic form without an article, σαββα, for Greek. They chose a form that was adapted for a Greek neuter plural ending (τὰ) σαββατα and that also reflected the Hebrew word. Undoubtedly, Σαββατα was chosen in Greek over Aramaic Σαββα because of being able to reflect the Hebrew shape better. The problem with Pelletier’s analysis is that he leaves no room for an author to use a citation form that may have been different from the original etymological shapes of the word. Pelletier did not seem to make allowance for a tri-lingual environment. From this discussion we may conclude that Grintz was correct, and that Josephus was referring to Hebrew in these cases, even though he was using popular Greek citation forms that go back to Aramaic in Alexandria. The conclusion becomes stronger after investigating Josephus more completely, below.

b *Jewish Pseudepigrapha*

References to Aramaic or Hebrew are relatively sparse in the Pseudepigrapha. However, those that exist remain consistent with the above discussion concerning the LXX. The Greek fragment of *Jub.* 12:26 reads: ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ λαλῶν τῷ Μωϋσῆ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, ὅτι τὸν Ἀβραάμ ἐγὼ ἐδίδαξα τὴν Ἑβραϊδα γλῶσσαν κατὰ τὴν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως λαλεῖν τὰ πάτρια πάντα (“The angel speaking to Moses said to him ‘I taught Abraham the Hebrew tongue according to what was from the beginning of creation to speak all the ancestral things’ ”). Here a form of Ἑβραῖς is used to describe the “Hebrew” that was taught to Abraham and spoken at the creation of the world.⁴⁹ It is generally accepted that the book of *Jubilees* was originally composed in Hebrew.⁵⁰ Since the book of Genesis was part of

à l'époque où le mot passa en grec” (“without a doubt more frequent in the time period that the word passed into Greek”) (“Σαββατα,” 441). The form שבב appears to us to have been the more frequent and more basic in the centuries leading up to the LXX, though the evidence is only suggestive, it being too sparse to be definitive. The increased use of the Aramaic article is primarily a feature of later Aramaic dialects and characteristic in the East.

49 William Dindorf, *Georgius Syncellus et Nicephorus ex recensione Guilielmi Dindorffi* (Corpus Scriptorum historiae Byzantinai 1; Bonnae: Impensis Ed. Weberi, 1829), 185.

50 For a discussion of the original language of *Jubilees*, see James C. VanderKam, “The Manuscript Tradition of *Jubilees*,” in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees* (ed. G. Boccaccinni and G. Ibbá; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 12–17.

the Torah and was written in Hebrew, there is no reason to assume that in the Greek translation of *Jubilees* τὴν Ἑβραϊδα means anything other than Hebrew.

The *Testament of Solomon* MS A 14:7 uses Ἑβραϊστί to denote the language of the angel Bazazath: Τῷ μεγάλῳ ἀγγέλῳ τῷ ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ οὐρανῷ καθεζομένῳ τῷ καλουμένῳ Ἑβραϊστί Βαζαζάθ (“By the great angel who is seated in the second heaven, who is called in Hebrew, Bazazath”). The name Bazazath does not give any indication that Ἑβραϊστί here would mean Aramaic rather than Hebrew.

The *Letter of Aristeas* further supports both a distinction between Aramaic and Hebrew and also refers to the continued use of Hebrew among some Jews. It is important to pay attention to the context rather than some widely quoted interpretations of this text. First, line 3 points out that the Jewish laws were written in Hebrew (διὰ τὸ γεγράφθαι παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἐν διφθέραις Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν). This is unremarkable and certainly refers to Hebrew. Lines 9–11 describe the king’s questioning of Demetrius concerning the size of the royal library. Demetrius informs the king that he intends to increase the number of volumes from 200,000 to 500,000. He mentions that the laws of the Jews are worthy of translation and of inclusion in the library (προσῆγγελται δέ μοι καὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμιμα μεταγραφῆς ἄξια καὶ τῆς παρὰ σοὶ βιβλιοθήκης εἶναι). When the king questions Demetrius as to why this has not yet been done, Demetrius responds that translation is needed because the law uses letters (writing) characteristic of the language of the Jews:

Τί τὸ κωλύον οὖν, εἶπεν, ἐστὶ σε τοῦτο ποιῆσαι; πάντα γὰρ ὑποτέτακται σοὶ τὰ πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν. ὁ δὲ Δημήτριος εἶπεν Ἑρμηνείας προσδεῖται· χαρακτηρῶσι γὰρ ἰδίοις κατὰ Ἰουδαίων χρῶνται, καθάπερ Αἰγύπτιοι τῆ τῶν γραμμάτων θέσει, καθὼ καὶ φωνῆν ἰδίαν ἔχουσιν. ὑπολαμβάνονται Συριακῆ χρῆσθαι· τὸ δ’ οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλ’ ἕτερος τρόπος. Μεταλαβὼν δὲ ἕκαστα ὁ βασιλεὺς εἶπε γραφῆναι πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅπως τὰ προειρημένα τελείωσιν λάβῃ.

“What is there to prevent you from doing this?” he said. “Everything for your needs has been put at your disposal.” Demetrius replied, “Translation is needed. They use letters characteristic of the language of the Jews, just as Egyptians use the formation of their letters in accordance with their own language. The Jews are supposed to use Syrian language, but this is not so, for it is another form of language.” The king, in answer to each point, gave orders that a letter be written to the high priest of the Jews that the aforementioned project might be carried out.⁵¹

51 Translation by R. J. H. Shutt, “Letter of Aristeas,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2 [ed. James H. Charlesworth; ABRL; Garden City: Doubleday, 1985], 12.

The *Letter of Aristeas* claims that the Jews in Jerusalem were speaking a language different than Aramaic (Συριακή). At the beginning of the twentieth century, Billerbeck contended that the peculiar alphabet and dialect of the Jews mentioned in line 11 refers to a distinct form of Aramaic spoken by the Jewish people. Regarding the language of the Jews in line 11, Billerbeck suggests:

Diese Gleichsetzung konnte übrigens um so leichter erfolgen, als man, wie der Aristeasbrief §11 zeigt, geneigt war, das von den Juden gesprochene Aramäisch als eine besondere Sprache neben der aramäischen Weltsprache anzusehen. Wenn die „Hebräer“ ihr besonderes Aramäisch sprachen, warum hätte man diese ihre Sprache nicht auch die „hebräische“ nennen sollen, obgleich sie in Wirklichkeit die aramäische war?⁵²

This equation was able to result all the easier when someone was inclined, as the Aristeas letter shows, to view the Aramaic spoken by the Jews as a special dialect of the Aramaic international language. Whenever the “Hebrews” spoke their own Aramaic, why wouldn’t someone name this “Hebrew,” even though in reality it was Aramaic?

The error in Billerbeck’s rhetorical question is that *Aristeas* is not referring to Aramaic, but to Hebrew, the language of the Torah. The difficulty in the translation of the Jewish laws is that they are composed in Hebrew rather than Aramaic. Demetrius reports that the Jews speak this language rather than the more common Aramaic. Billerbeck’s comments are a complete misreading of *Aristeas*.

Matthew Black also argued that the peculiar alphabet and dialect of the Jews represents a distinct form of Aramaic that had grown up in Palestine rather than a description of two different languages, Aramaic and Hebrew.⁵³ Black has apparently based his reading upon his presumptions that at that time Jews only used Aramaic and not Hebrew. He did not consider the context of the work sufficiently. The text itself gives no indication that a peculiar form of Aramaic is intended. Rather, the text claims that the Jews were speaking a distinct language that corresponds to the language of the Torah. The language of the Torah can only be Hebrew. So, paragraph 11 does not suggest a different dialect of Aramaic. It appears that the *Letter of Aristeas* purposefully empha-

52 (H. Strack)-Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, II (Munich: C.H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924), 444.

53 Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3rd ed; Clarendon: Oxford University Press, 1967), 48.

sizes the fact that the language of the Torah was a different language, that is, Hebrew, rather than a type of Aramaic. The comments by Billerbeck and by Black are a remarkable testimony to the power of presuppositions to hide the plain sense of a text in its context. Both Billerbeck's and Black's works are widely cited but their comments must be rejected as blatant mistakes and they cannot be allowed to influence the meaning of Ἑβραΐς.⁵⁴

We have seen that in the LXX and Pseudepigrapha Ἑβραΐστί/Ἑβραϊκή is never used to signify Aramaic. Instead, the authors use Συριστί/Συριακή for Aramaic, and probably Χαλδαΐστί for Akkadian/Babylonian. While Ἰουδαΐστί is used for a Judean dialect of Hebrew, Ἑβραΐς/Ἑβραϊκή/Ἑβραΐστί are employed to designate the Hebrew language in general. Therefore, on the basis of usage in pre-Christian Jewish literature (i.e. the LXX and the Pseudepigrapha) there exists no evidence to support the efforts to read Ἑβραΐς in Acts 21–22 to mean Aramaic. This is quite remarkable in light of the widespread assumptions to the contrary.

c *Josephus*

Similar to the LXX and Pseudepigrapha, Josephus' writings are an important witness to the Jewish language(s) in land of Israel during the first century C.E.

Josephus refers to Aramaic as "Syrian writing" (Συρίων γραμμάτων) in *Ant.* 12.15 when describing the project of the LXX and he distinguishes Hebrew from this Syrian language (*Ant.* 12.15 and 12.36). Thus, it is evident that Josephus is familiar with the common term for the Aramaic language, seen above in the LXX and Pseudepigrapha. Furthermore, there are a number of instances in his works where Josephus is unquestionably referring to Hebrew when describing something written in the "Hebrew language" or "language of the Hebrews" (γλῶττα Ἑβραίων or Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον), or "translated out of the Hebrew letters [Hebrew Bible]" (*Ant.* 1.5). Many of these examples have already been noted by Jehoshua Grintz in 1960.⁵⁵

While discussing the creation and the Sabbath in *Ant.* 1.33, Josephus writes "For this reason we also pass this day in repose from toil and call it Sabbath (προσαγορεύοντες αὐτήν σάββατα), a word which in the language of the Hebrews (τὴν Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον) means rest (ἀνάπαυσιν)." As S. Safrai has noted, in this case the language of the Hebrews can only refer to Hebrew since in Aramaic the root 𐤒𐤍 is used for "rest" rather than the Hebrew 𐤒𐤁𐤑.⁵⁶ That should be the

54 Josephus records the same details at *Ant.* 12.15 and 12.36.

55 Grintz, "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language," 42–45.

56 Safrai, "Spoken Languages," 6–7, has this correctly. For example, all the targumim and Syriac at Gen 2:2 have ܫܒܘܘ ܕܢܝܚܘ/חַיִּי/חַי for Hebrew 𐤒𐤁𐤑. In Late Aramaic ܫܒܘܘ was

end of the discussion. Unfortunately, many have overlooked this basic context and have been misled by focusing only on the form, which is close to an Aramaic form שבתה/שבתא.⁵⁷ As mentioned in the discussion under the LXX, this form may simply reflect euphony in Greek, or more probably, may reflect the common choice in Greek for a word that was used over a wide area of Greek and Aramaic interface, in Egypt and throughout the Levant. The LXX had already made that choice and both *σάββατα* and *ἀνάπαυσις* occur in Exod 16.33 LXX. Josephus is thus using the common LXX Greek citation form when he is discussing the Hebrew word. And, just like *Ἀσσυηρος* and *Ξέρξης* remain a Persian word in their meaning regardless of the form of transliteration that an author uses, so does *σάββατα* remain uniquely a Hebrew word when discussing its etymological meaning, “cessation, rest.” Look at the question from Josephus’ perspective. What did he mean? How do we exegete him? He did not refer to the Aramaic “meaning” of the word, where it was only a borrowed Hebrew name, but to the Hebrew meaning. As to the form, he took the common available form in Greek. Did Josephus care about whether or not there had been Aramaic influence on the Greek transliteration? Obviously not. But can lexicographers come along and say that here Josephus meant Aramaic when he said “language of the Hebrews”? No. That would misrepresent Josephus, no matter how many times an Aramaic interpretation of the “language of the Hebrews” is repeated in scholarly writings. This is an example where Josephus clearly refers to the Hebrew language for his choice of the phrase “dialect of the Hebrews,” even though he has been widely misquoted as if he had intended

formed out of the noun as a technical term meaning “to observe the Shabbat,” not as a general word for “stopping, resting.” Rajak, in *Josephus*, 231, is ambiguous in her description of Josephus’ Hebrew words: “Mostly it is, of course, the Hebrew word that is in question in the etymology, though in the case of the word Shabbath (1.34 [*sic*—RB/CP: 1.33]) it is the form with the Aramaic termination, ‘*Sabbata*,’ which Josephus’ gives.” Since she was discussing the problem of language names, for a more representative picture she should have added that *Sabbata* is also the Greek form in use in the LXX. It is not likely that Josephus personally reinvented a transliteration that was already established for Greek by the LXX, so that *sabbata* is the clearest, most natural way for Josephus to refer to Hebrew *תשבת* in Greek.

57 The base form of the loanword in Aramaic was *shabba* שַׁבָּא, already attested several times in Official Aramaic in Egypt (בשבתה, *יום שבתה*) as well as more locally in Qumran, Nahal Hever 50:5–6: *קדם שבתה*, “before *Shabba*.” Thus, had the LXX and Josephus only been thinking about the Aramaic word as their base they would have developed the form *σαββα*. The form *σαββατα* was apparently chosen over *σαββα* out of deference to the Hebrew, contra Pelletier, “*Σαββατα*,” as pointed out in the discussion on the LXX.

Aramaic. The reference to Hebrew in this passage also fits harmoniously with the rest of Josephus.

In *Ant.* 1.34 Josephus states that the name Adam signifies “red” in the Hebrew language (ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος Ἄδαμος ἐκλήθη. σημαίνει δε τοῦτο κατὰ γλώτταν τὴν Ἑβραίων πυρρόν). In Aramaic “red” would be ܟܪܡܝܘܣ. So again, Josephus means uniquely “Hebrew.” In 1.36 Josephus also claims that “in the Hebrew tongue a woman is called *essa*” (Ἔσσα δὲ καθ’ Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον καλεῖται γυνή). This comes from the Hebrew word for woman (השׂא) rather than the Aramaic (ܫܬܬܐ) and in this case Josephus may be providing his own transliteration. There was no Septuagintal precedent and apparently no loan word or citation form available in a Jewish Greek.⁵⁸

Transliterations can have a complex history. In *Ant.* 3.252, Josephus describes Pentecost, “which the Hebrews call Asartha” (Ἑβραῖοι ἄσαρθά καλοῦσι). It is probable that ἄσαρθά stems from an intermediate Aramaic form ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ. The word ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ occurs in both Hebrew and Aramaic, though in Aramaic it appears to be a loan word from Hebrew.⁵⁹ The Aramaic form has been chosen in Greek. Yet difficulties with the etymology remain, because Josephus (*Ant.* 3.252) states “Ἀσαρθά denotes fiftieth.” Superficially, that is not true, the word in both its Hebrew and Aramaic forms refers to an “assembly.” In neither Aramaic nor Hebrew does ἄσαρθά literally mean “fifty.” Louis Feldman contends that Josephus’ use of σημαίνει for “denotes” here does not indicate that Ἀσαρθά means fiftieth, but rather that it is associated with the fiftieth day.⁶⁰ His explanation is acceptable but not dependent on σημαίνει. Furthermore, ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ was also used for the end of Passover and the end of Sukkot, it was not limited to Shavuot.

Something similar happens in Josephus’ use of πάσχα.⁶¹ The Greek comes from the LXX. It is probable that this is a technical Greek transliteration of a hypothesized Aramaic form ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ* in Alexandria. It was apparently introduced into Alexandrian Greek in an environment where Aramaic word shapes were also widely known. The syllable pattern of the Greek correspond better to Aramaic than to Hebrew ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ. The Hebrew word was ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ with an “e” in the first syllable and a vowel between “s” and “ח.” Aramaic, on the other hand, is attested as ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ (ܫܬܪܥܝܘܬܐ*), with no vowel under the “s.” So, the Greek form πάσχα appears to be following an Aramaic syllable structure, not the Hebrew form of

58 For other examples of Josephus describing Hebrew words as written in the γλώτταν Ἑβραίων or Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον, see *Ant.* 1.333; 5.121.

59 See n. 47, above.

60 Flavius Josephus, *Judean Antiquities: Books 1–4* (trans. L. Feldman; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 305 n. 735.

61 E.g. *War* 2.10; 6.243; *Ant.* 2.313.

the name. These observations, however, are put in context and clarified by the fact that the LXX often uses τὸ πάσχα when transliterating the Hebrew פֶּסַח.⁶² The “Aramaic” form shows up in Greek even when the translator is known to be working from Hebrew. Thus, the scholarly “correction” that Josephus is really referring to Aramaic is a mistake. Πάσχα, פֶּסַח, is not a natural Aramaic word, it appears to be a transliterated loanword from Hebrew. The verb פִּסַּח does not occur in Syriac and only occurs in Jewish Aramaic in the targums to Exodus. Likewise, in Syriac the name of the feast even changes into פִּצְחָא (related to a root “cheerfulness,” “shine forth”). Josephus, writing two to three centuries after the LXX, explained the meaning of the feast name according to the Hebrew (*Ant.* 2.313), and naturally chose the already accepted Greek form of the Hebrew word when he took up pen and ink. So, the word in the LXX and Josephus is a loanword from Hebrew, but its form has come into Greek through a more euphonic Aramaic intermediate form.

Not all of Josephus’ references to Hebrew words are taken from contexts paralleled in the Hebrew Bible. Describing an attack on the temple in *War* 5.272–74, Josephus reports that Jewish watchmen were stationed at the towers in order to alert the Jews inside of Jerusalem when the Roman army fired one of their massive catapults. Important for this study is the phrase used by the watchmen to warn the population that the projectile was in the air. According to Josephus, the guards shouted ὁ υἱὸς ἔρχεται (“The son is coming”). This phrase is an interesting wordplay on the Hebrew בֵּן בֹּאֵה. It appears that a shortened form of the Hebrew phrase (-בֵּן בֹּא-) was included by the author as local color. The soldiers on guard would have intended to shout “a stone is coming,” though their words would literally sound like “the son is coming” (הֵבֵן בֹּא) when spoken quickly in a clipped manner.

The wordplay between “stone” and “son” is well-known in Hebrew and is even attested in the Gospels.⁶³ None of the options for stone in Aramaic (כֵּה or

62 The LXX transliterates the Hebrew פֶּסַח with πάσχα on over forty occasions, especially in the Pentateuch (e.g. Exod 12:11, 13, 21, 23, 27, 43, 48; Lev 21:18, Num 9:2, 4, 10, 12).

63 The בֵּן/בֵּן אֲבִי wordplay is also found in the parable of the tenants in Matt 21:33–46 and parallels, where the synoptic authors record Jesus quoting from Ps 118:22–23 in which the “stone that the builders rejected” is used to explain the murder of the landowner’s son. Both John Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard: Ideology, Economics, and Agrarian Conflict in Jewish Palestine* (WUNT 195; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), and Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 363, have explicitly rejected this scripture in the parable on the grounds that it is based on a wordplay that is not possible in Aramaic: “The effort of Snodgrass and Lowe to rescue Ps 117 [*sic*—RB/CP] for the original parable by positing a wordplay between *ben* (son) and *stone* (eben) collapses with Hultgren’s observation that this wordplay is impossible

בא) would be confused with the Aramaic word for “son” (בר). Also, the Aramaic words for “come” (fem.), אָתָה *atá*, and “come” (masc.), אָתָה *até*, have different vowels and would not be as easily confused as in Hebrew where the masculine (*ba*) and feminine (*baa*) use the same vowel. Thus, the report of Josephus provides a compelling example of Hebrew spoken in a non-religious, public context where Josephus refers to Hebrew as “the patriarchal language.” Moreover, this was being spoken in a life and death situation when understanding by the populace of Jerusalem was imperative, suggesting that Hebrew was the language of choice to warn the public in peril.⁶⁴ While this Hebrew story does not attest to the word Ἑβραϊστί, it does undermine a recurring presupposition documented above in which scholars assume that only Aramaic was a possible option for Semitisms and popular language use.

Josephus’ mention of the use of Hebrew during battle differs from an encounter in Aramaic among adversaries during the siege of Gamla, east of the

in Aramaic, presumably Jesus’ language” (Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard*, 236). Kloppenborg and Hultgren illustrate again, like others in Acts 21–22, how a too-restricted view of the language situation can negatively affect interpretation. Neither scholar tried to explain why all attested tannaitic story parables are in Hebrew. See now R. Steven Notley and Ze’ev Safrai, *Parables of the Sages, Jewish Wisdom from Jesus to Rav Ashi* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2011). New Testament scholarship needs to update itself after embracing the advances in Mishnaic Hebrew scholarship over the last century.

Matthew 3:9 and Luke 3:8 records John the Baptist saying, “God is able from these stones (האבנים) to raise up sons (בנים) to Abraham.” The plural of Aramaic בר, “son,” is בנין. While the wordplay in the plural would be possible in Aramaic in a different context, the anarthrous בנים fits better with Hebrew האבנים than Aramaic בנין with אבנייא.

- 64 Dalman, in *Jesus-Jeshua*, 15, claims that Josephus obviously means Aramaic (“the shouts ‘in the language of the fathers’ of the watchmen in the towers of Jerusalem, giving warning of the Romans, were doubtless in Aramaic”), even though such a reading is insupportable. However, if our proposed reading above is correct, it impacts on the references to the “patriarchal language” in other places in Josephus. The “patriarchal language,” like Ἑβραϊστί, appears to be uniquely Hebrew. In *War* 5.361 Josephus was sent to talk with his countrymen and Hebrew would be fitting. The Romans had other officers who could speak Aramaic, though not necessarily Hebrew. Of course, Josephus was a compatriot of the rebels, which could explain the choice. In *War* 1.3–6 Josephus says that he wrote a first edition in the patriarchal language. Since the intended audience were Jews and others all over the Middle East, most assume that such a work was in Aramaic. However, the scope of his audience appears to be an exaggeration. Since he specifically named the language “patriarchal,” it would appear that he more probably wrote something in Hebrew, perhaps as a language choice parallel to the language of 1 Maccabees, and first sent it to Jewish communities in these areas. In any case, the current Greek work does not appear to be a translation, but must be considered a new edition, a complete re-working of the first writing and likely a considerable expansion.

Sea of Galilee. Josephus records (*War* 4.37–38) that in the midst of the Roman assault, a certain Roman centurion named Gallus, along with ten other soldiers infiltrated a home of one of the inhabitants of Gamla. While in hiding, the Roman soldiers, who are described as Syrians, overheard the occupants of the house discussing what they would do to the Romans. In the night, the Roman soldiers killed the house's residents and retreated to their ranks.⁶⁵ Worthy of note here is the apparent use of Aramaic at Gamla among its inhabitants and by the Roman soldiers. Josephus assumes that his readers would understand that the language common to the Roman soldiers, who are described as Syrians, and Jewish residents of Gamla would be Συριστί, "Syrian" (i.e. Aramaic). This further supports the hypothesis that when Josephus uses Ἑβραϊστί, he is deliberately referring to the Hebrew language.

Elsewhere it appears that Josephus uses Ἑβραϊστί to designate the Hebrew language. In his account of the discussion between the Assyrian and Judean officials from 2 Kgs 18 and Isa 36 mentioned above, Josephus maintains the distinction between Hebrew and Aramaic. In *Ant.* 10.8, following the LXX version of 2 Kgs 18:26 and/or Isa 36:11, Josephus uses Συριστί to signify the Aramaic language. However, unlike the accounts in the LXX (2 Kgs 18:26, 28 and Isa 36:11, 13) that use Ιουδαϊστί for Hebrew, Josephus replaces Ιουδαϊστί with Ἑβραϊστί.⁶⁶

Josephus also uses Ἑβραϊστί for Hebrew in *Ant.* 11.159.⁶⁷ In this account Nehemiah comes across two men who are speaking Hebrew to one another (ἐπακούσας Ἑβραϊστί πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὁμιλούντων). Presumably it is because these men are speaking Hebrew, rather than Aramaic, that Nehemiah pauses to question them about Jerusalem. While one might argue this refers to a Palestinian dialect of Aramaic, there is no reason within the text itself to assume that anything other than Hebrew was intended. Speculation about Aramaic runs up against the problem that Josephus never refers to Aramaic unambiguously as Hebrew.

In addition to specific references to words and phrases written in the γλῶττα Ἑβραϊόν or Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον, Josephus also mentions items composed in

65 It is not clear how ten soldiers could hide in one house, overhear dinner talk, kill the inhabitants, and not be detected. Perhaps Gallus did the listening and later arranged a ten-man ambush.

66 As noted above, Ἑβραϊστί had already been used as the equivalent of Hebrew in the Prologue of Ben Sira. By the time that Josephus wrote, there is no longer a political need to distinguish the southern Judean dialect (Ιουδαϊστί) of Hebrew from the northern.

67 This appears to be an expansion of Neh 1:1–3. The mention of the men speaking Hebrew is not found in the biblical account. Therefore, it appears that Josephus adds the details that they were speaking in Hebrew as the reason Nehemiah questioned them about Jerusalem.

“the ancestral language” (τῆ πατριῶ γλώσση). In *War* 6.438, Josephus explains that the city of Jerusalem had been founded by a Canaanite chief named the “righteous king” in the ancestral language (ὁ τῆ πατριῶ γλώσση κληθεὶς βασιλεὺς δίκαιος). This is a reference to the Hebrew name Melchizedek (מֶלְכִּיצֶדֶק) found in Gen 14:18.⁶⁸

An interesting anecdote occurs at *Ant.* 18.228. “Now Marsyas, Agrippa’s freedman, as soon as he heard of Tiberius’s death, came running to tell Agrippa the news; and finding him going out to the bath, he gave him a nod, and said, in the language of the Hebrews ‘The lion is dead’ (συννεύσας πρὸς αὐτὸν γλώσση τῆ Ἑβραίων τέθνηκεν ὁ λέων φησὶν).” Technically, there is no information given here that distinguishes Hebrew from Aramaic. However, there is an implication of privacy and they are in a public area that would include Gentiles. Hebrew, perhaps in a soft voice, would add to the privacy, and appears to be an implication from Josephus’ specifying the language. So Hebrew fits, and without an unambiguous attestation where “Hebrew” refers to Aramaic, any suggestion of Aramaic here would need to be rejected.

In *Ant.* 3.151–78 Josephus describes the priests and temple activities with some forms that are clearly Aramaic (e.g. τῶ ἀρχιερεὶ ὄν ἀραβάζηην προσαγορεύουσι where ἀραβάζηην is Aramaic אַרְבָּי [אַרְבַּי]). However, it must be pointed out that Josephus did not call these words “Hebrew” and he specifically distinguished Hebrew from Aramaic where appropriate in the immediate context. In *Ant.* 3.156 (3.7.2.1) we find Μωυσῆς μὲν οὖν ἀβαῖθ αὐτὴν ἐκάλεισεν, ἡμεῖς δὲ παρὰ Βαβυλωνίων μεμαθηκότες ἐμίαν αὐτὴν καλοῦμεν, “Moses calls this belt Aba-[n]-ith,⁶⁹ but we learned from the Babylonians and we call it Emia.” These are words known in Biblical Hebrew, אַבְנֵי, and Mishnaic Hebrew, אֲבָנֵי, and Aramaic אַבְנֵי. This passage reinforces our position that Josephus was aware of the distinction in languages.

It seems that in the writings of Josephus, there is no instance in which Ἑβραῖς can be shown to mean Aramaic. Rather, the word group Συριστί/Συριακή/Σύριος is used for the Aramaic language. Additionally, despite casual rebuffs that contain no direct textual refutations of Grintz’s assertions about the Hebrew of Josephus, Grintz’s assertions about Josephus’ Hebrew words remain

68 While Jewish Aramaic had Hebrew loanwords based on Hebrew קֶדֶצ, Aramaic did not use these words more widely (they do not appear in Syriac), so Josephus’ presumed reference for the “patriarchal language,” here, too, is most probably Hebrew.

69 Karl Heinrich Rengstorff, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus, Volume I:A—D* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), lists [ἀβαῖθ] and ἀβανήθ.

valid.⁷⁰ While there are occasions in which the precise meaning of Ἑβραΐς is indiscernible from the context, in every instance where one is able to distinguish whether it signifies Hebrew or Aramaic, the clear meaning is Hebrew. Thus, the usage in Josephus accords with what we have seen in the LXX and Pseudepigrapha; namely, Ἑβραΐς means “Hebrew.” J. M. Grintz summed this up over fifty years ago:

An investigation into the writings of Josephus demonstrates beyond doubt that whenever Josephus mentions γλώττα Ἑβραίων, Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον, etc., he always means “Hebrew” and no other language.⁷¹

Since Grintz wrote his article, evidence has grown to support Grintz’s contentions.

d *Philo*

While the LXX, the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, and Josephus all appear to differentiate between Hebrew and Aramaic, Philo does not. He routinely claims that the Hebrew Bible was written in the language of the “Chaldeans.” In *Mos.* 2.26 Philo comments that in “ancient times, the laws were written in the Chaldean tongue” (τὸ παλαιὸν ἐγράφησαν οἱ νόμοι γλώσση Χαλδαϊκῆ).⁷² Describing the LXX translation he also claims that the translators worked between Chaldean and Greek:

ὅπερ ἐπὶ ταύτης τῆς νομοθεσίας οὐ φασι συμβῆναι, συνεχθῆναι δ’ εἰς ταῦτὸν κύρια κυρίοις ὀνόμασι, τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ τοῖς Χαλδαϊκοῖς

But this, they say, did not happen at all in the case of this translation of the law, but that, in every case, exactly corresponding Greek words were employed to translate literally the appropriate Chaldaic words. (*Mos.* 2.38)

At first glance this appears to confuse Akkadian and Hebrew, or possibly Aramaic and Hebrew. Philo even calls Moses a Chaldean: Μωυσῆς γένος μὲν ἐστὶ Χαλδαῖος (“Moses was a Chaldean by race,” *Mos.* 1.5). However, two points are worthy of note. First, Chaldean (Akkadian, Aramaic, or some language)

70 For example, Joseph Fitzmyer in *Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 701, glosses over Grintz’s claims that Ἑβραΐς means Hebrew as “a highly questionable attempt” without actually refuting any of Grintz’s evidence.

71 Grintz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language,” 42.

72 For similar examples, see *Mos.* 2.31, 40.

is confused with Hebrew, not vice-versa.⁷³ Even in Philo, there is no example in which Aramaic is called “Hebrew.”⁷⁴ It is the Hebrew *Torah* that is called “Chaldean.” Second, and more importantly, Philo is not a reliable source for this discussion, because it is possible, even likely, that he was unfamiliar with the Hebrew language.

The extent to which Philo was familiar with Hebrew is a debated topic among scholars. It seems unlikely that someone devoted to Scripture and who traveled to Jerusalem would be ignorant of the original language of *Torah*. Yet, as David Runia asserts, it appears to be true.⁷⁵ Apparently, Philo did not know Hebrew. Those who disagree with this opinion often point to the many etymologies of Hebrew words found throughout Philo’s works.⁷⁶ However, some scholars believe that the etymologies in Philo are not from his own hand, but rather from a source of collected names and their etymologies.⁷⁷ If so, these etymologies cannot be used to prove that Philo knew Hebrew, and neither can they advance our understanding of the distinctions or confusions between Hebrew and Aramaic at the turn of the era.

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- 73 Philo sometimes discusses the “language of the Hebrews” when discussing Hebrew names in the Bible (*Sobriety* 45; *Confusion* 68; *Abraam* 27, 57; *Decalogue* 159; *Laws* 2.41, 145, 194), but he never explicitly explains the relationship between “Chaldean” (*Dreams* 1.161; *Abraam* 8, 12, 82, 99, 201; *Moses* 1.5; 2.26, 31, 38, 40, 224; *Rewards* 14, 23, 44; *Gaius* 4) and “Hebrew,” and neither of them with “Syrian.” At *Abraam* 27 “Noah” is explained according to “the language of the Hebrews,” while at *Rewards* 23 “Noah” is called a Chaldean name.
- 74 The closest potential reference may be at *Husbandry* 95, where a “snake” and “life” come together, and “Eve” is called part of the “patriarchal language” [= Chaldean?, = Hebrew?]. הַיָּוֵה, “Eve,” is related to הַיָּוֵה, “to be alive,” and הַיָּוֵה, “snake,” in Aramaic (and possibly proto-Hebrew as background to the Genesis tradition). Cf. *Husbandry* 95: . . . οὐ μὴν τῶ φίλῳ καὶ συμβούλῳ ζωῆς Εὐάν πατριῶ γλώττη καλεῖν αὐτὴν ἔθος, “. . . not to that friendly [serpent], the counselor of life, Eve as she [‘life’?, feminine; or ‘friendly’?, masculine] is customarily called in [Moses’] national language.”
- 75 D. Runia, “Etymology as an Allegorical Technique in Philo of Alexandria,” *SPhilo* 16 (2004): 112. The main argument against Philo’s knowledge of Hebrew comes from V. Nikiprowetzky, in *Le commentaire de l’Écriture chez Philon d’Alexandrie: son caractè et sa portée; observations philologiques* (ALGHJ 11; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 50–96.
- 76 For example, see *Abraam* 99 and 201. For a complete discussion of the etymologies in Philo, see Runia, “Etymologies.”
- 77 See Y. Amir, “The Interpretation of Hebrew Names According to Philo” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 31 (1961–62): 297; L. Grabbe, *Etymology in Early Jewish Interpretation: The Hebrew Names in Philo* (BJudSt 115; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 73–85; and Runia, “Etymology,” 113.

e *Rabbinic and Patristic Works*

While the Rabbinic and Patristic literature is subsequent to the time of the use of Ἑβραϊστίς in Acts 21–22, it is helpful to note briefly that the distinction between Aramaic and Hebrew described above continues in the centuries following the New Testament. The Mishnah uses תרגום for Aramaic in *m. Yad.* 4:5. Additionally, *y. Sotah* 7.2 distinguishes between “Aramaic/Syrian for elegy” (סורסי לאיליי) and “Hebrew for speech” (עברי לדיבור).

Similarly, early Patristic writers also continue to differentiate between Hebrew and Aramaic. Origen, in *Contra Celsum* 3.6, differentiates between Aramaic (Σύρων διαλέκτω), “the Syrians’ dialect,” and Hebrew (Ἑβραϊδα). Through the second century C.E. there is no record of confusion between Hebrew and Aramaic in Jewish or Christian writings.⁷⁸

Of only marginal interest for our study, the *Acts of Pilate*⁷⁹ 1.5 has one passage, based on Gospel texts of the triumphal entry, with the crowd shouting Ἑβραϊστί in Hebrew: ωσαννα μεμβρομη βαρουχαμμα αδοναι. The interpretation, “He who is in the highest places, just save! Blessed is the one coming in the name of the Lord.” The transliteration is confused (μεμβρομη for /מבמרומים/ במרומי, αμμα for הבא) and broken (βεσεμ בשם is missing), but it obviously refers to a Hebrew retroversion (βαρουχ is distinctly Hebrew, ωσαννα is plain Hebrew

78 Even a late fourth-century Church writer was able to maintain the distinction. Epiphanius, in the *Pan.* 68.3 (Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Books II and III* [Leiden: Brill, 1994], 386), states: “Indeed, the Lord prophesied this when he said, in Hebrew, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani.’ On the cross the Lord duly fulfilled what had been prophesied of him by saying ‘Eli, Eli,’ in Hebrew, as had originally been written. And to complete the companion phrase he said, ‘lema sabachthani,’ no longer in Hebrew but in Aramaic . . . by saying the rest no longer in Hebrew but in Aramaic, he meant to humble <the pride> of those who boast of Hebrew.”

Nevertheless, Epiphanius, *Pan.* 26, does have a confusing statement that appears to use a qualified “deep Hebrew” as referring to Hebrew itself in contrast to “*Noura* in Hebrew . . . in Syriake dialect” for Aramaic: ἵνα δὴ καὶ ἐρμηνείαν ποιήσωσι τοῦ τῆς Πύρρας ὀνόματος, Νωρίαν ταύτην ὀνομάζοντες. ἐπειδὴ γὰρ νοῦρα ἐν τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ πύρ οὐ κατὰ τὴν βαθεῖαν γλῶσσαν ἐρμηνεύεται ἀλλὰ Συριακῇ διαλέκτῳ (ἦσαθ γὰρ τὸ πύρ παρὰ Ἑβραίοις καλεῖται κατὰ τὴν βαθεῖαν γλῶσσαν). We are indebted to Ken Penner for this reference, which comes from his SBL paper, “Ancient names for Hebrew and Aramaic: A Case for Lexical Revision.” Thus there is a hint that the language distinction was starting to break down in the fourth century C.E.

79 The date for the *Acts of Pilate* is normally thought to be fourth century C.E. For a discussion of possible early material, see Felix Schneidweiler, “The Gospel of Nicodemus, Acts of Pilate, and Christ’s Descent into Hell,” in *New Testament Apocrypha*. Vol. 1, *Gospels and Related Writings, Revised Edition* (ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; English trans. ed. R. McL. Wilson; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 501–4.

ⲁⲛ ⲡⲉⲣⲉⲛ, “please save” [not a quotation from Ps 118, but not necessarily independent from the Gospels]). In fact, the phrase in the interpretation, ⲡⲱⲥⲟⲛ δὴ ὁ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις, “may he who is in the highest places save!,” is clearer than in the Markan and Matthean ⲱⲥⲁⲛⲛⲁ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις, “*hosanna* in the highest.”

The early Church Father Papias mentions Hebrew in a discussion of the Gospel of Matthew. Papias was the Bishop of Hierapolis, near Laodicea, in the Lycus Valley in the Roman province of Asia. His one major work, *Exposition of the Logia of the Lord*, was a five-volume tome that has not survived except for fragments cited in Eusebius’ *Historia ecclesiastica*.⁸⁰ It is thought that Papias wrote his exposition sometime around the turn of the second century (ca. 110–140 C.E.).⁸¹ More important than the actual dating of the work itself, Bauckham suggests that Papias records testimony from the time that the oral traditions concerning Jesus were being written in the Gospels (ca. 80 C.E.).⁸²

Relevant for this study is one fragment in which Papias, commenting on the Gospel of Matthew, claims:

Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο, ἡμῆνευσε δ’ αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατὸς ἕκαστος.⁸³

Therefore Matthew put the logia in an ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language, but each person interpreted them as best they could. (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.39.16)

Here it appears that Papias is suggesting that Matthew ordered his Gospel in a manner different from the others.⁸⁴ Especially interesting is the mention that Matthew ordered the words of Jesus “in the Hebrew language.” J. Kürzinger argued that the Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ was a reference to the canonical

80 For a discussion of the person and work of Papias, see W. R. Schoedel, “Papias,” in *ABD* 5:140–42, and R. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 12–15.

81 For a discussion of the history of dating of Papias’ work, see Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 14.

82 *Ibid.*, 14.

83 The Greek text is taken from M. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (rev. ed; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999), 568.

84 R. Gundry, in *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2nd ed; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 614, argues that Papias is suggesting that Matthew was unhappy with Mark’s order and thus, changed it. He concludes that this is the first attestation of Markan priority. Bauckham disagrees, claiming that Eusebius has omitted material that would give a clearer understanding of what Papias meant (*Eyewitnesses*, 222).

Gospel of Matthew that was originally composed in Greek but in a Semitic style.⁸⁵ Bauckham suggests that the Papias' fragment supports the idea that a Gospel of Matthew was written in Hebrew/Aramaic and was then translated by others into Greek.⁸⁶ Therefore, Bauckham contends that Papias understood Matthew to have carefully recorded the *logia* of Jesus in order, based upon his own eyewitness, but that this order was spoiled by each (ἕκαστος) of those who translated the Gospel into Greek. The combination of Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ and ἡμῆνευσε suggests that a translation from one language to another is meant.⁸⁷

If Bauckham and others are correct, then Papias believed that the original form of Matthew was Hebrew. Until now many have argued that the Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ simply meant Aramaic rather than Hebrew because of the predisposition in New Testament scholarship described throughout this study. However, the evidence in the first and second centuries C.E. indicates that Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ really means "Hebrew" rather than "Aramaic." If this is the case, then Papias suggests that a Matthean document was originally composed in Hebrew. There are good reasons that argue that the canonical Matthew cannot be such a Hebrew document.⁸⁸ On the other hand, a tradition of a "Matthean" document in Hebrew could provide some explanatory power for some of the pre-Gospel developments and for textual and comparative data in the Gospels. What can be stated as a product of this study is that there is no external evidence in Jewish and Christian literature that requires that Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ be understood to mean "Aramaic."

85 J. Kürzinger, *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1983), 103. This interpretation is found earlier in Gundry, *Matthew*, 619–20, and is at least partially followed by S. Byrskog, *Story as History—History as Story* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 293.

86 See Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 223, for his support for such a theory. See especially his note 69, page 223, for a list of other scholars who understand this in the sense of a translation from a Semitic original to Greek.

87 *Ibid.*, 222–24.

88 The canonical Matthew is not a translated document. See, for example, the studies of Raymond A. Martin, *Syntactical Evidence of Semitic Sources in Greek Documents* (Cambridge, Mass.: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974); *idem*, *Syntax Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels* (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 10; Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1987). In addition, the evidence supporting Matthew's use of Mark argues that Matthew was written in Greek, not Hebrew.

3 Ἑβραΐς and “Hebrew/Aramaic” Words in the New Testament

Despite the aforementioned examples from the LXX, Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, and early Rabbinic and Patristic works, which demonstrate a consistent distinction between Aramaic and Hebrew languages in early Jewish and Christian literature, one of the most frequent arguments for Ἑβραΐς signifying Aramaic is the use of Ἑβραΐς in association with words that appear to be Aramaic. However, a closer examination calls these assessments into question and undermines their validity.

Fitzmyer argues that references to Ἑβραΐς/Ἑβραϊστί in the New Testament refer to Aramaic rather than Hebrew.⁸⁹ He points to seven occurrences in the New Testament where he alleges that the word Ἑβραϊστί is used for Aramaic. As noted, a number of these instances include Ἑβραΐς followed by a Greek word whose shape appears to be closer to Aramaic than Hebrew. But the three occurrences of Ἑβραΐς that he cites in Acts (21:40; 22:2; 26:14) contain no hint internally that Aramaic was intended. Fitzmyer, and those with a similar approach, merely assume their understanding.⁹⁰ We have shown above that the context of Acts 21–22 excludes Aramaic as a probable reading. Since Luke meant Hebrew at Acts 22, there is no reason or evidence to change that for Acts 26.

While ostensibly the use of Ἑβραϊστί with Aramaic words might appear to be support for reading Ἑβραϊστί as “Aramaic” throughout the New Testament, there are a number of reasons for pause before embracing such a premise. First, the book of Revelation uses Ἑβραϊστί for unmistakably Hebrew terms. Second, the only references of Ἑβραϊστί to what could be argued to be an Aramaic word are found in the Gospel of John. Thus, rather than being a widespread phenomenon in the New Testament, the possible use of Ἑβραϊστί for Aramaic is a potential feature for only a single author. Even these examples are not certain and they are incapable of becoming definitive evidence.⁹¹ Finally, it is rarely

89 Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 43.

90 Similarly, the *TDNT* entry on “Ἰσραήλ,” 388–89, states that in Acts, as well as in John, references to Ἑβραΐς are almost without exception Aramaic. As is common, no evidence is given to support this claim.

91 Tessa Rajak (*Josephus: The Historian and His Society* [London: Duckworth, 2002], 232) noted this correctly and explicitly: “In the Gospel of John certain names are said to be ‘in Hebrew’: Bethesda (5:2), Gabbatha (19.13), Golgotha (19.17) and the appellation ‘Rabbouni’ (20.16). While the place-name forms look Aramaic, they could have served at the time in Hebrew too, if there was constant interaction between the two languages.” David Bivin (“Hebraisms in the New Testament,” in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and*

noted that all three of the potential Johannine examples are limited to proper names: John 5:2 (Βηθζαθά); 19:13 (Γαββαθα), 17 (Γολγοθα). Trying to determine the meaning of Ἐβραϊστί in conjunction with a proper name brings with it special problems as was shown in the discussions on the LXX. We now turn to consider these instances individually.

a Ἐβραϊστί and Hebrew Names

The book of Revelation utilizes Ἐβραϊστί in reference to a proper name that appears to be Hebrew. In Rev 9:11, Ἐβραϊστί is followed by the angelic name Ἀβαδδών, which is undoubtedly the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew אַבְדּוֹן. The angelic name stems from the same Hebrew term, which is used regularly for the kingdom of the dead. The term is used as a parallel to *Sheol* (Job 26:2; Prov 15:11; 27:20), death (Job 28:22), the grave (Ps 88:11), and the abyss (4Q504 frg. 2 col. vii 8).⁹² Therefore, the proper angelic name אַבְדּוֹן seems to be a personification of the place of the dead.⁹³ 4Q286 frg. 7 col. ii 7 contains the only example of the Hebrew word אַבְדּוֹן where it might be a proper name: וְהוֹסִיפוּ וְיֵצֵר וְאָמְרוּ אֶרְוֹר אֶתְּהָ מְלֵאךְ הַשַּׁחַת וְרוּחַ הָאָבְדוֹן בְּכוּן [ל] מַחֲשׁוֹבוֹת יֵצֵר (“Then [they shall continue and say, Cursed are you, O ange]l of the pit, O spir[it of Aba]ddon, for al[l] the purposes of [your] g[uilt]y desire”). Though fragmentary, this line gives evidence that the name Abaddon is in fact Hebrew. Since Abaddon is only found in this work and Rev 9:11, which describes the name as being written in Hebrew (Ἐβραϊστί), it appears that in Rev 9:11 Ἐβραϊστί means the Hebrew language rather than Aramaic.

Similarly, Rev 16:16 uses Ἐβραϊστί followed by Ἀρμαγεδών, which appears to be a Greek transliteration of a Hebrew word. The precise meaning of Ἀρμαγεδών has challenged scholarship and has yet to attain consensus. Some suggest that it comes from the Hebrew name of the Israelite city Megiddo. In this instance the toponym would either come from Mt. Megiddo (הַר מְגִדּוֹ) or the city of Megiddo (עִיר מְגִדּוֹ).⁹⁴ However, the Greek vowels undermine the latter suggestion since the Hebrew עִיר would not be transliterated into the Greek Ἀρμαγεδών. If Ἀρμαγεδών refers to Mt. Megiddo, it is a compromised version of

Linguistics [Leiden: Brill, forthcoming]) takes the same approach: “The author of John gives the Greek transliterations of three place names: Bethzatha, Gabbatha, Golgotha, and despite their Aramaic etymology, he accepts these proper nouns as part of the Hebrew language.”

92 For additional uses of אַבְדּוֹן at Qumran, see 1QM col. xiv 18; xv 18; 1QHa col. xi 16, 19, 32; 4Q372 frag. 2:3; and 11Q11 col. iv 10.

93 S. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 74–75.

94 See D. Aune, *Revelation* (WBC 52B; Nashville: Nelson, 1998), 898–99.

the name, adding a final “n” to the city name. Evidence of this spelling is found in the LXX of 2 Chr 35:22 (ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ Μαγγελδῶν). It should be noted, however, that a “mountain” of Megiddo is not referenced anywhere else in early Jewish or Christian literature. Others have argued it stems from the Hebrew for “mountain of assembly” (הַר מוֹעֵד), noting that Hebrew ע is often transliterated with the Greek γ.⁹⁵ While the precise meaning or origin of Ἀρμαγγελδῶν is beyond the scope of this work, it is important to note that it is never suggested that it stems from Aramaic. The Hebrew for “mountain” (הַר) is undeniably behind the first part of the name here, as opposed to the Aramaic (רִיט, “mountain”). Therefore, Revelation only uses Ἑβραϊστί to signify words clearly drawn from the Hebrew language. While this does strengthen the notion of Ἑβραϊστί being used for the Hebrew language, the evidence may be qualified because in both instances in Revelation Ἑβραϊστί is used with proper names. As we will witness elsewhere in the New Testament, proper names are not the most reliable contexts for establishing the meaning of Ἑβραϊστί.⁹⁶

b *The Use of Ἑβραϊστί with Alleged “Aramaic” Names*

There is one author in antiquity whose use of Ἑβραϊστί is ambiguous and could have been used to support an Aramaic hypothesis if that writing, and only it, were available. The Gospel of John uses Ἑβραϊστί in conjunction with what have been claimed to be four different Aramaic words: Βηθζαθα [or Βηθεσδα], Γαββαθα, Γολγοθα, and ραββουεῖ.

Dalman, Fitzmyer, and many others refer to the four examples to suggest that Ἑβραϊστί was being used to describe the Aramaic language. While some of the words might, in fact, be related to Aramaic at some level, they do not provide support for conclusions about Ἑβραϊστί.

In John 20:16, Mary calls Jesus ραββουεῖ, which is recorded as having been spoken “in Hebrew” (Ἑβραϊστί). Traditionally, it has been argued that the Greek ραββουεῖ⁹⁷ comes from Aramaic רבּוּנִי⁹⁸ rather than Hebrew רַבִּי, a word

95 E. Boring, *Revelation* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1989), 177. This is not likely since γαμμα is usually connected to words that have *ghain* [ç] in the etymology.

96 After all, an English writer may claim that Los Angeles and Ian are English names meaning “angels” and “beloved,” respectively. Yes, we are aware that “Ian” is Scottish. That is part of the point. It belongs to the English language, now. And etymologically “Ian” goes back to Hebrew יָנַן, “deal graciously.”

97 The Greek texts have ραββουεῖ [B], ραββουεῖ [א, Byz], ραββουεῖ [D], ραββουεῖ [Θ], et al. They consistently record an [a] sound in the first syllable and an [i] in the final syllable according to Koine Greek phonology.

98 See *Targum Onkelos* Gen 18:12 (רַבּוּנִי), 24:9 (רַבּוּנִיה) and over two hundred more examples of *ribon-*. The problem is the first vowel [i]. Mishnaic Hebrew, too, has the word רַבּוּן, *ribbon-*.

more widely known among commentators. Yet, this understanding is too simplistic and probably shows a tendency in the eyes of New Testament scholarship to attribute anything different from a basic understanding of Hebrew or Biblical Hebrew to Aramaic.⁹⁹ Kutscher has demonstrated that רבּוּנִי and רבּוּנִי vs. רבּוּנִי represents a difference between Western and Eastern pronunciations of Hebrew and Aramaic rather than a Hebrew vs. Aramaic distinction. Both languages show the same West/East distinction. Texts such as the early Hebrew *Mishnah Taanit* 3:8 (according to Codex Kaufmann) and later Aramaic Palestinian Targum fragments from the Cairo Geniza¹⁰⁰ show that רבּוּנִי with *patah* is found in Western Semitic texts.¹⁰¹ Eastern texts, such as the Aramaic *Targum Onkelos* (*passim*), use the form רבּוּנִי, “*riboni*.” Kutscher has speculated that *Targum Onkelos* has caused the textual corruptions in later printed texts of both Hebrew and Aramaic.¹⁰² Since the word ραββουνοί was used in both Hebrew contexts and Aramaic contexts, John must be recognized as correct when he calls *rabbouni* “Hebrew,” and it cannot be used as evidence that Ἐβραῖστί means “Aramaic.”

Ἐβραῖστί in the Gospel of John is also used to describe three toponyms. However, examination indicates that none of these “Aramaic words” are unquestionably Aramaic, and toponyms by themselves cannot be used to demonstrate that Ἐβραῖστί necessarily means “Aramaic.” Proper names may show language influence and contact but they also travel across language boundaries. Names are adopted into new languages and become part of that language.

John 5:2 reads: “Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew *Beth-zatha* (ἡ ἐπιλεγομένη Ἐβραῖστί βηθζαθά [NA-27]), which has five porticoes.” In this verse the name of the pool in Hebrew is βηθζαθά. Unfortunately, John does not tell us what βηθζαθά means and attempts to

99 For an example of the trend, and needed correction, see note 40 on ὡσάννα in Buth’s “The Riddle of Jesus’ Cry from the Cross,” pages 408–409 in the present volume, where it is noted that the Hebrew הוֹשַׁע־נָא is often called Aramaic in commentaries; also in agreement on this point is Jan Joosten, “Aramaic or Hebrew behind the Gospels?,” *Analecta Bruxellensia* 9 (2004): 88–101 (91) states: “*hosanna* (said by the crowds) and *amen*, are in fact Hebrew and not Aramaic.”

100 Michael L. Klein, *Geniza Manuscripts of Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*, vol. 1 (Cincinnati, Ohio: Hebrew Union College Press, 1986). See, e.g., רבּוּנִי at 1:133 (col. 2, line 3—Gen 44:18), where the vocalization is clear but the consonants [נִי] are in a lacuna. At line 5 of col. 2, the vocalization רבּוּנִי is attested but the top parts of the consonants are missing.

101 E. Y. Kutscher, “Language of the Sages” (Hebrew), in Ben-Hayyim, Dotan, and Sarfatti, eds., *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies*, 95–98.

102 *Ibid.*, 98.

identify the Hebrew or Aramaic etymology behind the Greek have proven difficult and the spelling of the name is neither stable nor relatively certain.

(1) Gregory-Aland 02, ms B “Vaticanus,” p75, p66^c, and (Ψ) read βηθσαιδα. That could come from Hebrew and Aramaic בית צידה/בית צידתא, “house of fishing/hunting,” or Hebrew and Aramaic, (א) בית ציד, “house of fishing/hunting,” or Hebrew and Aramaic, (א) בית ציד, “house of the fisherman/hunter.” However, there is no reason for assuming a fishing/hunting context to the name and most assume that this represents a scribal assimilation to the more well-known βηθσαιδα on the Sea of Galilee.

(2) A variant reading βηθζαθα (Gregory-Aland 01 “א Sinaiticus”) might be a Greek assimilation of Hebrew/Aramaic (א) בית זית, meaning the “house of an olive tree/orchard,” but it is not as exact as βηθζαθ/βηθζαθθα would be. A variant of this proposal would be to link βηθζαθα and βηζαθα (ms L) to Josephus’ βεθεζα/βεζεθα, which Josephus describes as the northern expansion of the city and interprets the meaning of the name as “new city” Καίνόπολις (*War* 2.328, 530; 5.149, 151, 246, 504). The pools of the account in John would be included in this larger area north of the Temple. But Josephus’ name is complicated: βεζεθα/βεθεζα does not mean “new city” in Hebrew [קרית-חדשה or קריה-חדשה or עיר-חדשה] or Aramaic [קריתא חדתא].¹⁰³ In support of בית-זית there is a

103 Dalman preferred to read “house of the olive tree” rather than assume “new city”: “βεζεθα Jos. Bell. Jud. V 4, 2 (‘καὶνὴ πόλις’), βηζεθ Makk. 7, 19 A (S βηθζαθ), βηθζαθα (Job. 5, 2 S) wäre Dach Jos. eine Anpassung des hebräischen בֵּית חַדְשָׁה oder בֵּית חַדְשָׁתָא an griechische Aussprache. Es ist aber אֵתְא בֵּית זֵיתָא, bez. אֵתְא בֵּית זֵיתָא ‘Oelbaumort’” (Gustaf Dalman, *Grammatik des Jüdisch-Palästinischen Aramäischen nach den Idiomen des Palästinischen Talmud und Midrasch, des Onkelostargum (Cod. Socini 84) und der Jerusalemischen Targume zum Pentateuch* [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1894]), 115.

Abraham Schalit in K. H. Rengstorf, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus, Supplement 1 Namenwörterbuch zu Flavius Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 25–26, thinks that βηθεζα refers to an earlier name for the area north of the Hasmonean city that was called בֵּית צֵאָה, “house of excrement/dung.” He speculates that during the time of Herod this area expanded into the new city and obtained a second name, “new city.”

However, because of the time differential between the incident in John 5 and Agrippa’s unfinished expansion of the “new city” in the 40s, it is possible that the name mentioned in the Gospel spread from the “five porticoes” to the rest of the area north of the Hasmonean city wall. Were the “five porticoes” impressive enough that they could lend their name to the larger area that would be encompassed by a third wall project? It is not clear.

It is also not clear that Josephus’ βεθεζα/βεζεθα and John’s βηθζαθα/βηθεσδα are to be equated as the same name. For example, Josephus’ name might reflect the town Beth-zait, since the new area of the city was built around the road that led to Beth-zait, among other northern destinations. Today *sha’ar Shechem* in Jerusalem refers to the gate that leads

βηθζαιθ (ms א) and βηθζεθ (ms A) in 1 Macc 7:19. These would appear to show a similar place name that originated in Hebrew and that the Greek forms have undergone later assimilation for euphony and/or to an Aramaic form (points 1 and 2 in the LXX discussion). The city in 1 Macc 7:19 was located several miles north of Jerusalem and is not the same place as mentioned in John 5:2. But it does illustrate how a Hebrew name “house of the olive tree” could produce the textual readings in John.

(3) A third option, βηθεσδα, is widely attested in ms A and the Byzantine tradition (also βηθεσεδα in ms E*). Many have rejected this transcription on the grounds that it can be explained as an assimilation to an assumed Hebrew and Aramaic בֵּית-חַסְדָּ/בֵּית-חַסְדָּ, “house of grace.”¹⁰⁴ However, it needs to be remembered that it is the Byzantine tradition, and only the Byzantine tradition, that has correctly preserved the unassimilated words from the cross in Matt 27:46 and Mark 15:34. The Byzantine tradition is capable of maintaining an original foreign transliteration and another option is available for explaining βηθεσδα.

(4) A suggestion from Franz Delitzsch merits reconsideration in the light of the Qumran discoveries. He astutely suggested that the name preserves a Greek loanword in Hebrew בֵּית-אֶסְטָו, “house of the colonnade/portico,” < στωά.¹⁰⁵

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- to Shechem (in English “Damascus gate,” because it also leads to Damascus). The road through Joppa gate leads to Joppa (in Arabic, *baab al-khalil* because it leads to Hebron, the city of the friend [خليل] of God [Abraham]). On “house of stoa,” see option 4, בֵּית-אֶסְטָו.
- 104 The discovery of the Copper Scroll (3Q15) was thought to lend support to the reading βηθεσδα. In 3Q15 col. 11.12, Milik recorded the words אֶשְׁדֵּתִין {א} בֵּית, and he argued that this is awkwardly put in the dual form since the pool of Bethesda contained two basins (M. Baillet, J. Milik, and R. De Vaux, *Les “Petites Grottes” de Qumran* [DJD III; 2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1962, 271–272]). However, others have cast doubt on that reading. Already in 1963, B. Z. Luria (*The Copper Scroll from the Judean Desert* [Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1963 (Hebrew)], 121) read בֵּית הַאֲשׁוּחִין, “house of waterworks.” A new edition of 3Q15 agrees with Luria’s reading: D. Brizemeure et al., *Le Rouleau de Cuivre de La Grotte 3 de Qumrân* (3q15): *Expertise—Restauration—Épigraphie* (STDJ 55.1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 200, 203, 215. In the revision of the text, 3Q15 col. 11.12 reads בֵּית הַאֲשׁוּחִין/א rather than {א} בֵּית אֶשְׁדֵּתִין. R. Ceulemans (“The Name of the Pool in Joh 5,2: A Text-Critical Note Concerning 3Q15,” *ZNTW* 55, no. 1 [2008]: 112–15) concurs. A different passage from the Copper Scroll that has never been in doubt probably does explain John 5:2. See suggestion 4.
- 105 Franz Delitzsch, “Talmudische Studien, X. Bethesda,” *Zeitschrift für die gesammte lutherische Theologie und Kirche* (Leipzig, 1856), 622–24, <http://books.google.co.il/books?id=Q8EnAAAAYAAJ&pg=PR3&dq=Franz+Delitzsch+Talmudische+Studien+1856&hl=iw&sa=X&ei=VjIxT7ixHqayoQXRytGnBw&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false> (retrieved 7 February 2012). Also cited in (Strack)-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*, II, 453.

This suggestion fits the Johannine context where the place has five porticos (πέντε στοὰς ἔχουσα). The loanword is attested in various forms in rabbinic literature, including ,איסטובא, איסטווא, and איסטיב.¹⁰⁶ The source for these words is the Greek στοά. If βηθεςδα is from בית-אֶסְטִיב, then a “t” has been assimilated to “d,” something that Delitzsch already pointed out as possible from considering the name פוט Gen 10:6, where the LXX transcribes *tet* with *delta*: φουδ.¹⁰⁷ In addition to the Mishnaic Hebrew references that Delitzsch cited, we now have the Greek loan word attested at Qumran in low-register (proto-Mishnaic) Hebrew. The Copper Scroll 3Q15 11:2 has פנת האסטאן הדרומית, “from under the corner of the southern portico.”

This last suggestion, βηθεςδα > בית-אסטאן, has the ironic status of pointing to a Hebrew name whose etymology would technically be Greek. The ‘n’ at the end of the word in Qumran Hebrew is an addition to the Greek word, so that some local people may have been saying בית-אסטאן. We should use this Qumranic spelling (י)אסטאן since it is probably attested a second time at 4Q468 fragment x.¹⁰⁸ It is earlier than the Mishnaic attestations of the loanword, and the word shape fits the transliteration Βηθεςδα with only a commonplace dropping of a final “n,” which was superfluous anyway.¹⁰⁹ The interesting history of this name would give us a Greek word στοά transformed into Hebrew for the name of the place with “five porticoes,” (י)אסטאן “house of a portico,” which was turned back into Greek as Βηθεςδα. In further support, John does not claim that the etymology was scientifically and purely Hebrew, he only claims that the name was used in Hebrew. “House of stoa” fits the context better than “house of an olive tree.” None of the textual traditions in the Gospel clearly

106 See Michael Sokoloff, *Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (1990), 51, איסטיב; and Marcus Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Talmud*, איסטובא, p. 54.

107 See, for example, Ezra 7:22 [δ] instead of [τ] for Aramaic בִּתְיָן (= Biblical Hebrew בִּתְיָם), plural of בת “liquid measure”: ἕως οἴνου βάδων ἑκατόν, “to 100 bats of wine,” βάδων ἑκατόν ἐλαίου ἕως, “to 100 bats of oil.” This is according to the Alexandrinus manuscript. Vaticanus reads ἀποθήκων, “storehouses,” apparently understanding בִּתְיָן as the plural of בִּיתָה (= Hebrew בִּתְיָם). Manuscripts of Josephus also have βάδος/βάτος interchanging.

108 This is a fragment that preserves]אסטא[. There are no other words at Qumran that use אסטא, so it appears to be a second attestation of (י)אסטאן.

109 The addition or deletion of a final ν or μ can be considered normal between Greek and Hebrew as well as within Hebrew. Cf. שילוח Σιλοαμ with “μ” added and a presumed Mishnaic Hebrew שֶׁמֶן-גַּת-גֶּשֶׁשְׁמָנֵי/גֶשֶׁשְׁמָנֵי (Byz) with a deletion of “n” (the vowel pattern fits Hebrew rather than Aramaic). Hebrew כאן, “here,” from כה and טן, “below;” from מטח show an etymological addition. See names Οζα οζן and Σαβαθα ζבש listed as examples of “euphony;” with a deletion. Nasals at the end of names were unstable.

point to “house of olive” (βηθζαιθ).¹¹⁰ “Five porticoes” can be explained as having three rows of columns around a large rectangle area with small medicinal pools at the side of two massive storage pools, or perhaps more appropriately for the larger structures, the large storage pools gave the name as four sides of a large rectangle with a fifth row of columns dividing two pools at the dam. Of course, whether the name of the pool came from בית-זית or בית-טסטא,¹¹¹ along with its transcriptional development within Greek and its adoption in the Gospel of John, the name does not and cannot serve as proof that Ἐβραϊστί meant Aramaic for the author. If the name comes from בית-טסטא, then the name is based on a Greek word that has been borrowed into Hebrew. The Gospel only claims that the name is used in Hebrew.

The name at John 19:13 Γαββαθα also presents surprising linguistic puzzles: εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, Ἐβραϊστί δὲ Γαββαθα, “at a place called ‘Paved-in-stone,’ and in Hebrew *Gabbata*.” Many have assumed that the name is “Aramaic” but the etymology is not clear and in any case, the issue revolves around a name. Even if the etymology were Aramaic, it would still be the name in use in Hebrew, just like Californians call their two biggest cities San Francisco and Los Angeles in English. But an investigation into the etymology proves both enlightening and surprising.

Joseph Fitzmyer makes a misleading claim, “it [Ἐβραϊστί—RB/CP] is used at times with words and expressions that are clearly Aramaic. Thus in John 19:13, Ἐβραϊστί δὲ Γαββαθα is given as an explanation of the Lithostrotos, and γαββαθα is a Grecized form of the Aramaic word *gabbeta*, ‘raised place.’”¹¹² But is that really a word in Aramaic? Fitzmyer footnoted Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, for his statement. When we turn to Dalman’s *Words of Jesus* we read, “The discussion of these words will be found in my *Gram. des jüd.-pal. Aram.* It may here be added that Γαββαθα (*Gram.* p. 108) is incorrectly explained. אָהַבָּה, which properly means the baldness of the forepart of the head, was a fitting name for the open space in front of the Antonia Castle which served as a place of execution.” Turning to Dalman’s earlier grammar, one finds Fitzmyer’s word “Γαββαθα = אָהַבָּה, Ev. Hier. אָהַבָּה” (p. 108), but without explanation. Dalman correctly rejected his proposal אָהַבָּה in his later work. Syriac does not seem to

110 The texts βηθζεθ/βηθζαιθ of 1 Macc 7:19 point to a more probable original spelling of a name *Beyt-zayt*, “house of an olive tree.”

111 The texts βηθζεθ/βηθζαιθ of 1 Macc 7:19 and the attestation in the Copper Scroll for a Greek loan word סווא in Hebrew both point to Hebrew as the etymological origin of the name.

112 Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 43.

know כַּבֵּשׁ ¹¹³ and the Peshitto lists כַּבֵּשׁ , suggesting that כַּבֵּשׁ was not a known item. Dalman reconsidered his earlier proposal and came up with a word that is in both Hebrew and Aramaic תַּבְּחָג , “frontal baldness.”

תַּבְּחָג is a possible etymology, but its meaning does not inspire confidence. Everyone would agree that this does not line up with Λιθόστρωτος , “paved-in-stone.” In light of points 1 (euphony), 2 (assimilation to Aramaic), and 4 (a borrowed Aramaic name), there would be no problem with John calling Γαββαθα / תַּבְּחָג “Hebrew.” But we have other options, too.

Hebrew has a word גְּבַה that means “eyebrow.” While “eyebrow” might not seem much of an improvement over “baldness,” it does have the advantage of being used for a “ridge” or “hill” in Greek: $\delta\phi\rho\upsilon\varsigma$, “eyebrow; ridge, edge of a hill.” However, Hebrew by itself does not easily explain the “θ.” In the LXX such names often come from the “directional *-he*”: גְּבַת־הַ , “to the ridge,” if, in fact, an alleged meaning “ridge” was in use for גְּבַה in Hebrew.

Perhaps Γαββαθα is related to Hebrew גְּבַת־הַ , “to the hill,” the Hebrew place-name גְּבַת־שָׁאוּל north of Jerusalem, גְּבַת־שָׁאוּל , “Hill of Saul” (which may or may not be related to גְּבַת־בְּנִימִין , “Geba of Benjamin,” Old Greek Γαβαα Judg 20:10), or Aramaic גְּבַת־הַ , “hill”? The vowels are not the best match, though Josephus does have Γαβαθ Σαουλ (*War* 5:51). As a precedent for this, opposite 1 Sam 15:34 גְּבַת־שָׁאוּל the Old Greek simplifies and transliterates Γαβαα . That is a town a few kilometers north of Jerusalem and is a different place from our Γαββαθα .¹¹⁴ However, even if the vowels in Γαββαθα can be explained as dialectically different from the Masoretic text’s גְּבַת־הַ , another problem is explaining why the

113 There is no entry listed in J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, founded upon the Thesaurus Syriacus of R. Payne Smith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903). The three CPA lectionaries at Matt 26:23 have the word כַּבֵּשׁ for $\tau\rho\upsilon\beta\lambda\iota\sigma\omicron\nu$, “bowl.” CPA is a dialect from the last half of the first millennium c.e. and shows heavy influence from Greek. A better, first-century etymology is available.

114 Other less probable options include: Hebrew גְּבַת , “natural (shallow) cavity, pond.” Was the pavement covering a natural cistern? גְּבַת־הַ / גְּבַת־הַ “hills” (near Sepphoris), but again the vowels and shape are not a good match. There is also a biblical place name גְּבַת־הַ (Josh 21:23–24) that was later called גְּבַת (Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Talmud*, גְּבַת). Could such a name have been re-applied to some place in Jerusalem, perhaps connected to Levites from Gibbethon? Incidentally, neither Dalman’s disavowed גְּבַה , nor גְּבַת־הַ , come from the root גְּבַה , “to be tall, high.” The root *גְּבַה does not exist in Syriac and Western Aramaic though it is attested in some Babylonian talmudic texts and a few later targumim to Psalms, Job, and Chronicles. Thus, one cannot speculate about *כַּבֵּשׁ . Hebrew from that root would presumably have produced גְּבַת־הַ [ארץ]-גְּבַת־הַ, “frontal baldness,” and Latin *gabata*, “platter;” we can only speculate, we do not know how Γαββαθα was named or what it meant.

Gospel texts consistently have a double “ββ,” contra Josephus and the LXX. Accepting such a [-ββ-] as an idiosyncrasy that may be unnecessarily trying to block a first century softening of Greek *Beta* into a bi-labial fricative, Gabbata would mean “the hill” in Hebrew/Aramaic and might have referred to the area of the Herodian palace on the western ridge of Jerusalem, geographically above the temple area and even further west and higher than the Hasmonean palace, which was also west and above the temple area.¹¹⁵ The Herodian palace compound is presumably where Pilate would have been lodging for the holiday, with Herod Antipas staying in the Hasmonean palace.¹¹⁶ However, there is a major flaw in this line of speculation about Γαβ[β]αθα meaning “the Hill.” The Λιθόστρωτος is apparently a small, particular spot in the governmental building complexes and not a whole mountain. If Γαββαθα were derived from “the hill” or even “to the hill,” it would not appear to be a local name for the same particular place as the Λιθόστρωτος.

A better option comes from Latin and was first argued by Charles C. Torrey.¹¹⁷ *Gabata* means “platter, dish” and is attested in Latin in the first century (*Martial* 7, 48, 3 and 11, 31, 18). Why might the “paved-in-stone” place, that is, the *Lithostrotos*, be called “the platter”? We do not know. There may have been something special in the building’s shape, history, or perhaps a mosaic design in the pavement that gave it such a name (e.g. a large platter of fruit). However, if such a name were coined and in place, it might help to explain why a Judean dialect of Aramaic (CPA) half a millennium later would have a word unattested in other Aramaic dialects, ܩܒܬܐ, “a kind of dinner dish,” used in the

115 Josephus writes of the Hasmonean palace, “Now this palace had been erected of old by the children of Asamoneus, and was situated upon an elevation, and afforded a most delightful prospect to those that had a mind to take a view of the city, which prospect was desired by the king; and there he could lie down, and eat, and then observe what was done in the temple” (*Ant.* 20.190 [20.8.11.]).

116 Older speculation about Pilate staying at the fortress of Antonia north of the Temple should not be followed. Steven Notley (Anson F. Rainey and R. Steven Notley, *The Sacred Bridge* [Jerusalem: Carta, 2006], 365–66), supports a consensus on the Herodian palace: “Benoit has argued convincingly that Pilate was staying in the palace of Herod the Great on the western hill.” Philo suggests that Pilate stayed at Herod’s palace, “Pilate . . . dedicated some gilt shields in the palace of Herod” (*Legat.* 299 [*Gaius* 299]). Josephus also suggests that governors stayed at Herod’s palace: “Now at this time [66 C.E.—RB/CP] Florus took up his quarters at the palace; and on the next day he had his tribunal set before it, and sat upon it, when the high priests, and the men of power, and those of the greatest eminence in the city, came all before that tribunal” (*War* 2.301).

117 Charles C. Torrey, “Studies in the Aramaic of the First Century A.D. (New Testament Writings),” *ZAW* 65, no. 1 (1953): 228–47.

CPA lectionaries at Matt 26:23 opposite Greek *τράβλιον*, “bowl.” The same lectionaries have the same *𐤒𐤃𐤁* at John 19:13. We only need to explain *Γαββαθα* in the first century and a Latin loan word *gabata* would explain the name. The best part of this explanation is that it highlights the ability of a proper name to cross language boundaries. It might also explain why John did not mention what either *βηθεσδα* or *γαββαθα* meant. They may both have been loanwords, from Greek and Latin, respectively. As names based on foreign loan words their meaning may not have been widely transparent for Hebrew speakers or Aramaic speakers. John, of course, does not tell us what these names mean, nor does he tell us whether the names were also in use in Aramaic *Συριστί*, he only states that they were in use in Hebrew *Ἑβραϊστί*.

The third toponym in John that is called Hebrew is *Γολγοθά*. This name is fairly transparent and John tells us what it means. Both Hebrew and Aramaic have a word for “skull,” *תְּלִינָה*. The Greek has dropped the second *lamed* but it is otherwise clear. The *-α* at the end of a Hebrew name could have arisen from euphony, or as an assimilation to an Aramaic form of the same name, or it may be the adoption of a name that was first coined in Aramaic. None of these are grounds for saying that John was referring to Aramaic when he wrote *Ἑβραϊστί*. We have shown that Greek writers distinguished *Ἑβραϊστί* from *Συριστί* consistently. Consequently, it would be a poor methodology to generate a unique meaning for one author when the common meaning can also explain that same author. The author was naming the language being used and what the language users thought about the meaning of the name. To go beyond that would be to twist the author’s words into something for which there is no clear evidence and against attested usage for all other authors. If John meant “Aramaic” he could have said so. *Συριστί* was already part of the common language. Thus, the “Aramaic” claim for *Ἑβραϊστί* goes far beyond the evidence. We only have *Ἑβραϊστί* attested in contexts where Hebrew is unambiguously Hebrew or where it is justified as Hebrew.

The discussion concerning these last three toponyms is not to argue that only Hebrew represents each etymology rather than Aramaic. It is entirely possible that all three names were first coined in Aramaic or in Hebrew as place names, or perhaps they came from Greek, Latin, Aramaic, and Hebrew. There are questions remaining on the history of each of these names. Nevertheless, proper lexicography leads us to recognize that the author of the Gospel treated the names as Hebrew, not as Aramaic.

The final example of *Ἑβραϊστί* in the Fourth Gospel comes from John 19:20. In this verse Pilate has Jesus’ charge written out; namely, that he was the “King of the Jews.” This verse claims that the sign was written in Greek, Latin, and in Hebrew (*Ἑβραϊστί*). There is no evidence within the verse to indicate whether

the language was Hebrew or Aramaic. Scholars who support the Aramaic theory read this as Aramaic based upon presuppositions already cited above rather from the text itself. Thus, the verse does not move us any further along towards a clearer understanding of the meaning of Ἑβραϊστί.

Although much of current scholarship states that Ἑβραϊς means “Aramaic” among ancient Greek authors, a careful reading of early Jewish and Christian literature has shown a consistent and careful distinction between “Hebrew” and “Aramaic.” Without any proof to the contrary, even the Gospel of John needs to be included with the rest of the literature of the period.¹¹⁸

4 Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that the use of Ἑβραϊς/Ἑβραϊστί for the Hebrew language is well attested throughout early Jewish and Christian literature. Examples from the LXX, the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, and from Josephus all point to a clear use of the term for the Hebrew language, rather than for an Aramaic dialect common to the Hebrew people. The theory that Ἑβραϊστί means “Aramaic” is weak and ultimately untenable because the only potential examples are three poorly understood toponyms in one Greek author (the Gospel of John). That evidence is without definitive value because toponyms transcend language boundaries and there are several ways to account for the three names according to precedents with Hebrew–Aramaic–Greek interface. In the New Testament itself, the book of Revelation and Acts uses Ἑβραϊς unambiguously to signify “Hebrew,” and there are no instances in which Ἑβραϊς should be necessarily explained as “Aramaic.” Everywhere Greek authors consistently use Ἑβραϊκή/Ἑβραϊστί for Hebrew words and Συριακή/Συριστί for Aramaic.

This study helps to clarify the linguistic environment of the Second Temple period and the first century. According to the author of Acts, Hebrew was a language of public communication among the Jewish audiences in Jerusalem and Paul was able to speak publicly in Hebrew. According to Josephus, Josephus twice addressed a crowd in Hebrew on behalf of Roman commanders. According to *Aristeas*, the knowledge of Hebrew was necessary for translating

118 Rajak’s summary is short and to the point: “In the Gospel of John certain names are said to be ‘in Hebrew’: Bethesda (5:2), Gabbatha (19.13), Golgotha (19.17) and the appellation ‘Rabbouni’ (20.16). While the place-name forms look Aramaic, they could have served at the time in Hebrew too, if there was constant interaction between the two languages” (Rajak, *Josephus*, 232).

the Torah into Greek. According to Papias, the Church maintained a tradition that Matthew recorded the “oracles” of the Lord in Hebrew.

A question can be posed relating to the title of the article: What do Ἑβραϊστί and Συριστί mean in the first century? Answer: Ἑβραϊστί means “Hebrew,” Συριστί means “Aramaic,” and no, Ἑβραϊστί does not ever appear to mean “Aramaic” in attested texts during the Second Temple and Greco-Roman periods.¹¹⁹

119 Such a simple statement would not normally need an essay of this length, but that length is partially a testimony to how widely this term has been misused and misunderstood.

The Linguistic Ethos of the Galilee in the First Century C.E.*

Marc Turnage

What song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, although puzzling questions, are not beyond *all* conjecture.

—Sir Thomas Brown, *Hydriotaphia: Urne-Buriall*

1 Introduction

Language evolution within a society reflects the history of that society; “the history of language and the history of culture move along parallel lines.”¹ A society shapes its thought and expression of reality through language and its grammar. Language choice and language change can be socially loaded. For this reason, language choice within a culture is not passive; it distinguishes religious and national affiliations, as well as social class. Language preserves social behavior and acts as a social marker between social groups; it is “a complex social fact.”² An ancient (or modern) society cannot be adequately depicted apart from the language(s) it used to communicate its needs, ideas, and emotions. While the language of Galilee in the Early Roman period (63 B.C.E.–135 C.E.) has been a matter of some debate, quite often studies on Early Roman Galilean society have paid too little attention to the language(s) used³ by Galileans as a foundational force that shaped and expressed Early

* In loving memory of Hanan Eshel ב”ר, for Esti.

1 E. Sapir, *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* (New York: Harcourt & Brace, 1921), 219.

2 J. Irvine, “When Talk Isn’t Cheap: Language and Political Economy,” *American Ethnologist* 16 (1989): 250.

3 Language use refers to both literary and spoken manifestations of a language. The literary form of a language quite often preserves a different register of the language than the vernacular form(s) in which a language manifests itself. Any investigation of an ancient language encounters particular problems in discussing the spoken form(s) of that language due to the paucity of materials that can be clearly identified as reflecting the spoken register of a language, and even those materials that reflect the spoken form of a language are too few to draw systematic conclusions. Moreover, an ancient multi-lingual society, as existed among Jews living in the land of Israel at the end of the Second Temple period, often viewed

Roman Galilean society.⁴ Language is the most sensitive indicator of social change; therefore, language allows one to observe social change in process prior to its crystallization and standardization within a social structure. A diachronic analysis of a language tells the story of a culture. The language(s) used by the Jewish people living in the land of Israel in the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods at the same time reflect and were a crucial part of the social forces that shaped Jewish society in the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods in Galilee and Judea.

The virtual absence of literary and epigraphic materials from Galilee during the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods complicates the construction of the linguistic ethos of Galilean society.⁵ Many scholarly investigations of the languages used by Galilean Jews in the Early Roman period tend to rely upon analyses of Greek texts (e.g. Josephus and the New Testament) and parallels drawn from the literary and epigraphic remains in Judea and the

languages and language interaction through a different social and psychological matrix, both individually and collectively, than modern Western culture. Acknowledging, however, that the literary and spoken manifestations of a language often reflect different linguistic registers, we should exercise caution in theoretically exaggerating the difference between the literary and spoken forms of a language. Cf. C. Rabin, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century," in *The Jewish People in the First Century* (ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; CRINT; 2 vols.; Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1976), 2:1033–35; and M. Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew: An Introductory Survey," in *The Literature of the Sages. Second Part: Midrash and Targum, Liturgy, Poetry, Mysticism, Contracts, Inscriptions, Ancient Science, and the Languages of Rabbinic Literature* (ed. S. Safrai, Z. Safrai, J. Schwartz, and P. J. Tomson; CRINT; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 589–91.

- 4 See M. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus* (SNTSMS 134; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); idem, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee* (SNTSMS 118; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); E. M. Meyers, "Galilean Regionalism as a Factor in Historical Reconstruction," *BASOR* 221 (1976): 93–102; E. M. Meyers and J. F. Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis, and Early Christianity* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981); S. Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian: 323 B.C.E. to 135 C.E.: A Study of Second Temple Judaism* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998); idem, "Archaeology and the Historical Jesus," in *Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation* (ed. J. R. Bartlett; London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 117–44; idem, "Galilee: Galilee in the Hellenistic through Byzantine Periods," *OEANE* 2:370–76; idem, *Galilee, Jesus, and the Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988); and H. C. Kee, "Early Christianity in the Galilee: Reassessing the Evidence from the Gospels," in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. I. Levine; New York and Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 3–22.
- 5 Cf. M. O. Wise, "Languages of Palestine," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (ed. J. B. Green, S. McKnight, and I. H. Marshall; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1992), 434–44 (437 and 441); and M. Chancey, "Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus: The Neglected Significance of Chronology," in *SBL Seminar Papers 2003* (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 173–87 (174–81).

surrounding regions.⁶ Some have argued due to regional differences between Galilee and Judea that the literary and epigraphic remains from Judea cannot assist in reconstructing the language fields in which Galilean Jews operated.⁷ While some regional differences certainly existed between Jews in Judea and Galilee,⁸ the ancient literary sources (e.g. Josephus, the New Testament, and rabbinic literature)⁹ portray the Jews of Galilee possessing strong national, religious, and filial attachments to the Jews of Judea, especially Jerusalem (cf. *Ant.* 13.154; *t. Sanh.* 2.6; Luke 2:22–24, 41–49; *m. Ketub.* 4.12; *b. Shabb.* 153a).¹⁰ The ancient literary sources, moreover, depict Galilean society as a Jewish population with strong ties to Jerusalem and its temple, concerned with ritual purity (*Ant.* 18.36–38), Sabbath observance (*Life* 159; Mark 1:32), and adherence to the Torah (*War* 2.591–92; *Life* 74–76).¹¹ Recent archaeological excavations in Upper and Lower Galilee provide a similar picture of Early Roman Galilean society: a population ethnically and religiously Jewish, observing Jewish dietary restrictions, burial practices and issues of ritual purity and lacking material remains indicating the presence of a pagan population.¹² Although

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- 6 A. P. Millard, *Reading and Writing in the Times of Jesus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000).
- 7 Cf. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 131–32; R. A. Horsley, *Archaeology, History and Society in Galilee: The Social Context of Jesus and the Rabbis* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996), 162–71.
- 8 The primary social regional differences mostly centered in Jerusalem, where the Jerusalem Temple played a formative role in shaping the life, industry, and culture of Jerusalem making it unique even within the larger region of Judea; cf. J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1962).
- 9 On the critical use of rabbinic literature as a witness to the cultural world of the late Second Temple period, see S. Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of the Galilee in the First Century,” *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990): 149–52.
- 10 Cf. S. Safrai, *Pilgrimage at the Time of the Second Temple* (Tel Aviv: Am Hasefer, 1965 [Heb.]), 50–53, 115–17; S. Klein, *Galilee: Geography and History of Galilee from the Return from Babylon to the Conclusion of the Talmud* (Mossad Harav Kok: Jerusalem, 1967 [Heb.]), 169–76; Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 259–97; and L. H. Schiffman, “Was There a Galilean Halakhah?,” in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 143–56.
- 11 Josephus, who insisted upon Torah observance, never condemned the Galileans for a lack of observing the Torah. He identified the Galileans as fellow, Jewish brethren. Moreover, he depicts first-century Galileans as identifying themselves as Jews (as do the Gospels).
- 12 Cf. J. L. Reed, “Galileans, ‘Israelite Village Communities’, and the Sayings Gospel Q,” in *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence and Culture* (ed. E. M. Meyers; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 87–108; idem, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-Examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2002), 23–61; U. Leibner, *Settlement and History in Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Galilee* (TSAJ 127; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 116–21, 151–55, 265–70, and 337.

excavations have yet to unearth significant linguistic data from the Early Roman period in Galilee, we can assume that language played a crucial role in the establishment, expression, and maintenance of the social, political, and religious attachments between the Jewish populations of Galilee and Judea. If the linguistic character of Galilee differed considerably from that of Judea, then, based upon sociolinguistic analysis, Galilean Jewry would stand on the fringes of Early Roman Jewish culture and society, a portrait quite different from the emerging archaeological evidence and the ancient literary sources.

The argument of “linguistic regionalism” that prohibits appealing to the literary and epigraphic remains from Judea in constructing the linguistic ethos of Early Roman Galilee fails to acknowledge the picture emerging from archaeological excavations in Galilee. Recent archaeological work in Galilee indicates that during the Hasmonean period, beginning in the days of John Hyrcanus (see below), Jews from Judea migrated into Galilee, and this immigration, not a forced conversion of a Gentile population by Aristobulus I, accounts for the strong Jewish presence in Galilee in the Early Roman period.¹³ The immigration of Jews from Judea into Galilee beginning during the time of John Hyrcanus and continuing into the Early Roman period explains the strong political, religious, and filial ties between Galilean and Judean Jews portrayed in the ancient literary sources. These Judean immigrants brought their linguistic culture into Galilee, which helped to form and shape these social attachments between Galilean Jews and their southern brethren. Certain nuanced differences surely existed between the social lives of Galilean and Judean Jews due to regional differences. These regional differences would have reflected themselves in the linguistic culture by the emergence of dialects. We should not, however, expect an entirely different linguistic culture between Galilean and Judean Jews. The ancient literary sources and archeological record attest to a common pattern of Jewish life in the Early Roman period, which developed and expressed itself, in part, from a common linguistic culture. It, therefore, seems very likely that the linguistic ethos of Galilee mirrored that of Judea in the Early Roman period.

To compensate for the absence of direct linguistic data from Early Roman Galilee, scholars have sought to construct the linguistic ethos of Early Roman Galilee by using epigraphic and literary data from Galilee dating to later periods

13 B. Bar-Kochva, “Manpower, Economics, and Internal Strife in the Hasmonean State,” in *Armées et fiscalité dans le monde antique. Actes de colloque national, Paris 14–16 Octobre 1976* (Colloques nationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 936; Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1977), 167–96; and Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 322.

or from non-Jewish regions surrounding Galilee.¹⁴ This methodological fallacy fails to acknowledge the incredible social impact that the First Jewish revolt against Rome and the Bar Kokhba revolt had upon Jewish society in the land of Israel. Quite simply, Galilean culture in the third and fourth centuries C.E. was not first-century Galilean culture.¹⁵

As previously noted, the history of language parallels the history of a culture. The linguistic character of the land of Israel reflects a sensitivity to the historical vicissitudes of the Jewish people, especially the two Jewish revolts, which caused momentous social changes. Linguistic changes follow social changes, but rarely do they precede them.¹⁶ In fact, language is the most sensitive indicator of social changes. As such, the linguistic record of the Jewish people in the land of Israel reflects the social upheaval that resulted from the Bar Kokhba revolt. Up to the beginning of the third century C.E., Hebrew played a significant role in shaping and expressing the national and religious ethos of the Jewish people and was prominently used in literary expression and common speech.¹⁷ The Bar Kokhba revolt dealt a devastating blow to the prominence of Hebrew within Jewish culture in the land of Israel (both Judea and Galilee), and in the aftermath of the revolt and the concluding decades of the second century C.E., the use of Hebrew declined. The social impact of the Bar Kokhba revolt upon Galilean society and the sensitivity of the linguistic culture to the social changes that resulted from it prohibit the use of later epigraphic and literary materials to construct the linguistic setting of Early Roman Galilee: the linguistic culture of Early Roman Galilee was not that of the third and fourth centuries C.E.

In spite of the absence of direct linguistic data from Early Roman Galilee, scholars accept as “common knowledge” that the majority of Jews living in Galilee during the Early Roman period predominately, if not exclusively, spoke Aramaic, which, it is generally assumed, had replaced Hebrew as a spoken

14 Wise cautiously and correctly notes concerning the situation of the linguistic data for first-century Galilee, “there is simply not sufficient evidence to attempt such [a sociolinguistic model] for Galilee” (“Languages of Palestine,” 441). Most scholars, however, do not share Wise’s caution and appeal to later material as evidence for their linguistic models of first-century Galilee.

15 Cf. Chancey, “Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus.”

16 P. Trudgill, *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society* (New York: Penguin, 1995), 83.

17 J. Barr, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek in the Hellenistic Age,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 2, *The Hellenistic Age* (ed. W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 79–114; Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century,” 1007–39; idem, *A Short History of the Hebrew Language* (Jerusalem: Haomanim, 1973), 34–41.

language within Galilean society.¹⁸ A few studies have addressed how much Greek was a part of Jewish Galilean society,¹⁹ but the predominance, and even exclusive, use of Aramaic among the Jewish population of Galilee is generally accepted without question.

In light of the absence of significant direct linguistic data from Early Roman Galilee, scholars rely upon the linguistic data from Galilee and the surrounding non-Jewish regions from the third and fourth centuries C.E., particularly the Aramaic Targumim, of which there is no evidence in the land of Israel prior to the middle of the second century C.E., after the Bar Kokhba revolt.²⁰ Not only

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- 18 Cf. E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Black; 3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2:20–28; J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), *passim*, see particularly 2:12–34; and F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), *passim*, see especially 3–4. Almost from its inception the “Aramaic hypothesis” was connected to the question of the language of Jesus; cf. G. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu mit Berücksichtigung des nachkanonischen jüdischen Schrifttums und der aräamaischen Sprache* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1898; 2d ed., 1930); English translation, *The Words of Jesus Considered in Light of Post-Biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language* (trans. D. Kay; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902); C. C. Torrey, *The Traditions Made from the Original Aramaic Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1912); M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954); J. A. Fitzmyer, “The Study of the Aramaic Background of the New Testament,” in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979), 1–27; idem, “The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.,” *CBQ* 32 (1970): 501–39; repr. *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 29–56; M. Casey, *An Aramaic Approach to Q: Sources for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (SNTSMS 122; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); idem, *Aramaic Sources of Mark’s Gospel* (SNTSMS 102; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Freyne, “Galilee: Galilee in the Hellenistic through Byzantine Periods,” 375; Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 124–25; and idem, “Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus: The Neglected Significance of Chronology,” 178.
- 19 See Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, 122–65; W. Argyle, “Greek among the Jews of Palestine in New Testament Times,” *NTS* 20 (1973): 87–89; S. E. Porter, “Jesus and the Use of Greek in Galilee,” in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research* (ed. B. Chilton and C. A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 123–54; J. A. Fitzmyer, “Did Jesus Speak Greek?,” *BAR* 18, no. 5 (1992): 58–63, 76–77; R. H. Gundry, “The Language Milieu of First-Century Palestine: Its Bearing on the Authenticity of the Gospel Tradition,” *JBL* 83 (1964): 404–8.
- 20 Z. Safrai, “The Origins of Reading the Aramaic Targum in Synagogue,” *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990): 187–93; idem, “The Targums as Part of Rabbinic Literature,” in *The Literature of the Sages. Second Part*, 245–46; Wise, “Languages of Palestine,” 438; D. Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena of Targum and Translation in the Second Temple

do such arguments suffer from the anachronistic use of later linguistic data to reconstruct Early Roman Galilean linguistic culture, they betray a philosophical assumption that ignores the sociolinguistic data of Tannaitic literature that is composed in Hebrew in favor of later Aramaic Targumim. Scholars also reference the Aramaic materials from Judea and Jerusalem in support for the assumed widespread use of Aramaic in the Early Roman period among Jews living in the land of Israel, including Galilee.²¹ The origins of the “Aramaic hypothesis” predate the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and, as such, developed from philosophical assumptions²² rather than the existence of Early Roman Jewish Aramaic texts from the land of Israel, which have been negligible.²³ The widespread acceptance of the “Aramaic hypothesis” as “fact” by many scholars today rests upon second-hand knowledge of the primary materials such that the origins of the theory, its foundations upon scant archaeological and textual evidence, and its philosophical underpinnings remain unquestioned.²⁴ The strong philosophical entrenchment of the exclusive use of Aramaic among the Jews of Galilee is demonstrated in the methodological fallacy that criticizes the use of the literary and epigraphic remains from Judea and Jerusalem with regard to the use of Hebrew within Early Roman Galilee²⁵ yet appeals to the Aramaic materials from Judea and Jerusalem as proof of the widespread use of Aramaic in the Galilee.²⁶ If the Aramaic linguistic data of Judea is removed, almost no Early Roman literary or epigraphic materials exist upon which to claim, “Aramaic remained the dominant language there [Galilee], as it did elsewhere in the Jewish parts of Palestine.”²⁷

If, however, as previously noted, the linguistic culture of Galilee mirrored that of Judea, then the Dead Sea Scrolls demonstrate that Aramaic was part

Period and Post-Second Temple Period,” in the present volume; and E. Cook, “Aramaic,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (ed. J. J. Collins and D. C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 362.

- 21 Cf. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 2:20–28; Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.,” 29–56
- 22 G. Baltes, “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’ in the Nineteenth Century: Methodological Fallacies and Subtle Motives,” in the present volume.
- 23 Barr, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek in the Hellenistic Age,” 79–114 (91); and Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.,” 38–39.
- 24 Baltes, “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’ in the Nineteenth Century.”
- 25 Cf. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 131–32; Horsley, *Archaeology, History and Society in Galilee*, 162–71.
- 26 Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 124.
- 27 Ibid. Cf. Wise’s caution due to the lack of sufficient evidence regarding any proposed linguistic model of first-century Galilee, “Languages of Palestine,” 441.

of the multilingual culture of Judea in the Early Roman period. The linguistic data from Judea and Jerusalem, however, indicate that Hebrew (and perhaps Greek) played a significant role in shaping and expressing the national and religious ethos of the Jewish people, while Aramaic, both literary and spoken, did not shape any cultural message.²⁸ Aramaic was merely used for communication; the Jewish population showed no loyalty to it.²⁹ The prominence of Hebrew within the political, social, and religious culture of Judea and Jerusalem creates a sociolinguistic disconnect between the Jews of Judea and Galilee if Galilean Jews predominately, if not exclusively, used Aramaic for communication and religious expression. From a sociolinguistic standpoint, Galilean Jews, as linguistic outsiders, would have found themselves on the fringes of Early Roman Jewish society and culture, a portrait contradicted by the archaeological remains uncovered in Galilee and the ancient literary sources. While increasingly more studies on Early Roman Galilee point out a regional connection to Judea and especially Jerusalem, routinely this connection is articulated in terms of material remains, trade goods, and archaeological religious remains (e.g. stone vessels and mikva'ot). Few have acknowledged that religious and national affiliations are social and psychological phenomena expressed primarily through language. The national, religious, and filial connections between Galilean and Judean Jews attested to in the archaeological record and reflected in the literary sources hints to a deep social and psychological bond that grew out of a common linguistic culture; therefore, although the Early Roman Galilean archaeology and the ancient literary materials do not provide direct linguistic data, we can infer that Hebrew played a dynamic role in forming the social and psychological connection between Galilean and Judean Jews, and also shaped and expressed Galilean Jewish society in the Early Roman period.

Almost from its inception, the "Aramaic hypothesis" has been intertwined with the question of the language of Jesus, and, as such, has played an intentional and important role in distancing Galilean society from the Jewish piety of Jerusalem.³⁰ So too, the question of the cultural nature of Galilee in the Early Roman period has been interlaced with scholars' assumptions regarding the historical Jesus. New Testament scholarship of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries juxtaposed the "Galilean Jesus" from the religious "heart" of Judaism in Jerusalem. To support their characterizations of the "Galilean Jesus," scholars tended to depict Galilee as either "Galilee of the Gentiles," a region

28 Rabin, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century," 1032.

29 Ibid.

30 Cf. Baltes, "The Origins of the 'Exclusive Aramaic Model' in the Nineteenth Century."

of Gentiles forcefully converted to Judaism by Aristobulus I (104–103 B.C.E.) that had not taken deep root in the first century C.E., or a Jewish society removed from the Hebrew-speaking Judaism of Jerusalem. These prominent “historical” depictions of Galilee provided the backdrop for the de-Judaization of Jesus.³¹ Modern scholarship does not accept the theological motives that shaped earlier scholarly depictions of the Galilee and the “Galilean Jesus”; nevertheless, many of the assumptions, including the “Aramaic hypothesis,”³² derived from such motivations remain unchallenged.

The paucity of direct linguistic data from Galilee³³ from the Early Roman era prohibits constructing a detailed sociolinguistic model for Galilee; however, allowing the discussion to be phrased in probabilities, not absolutes, we can suggest that the linguistic culture of Galilee did not differ significantly from that of Judea in the Early Roman period. We can, therefore, suggest a trilingual model for Early Roman Galilean Jewish society based upon the testimony of the ancient literary sources, the picture emerging from archeological excavations in Galilee dating from the Early Roman Galilee, and an understanding of how language functions in shaping and giving expression to a culture. In light of the meager direct linguistic data from Galilee, five principal issues frame an attempt to construct a sociolinguistic model for Galilee: (1) the question of the languages of the Jewish population of Judea in the Early Roman era; (2) the history of Jewish settlement within Galilee—was the region the “Galilee of the Gentiles”?; (3) the social impact of the Bar Kokhba revolt upon Galilee and the linguistic fallout as a result of the social upheaval caused by the revolt; (4) the problem with using the Targumim as evidence for the widespread use of Aramaic; (5) direct and indirect linguistic data.

31 S. Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 55–61. On the theological underpinnings of the “Aramaic hypothesis,” see Baltes, “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’ in the Nineteenth Century.”

32 Cf. Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark’s Gospel*, 79.

33 Efforts to locate the composition of the Gospels and Q are quite speculative and therefore do not contribute to discussions of first-century Galilean society; cf. A. J. Saldarini, “The Gospel of Matthew and Jewish-Christian Conflict in the Galilee,” in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 23–38; E. Lohmeyer, *Galiläa und Jerusalem* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1936); Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist* (trans. J. Boyce et al; Nashville: Abingdon, 1969); W. H. Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark: A New Place and a New Time* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974); J. S. Kloppenborg, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000); and B. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Gospel Origins* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993).

2 The Question of the Languages of the Jews in Judea in the Early Roman Period

The social history of the Jewish people provides the backdrop against which we can understand the evolution of the Hebrew language; moreover, it offers hints as to when we should expect seminal changes within the Hebrew language. It is not the purpose of the present study to recapitulate the origins of the “Aramaic hypothesis”³⁴ or the methodological fallacies upon which it rests³⁵ other than to note that scholars, in part, sought a historical foundation for this theory upon the assumed linguistic impact of the Babylonian exile, a period in which the Jewish people came into direct contact with Aramaic for public and private use. It was assumed that Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language after the Babylonian exile and Jews living in the land of Israel only spoke Aramaic. Only the “religious academics” understood Biblical Hebrew; the people, however, needed the Bible translated into Aramaic (cf. Neh. 8:8).³⁶ The theory became popular in the nineteenth century that the rabbinic sages, after the Bar Kokhba revolt, invented Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) out of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic, creating an artificial language for their academic and ideological purposes, but removed from the spoken language of the people—Aramaic. In support of this assumption, scholars turned to the Targumim, assuming that the common person would not need the Bible translated into Aramaic if he or she understood Biblical Hebrew. No mention is made in any Second Temple period source of the practice of translating the Hebrew Bible into Aramaic,³⁷ so the only evidence to support this assumption was the Targumim themselves. The “Aramaic hypothesis,” that Jews from the Persian period onward predominately, if not exclusively, spoke Aramaic, became the principal model for the linguistic culture in the land of Israel since the nineteenth century. In more recent years, some scholars have given Hebrew a marginal status within the linguistic

34 Initiated by A. Geiger; *Lehr- und Lesbuch zur Sprache der Mischnah* (Breslau: J. C. C. Leudart, 1845).

35 Cf. Baltes, “The Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model’ in the Nineteenth Century”; and Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena.” It should also be noted that even in the nineteenth-century professional linguists did not hold the attitude that underpinned Geiger’s hypothesis regarding Mishnaic Hebrew; cf. Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century,” 1023.

36 For an alternative reading of this passage, see Rabin, *A Short History of the Hebrew Language*, 35–36.

37 S. Fraade, “Targum, Targumim,” in Collins and Harlow, eds., *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, 1278–81 (1278). Fraade notes, however, that mention is made of the practice of translating the Hebrew Bible into Greek from the Second Temple period (p. 1278).

landscape in the land of Israel during the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, yet even still, Aramaic's place as the dominant language used by Jews in the land of Israel remains an accepted fact.³⁸ It is generally assumed that Hebrew was used for religious contexts and national purposes.³⁹ As we have noted, Hebrew played an important role in shaping and giving expression to the religious and national culture of Jews in the land of Israel in the Hellenistic and Early Roman eras. These were hardly marginal social areas in which Hebrew shaped Jewish society. Moreover, a model that seeks to marginalize Hebrew use to solely religious and national purposes proves too simplistic.⁴⁰

In 1908,⁴¹ M. H. Segal published an article whose relevance for New Testament studies is frequently overlooked. He challenged the thesis of Geiger and asserted that Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) reflected a spoken Hebrew that developed diachronically from the vernacular Hebrew of the late biblical period—Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH).⁴² Segal acknowledged the influence of

38 Cf. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 124–25; and Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine.” Fitzmyer, however, notes that those who hold the view that Aramaic was the most commonly used language during the first century in the land of Israel “must reckon with the growing mass of evidence that both Greek and Hebrew were being used as well” (p. 38).

39 Frequently the “revival” of Hebrew among the Jews living in the land of Israel after the Exile is connected to the national-religious agenda of the Hasmoneans, whose coins bear Hebrew legends, and the nationalist outlook of the Jewish rebels of the First Jewish revolt and the Bar Kokhba revolt. Such a hypothesis fails to account for the appearance of Hebrew on coins minted in the land of Israel during the Persian and Hellenistic periods, when Greek began to make inroads into Jewish society. From the Persian period, coins have been found bearing the Hebrew names *יְהוּדָה* and *יְהוּדָה הַכּוּרָה*, and from the reign of Ptolemy II, coins bearing the inscription *יהודה*, the name of the province, have been found. The language used on coins does not necessarily reflect the common spoken language of the people, but rather the linguistic ideology of those minting the coins. Nevertheless, it can hardly be argued that the use of Hebrew on the coins of the Persian period and the reign of Ptolemy II arose from national-religious motivations. Most likely, its use reflects the continued use of Hebrew by Jews living in the land. See Y. Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins from the Persian Period to Bar-Kochba* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1997 [Heb.]), 21–27.

40 Cf. also, E. A. Bar-Asher, “Hebrew,” in Collins and Harlow, eds., *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, 713–15 (715).

41 Already in the nineteenth century scholars challenged Geiger's theory of Mishnaic Hebrew; see T. Nödeke, *Die semitischen Sprachen* (2d ed.; Leipzig, 1899), 25; S. D. Luzzatto, “Über die Sprache der Mischnah,” *LBdOr* (1846–47): 7:829–32; 8:1–5, 46–48, and 55–57; and H. L. Graetz, “Review of Geiger 1845,” *LBdOr* (1844–145): 5:822–27; 6:30–31, 54–49, 76–78, and 86–90.

42 M. H. Segal, “Mishnaic Hebrew and Its Relation to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic,” *JQR* 20 (1908): 647–737; see also idem, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1927).

Aramaic upon מַח;⁴³ however, he viewed the two languages, at least during the period of 200 B.C.E.–200 C.E., as developing alongside each other.⁴⁴ מַח reflects the popular and colloquial dialect of the people, a language used in both secular and religious communication. Furthermore, מַח, as reflected in the sayings of the Tannaim, preserves a diachronic linguistic stratification, with the sayings of earlier sages (e.g. *m. Peah* 2.2; and *m. B. Qam.* 1.2; cf. also *b. Qidd.* 66a; and *Sifre Bamidbar* 22, on Num 6:2) displaying a Hebrew similar to the LBH of Esther and Daniel.⁴⁵

The work of subsequent scholars has upheld Segal's basic thesis that מַח reflects a colloquial dialect used among the Jewish people of the land of Israel from 200 B.C.E.–200 C.E.,⁴⁶ and that מַח developed diachronically in an organic manner from Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH; cf. *b. Avod. Zar.* 58b).⁴⁷

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- 43 Subsequent studies have demonstrated that Aramaic influenced מַח more than Segal initially assumed, in part because he relied upon the printed texts of Tannaitic literature as opposed to the manuscripts. Nevertheless, his primary thesis—the colloquial nature of מַח—appears certain. See E. Y. Kutscher, “Hebrew Language,” *EJ* 16:1590–1608; idem, “The Language of the Sages,” in *Sefer Hanoach Yalon* (ed. S. Lieberman, et al; Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1963), 246–80 (Heb.); idem, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1Q Isa)* (STDJ 6; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974); idem, “Aramaic Calque in Hebrew,” in *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies* (ed. Z. Ben-Hayyim, A. Dotan, and G. Sarfatti; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977 [Heb.]), 394–406; and J. N. Epstein, *Introduction to the Text of the Mishnah* (2 vols; Jerusalem: Baruch Micah Bokser, 1948 [Heb.]), especially 1050, and 1207–267.
- 44 Kutscher points out that מַח has forms that are not found in either Biblical Hebrew (בִּח) or Aramaic. If Geiger were correct that מַח was an artificial language created by the Sages from בִּח and Aramaic, such phenomenon should not occur; “Hebrew Language,” 1592; cf. also Rabin, “The Historical Background of Qumran Hebrew,” in *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. C. Rabin and Y. Yadin; ScrHier 4; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1965), 144–61 (145–48).
- 45 Epstein, *Introduction to the Text of the Mishnah*, 2:1129–33.
- 46 To the sources in n. 43 add Kutscher, “The Language of the Hebrew and Aramaic Letters of Bar-Kosiba and His Contemporaries, Second Study: The Hebrew Letters,” *Leshonenu* 26 (1961): 7–23 (Heb.); idem, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (ed. R. Kutscher; Jerusalem: Magnes; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982), 87–147; E. Ben-Yehudah, *Dictionary of the Hebrew Language* (New York: Doubleday, 1939), the Prolegomenon; Epstein, *Mavo le-Sifrut ha-Tanna'im*; A. Bendavid, *Leshon Miqra ulshon Hakhamim* (2 vols.; 2d ed.; Tel Aviv: Devir, 1967 [Hebrew]); C. Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century,” 1007–39; idem, *A Short History of the Hebrew Language*, 38–41; M. Bar-Asher, “The Different Traditions of Mishnaic Hebrew,” in *Working with No Data: Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin* (ed. D. M. Golomb and S. T. Hollis; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 1–38; idem, *Studies in Mishnaic Hebrew* (Scripta Hierosolymitana 37; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998).
- 47 On the development of LBH, see A. Hurvitz, “The Evidence of Language in Dating the Priestly Code,” *RB* 81 (1974): 24–56; idem, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the*

Discoveries of the book of Ben Sira in the genizah of the Ben Ezra synagogue in Cairo, Egypt⁴⁸ and the fragments of Ben Sira discovered at Masada,⁴⁹ further corroborated the place of Hebrew within the late Second Temple period⁵⁰ including the existence of an early form of MH as a spoken vernacular in the land of Israel.⁵¹ The majority of the documents discovered in caves in the area of the Dead Sea were written in Hebrew.⁵² This large cache of Hebrew documents indicates that Hebrew continued to serve an important role in the

Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel: A New Approach to an Old Problem (Cahiers de la Revue Biblique; Paris, 1982); R. Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward a Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 12; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976); Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 81–86; D. Talshir, “A Reinvestigation of the Linguistic Relationship Between Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah,” *VT* 38 (1988): 164–93; idem, “The Autonomic Status of Late Biblical Hebrew,” *Language Studies* 2–3 (1987): 161–72 (Hebrew); E. Qimron, “Observations on the History of Early Hebrew (1000 B.C.E.–200 C.E.) in the Light of the Dead Sea Documents,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Forty Years of Research* (STDJ 10; ed. D. Dimant and U. Rappaport; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 349–61; and idem, “The Biblical Lexicon in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *DSD* 2 (1995): 295–329.

- 48 Cf. M. H. Segal, *Sefer Ben-Sira HaShalem* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1958 [Hebrew]); and Z. Ben-Hayyim, *The Book of Ben Sira: Text, Concordance, and an Analysis of the Vocabulary* (Jerusalem: The Academy of the Hebrew Language and Shrine of the Book, 1973 [Hebrew]).
- 49 Y. Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society and the Shrine of the Book, 1965); see now Yadin with E. Qimron, “The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada,” in *Masada VI: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965* (ed. J. Aviram, G. Foerster, and E. Netzer; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society/The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999), 151–252; P. C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew* (VTSup 68; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998); and Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 87–93.
- 50 Cf. also T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde, eds., *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira: Proceedings of a Symposium held at Leiden University 11–14 December 1995* (STDJ 26; Leiden: Brill, 1997); idem, *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah held at Leiden University, 15–17 December 1997* (STDJ 33; Leiden: Brill, 1999); idem, *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (STDJ 36; Leiden: Brill, 2000); and J. Joosten and J.-S. Rey, eds., *Conservatism and Innovation in the Hebrew Language of the Hellenistic Period: Proceedings of a Fourth International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (STDJ 73; Leiden: Brill, 2007).
- 51 Rabin, “The Historical Background of Qumran Hebrew,” 152–53.
- 52 Cf. Fitzmyer, “Languages,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2 vols.; ed. L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1:473–74

shaping of Jewish society and culture from 200 B.C.E. to 200 C.E.⁵³ Although Qumran Hebrew preserves certain anomalies unique to itself, and apparently the authors of the Qumran Scrolls intentionally sought to imitate Biblical Hebrew in their writings,⁵⁴ Qumran Hebrew displays features that are organically woven into the language, indicating that it developed as an offshoot of LBH and was part of a community that used Hebrew for oral communication.⁵⁵ Qumran Hebrew also preserves certain features of MH at both the lexical and grammatical levels of the language, indicating that the Qumran scribes knew MH and that it was part of the colloquial language of the Jewish people in the land of Israel.⁵⁶ The discovery of the Aramaic manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls attests to that language's place within the multilingual environment of Second Temple Judaism. Moreover, the Aramaic manuscripts discovered among Qumran Scrolls show that the Qumran community did not oppose Aramaic or the preservation of documents written in Aramaic;⁵⁷ however, the sectarian documents were exclusively preserved in Hebrew.⁵⁸ In spite

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- 53 On the character of Qumran Hebrew, see Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*; idem, *The History of the Hebrew Language*, 93–106; Qimron, "Observations on the History of Early Hebrew," 349–61; idem, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (HSS 29; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986); Rabin, "The Historical Background of Qumran Hebrew," 144–61; Z. Ben-Hayyim, "Traditions in the Hebrew Language, with Special Reference to the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 200–214; and M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, "Linguistic Structure and Tradition in the Qumran Documents," in *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 101–37; and S. Morag, "Qumran Hebrew Some Typological Observations," *VT* 38 (1988): 148–64.
- 54 Cf. B. Schniedewind, "Qumran Hebrew as an Antilanguage," *JBL* 118 (1999): 235–52.
- 55 Muraoka, "Hebrew," in *EDSS*, 1:344; cf. also Kutscher, *The History of the Hebrew Language*, 93–106.
- 56 Rabin, "The Historical Background of Qumran Hebrew," 146–50; Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, *passim*, see especially 98–117.
- 57 The Aramaic documents discovered at Qumran came from outside the community, most were likely composed elsewhere in the land of Israel; however, the copies of the Targum of Job discovered among the Qumran library appear to have come from a foreign provenance. See S. Segert, "Sprachliche bemerkungen zu einigen aramaischen texten von Qumran," *ArOr* 33 (1965): 190–206; T. Muraoka, "The Aramaic of the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI," *JJS* 25 (1974): 425–43; E. Cook, "Qumran Aramaic and Aramaic Dialectology," in *Studies in Qumran Aramaic* (ed. T. Muraoka; AbrNSup 3; Louvain: Peeters, 1992), 1–21; and idem, "A New Perspective on the Language of Onkelos and Jonathan," in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in Their Historical Context* (ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara; JSOTSup 166; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 142–56.
- 58 J. C. Greenfield, "Aramaic and the Jews," in *Studia Aramaica: New Sources and New Approaches. Papers Delivered at the London Conference of The Institute of Jewish Studies*

of the Qumran community's intentional attempt to imitate the Hebrew of the Hebrew Bible, documents such as 4QMMT⁵⁹ and the Copper Scroll⁶⁰ attest to the influence of the colloquial MH upon the Hebrew of the Qumran sectarians.⁶¹ So too, many of the Bar Kokhba letters were written in a colloquial dialect of MH used by the Jewish rebels.⁶² The Hebrew Bar Kokhba letters, the

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- University College London 26th–28th June 1991* (JSS Supplement 4; ed. M. J. Geller, J. C. Greenfield, and M. P. Weitzman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1–8; D. Dimant, "The Qumran Manuscripts: Contents and Significance," in *Time to Prepare the Way in the Wilderness* (STDJ 16; ed. D. Dimant and L. H. Schiffman; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 34–35; E. Eshel and M. Stone, "464. 4QExposition on the Patriarchs," in *Qumran Cave 4: XII, Parabiblical Texts, Part 2* (DJD 19; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 215–30; Schniedewind, "Qumran Hebrew as an Antilanguage," 235–52; and S. Weitzman, "Why Did the Qumran Community Write in Hebrew?," *JAOs* 119 (1999): 35–45.
- 59 See E. Qimron and J. Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4. V. Miqsat Ma'ashe Ha-Torah* (DJD 10; Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 65–108 (103–8); and idem, "An Unpublished Halakhic Letter from Qumran," in *Biblical Archaeology Today: Proceedings of the International Congress on Biblical Archaeology, Jerusalem, April 1984* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1985), 400–407.
- 60 J. T. Milik, "Le rouleau de cuivre de Qumran (3Q15)," *RB* 66 (1950): 321–57.
- 61 Inscriptional finds also attest to the prevailing use of Hebrew among the Jewish people in the closing days of the Second Temple. See L. Y. Rahmani, *A Catalog of Jewish Ossuaries in the Collection of the State of Israel* (Jerusalem: The Israel Antiquities Authority/The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994), especially 13; Y. Yadin and J. Naveh, "The Aramaic and Hebrew Ostraca and Jar Inscriptions," in *Masada I: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965 Final Reports* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society/The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989), 1–68; Naveh, *On Sherd and Papyrus: Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from the Second Temple, Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992 [Heb.]), 11–82; E. Y. Kutscher, "Hebrew and Aramaic Inscriptions from Jerusalem of the Second Temple Period," in Ben-Hayyim, Dotan, and Sarfatti, eds., *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies*, 27–35 (Heb.); and Baltes, "The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era," in the present volume. On the challenges of using epigraphic sources for mapping the languages used within a society, see J. Price and H. Misgav, "Jewish Inscriptions and Their Use," in *The Literature of the Sages. Second Part*, 461–83 (468–80). Although numismatic evidence does not in-and-of itself make a linguistic argument, the numismatic evidence further corroborates that Hebrew was part of the multilingual environment of the Jewish people at the end of the Second Temple period, as also attested in the literary and epigraphic finds; see Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins*; and idem, *Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period* (Tel Aviv: Am Hassefer, 1967).
- 62 See E. Y. Kutscher, "The Language of the Hebrew and Aramaic Letters of Bar Kosiba and His Contemporaries: 1. The Aramaic Letters," *Leshonenu* 25 (1961): 117–33 (Heb.); idem, "The Language of the Hebrew and Aramaic Letters of Bar Kosiba and His Contemporaries: 2. The Hebrew Letters," 7–23; and P. Benoit, J. T. Milik, and R. De Vaux, eds., *Les Grottes de Murabba'at: Texte* (DJD 2; Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), especially 67–74 (henceforth *DJD* 2).

Copper Scroll, 4QMMT, together with the other materials in MH contain evidence that MH, as a spoken language, was not uniform between regions; different dialects can still be traced.⁶³ Such a phenomenon clearly indicates that MH was a living, spoken language within several regions of the land of Israel at the close of the Second Temple period through the Tannaitic period.⁶⁴ Moreover, the Bar Kokhba letters, as well as Tannaitic literature, reflect a sociological setting in which Hebrew was used for daily, non-nationalistic and non-religious matters. In other words, Jews living in the land of Israel used Hebrew to communicate within the marketplace, not only in Jerusalem, but also throughout the villages and rural communities in the land, including Galilee.

While among specialists in the field of post-biblical studies the trilingual status of the Jewish population in the land of Israel is an accepted fact,⁶⁵ New Testament scholarship continues to work primarily within the older theory proposed by Geiger of a bilingual linguistic setting.⁶⁶ Even among specialists, however, the general assumption remains that the Jewish inhabitants of the Galilee spoke predominately Aramaic, and perhaps some Greek, but Hebrew played little to no role in the articulation of Jewish Galilean society. To support this opinion, the Talmudic statement regarding the Galileans lack of care in their speech is frequently cited:

The Judeans who had been careful about their language succeeded in preserving the Torah, while the people of Galilee, who did not care for their language, did not preserve the Torah (*b. Eruv.* 53a–b; *y. Ber.* 4d, *et al.*).⁶⁷

The Talmud proceeds to discuss the kinds of errors made by the Galileans in their speech (cf. Matt 26:73), some of which are given in Aramaic. The discussion primarily focuses upon the Galileans mispronunciation of the pharyngeals

63 Bendavid, *Leshon Miqra ulshon Hakhamim*, 1:100; M. Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew," 578–79.

64 Cf. Milik, *DJD* 2, 70; idem, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (SBT 26; London: SCM, 1959), 130–31; and J. A. Emerton, "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew in the First Century A.D. and the Language of Jesus," *JTS* 24 (1973): 1–23 (15).

65 Barr, "Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek in the Hellenistic Age," 79–114; Rabin, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century," 1007–39; M. Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew," 567–95; and G. A. Rendsburg, "The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew," in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 225–40.

66 Some have challenged the consensus New Testament view; for example, see, H. Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus* (Avhandling Utgitt av det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi I Oslo II. Hist.-Filos. Kl., 1954; Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1954).

67 Cf. Bendavid, *Leshon Miqra ulshon Hakhamim*, 1:154.

י and ן and their dropping of the laryngeals ם and ן, a similar phenomenon that occurs in the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁶⁸ Kutscher suggests that the weakening of these phonemes occurred under the influence of Greek and not Aramaic.⁶⁹ These issues do not demonstrate that Hebrew was less common in Galilee than in Judea and Jerusalem; rather, they are dialectal features that one would expect to develop within a living, spoken language.⁷⁰

3 The History and Character of Jewish Settlement in the Galilee: Was there a Galilee of the Gentiles?

Scholars have frequently used the statement attributed to the first-century sage Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai by Rabbi Ulla (c. second-half of the third century C.E.) to support the assumption that Galilean Jews in the Early Roman period were distant and hostile to the Torah:⁷¹ “Galilee, Galilee, you hated the Torah! Your end will be to be besieged!” (י. *Shabb.* 16.15d; cf. also *b. Eruv.* 53b). Ulla attributed this saying to a time in Yohanan ben Zakkai’s life when he lived in Arav in the Lower Galilee.⁷² Quite possibly, if Yohanan ben Zakkai uttered this statement, it simply reflects “an unobjective denigration” of residents living in certain geographic regions (cf. י. *Pes.* 5.32a; י. *Sanh.* 1.18c; John 1:46),⁷³ or given his connection to the “peace party,” in which he resisted the religious zealotism that led to the First Jewish revolt, a movement with roots in the Galilee,

68 Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 505–11; idem, “Hebrew Language,” *EJ*, 1586; and Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 25–26.

69 Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*.

70 B. Spolsky, “Jewish Multilingualism in the First Century: An Essay in Historical Sociolinguistics,” in *Contributions to the Sociology of Jewish Languages* (ed. J. A. Fishman; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985), 1:35–50 (37); and S. Safrai, “Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus,” in *Jesus’ Last Week* (ed. R. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage and Brian Becker; Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 225–44 (231–32). On the regional dialects within מנח, see M. Bar-Asher, “Mishnaic Hebrew,” 578–79; cf. also Kutscher, “The Language of the Sages”; and idem, “Studies in the Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew According to Ms. Kaufmann,” in Ben-Hayyim, Dotan, and Sarfatti, eds., *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies*, 108–34.

71 Cf. J. Neusner, *A Life of Yohanan Ben Zakkai ca. 1–80 C.E.* (Studia Post-Biblical 6; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), 24–26 and 47–58.

72 On Yohanan ben Zakkai’s presence in the Galilee, see Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of the Galilee in the First Century,” 149–52.

73 *Ibid.*; cf. also G. Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 506–14.

Yohanan ben Zakkai's statement could have been a rebuke of those who would "cast off the yoke of heaven and accepted the yoke of flesh and blood" (*t. B. Qama* 7.5–6; and *t. Sotah* 14.4).⁷⁴ Either way, this statement does not demonstrate the absence of a flourishing Torah observant Jewish community within Galilee in the first century. In fact, Yohanan ben Zakkai's presence in Arav for nineteen years attests to the presence of Sages in Galilee and the region's social and religious connection to the world of the Sages during the Early Roman period.⁷⁵

The presentation of first-century Galilee as a thoroughly Hellenized⁷⁶ region⁷⁷ has, nevertheless, become almost axiomatic within scholarly treatments

74 See S. Liberman, *Tosephta ki-feshuta: Neziqin* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1988), 66–67; cf. also *'Abot de Rabbi Nathan*, version A, 20; *m. 'Abot* 3.5 and 6.2; *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael* on Exod 15:18 and 19:1; *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai* on Exod 15:18 and 19:18; *Sifre* on Deut 32:29; *b. Avod. Zar.* 5a; *Targum* on Ezek 2:10; Luke 13:34; 19:41–44, and 22:24–27.

75 Safrai, "The Jewish Cultural Nature of the Galilee in the First Century," 149–65.

76 By the first century, all Judaism was Hellenistic Judaism; therefore, the terms "Hellenization," "Hellenized," and "Hellenism" do not provide clear religious, social, or ethnic markers as a means of defining, for example, the level of Torah observance of a Jewish community or whether a community was Jewish or Gentile. "Hellenism" does not equal Gentile pagan influence—they are not the same. See M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), especially 1:104; idem, *Jews, Greeks, and Barbarians: Aspects of the Hellenization of Judaism in the Pre-Christian Period* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980); idem, *The 'Hellenization' of Judaea in the First Century after Christ* (London: SCM; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989); idem, "Judaism and Hellenism Revisited," in *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (ed. J. J. Collins and G. E. Sterling; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 6–37; V. Tcherikover, "The Cultural Background," in *The Hellenistic Age: Political History of Jewish Palestine from 332 B.C.E. to 67 B.C.E.* (ed. A. Schalit; The World History of the Jewish People 6; New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1972), 33–50; idem, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1966); Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, 1–23.

77 Meyers, "The Cultural Setting of Galilee: The Case of Regionalism and Early Judaism," in *ANRW* 2:19.1 (1979), 686–702; idem, "Galilean Regionalism as a Factor in Historical Reconstruction," 93–102; Meyers and Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis, and Early Christianity*, 31–47; Kee, "Early Christianity in the Galilee"; D. R. Edwards, "The Socio-Economic and Cultural Ethos of the Lower Galilee in the First Century: Implications of the Nascent Jesus Movement," in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 39–52; idem, "First-Century Urban/Rural Relations in Lower Galilee: Exploring the Archaeological and Literary Evidence," in *SBL Seminar Papers 1988* (ed. J. D. Lull; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 169–82.

of Galilee and the historical Jesus.⁷⁸ Typically first-century Galilee is depicted as either a bucolic backwater whose religiously uneducated populace developed a “popular faith” in contrast to the Torah observant Judaism of Galilee’s Judean neighbors,⁷⁹ or as a region overrun by Gentiles who infused Galilee with pagan, non-Jewish culture such that the population of this “Galilee of the Gentiles” lacked any significant moorings in the Judaism that made the Galilee its seat after the Bar Kokhba revolt.⁸⁰ The deep entrenchment of this characterization of Galilee persists in more recent New Testament scholarship that continues to interpret the archaeological record of Galilee through the lenses of a regional bucolic backwater and/or the “Galilee of the Gentiles.”⁸¹ This representation of first-century Galilee provides the backdrop against which New Testament scholars, particularly those interested in the historical Jesus, explain their social construction and interpretations of Jesus and the nascent Jesus movement.⁸² At the same time, the close connection between Jesus and first-century Galilee has colored characterizations of the Galilee, as scholars utilized their social descriptions of Galilee as a foundation for de-Judaizing Jesus.⁸³ Although this *tendenz* has been rejected within modern scholarship, vestiges of such an agenda remain by the unquestioned existence

78 For a review of scholarship on the Galilee, see Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*, 1–22; H. Moxnes, “The Construction of Galilee as a Place for the Historical Jesus—Part I,” *BTB* 31 (2001): 26–37; and idem, “The Construction of Galilee as a Place for the Historical Jesus—Part II,” *BTB* 31 (2001): 64–77.

79 G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975); Neusner, *A Life of Yohanan Ben Zakkai*, 24–26, and 47–58.

80 See K. W. Clark, “Galilee,” in *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (ed. G. A. Buttrick et al.; 5 vols.; New York and Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 2:344–47; Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1960), 42; M. Dibelius, *Jesus* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1949), 39–40; and G. Dalman, *Sacred Sites and Ways: Studies in the Topography of the Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1935).

81 Cf. B. L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1993), 59; idem, *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988); R. W. Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 33 and 79; Paula Fredriksen, *Jesus of Nazareth: King of the Jews* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999), 160–61; M. J. Borg, “The Palestinian Background for a Life of Jesus,” in *Searching for Jesus* (Washington D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1994), 46–47; R. W. Funk, R. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 28; and Kee, “Early Christianity in the Galilee.”

82 To the references in the preceding note add F. C. Grant, “Jesus Christ,” *IDB* 2:869–96 (877); D. J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991), 71.

83 Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus*, 55–63.

of conclusions reliant upon them, for example, “the Galilee of the Gentiles” and an Aramaic Galilee.

The question of the nature of the Jewish presence in Galilee during the Early Roman period depends on how one understands the Jewish presence in Galilee prior to and during the Hasmonean period. Two events from the second century B.C.E. stand at the crux of this issue: (1) Simon’s campaign in Galilee (1 Macc 5:15–23), and (2) the campaign of Simon’s grandson, Judas Aristobulus (104–103 B.C.E.; *Ant.* 13:318–19) against the Itureans. The standard historical reconstruction depicts Simon’s campaign as an evacuation of the Jewish population of Galilee, which created a population vacuum in Galilee subsequently filled by Gentiles, primarily the Itureans. Josephus’ account of Aristobulus’ campaign against the Itureans (ca. 103 B.C.E.; *Ant.* 13:318–19) accordingly describes Aristobulus’ annexation of Galilee for the Hasmonean kingdom, a region populated by Itureans, whom he forcibly converted to Judaism.⁸⁴ According to this proposed interpretation of the historical events, the Jewish population of Early Roman Galilee resulted from “converted” Galileans. This, of course, raises the question how deeply Judaism penetrated into Galilean culture by the first century C.E. Galilee, then, remained loosely Jewish until after the Bar Kokhba revolt when the rabbinic Sages moved the Sanhedrin to Galilee.

Historical sources provide almost no information on Galilee from the period of the Assyrian conquest in the eighth century B.C.E. until the Hasmonean uprising.⁸⁵ The archeological record suggests that most of the settlements in

84 Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, 2:217–18; cf. 1:142, and 2:7–10; cf. also F. Millar, *The Roman Near East 31 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 346; R. A. Horsley, *Galilee: History, Politics, People* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1995), 34–52; idem, *Archaeology, History and Society in Galilee: The Social Context of Jesus and the Rabbis* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996), 25–28; M. Goodman, “Galilean Judaism and Judean Judaism,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 3, *The Early Roman Period* (ed. W. Horbury, W. D. Davies, and J. Sturdy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 596–617 (599–600); P. Schäfer, *The History of the Jews in the Greco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2003), 74; Clark, “Galilee,” 344

85 U. Rappaport, “The Galilee between the Hasmonean Revolt and the Roman Conquest,” in *Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple, Mishna, and Talmud Period: Studies in Honor of Shmuel Safrai* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1993), 20–25 (Heb.); cf. Jdt 1:8–9. Γαλιλα appears in the list of the Egyptian administrator Zenon who visited Israel in 260–258 B.C.E. (pap. 2). W. L. Westermann and E. S. Hasenoehrl, *Zenon papyri: Business Papers of the Third Century B.C. dealing with Palestine and Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934), 6–8; cf. also Tcherikover, “The Land of Israel in Light of the Zenon Papyri,” in *The Jews in the Greco-Roman World* (Tel Aviv: Hatsaat Sefarim, 1961), 33–82 (Heb.); and M. Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land: A Historical Geography from the Persian to the Arab Conquest 536 B.C.*

the region were abandoned as a result of the Assyrian invasion.⁸⁶ The biblical, non-biblical, and archaeological records all agree that Galilee lost the vast majority of its Israelite population as a result of the Assyrian conquest. A few references in the Bible (2 Chr 30:6, 10; 2 Kgs 21:19; 24:1) suggest that a small number of people from the northern kingdom remained in Galilee, most likely concentrated in Lower Galilee (cf. Jdt 1:8).⁸⁷ After the Assyrian conquest of the region, however, new settlers were not moved into Galilee.⁸⁸ In fact, the archaeological record indicates that in the centuries following the Assyrian conquest, there was little population growth in Galilee. The historical sources and the archaeological record provide minimal information regarding the resettlement of Galilee, as well as the ethnic character of those settlers during the Persian and Hellenistic periods.⁸⁹ During the Hellenistic period, both the Ptolemies and Seleucids established cities in the regions surrounding Galilee (e.g. Ptolemais and Nysa-Scythopolis [Beth Shean]), and most of the population concentrated around these fortified centers on the margins of the western and central valleys.⁹⁰ The interior of Galilee, however, apparently remained sparsely populated.⁹¹ Our sources from the Hasmonean period provide only sketchy information on Galilee during the Hasmonean dynasty. In fact, not until the annexation of the Galilee to Judea as part of Rome's administrative restructuring under Gabinius in the mid-first century B.C.E. do we find much information regarding Galilee within the historical sources. Clearly, however, a Jewish presence existed within Galilee by the second century B.C.E. As part of the campaigns of Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers against the foreigners surrounding Jewish lands, they encountered Jews living in Galilee and in the vicinity surrounding it. Simon, Judas' brother, led a campaign against Gentiles harassing Jews living in Galilee (1 Macc 5:14–23), and Judas interacted with a

to A.D. 640 (Jerusalem: Carta, 2002), 36, who suggests that *Galila* was an hyarchy under the Ptolemies.

86 Cf. Z. Gal, *Lower Galilee during the Iron Age* (trans. M. Reines-Josephy; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 108–9.

87 M. Aviam, "The Hasmonean Dynasty's Activities in the Galilee," in *Jews, Pagans and Christians in the Galilee* (Land of Galilee 1; Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 41–42; and Z. Safrai, *The Galilee in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud* (Ma'alot: Midreshet Shorashim, 1985 [Hebrew]), 1–2.

88 M. Moreland, "The Inhabitants of Galilee in the Hellenistic and Early Roman Periods," in *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee: A Region in Transition* (ed. J. Zangenberg, H. W. Attridge, and D. B. Martin; WUNT 210; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 137.

89 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 315.

90 *Ibid.*, 322.

91 Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*, 35–36.

Jewish population in Scythopolis (Beth Shean) who “bore witness to the goodwill that the people of Scythopolis had shown them” (2 Macc 12:29–31).⁹²

According to the author of 1 Maccabees, when the “Gentiles around” (the Jewish lands) heard that Judas Maccabaeus had rebuilt the altar in Jerusalem and rededicated the sanctuary, they responded violently against their Jewish neighbors (1 Macc 5:1–2). As part of the literary and rhetorical intention of 1 Maccabees, the author collected disparate accounts of campaigns of Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers against Gentiles along the borders of Jewish lands in order to characterize them as heroes of the Jewish people like Joshua, son of Nun, who expelled non-Jews from the land,⁹³ and thus created an artificial chronological structure within 1 Macc 5.⁹⁴ In his description of the campaigns of Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers, the author of 1 Maccabees deliberately imitated biblical language and style, describing Judas and his brothers as fighting against the “sons of Esau” (5:3), “the land of Amon” (5:6), “the district of the Philistines” (5:15), and “the land of the Philistines” (5:68).⁹⁵ Not only is Judas the “new Joshua,” the campaigns of Judas and his brothers fulfill biblical prophecy. The author of 1 Maccabees described Judas’ campaign against the Idumeans as his warring against the “sons of Esau” (5:3) fulfilling the prophecy of Obad 15–21 (especially vv. 18–19).⁹⁶ Beginning with Judas, the Hasmoneans sought to portray themselves as the political and religious saviors of the Jewish people.⁹⁷ The deliberate imitation of biblical style as well as the literary structuring of

92 Although technically not part of Galilee (cf. Luke 17:11), the region of Scythopolis bordered Galilee. John Hyrcanus conquered Scythopolis around 108 B.C.E., which most likely opened the way for the Hasmoneans to extend their control of Galilee during the days of Hyrcanus I (see below). The city had a sizable Jewish community at the time of the First Revolt (*War* 2.466–68). The settlement of Tel Basul located west of Scythopolis in the valley, yet still within the territory of Scythopolis, was apparently a Jewish community (based upon the numismatic profile of the site) from the days of Antiochus VII (138–129 B.C.E.; see below) until it was destroyed in the First Revolt; see D. Syon, “Tyre and Gamla: A Study in the Monetary Influence of Southern Phoenicia on Galilee and the Golan in the Hellenistic and Roman Period” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem), 220–22, 244–45.

93 U. Rappaport, *The First Book of Maccabees: Introduction, Hebrew Translation, and Commentary* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2004 [Heb.]), 166–67; J. Goldstien, *1 Maccabees* (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 293.

94 Rappaport, *Maccabees*, 166; Goldstien, *1 Maccabees*, 99–102.

95 Cf. Rappaport, *Maccabees*, 169; and S. Schwartz, “Israel and the Nations Roundabout: 1 Maccabees and the Hasmonean Expansion,” *JJS* 41 (1991): 16–38.

96 Goldstein, *1 Maccabees*, 294.

97 Rappaport, *Maccabees*, 167; D. Flusser, “What is Hanukkah? The Historical Setting of the Hasmonean Temple Dedication,” in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period*. Vol. 2, *The Jewish*

events in 1 Macc 5 (cf. 2 Sam 8) contributed to the national and religious propaganda of the Hasmoneans.

Within this context, the author of 1 Maccabees mentions a request for aid that came from the Jewish residents of Galilee to Judas and his brothers because, “the people of Ptolemais and Tyre and Sidon, and all the district (‘galilee’) of the aliens (πάσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων), had gathered together against them” (1 Macc 5:15; cf. also 2 Macc 6:8–9, 13:24–25). In response to the Gentile aggression, Judas dispatched his brother Simon to “rescue” the Jews of Galilee (cf. 1 Macc 5:17; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.331–34). Simon fought against the Gentiles of the region, and, according to the account of 1 Maccabees, he crushed them, pursuing them to the gate of Ptolemais (1 Macc 5:21–22). After sufficiently defeating the Gentile agitators, Simon “took the Jews from Galilee and in Arbatta (ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἐν Ἀρβαττοῖς),⁹⁸ with their wives and children . . . and led them to Judea with great rejoicing” (1 Macc 5:23). The manuscript readings of “Arbatta” (Ἀρβαττοῖς) are notoriously spurious;⁹⁹ a place named Arbatta does not appear in any ancient sources. This has led some to suggest that ἐν Ἀρβαττοῖς is a scribal corruption of Ναρβαττοῖς (where the first letter has been expanded into a preposition),¹⁰⁰ a town near Caesarea, between Caesarea and Mount Carmel (Josephus, *War* 2.291, 509), in the Sharon Plain.¹⁰¹ Josephus identified Ptolemais and Mount Carmel as outlining the western borders of Galilee (*War* 3.35). If Simon removed the Jews from Nabata, then he took the Jewish inhabitants from the coastal region and the frontiers of western Galilee, areas typically inhabited by non-Jewish populations.

The author of 1 Maccabees described the Gentile peoples troubling the Jews of Galilee as “from Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, and all the district of the foreigners” (ἐκ Πτολεμαίδος καὶ Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων, 1 Macc 5:15). Many have taken the appearance of the phrase “and all the Galilee of the foreigners” to indicate that Galilee was largely inhabited by Gentiles, the “Galilee of the Gentiles.”¹⁰² Rappaport, however, has argued that the phrase is

Sages and Their Literature (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 113–34; and B. Z. Wacholder, “The Letter from Judah Maccabee to Aristobulus,” *HUCA* 49 (1978): 133–89.

98 The Greek of this passage is awkward; one would expect idiomatic Hebrew not to change the prepositions reading instead “... from (ἵδ:ἐκ) Galilee and from (ἵδ:ἐκ) Arbatta” (Goldstien, *1 Maccabees*, 300).

99 See the following note.

100 F. M. Abel, *Les Livres des Maccabées* (Pairs: Gabalda, 1949), 95–96; and M. Avi-Yonah, “The Hasmonean Revolt and Judah Maccabee’s War Against the Syrians,” in Schalit, ed., *The Hellenistic Age*, 147–82 (168).

101 Cf. Goldstien, *1 Maccabees*, 300; and Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land*, 144–45.

102 Cf. B. Bar-Kochva, “Manpower, Economics, and Internal Strife in the Hasmonean State,” in *Armées et fiscalité dans le monde antique. Actes de colloque national, Paris 14–16 Octobre*

a literary term deriving from Isa 8:23, or perhaps the phrase *καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων* stands in apposition to the preceding locations, and thus, paraphrases the first part of the verse.¹⁰³ Moreover, the location of the cities troubling the Galilean Jews, along the Phoenician coast, on the western boundaries of the Galilee, raises a question whether the word *Γαλιλαίαν* refers to Galilee in the broad sense of the term as it was used in the first century, or to a more localized area, a “district” (חֵיִלָּה).¹⁰⁴ In other words, a more localized region (district) within western Galilee along the borders with Ptolemais and its territory.¹⁰⁵

The Greek translator of 1 Maccabees deliberately used the genitive *ἀλλοφύλων* and avoided using *ἐθνῶν*, making it doubtful that the phrase “Galilee of the Gentiles” functioned as a *terminus technicus* for the Galilee in antiquity.¹⁰⁶ The Septuagint typically used the Greek *ἀλλόφυλος* (“foreigner”) to translate the Hebrew *תַּשְׁבֵּץ*; never does it translate the Hebrew *יָג*. Previously we noted that the author of 1 Maccabees intentionally imitated biblical style and language in his composition. The Greek translator of 1 Maccabees mimicked the compositional style of the author in his translation. In this vein, he used *ἀλλόφυλος* in a similar manner to the Septuagint, primarily to identify the land of the Philistines (1 Macc 3:41 and 5:66; cf. also 1 Macc 4:30).¹⁰⁷ In speaking about the peoples living on the coastal plain who joined the Seleucids to fight against Judas Maccabaeus, he says, “And forces from Syria and the land of the Philistines (*καὶ γῆς ἀλλοφύλων*: i.e., the plain of Philistia and the Sharon plain: the coastal region inhabited by Gentiles) joined with them” (3:41; cf. also 1 Macc 5:66). The phrase *Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων* represents the

1976 (ed. H. van Effenterre; Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1977), 192; J. C. Dancy, *A Commentary on 1 Maccabees* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954), 104; and Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 1:142, and 2:7–10.

103 Rappaport, “Akko-Ptolemais and the Jews in the Hellenistic Period,” *Cathedra* 50 (1988): 31–48 (42) (Heb.); cf. also idem, *The First Book of Maccabees*, 173.

104 L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1:193.

105 Prior to the Hasmonean revolt, Ptolemais utilized the alluvial soil of the Plain of Akko and the valleys in western Galilee for its breadbasket and constructed a series of fortified settlements to the east, bordering Galilee, to protect its agricultural activities within this fertile region and protect the rear of the city. See M. Aviam, “Hellenistic Fortifications in the ‘Hinterland’ of ‘Akko-Ptolemais,’” in *Jews, Pagans and Christians in the Galilee*, 22–30; cf. also Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 326–27.

106 Josephus’ attempt to clarify the language of 1 Macc 5:15 (*καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων*) with *καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν τῆς Γαλιλαίας* (*Ant.* 12.331) further attests to the fact that Galilee was not referred to as “Galilee of the Gentiles” in the first century C.E.

107 Cf. B. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus: The Jewish Struggle Against the Seleucids* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 218 and 247–48.

Hebrew פְּלִשְׁתִּים, “the district (region) of the Philistines.”¹⁰⁸ The translator of 1 Maccabees never used ἀλλόφυλος to refer to Gentile inhabitants of the north, including Galilee; to describe the Gentiles, whom Simon fought in Ptolemais, he used the term ἔθνη (1 Macc 5:21–23; cf. also the appearance of γῆν ἀλλοφύλων in 1 Macc 5:66).¹⁰⁹ Josephus relied heavily upon 1 Maccabees in his *Jewish Antiquities* for his information on Mattathias, Judas Maccabaeus, and Jonathan,¹¹⁰ yet he felt uncomfortable with 1 Maccabees’ use of ἀλλόφυλος in 1 Macc 5:15 and sought to explain it better to his Gentile readership, possibly because he failed to account for the Greek dialect of the translator of 1 Maccabees, who frequently ascribed the meaning of the Greek words found in the Septuagint.¹¹¹ More likely, he did not recognize the allusion to Joel 3:4 (LXX 4:4) in 1 Macc 5:15 and sought to clarify the phrase καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων by describing the problematic Gentiles as, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἔθνῶν τῆς Γαλιλαίας (*Ant.* 12.331) perhaps due to the description of Simon’s opponents in Ptolemais as ἔθνη in 1 Macc 5:21.¹¹²

The use of the phrase καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων in 1 Macc 5:15 appears to serve a more pointed purpose than merely a regional designation. In one sense, it reflects the deliberate biblicalizing style of 1 Maccabees and underscores the author’s intention of portraying Judas and his brothers as the religious and national saviors of the Jewish people, like the biblical heroes Joshua and David. At the same time, it portrays Judas and his brothers, specifically Simon in this

108 Many have assumed that הַגּוֹיִם לְגִלְיָהוּ of Isa 8:23 (LXX 9:1) stands behind the Greek Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων of 1 Macc 5:15, yet in light of the Greek translator’s tendency to mirror the vocabulary of the Septuagint, in which ἀλλόφυλος never translates גּוֹי, there is no apparent connection between Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων in 1 Maccabees and הַגּוֹיִם לְגִלְיָהוּ in Isaiah; contra Rappaport, “Akko-Ptolemais and the Jews in the Hellenistic Period,” 42; idem, *The First Book of Maccabees*, 172–73; and M. Karrer, “Licht über dem Galiläa der Völker: Die Fortschreibung von Jes 9:1–2 in der LXX,” in Zangenberg, Attridge, and Martin, eds., *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee*, 49–53. Moreover, הַגּוֹיִם לְגִלְיָהוּ in Isa 8:23 did not refer to the traditional Galilee, but rather “the district (region) of the foreigners,” which Rainey has identified with Harosheth-ha-goiim (Judg 4:2–3), that is, the land in the western Jezreel Valley between Taanach and Megiddo; cf. Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 150–51, and 231.

109 Notley, “Was the Galilee Still Jewish in the Days of Judah Aristobulus?,” a paper presented at a conference in honor of Professor Anson F. Rainey’s Eightieth birthday, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan Israel, May 2010.

110 H. Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 6–7; Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 186–93.

111 Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 192–93.

112 Josephus similarly “corrected” the phrase γῆς ἀλλοφύλων (“land of the Philistines”) in 1 Macc 3:41 to those “from the nearby region” (τῆς πέριξ χώρας, *Ant.* 12.299); cf. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 248.

instance, as fulfilling biblical prophecy. In 1 Macc 5:15, the author drew three of the four geographic locations of Gentiles harassing the Jews of the Galilee from the prophet Joel (3:4–6 [LXX 4:4–6]):

What are you to me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia (פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְכָל וְצִידוֹן גְּלִילוֹת פְּלִשְׁתִּים): Τύρος καὶ Σιδῶν καὶ πᾶσα Γαλιλαία ἀλλοφύλων)? Are you paying me back for something? If you are paying me back, I will turn your deeds back upon your own heads swiftly and speedily. For you have taken my silver and gold, and have carried my rich treasures into your temples. You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks (לְבָנֵי הַיּוֹנִים), removing them far from their own border.

Apart from 1 Macc 5:15, the Septuagint translation of Joel is the only occurrence in Jewish Greek literature of the phrase Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων. So too, this passage stands alone in grouping Γαλιλαία together with Tyre (Τύρος) and Sidon (Σιδῶν). The only difference between the Septuagint translation of Joel 3:4 and 1 Macc 5:15 is the addition in 1 Maccabees of Ptolemais. Often ancient Jewish historiographers, like the author of 1 Maccabees, shaped their presentations of historical events under the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures.¹¹³ Within the reshaping of their narratives in light of the Hebrew Bible, the contemporary points of the story, where the author deviates from the biblical language, often reflect the “historical” situation upon which the story is based. In the account of Simon’s campaign along the frontiers of the Galilee, the author of 1 Maccabees three times mentioned the city of Ptolemais (1 Macc 5:15, 22, and 55) as a focal-point of the conflict, yet he never again mentions the topographical locations of Tyre, Sidon, or the district of the foreigners (Τύρος καὶ Σιδῶν καὶ πᾶσα Γαλιλαία ἀλλοφύλων)—the three locations he inserted into his narrative from the biblical prophecy of Joel. In fact, it seems highly unlikely that the Gentile populations of Tyre¹¹⁴ and Sidon¹¹⁵ played any historical role in the violent interchanges along the western border of Galilee that Simon came

113 Cf. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 154–55, 200, and 204–6; Rappaport, *The Book of First Maccabees*, 26–35, 166–67; and Flusser, “What is Hanukkah?,” 113–34.

114 Syon has noted that around 162 B.C.E. Jewish sites within Lower Galilee (namely Sepphoris, Shihin, Yodefat, and H. Qana) began using coins minted in Tyre instead of ‘Akko-Ptolemais, which is geographically closer and makes more economic sense. The shifting of the preferred mint from ‘Akko-Ptolemais to Tyre at the time of the Hasmonean revolt by the Jewish Galileans may reflect a political choice motivated by ‘Akko-Ptolemais’ actions against the Hasmoneans and the Jewish population in Lower Galilee. Syon, “Tyre and Gamla,” 219–20.

115 Josephus defines “the land of the Tyrians” (*War* 3.35–40) as part of the northern borders of Galilee; Sidon’s influence, however, never really penetrated into Galilee, especially Lower

from Jerusalem to address (cf. 1 Macc 5:21, 55; *Ant.* 12.350). So too, his use of the phrase *καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων* from Joel 3:4 most likely derived from his desire to show Simon's actions as a fulfillment of the prophecy from Joel, and therefore we should not ascribe either topographical or ethnic significance to the phrase in describing Galilee during the days of Simon. Moreover, the use of *ἀλλοφύλων* (תּוֹשָׁבִיִּים: Philistines) in 5:15 fits the author's rhetorical use of names of Israel's ancient enemies to describe the nations Judas and his brothers struggled against to bring religious and national liberty to the Jewish people (e.g. "the sons of Esau," 5:3; "the land of Amon," 5:6; "the district of the Philistines," 5:15; and "the land of the Philistines," 5:66).¹¹⁶

Within the narrative of Simon's campaigns in Galilee, the author of 1 Maccabees identifies Ptolemais as the point of conflict between the Jews of Galilee and the Gentile population along the Phoenician coast: "Now while Judas and Jonathan were in Gilead and their brother Simon was in Galilee before Ptolemais" (ἐν τῇ¹¹⁷ Γαλιλαίᾳ κατὰ πρόσωπον Πτολεμαίδος, 1 Macc 5:55; cf. also 1 Macc 5:22; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.350). Although the author of 1 Maccabees framed Simon's campaign in Galilee within his pro-Hasmonean, national-religious agenda, Leibner has suggested that the issue between the Jews of Galilee and the Gentiles of 'Akko-Ptolemais centered around control of the fertile land east of the plain of 'Akko in western Lower Galilee in which a series of fortified settlements from the Hellenistic period have been identified protecting Ptolemais' control of the fertile agricultural land in the valleys of Lower Galilee as well as its landward defense.¹¹⁸ From the earliest days of

Galilee, as evidenced by the fact that Sidonian coins were never a major factor in Galilee; see, *ibid.*, 233–34.

116 Cf. Rappaport, *The Book of Maccabees*, 166–86.

117 The use of the definite article in the phrase, τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ, in 1 Macc 5:55 is significant. The definite article attached to "Galilee" always refers to the region of "the Galilee." The non-articular form can, as we have shown, refer to a more localized area, a district (לְיָגוֹן). Of course, the non-articular form appears in the phrase, *καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων* (cf. Joel 3:4 [LXX 4:4]). The appearance of the articular and non-articular forms within 1 Maccabees 5 may further indicate that the author did not intend for *καὶ πᾶσαν Γαλιλαίαν ἀλλοφύλων* to refer to the region of "the Galilee." Cf. R. Frankel, N. Getzov, M. Aviam, and A. Degani, *Settlement Dynamics and Regional Diversity in Ancient Upper Galilee: Archaeological Survey of Upper Galilee* (IAA Reports 14; Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2001), 141.

118 Leibner, *History and Settlement of Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Galilee*, 326–27; cf. also Aviam, "Hellenistic Fortifications in the 'Hinterland' of 'Akko-Ptolemais," 22–30; and *idem*, "The Hasmonean Dynasty's Activities in the Galilee," in *Jews, Pagans and Christians in the Galilee*, 42–44.

the Hasmoneans through the Early Roman period, the borders between the coastal plain around 'Akko-Ptolemais, Mount Carmel, the Sharon Plain, and the western Jezreel continued to be a flashpoint between Jews living in western Galilee and the Gentiles along the coast as the inhabitants of Ptolemais aggressively protected its boundaries from the Jews, and the Jews, particularly under the Hasmoneans, repeatedly sought to conquer the region (cf. 2 Macc 6:8–9; Josephus, *Ant.* 13:324; *War* 2.458–59).¹¹⁹

The tumultuous events leading up to the Hasmonean revolt and the response of the sons of Mattathias, including Simon's campaign against Ptolemais, reminded the author of 1 Maccabees of the prophecy of Joel 3 (LXX 4). The author identified the rebuilding of the altar and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem, the events which for him sparked the violent troubles from Gentiles in the surrounding regions (1 Macc 5:1), as a time when God “restore[d] the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem” (Joel 3:1 [LXX 4:1]). The battles of Judah and his brothers appeared to the author of 1 Maccabees as a fulfillment of the promised judgment of God upon “all the nations” (כל הגוים, Joel 3:2 [LXX 4:2]) for their mistreatment of the Jewish people and Jerusalem, specifically Antiochus' robbing of the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Macc 1:20–23; cf. 2 Macc 4:32) and seizure of Jewish slaves (1 Macc 1:32): “For you have taken my silver and gold, and have carried my rich treasures into your temples. You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks (τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων: לבני היונים . . .) (Joel 3:5 [LXX 4:5]).¹²⁰ The singular appearance of the phrase לבני היונים within the entire Hebrew Bible in the Joel prophecy would have drawn a natural connection between the biblical prophecy and the historical struggles of the Hasmoneans with the Greek Seleucids. Judas Maccabaeus viewed his actions as brining about political independence for the Jewish people, as well as tying into the ultimate hopes of Jewish redemption, specifically the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the ingathering of the exiles (2 Macc 2:16–18; cf. also 2 Macc 1:26–29).¹²¹ Both of these eschatological ideas,

119 Josephus identifies the coastal cities of Gaza, Dora, Straton's Tower, and Ptolemais as remaining outside the control of the Hasmoneans in the days of Alexander Jannaeus, as well a focal-point of the continued tensions between these cities and the Jews of western Galilee. Cf. Rappaport, “Hellenistic Cities and the Judaization of Palestine in the Hasmonean Age,” in *Doron: Studies in Classical Culture Presented to Professor B. Z. Katz Ben Shalom* (ed. S. Perlman and B. Shimron, ed.; Tel Aviv: Mif'al ha-Shikhpuh, 1967), 219–30 (Heb.); and idem, “Akko-Ptolemais and the Jews in the Hellenistic Period,” 31–48.

120 Notley, “Was Galilee Still Jewish in the Days of Judah Aristobulus?”

121 See Flusser, “What is Hanukkah?,” 113–34; and Wacholder, “The Letter from Judah Maccabee to Aristobulus,” 133–89. On the origin of the eschatological hopes for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the ingathering of the exiles, see Flusser, “Jerusalem in

the ingathering of the scattered Jewish community and the rebuilding of Jerusalem—a Jerusalem devoid of foreigners—are hinted at in the prophecy of Joel 3 (cf. 3:7 and 16–17 [LXX 4:7 and 16–17]). The author of 1 Maccabees interpreted the historical event of Simon’s campaign along the frontier of western Galilee as part of God’s judgment against the Greeks (בני היונים). By interweaving the language of Joel, particularly the topographical additions of Τύρος καὶ Σιδῶν καὶ πᾶσα Γαλιλαία ἀλλοφύλων, he elevated a regional and localized conflict along the boundaries of western Galilee into an event of national and redemptive importance. So too, Simon’s evacuation of the Jews along the border of western Galilee and Nabata (1 Macc 5:23) to Jerusalem became a fulfillment of the hope for the ingathering of the exiles into Jerusalem¹²² instead of a relocation of those Jews most at risk¹²³ from the aggressive actions of the Gentiles living along the Phoenician coast. The success of our author’s intertwining of the language of Joel 3:4 (LXX 4:4) into the historical narrative of Simon’s campaign against the Gentiles of Ptolemais can be measured by the impact of the phrase καὶ πᾶσα Γαλιλαία ἀλλοφύλων upon modern scholarly characterizations of Galilee from the days of Simon through the first century.

The physical setting for Simon’s campaign took place along the western frontier of the Galilee, in the region of ‘Akko-Ptolemais and perhaps in part of the western Lower Galilee.¹²⁴ Aviam has noted a later *piyyut* for Hanukkah that recounts how Judas (instead of Simon) pursued the Gentiles “from ‘Akko to Nimrin” (it should be from Nimrin, on the eastern edge of the Tur’an Valley, to ‘Akko).¹²⁵ Simon drove the Gentiles from the Jewish villages in Lower Galilee¹²⁶

Second Temple Literature,” in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period*, 2:44–75; and idem, “The Jewish Religion in the Second Temple Period,” in *Society and Religion in the Second Temple Period* (WHJP 8; ed. M. Avi-Yonah; Jerusalem: Massada, 1977), 3–40.

122 On the campaigns of Simon portraying the Hasmoneans as the fulfillers of the biblical promises of the ingathering of Jews to Jerusalem, see Goldstein, *1 Maccabees*, 300; and Chancey, *The Myth of the Gentile Galilee*, 41.

123 Cf. Avi-Yonah, “The Hasmonean Revolt,” 168; and Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism: From Herodotus to Plutarch* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974), 1:225.

124 Cf. Aviam, “The Hasmonean Dynasty’s Activities in Galilee,” 43.

125 Ibid.

126 Aviam cites the absence of Galilean Coarse Ware (GCW), a type of pottery produced extensively in the Hellenistic Galilee by local Gentile populations, in the southern Lower Galilee in the Hellenistic period as marking this region as Jewish; “Distribution Maps of Archaeological Data from the Galilee: An Attempt to Establish Zones Indicative of Ethnicity and Religious Affiliation,” in Zangenberg, Attridge, and Martin, eds., *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee*, 115–17.

to the Plain of 'Akko and Ptolemais. The Jews living along the border of the Phoenician coast and Galilee, that is, those most at risk from continued hostilities, he removed, possibly bringing them to Jerusalem. Once we recognize the intent of the author of 1 Maccabees to present Simon's removal of the Jews in the border regions of western Galilee as part of the national and redemptive hopes of the Hasmoneans, there is no reason to assume his actions affected the Jews living in the interior and eastern Galilee;¹²⁷ in reality, his actions were quite narrowly localized.

Although fragmentary and incomplete, the literary and archaeological records do not support the commonly assumed removal of a Jewish presence in the Galilee from the days of Simon to Judas Aristobulus. A few years after Simon's campaign against Ptolemais, Jonathan fought a battle against Demetrius II (1 Macc 11:63) in the "Plain of Asor (Hazor)" (1 Macc 11:67; *Ant.* 13.158; c. 145 B.C.E.). Prior to meeting Demetrius in battle, Jonathan and his men camped "by the waters of Gennesar (Γεννησαρ)" (1 Macc 11:67). Demetrius' forces laid a well-planned ambush for Jonathan, but due to the courage of two of his commanders, Jonathan's army pushed the Syrian forces "as far as Kedesh"¹²⁸ (1 Macc 11:73; cf. *War* 4.104–5). According to Josephus, Jonathan felt compelled to fight Demetrius and defend "the Galileans, who were his [Jonathan's] own people" (γὰρ Γαλιλαίας ὄντας αὐτοῦς) from the Syrian invasion of the Galilee (*Ant.* 13.154). Based upon Josephus' description, Klein suggested that Jonathan's actions provide indirect evidence that the Galilee was mostly a Jewish territory in the days of Jonathan.¹²⁹ It is unclear whether Josephus' expansion of the story in 1 Maccabees derived from an unknown source or his own editorial hand in which he anachronistically reflected the status of Galileans in his day back into the days of Jonathan. Although Klein and others have used the story of Jonathan's campaign against Demetrius to argue that Galilee contained a strong Jewish population in the time of Jonathan, recent archaeological surveys and excavations point to Galilee being sparsely

127 Avi-Yonah, "The Hasmonean Revolt," 168; and Klein, *The Galilee*, 1–19.

128 Excavations at Kedesh indicate that the site was burned and abandoned in, or around, 145 B.C.E., which coincides with Jonathan's battle against Demetrius in the plain of Hazor. The Hasmoneans, however, did not stay, as evidenced by the revival of the site shortly after its abandonment, reflecting the same material culture as before. S. Herbert and A. Berlin, "Tel Kedesh, 1997–1999," *IEJ* 50 (2000): 118–23; idem, "A New Administrative Center for Persian and Hellenistic Galilee: Preliminary Report of the University of Michigan/University of Minnesota Excavations at Kedesh," *BASOR* 329 (2002): 13–59.

129 Klein, *Galilee*, 10–15.

populated in the early Hasmonean period.¹³⁰ Nevertheless, Jonathan's campaign against Demetrius in the plain of Hazor does suggest that a Jewish presence remained in Galilee, albeit most likely in eastern Galilee, and was not completely removed by Simon's rescue efforts.

Josephus records the campaigns of John Hyrcanus I and his sons against Samaria and Scythopolis (*War* 1.64–66), a conquest that opened the way for the migration of Jews from Judea into Galilee. Other than Hyrcanus' campaign against Scythopolis and into the Jezreel Valley (*War* 1.64), Josephus says nothing about Hyrcanus' military involvement in Galilee; however, he does relate that Hyrcanus sent his son Alexander Jannaeus to be raised in Galilee: "... so he [Hyrcanus I] let him [Alexander Jannaeus] be brought up in Galilee from his birth" (*Ant.* 13.322). Josephus indicates that Hyrcanus sent Jannaeus to Galilee because he was displeased that God had selected Jannaeus to be his successor. Aviam, noting the story's legendary element, suggests that Hyrcanus sent Jannaeus to the far end of his kingdom because he was afraid of him and dates this event to after Hyrcanus' conquest of Scythopolis (c. 108 B.C.E.; see below) when Jannaeus was 16–18.¹³¹ It seems unlikely that Hyrcanus, the high priest in Jerusalem, would send his son to be raised in a pagan, Gentile environment,¹³² even if he did not favor Jannaeus, particularly in light of the strict halakic requirements for those of priestly descent.¹³³ It is, therefore, probable that some parts of Galilee were Jewish and even part of the Jewish state under John Hyrcanus.¹³⁴

The excavations at Tel Iztabba (Beth Shean) revealed a Hellenistic layer with homes dating to the third and second centuries B.C.E. covered by a destruction layer. The stamped handles on the imported amphorae date the final destruction of Scythopolis to 108 B.C.E., probably the year of the conquest of Hyrcanus I and his sons.¹³⁵ Aviam maintains that after the conquest of Scythopolis Hyrcanus immediately marched into Galilee and opened the way for Jewish settlers from Judea to migrate into Galilee, which until this time

130 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 322; Aviam, "The Hasmonean Dynasty's Activities in Galilee," 43–44.

131 Aviam, "The Hasmonean Dynasty's Activities in the Galilee," 45.

132 Cf. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 1:225; Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 330.

133 Cf. S. Klein, *The Settlement Book* (Tel Aviv, 1977 [Heb.]), 15.

134 Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*. 1:225.

135 R. Bar-Nathan and G. Mazor, "Beth-Shean during the Hellenistic Period," *Qadmoniot* 107–108 (1994): 87–92 (Heb.); D. Barag, "New Evidence on the Foreign Policy of John Hyrcannus," *INJ* 12 (1992–93): 1–12.

had been sparsely populated (cf. *War* 1.66).¹³⁶ Shortage of land was a major problem for the early Hasmoneans, and their campaigns sought, in part, to acquire land for settlement.¹³⁷ Archaeological evidence suggests the reign of John Hyrcanus began a period of Jewish migration from Judea to Galilee, as Judeans sought land in an unsettled area. During this period of Hasmonean domination, some sites underwent an ethnic transition, probably as a result of conquest in which the site was abandoned and resettled by Jews.¹³⁸ Also, new sites appear due to the immigration of Jews into Galilee. Beginning with John Hyrcanus and continuing into the Early Roman period, Galilee experienced an increase in sites and population that cannot be attributed to either forced conversion of the indigenous population (see below) or to the natural increase of the indigenous population. The only explanation for such growth and settlement within the region is Jewish immigration.¹³⁹ Although currently limited in its breadth, the archaeology of Galilee relevant to the time of John Hyrcanus (135–104 B.C.E.) provides two important notes regarding the Jewish presence in Galilee in the second century B.C.E.: (1) signs of ethnic change in population that occurred over a relatively short period of time beginning during the time of John Hyrcanus and reaching its peak during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus, and (2) evidence for a Jewish presence in Galilee prior to Hyrcanus' conquest of Scythopolis.

Excavations at Yodefat indicate that the site was continuously inhabited from the Hellenistic period into the Hasmonean period. In the numismatic record of the site, Hasmonean coins replaced the coins from the Phoenician coastal cities, indicating Hasmonean dominance over the site, which the excavators suggest took place between 125–110/109 B.C.E.¹⁴⁰ The transition to the Hasmonean currency reflects a preference/rejection due to an ethnic change in the population of the site.¹⁴¹ This ethnic transition at Yodefat apparently was remembered in a Tannaitic tradition that mentions Sepphoris, Gush Halav, Yodefat, and Gamla as cities “surrounded by walls from the days of Joshua”

136 Aviam, “The Hasmonean Dynasty’s Activities in the Galilee.”

137 Bar-Kochva, “Manpower, Economics, and Internal Strife in the Hasmonean State,” 170–73.

138 Rappaport, “The Galilee between the Hasmonean Revolt and the Roman Conquest,” 29.

139 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 322; cf. also Bar-Kochva, “Manpower, Economic, and Internal Strife in the Hasmonean State,” 167–96. This conclusion will be strengthened below in the discussion on Γεννησαρ.

140 D. Adan-Bayewitz and M. Aviam, “Iotapata, Josephus, and the Siege of 67: Preliminary Report on the 1992–1994 Seasons,” *JRA* 10 (1997): 131–65 (161).

141 Syon, “Tyre and Gamla,” 227.

(*m. 'Arak*. 9.6; *Sifra BeHar* 4.1). Jewish presence at Yodefat and Gamla¹⁴² dates to the Hasmonean period. Both of these sites were destroyed during the First Jewish revolt and never resettled; therefore, the Tannaitic tradition does not date to the period when the traditions were compiled.¹⁴³ Adan-Bayewitz suggested that in order to be identified as a “walled city” the settlement needed fortification remains predating the Jewish settlement of these cities, which the Jewish population attributed to “the days of Joshua.”¹⁴⁴ Aviam, however, has noted the absence of Hellenistic fortifications at Yodefat, Gamla, Gush Halav, and Sepphoris indicating that these sites were not Gentile fortified sites prior to Jews settling the region.¹⁴⁵ Further excavations at Gamla have shown a Jewish presence at the site prior to Jannaeus,¹⁴⁶ possibly during the reign of Hyrcanus I. The Jewish presence at Yodefat dates to the time of John Hyrcanus, and a Jewish presence at Sepphoris predated the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (see below).¹⁴⁷ In light of the archaeological and literary evidence, it

142 According to Josephus (*War* 1.103–6; *Ant.* 13.394), Alexander Jannaeus captured the “strong fortress of Gamla” during his campaign in the Golan. While it is generally assumed that the Golan became heavily populated by Jews after Jannaeus’ campaign, Syon suggests based upon the numismatic evidence from Gamla that a substantial Jewish population resided there before his conquest; see Syon, “Tyre and Gamla,” 95–107.

143 Contra R. Frankel, N. Getzov, M. Aviam, and A. Degani, *Settlement Dynamics and Regional Diversity in Ancient Upper Galilee: Archaeological Survey of Upper Galilee* (IAA Reports 14; Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2001), 109; cf. Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 326.

144 Adan-Bayewitz, “The Tannaitic List of ‘Walled Cities’ and the Archaeological-Historical Evidence from Iotapata and Gamla,” *Tarbiz* 66 (1996–97): 449–70. Ze’ev Safrai dated the list of walled cities to the days of Alexander Jannaeus because of the inclusion of Gamla, which, according to Josephus, Jannaeus conquered (*War* 1.105); see Safrai, *The Galilee in the Time of the Mishna and Talmud*, 3.

145 Aviam, “People, Land, Economy and Belief in First Century Galilee and its Origins: A Comprehensive Archaeological Synthesis,” in *The Galilean Economy in the Time of Jesus* (Early Christianity and Its Literature 11; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 5–48. I appreciate the author providing me with a pre-publication copy of this article.

146 See n. 142.

147 Excavations at Sepphoris have yet to yield any Early Hellenistic building remains. The earliest traceable architecture at Sepphoris is the large structure on the acropolis identified by the archaeologists as a Hasmonean fortification dating to the beginning of the first century B.C.E. due to the presence of numerous coins of Alexander Jannaeus discovered in the foundation and two mikva’ot in the structure. Pottery sherds from the Persian and Early Hellenistic period have been discovered on the site including a beautifully decorated, black glazed terracotta horn-rython with a griffin head base dating to the fourth century B.C.E. See M. Dayagi-Mendels, “Ryton,” in *Sepphoris of Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture* (ed. R. M. Nagy et al.; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 162–63. A vase fragment with a multilingual Achaemenid royal inscription reading “Artaxerxes, King,” was also

seems probable that the Tannaitic list of walled cities dates to the latter days of John Hyrcanus or the early reign of his son, Alexander Jannaeus.

The transition of the ethnic population of Yodefat and Gamla reflects a phenomenon found in the numismatic record throughout Galilee during the days of John Hyrcanus and his successors. Hasmonean coins became dominant in eastern Upper and Lower Galilee, the Golan, and the Beth Shean Valley. A sharp decline in Phoenician bronze coins concurrently with the rise of Hasmonean coins indicates Hasmonean domination of the region and an ethnic shift in the population as Jewish inhabitants preferred Hasmonean currency.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, the distribution of Hasmonean coins provides a clear picture of the boundaries of Hasmonean control in eastern Upper and Lower Galilee and the Golan.¹⁴⁹

The evidence from Yodefat and Gamla indicates that at certain sites within Galilee an ethnic change in population occurred over a relatively short period beginning with the reign of John Hyrcanus. The discovery of the lily/anchor bronze coins of Antiochus VII (138–129 B.C.E.) from the mint in Jerusalem (132/1–131/0 B.C.) throughout sites in Galilee indicates the presence of a Jewish population in Galilee¹⁵⁰ early in the reign of John Hyrcanus and prior to his campaign against Scythopolis.¹⁵¹ This rare coin was unique to Jerusalem and would not have been accepted everywhere. Syon suggests that the source of their appearance within Galilean sites stemmed from Galilean pilgrims to Jerusalem and its Temple bringing the currency back with them from their pilgrimages.¹⁵² He also observes that the distribution of these bronze coins in Upper Galilee (Gush Halav), the Golan (Gamla), the Jezreel Valley (Beth Shean and Tel Basul), as well as Lower Galilee (Yodefat, Shihin, and Arbel) indicates a more widespread regional Jewish presence in the early years of John Hyrcanus' reign than is commonly assumed.¹⁵³

The numismatic evidence uncovered in excavations in Galilee and the Golan indicate that a Jewish population existed in Galilee already early in the reign of John Hyrcanus, and this population recognized a shared religious heritage with Judea, as indicated by the presence of the bronze lily/anchor coins of

discovered at the site; M. W. Stolper, "Vase Fragment," in Nagy et al., eds., *Sepphoris of Galilee*, 166–67.

148 Syon, "Tyre and Gamla," 226–35.

149 *Ibid.*, 230.

150 Gush Halav (1), Gamla (4), Yodefat (2), Shihin (1), Arbel (1), Beth She'an (2), Tel Basul (1); see Syon, "Tyre and Gamla," 220–22.

151 D. Syon, "Numismatic Evidence of Jewish Presence in Galilee before the Hasmonean Annexation?," *Israel Numismatic Research* 1 (2006): 21–24.

152 *Ibid.*, 23.

153 *Ibid.*

Antiochus VII from the Jerusalem mint brought back to Galilee and the Golan by Galilean pilgrims to Jerusalem. The numismatic transition at some sites, like Yodefah, indicate a change in the ethnic population at the site; moreover, the increase in the Hasmonean coins of John Hyrcanus and Judas Aristobulus point to the inhabitants in Galilee having economic and political connections with Jerusalem and the Hasmonean state. The beginning of the first century B.C.E. marks a period of settlement surge within Galilee and the Golan, with many new sites being settled (see below), many of which had a material culture that parallels Judea's. The numismatic evidence points to the beginning of this period of settlement during the reign of John Hyrcanus as evidenced by the numerous coins of Hyrcanus I uncovered there.¹⁵⁴

The appearance in the second century B.C.E. of the toponym "Gennesar" (Γεννησαρ, 1 Macc 11:67) in connection with the lake of Galilee may further point to the Hasmonean presence in Galilee during the time of John Hyrcanus. The mention of Jonathan's encampment "by the waters of Gennesar (τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦ Γεννησαρ= גַּי גֵּנֶסָר (1 Macc 11:67) is the first appearance of "Gennesar" in Jewish Greek literature,¹⁵⁵ and indicates its use in connection with the lake of Galilee in the second century B.C.E.¹⁵⁶ We should not, however, conclude, as Leibner and others do,¹⁵⁷ that the appearance of Gennesar in connection to Jonathan's campaign necessarily dates the toponym to the days of Jonathan or before. At most, the use of Gennesar in 1 Maccabees dates the toponym to the time of the composition of the book, and, as we will see, its appearance in connection with Jonathan's campaign is anachronistic.¹⁵⁸

154 Syon, "Tyre and Gamla," 102.

155 Strabo mentions that the lake of Galilee was called Gennesaritis (Γεννησαρῆτις, *Geography* XVI.2.16). His description of the lake, however, better suits lake Merom (Semechonitis), and he may have confused the two; see Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 1:289. Pliny the Elder also mentions the lake of Galilee was called Genesara (*Natural History* V. 71), and while he mentions a number of sites around the lake, he never mentions a site of Gennesar.

156 Many date the composition of the book of 1 Maccabees to the reign of John Hyrcanus; cf. Rappaport, *The First Book of Maccabees*, 60–61; and Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 151–170.

157 Leibner, "Identifying Geneesar on the Sea of Galilee," *JRA* 19 (2006): 229–245; idem, *Settlement and History*, 180–191.

158 Notley, "Genesis Rabbah 98:17: 'Why is it called Gennesar?' (Literary and Archaeological Evidence for a Priestly Presence on the Plain of Gennesar)," in *Talmuda de-Eretz Israel: Archaeology and the Rabbis in Late Antique Palestine* (ed. A. Koller and S. Fine; SJ; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012). For other examples of anachronistic toponyms, cf. Gen 21:32 ("the land

The first description of “Gennesar” comes from Josephus, who identified “Gennesar” as the fertile plain along the northwest corner of the lake of Galilee, which provided the name by which the local Galilean residents referred to the lake itself (cf. Josephus, *War* 3.463; see also 2.573; 3.506, 515–16; *Ant.* 5.84; 18.28, 36; Luke 5:1; *Gen. Rab.* 98.17; and *b. Pesah.* 8b).

The lake of Gennesar (λίμνη Γεννεσάρ) takes its name from the adjacent territory (χώρα) . . . Skirting the Lake of Gennesar, and also bearing that name, lies a region (χώρα) whose natural properties and beauty are very remarkable . . . (*War* 5.506–21)

Twice Josephus indicates Gennesar refers to a “territory/region” (χώρα) adjacent to the lake, and not to a settlement along the lake. In fact, in his numerous descriptions of the lake and settlements around it, Josephus never mentions a site of Gennesar, which suggests that Josephus did not perceive the plain of Gennesar as a territory belonging to a settlement by that name.¹⁵⁹ So too, the New Testament mentions “the land of Gennesar” (τὴν γῆν Γεννησαρ,¹⁶⁰ Matt 14:34; Mark 6:53), but never mentions a village or town of Gennesar. The ancient sources dating to the first century C.E. and earlier never mention a settlement of Gennesar. In these sources, both Jewish and non-Jewish, Gennesar refers either to the fertile plain on the northwest corner of the lake or the lake itself, which derived its name from the adjacent region, including Josephus who was an eyewitness to the settlement geography around the lake (*War* 5.506).¹⁶¹ This

of the Philistines”), and Matt 4:25; Mark 5:20; 7:31 and the use of “Decapolis” in the time of Jesus; Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 362.

159 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 186.

160 Most New Testament manuscripts preserve the name as Γεννησαρέτ. Codex Bezae, however, preserves the Greek Γεννησαρ, which reflects the name of the land as reflected in 1 Maccabees and Josephus (Γεννησαρ = *gnysr* = Gennesar). The appearance of Γεννησαρέτ most likely occurred under the influence of Kinneret, but the correct and original form of the name was Γεννησαρ; cf. Flusser, “Who is the Ruler of Gennesar?,” in *The Jewish Sages and Their Literature*, 349–50; E. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 155.

161 Cf. Safrai, *Galilee in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud*, 81. During the Early Roman period, the two most prominent settlements on the western side of the lake were Tiberias and Taricheae (Migdal). Both locations on occasion also lent their names to the lake (Pliny, *Natural History* V. 71; Josephus, *War* 3.57; 4.456; and John 6:1; 21:1). The establishment of Taricheae at the end of the second/beginning of the first century B.C.E. (cf. Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 214–35, and 322) does not provide a significant amount

uniformity seems hardly coincidental. Even later rabbinic sources frequently refer to “the valley of Gennesar” ([גניסר] בקעת גנוסר; cf. *t. Shev.* 7.11; *y. Shev.* 38.4; *t. Nid.* 3.11) or “the boundary (area) of Gennesar” ([גניסר] תחום גנוסר,¹⁶² *b. Baba Batra* 122a), the emphasis being upon the region as opposed to a settlement of Gennesar. Safrai and Leibner have both noted that rabbinic sources dating after the first century C.E. provide the first indication of a settlement named Gennesar (*t. Eruv.* 7.13; *t. Tohorot* 6.7; *Gen. Rab.* 98.17; *y. Meg.* 1.1.70a).¹⁶³ In two instances, the Sages sought to identify the biblical Kinneret with Gennesar (*Gen. Rab.* 98.17; *y. Meg.* 1.1.70a), and upon closer inspection, it is not clear that they identified the biblical Kinneret with a settlement known to them in their days. In *Genesis Rabbah*, the Sages offered a midrash upon Gen 49:21:

“Naphtali is a hind let loose” (Gen. 49:21): This refers to his territory which is all irrigated (cf. *War* 3.506–521). Thus it is written: “From Kinneret even unto the sea of the Arabah” (Deut. 3:17): From Kinneret: Rabbi Elazar said, “(This is) Gennesar” . . . Rabbi Berakiah said: “The whole shore of the Lake of Tiberias is called Kinneret (כל כנרת חוף ימה של טבריה נקרא).”

The statement of Rabbi Berakiah is striking for two reasons: (1) his description of “the whole shore of the Lake of Tiberias” refers to a region not a settlement, and (2) within rabbinic literature, Kinneret is identified with Beit Yerah, Gennesar, and Tiberias,¹⁶⁴ which suggests that while the Sages knew Kinneret was a principal town on the lake during the biblical period, they guessed as to its location. Leibner even concedes that in the passage from the Jerusalem Talmud where the Sages identified Kinneret with Gennesar, a site of Gennesar may not have been settled in their day (although he feels the name originated from a settlement). Strikingly, Eusebius, the bishop of Caesarea, in his

of time for a settlement of Gennesar to fill the role of the principal town on the western shores of the lake (cf. Safrai, *Galilee in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud*, 83, if such a town lent its name to the region).

162 Safrai (ibid., 83) seeks to infer from the use of תחום with גנוסר that Gennesar must refer to a settlement, as in “the boundary of [the settlement] of Gennesar.” The word תחום, however, can also refer to an area of land not attached with a settlement; see M. Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli, and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2005), 1660; M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003), 86; idem, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (2d ed.; Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002), 579; cf. also *Targum Onkelos* on Exod 10:19; Num 20:21, 21:13, 15.

163 Safrai, *Galilee in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud*, 83–84; Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 189–91.

164 Cf. Safrai, *Galilee in the Time of the Mishna and Talmud*.

Onomasticon never mentions a settlement of Gennesar.¹⁶⁵ This seems strange, given the mention of Gennesar in the Gospels, if a settlement of Gennesar existed during Eusebius' day. The absence of any mention of Gennesar from the *Onomasticon*, which is contemporary with the rabbinic witnesses, suggests that a site of Gennesar did not exist in the rabbinic period, and as indicated by the pre-second century C.E. witnesses, particularly Josephus, the name Gennesar referred to a region and not a settlement.

1 Maccabees and Josephus attest that the Greek form of this toponym in the first century was Γεννησαρ = *gnysr* = Gennesar. Within the better rabbinic manuscripts (particularly the Leiden MS of the Yerushalmi), the original form of the name גניסר appears, which parallels the Greek Γεννησαρ.¹⁶⁶ The Sages suggested that גנוסר¹⁶⁷ (Gennosar) came from גני שרים ("the Gardens of the Princes," *Gen. Rab.* 98.17).¹⁶⁸ Josephus' description of the "territory" that lent its name to the lake, "whose natural properties and beauty are very remarkable . . . Besides being favored by its genial air, the country is watered by a highly fertilizing spring" (*War* 3.506–21), corresponds to the rabbinic description of the region and attests to its fertile land as a place for agriculture, that is, gardens (cf. *b. Pesah.* 8b). The uniform agreement of the Jewish and non-Jewish Second Temple sources that identify Gennesar as a region (and not a settlement) that gave its name to the lake suggest that the philological instincts of the Sages correctly identified the original etymology of the toponym גניסר (Γεννησαρ) and were not merely a midrashic play on words.¹⁶⁹

Although the etymology of the toponym גנוסר is addressed, the Sages did not identify the שרים ("Princes") to whom the gardens belonged. Flusser has traced the use of שר to the days of the Hasmoneans, specifically to the consolidation of their political rule in the second century B.C.E. beginning with Simon: "The Jews and their priests have resolved that Simon should be their

165 Cf. R. S. Notley and Z. Safrai, *Eusebius, Onomasticon: A Triglott Edition with Notes and Commentary* (Jewish and Christian Perspectives 9; Leiden: Brill, 2005).

166 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 186, n. 53.

167 גנוסר is a secondary development from the original first-century גניסר (Γεννησαρ). The manuscripts of *Genesis Rabbah* also attest the reading גניסר and גניסר; cf. J. Theodor and Ch. Albeck, *Midrash Bereshit Rabba* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Wahrman Books, 1965), 1267.

168 Cf. *ibid.* For the exchange of ש and ס, see Dan 3:5, 7, 10, 15; Ezra 4:7; 7:1, 7, 11; 8:1, etc. See P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2011), 27.

169 Contra Leibner, *History and Settlement in Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Galilee*, 187–88. The etymological instincts of the Sages should not be quickly rejected since ancient geographical names often derived from agricultural features that define the nature of a site and its surroundings; see Y. Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 108–109.

leader (ἡγούμενον) and high priest forever, until a trustworthy prophet should arise” (1 Macc 14:41); thus, Simon became the “prince of the people of God”—**שר עם אל** (cf. 1 Macc 14:28).¹⁷⁰ Flusser noted that **שר** is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek ἡγούμενον.¹⁷¹ The Hasmoneans used the titular term **שר** only for a brief period, from the ascension of Simon until the death of John Hyrcanus in 104 B.C.E. Simon settled in Gazara (1 Macc 13:43-48),¹⁷² so it seems unlikely that the individual identified in the toponym referred to him. Hasmonean activity and settlement in Galilee significantly began with John Hyrcanus’ conquest of Scythopolis,¹⁷³ during which time he sent his son Alexander Jannaeus to live in Galilee (*Ant.* 13.332). Upon the death of John Hyrcanus, his sons, Aristobulus I (104–103 B.C.E.) and Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 B.C.E.), assumed the title of “king” (**מלך**).¹⁷⁴ The development of the toponym “Gennesar” could only have originated during the time of Simon and John Hyrcanus—**השרים**.¹⁷⁵

The end of the second and beginning of the first century BCE witnessed Hasmonean investment in Galilee.¹⁷⁶ During this period, the settlements of Arbel and Migdal were established.¹⁷⁷ In the first century BCE, Migdal was the most prominent settlement on the western side of the lake (*War* 1.180) until Herod Antipas built Tiberias in the first century CE (*Ant.* 18.27). Migdal’s location on the shore of the lake connected it to the local fishing industry. Its names Migdal-Nunia (“the fish tower”) and Taricheae (“salted fish”) attest to

170 Cf. Goldstein, *1 Maccabees*, 501–2. According to Origen, as quoted by Eusebius (*H.E.* 6.25.2), he knew a Hebrew version of 1 Maccabees, which was called **Σαφβήθ Σαβαναιέλ**, most likely representing **אל בני שר בית ספר**; see Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 3:82–83.

171 Flusser, “Who is the Ruler of Gennesar?,” 349–50; cf. also Goldstein, *1 Maccabees*, 479. Cf. Ps 68:28 (LXX 67:28); Jer 38:17 (LXX 45:17); 39:3 (LXX 46:3); 40:7, 13 (LXX 47:7, 13); 41:11, 13, 16 (LXX 48:11, 13, 16); 42:1, 8 (LXX 49:1, 8); 43:4, 5 (LXX 50:4, 5); 51:23, 57 (LXX 28:23, 57).

172 Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 326.

173 Aviam, “The Hasmonean Dynasty’s Activities in the Galilee,” 44–46; idem, “People, Land, Economy and Belief in First Century Galilee.”

174 According to Josephus, Aristobulus I “assume[d] the diadem” (*War* 1:70; *Ant.* 13.301), a practice continued by his brother Alexander Jannaeus as attested by his bilingual coins: **יהונתן המלך / ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΠΟΥ**. On the coins of Alexander Jannaeus, see Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins*, 37–42.

175 Significantly, the first appearance of this toponym occurs in 1 Maccabees, which dates either to the rule of John Hyrcanus or slightly after, and provides a *terminus ad quem* for the **שר** identified in the toponym. See Notley, “Genesis Rabbah 98:17.”

176 Aviam, “People, Land, Economy and Belief in First Century Galilee.”

177 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 184, 329–331; and S. De Lucca, “La città ellenistico-romana di Magdala/ Taricheae. Gli scavi del Magdala Project 2007 e 2008: relazione preliminare e prospettive di indagine,” *Liber Annuus* 49 (2009), 343–562.

the importance of the fishing trade for its citizens.¹⁷⁸ According to Strabo, “At the place called Taricheae the lake supplies excellent fish for pickling; and on its banks grow fruit-bearing trees resembling apple trees” (*Geo.* 16.2.45). Recent excavations provide material evidence of the prominence of the fishing industry at Migdal. The excavators uncovered a massive pier of a harbor, with mooring-stones *in situ* facing the lake.¹⁷⁹ Its earliest phase dates to the Hasmonean period, with an addition in the Herodian period (probably Antipas).¹⁸⁰ Aviam points to the size of the Hasmonean harbor as clear evidence of Hasmonean investment in Galilee.¹⁸¹

According to Josephus, Migdal (Taricheae) became the center of its own toparchy when Nero awarded the city to Agrippa II (54 CE; *War* 2.252; *Ant.* 20.159), which indicates that Migdal continued to be an important city on the west side of the lake even after the founding of Tiberias. The toparchy of Migdal, together with the toparchy of Tiberias, comprised the eastern half of Lower Galilee.¹⁸² In light of the recent excavations at Migdal, Aviam has changed his earlier opinion that Migdal was “a small town in the early Hellenistic to Byzantine periods” and suggests that it served as the Hasmonean capital of the eastern Galilee, a sign of Hasmonean interest and investment in the social and economic status of Galilee.¹⁸³

Strabo described Taricheae (Migdal) as connected to the fishing industry of the lake and the fertile agriculture of the Gennesar plain (*Geo.* 16.2.45). The recently excavated large Hasmonean harbor indicates Hasmonean investment in the fishing industry of Migdal; it seems that the Hasmoneans also contributed to the agricultural industry of the Gennesar valley. Hasmonean control of Galilee introduced the mass production of olive oil into the rural life of the region.¹⁸⁴ Excavations in Judea and Philistia at Tirat Yehuda, Aderet, Marisa, and Mazor have uncovered a large number of industrial olive oil instillations from the Hellenistic period indicating that the manufacture of olive oil

178 Aviam, “Magdala,” *OEANE* (ed. E. Meyers; 5 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3:399-400.

179 De Lucca, “La città ellenistico-romana di Magdala/Taricheae,” 417-435.

180 Aviam, “People, Land, Economy and Belief in First Century Galilee.”

181 *Ibid.*

182 Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2002), 97.

183 For Aviam’s earlier position, see, “Magdala,” 3:399; for his suggestion of Migdal as the Hasmonean capital of eastern Galilee, see “People, Land, Economy and Belief in First Century Galilee.”

184 Aviam, “The Beginning of Mass Production of Olive Oil in the Galilee,” in *Jews, Pagans, and Christians in the Galilee*, 51-58.

occurred in this region continuously from the Iron Age.¹⁸⁵ Such instillations do not appear in Galilee until the Hasmonean period. This has led Aviam to conclude

The Hasmoneans repopulated Galilee with Jewish inhabitants, among them Judeans, who probably brought with them the knowledge of olive cultivation and the new technology of the mechanized oil press. In their attempts to resettle the Galilee and to establish a large, economically strong and wealthy community, the Hasmonean rulers probably subsidized the planting of large olive groves and the erection of the new mass-producing oil presses.¹⁸⁶

Josephus, Strabo, and rabbinic sources attest to the fertility of the region of Gennesar. When the ancient sources mention the Gennesar valley, they highlight its agricultural fertility, which underscores the rabbinic etymology of גניסר. Josephus' description of the fertility of the region may imply it served as an area for the mass-production of produce (cf. also Strabo, *Geo.* 16.2.45; and *b. Pesah.* 8b). The introduction of the mass-production of olive oil into Galilee by the Hasmoneans along with Aviam's suggestion that they probably subsidized the planting of olive groves and the building of the olive oil presses, raises the possibility that the origin of the toponym Gennesar, "the gardens of the Hasmonean princes," referred to a fertile region the local Galileans identified with Hasmonean agricultural efforts and investment.¹⁸⁷ Whether this

185 Ibid., 54.

186 Ibid., 56.

187 Leibner rejects the connection between Migdal and Gennesar because Migdal was established during the Hasmonean period (late second to early first century B.C.E.). His primary reason for dismissing Migdal with Migdal is the mention of Jonathan's campaign in 145 B.C.E. in which he encamped by "the waters of Gennesar." From this reference, Leibner concludes that the toponym was already in place during the days of Jonathan, thus pre-dating the founding of Migdal (Taricheae) in the late second century B.C.E. This leads him to identify Ghuweir Abu Shusheh as Gennesar because it yielded Hellenistic remains. As we have already noted, the mention of "the waters of Gennesar" in 1 Maccabees simply dates to the toponym to the time of the composition of 1 Maccabees, which was probably composed during the reign of John Hyrcanus or Alexander Jannaeus, precisely when we find an increase in Hasmonean activity and investment in Galilean social and economic life. Ghuweir Abu Shusheh, moreover, sits approximately 2km from the shore of the lake, which raises serious questions whether a site so far removed from the shore could have given its name to the lake as attested by 1 Maccabees, Josephus, Pliny, and the New Testament. Leibner dismisses this due to his assumption that the name Gennesar must

toponym originated with Jews living in Galilee prior to John Hyrcanus' conquest of Scythopolis or with Jewish immigrants from Judea who brought their knowledge of mass-production of olive oil into Galilee, as well as their language culture, is of little consequence. The toponym Gennesar attests to the local, Jewish population's colloquial use of Hebrew, as the etymology גני שרים for גניסר can *only* be in Hebrew, not Aramaic.¹⁸⁸

The presence of a Jewish population in Galilee from the days of Simon and John Hyrcanus undermines the assumption of those who view the campaign of Judas Aristobulus against the Itureans as a Hasmonean annexation of Galilee, which resulted in the conversion¹⁸⁹ of a Gentile population to Judaism.¹⁹⁰ Although the assumption of a Hasmonean annexation of Galilee under Judas

date to the Hellenistic period. He fails to note, however, that the ancient sources mention that Taricheae and Tiberias also lent their names to the lake (Pliny, *Natural History* V. 71; Josephus, *War* 3.57; 4.546; and John 6:1; 21:1), and both of these sites reside on the lake-shore. It seems unlikely that a site removed, as Ghuweir Abu Shusheh from the shoreline would give its name to the lake. Cf. Leibner, "Identifying Gennesar on the Sea of Galilee," 229–244; idem, *Settlement and History*, 182–185.

188 The word שר is Hebrew, not Aramaic. It does not appear in any Aramaic inscription, document, or literary work of the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, not even as a Hebrew loanword in Aramaic contexts; cf. Koehler and Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 2:1350–51; M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic* (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003); J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Biblica et Orientalia 34; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2002). It became a Hebrew loanword in later Amoraic literature; cf. M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (2d ed.; Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002), 572.

189 Schürer (*The History of the Jewish People*, 1:275–76) viewed this as a forced circumcision, and thus viewed the Galileans in the time of Jesus as Jewish converts; cf. also M. Goodman, "Galilean Judaism and Judean Judaism," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 3, *The Early Roman Period* (ed. W. Horbury, W. D. Davies, and J. Sturdy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 599. Other scholars have proposed that this was a voluntary conversion of the Itureans in the Eastern Upper Galilee; see A. Kasher, *Jews, Idumaeans, and Ancient Arabs: Relations of the Jews in Eretz-Israel with the Nations of the Frontier and Desert during the Hellenistic and Roman Era (332 BCE–70 CE)* (TSAJ 18; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 79–85; and Rappaport, "The Galilee between the Hasmonean Revolt and the Roman Conquest," 29.

190 Cf. Avi-Yonah, "Historical Geography," 90; and Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 1:225. In part, this assumption depends upon the view that Simon removed the Jews from Galilee. It is significant that Galileans are never derided or scorned in Jewish literature as "half-Jews," a term used by the Hasmonean Antiochus to describe the Idumean Herod, whose ancestors had been forcefully converted to Judaism, and who he felt was unworthy to rule a Jewish state (*Ant.* 14.403).

Aristobulus is quite common, it overlooks the absence of any mention of a Hasmonean conquest of Galilee in the historical sources.¹⁹¹ Josephus described the campaign of Judas Aristobulus against the Itureans that occurred during the brief year of Aristobulus' reign:

... in his reign of one year, with the title of Philhellene, he conferred many benefits on his country, for he made war on the Itureans and acquired a good part of their territory for Judea and compelled the inhabitants, if they wished to remain in their country, to be circumcised and to live in accordance with the laws of the Jews. (*Ant.* 13:318)

In light of how this passage is commonly interpreted, two important points stand out: (1) Josephus gives no indication that the territory of the Itureans extended into Galilee, and (2) he does not describe Aristobulus' campaign as annexing Galilee, a region he knew quite well.¹⁹² It is possible that Josephus misunderstood the events of Aristobulus' campaign against the Itureans, for he cites Timagenes (via Strabo) who offers a slightly different version:

This man [Aristobulus] was a kindly person and very serviceable to the Jews, for he acquired additional territory for them, and brought over (ὠκειώσατο: which can also mean, "to make someone a friend") to them a portion of the Iturean nation whom he joined to them by the bond of circumcision. (*Ant.* 13:319)

While Josephus implied that Aristobulus forced circumcision upon the Itureans, Strabo may not have said the same.¹⁹³ Strabo's account may only mean that some of the Itureans, who may have practiced circumcision, came into a political association with the Jews.¹⁹⁴ Moreover, Josephus' version of the account could have come from the anti-Hasmonean Nicolus of Damascus.¹⁹⁵ Recent archaeology of the Iturean lands of the northern Golan, Hermon, and

191 Cf. Rappaport, "The Galilee between the Hasmonean Revolt and the Roman Conquest," 22–29.

192 It is also significant to note that neither does Timagenes, whom Josephus cites via Strabo.

193 J. C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 317.

194 S. J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (HCS 31; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 110–29.

195 Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 1:271; and VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas*.

the Lebanese Beq'a, cast significant doubt on both Josephus' account and that of Timagenes because the Iturean lands remained outside of Hasmonean control and their population remained Iturean-pagan.¹⁹⁶

The Itureans, an Arab tribe, expanded their settlement from the Lebanese Beq'a into the northern Golan and Mount Hermon as part of the settlement shifts that occurred in the second century B.C.E. as a result of the collapse of the Seleucid Empire.¹⁹⁷ Archaeologists have identified Iturean settlements in the Golan and Mount Hermon due to their distinctive brownish-pink tempered "Golan ware" pottery, unwalled farmsteads of field stones, and standing stones; however, no evidence for Iturean settlement or "phase" of settlement appears in Galilee, not even in Upper Galilee, which bordered Mount Hermon or the Golan.¹⁹⁸ Perhaps Josephus' mention of the campaigns of Antigonos, the brother of Aristobulus, "in Galilee" (*War* 1.76) referred to battles against the Itureans,¹⁹⁹ but while some battles between the Hasmonean forces and the Itureans may have occurred along the border of Upper Galilee and Mount Hermon and the Golan, Josephus' passing statement does not suggest Iturean control of the Galilee. Quite possibly, Aristobulus' campaign resulted from an Iturean threat to Jews residing in Upper Galilee, and he came to the aid of his fellow countrymen (cf. *Ant.* 13.154) much like his grandfather Simon. Neither Josephus nor Timagenes indicate that Aristobulus provoked a conflict with the Itureans. In fact, as Notley points out, it seems unlikely that "after such a short period of time on the throne and plagued with illness and domestic crisis, Aristobulus would have initiated a campaign of territorial expansion."²⁰⁰ Aristobulus most likely responded to Iturean incursions in the Galilee, possibly provoked by the death of John Hyrcanus and Aristobulus' weakening health.²⁰¹

The numismatic evidence from Galilee suggests that already under Judas Aristobulus the Galilee and Golan were strongly Jewish.²⁰² The majority of

196 M. Hartal, *The Land of the Itureans: Archaeology and History of Northern Golan in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Golan Studies 2; Qatzrin, 2005), 374.

197 E. A. Knauf, "Ituraea," in *ABD* (ed. D. Noel Freedman et al.; 6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3:583; Z. Uri Maoz, "Golan: Hellenistic Period to the Middle Ages," in *NEAEHL* (ed. E. Stern; 4 vols.; Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society and Carta, 1993), 2:535–36; and Reed, "Galileans and the Sayings Gospel Q," 96.

198 S. Dar, "The History of the Hermon Settlements," *PEQ* 120 (1988): 26–44; and R. Frankel et al., *Settlement Dynamics and Regional Diversity in Ancient Upper Galilee: Archaeological Survey of Upper Galilee* (Israel Antiquities Reports 14; Jerusalem, 2001), 110.

199 Cf. Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 330.

200 *Ibid.*

201 *Ibid.*

202 Syon, "Tyre and Gamla," 234–35.

the provenanced coins of Judas Aristobulus discovered to date come from Galilee and the Golan, with the largest amount found at Gamla.²⁰³ While some of these coins could have come to Galilee and the Golan after the reign of Aristobulus I, it seems most probable that the majority arrived during his lifetime.²⁰⁴ Syon notes that the numismatic evidence corroborates Josephus' testimony of Aristobulus' activity during his brief reign in the north; however, it also confirms that Galilee and the Golan had a strong Jewish population prior to his ascension to the throne.

The archaeological evidence points to two phenomena that occurred between the reign of John Hyrcanus and his son Alexander Jannaeus, the brother of Aristobulus: (1) an ethnic change where the indigenous population abandoned a site and was replaced by a different ethnic group with a material culture paralleling Judea's;²⁰⁵ and (2) a large number of new settlements appear in Eastern Galilee and the Lower Golan that have a material culture that parallels Judea's.²⁰⁶ The archaeological data point to a considerable wave of settlement, most likely as a result of Hasmonean policies.²⁰⁷ These immigrants most likely came from Judea and brought with them a strongly pro-Hasmonean ideology as well as Judean material culture, including the language culture of Judea of which Hebrew was an important part. The archaeological evidence from Galilee during the days of John Hyrcanus, Aristobulus, and Alexander Jannaeus indicates an ethnic preference for the Hasmoneans,²⁰⁸ as well as an economic and political orientation toward Judea. This wave of Jewish immigrants from Judea, who were loyal to the Hasmoneans, explains the support of the Galileans of the Hasmoneans in their struggle against Rome and Herod

203 Ibid., 100. On attributing these coins to Aristobulus I (104 B.C.E.) rather than Aristobulus II (67–63 B.C.E.), see Syon, *ibid.*, 37–38; cf., however, Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins*, 27–29, who prefers to attribute them to Aristobulus II. In light of the archaeological data presented by Syon, his identification of these coins as belonging to Aristobulus I seems most tenable.

204 Ibid., 100, 235.

205 Cf. Aviam, "The Hasmonean Dynasty's Activities in the Galilee," 46–49; *idem*, "Distribution Maps," 127–29; Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 322–26.

206 Aviam, "Galilee: The Hellenistic to Byzantine Periods," *NEAEHL* 2:453; Reed, "Galileans and the Sayings Gospel Q," 96–97.

207 Cf. Bar-Kochva, "Manpower, Economics, and Internal Strife in the Hasmonean State," 167–96; and *idem*, "The Conquest of Samaria by John Hyrcanus: The Pretext for the Siege, Jewish Settlement in the 'Akraba District, and the Destruction of the City of Samaria," *Cathedra* (2002): 7–34 (Heb.).

208 Cf. Syon, "Tyre and Gamla," 224–27.

(e.g. Antigonus; *War* 1.314–15).²⁰⁹ Such support seems unlikely if the Galileans were Iturean converts a couple of generations removed from their forcible conversion.²¹⁰ The loyalty of the Galileans for the Hasmoneans also explains the ideological connections between the Hasmoneans and zealotry, which had a strong root in Galilee.²¹¹

By the time Alexander Jannaeus succeeded his brother Judas Aristobulus (104–103 B.C.E.) as king, the Hasmonean settlement of Galilee was well underway. Alexander Jannaeus, who spent time in his youth in Galilee (*Ant.* 12.12), besieged 'Akko-Ptolemais (*Ant.* 13.334), which opposed the Hasmonean resettlement of Galilee and offered Jannaeus a key city in the establishment of a stable and wealthy Jewish Galilee.²¹² Ptolemy Lathyrus, the son of Cleopatra and king of Cyprus, responded to the attack of Alexander Jannaeus against Ptolemais by attacking Asochis, a village located in the Beit Netofa Valley of lower western Galilee, on the Sabbath (*Ant.* 13.337; *War* 1.86). Ptolemy utilized the Sabbath to capture the inhabitants of Asochis off-guard because the people of Asochis were observant Jews.²¹³ It is difficult to explain the presence of established, observant Jewish communities in the Galilee if the year prior Aristobulus supposedly "Judaized" Galilee, and prior to Aristobulus' actions no Jewish presence existed in the region.²¹⁴

The Roman appearance in the East under Pompey in 64/63 B.C.E. reconfigured the territory under Jewish control, depriving the Jews of most of the

209 Cf. Aviam, "The Hasmonaean Dynasty's Activities in the Galilee," 49–50; and idem, "The Hellenistic and Hasmonean Fortress and Herodian Siege Complex at Qeren Naftali," in *Jews, Pagans, and Christians in the Galilee*, 59–88.

210 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 336.

211 Ibid.; I. Ben-Shalom, *The School of Shammai and the Zealots' Struggle against Rome* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1993), 19, 303–4; Flusser, "The Image of the Masada Martyrs in Their Own Eyes and in the Eyes of Their Contemporaries," in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period*. Vol. 2, *The Jewish Sages and Their Literature*, 76–113; and F. Loftus, "The Anti-Roman Revolts of the Jews and the Galileans," *JQR* 68 (1977): 78–98.

212 During his campaign against 'Akko-Ptolemais, Jannaeus captured a number of the fortresses built around the hinterland of Ptolemais to protect the agricultural interests of the coastal city; see Aviam, "Hellenistic Fortifications in the 'Hinterland' of 'Akko-Ptolemais," 22–30.

213 After sacking Asochis, Ptolemy unsuccessfully attacked Sepphoris (*Ant.* 13.337). By attacking Sepphoris, he identified this Galilean town as loyal to the Hasmonean kingdom. As part of the Roman reorganization of the Hasmonean kingdom, Gabinius, the *strategos* of Syria, divided the country into five regional councils, one of which he established at Sepphoris (*War* 1.170; *Ant.* 14.91). It is telling that Sepphoris was not among the towns "liberated" by Pompey from Jewish control and returned "to their legitimate citizens" (*War* 1.155–57).

214 Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 1:225.

non-Jewish territory annexed by the Hasmoneans. In accordance with his pro-Hellenic policy in the East, Pompey “deprived the Jews of the towns they had occupied in Coele Syria” removing the towns of Hippos, Scythopolis, Pella, Samaria, Jamnia, Marisa, Azotus, Arethus, Gaza, Joppa, Dora, Gadara, and Strato’s Tower from Jewish control (*War* 1.155–57).²¹⁵ Josephus comments, “all these towns he gave back to their legitimate inhabitants and annexed to the province of Syria” (*War* 1.155–57). Moreover, while Pompey’s actions set the Hasmonean state on the path to becoming a Roman province, he did not annex the Hasmonean state at this time;²¹⁶ he left under Jewish control the territory that belonged to the Jews, which included Galilee. The cities returned by Pompey to “their legitimate inhabitants” lay along the borders of Judea and Galilee and had been brought into the Hasmonean state through the expansion efforts of the Hasmoneans. He did not remove any part of the Galilee to the province of Syria.²¹⁷ We should assume that if any part of the Galilee had been annexed by the Hasmoneans Pompey’s pro-Hellenic policy would have led him to return those villages and territory to “their legitimate inhabitants.” Furthermore, Josephus describes the territorial situation left to the Jewish population as “this meant that the nation was confined within its own boundaries” (*War* 1.155–57). Josephus viewed the land left by Pompey to the Jewish state, including Galilee, as part of the territory belonging to the Jewish people, “confined within its own boundaries,” and not part of the territory added by the Hasmonean conquests.²¹⁸

According to Josephus, Gabinius,²¹⁹ who was appointed as *strategos* of Syria, re-established many of the towns Pompey had “liberated” from Jewish control: Scythopolis, Samaria, Anthedon, Apollonia, Jamnia, Raphia, Marisa, Dora,

215 A. Schalit, “The Fall of the Hasmonean Dynasty,” in *The Herodian Period* (ed. M. Avi-Yonah; WHJP 7; New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1975), 34–36.

216 Ibid.; and Schalit, *Herod the King: The Man and His Work* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1960 [Heb.]), 18.

217 The towns of Hippos and Gadara lie in the Transjordan along the eastern frontier of the Galilee, and Dora and Strato’s Tower are in the coastal territory that we have already identified as a flash-point between the Jewish population of western Galilee and the non-Jews living on the coast.

218 In part, the action of the Romans toward Galilee underscores our point regarding the Hasmonean settlement of Galilee with Jewish immigrants. The wave of settlement by the Hasmoneans so closely tied Galilee with Judea as a Jewish region that Rome viewed Galilee as part of Jewish territory; cf. Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 336.

219 Both Gabinius and his successor Crassus faced Jewish opposition in the Galilee. Gabinius killed 10,000 Jews at Mount Tabor (*War* 1.177; *Ant.* 14.102), and Crassus’ subordinate, Cassius, captured 30,000 Jews at Taricheae (*War* 1.180; *Ant.* 14.120).

Gaza, Azotus, and “many other towns” (*War* 1.166). Gabinius’ actions drew an influx of colonists into these towns and created a Gentile ring around the Jewish populations of Judea in the south and Galilee in the north;²²⁰ however, neither he nor Pompey sought to colonize the Galilee.²²¹ The archeological and epigraphic record indicate the presence of pagan cultic worship in the area surrounding Galilee, including some of the towns removed from Jewish control by Pompey and re-established by Gabinius.²²² The pagan culture in the cities and regions surrounding Galilee never penetrated into the material culture of Early Roman Galilee.²²³

At some point during Rome’s appearance in the East, the Jews lost control of Joppa and the “villages of the great plain (i.e. the Jezreel Valley),” quite possibly because of the importance of Joppa and the Jezreel Valley to trade and commerce.²²⁴ Julius Caesar, however, returned (c. 47 B.C.E.) both Joppa and the “villages of the great plain” to Jewish control, citing their longstanding possession by the Jewish people (*Ant.* 14: 205, 207), a statement that can hardly refer only from the days of Hyrcanus II’s great uncle Aristobulus I.²²⁵ By the time Herod the Great came into the position of King of Judea, Galilee contained a flourishing observant Jewish population.²²⁶ Herod acknowledged this in his building projects, for although he ringed the Galilee with temples dedicated to the imperial cult and other projects reflecting Greco-Roman culture (cf. *War* 1.401–28; *Ant.* 15.266–76, 328–41, and 16.136–49), he did not build pagan temples or gymnasia in the Galilee out of consideration for the religious sentiments of

220 Cf. E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 31; Syon, “Tyre and Gamla,” 148; and Schalit, *Herod the King*, 27.

221 In the first century C.E., towns surrounding Galilee received the status as Roman *colonia*, for example, Ptolemais, Caesarea on the Mediterranean Sea, Neapolis in Samaria, and even Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina in the second century C.E. The Romans never sought to colonize the Galilee in the first century C.E. or the centuries that followed; cf. Chancey, *The Myth of the Gentile Galilee*, 53–54.

222 Flusser, “Paganism in Palestine,” in Safrai and Stern, eds., *The Jewish People in the First Century*, 2:1065–1100; Aviam, “Distribution Maps,” 124–25; and idem, “Borders Between Jews and Gentiles in the Galilee,” in *Jews, Pagans and Christians in the Galilee*, 14–20.

223 Cf. Chancey, “Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus,” 173–87.

224 Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 29 and 40; and Avi-Yonah, “Historical Geography,” 89–90.

225 Cf. Schalit, *Herod the King*, 30.

226 Toward the end of Herod the Great’s reign (5–4 B.C.E.), Joseph ben Ilim of Sepphoris “served as the High Priest for a short time” (*t. Yoma* 1.4; *y. Yoma* 1.38c; *b. Yoma* 12b; and Josephus, *Ant.* 17.165). He replaced the High Priest for the Yom Kippur service because the latter had become ritual unclean. Josephus identifies Joseph as a relative of the High Priest, Matthias ben Theophilus.

his Jewish subjects (cf. *Ant.* 15.328–30).²²⁷ So too, the coins minted by Herod's son, Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, are void of images of people, pagan deities and temples apparently in deference to the Jewish religious sensitivities of the population of the Galilee.²²⁸

While the archaeological record indicates that Galilee was sparsely populated from the Assyrian destruction of the kingdom of Israel until the second century B.C.E., a small Jewish presence seems to have existed in Galilee prior to the days of Simon the Hasmonean and continued into the time of John Hyrcanus. John Hyrcanus' conquest of Scythopolis began a period of Hasmonean settlement in Galilee that brought Jews from Judea. This Hasmonean policy continued with the sons of John Hyrcanus, Aristobulus I and Alexander Jannaeus. By the end of the second and beginning of the first century B.C.E., a Jewish Galilee was under Hasmonean control.²²⁹ The material culture of Galilee from this period parallels Judea's and displays strong economic, political, and religious ties with Judea and Jerusalem. Although linguistic data from Galilee dating to the Hellenistic period are virtually absent, we can reasonably assume that the wave of Jewish immigrants from Judea brought their linguistic culture, of which Hebrew was an important part, along with their material culture.

227 P. Richardson, *Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 174–202; and Chancey, *The Myth of the Gentile Galilee*, 49–51.

228 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period*, 72–75, and 78–84; and idem, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins*, 75–78. Also, the artwork found in excavations of first century C.E. Galilean sites is strikingly aniconic for a region supposedly identified as “the Galilee of the Gentiles”; cf. Adan-Bayewitz and Aviam, “Iotapata, Josephus, and the Siege of 67,” 152.

229 The boundaries of Jewish settlement in the Hasmonean period appear well defined in the archaeological record by the distribution of Hasmonean coinage; see Syon, “Tyre and Gamla,” 224–35. Aviam notes that the distribution of Jewish material culture in Galilee at the end of the second and beginning of the first century B.C.E. overlaps with the “Baraita of the Boundaries of Eretz-Israel,” which he suggests dates to the Hasmonean period in the first half of the first century B.C.E.; see Aviam, “Borders Between Jews and Gentiles in the Galilee,” 11–12, 14; idem, “The Hellenistic and Hasmonean Fortress and Herodian Siege Complex at Qeren Naftali,” 59–88; and idem, “Distribution Maps,” 128–29. Safrai (*Galilee in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud*, 206–13) dates the “Baraita of the Boundaries” to after the Bar Kokhba revolt and suggests the list reflects the reality of the Mishnaic period (cf. also Syon, “Tyre and Gamla,” 146–147. Frankel and Finkelstein date the “Baraita” to Herod's reign looking back to the days of Jannaeus; see R. Frankel and I. Finkelstein, “The Northwest Corner of Eretz-Israel in the Baraita Boundaries of Eretz-Israel,” *Cathedra* 27 (1983): 39–46 (Heb.)

4 The Impact of the Bar Kokhba Revolt upon the Social and Linguistic Culture of Galilee

Much of the archaeological evidence cited to verify the first-century existence of a Galilee of the Gentiles dates to the third and fourth centuries C.E. when the Galilee experienced a significant urbanization throughout the region.²³⁰ Because of the minimal remains dating to the late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods from Galilee, scholars have created anachronistic reconstructions of first-century Galilee using archaeological remains from the third and fourth centuries C.E.²³¹ The archaeological record of the Galilee indicates that the middle to late second century C.E. served as a transitional period culturally within Galilee, leading Chancey to point out “First-century C.E. Galilee was not the same as third-century C.E. Galilee.”²³² Clearly, this transition was brought about by the large-scale social upheaval within the land of Israel that resulted in the wake of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

Although the literary sources and archaeological remains for the Bar Kokhba revolt are fragmentary,²³³ the revolt profoundly affected the population demographic within the land of Israel, including the Galilee. While it appears that Galilee, as a region, did not participate in the revolt,²³⁴ the possibility exists that the revolt spilled over into regions surrounding Judea and some local guerrilla forces engaged the Roman army in Galilee.²³⁵ The establishment of the Roman legion in Galilee in 120 C.E. most likely prevented the spread of the

230 Cf. L. I. Levine, *The Rabbinic Class of Roman Palestine in Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1989).

231 Cf. Chancey, “Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus: The Neglected Significance of Chronology,” 173–75.

232 *Ibid.*, 173–87.

233 On the challenge of any scholarly attempt to reconstruct the events surrounding the revolt, as well as the revolt itself, see Eshel, “The Bar Kochba Revolt, 132–135,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 4, *The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period* (ed. S. T. Katz; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 105–27; P. Schäfer, ed., *The Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered* (TSAJ 100; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

234 Cf. A. Oppenheimer, *Galilee in the Mishnaic Period* (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1991 [Heb.]), 37–44. To date, no Bar Kokhba coins have been discovered in Galilee; see D. Barag, “A Note on the Geographical Distribution of Bar Kokhba Coins,” *INJ* 4 (1980): 30–33; and B. Zissu and H. Eshel, “The Geographical Distribution of Coins from the Bar-Kokhba War,” *INJ* 14 (2002): 78–87.

235 Cf. Eshel, “The Bar Kochba Revolt,” 114–15; Safrai, *Galilee in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud*, 11; Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 2:402–3; and Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 442–43.

rebellion to its full extent into Galilee.²³⁶ Because Galilee had remained relatively out of the revolt, the region did not experience the catastrophic devastation Judea did. Cassius Dio described the devastation:

Very few of them in fact survived. Fifty of their most important outposts and nine hundred and eighty-five of their most famous villages were razed to the ground. Five hundred and eighty thousand men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out. Thus nearly the whole of Judaea²³⁷ was made desolate . . . (*Roman History* LXIX, 14.1–2)

While Dio's numbers, both of towns and casualties, appear hyperbolic, other ancient witnesses (Eusebius, *H.E.*, IV, 6.1; Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel* 9:24; and *y. Ta'an.* 4, 69a–b), as well as archaeological data attest to the widespread destruction brought about by the Bar Kokhba revolt.²³⁸ By the end of the revolt, Judea lay in ruins and many Jews were dead, wounded, or enslaved. The influx of Jewish slaves as a result of the revolt flooded the slave markets in

236 Safrai, *Galilee in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud*, 10–11; Avi-Yonah, "The Development of the Roman Road System in Palestine," *IEJ* 1 (1950–51): 59–60; and Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 458–59. On the establishment of the Roman army in Galilee in 120 C.E., see B. Lifshitz, "Sur la date du transfert de la Legio VI Ferrata en Palestine," *Latomus* 19 (1960): 109–11. On the presence of the Roman Army in the Galilee in the Middle and Late Roman periods, see Lifshitz, "The Roman Legions in the Land of Israel," in *The Bar Kokhba Revolt* (ed. A. Oppenheimer; Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center, 1980), 95–109 (Heb.); Z. Safrai, "The Roman Army in the Galilee," in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 103–14; idem, *The Economy of Roman Palestine* (London: Routledge, 1994); Oppenheimer, "Roman Rule and the Cities of the Galilee in Talmudic Literature," in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 115–25; Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*, 55–62; Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, 641–80; F. Millar, "Empire, Community and Culture in the Roman Near East: Greeks, Syrians, Jews and Arabs," *JJS* 38 (1987): 143–64; and B. Isaac and I. Roll, "Judea in the Early Years of Hadrian's Reign," *Latomus* 39 (1979): 54–66.

237 It is not entirely clear whether Judea refers to the entire province (cf. *Roman History* LXIX, 13.1) or to Judea proper; cf. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 2:402–3; and Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 457, n. 113.

238 Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 2:405; and Eshel, "The Bar Kochba Revolt," 125–26.

the land of Israel and abroad, such that one source reports a Jewish slave could be purchased for a horse's ration.²³⁹

It is generally assumed that in the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt and the devastation of Judea a large population of Jews from Judea immigrated into Galilee.²⁴⁰ In most reconstructions of the linguistic culture of Galilee, this immigration after the Bar Kokhba revolt is identified as bringing Hebrew into Galilee. The archaeological evidence of Galilee in the second and third centuries C.E. indicates a modest (10 to 15%) increase in settled area; however, the establishment of new settlements during this period was meager. Leibner notes that the archaeological data raises a question as to the degree of immigration from Judea to Galilee after the Bar Kokhba revolt, suggesting that it was rather limited with little effect on demography or settlement within rural Galilee.²⁴¹ The movement of the Jewish court and academies²⁴² to the Galilee coincided with an influx of Gentiles, particularly Roman legionnaires who settled in the heart of the Jezreel Valley and became a permanent part of the Galilean social landscape.²⁴³ At this time, with the influx of Roman legionnaires, cities and villages throughout Galilee began to develop a more widespread Greco-Roman ethos than was present in first century C.E. Galilee.

In the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt, many of the Jewish inhabitants remaining within the land of Israel emigrated from Israel into the Diaspora (cf. Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* 1.5)—some voluntarily, others by force as slaves.²⁴⁴ At the same time, there was an immigration of Jews from Babylonia into the land of Israel, specifically in the Galilee.²⁴⁵ While these

239 L. A. Dindorf, ed., *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae. Chronicon Paschale* (1832), 1:474; cf. Jerome, *On Jeremiah* 31.15; *On Zechariah* 1.4–5; S. Applebaum, *Prolegomena to the Study of the Second Jewish Revolt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 52–56; and S. Safrai, “The Era of the Mishnah and Talmud (70–640),” in *A History of the Jewish People* (ed. H. H. Ben-Sasson; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 333.

240 Cf. Chancey, *The Myth of the Gentile Galilee*, 60–61.

241 Leibner, *Settlement and History*, 348.

242 Little evidence exists for the presence of academies outside of Jerusalem during the Second Temple period; however, Yohanan ben Zakkai and Rabbi Halaftha, both sages who lived prior to the destruction of the Temple in Galilee, had academies, or something approaching an academy, in Galilee; see Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century,” 152–54, 166.

243 Cf. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 473; and Chancey, “Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus,” 186–87.

244 Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, 643–46.

245 I. Gafni, “The Historical Background,” in *The Literature of the Sages. First Part: Oral Torah, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates* (ed. S. Safrai; Philadelphia: Fortress

Babylonian immigrants were Jews, they influenced the Jewish cultural nature of the Galilee, particularly the linguistic ethos of the Galilee. Although certain of these cultural shifts began prior to the Bar Kokhba revolt,²⁴⁶ the Second Jewish revolt accelerated them, and with the decimation of the Jewish population in the land of Israel in the wake of the revolt, different populations moved into the Galilee and transformed the culture of the Galilee. One of the principal areas that felt this transformation was the linguistic register of the region.

In a similar manner as archaeologists have detected a cultural transition beginning in the middle of the second century C.E. within the archaeological record of Galilee, linguists have identified a transition in the languages of the Galilee as a result of the Bar Kokhba revolt.²⁴⁷ Consequently, Mishnaists view 200 C.E. as a watershed in the linguistic topography of the land of Israel. Prior to 200 C.E., Tannaitic Hebrew, what Kutscher identified as Mishnaic Hebrew 1 (MH1), held the position of a colloquial language used by the Jewish people living within the land of Israel, including Galilee, for religious instructions and daily activities and interactions. After 200 C.E., the period Kutscher categorized as Mishnaic Hebrew 2 (MH2),²⁴⁸ Hebrew became principally used in the synagogue and rabbinic academies with Aramaic claiming the preeminent position as the language used for religious instruction and daily interactions. In the third century C.E., however, Hebrew was still commonly understood by the adult Jewish population, but as a second language where Hebrew and Aramaic were juxtaposed in the synagogue for interactive understanding.²⁴⁹ That this linguistic transition in the land of Israel coincides with the social and cultural

Press, 1987), 21; idem, "The Status of Eretz Israel in Reality and in Jewish Consciousness Following the Bar Kokhba Uprising," in *The Bar Kokhva Revolt: New Studies* (ed. A. Oppenheimer and U. Rappaport; Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1984), 224–32 (Heb.); Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 477–78; and Safrai, "Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus," 243–44.

246 Cf. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, 100–121.

247 Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 115–16; Spolsky, "Jewish Multilingualism in the First Century," 40–41; and J. M. Grintz, "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple," *JBL* 79 (1960): 32–47.

248 Within MH2, one must distinguish between Palestine and Babylonia.

249 S. Fraade, "Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum and Multilingualism in the Jewish Galilee of the Third-Sixth Centuries," in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 253–86. The large number of Hebrew inscriptions discovered at Beth She'arim dating from the latter part of the second to the fifth century C.E. came from a group that remained fluent in Hebrew even though the general populace spoke Greek or Aramaic; see N. Avigad, *Beth She'arim. Report on the Excavations during 1953–1958*. Vol. 3, *Catacombs 12–23* (Jerusalem: Masada, 1976), 131–32.

transitions found in the archaeological data seems hardly coincidental, yet, like any cultural shift, it took place over time, as can be seen from the statement of Rabbi Judah, the Prince towards the end of the second century C.E., who desired that Hebrew would retain its place of prominence as the spoken, colloquial dialect among Jews in the Galilee: “Rabbi [Judah, the Prince 200 C.E.] said: ‘Why use the Syrian language [Aramaic] in Palestine? Either the Holy [Hebrew] tongue or Greek’” (*b. Sotah* 49b).²⁵⁰

To support the predominance of Aramaic within first-century Galilee, scholars frequently appeal to the inscriptional materials discovered in Galilee. The vast majority of the inscriptions that have been found, which were primarily written in Aramaic and Greek (although a few Hebrew inscriptions have been uncovered),²⁵¹ date from the end of the second century C.E. and later,²⁵² precisely when Hebrew began its steady decline and Aramaic ascended as the principal colloquial language of Galilee. For the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, the inscriptional remains of Galilee are sparse for Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The most prominent epigraphic discoveries come from the coins unearthed throughout the Galilee. The majority of the coins dating to the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods bear Greek legends, although the Hasmonean coins bare bilingual—Greek and Hebrew—inscriptions. A couple of problems exist with using numismatic evidence as proof of a linguistic culture of a region: (1) the velocity of money within a region forces currency by its very nature to move from where it was minted throughout the region; and (2) the inscriptional legends on the coins reflect the linguistic ideology of those who minted them and not necessarily those using them. If we thus remove the numismatic evidence from the picture, the epigraphic materials, specifically preserving a Semitic language, from Galilee during the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods proves almost inconsequential. Excavators at Sepphoris

250 It is clear that the Sages understood the difference between Aramaic and Hebrew and did not confuse the two. In addition to the passage cited, cf. *y. Meg.* 71b; *Midrash Tanhuma, Shemini* 5; *m. Yad.* 4.5. Likewise, many of the Jewish authors who wrote in Greek distinguished between Hebrew and Aramaic; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 1.5, 33; 3.156, 282; 10.8; *War* 6.96; and the *Letter of Aristaeus* 11. Most likely the New Testament authors also correctly understood Ἑβραϊκὴ and Ἑβραϊστὴν as Hebrew and not Aramaic. Cf. Safrai, “Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus,” 229–31; Grntz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language;” R. Buth and C. Pierce, “*Hebraisti* in Ancient Texts: Does Ἑβραϊστὴν Ever Mean ‘Aramaic’?” in the present volume.

251 Cf. J. Naveh, *On Mosaic and Stone: The Hebrew and Aramaic Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1978 [Heb.]).

252 Cf. G. Baltes, “The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era,” in the present volume.

discovered an ostrakon dated to the second century B.C.E. with the seven Semitic letters אפמלסלש, the first five of which have been identified as a transliteration of the Greek *epimeletes*.²⁵³ A pre-67 C.E. shard from Yodefat bears the Semitic characters אכ,²⁵⁴ and an abecedarium on a cooking pot from Khirbet Qana, possibly dating to the first century, inscribed with the Semitic letters בגד.²⁵⁵ This meager evidence provides almost no information regarding the Semitic language situation within first-century Galilee, such that the epigraphic evidence cannot support the general assumption that Aramaic was the dominant language of Galilee in the Early Roman era.²⁵⁶ A statement like Chancey's that the "literary and other evidence for the use of Aramaic throughout the Jewish parts of Palestine is quite strong"²⁵⁷ seems, in light of the evidence, a gross overstatement.

Aramaic undoubtedly was part of the linguistic landscape of the Jewish population in the land of Israel during the Early Roman period, yet if the literary and epigraphic material from Judea and Jerusalem cannot assist in constructing the language culture of Galilee because of their southern provenance,²⁵⁸ the lack of literary and epigraphic material in Hebrew and Aramaic from Early Roman Galilee forces one to conclude sufficient evidence does not exist to assert strongly anything about Galilean language culture in the Early Roman period. If the language evidence from Judea and Jerusalem is included to make broad, general statements about the language culture of Galilee, it must be acknowledged that the majority of this material was written in Hebrew and not Aramaic.

253 Meyers, "Sepphoris on the Eve of the Great Revolt (67–68 C.E.): Archaeology and Josephus," in *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Cultures* (ed. E. M. Meyers; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 109–22; J. Naveh, "Jar Fragment with Inscription in Hebrew," in *Sepphoris in Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture* (ed. R. M. Nagy et al.; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 170; and idem, "Epigraphic Miscellanea," *IEJ* 52 (2002): 240–53.

254 Adan-Bayewitz and Aviam, "Iotapata, Josephus, and the Siege of 67."

255 E. Eshel and D. R. Edwards, "Language and Writing in Early Roman Galilee: Social Location of a Potter's Abecedarium from Khirbet Qana," in *Religion and Society in Roman Palestine* (ed. D. R. Edwards; London: Routledge, 2004), 49–55.

256 Cf. Wise, "Languages of Palestine," 441; and Baltes, "The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era."

257 Chancey, "Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus," 178. To Chancey's credit, he does acknowledge the presence of Hebrew in the Galilee of Jesus, but he feels it was not nearly as prevalent as Aramaic; see Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, 125.

258 Cf. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, 131–32.

As stated at the outset, the history of language parallels the history of a culture. Linguistic changes are sensitive to the historical vicissitudes of a culture following social change. The social and cultural upheaval brought upon the Jewish people as a result of the Bar Kokhba revolt dynamically impacted the language culture of the land, such that the language culture of Early Roman Galilee was not that of Late Roman Galilee. The Second Jewish revolt accelerated the decline of Hebrew within the land of Israel; however, in the Early Roman period, MH1 functioned as a living language used for communication in the land of Israel. The separation between MH1 and MH2 detected within the evolution of MH parallels the social changes brought on by the Bar Kokhba revolt and reflected in the archaeological record. This seminal linguistic transition raises serious methodological issues with using later epigraphic and literary data to construct the language culture of Early Roman Galilee, including the Aramaic Targumim.

5 The Targumim as Evidence for the Widespread Use of Aramaic in First-Century Galilee²⁵⁹

Scholars quite often appeal to the Targumim as proof that Galilean Jews in the first century did not understand Hebrew and had to access the Hebrew Bible in Aramaic. Bruce Chilton has suggested: “Their [the Galilean Jews’] understanding of the covenant came *not* from the written Torah and Prophets in Hebrew, which few of them could read, but from their oral targum.”²⁶⁰ Chilton assumes: (1) Galilean Jews did not understand Hebrew, (2) because the populace did not understand Hebrew, the purpose of Targum was translation, and (3) the classical Targumim, which are written, literary texts, reflect the what Chilton refers to as the “oral targum” of the Second Temple period, and (4) the Palestinian Targumim preserve the colloquial dialect of first-century Galilean Aramaic.²⁶¹ The evidence from Early Roman Galilee, as we have seen, cannot substantiate Chilton’s first assumption. There is a certain degree of circular reasoning among scholars who use the Aramaic Targumim as evidence for the predominance of Aramaic in Early Roman Galilee. On the one hand, they reason

259 For an outstanding treatment of the issues of Aramaic targum and translation as related to the status of Hebrew in the land of Israel in the Second Temple era, see the study of Dan Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena,” in the present volume.

260 B. Chilton, *Rabbi Jesus, An Intimate Biography* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 4; cf. also Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture*, 124–25.

261 See also L. I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 150.

the populace could not understand Hebrew because we find Targumim. Yet, on the other hand, they assume that the people needed the Aramaic Targumim for translation because they could not understand Hebrew. This line of reasoning assumes that the primary purpose of Targum was translation. As Machiela notes, the principal function of Targum was not translational, but exegetical.²⁶² Fraade has pointed out that the appearance of Targum within synagogal and educational settings in the Late Roman period did not occur because the people no longer understood Hebrew; rather, the Aramaic Targum served to differentiate the oral interpretation about the Hebrew text from the Hebrew reading.²⁶³ In fact, within the targumic tradition are interpretive traditions that directly depended upon Hebrew. For example, Targum Jonathan on Ps 118:22 (אבן מאסו הבונים היתה לראש פנה) identified the “stone” of the psalm as “the child” (טליא): “The child the builders left behind was the descendent of Jesse and was worthy to be appointed king and ruler” (cf. Ps 151, and *Midrash Hagadol* on Deut 1:17). The common Hebrew wordplay between “stone” (אבן) and “son” (בן; cf. Josephus, *War* 5.272) stands behind the exegetical tradition of the Targum.²⁶⁴ Such a tradition assumes a community working in Aramaic and Hebrew; it could not have arisen among a community that only understood Aramaic.

Pertaining to the Early Roman period, however, there is no evidence of Aramaic Targumim in the land of Israel prior to the middle of the second century C.E. (i.e. post-Bar Kokhba).²⁶⁵ It seems likely that to a certain degree the immigration of Jews to Israel from Babylonia in the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt introduced Aramaic Targum into the synagogal setting. While

262 Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena.” See his lengthy discussion on the socio-rhetorical role of targum and the important distinction he makes between targum and Aramaic translation.

263 S. D. Fraade, “Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum, and Multilingualism in the Jewish Galilee of the Third-Sixth Centuries,” in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 253–86; cf. also Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena.”

264 R. Buth, “Aramaic Language,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (ed. C. A. Evans and S. E. Porter; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2000), 88.

265 Safrai, “The Origins of Reading the Aramaic Targum in Synagogue,” 187–93; idem, “The Targums as Part of Rabbinic Literature,” in *The Literature of the Sages. Second Part*, 245–46; Wise, “Languages of Palestine,” 438; and Cook, “Aramaic,” in Collins and Harlow, eds., *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, 362. On the issues of dating the classical Aramaic Targumim, see Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena.” Cf. Luke 4:16–30; Philo, *Hypothetica* 7.12–13; *Spec. Leg.* 2.62; *Quod. Omnis.* 82; *Somn.* 2.127; *Leg.* 156–57; *Mos.* 2.215–16; Josephus, *Ant.* 16.2, 4, 43; *Ag. Ap.* 2, 17, 175; and Acts 13:13–16, 27; and 15:21. See also Fraade, “Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum,” 254.

the classical Aramaic Targumim preserve interpretive traditions that likely date to the Second Temple period, none of them originate from the land of Israel in the Second Temple period.²⁶⁶

A dialect or language can only be described on the basis of direct evidence of the language either written or preferably oral.²⁶⁷ This proves particularly challenging for the investigator of an ancient language, who must go back to the most ancient witnesses of a language or dialect. For example, MH was a spoken living language during the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods in the land of Israel. During this period, it was clearly not uniform, with different regions expressing dialects of MH.²⁶⁸ The transition of MH from a spoken, colloquial language to the written language of the Tannaim created a degree of “standardization” within MH, a process that continued and grew with the copying and printed editions of the Tannaitic corpus.²⁶⁹ Some have argued that the Palestinian Targumim and the Jerusalem Talmud preserve the colloquial dialect closest to that of first-century Aramaic, while Qumran Aramaic preserves a literary Aramaic. Buth has cautioned against placing too much emphasis on “the literary nature on the Judean desert documents” noting that Qumran Aramaic shows that it accepted colloquial and dialectical changes.²⁷⁰ The Aramaic of the Palestinian Targumim reflects certain diachronic and regional features that make it later than Qumran Aramaic, yet earlier than Galilean Aramaic, with which it has certain linguistic parallels.²⁷¹ This makes it difficult simply to identify the linguistic differences between the Palestinian targumic tradition and Qumran Aramaic as purely colloquial/literary differences. Furthermore, while undoubtedly the classical Targumim and the Qumran Aramaic documents preserve colloquial and dialectical features, both groups

266 Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena.” On the question of the Aramaic copies of Job and Leviticus discovered among the Qumran library, see *ibid.*; and Buth, “Aramaic Targumim: Qumran,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 91–93.

267 M. Bar-Asher, “Mishnaic Hebrew,” 589.

268 Bar-Asher, “Mishnaic Hebrew: An Introductory Survey,” in *Judaism*. Vol. 4, *The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, 381–83.

269 *Ibid.*, 372, 384–89. This discovery of the Copper Scroll, 4QMMT, the Bar Kokhba letters, and synagogue inscriptions betray certain dialectical aspects of MH. Even within the Tannaitic corpus, the standardization of MH has not created a uniform language erasing the evidence of regional dialects.

270 Buth, “Aramaic Language,” 88.

271 Cf. A. Tal, “The Dialects of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic and the Palestinian Targum of the Pentateuch,” *Sefarad* 46 (1986): 441–48. On the larger issue of language and dating of the classical Targumim, see Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena,” and the references cited therein.

are written, literary works, and in the case of the Targumim, they are religious, liturgical works. The literary production of these materials created a degree of standardization of the language, as it did with MH. Buth notes, "It is especially problematic to take later religious, liturgical texts like the Palestinian Targum and pose them as pure colloquial texts."²⁷²

The absence of Aramaic Targumim from the land of Israel during the Early Roman period and the exegetical function of Targumim cannot sustain the argument of those who use the existence of later Targumim as proof that Jews in the Early Roman period could not understand Hebrew. If the Jewish people in the first century did not understand Hebrew, we should expect to find more copies of Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Bible. In fact, the biblical scrolls discovered along the Dead Sea contain more copies of Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible than Aramaic!²⁷³ James Barr challenged the appeal to the Targumim as proof against Hebrew as part of the social and colloquial ethos of the Jewish people in the land of Israel: "the existence of the Targum is not a particularly strong argument against the coexistence of Hebrew in the Palestinian culture."²⁷⁴ The introduction of the exegetical phenomena of Targum into the land of Israel coincides with the social and cultural upheaval resulting from the Bar Kokhba revolt, during the time when Hebrew underwent a transition reflected in MH1 and MH2. We should expect the sociolinguistic culture of the land to reflect these momentous changes, and it does. Even during the period of MH2, when Hebrew was in decline, Jews living in Galilee continued to interact within the synagogue in Hebrew and utilized Aramaic and the Targumim as a means of distinguishing exegetical material from the Hebrew text. Aramaic, however, had become the dominant colloquial and literary language of the Jewish people. The evidence of the Early Roman period indicates that the Jewish populace understood the readings from the Torah and the Prophets in Hebrew and likewise interacted with the teachings of the Jewish sages, their homilies, parables, and legal rulings, in Hebrew. The ancient sources available to us indicate that the Jewish population of Galilee felt very comfortable interacting and communicating within this sociolinguistic setting, and even made important contributions to it.

²⁷² Buth, "Aramaic Language," 88.

²⁷³ Cf. Machiela, "Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena."

²⁷⁴ Barr, "Which Language Did Jesus Speak?—Some Remarks of a Semitist," *BJRL* 53 (1970): 24–25.

6 The Social Setting of the Galilean Jews in the Early Roman Period: Direct and Indirect Data

Archaeological data and ancient literary sources indicate that the socio-cultural setting of Galilean Jews differed little from that of the Jews living in Judea in the Early Roman period.²⁷⁵ The immigration of Jews from Judea into Galilee from the days of John Hyrcanus into the Early Roman period not only accounts for the common culture reflected in the material remains, but suggests that the language culture of Galilee mirrored that of Judea, although sufficient data do not exist to confirm or deny this. The absence of significant direct data from Early Roman Galilee limits our ability to develop a sociolinguistic model for Galilee; however, indirect data preserved in the ancient witnesses and uncovered in archaeological excavations indicate that in the Early Roman period Galilee, like Judea, was trilingual.

A letter discovered at Wadi Muraba'at (Mur 43 fi.1–8) from Shimon ben Kosibah to Yeshua ben Galgula offers insight into the connection between the Galileans and their southern brothers. While the Bar Kokhba revolt did not extend into the Galilee,²⁷⁶ Galileans apparently sought refuge among Bar Kokhba's fighters in the south, in Judea.²⁷⁷

משמעון בן כוסבה לישע
 בן גלגלה ולאנשי הברך²⁷⁸
 שלום מעיד אני עלי ת שמים
 יפס [] מן הגללאים שהצלכם
 כל אדם שאני נתן ת כבלים
 ברגלכם כמה שעסת[י]
 לבן עפול
 [ש]מעון בן [כוסבה] על [נפשה]

275 Whatever regional differences existed between the Jews of Galilee and Judea, they were inconsequential compared to the differences dividing Jews in Galilee and Judea from the Gentiles surrounding them; cf. Goodman, "Galilean Judaism and Judean Judaism," 602.

276 Oppenheimer, *The Galilee in the Period of the Mishnah*, 37–44.

277 Milik, "Textes Hébreux et Araméens," in *DJD* 2, 159–62; cf. also Kutscher, "The Language of the Hebrew and Aramaic Letters of Bar-Kosiba and His Contemporaries, Second Study: The Hebrew Letters," 7–23.

278 Milik identifies the location of Yeshua and his men as Kefar Hebron near to Hebron; see Milik, "Textes Hébreux et Araméens."

Ben Kosibah threatened to imprison Yeshua ben Galgula, or anyone else, in shackles if the Galileans who were under his command were harmed. Milik has identified הגללאים (cf. Luke 13:1–2) as Galileans who sought refuge in Yeshua ben Galgula's region.²⁷⁹ Oppenheimer identifies the Galileans as men who joined Bar Kokhba's southern army, which he takes as an indication that Galilee as a region did not revolt.²⁸⁰ Others, including Milik, suggest the Roman occupation of Galilee forced Galileans to seek refuge in the south among Bar Kokhba's forces.²⁸¹ Apparently, tensions between Yeshua ben Galgula and his men with these Galileans provoked Bar Kokhba to send this letter. Bar Kokhba's reaction and threat of protection of the Galileans indicates he viewed them as fellow countrymen. So too, the Galileans' seeking of refuge in regions controlled by Bar Kokhba and his army suggests they felt a strong connection with their southern brethren. Ben Kosibah addressed the letter to Yeshua ben Galgula and his forces (לאנשי הברך). We can assume that although Ben Kosibah addressed Yeshua and his men, he intended the Galileans of Yeshua's region (הגללאים שהצלכם) to understand his letter, should it get cited in their internal discussion. His decision to compose the letter in Hebrew implies that the primary (Yeshua and his force) and secondary (the Galileans) audiences could understand Hebrew. While we cannot determine for certain the social composition of the Galileans among Yeshua's force, it seems safe to assume that at least some of them reflect the "common Galilean," that is, they do not represent a scholarly guild who sought to retain a vanishing language, for example, scribes or Sages. These Galileans were expected to understand this Hebrew epistle and take note of its implications. The sociolinguistic context assumed by Bar Kokhba's letter is that they, like their Judean brethren, understood Hebrew and used it as part of their colloquial speech.²⁸²

Another very fragmentary Hebrew letter from the Bar Kokhba cache includes the word הגלילי ("the Galilean," Mur 52).²⁸³ The text is too fragmentary to identify the Galilean mentioned, but whoever this person was his or her place of origin was given in Hebrew. Among the tags of names discovered at

279 Ibid. Some have proposed that הגללאים refers to Jewish Christians; to this, Milik responds, "l'hypothèse des judéo-chrétiens ou celle des combattants d'origine galiléenne est moins satisfaisante."

280 Cf. Oppenheimer, *The Galilee in the Period of the Mishnah*, 38.

281 Milik, "Textes Hébreux et Araméens," 159; Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 1:547; Eshel, "The Bar Kochba Revolt," 114–15; and Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 453.

282 The Bar Kokhba letters preserve certain regional (southern) differences in the colloquial Hebrew of the period; cf. Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew," *CHJ*, 381–82.

283 Milik, *DJD* 2, 169.

Masada is the inscription [שְׁלוֹם הַגְּלִילִית] (“Shalom {or Salome} the Gali[lean],” Mas 404).²⁸⁴ These two Hebrew inscriptions suggest that the nickname “the Galilean” used to identify these two individuals reflects their linguistic culture and the region from which they came, namely, Galilee. The same regional nickname appears in a Hebrew list of payments to workers inscribed on an ossuary lid discovered at Bethpage and dating to the first century C.E.: יְהוֹסִי הַגְּלִילִי.²⁸⁵ Baltes notes that among all the places of origin mentioned on ossuary inscriptions, place names from the north are more frequent than others, and most of these inscriptions are in Hebrew, including individuals that came from cities outside of Jewish territories (הַבְּשָׁנִי, “Beth-Sheanite,” CIIP 410–412 [three times]; and הַגְּדַרְיָאן, “The Gadarene”[?]. Mas 420).²⁸⁶ The multiple appearances of the nickname הַגְּלִילִי in the Bar Kokhba letter and the epigraphic remains argue against the common assumption that since the second-century C.E. Sage Rabbi Yose ha-Galili (יְוֹסִי הַגְּלִילִי)²⁸⁷ was known by his region of origin there were not many Sages from Galilee.²⁸⁸ It appears people not from Galilee used הַגְּלִילִי to identify Galileans.

There is no evidence that the Galileans viewed themselves as anything other than Jews (cf. *Ant.* 13.154). Archaeological data (e.g. see the discussion above regarding coins of Antiochus VII from the Jerusalem mint) and the ancient literary witnesses attest to Galileans participating in pilgrimage to Jerusalem and its Temple.²⁸⁹ This strong connection between Galileans and Jerusalem appears in the halakic observances shared by Galileans and the people of Jerusalem. Often these halakic similarities between Galilee and Jerusalem agreed with each other *against* the traditions practiced in Judea (cf. *b. Shabb.* 153a). The halakic traditions describing Galilean practice being the same as the people of Jerusalem almost certainly date to the first century, prior to the destruction of the Temple.²⁹⁰ For example, a widow had the right

284 Yadin and Naveh, *Masada I*, 22.

285 H. Cotton et al. eds., *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae. Volume 1: Jerusalem. Part 1:1–704* (CIIP; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 681–86.

286 G. Baltes, “The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era,” in the present volume.

287 Cf. Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century,” 163–65. Safrai notes that הַגְּלִילִי may mean that Yose came from the village of “Galil,” a settlement in Upper Galilee (p. 163).

288 Cf. Goodman, “Galilean Judaism and Judean Judaism,” 604.

289 Safrai, *Pilgrimage at the Time of the Second Temple*, 50–53, 115–17; Klein, *Galilee*, 169–76; and Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 259–97.

290 Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century,” 171; and Goodman, “Galilean Judaism and Judean Judaism,” 597.

in Galilee and Jerusalem to stay in her husband's house indefinitely (כך היו) ... אנשי ירושלים כותבין ואנשי הגליל היו כותבין ירושלם כאנשי וביהודה. 4.12), while in Judea she could only stay until the heirs gave her the money stipulated in the marriage contract. It is significant that this halakic tradition is transmitted in Hebrew. This assumes that the people of Jerusalem and Galilee in the Early Roman period used and understood Hebrew and, most likely, communicated with each other in Hebrew.²⁹¹ The Galilean-Jerusalem opinion went much further in making sure the widow would be taken care of and in ensuring the purpose of the marriage contract would be enacted. This demonstrates a Galilean-Jerusalem stringency in halakic opinions whereas the tradition in Judea was less strict.²⁹² Frequently within rabbinic literature, Galileans adhered to a stricter moral standard than Judeans, who frequently had to introduce additional precautions unnecessary to Galileans (cf. *m. Ketub.* 1.5; *m. Yevam.* 4.10; *b. Ketub.* 12a; *t. Ketub.* 1.4; *m. Pesah.* 4.5).²⁹³ The testimony of

291 There is evidence that Galileans and Judeans also communicated with each other in Aramaic. *Tosefta Sanhedrin* 2.6 records an event that took place prior to the destruction of the Temple in which Rabban Gamaliel sent a letter to Galilee regarding the tithes (cf. Josephus, *Life* 12, 15, 62–63, and 80): “It happened that Rabban Gamaliel and the Elders were sitting on the stairs on the Temple Mount, and Yohanan, that scribe, was before them. They said to him, ‘Write to our brothers, the people of Upper Galilee and the people of Lower Galilee (כתוב לאחנא בני גלילה עילאה ובני גלילה תתאה): “May you have great peace! We are informing you that the time of the removal has come, to take out the tithes from the vats of olives.”’”

Rabban Gamaliel's address of the Galileans as “brothers” indicates he saw them as fellow Jews. Some have suggested that the composition of the letters in Aramaic attests to the Galileans inability to understand Hebrew. It should be noted, however, that the entire discourse of Gamaliel and the Elders was in Aramaic, not just the letter: “They said to him [Yohanan]: ‘Write to our brothers...’ (כתוב לאחנא).” Moreover, the epistle to the Galileans was part of a longer epistle sent to Jews in the south (דרומא) and the Diaspora, particularly the eastern, Aramaic-speaking Diaspora: “and to our brothers the people of the Exile in Babylon (בני גלותא דבבל), and the people of the Exile in Media (בני גלותא דמדאי), and the remainder of all the people of the Exile of Israel (בני גלותא דישראל)...” Because the entire discourse, not just the language of the letter, is in Aramaic and the recipients spread beyond the borders of the land of Israel, particularly the Aramaic-speaking eastern Diaspora, too much should not be made of the fact that the epistle was written in Aramaic, other than the conclusion that the recipients could all read Aramaic. It says nothing about Galileans' ability to read and understand Hebrew (cf. *m. Ketub.* 4.12).

292 Schiffman, “Was There a Galilean Halakhah?,” 146.

293 *Ibid.*, 143–56; Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century,” 174–80.

the ancient witnesses refutes modern scholarly characterizations of Galileans as lax in observance of the Torah. Lawrence Schiffman concludes:

[W]e find no evidence of widespread laxity in the Galilee in tannaitic times or later. On the contrary, our study finds time and again that tannaitic sources attributed to the Galileans a higher degree of stringency in halakic observance than to the Judeans . . . [I]n most cases, the Galileans were more stringent in regard to the law than their Judean coreligionists. Other instances indicate that differences of practice were minor or resulted from distance from the Temple. In no case did the sources portray the Galileans as lenient or less observant.²⁹⁴

Shmuel Safrai likewise concluded regarding the strictness of Galilean religious observance that “its [Galilee’s] religious and social life was rooted in a tradition of the Oral Torah which was indeed superior to the tradition of Judea.”²⁹⁵

Galilean adherence to Jewish law undoubtedly developed under the influence of Sages in Galilee during the Early Roman period. Rabbinic tradition attests to the presence of a number of Sages in Galilee in the period following the destruction of the Temple leading Safrai to note, “. . . if Jerusalem is excluded, most of the sages about whom there is evidence of their origin and activity either were Galileans or were especially active in Galilee.”²⁹⁶ The two Jewish revolts almost certainly influenced the migration of Jewish Sages to Galilee; however, as we have seen, evidence exists for Galilean halakic strictness prior to the destruction of the Temple. Moreover, several sources indicate the presence of Jewish Sages and learning in Galilee prior to 70 C.E.

Josephus’ account of the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene (*Ant.* 20.17–46) mentions a Jew, named Eleazar, who is described by Josephus as “from Galilee and had a reputation for being extremely strict (exact)²⁹⁷ when it came to the ancestral laws” (περὶ τὰ πάτρια δοκῶν ἀκριβῆ, 20.43). The Greek wording of Josephus indicates that Eleazar belonged to the Pharisaic stream of piety.²⁹⁸ According to Josephus, the Pharisees interpreted the laws “with strictness” (μετ’ ἀκριβείας, *War* 2.162). The book of Acts describes Paul

294 Schiffman, “Was There a Galilean Halakhah?,” 144–45.

295 *Ibid.*, 180.

296 *Ibid.*, 149–65.

297 Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek–English Lexicon*, 32.

298 Flusser, “Paul’s Jewish-Christian Opponents in the Didache,” in *Gilgul: Essays on Transformation, Revolution and Permanence in the History of Religions* (ed. S. Shaked, D. Shulman, and G. G. Stroumsa; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987), 79.

as a disciple of the Pharisee Gamaliel (cf. Acts 5:34), who was brought up in Jerusalem, and who comported himself “according to the strict manner of our ancestral law” (κατὰ ἀκριβειαν τοῦ πατρῶου νόμου, 22:3) and “according to the strictest (ἀκριβεστάτην) party of our religion and lived as a Pharisee” (26:5). Flusser notes that because Jewish sources written in Greek use ἀκριβεια as a technical term defining Pharisaic piety, we can know that those who opposed the killing of James, the brother of Jesus, were Pharisees: “Those of the inhabitants of the city who were considered the most fair-minded and who were strict in observance of the law (περὶ τοὺς νόμους ἀκριβεῖς) were offended at this” (*Ant.* 20.201).²⁹⁹ Josephus’ description of Eleazar attests to the presence of Pharisaic piety in Galilee prior to the destruction of the Temple.

According to rabbinic tradition, Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai lived and taught in Arav in Lower Galilee.³⁰⁰ While in Arav, Hanina ben Dosa became his disciple.³⁰¹ The Mishnah records two rulings of Yohanan ben Zakkai on cases of Sabbath law from his time in Arav (*m. Shab.* 16.7; 22.3): “A case came before Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai in Arav, and he said, ‘I fear on his account he should bring a Sin-offering’ (חושש אני לוֹ מחטאת).” The preservation of Yohanan’s saying in Hebrew indicates that he gave his original rulings in Hebrew. The mishnaic editors did not avoid preserving sayings in Aramaic (cf. Yose ben Yoezer, *m. Eduyot* 8.4; and Hillel, the Babylonian, *m. ’Abot* 1.13; 2.6); therefore, the preservation of Yohanan ben Zakkai’s, as well as other Galilean Sages’, sayings in Hebrew likely represents the original language used by those Sages and understood by their audience, namely, Galileans.

Hanina ben Dosa, the disciple of Yohanan ben Zakkai, represents a unique group known for their exceptional piety and miracle-working that was active during the Early Roman period, principally in Galilee: the Hasidim (חסידים ואנשי מעשה).³⁰² The Hasidim stood on the fringes of the world of the

299 Ibid.

300 Cf. Safrai, “The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century,” 149–52. He lived in Arav for eighteen years; *y. Shabb.* 16.8.

301 Neusner, *A Life of Yohanan ben Zakkai*, 51–53.

302 S. Safrai, “The Teaching of the Pietists in Mishnaic Literature,” *JJS* 16 (1965): 15–33; idem, “Hasidim and Men of Deeds,” *Zion* 50 (1985): 133–54 (Heb.); idem, “Mishnat Hasidim in the Literature of the Tannaim,” in *In Times of Temple and Mishnah: Studies in Jewish History* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1996), 2:501–17 (Heb.); idem, “The Pharisees and the Hasidim,” *Sidic* 10 (1977): 12–16 (Heb.); Ch. Safrai and Z. Safrai, “Holy Men and Rabbis in Talmudic Antiquity,” in *Saints and Role Models in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 45–58; G. Vermes, “Hanina ben Dosa,” *JJS* 23 (1972): 28–50; idem, “Hanina ben Dosa,” *JJS* 24 (1973): 51–64; and Oppenheimer, *Galilee in the Period of the Mishnah*, 128–29.

Sages and, as such, while the Sages recognized their power as miracle workers, the traditions about the Hasidim preserved in rabbinic literature often contain a subtle criticism because of the Sages' emphasis upon Torah study, a point not shared by the Hasidim.³⁰³ The Hasidim did not adopt the purity laws of the Sages, which allowed them to interact freely with the poor and wretched and made them popular among the common people. They were, however, quite strict on the observance of laws between a man and his fellow man, praying a great deal, and embracing poverty as an ideology.³⁰⁴ The expressions "sin fearers" (יִרְאֵי הַט) and *derekh erez* (דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ; i.e., "the way of the world", "right behavior")³⁰⁵ exemplify the moral and social aspects of Hasidic piety. The Hasidim emphasized *derekh erez*, which encapsulated their social piety, which focused upon the needs of the poor and needy. Unlike the Sages, they emphasized a moral philosophy in which Torah explication was secondary, and they were primarily remembered with regard to their pious practices.

A statement attributed to Hanina ben Dosa, the Galilean disciple of Yohanan ben Zakkai, expressed the pietistic impulses of the Hasidim:

Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa says: Anyone whose fear of sin precedes his wisdom, his wisdom endures; but anyone whose wisdom precedes his fear of sin, his wisdom does not endure. He used to say: Anyone whose deeds are greater than his wisdom, his wisdom endures; but anyone whose wisdom is greater than his deeds, his wisdom does not endure. (*m. 'Abot* 3.9)³⁰⁶

303 Safrai, "Mishnat Hasidim in the Literature of the Tannaim," 501–17; Safrai and Safrai, "Holy Men and Rabbis," 45–58; and Z. Safrai and R. S. Notley, *Parables of the Sages: Jewish Wisdom from Jesus to Rav Ashi* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2010), 19–27.

304 Safrai and Safrai, "Holy Men and Rabbis," 62–63; and Safrai and Notley, *Parables of the Sages*. The similarity between these Galilean pious figures and Jesus of Nazareth has already been recognized. See S. Safrai, "Jesus and the Hasidim," *Jerusalem Perspective* 42–44 (1994): 3–22; idem, "Jesus as a Hasid," *Proceedings of the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem: World Congress of Jewish Studies, 1990), 1–7 (Heb.); and Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (London: William Collins Sons, 1973), 72–82.

305 S. Safrai, "The Term *Derekh Eretz*," *Tarbiz* 60 (1991): 147–62 (Heb.); D. Flusser, "Which is the Straight Way that a Man Should Choose for Himself? (*m. Avot* 2.1)," in *Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, 2:232–47.

306 Notice the saying attributed to Yohanan ben Zakkai appended to Hanina ben Dosa's in *'Abot de-Rabbi Nathan* (ver. A, 22): "If one is wise and fears sin, what is he like? He is a craftsman with the tools of his craft in his hand. If one is wise and does not fear sin, what is he like? He is a craftsman without the tools of his craft in his hand. If one fears sin, but is not wise, what is he like? He is not a craftsman, but the tools of his craft are in his hand." Cf. Neusner, *A Life of Yohanan Ben Zakkai*, 52.

רבי חנינה בן דוסה אומר כל שיראת חטאו קדמת לחכמתו חכמתו מתקימת וכל שחכמתו קודמת ליראת חטאו אין חכמתו מתקימת הוא היה אומר כל שמעשיו מרובין חכמתו מתקימת וכל שחכמתו מרבה ממעשיו אין חכמתו מתקימת

Not only does Hanina's saying express the pietism of the Hasidim, it is in Hebrew.³⁰⁷ So too the tannaitic tradition preserves Hanina's common speech in Hebrew:

They tell of Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa that whenever he would pray over the sick, he would say, "This one will live, and this one will die" (זה חי וזה מת). They said to him, "How do you know?" He said to them, "If my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know it has been received, but if not, I know that it has been rejected (אם שגרה תפילתי בפי יודע אני שהוא) (מקובל ואם לאו יודע אני שהוא מטורף" (*m. Ber.* 5.5).

The popular place within Jewish, Galilean society that these pietistic figures held among the common people suggests they communicated in the language of the people, or, at the very least, a language the populace easily understood (cf. the words of Hanina ben Dosa in *b. Ber.* 33a, 34b).

Shmuel Safrai has identified halakic traditions of the Hasidim that have been absorbed into rabbinic literature, often anonymously, including entire chapters that have become embedded into rabbinic tradition (*m. Ber.* 5 and the *Derekh Eretz Tractates*).³⁰⁸ These halakic traditions of the Hasidim are consistently transmitted in Hebrew: חסידים הראשנים היו שוהים שעה אחת ומתפללים: כדי שייכונו את לבם למקום ואפילו המלך שואל בשלומו לא ישיבנו אפילו נחש כרוך (The early Hasidim used to wait an hour before they would pray in order to direct their heart toward God. Even if a king greets him, he may not respond. Even if a snake twists around his heel, he may not interrupt his prayer," *m. Ber.* 5.1).³⁰⁹ Safrai and Notley have also identified passages within *Tanna debe Eliyahu* that belonged to the worldview of the Hasidim, particularly many of the parables:³¹⁰

307 Cf. also the saying of Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair, a Hasid, in *m. Sotah* 9.15, which is also transmitted in Hebrew.

308 Safrai, "Mishnat Hasidim," 501–17. For the *Derekh Eretz* tractates, see M. Higger, *The Treatises Derekh Erez* (2 vols.; New York: Moinester, 1935).

309 Cf. Safrai, "Mishnat Hasidim," 512–14.

310 Safrai and Notley, *Parables of the Sages*, 26 and 245. For *Tanna debe Eliyahu*, see M. Friedmann, *Seder Eliahu Rabba and Seder Eliahu Zuta (Tanna d'be Eliahu)* (Jerusalem: Wahrman Books, 1969).

אשרי אדם שמעשיו מרובין מחכמתו למה הוא דומה לרגל זו שהיא מונחת
מונחת במנעל מכל צער ויגון שנאמר מה יפו פעמך וגומר

Blessed is the man whose deeds exceed his wisdom. To what may the matter be compared? To a foot placed in [well-fitting] footwear, free of pain and suffering. As it is said, “How graceful are your feet in sandals, etc. (Song of Songs 7:2).” (*Tanna debe Eliyahu Rabbah* 17)³¹¹

While not all parables in rabbinic literature are Hasidic, parables seem to have played an important role in the Hasidim’s articulation of their piety and critique of the Sages and their disciples, and all parables in rabbinic literature are always told in Hebrew, even in later Amoraic texts written in Aramaic (cf. *b. Baba Qam.* 60b; *b. Sotah* 40a).³¹² Parables served a socio-rhetorical purpose, namely to illustrate, explain, and clarify the complexities of religious faith and human experience in a manner the common person could understand.³¹³ Their esteem with the Jewish populace made those who told parables popular among the crowds (cf. *b. Sotah* 40a; *Sifre Deut.* 49). The role of parables as a means of theological teaching and illumination, their popularity with the people, and the fact that all rabbinic parables are in Hebrew indicates that the Sages and the Hasidim delivered their parables in Hebrew because that was the language people used and understood. Although parables functioned as part of religious education, quite often the world of the parable is common, everyday life and culture, and the language of the parable reflects this reality, which underscores the place of Hebrew within everyday life during the Early Roman period.

The sociolinguistic culture of the Galilee reflected in rabbinic tradition (particularly Tannaitic tradition) mirrors the known trilingual setting of Jerusalem and Judea, with which Galilee had strong socio-religious connections. This data agree with the scattered evidence presented thus far; and therefore,

311 On the Hasidic nature of this parable, see Safrai and Notley, *Parables of the Sages*. Cf. *m. Abot* 3.9.

312 Cf. Safrai, “Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus,” 238; Safrai and Notley, *Parables of the Sages*; and B. Young, *Jesus and His Jewish Parables: Rediscovering the Roots of Jesus’ Teaching* (New York: Paulist, 1989), 40–42.

313 Cf. D. Flusser, *Die rabbinischen Gleichnisse und der Gleichniserzähler Jesus. 1. Teil Das Wesen der Gleichnisse* (Judaica et Christiana; Bern: Peter Lang, 1981); idem, “The Parables of Jesus and the Parables of the Sages,” in *Jewish Sources in Early Christianity* (Tel Aviv: Sifrat Poalim, 1979), 150–209 (Heb.); Young, *Jesus and His Jewish Parables*; idem, *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998); D. Stern, *Parables in Midrash: Narrative and Exegesis in Rabbinic Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991); and Safrai and Notley, *Parables of the Sages*, 27–35.

there is no reason to doubt that the rabbinic memory accurately reflects the linguistic culture of Early Roman Galilee. As a language, MH1 displays a clear diachronic development as a parallel and colloquial development during the Second Temple period when LBH was used for literary discourse, even taking into consideration the possibility of regional Hebrew dialects in the biblical period that influenced MH1.³¹⁴ The Sages of Galilee, including the Hasidim, and the Galileans that listened to them functioned in a trilingual environment, in which Hebrew played an important role. In the future, studies on Early Roman Galilee, and the various tangential issues related to it, must take the trilingual setting of the region as a starting point for discussing the cultural nature of Galilee.

7 Conclusions

At the beginning of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Sherlock Holmes deduces from a walking stick left behind at his lodgings a rather detailed description of the owner, his profession, and where he came from. Although Holmes missed on some points, his attention to the details of the stick allowed him to provide an accurate description of the man who filled its owner's shoes. In assessing the sociolinguistic culture of Early Roman Galilee, scant archaeological and literary remains exist; thus, we must rely upon deductions derived from the details, speaking in probabilities and not absolutes. Our examination of the data has shown that no evidence supports the strongly held position of a bilingual (Aramaic and Greek) Galilee. For the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, quite simply, no direct epigraphic or literary remains exist that come from Galilee to support the widely held consensus of a bilingual Galilee in which Hebrew was absent. To the contrary, the first literary work produced in Galilee, the Mishnah, suggests the strong presence of Hebrew as a colloquial dialect of the region. In spite of the absence of direct Galilean evidence, a general picture emerges from the literary and archeological witnesses suggesting a trilingual culture of Early Roman Galilee. The details, although fragmentary, challenge the consensus bilingual theory: "Unless serious attention is given to details, all theories about the whole can only be castles in the air."³¹⁵ Based upon our study, we can conclude the following:

314 Cf. G. A. Rendsburg, "The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew," in Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 225–40; and idem, *Diglossia in Ancient Israel* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1990); and Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew," 374–77.

315 Attributed to W. von Humboldt.

(1) The campaign of Simon the Hasmonean did not remove Jews from Galilee. His military actions took place along the frontier of western Galilee and Ptolemais. The author of 1 Maccabees, in keeping with his pro-Hasmonean national/redemptive ideology, elevated Simon's campaign as part of the Hasmonean fulfillment of the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. As such, he borrowed language from Joel 3 to shape his narrative as part of his identification of the Hasmoneans as the saviors of the Jewish people and fulfillment of biblical prophecy. While the population of Galilee was sparse, even prior to Simon's campaign, Jews remained in Galilee and felt a socio-religious connection with Jerusalem as attested by the coins of Antiochus VII from the Jerusalem mint found in Galilee from the early days of John Hyrcanus, Simon's successor. This must be treated as a historical fact, and it needs to replace popular conceptions: there was never a "Galilee of the Gentiles."

(2) Most likely beginning with the campaign of John Hyrcanus and his sons against Scythopolis, a stream of Jewish immigrants from Judea settled in Galilee bringing with them the trilingual language culture of Judea. In line with the evidence of conclusion #1, no archaeological evidence exists indicating the Itureans inhabited Galilee from Simon to Judas Aristobulus. Archaeological data from Galilee indicate an ethnic transition at some sites, as well as the infiltration of Jewish immigrants beginning with John Hyrcanus and continuing during the reigns Judas Aristobulus and Alexander Jannaeus. Moreover, Josephus never identifies the campaign of Aristobulus I against the Itureans as a conquest of Galilee, nor does he ever suggest Galileans were converted foreigners. On this point, other ancient Jewish literature agrees. Galilee, then, was part of the Hasmonean kingdom from the days of John Hyrcanus, and with Hasmonean efforts to settle Galilee and establish economic stability in the region, Galilee had a Jewish ethos and clearly defined Jewish borders by the Roman incursion into the land of Israel under Pompey in the mid-first century B.C.E.

(3) The Bar Kokhba revolt caused a cataclysmic social and cultural upheaval throughout the land of Israel. The aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt affected and impacted the language culture of the land, including Galilee, as Hebrew began a steady decline as the dominant Jewish colloquial language. For this reason, epigraphic and literary witnesses from the third century C.E. onward cannot be assumed to reflect accurately the linguistic culture of Early Roman Galilee. The indirect literary and archaeological data from Judea in the Early Roman period intimates that Hebrew was part of the language culture of Galilee, as even the nickname of several Galileans was given in Hebrew: *הגלילי*. The sociolinguistic setting implied by the epistle sent by Ben Kosibah

to Yeshua ben Galgula (Mur 43) assumes that the Galileans within Yeshua's region understood Hebrew and would know of Ben Kosibah's threat to protect them against Yeshua and his men. The linguistic transition from MH1 to MH2 as a result of the Bar Kokhba revolt also coincides with the transition of MH1 to the literary language of Tannaitic tradition. Nevertheless, the literary and epigraphic witnesses that remain contain evidence of dialects within MH1 as a spoken language in various regions of the land of Israel; however, the evidence is too scant to reconstruct a clear picture as to the dialectal differences of colloquial MH in the Early Roman period.

(4) In the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt, Targumim appeared in the land of Israel.³¹⁶ No evidence exists for the practice of targum in the land of Israel prior to the middle of the second century C.E. The development of Targumim within the land of Israel coincides with the immigration of Jews from the east after the Bar Kokhba revolt, who brought their Aramaic Bible reading practices with them. Moreover, the socio-rhetorical purpose of the classical Targumim was exegetical, not translational, as Jews wanted to differentiate the interpretation from the Hebrew text. The evidence from the land of Israel in the Early Roman period indicates that Jews interacted with the Hebrew Scriptures in Hebrew and understood its public reading in Hebrew. Although the targumic tradition contains interpretive traditions that possibly

316 Scholars commonly appeal to the two copies of a Targum of Job in the Qumran library (4Q157 and 11Q10) as proof for Targumim within first-century Israel. The two copies of Aramaic Job do not attest to "widespread" use of Targumim. In fact, the Job translations at Qumran offer the only definite example of an Aramaic translation of a Hebrew book during the Second Temple period. One should exercise caution in drawing the conclusion that because two copies of an Aramaic Job appear in the Qumran library Targumim of the Law and the Prophets existed in the land of Israel in the first century. The Qumran Aramaic Job fragments only witness to an Aramaic translation of Job, not the remainder of the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew of Job is notoriously difficult, and was recognized as such already in antiquity. The difficulty of the Hebrew of Job quite likely explains why multiple ancient witnesses attest to an Aramaic translation of the book of Job (cf. *t. Shabb.* 13.2; *y. Shabb.* 15c; the appended note to the Septuagint of Job 42:17; 4Q157 and 11Q10). Moreover, the Aramaic language of the Aramaic Job manuscripts reflect a dialect from east of the land of Israel and distinct from the majority of the Qumran Aramaic texts. See Buth, "Aramaic Targumim: Qumran," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, 91–93; Machiela, "Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena"; Muraoka, "The Aramaic of the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI," 425–43; E. M. Cook, "Qumran Aramaic and Aramaic Dialectology," in Muraoka, ed., *Studies in Qumran Aramaic*, 1–21; and idem, "A New Perspective on the Language of Onkelos and Jonathan," in Beattie and McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible*, 142–56. On the issues with the so-called Leviticus Targum at Qumran, see Machiela, "Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena."

date to the Second Temple period, none of the classical Targumim existed in the land of Israel prior to the Bar Kokhba revolt. For this reason, as well as the impact of Bar Kokhba revolt upon the language culture of Galilee, scholars should not use the Targumim as evidence for the dominance of Aramaic in Early Roman Galilee.

(5) Based upon the archaeological and literary data, the land of Israel was trilingual (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) in the Early Roman period. This language culture should also be assumed for Galilee. Hebrew shaped Galilean culture as it did that of Judea. Although the direct data have not yet been discovered in Galilee, the socio-cultural connection between Galilee and Judea, Galileans and Jerusalem and its Temple, assume a common language culture that marked Jews (Galilean and Judean) as Jewish. This is the language culture assumed by Tannaitic tradition, which preserved the sayings of Early Roman Galilean Sages in Hebrew. Moreover, the popularity of the Hasidim among the people, particularly of Galilee, assumes that the preservation of their sayings in Hebrew reflects the language culture of the populace who revered these charismatic wonder-workers. Finally, the socio-rhetorical role of parables among the Jewish populace—all of which are in Hebrew—takes for granted communication between the storyteller and audience in Hebrew.

Language preserves and expresses culture. Accepting a trilingual setting for Early Roman Galilee offers an important window into Galilean culture and society, as well as promising avenues of inquiry for the study of Ancient Judaism and the origins of Christianity.

Hebrew versus Aramaic as Jesus' Language: Notes on Early Opinions by Syriac Authors

Serge Ruzer

The question of the language(s) that the historical Jesus used on various occasions of his ministry and which characterized the pristine form—either oral or written—of the Jesus tradition, is obviously at the heart of the present volume, with Hebrew and/or Aramaic being the plausible candidates. This question naturally overlaps with that of the language of the religious discourse of Jesus' immediate entourage and, more broadly, of first-century C.E. Palestinian Jewry. Although the exact solution may still elude us, a certain collation of Hebrew, Aramaic and even elements of Greek can be reasonably supposed here.¹ This essay, however, will focus not on the first-century C.E. linguistic situation itself—admittedly a most complicated issue—but rather on how it was perceived throughout the early centuries of Christianity. An emphasis will be put on the evidence where a differentiation was made between Hebrew and Aramaic and on the role allotted to such a differentiation in polemical strategies of identity building. Early Christian Syriac authors will be of special interest for our discussion as it is with them that one may expect Aramaic-centered preferences with regard to Jesus' language to surface. This, after all, was a natural expression of Aramaic-Syriac pride that is well-known from later sources. Our investigation, however, leads to somewhat surprising observations that have a bearing, even if indirect, on the main topic of the volume.

1 Pre-Christian Hellenistic Jewish Evidence

As a way of introduction, a brief discussion of two pre-Christian Jewish statements on the nature of the Holy Writ's language is in place here, from which a

1 See Shmuel Safrai, "Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus," in *Jesus' Last Week* (ed. R. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage and Brian Becker; Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 225–44; Angel Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (trans. J. F. Elwolde; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Moshe Bar Asher, *Studies in Mishnaic Hebrew* (ScrHier; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1998); Philip S. Alexander, "How Did the Rabbis Learn Hebrew?" in *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yehuda* (ed. William Horbury; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999), 71–89.

certain perception concerning the linguistic situation in the land of Israel can be gleaned. Both of them come from the Alexandrian diaspora—if you wish, from “outsiders”—and both relate to the Septuagint translation enterprise.

We start from the later of the two, found in the famous passage from Philo's *The Life of Moses*, Book 2 (37–40):²

Sitting here in concealment with none present save the natural elements, earth, water, air, heaven, the mystery of whose genesis they were on the verge of expounding first, for the creation account constitutes the beginning of the laws, they became as it were possessed and interpreted the divine word . . . all of them employing precisely the same words and phrases, as though dictated (ἐνηχεῖν) to each by an invisible prompter . . . The Greek words used corresponded exactly to the Chaldean (τοῖς Χαλδαῖκοις), perfectly adapted to the things signified . . . The clearest proof of this is that, if the Chaldeans (ἐάν τε Χαλδαῖοι) have learned Greek, or Greeks Chaldean (τὴν Χαλδαίων), and read both versions, the Chaldean (τῆ τε Χαλδαίων) and its translation, they marvel at them and respect them as sisters, or rather one and the same, both in matter and words, and designate the authors not as translators but as prophets and hierophants, to whom it was granted in the purity of their thought to match their steps with the purest of spirits, the spirit of Moses.

The crux of the passage is clearly the attempt to elevate the status of the Scripture's Greek translation.³ Philo's polemically flavored argument reflects the situation of the enlightened Alexandrian Jews of the first century C.E., who mostly had a rather limited ability, if at all, to deal directly with the original, using instead the Greek version of the Torah and the prophets (and some other biblical or para-biblical books as well). This version was also used for the public reading at their synagogues.⁴ Therefore, our author claims that all the meanings implied in the Semitic original are faithfully expressed by the Greek. Consequently, the need for the original is for all practical purposes eliminated. Moreover, it is emphatically stated that the revelatory miracle granted to the

2 English translation follows *Philo of Alexandria: The Contemplative Life, the Giants, and Selections* (trans. and intro. David Winston; The Classics of Western Spirituality; New York: Paulist, 1981).

3 See Tessa Rajak, *Translation and Survival: The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 139–42, 152–56.

4 See, for example, Aryeh Edrei and Doron Mendels, “A Split Jewish Diaspora: Its Dramatic Consequences,” *JSP* 16/2 (2007): 95–101; Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 143–52.

compilers of the Septuagint (the “seventy translators”) equalled the Sinai revelation to Moses.

More important for the present discussion, however, is that the language of the Sinai revelation, which is also the original language of the Jewish Holy Writ, is described here as Chaldean. This seems to refer to what is marked in the Septuagint version of Genesis as the native country of Abraham, the forefather of the people of Israel (אֹר כַּשְׁדִּים, Gen 11:28, 31; 15:7; LXX: χώρα τῶν Χαλδαίων). The Torah alternatively describes Abraham, as well as some other progenitors of the Israeli tribe as “Aramean” (אֲרָמִי, Deut 26:5; Gen 25:20; 28:5; 31:20, 24), which is consistently translated in the Septuagint as Σύρος (Syrian). So, even if one may reasonably understand “Chaldean” here as equaling the language of the Jewish Scripture, namely, Hebrew,⁵ it should be noted that Philo’s statement totally lacks a differentiation between the particular language of the Hebrew Bible and that of a broader Aramaic- or Syriac-speaking realm. It was even suggested that a similar lack of differentiation might have characterized also a Palestinian Jew, Josephus, whose “undifferentiated use of the term *hebraisti* does not allow us to judge which of the two closely related languages he has in mind at any moment, Hebrew or Aramaic of Jerusalem and Galilee.”⁶

Such a lack of differentiation is also reflected—but this time polemically rejected—in the second source to be related to in this section, the second-century B.C.E. *Letter of Aristeas*. In the beginning of the letter (*Ar.* 3, 11), the author criticizes those in his intended Jewish audience who believe that the Torah was written in Syriac, arguing instead that its language is Hebrew.⁷ Whatever the actual ability of the Hellenistic Jews to distinguish between the two closely related languages,⁸ Philo’s *Life of Moses* and the *Letter to Aristeas* witness for both the possibility that Aramaic and Hebrew would remain undifferentiated in Diaspora Jewish perception and the possibility that under certain circumstances the polemically charged differentiation would become instrumental for Jewish identity building.⁹ Moreover, in line with the polemical strategies employed by the author of the *Letter of Aristeas*, who aims at

5 See Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 139.

6 Ibid., 147. This suggestion, however, is disputed elsewhere in the present volume; see Buth and Pierce “Ἑβραϊστί (Hebraisti) in Ancient Texts: Is Its Meaning Ever Aramaic?”

7 Another source roughly contemporaneous with the *Letter of Aristeas* and distinguishing between the two languages seems to be 2 Macc 7:27. See Jan W. van Henten, “The Ancestral Language of the Jews in 2 Maccabees,” in *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yehuda*, 53–68.

8 Aramaic seems to have been in use among the Jews of Elephantine, but not in Alexandria. See the discussion in Rajak, *Translation and Survival*, 148–49.

9 See the discussion in Maren Niehoff, *Jewish Biblical Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 30–32.

enhancing the status of the Jerusalem High Priesthood in the eyes of proud Jewish Alexandrian intellectuals, the latter's land of Israel co-religionists are presented here as enjoying access to and command of Biblical Hebrew, which, as noted, is polemically distinguished in this context from Aramaic/Syriac.¹⁰

2 Early Greek Christian Evidence

From the second century on, Christian authors writing in Greek referred to the existence of Gospels written for and/or used by the Jews, who naturally used their own tongue. The earliest witness for this opinion is Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis (early second century C.E.) who, according to Eusebius, claimed that those had been, in fact, Jesus' words and maybe also deeds (if *τά λόγια* includes the latter), put into writing by Matthew in the "Hebrew language" (*Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ*) and ostensibly for the Jews that constituted the source from which the further Greek canonical versions of the Gospels were translated "according to the ability of each one" of the Gospel writers (Eusebius, *H.E.* 3.39.16). Papias' usage of *Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ* here has been alternatively interpreted as intending either Hebrew or Aramaic; whatever may be the case, no polemical differentiation is indicated.¹¹ Eusebius also mentions in this respect Irenaeus (*H.E.* 3.1.1), Origen (*H.E.* 4.25.3–4) and Hegesippus (*H.E.* 4.2.28), claiming in addition that a certain Gospel according to the Hebrews was used by the sect of Ebionites (*H.E.* 3.27.4) and by a community as far as India (*Demonstratio Evangelica* 9.15.6). Epiphanius (*Panarion* 9.4, ca. 376) speaks in this context about the sect of Nazarenes.¹² Various statements regarding

¹⁰ Ibid., 31.

¹¹ Relevant entries of *A Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. and ed. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich; 3d ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000) (BDAG) aptly demonstrate the uncertainty combined with less than warranted conclusions existing here: whereas *εβραϊστί* is defined as "in Hebrew/Aramaic," for the preceding entry *εβραϊσ/δος* the following explanation is offered with a reference, inter alia, to Papias' statement: "The Hebrew language Ac 21:40; 22:2; 26:14; Papias (2:6). This possibly refers to Aramaic spoken at that time in Palestine." For a critical assessment of interpreting *Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ* as indicating Aramaic, see Guido Baltes, "The Origins of the 'Exclusive Aramaic Model' in the Nineteenth Century: Methodological Fallacies and Subtle Motives" in the present volume.

¹² See Albertus F. J. Klijn, *Jewish–Christian Gospel Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 14–15. For a modern scholarly investigation into the phenomenon, see Ray Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity: From the End of the New Testament Period until Its Disappearance in the Fourth Century* (Jerusalem: Magnes/Hebrew University Press, 1992).

the “Jewish Gospel” found in Jerome cannot be easily harmonized.¹³ As has been suggested, the discrepancies may reflect the gradual process of acquiring knowledge of Jewish-Christians by Jerome. Whereas at earlier stages “in Hebraico,” “secundum Hebraeos,” etc. could indiscriminately mean both Hebrew and Aramaic of the supposed original Gospel, later on Jerome discovered that a Jewish-Christian Gospel actually existed in his days in Aramaic.¹⁴ It may be observed that vis-à-vis Greek, dominating the Church discourse, the Semitic version of the Gospels in the above sources enjoys an ambiguous evaluation, being portrayed as used by a marginal Christian group.

The idea that Hebrew/Aramaic had been not only the language of Jesus but also the language of the original Gospel was therefore widely known in the early Church. Moreover, the supposed remnants of that original text were at least sometimes seen as containing important information on Jesus’ *ipsis-sima verba* as well as his deeds, otherwise lacking in the canonical Gospels.¹⁵ Of course, the fact that the compilers of the Greek Gospels retained certain Aramaic sayings of Jesus also enhanced the awareness of the Semitic *Vorlage*.¹⁶ This, however, gave support to a complementing notion of Aramaic, now distinguished from Hebrew, as the language Jesus spoke—the notion that, as witnessed by Eusebius, was also well attested among the Christian authors of Late Antiquity.¹⁷ It has been further argued that the fifth-century Alexandrian codex of the Septuagint version of 2 Macc 15:36 might have reflected exactly this latter notion.¹⁸ An illuminating attempt to suggest a “composite model” was made by Epiphanius, who articulated—relying on what he saw as a collation of Hebrew opening and Syriac ending in *eli eli lema sabakhthani* (Matt 27:46; cf. Mark 15:34)—the idea that although the Gospel of Matthew had originally been written in Hebrew, Aramaic (= Syriac) did get a place of honor alongside Hebrew to allow the communication of the fullness of knowledge about Christ.¹⁹

13 Ibid., 16–18.

14 Ibid., 18–19.

15 Ibid., 3–19.

16 Matt 27:46; Mark 5:41; 7:34; 15:34.

17 See, e.g., Eusebius, *Demonstratio evangelica* 3.7.10.

18 μῆνός Αδάρ λέγεται τῆ Συριακῆ φωνῆ. See Daniel R. Schwartz, “ΣΥΡΙΑΚΗ or ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ: Aramaic or Lord’s Language,” *Herald of the Jewish University* 7 (25) (2002): 59–66 [in Russian], who argues that Συριακῆ (Syriac) was interpreted here by a Christian scribe as Κυριακῆ (Lord’s [Jesus’] language).

19 Epiphanius, *Panarion* 3.69.68; 30.3. See Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel*, 14–15.

3 Syriac Sources

The above evidence seems to indicate well-established perceptions of the Hebrew/Aramaic character of the pristine Jesus tradition—including the initial form of the Gospel account(s). It is against this backdrop that attitudes discerned in early Syriac Christian compositions are now going to be addressed. It will be asked, *inter alia*, how close the Syriac authors considered their own tongue to that of Jesus and the original Gospel and whether in this context they ascribed any particular importance to the distinction between Hebrew and Syriac-Aramaic. The “Syriac perceptions” will be discussed in light of a broader issue of the sacred language. More recent attitudes may provide here an instructive point of comparison, since in modern times the “Aramaic emphasis” has been part and parcel of the Syriac communities’ distinctive pride, as anyone who has been to St. Mark’s monastery in the Old City of Jerusalem and shown (on the wall) the “original version” of the Lord’s Prayer is well aware.²⁰ Far from belonging exclusively to a local religious folklore, this notion was forcefully expressed in programmatic church statements, for instance, the following one by the late East Syrian Catholicos Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII, where it moreover serves as an argument for the Syrians theological advantage *vis-à-vis* the “Western Christians”:

The message of the Christian faith which was totally alien to the Western people, such as Greek, Latin and other races, to the Semitic people of the Middle East, who also spoke the Aramaic language, this faith was merely a completion and perfection of the faith of the Old Testament, and, therefore, they were able to understand, accept and embrace it without reservation. . . .

The Church of the East, on the other hand—*having received the Scriptures from the hands of the apostles, in a language common to both, namely, to them and the Assyrians*, and free from the pagan philosophies and political pressures which plagued the Church within the Roman Empire—never compromised its faith and kept it in its purity to this very day. . . .²¹

20 For the “Aramaic emphasis” in the nineteenth-century New Testament research, see Baltes, “Origins of the ‘Exclusive Aramaic Model.’”

21 Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII, Introduction to Mar Odishoo, Metropolitan of Suwa (Nisibin) and Aremenia, *The Book of Marganita (the Pearl) on the Truth of Christianity* (Kerala: Mar Themotheus Memorial Printing & Publishing House, 1965), III–VIII. See the discussion in

As was demonstrated by Milka Rubin, the early Syriac Christian authors with only few exceptions subscribed to the view, sometimes cited as having been supported by Ephraem, that Syriac/Aramaic was the language of creation, God's initial language of communication.²² As for Hebrew, in which the Jewish Bible (Old Testament) had been given, it was distinguished as a language of revelation, a relative newcomer befitting God's plan of Israel's election.²³ Sometimes, it was stated explicitly that it had been this election that entailed a measure of linguistic condescension—the revelation had to be tailored to the pitiful inability of the Jews to learn languages, including the most sacred one, that of creation.²⁴

With such a perceived hierarchy between Aramaic and Hebrew as a possible backdrop, how was Jesus perceived: as a Hebrew- or Aramaic-speaker? And what was the language of the pristine Gospel tradition? One would expect to find the claim for "Aramaic authenticity" featuring prominently on the agenda of Syriac Christian authors, and it is quite striking that, as the following survey shows, this emphasis is, in fact, absent in the earlier surviving sources. Even granted that not all the sources have necessarily reached us, this lack of evidence seems to indicate that the specifically Christian variation of Syriac "linguistic pride" might have been a relatively late phenomenon due, at least in part, to European influence.²⁵ Dionysius bar Salibi, twelfth century, can possibly be seen as an early (the earliest?) witness to this tendency.²⁶ The issue

Serge Ruzer and Aryeh Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies: Theology and Hermeneutic in Early Syriac Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), "Introduction," 1–6.

- 22 Unlike Greek-Christian authors who were free of the need to fight for their cultural self-definition and could accept the Jewish view of the priority of Hebrew. See Milka Rubin, "The Language of Creation or the Primordial Language: A Case of Cultural Polemics in Antiquity," *JJS* 49 (1998): 306–33.
- 23 So Theodore Bar Koni of the eighth century in his *The Book of Scholia*; see Rubin, "The Language of Creation," 325 n. 106.
- 24 So Isho'dad of Merv of the ninth century; see Rubin, "The Language of Creation," 325 n. 107.
- 25 In the nineteenth century the scholarly champions of the "exclusive Aramaic model" would in turn get inspiration from the claims propagated by Syrian Christians. See Baltes, "Origins of the 'Exclusive Aramaic Model'."
- 26 Dionysius bar Salibi, *Against the Melkites* IX: "If it is because of these *Canons* and because of four or five books of theirs (i.e. of the Greeks) that we have translated that they are so arrogant, our Lord was a Syrian, and they have translated all His teaching into their language..." See *Woodbrooke Studies: Christian Documents in Syriac, Arabic, and Garshuni, Edited and Translated with a Critical Apparatus*. Vol. 1, *Barsalibi's Treatise against the Melchites; Genuine and Apocryphal Works of Ignatius of Antioch; A Jeremiah Apocryphon; A New Life of John the Baptist; Some Uncanonical Psalms* (ed. A. Mingana; Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1927), 57. I thank Gerard Rouwhorst, who had indicated to me (per-

is definitely in need of further clarification; for now, I intend only to start the discussion by reviewing some early evidence and asking what underlying perceptions it may point to.

4 The Syriac Gospel Tradition

Syriac renderings of the Gospels suggest themselves as possible sources of indications for the translators' ideas regarding the language of Jesus and/or of the pristine Christian tradition. One is prompted to ask if their work was guided, at least in part, by an aspiration to restore the "Semitic original"? It seems less likely to discover such an aspiration at work on later stages of subsequent Syriac reworking of the Gospels—NT Peshitta (fourth–fifth century) and the following Philoxeniana (507/508) and Harklensis (615/616) recensions—as their setting was characterized by an onslaught of Greek hegemony and, as a result, by "a degree of fidelity to the Greek text so extreme that it violates natural Syriac idiom."²⁷ Somewhat more promising in this respect may be the *Old Syriac Gospels* (*OSG*, *Vetus Syra*) represented by two extant manuscripts—codex *Cureton*²⁸ and the *Sinaitic* palimpsest²⁹—and commonly supposed to be the earliest extant Syriac version of the four separate canonical accounts.³⁰

sonal communication) that such a stance should be looked for in Dionysius Bar Salibi, and Sergey Minov, who supplied me with the exact reference.

- 27 Nestle-Aland edition of the New Testament (*Novum Testamentum Graece* [27th rev. ed; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001], 65*–66*).
- 28 Published by William Cureton as *Remains of a Very Ancient Recension of the Four Gospels in Syriac, hitherto unknown in Europe* (London: John Murray, 1858); repr. (New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2005).
- 29 First published by Francis C. Burkitt, Robert L. Bensly, and James R. Harris (*The Four Gospels in Syriac Transcribed from the Syriac Palimpsest* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1894]). I consulted the following edition, considered authoritative: Agnes S. Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels, or Evangelion da-Mepharreshe; being the text of the Sinai or Syro-Antiochian Palimpsest, including the latest additions and emendations, with the variants of the Curetonian text* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1910).
- 30 The two have been seen by most scholars as either belonging to the same tradition or stemming from a common source. While some scholars, mainly in the earlier days (e.g. Burkitt), believed that in many instances the *Vetus Syra* had been of very early provenance (second century), others date the *OSG* to a period much closer to the composition of the NT Peshitta (mid-fourth century; see, for example, Matthew Black, "The Syriac Versional Tradition," in *Die alten Übersetzungen des Neuen Testament, die Kirchenväterzitate und Lektionare* [ed. Kurt Aland; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972], 130). The Introduction to the Nestle-Aland edition of the New Testament takes a middle ground, dating *Vetus Syra* to "ca. 3–4 cent."

The relation of the *OSG* to the original second-century Syriac *Diatessaron* Harmony of Tatian (surviving only in later translations)³¹ is an issue that has received considerable attention in research.³²

In contradistinction to the initial suggestion that the *Cureton* version of Matthew could represent, at least partly, an original Aramaic gospel, the dominant scholarly view is now that the *OSG* were translated from a Greek gospel source.³³ So, did the *Vetus Syra* compilers see their enterprise as an attempt to restore an original Aramaic Gospel? A comprehensive study of the *OSG* translation techniques—the study which has yet to be undertaken³⁴—can bring us closer to answering this question. Yet, a few, admittedly inconclusive, observations relying on earlier research and relevant for our topic can be already put forward.

First, whereas the language of the *OSG* is predominantly Eastern Syriac, there are elements—appearing mainly in Jesus' sayings in the *Sinaitic palimpsest*—of Palestinian Aramaic.³⁵ This may at least suggest awareness of the dialectical distinctions—and reflect an inherited *logia* tradition—with Jesus' language perceived as related to but not exactly similar to that of the compilers and their intended audience.

Second, instructive is the treatment of those sayings by Jesus, which are retained in the canonical Gospels in their Aramaic form with the immediately following translation into Greek. The most famous example is Jesus' cry from the cross (Matt 27:46; cf. Mark 15:34): καὶ τῆ ἐνάτῃ ὥρα ἐβόησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς φωνῆ

31 See, for example, Ruzer and Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies*, "Appendix: The Old Syriac Gospels: Textual Authority and Hermeneutics," 153 n. 16.

32 Tatian's Harmony, which had been in liturgical use for more than two centuries before it was suppressed by the separated Gospels of the NT Peshitta, is often viewed as the first Syriac version of the Gospel to have become known in the Syrian churches; the *OSG* is then believed to be dependent on the *Diatessaron*. Others have, however, been ready to speak about *OSG* priority. Finally, a third model has been suggested—namely, that the *Diatessaron* and the *OSG* as independent attempts at Syriac translation of the Gospels. For a discussion of the various scholarly suggestions, see Brock, "The Syriac Versions," 45–46.

33 The dependence may be discerned mainly on the western text represented by Codex Bezae (D) but there are also points of closeness to the tradition of A.

34 I dealt with only one aspect of the *OSG* approach to the task of translation in my Ph.D. dissertation, "Biblical Quotations in the *Old Syriac Gospels*: Peshitta Influence and Hermeneutical Concerns" (Ph.D. diss.; Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1996 [in Hebrew]). See also Ruzer and Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies*, "Appendix," 149–78.

35 Thus Antioch has been suggested as a possible place of producing part of the *OSG*; see Sebastian P. Brock, "The Syriac Versions," in *The Early Versions of the New Testament* (ed. B. M. Metzger; Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 39.

μεγάλη, Ελωι ελωι λεμα σαβαχθθανι;³⁶ ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον Ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με; (“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, la’ma sabach-tha’ni?’, that is, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’”). Here, as in other analogous cases,³⁷ the *Vetus Syra* translators quote the saying itself, adjusting it to what they seem to perceive should have been its original Aramaic-Syriac form (ܐܠܗܝܐ ܠܗܝܐ ܠܡܐ ܣܒܚܬܗܢܝ), but do not feel any need to render the Greek explanation. This also seem to indicate that they recognize this outstandingly marked Jesus’ saying as belonging to “their language,” even if, maybe, to a different dialect.³⁸

There is a third observation that somehow counters the preceding two. The above awareness even if present, does not seem to have played the central role in the *OSG* compilers’ strategies when they were not specifically prompted by their Greek source. It is exemplified, *inter alia*, by the treatment of those Old Testament quotations appearing in the Gospels, where a “deviation” from the Old Testament may be discerned. As an earlier investigation has demonstrated, in such cases the activity of the Syriac compilers is often directed toward the restoration (full or partial) of the Old Testament Peshitta form of the verse cited (already in use in mid-second century C.E.), and that, as a rule, these amendments have no support in any Greek manuscript of the Gospels.³⁹ This Scripture-oriented approach tends to overshadow other concerns including possible interest in Jesus’ *ipsissima verba*, as it is often Jesus himself who is presented as invoking these foundational quotations. Suffice it to review here briefly one instructive example: the quote from Ps 118:22–23 appearing in Matt 21:42 (= Mark 12:10–11 = Luke 20:17).⁴⁰

36 Cf. Codex Bezae (λαμα ζαφθθανι), which seemingly presupposes here Hebrew rather than Aramaic.

37 Cf. Mark 7:34: καὶ ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐστέναξεν, καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Εφφαθα, ὃ ἐστὶν, Διανοίχθητι (“and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and said to him, ‘Eph’phatha,’ that is, ‘Be opened’”); Mark 5:41: καὶ κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ παιδίου λέγει αὐτῇ, Ταλιθα κουμι, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον Τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε (“Taking her by the hand he said to her, Talitha cumi; which means, ‘Little girl, I say to you, arise’”).

38 This recognition would become somewhat blurred in NT Peshitta for Mark 15:34, where the explanatory ending is retained (ܐܠܗܝܐ ܠܗܝܐ ܠܡܐ ܣܒܚܬܗܢܝ ܐܠܗܝܐ ܠܗܝܐ ܠܡܐ ܣܒܚܬܗܢܝ). Cf. Franz Delitzsch’s nineteenth-century translation of the New Testament into Hebrew: ויצעק ישוע בקול גדול אלי אלי למה שבקתני ותרגומוו אלי אלי למה עזבתני. See the discussion in Ruzer, “Biblical Quotations in the *Old Syriac Gospels*,” 129–31.

39 The issue is discussed at length in Ruzer, “Biblical Quotations in the Old Syriac Gospels,” and now in Ruzer and Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies*, “Appendix,” 149–78.

40 See Ruzer and Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies*, “Appendix,” 158–63.

We start from the Hebrew version of Ps 118:22–23 followed by its relevant *targumic* renderings:

MT:

אבן מעשו הב(ו)נים היתה לראש פינה מאת ה' היתה זאת והיא נפלאות בעינינו ...

RSV: “The stone, which the builders rejected, has become the head of the corner. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes”

LXX (117:22–23):

λίθον, ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας· παρὰ κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη καὶ ἔστιν θαυμαστὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν.

OT Peshitta:

כּפּא כּאִסלל כּנא מ, סֵא לישׁא גכּנא
כּאִסלל כּנא מֵאֵלֵינוּ סֵאֵלֵינוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ

Syro-Hexapla

כּפּא כּאִסלל כּנא מֵאֵלֵינוּ סֵאֵלֵינוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ

One observes that the OT Peshitta is the only *targumic* version of the biblical verse that uses a paraphrase for the “head of the corner”: *risheh d'benyana* (ישׁא גכּנא, “the main [corner]stone of the *building*”).⁴¹ Moreover, the appearance of this paraphrase turns out to be restricted in the OT Peshitta to the verse in question, thus constituting a unique feature of its textual tradition for Ps 118.⁴²

The text form of the first part of the quotation (Ps 118:22) is the same in all three Synoptic Gospels⁴³ and is identical to that of LXX, whereas the *OS* versions of Luke read as follows (the *Cureton* readings that differ from the *Sinaitic* are noted in brackets):

Luke 20:17:

סֵאֵלֵינוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ [אִסלל] סֵאֵלֵינוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ
גכּנֵנוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ [אִסלל] ⁴⁴

41 Cf. *risheh d'gunya* in *Syro-hexapla*.

42 Cf. Jer 51:26, where ולא יקחו ממן אבן לפנה (RSV: “No stone shall be taken from you for a corner”) is faithfully rendered by the Peshitta as אִסלל כּפּא כּאִסלל כּנא מֵאֵלֵינוּ סֵאֵלֵינוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ (*w'la nesbun minakh kifa l'zawitha*).

43 In Matthew and Mark the quotation is longer and includes also Ps 118:23.

44 Cf. אִסלל כּפּא כּאִסלל כּנא מֵאֵלֵינוּ סֵאֵלֵינוּ מֵאֵלֵינוּ כּכּנֵנוּ of the *OSG* versions of Matt 21:42 and Mark 12:10–11.

But he looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner/*Cur*: head of the building'?"

The *OSG* Cureton abandons the idiom of its Greek source—and therefore also the task of unearthing the *ipsissima verba* behind it—choosing instead to modify the saying in such a way that it would correspond to the OT Peshitta peculiar *risheh d'benyana*. It should be noted that the *Vetus Syra* translator differs here from other Syriac Gospel versions, which retain the wording closely reflecting the Greek source—*risha d'zawitha*, *risha d'qarna* and all the way to *risha d'guniya* with its slavish appeal to a loan-word ܪܫܐܢܐ (from γωνία).

Here as in other similar instances the *OSG* allegiance seems to have been given first and foremost to the Syriac *text* of the Old Testament, which enjoyed authoritative status in their milieu. Moved by practical considerations of polemic and mission, they were keen on editing biblical material found in the Greek Gospels in such a way that quotations would be easily recognized as such by the reader. In other words, at least in the case of biblical quotations the authority of the OT Peshitta was higher for the *OSG* compilers than that of the Greek Gospel.⁴⁵ Again, the above strategy clearly overshadows here an inclination, if any, to stay as close as possible to the *ipsissima verba* retained in the Greek source. OT Peshitta is treated as a sacred text, and the status of the Gospel *text* is boosted by adjustment to the East Syriac language of the Peshitta. As for the lay dialect supposedly spoken by Jesus and for the latter's *ipsissima verba* in such cases, they seem to have not been ascribed a major importance.

45 The earlier investigations (Ruzer, "Biblical Quotations in the Old Syriac Gospels," Ruzer and Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies*, "Appendix") have led to the conclusion that the peculiarities of the *OSG* treatment of biblical material in their entirety cannot be ascribed to the influence of Tatian's *Diatessaron*—a thesis that is not shared by the majority of the scholars in the field. For our discussion, however, the question of copyright is less important; what is important is the existence of an attitude assigning such a predominant authority to the Syriac Old Testament text vis-à-vis the Greek Gospel. It may be added that such an attitude seems to indicate a relatively early time of composition (or a peculiar milieu), when the process of New Testament ("secondary canon") canonization was still underway, a process accompanied by attempts to define the relation between the two parts of what would eventually (ca. 200) become the Christian Bible.

5 *The Cave of Treasures versus Philoxenus of Mabbug*

The *Cave of Treasures* (*CT*) is a composition of a re-written Bible genre, covering the history of the fall and salvation starting from the creation and going all the way to Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection and the Pentecost. There is a scholarly consensus that *CT* was originally composed in Syriac.⁴⁶ The fourth century has often been seen as a time of compilation of an earlier version of the text.⁴⁷ It is quite probable, however, that much earlier traditions also found their way into *CT*. A later (final?) redaction in the beginning of the sixth century by an East-Syrian scholar is usually assumed.⁴⁸

The period of late fifth–early sixth century is usually viewed as characterized by the onslaught of Greek hegemony, accompanied by voluminous translations into Syriac of Greek patristic literature. It is in the beginning of the sixth century that Philoxenus of Mabbug (died 523), a prolific anti-Chalcedonian author wrote his commentary on the Prologue of John, where, focusing on John 1:14, he forcefully argued for the miaphysite character of the incarnation.⁴⁹ Philoxenus' strategy includes considerable effort to harmonize the Johannine statement on the "Word becoming flesh" with, on the one hand, Old Testament passages speaking of earlier stages of God's revelation and, on the other, with certain key New Testament statements, most prominently, Synoptic descriptions of Mary's pregnancy and Jesus' birth, seemingly precluding an incarnation-centered interpretation.

46 The text has been presented by Ri (*La Caverne des Tresors. Les deux recensions Syriaces* [ed. Su-Min Ri; CSCO 486-487; 2 vols.; Louvain: Peeters, 1987]) as extant in two recensions, West-Syriac and East-Syriac (R. Oc. and R. Or., respectively).

47 Ri (*ibid.*) proposes the first half of the third century.

48 For a discussion of the *status quaestionis* and new suggestions, see Clemens Leonhard, "Observations on the Date of the Syriac Cave of Treasures," in *The World of the Arameans*. Vol. 3, *Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul-Eugène Dion* (ed. Michèle Daviau, John W. Wevers, and Michael Weigl; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 255–94.

49 *Philoxène de Mabbog. Commentaire du prologue johannique* (ed. and French trans. André de Halleux; CSCO 380–381, *Scriptores Syri* 165–166; Louvain: Impr. orientaliste, 1977) (hereafter referred to as *Comm.*). For a general discussion of Philoxenus' miaphysite spirituality attested in that work, see André De Halleux, "Monophysitismus und Spiritualität nach dem Johanneskommentar des Philoxenus von Mabbug," *Theologie und Philosophie* 53 (1978): 353–66.

Philoxenus' solution for the latter problem has been discussed at length by Aryeh Kofsky and me in an earlier study.⁵⁰ I will mention here only the aspects pertaining to the linguistic side of Philoxenus' argumentation. He addresses what may present itself as two grave hermeneutical difficulties: the lack of explicit reference to the incarnation in the Synoptics and the absence of a pregnancy–birth narrative in John. This distinction is highlighted by a seemingly novel incarnation terminology employed by Philoxenus, where “becoming flesh” (ܘܒܕܠܐ) refers to the initial moment of incarnation followed by pregnancy and birth. The complementary term “becoming human” (ܘܒܗܡܢܐ) indicates the full adoption of humanity by the Logos.⁵¹

It is in this context that Philoxenus voices a harsh criticism of the Syriac (Peshitta) version of the Gospels and makes a bold suggestion for its revision. According to him, the Syriac translators either misapprehended the distinction between γένεσις (*genesis*, becoming), and γέννησις (*genesis*, birth) or, alternatively, thought that “becoming” (ܘܒܕܠܐ) is not appropriate for divinity, thus preferring the term “birth” (ܘܒܗܡܢܐ). Whatever the case, they are to blame for creating the impression that the Synoptics speak of “birth” and not of Johannine “becoming.” The translators thus opted for their personal flawed theological understanding informed by what they saw as appropriate to be said about divinity in Syriac and missed the true message of the word of God—the message expressed explicitly in the Greek text of John, but clearly discernable also in the Greek of the Synoptic tradition.⁵²

Philoxenus' criticism of earlier Syriac writers (branded by him as “unintentionally Nestorian”) and translators of the New Testament occurs also in his other writings. Thus in his *Letter to the Monks of Senoun* he bewails the

50 Aryeh Kofsky and Serge Ruzer, “Christology and Hermeneutics in Philoxenus' Commentary on John 1:14,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 71 (2005): 343–62; see also Ruzer and Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies*, Chapter 5: “Philoxenus of Mabbug: Hermeneutics of Incarnation,” 121–40.

51 *Comm.* 16, p. 42 lines 2–3. For Philoxenus' theological application of these two terms in the *Commentary*, see the discussion in Kofsky and Ruzer, “Christology and Hermeneutics.” Philoxenus seems to have invented these Syriac neologisms. See André de Halleux, “La philoxénienne du symbole,” in *Symposium Syriacum 1976* (OrChrAn 205, Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1978), 295–315; Lucas Van Rompay, “Malpânâ dilan Suryâyâ. Ephrem in the Works of Philoxenus of Mabbog: Respect and Distance,” *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 7/1 (2004); Sebastian P. Brock, “L'apport des pères grecs à la littérature syriaque,” in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque* (ed. A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet; Etudes syriaques 4; Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 13–14.

52 Namely, in Matt 1:1, 18–20 and Luke 1:35; 3:23. See *Comm.* 16, p. 41 lines 9–17, p. 42, line 28.

imprecision of the Syriac terms used by his predecessors including the great Ephraem himself.⁵³ This criticism included the notion of Syriac's inherent "theological inadequacy"—thus Philoxenus' impetus to create a new Syriac translation of the New Testament, which should remain as close to the Greek original as possible.⁵⁴ It should be noted, however, that in his *Commentary*, Philoxenus never criticizes the Peshitta version of the Old Testament; moreover, it is recruited to provide evidence for the preliminary phases in the history of God's revelation, which would climax in his Logos' incarnation.⁵⁵ So, the Peshitta Aramaic had been, as it were, adequate to convey God's will as revealed during that earlier epoch—it is only concerning the final, Christian, stage that its adequacy vis-à-vis Greek is questioned! To sum up, an initial Aramaic (or Hebrew for that matter) version of the Gospel narrative is in no way presupposed here; moreover the Greek is perceived as a perfect means for transmitting the deepest mystery of (miaphysite) faith.

The *Cave of Treasures* may be viewed as containing, inter alia, a polemical literary reaction to the overwhelming patristic influence on Syriac Christianity, of which Philoxenus is such an outstanding example. As shown elsewhere, the composition is keen on developing a distinctive Syriac ethno-cultural identity—vis-à-vis both Judaism and "other (western) Christianities"—including such salient identity markers as territory, traditional cult and language.⁵⁶ It is

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- 53 Philoxenus, *Letter to the Monks of Senoun*, p. 54 line 23, p. 55 line 11 (ed. and French translation by André de Halleux [CSCO 231–232; Syr. 98–99; Louvain: Impr. orientaliste, 1963]); see Van Rompay, "Ephrem in the Works of Philoxenus."
- 54 The amendment to the translation of the Synoptic accounts of Jesus' birth remain one of the very few certain examples of Philoxenus' editing activity. See De Halleux, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, 43, 121–25, 510; Brock, "L'appart des pères grecs."
- 55 At one point, Philoxenus bases his argument for the idea of (the miaphysite) incarnation on the Peshitta rendering of Bar 3:35–36: "Again, prophet Jeremiah said in the epistle of Baruch that 'He is our God and that there is no *other* to be counted with Him. He founded the way of wisdom and gave it to Jacob his servant and to Israel his chosen. And after all this *He* appeared on earth and wandered among men'" (*Comm.* 18, p. 46 lines 1–4; emphasis added). This would definitely be more problematic on the basis of the Septuagint (Bar 3:34–41): οἱ δὲ ἄσπερες ἔλαμψαν ἐν ταῖς φυλακαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ εὐφράνθησαν, 35 ἐκάλεσεν αὐτοὺς καὶ εἶπον Πάρεσμεν, ἔλαμψαν μετ' εὐφροσύνης τῷ ποιήσαντι αὐτούς. 36 οὗτος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, οὐ λογισθήσεται ἕτερος πρὸς αὐτόν. 37 ἐξεύρεν πάσαν ὁδὸν ἐπιστήμης καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν Ἰακωβ τῷ παιδί αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἰσραὴλ τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. 38 μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὤφθη καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις συνανεστράφη. 41 αὕτη ἡ βίβλος τῶν προσταγμάτων τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ὁ νόμος ὁ ὑπάρχων εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
- 56 See Ruzer and Kofsky, *Syriac Idiosyncrasies*, Chapter 4: "The *Cave of Treasures*: Calvary versus Earthly Paradise," 87–120.

the latter that will be addressed here: geographical and “ritual” exclusiveness is bolstered in the *CT* by a linguistic one—the *CT* claims, basing its argumentation on OT Peshitta wordings from the story of creation and the fall, that Syriac was the language of creation.⁵⁷ Moreover, it was the primordial language of humanity (*CT* 24.10–11):

And in the days of Peleg all the tribes and families of the children of Noah gathered together, and went up from the East. And they found a plain in the land of Sên'ar, and they all sat down there; and from Adam until this time they were all of one speech and one language. They all spoke this language, that is to say, SÛRYĀYĀ (ܣܘܪܝܝܐ, Syrian), which is ÂRÂMĀYĀ (ܐܪܡܝܐ, Aramean), and this language is the king of all languages. Now, ancient writers have erred in that they said that Hebrew was the first [language] (ܘܚܘܪܝܐ ܘܡܘܕܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ), and in this matter they have mingled an ignorant mistake with their writing. For all the languages there are in the world are derived from Syrian, and all the languages in books are mingled with it (ܘܚܘܪܝܐ ܘܡܘܕܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ ܘܚܝܝܐ).

As noted, such tradition was popular in Syriac-speaking Christianity in Late Antiquity. The *CT*, however, gives it a further and, admittedly, rather enigmatic bend: not only is Syriac the most ancient and the holiest tongue, the original universal language of humanity thus having priority over Hebrew, but the very form of its right-side oriented script indicates its closeness to God, whereas the form of the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman scripts are characterized by their opposite “bend sinister,” which seems to indicate abandoning the true faith (*CT* 24.11):⁵⁸

57 *CT* 3.6 (English rendition of the *CT* passages is indebted to W. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures* [London: The Religious Tract Society, 1927], 55–56): “But he was swept away out of heaven and fell, and the fall of himself and of all his company from heaven took place on the Sixth Day, at the second hour of the day. And the apparel of their glorious state was stripped off them. And his name was called ‘Sâtânâ’ because he turned aside [from the right way, from the root *s-t-n*], and ‘Shêdâ’ because he was cast out [from the root *sh-d-’*], and ‘Daiwâ’ because he lost the apparel of his glory. And behold, from that time until the present day, he and all his hosts have been stripped of their apparel, and they go naked and have horrible faces.” Cf. the rabbinic exegesis in favor of Hebrew in, for example, *Gen. R.* 31.14.

58 Cf. *CT* 45:4–15.

at all.⁵⁹ In a curious replay of the distinction between the language of God/creation and that of revelation (see above)—with the latter adjusted to the needs of the providentially chosen “first audience”—Jesus seems to have had to speak Hebrew (with elements of Greek and Roman?), the language of those evil people who eventually would not accept him as “their master.”

Whereas in the *CT* the providential aspect regarding the Greeks and the Romans remains obscure, at least the Jews are clearly marked for punishment for the refusal to see in Jesus their Messiah by the “Aramean/Syriac” king Abghar of Edessa.⁶⁰ It is interesting that the same list of languages—again, with Syriac conspicuously left out, but with much more “positive” providence supposed—surfaces in the twelfth-century miaphysite Syriac author Dionysius bar Salibi already mentioned above, who states in the Introduction to his *Commentary on the Gospels* (par. 37, translation by Joseph Tarzi):

Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew in the land of Palestine, and Mark wrote his in Rome in Latin, that is, Frankish. However, St. Ivarius says that Mark wrote in Egypt. Luke wrote in Greek in Alexandria. John wrote in Ephesus. Thus the Gospel was written in three languages, for in these very languages the inscription on the Cross of our Lord was written, that is, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Hebrew was used for the sake of the Jews, Greek for Pilate, and Latin for Herod. Thus, the languages that were used for His condemnation were also used for preaching His Gospel.

It is illuminating how a variation of the common Christian tradition concerning the composition of various Gospels with Matthew customarily representing

59 The alternative conclusion, namely, that they were all Jesus' followers and thus did not take part in bringing him to his trial and death seems less probable. The motif of a pre-Christian ancient community that providentially did not take part in Jesus' crucifixion does not belong exclusively to *CT*; a similar claim appears in an early chronicle about the conversion of Georgia (Kartli) to Christianity. The righteous Jews of Kartli, who had been called—along with representatives of other Jewish communities—to participate in Jesus' trial, used the pretext of their great distance from Jerusalem to justify their inability to arrive in time. They thus avoided taking part in the evil deed committed by their fellow Jews. In the Georgian narrative, however, this *topos* of a community's exemption from the guilt is not accompanied by the motif of linguistic superiority. For an English translation of the chronicle and discussion, see Constantine B. Lerner, *The Wellspring of Georgian Historiography: The Early Medieval Historical Chronicle, The Conversion of K'art'li and the Life of St. Nino* (London: Bennett & Bloom, 2003).

60 Cf. “The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle,” in William Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents* (Amsterdam: Oriental Press, 1967; Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias, 2005), 30.

the (original?) Hebrew version⁶¹ is supplied here with polemical overtones—even if dramatically subdued in comparison to the *Cave of Treasures*.

6 A Judeo-Christian Tradition in Arabic Treatise?

In the course of last two decades, the history of the early Judeo-Christian movement and its literary output has been the object of a renewed scholarly interest and updated evaluation.⁶² The outline of this history is still to a large extent based on conjecture because of the paucity and mostly late provenance of the surviving evidence. Generally speaking, however, the term is usually applied to those Jewish followers of Jesus of Nazareth who supposedly continued their more or less isolated existence on the margins of Christianity which was becoming predominantly Gentile, while claiming to be the only true heirs of Jesus himself and his first disciples.⁶³ As can be gleaned from the available sources, certain Judeo-Christian groups were still to be found as late as the tenth century, for example, in the area of today's Mosul.⁶⁴

The passage discussed below comes from a tenth-century polemical tractate in Arabic by a well-known Moslem author 'Abd al-Jabbār.⁶⁵ However, as Shlomo Pines forcefully argued, the character of a considerable portion of its anti-Christian polemic makes its attribution to a Moslem theologian more than problematic. Pines therefore suggested that 'Abd al-Jabbār had incorporated—while adapting for his purposes—a composition of Judeo-Christian provenance, which might have reflected a centuries-old tradition. Analysis of its peculiarities also led Pines to a number of more pointed conclusions: (a) the tradition incorporated by 'Abd al-Jabbār must have been formed, at

61 See Papias' testimony and the discussion above.

62 See Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*; Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel*; Matt A. Jackson-McCabe, ed., *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007).

63 See David Flusser, *Jesus* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2001), 80.

64 See Shlomo Pines, "The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source," *Proceedings of the Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities* II.10 (1966): 271–76.

65 "The Establishment of Proofs for the Prophethood of Our Master Mohammad." On the MS and the stormy history of its scholarly appropriation, see Pines "The Jewish Christians," 234–39; Samuel M. Stern, "Quotations from Apocryphal Gospels in 'Abd Al-Jabbār," *JTS* 18/1 (1967): 34–57; Gabriel S. Reynolds, *A Muslim Theologian in the Sectarian Milieu: 'Abd al-Jabbār and the Critique of Christian Origins* (Islamic History and Civilization. Studies and Texts 56; Leiden: Brill, 2004), i–xv.

least in its main part, not later than the beginning of the seventh century—based on the fact that it neither refers nor alludes in any way whatsoever to the advent of Islam, as well as on additional historical indications; (b) other details, such as mentioning the Armenians as a Christian nation, establish the fourth century as the *terminus post quem*; (c) the Judeo-Christian community in question seems to have flourished in the area of Nestorian dominance—based on the hints provided by 'Abd al-Jabbar himself (Pines does not preclude the possibility that it even led a semi-clandestine existence *within* the Nestorian Church); and (d) the Judeo-Christian source-text was translated into Arabic from Syriac.⁶⁶

Whereas certain elements of Pines' analysis have been challenged,⁶⁷ his conjectures, in my mind, remain the most plausible explanation for the peculiarities of the tradition perused by the Moslem polemist. What is important for our discussion is the fact that the issue of language clearly stands out as one of these peculiarities functioning here as a core polemical identity marker.⁶⁸ The tradition in question presupposes that there was in the beginning a Hebrew version of the Gospel; moreover, our narrative outlines in detail the process that led to suppressing that original and the only reliable Gospel, for the sake of Greek and other later accounts full of inexactnesses and plain inventions. According to this version of the nascent Christianity's history, after Jesus' death his disciples remained part of the Jewry in the land of Israel, prayed in the synagogues, celebrated Jewish festivals, strictly adhered to the rituality-centered understanding of the Torah and, yes, spoke Hebrew. There were, however, also tensions and disagreement regarding the claim for Jesus' messiahship. In other words, already in the beginning there was conflict and intrigue. I quote the tractate in Pines' English translation (71a–b):⁶⁹

(Some of) the (early) Christians used to complain to the Romans about (their conflicts with) the Jews... appealing to their pity... And the Romans said to them: "Between us and the Jews there is a pact which (obliges us) not to change their religious laws (*adyān*). But if you would abandon their laws and separate yourselves from them (becoming like us)... we should help you and make you powerful, and the Jews would find no way (to harm you)... Go, fetch your companions, and bring your Book (*kitāb*)." They went to their companions... and said to them: "Bring

66 See Pines, "The Jewish Christians," 271–73.

67 See the vehement opposition in Stern, "Quotations from Apocryphal Gospels."

68 See Pines, "The Jewish Christians," 256.

69 *Ibid.*, 251–53.

the Gospel (*al-injil*) . . . so that we should go to them.” But these (companions) said to them: “We are not permitted (to let) the Romans pollute the Gospel. (71b) In giving a favorable answer to the Romans, you have accordingly departed from the religion . . .” and they prevented their (taking possession of) the Gospel or gaining access to it . . . (As for) those who had given a favorable answer to the Romans they came together and took counsel how to replace the Gospel, seeing that it was lost to them . . . They said: “. . . Everyone among us is going to call to mind that which he remembered of the words of the Gospel and of (the things) about which the Christians talked among themselves (when speaking) of Christ.” Accordingly, some people wrote a Gospel. After (them) came others (who) wrote (another) Gospel. (In this manner) a number of Gospels were written. (However) a great part of what was (contained) in the original was missing.

So, the uncompromising component of the Jesus movement denied the “collaborators” access to the initial Hebrew Gospel, and those had to create new, less than reliable accounts that would later serve the historical Church. On top of their other imperfections, the resulting secondary Gospels were written—as part of the strategic bet on “Romanization”—in the “language of the Romans” (71b–72a):⁷⁰

Then there is not among these a Gospel (written) in the language of Christ (Messiah), which was spoken by him and his companions (*ashāb*), namely the Hebrew (*al-ʿibraniyya*) language, which is that of Abraham (*Ibrāhīm*), the Friend (*khalīl*) of God and of the other prophets, (the language) which was spoken by them and in which the Books of God were revealed to them and to the other Children of Israel and in which God addressed them. For they abandoned (this language). Learned men (*al-ʿulamā*) said to them: “O Christians, give up the Hebrew language, which is the language of Christ and the prophets (who were) before him, peace be upon them, (72a) and (adopt) other languages” . . . Therefore . . . the giving-up (of the language) occurred because your first masters aimed at deception in their writings using such stratagems as quotations from counterfeit authorities in the lies which they composed, and concealing these stratagems. They did this because they sought to obtain domination (*riʿāsa*). For at that time the Hebrews (*al-ʿibraniyya*) were people of the Book and men of knowledge. Accordingly, these individuals altered the lan-

70 Ibid., 252–53.

guage or rather gave it up altogether, in order that the men of knowledge should not grasp quickly their teaching and their objectives. Accordingly, they . . . (took up) numerous other languages which had not been spoken by Christ and his companions. (Those who speak these languages) are not people of the Book and have no knowledge concerning God's books and commandments. Such were the Romans, the Syrians, the Persians, the Armenians and other foreigners.

The switch from Hebrew, first, to the "language of the Romans" (in all probability Greek)⁷¹ and, later, to languages of other peoples—Syriac included!—is viewed by this tradition as the key expression of Christianity's decadence occurring already in the course of the initial period of its history. Those were some among the Jesus movement's first leaders, who, striving for dominion and expansion of the new faith, gave up Hebrew, adopting instead the language(s) of religiously illiterate Gentiles. It is Hebrew that had always been a means of communication among the chosen people, that "tough minority," which included the Messiah himself and his companions, as well as of God's revelation throughout the history—hence, the Old Testament revelation can be adequately appreciated in Hebrew only. And only adherence to the Hebrew heritage could guarantee the preservation of the true teaching of Jesus.

The leaders of the movement should have put their efforts into mission to the Jews; this mission would have surely been a difficult one because of Jewish penchant for exact argumentation and their great mastery of the Scriptures, but even a limited and slow success here would be much more meaningful than winning over masses of religiously illiterate Gentiles with ready-made superficial argumentation. As the text seems to indicate, it is the appeal to quotations from non-Hebrew versions of Scripture ("counterfeit authorities") that allowed introducing "theological lies" into the pristine Christian message. It deserves notice that at the time of the tradition's formation, even the Jewish-Christian community which supposedly engendered it seems to have been already using a translated version of the Gospels for recitation⁷²—Syriac according to Pines' reconstruction.⁷³ If Pines is right, the criticism against Syriac may thus have

71 See, e.g., *ibid.*, 250 n. 40.

72 See *Establishment of Proofs* 72a (Pines, "The Jewish Christians," 253): "Thus there is no Christian who (in observing) a religious obligation recites these Gospels in the Hebrew language: he does not do so out of ruse (using) a stratagem, in order to avoid (public) shame."

73 See Pines, *ibid.*, 259.

here an additional overtone compared to the one leveled against other “secondary” languages—it is actually also a self-criticism.⁷⁴

One observes that in this context also, similarly to the *Cave of Treasures*, Hebrew is explicitly distinguished from Syriac-Aramaic. Admittedly this differentiation serves in the two traditions opposite polemical standpoints—the *CT* identifies with the Syriac side against the Hebrew one (together with the Greek and the Roman), whereas the tradition incorporated by ‘Abd al-Jabbar identifies with the Hebrew side against the Syriac and the others—but in both cases the differentiation functions as an identity marker of core importance.

7 Conclusion

A number of early Syriac traditions reviewed in this study, including one extant in Arabic translation but presumably of Syriac origin, reflect variegated language-related sets of priorities. These traditions attest to a wide range of opinions on the status of Aramaic (Syriac): from elevating it as the language of creation and portraying it as the only truly godly means of communication to criticizing its inability to convey the deep truths of Christian faith adequately expressed only in Greek or, alternatively, equating it with other “lay” tongues divorced from the history of revelation represented by Hebrew.

As for Semitic origins of the Christian tradition, two different but intertwined topics may be discerned here: the question of Jesus’ own language and that of initial Gospel accounts. Even when our texts do not explicitly elaborate on the former, they do contain implicit indications regarding the language(s) of Jesus’ milieu, from which one may make conjectures about the language of Jesus’ preaching. The *Old Syriac Gospels* already bear witness to awareness that certain sayings were pronounced in an Aramaic dialect—not necessary identical to that of the *OSG* themselves—but, as we have seen, this awareness does not belong to the compilers’ core priorities, being instead overshadowed by other allegiances.

Even if one has reason to believe that some (Western) Aramaic elements of Jesus’ parlance continued to be recognized later on, the *Cave of Treasures* clearly marks the languages of Jesus’ immediate milieu as the languages of the hostile “others,” polemically distinct from Syriac proper. The *CT* might have shared the opinion of those Syriac authors who distinguished between the primordial sacredness of Syriac as the language of creation and the second-rate status of Hebrew, in which God had to reveal himself to the Jews out of

74 It might have alternatively represented the input of the Moslem editor of the tradition.

condescension to their notorious inability to master other tongues. Thus in the context of the *CT*, the new Christ-centered phase of revelation becomes a replay of that ages-old linguistic situation: Jesus addressed his audience in its dialect—namely, in Hebrew (possibly interspersed with Western Aramaic elements) and in Greek and Roman when talking to “authorities.” This was, however, out of necessity with the distinction between Jesus’ language and the holy Syriac being emphatically retained.

Whereas the *Cave of Treasures* does contain certain indirect indications on the issue of Jesus’ language, a similar tradition, also engendered by the Gospel account about the inscription on the cross, is evoked by Bar Salibi in connection to the languages in which various Gospels were first composed. Both issues are intrinsically connected in the narration of early Christian history incorporated by ‘Abd al-Jabbar. Our discussion highlights a rather surprising feature shared by all the traditions reviewed: whatever their allegiances—pro-Hebrew, as with the Judeo-Christian material, pro-Syriac, as with the *CT*, or pro-Greek, as with Philoxenus—Syriac is never explicitly pictured as part of the setting for Jesus’ preaching nor as the original language of the Gospels.

Whatever (Western) Aramaic elements may be presupposed by early Syriac writers in that pristine means of Christian message, they are viewed as distinct from “proper Syriac” of the writers themselves. Whereas Greek sources either did not make a polemical differentiation between Hebrew and Aramaic as a supposed language of pristine Gospel tradition or, as with Eusebius, vote for Aramaic, the Syriac traditions surveyed somewhat paradoxically mark the “pristine Christian tongue” as foreign to their own, as a marker—be it positive or negative—of “otherness.” It seems, then, that we should not locate the beginnings of Jesus’ language-related species of “Syriac pride” in the early centuries of Christianity, seeing it instead as a later development.

What were the reasons for that “late discovery” within the Syriac communities? This study does not aspire to provide definite answers for this question. As indicated, substantial dialect differences could have contributed to the feeling of “otherness,” but only further investigation may clarify the issue. In any case, the opinions surveyed seem to have been formed with no established early Semitic Christian tradition in sight, which would communicate that Aramaic—as opposed to Hebrew—was the language of the pristine Christian message, or, for that matter, of the first-century C.E. Jewry in the land of Israel. While not providing a *direct* indication of the actual first-century C.E. linguistic situation, these findings, in my opinion, may still be relevant for its assessment.

Literary Issues in a Trilingual Framework



Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena of Targum and Translation in the Second Temple Period and Post-Second Temple Period

Daniel A. Machiela

1 The Debate over Language(s) in Second Temple Period Israel and the “Language of Jesus”

For well over a century now the study of Aramaic language and literature during the Second Temple period and the “language of Jesus” have been closely intertwined. We might trace the subject of the language in which the Gospels were originally composed and (at least one degree further removed) the language used by Jesus and his disciples for teaching and conversing all the way back to the early second-century witness Papias, who testified that “Matthew composed his history in the Hebrew dialect, and every one translated it as he was able.”¹ However, the modern study of the language behind the Greek of our Gospels rests to a great extent on a nineteenth- and twentieth-century battle waged over the status of Hebrew and Aramaic during the first centuries of the Common Era. The most famous figures in this debate are the German-Jewish reformer Abraham Geiger and his later academic nemesis Moses Segal. Geiger, in his *Lehr-und Lesebuch zur Sprache der Mischnah*,² asserted that by the time of the Second Temple period Hebrew as a spoken vernacular was dead, but that it was resuscitated following the Bar-Kokhba revolt (132–135 C.E.) as the *Gelehrtsprache* of an elite scholarly guild (the rabbis) in a manner comparable to academic Medieval Latin. By this time Aramaic had long been the popular language of Palestinian Judaism, and Hebrew would have been inaccessible to the large majority of the populace in Israel and abroad. The upshot of this argument was that the Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) of the Tannaim was a purely artificial language formulated for academic, ideological, and perhaps political purposes by the Sages—an opinion that had contemporary implications for Geiger in inter-Jewish debates over the use of Hebrew in Jewish liturgy, which he opposed. Long before this unnatural, rabbinic language was invented, living Hebrew had died and been supplanted by Aramaic. Geiger’s view of a popular, natural, spoken Aramaic vs. an artificial, academic, largely inaccessible

1 Quoted by Eusebius in his *E.H.* 3.39.

2 A. Geiger, *Lehr-und Lesebuch zur Sprache der Mischnah* (Breslau: J. C. C. Leudart, 1845).

Hebrew predominated for several decades,³ and made its way into German New Testament scholarship through G. Dalman's influential *Die Worte Jesu*,⁴ translated into English in 1902. This view has become a popular and surprisingly enduring assumption of most New Testament scholars since the widely heralded monographs of C. C. Torrey and Matthew Black, the titles of which make their positions clear: *The Translations Made from the Original Aramaic Gospels* and *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*.⁵ In essential points this view was later reaffirmed by Joseph Fitzmyer.⁶

It was in 1908 that Segal first decried the above argument,⁷ asserting instead that MH was the product of a developing, spoken Hebrew that must have been alive and well throughout the Second Temple period (the period he wrote of was 200 B.C.E. to 200 C.E.), and was the direct descendant of the colloquial Hebrew of biblical times.⁸ Segal did not deny that Aramaic grew into a major vernacular language in Palestine during this time as well (perhaps at certain places and times eclipsing Hebrew), but contended that alongside it was a flourishing spoken Hebrew, at least in Judea.⁹ Segal's initial article was followed

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- 3 Geiger's basic presuppositions were adopted in several subsequent grammars of MH (L. Dukes [1846], Y. Weiss [1867], and C. Siegfried [1884]). On the development of this debate, see S. Kessler-Mesguich, "The Study of Mishnaic Hebrew: Some Historic Milestones," *Bulletin du Centre de recherche français de Jérusalem* 12 (2003): 136–52.
 - 4 G. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu mit Berücksichtigung des nachkanonischen jüdischen Schriftums und der aramäischen Sprache*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1898; 2d ed., 1930). Translation by D. Miller Kay: *The Words of Jesus: Considered in the Light of Post-Biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902).
 - 5 C. C. Torrey, *The Translations Made from the Original Aramaic Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), and M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1954 [1st ed.]).
 - 6 J. Fitzmyer, "The Study of the Aramaic Background of the New Testament," in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979), 1–27.
 - 7 M. Segal, "Mišnaic Hebrew and its Relation to Biblical Hebrew and to Aramaic," *JQR* 20 (Old Series, 1908): 647–737. It should be noted that Segal was preceded in this opinion by S. Graetz and a few others, though the latter had not articulated a full response to Geiger (see p. 650).
 - 8 *Ibid.*, 647.
 - 9 The widespread use of Aramaic in Palestine throughout the Second Temple period (which presumably grew stronger as time went on) is amply attested to by the variety of inscriptions and texts that employed the language, especially those discovered in the Judean Desert and Wadi Daliyeh. It is worth noting, however, that, as is the case with Hebrew, the vast majority of these texts are literary in nature and probably do not represent the spoken dialect in a precise way (cf. J. Greenfield's category of "Standard Literary Aramaic" in, for example, *Al Kanfei Yonah: Collected Studies of Jonas Greenfield on Semitic Philology* [2 vols.; Leiden: Brill/Jerusalem: Magnes, 2001], 1:111–20). Moreover, many of the inscriptions are deemed to be

up by *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* in 1927, in which he described MH as “a popular and colloquial dialect” that was used alongside Aramaic in daily life, but “exclusively in the school, and for religious purposes.”¹⁰ Segal has been supported in this basic stance by a preponderance of Israeli scholars subsequently working on MH, such as Jacob Epstein, Abba Bendavid, Eduard Kutscher, Chaim Rabin, Moshe Bar-Asher, and Baruch Levine.¹¹ In light of the Hebrew Bar-Kokhba letters, Józef Milik also subscribed to this theory, going so far as to state that “Mishnaic was the normal language of the Judaeen population in the Roman period.”¹² We may note the assessment of distinguished semiticist Takamitsu Muraoka, commenting on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls:

Qumran Hebrew reveals features that are so organically integrated into the texture of the language and other features that can be adequately accounted for only in terms of phonological processes and development

“Aramaic” on what some consider tremulous grounds, such as the presence of the noun **בן** (*bar*, “son”) alone. Still, in terms of at least the textual record now available, we must admit that Hebrew is significantly better attested in Late Second Temple period Palestine than Aramaic. For standard overviews of the evidence which, however, come to partially divergent final assessments, see J. A. Fitzmyer, “The Languages of Palestine of the First Century A.D.,” in *A Wandering Aramean*, 29–56 (repr. from *CBQ* 32 [1970]: 501–31); and J. Barr, “Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek in the Hellenistic Age,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 2, *The Hellenistic Age* (ed. W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 79–114.

10 M. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1927; repr. Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2001). Quotations are from pp. 6 and 14.

11 Some major contributions are: J. Epstein, *Introduction to the Text of the Mishna* (2 vols.; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1948 [Heb.]); A. Bendavid, *Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew* (2 vols.; Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1967 [Heb.]); E. Kutscher, “Mishnaic Hebrew,” in *Encyclopedia Judaica* 16:1590–608 (revised version in E. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* [ed. R. Kutscher; Jerusalem: Magnes; Leiden: Brill, 1982], 115–46); idem, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a)* (STDJ 6; Leiden: Brill, 1974 [first published in Hebrew; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1959]); idem, “The Language of the Hebrew and Aramaic Letters of Bar-Kosiba and His Contemporaries, Second Study: The Hebrew Letters,” *Leshonenu* 26 (1961): 7–23 [Heb.]; C. Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century,” in *The Jewish People in the First Century* (2 vols.; ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; CRINT 1.2; Assen: Van Gorcum; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1976), 2:1007–39; and B. A. Levine, “Hebrew (Postbiblical),” in *Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages* (SBL-RBS 42; ed. J. Kaltner and S. L. McKenzie; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 157–82. Also see the volume edited by M. Bar-Asher, *Studies in Mishnaic Hebrew* (ScrHier 37; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998).

12 J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (SBT 26; London: SCM, 1959), 130–31.

such that it must have had its basis in a community that used Hebrew as a means of oral communication. It is hardly an artificial and merely bibli-cizing means of literary creativity, but a natural, vibrant, idiom.¹³

To the detriment of New Testament scholarship, much of this literature was published in Modern Hebrew and remains untranslated, and has thus not been easily accessible or integrated into discussions of the original language of Gospel traditions and the language of Jesus. At the same time, some working closely with Aramaic, such as Beyer, Harrington, Gleßmer, and Kottsieper, continue to advance the view that Hebrew had effectively died out as a vernacular language by the Hellenistic period, while Seth Schwartz has attempted the same from a socio-political, historical angle.¹⁴ This may help explain, but does not excuse, the wide disparity between the still common declaration in the media, from many pulpits, and by too many New Testament scholars that “Jesus spoke Aramaic,”¹⁵ while those who work closely with the linguistic situation of Israel in antiquity may begin an article with a statement such as, “[a]ll scholars today agree that Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) represents a colloquial dialect used in Eretz-Israel in late antiquity.”¹⁶

As hinted at by the references above to Milik and Muraoka, the landscape of this debate shifted dramatically with the discovery and subsequent study of the

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- 13 T. Muraoka, “Hebrew,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2 vols.; ed. L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1:344.
- 14 See K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Band 1* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 273; D. J. Harrington, *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996), 18; U. Gleßmer, “Targumim,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2:915; I. Kottsieper, “And they did not care to speak Yehudit’: On Linguistic Change in Judah during the Late Persian Era,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (ed. O. Lipschits, G. N. Knoppers, and R. Albertz; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 95–124; S. Schwartz, “Language, Power and Identity in Ancient Palestine,” *Past and Present* 148 (1995): 3–47.
- 15 For example, while writing the present study I happened across a news article on Cypriot Maronite Arabic (S. Heller, “Bringing Back to Life an Ancient Language,” *Cypriot Mail* [February 7, 2010]) that declared “Cypriot Maronite Arabic (CMA) is a distinct language composed of a mixture of Arabic and Aramaic, the language of Jesus Christ and his disciples . . .”
- 16 G. A. Rendsburg, “The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew,” in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. I. Levine; New York and Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1992), 225–40 [225].

nearly one thousand manuscripts in the Judean Desert from the 1940s onward.¹⁷ The great majority of these were written Hebrew, though what type of Hebrew, and for what reasons it was employed, has remained a matter of discussion by experts (e.g. colloquial vs. literary, archaizing vs. contemporary, ideologically driven [or an “anti-language”] vs. reflective of broader Jewish society). This is a complex debate with no obvious answers, due primarily to the fact that the Hebrew even within these texts varies appreciably. Nevertheless, the vast majority of those studying ancient Judaism have taken these discoveries—and especially certain texts among them such as Hebrew Ben Sira, 4QMMT, the Copper Scroll, and the Hebrew Bar-Kokhba letters—to support decisively the basic position of Segal and deal a vital blow to that of Geiger.¹⁸ Alongside these developments have been studies drawing from the broader fields of linguistics and language theory, which advocate factoring into our assessments dynamics such as diglossia, dialect geography, and class dialects.¹⁹ Even the once common

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- 17 E. Puech has observed that any robust participant in the Qumran sect must have been at least bilingual, and Puech considered this to coincide with the population of Judea more generally at this time. See his “Du Bilinguisme à Qumrân,” in *Mosaïque de langues, mosaïque culturelle: Le bilinguisme dans le Proche-Orient ancien* (Antiquités sémitiques 1; Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1996), 181.
- 18 One significant collection of scholars who represent this trend is that comprising the International Symposium of the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira, first convened by T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde. The research of this group has been gathered in a series of monographs published by Brill, Leiden. The volumes that have appeared to date are: *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira: Proceedings of a Symposium Held at Leiden University 11–14 December 1995* (ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde; STDJ 26; Leiden: Brill, 1997); *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, Held at Leiden University, 15–17 December 1997* (ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde; STDJ 33; Leiden: Brill, 1999); *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde; STDJ 36; Leiden: Brill, 2000); and *Conservatism and Innovation in the Hebrew Language of the Hellenistic Period: Proceedings of a Fourth International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (ed. J. Joosten and J.-S. Rey; STDJ 73; Leiden: Brill, 2007).
- 19 See, e.g., G. A. Rendsburg, *Diglossia in Ancient Israel* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1990); W. R. Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine: 100–586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985); S. A. Kaufman, “The Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof,” in *The Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Panel Sessions, Hebrew and Aramaic* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988), 41–57; J. R. Davila, “Qoheleth and Northern Hebrew,” *Maarav* 5–6 (1990; Segert Festschrift): 69–87. However, see also the critique of a diglossic

assumption that a living Hebrew during the Second Temple period must have been restricted to Judea has now been challenged by Gary Rendsburg, who argues for MH being an essentially Galilean/Northern dialect of Hebrew. While Rendsburg's theory may require further evidence, his preliminary results warn against automatically writing off Hebrew as a strong, living dialect in the Galilee during our period.

2 The Factor of Translation

An area of special interest and relevance for the above debate is that of translation in Palestine during the Second Temple period, and it is this topic that will comprise the focus of the present study.²⁰ The fact that we possess ancient Aramaic Targumim for most of the Hebrew Scriptures (with the exception of Ezra–Nehemiah and Daniel) has been an oft-cited support for the argument that Hebrew was not understood by the majority of the Jewish population of Israel during the Second Temple period. If people understood Hebrew, then why produce these Aramaic translations? Indeed, if Aramaic was the common tongue and Hebrew a dusty relic used only in an artificial way by a small group of bookish scribes, we might expect to find strong evidence that Hebrew literature, Scripture in particular, was translated into the *lingua franca*

approach by J. Blau, "The Structure of Biblical and Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew in Light of Arabic Diglossia and Middle Arabic," *Leshonenu* 60 (1997): 21–32 [Heb.]; affirmed by Muraoka, "Hebrew," 344.

20 While we must acknowledge the importance of the Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures beginning already in the third centuries B.C.E. and onward, eventually collected into the Septuagint, they will not be discussed in this essay. The main reason for this is the present focus on translations within the land of Israel, while most (though perhaps not all) Greek translations are widely held to have been products of the Greek-speaking Diaspora, Egypt in particular (and more specifically Alexandria). In addition, the focus here is the interaction between Hebrew and Aramaic during the Second Temple period. Having said this, the way in which the Greek translations bear on our current findings may prove a fruitful area for further discussion and research. For the traditional opinion on the geographic setting of the Greek translations, see, e.g., S. Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 47–73. Also see the essays of Ameling, Gruen, Kruse, and Rajak in *Die Septuaginta—Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstalten von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.–23. Juli 2006* (ed. M. Karrer and W. Kraus; WUNT 219; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). Gruen (pp. 134–56) especially notes the fact that this translation may not have been made solely, or even primarily, out of a lack of facility in understanding Hebrew in Alexandria, but for political and ideological reasons as well. It is also noteworthy that some Greek translations have been found in the Judean Desert (more, in fact, than those in Aramaic!).

of Aramaic, as we find with Greek in the Greek-speaking Diaspora. According to those who espouse the theory of Aramaic predominance in Palestine this is precisely what we *do* find in the Targumim. In fact, one could say that the Targumim provide one of the last bunkers in which this group may find defense for their views.

The central argument of the present essay is that the evidence of translation gives little or no support to those wishing to show that Aramaic was the generally used vernacular during our period to the exclusion of Hebrew. In fact, it seems to point quite plainly in the direction of a widespread bi/multilingualism, with Hebrew being widely understood and spoken, undoubtedly alongside Aramaic. The following points will be advanced to support this assertion: (1) none of the classical Aramaic Targumim may be safely dated to Second Temple period Israel, though some of the traditions therein certainly originated in that period; (2) we have one sure Aramaic translation from Hebrew among the Dead Sea Scrolls (Job), and perhaps a second (Leviticus), though both present special cases that may be best explained without recourse to the populace being unable to interact with Hebrew; (3) we possess one ambiguous translation (Tobit), either from Hebrew to Aramaic or Aramaic to Hebrew, with the second option being plausible, if not preferable; and (4) taken together these points highlight a remarkable dearth of translation between Hebrew and Aramaic during the Second Temple period, far from what we should expect were Geiger's historical construction correct. Combined with the linguistic testimony of certain texts from the Judean Desert and MH, the absence of translation serves as yet another indicator that Hebrew was alive and well in Palestine until its demise sometime during the second to third centuries C.E.

a *The Classical Targumim: Their Character and the Issue of Dating*

The so-called classical (or rabbinic) Targumim are a broad and variegated group of compositions both in terms of their formal styles and origins, making simplified general statements regarding their natures, dates, and provenances ill-advised.²¹ For many of the books, or sub-canonical groupings like the Five

21 The most accessible and still best introductions to the Targumim are the articles by P. S. Alexander, "Jewish Aramaic Translations of the Hebrew Scriptures," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretations of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. M. J. Mulder and H. Sysling; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 217–54; and "Targum, Targumim," in *ABD*, 6:320–31. Also see R. LeDéaut, "The Targumim," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 2, *The Hellenistic Age* (ed. W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 563–90; and P. V. M. Flesher, "The Targumim," in *Judaism in Late Antiquity, Part One: The Literary and Archaeological Sources* (ed. J. Neusner; HdO I.16; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 40–63.

Books of Moses, there are two, three or more rival targum traditions, and the relationships between these are usually complex and difficult to discern. We are concerned here only with Targumim that have a possible claim on originating in the Second Temple period *as translations*, and this narrows the field somewhat.²²

The question of how ancient the classical Targumim are has vacillated between two foci: language and content. With the first, linguists have sought to assess the language of a given targum and then assign it a relative date in comparison with other Aramaic works from the Second Temple and Rabbinic periods, quite often including other Targumim. With the second, historians and textual scholars have weighed the antiquity of certain exegetical traditions within a targum in efforts to determine to which era they belong. Both of these have been the basis of theories as to the geographic origin of a given targum, the former striving to situate a particular targumic dialect between the established poles of Eastern Aramaic and Western Aramaic, and the latter sizing up a targum's exegetical expansions against the midrashic works distinctive to Babylonia on one hand, and Israel on the other. It is rarely claimed that a targum *as we now have it* hails from the Second Temple period; rather, it is much more common to find theories that a targum originated in the Second Temple period and then continued to develop for some time (even centuries) thereafter. This often leads to what scholars describe as a jumbled mixture of exegetical and linguistic traditions and characteristics from various times, making consensus regarding such issues as date and provenance difficult to attain.

The Targumim that are sometimes claimed to be from the Second Temple period *and* from Palestine are: Targum Neofiti (TN) to the Torah, Targum Onkelos (TO) to the Torah and Targum Jonathan (TJ) to the Prophets (which are of a similar ilk and often treated together), the so-called Fragmentary Targumim (FT), and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (PS-J) to the Torah. The earliest existing manuscripts for any of these date to the Late Rabbinic and Medieval periods. Although Targumim other than those just listed may also have devotees of a Second Temple Palestinian origin, the arguments for such are usually dependent on, or very similar to, the arguments used for the Targumim listed above. Since this is the case, we will deal with each of the Targumim listed in turn, assuming that our arguments concerning them could be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to other Targumim as well.

22 The Qumran Aramaic evidence will be dealt with in a separate section, below.

(1) Targum Neofiti

Anyone delving into the Targumim will soon run across the contention of Spanish targumist Alejandro Díez Macho and his students (e.g. L. Díez Merino) that TN is, in its essential features, a targum from late Second Temple Palestine.²³ Scholars had for some time before the discovery of TN considered an early (ca. first–second centuries C.E.), but to a significant extent hypothetical, “Palestinian Targum” (PT) to stand behind TO and TJ, FT, and PS-J.²⁴ Díez Macho claimed that in Neofiti we finally had a very early, “pre-Christian” edition of this PT, roughly contemporary with the Aramaic manuscripts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. According to Díez Macho, the linguistic differences between the Aramaic of the Scrolls and that of TN are diglossic in nature, with the Scrolls preserving a literary idiom while TN preserves instead a spoken form of Aramaic. Significant for New Testament scholarship was the adoption of this theory by M. Black in his *An Aramaic Approach*.²⁵ The opinion that TN is of a western, or Palestinian, origin has gained general acceptance, but the same cannot be said for the “pre-Christian” date assumed by Díez Macho and Black. Fitzmyer, Greenfield, Alexander, Kaufman, Fleisher, Gleßmer, and others have formed an impressive, convincing consensus against the early dating of TN by Díez Macho, arguing instead for a date somewhere between the second and fourth centuries C.E. for its earliest stratum.²⁶ Moreover, the assertion that

23 The manuscript, however, dates to the early sixteenth centuries C.E. See the introduction in vol. 1 of A. Díez Macho, *Targum Neophyti 1, Targum Palestinense ms. de la Biblioteca Vaticana* (6 vols.; Madrid and Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1968–79). For Díez Macho’s position on the origin of TN also see his *The Recently Discovered Palestinian Targum: Its Antiquity and Relationship with the Other Targums* (VTSup 7; Leiden: Brill, 1959), 222–45.

24 On the PT, see, e.g., Alexander, “Targum, Targumim,” 321–24; and S. A. Kaufman, “Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums and Their Use in the Study of First Century CE Texts,” in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context* (ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara; Sheffield: JSOT, 1994), 118–41.

25 Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 22–23. For a more recent affirmation of a prototypical PT, see Kaufman, “Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums,” 130. This concept is, however, challenged and deemed counterproductive by G. Boccaccini, “Targum Neofiti as a Proto-Rabbinic Document,” in Beattie and McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible*, 254–63 (261–63).

26 See Alexander, “Targum, Targumim,” 323; Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 42–43; Kaufman, “Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums,” 120–22; idem, “The Job Targum from Qumran,” *JAOS* 93/3 (1973): 317–27 (326–27); J. Greenfield, “Review of M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967),” *JNES* 31/1 (1972): 58–61 (59); Fleisher, “The Targumim,” 43–44; and U. Gleßmer, *Einleitung in die Targume zum Pentateuch* (TSAJ 48; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995).

the Aramaic of TN represents a spoken dialect instead of a literary one has been heavily criticized and widely dismissed.²⁷ It has become clear from the linguistic character of TN that it does not belong to the first century C.E.

(2) Targum Onkelos and Targum Jonathan

It is commonly acknowledged that TO and TJ have numerous eastern linguistic traits and share a special relationship with the Babylonian Talmud, and for this reason many who worked on TO, especially at an early stage, believed it was composed in the East.²⁸ At the same time, there are also a number of decidedly western characteristics in the Aramaic of TO and TJ, some of which are shared by the Dead Sea Scrolls (or, more generally, texts written in Standard Literary Aramaic) and Bar-Kokhba letters, along with other links to exegetical traditions in the PT. This mixed character has led most scholars in more recent times to posit that TO and TJ originated in Palestine (= Proto-Onkelos for TO) and then were thoroughly revised in Babylonia during the Amoraic period (third–fifth centuries C.E.).²⁹ Speculations from this group over composition of the earlier, Palestinian stage of TO and TJ have tended to claim a date between 70 and 135 C.E. due to a handful of linguistic affinities with Qumran Aramaic and certain bits of exegetical material.³⁰ Technically speaking, this leaves TO and TJ out of consideration as Second Temple Targumim, but one could (and some have) legitimately assumed that TO and TJ would then reflect a tradition of Aramaic translation already operative in Palestine during that era.

The assertion that TO and TJ were composed in the West because they contain some features of Standard Literary Aramaic or Imperial Aramaic (championed especially by Dalman and Kutscher) is less than determinative, and has rightly been questioned of late by Edward Cook and Christa Müller-

27 See especially the assessment of Greenfield (“Review of M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach*,” 60), who writes, “although it [TN] contains Palestinian traits it does *not* mirror the *spoken* Aramaic of Palestine during this period, and surely not the Galilean dialect” (italics original).

28 E.g. Geiger, Kahle, Rosenthal, and Ginsberg. See E. M. Cook, “A New Perspective on the Language of Onqelos and Jonathan,” in Beattie and McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible*, 142–56.

29 For this view, see Alexander, “Targum, Targumim,” 321–22, 324–25; Flesher, “The *Targumim*,” 45–47; and the survey in Cook, “A New Perspective,” where he cites the names of Nöldeke, Dalman, Kutscher, Kaufman, Greenfield, Tal, and Beyer.

30 For example, Dalman (*Die Worte Jesu* [1st ed.], 72; and *Grammatik des jüdischen-palästinischen Aramäische* [2d ed.; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1905], 12–13), following Geiger and Berliner, argued that TO best preserves the Aramaic dialect of first-century C.E. Judea.

Kessler. Working from the perspective of dialect geography,³¹ Cook contended that “these linguistic arguments [for a western origin] fail at crucial points and . . . do not warrant the conclusions usually drawn from them,”³² and that “[t]he problem of Onqelos and Jonathan’s language has suffered for years—from more than a century—from the tendency, perhaps unconscious, to divide the Aramaic dialects between two poles, Eastern and Western.”³³ Moreover, he reaffirms Ginsberg’s earlier opinion that the features deemed “Western” by Kutscher and others are, in fact, “neutral” and “not specifically Western. They are common retentions from an earlier stage of Aramaic.”³⁴ Cook goes on to point out that the dialectical situation “on the ground” calls for a much more nuanced approach than has hitherto been employed, in which scholars allow for many variously contiguous dialects from a number of geographic locales, each of which has its own distinctive mix of archaic, progressive, “Eastern”, and “Western” traits. In the end, Cook argues that TO and TJ are, in fact, written in a Central Aramaic dialect along the lines of Syriac and Palmyrene.³⁵ Müller-Kessler also questions the originally western origin of TO and TJ based on a comparison of its language with Jewish Aramaic magical bowls which, significantly, are from Mesopotamia and date from the fourth to seventh centuries C.E.³⁶ She observed that “90 per cent of the bowls inscribed in Aramaic square script

31 Cook’s basic approach and a good background for his argument are found in his earlier “Qumran Aramaic and Aramaic Dialectology,” in *Studies in Qumran Aramaic* (ed. T. Muraoka; Abr-NahrainSup 3; Louvain: Peeters, 1992), 1–21.

32 Cook (“A New Perspective,” 144–45) singles out Kutscher in particular, who, in his extremely influential article, “The Language of the ‘Genesis Apocryphon’: A Preliminary Study” (in *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls* [ed. C. Rabin and Y. Yadin; ScrHier 4; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1958], 1–35; repr. in *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies*; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1977], 3–36), lists very thin evidence indeed—namely, five vocabulary items (two of which have now been proven unsubstantial)—for his pronouncement of “a Palestinian and perhaps even Judaeian origin for TO.” It seems that Kutscher’s assessment has been taken over by a host of scholars without submitting it to the critical eye that Cook has.

33 Cook, “A New Perspective,” 142–43, 148.

34 *Ibid.*, 145.

35 Cook’s assessment seems to gain guarded approval from Kaufman (“Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums,” 123–24), who, in a discussion of the overly-cramped time frame involved in assuming that the Aramaic of TO/TJ is both relatively early and developed in the line of Qumran Aramaic, entertains that “a possible solution to our problem of limited time frame is to remove Onqelos from the Palestinian mix.”

36 C. Müller-Kessler, “The Earliest Evidence of Targum Onqelos from Babylonia and the Question of its Dialect and Origin,” *Journal for the Aramaic Bible* 3 (2001): 181–98. Specific examples of bowls with TO citations (also our earliest attestations) come from Nippur, in the heart of Mesopotamia.

show a pure language type that coincides with the Aramaic dialect of Targum Onqelos and Jonathan, and can be described as a supralocal Standard Literary Aramaic type.³⁷ This leads to the conclusion that “it has become obvious that it is conceivable that Targum Onqelos and Jonathan could have been translated in Babylonia despite their striking Western linguistic phenomena.”³⁸ As a basic point, then, we may say that the Aramaic linguistic situation of the Near East from the Persian through Roman periods (for any period, in fact) was far more complex than a simple “East/West” dichotomy allows, a complexity already articulated by Moshe Goshen-Gottstein in 1978.³⁹ It seems plausible based on the studies of Cook and Müller-Kessler that, rather than suggesting a two-stage (West and East), redacted pastiche, T_O and T_J were composed in a distinctive Middle Aramaic dialect from east of Palestine that preserves some older “Western” traits alongside later “Eastern” ones. At the very least Cook and Müller-Kessler have once again (and to my mind convincingly) opened up the possibility that T_O and T_J were composed to the east of Israel at a date appreciably later than the first century C.E.⁴⁰

(3) The Fragmentary Targumim and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

It is common to read in introductions to the Targumim that the FT and PS-J both originate from Palestine based on their Aramaic dialect (Jewish Palestinian Aramaic) and affinity with Palestinian midrashic works.⁴¹

37 Ibid., 188.

38 Ibid., 197.

39 This is acknowledged even by Alexander, who otherwise supports an early western stage of T_O and T_J, in his *The Targum of Lamentations: Translated with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes* (The Aramaic Bible 17B; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2008), 12–13. For the survey of this topic by Goshen-Gottstein, who despairs of ever finding a solid answer to the questions raised here but deals with several matters of great interest to the problem, see “The Language of Targum Onqelos and the Model of Literary Diglossia in Aramaic,” *JNES* 37, no. 2 (1978): 169–79.

40 Müller-Kessler (“The Earliest Evidence of Targum Onqelos,” 184) suggests the latter part of the third century C.E. This is not, however, to say that I fully agree with her extremely positivist historical reconstruction on p. 191.

41 See, e.g., E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ: A New English Edition* (rev. and ed. by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Black; 3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973), 1:102–5; Alexander, “Targum, Targumim,” 322–24; Flesher, “The Targumim,” 47–49; Z. Safrai, “The Targums as Part of Rabbinic Literature,” in *The Literature of the Sages: Second Part* (ed. S. Safrai et al.; CRINT 3.2; Assen: Van Gorcum; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 243–78 (267).

Consequently, they have both been widely regarded, along with TN, to derive from or be somehow linked to a core PT, and therefore form a targumic family in the Palestinian tradition.⁴² One might think that the main question, then, regards *when* they were written. It is clear that both Targumim in their present form are quite late: PS-J cannot have been redacted before the seventh or eighth centuries C.E. based on certain statements therein referring to Muslim names and events, while the FT is typically thought to be a medieval compilation of targumic excerpts from a PT recension standing somewhere between TN and PS-J, though this, too, has been a matter of some debate.⁴³ Despite this, it had for some time been in fashion to consider an early stratum of these Targumim to pre-date the Second Jewish Revolt (132–135 C.E.), and even to date as early as the first century C.E.⁴⁴ However, speaking of the nature and date of PS-J, Kaufman wrote in the early 1990s that “[m]ost workers in the field . . . have recognized the composite nature of that document—a kind of compote of Onqelos, the Palestinian Targum, midrashim, and even Babylonian Targum, a compote in terms of both language and content; a document, therefore, post-talmudic in date at the very earliest, in spite of the presence of admittedly early traditions within it.”⁴⁵ In general, this later date for the Palestinian Targumim has been affirmed by Gleßner and others, though some, such as Robert Hayward, have argued for a more intermediate

42 On this relationship and a “proto-Palestinian” targum tradition, see Safrai, “The Targums,” 268, 277–78. Note, however, Kaufman’s scathing rebuke to those who oversimplify this matter (“Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums,” 124). He writes, “careless writers have long mistakenly labelled Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch a Palestinian Targum, while more careful but even more egregiously misled scholars have frequently argued that Pseudo-Jonathan was the earliest, and, hence, most Palestinian of all Targums, at least in some early textual incarnation.”

43 Cf. Flesher, “The Targumim,” 47–49.

44 E.g. by M. Ginsburger, *Pseudo-Jonathan (Thargum Jonathan ben Usiel zum Pentateuch) nach der Londoner Handschrift* (Berlin: Calvary, 1903; repr. Jerusalem: Makor, 1969 and 1974; and Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1971); *Das Fragmententhargum: Thargum jeruschalmi zum Pentateuch* (Berlin: Calvary, 1899); P. Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza* (2d ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1959), 198–208; Black, *An Aramaic Approach* (3d ed.), 22–23; M. Delcor, “Le Targum de Job et l’araméens du temps de Jésus,” *RecSR* 47 (1973): 232–62; and Vermes, in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 1:104–105. In general, this also seems to be the assumption of Vermes in his *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (Studia Post-Biblica 4; Leiden: Brill, 1961 [2d ed., 1973]).

45 Kaufman, “Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums,” 124.

(fourth–fifth centuries C.E.) date.⁴⁶ Moreover, independent linguistic assessments by both Kaufman and Cook have isolated a distinctive Aramaic layer of PS-J's latest phase, which they contend is dialectically most comparable to Syriac.⁴⁷ Kaufman adds that “[t]o be sure many of its [i.e. this dialect’s] features are clearly derived from the Palestinian tradition . . . but in my opinion that is no reason to assume a Palestinian origin for any of the texts written in this dialect.”⁴⁸ Based on a number of recent studies, then, a provenance for PS-J and FT that is *both early and Palestinian* is very shaky and should not be assumed, though Vermes, Hayward, and others have shown that these Targumim do preserve many Second Temple period exegetical traditions. Bearing in mind all facets of these Targumim, the later incorporation of such traditions should not be deployed as evidence for their early composition, including earlier hypothetical strata belonging to the Second Temple period.⁴⁹

(4) Targum vs. Translation: What is a Targum?

The above survey has demonstrated, I hope, the lack of conclusive evidence for a Second Temple Palestinian origin for any of the classical Targumim, though we shall see below that some scholars have claimed that we *do* have a late Second Temple antecedent in the translation(s) from the Dead Sea Scrolls. The classical Targumim, rather, seem either to come from east of Israel (TO/TJ) or to originate in Palestine after the Second Temple period (TN, FT, PS-J), although they undoubtedly incorporate oral or written traditions from an

46 Gleßner, *Einleitung in die Targume zum Pentateuch*. For Hayward’s position, and a good example of the arguments for a later dating, see the English-language exchanges between Hayward and Avigdor Shinan in the following articles: A. Shinan, “The ‘Palestinian’ Targums—Repetitions, Internal Unity, Contradictions,” *JJS* 36 (1985): 72–87; R. Hayward, “The Date of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Some Comments,” *JJS* 40 (1989): 7–30; A. Shinan, “Dating Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Some More Comments,” *JJS* 41 (1990): 57–61; R. Hayward, “Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Anti-Islamic Polemic,” *JSS* 34 (1989): 77–93; and idem, “Inconsistencies and Contradictions in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: The Case of Eliezer and Nimrod,” *JSS* 37, no. 1 (1992): 31–55. Shinan’s views are most fully argued in his *The Aggadah in the Aramaic Targums to the Pentateuch* (2 vols.; Jerusalem: Makor, 1979 [Heb.]), esp. 1:119–46.

47 Kaufman, “Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums,” 124–25; E. M. Cook, “Revising the Bible: The Text and Language of the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum” (unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1986).

48 Kaufman, “Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums,” 125.

49 On this question see A. Shinan, “The Aggadah of the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch and Rabbinic Aggadah: Some Methodological Considerations,” in Beattie and McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible*, 203–17, and, in the same volume, Boccaccini, “Targum Neofiti as a Proto-Rabbinic Document.”

earlier (plausibly Second Temple) time. I now wish to suggest, following the insights of Philip Alexander, Alexander Samely, and others, that the *raison d'être* for the classical Targumim (no matter when and where they were written) was not primarily translational, but exegetical. In other words, the classical Targumim may not have been written because the populace could not understand Hebrew, but because their authors wanted a non-Hebrew medium in which they might relate extra-Scriptural information about the Hebrew text in synagogal or educational settings.

Scholars have long noted that the character of the Targumim regularly goes well beyond what we would normally call translation, though the distance between “targum” and “translation” varies from one example to the next (TO is usually considered the most literal, and PS-J the most expansive).⁵⁰ Alexander has described the close relationship between targum and rabbinic midrash, the latter citing a scriptural lemma to which commentary is then appended. This difference, suggests Alexander, is really only a formal one:

Targum was intended to be read side by side with Scripture: Targum proper is arguably only part of a larger literary structure which includes the Bible. The biblical text therefore can be seen as the lemma, the Targum as the comment. Even within the Targum proper there is an analogy to lemma + comment. At many points in the Targum it is possible to distinguish a literal base-text from explanatory plusses: the base-text is equivalent to the lemma, the plus to the comment.⁵¹

This is often true even of the more “literal” Targumim (TO and TN) and affirms that at least one function of targum was to *further explain and comment upon* the Hebrew text, not just translate it in a literal way.⁵² One can easily imagine the usefulness of this in the setting of public reading in a synagogue or academic study: the exegetically flexible Hebrew text of Scripture was nuanced and directed by the targum, providing hearers the true *sense*, or *meaning*, of

50 For discussion of the variety of approaches adopted by the different Targumim and their exegetical character, see Alexander, “Targum, Targumim,” 328–29; Safrai, “The Targums,” 257–62.

51 Alexander, “Targum, Targumim,” 329.

52 On this basic point, see also S. D. Fraade, “Rabbinic Views on the Practice of Targum, and Multilingualism in the Jewish Galilee of the Third-Sixth Centuries,” in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. I. Levine; New York and Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1992), 253–86; and D. M. Golomb, “Methodological Considerations in Pentateuchal Targumic Research,” *JSP* 18 (1998): 3–25.

the Hebrew.⁵³ The public deployment of targum is significant, for it would be unwieldy for traditional rabbinic midrashim to be used in such a setting (imagine the moans at the fifth *davar aher*). The targum provided a very effective, though largely monovalent (in contrast to the polyvalent midrashim), means of transmitting interpretation alongside Scripture to the general populace. This may also help explain why we do find polyvalent formats in certain later Targumim (e.g. to Job) that were not frequently at the center of public worship; these were more free to drift toward the midrashic form since they were likely more academic than public in nature. It is also important to note that often, but not always, the targum entails a distinctively *rabbinic* understanding of Scripture, though this depends upon the particular tradition. The finest and most persuasive work in this area has been done by Alexander Samely, who dedicated an entire monograph to detailing the specific formal features which define the Pentateuch Targumim. He is worth quoting here at length:

The assessment that the original rationale of oral targum was very likely a translation need and its *Sitz im Leben* the synagogal Bible lesson, together with the fact that the written targums happen to be in Aramaic, has effectively channeled the efforts to identify the literary form of targum in the direction of translation. However, there is no other translational text in Jewish antiquity (or, as far as I am aware, outside it) that shares the peculiar features of targum, and this includes the Septuagint even in recognition of its exegetical elements . . . To call a targum a 'translation' serves to obscure the essential *formal* differences between works like Neofiti, Pseudo-Jonathan, and Onkelos on the one hand and the Septuagint, the Peshitta, Vulgate, and—Qumran has been obliging—the Aramaic Job from Cave 11 on the other. The label is quite inadequate to cover the phenomena we find in the approximately 100 passages quoted in this study. Any random selection from the targums would have the same result. In short, 'translation' is not an accurate label for what we find in these texts.⁵⁴

Samely goes into great detail regarding the formal features of targumic exegesis, and it is impossible to articulate his findings fully here. An important trait is targum's close adherence to the wording of the Hebrew base-text, which may be altered in two main ways: (1) the replacement of potentially literal equivalents of Hebrew lexemes with other, non-literal equivalents; and (2) the expansion

53 Cf. Safrai, "The Targums," 249.

54 A. Samely, *The Interpretation of Speech in the Pentateuch Targums: A Study of the Method and Presentation in Targumic Exegesis* (TSAJ 27; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 158–59.

of the Hebrew syntactic structure by new text, often restricted to a single word or phrase, which typically simply fills in a grammatical slot provided by the Hebrew syntactic structure.⁵⁵ This second category is often governed by a distinct targumic vocabulary of “lexical links”, and in general a number of rules and hermeneutic presuppositions undergird the targumic project. An example of the first type of alteration would be the translation of *adoni* with *riboni* in TN to Exod 32:22, which helps nuance the sense of this verse.⁵⁶ The second type is illustrated by the following expansion in PS-J to Gen 24:33:

MT: And there was set to eat before him; and he said: “I will not eat until I have told my errand.” And he said, “Speak.”⁵⁷

PS-J: And there was set before him to eat *a meal which contained deadly poison. And he noticed it* and said: “I will not eat until I have told my errand.” And he said, “Speak.”

Note in this example how an interpretive element is added, though the syntactical structure of the verse is left intact. The ultimate effect of these targumic “co-texts,” argues Samely, is to narrow down the potential meanings of the Hebrew original. As such, the goal of targum is not so much translation as it is interpretation.⁵⁸

What significance, then, should be allotted to the fact that Aramaic, rather than Hebrew, was the language of choice for this project? The old view that it was a matter of necessity driven by the Jewish populace being unable to understand Hebrew remains a possibility, especially given the probable dates discussed above, but this is not the only plausible explanation. Here again Samely has offered an intriguing proposal inspired by the suggestive statement of C. Rabin: “The interpretive translations [here meaning PS-J and PT], whatever their period, constitute a most unusual phenomenon in the history of translation, with few known parallels and no likely models in the Near East: *possibly we ought to seek their origin in monolingual hermeneutics.*”⁵⁹ Building on this,

55 Ibid., 174.

56 Ibid., 90–91.

57 Ibid., 35–36.

58 Samely argues that this is true across the range of Pentateuch Targumim, including Onqelos. For his defense of this, see *The Interpretation of Speech*, 158–59, 177–79, and “Is Targumic Aramaic Rabbinic Hebrew? A Reflection on Midrashic and Targumic Rewording of Scripture,” *JJS* 45, no. 1 (1994): 92–100 (98 n. 18).

59 A. Samely, “The Translation Process and the Character of the Septuagint,” *Textus* 6 (1968): 1–26 (17, italics original).

Samely proposed that Aramaic was chosen by those composing the Targumim at least in part because it allowed them to paraphrase *every single sentence* of the biblical text without recourse to Hebrew in those verses where a more-or-less literal “saying again” of the biblical text was preferred.⁶⁰ In other words, the choice of Aramaic may have been driven by the nature of the comprehensive exegetical project that resulted in the rabbinic Targumim. Had Hebrew (even Rabbinic Hebrew) been used, this particular genre would have entailed confusion in some passages by looking *too much* like Scripture when it was, in fact, not; such confusion was neatly avoided by using Aramaic. In the Rabbinic Hebrew midrashim, by way of contrast, such confusion was averted simply by the more clear format of lemma + discrete commentary. In this connection, Samely asks us to imagine “a speaker who is equally familiar with Hebrew and Aramaic, who sometimes mixes the two languages in his own speech, or could switch in mid-sentence from one to the other. To such a Hebrew/Aramaic speaker, the Aramaic ‘translation’ of a Hebrew word would simply be another item in his combined Hebrew-Aramaic lexicon, and in fact a synonymous item.”⁶¹ As Samely himself admits, we need not decide between the need for translation and this “exegetical utility” explanation; it is plausible that they were both operable at different times and places.⁶² It is critical, however, that we understand properly *what* targum is (i.e. *not* translation) and that language choice may be interrelated with the intended exegetical function of targum.

To sum up thus far, our survey has called into serious question both the possibility that any of the classical Targumim may be located securely in Second Temple Palestine and that the Targumim are even intended to be “translations” in the first place.⁶³ Given the questions raised by scholars such as Cook, Kaufman and Samely, it seems imprudent to speak any longer of the classical Targumim as the relics of Second Temple period Aramaic translations. This is doubly true for using the Targumim as evidence that Hebrew was no longer in use during the Second Temple period, and therefore could not have been used by Jesus, his disciples, and other Jews of the time.⁶⁴

60 Samely, “Is Targumic Aramaic Rabbinic Hebrew?”

61 Ibid., 97–98.

62 Ibid., 99.

63 Note too Ze'ev Safrai's observation that we have no literary source unambiguously mentioning the Jewish practice of translating Hebrew Scripture into Aramaic before the Usha period, or at best the late Yavne period (100–135 C.E.); Safrai, “The Targums,” 246.

64 The general sentiment that the classical Targumim should not be used to evaluate the linguistic situation of Late Second Temple period Palestine has been for some time advocated by Fitzmyer (reacting against Kahle and Black). See the helpful survey of L. T. Stuckenbruck, “An Approach to the New Testament through Aramaic Sources: The Recent Methodological Debate,” *JSP* 8 (1991): 3–29 (29).

b *Second Temple Period Translations*

When the stunning cache of manuscripts from Second Temple period Judea were discovered in the mid-twentieth century, scholars with varied backgrounds (notably the nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement, those interested in the Historical Jesus, and textual critics of the Old Testament) had been speculating about the origins of the Targumim and their linguistic implications for over a century, often advancing conflicting theories. It is easy to see, then, why hopes were immediately kindled that these texts might finally shed some new light on the early practice of translation, the origins of targum, and the status of Hebrew and Aramaic. Indeed, one—perhaps two—Aramaic translations of Hebrew scriptural books did eventually surface. The most significant and extensive was the Aramaic Job manuscript from Cave 11 (11Q10), which was accompanied by scraps of a second copy from Cave 4 (4Q157).⁶⁵ In addition, some have claimed that two very damaged fragments from Cave 4 (4Q156) are evidence of an Aramaic Targum of Leviticus.⁶⁶ The very fact that these newly discovered texts were called “targums” was significant, for it marked them generically as the predecessors of the later, classical Targumim. Not a few scholars have thus treated the Qumran translation(s) as if they share a generic relationship with the later Targumim, and thus may provide evidence for the early existence of the latter. Hence, Daniel Harrington states: “The discovery of two Targums of Job at Qumran . . . at least established the existence of the targum as a literary genre in the first century, although it did not resolve the debates about the age of the rabbinic targums or their value in providing parallels.”⁶⁷ Or consider Alexander’s appraisal: “Fragments of Aramaic translations of the Bible have been discovered at Qumran . . . This suggests that the Targum is a pre-rabbinic institution which the rabbis attempted to rabbinize and to control.”⁶⁸ And, finally, Gleßmer: “The oldest witnesses to the targumic genre are fragments of Targumim from Qumran. They show that

65 The most recent edition and earlier bibliography (which is substantial) of 11Q10 may be found in DJD 23 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 79–180. Note, however, the subsequent monograph of D. Shepherd, *Targum and Translation: A Reconsideration of the Qumran Aramaic Version of Job* (SSN 45; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004). The Cave 4 fragments are published in DJD 6 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 90.

66 First published in DJD 6, 86–89. See also Fitzmyer, “The Targum of Leviticus from Qumran Cave 4,” *Maarav* 1, no. 1 (1978): 5–23; L. T. Stuckenbruck and D. N. Freedman, “The Fragments of a Targum to Leviticus in Qumran Cave 4 (4Q156): A Linguistic Comparison and Assessment,” in *Targum and Scripture: Studies in Aramaic Translation and Interpretation in Memory of Ernest G. Clarke* (ed. P. V. M. Flesher; SAIS 2; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 79–95.

67 D. J. Harrington, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996), 18.

68 Alexander, “Targum, Targumim,” 330.

written Targumim go back at least to the second century B.C.E.”⁶⁹ In statements like these the translations from Qumran and the later Targumim are brought into a relationship whereby the former vaguely affirms the early existence of the latter, even if it is usually acknowledged that the link is not one of direct, literary dependence. But does the evidence really support such an approach?

The most immediate response to this question is that there exists an important difference in *kind* between these two groups of texts: the Qumran text(s) is “translation,” while the later rabbinic texts are “targum”. Though a distinction was already acknowledged in the *editio princeps* of 11Q10 by van der Ploeg and van der Woude,⁷⁰ and was discussed in greater depth by Raphael Weiss,⁷¹ more serious qualifications of the moniker “targum” for this text began to surface with Fitzmyer, Muraoka, and Beyer, though all of these continued to use the term.⁷² As far as I am aware, it was Sebastian Brock who brought the first direct challenge against even assigning the title Targum to 11Q10, arguing that the Qumran translator considered himself an *interpretes* (translator of the literal sense), whereas those responsible for the Targumim assumed the role of *expositores* (both translating and explaining at one and the same time).⁷³ Consequently, Brock concluded that the Qumran Aramaic translations were

69 Gleßner, “Targumim,” 916. Also see A. S. van der Woude, “Job, Targum of,” in *EDSS*, 1:413–14 (414).

70 J. P. M. van der Ploeg and A. S. van der Woude (with B. Jongeling), *Le Targum de Job de la Grotte XI de Qumrân* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 9.

71 R. Weiss, *התרגום הארמי לספר איוב* *The Aramaic Targum of the Book of Job* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1979 [Heb.]).

72 J. A. Fitzmyer, “The First-Century Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI,” in *A Wandering Aramean*, 161–82; T. Muraoka, “The Aramaic of the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI,” *JJS* 25 (1974): 425–43 (425); idem, “Notes on the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI,” *RevQ* 9 (1977): 117–25 (117); Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte*, 274. See also B. E. Zuckerman, “Two Examples of Editorial Modification in 11QTgJob,” in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies: Essays in Honour of W. S. LaSor* (ed. G. Tuttle; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 269–75. It is worth noting that at one time scholars seriously entertained whether 11Q10 was a specifically Qumranic, or sectarian Essene, composition, but this has long since been dismissed and abandoned (see Shepherd, *Targum and Translation*, 16–17).

73 S. P. Brock, “Translating the Old Testament,” in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture, Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars* (ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 87–98. Brock’s fuller explanations of the *interpretes* vs. the *expositores* are found on pp. 90–93. On this point also see his “To Revise or Not to Revise: Attitudes Towards Jewish Biblical Translation,” in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings* (ed. G. Brooke et al.; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 301–38.

not “targums” at all.⁷⁴ Samely, as we have seen, also considered targum to be something quite distinct from translation. Speaking of the Targumim he asks “which texts belong to that genre? I am convinced that one text usually called ‘targum’ does not belong: the Aramaic Job from Qumran Cave 11, which seems indeed to be that elusive animal, a translation of a biblical text into Aramaic.”⁷⁵ Brock and Samely do almost no comparative work to back up their assertions, a deficiency remedied by the extensive study of David Shepherd. Through close comparison of 11Q10 with the Peshitta version of Job and the Rabbinic Targum of Job, Shepherd concludes:

The fundamental line, as demarcated in the present study, dividing the Qumran and Syriac versions from the Targum in terms of *translation approach* would certainly imply that the Peshitta and Qumran translation traditions are clearly and unequivocally independent of the targumic tradition. The fundamentally ‘non-targumic’ status of both Qumran and Syriac versions would clearly rule out their share in a hypothetical ‘proto-targum’ which appears to be presupposed by theories which see the roots of the Peshitta in a targum tradition. This is not to rule out the existence of a proto-targum from which the later targums were to derive, but rather to suggest that were such a creature to have existed, it would by definition bear more resemblance to these later targums in terms of translation approach than to more linguistically-stylistically oriented versions such as are found in the Qumran and Syriac traditions.⁷⁶

Concerning the precise nature of this difference, Shepherd writes:

[T]he . . . crucial task of assessing the Aramaic translators’ representation of the MT was undertaken through an evaluation of omission, transposition and the treatment of the *waw* conjunction. On the basis of these criteria, the translators of the Syriac and Qumran versions of Job have

74 This sentiment is echoed in S. P. Brock, “A Palestinian Targum Feature in Syriac,” *JJS* 46 (1995): 274–75.

75 Samely, “Is Targumic Aramaic Rabbinic Hebrew?” 98 n. 18. See also Samely, *The Interpretation of Speech*, 158–59. Shepherd (*Targum and Translation*, 20–21) has noted that a similar argument is made by M. P. Weitzman (*The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 128; and “Is the Peshitta of Chronicles a Targum?,” in *Targum Studies* 2 [ed. P. V. M. Flesher; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998], 159–93), though his argument is grounded primarily in his study of the Peshitta in relation to the Targumim.

76 Shepherd, *Targum and Translation*, 284–85 (italics original).

shown that the priority of fidelity to the MT, so clearly illustrated by the targumist, was overridden by, among other factors, the perceived linguistic-stylistic demands of their Aramaic target languages. It seems clear from the present study that if the targumist's approach is to be defined fundamentally in terms of his formal preservation of Hebrew elements in the order in which they appear in MT, then the translators responsible for the Qumran and Syriac versions of Job should not be credited with the production of a 'targum'.⁷⁷

It becomes clear, then, that if we want to continue calling the Qumran translations "Targumim" (which now seems imprudent) we must recognize that the Qumran and later rabbinic texts are fundamentally different in their approach to Scripture. With this important distinction in mind, let us now turn to the translations.

(1) The Job Translations from Qumran (11Q10, 4Q157)

The Job translations provide the only definite example of a Hebrew book being translated into Aramaic during the Second Temple period. Though we must exercise the usual caution in making an *argumentum ex silentio*, it is worth

77 Ibid., 283. One helpful example (Shepherd, *Targum and Translation*, 153–55) of this basic difference in styles of interaction with the base-text is found in Job 42:10 and the Aramaic parallels:

MT: וְהָיָה שֶׁבֶת אֱת שְׁבִיתָ אִיּוֹב בְּהִתְפַּלְלוֹ בְּעַד רַעְוָהּ וַיִּסַּף ה' אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לְאִיּוֹב לְמִשְׁנָה

11Q10 (38:4): ... תַּב אֱלֹהֵא לְאִיּוֹב בְּרַחֲמֵינָא וַיְהִי לֵהּ חַד תְּרִינָא בְּכוּל דִּי

TargJob: וּמִיִּמְרָא דִּיִּי אֲתִיב יֵת גְּלוּתָא אִיּוֹב בְּצִלְאוּתֵיהָ מִטּוֹל חֲבֵרוּהִי וְאוּסִיף מִיִּמֵר דִּיִּי יֵת
כָּל דְּהוּהָ לְאִיּוֹב בְּכַפּוּלָא {לֵא} עַל חַד תְּרִינָא

Here we find that 11Q10 is more syntactically and grammatically flexible in its approach to the scriptural base-text, but this is for the purpose of more accurately translating its (assumed) plain meaning into the target language. This results in an idiomatic translation that nevertheless seeks to bring the true *sense* (as the translator understood it) of the Hebrew into Aramaic (see further Brock's definition of the *interpretes*, references in n. 73 above). This is witnessed especially in the free changes in syntax in order to "smooth out" the verse, the collapsing of longer phrases into a more compact, intelligible unit (see M. Sokoloff, *The Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI* [Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 1974], 8), and lexical equivalents which simplify linguistic ambiguity. In contrast, the rabbinic Job targum stays faithful to the syntactic structure of the Hebrew base-text. It is willing to add supplemental information to the verse in order to further condition/narrow its meaning and elucidate interpretive questions, but without significantly changing the syntax. Thus, where such additions occur (and they occur frequently) they are tucked into the existing syntactic structure. (The {לֵא} designates a secondary reading for the word בכפולא.)

pausing to appreciate how striking and significant this is. 11Q10 is dated paleographically to the mid-first century B.C.E. based on its late formal Herodian script, and most assessments of its language have placed the translation's composition somewhere in the range of the second–first centuries B.C.E.⁷⁸ The manuscript is of high quality, on fine-grade leather in a consistent, expert scribal hand, suggesting that it was considered an important text. It preserves portions of Job in Aramaic from Job 17:14–42:12 (about 15% of the entire book is attested), though much is missing due to the deteriorated state of the scroll. The two extant fragments of 4Q157 contain far less text, preserving a small portion of Job 3:5–6 and 4:17–5:4, and date to a similar period as the Cave 11 translation.

The fact that the Hebrew language of Job has regularly been considered the most difficult in the Hebrew Bible, both in antiquity and thereafter, raises the prospect that we may well be dealing here with a special case not to be extended to the rest of the biblical books. This possibility gains force from the fact that the one rabbinic mention of a specific book being translated during the Second Temple period is to the Aramaic Job associated with Gamaliel I and II (first century C.E.; two different scrolls are referred to).⁷⁹ In addition, we find the Old Greek statement in the postscript attached to Job 42:17: Οὗτος ἐρμηνεύεται ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς βίβλου (“This one was interpreted from the Aramaic/Syriac book . . .”). It is easy to imagine that even those who were familiar with more standard Biblical Hebrew and the vernacular Hebrew(s) of the day had an especially hard time reading or understanding Job, necessitating a more easily accessible version of that book *in particular*. That Aramaic was chosen because Hebrew was no longer used or understood by the intended audience should remain one possible option. However, a bilingual environment would in fact have offered two main solutions to the difficulty of Job: (1) translating the book into a more colloquial or accessible form of Hebrew; or (2) translating the book into Aramaic. The latter would perhaps have been preferred, for it would have avoided the potential confusion caused by two Hebrew versions (though here we should be careful in light of the evidence of 1QIsa^a and other “updated” biblical manuscripts from Qumran).⁸⁰ Whatever

78 On this question, see S. A. Kaufman, “The Job Targum from Qumran,” *JAOS* 93 (1973): 317–27; and B. E. Zuckerman, “The Date of 11Q Targum Job: A Paleographic Consideration of its *Vorlage*,” *JSP* 1 (1987): 57–78.

79 *t. Shab.* 13.2 (Lieberman edition, p. 57); with parallels in *y. Shab.* 16.1 (16c), *b. Shab.* 115a, *Tractate Soferim* 5.15.

80 See especially the landmark study of E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll* (Leiden: Brill, 1974 [repr. with indices, corrections and introduction by S. Morag in 1979]).

the reason for choosing Aramaic, the singular difficulty of Job's Hebrew text (though, to be sure, other books such as Qohelet and Song of Songs are also thorny) is likely to have been the major reason for its translation.

Two further factors in the case of the Job translation(s) are that of Aramaic dialect and geographic point of origin. Since the influential work of Kutscher onward it has been common to place 11Q10 in a linear, diachronic relationship with the Aramaic of Daniel on one hand and that of the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1Q20) on the other, assuming all to be (the same type of) Western Aramaic.⁸¹ Consequently, scholars have adopted the following historical-linguistic sequence based on a group of linguistic traits: Daniel (earliest), 11Q10 (middle), and 1Q20 (latest). This sequence was then used for the relative dating of these compositions.⁸² The legitimacy of this approach has been consistently and seriously questioned, to the point where it can no longer be accepted in the simplistic form propounded by many of those who followed Kutscher's method. Though he seemed to accept the approach just outlined, Kaufman was the first to raise the possibility that 11Q10 and the *Genesis Apocryphon* may actually represent different literary traditions. In his review of the Dutch *editio princeps* Kaufman wrote concerning these texts that, "it is clear that we are dealing here with two different literary Aramaic traditions . . . The relationship between these two remains unclear, but it does not appear to be merely a matter of straight-line development."⁸³ Muraoka went even further, noting that 11Q10 exhibits a number of eastern linguistic features and concluding, *contra* Kutscher, that "our study however seems to point to the East as [the] more likely place of origin of this old Targum."⁸⁴ Kaufman had also pointed to distinctive

81 Kutscher, "The Language of the Genesis Apocryphon." See also E. Y. Kutscher, "Aramaic," in *Current Trends in Linguistics: Volume 6* (ed. T. A. Sebeok; Paris: The Hague, 1970), 347–412 (403).

82 Adherents of this view include van der Woude and van der Ploeg, *Le Targum de Job*, 4; Sokoloff, *The Targum of Job*, 9–26; Fitzmyer, "The Targum of Job," 164–65; idem, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1 (1Q20): A Commentary* (3d ed.; BibOr 18/B; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2004), 32–38; and Kaufman (though with some helpful qualifications), "The Job Targum from Qumran," 325–27.

83 Kaufman, "The Job Targum from Qumran," 326.

84 Muraoka, "The Aramaic of the Old Targum of Job from Qumran Cave XI," 441–43. The major easternisms, according to Muraoka, are: (1) the patterns of assimilation/dissimilation for *nun*; (2) the use of *aleph* in the nominal declension (especially as used for the feminine absolute ending); (3) the emphatic status used for the absolute status (which slowly becomes the norm in Eastern Aramaic, but not Western, and is not common elsewhere in the Aramaic Scrolls); and (4) word order (in nine instances the verb has been moved later in comparison with the Hebrew, as opposed to two instances of the reverse

“non-western” elements in 11Q10,⁸⁵ while Greenfield and Shaked and Fitzmyer drew attention to several Iranian-Persian loanwords,⁸⁶ though such borrowings are not unheard of elsewhere in Qumran Aramaic. Taking into account these observations, along with those of Cook on dialectology,⁸⁷ we must strongly consider that the Job translation(s) from Qumran represent(s) an Aramaic dialect from east of Palestine, a dialect subtly distinct from the bulk of Qumran Aramaic texts. If many Aramaic works were brought to Qumran from outside, as most assume, there is theoretically nothing hindering an Aramaic translation of a most difficult Hebrew book being brought from Syria, or even further east—indeed, this might be the most compelling historical scenario, regardless of linguistic features. Consequently, extreme hesitation is warranted over trying to draw conclusions about the situation of Aramaic and Hebrew in Palestine during the Second Temple period from the Job translation(s). What we may say with confidence is that some Israelite(s) at this time saw a need to translate the book of Job into Aramaic in order to make it more intelligible, and that two copies of such a text were made at, or, more likely, brought to, Qumran. Whether this person or group lived within or outside of Palestine we are, at present, unable to judge decisively, though some linguistic features may indicate a non-Palestinian setting.

(2) 4Q156: A Translation of the Book of Leviticus?

The two small fragments that comprise 4Q156 contain 49 words, of which 22 are fully preserved and legible. From these few words it is clear that the fragments translate Hebrew portions of Lev 16:12–15 and 16:18–21 into Aramaic; hence their usual designation as a “Targum of Leviticus.”⁸⁸ These verses detail

phenomenon; on this see further Shepherd, *Targum and Translation*, 153–55). Other differences include the infrequent use of *lamed* as a direct object marker (as we find often in the *Genesis Apocryphon*), and the lack of *mem* prefix on the *pe’al* infinitive.

85 Kaufman, “The Job Targum from Qumran,” 325. See specifically the use in 11Q10 of the words כמא and תמה vs. the forms כמן and תמן in the *Genesis Apocryphon*.

86 J. C. Greenfield and S. Shaked, “Three Iranian Words in the Targum of Job from Qumran,” *ZDMG* 122 (1972): 37–45 (repr. in *‘Al Kanfei Yonah: Collected Studies of Jonas Greenfield on Semitic Philology* [2 vols.; Leiden: Brill; Jerusalem: Magnes, 2001], 1:344–52). The words studied in this article are: דהשת (“desert”), נוד (“spear”), and הרתך (“thorn”). See also Fitzmyer, “The Targum of Job,” 166–67, who adds the less convincing examples פתגם (“word, thing”) and דת (“law, religion”).

87 Cook, “Qumran Aramaic and Aramaic Dialectology.”

88 Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery*, 31, and idem, “Targum de Lévitique,” in *Qumrân Grotte 4. II: Tefilin, Mezuzot et Targums* (DJD 6; Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 86–89; also see Stuckenbruck and Freedman, “The Fragments of a Targum to Leviticus,” 81–82.

aspects of the *Yom ha-Kippurim* (Day of Atonement) ritual; especially the manipulation of blood in the Holy of Holies and the ceremony of the scapegoat. The fragments have been dated paleographically by Milik to the late second or early first century B.C.E., and what little writing is left on them comports well with the dialect of Aramaic used in the other Aramaic texts from Qumran (though very few useful traits are preserved to help accurately determine this). One peculiar scribal trait of 4Q156 among the Scrolls is its employment of two dots (:) to separate sense units within the text (six occurrences).⁸⁹ It is difficult to know what to make of this practice given its absence from other manuscripts (biblical and non-biblical alike), but one possibility is that the text arose from a scribal circle distinct from those which produced most of the literature from the Judean wilderness. Such a view may find support from Emanuel Tov, who includes neither the Job translations nor 4Q156 within the cache of manuscripts considered to exhibit the traits of his “Qumran scribal practice.”⁹⁰ Describing the fragments’ character, Stuckenbruck and Freedman write that “apart from a few omissions, a change in word order, and an additional word . . . the translation is generally literal, that is, for the most part, it seems to reflect a unit-for-unit correspondence.”⁹¹ In other words, these fragments may also better be described as “translation” than “targum” if we wish to differentiate the rabbinic project of targum as described by Samely and others. However, it should be noted that for these verses even the classical Targumim (except for PS-J) could be described as quite literal.⁹²

Despite all the discussion of 4Q156 as a Targum of Leviticus, the fact that it only covers bits of seven verses leaves us with one crucial, lingering question: “What *sort* of text is this?” Those working closely with the fragments have, in fact, suggested three possible answers: (1) 4Q156 is a small portion of a complete translation (or targum) of the *book* of Leviticus; (2) it is part of an Aramaic liturgical or ritual text that includes selections from Leviticus, including the *Yom ha-Kippurim* ceremony; or (3) it forms part of another (e.g. narrative) Aramaic composition that incorporates this material from Lev 16 in some way. The first option must be considered as a possibility, and was accorded

89 Stuckenbruck and Freedman, “The Fragments of a Targum to Leviticus,” 81. Cf. E. Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 138–39.

90 Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 277–88.

91 *Ibid.*, 91.

92 For an in-depth comparison of 4Q156 with the rabbinic Targumim, see Stuckenbruck and Freedman, “The Fragments of a Targum to Leviticus”.

pride of place by Milik and Beyer.⁹³ Even before its official publication, however, Fitzmyer expressed concern that such a small amount of text could not really support this conclusion, and that 4Q156 may simply be “a fragment of some other Aramaic work that just happened to quote or use Leviticus 16 for some purpose.”⁹⁴ Milik subsequently raised the possibility of a ritual format for the text, which presumably would have contained excerpted biblical (and perhaps other) passages to be used in communal or individual worship and/or study; likely something concerned with *Yom ha-Kippurim* specifically, or Jewish festivals more generally. This liturgical alternative has received varied levels of either consideration as a possible option, or outright support, from Fitzmyer, Angerstorfer, García Martínez, and Stuckenbruck and Freedman.⁹⁵ Beyer, however, argued against such an understanding, maintaining that a text of this liturgical sort would be written in Hebrew, be in a freer, periphrastic style, and contain fewer agreements with later Targumim.⁹⁶

Yet, as Fitzmyer had first suggested, the view that 4Q156 may be a snippet from “some other Aramaic work” does not necessitate that it be explicitly liturgical or ritual in nature. We now know of a number of Aramaic narrative compositions which exhibit a strong interest in priestly ritual, such as the Levi-Qahat-Amram suite of compositions, the Noah columns of the *Genesis Apocryphon*, and 1 En. 87. Indeed, one could say that this is one of a handful of characteristic interests linking a core group of the Aramaic Scrolls together. In addition, many Aramaic works are clearly working with existing scriptural accounts; rewriting, adapting, and supplementing them according to a distinctive view of history and revelation. Milik pointed to the incorporation of the vision of Ezek 8–11 and descriptions from Leviticus into the so-called *New Jerusalem* composition found in a number of the Qumran caves,

93 Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery*, 31; cf. Milik, “Targum de Lévitique,” 86; Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte*, 278.

94 Fitzmyer, “The Targum of Job,” 511.

95 Milik, “Targum de Lévitique”; Fitzmyer, “The Targum of Leviticus,” 5; A. Angerstorfer, “Ist 4QTgLev Menetekel der neueren Targumforschung?,” *Biblische Notizen* 15 (1981): 55–75 (61); idem, “Überlegungen zu Sprache und Sitz im Leben des Toratargums 4QTgLev (4Q156),” *Biblische Notizen* 55 (1990): 18–35; F. García Martínez, “Estudios Qumránicos 1975–1985: Panorama Crítico (II),” in *Estudios Bíblicos* 45 (1987): 361–402 (401); and Stuckenbruck and Freedman, “The Fragments of a Targum to Leviticus,” 81–82. Angerstorfer speaks with the most confidence of 4Q156 being a liturgical text, but considers that it may derive from a Pentateuch targum.

96 Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte*, 278.

suggesting that 4Q156 may once have belonged to a work of this sort.⁹⁷ We might also note that the *Genesis Apocryphon* has passages (though they are admittedly very few and confined to cols. 21–22) where its Aramaic is a fairly close translation of Genesis. Take, for example, the parallel to Gen 14:21–24 in 1QapGen 22.18–24:

Gen 14: 21–24:

וּיֹאמֶר מֶלֶךְ סֹדֶם אֶל אַבְרָם תֵּן לִי הַנֶּפֶשׁ וְהַרְכַּשׁ קַח לְךָ וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֵל מֶלֶךְ סֹדֶם
הֲרַמְתִּי יָדִי אֶל ה' אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן קִנְיָה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ אִם מַחֹט וְעַד שְׂרוּךְ נֶעַל וְאִם אֶקַּח מִכֹּל
אֲשֶׁר לְךָ וְלֹא תֹאמַר אֲנִי הִעֲשֵׂרְתִּי אֶת אַבְרָם בְּלִעְדֵי רַק אֲשֶׁר אֲכָלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וְחֹלֶק
הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הִלְכוּ אִתִּי עֲנֵר אֲשַׁכַּל וּמִמְרָא הֵם יִקְחוּ חֵלְקָם

Then the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the person, but take the goods for yourself.” But Abram said to the King of Sodom, “I have sworn to the Lord, God Most High, maker of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal-thong or anything that is yours, so that you might not say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’ I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre. Let them take their share.”⁹⁸

1QapGen 22.18–24:

בְּאֵדִין קֶרֶב מֶלֶכָא דִּי סוּדֶם וַאֲמַר לְאַבְרָם מְרִי אַבְרָם הֵב לִי נִפְשָׁא דִּי אִיתִי לִי דִּי שְׁבִיא
עִמָּךְ דִּי אֲצִלְתָּה מִן מֶלֶךְ עֵילָם וְנִכְסִיא כּוֹלְהוֹן שְׁבִיקִין לְךָ אֲדִין אֲמַר אַבְרָם לְמֶלֶךְ סוּדֶם
מְרִים אָנָּה יָדִי יוֹמָא דֵּן לֹאֵל עֲלִיּוֹן מְרָה שְׁמִיא וְאַרְעָא אֲנִי מִן חוּט עַד עֶרְקָא דְּמַסְאֵן
אֲנִי אֲסַב מִן כּוֹל דִּי אִיתִי לְךָ דְּלִמָּא תְּהוּהוּ אֲמַר דְּמִן נִכְסֵי כּוֹל עֲתֵרָה דִּי אַבְרָם בְּרָא מִן
דִּי אֲכָלוּ כְּבֵר עוֹלִימֵי דִּי עִמִּי וּבְרָא מִן חוֹלֶק תְּלַתָּת גְּבִרִיא דִּי אֲזָלוּ עִמִּי אֲנֹן שְׁלִיטִין
בְּחוֹלְקוֹן לְמִנְתָּן לְךָ

Then the king of Sodom drew near and said to Abram, “My Lord, Abram, give me anyone who belongs to me of the captives with you, whom you have rescued from the king of Elam. But as for the property, it is left to

97 Milik, “Targum de Lévitique,” 86. For an up-to-date, balanced introduction to this text, see É. Puech, “554–554a–555. 4QJérusalem Nouvelle-c ar,” in *Qumrân Grotte 4. XXVII. Textes araméens. Deuxième partie (4Q550–4Q575a, 4Q580–4Q587 et appendices)* (DJD 37; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 91–102. Pertinent passages in the New Jerusalem texts include 2Q24 fig. 4 (Lev 24).

98 Translation is taken from the NRSV.

you.” Then Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I lift up my hands this day to the Most High God, the Lord of heaven and earth, (swearing) that I will take neither string nor sandal strap from all that which belongs to you, lest you should say, ‘All the wealth of Abram (derives) from my property.’ (This) excludes that which my young men who are with me have already eaten, and also the portion of the three men who went with me. (Only) they have authority to give you their portions.”⁹⁹

Had we found only scraps of this passage from the *Apocryphon* we surely would now be speaking confidently of the “Targum of Genesis” found in Cave 1. Of course, in the context of the entire composition it becomes patently clear that 1Q20 is anything but this; rather, it is a creative recasting of the Genesis narrative written from a distinct viewpoint and resembling in format the book of *Jubilees*. We might also cite as an example the Cave 11 *Temple Scroll* (11Q19). Though here the factor of translation does not apply since it is written in Hebrew, in the latter columns especially (e.g. cols. 51 or 66; cf. Deut 16, 22, etc.) it is easy to imagine that were we to possess only certain bits and pieces of these sections, as we do with 4Q156, we could plausibly argue that 11Q19 is a copy of Deuteronomy. With further context it is easy to see that this is the wrong approach. The examples provided above show the heavy dependence on Scripture typical of many non-biblical works found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, even though 4Q156 must be admitted to be a more literal rendering of the biblical text than is usually found in the rewritten scriptural compositions.

In sum, we must retain the possibility that 4Q156 is a translation of the *book* of Leviticus, but given the creativity, diversity and scriptural affinities of many of the non-biblical Scrolls, Fitzmyer’s suggestion that these scraps may belong to an Aramaic work which simply incorporates verses from Leviticus (whether liturgical, anthological, or “rewritten scripture”) is plausible.

(3) The Curious Case of Tobit (4Q196–200)

Prior to the Cave 4 discoveries the original language of the book of Tobit had been a matter of ongoing debate, with scholars divided over whether it was first composed in Greek or a Semitic language.¹⁰⁰ This matter was decisively

99 Text and translation are from D. A. Machiela, *The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon: A New Text and Translation with Introduction and Special Treatment of Columns 13–17* (STDJ 79; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 82–83.

100 See the recent discussion and bibliography in J. A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit* (CEJL; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 18–22. A diverse body of ancient versions of Tobit is preserved in Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Hebrew, Syriac, Coptic, and Ethiopic.

settled in favor of the latter option with the unearthing of five manuscripts of Tobit from Cave 4, four of them in Aramaic (4Q196–199) and one in Hebrew (4Q200).¹⁰¹ Where one dispute was settled, however, another has come to the fore: whether the Hebrew or Aramaic manuscript(s) preserve(s) the original language of Tobit. Assessments on this point have been mixed. Milik, who first announced the discovery of Tobit at Qumran, stated early on that “a preliminary investigation suggests that Aramaic was the original language of the book.”¹⁰² This was, however, an unsubstantiated assertion, and in 1984 K. Beyer argued instead that Hebrew was the original language while classifying Aramaic Tobit among “Die Targume.”¹⁰³ Beyer’s proposal stemmed mainly from what he considered five Hebrew words incorporated into the Aramaic copies (משפחתי, תהלין, ארור, אליל, and קרא) and a few other points of “unaramäische” grammar. Most of these words and phrases were subsequently dismissed by Cook and Fitzmyer, and of the two or three possible Hebraisms that remain Fitzmyer rightly judged that “a Hebrew loanword . . . scarcely shows that Tobit was originally composed in Hebrew.”¹⁰⁴ Indeed, if a few Hebraisms were the criteria for judging a composition to have been composed in Hebrew there would be nary an originally Aramaic work left among the Dead Sea Scrolls!¹⁰⁵

101 Published by Fitzmyer in J. C. VanderKam et al., *Qumran Cave 4. XIV: Parabiblical Texts, Part 2* (DJD XIX; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 1–76. An additional Aramaic fragment of Tobit, originally assigned to 4Q196, has been published by M. Hallermayer and T. Elgvin, “Schøyen ms. 5234: Ein neues Tobit-Fragment Vom Toten Meer,” *RevQ* 22, no. 3 (2006): 451–61. However, comparison of the fragment with 4Q196 shows conclusively that the former is, in fact, from another manuscript altogether—a manuscript purportedly also from the caves around Qumran. This observation was passed along to me in personal communication with one of the fragment’s original editors, Torleif Elgvin, who plans to republish the fragment under a new title (along with Esther Eshel) in the near future. A high quality digital image of the fragment may presently be found at <http://www.schoyencollection.com/dsscrolls.html#12.2>.

102 Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery*, 31. This was also the opinion of P. Grelot and A. Caquot (see Puech, “Du Bilinguisme à Qumrân,” 181); and H. Stegemann, *Die Essener, Qumran, Johannes der Täufer und Jesus. Ein Sachbuch* (Freiburg i.B.: Herder, 1993), 130.

103 Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte*, 298–300; *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Ergänzungsband* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 134–47; *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Band 2* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 172–73.

104 Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 22–24.

105 By this logic the *Genesis Apocryphon* and *Aramaic Levi* would also be originally Hebrew compositions. For the standard treatment of this topic, see S. E. Fassberg, “Hebraisms in the Aramaic Documents from Qumran,” in *Studies in Qumran Aramaic*, 48–69. Also see the opinions of Cook, “Our Translated Tobit,” in *Targumic and Cognate Studies: Essays in Honour of Martin McNamara* (ed. K. J. Cathcart and M. Maher; JSOTSup 230; Sheffield:

It bears special mention that Beyer also listed what he considered to be nine Aramaic words in the Hebrew copy of Tobit, yet these did not lead him to shift his position.¹⁰⁶ In the end Beyer's analysis is unpersuasive, as both Fitzmyer and Cook have shown.

Another reason for considering the Hebrew Tobit original was offered by Michael Wise.¹⁰⁷ Considering the "idiomatic Hebrew" of 4Q200, especially the high frequency of infinitive absolute forms in place of expected finite verbs, he believed that "[s]uch usage is surprising if this text is translation Hebrew, not least because one rarely encounters the infinitive absolute at all in Qumran Hebrew."¹⁰⁸ Wise is correct to highlight 4Q200's surprising number of infinitives absolute used as the main verb of a coordinated clause (five times) in comparison with the broader Hebrew corpus of scrolls,¹⁰⁹ but how can we tell what should surprise us in translation Hebrew from this period given that we have virtually none for comparison?¹¹⁰ Cook, by contrast, leans toward Aramaic as the original language. Addressing Wise's proposal he observed that "if the liberal use of the infinitive absolute is otherwise absent in free Hebrew composition at Qumran, then its use in Tobit indicates that it is *not* freely composed Hebrew, but a translation—perhaps an effort to duplicate the nuance of the narrative participle in Aramaic."¹¹¹ Matthew Morgenstern echoes this sentiment when he writes, "[i]t would seem to me that the uncomfortable style of the Hebrew would suggest that it is secondary to the more fluent and stylistic

Sheffield Academic, 1996), 153–63 (155); M. Morgenstern, "Language and Literature in the Second Temple Period," *JJS* 48, no. 1 (1997): 130–45 (140).

106 Fitzmyer does not comment on these examples. See, however, Cook, "Our Translated Tobit," 155.

107 M. O. Wise, "A Note on 4Q196 (papTob ar^a) and Tobit I 22," *VT* 43, no. 4 (1993): 566–70 (esp. 566 and 570 n. 4). Wise's main statement on the matter is: "A first impression—based on my own transcription and preliminary analysis of the Qumran portions—is that claims for Aramaic as the original language of Tobit are by no means as certain as prepublication discussion had suggested" (p. 566).

108 *Ibid.*, 570 n. 4.

109 On the general paucity of the form in the Scrolls, see E. Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Harvard Semitic Series 29; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 47. Fitzmyer (*Tobit*, 25) mentions occurrences at 4QMMT C 26 and 4QNaphtali 2.10.

110 For a similar sentiment, see Morgenstern, "Language and Literature"; and the recent book of M. Hallermayer, *Text und Überlieferung des Buches Tobit* (DCLS 3; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 178–79.

111 Cook, "Our Translated Tobit," 156 n. 13 (emphasis original).

Aramaic. In any case, Fitzmyer's dating of the Aramaic to the second century B.C.E. seems most convincing."¹¹²

Fitzmyer has been the most staunch advocate of Milik's earlier view that 4Q200 is a Hebrew translation of Aramaic Tobit. His argument for this position has consisted mostly of debunking the Hebrew-first theory of Beyer, though he adds that the Aramaisms in 4Q200 "make one think that the Hebrew form of Tobit is secondary, a translation from the Aramaic . . . even though there is no real proof of it."¹¹³ Based on more extensive and rigorous comparison of the language of the Cave 4 copies Morgenstern concurred with this judgment.¹¹⁴ At present, then, the majority of scholars working on the language of these early Tobit manuscripts agree that 4Q200 is probably a Hebrew translation of Aramaic Tobit, though all acknowledge that we are lacking the proof necessary to make this claim with stridence.¹¹⁵

There are two additional factors that may recommend Aramaic as Tobit's original language of composition, though neither bears much weight on its own.¹¹⁶ First, there are the ancient witnesses of Origen and, especially, Jerome.

112 Morgenstern, "Language and Literature," 140. He also notes Qimron's later discussion of the infinitive absolute during our period, in which a use similar to that in Tobit is discussed for 4QMMT. See E. Qimron and J. Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4. V: Miqsat Ma'ase Ha-Torah* (DJD 10; Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 81.

113 Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic and Hebrew Fragments of Tobit from Qumran Cave 4," *CBQ* 57 (1995): 655–75 (670).

114 Morgenstern, "Language and Literature," esp. 139–40.

115 The lack of a preponderance of evidence for either side is stressed by Hallermayer (*Text und Überlieferung*, 178), though she too seems to lean toward Aramaic as the original language of composition (p. 179).

116 While a consideration of palaeographic and manuscript data may also seem support 4Q200 being a translation (the earliest manuscript is Aramaic), the unknown vagaries of preservation and individual manuscript histories warns against placing much weight here. The manuscripts may be described as follows: 4Q196 is written on papyrus with generous margins by an expert scribe; it is a high quality manuscript dated on palaeographic grounds to ca. 50 B.C.E. 4Q197 is also a well-made manuscript penned by a skilled scribe, though it is written quite compactly in relation to other copies; it is said to date between 25 B.C.E. and 25 C.E. 4Q198 is a notch below the other manuscripts in terms of its quality and execution, and is dated to around the mid-first century B.C.E. 4Q199 contains so little preserved text that it is difficult to say much about it with confidence, but it may be the earliest manuscript given the ca. 100 B.C.E. palaeographic date assigned to it by Fitzmyer. 4Q200 is perhaps the finest copy of Tobit extant, with generous line spacing and margins, and a beautiful formal scribal hand dating from ca. 30 B.C.E.–20 C.E. A notable feature of this copy is the several corrections it contains, including a crossed out word

In his *Letter to Africanus* (c. 240 C.E.) Origen makes an aside about Tobit and Judith in which he relates that Jews do not use the books, “nor do they even have them among the apocrypha in Hebrew, as we know, having learned (this) from them” (οὐδε γὰρ εχουσιν αυτα καν εν αποκρυφοις εβραισι ως απ αυτων μαθοντες εγνωκαμεν).¹¹⁷ Of course, this only tells us that Origen’s Jewish acquaintances did not *know* of a Hebrew version, and no mention of an Aramaic text is made alongside this claim. This statement may gain in importance, however, in light of Jerome’s comments about translating Tobit into Latin for the Vulgate in his letter to Bishops Chromatius of Aquileia and Heliodorus of Altinum. Like Origen, Jerome recounts that the Jews had expunged Tobit, which was written in “Chaldean” (*Chaldeo*; what we know as Aramaic), from their sacred writings.¹¹⁸ In order to make a Latin translation Jerome says that he found someone who was fluent in both Aramaic and Hebrew(!) and for one day had this person translate the book orally from Aramaic into Hebrew, which Jerome then dictated in Latin to a scribe. While the importance of these patristic reports is difficult to gauge, and we should expect some hyperbole from Jerome, he presents a very interesting scenario here; one worth keeping in mind as we discuss the original language of Tobit. The second factor, which I consider to be more persuasive, concerns the literary character and worldview of Tobit, which betray marked affinities with the known corpus of Aramaic literature from the Second Temple period, and especially with the *Genesis Apocryphon* and other Aramaic pseudepigraphic works. Nickelsburg has already outlined some such connections between Tobit and *1 Enoch*, and we may now add to the mix several new, lively Jewish tales set in the eastern Diaspora from the Aramaic Scrolls (e.g. 4Q242–46, 550–51, and 580) that resemble Tobit in basic

on frg. 6 line 2, where the scribe appears to have accidentally skipped to the next line of his exemplar. This, along with the fine quality of the manuscript, suggests that it was copied from an earlier Hebrew text. However, some of the Aramaic manuscripts also contain corrections, and all of them should be considered copies made from earlier texts. For the paleographic dates see DJD 19. Even if one is not inclined to subscribe to Cross’s paleographic dating system (as, for example, Wise and Doudna are wont) the dates provided here may still be considered for the diachronic relation of these manuscripts to one another.

- 117 *Ep. ad Africanum* 19 (Sources chrétiennes 302. 562). Also see Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 19. For more on use of the term Ἑβραϊστί, see the essay by C. Pierce in this volume.
- 118 The text may be found in J. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* (1844–66) 29:23–26; and is also provided in full by Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 20. Cf. the comment of Hallermayer, *Text und Überlieferung*, 179.

literary features.¹¹⁹ This is not the place for a full study of this issue, but the following links between Tobit and the *Genesis Apocryphon* may serve to illustrate my basic point:¹²⁰

1. Both Tobit and the *Genesis Apocryphon* have alternating sections of first-person (i.e. pseudonymous) and third-person narration.¹²¹
2. “I, Tobit, walked the paths of fidelity and righteousness all the days of my life” (Tob 1:3); “All of my days I [Noah] conducted myself uprightly, continually walking in the paths of everlasting truth . . .” (1QapGen 6.2).
3. “When I reached manhood, I married a woman from our ancestral kindred and had a son by her who I named Tobiah” (Tob 1:9); “[T]he[n] I, Noah, became a grown man . . . I went and took Emzera his daughter as my wife. She conceived by way of me and gave birth to t[h]ree sons, [and daughters]” (1QapGen 6.6–7).
4. Both works make liberal use of the divine appellation “Most High” (עליון), e.g. Tob 1:13; 4:11; 1QapGen 12.17, 21; 20.12, 16).
5. Both texts use the divine epithets “King of Heaven” and “Lord of Heaven” (e.g. Tob 1:18; 6:18; 7:11; 1QapGen 2.14; 8.10; 22.16, 21).
6. There is a shared proclivity for giving the names of female and other ancillary characters, such as the wives of Tobit, Raguel, Lamech and Noah (Hannah, Edna, Batenosh and Emzera, respectively).
7. Related to this, both works include extensive, animated exchange between main characters and their wives, including both wives being accused of mischief by their husbands and then being acquitted (Tob 2:11–14; 1QapGen 2.3–28; 19.14–23).
8. In both texts husbands and wives call each other “brother” and “sister” (Tob 4:21; 7:15; cf. 7:11; 1QapGen 2.9, 13).
9. Demon affliction is dramatically depicted in both works, and mantic measures, such as apotropaic prayer, are used to heal the affliction (Tob 3:8; 8:2–5; 1QapGen 20.12–30).

119 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, “Tobit and Enoch: Distant Cousins with a Recognizable Resemblance,” in *SBL 1988 Seminar Papers* (ed. D. J. Lull; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 54–68; and idem, “The Search for Tobit’s Mixed Ancestry: A Historical and Hermeneutical Odyssey,” *RevQ* 17 (1996): 339–49. Also see I. Fröhlich, “Tobit against the Background of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology* (ed. G. G. Xeravits and J. Zsengellér; SJSJ 98; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 55–70 (68–69).

120 All quotations of Tobit are taken from Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, and of the *Genesis Apocryphon* from Machiela, *The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon*.

121 Randall Buth (in personal discussion) raised the important parallel of the book of Nehemiah, which also switches occasionally from first to third person.

10. Noah is described as a prophet in Tob 4:12, and is depicted in this light in the *Genesis Apocryphon*.
11. Both works make dramatic use of the negative jussive (לֹא + imperfect finite verb) in dialogue, including doubled constructions in both works (Tob 4:21; 1QapGen 8.34).
12. Both works contain frequent, extemporaneous expressions of praise and prayer by characters in response to an event.

To wit, Tobit as a literary work seems to me to fit better within our collection of Jewish Aramaic texts (and especially with the *Genesis Apocryphon*) than with known Hebrew works.

While a firm conclusion concerning the original language of Tobit remains elusive, the thesis that Aramaic Tobit was translated into Hebrew is, in light of the cumulative evidence presented above, most plausible. The import of this for our present topic should be readily apparent, for here we would have an example of precisely the *opposite* phenomenon than we should expect were Aramaic the vernacular language in Palestine and Hebrew ill-understood. Of course, we should not too hastily draw conclusions about spoken languages from this example, since the Qumran sect or some other group may have had religious reasons for translating an Aramaic text into Hebrew.¹²² Still, it is difficult to imagine such a translation being made if Hebrew was a dead language among the Jewish populace of Second Temple period Israel.

(5) 1Q19: A Hebrew Copy of the (Aramaic) Birth of Noah Story

One of the fragmentary Hebrew texts from Cave 1 recounts a story known elsewhere only from earlier Aramaic accounts in 1 En. 106–107 and 1QapGen 1–5 (which are similar but not identical).¹²³ Sometimes construed as part of a

122 See, e.g., the studies by W. M. Schniedewind, “Qumran Hebrew as an Antilanguage,” *JBL* 118, no. 2 (1999): 232–52; S. Weitzman, “Why did the Qumran Community Write in Hebrew?,” *JAOS* 119, no. 1 (1999): 35–45; and S. Schwartz, “Language, Power and Identity.” Cf. the discussion of E. Eshel and M. E. Stone, “464. 4QExposition on the Patriarchs,” in *Qumran Cave 4. XIV: Parabiblical Texts, Part 2* (DJD 19; ed. J. C. VanderKam et al.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 218–20.

123 Published by Milik in D. Barthélemy and J. T. Milik, *Qumran Cave 1* (DJD I; Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 84–86. The relationship between all three texts was first noted in N. Avigad and Y. Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon: A Scroll from the Wilderness of Judaea. Description and Contents of the Scroll, Facsimiles, Transcription and Translation of Columns II, XIX–XXII* (Jerusalem: Magnes and Heikhal ha-Sefer, 1956 [Heb.]), 38–39. Cf. J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments from Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 55; F. García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic: Studies on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran* (STDJ 9;

larger *Book of Noah*, this story tells of Lamech witnessing the astounding birth of his son Noah, accompanied by an effulgence of light and other miracles.¹²⁴ Scholars have been unanimous in the opinion that this story was first written in Aramaic, which implies that 1Q19 is a Hebrew rendition of this composition. Unfortunately, the very little text left to us makes it impossible to know whether this was a close approximation (translation?) of the versions in 1 *Enoch* and the *Genesis Apocryphon* or more of a précis comparable to the incorporation of the Aramaic Enoch traditions into the Hebrew book of *Jubilees*.¹²⁵ In any event, in 1Q19 we appear to have an Aramaic story converted into Hebrew for consumption by either the Qumran sect or another Second Temple period Jewish group. What 1Q19 and Tobit would seem to show is a level of comfort with Hebrew that allowed for the generation and reception of translated texts in that language by at least some Jews around the turn of the Common Era.

(6) 3Q7 and 4Q484: Hebrew Copies of the (Aramaic) Testament of Judah?

Though the main point has now been made, a very similar case of rewriting or translation into Hebrew may also obtain for the Aramaic *Testament of Judah* (4Q538),¹²⁶ which by all appearances is an earlier version of the more well-known Greek recension of that work.

3 Conclusions

The above survey demonstrates that, when speaking of Second Temple period translation into Aramaic and Hebrew, we are forced to rely heavily on educated guesswork and speak regularly in terms of probabilities, not absolutes. With this caveat in mind, I suggest the following results of our appraisal:

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- Leiden: Brill, 1992), 42; and Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran Cave 1 (1Q20): A Commentary* (3d ed.; BibOr 18/B; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2004), 258. For discussion of the relationship between the 1 *Enoch* and *Genesis Apocryphon* versions of the story, see Machiela, *Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon*, 9–12.
- 124 On the question of a *Book of Noah*, see the balanced study of M. E. Stone, “The Book(s) Attributed to Noah.” *DSD* 13/1 (2006): 4–23.
- 125 On this phenomenon, see J. C. VanderKam, “Enoch Traditions in Jubilees and Other Second-Century Sources,” *SBL Seminar Papers, 1978* (2 vols.; SBLSP 13–14; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978) 1:229–51.
- 126 For the text, see E. Puech, *DJD* 31, 191–99.

(1) While we can be certain that *some interpretive traditions* preserved in the classical Targumim originate in the Second Temple period, there is no solid evidence (linguistic or generic) supporting a Second Temple origin for their *composition*, and the probability that they are reliable guides to the state of Aramaic and Hebrew in Israel during that era is very low.

(2) The Job translations from Qumran provide unambiguous evidence that *this book* was translated from Hebrew into Aramaic during the Second Temple period. However, the difficulty of the Hebrew of Job and the special traditions associated with its translation even in rabbinic literature makes it probable that this was a special case, and should not be taken to indicate the widespread practice of translating biblical texts into Aramaic at this time. In addition, the origin of this translation in the land of Israel cannot be assumed, despite the discovery of copies in the Judean Desert. It is plausible—and Muraoka's study would suggest more probable—that this Job translation was produced in a location east of Palestine, such as the Diaspora communities of Syria.

(3) The Aramaic translation of seven partial verses from Leviticus in 4Q156 *may* provide evidence of another book being translated from Hebrew during the Second Temple period. However, considering the limited text preserved, the particular passage being translated, and the nature of other non-biblical works found in the caves around Qumran, it is entirely plausible that these fragments did not belong to an Aramaic translation of the *book* of Leviticus, but to some other Aramaic work, liturgical or otherwise. Indeed, given the paucity of Aramaic translation from Hebrew at this time in comparison with the many examples of biblically inspired, original Aramaic compositions, this second option is more probable.

(4) Tobit presents us with another clear-cut case of Second Temple period translation, but here the direction of influence (Hebrew → Aramaic/Aramaic → Hebrew) has been a matter of debate. A number of factors suggest that at present we should work under the assumption that Tobit is an originally Aramaic composition which was translated into Hebrew. The Hebrew translation/adaptations of the Aramaic birth of Noah story and the *Testament of Judah* are corroborating examples of texts originally composed in Aramaic being rendered in Hebrew by the Qumran sect or another Jewish group during the first century B.C.E.—first century C.E. These Aramaic to Hebrew translations may or may not have implications for the spoken languages of the group(s) who wrote them, but they do seriously compromise claims that Hebrew to Aramaic translation in Israel during this period is evidence for Aramaic as the only, or even primary, vernacular language in use. They may also offer support to the claims of Schniedewind, Weitzman, and others that Hebrew became the more acceptable language for works like these to be written and read in sometime

during the Hellenistic–Roman periods (and here, too, we might include the evidence of *Jubilees*).

Finally, an important outcome of our survey must be stressed: if the classical Targumim are not admitted as evidence—and it is assumed here that this constitutes the best approach—then we have *strikingly little proof* of Hebrew to Aramaic translations being produced in Israel during the Second Temple period. In fact, we may quite possibly have *none*. Even if we were to admit the Job translation(s) and 4Q156 as evidence, however, we would have to balance these against the example of the *Birth of Noah*, *Testament of Judah*, and *Tobit* as likely Hebrew translations. In the ongoing debate over the linguistic milieu in which Jesus, his disciples, and so many other Jews lived in Late Second Temple period Israel, these seem important factors indeed to bear in mind.

Distinguishing Hebrew from Aramaic in Semitized Greek Texts, with an Application for the Gospels and Pseudepigrapha

Randall Buth

The Gospels can be tested to distinguish between Hebrew or Aramaic as the background language in Semitized Greek sources. When this is done correctly, the results point to a written Hebrew source behind the Greek sources to the Synoptic Gospels. This has a direct application for synoptic studies and the history of the earliest strata of the Jerusalem Jesus movement. The linguistic differentiation tests also have a direct application for Jewish literature from the Second Temple period that has survived in Greek. Distinguishing Hebrew from Aramaic can help to elucidate quite complex literary and textual histories.

The present study establishes three diagnostic tests for distinguishing Aramaic from Hebrew narrative sources in Greek translation during the Second Temple period. One test looks at both sides of the occurrence or non-occurrence of the Aramaic narrative conjunction וְאָיִן *edayin*. The other test concerns the presence or absence of the narrative Hebraic structure, *impersonal* $\text{\textit{\epsilon}\textit{\gamma}\textit{\acute{\epsilon}}\textit{\nu}\textit{\epsilon}\textit{\tau}\textit{o}}$ *introducing a finite verb main clause*, as opposed to the Greek narrative structure, *impersonal* $\text{\textit{\epsilon}\textit{\gamma}\textit{\acute{\epsilon}}\textit{\nu}\textit{\epsilon}\textit{\tau}\textit{o}}$ *introducing an infinite main clause*. The validity and scope of each criterion is investigated. Pairing these tests allows us to add a third test, the test of internal consistency.

The linguistic data lead to conclusions that cut across common assumptions in New Testament studies. Consequently, the data will be presented in considerable detail so that their validity may be established. The article will be divided into five sections: 1. Previous Approaches to Distinguishing Hebrew from Aramaic Influence in Greek Texts; 2. Establishing the Criteria; 3. Application to Non-canonical Jewish Literature; 4. Application to New Testament Gospels and Acts; 5. Conclusions.

1 Previous Approaches to Distinguishing Hebrew from Aramaic Influence in Greek Texts

a *A Syntactic Approach*

Previous approaches to the question of Hebrew vs. Aramaic sources behind a Greek document have not usually dealt with structural linguistic evidence.¹

Raymond Martin recognized some of the vexing problems involved with distinguishing Aramaic from Hebrew in a Greek translation. Most of the distinguishing syntactical markers of Semitic translation were as true for an Aramaic translation source as for a Hebrew source. As an answer to this problem he suggested that a statistical analysis of clause-level word order frequencies might separate Hebrew-based and Aramaic-based sources behind Greek documents.² As the natural place to start he chose the Greek texts of the Aramaic parts of Daniel and Ezra in order to generate statistics that could be compared to the Greek texts of the Hebrew portions of those books and the Old Greek translation in general. Martin tested 1 Esdras and concluded that 1 Esd 3:1–5:6, the section without a known source, could be statistically distinguished as Aramaic.³

While Martin's conclusions were admittedly tentative, a basic problem with his approach was a lack of appreciation for the kinds of Aramaic being used

1 Two of the most widely used non-structural criteria are wordplay and mistranslation. They have a long and checkered history in Gospel criticism due to their nature of being conjectures and random. (See, for example, the discussion in Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to Gospels and Acts* [3d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1967], 4–14.) Sometimes it is difficult to judge whether a proposal shows more of a proposer's ingenuity or reflects a necessary solution. For an anti-example, consider a name in Isa 8. Which is original: "Quickly to the cache, Speedily to the spoil" or מהר שלל חש בו? The alliteration is better in English, but we know that the original cannot be English, because English did not exist in the eighth century B.C.E. On the other hand, an author may signal a wordplay, as Josephus did in *War* 5.272. (The wordplay ὕς ἐρχεται in the "ancestral language" by guards on the city wall, warning the crowd below of an incoming stone missile, is unambiguously Hebrew: באה באבן can sound just like בהבן when shouted quickly. Aramaic אָתְהָ בְרָא אָתְהָ does not sound like כִּפְּאָ אָתְהָ or אָתְהָ אָבְנָא.) Proposals of mistranslation can be problematic if their necessity is questionable, if they are not a clear improvement, or if they are based on a different, unattested text. Yet any study of the Old Greek Bible confirms the necessity of the scholarly endeavor and it certainly helps to know which languages to be using in undertaking a quest for a wordplay or mistranslation. See the discussion on wordplay below under Susanna and in n. 66.

2 Raymond A. Martin, "Syntactical Evidence of Aramaic sources in Acts I–XV," *NTS* 10 (1964): 38–59, and idem, *Syntax Criticism of Johannine Literature, the Catholic Epistles, and the Gospel Passion Accounts* (Studies in Bible and Early Christianity 18; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1989), 177–81.

3 Martin (*ibid.*, 181) offers a "Tentative conclusion: 3:1–5:6 is free translation of Aramaic."

in Second Temple times. He was aware of the possibility of Greek masking his view of Aramaic,⁴ but Aramaic itself was multi-dialectal. The older Aramaic literary style used during the Second Temple period was an Aramaic with a relatively “free” word order system.⁵ However, in the West during the second half of the Second Temple period, Aramaic was being written in a clearer, Verb–Subject–Object order. The spoken dialects of Aramaic in the West apparently never adopted a “free” word order like that used in Persian-period Aramaic documents. Qumranic Aramaic and later Jewish Palestinian Aramaic do not follow the word order patterns of Persian-period Aramaic. In fact, the Persian period was a kind of linguistic aberration for a Semitic language. Akkadian had been influenced from Sumerian and had developed a Subject–Object–Verb order, and this in turn influenced Aramaic when it was adopted by the Assyrian and Babylonian administrations. Persian, too, reinforced this “non-Semitic” word order for Aramaic.⁶

Greek, on the other hand, was a language that had always known a “freer” word order. Linguists debate the status of any underlying word-order template for Greek, but it certainly generates a lot of sentences with Subjects, Objects, and other material in front of a Verb. Helma Dik has argued for an underlying Verb-initial template.⁷ That is a helpful linguistic abstraction, and I think that it is correct not just for classical Ionic Greek but for the Koine as well. Yet, it does not change the fact that Greek texts exhibit a very varied word order. At times one might feel inclined to say, “anything can happen in Greek word order.” The significance of this is that a well-edited Greek text will produce Subjects and Objects in front of a verb in ways that would cause Martin to declare a Semitized source “Aramaic.” This is especially problematic in “tertiary

4 Martin (*ibid.*, 180) states: “Aramaic word order and Greek word order are similar in this case.”

5 One Aramaist of repute even suggested that the basic word order of Aramaic was Object–Verb–Subject. This would be such a rare word order among the world’s languages, some would claim impossible, that linguists immediately doubt any such claim. There are good grounds for positing that the “free” Aramaic word order system was coming from a Verb–Subject–Object basic template. See Randall Buth, “Word Order in Aramaic from the Perspectives of Functional Grammar and Discourse Analysis” (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1987) (available via University Microfilms).

6 For a discussion of Persian word order, see Mark Hale, “Old Persian Word Order,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 31 (1988): 27–40. Basic Subject–Object–Verb structures remain in modern Persian. See also, Scott L. Harvey, Winfred P. Lehmann and Jonathan Slocum, “Old Iranian Online Lesson 7: Old Persian”: “The standard word order of Old Persian is Subject–Object–Verb.” <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/lrc/eieol/aveol-7-R.html> (accessed October 26, 2008).

7 Helma Dik, *Word Order in Ancient Greek: A Pragmatic Account of Word Order Variation in Herodotus* (Amsterdam Studies in Classical Philology 5; Amsterdam: Gieben, 1995).

Greek” texts. By tertiary Greek I mean Greek translations of a Semitic source that have been further edited or redacted within a Greek context, that is, the resulting Greek is not just a translation, but that translation has been handled by a second author and further stylized. In such cases, the word order will tend toward Greek and could therefore artificially score as “Aramaic,” even where the source had been Hebrew.

On the other hand, a Jewish Aramaic text with restrained Aramaic word order (i.e. relatively fixed and tending toward Verb–Subject–Object), might be literally translated into Greek and yet would score as “Hebrew.” The *Genesis Apocryphon* in the travelogue section (cols. 19–22) would be such a document if literally translated. The Aramaic Antiochus Scroll is also such a document, even with its strong biblical Aramaic coloring. Unfortunately, we do not have Greek translations of either to serve as a statistical model.

Thus, word order is not a criterion that can reliably distinguish Hebrew from Aramaic, especially in a tertiary Greek text. If the Greek word order is relatively free, it could be either Hebrew or Aramaic that has been stylized in Greek. If the Greek word order is relatively tight and “Verb-initial,” it could be either post-Persian period Aramaic or Hebrew. We must look elsewhere in order to distinguish Hebrew from Aramaic in a Semitized Greek document.

b *Sociolinguistic Approaches*

The other major approach has been to argue probability based essentially on sociolinguistics. The probable language is decided on historical sociolinguistic considerations and then mistranslations and wordplays are brought forward as confirmation. The claim is that Jesus taught in Aramaic with the presumption that a Semitic written text about him would be in Aramaic. From an Aramaic assumption, Hebraisms are frequently treated as evidence of artificiality and “Septuagintalism.” These issues are quite complex and could use monograph-length treatment. This is not the place to rehash the data on the language situation in the first century, though there are still points to be added⁸ and mistakes to be corrected.⁹ This has been the major approach of scholars like Gustaf Dalman, H. F. D. Sparks, and Matthew Black, and is explicitly discussed

8 The perspective of a tri-lingual environment and the function of the three Aramaic sentences in Mark are discussed in Randall Buth, “The Riddle of Jesus’ Cry from the Cross,” in the present volume.

9 For examples that bring needed correction and a new perspective, see Randall Buth and Chad Pierce, “Εβραϊστί” and Guido Baltes, “The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era,” both in the present volume.

and accepted by E. P. Sanders.¹⁰ Maurice Casey is a more recent illustration of this approach, especially in his work within the narrative framework Mark. The first-century language situation as argued by Casey and others is presented as justification for assuming a written Aramaic substratum at some point behind Semitized Greek sources to Mark and/or the Synoptics.

The problem, of course, is that the Jewish society in the first century is attested as trilingual. Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek were all viable candidates for public, written documents. One might argue that the eschatological Yeshua movement¹¹ would naturally choose to write in Aramaic,¹² but that was revealed to be a questionable assumption after the discovery of another eschatological community like Qumran using Hebrew for their own documents and using rewritten Hebrew Bible like the Temple Scroll. The Jerusalem Yeshua community saw themselves as following the eschatological prophet of Deuteronomy (Deut 18:15 cited in Acts 3:22 and 7:37) and Hebrew would not be an unreasonable choice for recording a subsequent “eschatological *halaxa*,” “new covenant,” or a ספר דברי ישוע (“Book of the Words of Yeshua”).¹³ Assuming that Aramaic was the only choice because of an assumed popularity in the market is also a problematic argument when it is recognized that Jewish teaching in the first century was almost always orally published in Hebrew. In rabbinic literature there is a ruling that one should record a saying in the original language used by the teacher and this was generally Hebrew in the first century.¹⁴

10 E. P. Sanders, *The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTSMS 9; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969). See especially pages 199–206.

11 We have no problem with the name “Christian” here, but it is important to first evaluate the Jerusalem church as a Jewish movement (Acts 21:20) and within Jewish society. Χριστιανοί is a later and foreign term (Acts 11:26) and it is too easy to evaluate the first generation anachronistically.

12 For a sample methodological statement along these lines, see Sanders, *The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition*, 202–3, who states: “they are persuaded that the language of Jesus and his disciples was Aramaic . . . The question of how thoroughly trilingual Palestine was in the first-century still awaits solution . . . It still seems safe to conclude, however, that at least a significant proportion of the earliest Christian traditions was first formulated in Aramaic. This certainly justifies a search for the Aramaic background of the Gospel materials.”

13 The name of the Tobit narrative is βιβλος λόγων Τοβιθ, “Book of the Words of Tobit.” Cf. Papias’ comment “Τὰ Λόγια [τοῦ Κυρίου].”

14 חייב אדם לומר בלשון רבו (“[In a discussion about Hillel’s use of the word *hin*] a man must use the language of his teacher,” *Eduyot* 1.3 [translation mine—R.B.]). This is a comment in the Mishnah on why the word *hin* was used in the previous statement. The Mishnah and Tannaitic literature are 99% Hebrew and quote many first-century teachers and situations. M. H. Segal (*Grammar of Mishnaic Grammar* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1927 (corrected

The Yeshua movement may have chosen Aramaic for some of their documents, but they may also have chosen Hebrew. We need to investigate some linguistic

sheets 1970)], 19–20) argued very succinctly for the general reliability of this tradition to preserve the language of sayings in their original language. One of the more telling arguments is that rabbinic sources preserve occasional early sayings in Aramaic. Segal (p. 20) concluded, “These Aramaic traditions were not translated into MH, but were left in their original language. It follows, therefore, that MH sayings were originally spoken in MH.” Segal had argued that Mishnaic sayings were transmitted in their original language, which was Hebrew.

More recently John Poirier (“The Linguistic Situation in Jewish Palestine in Late Antiquity,” *JGRChJ* 4 [2007]: 55–134) has repeated a suggestion that first-century rabbinic sayings were in Aramaic and were all translated into Hebrew for the Mishnah (p. 76): “as Hezser points out, ‘the fact that the Mishnah was written and composed in Hebrew does not necessarily imply that the statements and traditions that it contains were originally formulated in that language,’ that is, this language could well have been (and almost certainly was) Aramaic rather than Hebrew.” Poirier’s claim goes against the grain of the mass of Tannaitic and Amoraic literature and is “almost certainly” wrong, to use Poirier’s own words. Poirier stands the evidence on its head. He cites an alleged example from Cathrine Hezser, who cited *y. Kil.* (1:1) 27a, but without giving the data. This is unfortunate because it is better evidence for the opposite of his claim. The Mishnah in question is a generic agricultural *halaxa* of ancient provenance.

החטים והזונין אינן כלאים זה בזה.

השעורים ושבלת שועל, הכסמין והשיפון, הפול והספיר, הפרקדן והטפח, ופול הלבן והשעועית—אינם כלאים זה בזה

Danby translates, “Wheat and tares are not accounted Diverse Kinds. Barley and goat-grass, spelt and oats, the common bean and the kidney bean, the everlasting-pea and the vetchling, the white bean and haricot bean are not accounted Diverse Kinds.” It should be noted that these lists of grasses and beans are within properly structured sentences in Hebrew. A point of discussion occurs in *y. Kil.* (1:1) 27a:

ר' יונה בשם ר' חייא בר ווא.

אשכחון כת' על כותלא דר' הלל ביר' אלס.

פולה פישונה גילבונה מליתה סרפונה פסיתה.

Rabbi Yona (fourth century C.E.) in the name of Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba (third to fourth century C.E.), “they found them written on the wall of Rabbi Hillel son of Rabbi Vales (third century C.E.). Egyptian bean, garden pea, chickpea-a [*lathyrus sativus*], chickpea-b [*lathyrus cicera*], white bean, φάσγλος kidneybean” (translation mine—R.B.). What we have in Talmud Yerushalmi is a glossary of the last six names of a Mishnaic *halaxa*. Far from showing that the *halaxa* was originally in Aramaic and then translated, it shows that it was originally in Hebrew and needed an Aramaic glossary at the beginning of the third century C.E. in order to apply it to some then current agricultural questions. Cf. Y. Sussman, “Torah in the Mouth,” in *Mehqerei Talmud: Memorial Volume for Ephraim E. Urbach* (ed. Yaakov Sussman and David Rosenthal. Jerusalem: Magnes, 2005), 209–384 (215):

criteria before specifying the language of any source writings. We need a level playing field if we are going to evaluate the gospel evidence.

2 Establishing the Criteria

a *Toward a Solution*

Structural linguistic evidence is desirable in that it can show whether (a) Semitic source(s) was in Aramaic or Hebrew. Fortunately, there are some criteria that are diagnostic and that do not require “mistranslation” or “wordplays.”

Languages have different ways of organizing and presenting a story. For example, in English a narrative can be told without an explicit conjunction at the beginning of almost every sentence. Greek, on the other hand, prefers to have a conjunction at the beginning of most sentences. These conjunctions provide a signal to the audience about how the discourse is progressing.¹⁵

b *Criterion 1: Hebrew and Aramaic Use Different Connectives*

Hebrew and Aramaic, as is well known, have quite a few examples of ו (“and”) to hold a story together and mark its progress. Greek, on the other hand, has three words that roughly correspond to this Semitic “and”: δέ, καί, τέ. One could even add οὐν, μέν, ἀλλά, ὥστε and *asyndeton* (no marker), as words used in contexts where a Semitic author moves forward with a more insipid ו (“and”).

והרי ברור שאין זה (בכלאיים) אלא רישום אקראי של גלוסות (תרגומי מילים) לרשימת הפירות המנויים שם במשנה, וזו הרי בוודאי אינה אלא ‘בבחינת רשימות אישיות.

“So it is clear that this (in Kilayim) is none other than an incidental listing of glosses (translations of words) for the list of fruit specified in the Mishnah, and certainly in the category of personal notes” (translation mine—R.B.).

We note that both the Hebrew *halaxa* and the later Aramaic discussion are preserved in their original language according to standard rabbinic practice. The Mishnah are full sentences, while the Yerushalmi comment is only a list of glosses. The *halaxa* was given in Hebrew long before the Aramaic glosses were needed.

15 Those working in Bible translation from the 1960s and later would routinely study the way in which target languages linguistically organized their stories. The system of connectives and the presentation of the events of a story were studied in a growing field in linguistics called textlinguistics and discourse analysis. It was only natural to turn to biblical texts in Hebrew and Aramaic, and to Greek New Testament texts, in order to ask the same questions. While involved in Bible translation in the 1970s, I wrote up some observations and published them in a translation-oriented journal: “Perspectives in Gospel Discourse Studies,” *Selected Technical Articles Related to Translation* 6 (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1981). This present article is an expansion and reflection on those observations after thirty years of further study.

Since the Semitic word for “and” is used both for joining clauses as well as for joining nouns and noun phrases, Greek translators tended to prefer *καί* in their translations, since *καί*, too, could join items at both the level of clauses and of nouns and noun phrases. One of the features of Semitized Greek is a Greek style with an unnatural frequency and usage of *καί* to join sentences together. This has been widely acknowledged by scholars. But “Semitic *καί*” does not distinguish Aramaic from Hebrew.

Aramaic has a distinctive word that was used as a narrative connector in Second Temple Aramaic: *בְּאַדְרִין* and *וּבְאַדְרִין* (“then, at that time”).¹⁶ Of course, both Hebrew and Greek have words for “then, at that time,” *אָז* and *τότε*, respectively. But neither Hebrew nor Greek use this adverb frequently as part of the narrative conjunctive network. For example, in Daniel *בְּאַדְרִין/וּבְאַדְרִין* combine for 46 occurrences,¹⁷ which is 12.17 per thousand words of text. Ezra has 11 occurrences for 8.67 per thousand words of text. However, two of the examples in Ezra may not be purely “narrative conjunctions.” Ezra 5:5 has *וּבְאַדְרִין* (“and then”), where the word “and” can technically be called the conjunction, and 5:16 has *וּמִן אֲדָרִין* (“and from then”). Without these two examples, the statistics for narrative *בְּאַדְרִין* in Ezra are 7.09 per 1000.

In Greek translation from an Aramaic source we find that literal translation produces a high frequency of these *τότε* adverbial-conjunctions. For the purposes of comparison of statistics, it should be remembered that Greek total word counts are higher for any translation. Some particles and articles are counted as words in Greek but are not counted as individual words in Hebrew or Aramaic. This will produce lower “narrative *τότε*” ratios in literal Greek translations when compared to the Aramaic source ratios.

The Old Greek translation of Daniel has 39 occurrences of *τότε*, which is 6.96 per 1000.¹⁸ The Theodotonic text of Daniel has 28 occurrences of *τότε*

16 There is no difference between *בְּאַדְרִין/וּבְאַדְרִין* in how they are translated in Greek. For a discussion about their function and use in Aramaic, see Randall Buth, “*בְּאַדְרִין/וּבְאַדְרִין*”: An Anatomy of a Semitism in Jewish Greek,” *Maarav, Journal for the Study of the Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures* 5–6 (1990): 33–48.

17 Only 45 of these are connectives. One is a simple adverb (Dan 7:11) that is not at the beginning of its clause.

18 In the Old Greek, several of the Aramaic source *בְּאַדְרִין/וּבְאַדְרִין* are parallel to *καί*—Dan 3:3, 26a (LXX 3:93); 5:3, 6, 8; 6:6, 12, 14; *δέ*—4:16 (LXX 4:19); 6:5; *οὐτως οὕτως*—Dan 3:26b (3:93), 30 (3:97); and *τότε* for *דְּנָה בְּלִקְבֵּל*—2:12; with missing verses 4:4; 5:24; and extra *τότε*—3:18; 5:7, 10; 6:21, 25.

for a statistic of 5.21 per 1000 words.¹⁹ While some of the differences between the Greek and the Aramaic may be due to differences in text and inner-Greek contamination, the lower overall number of occurrences of τότε in comparison with the Aramaic source should probably be attributed to the unnaturalness of the use of τότε as a conjunction in Greek. This unnaturalness in Greek will be demonstrated below.

The Old Greek translation of Ezra has ten τότε, all of which occur parallel to וְאִם in the Aramaic.²⁰ There are 5.81 narrative τότε per 1000 words in the Old Greek to Aramaic Ezra.

For a Hebrew comparison we can look at a book like Genesis. Of the six occurrences of וְאִם in Genesis, only one (4:26) is at the beginning of a narrative clause as a possible conjunction. Two (12:6; 13:7) are not the first word of the clause, one is compounded וְאִם־כֵּן (“from then, from that time,” 39:5), and one is poetic (49:4). This produces a statistic of 0.19 per 1000 words, or 0.03 if limited to the one prototypical narrative example. In Late Biblical Hebrew we find the following in Hebrew-based Esther: the Hebrew text happens to be without וְאִם, and we have four τότε in Greek translation: καὶ τότε (2:13); καὶ τότε (4:16); καὶ τότε (7:10); καὶ τότε (9:31). We note that all of these examples are prefixed with καὶ, so τότε may be called an adverb and would not necessarily be a “narrative conjunction.” The underlying Hebrew text to these Greek τότε has וְאִם־כֵּן (2:13), וְאִם־כֵּן (4:16), וְאִם־כֵּן (7:10), וְאִם־כֵּן (9:31). But the slight increase in Greek in the direction of narrative τότε needs to be remembered, though its statistic is only 0.67 per 1000.

For a comparison of Greek from Jewish circles, consider 2 Maccabees, generally held to be an original Greek composition. There are three occurrences of τότε among 11,920 words and none of them unambiguously begins a clause as a conjunction:²¹

2 Macc 1:19

οἱ τότε εὐσεβεῖς ἱερεῖς

“the devout priests of that time,”

19 In Theodotonic Daniel we also find τότε for כִּלְקַבֵּל דְּנָה at 2:12; 3:8, and 6:10. Theodotion has δέ at Dan 2:15. It has καὶ at Dan 2:17, 19b, 48; 3:3, 13, 24 (3:91), 26b (3:93); 4:4 (4:7); 5:3, 8, 9, 29; 6:4, 5, 6, 13, 19, 22; 7:1, 19. διὰ τοῦτο occurs at 5:24.

20 Ezra 4:9 has וְאִם and the parallel in Greek has τότε, “these things.” This may be considered either a more stylized translation or evidence of a different text. It does not affect the status of τότε as a diagnostic criterion of Aramaic narrative behind a Greek translation.

21 3 Maccabees, Greek by consensus, has six τότε (1.17 per 1000 words), five of which look like narrative τότε (0.98/1000).

2 Macc 2:8

καὶ τότε ὁ κύριος ἀναδείξει

“and then the Lord will show,”

2 Macc 12: 18

ἄπρακτον τότε ἀπὸ τῶν τόπων ἐκλελυκότα

“having left the area at that time without doing anything.”

Likewise, Josephus' *Antiquities*, Book 1, has 15,027 words and 11 occurrences of τότε, but none as a potential conjunctive. Even when τότε occurs near the beginning of a clause it is still a normal Greek adverb. For example,

Ant. 1.44

Λούδους δὲ τότε Λούδας ἔκτισε

Louda created the Loudites at that time

Ant. 1.170

ἣ τότε μὲν ἦν ἀγαθή

which (city) at that time on the one hand was good

Ant. 1.260

τότε μὲν ἀνεχώρησεν

and at that time he withdrew

Ant. 1.313

καὶ τότε μὲν ἐσπέρα γὰρ ἦν ἡσύχαζεν

and at that time on the one hand he was relaxing because it was evening.

Similar results are found for Books 18–20 of Josephus's *Antiquities*, with 38,710 words. There are 41 occurrences of τότε, but only two occur asyndetically at the beginning of a clause and could be considered a parallel to the Aramaic 𐤇𐤃𐤁: τότε καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος ἀνέγνω ὁ τιμώτατός μοι βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας, “(which things) at that time on the platform my most honored king Agrippas read . . .” (*Ant.* 19.310); τότε δὴ τῶν ὑποστρεψάντων αἰχμαλώτων Ἰησοῦς ὁ τοῦ Ἰωσεδέκ εἰς ὧν τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην λαμβάνει, “then indeed Yeshua son of Yosedek being one of the returning captives accepted the high priesthood” (*Ant.* 20.234).²² Normal

22 The examples presented are intended to be representative of normal Greek style. An exhaustive listing of examples would not change the profile but would excessively clutter the present study.

Greek composition did not use τότε in any manner remotely suggesting a parallel to Aramaic ܦܕܢ as a narrative conjunction.

The results of the above are sufficient to suggest that when we find τότε in a Semitized Greek text functioning as a potential conjunction with some frequency,²³ we are probably looking at Aramaic influence. However, the other side of this feature may be just as helpful as a diagnostic tool. The *lack of narrative τότε* in an otherwise Semitized Jewish Greek becomes evidence of Hebrew.

There are two questions that must be dealt with before we can accept narrative τότε as a potential criterion for distinguishing Aramaic from Hebrew in a Greek translation:

Did all Aramaic narrative at the time use a narrative ܦܕܢ?

Were there no Greek authors who naturally used τότε as a quasi-narrative conjunction?

We must sift the evidence and carefully extrapolate over the times and places of potential writing in order to answer these questions with maximal reliability.

We have the biblical Aramaic texts of two writers, Ezra and Daniel, that both show the narrative ܦܕܢ style. Extended Aramaic narratives from the Second Temple period are not many in number.

Some might think of looking at the various Targum traditions. The Qumran Aramaic Job translation²⁴ is the only extant Aramaic text of a canonical Hebrew book from the Second Temple period.²⁵ Even though it is a translation

23 A frequency of 3.00 narrative τότε per 1000 words is a reasonable threshold for assuming Aramaic influence. Anything over 1.50 narrative τότε per 1000 words in a Greek text begins to raise a question. 1.5 is an arbitrary number that is chosen because it is below known examples of Aramaic translation and above known examples of original Greek. The number serves as a convenient reference point for any discussion.

24 11Q10 Job ar is often called a “targum,” but several studies have retreated from the appellation “targum.” For a modified view of “targum,” see Sally Gold, “Targum or Translation: New Light on the Character of Qumran Job (11Q10) from a Synoptic Approach,” *Journal for the Aramaic Bible* 3 (2001): 101–20. For a “translation” perspective, see Daniel A. Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena of Targum and Translation in the Second Temple Period and Post-Second Temple Period,” in the present volume.

25 Qumran also attests a small, nine-verse fragment of Job in Aramaic (4Q157 Job ar, from Job 3:5; 4:16–5:3) and eight verses from Lev 16 (4Q156 Lev ar, from Hebrew Lev 16:12–15, 18–21). This latter may represent a complete book, or it may represent a holiday reading for the pilgrimage at Sukkot season. It has special scribal markings of dicola (double dots). It is remarkable that we have five ancient references to a *Job* in Aramaic: two copies from Qumran, two rabbinic stories connected with Gamaliel, and the colophon to the Old

from Hebrew, it inserts an אַדִּין at a place where the MT has a *vav*. This would suggest that אַדִּין was part of the style for the Aramaic translator of Job and is consistent with the picture of Aramaic narrative style that we have seen in Ezra and Daniel.²⁶

11Q Job ar 20,6 אַדִּין רִגַּו [space] then grew angry . . .
 // MT Job 32.2 וַיַּחַר אֵף אֱלִיהוּא [petucha space] and Elihu got angry

None of the later Aramaic translation traditions from post-Second Temple times (Onkelos, Jonathan, Neofiti, Fragment Targum, Pseudo-Jonathan) reflects a style with a narrative אַדִּין conjunction. However, because they are late, none of them can serve as evidence of Aramaic style during the Second Temple. Secondly, they are primarily translations from Hebrew, so that a lack of אַדִּין can be explained as translationese and Hebrew influence.

There is one example of אַדִּין in the late targum to the Song of Songs. The passage deals with a Greek attack on Jerusalem in the time of Alexander; therefore, this may be a fragment from an old narrative that was inserted or quoted:

בִּאִידִין קָמוּ יוֹנָאֵי וְכִנְשׁוּ שְׁתַּיִן מַלְכִין מִבְּנֵי עֶשׂוּ מְלוּבְשֵׁין שְׂרִיזֵינֵין רְכִיבֵי עַל סוֹסוֹן וּפְרָשִׁים
 וְתַמְנָן רוֹכְבֵין מִבְּנֵי יִשְׁמַעֵאל רְכִיבֵין עַל פִּילֵיאַ בְּרִימָן שְׂאֵר עֵמְמִיא <וְלִישְׁנִיאַ> דְּלִית
 לְהוֹן מְנִין וּמְנִיאֵו אֲלִכְסַנְדְּרוֹס רְשִׁיעָא עֲלֵיהוֹן וְאַתָּא לְאַגְחָא קֶרְבָּא עַל יְרוּשָׁלַם:

then the Greeks arose and gathered sixty kings from the sons of Esau...and they appointed Alexander the wicked over them and he came and waged war against Jerusalem.

Greek translation of Job (42:17). Job seems to have been popular as a translation all over the ancient Near East. We will find a possible sixth Aramaic connection to Job traditions below in the *Testament of Job*.

26 The Qumran Job translation was probably not produced in the land of Israel, but further east. Cf. Takamitsu Muraoka, "The Aramaic of the Old Targum of *Job* from Qumran Cave XI," *JJS* 25 (1974): 425–43. See also Eibert Tigchelaar, "Aramaic Texts from Qumran and the Authoritativeness of Hebrew Scriptures: Preliminary Observations," in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism* (ed. Mladen Popović; JSJSup 141; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 155–71 (160): "linguistic analysis suggests that the Targum of Job (4Q157; 11Q10) originated in the East." Tigchelaar adds a footnote "T. Muraoka, . . . (1974): 425–43; a position which is still held by Muraoka today."

In any case, the later targums,²⁷ being translations and dating from the post-Second Temple period, are irrelevant. They neither support nor contradict the thesis presented here and are not good evidence of natural Aramaic narrative style.

Syriac literature, too, is not able to help us in our investigation because of language developments and time considerations. Syriac is a Central/Eastern Aramaic dialect attested from the second century C.E. and following. Neither ܐܘܢܐ nor ܒܘܘܢܐ are used in Syriac. Syriac developed a new conjunction ܐܘܢܐ, *den*, ܐܘܢܐܘܢܐ (“and, but”). Syntactically, *den* is modelled after Greek δέ. It occurs postpositively after an initial element in a sentence, exactly like Greek δέ. However, the -n- sound at the end of the word suggests that *den* may have developed and merged as a reinterpretation of the older Aramaic ܐܘܢܐܘܢܐ, *edayin*. From Syriac ܐܘܢܐ, *den* (“and, but”), a new word for “then” was created by adding Syriac ܘܢܐܘܢܐ, *hoy* (“this, that [f.]”) to *den* (“and, but”), resulting in ܐܘܢܐܘܢܐܘܢܐ, *hoyden* (“then, at that time”).

In the Syriac recensions of the Ahiqar legend, a popular Aramaic story that goes back to the sixth century B.C.E., the frequencies of *hoyden* are something like the Second Temple Aramaic ܐܘܢܐܘܢܐ. The five recensions listed at the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon project produce the following statistics for *hoyden* per 1000 words: recension 01 (414 words) = 9.66; recension 02 (5173 words) = 6.96; recension 03 (1237 words) = 3.23; recension 04 (5688 words) = 10.02; recension 05 (3522 words) = 5.39. These may be reflecting the continuation of the style of the older Aramaic story. However, in what may be the oldest native Syriac narrative that we have, a 400-word account of the great flood of Edessa in 201 C.E. from the Edessa Chronicles, we do not have any *hoyden*, but we do have examples of *den* (δέ) and *ger* (γάρ).

27 Restrictions of space do not allow us to discuss the complex origins of the targumic traditions. What is certain is that the Palestinian traditions are later than the Second Temple period and their lack of ܐܘܢܐܘܢܐ is not acceptable evidence for Second-Temple Aramaic narrative. Likewise Onkelos and Jonathan are both later and geographically too questionable to serve as acceptable evidence. On geography, see Moshe Goshen-Gottstein, “The Language of Targum Onkelos and the Model of Literary Diglossia in Aramaic,” *JNES* 37 (1978): 169–79. See also Edward Cook, “A New Perspective on the Language of Onkelos and Jonathan,” in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in Their Historical Context* (ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara; JSOTSup 166; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 142–56; and Christa Müller-Kessler, “The Earliest Evidence for Targum Onkelos from Babylonia and the Question of its Dialect and Origin,” *Journal of the Aramaic Bible* 3 (2001): 181–98.

In sum, Syriac reflects a later stage of the Aramaic language where אדין has metamorphasized into a Greek-styled conjunction *den*. Syriac cannot provide evidence of first-century Aramaic practice.

The non-biblical Aramaic texts from Qumran are the best evidence for Jewish Aramaic usage from the Second Temple period.²⁸ A survey of the extant texts is revealing.

The *Genesis Apocryphon* has 14 examples of narrative אדין.²⁹ Three examples are listed here:

1QGnAp 20,21	באדין אתה עלי חרקנוש	[space] then Hirqanos came to me
1QGnAp 22,18	באדין קרב מלכא די סודם	[space] then the king of Sodom approached
1QGnAp 22,20	באדין אמר אברם למלך סודם	[space] then Avram said to the king of Sodom

Other Aramaic narratives from Qumran also show this Aramaic אדין style. Note the examples below from the Enoch traditions, from Aramaic Levi, from the Aramaic *Testament of Judah*, from the visions of Amram, and from the “ProtoEsther” story.

4Q204 Enoch ^c ar 13.30	באדין ...	[space] then ...
4Q530 Enoch Giants ^b 2.3	באדין חלמו תריהון חלמין	[space] then two of them dreamed dreams
4Q530 Enoch Giants ^b 2.15	באדין .. הודה אחוהי אוהיה	then [it was?] his brother Ohyah acknowledged
4Q213a AramaicLevi ^b 2.11	באדין נגדת	[then I set out
4Q213a AramaicLevi ^b 2.13	אדין	[then ...
4Q213a AramaicLevi ^b 2.15	אדין חזוין אחזית	[then I was shown visions
Bodlian AramaicLevi ^a 10–11	אדין אמרת	then I said
4Q538 TestJudah ar	[א]דין חשל ע[ל]	then he formed against
4Q545 Visions of Amram ^c ar 1.7–8	אדין כדי אשתציו יומי משתותא שלח	

28 Two other possible languages from the first century can be ignored. Arabic was used to the South and East of Judea and later Arabic knows of a connector ^ف, “so, then, and,” that is reminiscent of the functions of Aramaic אדין. We do not, however, have any literature from the right period, and Nabatean is really the wrong culture to be pursuing background for the Gospels. Likewise, Latin does not produce anything that might produce Matthew’s strong τότε style. For example, neither Caesar nor Tacitus use *tunc* or synonyms as a narrative conjunctive.

29 1QGnAp 2.1, 3, 8, 11, 13, 19; 5.16; 10.1, 11, 18; 11.12; 20.21; 22.18, 20.

then, when the days of the feast were completed, he sent
 4Q550c JewsPersianCourt^c ar 2.7 אדין על בגסרו
 then Bagasro entered

Except for Tobit, all of our Qumran Aramaic narratives of considerable length show a narrative אדין style.³⁰ Tobit (six pages in length)³¹ is a special case and will be discussed in the section on non-canonical Jewish literature.

A historical romance about the revolt and wars of the Maccabees adds to our picture of Aramaic narrative. The Antiochus Scroll³² is a document of 66 verses and 1300 words. It has ten examples of narrative אדין. אדין occurs in 14, 43, and 52. אדין occurs at 16, 17, 21, 26, 32, 38, 47. This is a rate of 7.69 per 1000 and comparable to the style of Daniel and Ezra.

An indirect testimony to the status of the אדין style in Second Temple Jewish Aramaic is the New Testament book of Matthew. Matthew was certainly written in Greek and was certainly not written in Aramaic.³³ However, out of 90 examples of τóτε, Matthew has between 55 and 62 examples of a

30 4Q208–211 AstronEnoch ar have 33 instances of אדין in non-narrative text; 4Q242 Nabonidus ar is fragmentary; 4Q243–246 Apocalyptic ar are all non-narrative and fragmentary; 4Q318 Brontologion ar is a fragmentary, non-narrative list; 4Q339 FalseProphets ar is fragmentary; 4Q529 Words of Michael is fragmentary; 4Q534 Noah ar has a אדין in a fragmentary apocalyptic text; 4Q 537 TestJac? ar is fragmentary; 4Q539 ApocJoseph ar is fragmentary; 4Q540–541 ApocLevi ar is fragmentary but has a couple of אדין; 4Q542 TestQahat ar is fragmentary; 4Q549 Hur and Miriam ar is fragmentary; 4Q551 ar is fragmentary but has אדין [א]; 4Q552 FourKingdoms ar and 4Q553 FourKingdoms ar are quite fragmentary, 4Q554–555 New Jerusalem ar are a non-narrative description; 4Q557–558 Vision ar, 4Q559 BiblicalChron ar, 4Q560 Exorcism ar, 4Q561 Horoscope ar and 4Q562–575 ar are all relatively short and fragmentary. 4Q565 ar apparently has a אדין.

31 Six pages of Semitic text in Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls, Study Edition* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1997–98).

32 For the text, see Menachem Tzvi Qaddari, "The Aramaic Antiochus Scroll (Part 1), [Hebrew]" *The Yearbook for Jewish Studies and Humanities of Bar-Ilan University* [Hebrew] (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 1963), 81–105. Qaddari proposed a third-century C.E. date for the writing in *Leshonenu* 23 (1959): 129–45.

33 Martin's statistics (Raymond A. Martin, *Syntax Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels* [Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 10; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1987]) are useful for confirming that the work of Matthew as a whole is not a translation but a Greek writing. In addition, those who see Matthew as using Mark in Greek, the present author included, have added reasons for this conclusion that Greek Matthew is not a translation. Places in Matthew and Mark with identical Greek wording show a Greek compositional connection, and if the textual influence is from Mark to Matthew then Matthew cannot be translation. However, the argument from synoptic relationships is not necessary for showing that Matthew is not a translation. The statistical evidence gathered by Martin already shows that. The conclusion that canonical Matthew was written in Greek and was not a translation does not depend on synoptic theory.

narrative τότε.³⁴ This occurs where Matthew is otherwise word-for-word identical with Mark, in Matthean material, in Matthean–Mark material, in Matthean–Lukan material, and in triple tradition (Matthew//Mark//Luke). The feature is probably not coming from a source but is Matthew’s own style in *Greek*.³⁵ It may or may not reflect Matthew’s mother-tongue or his primary writing language.³⁶

What is more important is that this Greek style testifies to a distinct Aramaic influence in another first-century document. This Aramaic influence reinforces our observation that Second Temple Aramaic was using an 𐤀𐤇𐤍 style in narrative. Matthew’s Greek style is inexplicable if contemporary Aramaic did not have an 𐤀𐤇𐤍 style. As a secondary issue, the unnatural Greek style also raises the question of how many other “Matthews” might have existed. If Matthew could produce or create such a style, theoretically there could be others. Someone writing in a “Jewish” Greek could add τότε to a narrative in a way reminiscent of current Aramaic style. Textual traditions that show contamination with this style in Greek must be evaluated for the kind of influence, whether from an Aramaic source or a Jewish Greek writer. However, this question must be balanced with a recognition that a τότε-style was not a general style of a Jewish Greek dialect. If narrative τότε was a standard Jewish Greek style, then we would expect to see evidence of this in the other Synoptic Gospels where their style is not standard Greek. We will see below in Section 4, “Application to New Testament Gospels and Acts,” that such is not the case. There is no evidence of a general “Jewish Greek” narrative τότε style.

Here, we must clarify the nature of the narrative connector so there is no misunderstanding on what is, and is not, diagnostic between Hebrew and Aramaic. In future contexts it is common for Hebrew to use 𐤀𐤇𐤍 (“then, at that time”), the etymological cognate of Aramaic 𐤀𐤇𐤍 (First Temple Aramaic and poetic Hebrew was 𐤀𐤇𐤍). Here are three of Isaiah’s seven occurrences:

34 For the Matthean data see the discussion below on Matthew, below in Section 4, “Application to New Testament Gospels and Acts.”

35 On the conclusion that this is Matthew’s Greek style, see the discussion on Matthew, below in Section 4, “Application to New Testament Gospels and Acts.”

36 Multilingual situations can produce unpredictable styles. I am well acquainted with a particular man in Sub-Saharan Africa. He spoke a Nilotic language as a first-language, a second Nilotic language as a trade language, English as his primary language of education, Arabic as a spoken trade language, and Italian. For some reason he was fond of preaching in English with a conjunction “fa,” which is Arabic, meaning “and, and then.” English was his most developed and mature language, yet his English preaching style was distinctly idiosyncratic, exhibiting an Arabism.

Isa 58:8	אֲזִי יִבְקַע כְּשַׁחַר אֶזְרִיךְ	then your light will break out like dawn
Isa 58:14	אֲזִי תִתְעַנֵּג עַל־יְהוָה	then you will have joy for the Lord
Isa 60:5	אֲזִי תִרְאֵי וְנִהַרְתִּי	then you will see and be bright

As expected, a similar future use of אֲזִי is attested in Aramaic and at Qumran. Here are four selected examples of “non-narrative” future use. They are good, generic Semitic. That is, they are equally good as Hebrew and Aramaic:

1QLevi ar 11.1 (cf. 27.1; 53.1, אֲזִי in past contexts)	אֲדִין יהוּא	then he will be
4Q534 Noah ar 1.6	בְּאֲדִין יֵעָרַם וְיָדַע	[space] then he will be wise and will know
4Q541(ApocryphonLevi b) ar 7.4	אֲדִין יִתְפַתְחוּן סְפְרֵי חִכְמָא]	then the books of wisdom will be opened
4Q541(ApocryphonLevi b) ar 9.4	אֲדִין יַעֲדָה חֹשֶׁכָא	then darkness will vanish

These examples of אֲזִי and אֲדִין in future contexts are standard adverbial usages and should not be confused with the narrative use of אֲזִי as a conjunction in Aramaic. It is also amply attested in Greek. There the 241 examples of (καὶ) τότε in the *Sibylline Oracles*, which is 8.23 futuristic τότε per 1000 words in this future-poetic Greek hexameter.

From all of the above, we can conclude that in Jewish Greek from the Second Temple period finding frequent examples of *narrative* τότε is an indication of Aramaic influence. *Narrative* τότε may indicate an Aramaic source, or *narrative* τότε may conceivably be an Aramaized writing style in Greek. Equally important, Semitic Greek without *narrative* τότε is a possible indication of Hebrew influence. If there is an indication of a Semitic source being used but there is no *narrative* τότε, then that source is probably Hebrew. We will examine this and further refine it by applying it to several texts after the other diagnostic criterion is introduced.

c **Criterion 2: Impersonal ἐγένετο Setting to Introduce a Finite Verb**

Anyone who has read a semi-literal translation of the Hebrew Bible is acquainted with a peculiar style of old literary Hebrew narrative. The Hebrew verb for “be” is used impersonally with a “setting” and this setting structure introduces a finite verb. Several examples below illustrate this structure in Hebrew and in Greek and Aramaic translation. There are two basic subtypes of structures in Greek—those settings that introduce the following finite verb

without καί (subtype a),³⁷ and those settings that introduce the following finite verb by means of καί (subtype b):³⁸

Gen 12:11 (Greek subtype a)³⁹

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבוֹא מִצְרַיִם
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ
הִנֵּה־נָא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יִפְתַּח־מִרְאָהּ אֹתָּ:

And it happened as he neared to enter Egypt
and he said to Saray his wife
Look, I know that you are a beautiful woman.

(LXX) ἐγένετο δὲ ἡνίκα ἤγγισεν Ἀβραμ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς Αἴγυπτον
εἶπεν Ἀβραμ Σαρα τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ
γινώσκω ἐγὼ ὅτι γυνὴ εὐπρόσωπος εἶ

וַהֲוֶה כַּד קָרִיב לְמִיעַל לְמִצְרַיִם
וַאֲמַר לְשָׂרִי אִיתְתִּיהּ
הָא כְעַן יָדַעְנָא אֲרִי אִיתְתָּא שְׂפִירַת חִיזוֹ אֵת:

Gen 12:14 (Greek subtype a)⁴⁰

וַיְהִי כְּבוֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִם
וַיִּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה כִּי־יָפָה הוּא מְאֹד:

37 These distinctive subtypes were first discussed by Alfred Plummer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (1CC; Edinburgh T. & T. Clark, 1896).

38 Further discussion on this criterion was presented in Randall Buth and Brian Kvasnica, “The Parable of the Vineyard and the Tenants in its Historical and Linguistic Context,” in *Jesus’ Last Week* (ed. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage, and Brian Becker; Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 53–80 and 259–317, especially pages 268–73. See also Randall Buth, “A Hebraic Approach to Luke and the Resurrection Accounts: Still Needing to Re-do Dalman and Moulton,” in *Grammatica Intellectio Scripturae* (ed. R. Pierri; Saggi filologici di Greco biblico in onore di Lino Cignelli OFM, Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 2006), 293–316.

39 The LXX εἶπεν Ἀβραμ did not translate the second Hebrew “and” because of considerations of Greek style, so it is subtype a.

40 This is Greek subtype a because the material following the setting (ἰδόντες...) is introduced without καί. Here the Hebrew has an infinitive as the setting (כְּבוֹא) and it is translated by a subordinate temporal clause in Greek (ἡνίκα+finite verb).

וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת־הַשְּׂרָי פְּרָעָה
וַיְהַלְלוּ אֶת־אֵל־פְּרָעָה

And it happened after Avram entered Egypt
and the Egyptians saw the woman that she was very beautiful
and Pharaoh's administrators saw her
and praised her to Pharaoh.

ἐγένετο δὲ ἡνίκα εἰσήλθεν Ἀβραμ εἰς Αἴγυπτον
ιδόντες οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι τὴν γυναῖκα ὅτι καλὴ ἦν σφόδρα,
καὶ εἶδον αὐτὴν οἱ ἄρχοντες Φαραω
καὶ ἐπήνεσαν αὐτὴν πρὸς Φαραω.

(Onkelos)

וְהָיָה כִּד עַל אַבְרָם לְמִצְרַיִם וַחֲזוּ מִצְרַיִם יְת אֶת־אֵרָי שְׂרָיָה הִיא חֲדָא:

Genesis 12:14 also illustrates subtype a. In addition, Gen. 12:14 shows a rare mistake where the translator has incorrectly tried to stylize the Hebrew source into smoother Greek. The first verb וַיֵּרְאוּ has been put into a nominative participle form *ιδόντες*. But it is followed by an unnecessary “and” when linking the participle to the main verb *καὶ εἶδον*, and furthermore, the verb *εἶδον* has a different subject. This dangling participle and improper agreement was probably caused by the intervening description of what the first group saw: “that she was very beautiful.” If the translator had wanted to subordinate one of the Hebrew verbs to a participle he should have chosen the second “seeing” and said *καὶ ἐγένετο . . . εἶδον οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι ὅτι . . . , καὶ ιδόντες αὐτὴν οἱ ἄρχοντες Φαραω ἐπήνεσαν αὐτὴν πρὸς Φαραω*. As the LXX stands, this *καί* would be a Hebraism of the “mistranslation” type and cannot serve as a pattern for imitation because it is too rare. It may not occur anywhere else in the Old Greek.⁴¹

41 The incorrect use of *καί* is obvious in Gen 12:14–15 because we have the Hebrew source text and because the subjects of the Greek participle and the main verb are different. There is a good potential example of this same phenomenon in Luke 5:18.

<i>καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες φέροντες ἐπὶ κλίνης ἄνθρωπον</i>	and behold men carrying on a bed a man
<i>ὃς ἦν παραλελυμένος,</i>	who was paralyzed
<i>καὶ ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν εἰσενεγκεῖν</i>	and they were seeking to bring him in

Normal Greek style would have *φέροντες* link to *ἐζήτουν* without a conjunctive *καί*. If this *καί* was the result of a Semitic source behind the Greek source, the unnecessary *καί* was probably caused by the intervening description of the man. However, it has then remained in the Greek manuscript tradition because it is still grammatically correct as Greek: the superfluous *καί* comes to be read as an adverb, “they were *even* trying to bring

Gen 19:34 (Greek subtype b)⁴²

וַיְהִי מִמָּחָרֶת וַתֹּאמֶר הַבְּכִירָה

And it happened on the morrow,
and the older daughter said

ἐγένετο δὲ τῇ ἐπαύριον
καὶ εἶπεν ἡ πρεσβυτέρα

(Onkelos)

וְהוּא בְיוֹמָא דְבִתְרוּהִי וַאֲמַרְתָּ רַבְתָּא

Gen 38:29 (Greek subtype b)⁴³

him in.” But such a focus on “*even* trying” appears to be misplaced, since there was nothing else for them to do if they were carrying the man. This text highlights the tensions in proposals of “mistranslation.” One must appreciate the incongruity of the καὶ and then accept a narrative Semitic source behind an early stage of the Greek story. This would require a Semitized, non-Markan source to Luke. What is “reasonable and clear” to one reader, might be brushed aside as “amusing conjecture” by another. A major, non-Markan, Semitized source is the iceberg under the surface of the present study and this possibility underlines the importance of getting language details correct.

This “superfluous καὶ after a participle” appears to be very rare in Greek. Besides Luke 5:18 and Gen 12:14–15, we could only find two other examples: *Sedrach* 14.2, καὶ πεσόντες ἐπὶ πρόσωπον παρακαλοῦντες τὸν θεὸν καὶ εἶπον, “and fallen on their face beseeching God and they said . . .,” and *T. Job* 18:1, Καὶ ταῦτα δὲ λέγων αὐτοῖς, ἀπέλθων καὶ κατέβαλεν τὸν οἶκον ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα μου, “And saying even these things to them, having gone off and he threw down the house on my children.” *Sedrach* is probably late (fourth century C.E.) and Greek, and likely to be an accidental mistake triggered by the interruptive present participle “beseeching God” hanging on the aorist participle. Perhaps παρακαλοῦντες had been παρεκάλουσι in an earlier recension. The *Testament of Job* is probably a first-century product and may be reflecting Aramaic, as will be shown below. However, in the *Testament of Job* one could claim that the καὶ before κατέβαλεν is adverbial “even,” since the first καὶ in the sentence is adverbial.

- 42 This is Plummer’s subtype b because of καὶ after the setting and introducing the following finite verb clause.
- 43 The Hebrew text does not have a sequential past tense (*vav ha-hippux* structure) after the setting. It uses simple “and” + “behold.” The LXX has retained this “and” in its translation so it is subtype b.

וַיְהִי כַּמְשִׁיב יָדוֹ
וַהֲגִה יָצָא אֶחָיו
וַתֹּאמֶר מִה־פִּרְצָתָּ עָלַיְךָ פֶּרֶץ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פֶּרֶץ:

And it happened as he was returning his hand
and behold his brother came out.
and she said, “Look how you’ve broken out, and she called his name
Peretz.”

ὡς δὲ ἐπισυνήγαγεν τὴν χεῖρα
καὶ εὐθὺς ἐξῆλθεν ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ
ἢ δὲ εἶπεν τί διεκόπη διὰ σέ φραγμός καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Φαρες

(Onkelos) וַהֲוֶה כַּד אֶתִּיב יְדִיה
וַהֲא נִפְק אֶחָיו
וַאֲמַרְתָּ מָה תִּקְוֶה סְגִי עָלֶיךָ לְמַתְקֶה וַקְרָא שְׁמִיה פֶּרֶץ:

Gen 39:15 (almost subtype a)⁴⁴

וַיְהִי כְשָׁמְעוֹ כִּי־הִרְיַמְתִּי קוֹלִי וַאֲקָרָא וַיַּעֲזֹב בְּגָדוֹ אֶצְלִי וַיֵּנֶס וַיֵּצֵא הַחוּצָה:

And it happened after his hearing that I raised my voice and cried out
and he left his clothes with me
and he fled and went outside.

ἐν δὲ τῷ ἀκοῦσαι αὐτὸν ὅτι ὑψωσα τὴν φωνήν μου καὶ ἐβόησα
καταλιπὼν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ παρ’ ἐμοὶ
ἔφυγεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἔξω

(Onkelos)
וַהֲוֶה כַּד שָׁמַע אָרִי אֶרְיַמִּית קוֹלִי וַקְרִית
וַשְׁבַּקִּיה לְלַבְשִׁיה לְוֹתִי וַעֲרַק וַנִּפְק לְשׁוּקָא:

Gen 22:1 (subtype a)⁴⁵

44 The LXX does not use ἐγένετο in its translation, so it is technically not a Greek subtype. However, it drops καὶ after the setting so it is close to Greek subtype a.

45 The Hebrew does not follow with a sequential tense and the LXX does not use “and.” This is subtype a. For contrast, compare Gen 22:20 in the LXX where it includes καὶ (subtype b): καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα καὶ ἀνηγγέλη τῷ Ἀβρααμ λέγοντες.

וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה
וְהָאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת־אֲבִרְהָם
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲבִרְהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי:

καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα
ὁ θεὸς ἐπείραζεν τὸν Ἀβραάμ
καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν Ἀβραάμ Ἀβραάμ ὁ δὲ εἶπεν ἰδοὺ ἐγώ

(Onkelos)

וְהָיָה בְּתֵרָת פְּתֻמֵּי אֵילִין
וַיִּוִּי נְסִי יְת אֲבִרְהָם
וַאֲמַר לִיה אַבְרָהָם וַאֲמַר הָאֲנִי:

These examples show some flexibility on behalf of the Greek translators. For perspective, though, it should be added that by far the most common translation in the Old Greek Bible is to have ἐγένετο plus an infinitive setting that introduces a finite verb clause.

Ever since Alfred Plummer⁴⁶ it has been common to differentiate the Greek of these Hebraic structures into two subcategories. The first subcategory (a) serves as an introduction to the following main event, but it does not use “and” for that event. The main event is a finite verb (see above: Gen 12:11; 22:1, and 39:15 [though without ἐγένετο]). It may be considered slightly more refined as a Greek translation. The second subcategory (b) serves as an introduction to the following main event, but it includes “and” in its translation (see above: Gen 19:34; 22:20, and 38:29 [though without ἐγένετο]).

d *A Similar “Greek” Structure, But Not Criterion #2: Plummer Category C*

In addition to these Hebraic examples there is also a Greek structure that resembles this Hebraic ἐγένετο structure and the Greek impersonal-ἐγένετο structure must be distinguished from the Hebraic structure. It developed from a classical idiom that was built on συνέβη, “it happened,” + an infinitive. This idiom occurs nine times in 2 Maccabees: 3:2 (συνέβαινεν); 4:30; 5:2, 18; 7:1; 9:2, 7; 10:5; 12:34; 13:7. Because the Hebraic structure often has an infinitive within a “setting phrase,”⁴⁷ the Greek structure with an infinitive as the main verb may

46 Plummer, *The Gospel According to Luke*.

47 See Mark 4:4; Luke 1:8; 2:6; 5:1, 12; 9:18, 33, 51; 11:1, 27; 14:1; 17:11, 14; 18:35; 19:15; 24:4, 15, 30, 51. For example, in Luke 24:30, καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ κατακλιθῆναι αὐτὸν μετ’ αὐτῶν λαβῶν τὸν ἄρτον εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἐπέδιδου αὐτοῖς, the infinitive κατακλιθῆναι is part of the setting and

sometimes be mistaken for the Hebraic Greek structure. Mark 2:23 (below) is an example of the Greek structure with an infinitive main verb:⁴⁸

2 Macc 5:2:

συνέβη δὲ καθ' ὅλην τὴν πόλιν σχεδὸν ἐφ' ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα φαίνεσθαι διὰ τῶν ἀέρων τρέχοντας ἵππεις διαχρύσους

and it happened throughout the whole country for almost forty days there were appearing (inf.) in the air golden galloping horses

Acts 21:25:

ὅτε δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀναβαθμούς,
συνέβη βασιτάζεσθαι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν στρατιωτῶν
διὰ τὴν βίαν τοῦ ὄχλου.

and when he was on the steps
it happened that he was being carried (inf.) by the soldiers
because of the force of the crowd.

Examples of γίνεσθαι (ἐγένετο), “become,” introducing an infinitive event occur in the papyri in non-past contexts⁴⁹ and provide the link for the following “Greek” structure:

Mark 2:23 καὶ ἐγένετο αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς σάββασι διαπορεύεσθαι
and it happened him, on the sabbath, to be going through
the fields.

the main verbs are (λαβῶν...) εὐλόγησεν and (κλάσας) ἐπέδιδου. These are all the Hebraic structure.

48 Cf. Luke 3:21–22 ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ βαπτισθῆναι ἅπαντα τὸν λαὸν καὶ Ἰησοῦ βαπτισθέντος καὶ προσευχομένου ἀνεωχθῆναι τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ καταβῆναι τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον σωματικῶ εἶδει ὡς περιστερὰν ἐπ' αὐτόν, καὶ φωνὴν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ γενέσθαι. Here the setting phrases include an infinitive βαπτισθῆναι and a genitive absolutes βαπτισθέντος and προσευχομένου. The main events are recorded as infinitives ἀνεωχθῆναι... καταβῆναι... γενέσθαι. Luke 3:21–22 is the Greek structure.

49 J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1930) 126.

Thus, ἐγένετο, plus or minus a setting that introduces an infinitive main event should be called Greek, or Jewish Greek.⁵⁰ This is the third ἐγένετο setting structure, subcategory c in Plummer's classification. It is not a direct Hebraism. It is important to distinguish this Greek structure because many erroneous statements have been made by New Testament scholars about this structure found in Luke and Acts.⁵¹

e *Is "Impersonal ἐγένετο + Finite Main Verb" Hebrew or Aramaic?*

Since the Targum sometimes mimics this Hebrew structure, scholars question whether this setting structure (indefinite ἐγένετο + finite main verb) should be considered unique to Hebrew? Although there is a near consensus that the structure is not natural to texts written in Aramaic, one scholar has suggested that the structure is unique to Aramaic in the Second Temple period and is not Hebrew at all.⁵² Let us examine this claim.

Elliott Maloney appears to recognize that 4Q202 En-b ar ii 2 (= 1 En 6:1) may only be a reflection or translation of the biblical Hebrew structure.⁵³ His only natural Aramaic "example" comes from Elephantine Aramaic and needs to be cited in its larger context. It turns out to be an "anti-example" and does not reflect the common Biblical Hebrew structure.

Cowley 30 (fifth century B.C.E.), lines 8–12

אחר נפין דבר מצריא עם חילא אחרנן

Then Nepin took the Egyptians with another force

50 See discussion in J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Vol. 1: *Prolegomena*, (3d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908) 17. Plummer's "structure c" is not exactly found in Greek papyri, so it is best to call what we find in the Gospels "Jewish Greek" and a colloquial adaption of the Greek συνέβη construction.

51 For representative examples of erroneous and misleading statements, see nn. 112, 114, 115, 116.

52 Elliott Maloney, *Semitic Interference in Marcan Syntax* (SBLDS 51; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars, 1981). This was a dissertation under Joseph Fitzmyer at Fordham University, accepted 1979. The structure is discussed on pp. 81–86, 207–8, and 247.

53 Aramaic ׳והווא כד׳] כד׳] ויהווא can be compared with the Greek text καὶ ἐγένετο ὅταν (or ὅτε) ἐπληθύνθησαν οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐγεννήθησαν αὐτοῖς θυγατέρες, "And it happened when (whenever) the sons of men multiplied in those days (that) daughters were born to them" (translation Maloney's). This comes directly or indirectly from the Hebrew of Gen 6:1: וַיְהִי כִּי הִחַל הָאָדָם לָרֵב עַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּבָנוּת יִלְדוּ לָהֶם.

אתו לבירת יב עם תליהם

they came to the fortress Yev with their weapons

עלו באגורא זך

they entered that temple

נדשוהי עד ארעא

they smashed it to the ground

ועמודיא זי אבנא זי הוו תמה תברו המו

and the pillars of stone that were there they broke them.

אף הוה

Even it happened

תרען זי אבן /////

five gates of stone,

בנין פסילה זי אבן זי הוו באגורא זך

a building of hewn stone that was in the that temple,

נדשו.

they smashed,

ודשיהם קימו

and their doors they set up

וציריהם זי דששיא אלך נחש

and the hinges of these doors were bronze

ומטלל עקה זי ארז

and a ceiling of wood was cedar

כלא זי עם שירית אשרנא ואחרן זי תמה הוה

all that with the rest of the furniture and other things that were there

כלא באשה שרפו.

all of it they burned with fire.

The first thing that needs to be said about the above text is that the Aramaic structure is not like the Hebrew structure common in the Hebrew Bible.

In Hebrew, the ויהי clause is linked to subordinated material that provides a setting to the event or events that follow. The Hebrew setting material is typically a prepositional phrase, or an infinitive,⁵⁴ or כִּי plus a finite verb. In Hebrew narrative, this structure typically serves as a “setting phrase” to a new paragraph-type unit and foregrounded material that moves the narrative forward. The Aramaic of Cowley 30 is the opposite of the Hebrew structure. Cowley 30:8 opens with a narrative about the destruction that Nepin and the Egyptians accomplished. This is followed with a backgrounded listing of the specific events of destruction that are introduced by an adverb אַ, “even,” plus הוה, “was,” and several backgrounded clauses. There is no subordinated “setting” clause joined to הוה, the narrative pauses in its temporal march, and the whole list expands and reiterates what had been mentioned in the narrative. The backgrounded nature of the material listed is further marked in Aramaic by verb final word order.

The only point of contact between Cowley 30:8–12 and Hebrew is the impersonal use of the verb “be, happen.” However, structurally, they are as different as night and day. This difference is easily detected in Greek translation, for example, Mark 1:9 (cited by Maloney, 85) *καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρετ* (“... and it happened in those days Jesus came from Nazareth...”). This is clearly parallel to the Hebrew structure “impersonal ‘be’ + setting phrase + finite verb” where the finite verb moves the narrative forward.⁵⁵ The same is true of Maloney’s other example, Mark 4:4. So, rather

54 Usually -כ or -ב + the infinitive.

55 See Exod 2:11 for an exact Hebrew example: ויהי בימים ההם ויגדל משה ויצא אל אחיו, “and it happened in those days and Moses grew up and went out to his brothers.” LXX (subtype a): ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταῖς πολλαῖς ἐκείναις μέγας γενόμενος Μωυσῆς ἐξῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς

than establishing an Aramaic provenance for this structure, Maloney has unintentionally helped to establish its Hebrew pedigree. The structure “impersonal ‘be’ + setting phrase + (foregrounded) finite verb” is only natural to Hebrew and is only known to occur in Aramaic as translation from Hebrew.

f *Criterion #2 Exists as Second Temple Hebrew*

After discussing the Aramaic side of this structure, we still need to look at the Hebrew side, since there are a couple of puzzles to be resolved. It is known that Mishnaic Hebrew no longer used the sequential tenses of Classical Hebrew. The very few examples like *b. Qid.* 66a⁵⁶ are to be treated as quotations from works that have otherwise disappeared. They do not prove that sequential tenses were still being actively used in the talmudic period.

During the Second Temple period we have examples of literary Hebrew books that use this Hebrew structure and we have examples of books without the Hebrew structure.

1 and 2 Chronicles, Nehemiah, Job (1:5, 6, 13; 2:1; 42:7), Zechariah (7:1), Jonah (4:8), Daniel (8:2, 15), Esther (1:1; 2:8; 3:4; 5:1, 2), and Ruth (1:1, 19; 3:8) use this structure.

On the other hand, there are Biblical Hebrew books that do not have an example of impersonal ויהי + setting + main clause: Ezra (narrative), Song of Songs (poetry), Lamentations (poetry), Qohelet (essay), Psalms (poetry), and Proverbs (poetry). Perhaps the most significant of these is Ezra since it is a

ἀδελφούς αὐτοῦ. Other examples of ויהי בימים ההם include Exod 2:23 (where the LXX did not use ἐγένετο), Judg 19:1, and 1 Sam 28:1.

56 *b. Qid.* 66a is a famous story about Yannai and the Pharisees that starts in Mishnaic Hebrew, then quotes an apparent source in literary Hebrew with sequential tenses, even a מיד, “immediately,” and then finishes in Mishnaic Hebrew. The text reads:

מעשה בינאי המלך שהלך לכוחלית שבמדבר וכיבש שם ששים כרכים, ובחזרתו היה שמח שמחה גדולה, וקרא לכל חכמי ישראל. אמר להם: אבותינו היו אוכלים מלוחים בזמן שהיו עסוקים בבנין בית המקדש, אף אנו נאכל מלוחים זכר לאבותינו, והעלו מלוחים על שולחנות של זהב ואכלו. והיה שם אחד איש לץ לב רע ובליעל ואלעזר בן פועירה שמו, ויאמר אלעזר בן פועירה לינאי המלך: ינאי המלך, לבם של פרושים עליך! ומה אעשה? הקם להם בציץ שבין עיניך, הקים להם בציץ שבין עיניו. היה שם זקן אחד ויהודה בן גדידיה שמו, ויאמר יהודה בן גדידיה לינאי המלך: ינאי המלך, רב לך כתר מלכות, הנח כתר כהונה לזרעו של אהרן! שהיו אומרים: אמו נשבת במודיעים, ויבוקש הדבר ולא נמצא; ויבדלו חכמי ישראל בוועם. ויאמר אלעזר בן פועירה לינאי המלך: ינאי המלך, הדיוט שבישראל כך הוא דינו, ואתה מלך וכהן גדול כך הוא דינך? ומה אעשה? אם אתה שומע לעצתי רומסם. ותורה מה תהא עליה? הרי כרוכה ומונחת בקרן זוית, כל הרוצה ללמוד יבוא וילמוד. אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: מיד נורקה בו אפיקורסות, דהוה ליה למימר: תינח תורה שבכתב, תורה שבעל פה מאי? מיד ותוץץ הרעה על ידי אלעזר בן פועירה, ויבדלו כל חכמי ישראל, והיה העולם משתומם עד שבא שמעון בן שטח והחזיר את התורה ליושנה.

narrative, though it is relatively short. Note, for example Ezra 9:1: וככלות אלה 9:1: ונגשו אלי השרים, “and after these finished the officers came to me.” The context fits the use of ויהי but the structure was not used.

Qumran adds to the list of literary Hebrew documents that do not use the narrative ויהי structure. However, most of these are non-narrative documents like the biblical books just listed that do not use this structure. For example, the non-narrative Community Rule (1QS 6.4) is suggestive of the structure but uses an impersonal “it will be” plus setting structure in the future:

והיה כי יערכו השולחן לאכול או התירוש לשתות הכוהן ישלח ידו

and it will be when they arrange the table to eat or the wine to drink, the priest will extend his hand.

A paraphrase of Genesis shows the impersonal setting structure. Even though the first four words of the Qumran example fit the biblical text itself, the continuation is independent of the biblical text and might be an example of semi-independent use. Compare the MT with the Qumran rewording:

Gen 8:5–6 (MT)

והמים היו הלוך וחסור עד החדש העשירי
בעשירי באחד לחדש נראו ראשי ההרים
ויהי מקץ ארבעים יום ויפתח נח

This last line is expanded in the Qumran Genesis commentary 4Q252 1:12:

ויהי מקץ ארבעים יום להראות ראשי

and it happened forty days after the appearing of the peaks of [the mountains]

However, just a few lines later, this same text drops a ויהי from the source while paraphrasing the account. 4Q 252 2.1 reads:

באחת ושש מאות שנה לחיי נוח

[MT has באחת ושש] In the 601st year of Noah's life . . .

There is a *Jubilees* fragment that appears to have this structure (11Q12, f9.2):

ויהי בשב[עה]...

And it happened on the 7th ...

The Temple Scroll has several examples of the impersonal setting structure in the future (11Q19 19.7; 56.20; 58.3, 11; 61.14; 62.6). It also has one interesting mistake for the MT of Deut 20:9:

והיה ככלות השטרים לדבר אל העם
ויהי ככלות השופטים ...

And it would happen [*sic* (probably to be read וַיְהִי or corrected to וְהָיָה)]
after the judges finished ...

So, while the Qumran literature gives evidence of knowing and using the impersonal “be” + setting structure in the future, there are no clear, unambiguous examples in the past. However, the future examples plus the ambiguous examples in the past are enough to suggest that the structure was part of the language. This is further confirmed by considering the non-canonical literature.

The books of 1–4 Maccabees have been preserved in Greek. One of them, 1 Maccabees, is written in a highly Semitized Greek and there is a scholarly consensus and ancient attestation that the book was originally written in Hebrew.⁵⁷ In support of this consensus we note that there are eight examples of the impersonal *εγενετο* setting structure introducing a finite verb.⁵⁸ This is helpful because 1 Maccabees (ca. 140–90 B.C.E.) joins the Late Biblical Hebrew canonical books in attesting this Hebrew usage.

From the data and discussion above, we must conclude that the structure “ויהי + setting + finite verb” was certainly a part of late Second Temple literary Hebrew. This is not remarkable and merely underlines what is close to a consensus. Maloney was mistaken in listing the “impersonal ‘be’ plus finite verb” structure as Aramaic and was rash in excluding the Hebrew structure from his survey of Semitic syntax in his study of Mark. Most scholars have followed

57 Thomas Fischer, “Maccabees, Books of,” in *ABD*, 4:440.

58 1 Macc 1:1; 5:1, 30; 6:8; 7:2; 9:23; 10:64, 88.

Dalman⁵⁹ in recognizing the value of 1 Maccabees, and Late Biblical Hebrew in general, for establishing the characteristics of literary Hebrew during the Second Temple.

g *The Consistency of the Two Criteria as a Third Test*

The two criteria for testing Semitic Greek narrative are:

- #1 the use of narrative τότε as a conjunction
- #2 impersonal ἐγένετο setting introducing a finite main verb

When these two criteria are used in tandem, they can also be evaluated for consistency and produce the following expectations.

Greek documents translated from or influenced by Aramaic would be:

Positive for #1: includes Aramaic “narrative τότε”

Negative for #2: no Hebraic ἐγένετο

Greek documents translated from or influenced by Hebrew would be:

Negative for #1: no Aramaic “narrative τότε”

Positive for #2: includes Hebraic ἐγένετο

Greek documents composed in natural Greek would be:

Negative for #1: no Aramaic “narrative τότε”

Negative for #2: no Hebraic ἐγένετο

As a table:

Language	Narrative Criteria	
	#1 narrative τότε	#2 Hebraic ἐγένετο Setting
Aramaic	+	–
Hebrew	–	+
Greek	–	–

⁵⁹ Gustaf Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu* (2d ed.; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1930), 30.

These tests produce an observable profile that may clearly suggest Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic influence for the document under study.

Using the tests together adds a test for consistency since a positive criterion #1 would predict a negative #2, and a positive #2 would predict a negative #1. Any results different from these would flag the need for further investigation.

A third criterion for consistency would be positive if the results fit the table above. The consistency test would be negative if a document with an original Greek statistical profile (according to Martin) tested positive for either #1 or #2. Criterion #3 would also be negative if its profile was positive for both #1 and #2.

It goes without saying that additional confirmation would be sought and weighed for any analysis. One limitation could occur where an author imitated or adopted a foreign style and thus a false match could be obtained for one of the languages. A second limitation could occur where there is a partial match. For example, a Greek document might be highly Semitized from the standpoint of other criteria like word order patterns, genitives, non-Greek profiles of conjunctions, and prepositions, and yet it may still test negative for both #1 and #2 (like the Hebrew sections of Ezra). In addition, a Greek document might test positive for #1 and positive for #2, as we will see is the case with Matthew. Such anomalies demand a more careful analysis.

It should be remembered that we are dealing with much more than two random words or two structures. We are dealing with something that is woven into the fabric of the narrative structure of Second Temple period Aramaic and Hebrew. That is what gives these tests something of the quality of "litmus paper."

We can now proceed to an application of these criteria to fourteen Greek documents from the Second Temple period.

3 Application to Non-canonical Jewish Literature

a *1 Maccabees*

As discussed immediately above, *1 Maccabees* tests positive for criterion #2. There are also five potential examples of "narrative τóτε," yielding a frequency of 0.27 per 1000 words.⁶⁰ This is negligible in comparison with Daniel's 5.77 τóτε per 1000 words (Theodotonic) and 6.78 (Old Greek), and Ezra's 5.81 (Old Greek). Consequently, we should assign a negative value to criterion #1. The resulting profile, negative #1, positive #2, and consistent in #3, marks *1 Maccabees* as

60 1 Macc 2:29, 42; 4:41; 14:32; 16:9.

Hebrew. This conclusion fits the scholarly consensus today as well as the testimony of Origen and Jerome.

b *2 Maccabees*

The profile of 2 Maccabees is equally clear. 2 Maccabees has three occurrences of *τότε*, but none of them are potential conjunctions. 2 Maccabees is negative for #1, and negative for #2. This profile would be Greek and this supports the scholarly consensus that 2 Maccabees was written in Greek.

c *Susanna*

Susanna is a story from the Daniel traditions that is only known in Greek.⁶¹ Since canonical Daniel is a bilingual document, one might expect a Semitic source, if such existed, to be in either Hebrew or Aramaic. The three criteria here can make a contribution since many commentaries and introductions present Hebrew and Aramaic as equally valid options.⁶²

Susanna has two textual traditions. In the Theodotionic tradition there are zero examples of #1, while in the slightly shorter and different recension of the Old Greek there is only one *τότε*; this is preceded by *καί* and may not be the “narrative *τότε*” conjunction. Even if the *καί* were treated as a stylistic improvement by the Old Greek to an Aramaic-based *τότε*, the resulting statistic would be 1.26 narrative *τότε* per 1000, which would probably be too low for an Aramaic source.⁶³ Thus, both recensions test as negative for #1.

61 Speculation that 4Q551 was an Aramaic fragment of Susanna has been rightly rejected by George W. E. Nickelsburg, “4Q551: A Vorlage to Susanna or a Text Related to Judges 19?” *JJS* 48 (1997): 349–51.

62 Roger A. Bullard and Howard A. Hatton, *A Handbook on the Shorter Books of the Deuterocanon* (New York: United Bible Societies, 2006), 232: “Opinion today favors an original in either Aramaic or Hebrew.” See also Dan W. Clanton, Jr., “(Re)Dating the Story of Susanna: A Proposal,” *JSJ* 34 (2003): 121–40—“Aramaic or Hebrew”; Klaus Koenen, “Von der todesmutigen Susanna zum begabten Daniel: Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Susann-Erzählung,” *Theologische Zeitschrift* 54 (1998): 1–13—“Aramaic or Hebrew”; Helmut Engel, *Die Susanna Erzählung: Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar zum Septuaginta-Text und zur Theodotion-Bearbeitung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), 55–56—“Aramaic or Hebrew”; Carey A. Moore, *Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions* (AB 44; Garden City: Doubleday, 1977), 80–84—“Aramaic or Hebrew.” From the last century, see Henry Wace, *The Holy Bible according to the Authorized Version (A.D. 1611), with an Explanatory and Critical commentary and a Revision of the Translation, Apocrypha* (London: John Murray, 1888), 2:308: “As to the original language of all the Three Additions to Daniel, it was probably in each case either Hebrew or Aramaic.”

63 We have natural Greek examples that get over 1.00 per 1000, and we have no unambiguous Aramaic ratios below 3.0 per 1000.

On the other hand, Theodotonic Susanna has four examples (7, 15, 19, 28) of the Hebraic criterion #2, though the Old Greek recension has no examples of criterion #2.

In terms of language profile, Theodotonic Susanna is clearly Hebraic. The other tradition, the Old Greek, technically tests as potentially “Greek.” It is negative for Aramaic τότε and negative for the Hebraic setting structure. However, if it is to be considered Semitized Greek on other grounds, then it would more likely be Hebraic than Aramaic. The lack of #1 is more significant than a lack of #2, because #1 is naturally more common in an Aramaic text than #2 is in a Hebrew text. Thus, the lack of the Hebraic setting in a story as short as Susanna means no more than the lack of the same thing in the Hebrew parts of Ezra. However, the relative lack of narrative τότε over the whole book of 36 verses in the Old Greek (795 words) is highly suggestive of its not being Aramaic. We would have expected between 2 and 7 examples were the book to be considered Aramaic in origin. We can conclude that Theodotonic Susanna was influenced by Hebrew, and that the Old Greek Susanna was probably influenced by Hebrew.

An interesting question is whether the two versions were working from the same source text, or from each other. While textual criticism tends to favor shorter versions and many see the Old Greek Bible as older than the Theodotonic text, the Old Greek is only 70% as long as the Theodotonic text and might reasonably be considered an epitome,⁶⁴ deriving either from Hebrew or from Greek. In favor of such a judgment is the general character of the Theodotonic version in this part of the Greek Bible. “Theodotion” is considered closer to its Semitic sources in canonical Daniel than the Old Greek. Its profile here matches that character, since the Theodotonic text tests as clearly Hebrew.⁶⁵ Since the Hebraic ויהי setting structure is verbose and repetitive, it would be in keeping with the Old Greek to delete these settings if the author/translator was trying to produce an epitome of Susanna.

Another question that remains is whether the two Greek word plays in the climax of the story (54–55, 58–59) require a Greek original. Scholars

64 The development of “Reader’s Digest” versions of stories was a process that was begun in the Hellenistic age in Greek literature and the republican period in Latin literature. See Michael Silk, “Epitome,” in *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3d ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 549.

65 Incidentally, Theodotonic has the specifically Hebrew idiom ἐχθές τῆν τρίτην ἡμέραν, “yesterday the third day” (Aramaic targums say ומדקמוי במאתמלי, “as yesterday and previously” etc.) in v. 15, which supports a Hebrew undersource to Theodotion, while the Old Greek has skipped this detail, again in keeping with being an *epitome*.

differ on this. While one wordplay might be an accident of translation, two wordplays show obvious intention. The same two wordplays in both Greek recensions show Greek contact between the two. The easiest solution is that wordplays in Hebrew were replaced by the wordplays in Greek. Henry Wace, in the nineteenth century, listed several potential Hebrew wordplays.⁶⁶ Frank Zimmerman suggested a peach tree.⁶⁷ Our job here is not to list the history of speculation on this question. I could even add my own examples, like אֵלֶּן/אֶלֶן “oak, terebinth” עַל רֹאשׁךָ אֵלֶּן “curse on your head.” As Wace says, “these [proposed wordplays—R.B.] may suffice to shew how far those [wordplays—R.B.] of the Greek text are from constituting an insuperable objection to the theory of a Hebrew original.”⁶⁸

In any case, we can and should delete Aramaic from a list of probable original languages. Our Greek texts point to Hebrew for Susanna.

d *Bel and the Dragon*

Criterion #1, “narrative τότε,” is lacking in the Old Greek of *Bel and the Dragon* (895 words in length). The *καὶ* τότε in v. 14 is technically not the Aramaizing conjunction since *καὶ* serves as the conjunction. If we included this instance, the statistic would be 1.18, quite low for Aramaic though higher than Hebrew works like *Esther*, which yields 0.67 (the Old Greek parallels to canonical *Esther* have four *καὶ* τότε, 2:13; 4:16; 7:10; 9:31).

On the other hand, the Theodotonic text of *Bel and the Dragon* has two occurrences of τότε (21, 32), though neither is a prototypical “narrative τότε” (out of 871 words).

θ' 21 καὶ ὀγισθεὶς ὁ βασιλεὺς τότε συνέλαβεν τοὺς ἱερεῖς καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας
θ' 32 τότε δὲ οὐκ ἔδῳθη αὐτοῖς ἵνα καταφάγωσιν Δανιηλ.

66 Wace, *The Holy Bible according to the Authorized Version (A.D. 1611)*, 2:324, points out that Lagard's Syriac translation of the story already has two wordplays at the places, despite being translated from Greek: *pasteqa*, “pistachio tree”; *pesaq*, “to cut off”; and *rummana*, “pomegranate tree,” and *rumcha*, “sword.” He also added “pomegranate”/“lift head” (תאנה—ירבה) (רמון—הרים ראש), “nut”/“cut in two” (אגוז—גור), “fig”/“mourning” (תאנה—ירבה) (בד תאניה ואניה), “cypress”/“not forgive” (כפר—לא יכפר לך), “palm”/“be bitter” (—תמר לך ימר לך).

67 Frank Zimmermann, “The Story of Susanna and its Original Language,” *JQR* 48 (1957–58): 236–41 (237): “Probably the tree was a peach tree (פְּרִיטָק) . . . ‘Even now the angel of God hath received the sentence of God (פְּרִיטָק), and shall cut thee in two (פְּרִיטָקִי).’”

68 Wace, *The Holy Bible according to the Authorized Version (A.D. 1611)*, 2:324.

Verse 21 has τότε inside the Greek sentence, but it does begin the clause with the finite verb. In v. 32, the τότε is joined with the Greek conjunction δέ. If both of these represent Greek stylizations of narrative יָגִיד the resulting statistic would be 2.30 per 1000. While this may not be strongly Aramaic, it is suggestive. It is not an expected statistic from a Hebrew source. However, it must be remembered that the structure is not exactly “narrative τότε.” The second criterion will especially call into question the Aramaic interpretation of criterion #1 and serves as a consistency test.

Criterion #2 appears in vv. 15 and 33 in the Old Greek. In Theodotianic Bel and the Dragon, it appears in vv. 13, 18 and 28. The Old Greek appears to have reorganized vv. 14–17, which may explain the different placement of the Hebraic ἐγένετο structures.

In terms of language profile, Bel and the Dragon appears go back to a Hebrew original. The Old Greek is negative #1, positive #2, which is Hebraic. Theodotion is not clear on #1, and positive for #2, which also suggests Hebrew.

e *1 Esdras*

This book shows an interesting mixed profile. Certain sections are incorporated from known sources, both Hebrew (1 Esd 1:1–55 is from 2 Chr 35:1–36:21; 1 Esd 2:1–2:15 is from the Hebrew section of Ezra 1:1–11; 1 Esd 5:7–73 is from Hebrew Ezra 2:1–4:5; 1 Esd 8:1–8 is from Hebrew Ezra 7:1–11; 1 Esd 8:25–9:55 is from Hebrew Ezra 7:27–10:44 plus Neh 7:73–8:12) and Aramaic (1 Esd 2:16–30 is from Aramaic Ezra 4:7–24; 1 Esd 6:1–7:15 is from Aramaic Ezra 4:24–6:22, and 1 Esd 8:9–8:25 is from Aramaic Ezra 7:12–26). These sources have influenced the final Greek document, 1 Esdras. The “Hebrew” Greek sections result in a profile of negative #1 and negative #2. This is the same profile that the Hebrew sources themselves have. The “Aramaic” Greek sections profile as positive #1 and negative #2, which is clearly Aramaic and is also the profile of the sources.

An interesting question is the unique material in 1 Esd 3:1–5:6. Its pattern is suggestive.

Narrative τότε occurs at (3:3 A-text) 3:4, (3:8? και τότε, 4:33? και τότε, 4:41? και τότε); 4:42, 43, 47. The overall statistic for narrative τότε is at least 2.23 per 1000 words, and possibly could run as high as 4.47 per 1000 words. This is a little lower than that which is found in Daniel and Ezra, but it must be remembered that 1 Esdras contains long speeches. Speeches are not necessarily narrative stories and the speech of Dan 4:17–30 and requests and response of Ezra 4:10–22 and the decree of Ezra 7:12–26 do not contain narrative יָגִיד . When the speech discourses are deleted from 1 Esd 3:18–24; 4:2–12, 14–32, and 34–40 the

statistics are 4.18 and 8.35 narrative τότε per 1000 words. We must conclude that the unique section in 1 Esd 3:1–5:6 tests positive for “narrative τότε.”⁶⁹

Criterion #2 does not occur in 1 Esdras, so it is negative for all sections, including 3:1–5:6. As mentioned above, criterion #2 does not occur in the Old Greek of the Hebrew sources themselves. While its lack may be compatible with Hebrew sources, it is predicted for both Aramaic-influenced and original Greek texts.

We can conclude that 1 Esd 3:1 to 5:6 has most likely been influenced by an Aramaic source.⁷⁰

f *Testament of Job*

The *Testament of Job* is often dated to the end of the Second Temple period, first century B.C.E.–first century C.E. Hebrew and Aramaic origins have been suggested for this work, although it is more commonly assumed to have been written in Greek. Our criteria can contribute data to add to the discussion.

The Greek text has 6784 words.

There are 14 “narrative τότε” (16:2; 17:1; 23:8, 10; 27:2, 6; 30:3; 35:1; 36:1; 38:3; 39:6, 13; 41:5; 43:1), and another 11 και τότε as possible “narrative τότε” (8:3; 19:3; 20:3; 31:6; 40:2, 10; 44:5; 44:5[2]; 46:5; 49:1; 50:1). The close repetition of και τότε at 44:5 suggests that this is not simply the Greek adverb, but is indeed a reflection of Aramaic influence in some form. Together these examples are 3.83 per 1000 words, quite a bit higher than anything we have seen in normal Greek. In addition, there is one τότε in a future context (4:11) and one as a non-conjunction (καὶ γὰρ τότε Νηρηός, 53:1). Therefore, criterion #1 must be considered positive.

69 Zipora Talshir and David Talshir, (“The Question of the Source Language to the Story of the Three Youths [1 Esd 3–4]” [Heb], in *Sha’arei Talmon, Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon* [ed. Michael Fishbane and Emanuel Tov with the assistance of Weston Fields; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992]), 63*–75:

משום מרכזיותה של τότε האמורה לשקף את מלת הקישור הארמית אדין, נוטה הכף ממילא לצד הטענה שאותו מקור שמי משוער ארמי היה ולא עברי.

“Because of the centrality of τότε, which is considered to reflect the Aramaic connector אדין, the balance of evidence swings on its own accord to the side of the argument that the assumed Semitic source was Aramaic and not Hebrew” (translation mine—R.B.). Cf. also: Zipora Talshir, *1 Esdras: From Origin to Translation* (SBSSCS 47, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999).

70 Raymond A. Martin (*Syntax Criticism*, 181) added some supporting evidence from word order and concluded that this evidence supports Aramaic. See n. 3. Word order can distinguish Imperial Aramaic from Hebrew but it cannot distinguish Western, Jewish Aramaic from Hebrew.

Criterion #2 is negative for this work, with one example of the “Greek” structure at 23:2: καὶ ἐγένετο κατὰ συγχυρίαν ἀπελθεῖν πρὸς αὐτὸν τὴν γυναῖκα μου (“and it happened according to coincidence for my wife to go to him”). This is not an example of the Hebrew structure, but of the misleadingly similar Greek structure (subcategory c of Plummer’s classification): instead of the Hebraic impersonal “become” + setting introducing a finite verb, here they introduce an infinitive clause.

We can make several observations about this Testament. First, it is not written to mimic the LXX. The frequent narrative τότε in the *Testament of Job* do not reflect either the LXX, or the Old Greek Bible in general; nor do they reflect the canonical book of Job in particular, with its ten τότε that only score 0.74 τότε per 1000 words. Only two of those τότε in canonical Job are candidates for “narrative τότε” (1:12; 2:2). The lack of Hebraic ἐγένετο structures further supports the claim that in the *Testament of Job* there is no intention of artificially imitating a biblical style.

In this context, the Aramaic coloring of “narrative τότε” appears to reveal real Aramaic influence. The *Testament of Job* might have been written by someone with a writing style like the Gospel of Matthew, but, more simply and more likely, the *Testament of Job* looks like a reworking of an Aramaic core document. Hebrew can be ruled out as a reasonable possibility. If there is an Aramaic document lying behind our Greek *Testament of Job*, then the *Testament of Job* constitutes a second major Aramaic document circulating in antiquity that deals with the person of Job. As mentioned earlier, canonical Job has a five-fold testimony about an Aramaic translation: two rabbinic stories relating to the Gamaliel family, one about the grandfather, the other about his grandson; two copies of Aramaic Job at Qumran; and the reference in Job 42:17 of the Old Greek to the use of an Aramaic history of Job. The Testament of Job would be a sixth Aramaic document connected with the figure of Job.

g *Joseph and Aseneth*

Joseph and Aseneth is a Greek story whose text is problematic and whose date of writing is widely disputed.

The Greek of the book is quite Semitized and is similar to the Life of Adam and Eve, Tobit, and Judith. However, scholarly opinion leans towards Greek as the original language of Joseph and Aseneth.⁷¹ In particular, several thematic words like “immortal,” “incorruptible,” “unutterable,” and “non-appearing,” fit

71 For example, see C. Burchard, “Joseph and Aseneth,” in James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York: Doubleday, 1985), 2:181: “Most scholars have agreed that Joseph and Aseneth was composed in Greek.”

an assumption of an original Greek composition since they do not correspond to simple lexemes in Hebrew or Aramaic. We will examine data that calls into question the assumption of the book's Greek origin. We have a recent critical text of Joseph and Aseneth from 2003, and we may thank Christoff Burchard for his work, which has spanned thirty-five years.

The four textual families of the book, A–D, can be grouped into two camps according to the language profiles that we are applying in the present article. Burchard's critical text is labelled the B-family below and will be seen to profile as "Hebraic." The "short" version of the text published by Philonenko, the D-family, also profiles as "Hebraic."

The B-family text is:

negative for criterion #1, especially in comparison to Batiffol's version, and positive for criterion #2 (1:1, 3:1, 11:1, 22:1, 23:1 in Philonenko's text.)

The A-family corresponds to Batiffol's version, which was published in 1892. The A-family is clearly influenced by Aramaic, at least from ch. 8 and following, where there are no fewer than 45 examples of "narrative τότε." That the A-family is positive for criterion #1 can be easily seen in the table below.

Criterion #1 according to textual families:

The Textual Families of Joseph and Aseneth

The manuscript families of Joseph and Aseneth: Family A = Batiffol (1892); Family D = Philonenko (1968); Family B = Burchard (2003). Verse numbers follow Burchard.

8:1	A: τότε ανέβη ή μητήρ αὐτῆς	D: και ανέβη ή μητήρ αὐτῆς B: και ανέβη ή μητήρ τῆς Ἀσενέθ
8:9	A: τότε ἐπήρεν τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ	BD: και ἐπήρε(ν) τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ
10:1	και ὡς ἐξῆλθεν Ἰωσήφ . . .	D: τότε Πενταφρῆς . . . ἀπήλθον B: και ἀπήλθεν Ἰωσήφ
10:10	A: τότε οὖν ἐξεδύσατο	D: και ἐξεδύσατο B: και ἔσπευσεν
10:11	A: τότε λαμβάνει	BD: και ἔλαβε

11:19	A: τότε ανέστη	D: και ανέστη
14:12	A: τότε ἔσπευσεν	BD: και ανέστη
14:14	A: τότε ἔσπευσεν και εἰσήλθεν	D: και εἰσήλθεν B: και ἔσπευσεν και εἰσήλθεν
15:1	A: και εἶθ' οὕτως ἦλθε	BD: και ἦλθε
16:9	A: τότε θαμάσασα ἡ Ἄσενέθ εἶπεν	D: ----- B: και ἐθάμασεν ἡ Ἄσενέθ και εἶπεν
16:13	A: τότε καλεῖ	D: ----- B: και ἐκάλεσεν
16:15	A: τότε ἐξέτεινεν ὁ θεῖος ἄγγελος	D: και ἐξέτεινεν . . . ὁ ἄνθρωπος B: και ἐξέτεινεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος
16:19	A: τότε περιεπλάκησαν	D: και συνεπλάκησαν B: και περιεπλάκησαν
16:21	A: τότε ἀνέστησαν πάσαι αἱ μέλισσαι	D: και ἀπήλθαν B: και ἀνέστησαν πάσαι αἱ μέλισσαι
16:22	A: και εἶθ' οὕτως ἐξέτεινεν	D: ----- B: και ἐξέτεινεν
16:23	A: τότε ἀνέστησαν πάσαι αἱ τεθνηκυ'	D: και ἀνέστησαν . . . ἅπασαι B: και ἀνέστησαν αἱ τεθνηκυῖαι
17:3	A: τότε ἐξέτεινε τρίτον	D: -----και ἦψατο τοῦ κηρίου B: και ἐξέτεινε τρίτον
17:6	A: τότε ἐκάλεσεν τὰς 7 παρθένους ἡ Ἄσενέθ	D: και ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὰς Ἄσενέθ B: και ἐκάλεσεν Ἄσενέθ τὰς 7 παρθένους
17:9	A: τότε εἶπεν Ἄσενέθ	D: ----- B: και εἶπεν Ἄσενέθ
18:9	A: τότε ἀπελθὼν ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκίας	D: ----- B: και ἀπήλθεν ὁ τροφεύς
19:2	A: τότε σπεύσασα Ἄσενέθ	D: και κατέβη Ἄσενέθ B: και ἔσπευσεν Ἄσενέθ και κατέβη
19:8	A: τότε λέγει ὁ Ἰωσήφ πρὸς Ἄσενέθ	D: ----- B: και λέγει ὁ Ἰωσήφ πρὸς Ἄσενέθ
19:10	A: τότε ἐξέτεινε τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ	D: και ἐξέτεινε τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ B: και ἐξέτεινε τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ

- 19:11 A: εἶτα τὸ δεύτερον δέδωκεν D: καὶ ἠσπάντο ἀλλήλους
B: καὶ κατέφιλησεν αὐτὴν τὸ
δεύτερον καὶ ἔδωκεν
- 20:5 A: εἶτα ἐκράτησεν τὴν χεῖρα
αὐτῆς D: καὶ ἐκράτησεν τὴν χεῖρα
αὐτῆς
B: μετὰ ταῦτα ἐκράτησεν τὴν
χεῖρα αὐτῆς
- 20:5 A: καὶ εἶθ' οὕτως ἐκάθισεν αὐτὴν
ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ D: -----
B: καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐκ δεξιῶν
αὐτοῦ
- 21:4 A: τότε ἀπέστειλε Φαραῶ D: καὶ ἀπέστειλε Φαραῶ
B: καὶ ἀπέστειλε Φαραῶ
- 21:7 A: τότε περιστρίψεν αὐτοὺς
Φαραῶ D: καὶ ἀπέστριψεν αὐτοὺς
Φαραῶ
B: καὶ περιστρίψεν Φαραῶ
- 22:6 A: τότε οὖν προσῆλθον . . . πρὸς
Ἰακώβ D: [καὶ ἦλθον πρὸς Ἰακώβ][see
next]
B: καὶ προσῆλθον πρὸς Ἰακώβ
- 22:8 A: τότε ἰδοῦσα αὐτὸν D: -----
B: καὶ <εἶδεν> αὐτὸν . . .
- 22:9 A: τότε ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὴν D: -----
B: καὶ ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὴν
- 23:2 A: τότε ἀπέστειλεν ἀγγέλους D: καὶ ἀπέστειλεν . . . ἀγγέλους
B: καὶ ἀπέστειλεν ἀγγέλους
- 23:9 A: τότε εἶπε Λευὶ . . . D: καὶ εἶπε Λευὶς
B: καὶ εἶπε Λευὶς
- 23:14 A: τότε εἴλκυσαν τὰς ῥομφαίας D: καὶ εἴλκυσαν τὰς ῥομφαίας
B: καὶ εἴλκυσαν τὰς ῥομφαίας
- 23:16 A: τότε ἐξέτεινε Λευὶ . . . D: καὶ ἐξέτεινε Λευὶς . . .
B: καὶ ἐξέτεινε Λευὶς . . .
- 24:2 A: τότε λέγουσιν αὐτῷ D: καὶ εἶπον πρὸς αὐτὸν . . .
B: καὶ εἶπον αὐτῷ
- 24:5 A: τότε ἐχάρη ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ
χαρὰν με' D: καὶ ἐχάρη ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ
χαρὰν με'
B: καὶ ἐχάρη ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ
χαρὰν με'
- 24:7 A: τότε ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ. ἐψεύσατο D: καὶ ἐψεύσατο ὁ υἱὸς
Φαραῶ . . .

		B: και ἐψεύσατο αὐτοῖς ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ . . .
24:18	A: τότε δέδωκεν ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ	D: και . . . ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ . . . ἔδωκεν
		B: και ἔδωκεν ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ
25:1	A: τότε ἀνέστη ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ νυκτὶ . . .	D: και-----
		B: και ἀνέστη ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ . . .
25:7	A: τότε ὀργίσθησαν	D: και ὀργίσθησαν
		B: και ὀργίσθησαν
26:4	A: τότε ἀπήλθεν Ἀσενέθ	D: και ἀπήλθεν Ἀσενέθ
		B: και ἀπήλθεν Ἀσενέθ
26:6	A: τότε ἔγνω λευὶ . . .	D: και ἔγνω λευὶς . . .
		B: και ἔγνω λευὶς . . .
27:2	A: τότε κατεπήδησε Βενιαμὴν . . .	D: και κατεπήδησε Βενιαμὴν . . .
		B: και κατεπήδησε Βενιαμὴν . . .
27:6	A: τότε οἱ υἱοὶ Λίας . . . κατεδίωξαν	D: τότε οἱ υἱοὶ Λίας . . . κατεδίωξαν
		B: και οἱ υἱοὶ Λίας . . . κατεδίωξαν
28:2	A: τότε πεσόντες ἐπὶ πρόσωπον	D: και ἔπεσον ἐπὶ πρόσωπον
		B: και ἔπεσον ἐπὶ πρόσωπον
28:8	A: τότε ἔφυγον εἰς τὴν ὕλην . . . Δ. κ Γ.	D: και ἔφυγον Δὰν και Γὰδ εἰς τὴν ὕλην
		B: και ἔφυγον εἰς τὴν ὕλην Δὰν και Γὰδ
28:14	A: τότε ἐξέτεινεν Ἀσενέθ . . .	D: και . . . εἶπεν αὐτῷ Ἀσενέθ
		B: και ἐξέτεινεν Ἀσενέθ . . .
28:15	A: τότε προσελθὼν αὐτῇ Λευὶς	D: και ἦλθε πρὸς αὐτὴν Λευὶς . . .
		B: και ἦλθε πρὸς αὐτὴν Λευὶς . . .
29:3	A: τότε ἔδραμεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν Λευὶς	D: και . . . ἔδραμεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν Λευὶς
		B: και ἔδραμεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν Λευὶς
29:5	A: τότε ἀνέστησε Λευὶς τὸν υἱὸν . . .	D: και ἀνέστησε Λευὶς τὸν υἱὸν . . .
		B: και ἀνέστησε Λευὶς τὸν υἱὸν . . .

The strong Aramaizing direction of the A-family needs to be checked for consistency. If it were a new translation from an Aramaic source we might predict that there would be no examples of criterion #2. The first place to check would be the five examples of criterion #2 of the B-family cited above. Three of those places delete the ἐγένετο in the A-family: 1:1, 11:1, and 22:1. This lack of the ἐγένετο structure is consistent with Aramaic influence. But the examples in 3:1 and 23:1 still need explanation in the A-family. What can we say about these two instances? First of all, if Hebrew was the original language of Joseph and Aseneth, then those two spots could be remnants just like sometimes happens in the Targumim to the Hebrew Bible. Or these two instances could be textual contamination from the “Hebraic” textual tradition in Greek. Finally, it is possible that the Aramaizing influence in the A-family was a development within the Greek tradition similar to what we find in Matthew. However, the predicted decrease in criterion #2 and the fact that we know that at least some of the pseudepigrapha circulated in three languages during the Second Temple (e.g. Tobit), could lead to the hypothesis that there were two Semitic language texts of Joseph and Aseneth, too.

If we assume that there was both a Hebrew source and an Aramaic source, how can we decide which was original? Consistency of the criteria is one help. The two examples of criterion #2 remaining in the A-family are not consistent with an Aramaic original. Likewise, if Aramaic were the original Semitic document, it is difficult to imagine how the B-family would purge its “narrative τότε” and test so consistently “Hebraic” unless there was, in fact, a Greek translation from an intervening Hebrew. However, we still cannot be certain which came first, Hebrew or Aramaic. If Burchard is correct that the B-family is an earlier recension and the A-family is later, then the textual history would also support the conclusion that Hebrew came first.⁷²

We must still ask whether there was or was not a Semitic text. There are some indications of tight translationese in some sections of the work. These

72 The story gives “city of Refuge” as Aseneth’s new name. “She will find refuge, she will flee” in Hebrew can be תנוס, Tanus, or perhaps תניס, “she will make flee” Tanis, a city in Egypt. This reverses the last three consonants of the name Aseneth. We see exegesis like this at Qumran where the Habakkuk peshar takes הַיְכָל, “palace, temple,” and prophesies that Rome “will destroy,” בְּיָמָיו. If Hebrew תניס is the correct derivation of the name and meaning in the story, then we have evidence of Hebrew, because Aramaic does not use the root טנס, for example, using ערק in the targum tradition. However, all of this is speculative without a source text. *Aseneth* 15:6 only mentions that Aseneth will no longer be “your name” and that “city of refuge” will be “your new name”. It does not say that there is a connection between the old name Aseneth and the new name “city of refuge.”

would indicate a Semitic source. They would also be evidence of Greek editing in a few limited sections.

(a) Example of Probable Tight Translation

8:9:

Καὶ εἶδεν αὐτὴν Ἰωσήφ.

and Joseph saw her

This is very Hebraic word order where αὐτὴν, “her,” comes between the verb and subject in the Hebrew “quiet spot,” a non-focal place between the verb and subject. This is one of many examples of possible tight translationese.

(b) Intrusive Greek Editing

27:3:

καὶ ἔπεσεν ὁ υἱὸς Φαραῶ
ἀπὸ τοῦ ἵππου αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν
ἡμιθανῆς τυγχάνων.

and Pharaoh's son fell
from his horse onto the ground
half-dead becoming

The word ἡμιθανῆς has a compound, non-Semitic etymology and the word order is inverted from Semitic patterns. Ἡμιθανῆς looks like intrusive Greek editing. This Greek word does not smoothly mesh with the style of the surrounding text.

(c) “A”-Family with a Possible Christian Interpolation

15:5:

καὶ φαγεῖ ἄρτον ζωῆς εὐλογημένον,

and he will eat blessed bread of life

καὶ πιεῖ ποτήριον ἐμπεπλησμένον ἀθανασίας,

and will drink a cup of immortality

καὶ χρίσματι χρισθήσῃ εὐλογημένῳ τῆς ἀφθαρσίας

and with an ointment you will be
anointed, blessed of incorruptibility.

The subject matter has been discussed often in the literature. It might be suggestive of a Christian interpolation and at the same time we find two Greek lexical forms with α-privative. Greek “α-privative” words do not have direct Semitic counterparts and suggest some complication, at least. In addition, the word order of χρίσματι . . . εὐλογημένῳ is split in Greek fashion rather than being

found in tight Semitic word order. Thus, here, where distinctive Greek words are found, we also find distinctive Greek syntax. However, an interpolation is unnecessary. Greek vocabulary can be attributed to a translator. One does not need to explain every Greek-sounding vocabulary choice that does not have a clear relationship to a Semitic source.⁷³

(d) "A"-Family with a Possible Christian Interpolation

16:16:

Καὶ λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ ἄγγελος	and the angel says to her
Ἴδου δὴ ἔφαγες ἄρτον ζωῆς,	look, you ate the bread of life
καὶ ποτήριον ἔπιες ἀθανασίας	and cup of immortality you drank
καὶ χρίσματι κέχρισαι ἀφθαρσίας,	and with an ointment have been anointed of incorruptibility

Here, too, the non-Semitic, Greek vocabulary occurs in the midst of non-Semitic, Greek word order transposition, suggesting that the distinctive, non-Semitic Grecisms are part of a secondary recension and have been inserted into the text. (The texts behind Burchard's B-family are mixed here, and Burchard has followed a more Semitic order.)

Tentative conclusions for Joseph and Aseneth are as follows:

1. An Aramaic copy of *Joseph and Aseneth* was circulating and influenced the Greek textual tradition of the A-family *secondarily*.
2. This Aramaic text probably had roots in the Second Temple period when the narrative 𐤆𐤇𐤍-style was in use.⁷⁴ Of course, the text might be a late Aramaic stylization (old-styled Aramaic like *megillat Antiochus*), or possibly a Matthew-styled Greek recension. If the latter, it would probably put the book back into the Second Temple period.
3. It is possible that both Hebrew and Aramaic copies were in circulation, in a way similar to what we see with Tobit.
4. If the Greek is based on a Semitic source, then Hebrew is the most likely first language. A Hebrew profile suggests that the A-family (Battifol's

⁷³ For example, cf. n. 75, where Talshir and Talshir argue such phenomena.

⁷⁴ This is contra a fourth-century proposal. Cf. Ross Shepard Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and his Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Greek text) is secondary to either Philonenko's short version (D-family), or Burchard's long B-family.

It must be remembered that the criteria that are being developed in the present study cannot determine on their own whether or not a Semitic source existed. They can only distinguish whether Semitic influence lines up with Aramaic or with Hebrew and if the criteria are consistent.⁷⁵

i *Tobit*

The book of Tobit exists in two Greek recensions, fragments of which were found at Qumran in both Aramaic and Hebrew. We can apply our two criteria to see what they can tell us about the history of these versions.

4Q196papTobit ^a ar f2,6	ובעה אַחיקר עֲלֵי	and ["Hebraic"] Ahiqar made a request for me
Old Greek 1:22	τότε ἠξίωσεν Ἀχιχάρως περὶ ἐμοῦ	then Achichar petitioned concerning me
Old Greek A, B 1:22	καὶ ἠξίωσεν Ἀχιχάρως περὶ ἐμοῦ	and Achichar petitioned concerning me

The Greek recensions have the same words at this point, but differ in the conjunction. The Sinaiticus text has a "narrative τότε," which might lead us to expect ܘܢܝܢ in an Aramaic fragment. But our Qumran fragment has -ו, which corresponds to the Greek recension of manuscripts A and B, even though the Qumran texts more often side with Sinaiticus.

4Q200 Tobit^e Hebrew also has a word ܘܢ, "then," but this is not the Aramaic narrative conjunction, but a perfectly normal futuristic use in Hebrew, something that occurs in both Hebrew and Aramaic:

75 A general consensus that the book was written in a Jewish Greek modeled on the Greek Bible should probably be re-examined. In another context Talshir and Talshir ("The Question of the Source Language," 64*) point out:

"There is not a great deal of incentive in looking for components that are impossible to be written in a Semitic language. For in such a case there is a ready answer for any problem in the person of the [Greek] translator. For example, if a Greek conception par excellence like *φιλανθρωπία*, to which one would have difficulty supplying a source in Aramaic or Hebrew, is able to be considered a claim among the claims that the E-addition to Greek Esther was written originally in Greek, along comes the same Greek word in the translated parts of 1 Esdras, not in the story of the youths, and it does not matter that there is no clear equivalent [in Aramaic and Hebrew], which undermines the basis of the [Greek] claim" (translation mine—R.B.).

4Q200 Tobit ^e Hebrew	וְצִוִּי וְרָמַשׁ וְרָצוּ	so be happy and dance ⁷⁶
Old Greek \aleph 13:15	τότε πορεύθητι και ἀγαλλίασαι	then go and rejoice
Old Greek A, B 13:15	χάρηθι και ἀγαλλίασαι	be happy and rejoice

This is standard Hebrew in song and future contexts and negative to criterion #1. Here, where “then” fits Hebrew, it shows up in both the Qumran text and Old Greek Sinaiticus.

There is something strange about Aramaic Tobit. With 1,200 words of extant Aramaic text from Qumran we could have expected four to ten examples of narrative τότε. But we have zero.

The Greek textual tradition for the whole book does not change this perspective. In the textual tradition of Old Greek A+B there are only two potential examples of narrative τότε.

Old Greek A, B 6:14	τότε εἶπεν τὸ παιδάριον τῷ ἀγγέλῳ	then the boy said to the angel
Old Greek A, B 8:21	καὶ τότε λαβόντα . . . πορεύεσθαι	and then he should take . . . and go
Old Greek A, B 12:6	τότε καλέσας τοὺς δύο κρυπτῶς εἶπεν	then taking the two secretly he said
Old Greek A, B 13:6	ἐὰν ἐπιστρέψῃτε . . . τότε ἐπιστρέψει	if you turn to him . . . then he will turn to you

The examples in 8:21 and 13:6 are in future contexts and irrelevant to criterion #1. They are only provided here in order to fill out the picture. In addition, 8:21 has a conjunction καί and could be interpreted as normal Greek. With only one example left, the statistic for narrative τότε is 0.18 per 1000 words and would only be 0.36 if 8:21 were included. Either of these numbers mean that this manuscript tradition tests unambiguously negative for narrative τότε, criterion #1.

In the textual tradition of Old Greek \aleph there are six examples of narrative τότε and another two potential examples (6:7; 12:13):

Old Greek \aleph 1:22	τότε ἤξιωσεν Ἀχιχαρος περὶ ἐμοῦ	then Achichar petitioned concerning me
Old Greek \aleph 5:1	τότε ἀποκριθεὶς Τοβίας εἶπεν	then Tobias answered and said

76 This וְצִוִּי וְרָמַשׁ וְרָצוּ is good Hebrew. The Greek of Sinaiticus τότε πορεύθητι, “then go . . .” might suggest that some texts were copied/read as וְצִוִּי וְרָמַשׁ וְרָצוּ, “be happy and run.”

seems smoother than the Hebrew.⁷⁸ Possibly. It is difficult to judge with fragmented texts. However, if that were true, then it is more likely that the Aramaic is secondary. Translators have an obligation to make sense of a rough text. This can be demonstrated easily in any Bible translation, ancient or modern. Modern translations with footnotes that say “Hebrew obscure” confirm this point: these translations are clearer than their source.

We may reasonably conclude that the application of our criteria is sound. The criteria point to Hebrew being the original language of the book and that fits the other evidence.⁷⁹

j *Judith*

Criterion #1 is negative for Judith: Jdt 6:6 appears in a future context, while 15:3 and 16:11 exhibit the adverbial καὶ τότε. That gives us maximally two examples out of 9175 words for a statistic of 0.22 narrative τότε per 1000 words.

Criterion #2 is positive. Note Jdt 2:4; 5:22; 10:1; 12:10; (13:1); 13:12.

Taken together these criteria are consistent and they suggest a Hebrew background for Judith, if there existed a Semitic source. Even though the application of these three tests cannot give a definitive answer to the question of whether or not the work was translated from a Semitic source, nevertheless, in the case of Judith, they can rule out Aramaic.

k *The Life of Adam and Eve (also called The Apocalypse of Moses)*

Adam and Eve has a complicated textual history that has recently been published by Johannes Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve in Greek, Critical Edition* (2005). Tromp distinguishes three macro families of manuscripts. His α family is positive for criterion #1. There are approximately 17 examples of “narrative τότε” (11:1; 12:2; 15:1; 16:2; 17:1; 18:1; 19:3; 21:5 [καὶ τότε]; 23:2, 4; 27:4, 5; 28:3; 31:3; 32:1; 35:1; 40:1 [καὶ τότε]), which is 3.80 per 1000 words. This textual family has evidence of Aramaic influence and the other families are only slightly less consistent on this criterion.

78 Matthew Morgenstern, “Language and Literature in the Second Temple Period,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 48 (1997): 130–45 (140): “It would seem to me that the uncomfortable style of the Hebrew would suggest that it is secondary to the more fluent and stylistic Aramaic.”

79 For an argument based on different criteria in support of an Aramaic original, see Daniel A. Machiela, “Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena of Targum and Translation in the Second Temple Period and Post-Second Temple Period,” in the present volume.

However, criterion #2 also appears to be positive. At 15:2 *καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ φυλάσσειν ἡμᾶς τὸν παράδεισον ἐφυλάττομεν ἕκαστος τὸ λαχὸν αὐτοῦ μέρος . . . ἐφύλαττον*, “and it happened in our guarding the park we were guarding each one his received portion . . . and I was guarding.” This would be an uncommon example of the Hebraic setting structure because the same verb is used in the setting and in the finite verbs and the finite verbs are background descriptions in imperfect. Perhaps this is a biblicalizing extension of the Aramaic usage found at Cowley 30, discussed above pp. 271–273.

If this example is not a false positive, then *The Life of Adam and Eve* has a complex history and fails the consistency criterion. We may tentatively suggest that criterion #2 is an accidental false positive created by a Greek translator or a biblicalizing Aramaic source, since it is only one example. If a Semitic source is behind Adam and Eve, criterion #1 would suggest that it was an Aramaic source. There may or may not have been a Hebrew edition of this book in circulation, but one irregular example would seem to be insufficient evidence.⁸⁰

4 Application to New Testament Gospels and Acts

a *Gospel of Matthew*

Criterion #1 is found approximately 55 to 63 times in Matthew: 2:7, 16, 17; 3:5, 13, 15; 4:1, 5, 10, 11; (4:17, ἀπὸ τότε); 8:26; 9:6, 14, 29, 37; 11:20; 12:13, 22, 38; 13:36; 15:1, 12, 28; 16:12, 20, (16:21, ἀπὸ τότε), 24; 17:13, 19; 18:21, 32; 19:13, 27; 20:20, (21:1, καὶ ὅτε . . . τότε), (22:8 in a parable),⁸¹ (22:13 in parable); 22:15, 21; 23:1; (25:7 in parable); 26:3, 14, (26:16, καὶ ἀπὸ τότε), 31, 36, 38, 45, 50, 52, 56, 65, 67, 74; 27:3, (27:9),

80 M. D. Johnson (“Life of Adam and Eve,” in Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:251) thinks that the source language was Hebrew, on the basis of what might be two cognate infinitives (at 17:5 and 41:3).

81 Matt 22:8 and 22:13 occur in the parable of the wedding of the king’s son, and 25:7 occurs in the parable of the ten virgins. These are curious cases for two reasons. First, Jewish story parables were all recorded in Hebrew in rabbinic literature, even in Aramaic contexts, and an Aramaic source for these would be unique for ancient Jewish literature. (See the section on Lukan sources for further discussion of τότε and parables.) Second, these particular parables are distinctly Matthean with developed motifs that are like a pastiche from parallel synoptic material. Matthew 22:1–14 has a distinctive “son” motif that is missing from Luke 14:16–24, an abusing of messengers motif like the parable of the vineyard (Matt 21:35 and functional parallels in the vineyard parallels in Mark 12 and Luke 20), and a motif of a wedding garment (22:11–14) that has a teaching parallel in Luke 12:35–37. Likewise, Matt 25:1–13 has a door-knocking motif like Luke 12:35–38, and a door-closure motif like Luke 13:25–28. If τότε is distinctly Matthean, as we are arguing, then these two

13, 26, 27, 38, 58; 28:10. These occurrences generate a statistic of between 3.00 to 3.43 narrative τότε per 1000 words of text, which tests positive for criterion #1 and is far above our arbitrary reference point of 1.5 narrative τότε per 1000 words.

Examples of non-narrative τότε are found at 5:24; 7:5, 23; 9:15; 12:29, 44, 45; 13:26, 43; 16:27; 24:9, 10, 14, 16, 21, 23, 30, 40; 25:1, 31, 34, 37, 41, 44, 45; 27:16. These instances of non-narrative τότε are listed here for completeness. They are normal for Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, and are not diagnostic.

Criterion #2 should test negative if criterion #1 is reflecting an Aramaic source. However, Matthew has six examples of criterion # 2 (7:28; 9:10; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). Five of these are found at the end of significant collections of Matthew arrangements. Matthew 7:28 concludes the Matthean Sermon on the Mount, 11:1 concludes the instruction for an apostolic mission, 13:53 concludes the long Matthean section of parables, 19:1 concludes the Galilean ministry, and 26:1 concludes the temple/Jerusalem teaching. Of these, 7:28; 13:53; 19:1, and 26:1 do not have parallels in Luke, even though Luke has parallel pericopae and is very accepting of ἐγένετο structures.

Together these two criteria are useful in evaluating Matthew. Testing positive for criterion #1 and also positive for criterion #2 is a signal that something complex is happening that is beyond a reflection of a Semitic source. Aramaic would produce #1 without #2, and Hebrew would produce #2 without #1.

Criterion #1 occurs in various kinds of material, including triple tradition, double tradition Matthew–Mark, double tradition Matthew–Luke, Matthean material, in parables, and parallel to material that is word-for-word identical to Mark, except for τότε.

Here are fifteen examples where the wording with Mark is close, sometimes close with Luke, too, but in no case do they have Matthew’s narrative τότε:

Matt 3:5	τότε ἐξεπορεύετο πρὸς αὐτὸν Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία
Mark 1:5	καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο πρὸς αὐτὸν πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία χώρα καὶ οἱ Ἱεροσολυμίται
Luke 3:3–7	(parallel pericope, but without this sentence)
Matt 4:11	τότε ἀφήσιν αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος
Mark 1:12–13	(parallel pericope, but without this sentence) ⁸²

parables should be attributed to Matthean editing in Greek and not to a hypothetical Aramaic story parable.

82 This example does not help with the Matthew–Mark relationship, but is part of the evidence that confirms that Luke was not using Matthew. In the temptation pericope Matthew has four cases of narrative τότε, none of which are picked up by Luke.

Luke 4:13	καὶ συντελέσας πάντα πειρασμόν ὁ διάβολος ἀπέση ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ		
Matt 9:6	ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας—τότε λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ, ἐγερθεὶς ἄρον...		
Mark 2:10–11	ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς—λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε ἄρον...		
Luke 5:24	ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας—εἶπεν τῷ παραλελυμένῳ, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε καὶ ἄρας...		
Matt 8:26	τότε ἐγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν τοῖς ἀνέμοις		
Mark 4:39	καὶ διεγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ		
Luke 8:24	ὁ δὲ διεγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ		
Matt 12:13	τότε	λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ,	ἔκτεινόν
Mark 3:5	καὶ περιβλεψάμενος...	λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ,	ἔκτεινόν
Luke 6:10	καὶ περιβλεψάμενος...	εἶπεν αὐτῷ,	ἔκτεινόν
Matt 17:19	τότε προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ τῷ Ἰησοῦ κατ’ ἰδίαν εἶπον Διὰ τί ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἠδυνήθημεν ἐκβαλεῖν αὐτό;		
Mark 9:28	καὶ εἰσελθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς οἶκον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ κατ’ ἰδίαν ἐπηρώτων ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἠδυνήθημεν ἐκβαλεῖν αὐτό; ⁸³		
Luke 9:37–43	(parallel pericopae, but without this sentence)		
Matt 19:13	τότε προσηέχθησαν αὐτῷ παιδία		
Mark 10:13	καὶ προσέφερον αὐτῷ παιδία		
Luke 18:15	προσέφερον δὲ αὐτῷ παιδία		
Matt 21:1 ^{*84}	καὶ ὅτε ἤγγισαν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ ἦλθον εἰς Βηθφαγή εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν τότε Ἰησοῦς ἀπέστειλεν δύο μαθητάς		

83 The wording is quite tight over an extended sentence. One notices that Mark records a statement in spite of using ἐπηρώτων “they were questioning him.” Matthew has rephrased the wording as a question and διὰ τί appears to be secondary according to the manuscripts of Mark that read ὅτι: B, Ⲙ, C, W, Θ, Byz. In any case, Matthew has narrative τότε, Mark does not have narrative τότε, while Luke does not have an exact parallel here.

84 This is an ambiguous τότε because it follows a “when” clause. By itself it would not be considered narrative τότε or a diagnostic example of Aramaic influence. However, in this

Mark 11:1	καὶ ὅτε ἤγγιζουσιν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα εἰς Βηθφαγή καὶ Βηθανίαν πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν ἀποστέλλει δύο τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ
Luke 19:29	καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἤγγισεν εἰς Βηθφαγή καὶ Βηθανία[ν] πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τὸ καλούμενον Ἐλαιῶν ἀπέστειλεν δύο μαθητάς
Matt 22:21	λέγουσιν αὐτῷ Καίσαρος. τότε λέγει αὐτοῖς
Mark 12:16–17	οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ Καίσαρος. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς
Luke 20:24–25	οἱ δὲ εἶπαν Καίσαρος. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοῖς
Matt 26:14	τότε πορευθεὶς εἰς τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰούδας Ἰσκαριώτης, πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς
Mark 14:10	καὶ Ἰούδας Ἰσκαριώθ ὁ εἰς τῶν δώδεκα, ἀπῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς
Luke 22:3	εἰσῆλθεν δὲ σατανᾶς εἰς Ἰούδαν τὸν καλούμενον Ἰσκαριώτην, ὄντα ἐκ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ τῶν δώδεκα,
Matt 26:16 ^{*85}	καὶ ἀπὸ τότε ἐζήτει εὐκαιρίαν ἵνα αὐτὸν παραδῶ
Mark 14:11	καὶ ἐζήτει πῶς αὐτὸν εὐκαίρως παραδοῖ
Luke 22:6	καὶ ἐζήτει εὐκαιρίαν τοῦ παραδοῦναι αὐτὸν
Matt 26:31	τότε λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάντες ὑμεῖς σκανδαλισθήσεσθε
Mark 14:27	καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι πάντες σκανδαλισθήσεσθε
Luke 22:31–39	(parallel pericope, but without this sentence)
Matt 26:38	τότε λέγει αὐτοῖς περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου μείνατε ὧδε καὶ γρηγορεῖτε μετ' ἐμοῦ
Mark 14:34	καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου μείνατε ὧδε καὶ γρηγορεῖτε
Luke 22:39–41	(parallel pericope, but without this sentence)

case, the Aramaic influence is already clear, and it is equally clear that the τότε was not transferred along with the tight wording. It enters the synoptic tradition with Matthew, and ends right there.

85 This is technically not narrative τότε because of the conjunction and preposition. However, it fits Matthew's profile and, more importantly, it does not occur in either Mark or Luke. This is more significant for Luke, since Luke shares the phrase ἀπὸ τότε at Luke 16:16.

Matt 26:74	τότε ἤρξατο καταθεματίζειν καὶ ὀμνύειν ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα τὸν ἄνθρωπον ⁸⁶
Mark 14:71	ὁ δὲ ἤρξατο ἀναθεματίζειν καὶ ὀμνύειν ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα τὸν ἄνθρωπον
Luke 22:60	εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Πέτρος· ἄνθρωπε, οὐκ οἶδα ὃ λέγεις
Matt 27:26	τότε ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοῖς τὸν Βαραββᾶν
Mark 15:15	... ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοῖς τὸν Βαραββᾶν
Luke 23:25	ἀπέλυσεν δὲ τὸν διὰ στάσιν

There are several generic, futuristic, non-narrative uses of τότε that are found almost word-for-word in Synoptic triple tradition, or in Matthew–Mark, or Matthew–Luke double tradition. These show that all of the Synoptic writers are able to accept and use the word τότε itself. And these wordings are natural to Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek—all three. They are generic τότε.

The following seven sets of readings are *not* narrative τότε:

Matt 7:5	καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις ἐκβαλεῖν τὸ κάρφος ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.
Mark	(no parallel)
Luke 6:42	καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις τὸ κάρφος τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου ἐκβαλεῖν. ⁸⁷
Matt 9:15	καὶ τότε νηστεύουσιν
Mark 2:20	καὶ τότε νηστεύουσιν
Luke 5:35	τότε νηστεύουσιν
Matt 12:29	καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει
Mark 3:27	καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει
Luke 11:22	καὶ τὰ σκῦλα αὐτοῦ διαδίδωσιν

86 One should note the “pleonastic ἤρξατο” in Matthew. This is a fairly strong Markanism (1.91 per 1000 words, compared to Matthew’s 0.59 per 1000) and it is most easily explained as being borrowed by Matthew. If so, then again, the τότε appears to be coming from Matthew’s own style, since it is certainly not coming from Mark. See Buth and Kvasnica, “Parable of the Vineyard,” 261–268, for a discussion of the Semitic background of “pleonastic ἤρξατο” and comparison between Luke and Mark.

87 Incidentally, this is a classic case of Luke retaining the vocabulary of a source that was, presumably, in good Semitic order, and then rearranging the words into a more typical Greek pattern. It would appear that Matthew has preserved the better source wording here. However, the same basic Greek words are in both and testify to a Greek literary connection between Matthew and Luke. They are not separate translations.

Matt 12:43–45	τότε λέγει εἰς τὸν οἶκον μου ἐπιστρέψω... ⁸⁸ τότε πορεύεται καὶ παραλαμβάνει μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ ἑπτὰ ἕτερα πνεύματα
Mark	(no parallel)
Luke 11:24–26	τότε λέγει εἰς τὸν οἶκον μου ἐπιστρέψω... τότε πορεύεται καὶ παραλαμβάνει ἕτερα πνεύματα
Matt 24:16	τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὸ ὄρη
Mark 13:14	τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὸ ὄρη
Luke 21:21	τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὸ ὄρη
Matt 24:23	τότε ἐὰν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ ἰδοὺ ᾧδε
Mark 13:21	καὶ τότε ἐὰν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ ἰδοὺ ᾧδε
Luke 17:23	καὶ ἐροῦσιν ὑμῖν· ἰδοὺ ἐκεῖ, [ἦ] ἰδοὺ ᾧδε

Because criterion #1 occurs throughout various kinds of Matthean material, sometimes including shared material word-for-word with Mark (except for τότε), it is probable that we are looking at a Matthean stylistic feature in Greek. It is also certain that he did not get the style from Mark. More importantly, a hypothesis of a Matthean narrative τότε style does not create the problems that would arise if we attributed the narrative τότε to a source.

If Matthew had taken his style from a non-Markan source, then we would need to explain the tight Greek verbal correspondence with Mark as Markan borrowing from Matthew. However, Mark would only have borrowed *generic* τότε from Matthew; curiously, he would never have borrowed *narrative* τότε. But how did Mark know the difference between narrative τότε and generic τότε? And why would that have made any difference? Mark of all people was not a Greek stylist who would have objected to something whose statistics are not Greek norms. And even a few narrative τότε are not out of line in Greek or Hebrew. Nevertheless, even if Mark would have borrowed the broken syntax in Mark 2:10, Mark did not borrow narrative τότε. Yet if Mark had shortened the saying in Matt 24:30 (το καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχομένω . . .; Mark 13:26), then he would have added the τότε from earlier in Matthew's verse, so that it would now join ὄψονται, creating a non-Matthean τότε:

88 These are timeless, proverbial examples, and so they are not narrative τότε. Matthew and Luke are about 90% similar in these three verses, which is remarkably high.

- Matt 24:30–31 και τότε φανήσεται τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν οὐρανῷ
καὶ τότε κόψονται πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς
καὶ ὄψονται τὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν . . .
(24:31) καὶ ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους
- Mark 13:26–27 (no parallel to Matt 24:30)
καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις . . .
καὶ τότε ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους
- Luke 21:27 (no parallel to Matt 24:30a)
καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλῃ . . .
(no parallel to Matt 24:31//Mark 13:27)

Mark would have dropped two τότε from earlier in Matt 24:30, and would then balance this by adding them to the following sentences, Mark 13:26–27. Mark would actually appear reticent to drop τότε from Matthew! This same text in Matthew only makes sense as a Matthean edit of Mark. Matthew added two sentences at the beginning of the saying parallel to Mark 13:26. He introduced both with τότε, his style, so that when he continued with Mark's sentences he needed to drop Mark's τότε (or else have four τότε in a row!). The result of these considerations is that assuming a literary flow from Matthew to Mark creates an unreasonable outcome. Unpredictably, Mark would accept some generic τότε, but would accept zero out of 60 narrative τότε.

Since the hypothesis that Matthew got his narrative τότε style from a source creates a serious, unexpected problem, we return to the non-problematic hypothesis: Matthew himself introduced narrative τότε. The most reasonable, least problematic hypothesis is that narrative τότε is Matthew's own writing style of Greek. This is a conclusion based on linguistic data and a literary analysis, not on a synoptic theory. The Matthean style hypothesis is not being chosen "because Matthew used Mark" but because the other hypothesis created problems. This point is extremely significant: it allows us to use linguistic data, Matthew's narrative τότε style, in synoptic criticism. Using Matthew's narrative τότε style in synoptic criticism is not circular reasoning. We will see below that many current Lukan studies are based on an assumed Synoptic theory. This has prevented scholars from asking the pertinent linguistic questions and appears to have led some scholars to even misrepresent the data.

The conclusion that narrative τότε is a feature in Matthew's own Greek style and not coming from a source is further reinforced when the incongruity of the existence of criterion #2 is considered.

Because criterion #2 occurs at boundaries of literary sections that are unique to Matthew and apparently arranged by Matthew himself, and because criterion #2 is incompatible with criterion #1, we conclude that the co-occurrence

of both criterion #1 and criterion #2 in Matthew's Gospel does not come from a source and are a result of Matthew's own Greek creation. Matthew wrote Greek with a style that borrowed from both Aramaic and Hebrew.⁸⁹

We do have stylistic confirmation that Matthew is the writer who introduced narrative τότε. If it is true that Matthew received tight Greek wording from Mark, is there any stylistic Markanism that came along and shows up in Matthew? Yes. Mark's (καὶ) εὐθὺς, "(and) immediately," is distinctive in the Gospels.⁹⁰ It does not distinguish Hebrew from Aramaic so it cannot be added to the criteria developed in the present study, but it is diagnostic of Mark. Mark has 42 examples of εὐθὺς. Matthew has seven examples of εὐθὺς⁹¹ and eleven examples of εὐθέως, "immediately."⁹² Of Matthew's total of 18 "immediately's," 14 are parallel to an "immediately" in Mark.⁹³ Most of Matthew's "immediatelys" have been initiated by Mark (78%). Most importantly, *all* the examples of εὐθὺς are parallel to Mark. Matthew does not appear to use εὐθὺς on his own.⁹⁴

89 Theoretically, one might hypothesize that one of the criteria could come from a source and the other criterion was added according to Matthew's own style, creating the incompatibility. The discussion on τότε above showed that a source hypothesis for Matthew's narrative τότε is unreasonable. It is the programmatic collection of material into five discourses that makes a source hypothesis for the impersonal ἐγένετο structure unreasonable. Neither item appears to have come directly from a source.

On the other hand, one need not assume that Matthew would always write Greek with both criteria. Conceivably, re-arranging sources that had one of these criteria may have encouraged its adoption. That is particularly fitting for the impersonal ἐγένετο structure. Rearranging source materials that had many occurrences of the impersonal ἐγένετο structure may have encouraged the Matthean summary structures. Yet, regardless of influence, those summary sentences were probably penned by Matthew in Greek and were almost certainly not copied from a source.

90 The importance of (καὶ) εὐθὺς for tracing synoptic relationships was pointed out by Robert L. Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark: A Greek-Hebrew Diglot with English Introduction* (2d ed.; Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, 1973), 58–61. Buth and Kvasnica ("Parable of the Vineyard," 314) have further outlined its importance for synoptic studies.

91 Matt 3:16, 20, 21; 14:27; 21:2*, 3; 26:74*. (Matt 21:2 has εὐθὺς in \aleph , L, and Westcott-Hort, while UBS-NA read εὐθέως; 26:74 has εὐθὺς in B, L, Θ , and Westcott-Hort, while UBS-NA read εὐθέως.)

92 Matt 4:20, 22; 8:3; 13:5; 14:22, 31; 20:34; 24:29; 25:15; 26:49; 27:48.

93 Matt 3:16; 4:20, 22; 8:3; 13:5, 20, 21; 14:22, 27; 20:34; 21:2, 3; 26:49, 74.

94 These statistics are according to the UBS/Nestle-Aland and Westcott-Hort texts. The Byzantine text family erases the εὐθὺς unidirectional proof because in the Byz text family 40 of these "immediately" examples in Mark are εὐθέως. The unidirectional flow is missing. We still see the restriction of Mark's "immediately" in Matthew, but we cannot prove that Matthew is restricting these and that Mark is not expanding them. This does not alter the conclusion that narrative τότε was added to a Markan base by Matthew.

This means that εὐθύς in Matthew is a Markanism, and it confirms the literary flow from Mark to Matthew.

In light of the above, it is difficult to believe in the various Matthean-priority hypotheses. Theoretically it is not impossible, but truly difficult. Not a single narrative τότε crosses over into either Mark or Luke. This observation calls the Farrar-Goulder hypothesis into question as well.⁹⁵ The usefulness of narrative τότε is enhanced because it is like a conjunction and can be written by an author at a subconscious level, without thinking about it. Mark accepts τότε and has several τότε in parallel to Matthew's τότε. But none of these are narrative τότε. They are all the "non-Aramaic," generic τότε, acceptable in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. The same thing is true for evaluating Matthew with Luke, though the evidence is even stronger than in the case of Matthew with Mark. Luke actually has two or three cases of narrative τότε in his Gospel, and also has many of the same examples of generic τότε that Mark and Matthew have. In addition, Luke has 20 to 21 examples of narrative τότε in Acts. That makes the complete absence of Matthew's narrative τότε in the Gospel of Luke all the more remarkable. If Luke used Matthew, he would have refused all sixty examples of Matthean narrative τότε. Zero for sixty is truly a lack. The simplest explanation is that Luke did not use Matthew. This will be discussed below, in the sections dealing with Luke and Acts.

b *Gospel of Mark*

This is the easiest of the Synoptic Gospels to test. Mark is negative for criterion #1. There are zero examples of "narrative τότε." This is an astounding statistic given the many studies that speak about Mark's Aramaic source background as though it were close to fact. Mark cannot have a written Aramaic background. The word τότε occurs, but in all six examples it occurs outside the narrative framework of the Gospel, and in future or hypothetical contexts (2:20; 3:27, 14, 21, 26, 27). The occurrence of τότε, 𐤆𐤃𐤂, or 𐤆𐤃 in future or hypothetical contexts is characteristic of Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew.

95 The Ferrar-Goulder hypothesis has Mark first, influencing Matthew; then Luke using Mark and Matthew together. The Griesbach "two gospel" hypothesis holds that Matthew was first, Luke used Matthew and then Mark merged the two. The Augustinian hypothesis holds that Matthew was first, used by Mark, and that Luke used Mark and Matthew. All of these hypotheses would struggle to explain the breakdown of τότε. Generic τότε goes into both Mark and Luke, but, inexplicably, narrative τότε is absolutely blocked from both Mark and Luke.

There are two examples of criterion #2 in Mark: in Mark 1:9 (καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρετ), and in Mark 4:4 (in a parable, καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ σπεῖρειν ὃ μὲν ἔπεσεν παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν). Mark also has one or two examples of the Greek setting structure (2:23, with the setting within a following infinitive phrase;⁹⁶ 2:15, γίνεται without a setting, followed by infinitive).⁹⁷ These Greek structural examples should not be confused with, or added to, the Markan examples of criterion #2.

The criteria are consistent for Mark and they suggest that Mark's Semitic Greek might have a Hebrew influence. However, this evidence is not strong, especially in light of what we find below in Luke. In Luke there is strong evidence of a Hebraic gospel source.

What would be necessary to salvage an Aramaic background for Mark?⁹⁸ One could suggest that Mark's narrative may represent a colloquial Aramaic style that is not otherwise attested in the literature of this period, which literature is relatively meager. But that would mean ignoring what we do have and holding a position for which there is no supporting evidence. Such is not a strong position, certainly not a probable position. The criteria in the present study make a contribution to New Testament scholarship by highlighting the strong improbability of an Aramaic style for Mark.

A second possible way to salvage an Aramaic background for Mark might be to propose that Mark's idiosyncratic style with καὶ εὐθύς, "and immediately," somehow reflects the Aramaic narrative ܥܕܝܢ, "then, at that time." The main problem with this proposal is that in rabbinic literature both colloquial Hebrew and Aramaic storytelling have styles with a word מיד, "immediately."⁹⁹ The use of εὐθύς in Mark already has a good linguistic explanation: the word ܥܕܝܢ is used in both of those languages as a special narrative connector and could represent Hebrew as well as Aramaic. The one example of literary

96 Mark 2:23 is parallel to a similar Greek setting structure in Luke 6:1. J. H. Moulton, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Vol. 1, *Prolegomena* (3d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908), 17, thought that this might be "a primitive assimilation to Lk 6:1."

97 Instead of the present tense γίνεται and a Greek structure, the Byzantine text family has the Hebraic structure at Mark 2:15 (καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ κατακεῖσθαι αὐτον ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ πολλοὶ τελῶναι καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ συνανέκειντο τῷ Ἰησοῦ). Whether or not the Byzantine reading is accepted here, the conclusions about possible Aramaic or Hebrew influence behind Mark's Greek remain the same.

98 See Guido Baltes, "The Origins of the 'Exclusive Aramaic Model' in the Nineteenth Century: Methodological Fallacies and Subtle Motives," in the present volume.

99 See Abba Bendavid, *Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew* [Hebrew] (2 vols.; 2d ed.; Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1967), 581–83, 598.

Hebrew narrative in rabbinic literature mentioned above (*b. Qid.* 66a) even has an example of this word מִיד, so we know that the word could even penetrate late, literary Hebrew. At one point, however, Mark's εὐθύς-style appears non-Hebraic. Mark has καὶ εὐθύς while Hebrew texts do not show וּמִיד, but rather, only מִיד.¹⁰⁰ Aramaic has both forms, “immediately” without “and” (מִיד: Neof. Targ. has three examples—Gen 22:14, 38:25[b]; Exod 15:12]), and “immediately” with “and” (וּמִיד/יָד/וּמִיָּד: Neof. Targ. has two examples in the Torah—Gen 38:25[a]; Lev 22:27; there are also two examples in Targum Esther Sheni). The forms with a prefaced “and” appear to be a secondary development of the idiom without “and” in Mishnaic Hebrew.¹⁰¹ However, Mark's consistent addition of καὶ to εὐθύς suggests that this is part of his own Greek style, and that his addition of καὶ is a secondary reaccommodation to Greek, which prefers to connect sentences with a conjunction of some kind.¹⁰² So we should not see the use of εὐθύς as coming from a written Aramaic source. If Mark's εὐθύς were coming from a written, first-century Aramaic source, we would need to see some “narrative τότε” in Mark's Gospel. The only reasonable solution is to view Mark's “and immediately” style as his own Greek style, which was probably modelled on Hebrew colloquial storytelling.

100 It appears that Robert L. Lindsey was aware of this restriction, “καὶ εὐθύς . . . cannot even be translated to the Hebrew of the First Century” (from the Introduction to Elmar Camillo Dos Santos and Robert Lisle Lindsey, *A Comparative Greek Concordance of the Synoptic Gospels* [Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, 1985], xv). Of course, καὶ εὐθύς could be translated, but the expression had no exact equivalent. That is, וּמִיד was not good or attested Hebrew and מִיד by itself would not have elicited the two Greek words, καὶ εὐθύς, that are found so often in Mark.

101 Bendavid (*Biblical and Mishnaic*, 141, line 16, and 581 note) suggests that the word מִיד in Mishnaic Hebrew came from Greek ἐκ χειρός, “at hand, at once,” and is a partial replacement for the sequential narrative tenses when telling a literary story in colloquial Hebrew. In these cases מִיד becomes one of the substitutes for -, “and,” which explains why מִיד consistently occurs in colloquial Hebrew without “and.” He also suggests that מִיד served as a replacement for וְיָדָא when re-telling an Aramaic story in Hebrew. On the other hand, later Aramaic has apparently borrowed this idiom from Mishnaic Hebrew because it uses the word by itself and also with “and.” Thus, later Aramaic shows a linguistic development beyond the situation that caused מִיד *miyyad*'s creation without “and.”

102 When Mark uses this phrase at the beginning of a sentence it always has a conjunction with it, 28 times καὶ, once δέ, and once ἀλλά: Mark 1:10, 12, 18, 20, 21, 23, 29, 30, 42; 2:8, 12; 4:5; 5:29, 30, 42a; 6:27, 45, 50 [ὁ δὲ εὐθύς]; 7:25 [ἀλλ' εὐθύς], 35; 8:10; 9:15; 10:52; 11:2, 3; 14:43, 72; 15:1. When εὐθύς is preceded by a participle clause or other material (14 times), then it does not have καὶ: 1:28, 43; 3:6; 4:15, 16, 17, 29; 5:2, 42b; 6:25, 54; 9:20, 24 [most mss add καὶ; Ⓝ, C drop εὐθύς]; 14:45. In other words, the conjunction is a Greek phenomenon, and part of Mark's Greek style.

Finally, if there is a Semitic source layered somewhere behind Mark's less-than-natural Greek, that source tests as Hebrew rather than Aramaic.

This means that Casey's Aramaic reconstructions of Markan narrative are not natural Aramaic of the period,¹⁰³ but, ironically, look like a translation from Hebrew.¹⁰⁴ The lack of ׀ד׀ becomes especially visible where a parallel in Matthew has a narrative τότε. (The asterisk * within the texts below means that the parallel is not exact.)

Matt 12:13	τότε λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἔκτεινόν σου τὴν χεῖρα.
Mark 3:5	καὶ περιβλεψάμενος... λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἔκτεινόν τὴν χεῖρα.
Casey (<i>Mark</i> , 138)	אמר לאנשא, פשט ידא. ופשט ותוב ¹⁰⁵ לה ידא

103 Maurice Casey, *Aramaic Sources to the Gospel of Mark* (SNTSMS 102; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), and Maurice Casey, *Aramaic Sources to Q: Sources for Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (SNTSMS 122; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Casey's reconstructions have too many Aramaic mistakes to be used reliably. See the review by Peter M. Head and Peter J. Williams, "Q Review," *Tyndale Bulletin* 54, no. 1 (2003): especially 138–44, where many Aramaic mistakes and inconsistencies are listed. These are not just typos, which also occur, but there are also mistakes that suggest a questionable control of the language. Casey uses Hebrew אומר׀ in an Aramaic sentence (*Mark* 12:1, 13:8), adds an *alef* to תאעלנא "don't bring us" for תעלנא (*Mark* 6:0), "corrects" *Mark* 3:5 and argues that "hand" should have been the subject ידא ופשט ותוב לה [sic], but then makes both verbs masculine instead of feminine and gets the form of the second verb wrong (תוב). Head and Williams include this last instance when describing similar mistakes in Casey's 2002 volume where he reconstructs with קום instead of קם (p. 141). If Casey meant the *vav* to mark the *gamets*-quality vowel, it is not in accord with Second Temple-period Aramaic spelling. We do have occasional evidence from a later dialect of words like "in heaven" spelled בשומיא, but בשומיא reflects a different phonological process and it is not a masculine singular verb.

104 Studies such as Klaus Beyer, *Semitische Syntax im Neuen Testament, Band 1, Satzlehre, Teil 1* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962); or Black's *Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3d ed., 1967), or Maloney's Ph.D. dissertation, published as *Semitic Interference in Marcan Syntax* (SBLDS 51; California: Scholars Press, 1979), or Casey's *Aramaic Sources to Mark*, and Casey's *Aramaic Sources to Q*, have all ignored the role of narrative τότε in Aramaic and have completely missed the non-Aramaic, Hebraic character of any Semitic written background to Mark, as well as Luke.

105 ידא ופשט ותוב לה ידא [sic]. This is a mistake for ידא ליה ותבת לפי Casey's understanding of his Aramaic "and the hand stretched out and returned to him" (*Casey, Mark*, 139). Casey should not have altered the sense of the Greek: καὶ ἐξέτεινεν καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη ἡ χεῖρ αὐτοῦ, ידיה ויתקנת (ואתאסיית) ידיה, פשט ידיה ויתקנת.

At Mark 3:5 Casey's Aramaic text "misses an opportunity" for Aramaic narrative אַדִּין. (Of course, if Mark was written in Greek and/or had influence from Hebrew, then there is no Aramaic to miss.)

Matt 12:22–24*	τότε προσηγήθη αὐτῷ δαιμονιζόμενος τυφλὸς καὶ κωφός... οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες εἶπον
Mark 3:20–22	καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς οἶκον καὶ συνέρχεται πάλιν ὁ ὄχλος... καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς οἱ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων καταβάντες ἔλεγον...
Casey (Q, 147)	¹⁰⁶ ... ועללין בבי ואתכנשת תובא כנשא... ... וספריא דנחתו מן ירושלם אמרין דיש ¹⁰⁷ בעל זבול לה,
Matt 17:12–13*	ἀλλὰ ἐποίησαν ἐν αὐτῷ ὅσα ἠθέλον... τότε συνήκαν οἱ μαθηταὶ ὅτι περὶ Ἰωάνου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ εἶπεν
Mark 9:13	καὶ ἐποίησαν αὐτῷ ὅσα ἠθέλον, καθὼς γέγραπται ἐπ' αὐτόν
Casey (<i>Mark</i> , 121)	ועבדו לה דצבו כדי כתיב עלוהי
Matt 20:20	τότε προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ἡ μήτηρ τῶν υἱῶν Ζεβεδαίου
Mark 10:35	καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάνης οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου
Casey (<i>Mark</i> , 121)	וקרבין לה יעקב ויוחנן בני זבדיה ואמרין

At three more places (Mark 3:20–22; 9:17; 10:35) Casey misses more “opportunities” for Aramaic narrative אַדִּין.

106 נשא ואתכנשת תובא כנשא (Casey's proposal). Besides missing another opportunity for inserting an Aramaic narrative style into Mark, this is a string of less probable choices. Aramaic עללין prefers the preposition ל (cf. Dan 5:10; 6:11; 1Q20 xix.13, 14; xx.6; 2Q24 f4.3; 4Q197 Tob ar f4 i.15; iii.1, 4; 4Q209 f7 iii.6; 4Q550c fi ii.6, et al.). And see Old Syriac and Peshitto at Mark 3:19 with the verb לביתא (הוא) אתה. The form תובא is only found in 4Q540. The common forms in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, Christian Palestinian, and Syriac are both תוב and תובן. There are better choices for an unmodified “crowd” (cf. 4Q530 EnGiants^b i8 modified as גבריא על לכנשת גבריא) than כנישה, “a gathering, assembly [synagogue],” such as המון, קהל, and אוכלוסין “crowd, people [loan word from Greek found in Mishnaic Hebrew, Christian Palestinian, Samaritan, and Jewish Aramaic].”

107 דיש בעל זבול לה [sic]. This is a mistake for דאית ליה בעל זבול. Hebrew would have been שיש לו בעל זבול.

Matt 26:30–31*	καὶ ὑμνήσαντες ἐξήλθον εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν. τότε λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς
Mark 14:26–27	καὶ ὑμνήσαντες ἐξήλθον εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν. καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς

Casey stops at v. 26. Matthew 26:31 is cited to suggest that an Aramaic narrative style fits these selections.

Matt 12:29	καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει
Mark 3:27	καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει
Casey (Q 148)	התב יב ין דאב

This last example is not “Aramaic” narrative τότε but a usage that is equally good in Hebrew and Greek, especially with the “and.” Ironically, at Mark 3:27, Casey finally includes an ין דאב in his text. But here the word “then” is not a narrative conjunction and fits equally well with Hebrew.

The Greek structure related to criterion #2 also interfaces with Casey’s reconstructions:

Matt 12:1	ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἐπορεύθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς σάββασιν διὰ τῶν σπορίμων
Luke 6:1	ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν σαββάτῳ διαπορεύεσθαι αὐτὸν διὰ τῶν σπορίμων
Mark 2:23	καὶ ἐγένετο αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς σάββασιν παραπορεύεσθαι διὰ τῶν σπορίμων
Casey (<i>Mark</i> , 138)	היה בשבתא עבר בזרעא

Casey’s Aramaic looks like translationese from Hebrew. The verb structure is not natural Aramaic though Casey (*Mark*, 138) cites Qumran Enoch (6:1) as a precedent.¹⁰⁸ That Qumran passage does show an impersonal “be” verb before a setting clause, but it is a literal translation from the Hebrew. The structure in Mark is the “Greek” structure, subtype c, and the structure in Luke 6 is subtype c, though Luke’s is closer to a Hebrew word order. When the structure of subtype c is put back into a Semitic language then it looks like the Hebrew structure of criterion #2.

108 See n. 53 above for the text. In the earlier section “*Is ‘Impersonal ἐγένετο + Finite Main Verb’ Hebrew or Aramaic?*” it is shown that the Semitic structure is not Aramaic, but Hebrew.

Casey's Aramaic is unreliable, as is his evaluation of the language background to Mark. Casey is unaware that his Markan Aramaic fits a Hebraic profile and not an Aramaic one.

In sum, Mark does not show evidence of Aramaic in his Greek, but Mark does show a pattern that is within Hebrew parameters.

c *Luke*

Luke may be the most interesting and controversial to test for Semitic backgrounds.

Criterion #1 is negative for Aramaic influence. There are only two narrative *τότε* in the narrative framework of Luke (21:10; 24:45). This is a statistic of 0.10 per 1000 and can in no way be considered to represent Aramaic influence. There are also nine examples of *τότε* in a future context (5:35; 6:42; 13:26; 14:9, 10; 21:20, 21, 27; 23:30), a feature common to Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. There is also an adverbial usage in 16:16, and two examples in a non-narrative 'potential, proverbial' context (11:[24], 26). One "narrative *τότε*" comes in a parable (14:21).¹⁰⁹

Criterion #2 is positive. There are 33–34 examples of the Hebraic setting structure, those that introduce a finite verb without *καί* (1:8, 23, 41, 59; 2:1, 6, 15, 46; 7:11; 9:18; [9:28]; [9:29 without ἦν, "was"]; 9:33, 37; 11:1, 14, 27, 14; 18:35; 19:29; 20:1; 24:30, 51 [22/23 total]), and those that introduce *καί/δέ* plus a finite verb (5:1, 12, 17; 8:1, 22; [9:28]; 9:51; 14:1; 17:11; 19:15; 24:4, 15 [11/12 total]). There are an additional five examples of the Greek setting structure introducing an infinitive main event (3:21; 6:1, 6, 12, 22).

Most New Testament scholars who followed Dalman took this clear Hebraic characterization as a sign of artificiality and Lukan creation, based primarily on three assumptions. It was generally assumed that Hebrew would not have been used for Gospel traditions, which naturally led to viewing something

109 Story parables were told in Hebrew. Cf. Segal, *Grammar of Mishnaic Grammar*, 4–5: "But even the later Amoraim, and even in Babylon, used MH [Mishnaic Hebrew—R.B.] exclusively for the following purposes: *halakah*; expositions of the Scriptures; parables (משל), even in the middle of an aram. conversation (cf., e.g. BA 60b; Ta'a. 5b)"; and Shmuel Safrai, "Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus," in Notley, Turnage and Becker, eds., *Jesus' Last Week*, 225–44 (238): "Thousands of parables have been preserved . . . All of the parables are in Hebrew." That means that this single occurrence of *τότε* in speech should be treated as Greek. When added to Luke's statistics the result is still clearly negative for criterion #1, 0.15 per 1000.

“Hebraic” as artificial and coming from an imitation of the Old Greek.¹¹⁰ It was also assumed that Luke’s Hebraisms were artificial because they are not coming from Mark.¹¹¹ Markan priority did not have room for a gospel-length, non-Markan Semitized source for Luke to use. Finally, it was assumed, mistakenly, that Luke used the Hebraic ἐγένετο setting structure in Acts. Dalman made the mistake explicitly: “Wer Beweise für ein hebräisches Urevangelium sammeln wollte, hätte zuerst dies καὶ ἐγένετο nennen müssen. . . . Selbst der ‘Wir-Bericht’ ist nicht davon frei, s. Apg. 21,1.5; 27,44; 28,8.17 . . . Solche Beobachtungen verbieten die Annahme eines hebräischen Originals.”¹¹² Dalman ignored the structural distinctions that had been outlined by Alfred Plummer as early as 1896. The Hebraic ἐγένετο structure does not occur even once in Acts.¹¹³ This lack is against common scholarly assumptions and is important enough to bear repeating: *the Hebraic structure does not occur in Acts*. Notice how three widely

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- 110 See, for example, H. F. D. Sparks, “The Semitisms of St Luke’s Gospel,” *JTS* 44 (1943): 129–38: “Confirmation, or otherwise, of this hypothesis has to be sought in any distinctive Aramaisms the Gospel may exhibit; since not only was Aramaic the particular Semitic language that St. Luke would come across . . . it was also the foundation of the Gospel tradition.” Note also Sparks, “The Semitisms of the Acts,” *JTS* NS 1, no. 1 (1950): 16–28 (16): “The main conclusion of the previous paper was that the vast majority of the Semitisms in the third gospel are not in fact Semitisms at all, but what I called ‘Septuagintalisms’; and that St. Luke is to be regarded not as a ‘Semitizer’, but as an habitual, conscious, and deliberate ‘Septuagintalizer’. This conclusion I claimed to have proved.”
- 111 Sparks, “The Semitisms of St Luke’s Gospel,” 130: “It is established that St. Luke knew St. Mark and Q in Greek . . . In order to account for a fair proportion of the Lukan Semitisms we need look no further than St. Mark and Q . . . A substantial residuum . . . can only be due to the Evangelist himself. His continual re-phrasing of St. Mark is decisive on this point.”
- 112 Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, 26: “Whoever would collect proofs for a Hebrew source gospel should first start with καὶ ἐγένετο . . . [T]he We-section is not free from καὶ ἐγένετο, see Acts 21 etc. . . . Such observations forbid any assumption of a Hebrew source.”
- 113 Hawkins recognized this lack of the Hebraic ἐγένετο structure as a problem. See John C. Hawkins, *Horae Synoptica* (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1909), 179–80. See also Moulton, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*. Vol. 1, *Prolegomena*, 17: “What then of (c), . . . adopted by him in Ac as an exclusive substitute for the other two?” One might turn to Codex Bezae to ameliorate this stark dichotomy. Codex Bezae [D 05] has two examples of the Hebraic structures in Acts 2:1 and 4:5. Bezae represents a significantly different recension of Acts. It is conceivable that there was influence from a non-canonical Hebraic document in these early Jerusalem stories. A possible Hebrew text does not mean, though, that Bezae’s recension goes back to Luke. It could be an independent, later recension.

quoted authors—Howard,¹¹⁴ Fitzmyer,¹¹⁵ and Turner¹¹⁶—seem to have let pre-suppositions color their report of the data. Dalman and these three are all unreliable on this question.

The comparison with Acts is especially enlightening for the question of an artificial biblicizing style that is often alleged for Luke. Comparing the Gospel with Acts leads to the opposite conclusion. In Acts, especially the second half,

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- 114 Wilbert Francis Howard (in James Hope Moulton and Wilbert Francis Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Vol. 2 [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1929], 427) implies that Luke did use the Hebraic structure in Acts: “We observe that in the latter [Acts–R.B.] Luke not only uses (c) [the Greek structure–R.B.] almost entirely to the exclusion of (a) and (b), but also avoids the more Hebraic form of the time clause.” The word “almost” is unjustified if used to imply that there is evidence that Luke himself ever used the structure on his own. Howard’s tables did not list any unambiguous evidence. They listed the two examples from Bezae, 2:1 and 4:5 and a citation of Acts 5:7 with a question mark (correctly, because it has an explicit subject and is not the Hebraic structure). Howard then favorably quoted a letter from Dr. G. G. Findlay to J. H. Moulton (p. 428): “Acts 20:16 seems decisive evidence of the native (or thoroughly naturalized) stamp of the idiom.” On the one hand, it is ambiguous whether Findlay is referring to the Hebraic or Greek setting structure or to something else. However, the structure referred to (Acts 20:16) is neither: ὥπως μὴ γένηται αὐτῷ χρονοτριβήσαι ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ, “so that there would not be to him to be staying long in Asia.” This is an impersonal γένηται but it is not a setting introducing a main event.
- 115 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I–IX): Introduction, Translation and Notes* (AB 28; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981), listed Acts 5:7 and 9:19 as examples of the Hebraic setting structure in Acts (p. 119). They are not. Acts 5:7, Ἐγένετο δὲ ὡς ὥρων τριῶν διάστημα, “and there was an interval of about three hours,” has an explicit subject διάστημα. Howard (*A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 426) listed this verse with a question mark, recognizing both its similarity and difference from the other Hebraic structures. In Hebrew, one would have expected ויהי אחריו שלש שעות, which would have produced the following in Greek and English: καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ τρεῖς ὥρας, “and it happened after three hours.” Acts 9:19 reads: Ἐγένετο δὲ μετὰ τῶν ἐν Δαμασκῶ μαθητῶν ἡμέρας τινάς, “and he was with the disciples in Damascus some days.” Here the subject of ἐγένετο is Paul, “he.” Both of Fitzmyer’s examples fail.
- 116 N. Turner, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*. Vol. 4, *Style* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1976), 47: “The construction with the infinitive occurs, very rarely in non-Biblical authors, but the preponderance of the strictly Hebraic construction in Luke-Acts [*sic*—R.B.] indicates that even when Luke sometimes uses the infinitive construction he is still writing Biblical Greek influenced by the LXX (II Acts 19:1; We 16:6, 21:1, 5; 27:44; 28: 8).” Turner missed the point. If Luke was writing under the influence of biblical Greek, why did he only use the third structure, never the first two? Notice how Turner’s wording “the preponderance of the strictly Hebraic construction in Luke-Acts” neatly slides over the fact that the structure only occurs in the Gospel of Luke, but not in Acts.

we see the hand of Luke himself, and he never uses the Hebraic structure. This is even true in Acts 22 where he explicitly says that Paul was speaking Hebrew, yet uses the Greek structural subtype c twice. In the Gospel he uses both the Hebraic structure and the Greek structure. Apparently, Luke was not particularly bothered by the difference between the Hebraic and Greek setting structures, and may not have been aware of their difference—the distinction has only been discussed in New Testament scholarship since the end of the nineteenth century. Yet in Acts Luke stops using the Hebraic structure entirely, and continues with 16 examples of the Greek structure.¹¹⁷ The only thing we know for certain is that Luke in his own writing used structure c. The reasonable, probable conclusion is that the Hebraic structure in Luke's Gospel is coming from a source. It is not Lukan. As we see from his Gospel, Luke could accept a Hebraic structure from a source and use it in his writing. But when not receiving them from a source, he does not use them in his writing. This is what we see in Acts.¹¹⁸

On another question, Luke 19:15 had the Hebraic setting structure in the middle of a parable. This might suggest that when parables were written down in a text using the literary register (i.e. a parallel register to Late Biblical Hebrew rather than the low register, Mishnaic Hebrew), the parables were also adapted to literary Hebrew. Rabbinic literature preserves over two thousand story parables, and they are all preserved in colloquial Hebrew. One might legitimately assume that the parables recorded in the Gospels were presented orally in colloquial Hebrew but were still recorded and published in literary Hebrew during the Second Temple period. One of Mark's two examples of the Hebraic setting structure also occurred in a parable (4:4).

The scope of the Hebraic source(s) behind Luke's Greek sources also deserve(s) comment. The Hebraic setting structure is not from Luke himself, yet it occurs throughout his Gospel, in the first two chapters, in triple tradition parallels (Luke 5:1, 12, 17; 8:1, 22; 9:18, 28, 29, 33, 37; 18:35; 20:1; 24:4), in Matthew–Luke parallels (Luke 11:1, 14; 19:15), in Lukan material (7:11; 9:51; 11:27; 14:1; 17:11, 14; 24:15, 30), and curiously never in material parallel only to Mark. This means that a “gospel-length” Hebrew source is in the background. If someone were

117 For a list, see the notes on Acts, below.

118 For more on Lukan style, see Buth and Kvasnica “Parable of the Vineyard,” 285, 312–16, where the phenomenon of Luke's schizophrenic style is explained as the opposite of Septuagintalizing; and Randall Buth, “Evaluating Luke's Unnatural Greek: A Look at His Connectives,” in Steven E. Runge, ed., *Discourse Studies and Biblical Interpretation, a Festschrift in Honor of Stephen H. Levinsohn* (Logos Bible Software, 2011): 335–370.

inclined to equate this Hebrew source with Q, then it would be a maximally large Q, larger than Mark, and with a narrative framework.

d *John*

Criterion #1 is negative. The examples of τότε in John do not resemble “narrative τότε,” and are all normal examples of Greek usage: 7:10 (ὡς δὲ . . . τότε); 8:28 (future); 10:22 (adverbial, ἐγένετο τότε τὰ ἐγκαίνια); 11:6 (ὡς οὖν . . . τότε μέν), 14 (τότε οὖν); 12:16 (ὅτε . . . τότε); 13:27 (καὶ μετὰ τὸ ψωμίον τότε); 19:1 (τότε οὖν), 16 (τότε οὖν); 20:8 (τότε οὖν).

There are no examples of criterion #2.

One can conclude that John does not show evidence of using either a written Aramaic or written Hebrew source.

e *Acts*

Criterion #1 is found 21 times in Acts, 11 of these are in chs. 1–15 and 10 and in chs. 16–28. Ten of the 11 examples in chs. 1–15 qualify as “narrative τότε.” They are in the narrative framework of the book and begin their respective verse or sentence (Acts 1:12; 4:8; 5:26; 6:11; 8:17; 10:46, 48; 13:3, 12; 15:22). Acts 7:4 begins a sentence and is within Stephen’s speech. Narrative τότε is thus 1.09 per 1000 or 0.99 per 1000 in Acts 1–15.

Seven of the examples in chs. 16–28 are in the narrative framework and qualify (21:13, 26, 33; 23:3; 25:12; 26:1; 27:32). Three additional examples (17:14, 27:21, 28:1) are all in past contexts, the last two occurring between a participle and the main part of a sentence. The statistics are maximally 1.19 (and adjusted, 0.83) narrative τότε per 1000 words.

Overall, the average raw τότε statistic in Acts of 1.14 per 1000 is a little low for suggesting any direct Aramaic influence. The frequent occurrence of τότε in the second half of Acts (Acts 15:36–28:31) strongly suggests that this is Luke’s own narrative style. However, it is significantly higher than the number of narrative τότε in Luke’s Gospel. This may be explained by supposing Hebraic sources behind Luke’s Gospel. Hebraic Greek sources do not have narrative τότε, and this lack could influence a writer who might otherwise have added a few examples if left completely on his own.

Criterion #2 is negative. There are no Hebraic ἐγένετο structures in Acts, contrary to implications sometimes found in the literature.¹¹⁹ The only “impersonal ἐγένετο setting” structures found in Acts are those that are modelled after the standard Greek structure that introduces an infinitive as the main event (Acts 4:5; 9:3, 32, 37, 43, [10:25 ὡς ἐγένετο . . .]; 11:26; 14:1; 16:16; 19:1; [21:1 ὡς δὲ

¹¹⁹ See nn. 112, 114, 115, and 116.

ἐγένετο +infinitive without setting]; [21:5 ὅτε δὲ ἐγένετο + infinitive without setting]; 22:6, 17; 27:44; 28:8, 17).

We may conclude that Acts tests positively for Greek by the criteria. It is negative for both criterion #1 and criterion #2. If the occasional narrative τότε in Acts are Luke's personal style, then we are not able to distinguish the language of any potential sources or influences by the criteria here.¹²⁰ Moreover, any sources behind Acts were different from those employed in the Gospel, possibly in length, language, and amount of editing.

There are questions that remain. The higher rate of "narrative τότε" in Acts might suggest some kind of contact or influence from Aramaic. But it is not much different from a statistic like 0.98 or 1.17 for the Greek of 3 *Maccabees*. Because of their occurrence in 2 Acts, we can account for these τότε in Acts as Luke's personal style. This is not surprising for the book of Acts, but it adds another piece to the puzzle of Luke's Gospel. Criterion #1 is not just negative for Aramaic influence in the Gospel, it is also low for the author Luke, if Acts is

120 This is in general agreement with studies like John C. Hawkins, *Horae Synoptica* (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1909). On the "we" sections of Acts, Hawkins concludes (p. 185), "Such evidence of unity of authorship, drawn from a comparison of the language of the three Synoptic Gospels, appears to me irresistible." Hawkins also concluded that Luke and Acts were composed at quite different times (p. 180), "If the differences of vocabulary and phraseology which have been collected under these five headings are considered together, they seem to me to suggest the inference that the two books, though the works of the same writer, could not have proceeded from him at the same, or very nearly the same, time. Would it be at all likely that an author . . . would so alter his style in two nearly contemporaneous books as, e.g., to drop εἶπεν δέ, ἐν τῷ with the infinitive, and καὶ αὐτός, to take μὲν οὖν, τέ, κελύειν, and συνέρχονται, and to substitute the infinitive for the finite verb after ἐγένετο, to the extent that has now appeared?" However, Hawkins did not deal with narrative τότε, and τότε does not enter any of his lists dealing with Luke-Acts. Such an oversight is unfortunate, because it helps to put the ἐγένετο constructions in a different light. Narrative τότε is not just a different frequency—its relative lack in the Gospel is consistent with Hebraic influence from a source. And influence from sources can directly answer Hawkins questions. The structures that Hawkins mentions like εἶπεν δέ (58 occurrences in the Gospel, 16 in Acts), and τε (9 in the Gospel, 151 in Acts), still occur in both the Gospel and Acts, and are not as absolute as Luke's using the "Greek" ἐγένετο structure in Acts (Hebraic/Greek ratio in the Gospel is 34/5, in Acts 0/16 or 0/17). Since Luke used both ἐγένετο structures in the Gospel, it is difficult to believe that he was aware of a significant difference between them, yet he only has the Greek structure from what we know is his own influence. Once a major, narrative, non-Markan source for the Gospel is recognized, the different choices in vocabulary take on a different perspective. Hawkins' work has been very useful but it needs to be redone, especially in the light of his formula for determining what a Lukanism is.

showing his normal style. (A) Hebrew-influenced Greek source(s) behind the Gospel appear(s) to have affected Luke's overall style in the Gospel.

f *The Larger Hebraic Context Behind the Synoptic Gospels*

The conclusions that point to a literary Hebrew gospel source behind the Greek sources of the Synoptic Gospels fit well within the larger picture of what is known about the linguistic situation in the land of Israel in the first century. The major points are:

1. Qumranic Hebrew shows the language choice of a major Jewish sect at the end of the Second Temple period. They chose the literary Hebrew dialect that is an extension of "Late Biblical Hebrew," though they were apparently aware of other proto-Mishnaic dialects.
2. The style of 1 Maccabees points to the use of literary Hebrew for the writing of a Maccabean history.
3. The descriptions in Acts 21 point to a Jerusalem-based messianic movement concerned with the study of Torah and participation in Temple worship. Literary Hebrew would be a natural fit for writings about a second Moses.¹²¹
4. The most natural reading of the Papias statement points to a Hebrew gospel prepared by Matthew, presumably for the Jerusalem church. (The tradition would have developed from a Hebrew source gospel, not from the canonical Greek Gospel of Matthew.)
5. It now appears that the Jewish people living in the land of Israel in the first century accessed the Hebrew Bible directly. This is confirmed by the relative lack of Targumim at Qumran, even though the Dead Sea sect had many Aramaic documents, including two copies of an Aramaic translation of the notoriously difficult book of Job.¹²²

¹²¹ The linguistic worldview in the book of *Jubilees* associated Hebrew with the Garden of Eden and sees it restored at the call of Abraham, *Jub.* 12:25–7. Such a linguistic worldview would naturally fit with various restoration worldviews, including a group that used the Temple Scroll at Qumran or a group that was following a second Moses like the Yeshua movement (Acts 3).

¹²² The facts on the ground are problematic for the older assumptions that common Jews no longer accessed the Hebrew Bible directly. Consider the opening sentence of an article by Willem Smelik, "Language, Locust, and Translation Between the Talmudim," *Journal for the Aramaic Bible* 3 (2001): 199–224 (206): "In a society that had largely lost the ability to speak Hebrew—in both the Diaspora and Palestine—translations of the Torah must have been used quite freely around the beginning of the Common Era." Actually, this would explain the targum of Job, because Hebrew Job was written in a unique dialect in the history of

6. The Mishnah and rabbinic literature claim to record the teachings of the Pharisees and Tannaim in the language in which they were given. This literature overwhelmingly (99%) testifies that first-century teachers and the popular Hasidim taught in Hebrew.¹²³
7. Story parables are given in Hebrew throughout rabbinic literature, even when within Aramaic contexts.

Linguistic trace elements in the Gospels point to Hebrew somewhere behind the Greek Gospels and they now join the above sociolinguistic testimonies.

5 Conclusions

The three tests in this study involve two criteria, narrative τότε and impersonal Hebraic ἐγένετο. These two criteria are joined with a consistency evaluation of the two criteria. Together, these tests produce essential data for any discussion of Semitic backgrounds to a Greek document. The application of these tests to many Jewish Greek documents from the Second Temple period shows their usefulness in adding precision to discussions about sources behind documents and about the textual history of documents. The coupling of the two criteria brings added reliability by highlighting anomalous results, as was found in the case of the Gospel of Matthew.

the Hebrew language. In the land of Israel, we must assume that the Hebrew Bible was commonly accessed directly in the Hebrew language during the Second Temple period. It is only in the second century that Smelik's opening statement starts to find support, as he himself points out: "In Palestine, translations may have found their way into the synagogue much later than in the diaspora, possibly not before the second century C.E. While generalizations are quite misleading, this assumption is based on observations that show that the inclusion of translations was not standard to the extent that many scholars assume it was. All the first-century sources on Palestine, including Philo, Josephus and the New Testament, refer to all elements within the service, including midrashic expositions, but remain silent about a translation. Only literary sources dating from the second century C.E. onward relate translations to the synagogue." We can add the archeological evidence of Qumran to that picture of agreement for the first century. The relative lack of Targumim at Qumran suggests that Aramaic biblical texts were not commonly used by Jews in the land in the first century. Cf. Machiela's contribution to the present volume, "Hebrew, Aramaic, and the Differing Phenomena of Targum and Translation in the Second Temple Period and Post-Second Temple Period."

123 See the longer discussion in n. 15.

On the other hand, it must be recognized and emphasized that these tests are not absolute. They must be done in conjunction with other studies. There are several scenarios in which anomalous results need to be explained. For example, the lack of impersonal Hebraic ἐγένετο structures in a translation of Ezra reflects a certain style of Second-Temple literary Hebrew. Thus, the lack of both criteria in a Greek document might point either to an original Greek document or to a Hebraically influenced document. If in other features the document has a stylistic profile of an original Greek document, then its Greek pedigree is strengthened by the lack of both criteria. However, if a document tests negative for both criteria but in other features the document tests as some kind of Semitized Greek, then the influence would be attributed to Hebrew rather than Aramaic. Finally, it must be remembered that theoretically an author might imitate the style of a Semitized Greek document or might write with a Jewish Greek idiolect. Careful examination of the consistency of all relevant data must be done before a reliable conclusion can be reached.

With the above caveats, we suggest that the following documents have a consistent Hebrew background or Hebraic influence: 1 Maccabees, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Joseph and Aseneth, Tobit, and Judith.

Likewise, with the above caveats, we suggest that the following documents have an Aramaic background: 1 Esd 3:1–5:6, the *Testament of Job*, and probably *The Life of Adam and Eve*. It also appears that an Aramaic exemplar may have secondarily influenced the Greek textual tradition of *Joseph and Aseneth*.

In addition, we can suggest that the following documents have a Greek background without a long, written Semitic source: 2 Maccabees, John, and Acts.

The application of these criteria to the Greek Gospels is particularly fruitful in bringing more precision to discussions about Semitic source backgrounds. While the Synoptic Gospels are tertiary Greek, or at least Greek documents that were not translated directly from (a) Semitic source(s), they still present data of Semitized Greek. A Semitic source behind the Synoptic Gospels has not left the distinguishing features of an Aramaic source, but it has left features that testify to a potential Hebrew background. This is a linguistic datum and is not affected by arguments about which language is the most popular in home or market, nor by which synoptic theory one follows. Furthermore, this linguistic evidence suggests that the synoptic problem cannot be solved without seriously coming to grips with Hebrew.¹²⁴ The Hebrew gospel source(s) behind the Greek sources to the Synoptic Gospels is/are necessarily long. It is not a

124 It is beyond the scope of the present study to discuss this/these source(s) and its/their relationship to each Synoptic writer or the synoptics between themselves. It should be obvious that Luke was influenced by a source that reflects Hebrew. I consider Mark

minimal sayings-document, nor only the passion story, but a full-length biography from birth accounts to resurrection accounts.

As a corollary to the evaluations of the synoptic data, it is highly improbable that a stylistic imitation theory can account for the Semitic evidence in Luke–Acts. The stark difference of “impersonal ἐγένετο” between the Gospel and Acts and the lack of the Hebraic structure in Acts cannot be explained by “imitation Septuagintal Greek,” nor can the differences in statistics with *narrative* τότε be so explained. These new tests call for a re-evaluation of Luke’s style and working methods. Luke’s style in the Gospel appears to come from a Greek source that descends from a literary Hebrew narrative.¹²⁵

Previous scholars have approached the Semitized Greek Gospels with assumptions of the plausibility of an Aramaic background. The data of this study conflict with those assumptions and reverse them. Scholars will need to deal with the lack of any extant, Aramaic model on which to explain the stylistic Semitic data in Mark. Any Aramaic approaches will need to deal with these linguistic data that point unambiguously in the opposite direction, away from Aramaic and towards Hebrew. The ability to differentiate Hebrew from Aramaic in Semitized Greek sources changes the starting point of discussions about the Synoptic Gospels.

and Luke to be independent. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, probably had access to (the) Hebraized Greek source(s). This will be addressed in Volume 4 of this series.

125 If the Papias title τὰ λόγια [τοῦ κυρίου], “the sayings,” reflects the Hebrew title, then the natural precedent would be שׁוֹעֵה אֲדוֹן דְּבָרֵי סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי יֵשׁוּעַ הָאֲדוֹן as the title of a narrative story, on the model of Tobit: βίβλος λόγων Τοβιθ.

Non-Septuagintal Hebraisms in the Third Gospel: An Inconvenient Truth

R. Steven Notley

Almost 70 years ago, working under the assumption of an essentially exclusive Aramaic model, H. F. D. Sparks published a short but influential article, “The Semitisms of St. Luke.”¹ He began by observing that both in number and in character the Semitisms of Mark and Matthew are decidedly different from those of Luke:

If we compare St. Luke with the other Synoptists, we are forced to admit that “subject matter” is very far from being a complete explanation; for not only do certain of the characteristic Semitic expressions, which all three share, occur with greater frequency in St. Luke, but there are in addition a whole host of peculiarly Lukan Semitisms, that is, constructions and phrases, sometimes complete sentences, which, awkward in Greek, are normal and idiomatic in Semitic.²

Even more perplexing for Sparks was the recognition that Matthew and Mark contain Semitisms that can be explained by either Aramaic or Hebrew, while Luke presents Semitisms that can be only Hebrew. Writing prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls³ and other inscriptional evidence that demonstrates

1 H. F. D. Sparks, “The Semitisms of St. Luke’s Gospel,” *JJS* 44 (1943): 129–38.

2 *Ibid.*, 129. Sparks gives a handful of examples that he describes as being distributed in all parts of the Gospel. See Luke 1:6: ἦσαν δὲ δίκαιοι ἀμφότεροι ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ, πορευόμενοι ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐντολαῖς καὶ δικαιώμασιν τοῦ κυρίου ἄμεμπτοι; Luke 11:54: ἐνεδρεύοντες αὐτὸν θηρεύσαι τι ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ; Luke 21:34–35: ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη ὡς παγίς· ἐπεισελεύσεται γὰρ ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς καθημένους ἐπὶ πρόσωπον πάσης τῆς γῆς; Luke 24:49: ὑμεῖς δὲ καθίσατε ἐν τῇ πόλει ἕως οὗ ἐνδύσησθε ἐξ ὕψους δύναμιν.

3 Abegg estimates that of the 700 non-biblical texts from the Qumran library, “120 are written in Aramaic and 28 in Greek . . . 550 scrolls were written in Hebrew.” M. Abegg, “Hebrew Language,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (ed. C. A. Evans and S. E. Porter; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 460; cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, “Languages,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 473.

the first-century use of Hebrew,⁴ Sparks presumed that if the Evangelist had drawn from a Semitic source, it could only have been Aramaic. Therefore, since “hardly any of St. Luke’s Semitisms are demonstrably derivable from Aramaic,” he concluded the only explanation for the Hebraisms in the Third Gospel was the Evangelist’s intentional biblicalizing style.

Sparks’ approach is still representative of the mainstream of New Testament scholars, who have not moved far from either his assumptions or conclusions during the ensuing seven decades. The charge of alleged Lukan Septuagintisms⁵ is unhesitatingly repeated in the scholarly literature.⁶ This line of reasoning is founded upon two *a priori* assumptions: first, Aramaic is the only language option available to explain the Semitisms in the Synoptic Gospels;⁷ second, Luke’s literary sources for his Gospel were primarily Mark and Q, which

4 See, for example, the inscriptional evidence for Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek on ancient Jewish ossuaries; see L. Y. Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries* (Jerusalem: IAA, Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994), 13. G. Baltes concludes in a contribution to the present volume (“The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in Epigraphic Sources of the New Testament Era,” 35–36), “the assumption of the death of spoken Hebrew after the Babylonian exile can no longer be upheld in view of the epigraphic evidence. Hebrew was obviously a living language in the first century C.E. and continued to be so well into the second century.”

5 A Septuagintism is a Hebraism occurring in a Greek text that is found in the Septuagint, while a non-Septuagintal Hebraism is a Hebraism occurring in a Greek text that is not found in the Septuagint.

6 J. C. Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1899), 162; J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB 28; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1981–85), 114–16; I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), 208, 405; F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* [hereafter: BDF] (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1961), 3–4 (§4).

7 The presumption of Aramaic-only as the Semitic *Vorlage* of the Gospels is frequently reasoned. For example, R. Gundry rejected the suggestion that the familiar Hebrew word play upon פֶּרֶךְ (“summer[fruit = fig]”) and עֵץ (“end,” 2 Sam 16:1–2; Jer 40:10; Isa 16:9; *t. Ned.* 4.1–2) (Aramaic פֶּרֶךְ, “summer/fruit,” and Aramaic עֵץ, “end,” does not work) might be represented in the logion preserved in the Synoptic Gospels, “Learn the lesson of the fig (συχῆ) . . . you know that the summer (θερος) is here” (Luke 21:30; cf. Matt 24:32; Mark 13:28). His sole reason was that the wordplay, “is possible only in Hebrew, not in Aramaic . . . much less in Greek.” See R. H. Gundry, *Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 788. J. S. Kloppenborg likewise dismissed a word play between בֶּן (i.e. υἱός = son) and אבן (i.e. λίθος = stone) in Mark 12:10 and parallels on the grounds that “this wordplay is impossible in Aramaic, presumably Jesus’ language” *The Tenants in the Vineyard: Ideology, Economics, and Agrarian Conflict in Jewish Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 236. M. McNamara (*Targum and Testament Revisited: Aramaic Paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible* [2d ed; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010], 90–91) describes the general position of scholarship regarding the language environment in the first century and the New Testament: “It is agreed

possess Aramaisms but not the Hebraisms associated with the Third Gospel. Thus presumed, the prevalent independent Hebraisms in the Gospel of Luke have led to the characterization that the Evangelist was “an habitual, conscious, and deliberate Septuagintalizer.”⁸

In the fresh light of the results of a century of archaeological investigation, it simply can no longer be maintained that Aramaic is the only viable Semitic *Vorlage* for the words of Jesus. A trilingual environment, which included Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, existed in the land of Israel during the first century. This acknowledgment must be central to any explanation for the development of the Synoptic Tradition, and the inevitable consequences of this reassessment are swift and profound. Once the possibility for the existence of living Hebrew is conceded, then, if one identifies Hebraisms in Luke’s Greek, which also happen to appear in the Greek text of the Septuagint, one is not permitted simply to brush them aside as the product of the Evangelist’s literary creativity. Instead, to discount them, one must demonstrate that these are *not* independently sourced Hebraisms, but that the Evangelist has relied upon the Greek Bible precisely at these points in the writing of his Gospel. The fact that Hebraisms appear both in Luke and the Septuagint proves merely a similar rendering of a Hebrew idiom into Greek, not Luke’s conscious (or unconscious) use of the Septuagint.

As we noted, scholarship has struggled to reconcile its assumption regarding Luke’s sources and the Hebraisms in the Third Gospel. If Luke relied upon Mark and Q for the vast majority of his Gospel, how are we to explain the fact that his report at many places is more Hebraic than these two sources? It is true that some of the Semitisms of Mark (γεύεσθαι θανάτου: “to taste death,” Mark 9:1/Matt 16:28 = Luke 9:27)⁹ and Q (φοβείσθαι ἀπό: “to be afraid from,” Matt 10:28 = Luke 12:4)¹⁰ find their way into the Third Gospel, but these do not explain Luke’s Hebraisms that are not shared by his putative sources. Instead,

that the chief centre of Jesus’ ministry and of the Gospel proclamation was Galilee and that the language spoken in Galilee was principally Aramaic. It is also agreed that the chief language used by Jesus in his preaching and in teaching his disciples was Aramaic.” As is too often the case, McNamara brings no inscriptional evidence to support his linguistic assumption, which is challenged in studies by both Baltes and Turnage in the present volume.

8 Sparks, “The Semitisms of St. Luke’s Gospel,” 134.

9 Cf. H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (6 vols.; Munich: C. H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926) (hereafter: Billerbeck), 1:751–52; 4 *Ezra* 6:26.

10 Cf. LXX Deut 1:29; 20:1; Josh 10:6; *T. Sim.* 2:3; BDF 83 (§149).

Luke is often accused of rephrasing Mark with intentional biblicisms, and it is precisely at this point that the argument breaks down.

For example, Sparks describes Luke's use of Mark to rewrite "The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen" (Mark 12:1–12 = Luke 20:9–19) in which "St. Luke has re-phrased [Mark] twice—'and he added to send another servant'; and then 'he added to send a third.'"¹¹ It is correct that Luke's *καὶ προσέθετο πέμψαι* is more Hebraic than Mark's *καὶ πάλιν ἀπέστειλεν*. However, Luke's phrase is not Septuagintal.¹² If Luke is intentionally Septuagintalizing the narrative he received from Mark, his insertion of *ἕτερον* between the two verbs makes no sense.

It is schizophrenic to insert a blatant Hebraism but [then] to just as blatantly use a non-Hebrew, non-Septuagintal word order. This is part of the riddle that a source theory can handle much more naturally. It is relatively easy to edit a [non-canonical] preexisting Greek text, partially adapting items to Greek style but leaving much of the source's style intact.¹³

Additionally, the phrase "and added to send" does not even appear to be characteristically "Lukan." In the combined corpus of Luke–Acts, *προσθεῖναι* + infinitive occurs three times (Luke 20:11–12; Acts 12:3), but never in 2 Acts.¹⁴ So, precisely in the portion of the Lukan corpus that is most often acknowledged

11 Sparks, "The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel," 130; cf. A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1896), 460; BDF 225 (§435a).

12 In Gen 8:10 we witness *קָלַף הָרִיבֹּן*, but the LXX's rendering of this phrase actually resembles more the wording of Mark than Luke: *πάλιν ἐξἀπέστειλεν* (cf. Num 22:15; Judg 22:15). For *רִיבֹן* + infinitive compare Gen 4:12; 8:12; Exod 10:28; Deut 3:26; Isa 1:13; 24:20; Hos 9:15; Amos 5:2.

13 R. Buth and B. Kvasnica, "Temple Authorities and Tithe-Evasion: The Linguistic Background and Impact of the Parable of the Vineyard, the Tenants and the Son," in *Jesus' Last Week* (ed. R. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage and Brian Becker; Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 285.

14 Without prejudging the matter, for the purposes of this study we have adopted Torrey's terminology of 1 Acts (chs. 1–15) and 2 Acts (chs. 16–28) in recognition of the shift in the Evangelist's literary style within the composition. See C. C. Torrey, *The Composition and Date of Acts* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1916), 5; cf. M. Wilcox, *The Semitisms of Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), 6.

to reflect the Evangelist's own peculiar style (i.e. 2 Acts),¹⁵ the Hebraism προσθεῖναι + infinitive is absent.¹⁶

Luke's use and non-use of Hebraisms in his corpus can prove to be diagnostic for distinguishing between "Lukanisms" and "sourcisms." To wit, the Hebraisms that occur prominently in Luke's Gospel and 1 Acts, but are entirely or mostly absent from 2 Acts, are likely not the product of the Evangelist's own idiosyncratic style, but have been borrowed by him from a [non-canonical] source. Indeed, if we look more closely at Luke 20:11–12, we find that the author's own style is not Hebraic at all, as demonstrated by his insertion of ἕτερον, which is markedly Greek in style. "The non-Lucan style of 'added + infinitive' coupled with the non-Hebraic word order lead us to the conclusion that this is not an imitation of the LXX. The word order suggests Lucan editing and the Hebrew idiom suggests [a non-canonical] Hebraic source . . ."¹⁷

On a separate occasion, Sparks again charges Luke with the "rephrasing of St. Mark's 'and they were all amazed' to read 'and amazement came upon them all' " (Mark 1:27; Luke 4:36).¹⁸ However, he ignores that Luke does not use θάμβος outside of his Gospel and 1 Acts (Luke 5:9; Acts 3:10), evidence that it is possibly a sourcism rather than an invention of "Lukan rephrasing." Moreover, if Luke had intended to imitate the LXX, would he not also have joined the noun with the Greek biblical verb: for example, θάμβος + πίπτειν ἐπ'!¹⁹ On the other hand, the verb θάμβειν, in fact, may betray Mark's own pen (which Luke does not follow), since he employs it two additional times in his Gospel (Mark 10:24, 32). On those occasions Matthew is in agreement with Luke's non-use of the Markan θαμβεῖν (cf. Mark 10:24 = Matt 19:24/Luke 18:25; Mark 10:32 = Matt 20:17/Luke 18:31), strengthening our suggestion that it is Mark's editing we see in Mark 1:27, and not Luke's replacement of Mark's wording with θάμβος.

Returning to our earlier observation, insufficient attention is given to Luke's change in literary style in 2 Acts as a diagnostic measure whether or not Luke intentionally biblicalized his Greek, or was influenced by Hebraized sources. For example, two other supposed Septuagintisms are routinely cited by scholars to be present in Luke's compositions, but almost no attention is paid to

15 F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 28–29; Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, 13–20.

16 R. Buth, "Evaluating Luke's Unnatural Greek: A Look at His Connectives," in *Discourse Studies and Biblical Interpretation: A Festschrift in Honor of Stephen H. Levinsohn* (ed. S. E. Runge; Logos Bible Software, 2011), 335–70.

17 Buth and Kvasnica, "Temple Authorities and Tithe-Evasion," 285–86.

18 Sparks, "The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel," 130 n. 4; cf. Plummer, *Luke*, 135.

19 E.g. 1 Sam 26:12: ὅτι θάμβος κυρίου ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτούς; cf. Luke 1:12; Acts 19:17; Rev 11:11.

their absence from Acts 16–28. Fitzmyer, lists Luke's use of ἐν τῷ + infinitive + accusative pronoun as a Lukan Septuagintism, no doubt because it occurs 362 times in the Septuagint.²⁰ It reflects the Hebrew construction with the preposition אַ prefixed to an infinitive construct, often with the subject indicated by a pronominal suffix (e.g. Gen 11:2: םַטְּׁבָׁב, “when they traveled”).²¹ Yet, Fitzmyer fails to mention that while Luke uses the Greek construction 26 times in his Gospel and seven times in 1 Acts, he does not use it in 2 Acts.

An obvious explanation for this shift in style is that the Evangelist has been influenced by Hebraized sources in the composition of the Third Gospel and 1 Acts. His source for the phrase, ἐν τῷ + infinitive + accusative pronoun, cannot have been Mark, since the Hebraic idiom does not occur in the Second Gospel. Neither is Q of much assistance, since the construction only occurs twice in Matthew (Matt 13:4; 27:12). Finally, when writing in 2 Acts about events that the author himself witnessed, he does not incorporate this Hebraic style.²²

The same explanation of an Hebraic source for Luke and 1 Acts (and its contrasting absence in 2 Acts) can be made for another alleged Lukan Septuagintism: the use of the noun ῥῆμα to mean “thing” rather than “word or saying,” as it does routinely in Greek usage.²³ Luke's use of ῥῆμα for “thing” reflects influence from the Hebrew noun דְּבַר (e.g. Luke 1:37, 65; 2:15, 19, 51; Acts 5:32; 13:42).²⁴ Yet, there is silence among scholars concerning the fact that

20 J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 119–20; cf. N. Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*. Vol. 3, *Syntax* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), 47.

21 According to G. Dalman, *The Words of Jesus Considered in the Light of Post-Biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), 33, the preposition with the dative of the articular infinitive is Hebraic and its equivalent is not to be found in Aramaic (cf. BDF 208 [§404]). Yet, T. Muraoka's *A Grammar of Qumran Aramaic* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 105, notes “in a small number of cases and under certain syntactic conditions we find an infinitive without the prefixed proposition ל . . .” Muraoka cites examples from the Qumran Targum of Job (11Q10) of the temporal use of the infinitive, במעבדי ארעא (“when I made the earth,” [11Q10] XXX, 2 [MT במזהר]; [בִּיטְדִי] “when (they) shine” (ibid. 4 [MT במעבדה לרוחא]; [בְּרִן] (“when he made the wind,” 11Q10 XIII, 6 [MT לַעֲשׂוֹת לְרִיחַ]). Nevertheless, while the construction may be possible in Aramaic, the relative frequency of its occurrence both in the Septuagint and Luke's Gospel indicates a Hebrew Vorlage.

22 Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, 32.

23 Sparks, “The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel,” 133; Bruce, *Acts*, 144; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 352; cf. H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon with a Revised Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 1569.

24 M. Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 272.

the meaning of “thing” for *ῥῆμα* does not occur in 2 Acts. When the term does occur in these chapters (26:25; 28:25), it retains its characteristic Greek sense: “word or saying.” So, we see that careful attention to Luke’s use and non-use of vocabulary in 1 Acts and 2 Acts can assist to distinguish Luke’s own style from his use of Hebraized sources.

Such attention may also serve to answer another charge. Sparks raises the question whether Luke might have been influenced by a Semitic-Greek *patois* as a result of his contact with “Semitic speaking Christians in Palestine.”²⁵ He observes, “If we are to maintain that St. Luke’s Semitisms are due to the *patois*, we are bound to ask what evidence there is for distinctive Aramaic influence on his style.”²⁶ Once again his presumption of an exclusive Aramaic environment has colored his reading of the evidence. The question of possible Lukan Aramaisms momentarily aside, he has overlooked the strongest evidence against Luke’s influence from a Semitic-Greek *patois*. If Luke’s own literary style was shaped by a Jewish-Christian *patois* rather than written sources, we would expect to see consistent evidence of this throughout his corpus. Yet, the comparative lack of Hebraisms in 2 Acts suggests Luke’s style was determined not by a Jewish-Christian *patois* but by his use and non-use of external written sources.

In any event, Sparks is able to identify only two alleged Aramaisms in Luke’s Gospel: “the collocation of the verb ‘to be’ with the participle in place of the finite verb, as in *ἦσαν δὲ αὐτῶ ἐγγίζοντες* [Luke 15:1]; and the phrase ‘to begin to do something’, as in the constantly recurring ‘he began to say’ [*ἤρξατο δὲ λέγειν*; e.g. Luke 4:21; 7:24].”²⁷ Even these two cases of theorized Lukan Aramaisms cannot be used to prove Aramaic sources (or a Semitic *patois*). The influence of Aramaic upon Hebrew in the Greco-Roman period is well documented.²⁸ Rabin has argued that beginning in the Hasmonean period and continuing into the first century C.E. in Judea there existed a Hebrew *diglossia* that consisted of a more formal [high] Hebrew (which can be identified with Late Biblical Hebrew and witnessed in much of the non-biblical Dead Sea Scrolls) and

25 See N. Turner, “Jewish and Christian Influence on New Testament Vocabulary,” *Novum Testamentum* 16 (1974): 149–60.

26 Sparks, “The Semitisms of St. Luke’s Gospel,” 131.

27 Ibid. See Buth and Kvasnica’s discussion of the aspectual use of *ἄρξασθαι* + infinitive (“Temple Authorities and Tithe-Evasion,” 261–68). The increase of the phrase and aspect in general was likely an influence of Indoeuropean (Persian) and Greek on both Aramaic and Hebrew.

28 See C. Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century,” in *The Jewish People in the First Century Volume Two* (ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1976), 1022.

a less formal [low] Hebrew that shows signs of Aramaic influence. This low Hebrew was primarily in oral use in the first century and should be identified later with the Hebrew of the Mishnah and Tannaitic literature. Evidence of both dialects can be seen in the Hebraisms of the New Testament.²⁹ Aramaic influences are comparatively more prevalent in low Hebrew. While the periphrastic participle construction occurs in the Hebrew Bible,³⁰ it does so much more frequently in Post-biblical Hebrew.³¹ As one would expect, it is found in the high Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls³² but increases significantly in the low Hebrew found in the Mishnah.³³

Moreover, Greek translations of works that were originally composed in Hebrew witness the same construction (i.e. 1 Maccabees³⁴ and Ben Sira³⁵). So, the presence of the periphrastic participle in Luke does not indicate that the Evangelist used Aramaic sources. Neither is the pleonastic use of ἄρξασθαι + infinitive in Luke 13:25–26 necessarily Aramaic³⁶ or even Lukan as Sparks contends:

In Mark, ἄρξασθαι + infinitive is one of Mark's stylistic characteristics. However, comparison with 2nd Acts [i.e., where it only occurs three

29 D. N. Bivin, "Hebraisms in the New Testament," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, ed. Geoffrey Khan (4 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 198–201.

30 E.g. Gen 37:2; 1 Sam 2:11; 2 Kgs 12:6, etc.

31 M. H. Segal, "Mishnaic Hebrew and its Relation to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic," *JQR* 20, no. 4 (1908): 698, states: "Like Aramaic, Mishnaic Hebrew regularly combines the participle with היה whenever it desires to express the iteration of an act in the past or in the future, or its continuity through a longer or shorter period, the combination thus taking the place of the frequentative and iterative uses of the old perfect consecutive and of the simple tenses. The construction in Mishnaic Hebrew is, however, of native origin and not borrowed from the Aramaic." For the purposes of the present study, we may leave aside Segal's contention whether or not the paraphrastic participle in Mishnaic Hebrew was "of native origin." What is important is that it was already an integral part of Mishnaic Hebrew by the first century C.E.

32 83 times; e.g. 4Q221 f5.6: היה מתאבל על אשתו.

33 800 times; e.g. היה קורא בתורה (m. Ber. 2.1); היה עומד בתפילה (m. Ber. 3.5); היה יושב (m. Ber. 4.6); היה יושבים כל אחד ואחד (m. Ber. 6.6).

34 1 Macc 3:12; 5:27; 6:18, 43; 8:4; 9:5; 14:8; 15:2; 16:11, 14; cf. U. Rappaport, *The First Book of Maccabees: Introduction, Hebrew Translation and Commentary* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2004 [Hebrew]), 9.

35 Sir 5:10; 7:25; 11:11, 18; 19:16, 25–26; 20:1, 5–6, 12, 21–22; 37:7, 20; 42:8; 43:8; cf. M. H. Segal, *Sefer Ben Sira ha-Shalem* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1958 [Hebrew]), 18–19.

36 The construction החל + infinitive occurs 19 times in the Qumran library: e.g. 4Q27f ii.1; 4Q514 fii.7; 11Q19 21.10, etc.

times: 18:26; 24:2; 27:35] . . . shows that ἄρξασθαι + infinitive is not typical as Luke's own style. In the gospel ἄρξασθαι is one of the characteristics of Luke's sources. Furthermore, quite unpredictably for a theory that Mark was Luke's source, only 3 of Luke's 27 examples are shared with Mark.³⁷

Nevertheless, while Sparks is correct that few of Luke's Semitisms are derivable from Aramaic,³⁸ this does not mean that the only alternative explanation for his Semitisms is "Biblical Hebrew." For example, Sparks argues for his identification of Lukan biblicisms from the opening verse of "The Healing of the Leper": Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐν μιᾷ τῶν πόλεων καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ πλήρης λέπρας (Luke 5:12). He points to three elements in this phrase that betray Luke's Septuagintalizing style: the opening with καὶ ἐγένετο; the use of ἐν + articular infinitive + accusative subject; and the verbless clause καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ πλήρης λέπρας.³⁹

Scholarship has discussed the significance of the phrase καὶ ἐγένετο (ἐγένετο δέ) "and it [indefinite subject] happened . . ." in the Synoptic Gospels (especially in the Lukan corpus).⁴⁰ Three distinctive constructions are recognized: (a) καὶ ἐγένετο (ἐγένετο δέ) + finite verb; (b) καὶ ἐγένετο (ἐγένετο δέ) + καὶ + finite verb; (c) ἐγένετο δέ (καὶ ἐγένετο) + infinitive main verb (i.e., a subject complement to ἐγένετο). Thackeray demonstrated that (a) and (b) are widely represented in the Septuagint.⁴¹ Howard deems these Hebraisms and contrasts their use in 1 Maccabees (which was likely written originally in Hebrew⁴²) with their absence from the free Greek of 2–4 Maccabees.⁴³ These Greek works lack the Hebraic constructions, and instead prefer συνέβη + infinitive main verb (2 Macc 4:30; 5:18; 9:7; 12:34; 13:7; 3 Macc 1:3, 8).

Fitzmyer argues that (a) καὶ ἐγένετο (ἐγένετο δέ) + finite verb should be "recognized as a Septuagintism" created by Luke.⁴⁴ Doubtless, this is because of its

37 Buth and Kvasnica, "Temple Authorities and Tithe-Evasion," 261.

38 Sparks, "The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel," 132.

39 BDF, 71 (§128): "Following the Semitic pattern a present or imperfect (also aorist or future) of εἶναι (παρεῖναι, [παρα-]γίνεσθαι) can be omitted following ἰδοὺ = Hebr. הִנֵּה, Aram. הִנֵּי."

40 Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, 30; J. H. Moulton and W. F. Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*. Vol. 2, *Accidence and Word-Formation with an Appendix on Semitisms in the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928), 425–28; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 118–19; Plummer, *Luke*, 40.

41 H. St. J. Thackeray, *A Grammar of Old Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 50–52.

42 Rappaport, *Maccabees*, 9.

43 Moulton and Howard, *Grammar*, 426.

44 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 119.

frequent occurrence in the Septuagint together with its 22 occasions in Luke's Gospel.⁴⁵ In addition, Luke cannot have borrowed it from Mark. "Though it is found twice in Mark (1:9; 4:4), this is scarcely the source of Luke's use of it, since in those instances, he changes what he borrows from the Markan source (Luke 3:21) or omits it (Luke 8:8)."⁴⁶ Since Fitzmyer and New Testament scholarship have assumed *a priori* that Luke's only sources in parallel material are Mark and Q, they are left with little alternative but to describe these Hebraisms as the product of the Evangelist's own hand.

However, the clearest indication that this Hebraism is not Luke's own bibli-cizing style is Fitzmyer's admission that Luke "never seems to use this form in Acts."⁴⁷ By contrast, Luke's characteristic style is on exhibit in 2 Acts with the Greek construction συνέβη + infinitive that we witnessed above in 2–4 *Macca-bees*: συνέβη βασιτάζεσθαι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν στρατιωτῶν διὰ τὴν βίαν τοῦ ὄχλου (Acts 21:35). Once again close attention to the use and non-use of Hebraisms in Luke and Acts can serve as a diagnostic measure that these Hebraisms in the Third Gospel are derived from non-canonical sources that were marked by stark Hebraisms.

The form of καὶ ἐγένετο found in Luke 5:12 is (b) καὶ ἐγένετο (ἐγένετο δέ) [with an intervening time/circumstantial phrase] + καὶ + finite verb. It occurs 12 times in Luke's Gospel.⁴⁸ Fitzmyer is mistaken in his claim that it occurs twice in Acts (5:7; 9:19).⁴⁹ Hawkins and Howard both rightly bracketed Acts 5:7 with a question mark, because διάστημα is the explicit subject of the verb ἐγένετο ("There was an interval...").⁵⁰ This then is not an example of the Hebraic indefinite subject, "It happened that..." Likewise, the phrase in Acts 9:19 follows the description concerning Paul in Acts 9:8, "Then he rose and was baptized, and took food and was strengthened." So, the following sentence is not indefinite at all but presents a clear subject (i.e. Paul): Εγένετο δὲ μετὰ τῶν ἐν Δαμασκῷ μαθητῶν ἡμέρας τινὰ (i.e. "He was with the disciples for several days in Damascus").

So, Fitzmyer has erred, and the Hebraic construction does not in fact appear in Acts. Yet, since it is lacking also in Mark, he continues, "Luke's use of it is

45 Luke 1:8, 23, 41, 59; 2:1, 6, 15, 46; 7:11; 9:18, 29, 33, 37; 11:1, 14, 27; 17:14; 18:35; 19:29; 20:1; 24:30, 51.

46 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 119.

47 Ibid.

48 Luke 5:1, 12, 17; 8:1, 22; 9:28, 51; 14:1; 17:11; 19:15; 24:4, 15.

49 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 119.

50 Hawkins, 30; Moulton and Howard, *Grammar*, 426.

again to be understood as a Septuagintism.”⁵¹ He offers no explanation for Luke’s sudden shift in style and the absence of the construction καὶ ἐγένετο (ἐγένετο δέ) + καί + finite verb in Acts. As we have argued above with construction (a), the absence of this phraseology in Acts should be understood to attest to Luke’s use of Hebraic sources for his Gospel, especially in the light of Luke’s willingness to use structure (c) in both Luke and Acts.⁵²

Fitzmyer’s assertion that both of these (“a” and “b”) are the product of the Evangelist is based merely upon the observation that they happen also to occur in the Septuagint. We have witnessed, however, time and again that scholarship overlooks entirely the significance of Luke’s use of Hebraisms in his Gospel (and sometimes also in 1 Acts) and their non-use in 2 Acts. In this instance, we have demonstrated that neither of these constructions occurs at all in Acts, which indicates that they are derived from Luke’s sources for his Gospel and are not his own creation.

We have already discussed Luke’s use and non-use of ἐν + articular infinitive + accusative subject, demonstrating that it is also not indicative of Lukan style but signals a non-canonical source. So, it should come as no surprise that his use of καὶ ἐγένετο + καί + finite verb with an intervening temporal phrase ἐν + articular infinitive + accusative subject, likewise only appears in the Third Gospel.⁵³ Since the construction occurs just 14 times in the Septuagint (and never more than three times in any work),⁵⁴ it is hardly demonstrative of Septuagintal style or the explanation for its 12 occasions in Luke’s Gospel. If the Evangelist’s pen is truly responsible for the artificial creation of these Hebraisms in an attempt to imitate the Septuagint, then scholarship needs to explain why Luke chose to omit the constructions from Acts entirely, especially those chapters (i.e. chs. 16–28) where his own hand is most profoundly felt. Instead,

51 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 119.

52 Cf. Buth and Kvasnica, “Temple Authorities and Tithe-Evasion,” 268–73. Buth and Kvasnica (p. 271) state: “If Luke were the one producing all of the structures (a + b + c) in his Gospel then he was probably unconscious of material distinction between them. However, this flexibility of (a + b + c) is turned off like a faucet when Luke crosses into Acts. Structure (c) continues, seemingly taking over (a + b) so that structures (a + b) disappear. There is even an excellent place to observe this incongruity. At Acts 22.2 Luke makes a point of stating that the Hebrew language had an effect on the crowd. However, in the two places in the speech where Luke uses an ἐγένετο structure (22.6, 17), we find structure (c) ‘ἐγένετο + infinitive main verb!’”

53 Luke 5:12; 9:18, 29, 33; 11:1; 14:1; 17:14; 19:15; 24:4, 15, 30, 51.

54 Gen 4:8; 11:2; Josh 14:18; Judg 1:14; 14:11; 2 Sam 1:2; 4:4; 2 Kgs 2:9; 4:40; Neh 1:4; Ezek 9:8; 10:16; 11:13; Dan 8:15.

these are evidence of Luke's use of non-canonical Hebraized sources in the composition of his Gospel.

As for the verbless clause, it is true that Luke preserves this Hebraic ellipsis,⁵⁵ but his key terminology is markedly non-Septuagintal. Of the 12 times that we witness עֲרֵבָה or עֲרֵבָהּ in the Hebrew Scriptures to designate a leprous individual, it is always rendered in the LXX with $\acute{\omicron}$ λεπρός. So, Luke can hardly be accused of Septuagintalizing his account when he abandons the Septuagint's consistent term to describe one afflicted with the disease and instead describes the man: $\acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\rho$ πλήρης λέπρας.⁵⁶ In fact, it is Mark and Matthew who employ the Septuagintal word (λεπρός) to identify the afflicted man.

Finally, while it is not the focal point of our study, a brief comment is needed concerning the frequent claim by Sparks and others that Luke's quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures are only taken from the LXX. There seems little question that Luke was familiar with the Greek Bible, but it is less certain that his citations are always drawn from it. In another study, I have collaborated with Jeffrey P. García on the subject of Luke's use of the Hebrew Scriptures.⁵⁷ We have demonstrated that Luke portrays Jesus using the Bible in Hebrew. Jesus' hermeneutical method in his interpretation of Scripture at times can only be explained by his use of the Scriptures in Hebrew, and not in Aramaic or Greek.⁵⁸ A single brief illustration must suffice. Luke 4:18 presents Jesus combining Isa 61:1–2 and 58:6 in his reading in the synagogue of Nazareth. This otherwise arbitrary combination of two disparate passages signals Jesus' use of *gezerah shavah*, a hermeneutical technique associated with Hillel

55 See also Matt 3:17: $\kappa\alpha\iota$ ἰδοὺ φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν λέγουσα . . . (cf. Acts 10:15); Luke 5:18; 22:38; Acts 8:36; 13:11.

56 For the use of πλήρης , compare Acts 6:5: $\acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\rho\alpha$ πλήρης πίστεως (“a man full of faith”); cf. *m. Shabb.* 16.3: $\text{סֵל מְלֶאֱ בַכָּרוֹת}$ (“a basket full of loaves of bread”); *m. Ma'as. Sh.* 4.11: $\text{תְּבִיט מְלֵיאָה פִּירוֹת}$ (“a box full of fruit”); *m. Tehar.* 8.2: $\text{תִּבְיָה מְלֵיאָה בְּגָדִים}$ (“a box full of clothes”); *m. Maksh.* 1.4: $\text{סֵק מְלֶאֱ פִירוֹת}$ (“basket full of fruit”).

57 R. S. Notley and J. P. García, “The Hebrew Scriptures in the Third Gospel,” in *Searching the Scriptures: Studies in Context and Intertextuality* (ed. C. A. Evans and J. J. Johnston; Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 19; LNTS; London and New York: T&T Clark International, [forthcoming]); cf. R. S. Notley, “Jesus' Hermeneutical Method in the Nazareth Synagogue,” in *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality. Volume 2: Exegetical Studies* (ed. C. A. Evans and H. D. Zacharias; Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 15; LNTS; London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2009), 46–59.

58 This linguistic picture corresponds to historical reality. We have no report of a first-century Jewish sage in Judaea who exegetes the Bible in any other version than Hebrew.

the Elder.⁵⁹ What allows Jesus to join the verses is the collocation of the verbal link $\text{לִיהֵיךָ לְיִצְחָק}$, which in the entirety of the Hebrew Scriptures only occurs in these two passages of Scripture. Recognition of Jesus' interpretative method is germane to the charge of Luke's habitual use of the Septuagint, because the vital, verbal linchpin disappears in both the Greek and Aramaic translations.⁶⁰ In other words, according to the Lukan report Jesus could only have created this ingenious scriptural complex in Hebrew, thus challenging the claim that Luke's narrative is dependent upon the Greek Bible.

Concluding his study, Sparks throws down the gauntlet, writing that if one is able to identify non-Septuagintal Semitisms in the text of Luke, then "there is evidence for a historically reliable source or sources independent of the Evangelist."⁶¹ Writing under the *a priori* assumptions of his day, Sparks assumed that Post-biblical Hebrew was not an option, and so by non-Septuagintal Semitisms he meant Aramaisms. Nevertheless, we accept his challenge and present here ten examples of non-Septuagintal Hebraisms, which point towards a non-canonical Hebraized source for Luke's Gospel.

1 Luke 4:17: $\beta\iota\beta\lambda\iota\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \text{Ἰσαιοῦ}$

Luke's terminology reflects Post-biblical Hebrew idioms that he has not adopted from the Septuagint, the other Gospels or any other known Jewish Greek literature of the period. The problem is that scholarship is often looking for the obscure, enigmatic idiom when the examples are right in front of the reader. Their sense is so obvious and the reading so familiar that we simply overlook their Hebraic character. For example, Luke refers to the work of Isaiah as $\beta\iota\beta\lambda\iota\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \text{Ἰσαιοῦ}$ (Luke 4:17). Yet, nowhere else in the corpus of Jewish Greek literature (i.e., Septuagint, Greek Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Philo, etc.) in late antiquity is this prophetic work designated a $\beta\iota\beta\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$ (or $\beta\iota\beta\lambda\omicron\varsigma$). It is likewise not designated by the Hebrew equivalent (סֵפֶר) in the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet, the work of Isaiah is called exactly that in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Indeed, at Qumran the Lukan phrase—the book of the prophet Isaiah—appears in its precise Hebrew equivalent on four occasions (4Q174 fi.2i.15; 4Q176 fi.2i.4; 4Q265 fi.3; 4Q285 f7.1).

59 *t. Sanh.* 7.11; *Abot R. Nat.* A 37; H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. and ed. M. Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 17.

60 Isa 58:5 61:1
LXX δεκτῆν ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν
Ps. Yon אָנָּה רַבָּה אָנָּה רַבָּה

61 Sparks, "The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel," 135.

2 Luke 6:22: καὶ ἐχβάλλωσιν τὸ ὄνομα ὑμῶν ὡς πονηρόν

Jesus warned his followers that they would be reviled. Luke's idiom for the anticipated slander ("and cast out your name as evil") is decidedly more Hebraic than its parallel in Matt 5:11: καὶ εἰπωσιν πᾶν πονηρόν καθ' ὑμῶν ("and say all kinds of evil against you"). Luke's wording represents the Hebrew idiom heard in Deut 22:14: רַע יְהוּצִיא עָלֶיהָ שֵׁם רָע ("and bring an evil name upon [i.e. defame] her"). However, the form of the dominical saying is not Septuagintal, since ἐχβάλλειν more closely follows the sense of the Hebrew הוּצִיא than the Greek translator's use of καταφέρειν in his rendering of the biblical verse: καὶ κατενέγκη αὐτῆς ὄνομα πονηρόν.

Scholarship's failure to recognize Luke's Hebrew idiom has even led to a misunderstanding of its individual components and to its overlooking the expression's simple meaning: "to slander."⁶² For example, Fitzmyer has suggested that "the name" refers to the "Christian name" that the followers of Jesus now bear,⁶³ and he wonders whether Luke knew the Birkat ha-Minim, the Jewish malediction upon heretics.⁶⁴ However, there is nothing inherently Christian signaled by the phrase τὸ ὄνομα ὑμῶν. In fact, the Hebrew idiom is found in post-biblical texts with no reference to either Christianity or the Early Church.

11Q19 65.15:

כי הוציא שם רע על בתולת ישראל.⁶⁵

For he slandered [lit., brought an evil name upon] a virgin of Israel.

m. Sanh. 1.1:

וְחֻכְמָ אִישׁ שֵׁם רָע בְּעֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה שָׁנִים בּוֹ דִינֵי נַפְשׁוֹת.⁶⁶

But the Sages say: He that slandered [lit. brought an evil name] (must be judged) by three and twenty, for there may arise there from a capital case.

62 E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke* (Greenwood, S.C.: Attic, 1974), 113.

63 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 635: "This does not refer to the personal names of the disciples, but undoubtedly to the name of 'Christian,' which Luke otherwise knows (Acts 11:26; 26:28). Cf. 1 Pet 4:16."

64 Ibid.; Leaney, *Luke*, 136; cf. C. K. Barrett, *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents* (London: SPCK, 1957), 167.

65 Cf. 11Q19 65.8; 4Q159 f2 4.8: כי יוצו איש שם רע על בתולת ישראל.

66 Cf. *m. Shev.* 10.2; *m. Sot.* 3.5; *m. Bek.* 8.7; *m. Arak.* 3.1.

Thus, there is no reason to read into “the name” anything other than an individual’s reputation with no specified Christian connotation.⁶⁷ As for the Birkat ha-Minim, Flusser has convincingly demonstrated that the earliest form of this saying was not directed at Christians at all.⁶⁸ Its use as a malediction against Christians is a later development in Judaism with no relevance for our first-century saying.

3 Luke 8:44: τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ

All three Synoptic Gospels preserve the account of “Jairus’ Daughter and the Woman with a Hemorrhage” (Matt 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56). Central to the account of Jesus’ encounter with the woman is the description: προσελθοῦσα ὀπισθεν ἤψατο τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ (Matt 9:20; Luke 8:44). The agreement in detail between these two reports stands as a minor agreement against Mark, who omits mention of τὸ κράσπεδον.⁶⁹

The description that Jesus wore “tassels” or “fringes” is remarkable but certainly not unique.⁷⁰ Already in the *Letter of Aristeas* (c. 130 B.C.E.), we hear “in our clothes he has given us a distinguishing mark as a reminder” (*Aris. Ex.* 158). There are also legal discussions between the School of Hillel and the School of Shammai found in the minor tractate *Zizith*⁷¹ about the wearing of fringes (cf. *m. Eduy.* 4.10; *m. Moed Q.* 3.4; *m. Menah.* 3.7;⁷² *m. Kel.* 16.4). The custom stems from the injunction in Num 15:37–41:

67 F. Bovon, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50* (trans. C. M. Thomas; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 227. For the Christian expression, see 1 Tim 6:1: ἵνα μὴ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ διδασκαλία βλασφημῆται.

68 D. Flusser, “4QMMT and the Benediction Against the Minim,” in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: Qumran and Apocalypticism* (trans. A. Yadin; Jerusalem: Magnes and Jerusalem Perspective; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 70–118.

69 Neither Marshall (*Luke*, 344–45) nor Bovon (*Luke 1:1–9:50*, 333–34) see significance in the minor agreements, yet provide no suggestion how the Evangelists were able to preserve independently identical variants to Mark’s report.

70 See J. Schneider, “κράσπεδον,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [hereafter *TDNT*] (ed. G. Kittel; 9 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 3:904. Note the fascinating similarity with the episode in *b. Taan.* 23b concerning the first-century sage, Hanan ha-Nehba, son-in-law of Honi the Circle-Drawer.

71 Cf. *Minor Tractates* (London: Soncino, 1984), 63a.

72 In *m. Men.* 3.7 we do witness the plural form: וְזוֹ אֶתְּ זוֹ אֶתְּ וְזוֹ אֶתְּ וְזוֹ אֶתְּ (‘‘the four fringes invalidate one another’’). Note that even in an unvocalized Hebrew text, as also in spoken Hebrew, the singular is distinguishable from the plural.

The Lord said to Moses, “Speak to the people of Israel, and bid them to make tassels (תציצ) on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put upon the tassel (תציצ) of each corner a cord of blue; and it shall be to you a tassel (תציצ) to look upon and remember all the commandments of the Lord . . .”

What is important for our study is the Septuagint’s rendering of the distinctive clothing in Num 15:38: καὶ ποιησάτωσαν ἑαυτοῖς κράσπεδα ἐπὶ τὰ πτερύγια τῶν ἱματίων αὐτῶν (“and let them make for themselves tassels [pl.] on the corners of their garments”). The Greek translators routinely render the singular Hebrew noun in the plural.⁷³ This may have influenced Matthew’s account of Jesus’ critique of the Pharisees: “They do all their deeds to be seen by men; for they make their phylacteries broad and their tassels (τὰ κράσπεδα) long” (Matt 23:5).⁷⁴ In any event, not only does the description of Jesus’ clothing in our pericope serve as an important witness for his identification with the contemporary piety of the Jewish people, Luke’s preservation of the key term τὸ κράσπεδον in the singular to represent תציצ in the story is non-Septuagintal.

4 Luke 9:44: θέσθε ὑμεῖς εἰς τὰ ὦτα ὑμῶν τοὺς λόγους τούτους

Scholars routinely dismiss the originality of the Hebraisms in Luke, deeming them Septuagintisms, even though in fact the expressions do not appear in the Septuagint. So we find with a Hebraism that occurs in one of the three passion predictions of Jesus.⁷⁵ Jeremias considered the second prediction to be the most primitive form of the saying.⁷⁶ According to the Lukan tradition of the second prediction (Luke 9:43–45), the premonition lacks the details of Jesus’ betrayal or any mention of his resurrection. It is simple and without any indication of Christian editing. In addition, the words that describe Christ’s passion are prefaced with an exhortation not found in the parallels of Matthew (17:22) or Mark (9:31): θέσθε ὑμεῖς εἰς τὰ ὦτα ὑμῶν τοὺς λόγους τούτους (Luke 9:44a).

73 Targum Onkelos to Num 15:37–41 twice renders תציצ with the plural תציצות (from the Greek loan word κράσπεδα) and once with the singular תציצ.

74 See Billerbeck, 4.1.277–92; cf. W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991), 3:273.

75 Matt 16:21 = Mark 8:31 = Luke 9:22; Matt 17:22 = Mark 9:31 = Luke 9:44; Matt 20:18–19 = Mark 10:33–34 = Luke 18:31–33.

76 J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology I* (London: SCM, 1987), 281.

It is assumed that Luke's Hebraic wording is an attempt to imitate a biblical idiom,⁷⁷ although the phrase is not found in the Greek Bible. Marshall acknowledged, "It is not clear whether Luke is following a source which reflected a Hebrew phrase or whether he has produced a Septuagintal-sounding phrase."⁷⁸ The difficulty in assigning to Luke the responsibility for the "Septuagintal-sounding phrase" lies in the fact that his Greek saying is even more Hebraic than the Septuagint's translation of the verse upon which he allegedly relies, that is, Exod 17:14: $\text{וְשָׂם בְּאָזְנוֹיָהוּ} \text{וְהוֹשַׁע}$ ("and put in the ears of Joshua").⁷⁹

Luke's use of τιθέναι ("put") to represent פָּשַׁט ("put") is closer to the Hebrew verb than the Septuagint's διδόναι ("give"). If Luke's purpose was to produce a Septuagintalized Greek idiom "consciously [to write] in what he would call a 'Biblical' style,"⁸⁰ then scholarship needs to explain why Luke abandoned the Septuagint to preserve a phrase more Hebraic than the Greek Bible. Would his readers have appreciated his use of an "approximate Septuagintism"?⁸¹ The more obvious explanation, which Marshall admits, is that this is not a Lukan Septuagintism at all. Instead, the Evangelist has drawn his words from a source which retained a high degree of Hebraic idiom.

Although it is not our primary concern for this study, the correlation between language and content should not be lost on the reader. Sparks' assertion that non-biblical Semitisms are "evidence for an historically reliable source or

77 Plummer, *Luke*, 256; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 813; A. R. C. Leaney, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke* (London: A. & C. Black, 1958), 170.

78 Marshall, *Luke*, 393.

79 LXX Exod 17:14: $\text{καὶ δὸς εἰς τὰ ὦτα Ἰησοῦ}$. See Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 813.

80 Sparks, "The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel," 132.

81 C. W. Jung, *The Original Language of the Lukan Infancy Narrative* (JSNTSup 267; London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), prefers to call them, "unsuccessful or failed Septuagintalisms." He assumes that Luke is relying on the LXX but fails to reproduce the Septuagintal idiom. Nevertheless, he concludes, "The so-called 'unsuccessful Septuagintalisms' or 'Septuagintal-type expressions,' which seem to be cast in the mould of LXX style, can be included in Septuagintalisms" (p. 57). The failure here is not the Evangelist's but Jung's and scholars who pursue a similar line of reasoning. What they fail to recognize is that in most instances Luke's "unsuccessful Septuagintalisms" are not unsuccessful at all. They can only be deemed such, if it is assumed *a priori* that Luke is attempting to imitate the Septuagint. In reality, it is the Septuagintal translator who has failed—in the sense that all translations are an approximation—and given us an "approximate Hebraism." By comparison, Luke's Hebraism is not a random attempt by the Evangelist to mimic the LXX; instead, he has drawn from a Hebraized source that has preserved the Greek equivalent of a living Hebrew idiom that is more literal than that found in the LXX. Therein lies the difference between the idiom of the Gospel and the LXX, but in no way should it be deemed "an unsuccessful or failed Septuagintalism."

sources”⁸² corresponds to Jeremias’ observation that the most primitive form of the passion prediction is the second saying, where we have also identified Luke’s non-biblical Hebraism.

5 Luke 11:20: ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ

In Luke’s Gospel the construction ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ (“by the finger of God”) betrays Semitic influence. Greek style prefers the articular noun ὁ δάκτυλος with the genitive τοῦ θεοῦ.⁸³ In Exod 31:18 and Deut 9:10 the Hebrew expression **בְּיָדֶיךָ יְצַבְּרֶנּוּ** occurs in connection with the inscription upon the stone tablets. As in Luke 11:20, there “finger” appears instrumentally, “by the finger of God.” On account of its Hebrew construct state, the noun **יָד** has no article. Yet, in the Septuagint’s Greek rendering of these words with ὁ δάκτυλος in the dative case, the noun is not anarthrous but occurs in good Greek style with the article: τῷ δακτύλῳ τοῦ θεοῦ.⁸⁴

The Evangelist does not follow the Septuagintal construction. If the Semitism in Luke 11:20 were a result of Luke’s imitation of the Septuagint’s style, as many scholars assert,⁸⁵ then we need to explain Luke’s phraseology without the article. In fact, he follows more closely the Hebrew construction than the Septuagint. An unprejudiced assessment concludes that Luke’s δακτύλῳ τοῦ θεοῦ is not a Septuagintism at all, but in Blass and Debrunner’s words, “a translation-Semitism” derived from a non-Septuagintal Hebraic source.

82 Sparks, “The Semitisms of St. Luke’s Gospel,” 135.

83 BDF 135 (§259): “In Hebrew the *nomen regens* would appear in the construct or with a suffix and hence would be anarthrous [without an article]. In the NT this Semitic construction makes its influence felt especially where a Semitic original lies behind the Greek (hence ‘translation-Semitisms’), but occasionally also elsewhere in Semitizing formulae (‘Septuagintisms’).”

84 By contrast, the LXX in Exod 8:15, recounting the acknowledgment of Pharaoh’s magicians, does preserve the noun without the article: Δάκτυλος θεοῦ ἐστὶν τοῦτο. However, this example is more remote from Luke than the other two examples previously cited, because here the noun appears in the nominative case.

85 C. F. Evans, “The Central Section of St. Luke’s Gospel,” in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (ed. D. E. Nineham; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), 44; cf. D. L. Tiede, *Luke* (Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 217; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 922; Plummer, *Luke*, 302.

6 Luke 14:16: ἄνθρωπός τις ἐποίει δεῖπνον μέγα

Luke's syntax frequently attests not only to a Hebraic source but also to his literary independence from Matthew and Mark. According to the Lukan Parable of "The Great Supper" (Luke 14:15–24 = Matt 22:1–14), Jesus opens his narrative parable, "a certain man⁸⁶ gave a *great meal*" (δεῖπνον μέγα). Of particular interest is the syntactical order of μέγας and the noun it modifies. Whereas Greek allows the adjective μέγας to precede or follow its noun, in Hebrew the equivalent adjective לִיָּדָא is always posterior. As a singular occurrence, the syntactical order in Luke 14:16 carries only incidental weight, but as part of a consistent stylistic pattern it may serve as corroboration for Luke's use of a non-canonical source that retained Semitic characteristics.

All three Evangelists place μέγας in a posterior position, a syntactical order that is permitted in Greek and Hebrew.⁸⁷ Yet, it is telling that of the three Gospels, Luke is the only Evangelist who does not place μέγας in the distinctly Greek order, that is, with μέγας before the noun it modifies.⁸⁸

Luke's use of this Hebraic syntactical order is not necessarily Septuagintal. As Turner notes,⁸⁹ this distinctive Semitic syntax is not always maintained in the Septuagint, for example, in Exod 23:31; Josh 9:2; and 2 Kgs 5:13. Neither is the syntax the product of Luke's own predilections, because in 2 Acts, where scholarship suggests his style is most characteristic,⁹⁰ the Evangelist preserves good Greek word order with μέγας preceding its noun (Acts 16:28; 19:27; 19:35). Indeed, his own stylistic preferences may have influenced Luke's use of the Greek order in Acts 14:10: εἶπεν μεγάλῃ φωνῇ. Once again, we see that careful attention to shifts in Luke's language use in 2 Acts helps us to distinguish between Luke's own hand and the influence of (non-canonical) Semitic sources upon his composition.

86 In the New Testament the phrase ἄνθρωπός τις is a uniquely Lukan term. It may represent the Hebrew אִישׁ אֶחָד (cf. Luke 10:30; 12:14, 16; 14:2, 16; 15:11; 16:1; 19:12; 20:9; Acts 9:33; *m. Qid.* 4.12; *m. B. Qam.* 3.11; *m. Menah.* 5.6, etc.). In any event, it can hardly be considered "Septuagintal," because it only occurs once in Job 1:1 to render the Hebrew אִישׁ אֶחָד.

87 Matthew 13 times: 2:10; 4:16; 8:24, 26; 22:36; 24:21, 24, 31; 27:46, 50, 60; 28:2, 8; Mark 10 times: 1:26; 4:32, 37, 39, 41; 5:7, 42; 14:15; 15:34, 37; Luke 20 times: 1:42; 2:9, 10; 4:25, 33, 38; 5:29; 7:16; 8:28, 37; 14:16; 16:26; 17:15; 19:37; 21:11, 23; 22:12; 23:23, 46, 52.

88 In contrast to Matt 5:35; Mark 13:2.

89 Turner, *Grammar*, 349.

90 Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 80–89.

7 Luke 15:18, 21: ἡμαρτον εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν

The remorse of the prodigal son is expressed in a post-biblical Hebraism: “I have sinned against Heaven and before you” (i.e. his father).⁹¹ Substitutes for mention of the Divine Name in Judaism are well known.⁹² However, not until the Hellenistic period do we encounter the use of “heaven” as a circumlocution for God.⁹³

1 Macc 4:55:

καὶ ἔπεσεν πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἐπὶ πρόσωπον καὶ προσεκύνησαν καὶ εὐλόγησαν εἰς οὐρανὸν τὸν εὐδῶσαντα αὐτοῖς.

All the people fell on their faces and worshiped and blessed Heaven, who had prospered them.

Pennington has recently questioned the extent of the use of “heaven” as a reverential circumlocution in Jewish literature of the Second Temple period.⁹⁴

91 Failure to recognize Luke’s Hebraism has led to some dubious comments by scholars on the son’s statement. Leaney (*Luke*, 218) states: “The Greek may better be ‘up to heaven’ as though his sins were piled up that high.” However, Marshall (*Luke*, 609) rightly notes that the parallelism of “heaven” and “you” requires the former to mean God and not highest heaven (cf. Ezra 9:6).

92 E. E. Urbach, *The Sages: The Concepts and Beliefs* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1987), 124–34; H. Traub, “οὐρανός,” in *TDNT*, 5:521–22.

93 Cf. Dan 4:26 (שָׁמַיִם); 1 Macc 3:18, 50; 4:10, 24; 5:31; 9:46; 12:15; 16:3; 2 Macc, 7:11, etc.

94 J. T. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (ed. M. M. Mitchell and D. P. Moessner; NovTSup 126; Leiden: Brill, 2007); idem, “Circumventing Circumlocution: Did Jesus Really Use ‘Heaven’ as a Periphrasis for God?,” unpublished paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Atlanta, November 2003. In particular, he challenged the notion advanced by Dalman (*The Words of Jesus*, 233) and other New Testament scholars that Matthew’s use of ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν rather than ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ represented a reverential circumlocution for God. In the New Testament Matthew alone preserves the expression ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν (64 times), while the alternate expression ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ appears in each of the Synoptic Gospels (Matt 10 times; Mark 28 times; Luke 64 times). Pennington argues that Matthew’s use of “heaven” should be understood more broadly as metonymy to distinguish God’s realm (heaven) and humanity’s (earth). Likewise, he reads in Dan 4:23 [Eng. 4:26] (שָׁמַיִם יְצַוֵּשׁ) metonymy that is nuanced by the metaphoric language of the verse.

Nevertheless he was forced to acknowledge that 1 Maccabees is likely an exception: “[If] 1 Maccabees does provide evidence for heaven as a reverential circumlocution, then it is the noticeable exception, not the evidence for a widespread trend.”⁹⁵ His acknowledgment concerning 1 Maccabees takes on added significance when combined with a similar concession regarding our verse: “There is one usage of heaven in the Gospels that could be understood in this way (i.e., as reverential circumlocution): Luke 15:18, 21.”⁹⁶

The highlighting of the rarity of the usage of “heaven” as a reverential circumlocution for God in literature from the Second Temple period makes the New Testament wording even more remarkable.⁹⁷ It militates against scholarship’s characterization that Luke’s wording is Septuagintal. Of the 6,828 occurrences of יהוה in the Hebrew Bible, on no occasion does the Septuagint render the Divine Name οὐρανός.⁹⁸ So, one wonders what is the basis for Fitzmyer’s assessment that Luke’s wording in the son’s remorse is, “simply a paraphrase of an OT confession.”⁹⁹

Pennington further observes that avoidance of the tetragrammaton only has real relevance in a Hebrew language environment. In translation the concern becomes a moot point. Thus we see in the case of the Septuagint that the Greek translators exhibit little concern about the direct reference to God.¹⁰⁰ Still, Pennington does not seem to connect this observation regarding language with his earlier acknowledgment of the occurrences of οὐρανός in 1 Maccabees and Luke. Does the use of “heaven” as a reverential circumlocution in these works indicate a Hebrew *Vorlage*? Indeed, 1 Maccabees is widely held to have been written originally in Hebrew.¹⁰¹ If his observation is correct, the same usage in Luke’s parable suggests that the Evangelist has employed a non-canonical source that was originally penned in Hebrew. What we hear in

95 Pennington, “Circumventing,” 7.

96 Ibid., 4 n. 11.

97 The rarity of the occurrence challenges Muraoka’s suggestion that Luke’s language in the parable is merely drawn from the Septuagint’s wording of the story of Esau and the return of Jacob in Gen 33:3–4; see T. Muraoka, *Luke and the Septuagint*, *Novum Testamentum* 54 (2012): 13–15.

98 T. Muraoka, *Hebrew/Aramaic Index to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 60–61.

99 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1089.

100 According to Dos Santos, in the LXX יהוה is rendered by κύριος 6814 times and by θεός 585 times. See E. C. Dos Santos, *An Expanded Hebrew Index for the Hatch-Redpath Concordance to the Septuagint* (Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, 1973), 78.

101 See B. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabeus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 66; J. A. Goldstein, *1 Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 41; New York: Doubleday, 1976), 14.

the confession of the prodigal son, then, is a non-Septuagintal, Post-biblical Hebrew expression that is heard earlier in 1 Maccabees and in time will express reverence towards the Divine Name in rabbinic literature.

8 Luke 16:22: τὸν κόλπον Ἀβραάμ

In the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man (Luke 16:19–31), the Evangelist employs an unusual metaphor for the eternal abode of the righteous: “the bosom of Abraham.”¹⁰² It has no parallel in the Hebrew Scriptures, New Testament or Second Temple Jewish literature. Scholars have suggested that the expression may represent either the idea of being a guest who is close to the host at a banquet¹⁰³ or reflects the notion in the Hebrew Bible of being gathered to one’s fathers.¹⁰⁴

The biblical idea of being gathered to one’s fathers is continued into the Greco-Roman period and heard in the hope of the martyrs voiced in 4 Macc 13:17: “For if we so die, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will welcome us, and all the fathers will praise us.” Nevertheless, the Lukan phrase ὁ κόλπος Ἀβραάμ is non-Septuagintal and is not heard outside of the New Testament until it appears in rabbinic literature. Acknowledging this, Fitzmyer offers the fanciful notion that the rabbinic authors may even have borrowed the term from Luke’s Gospel!¹⁰⁵

In *Kiddushin* 72b we hear: דאגמה איכה בבבל אדא בר אהבה יש בה היום יושב: ברחיקו אברהם (“There is a Fort Agma in Babylon in which dwells Adda b. Ahabah, today he sits in the bosom of Abraham”). We cannot be sure whether the phrase in the Talmud is a euphemism indicating the sage had died. If so, then this is not the third-century Amora mentioned in the Talmuds (e.g. *y. Ta’an.* 3:13, 67a; *b. Ber.* 42b–43a). In any event, the phrase does connote the afterlife in two later midrashim within the context of Jewish suffering during the days of the Hadrianic persecutions. The setting closely parallels that recounted above in 4 Maccabees to depict Jewish martyrdom. 4 Maccabees describes persecution

102 See L. Ginzberg’s brief discussion, *The Legends of the Jews* (7 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1968), 5:268.

103 See *Sifre Deut.* 53; *Semah. R. Hiyya* 2.1; *Midr. Ps.* 25.9; Matt 22:1–14; Luke 14:15–24; cf. R. S. Notley and Z. Safrai, *Parables of the Sages: Jewish Wisdom from Jesus to Rav Ashi* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2011), 45; J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (London: SPCK, 1955), 184; R. Meyer, “κόλπος,” in *TDNT*, 3:824–26.

104 Gen 15:15; 1 Kgs 1:21; 2:10; 11:21; Billerbeck, 2:225–27.

105 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1132.

at the hands of Antiochus IV, while the rabbinic stories record Jewish suffering in the days of the Roman emperor Hadrian. Both Maccabees and the midrashic legends present a mother whose seven sons¹⁰⁶ must choose death rather than transgress God's commandments. According to the midrashim, at last only the youngest son remains, and he is given the choice to bow to the idol or be martyred. He confers with his mother, who exhorts him, "Oh my son, do you wish that in the time to come *all your brothers be found in the bosom of Abraham* (שיהיו כל אחיך נתונים בחיקו של אברהם) while you are in the bosom of Esau?¹⁰⁷ I beg you, do not listen to Hadrian's men."¹⁰⁸ What is important for our present study is the repetition in the rabbinic texts and in Luke's Gospel of the phrase "the bosom of Abraham" to designate the eternal abode of the righteous.¹⁰⁹ Even though we do not know specifically the source for Luke's Hebraism, there is no question that it has not been derived from the Septuagint, and it indicates once again the Evangelist's access to primitive, Hebraic non-canonical sources.

9 Luke 19:33: οἱ κύριοι αὐτοῦ

The Lukan account of the retrieval of the colt¹¹⁰ (Luke 19:29–35) presents a non-Septuagintal Hebraism to describe the owner of the animal: λυόντων δὲ αὐτῶν τὸν πῶλον εἶπεν οἱ κύριοι αὐτοῦ πρὸς αὐτούς (Luke 9:33). Fitzmyer ventured that the reference to multiple owners (οἱ κύριοι) means "its master and mistress."¹¹¹

106 Compare 2 Macc 7:1–42. For a review of the literature on the tradition of the widow and her seven sons, see S. Shepkaru, "From after Death to After Life: Martyrdom and Its Recompense," *AJS Review* 24, no. 1 (1999): 1–44.

107 R. Ulmer has suggested that the "bosom of Esau" is a late medieval emendation. See *Pesiqta Rabbati: A Synoptic Edition of Pesiqta Rabbati Based Upon All Extant Manuscripts and the Editio Princeps* (3 vols.; Langham, Md.: University Press of America, 2008), 1:xxxvii.

108 *Pesiq. Rab. Piska* 43; W. G. Braude (trans.), *Pesikta Rabbati: Discourses for Feasts, Fasts, and Special Sabbaths* (2 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 2:761. Compare the encouragement of the mother according to *Lamentations Rabba* 1.16 §50: אצל אחיך אתה אבינו הולך ואתה ניתן בתוך חיקו של אברהם אבינו ("You are going with your brothers and you will be placed within the bosom of Abraham our father").

109 See also a medieval example cited by Shepkaru (21 n. 67) from A. Habermann, *Sefer Gezerot Ashkena ve-Zarfat* (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1945 [Hebrew]), 47, 96: "He [God] will place him [R. Meshullam's son, Isaac] in the bosom of Abraham."

110 The foal of an ass: Gen 32:16; Judg 10:4; 12:14; Zech 9:9. See O. Michel, "πῶλος," in *TDNT*, 6:959–61.

111 Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1250. Plummer and Marshall interprets the plurality of "owners" in light of Mark 11:5: "the owner of the colt and those with him: τινες τῶν ἐκεῖ ἐστηγότων (Mk.); see Plummer, *Luke*, 446; Marshall, *Luke*, 713.

Yet, Buth has suggested that Luke intended only one owner, and instead we have an idiomatic expression best understood in light of Mishnaic Hebrew.¹¹²

Use of the plural בעלים to signify a single owner already appears in the Hebrew Bible:

Exod 21:29:

וְאִם שׁוֹר נִגַּח הוּא מִתְּמַל שְׁלֵשׁם וְהוּעֵד בְּבַעְלָיו וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרֵנוּ וְהַמִּית אִישׁ אִו אִשָּׁה
הַשׁוֹר יִסָּקֵל וְגַם-בְּבַעְלָיו יוֹמָת

But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its *owner* (lit., “owners” pl.) has been warned (sg.) but has not kept (sg.) it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its *owner* (lit., “owners” pl.) also shall be put to death (sg.).

In biblical parlance, we know that a single owner is meant by בעלים, because the plural subject occurs with a singular verb.¹¹³ Of course, the word בעל has a wider range of meaning than “owner,” for example, “husband,” “god,” and so on. Yet, the idiomatic use of בעל in the plural to mean a single person is used only to designate “ownership.”¹¹⁴

The idiom was apparently understood by ancient translators of the Hebrew Bible. The Septuagint renders the plural בעלים in Exod 21:29 with the singular noun κύριος: καὶ διαμαρτύρωνται τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ... καὶ ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ προσασποθανεῖται. The Greek translator’s rendering with the singular noun is also reflected in other ancient translations.¹¹⁵

Retaining Biblical Hebrew style in much of the composition of their non-biblical writings, there should be little surprise that the idiom recurs also in the Qumran library.¹¹⁶

112 R. Buth, “Luke 19:31–34, Mishnaic Hebrew, and Bible Translation: Is κύριος τοῦ πώλου Singular?,” *JBL* 104 (1985): 680–85.

113 See also, for example, Exod 21:34, 36; 22:10; Isa 1:3; Job 31:39; Eccl 5:10, 12; etc.

114 Buth, “Luke 19:31–34,” 681; L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (Study Edition)* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 143.

115 The plural subject with the singular verb is not used in Greek or Aramaic. Instead, the ancient translations rendered the plural noun with the singular noun. See Targum Onkelos of Gen 21:29: וְאִם שׁוֹר נִגַּח הוּא מִתְּמַל שְׁלֵשׁם וְהוּעֵד בְּבַעְלָיו וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרֵנוּ וְהַמִּית אִישׁ אִו אִשָּׁה הַשׁוֹר יִסָּקֵל וְגַם-בְּבַעְלָיו יוֹמָת (“the bull shall be stoned and its owner [sg.] killed”).

116 See CD 9:10–16; 4Q158 f10.12.12; 4Q251 f8.5–6.

CD 9.10–11:

... וכל האובד ולא נודע מי גנבו ממאד המחנה אשר גנב בו ישביע בעליו . . .

Anything that is lost and it is not known which of the men of the camp stole it, its owner (lit., “owners” pl.) shall pronounce (sg.) a malediction . . .

However, Buth notes that a change in expression took place in Mishnaic Hebrew. The plural “owners” with a singular meaning begins to appear with the plural verb.¹¹⁷ Only a careful reading of the context indicates that a singular subject is meant. This shift is reflected also in our reading of Luke 19:33. A colt would hardly have been in need of multiple owners.¹¹⁸ Instead, what we witness in this episode is a Mishnaic Hebraism that has been retained in Luke’s non-canonical Hebraized Greek source. So, while Mark’s inflated description of those who objected¹¹⁹ may be his attempt to clarify the enigmatic idiom, Luke’s account preserves the Mishnaic Hebraism drawn from his non-canonical source.

10 Luke 23:31: ὅτι εἰ ἐν τῷ ὑγρῷ ξύλῳ ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν, ἐν τῷ ξηρῷ τί γένηται

Woven within the tragic scene of Jesus’ final approach to Golgotha is his response to the lament by the women nearby: “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children . . . For if they do these things in the green tree, what will happen in the dry?” (Luke 23:31).¹²⁰ The message seems clear, even if the metaphors are somewhat obscure. Jesus warns that if such things can happen to one who is innocent, what does it portend for those who are not. Several scholars have noted that Jesus’ words are reminiscent of those uttered by R. Jose ben Joezer, himself on his way to be

117 See, e.g., *m. Ter.* 6.2; *m. Pesah.* 6.6; 7.9; *m. B. Qama* 7.6; *m. Zeb.* 12.2–3, etc.

118 It may also be that the singular sense of οἱ κύριοι is anticipated in Jesus’ instruction to the two disciples found in all of the Gospels: καὶ ἕαν τις ὑμᾶς ἐρωτᾷ (Luke 19:31; cf. Matt 21:3; Mark 11:3).

119 Mark 11:5: “τινες τῶν ἐκεῖ ἐστηκότων ἔλεγον . . .”

120 D. Bivin, “Jesus and the Enigmatic ‘Green Tree,’” 2 October 2009, Jerusalem Perspective Online, <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/4427> (13 November 2012); W. Nunnally, “From Ezekiel 17:24 and 21:3 to Luke 23:31: A Survey of the Connecting Jewish Tradition,” 14 May 2009, Jerusalem Perspective Online, <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/4325> (13 November 2012).

crucified, in response to his nephew, Jakum of Sererot: “If it is thus with those who do His will, how much more with those who anger Him.”¹²¹

Although the content of the dominical saying is of interest, at this juncture our attention concerns its language. The indefinite third person plural ποιούσιν reflects a Semitic style to express an indefinite subject, by which no specific person is intended.¹²² Instead, Jesus’ words should be read, “If *these things are done* in a green tree . . .” Further, Marshall rightly sees a Semitism in the use of ἐν to mark the indirect object.¹²³ It does not designate time, as most modern versions read, that is, “For if they do these things *when* the wood . . .” (NRSV). Instead, the phrase ποιεῖν ἐν is used to convey action against (i.e. “For if these things are done *to* the green tree . . .”).¹²⁴ Compare a similar use of ἐν witnessed in Matt 17:12 where the violent death of the Baptist is described: ἐποίησαν ἐν αὐτῷ ὅσα ἠθέλησα (“*they did to him* whatsoever they wished”).¹²⁵

Even more important is Luke’s use of ὑγρός and ξηρός. What do they signify, and are they meant to direct us to a specific passage in the Hebrew Scriptures? While we do have several references in the Septuagint to ξύλον ξηρόν (Isa 56:3; Ezek 17:24; 21:3 [Eng. 20:47]; Sir 6:3), there is no appearance of ξύλον ὑγρόν. Instead, the Greek Bible chooses twice to contrast ξύλον ξηρόν with ξύλον χλωρόν (“green tree,” Ezek 17:24; 21:3 [Eng. 20:47]). On both of these occasions ξύλον χλωρόν renders the Hebrew חֵץ-רַגַע (“moist tree”) which in fact more closely approximates Luke’s ξύλον ὑγρόν (“moist tree”). The reason these verses from Ezekiel have not garnered more attention, as background for the dominical saying, seems in part because Luke’s wording is not found in the Septuagint. Instead, Luke’s phraseology is a non-Septuagintal Hebrew idiom, and his use of ὑγρός¹²⁶ is a more literal rendering of the Hebrew חֵץ¹²⁷ than the Septuagint’s χλωρός.

The message of Ezek 17:24 has little in common with Luke 23:31. On the other hand, in spite of Leaney’s claim¹²⁸ that the message of Ezek 21:3 [Eng. 20:47]

121 *Midrash Psalm* 11.7.

122 BDF 72 (§130).

123 Marshall, *Luke*, 865; BDF 86 (§157).

124 This may itself be a Semitism. See Josh 24:7; 2 Kgs 23:19; Jer 51:24; CD 1.12: ויודע לדורות בעדת בוגדים את אשר עשה בדור אחרון בעדת בוגדים (“And he taught the later generations what [God] did to the previous generation, a congregation of traitors”).

125 See Gen 34:7; 2 Sam 18:13; CD 1.2; Davies and Allison, *Saint Matthew*, 2:715–16.

126 Liddell and Scott, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1843.

127 Koehler and Baumgartner, *Lexicon*, 525.

128 A. R. C. Leaney, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke* (London: A. & C. Black, 1958), 283.

has no relevance for the Lukan saying, an allusion to its content is acutely apt for the passion setting:

Behold, I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour every green tree in you and every dry tree; the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from south to north shall be scorched by it. (Ezek 21:3)

Similar to the warning by the Hebrew prophet, Jesus warns of impending judgment upon all, employing the contrasting metaphors of the “moist tree” and the “dry tree” to communicate the inclusive nature of judgment. When freed from the shackles of the requirement to suppose that Luke is parroting the Septuagintal idiom, we discover that Luke preserves a saying in Greek that is grounded in the Hebrew idiom of Ezek 21:3 (Eng. 20:47). Through it Jesus laments the future travail upon the Jewish nation at the hands of his Roman executioners.

The aim of this study has been a modest one: to demonstrate that in Luke’s Gospel there are numerous non-Septuagintal Hebraisms that have been overlooked. Many more examples could be added. The reason non-Septuagintal Hebraisms have not received more notice seems clear. For the most part, New Testament scholarship still functions under the outdated nineteenth-century assumption of an Aramaic-only language environment for first-century Judea. Therefore, any Hebraism in the Third Gospel must *a priori* be explained as a Septuagintism—even though (as we have seen) many of these Hebraisms do not actually appear in the Greek Bible. Some are postbiblical, while others are an even more literal rendering of biblical Hebrew idioms than the Septuagint’s Greek translation. We have demonstrated that the Septuagint cannot have been Luke’s source for his Hebraic phraseology in many cases. Instead, the evidence suggests that Luke had access to non-canonical sources that were marked by a highly Hebraized Greek. In the light of a century of archaeological discovery, which has seen a sea change in scholarship’s understanding of the languages of first-century Judea, the time has arrived for New Testament scholarship to rethink its working model for the linguistic environment of the Gospels. The inconvenient truth of Luke’s non-Septuagintal Hebraisms presents fresh questions regarding the literary relationship of the Synoptic Gospels and the sources used by the Evangelist in his composition of the Third Gospel.

Reading Gospel Texts in a Trilingual Framework



Hebrew-Only Exegesis: A Philological Approach to Jesus' Use of the Hebrew Bible

R. Steven Notley and Jeffrey P. García*

The purpose of this study is to examine the interpretive techniques demonstrated in five Synoptic pericopae and the manner in which they reflect the first-century C.E. linguistic milieu. In part, the impetus for such a study is because the Synoptic Gospels are a distinct source for Jewish methods of exegesis in late antiquity.¹ Scholarly focus of late has been on comparisons between Qumranic exegesis and the interpretive style preserved in the Gospels,² though more recent trends indicate that attention is now turning to Rabbinic exegesis and the Gospels.³ While the literature of Israel's Sages was initially codified

* For Salustiana "Caridad" Arroyo (1916–2012), whose daily handwritten lists of biblical verses were my first introductions to biblical texts. Para mi abuela, con amor profundo.

- 1 See J. W. Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953); S. Ruzer, *Mapping the New Testament: Early Christian Writings as a Witness for Early Jewish Biblical Exegesis* (Jewish and Christian Perspective Series 13; Leiden: Brill, 2007). Ruzer notes regarding the New Testament more broadly: "If the Second Temple Jewish genesis of nascent Christianity—meaning also its polemical stance vis-à-vis other Jewish groups—is taken seriously, it should be expected that its preoccupation with exegesis would reflect, either approvingly or polemically, both exegetical traditions current in rival circles and those of broader circulation. The New Testament 'conversation with Scripture' may thus be seen as bearing witness, at least in some instances, to those broader tendencies." Also E. E. Ellis, "Biblical Interpretation in the New Testament Church," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. M. J. Mulder; CRINT 2.1; Philadelphia: Fortress, 2004), 653–90.
- 2 See, for instance, Stephen Hultgren, "4Q521 and Luke's *Magnificat* and *Benedictus*," 119–32, and Lutz Doering, "Marriage and Creation in Mark 10 and CD 4–5," 133–64, in *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament* (ed. F. García-Martínez; STJD 85; Leiden: Brill, 2009); L. H. Schiffman, "Biblical Exegesis in the Passion narratives and the Dead Sea Scrolls," 117–30 in *Biblical Interpretation in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. I. Kalimi and P. Haas; New York: T&T Clark International, 2006). See also H. W. Basser, *The Mind Behind the Gospels: A Commentary to Matthew 1–14* (Brighton, Mass.: Academic Studies Press, 2009).
- 3 Most recently, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (ed. R. Bieringer et al.; JSJSup 136; Leiden: Brill, 2010), esp. sections "Halakhah" and "Midrash." See also R. S. Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method in the Nazareth Synagogue," in *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality*. Vol. 2, *Exegetical Studies* (ed. C. A. Evans and H. D. Zacharias; London: T&T Clark International, 2009), 46–59.

early in the third century C.E., numerous studies have shown that, when engaged critically, exegetical techniques that existed prior to the destruction of the Temple (70 C.E.) are discernible.⁴ To the second of our two proposals, viz., the manner in which these interpretive techniques reflect the first-century C.E. linguistic milieu, scant attention has been given to the opportunity such methods afford us in ascertaining contemporaneous language usage.

Before continuing, some consideration is warranted concerning the linguistic landscape of first-century Judea and the manner by which exegetical tendencies reflect it. First, the textual evidence retrieved from the caves of Qumran attests more broadly to a tri-lingual landscape: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.⁵ In fact, all of the documents that have been attributed to the Qumran community were penned in Hebrew, especially those documents that were central to the Yahad's communal, theological, and eschatological thought (e.g. 1QS, 1QS^{a-b}, CD, 1QM, 1QH^{a-f}). Moreover, while debates regarding the nature of Qumran Hebrew continue, one thing is clear: the language of the Hebrew scrolls reflects both literary⁶ (in some cases ideological⁷) and spoken elements.⁸ Along with the colloquial Hebrew attested in the Bar-Kokhba documents, it is

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- 4 Cf. D. Instone-Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 C.E.* (TSAJ 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992). Instone-Brewer has also attempted to elucidate the traditions of the rabbis that were extant before the destruction of the Temple in *Traditions of the Rabbis in the Era of the New Testament*. Vol. 1, *Prayer and Agriculture*; Vol. 2a, *Feasts and Sabbaths—Passover and Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004–11). See also A. Baumgarten, “Rabbinic Literature as a Source for the History of Second Temple Sectarianism,” *DSD* 2 (1995): 14–57.
 - 5 Shmuel Safrai, “Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus” in *Jesus’ Last Week* (ed. R. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage and Brian Becker; Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 225–44; repr. *Jerusalem Perspective* 30, 31 (1991), see also <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/2551>; C. Rabin, “Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century,” in *The Jewish People in the First Century* (ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; 2 vols.; CRINT; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1976), 2:1007–39. See also R. Buth, “Language Use in the First Century: Spoken Hebrew in a Trilingual Society in the Time of Jesus,” *JOTT* 5/4 (1992): 298–312.
 - 6 G. Rendsburg, “Qumran Hebrew (with a Trial Cut [1QS]),” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at 60: Scholarly Contributions of New York University Faculty and Alumni* (ed. L. H. Schiffman and S. Zoref; STJD 89; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 217–46.
 - 7 W. M. Schniedewind, “Linguistic Ideology in Qumran Hebrew,” in *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings for a Third International Symposium in the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira* (ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 245–55; idem, “Qumran Hebrew as an Antilanguage,” *JBL* 118, no. 2 (1999): 235–52.
 - 8 T. Muraoka, “Hebrew,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1: 340–45 (344).

now accepted that in the New Testament era Hebrew was still utilized for oral communication.⁹

Second, it is routinely assumed, but rarely explicitly stated, that the ancients most often utilized the Hebrew Bible for matters of interpretation. The terseness of biblical narratives and linguistic nuances of the Hebrew language inspired the exegetical traditions which appear in various translations (e.g. the LXX, Targumim), as well as the Dead Sea re-workings of the Pentateuch¹⁰—in addition to the wealth of exegetical materials that appear elsewhere in Second Temple period texts.¹¹

The five Synoptic narratives that will be examined here—“Jesus’ Preaching in the Nazareth Synagogue” (Luke 4:18–19), “Jesus’ Witness Concerning John” (Luke 7:27; Matt 11:10), “And You Shall Love . . .” (Luke 10:25–37), “The Cleansing of the Temple” (Luke 19:45–46; Mark 11:11–17; Matt 21:12–13), “Jesus and Caiaphas” (Luke 22:66–71)—preserve rabbinic exegetical techniques that appear for the

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- 9 Cf. Safrai, “Spoken and Literary Languages”; Both, “Language Use”; Joshua M. Grintz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple,” *JBL* 79 (1960): 32–47. Yonathan Breuer, “Aramaic in Late Antiquity,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*. Vol. 4, *The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period* (ed. S. Katz; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 457–58, notes, “Scholars had been of the opinion that, after the return of the Babylonian exiles, Hebrew no longer served as a spoken language. On this account Hebrew retained its status as a holy tongue and was used in prayer and in Torah study, and for this reason the Mishnah and contemporary Tannaitic literature was composed in Hebrew, but in everyday life Aramaic alone was spoken. *Today this view is no longer accepted, the scholarly consensus now being that Hebrew speech survived in all walks of life at least until the end of the tannaitic period (the beginning of the third century CE)*” (authors’ emphasis).
- 10 E. Tov and S. W. Crawford, *Qumran Cave 4, VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part I* (ed. H. Attridge et al.; DJD 13; Oxford: Clarendon, 1994); S. W. Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 39–59; M. Bernstein, “Pentateuchal Interpretation at Qumran,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. P. W. Flint and J. C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1989–99): 1: 128–59.
- 11 It should be noted, however, that in terms of the New Testament (for Josephus, see Instone-Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions*, 184) the majority of scholars have argued that the LXX was the authors’ primary source. While it is expected that authors in the Diaspora utilized the Greek version of the Scriptures, there is little reason to presume that within the confines of the land of Israel matters were the same. For all intents and purposes, it appears that Second Temple exegetical traditions developed out a reading of the Hebrew text. Furthermore, as several articles in the present volume indicate, it appears that the Evangelists’ sources originated from an environment of both spoken and literary Hebrew.

first time in written record.¹² The earliest iteration of these exegetical methods (i.e. *middoth*) is first attributed to Hillel (a Jewish sage who flourished in the first century B.C.E.) and appears for the first time in the Tosefta (*t. Sanh* 7.11)¹³—a supplement to the Mishnah which has been shown to be an amalgam of pre-mishnaic, mishnaic and later Rabbinic traditions. Yet, already in the Gospel of Matthew there is evidence of at least one of them, קל וחומר (*a minori ad maius*¹⁴): εἰ δὲ τὸν χόρτον τοῦ ἀγροῦ σήμερον ὄντα καὶ αὔριον εἰς κλίβανον βαλλόμενον ὁ θεὸς οὕτως ἀμφιένυσσιν, οὐ πολλῶ μᾶλλον ὑμᾶς, ὀλιγόπιστοι; (“But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will he not much more* clothe you, O ones of little faith?,” Matt 6:30).¹⁵ In the passage, the comparison of God’s care for the grass in light of its impermanence with the more important concern for humanity reflects the transition from *minori* (קל) to *maius* (חומר).

Certain *middoth*, especially those that are found in pre-70 C.E. texts, were conveyed orally and likely intended to be utilized in teaching contexts (e.g. *bet midrash*). The employment of these exegetical techniques reflects the manner in which a sage might readily interpret Scripture in the process of teaching or in regular conversation. Coupled with the acknowledgment of spoken Hebrew in the first century, we suggest that these exemplify a fluid development of interpretive techniques (*middoth*) that were derived out of a speaking environment rather than a literary/scrubal one. Therefore, the fact that the Synoptic Gospels preserve stories with contemporaneous methods of exegesis and that most of these accounts portray a setting where Jesus is teaching, it indicates not only the language of exegesis (i.e. Hebrew) but also the primary language of discourse. With that in mind, we turn our attention now to an examination of the selected Gospel narratives.

12 Cf. S. Safrai, “The Naming of John the Baptist,” *Jerusalem Perspective* 20 (May 1989): 1–2, see also <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/2342>.

13 שבע מידות דרש הלל לפני זקני בתירה (1) קל וחומר (2) וגזרה שוה (3) ובנין אב וכתוב אחד (4) ובנין אב ושני כתובים (5) וכלל ופרט (6) וכלל וכיצא בו ממקום (7) אחר דבר הלמד See also H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. M. Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 19–23.

14 An argument from a minor to major premise. If the minor premise stands, then the major, more complicated and weightier premise logically follows.

15 Gale argues that this *middah* is utilized in Matt 12:1–8 in A. M. Gale, *Redefining Ancient Borders: The Jewish Scribal Framework of Matthew’s Gospel* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 133–38.

1 Jesus' Preaching at the Synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:18–19)¹⁶

Apart from preserving an illustration of Jesus' exegetical technique, Luke 4:18–19 also presents the oldest report of the Jewish custom to read a portion of the Prophets (*haftarah*) after the reading of the Torah (see also Acts 13:15). Outside the New Testament, the earliest reference to such a practice appears in the Mishnah, codified at the beginning of the third century C.E.:

m. Meg. 4.2:

בְּיוֹם טוֹב הַמְשָׁה בְּיוֹם הַכִּיּוּרִים שֶׁשָּׁה בַשַּׁבָּת שֶׁבַע אֵין פּוֹחֲתִים מִהֶן אֲבָל מוֹסִי־
פִים עָלֶיהֶם וּמִפְטִירִים בְּנִבְיָא

On a festival day [the Torah is read] by five [readers], on the Day of Atonement by six, and on the Sabbath by seven. They may not subtract from them but they may add to them, and *they close with a reading from the Prophets*. (authors' emphasis).

Luke does not record Jesus reading from the Torah. Yet, according to Safrai, the Evangelist's description that "he stood to read" (καὶ ἀνέστη ἀναγνῶναι)¹⁷ indicates Jesus also read from the Torah; one does not stand to read from the prophets.¹⁸ Furthermore, the Lukan depiction bears a striking similarity

16 We consider here only Luke's account since the parallels in Mark (6:1–6:6) and Matt (13:53–58) do not preserve Jesus' use of Scripture. Portions of what follows appear in R. S. Notley, "Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method in the Nazareth Synagogue" in *Early Christianity and Intertextuality*, Vol. 2, *Exegetical Studies* (ed. C. A. Evans and H. D. Zacharias; LNTS 392; London: Continuum, 2009), 46–59.

17 This description has no parallel in Matt or Mark. Mark states, "And when the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue . . ." (καὶ γενομένου σαββάτου ἤρξατο διδάσκειν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ . . .). Matthew expands upon on the Markan account, "Then he came to his homeland and began to teach them in their synagogue" (καὶ ἔλθων εἰς τὴν πατρίδα αὐτοῦ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν). This is yet another instance where Luke, in distinction from the other Gospels, preserves language from his source(s) that inform(s) us of a decidedly Jewish custom.

18 S. Safrai, "Synagogue and Sabbath," *Jerusalem Perspective* 23 (November–December, 1989), 8–10, see also <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/2424>. Safrai also recognized that Luke's report about Jesus reading alone is in accord with other ancient witnesses (e.g. *m. Sot.* 7.7–8; *m. Yoma* 7.1; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.209; Philo, *Prob.* 81–82). The pre-70 practice allowed for one reader of Torah, not seven readers as became the common custom shortly after the destruction of the Temple. See S. Safrai, "Synagogue," in Safrai and Stern, eds., *The Jewish People in the First Century*, Vol. 2, 929–30 D. Bivin, "One Torah Reader, Not Seven!"

to the high priest's reading from the Torah described in *m.Yoma* 7.1: וְכָהֵן יָקוּם וְיִקְרָא וְיִקְרָא עוֹמֵד (“And the high priest rises and receives [the Torah] and reads [it] standing”). The Lukan omission of Jesus' reading from the Torah may be because the Evangelist assumed that it was not necessary to detail what was already understood, viz., that Jesus stood to read from the Torah first, and only then read from the book of Isaiah (i.e. *the haftarah*).¹⁹

Beyond the biblical passages themselves there are indications that the Lukan narrative has drawn from sources that were shaped within a Hebrew language environment.²⁰ For example, after reading from the Torah, Jesus is reportedly given “the book of the prophet Isaiah” (βιβλίον τοῦ προφήτου Ἡσαΐου, Luke 4:17).²¹ This phrase is a simple and often overlooked indication that the Lukan narrative reflects Post-biblical Hebrew idioms. The Greek βιβλίον, or its Hebrew equivalent סֵפֶר, is never used as a descriptive term for the prophetic work in either the Hebrew Bible or Greek Jewish literature from the Second Commonwealth. The few examples that we do have where Isaiah is referred to as a סֵפֶר (i.e. book) come from Qumran and on each occasion the phrase is the Hebrew: סֵפֶר ישעיה הנביא (cf., 4QFlorilegium [4Q174] fi, 2i:15; 4QMiscellaneous Rules [4Q265] fi:3; 4Q285 7:1; see also 4Q176 fi, 2:4).

Luke's report of Jesus' citation from Isa 61:1–2 clearly does not follow the Hebrew Bible. The common scholarly assumption that Luke has drawn his biblical passages from the LXX obscures the exegetical ingenuity inherent in the account. Further, the report's preservation of non-Septuagintal Hebraisms belies the simplistic explanation that the variants upon the Masoretic tradition resulted from the Evangelist's dependence on the LXX. Instead, it suggests

Jerusalem Perspective 52 (July–September, 1997): 16–17, see also <http://www.jerusalem-perspective.com/2787>.

19 Notley, “Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method,” 47.

20 *Ibid.*, 49.

21 Evidence from the Cairo Genizah suggests that the *haftarah* readings during the Second Temple period were not set and that readings within the triennial cycle may have differed from community to community. Often the connection between the Torah reading and the prophetic portion was due to common themes or wording, cf. Michael Fishbane, *Haftarot: the traditional Hebrew text with the new JPS translation* (JPS Bible Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society), xxiv. Furthermore, it is likely that the reading of the prophetic portion was at the discretion of the reader (cf., Notley, “Jesus' Jewish Hermeneutical Method,” 50). As the Mishnah states: מְדַלְגִים בְּנְבִיאָה וְאֵין מְדַלְגִים בְּתוֹרָה (“They skip [from place to place] in the prophetic [readings] but do not skip in the Torah [readings],” *m. Meg.* 4:4). In Luke it seems that Jesus is the one who chooses where to read in Isaiah. If so, it likely possessed a thematic or verbal connection to the Torah portion that he just read.

that Luke had access to source(s) other than our canonical Mark and Matthew, and that these were “marked with stark Hebraisms.”²²

Jesus’ deviation from Isa 61:1–2 is threefold: (1) the omission of Isa 61:2b, “to bind the broken-hearted” (לְהַבִּישׁ לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי־לֵב); (2) the omission of Isa 61:2b, “And the day of vengeance of our God” (וַיּוֹם נִקְמָה לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ); (3) the insertion of Isa 58:6, “and let the oppressed go free” (וְשַׁלַּח רְצוּצִים חֲפְזִים). It is Jesus’ insertion of Isa 58:6 which particularly concerns us here, because it sheds light on his exegetical method.

Fitzmyer assumed that the addition of Isa 58:6 was a consequence of the appearance of ἄφεσις (i.e. release) in the LXX’s version of both Isaianic passages.²³ While Fitzmyer has rightly recognized that the combination of these two passages is based on verbal analogies, his assumption regarding the use of the Greek Bible is less sure. The Greek term, ἄφεσις, appears frequently in the Septuagint (50 times). A comparison of the Hebrew and Greek texts reveals that ἄφεσις translates eleven different Hebrew words.²⁴ Indeed, in our passages it translates two entirely different Hebrew words (Isa 58:6: חֲפְזִים; Isa 61:1: דְּרוֹר).

It is important to remember that we have no record of any sage from the land of Israel in the period whose exegesis is based on any version of the Bible other than the Hebrew Scriptures. Nevertheless, it comes as little surprise that scant attention has been given to a rare Hebrew verbal link between the two Isaianic passages. There are only two places in the entirety of the Hebrew Bible where the phrase רְצוֹן לַיהוָה (i.e. the Lord’s favor) occurs, Isa 61:2 and 58:5, precisely the contexts from which Jesus drew his reading in our pericope. So, the Lukan narrative provides an example of Jesus’ adept use of *gezerah shavah*, a

22 Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: introduction, translation, and note* (AB 28–28a; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1981–1985), 1:531. Luke makes no mention of the use of Targum, *contra* Fitzmyer’s assumption that Jews did not readily comprehend Hebrew and therefore needed an Aramaic translation to understand the Scriptures. The evidence from Qumran suggests that during the Second Temple period Targums were in limited use (e.g. 11QtgJob; 4Q156, Targum to Lev 16) and we have no record of their use in the land of Israel until the Usha Period (140 C.E.). The change likely resulted from developments following the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–135 C.E.). Many Jews previously living in Judea emigrated to the Diaspora, while there was an influx of Jews from Babylonia. The population shift brought with it a new need for the Targumim. See A. F. Rainey, R. S. Notley, *The Sacred Bridge: Carta’s Atlas of the Biblical World* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2006), 398; R. Buth, “Aramaic Targumim: Qumran,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (ed. C. A. Evans and S. E. Porter; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 91–93.

23 Fitzmyer, 533.

24 Notley, “Jesus’ Jewish Hermeneutical Method,” 52. For example, see Exod 18:2: ἄφεσιν αὐτῆς for הַשְׁלֹחַתָּה; and Exod 23:11: ἄφεσιν ποιήσεις for תַּשְׁמֹטְנָהּ.

hermeneutical approach first associated with Hillel the Elder and described to be one of his seven exegetical rules (cf. *t. Sanh.* 7.11; *ʿAbot R. Nat. A* 37).²⁵ It is a midrashic verbal analogy of sorts, by which two unrelated verses are combined because of a similar word or phrase²⁶—although it seems that the early form of the technique may have required exact verbal analogy, such as we witness with Jesus in Nazareth.²⁷

The rare appearance of this Hebrew phrase, coupled with the fact that the verbal link disappears in the Aramaic Targumim and LXX of Isaiah,²⁸ indicates that Jesus is here pictured dependent on a Hebrew version of these texts. Consequently, if Jesus did employ a Hebrew text, it suggests not only his knowledge and use of Hebrew, but that also of his listeners in the synagogue who readily understood the significance of his creative reading and were immediately provoked by his “words of grace” (τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος).²⁹ In a longer treatment of this passage, Notley has argued that if we rightly understand the method by which Jesus joins these texts, it must affect our understanding of what he is saying through his exegesis.³⁰ It was not Jesus *per se* or a messianic claim that was rejected in Nazareth. Instead, it was the message he delivered through his ingenuity that challenged his hearers’ assumptions regarding the nature of the hoped-for redemption. In this regard, the disappointment of those in the synagogue at Nazareth was not dissimilar to that of John the Baptist while imprisoned by Herod Antipas (see Matt 11:3). In any event, for the purposes of our present study what is important is our recognition that the episode is dependent upon Jesus’ creative exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures.

25 While it is unlikely that Hillel invented these seven rules, they were in use during his time (early first century C.E.). As Strack has noted, the introduction “of the rules into Pharisaic exegesis” is commonly associated with *y. Pes.* 6.33a. H. L. Strack and G. Stemmerger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. and ed. M. Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 17.

26 See A. Yadin, *Scripture as Logos: Rabbi Ishmael and the Origins of Midrash* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 82–83; and Instone-Brewer’s discussion of *gezerah shavah* I and II in *Techniques and Assumptions*, 17–18.

27 Notley, “Jesus’ Jewish Hermeneutical Method,” 52.

28 Isa 58:5 61:2
LXX δεκτῆν ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν
Ps. Yon אָרְבַּעַיִם אַרְבַּעַיִם

29 See J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1971), 206–7.

30 See Notley, “Jesus’ Hermeneutical Method in the Nazareth Synagogue, 57–59.”

2 Jesus' Witness Concerning John (Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:27)³¹

Jesus' statement regarding John the Baptist as reported in Luke 7:27, and its Synoptic parallel in Matt 11:10, reflects the contemporary hope for an eschatological prophet who would precede the advent of the Messiah: "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,³² who shall prepare thy way before thee." Scholarship has acknowledged wording from the Hebrew Bible in the content of the testimony,³³ but few have recognized the creative exegesis inherent in Jesus' witness.

His testimony is taken in part from Mal 3:1:

Mal 3:1:

הִנְנִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָכִי וּפְנֵה-דָרָךְ לִפְנֵי

Behold, I am sending my messenger and he will clear the way before me . . .

Yet, similar language is heard earlier:

Exod 23:20:

הִנֵּה אֶנְכִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָךְ לְפָנֶיךָ לְשַׁמְרֵךְ בְּדָרְךָ

Behold, I am sending a messenger before you to preserve you on the way . . .

31 Portions herein appear in a study on the enigmatic statement in Matt 11:12, R. S. Notley, "The Kingdom Forcefully Advances," in *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition* (ed. C. A. Evans; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 279–311.

32 "Thy face" = "before."

33 Cf. W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew* (AB 26; New York: Doubleday, 1971), 136; R. H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 207–8; J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2 (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1994), 140–41; J. A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," *NTS* 4 (1957–58): 253–81; R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (Vancouver, B.C.; Regent College Publishing, 2000), 242–43; E. M. Boring, "Luke," in *The New Interpreter's Bible* (ed. Leander E. Keck; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 8:268.

The appearance of the shared words highlighted in the verses is collocated only in these two verses.³⁴ Accordingly, the Evangelists attest to the fusion of the individual passages into a single citation. For the most part, the saying follows Exod 23:10, but the addition of τὸν ἄγγελόν μου (מְלִאָכִי) is a linguistic indicator that we are here also dealing with wording taken from Mal 3:1. It is true that the SP and LXX of Exod 23:20 preserve a variant, “my messenger” (מְלִאָכִי; τὸν ἄγγελόν μου), rather than the MT’s מְלִאָךְ. Yet, it is possible that the Septuagint in fact witnesses to a non-extant Hebrew version. Similar Hebrew variants were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls, which shed light on the differences between the LXX and MT’s versions, particularly those of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.³⁵ While no such Judean text exists of Exod 23:20, the SP concurs with the LXX’s variant. Moreover, there are indications elsewhere that Jesus may have been familiar with non-Masoretic textual traditions (see below).

In the Second Temple period, Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20 were part of a complex of traditions regarding the eschatological prophet, who was expected to appear to announce the messianic age.³⁶ The anticipation for this figure finds expression in *The Community Rule* (1QS) 9.10–11:³⁷

ומכול עצת התורה לוא יצאו ללכת בכול שרירות לבם. ונשפטו במשפטים הרשונים
אשר החלו אנשי היחד לתיסר במ עד בוא נביא ומשיחי אהרון וישראל.

They should not deviate from any of the counsels of the Law to walk in the stubbornness of their heart. They should govern themselves in the former judgments, which the men of the Community began to be instructed in them, until there come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel.

Biblical support for this figure is preserved in the citation of Deut 18:18–19 found in *4QTestimonia* (4Q175 1.5–8):³⁸

34 It should be noted that הַנְּבִיִּי is essentially an inflected form of הַנְּבִיָּה אֲנֹכִי (Exod 23:20) or הַנְּבִיָּה אֲנִי.

35 See E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2d rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress; Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2001), 319–26, 333.

36 See Notley, “The Kingdom,” 290–96.

37 See also 1QS 1.1–3.

38 A. P. Jassen has argued that both the 1QS text and 4Q175 are the first texts to present “the concept of the prophet as a precursor to the Messiah(s),” in *Mediating the Divine: Prophecy and Revelation in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple Judaism* (STJD 68; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 174.

נבי אקים לאהסה מקרב אחיהסה כמוכה ונתתי דברי בפיהו וידבר אליהסה את
 כול אשר אצונו. והיה האיש אשר לוא ישמע אל דברי אשר ידבר הנבי בשמי אנוכי
 אדרוש מעמו.

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable.

The role of the eschatological prophet envisioned by the Qumran Congregation and other Second Temple literature is frequently one of a legislator who will mediate divine law.³⁹ Therefore, it should not surprise us to find expectations for this prophet couched in Deuteronomic language. When facing a dilemma regarding stones from the Temple's altar that were defiled by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Judah the Hasmonean decided that they should not be removed until "there should come a prophet" (μέχρι τοῦ παραγεννηθῆναι προφήτην) that would show the people what to do with them (1 Macc 4:42–46)—perhaps an allusion to Deut 34:10.

Later, the author of 1 Maccabees employed similar language to describe the selection of Simon as leader and high priest, "And the Jews and their priests decided that Simon should be their leader and high priest, forever, *until a faithful prophet should arise*" (ἕως τοῦ ἀναστῆναι προφήτην πιστόν, 1 Macc 14:41). Such language borrows images of a faithful (נִאֲמָן, Num 12:7) and ideal prophet-like-Moses (וְלֹא־יָקָם נְבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִשְׁהָה, Deut 34:10). It seems that a similar description, perhaps of Moses,⁴⁰ is gathered from disparate biblical passages in *1QFestival Prayers* (1Q34^{bis} f3 2.8), where the lawgiver is called a "faithful shepherd" (רועה נאמן = Exod 3:1; Num 12:7) and, if the reconstruction is correct, a "humble man" (איש עני = Num 12:3). Thus, the emphasis on the prophet's participation in legal matters, especially in Qumran literature, indicates that the eschatological prophet was envisioned to be a prophet-like-Moses.⁴¹

39 Ibid., 175.

40 The reconstruction of הַמְשַׁלֵּחַ in col. 2, l. 8 was suggested to Notley by David Flusser in private conversation.

41 The Jewish expectation for a Deuteronomic "prophet-like-Moses" is witnessed elsewhere in the New Testament where we hear about "a prophet rising." At Nain, the people respond to the healing of the widow's son, "A great prophet has arisen among us" (ὅτι προφήτης μέγας ἠγέρθη ἐν ἡμῖν, Luke 7:16)! Furthermore, scholarship has recognized that the three answers to Jesus' question "Who do the crowds say that I am?," are in fact three variations on the same answer—"John the Baptist; but others say Elijah; and others, that one of the old prophets has arisen" (οἱ δὲ ἀποκριθέντες εἶπαν· Ἰωάννην τὸν βαπτιστὴν, ἄλλοι

The identity of the prophet of the End of Days is not limited to one like Moses. Malachi 3:23 identifies this prophet with Elijah,

הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי שֹׁלַח לְכֶם אֶת אֵלֵיָהּ הַנְּבִיא לִפְנֵי בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא

Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

The earliest post-biblical reference to Elijah in this role is heard in the *Wisdom of Ben Sira* 48:10:

ὁ καταγραφείς ἐν ἔλεγκμοῖς εἰς καιροὺς
κοπάσαι ὀργήν πρὸ θυμοῦ,
ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱὸν
καὶ καταστήσαι φυλὰς Ἰακωβ.

You [Elijah] who are ready at the appointed time, it is written, to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury, to turn the heart of the father to the son and to restore the tribes of Jacob.

The close association of the two figures is clearly expressed in the joint appearance of Moses and Elijah in Mal 4:4–5:⁴²

זְכוּרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אוֹתוֹ בְּחֹרֵב עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים:
הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי שֹׁלַח לְכֶם אֶת אֵלֵיָהּ הַנְּבִיא לִפְנֵי בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא

Remember the law of Moses My servant, my statutes and ordinances which I gave him in Horeb. Behold, I am going to send you **Elijah** the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.

Typically, the Synoptic tradition draws upon the contemporary expectations for Elijah *redivivus*, “If you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come” (Matt 11:4). Yet, the further acclamation, “There has *arisen* no one

δὲ Ἠλίαν, ἄλλοι δὲ ὅτι προφήτης τις τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀνέστη, Luke 9:19, emphasis added).” Jesus speaks of his death in prophetic terms, “I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem” (Luke 13:33; cf. 4:24). Nonetheless, the Gospels never record that Jesus identified himself with the eschatological prophet. He consistently indicates that this role belongs to the Baptist.

42 Compare Luke 9:33 and par.; Rev 11:3–6.

born of women⁴³ greater than John” (Matt 11:11; Luke 7:28), bears allusions to the Deuteronomic traditions concerning Moses: “And there has not *arisen* a prophet since, in Israel like Moses” (וְלֹא-קָם נְבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה), Deut 34:10).⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Markan description of the Galilean crowds shortly after the Baptist’s execution, “they were like sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34; cf. Matt 9:36), is drawn from Num 27:17. In the biblical passage Moses is concerned about who will lead the people after his death, and he asks the Lord to appoint someone so that the people will not be, “like sheep without a shepherd” (כְּצֹאֵן אֲשֶׁר אֵין-לָהֶם רֹעֶה). The recent news of John’s death in Mark (6:17–29) prior to our saying suggests that some in the crowd were John’s followers.⁴⁵ The Evangelist’s literary characterization of the Baptist reflects the opinion maintained by some regarding him; namely, that he was considered to be a prophet-like-Moses.⁴⁶

The Synoptic tradition, therefore, presents both Jewish opinions regarding the contemporary expectations for the eschatological prophet. Jesus’ midrashic testimony concerning John essentially melds Exod 23:30 and Mal 3:1 to fuse the wording and at the same time the opinions identified with those verses to affirm the Baptist’s significance. Scholarship has generally overlooked the ingenious method by which Jesus communicates this blended identification, again employing *gezerah shavah*.⁴⁷ The language that pairs our passages together is the shared verbal cluster (לִפְנֵי; דָּרַךְ; מְלֻאָה;⁴⁸ שָׁלַח; [הַנְּגִי] הִגָּה). The dominical saying is, thus, not simply a conceptual allusion but a deft exegetical fusion of two passages from the Hebrew Scriptures that intimates the Baptist’s prophetic significance. It betrays an accomplished familiarity with the Hebrew Bible⁴⁹—beyond what is generally assumed to be that of the Evangelists themselves—as

43 Moses is referred to as “one born of a woman” in an early Jewish tradition. See L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (7 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1968), 3:112.

44 Notley, “The Kingdom,” 288–89.

45 Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 351.

46 It should also come as no surprise that both Moses and Elijah appear during Jesus’ transfiguration (Matt 17:1–8; Mark 9:2–8) to inform him of his “exodus” (Luke 9:28–36).

47 Notley, “Jesus’ Jewish Hermeneutical Method,” 52.

48 The Samaritan Pentateuch reads מְלֻאָבִי.

49 It is clear that Jesus’ exegesis, when compared to rabbinic exegesis, derives from the Hebrew text. Apart from the abundance of studies that have convincingly argued for Hebrew continuing as a living language during the first century (see above), on every occasion it is assumed that the exegesis of the sages was based on the Hebrew text and not a text in translation. The same would be true of Jesus’ exegesis, especially when one considers the detailed knowledge of the Hebrew Bible one would have to attain in order to pair together passages that share such precise language.

well as an understanding of the sophisticated hermeneutical methods utilized by the Sages of Israel in late antiquity.

3 And You Shall Love . . . (Luke 10:25–37)

This pericope appears in each of the three Synoptic Gospels (Matt 22:34–40; Mark 12:28–34; Luke 10:25–28). Owing to the constraints on the scope of the present study, there are some important tangential questions, ranging from the differences in the Synoptic tradition to manuscript variants,⁵⁰ that we—like the priest and Levite—must pass by. Instead, we want to draw attention to two points that are particularly germane. The first concerns the place of our episode within the landscape of emerging Second Temple Judaism, while the second is specific to Luke’s account: the citation of the biblical passages within the larger structure of his narrative. These two points are related, and when considered together can bring fruitful results.

The exchange between Jesus and the νομικός in Luke 10 serves as a window to developing socio-religious ideas that belonged to what Flusser called “a new sensitivity within Judaism.”⁵¹ These advances emerged in the wake of the tragic events of the Antiochan persecutions in the second century B.C.E. Differing from the earlier prophetic charge of God’s judgment upon a sinful nation during the Assyrian and Babylonian assaults, the martyrs in the Hasmonean conflict were not accused of being unfaithful. On the contrary, they were executed because they refused to accede to Antiochus’ demands that they transgress the divine commandments.

Difficult questions of theodicy were thrust upon the nation. In their hour of peril where was God to defend the righteous when they suffered for righteousness sake? Was he powerless to deliver them? Or was he himself somehow complicit in the injustices of their suffering? The cry of a generation is heard in the words of Taxo:

See, my sons, behold the second punishment has befallen the people; cruel, impure going beyond all bounds of mercy—even exceeding the

50 W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (International Critical Commentary; 3 vols.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988–1997), 3:242; Fitzmyer, 880; K. J. Thomas, “Liturgical Citations in the Synoptics,” *NTS* 22 (1975–76): 205–14.

51 D. Flusser, “A New Sensitivity in Judaism and the Christian Message,” *HThR* 61 (1968): 107–27.

former one. For which nation or which province or which people, who have all done many crimes against the Lord, have suffered such evils as have covered us? (*T. Moses* 9:2–3)

Of course, the problem of evil is an old and intractable one, and we shall make no attempt at it here. Instead, our narrow interest is the creative approaches that emerged from this troubling time. Antigonus of Socho (175 B.C.E.) questioned the old, simplistic model of reward and punishment reflected in the Old Testament presentation, according to which service assumed just compensation—namely, that God only blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked: “Do not serve your master with thought of reward but serve him with no thought of reward. And let the fear of Heaven be upon you” (*m. ‘Abot* 1.3).

The stark reality that the wicked continued to live their lives seemingly unpunished necessitated new solutions. Nickelsburg noted that it is just during this time that we find major developments concerning the notion of resurrection.⁵² To wit, if just recompense could not be found in this world, it was certain to be found in the next. Moreover, rather than the easy, superficial conjecture that delay in divine judgment upon the wicked possibly indicated God’s impotence or injustice, a deeper, more profound reflection concluded that the momentary escape of the wicked in fact demonstrated a sublime, undeserved divine mercy. The ripples from this new thinking were widespread. The theme of unmerited benevolence is even heard at the center of Jesus’ parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (*Matt* 20:1–16) in which the landlord answers the complaints by some regarding his largesse, “Do you begrudge me my generosity?” In the new calculus of divine mercy, the last will be first and the first last.

Similar perceptions of divine mercy granted to the undeserving surface in rabbinic Judaism: “Greater is the day of rainfall, than the day of resurrection. For the latter benefits only the pious, whereas the former benefits the righteous and sinners alike” (*b. Ta’anit* 7a). The antiquity of Rabbi Abahu’s sentiment is affirmed by Jesus’ statement: “For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (*Matt* 5:45). The relevance of these developments on our pericope is two-fold: first is the elevation of love over fear (of recompense), as the right impetus in the service of God. The charge to love God was exemplified by the biblical command found in *Deut* 6:5: וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לֵבְבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדֶךָ. Equally important, the new emphasis upon divine mercy called for altruistic love on

52 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

the part of those who bore God's image. Jesus' statement about rainfall and the unmeasured benevolence of the Creator was intended to be a model for the faithful, "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36; cf. Matt 5:48).

Expressions of altruistic love became the highest demonstration of Judaism in the Second Temple period. This second charge was likewise epitomized in a single passage from Lev 19:18: וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֲךָ כְּמוֹךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה. Rabbi Akiba deemed the verse to be "the great precept in the Law" (γ. *Ned.* 9.4; *Gen. Rab.* 9.4), an estimation not distant from the question of the *σοματός* in Matt 22:36. James likewise calls it "the royal law" (Jas 2:8), and Paul asserted, "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Gal 5:14; cf. Rom 13:9).

By the New Testament period there were already indications that the comparative pronoun כְּמוֹךָ should be understood to refer to the subject, that is, "You shall love your neighbor *who is like you*," rather than the predicate, "You shall love your neighbor *as you love yourself*":

רבי חנינא סגן הכהנים אומר דבר שכל העולם כולו תלוי בו נאמר עליו מהר סיני
אם שונא חבירך שמעשיו רעים כמעשיך אני ה' דיין להפרע מאותו האיש ואם אוהב
את חבירך שמעשיו כשרים כמעשיך אני ה' נאמן ומרחם עליך⁵³

Rabbi Hanina, the Prefect of the Priests (1st c. C.E.), says: An oath from Mount Sinai has been sworn on this saying ("Love your neighbor as yourself") upon which the whole world depends: If you hate your fellow man *whose deeds are evil like yours*, I the Lord am judge to punish that same man and if you love your neighbor whose deeds are proper like you own, I the Lord am faithful and merciful towards you (*'Abot R. Nathan Ver. B Chap. 26*, *emphsis added*).

This interpretation recognized universal human frailty, which necessitates divine mercy for all and precludes harsh judgment, a man against his neighbor: "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37). This intricate triangulation of God, the individual and his neighbor is closely identified with the teaching of Jesus, but in fact it advances upon the conclusions of the preceding generations. Already in Ben Sira (175 B.C.E.) we hear a similar triangulation:

53 Solomon Schechter, *Avoth de-Rabbi Nathan Solomon Schechter Edition with references to parallels in the two versions and to the addenda in the Schechter edition* (New York, Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1997), 53.

ἄφες ἀδίκημα τῷ πλησίον σου,
καὶ τότε δεηθέντος σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου λυθήσονται.
ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ συντηρεῖ ὀργήν,
καὶ παρὰ κυρίου ζητεῖ ἴασιν;
ἐπ’ ἄνθρωπον ὅμοιον αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔχει ἔλεος,
καὶ περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτοῦ δεῖται;

Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done,
and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.
Does anyone harbor anger against another,
and expect healing from the Lord?
If one has no mercy toward another *like himself*,
can he then seek pardon for his own sins? (Sir 28:2–4)

Likewise, the combination of Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18 is not original with the New Testament.⁵⁴ It is heard in *Jub.* 20:2, 7; 36:4–8; *T. Iss.* 5:2; *T. Dan.* 5:3; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 2.63; *Sib. Or.* 8:480–82. The Jewish portion of the *Didache*, which comprised the treatise of the Two Ways, presents the Double Commandment together with the familiar variant of the Golden Rule: “The Way of Life is this: ‘First, thou shalt love the God who made thee,’ second, ‘thy neighbor as thyself’; and whatsoever thou wouldst not have done to thyself, do not thou to another” (*Did.* 1:2).⁵⁵

In our consideration of the high ideals that are conveyed in the Double Commandment we should not overlook the mundane, individual literary components that make up the conceptual complex. The unifying thread for the exegetical combination of our two verses is not merely a conceptual interplay but a verbal analogy. Deuteronomy 6:5 and Lev 19:18 are two of the three occasions in the entirety of the Hebrew Scriptures in which a command begins **לְאָדָמָה**.⁵⁶

Recognition of the exegetical ingenuity inherent in the combination is important to appreciate fully the literary structure of the remainder of our pericope. We noted that the biblical citations are two of the three occasions in the Hebrew Scriptures in which a command begins **לְאָדָמָה**. The third appears

54 S. Ruzer, “The Double Love Precept,” in Notley, Turnage and Becker, eds., *Jesus’ Last Week*, 81–106.

55 H. van de Sandt and D. Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (CRINT 3.5; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 156–58.

56 A fourth occasion occurs in Deut 11:11, but it is a verbatim repetition of the command to love “the Lord your God” heard in Deut 6:5.

in Lev 19:34 regarding the foreigner: אֲרֻמֵי לֵוִי כְמוֹךָ. Is it possible that what we possess in the story of the merciful Samaritan, which was intended to answer the question “Who is my neighbor?,” is a narrative midrash upon the remaining biblical command to love? It was intended to communicate to the *νομιμάς* that the obligation to love extends beyond one’s community to include the stranger, even one whose community was at enmity with his own. It can hardly be a coincidence that the central character of the story belonged to a people who, according to the historical reports, were hostile towards the Jews of Roman Judea.⁵⁷

What might be the objections to such a reading? To our knowledge no other Jewish sage exploited the triple commandment to love. Yet, as Flusser observed, “Jesus went further and broke the last fetters still restricting the ancient Jewish commandment to love one’s neighbor.”⁵⁸ His is the only voice among his contemporaries who challenged his hearers, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt 5:44). It seems apt that such a unique, breathtaking advance should be undergirded with a novel exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures. If so, once again we witness a report preserved by Luke that is both independent of his Synoptic counterparts and structured upon an ingenious exegesis of the Hebrew text that contributes to our understanding of Jesus’ full engagement with emerging Jewish thought in his day.

4 The Cleansing of the Temple (Matthew 21:12–13; Mark 11:11–17; Luke 19:45–46)

The so-called “Cleansing of the Temple” pericope records yet another example of Jesus’ exegetical genius. Luke’s version (19:45–46) is the shortest version, depicting Jesus’ entry into the Temple courts and his verbal assault upon the sellers with an elliptical quotation taken from Isaiah and Jeremiah. On the other hand, Matthew and Mark portray Jesus driving out those selling and buying, turning over the tables of the moneychangers, and the chairs of those selling doves. Mark is further distinguished in two important ways: (1) Jesus’ attempt to stop other worshippers from entering the Temple courts, “And he did not

57 R. T. Anderson, “Samaritans,” in *ABD*, 5:943.

58 Flusser, *Jesus* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2000), 88.

permit that anyone carry a vessel through the Temple” (11:16), and (2) his more complete Isaianic quotation, adding “for all nations” (πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, 11:17).⁵⁹

A thorough treatment of the Synoptic tradition in this pericope is beyond the scope of the present study, but some items are worthy of note. All four accounts (from Luke to Mark/Matthew⁶⁰ to John) exhibit an increasing escalation in tension and violence, which finds its culmination in John’s description, “And he made a whip from ropes” (καὶ ποιήσας φραγέλλιον ἐκ σχοινίων, 2:15).⁶¹

However, the force of Jesus’ message lies in his exegesis, not his physical handling of the merchants in the Temple.⁶² The quotation from Isaiah, “My house will be a house of prayer” (56:7), and Jeremiah, “a den of robbers” (7:11), sent a forceful rebuke to the Temple authorities, who were responsible for and profited from these activities.⁶³ As is often the case in rabbinic citations, it is the immediate literary context of the biblical quotes (and not necessarily the words uttered/written) that in fact contain the message. Mark’s expanded mention of “for all nations” diverts the reader’s attention from the intended purpose of the citation.⁶⁴ Jesus’ rebuke was not concerned with the nations at all, but with the sinful behavior of those entrusted with the sanctity of the Temple. As such, the words from Isa 56:7 were intended to direct the hearers to the opening exhortation from Isa 56:

59 Matthew and Luke’s minor agreement, that is, the terse quotation of Isaiah and Jeremiah, bears striking similarities to the manner in which Scripture is quoted within rabbinic literature.

60 Matthew reflects elements from both Mark and Luke. Matthew’s use of the aorist (ἐξέβαλεν), rather than Mark’s aorist + infinitive (ἤρξατο ἐκβάλλειν), describes Jesus’ action as a completed act (cf. D. Flusser and R. S. Notley, *The Sage from Galilee* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 132 n. 44). On the other hand, Matthew’s scriptural quotation parallels Luke and not Mark’s fuller quotation.

61 R. S. Notley, “Anti-Jewish Tendencies in the Synoptic Gospels,” *Jerusalem Perspective* 51 (April–June 1996): 25–26, see also <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/2773>

62 The Greek verb ἐκβάλλειν need not suggest violence. See H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek–English Lexicon with a Revised Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 501.

63 Pace E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 66.

64 See, for example, V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1957), 463–64: “The quotation has an eschatological colouring; cf. συναξω ἐπ’ αὐτὸν συναγωγῆν in Isa lvi.8; also Psa. Sol. xvii.30f., where it is said that the expected Son of David will cleanse (καθαρεῖ) Jerusalem and nations will come from the ends of the earth to see his glory.”

Thus says the Lord: “Keep justice, and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed.”

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה שְׁמְרוּ מִשְׁפָּט וַעֲשׂוּ צְדָקָה בִּי־קְרוּבָה יְשׁוּעָתִי לְבוֹא וְצַדִּיקְתִּי לְהַגָּלוֹת

The first-century idiomatic reading⁶⁵ of לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה would have been understood as a call to care for the poor, the widow, the orphan, which is also heard in the context of Jeremiah’s warning, “if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow” (Jer 7:6). Isaiah’s call to righteous behavior with the promise of salvation stands like an antithetical mirror image to Jeremiah’s stark warning of divine judgment, if the prophetic call is not heeded. In particular, Jeremiah’s message was directed to the leaders of the Temple, if they continued to abuse their position and profit at the expense of the vulnerable (7:4–7).

Jeremiah’s warning hearkened back to the episode at Shiloh (Jer 7:12) and the battle at Aphek reported in 1 Sam 4. As a result of that conflict, the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant (v. 11)—though the problems at Shiloh found their genesis in the sons of Eli the priest, Hophni and Phineas, themselves priests. Both of them are described as “wicked” (*lit.* sons of wickedness) and “ignorant of the Lord” (יָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה, 1 Sam 2:12; also see v. 34). With the loss of the Ark from Shiloh and the death of his sons, Eli also perished. The situation was poignantly underscored by the naming of Eli’s newborn grandson, Ichabod, “without glory” (אִי־כְבוֹד; [ὸὐαὶ βαρῆαβωθ, LXX; from אִי־בְרִכְבוֹד]). The name signalled that the glory of God had departed from Israel (1 Sam 4:21). The inter-textual background to Jesus’ message was intended to utilize both the religious and moral context of Jer 7, as well as Jeremiah’s reference to the punishment upon the priests in the episode at Shiloh.

Frankovic advanced the notion that this is another example of *gezerah shavah*,⁶⁶ but the connectives in Jesus’ exegesis are not readily apparent:

Isa. 56:7:

My house will be called a house of prayer.

בֵּיתִי בֵּית־תְּפִלָּה יִקְרָא

65 For the post-biblical sense of צְדָקָה, see R. Posner, “Charity,” in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (eds. M. Berenbaum and F. Skolnik; 2d ed.; Detroit: Macmillan, 2007), 4:569–70.

66 Joseph Frankovic, “The Intertextual-Rhetorical Background to Luke 19:46,” 9–10 (unpublished study).

Jer 7:11:

This house has become a den of robbers.

הַמְעֵרַת פְּרָצִים הִיָּה הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה

As he observed, the noun בית may have played a role in Jesus' combination of texts.⁶⁷ If later rabbinic exegetical method is allowed, the inflected בַּיְתִי and הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה would have been a close enough parallel to connect the two verses.⁶⁸ Furthermore, the antithetical Temple themes in the prophetic passages could have provided the necessary link to connect these two passages.

Yet another closer linguistic correspondence may lie at the heart of Jesus' exegesis. It has long been noted by scholarship that the LXX text of Jeremiah differs at significant points from the Masoretic text known to us today. The prophetic work is one of the biblical books that appears to have two literary strata, that is to say, that the LXX and MT differ so greatly that the LXX is likely utilizing a different base text.⁶⁹ The discoveries of 4QJer^{b,d} have confirmed that the differences in the LXX's Jeremiah are, in fact, due to a variant Hebrew base text. While Jer 7:11 is not attested among the scrolls, the LXX, which deviates from the MT in one important place in our passage, seems to indicate that the translator was working with a slightly variant base text:

a den of thieves . . . <i>this</i> house הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה... הַמְעֵרַת פְּרָצִים (MT)
. . . a den of thieves . . . <i>my</i> house	σπήλαιον ληστῶν ὁ οἶκός μου . . . (LXX)

The rendering ὁ οἶκός μου (i.e. “my house”) does not correspond to the MT's הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה (i.e. “this house”). Elsewhere the Greek rendering of הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה is ὁ οἶκος οὗτος (e.g. 1 Kgs 8:27). Nevertheless, given that the variant is not due to the issues of vocalization, orthography, or exegesis, the Hebrew base text used for the LXX's Jeremiah seems to have read בַּיְתִי, which corresponds to ὁ οἶκός μου and complements the wording in Isa 56:7.

67 Ibid., 9.

68 Frankovic (ibid., 9–10) cites the *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael* tractate *Neziqin* as just one example of this later form of *gezerah shavah*. Cf. *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael: Critical Edition on the Basis of Manuscripts and Early Editions with English Translation, Introduction, and Notes* (trans. and ed. J. Z. Lauterbach; 3 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1935), 3:3–4.

69 Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew*, 313–26.

Therefore, Jesus' exegetical wit may have been based on the inflected בְּיַתִּי that occurs in Isaiah and the Hebrew text behind the LXX of Jeremiah. It betrays a deft handling, perhaps even memorization, of Scripture.⁷⁰ While one must acknowledge the possibility that Jesus' quotation of both prophetic passages was initiated by the simple appearance of the term *house*, it is the closer connective בְּיַתִּי, which better serves as a verbal linchpin and indicates the language in which the connection was made. Once again, the Gospels indicate that Jesus was at home in the Hebrew Bible and the exegetical method of his contemporaries. Drawing together these two disparate passages with a close verbal tie sent a poignant rebuke to the Temple authorities⁷¹

The meaning and target of Jesus' scriptural rebuke was not lost (Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47). It is this event that crystallized the lethal opposition by the Temple authorities. According to Luke, this is the first mention of their plot to do away with Jesus. Though some scholars have questioned whether the priests were the objects of Jesus' protest,⁷² such a contention is strengthened by a similar rabbinic critique referring to the priests as both "buyers" and "sellers" in *Sifre*:⁷³

אמרו חנויות חנו שלש שנים קודם לארץ ישראל שהיו מוציאין פירותיהן מידי לוקח
מעשרות שהיו דורשין לומר עשר תעשר ואכלת ולא מוכר תבואת זרעך ולא לוקח

The Sages said: The (produce) stores for the children of Hanan (i.e. Annas) were destroyed three years before the land of Israel, because they failed

70 Frankovic, "The Intertextual-Rhetorical Background to Luke 19:46," 10.

71 Such criticisms are not strange. Second Temple period literature reflects a similar sentiment against the Temple and the abuses of its authorities (e.g. Mal 1:6–14; 1 En. 89:73–74; T. Levi 14:5–8; Pss. Sol. 2:1–3; 8:4–10; cf. G. Nickelsburg and M. Stone, *Faith and Piety in Early Judaism: Texts and Documents* [Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991]). It is well known that Qumran sectarians were hostile critics of the priests in Jerusalem. Moreover, the Mishnah records R. Simeon b. Gamaliel's anger against the inflated prices of doves, "Once in Jerusalem a pair of doves cost a golden *denar*. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel said: By this Temple! I will not suffer the night to pass by before they cost but a [silver] *denars*" (מַעֲשֵׂה שְׁעָמְדוֹ קִינִים בִּירוּשָׁלַם בְּדִינָר זָהָב. אָמַר ר' שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הַמַּעֲזוּז הַזֶּה לֹא אֶלֶין הַלֵּילָה) (עד שִׁיהוּא בְּדִינָרִים. *m. Ker.* 1.7). Evans speculates that R. Simeon believed that price of doves had been inflated by 20 times. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan likewise preserved criticisms against the first-century priests, referring to them as "thieves," "robbers of money," and "robbers of wealth." See Craig A. Evans, "Jesus' Action in the Temple," *CBQ* 51 (1993): 237–70; and R. Buth and B. Kvasnica, "Temple Authorities and Tithe-Evasion," in Notley, Turnage and Becker, eds., *Jesus' Last Week*, 53–80 (65–73).

72 Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 66–67.

73 See Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 364. The use of "buyers and sellers" by Matthew (21:12) and Mark (11:15) is based on an earlier hendiadys.

to set aside tithes from their produce, for they interpreted *you shall surely tithe . . . and you shall surely eat* (Deut 14:22–3), as excluding the seller (מֹכֵר), and *the produce of your seed* (v. 22) as excluding the buyer (לֹקֵחַ).⁷⁴

Jesus' challenge was a biblically contextualized critique derived from a skillful merging of texts that was immediately understood by those learned in Scripture, namely the priests, of whom criticisms regarding their secrecy and financial misconduct have been preserved in the Talmud (*b. Pes.* 57a). It likewise indicates that Jesus assumed those present would be readily conversant in the Hebrew Scriptures in order to grasp his exegetical rhetoric. In light of their immediate response and subsequent actions, he was not mistaken.

5 Jesus and Caiaphas (Matthew 26:59–65; Mark 14:55–63; Luke 22:66–71)

Finally, the questioning of Jesus before the Temple leaders is a poignant example of the thrust and parry of scriptural exchange that undergirds this tragic narrative.⁷⁵ According to Matthew, the questions by Caiaphas stem from an accusation by two witnesses, “This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days” (Matt 26:61). Their testimony is likely a conflation of two separate statements. The first is drawn from Jesus' warning about Jerusalem's future.⁷⁶ The second expresses the Jewish expectations for the Messiah's role in the building of the Temple, which is already heard in Zech 6:12: “Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall grow up in his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord.’” Use of the moniker, the Branch, is heard elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible to describe the hoped-for descendant of David, “In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land” (Jer. 33:15; cf. 23:5). The Qumran scrolls preserve evidence that this title remained in use to express the hope for a royal Messiah called the Branch of David (e.g. 4Q161 f8 10:17; 4Q174 fi 2i:12; 11Q14 fii:13).

74 L. Finkelstein, *Sifre of Deuteronomy* (New York and Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1993), 165; See also R. Hammer, *Sifre: A Tannaitic Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 152.

75 See M. Turnage's thorough treatment of this episode in “Jesus and Caiaphas: An Intertextual-Literary Evaluation,” in Notley, Turnage and Becker, eds., *Jesus' Last Week*, 139–68.

76 See C. A. Evans, “Predictions of the Destruction of the Herodian Temple in the Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Scrolls, and Related Texts,” *JSP* 10 (1992): 94

Indeed, it was the expectations related to this second scriptural component that gave rise to the central question of the inquiry, “If you are the Christ, tell us” (Luke 22:67). Matthew and Mark present variations on this interrogation. Both follow the question whether Jesus thought himself to be “the Christ” with an appended epithet, Matthew’s “the son of God” and Mark’s “the son of the Blessed.”⁷⁷ On the other hand, Matthew and Luke preserve a minor agreement with the identification of Jesus as “the son of God.” The meaning of the epithet is to be found in the Lord’s promise to the scion of David, “I will be his father and he will be my son” (2 Sam 7:14), and later echoed in the royal enthronement hymn of Ps 2:7: “You are my son; today I have become your father.” These verses are repeated in various Christian *testimonia* (John 1:49; Heb 1:5; Rev 21:7).⁷⁸ Of added significance, in 4Q174 (the *Florilegium*) 2 Sam 7:14 is interpreted with Isa 11:1 (a verse which we have stated has particular relevance to the interrogation): “[I will be] his father and he shall be my son (2 Sam. 7:14). He is the Branch of David . . .” (4Q174 fi 2i:11).⁷⁹

As we noted, Luke does include the title “son of God,” but he structures the exchange differently. Rather than the conflated expressions that appear in his Synoptic counterparts, Luke reports that Jesus is first asked simply, “If you are the Christ, tell us” (Luke 22:67). In his response he advances, “But from now on the son of man shall be seated at the right hand of power”⁸⁰ (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἕσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καθήμενος ἐκ δεξιῶν τῆς δυνάμεως, Luke 22:69). His answer to Caiaphas’ question is an allusion to Ps 110:1: “An utterance of the Lord to my lord: Sit at my right hand . . .” (יְהוָה יָהֵאָם לְיְהוָה לְאֹדְנִי שֶׁב לְיְמִינֵי). Jesus’ mention of the “son of man” at the Lord’s right hand may also suggest a reference to Ps 80:17 (MT 80:18): “But let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, the son of man whom thou hast made strong for thyself!”⁸¹ His periphrastic reference to God by “Power” (δύναμις = גבורה) is likely drawn from Isa 9:6 (MT 9:5), where an anticipated son is called, “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God” (פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ אֱלֹהִים גִּבּוֹר). A discovery among the Dead Sea Scrolls assists us now to understand how these lines were read in the first century. We hear in 1QH^a 11:11 about the

77 For Mark’s periphrastic title, see *m. Ber.* 7.3: הַמְבוֹרָךְ יֵי בְרַכּוֹ אֶת יֵי הַמְבוֹרָךְ.

78 See C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1957), 28–60.

79 D. Flusser, “Two Notes on the Midrash on 2 Sam. VII,” in *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* [hereafter: *JOC*] (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988), 93–98.

80 The addition of τοῦ Θεοῦ is the Evangelist’s attempt to clarify what is meant by τῆς δυνάμεως.

81 P. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša’* (CBQMS 10; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 136, n. 21; Flusser, “At the Right Hand of Power,” in *JOC*, 304.

anticipated birth of “a Wonderful Counselor with his Power” (פלא יועץ עם גבור) (רתו), clearly an allusion to Isa 9:6 but with wording similar to Luke 22:69 and reading גבורה to be a hypostatic circumlocution for God.⁸²

These biblical verses belong to a midrashic complex that describes the appointment of a human figure who will execute divine judgment. Flusser commented, “The one like a man who sits upon the throne of God’s glory, the sublime eschatological judge, is the highest conception of the Redeemer ever developed by ancient Judaism.”⁸³ In the context, Jesus’ response is perhaps the clearest affirmation of his sublime self-awareness.

Nevertheless, our primary interest here is the use of the Hebrew Scriptures to underpin the rhetorical exchange between Jesus’ answer and Caiaphas’ second question. The high priest—a Sadducee—had little interest in a conversation about the judge of the End of Days. His concerns were more immediate, or if you will, political (cf. Luke 23:2). What were Jesus’ earthly intentions? It appears that Caiaphas was familiar with the redemptive scriptural complex from which Jesus drew his answer. He may have also recognized Jesus’ deft hint to Isa 9:6 with the elliptical mention of גבור. In any event, the chief priest’s second question borrowed language from another passage which belonged to the same complex.

He pressed, “Are you the Son of God, then?,” a biblical allusion to Ps 2:7, which is exegetically related to Ps 110 but possessing a stronger identification to the national hopes for a royal messiah. Flusser has already brought attention to the verbal link between Pss 110 and 2.⁸⁴ The term יְלִדְתִּיךָ in Ps 110:3 is an identical *consonantal* correspondent to Ps 2:7 (יְלִדְתִּיךָ), and these are the only two places in the Hebrew Bible where the consonantal form appears. In addition, the consonantal *yod* would not normally be used for the end of the singular noun, whether with a *shva* or with a pausal form *segol*. The *yod* points to the first person verb. Later, the Masoretes attempted to demythologize Ps 110,⁸⁵ which was used by Christian for their claims about Jesus (e.g. Heb 6:20; 7:17; 1 Clem 36:2–3). Thus, the Masoretic tradition vocalizes the term to read nominally, “your childhood” (יְלִדְתִּיךָ). However, both the LXX (γενένηκά σε) and the Vulgate (*genui te*) indicate that there existed pre-Masoretic circles who read

82 Flusser, “At the Right Hand of Power,” in *JOC*, 303–304.

83 Flusser and Notley, *The Sage from Galilee*, 115.

84 D. Flusser, “Melchizedek and the Son of Man,” in *JOC*, 192.

85 The human figure in Ps 110:5 (יְשִׁיבֶנִי) who sits at the Lord’s right hand was clearly intended to be identical with יְשִׁיבֶנִי introduced in 110:1, but the Masoretes have vocalized the term to identify him with יְשִׁיבֶנִי. By so doing they removed the role of a human figure in the execution of divine judgment.

the term as a verb + suffix, “I have begotten you” (יִלְדִתִּי), with the same sense as Ps 2:7.

The antiquity and Jewish provenance of this reading is attested by a Jewish legend. As is well known, some ancient interpreters identified the human redeemer in Ps 110:1 to be none other than Melchizedek himself, reading Ps 110:4, “You are a priest forever, according to my words, O Melchizedek!”⁸⁶ The identification of the human figure in Ps 110:1 to be Melchizedek combined with the reading of יִלְדִתִּי in Ps 110:3 doubtless is the genesis for the Jewish legend concerning the miraculous conception of Melchizedek reported in 2 En 71–72.

So we witness once again that the method and meaning of Jesus’ use of Scripture attests to his intimate familiarity with the contours of the Hebrew Bible. He was not alone. Those around him understood him well. These five pericopae have provided fresh light on the interpretive methodology of Jesus and his language of discourse. It is clear that his exegesis was not based on a Greek or Aramaic translation, but upon the Hebrew Bible. While such an assessment might be met with a jaundiced eye by those who claim Jesus knew only Aramaic (or Greek), it is important to repeat that our conclusion accords with what we know of Jesus’ contemporaries. We have no record of any first-century Jewish sage—particularly among those who lived and taught in the land of Israel—whose exegesis is founded upon any version of the Bible other than the Hebrew Scriptures.

The exegetical style attested in these passages betrays a sophisticated knowledge of the Scriptures—on par with Israel’s Sages. Equally important, their content is not divorced from the emerging world of Jewish thought during the Second Temple period—quite the contrary. The scriptural interpretation preserves evidence concerning both the expectations for a messianic forerunner in the figures of Moses and Elijah, as well as the developing ideas of Jewish humanism that surfaced in consequence of the national crisis in the second century B.C.E. The value of taking into account the original language of the discourse—Hebrew—can hardly be overstated in understanding the sense and purpose of the biblical allusions that undergird these ideas. Indeed, our aim throughout this modest study has been to demonstrate the importance of the Hebrew language and a thorough knowledge of the contours of emerging Jewish thought in order to grasp better both the method and meaning of Jesus’ exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures.

86 Reading על־דברתי as מַתְּ עַל־דְּבַרְתִּי and with a pronominal *yod*: “according to my word.” This is certainly the understanding of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who, at 7:3, attributes an eternal priesthood to Melchizedek. Only in Ps 110 is the king of Salem associated with such an honor.

Jesus' *Petros*–*petra* Wordplay (Matthew 16:18): Is It Greek, Aramaic, or Hebrew?*

David N. Bivin

Κάγώ δέ σοι λέγω ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ πύλαι ᾗδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς.

And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Matt 16:18 NIV)

Jesus' dramatic statement, "You are *Petros* and on this *petra* I will build my church," appears to contain an obvious Greek wordplay, indicating that Jesus taught in Greek. Therefore, one authority has suggested that the *Petros*–*petra* wordplay is Greek. Others have suggested that it is Aramaic. Is there a third possibility?

1 Language

a *A Greek Wordplay?*

The words πέτρος and πέτρα, found in Matt 16:18, make a nice wordplay. This has caused Nigel Turner¹ and a few others² to argue that the wordplay is Greek,

* An early version of this article was published as "Matthew 16:18: The *Petros*–*petra* Wordplay—Greek, Aramaic, or Hebrew?," *Jerusalem Perspective* 46–47 (September–December 1994): 32–36, 38; online: <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/2718>. A revision and expansion of the article was presented at the 2004 SBL annual meeting (San Antonio), Program Unit "Matthew." I wish to thank Randall Buth for the invaluable editorial suggestions that were incorporated into the present article. I also would like to thank Pieter Lechner for his assistance in sourcing several of the articles and books I have cited.

1 Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Syntax* (ed. James Hope Moulton; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 3:22, states: "The name of the apostle Πέτρος, if it actually means *rock* and corresponds to Aram. *Κηφᾶς*, cannot be connected directly with πέτρος, since this was out of general use; it does not mean *rock* but is a masculinizing of πέτρα." Elsewhere, Turner refers to this wordplay "as evidence which may establish original Greek composition" (*Grammatical Insights into the New Testament* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1965], 181).

2 Among recent commentaries on Matthew, see principally Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994). For Gundry's comments on Matt 16:17–19, see pp. 330–36. On pp. 333–34 he

evidence that Jesus delivered his teaching in Greek. However, the word πέτρος was apparently never used as a Greek name until its use as a second name, or nickname, for a Jewish native of the land of Israel who later became a disciple of Jesus.³ Furthermore, it is probable that Jesus taught in Hebrew, not Greek.⁴

states: "Matthew's composition of vv. 17–19 in Greek also means that we ought to overlook the Aramaic counterpart to Πέτρος—viz., ܨܦܛܐ—in our interpretation of the passage. Simon was called 'Cephas,' to be sure, and this Aramaic form of his nickname would provide a wordplay untarnished by the Greek distinction between Πέτρος (masculine) and πέτρα (feminine). Nevertheless, the two Greek words provide a wordplay that is good enough to obviate the need of an Aramaic substratum . . . No longer shackled by the need to suppose an Aramaic substratum, we can see that Πέτρος is not the πέτρα on which Jesus will build his church."

- 3 It is surprising, but the name *Petros* was apparently never used in Greek before its appearance in the New Testament. (See the entry "Πέτρος" in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. and ed. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich; Chicago: University of Chicago Press and Cambridge University Press, 1957), 660.) According to Allison, "in pre-Christian sources Kêpā' as a proper name is attested only once [referring to the Aramaic personal name ܨܦܛܐ from Elephantine pointed out by Fitzmyer, see my n. 6, and Πέτρος as a proper name not at all?" (Dale C. Allison, Jr., "Peter and Cephas: One and the Same," *JBL* 111, no. 3 [1992]: 492). However, in Allison's footnote to this statement (his n. 13), he provides counterevidence: "On the other hand, C. C. Caragounis argues that 'in view of the predilection of the ancients for names derived from πέτρα/πέτρος . . . it is only natural to suppose that Πέτρος was in existence [in pre-Christian times], though no examples of it before the Christian era have turned up as yet' (*Peter and the Rock* [BZAW 58; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990], 24); and Caragounis can demonstrate pagan use of the name in the first and second centuries C.E." Bockmuehl also cites possible counterevidence: "the currency of Peter's name is confirmed in Tal Ilan's identification of three additional first- and second-century Palestinian Jewish individuals who bear the name *Petros*" (Markus Bockmuehl, "Simon Peter's Names in Jewish Sources," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 55, no. 1 [2004]: 58–80 [71–72]). Bockmuehl (p. 72, n. 90) cites Tal Ilan to support this statement: "Ilan 2002 s.v. The first of these is *Petros* (c. 30 C.E.), a freedman of Agrippa's mother Berenice, whom Josephus mentions in passing in *Ant.* 18.6.3 §156 (v.l. *Protos*). The other two names are *Patrin* פטרין son of Istomachus at Masada (ostracon no. 413, pre-73) and *Patron* פטרון son of Joseph in a Bar Kokhba-period papyrus deed at Naḥal Hever (*P. Yadin* 46, 134 C.E.). Although these two names seem at first sight different from *Petros*, the Aramaic rendition of Greek names in -ος as פ- or פ'- was in fact well established, as Ilan 2002:27 [Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, Part I: Palestine 300 B.C.E.–200 C.E.* (TSAJ 91; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002)] demonstrates (cf. similarly Dalman 1905:176) [Gustav Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch nach den Idiomen des palästinischen Talum, des Onkelostargum und Prophetentargum, und her jerusalemischen Targume* (2nd ed.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1905)]."
- 4 See Shmuel Safrai, "Spoken and Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus," in *Jesus' Last Week: Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels* (ed. R. S. Notley, M. Turnage and B. Becker; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2005), 228–29, 233–34. According to Steven Fassberg, "The heterogeneity of Tannaic Hebrew known today to Hebraists suggests that it is the product of a language that was

b *An Aramaic Wordplay?*

Most New Testament scholars assume that the *Petros*–*petra* wordplay is Aramaic.⁵ A few scholars, such as Joseph A. Fitzmyer, have argued their case at

widely used and spoken. Had Tannaic Hebrew been merely a learned language used by just a few for religious and liturgical purposes, it would not be as variegated as we now know it to have been" (Steven E. Fassberg, "Which Semitic Language Did Jesus and Other Contemporary Jews Speak?," *CBQ* 74 [2012]: 275).

- 5 "The passage points to an Aramaic original" (Claude G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels: Edited with an Introduction and a Commentary* [2 vols.; 2d. ed.; London: Macmillan, 1927], 2:234); "The play upon the name *Petros* and the word *petra* ('rock') indicates an earlier play on the Graecised Aramaic nickname *Kephas*, which is the same thing as the Aramaic noun *kēphā* meaning 'rock'" (T. W. Manson, "The Sayings of Jesus as Recorded in the Gospels According to St. Matthew and St. Luke Arranged with Introduction and Commentary," in H. D. A. Major, T. W. Manson and C. J. Wright, *The Mission and Message of Jesus: An Exposition of the Gospels in the Light of Modern Research* [New York: E. P. Dutton, 1938; repr. London: SCM Press, 1949], 204); "Jesus, not quoting the OT, here uses Aramaic, not Hebrew, and so uses the only Aramaic word which would serve his purpose" (William Foxwell Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew* [AB 26; Garden City: Doubleday, 1971], 195); "There is little doubt that *Kephas* was the original form of Simon baryona's nickname, but once the name had passed into Greek as Πέτρος there was little need to continue using it in the old form" (J. K. Elliott, "Κηφᾶς: Σίμων Πέτρος: ὁ Πέτρος: An Examination of New Testament Usage," *NovT* 14.4 [October 1972]: 248); "*Peter* . . . on this rock (Gk *Petros* . . . *petra*): the play on the words is fully effective only in Aramaic (*kēpha* . . . *kēpha*) where there is no distinction of gender" (H. Benedict Green, *The Gospel According to Matthew in the Revised Standard Version: Introduction and Commentary* [The New Clarendon Bible; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975], 152); "As we know from Jn 1.42 and the Pauline epistles, behind Πέτρος (and also, probably, πέτρα) lies the Aramaic *kephā* . . ." (W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* [3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988–97], 2:626); "The word play is clear in the Greek (Πέτρος [*Petros*], 'Peter [lit. "stone"]'—πέτρα [*petra*], 'rock') despite the shift required by the feminine form of the noun for 'rock.' It is even more obvious in the Aramaic, where the name כֶּפְתָּי, *Kēphā*, is exactly the same for the word 'rock'" (Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew* [WBC 33A–33B; Dallas: Word Books, 1993–95], 470); "From a rabbinic point of view, there is no reason to query the idea of an Aramaic-speaking Simon bar Yonah who was surnamed *Petros* (and later Cephias) . . ." (Bockmuehl, "Simon Peter's Names in Jewish Sources," 75); "probably . . . the play on words between *Cephas* and *Cepha* (*petros* and *petra* in Greek) can be seen to go back to an Aramaic setting" (Ben Witherington III, *Matthew* [Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2006], 316); "*Peter*, a play on Gk 'petra,' 'rock'; the underlying Aram, 'Kēpha,' relates to the name *Cephas* (Jn 1.42; 1 Cor 1.12, and elsewhere)" (Aaron M. Gale, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* [ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler; Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011], 30); "Here we have the well-known wordplay on *Peter* (Greek: *Petros*; Aramaic: *kepha*), whose name means 'rock' (Greek: *petra*)" (Craig A. Evans, *Matthew* [NIBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012], 313).

length. Fitzmyer suggests that Jesus employed an Aramaic wordplay כֶּפְחָא–כֶּפְחָא (*Kēphā’–kēphā’*) in his response to Peter’s declaration.⁶ In his article, however, Fitzmyer himself acknowledges the difficulties posed by his assumption that underlying the Greek Πέτρος–πέτρα wordplay is an Aramaic wordplay: “The problem that confronts one is to explain why there is in the Matthean passage a translation of the Aramaic substratum, which is claimed to have the same word *kp’* twice, by two Greek words, Πέτρος and πέτρα . . . [I]f the underlying Aramaic of Matt. xvi.18 had *kēphā’* twice, then we should expect σὺ εἶ Πέτρος καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ τῷ πέτρῳ οἰκοδομήσω . . .”⁷ In other words, Fitzmyer puzzles that the Matthean Jesus does not say, “and on this *petros* I will build . . .”⁸ This difficulty is a product of Fitzmyer’s Aramaic reconstruction. He has been forced to reconstruct Jesus’ wordplay in Aramaic using only one word, כֶּפְחָא; therefore,

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- 6 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Aramaic Kēpha’ and Peter’s Name in the New Testament,” in *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black* (ed. Ernest Best and R. McL. Wilson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 121–32; repr. in *To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 112–24. According to Fitzmyer, Jesus said: ‘antāh hū’ Kēphā’ wēal kēphā’ dēn ‘ebnēh . . . (D.B.: אַנְתָּה הוּא כֶּפְחָא וְעַל כֶּפְחָא דֵּן עֲבִנְהָ . . .) (“You are Kēpha [Cephas], and on this *kepha* [rock] I will build . . .”) (ibid., 130 [= *To Advance*, 118]; Fitzmyer also puts forward his arguments and transcription in his reply to a *BAR* reader’s letter [*BAR* 19, no. 1 (January–February 1993): 68, 70]). Researchers are indebted to Fitzmyer for his “Aramaic Kēpha’ and Peter’s Name in the New Testament,” in which he points out an overlooked fifth-century B.C.E. occurrence of the Aramaic personal name כֶּפְחָא in an Elephantine text (Fitzmyer, “Aramaic Kēpha’,” 127–30 [= *To Advance*, 116–18]). Although there can now be no doubt that the name כֶּפְחָא existed in fifth-century B.C.E. Egypt, Fitzmyer cannot point to an example of כֶּפְחָא in the land of Israel. While we find a rabbi named פֶּטְרוֹס, there is no rabbi, or other person, in the land of Israel carrying the name כֶּפְחָא. Bockmuehl acknowledges that the evidence “from first-century Palestine . . . suggests that Cephas was not current as a name” (“Simon Peter’s Names in Jewish Sources,” 70). Surprisingly, however, instead of concluding that כֶּפְחָא was *not* in use as a name or nickname in the land of Israel in the time of Peter, Bockmuehl concludes that כֶּפְחָא was Peter’s nickname: “In the absence of evidence for Cephas as a Jewish name, however, this remains as Peter’s most distinctive epithet—his nickname rather than a proper name . . . It is this [nickname] that characterised him in the Aramaic-speaking churches of Judaea, and which ironically survived even Paul’s move in the Gentile world” (“Simon Peter’s Names,” 70–71).
- 7 Fitzmyer, “Aramaic Kēpha’,” 130–31 (= *To Advance*, 119). Nolland emphasizes the difficulty contained in Fitzmyer’s Aramaic assumption: “in Aramaic, as far as we know, no etymologically linked second word is available to take the place of πέτρα” (John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 669).
- 8 Assuming his suggested Aramaic reconstruction, Fitzmyer expects the Greek masculine dative of πέτρος instead of the Greek feminine dative of πέτρα, the reading of all Greek manuscripts. For Fitzmyer’s Aramaic reconstruction to be probable, the Greek text should read ἐπὶ τούτῳ τῷ πέτρῳ rather than ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρῳ.

he is unable to preserve the wordplay reflected in Greek, a play on two different words. The only difference between *Kēphā'* and *kēphā'* in Fitzmyer's reconstruction is the capitalization of the former. This distinction, however, does not exist in Aramaic, since in Aramaic there are no capital letters. Fitzmyer has no recourse but to surmise, "So, perhaps we are dealing with an Aramaic term that was used with different nuances."⁹ Fitzmyer's Aramaic wordplay is insipid, even if we would be willing to acknowledge that this is a wordplay.

Fitzmyer's Aramaic reconstruction presents other difficulties. First, Peter is known in the Synoptic Gospels only by the names Σίμων and Πέτρος.¹⁰ The Greek form of Peter's Aramaic name, Κηφᾶς (Cephas = Aramaic כִּפְאָא, *Kepha*), is not used in these sources.¹¹ Second, in this period Jewish sages ordinarily taught in Hebrew, not Aramaic.¹²

c *A Hebrew Wordplay?*

A possible solution to the difficulties inherent in the Greek and Aramaic assumptions is to suppose that both *petros* and *petra* became Hebrew words, and that Jesus spoke to Peter in Hebrew. Jesus may have said: אַתָּה פֶּטְרוֹס וְעַל אֶתְּהּ אֶבְנֵה אֶת עַדְתִּי הַפֶּטְרָא הַזֶּה אֶבְנֵה אֶת אֶבְנֵה אֶת עַדְתִּי (‘‘You are *Petros*, and on this *petra* I will build my community’’).¹³ The Hebrew wordplay, then, would be פֶּטְרוֹס–פֶּטְרָא.

The word πέτρος entered the Hebrew language as a proper noun. A certain פֶּטְרוֹס (*Petros*), for instance, was the father of Rabbi Yose ben Petros.¹⁴ This

9 Fitzmyer, ‘‘Aramaic Kepha,’’ 131 (= *To Advance*, 119).

10 On Σίμων (Simon), see n. 16.

11 In the New Testament, Κηφᾶς occurs once in the Gospel of John (John 1:42) and eight times in Paul's epistles (1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14).

12 See Safrai, ‘‘Spoken and Literary Languages,’’ 228–29, 233–34. In later rabbinic sources, parables, even when found in an Aramaic context, are preserved in Hebrew. Notley and Safrai have collected and edited the 456 tannaitic parables (R. Steven Notley and Ze'ev Safrai, *Parables of the Sages: Jewish Wisdom from Jesus to Rav Ashi* [Jerusalem: Carta, 2011]). They state: ‘‘The parable is always told in Hebrew, even in Amoraic texts written in Aramaic. On the other hand, the Amoraic story (עובדא) is usually in Aramaic. This distinction in language is not evident in Tannaitic compositions, which are all in Hebrew’’ (p. 6).

13 The reconstruction פֶּטְרוֹס for the Greek *Petros* was put forward in ‘‘Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary Preview: The Rich Young Ruler Story’’ (ed. David N. Bivin), *Jerusalem Perspective* 38–39 (May–August 1993): 23–24, nn. 76–84. See the entry ‘‘Peter’’ in ‘‘Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction’’ under the heading ‘‘Matthew 19:27 = Mark 10:28 = Luke 18:28.’’ For my 2011 revision of these comments, see the entry ‘‘L95 Πέτρος,’’ in Bivin, ‘‘Counting the Cost of Discipleship,’’ in *The Life of Yeshua: A Suggested Reconstruction*, 56–60; online: <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/712>.

14 *Gen. Rab.* 62:2 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 672: רבבי יוסי בן פטרוס; 92:2 (p. 1139: רבי יוסי בר פטרוס); 94:5 (p. 1175: רבבי יוסי בן פטרוס); *Exod. Rab.* 52:3: רבבי יוסי בן פטרוס; *Mo'ed Katan* 82d

Yose was a Jewish sage of the land of Israel who was active around 200–250 C.E., placing his father, Petros, as early as the second half of the second century C.E. In a tannaitic source, we also find a town or village marketplace named Petros in the vicinity of Antipatris, near Lydda.¹⁵ These examples show that Hebrew speakers could borrow the word *πέτρος* and use it as a name.

Apparently, Jesus' most prominent disciple bore two Hebrew names: שִׁמְעוֹן (*Shim'on*, Simon),¹⁶ the name Peter's parents gave him at his circumcision, and

(ch. 3, halakah 5: רבי יוסי בר פיטרס; *y. Avod. Zar.* 42c (ch. 3, halakah 1: רבי יוסי בר פיטרס); and elsewhere. Note the personal name פטריס (*patrys*) at רקמו (*Raqmu* = city of Petra) in a Nabatean-Aramaic burial monument inscription (see my n. 20). Is the name פטריס related to the Latin *patricius*, or can we relate it to the Hebrew פטרוס/פטרס? If the latter, then we have the personal name *Petros* in Petra in 60 C.E.

- 15 In *t. Demai* 1.11 there is a reference to the marketplace of the town (or village) of *Petros*, שוק של פטרוס (*shuk shel Petros*). Saul Lieberman comments that *Petros* is “apparently located in the vicinity of Antipatris” (*Tosefta Kifshutah* to *Demai* 1.1, 199). Michael Avi-Yonah identifies the site *Petros* with Kh. Budrus (Map Reference 147152), located about seven kilometers east of Lydda/Lod (*Historical Geography of Palestine: From the End of the Babylonian Exile Up to the Arab Conquest* [Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1962], 107 [Hebrew]). We should not assume the town sprang up only a short time before the *Tosefta* was redacted near the beginning of the third century C.E.
- 16 Σίμων (Simon—Matt 4:18; 10:2; 16:16, 17; 17:25; Mark 1:16 [twice], 29, 30, 36; 3:16; 14:37; Luke 4:38; 5:3, 4, 5, 8, 10; 6:14; 22:31; 24:34; Acts 1:13; 10:5, 17, 18, 32; 11:13) and Σιμεών (Simeon—Acts 15:14; 2 Pet 1:1) are used in the New Testament to refer to Peter. Both Greek names were used by the authors of the Septuagint to transliterate שִׁמְעוֹן (*Shim'on*). Peter's Hebrew name might also have been סִמּוֹן (variant: סִימוֹן), which is attested in inscriptions from the period (for examples, see L. Y. Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries in the Collections of the State of Israel* [Jerusalem: The Israel Antiquities Authority and The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994]: Σίμων [Inscriptions 99, 332, 560, 778, 794, 795, 868]; Σίμων [Inscription 332]; שמעון [Inscriptions 12, 16, 18, 26, 38, 41, 61, 150, 151, 428, 488, 501, 502, 520, 651, 820]; סמון [Inscription 200]; שמון [Inscription 651]); however the spelling Σιμεών, for example, in 2 Pet 1:1, implies the Hebrew name שמעון, not the Grecized Hebrew סִמּוֹן. A Hebrew סִמּוֹן probably would not produce Σιμεών. Based on first-century literary and epigraphic sources, שמעון (= Σίμων) was by far the most common Jewish male name of the period—approximately 20 percent of the Jews we know by name from the Second Temple period were named שמעון–Σίμων (see Rachel Hachlili, “Names and Nicknames of Jews in Second Temple Times” [Hebrew], *Eretz-Israel* 17 [1984]: 188–211; Tal Ilan, “Names of Hasmoneans in the Second Temple Period,” *Eretz-Israel* 19 [1987]: 238–41 [Hebrew]; cf. Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, Part I: Palestine 330 BCE–200 CE* (TSAJ 91; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002]). The personal name Πέτρος (always referring to Jesus' disciple) is found 156 times in the New Testament.

פֶּטְרוֹס (*Petros*, Peter), Simon's nickname, or second name, with which contemporaries could distinguish him from the many other Simons in the population.¹⁷

Like πέτρος, πέτρα entered the Hebrew language. The Hebrew word פטרא (also spelled פטררה, פיטרא, and פוטרה) is found in rabbinic literature, for example, in the Jerusalem Talmud in Tractates *Kil'ayim* and *Shebi'it*.¹⁸ In the former, as in Luke 8:6, a sower whose seed falls on *petra* is mentioned.¹⁹

- 17 Since such a large percentage of the male population carried the name "Shimon," it was necessary to specify, by the addition of a second name or second designation, which Shimon was intended. (Cf. the designation "*ben Sira*" [son of Sira] for a Shimon who was the son of a *Yeshua* [Jesus]: סירא בן ישוע שנקרא בן סירא [Sir 41:30].) Thus, we find in the New Testament, for example, Σίμων ὁ Καναναῖος (Matt 10:4 = Σίμων ὁ ζηλωτῆς in Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13); Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ (Matt 16:17); Σίμων ὁ λεπρός (Matt 26:6; Mark 14:3); Σίμων ὁ Κυρηναῖος (Matt 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26); Σίμων ὁ μαγέυων (Acts 8:9), and Σίμων ὁ βυρσεύς (Acts 9:43; 10:6, 32). For Peter's Jewish names, see further Bockmuehl, "Simon Peter's Names in Jewish Sources." The double name חנניה נותוס (*Haniah Nothos*) appears in the "Register of Rebukes" (4Q477). Because the designation is composed of a Hebrew name followed by a borrowed Greek word, νότος (*notos*, south), it reminds us of the name Σίμων Πέτρος (= שמעון פטרוס). In the New Testament the double name Σίμων Πέτρος appears twice in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt 16:16; Luke 5:8) and 17 times in the Gospel of John. The variant Συμῶν Πέτρος appears once in the New Testament (2 Pet 1:1). Such double names were common in the period, and, since there were relatively few male personal names in use, another of the ways of specifying the person referred to. Jesus' most trusted disciple, שמעון, one of a multitude of Shimons in the population of the land of Israel in the first century, also could be distinguished by reference to his father, יונה (*Yonah*, Jonah). See the reference to Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ in Matt 16:17, the Greek transcription of יונה בן שמעון (Shimon son of Jonah). The name Βαριωνᾶ (בר יונה) is often assumed to be "the transliterated Aramaic for 'son of Jonah'" (so Hagner, *Matthew*, 469), but בר is not necessarily an indication of Aramaic. Cf., for example, the יהודה בר אלעזר הסופר ossuary inscription (*CII*, no. 1308). Fitzmyer and Harrington classify it as Aramaic (Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* [Rome: Biblical Institute, 1978], 174, 232, no. 99), but the inscription is obviously Hebrew, as the title הסופר (the scribe) indicates.
- 18 *y. Kil'ayim* 27b (ch. 1, halakah 9: סלעים ע"ג פטורה ע"ג הים ע"ג פטורה ע"ג טרשים שהוא פטור (ע"ג טרשים שהוא פטור) and *y. Shevi'it* 36a (ch. 5, halakah 4: פוטרה של צילעות פוטרה). The assumption is that in these two passages the variants פטורה (perhaps representing a different pronunciation of the word *petra*) and פוטרה (perhaps a misspelling of פטורה) are the equivalents of פֶּטְרָא and פֶּטְרָא.
- 19 The Synoptic parallels are ἐπὶ τὸ πετρῶδες (Mark 4:5) and ἐπὶ τὰ πετρῶδη (Matt 13:5). In the New Testament the word πετρῶδης appears four times (only in the Markan and Matthean accounts of the Parable of the Sower and the Soils, and its interpretation), and appears to be a more complicated Greek replacement for the pre-Synoptic πέτρα. The word πέτρα appears 90 times in the Septuagint, but πετρῶδης never. (By comparison, in the works of Josephus we find πέτρα 78 times and πετρῶδης 10 times.) Note the house constructed with

The Hebrew word פטרא also appears in the *Avraham-petra* midrash. (See the discussion on the dating of the *Avraham-petra* midrash in the “Culture” section below.) These examples help to demonstrate that the word פטרא had entered Post-biblical Hebrew at least by rabbinic times.²⁰ It is possible, therefore, that both פטרוס and פטרא existed in first-century Hebrew and were available for the wordplay.

A Hebrew hypothesis provides solutions to the difficulties raised by the Aramaic reconstruction of Matt 16:18: it preserves the *Petros-petra* wordplay that is reflected in Greek, a contrast between two different though related words; it permits us to reconstruct Jesus’ saying using *Petros*, one of Peter’s names in the Synoptic Gospels; it lets Jesus speak in the language of contemporary Jewish sages—Hebrew.

A Hebrew hypothesis can also explain why the name *Petros* is not attested in the Greek language until it is used in the New Testament. Apparently, the name arose in the land of Israel within a Hebrew-speaking community in an area with prestige influence from Greek. Tannaitic evidence supports this assump-

its foundations on πέτρα (“solid rock, bedrock”; Matt 7:24–25; Luke 6:48) in the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders. *Petra* appears 15 times in the New Testament.

- 20 Like πέτρος, πέτρα became a place name. The city of Petra (the biblical קַלְעַ [Judg 1:36; 2 Kgs 14:7; Isa 16:1; 42:11], always translated by πέτρα in the LXX; Map Reference 205020) is mentioned five times by Strabo (*Geog.* XVI.iv.2, 18, 21, 23, 24) and 14 times by Josephus (*Ant.* 3.40; 4.82, 161; 14.16, 80, 362; 17.54; 18.120; *J.W.* 1.125, 159, 267, 574, 590; 4.454). In Strabo and Josephus’ time, Petra was the capital of the Nabatean kingdom. Note also the 32 references to Petra in the 26 Greek documents found in the Babata archive, which date from the twenties and thirties of the second century C.E. These documents were published in *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (ed. Naftali Lewis; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Shrine of the Book, 1989). *Ant.* 4.161 refers to the five Midianite kings mentioned in Josh 13:21, one of whom was named Πέρεμος (= MT: רֶקֶם; *Rekem*); “the city which bears his name ranks highest in the land of the Arabs and to this day is called by the whole Arabian nation, after the name of its royal founder, Rekeme [Ῥεκέμης]: it is the Petra of the Greeks” (trans. Loeb). In a Nabatean-Aramaic burial monument inscription from Petra dating to ca. 60 C.E. published by J. Starcky (“Nouvelle epitaphe nabatéenne dominant le nom Sémitique de Petra,” *RB* 72 [1965]: 95–97; pl. v.–vi.), we find the Nabatean name for their capital: רקמו (*Raqmu* = Petra). The inscription reads: דא נפש פטריס בר חרפטסו יקרא די הוה ברקמו די מית בגרשו. See the inscription’s translation in Ada Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic, Hebrew and Nabataean Documentary Texts from the Judaean Desert and Related Material* (2 vols.; Jerusalem: The Ben-Zion Dinur Center for Research in Jewish History [The Hebrew University], 2000), 2:107: “This is the burial-monument of *Ptryson* son of *Hrptsw*, the distinguished/dear, who was in *Rqmw* (= *Petra*), (and) who died in *Gršw* (= Gerash) . . .”

tion. Provincials who spoke Greek (the *lingua franca* of the Mediterranean world) as their second or third language borrowed the word πέτρος and used it as a personal name in their local language.²¹ Until it appeared in Greek in the New Testament, the name *Petros* may have existed only in Hebrew.

2 Culture

Not only did πέτρα become a Hebrew word, but it is the key word in a rabbinic interpretation (preserved in Hebrew) that is strikingly similar to Jesus' declaration to Peter. In a Hebrew source from the thirteenth century, we find a tantalizing midrash. An anonymous interpreter, commenting on Num 23:9, "I see him from the top of the rocks,"²² describes the dilemma God confronted when he wished to create the world:²³

21 Israelis whose first language is Modern Hebrew interact with the English language in a similar fashion. My Hebrew-speaking Israeli neighbors in Maoz Zion (ten kilometers west of Jerusalem) had a dog named "Star." Like the word πέτρος ("stone"), the English word "star" is not usually a personal name. This Israeli family, however, for whom English is a second language, liked the word "star" and used it as a name for their dog. Perhaps an even better example of this phenomenon is the transformation in personal nicknames taking place today in Thailand: "Bangkok: . . . For as long as people here can remember, children have been given playful nicknames that no matter how silly—classics include Shrimp, Chubby and Crab—are carried into adulthood. But now, to the consternation of some nickname purists, children are being given such offbeat English-language nicknames as Mafia or Seven—as in 7-Eleven, the convenience store. The spread of foreign names mirrors a rapidly urbanizing society influenced by everything from Hollywood to fast-food chains and English Premier League soccer . . . according to the results of a survey of almost 3,000 students in and around the city of Khon Khaen, in northeastern Thailand . . . Forty percent of secondary students and 56 percent of primary students had English nicknames, the survey showed, compared with just 6 percent of university students, indicating a clear trend among the youngest Thais . . . Ball was the most popular English nickname . . . followed by Oil and Bank" (Thomas Fuller, "English Nickname Fad Annoys Thai Purists," *International Herald Tribune* [August 24, 2007]: 5).

22 As rendered by the overly literal New American Standard Bible.

23 The interpreter digs deep into Scripture to find the answer to the question, "Who is this rock (literally, 'rocks,' צָרִים) that God saw in advance (here מְרֵאשׁ is taken to mean 'in advance' rather than 'from the top of')?" The interpreter's answer: "Abraham." This the interpreter deduced from Isa 51:1–2, which equates Abraham with "the rock"—"Look to the rock (צור) from which you were hewn . . . Look to Abraham, your father." Compare the rabbinic saying, "On account of Abraham both this world and the world to come were created" (*Tanhuma, Chaye Sarah* 6 [ed. Buber, p. 60a]). Abraham's identification as "the rock" may perhaps be seen in another source: in *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shim'on bar Yochai* to

It can be compared to a king who desired to build a palace. He began digging, searching for (something solid) on which he could lay a foundation [תמליוס, a Greek loanword = θεμέλιος],²⁴ but he found only mire. He dug in several other sites, always with the same results. However, the king did not give up. He dug in still another location. This time he struck solid rock [פטרא, a Greek loanword = πέτρα].²⁵

“Here,” he said, “I will build,” and he laid foundations [תמליוס] and built.

In the same manner, the Holy One, blessed is he, before he created the world, sat and examined the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood. “How can I create the world when those wicked people will appear [lit., ‘are standing,’ עומדין] and provoke me to anger?” he said.

When, however, the Holy One, blessed is he, saw Abraham who was destined to arise [שעתיד לעמוד]²⁶ he said, “Here I have found solid rock [פטרא] upon which I can build and upon which I can lay the world’s foundations.”

Exod 18:12 (ed. Epstein-Melamed, 131, line 22), there appears the curious phrase אברהם בפינה (*Avraham bapinah*, Abraham in [or, at] the corner). (See the discussion in M. B. Lerner, “Comments and Novellae on Mekhilta de Rabbi Simeon b. Yohai,” in *Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple, Mishna and Talmud Period: Studies in Honor of Shmuel Safrai* [ed. Isaiah Gafni, Aharon Oppenheimer and Menahem Stern; Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1993], 373–75 [Hebrew]). Shmuel Safrai suggested to me that this phrase should be read אברהם הפינה (*Avraham hapinah*), that is, “Abraham the corner[stone].”

24 See Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (2d ed.; New York, 1903; repr. New York: Pardes, 1950), 1677, entry “תמליוס.” Cf. “Then therefore . . . you have been built on the foundation (θεμέλιος) of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph 2:19–21).

25 Although in the two Bible passages from which the midrash is derived (Num 23:9 and Isa 51:1–2), it is the Hebrew word צור that is used, in the midrash the interpreter employs the Greek loanword פטרא. This occurrence of *pitra/petra* was noted by Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 1162, entry “פיטרא, פיטרה.”

26 The verb עמד (“stand”), with the sense “arise, appear,” occurs in Late and Post-biblical Hebrew (Ezra 2:63; Neh 7:65; Sir 47:1, 12), and frequently in the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g. CD 1.14; 3.19; 5.5, 20; 6.10; 7.20; 12.23; 14.19; 20.1), where particularly relevant to the *Avraham-petra* midrash are two references to the “standing” (i.e. appearing) of the Davidic Messiah, “the Branch of David” (4Q161 f8 10.17; 4Q174 f1 2i.11).

Therefore, he [God] called Abraham *Tsur*,²⁷ as it is said, “Look to the *tsur* from which you were hewn . . .” (*Yalkut Shim’oni* I.766, to Num 23:9, author’s translation)²⁸

- 27 Part of the *Avraham–petra* midrash’s shock is that in Scripture God is הַצִּוּר (“The Rock,” Deut 32:4 [note also Gen 49:24 where God is referred to as אֶבֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל, “The Stone/Rock of Israel”]). The creator of the *Avraham–petra* midrash demonstrated, by combining Isa 51:1–2 with Num 23:9, that Abraham is “The Tsur”! Jesus’ hearers would have been impacted in a similar fashion by Jesus’ *Petros–petra* wordplay: Jesus declared Peter to be the *Petra–Tsur*, a trustworthy man like Abraham, the sure foundation upon which Jesus could build his Kingdom of Heaven community.
- 28 The *Avraham–petra* midrash is well-known to scholars. Most commentators note this midrash, and, despite the late date of its source, most recognize that it may have relevance for interpreting Jesus’ declaration to Peter. Green understands the midrash’s importance, stating (after quoting from the midrash): “Peter is to be to the new covenant what Abraham was to the old, the man of faith (cp. Rom. 4) . . . what is built on him, the Church . . .” (Green, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 152). Green further identifies Peter as “the foundation-stone [הַיְסוּד הַבְּרִיחַ] in the centre of the temple at Jerusalem” (ibid., 152), a notion that Lachs rejects: “It is unlikely that the *petra* theme is related to the *even shetiyah*, the foundation stone which was in the Holy of Holies in the Temple and considered to be the navel of the world” (Samuel Tobias Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* [Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV, 1987], 257, n. 4). Nolland has reservations about the relevance of the *Avraham–petra* midrash for understanding Jesus’ statement in Matt 16:18: “In Is. 51:1–2 Abraham and Sarah are probably identified as ‘the rock from which you were hewn’. Though the late Jewish text *Midr. Yal. Sim’oni* 1.766 explains this in terms of God considering (the prospect of) Abraham an adequate foundation rock for the creation (construction) of the world, the imagery in Is. 51 is of Abraham as a quarry and not as a foundation” (Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 671). Gundry, too, discounts the *Avraham–petra* midrash: “The rabbinic saying that portrays Abraham as the rock on which God built and founded the world (see Str-B 1. 733; cf. Isa 51:1) hardly demands an identification of Matthew’s rock with Peter . . .” (Gundry, *Matthew*, 336). Witherington is aware of the *Avraham–petra* midrash, but attributes it to rabbinic knowledge of Christian tradition: “There is an interesting later rabbinic tradition in Greek [*sic*: the tradition is transmitted in Hebrew—D.B.] in which Abraham is called a *petra* on which God will build this world, but it seems likely to be a polemical counter to the Jesus tradition from a much later time” (Witherington, *Matthew*, 317–18). Like Witherington, Davies and Allison suspect Christian influence “because of the lateness of the text and the use of the loanword *pîtrā*” (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:624). Lachs gives an English translation of the *Avraham–petra* midrash, commenting only that it is “an interesting parallel” (Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary*, 256). Hagner only vaguely alludes to the *Avraham–petra* midrash, writing: “For Jewish background concerning a community built upon a ‘rock,’ see Str-B 1.732–33” (Hagner, *Matthew*, 471). For the text of the *Avraham–petra* midrash, Manson simply quotes George Foot Moore (*Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim* [2 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.:

The midrash leads us from צְרִיִם (“rocks”) in Num 23, to צוֹר (“rock”) in Isa 51, to פֶּטְרָא. Having a knowledge of who “the rock” is, the interpreter created a parable that illustrates the great esteem in which God held Abraham: when God decided to create the world, he looked into the future and realized that his plans would be frustrated by evil persons. There was nothing solid on which he could build. However, he saw one faithful person—Abraham. This was the solid foundation God needed. God then went ahead with his plans to create the world.²⁹

The same “rock–petra” interlinguistic and textually based wordplay is found in Matt 16:18, where Jesus, having found a trustworthy disciple named *Petros* (“Rock”) upon whom he could build his Kingdom of Heaven movement, says to him, “You are *Petros* and upon this *petra* I will build.”

Yalkut Shim'oni is a very late collection of midrash; however, it contains much early material.³⁰ Some scholars might argue that this rabbinic source

Harvard University Press, 1927], 1:538), with no citation of the rabbinic source (Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus*, 202–3). Manson's comment about the midrash is significant: “On this analogy it can be contended that Peter is the foundation of the New Israel” (ibid., 203). Montefiore also quotes Moore's translation (Claude G. Montefiore, *Rabbinic Literature and Gospel Teachings* [London: Macmillan, 1930], 255–56), but he cites the source: “Yalkut §766 on Numbers xxiii. 9” (ibid., 256). Montefiore's only comment about the value of this rabbinic source is: “The passage quoted in Moore i. p. 538 about Abraham is interesting” (ibid., 255). While the *Avraham–petra* midrash has been noticed by scholars, what perhaps has been overlooked is that Matt 16:18 proves that this midrash, recorded only in medieval times, already existed in the Second Temple period.

29 We might compare the rabbinic saying, “On account of Abraham both this world and the world to come were created” (*Tanhuma*, *Chaye Sarah* 6 [ed. Buber, p. 60a]).

30 The author of the thirteenth-century C.E. *Yalkut Shim'oni* identifies *Midrash Yelamdenu* as the source of the *Avraham–petra* midrash. According to Shmuel Safrai, *Midrash Yelamdenu*, which has survived in *Tanhuma* and other midrashic works, can be dated to the fifth century C.E. (personal communication). (*Tanhuma*'s final compilation was in ca. 800 C.E. according to Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005], 241.) However, *Midrash Yelamdenu* contains many traditions that are even earlier. This could be expected since the midrash is divided according to a triennial cycle of Torah readings, the division used in the land of Israel in the first century C.E. Further evidence for the antiquity of the *Avraham–petra* midrash is the occurrence of Greek loanwords: פֶּטְרָא is the Greek πέτρα, and תְּמֻלִּיּוֹס, the word translated “foundations” in the *Avraham–petra* midrash, is the Greek θεμέλιος. The frequent occurrence of Greek loanwords in a rabbinic passage may be an additional indication that the passage dates from the Second Temple period when Greek still heavily influenced Hebrew (my thanks to Joseph Frankovic for emphasizing this point to me). Randall Buth has pointed out to me that evidence from the Targums (ca. first–eighth centuries C.E.) strengthens the supposition that the *Avraham–petra* midrash

can tell us little or nothing about what a first-century Jewish sage might have said;³¹ yet the similarity between Jesus' declaration and the above midrash is too great to be coincidental. It seems likely Jesus alluded to a tradition with which his disciples were familiar, the tradition that God built the world on the sure foundation of a dependable man.

The *Avraham–petra* midrash is so similar culturally and linguistically to Jesus' *Petros–petra* midrash that there are only three logical possibilities: (1) the rabbis borrowed from Jesus; (2) Jesus and the rabbis used common traditions; (3) each independently created the midrash. While certainty is not possible, the name *Petros*, attested in tannaitic (second-century) rabbinic sources at a time of church–synagogue hostilities, suggests that the first possibility—that the rabbis borrowed from Christian sources—is less probable, and that the second and third possibilities are more probable. Most probable is that Jesus and the rabbis used common traditions.

dates from a much earlier period than *Yalkut Shim'oni*: the redactors of the Targums probably did not create the midrashic material found in their translations of the Bible. Rather, in most cases, this material already had a long history of development and transmission. The identification of Abraham as the *tsur* of Isa 51:1, or one of the *tsurim* of Num 23:9, was made long before *Yalkut Shim'oni* was redacted. The connection between Abraham and “rock” (*tsur*), assumed in Jesus' *Petros–petra* wordplay, is found in three Targumim to the Pentateuch: *Neofiti*, *Fragmentary Targum* and *Pseudo-Jonathan*. Here is the text (with English translation) of *Tg. Neof.*: ארום חמי אנה עמא האליין מדברין ואתיין בזכות אבהתה [ב] וצדיקיה דמתילין בטווריה אברהם יצחק ויעק[ב] ובזכות אמהתה צדיקתה דמתילין בגלמחה שרה דמתילין דמתילין בלחודיהון ובנימוס אומיה לא מתערבין רבקה רחל ולאה הא עמא האליין שריין לבלחודיהון ובנימוס אומיה לא מתערבין (“For I see this people being led and coming for the merits of the just fathers who are comparable to the mountains [יוריה = *tsurim*]: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and for the merits of the just mothers who are comparable to the hills: Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah. Behold this people encamp by themselves and do not mix themselves in the law of the nations” (*Tg. Neof.* Num 23:9; text: Alejandro Díez Macho, *Neophyti 1* [6 vols.; Madrid and Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1968–79], 4:221, 591–92 [Engl. trans. by Martin McNamara]). *Frg. Tg.* Num 23:9 and *Tg. Ps.-J.* Num 23:9 preserve this tradition in almost the same words. (For text and translation of *Frg. Tg.* Num 23:9, see Michael L. Klein, *The Fragment-Targums of the Pentateuch According to their Extant Sources* [2 vols.; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1980], 1:201; 2:74.)

31 For an opposing view, see Shmuel Safrai, “The Value of Rabbinic Literature as an Historical Source,” *Jerusalem Perspective* (September 29, 2009); online: <http://www.jerusalem-perspective.com/4669>. Should we think it strange for late midrashim to show up in the New Testament, we need only recall that the “Jannes and Jambres” midrash mentioned in 2 Tim 3:8–9 appears not earlier than the third century C.E. in the Targumim, and much later in the Midrashim. (I am indebted to Randall Buth for the content of the previous sentence.) 2 Timothy is dated as early as the autumn of 58 C.E. by John A. T. Robinson (*Redating the New Testament* [London: SCM, 1976], 80, 352).

Matthew, a first-century document, which may also be pre-70 C.E., is our earliest witness to the *Avraham–petra* tradition. Because of the *Petros–petra* midrash preserved by the author of Matthew, we may assume that the *Avraham–petra* midrash predates Jesus' time. If Jesus used the midrash in speaking to a first-century audience, the midrash must have been developed considerably earlier.

The Abraham–*petra* midrash is so late that it could well have been a reapplication to Abraham of a Christian motif, showing that a Jewish compiler indeed borrowed this tradition from Christians, or even that it was independently created at a much later date. However, there is an extraordinary parallel to “on this bedrock [i.e. foundation] I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt 16:18) in the Thanksgiving Scroll:

The depths roar to my groaning and [my] lif[e approaches] the gates of death (שערי מות). I am as one who enters a fortified city and seeks shelter behind a high wall until his deliverance. I rejo[ice] in Your truth, my God, for You set a foundation upon the rock (תשים סוד על סלע), beams upon a just measuring line and tru[e] plumb line, to [ma]ke the tested stones into a strong building which shall not be shaken. All who enter it shall not totter. For the stranger may not enter her [gat]es; armored doors (דלתֵי מִגְן) do not allow entry, and strong bolts (בריחי עוז) which do not shatter. (1QHa 14.27–31)³²

This text from the Dead Sea Scrolls is the smoking gun. It proves that the idea of building a community on bedrock already existed in Jewish tradition by the first century. At Qumran, Jews talked about a community built on a solid foundation. Jesus' Parable of the House Built on Bedrock [πέτρα] (Matt 7:24–25; Luke 6:48) provides additional support for this assumption. Although in Jesus' parable the image of a man building a “house” on *petra* is slightly different than founding a “community,” Jesus' parable contains, like the *Avraham–petra* midrash, both “to build” and “πέτρα,” showing that Jesus' culture already had

32 English translation from *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (trans. Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg, Jr. and Edward M. Cook; [New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005], 188–89). Eduard Schweizer notes this parallel in his *The Good News According to Matthew* (trans. David E. Green; Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 342. The parallel is likewise noted by Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 425–31; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8–20* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 362–63; and R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 620–25. Schweizer also points out the reference to “a community (עדה) being built (לבנות) by the Teacher of Righteousness” in the Qumran Peshier Psalms, 4Q171 f1+3 4iii.16 (*ibid.*, 342).

these metaphors. The Dead Sea Scrolls passage demonstrates that the motif of founding a community on a sure foundation was already in the air in Jesus' time, already part of cultural tradition.

3 The “Cephas” Riddle

Peter is referred to in the Synoptic Gospels by the personal names Σίμων, Πέτρος and Σίμων Πέτρος.³³ The author of the Gospel of John uses these same three names for Peter.³⁴ Once, however, the author of John refers to Peter as Κηφᾶς (Cephas: Σὺ εἶ Σίμων ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου, σὺ κληθήσῃ Κηφᾶς, ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται Πέτρος, John 1:42). Paul usually refers to Peter as Κηφᾶς (Cephas),³⁵ but when he refers to Peter's “mission to the circumcised,” he calls him *Petros* (twice in Gal 2:7–8). Why, in the Synoptic Gospels, where we would expect Cephas, do we find Peter's Hebrew names, “Simon,” “Petros” and “Simon Petros,” while, in the Gospel of John and in Paul's epistles, where we would expect to find a Greek transcription of Peter's Hebrew name, do we find the Greek equivalent of Peter's Aramaic name, “Cephas”? Furthermore, why did John use the name Κηφᾶς (Cephas) only once in his Gospel? If John never again used Cephas, why did he bother using it in the first place?

The enigma, therefore, is that Paul, when writing primarily to Gentile audiences in the diaspora, uses the name that is assumed to be a “Palestinian” name, Cephas–*Kepha*, while the Synoptic Gospels use the name that is assumed to be a Gentile name, *Petros*.

Many New Testament scholars view the Synoptic *Petros* texts as secondary and directed toward a Gentile audience, but view the *Cephas* texts as primal, “Palestinian” bedrock.³⁶ On the other hand, the riddle of the name *Cephas* is so serious that a few scholars have even questioned whether some of the eight references to *Cephas* in Paul's epistles are indeed references to Jesus' disciple Peter.³⁷

33 For a listing of occurrences in the New Testament, see nn. 16 and 17.

34 John refers to Peter by name as Πέτρος (16 times), Σίμων (4 times) and Σίμων Πέτρος (17 times).

35 For the references, see n. 11.

36 “The name Kephias may have come to Paul first from the earliest Jerusalem church tradition as the list in I Corinthians xv 5 may suggest” (Elliott, “Κηφᾶς: Πέτρος: ὁ Πέτρος,” 250).

37 For instance, Ehrman: “When Paul mentions Cephas, he apparently does *not* mean Simon Peter, the disciple of Jesus” (Bart D. Ehrman, “Cephas and Peter,” *JBL* 109, no. 3 [1990]: 474). Allison, in a critical note in reply to Ehrman's article, concludes: “in lieu of more solid evidence to the contrary, are we not compelled to believe that Peter and Cephas were one and the same?” (Allison, “Peter and Cephas: One and the Same,” 495). On this question,

Adding to the confusion is the assumption that Peter's name was changed by Jesus.³⁸ This notion arose by conflating the Synoptic Gospels' *σὺ εἶ Πέτρος* ("You are *Petros*") with John 1:42, where Jesus says, *σὺ εἶ Σίμων ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου, σὺ κληθήσῃ Κηφᾶς, ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται Πέτρος* ("You are Simon the son of John. You will be called *Cephas*, which means *Petros*"). This conflation resulted in the mistaken assumption that Matthew's "You are *Petros*" is likewise a name change. However, in Matthew, Jesus' declaration begins with "You are *Petros*" rather than "You are Simon." Without our having been influenced by John 1:42, we would assume that *Petros* was already Peter's name. The Synoptic Gospels present the name *Petros* as a given, not as a name change. Some harmonists might argue that John's account is earlier than that of Matthew, that the name change had already occurred, but that argument fails on two counts: (1) the synoptists give *Petros* as Peter's name, not *Cephas*, and, presumably, they would not have used *Petros* if they had been writing to an audience in Antioch (note Paul's use of *Cephas* there), or if they had been writing in the Galilee, where, according to the Aramaic hypothesis, *Cephas* would have been known; and (2) John 1:42 is not a historical sequence, that is, John's preceding words, "Behold, the lamb of God" (John 1:36), is clearly a midrash on the function of John the Baptist's testimony, not his words in time and space. John the evangelist's statement is not tied to the Synoptic Gospels' "*petra*-bedrock" saying, although his statement may assume it.

John 1:42 seems to imply a knowledge of the Synoptic tradition because "you are Simon and you will be called *Cephas*" comes from out of the blue. This tradition would not make sense unless one already knew the *Petros* confession story found in Matt 16:13–20. It appears that John 1:42 was written after the time of the *Petros*-*petra* story. *Cephas* would seem to be a new name; throughout

see also James M. Scott, "A Question of Identity: Is Cephas the Same Person as Peter?," *JBS* 3, no. 3 (2003): 1–20. Cephas' alleged hypocrisy in his behavior toward the Gentiles in Antioch and Paul's strong rebuke of him (in Gal 2:11–14) made some church fathers (e.g. Clement of Alexandria, quoted by Eusebius [*H.E.* 1.12.2]) so uncomfortable that they suggested that this Cephas was not identical with the Cephas, a pillar in the Jerusalem church, whom Paul mentions in Gal 2:9, and/or with the *Petros* whom he mentioned in Gal 2:7–8.

38 Bockmuehl makes this assumption: "while Greek speakers inevitably account for the preponderance of *Petros* in the New Testament and subsequently, the apostle's unusual linguistic background in Bethsaida allows for the possibility that he may have been called *Petros* from the start. If so, it is worth pondering the possibility that it was Jesus who applied to him the Aramaic translation *Kēfa*' as a new nickname, interpreting his Greek name in Jewish terms and thus ensuring this new appellation's enduring importance" (Bockmuehl, "Simon Peter's Names in Jewish Sources," 76).

the rest of his Gospel John never uses it again, preferring instead to refer to Peter as “Simon,” “Petros” and “Simon Petros”!

Why would John add the name *Cephas* to a Gospel tradition that only knows the name *Petros*? We may assume that he was writing in, or writing to, an area where *Cephas* was being used and was widely known. Once we discover that *Petros* was the name used for Peter in the land of Israel, and that it was a Hebrew name, it becomes clear that John was interpreting a *Cephas* tradition with which people in another area were familiar. John wished to say to his readers in this other area, “Jesus is ‘the lamb of God.’ It was Jesus who gave Simon his new name, *Cephas*.”

4 The “Cephas” Riddle’s Solution

We can solve the “Cephas” riddle by assuming that “Simon,” “Petros” and “Simon Petros” were Hebrew names and that they were native to the land of Israel. They were the names that Peter, his family and contemporaries used in Peter’s native land, the land of Israel.

It becomes more likely that the Gospel of John was written in the Aegean, as some Church Fathers claim,³⁹ where the name *Cephas* was known to the evangelist’s audience. When Paul wrote to Greek audiences in the Aegean and/or to the Aramaic-Greek environs of Antioch, he also referred to Peter by the Greek-Aramaic *Cephas* (e.g. 1 Cor 1:12, “I am of Cephas”). If we assume, as do many, that the *Petros* texts are secondary and directed towards a Gentile audience, we would predict that we would meet the name “Petros” in the Jewish diaspora, but we do not. Rather, there we meet the name *Cephas*. It appears that *Cephas* is a translation of Peter’s native Hebrew nickname פֶּטְרוֹס (*Petros*). Thus, in Greek texts that originated in the land of Israel, we find the name *Petros*, while in texts that originated in or were written to the diaspora, we find the name *Cephas*. כֶּפָּא (*Kepha*) and Κηφᾶς (*Cephas*), the Aramaic and Greek equivalents of the nickname פֶּטְרוֹס, appear to be the names by which Peter went in the Greek- and Aramaic-speaking diaspora. Since *Petros* was unknown as a Greek name,⁴⁰ native Greek speakers probably would have been amused and distracted by the name “stone.”

Assuming that *Petros* is a Hebrew name, we then understand why John used *Cephas* (John 1:42), and why it is so strangely anachronistic. By seeing *Petros*

39 Irenaeus (quoted by Eusebius) wrote that John, the disciple of the Lord, resided in Ephesus after Paul’s death (*Adv. Haer.* 2.22.5; 3.3.4).

40 See n. 3.

as a Hebrew name, we recognize in John a later tradition, which also fits an assumed later date for the writing of John. The reading “*Cephas*” makes sense chronologically: it is a secondary tradition and it shows up in the latest Gospel. “You are Simon, and you will be called *Cephas*” is true historically: at first, Peter’s name was פֶּטְרוֹס (*Petros*). Only after the resurrection, while ministering in the diaspora, did he receive the name כֶּפֶאָ—Κηφᾶς (*Kepha–Cephas*). The author of the Gospel of John rewrote the tradition as if it were a renaming in order to create a virtual prophecy: “You will be called *Cephas*”—in fact, Peter was already being called *Cephas*.

5 Summary

The פֶּטְרוֹס–פֶּטְרָא midrash in Matt 16:18 (which includes the “I have found a foundation upon which I can build” element) demonstrates that Christian scripture can be read as midrash. The פֶּטְרוֹס–פֶּטְרָא midrash is also evidence that the *Avraham–פֶּטְרָא* midrash is earlier than the first century C.E.

The word πέτρα was borrowed by ancient Hebrew speakers just like the French words *détente*, *gaffe* and *cliché* were borrowed by modern speakers of English. Such loanwords gain currency because they have a special flavor or satisfy a deficiency in the host language. Not only did πέτρα become a Hebrew word, but that Hebrew word is the key word in the *Avraham–פֶּטְרָא* midrash.

It appears that Jesus used his first-called and most-trusted disciple’s nickname to launch his teaching about the פֶּטְרָא on which he would build his Kingdom of Heaven, his community of disciples. He took advantage of the similarity in meaning and sound between פֶּטְרוֹס and פֶּטְרָא to hint at a tradition about Abraham. One can capture the flavor of Jesus’ statement with the translation, “You are Rock, and on this bedrock I will build my community.”⁴¹

41 It is very difficult to determine whether the *petra* in Jesus’ saying refers to Peter’s declaration or to Peter himself. Commentators and theologians are divided on this question. Two major suggestions have been put forward by scholars: that the *petra* is Peter, or that the *petra* is Peter’s declaration, “You are the Messiah of God” (Luke 9:20). In favor of *petra* being a reference to Peter: (1) Jesus hints at the *Avraham–petra* midrash—since this midrash speaks of God finding a man (Abraham) on whom he can build, then Jesus was probably hinting that he had found a man like Abraham (i.e., Peter) on whom he could build; (2) in the following verse (Matt 16:19), Jesus invests Peter with great authority in the Kingdom of Heaven (Jesus’ movement of disciples), giving Peter the “keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.” We learn from the book of Acts that Peter was indeed the leader and spokesman of the early church. In favor of *petra* referring to Peter’s declaration:

By adopting a “*Petros* is Hebrew” solution, it becomes possible to understand the riddle of the name *Cephas* in the New Testament, but more importantly this solution allows us to read several New Testament texts in a new light. For example, we are better able to explain the Gospel of John’s use of “*Cephas*” by assuming an Ephesian or Asia Minor provenance for the Gospel. To his readers in Asia Minor, John’s use of “*Cephas*” created a prophecy pointing to Peter’s ministry in the diaspora. By adopting a Hebrew solution to the “*Cephas*” riddle, one also can explain the complete absence of *Cephas* in the Synoptic Gospels. A Hebrew solution also might explain why the author or authors of the Epistles of Peter introduced himself/themselves as Πέτρος (1 Pet 1:1) and Συμεὼν Πέτρος (2 Pet 1:1), rather than Κηφᾶς (*Cephas*). These epistles, in choosing to use Peter’s Hebrew names rather than his Aramaic-Greek name, thus become more likely to be native to the land-of-Israel.

The *Petros–petra* wordplay probably was originally uttered by Jesus in Hebrew, not Greek or Aramaic.⁴² The argument is this: there is a rabbinic interpretation that contains the Greek loanword *petra*. More importantly, it is attested in a midrashic context in which Abraham is portrayed as a reliable foundation. (Support for the antiquity of this midrash comes from the Dead Sea Scrolls, where the idea of a community built on a solid foundation already existed.) Jesus’ statement to Peter also contains the word *petra*. The similarity in content of the *Avraham–petra* midrash and Jesus’ *Petros–petra* midrash is so great that coincidence seems improbable; it appears likely that Jesus alluded to the rabbinic interpretation, or to the tradition from which it was drawn. If so, he probably said *petra* in Hebrew. If *petra* is Hebrew, then *Petros*, which Jesus paired with *petra*, is also probably Hebrew. The likelihood of this assumption

(1) the word “this” in the phrase “and on this rock” seems to indicate a switch to a subject other than Peter. By using אַתָּה (“on you”), for example, Jesus could have clearly indicated Peter had he wanted. The words “and on this rock” following “you are Peter” only make sense if Jesus is speaking about Peter to others. Since he is not, there must be a switch to a subject other than Peter. (2) Jesus may have alluded to the Num 23:9 midrash, not to introduce the “dependable man” motif, but rather the “solid foundation” motif. (3) Jesus may have hinted at this midrash to indicate that he would build, not on a man, but rather on Peter’s declaration. One could also attempt to merge the two major suggestions: “The parallel [Isa 51:1–2] suggests that Jesus foresees founding a new people, his ‘church,’ on the bedrock of Peter’s confession and leadership” (Evans, *Matthew*, 314).

42 Steven Fassberg’s conclusion to the question he poses in the title of his article, “Which Semitic Language Did Jesus . . . Speak?” is: “it seems most unlikely that Jesus would not have known Hebrew in addition to Aramaic. Not only would he have been able to read from the Torah, but he would have been able also to converse naturally in Hebrew” (280).

is strengthened by evidence from rabbinic sources: Hebrew speakers borrowed the Greek word *petros* and used it as a personal name. If the *Petros–petra* word-play is Hebrew, then Jesus could have delivered his famous utterance to Peter in Hebrew.

The Riddle of Jesus' Cry from the Cross: The Meaning of ἡλι ἡλι λαμα σαβαχθάνι (Matthew 27:46) and the Literary Function of ελωι ελωι λειμα σαβαχθάνι (Mark 15:34)

Randall Buth

Just before Jesus dies on the cross he cries out with a loud voice and says something that Mark and Matthew record in a foreign language. There are two reactions to this cry. Some of the people mock and say that he is calling on Elijah to save him. In Mark the reaction is that of a centurion who says “truly this was God’s son.” The same reaction in Matthew follows an earthquake.

This essay will explore several questions by evaluating them in the light of what is known about the tri-language situation of the time and especially from the perspective of current Mishnaic Hebrew scholarship. Is the story historical or did it have a historical basis? What was actually said? Most importantly, how does the cry function within the narratives of Mark and Matthew?

1 Establishing the Greek Text of the Foreign Words in Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34

The Greek text of Matt 27:46 and Mark 15:34 is both complicated and interesting. The text in both Gospels needs to be discussed together. The four major textual groups—the Alexandrian (Alx), the Western (Wes), the Caesarean (Cae), and the Byzantine (Byz)—are all different from each other but they may be placed in two general groups. The Alexandrian, Western, and Caesarean all give a harmonistic, assimilated text between Matthew and Mark and are all probably secondary. It is the Byzantine text type that has resisted assimilation. This is especially remarkable since we are dealing with a transliteration of the words of Jesus at a high point in the gospel story. There was obviously pressure to assimilate the texts: the Alexandrian¹ assimilated to Mark, the

1 ελωι ελωι λεμα σαβαχθάνι. \aleph^c , C (B reads ελωει ελωει λεμα σαβακτανει in Matthew, with a confused and conflated ελωι ελωι λαμα ζαβαφθάνι in Mark). See Reuben Swanson, ed., *New Testament Greek Manuscripts, Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines Against Codex Vaticanus: Matthew, Mark*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), for fuller citations.

In the first century the graph ει was pronounced the same as ι.

Caesarean² to Matthew, and the Western³ to Biblical Hebrew. But the Byzantine text type preserved a Matthew that is different from Mark.

Matt (Byz): ηλι ηλι λειμα σαβαχθανι.

Mark (Byz): ελωι ελωι λειμα σαβαχθανι.

These are probably the closest recoverable texts to the original texts of Matthew and Mark.⁴ An alternative to these Byz readings would be to substitute the Caesarean in Matthew.⁵

Matt (Cae): ηλει ηλει λαμα σαβαχθανει⁶

Mark (Byz): ελωι ελωι λειμα σαβαχθανι.

2 Is the Story in Matthew and Mark with Psalm 22 and Elijah an Invention?

Rudolf Bultmann⁷ argued that the story in Mark developed out of an unspecified cry in the tradition (Mark 15:37) that was filled out by adding a scripture.

² ηλει ηλει λαμα σαβαχθανει. Θ, fi. See *ibid.*, for fuller citations.

³ ηλει ηλει λαμα ζαφθανει. D.

⁴ Westcott and Hort followed the Alexandrian family on this question, despite the strength of the assimilation explanation against their view and despite the problem with Codex Vaticanus in Mark. An overriding aversion to the Byzantine textform misled them here. UBS/NA and the new SBLGNT have corrected that.

⁵ In the matter of reconstructing these transliterations, I think that it is a mistake to work on each word in each author eclectically and work up to the whole sentence. UBS/NA and SBLGNT have produced a “new” reading for Matthew that does not appear in any manuscript listed in Swanson. This is a case where one should probably stay within the non-assimilating text group, which is the Byzantine. Having said that, I would not be averse to following the Caesarean text in Matthew as a very slightly different variant of the Byzantine. Both Cae and Byz basically point to the same sentence in Matthew.

⁶ For the title of the present study the Caesarean option was chosen for Matthew (λαμα), which highlights the difference between Matthew and Mark. The Byz reading in Matthew is the better textual choice if keeping to one unassimilated family for both Matthew and Mark. Both the Caesarean and Byzantine texts of Matthew agree on the same linguistic pedigree and structure. (The Caesarean Greek text in the title of this essay has been changed for *italicism* [ηλι for ηλει, and σαβαχθανι for σαβαχθανει] in order to accommodate “Erasmian” readers of Greek. The form λειμα was left in Mark as non-distracting for Erasmians for the title and for the broad strokes of the argument.)

⁷ Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 313.

David Flusser, employing a different methodology, basically agreed.⁸ There are two problems with this approach. Many have pointed out that Mark's transliteration does not fit easily with the Elijah motif. If Mark introduced Ps 22 into the story, then he would have been the one introducing the transliteration and the Elijah motif. But Mark's transliteration does not highlight the Elijah connection for a Greek reader, in fact, ελωι is about as far from ηλεια as possible. The transliteration suggests that Mark received the story and worked it into his gospel. In addition, these suggestions do not satisfactorily deal with the embarrassment criterion. The citation of Ps 22 has been seen as embarrassing in the history of the Church. Intuitively, most commentators consider the verse as easier to explain as the inclusion of a historical detail than as a literary creation in a gospel. I share this opinion. Looking at this issue from the other side may help clarify the strength of these counterarguments. If Mark only received Ps 31:6⁹ or an unspecified cry in the traditions,¹⁰ then what would lead him to choose Ps 22:2 as a replacement? What interpretative advantage for presenting his portrayal of the messiah does he achieve through the particular verse he chose? He unnecessarily creates added complexity for the picture of a messiah or the Son of God. If he wanted an Elijah story, then he bungled the connection by his transliteration against the biblical text and he did not need a scripture in any case. In terms of probability of solutions we must accept that Mark 15:34–35

8 David Flusser, with R. Steven Notley, *The Sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 4: "I believe that the famous quotation of Ps 22:1 [HMT 22:2] in Mark 15:34 (and Matt 27:46) is a creative invention."

9 For Robert Lindsey (*A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark* [2d ed; Jerusalem: Dugith, 1973], 63) the quotation of Ps 31 in Luke was the catalyst for Mark's substituting Ps 22:2 from a targum and rewriting the story: "The Aramaic words . . . are a direct quotation from a targum of Psalm 22 and appear to be a Markan replacement of the Lukan saying of Jesus from Psalm 31." He gives it as one among many examples of Mark replacing Luke's text but he does not explain why Mark chose a targum, nor does he discuss whether a targum existed in the first century. On a Psalms targum, see below.

10 Flusser (*Sage*, 161) assumed that Luke assimilated Jesus' last cry to what a dying Jew would be expected to say (Luke 23:46). Flusser cited the Jewish Prayer Book. However, as his editor Steven Notley has pointed out in private communication, this is a remarkable confluence between Jewish tradition and a probable Gentile author, despite the fact that the Jewish tradition is only first attested over a millennium later. Notley argues that this points to a historical tradition behind Luke 23:46 and we would concur. Notley also provides a close attestation for this Jewish custom in the *Life of Adam and Eve* 31:4: ἕως οὗ ἀποδῶ τὸ πνεῦμά μου εἰς τὰς χεῖρας τοῦ δεδωκότος αὐτό "until I repay my spirit into the hands of the one who gave it." At a minimum, we would conclude that Luke has received the material behind Luke 23:46 and the parallel usage in Acts 7:59 from a Judean source, oral or written, and with a reasonable case for historicity.

was most probably based on a source, and the cry of Ps 22 is a likely candidate for being historical. We proceed from this historical conclusion.

3 The Language of the Eliya Story

The story about Elijah (Greek: *ηλειας/ηλιας*, vocative *ηλεια/ηλια*; sometimes *ηλειου* in Old Greek OT), a common Jewish messianic motif, suggests that a pre-canonical Greek version of the story circulated with *ηλει/ηλι* not *ελωι*.¹¹ The form *ελωι* is not a good fit for an author who is writing about a wordplay with Elijah. The connection for the Greek reader is unnecessarily obscured.

If *ηλι* is pre-Markan, as appears probable, then Mark is responsible for the form *ελωι* and we should at least ask ourselves if there is a reason or motive that might explain such a change. Fortunately, this is not the only place where Mark introduces a language switch into his narrative. At both 5:41 and 7:35 Mark introduces apparent Aramaic sentences in healing accounts.¹² Apparently when Mark was writing, he was not thinking primarily of this Eliya wordplay, but was more interested in presenting a clearly Aramaic saying.¹³ This is the literary connection that needs to be explored. Another interesting question, assuming that Matthew had access to Mark, is why Matthew changed the transcription from what he found in Mark. However, before discussing the literary connections within each Gospel we must cover the background of the transliterated words themselves, since they have raised not a little controversy and confusion.

¹¹ Similarly, an oral tradition would have used [eli] instead of [eloi].

¹² *ταλιθα*, “little lamb/girl,” is unambiguously an Aramaic word. *εφφαθα*, “be opened,” is actually closer to a niphil Hebrew word פתח. In the first century the first Hebrew vowel was lower than [i] and Greek φφ was hard [p].) But *εφφαθα* can also be explained as colloquial development within Aramaic. Cf. Isaac Rabinowitz, “‘Be Opened’ = ΕΦΦΑΘΑ, Mk 7:34: Did Jesus Speak Hebrew?,” *ZNT* 53 (1962): 229–38; John A. Emerton, “*Maranatha* and *Ephphatha*,” *JTS* 18 (1967): 427–31; Isaac Rabinowitz, “*Εφφαθα* [Mk vii 34]: Certainly Hebrew, Not Aramaic,” *JSS* 16 (1971) 151–56; Shlomo Morag, “*Εφφαθα* [Mk vii 34]: Certainly Hebrew, Not Aramaic?,” *JSS* 17 (1972): 198–202. Because 5:41 and 15:34 are unambiguously Aramaic, it is best to read 7:35 as Aramaic, too.

¹³ Mark 3:17 *βοανηργες*, Mark shows that he is capable of changing a foreign transliteration for literary effect. He probably transliterated the word בנ bene- “sons of” *βοανη*-precisely for its literary effect in Greek where *βοαν* means “to shout”. See Randall Buth, “Mark 3:17 BONEPEFEM and Popular Etymology,” *JST* 3 (January 1981): 29–33.

4 Semitic Background of the Individual Words

The form $\epsilon\lambda\omega\iota$ in Mark seems intended to represent an Aramaic word for “my God,” הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵי in the Tiberian system.¹⁴ That is easy to establish and not in dispute.

On the other hand, $\eta\lambda\iota$, and its acoustically equivalent by-form $\eta\lambda\epsilon\iota$, are most probably intended as specifically Hebrew. One needs to ask the question from the perspective of persons in antiquity who knew both Hebrew and Aramaic: Would they have recognized אֱלֵי as Aramaic or Hebrew? Matthew’s transliteration $\eta\lambda\iota/\eta\lambda\epsilon\iota$ will turn out to be a crucial point because it sets the framework for his own citation.

It has sometimes been claimed that אֱלֵי is good Aramaic. For example, some have pointed to a late copy of a late Psalms Targum where אֱלֵי אֱלֵי is in the text.¹⁵ But a possible use of אֱלֵי in the late¹⁶ Psalms Targum at 22:2 might only mean that a foreign word was being used for midrashic purposes in a targum. Moreover, the text of the Psalms Targum at that verse probably did not contain אֱלֵי . The Targum printed in the new Bar Ilan series *Miqraot Gedolot*, ‘*ha-Keter*’, reads standard Aramaic הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵי .¹⁷ One must remember that a targum is a

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- 14 This Aramaic may be transcribed in IPA as approximately [ʔelɔi], though in the first century the vowel with *lamed* may have ranged anywhere from [a] to [ɔ], depending on dialect and speaker. Etymologically the vowel came from an “a,” but a sister language Phoenician was using “o” for many of these, later Western Syriac would use “o” for this, and later Tiberian Hebrew would use [ɔ]. An IPA transcription of the Greek would produce something similar. [ɛlɔi] or [ɛloi]. The ω -mega was originally a low back vowel close to [ɔ], though in the Hellenistic period both ω -mega and \omicron -mikron were pronounced the same. So, different dialects could freely range anywhere in the mid to lower back region for the one phonemic sound, from [ɔ] to [ɔ] or in between. On the other hand, a Hebrew form for “my God” would expect an extra vowel: [ɛloai] הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵי . Hellenistic Greeks would need to write this: $\epsilon\lambda\omega\alpha\epsilon\iota$. ($\epsilon\lambda\omega\alpha\iota$ would be ambiguous with $\epsilon\lambda\omega\epsilon$ and need a dieresis $\epsilon\lambda\omega\alpha\acute{\iota}$.) The uncommon Biblical Hebrew form הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵי might have been thought to fit perfectly but it is never attested with a suffix and is not used in Mishnaic Hebrew. Since neither Hebrew הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵי nor Hebrew הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵי can explain the Greek, $\epsilon\lambda\omega\iota$ must be considered an Aramaic word.
- 15 See Robert H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel, with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (NovTSup 18; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 64: “(The targum has אֱלֵי !).”
- 16 Probably seventh century or considerably later. A Psalms targum was not in use in Yemen and was not part of the otherwise excellent targumic traditions passed down through Yemenite sources. In the West, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Qimhi, who frequently quote Targumim in their commentaries, do not quote a Psalms targum.
- 17 The *Bar Ilan* targum in its Psalms volume is based primarily on Paris 110 for the consonantal Aramaic text, and primarily on Paris 1/17 for the vocalization, with a group of other manuscripts being used in a supporting role for correcting obvious mistakes.

midrashic translation and cannot be assumed to be natural Aramaic, even if it were from the correct time period. The Targum traditions are a rich index of Jewish exegesis of the biblical text. In sum, the Psalms Targum tradition has nothing to say about first-century Aramaic and the Targum probably had the normal Aramaic אלהי אלהי when it developed towards the end of the first millennium. In a secondary, late manuscript, אֱלִי can only be accepted as a Hebrew insertion.

Joseph Fitzmyer has claimed that no question remains about ηλι being Aramaic because אֱלִי is found in Qumran Aramaic.¹⁸ Unfortunately, his statement is premature, and somewhat misleading. The form אֱלִי/ηλι has not been found in Qumran. What has been found at Qumran is not so much an Aramaic word as an in-group, Hebrew code word, a quasi-proper name. Approximately 800 times in the Hebrew texts at Qumran we find אֱלִי, El, as a quasi-name. It is not used with “the” or with pronominal suffixes. It is a special name that Qumran uses for “God.” The quasi-name has been borrowed in some of the Qumranian Aramaic texts.¹⁹ It is important to point out that this form, too, does not occur with suffixes and it is not a general word for “God.” Fitzmyer has acknowledged this.²⁰ It is this special Qumranian Hebrew name that appears in 4Q246a, the so-called Son of God or Antichrist text. So, one must remember

See Menahem Cohen, *Rabbinic Bible, “the Crown”* [*miqraot gedolot, ha-keter*]: The Book of Psalms, Part 1: Psalms 1–72 (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University, 2003 [Hebrew]), ix–x.

- 18 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Aramaic Language and the Study of the New Testament,” *JBL* 99 (1980): 15: “Moreover, the phrase *bereh di ’l*, ‘the Son of God,’ preserves the use of *’el* as a name for God in Aramaic, in contrast to the usual name *’elah(a)*. It thus puts an end to the debate whether the words of Jesus on the cross in the Matthean form, *eli eli lema sabachthani* (27:46), were really all Aramaic or half Hebrew and half Aramaic, as has been at times maintained. Even though the Aramaic suffixal form *’eli* has not yet turned up, the absolute *’el*, “God,” turns up several times in this text.”
- 19 For instance, in Qumran Hebrew documents the Hebrew title אֱלִי עֲלִיּוֹן is used, which is tied to the special affinity that Qumran had for אֱלִי, El, as almost a personal name for God. Similarly, in the Aramaic 1Q20 *Genesis Apocryphon* we have a Hebrew title אֱלִי עֲלִיּוֹן, “supreme God,” apparently taken as a loan title in an Aramaic Qumran document. 4Q246 has בְּרַה דִּי אֱלִי, “son of El/God,” עַם אֱלִי, “people of El/God,” and אֱלִי רַבָּא, “the great El/God.” 4Q538 might be a better example of a potential normal use הוּא אֱלִי טַב, “he is a good God/El,” but the reading is doubtful. 4Q542 אֱלִי אֱלִי is apparently an adaption from the Qumranic Hebrew אֱלִים אֱלִים.
- 20 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979), 93: “Even though we still do not have the suffixal form of it (אֱלִי) such as the Greek of Matt 27:46 would call for . . ., this form of the divine name should be recalled in discussions that bear on that verse (it has often been maintained that is Hebraic).”

penetrated Aramaic dialects in magic contexts, probably in a late period, but they do not prove that it was an Aramaic word in the first century or that it was being used in normal Aramaic speech or syntax. So, finding ܠܐ at Qumran and *il* in some magic texts further fills out the picture and confirms that ܠܐ was not used in Aramaic, and that the Hebrew loanword ܠܐ was only used in special, marginal Aramaic. Predictably, we do not have words like ܠܐܝ, “my God,” ܠܐܝܗ, “your God,” ܠܐܝܗܗ, “his God,” and so forth, in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic.²⁶ More importantly, in front of an audience that understands Hebrew, the word ܠܐ would be understood as Hebrew and there would be no thought that it was Aramaic or foreign. There is little doubt that bilingual Aramaic and Hebrew speakers would hear ܠܐܝ ܠܐܝܗ as Hebrew.²⁷

A comparison of the Greek text with Syriac translations is complicated and ultimately unhelpful for understanding Matthew and Mark. In Matthew the Syriac Peshitto has ܠܐܝܗ ܠܐܝܗ, without the personal suffix “my.” It is also without translation, apparently since the word is recognized and used in Syriac in names like ܠܐܝܗܗ El-Shaddai and even by itself. In Mark the Peshitto has the same ܠܐܝܗ ܠܐܝܗ without “my,” although a translation in standard Aramaic/Syriac is also given, ܠܐܝܗܗ ܠܐܝܗܗ, “my God my God.” If the Peshitto texts are correct,²⁸ they might indicate that *il/Il* was being considered a divine name. However, one might also speculate that the Syriac ܠܐܝܗ is reflecting an abstract Hebraism ܠܐܝܗܗ, “force, power,”²⁹ from a parallel interpretation that shows up in the Gospel

26 One might ask whether ܠܐܝܗ might be an otherwise unattested signal for Aramaic magic in the first century? This, however, is ruled out by being in a sentence that is devoid of anything magical. Secondly, there is no evidence that “MY GOD” entered the Aramaic magic tradition, certainly not from pre-Christian times. As mentioned above, properly formed Hebrew words and phrases were sometimes taken in whole into the Aramaic magic traditions (cf. ܐܝܗܗ ܐܝܗܗ ܐܝܗܗ and ܐܝܗܗ ܐܝܗܗ ܐܝܗܗ on Amulet 1.23 (in Naveh and Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls*), but the word on the cross is not one of them.

27 Cf. Epiphanius in the *Panarion* 68.3 (Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Books II and III* [Leiden: Brill, 1994], 386): “Indeed, the Lord prophesied this when he said, in Hebrew, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani.’ On the cross the Lord duly fulfilled what had been prophesied of him by saying ‘Eli, Eli,’ in Hebrew, as had originally been written. And to complete the companion phrase he said, ‘lema sabachthani,’ no longer in Hebrew but in Aramaic . . . by saying the rest no longer in Hebrew but in Aramaic, he meant to humble <the pride> of those who boast of Hebrew.”

28 From some point of time in the first millennium Syriac did not vocalize the final syllable of ܠܐܝܗܗ. However, ܠܐܝܗܗ is more likely to be explained interpretively as a name, or possibly as Hebrew “power” rather than textually, especially with the correct form provided in the following clause.

29 The cognate to this word in Syriac is ܠܐܝܗܗ, “help.”

of Peter 19 (ἡ δύναμις μου ἡ δύναμις μου, κατελείπας με, “my Power, my Power, you left me”). It appears that the Peshitto has assimilated Matthew and Mark to the same transcription, and it cannot be taken to represent either the word from the cross or Aramaic for “my God.” The Old Syriac Sinaiticus text has ܐܠܐ ܐܠܐ in Matthew without translation and ܘܐܠܐ ܘܐܠܐ in Mark without translation. Even though ܐܠܐ is not a word used naturally elsewhere in Syriac,³⁰ the lack of translation shows that Syriac audiences were probably able to understand ܐܠܐ ܐܠܐ,³¹ but the phrase for “why” shows assimilation to Syriac.³² The Old Syriac provides a good correspondence to the Byzantine text family in Greek.

An indirect indication that ܐܠܐ was spoken and that it was not Aramaic comes from the logic of the confusion motif. Some of the bystanders were probably Aramaic speakers without a good control of Hebrew, if at all. Passover was a feast when Aramaic- and Greek-speaking pilgrims were in Jerusalem from all over the world. In addition, many of the conscripted Roman soldiers and other non-Jews in attendance would be mainly Aramaic- and Greek-speaking. Both pilgrims and non-Jews would be primary candidates for confusing *eli eli* as *eliya eliya*, ἡλεια ἡλεια. If the sounds *eli* were not an expected or normal word in Aramaic, this could generate confusion, so that the confusion motif takes on verisimilitude with a non-Aramaic *eli*.

30 Neither ܐܠܐ nor ܐܠܐ are listed in Payne Smith's dictionary. According to Payne Smith, ܐܠܐ means “God” and is “frequently used in the composition of proper names.” There is also a wordplay listed ܐܠܐ ܐܠܐ, which would mean “by the help of God/Il.” For perspective: ܐܠܐ is not used in the Old Syriac (Curetonian or Sinaiticus), and it is not used in the Peshitto NT outside of Matt 27:46 and Mark 15:34. In the OT it mainly occurs with names; cf., e.g., Gen 33:20, ܐܠܐ ܐܠܐ ܐܠܐ ܐܠܐ, “and he called it El-elohe-Yisrael”; Gen 35:1 with a play on the name Bethel, “bet-il/el,” house of the God Il/El. Num 16:22 has a vocative ܐܠܐ ܐܠܐ, “O God Il.”

31 This probably shows a cross-language understanding, perhaps like “a Dios” is understood by many Anglo-Californians even though they also recognize Dios as Spanish. Hebrew and Aramaic are closer. See above, where Hebrew words for “God” enter the Aramaic magic tradition as probable “foreign magic,” yet they were apparently able to be made understandable. While “Il/El” is one of the names of God in the Syriac OT, ܐܠܐ is not used for “my God.”

32 Syriac ܐܠܐ *le-mono* where an extra -n- consonant is added although it was not part of either Greek tradition or Second Temple, Western Aramaic.

5 Short Textual Note on λειμα/λαμα, “Why?”

The transliteration λειμα in Mark probably represents the Aramaic ܠܡܐ, “why?”³³ The Greek transcriptions with [i] would be a perception resulting from influence of the alveolar [l] sound on the reduced vowel.

The texts with λαμα are more transparently a Hebrew word ܠܡܐ, “why?” That may be an indication that some of the Caesarean texts are preserving the more original form of the saying in Matthew, where the sentence begins with Hebrew ܠܡܐ ܠܡܐ. However, it must be remembered that the Caesarean text has assimilated Mark’s text to Matthew. Nevertheless, the Caesarean text is still a “difficult reading” in Matthew, meaning textually capable of being original and generating the other texts, since it preserves the apparent Hebrew-Aramaic language dichotomy as enunciated by Epiphanius (see footnote 27 above). The Byzantine tradition itself is rather consistent in having (ליμα, λειμα [lima]). This probably reflects internal harmonization in Matthew, but it might reflect a dialectical use of ܠܡܐ in Mishnaic Hebrew.³⁴

6 Short Anecdotal Excursus on Hebrew in Jerusalem in the First Century

We have three anecdotal accounts of language use in Jerusalem that testify to a fluent use of Hebrew being taken for granted. Acts 21:33 through 22:21 records Paul in a riot, then speaking Greek to a Roman chiliarch, and then speaking Hebrew to the crowd. It has often been suggested that Luke meant

33 All of the textual traditions λειμα, λιμα, λεμα, and λαμα could theoretically refer to an Aramaic word ܠܡܐ, though the first three would be more suggestive of Aramaic and the last more suggestive of Hebrew.

34 The Hebrew Bible does not use ܠܡܐ, even where a preposition might be expected with the word “what?” For comparison, consider במה. This occurs 28 times in the Bible vocalized with *patah* as בַּמָּה (along with its byform בְּמָה) and once in Qoh 3:22 vocalized with *shva* מַשְׁלֵי. Later, in Mishnaic Hebrew, we get a distinction between לָמָּה and לָמָּה as in משלֵי לָמָּה הדבר דומה, “they parabled a parable—to what does the matter resemble?” There may have been dialects using *lema*, “why?,” that have not been recorded due to the lack of written vocalization in antiquity. 1 Chr 15:13 has such a form but it is graphically joined to the following word לְמַבְרָא שׁוֹנֶה. This could give some support to a dialect hypothesis. The Byzantine text family in Matthew would then provide support for such a dialectical form in Mishnaic Hebrew. However, having mentioned this possibility, we assume that it is more likely that λειμα, λιμα and λεμα represent an internal Greek corruption within the Byzantine textual traditions of Matt 27:46.

“Aramaic,” as Bible translations like the NIV and the footnote of the RSV make explicit. Allegedly, a Jew from the diaspora who can speak to them in Aramaic brings them to silence.³⁵ The problem with this suggestion is that many if not most diaspora Jews visiting from throughout the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean, could speak Aramaic as a *lingua franca*. There was nothing surprising at all and the account becomes puzzling when viewed from a wider geographical perspective. Appropriately, Luke did not say that Paul spoke in Aramaic, ἐν τῇ Συριακῇ διαλέκτῳ “in the Aramaic language.” Thanks in part to over a century of research on Mishnaic Hebrew, we now have a more fitting option. A colloquial Hebrew, not Biblical Hebrew, was used in teaching people about Jewish laws relating to daily life and groups like Qumran and even the Jewish members of Bar-Kochba’s army would use it. However, Hebrew was not widely used outside of Judea and Galilee, so hearing a speaker address a crowd in an extemporaneous public speech in Hebrew was predictably stunning. Hebrew explains the crowd’s reaction and it was also an appropriate language for discussing affairs internal to Jewish religious life. John Poirier has added another possibility that points to Hebrew.³⁶ The riot and investigation of Acts 21:33–34 may have taken place in Aramaic. If Paul participated in the investigation in any way before the Greek conversation in Acts 21:37–38, then Paul would have used Aramaic and could not switch to Aramaic in Acts 22 as something new. Roman soldiers serving in the Eastern Mediterranean had to know Greek, but many soldiers also spoke Aramaic, as Josephus exemplifies in *War* 4.37–38. Presumably, soldiers who were bilingual in Greek and Aramaic (not counting “army Latin” and other languages) would be stationed in the Temple area for organized crowd control. Finally, contemporary literature in Greek like Josephus, the LXX, the letter of Aristeas, Ben Sira, and Pseudepigrapha consistently distinguish Hebrew (Ἑβραϊκῶς) from Aramaic

35 Cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998): 704, “A parenthetical remark of Luke explains that Jews of Jerusalem are surprised that a diaspora Jew would address them, not in Greek, but in Aramaic, their native language.”

36 John C. Poirier, “The Narrative Role of Semitic Languages in the Book of Acts,” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 16 (2003): 107–16 (109–11). Also, John C. Poirier, “The Linguistic Situation in Jewish Palestine in Late Antiquity,” *JGRChJ* 4–3 (2007): 80: “when Paul addresses the crowd in τῇ Ἑβραϊκῇ διαλέκτῳ, they immediately fall silent, greatly surprised (and respectful?) at his choice of language. This indicates that Paul’s earlier exchange with the mob was *not* in τῇ Ἑβραϊκῇ διαλέκτῳ. But could it not be that Paul had earlier addressed the mob in Greek? No, for then the tribune would not be surprised to hear Paul address *him* in Greek. In other words, no matter what τῇ Ἑβραϊκῇ διαλέκτῳ means, the narrative implies that Paul addressed the mob in two different languages, and that *neither* of them was Greek.”

(Συριακή). There is no unambiguous reference of Ἑβραϊστί/Ἑβραϊστί to Aramaic. The closest example of an Aramaic reference are three names in the Gospel of John with an alleged Aramaic etymology that are called Hebrew names. (See the article in this volume by Randall Buth and Chad Pierce “*Hebraisti* in Ancient Texts: Does Ἑβραϊστί Ever Mean ‘Aramaic’?”) One cannot use the Gospel of John for re-reading Luke-Acts against its context and against the rest of the Greek language. Thus, Acts 22 most probably records a public speech in Hebrew.

A second anecdote comes from Josephus (*War* 5.272), where watchers on the city walls of Jerusalem warn the populace below whenever a Roman boulder is being catapulted into the city. Josephus records that the warning cry was in “the patriarchal language,”³⁷ ὁ υἱὸς ἔρχεται, “the son is coming,” a wordplay that was only possible in Hebrew: באבא, “stone is coming,” being shouted quickly as באבא, “son is coming,” while אבאבא, “stone is coming” (Aramaic *eben ata*) does not fit אבאבא, “son is coming” (Aramaic *bar ate*). The watchers apparently intuitively chose an insider language for the people, and a different one from the Roman soldiers, many of whom would know Aramaic.

Finally, Josephus records a speech that he makes on behalf of the Roman leader to the rebels holding the city. The speech is given in Hebrew, for the benefit of the rebel leaders as well as bystanders in the city. Josephus, of course, knew the difference between Hebrew and Aramaic, as he made clear when discussing the translation of the Torah into Greek. The translators did not work from Aramaic but from Hebrew (*Ant.* 12.15). Grntz comments, “Thus it can be taken for granted that when Josephus talks (*Bellum Judaicum* VI.2.1 § 96) about a speech he delivered by the command of the emperor in Hebrew: Ἰωσήπος ὡς ἂν εἴη μὴ τῷ Ἰωάννῃ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐν ἐπηκόῳ στὰς τὰ τε τοῦ Καίσαρος διήγγελλεν Ἑβραϊζῶν, ‘Standing so that his words might reach the ears not only of John but also of the multitude, (he) delivered Caesar’s message in Hebrew’—he means precisely what he says: Hebrew and not Syrian.”³⁸

37 This has implications for the first edition of Josephus’ *War*. Josephus says that he wrote it “in the patriarchal language.” In Josephus’ own words, he apparently chose Hebrew as the language of writing for posterity, maybe like 1 Maccabees and other histories before him, despite sending the book out to the Jewish diaspora. Incidentally, our Greek edition is of such a good quality that one may doubt if it is a translation at all. It appears to be much closer in quality to an original Greek work than a translation from a Semitic language. It would be best to think of the Greek work as a second edition that has been skillfully and thoroughly rewritten over an earlier Hebrew work.

38 Jehoshua M. Grntz, “Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple,” *JBL* 79 (1960): 32–47 (44). Earlier Grntz had surveyed Josephus’ usage of the language terms and concluded (p. 42): “An investigation into the writings of Josephus

Thus, we have three clear testimonies about the use of Hebrew in Jerusalem among a public Jewish audience. This does not require us to make Hebrew the most common language in use in Jerusalem, it is simply a language of choice in a Jewish audience in some contexts.³⁹

7 Foreign Words that are Not an Example of Language Switching

We need to look at two questions in order to understand properly what is going on in Mark's writing and with his language switching, or "code switching," to use a linguistic metalanguage.

First, we should discuss foreign items that are not examples of full language switching. They are intrusions into the same governing code, the language has not changed. We will start with these easier items and then return to the the examples of full code switching.

We have names like *Boanerges* (3:17) and *Golgotha* (15:22). The names are quoted in order to bring out a wordplay on their meaning. *Boanerges* is almost humorous because it appears that Mark has altered his transliteration of a foreign name in order to play on the Greek word "to shout," βoάv. Literarily, the use of a foreign name is unremarkable, since names penetrate and pass through language boundaries all the time.

Mark has added three foreign technical terms at three places, *qorban* in 7:11, and *hosanna* (חַסְנָא) in 11:9–10, and *abba* in 14:36. These can be explained as a simple desire for precision, using a technical term that is easiest to communicate by citing the foreign form. *Qorban* is a rabbinic term and best interpreted

demonstrates beyond doubt that whenever Josephus mentions γλωττα Ἑβραίων, Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον, etc., he always means 'Hebrew' and no other language."

Grintz wrote his article 50 years ago. One wonders why this article has not made more impact on NT scholarship. Perhaps the reason is that Grintz started off the article with an implicit equation of the Greek Gospel of Matthew with the Hebrew gospel mentioned in historical sources. Most Gospel scholars correctly recognize that canonical Greek Matthew is not a direct translation of a Hebrew source but is an original Greek work, even if using sources in a Semitized Greek. Grintz was certainly correct about Josephus' use of "Hebrew" for Hebrew.

39 E. Y. Kutscher and others long ago remarked that there may have been a difference in language patterns between Jerusalem, the capital city, and the surrounding villages. The Mishnah mentions that the *ketubba* was written in Aramaic in Jerusalem but in Hebrew in Judea. This may incidentally mirror a cosmopolitan–rural dichotomy that is known in other multilingual societies in sociolinguistic and dialectical studies. To this day in the Middle East one finds patterns of Arabic dialects that divide as city versus rural.

as Mishnaic Hebrew, befitting a halakic discussion. Also, contrary to some claim in NT studies, *hosha'-na* is distinctly Hebrew, and is not an Aramaic formulation.⁴⁰ The third example, *abba*, is a common Aramaic and Mishnaic

40 *hosha'-na* הוֹשַׁע-נָא is most probably a live Hebrew collocation that did not occur in the Hebrew Bible. *hosha'* is the normal imperative form of this Hebrew verb and it occurs two times in the Hebrew Bible. Joseph Fitzmyer (*Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Origins* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans: 2000], 119–30 [Chapter 7, “Aramaic Evidence Affecting the Interpretation of *Hōsanna* in the New Testament”]) proposed an Aramaic origin for this word and even speculated that הוֹשַׁע *hosha'* might be an Aramaic loan-form in Biblical Hebrew (p. 126): “Indeed, one wonders whether the short Hebrew form [הוֹשַׁע—R.B.] in Ps 86:2 and Jer 31:7 (if imperatival) is not really Aramaized.” This comment appears to be an unfortunate mistake and cannot lead to explaining *hosanna*. (See any Hebrew reference grammar: הוֹשַׁע *hosha'* is the expected Hebrew form according to regular Hebrew morphological processes. Final pharyngeal consonants, ע, ח, cause the preceding [i] or [e] vowel in a *hiphil* imperative to change to a *pataḥ* [a]. See הִנָּח; הִזְדַּע; הִזְלַח; הִנָּח; הִזְקַע; הִזְכַּח; הִזְדַּע; הִזְלַח; הִנָּח; הִזְקַע; הִזְכַּח. This occurs in many other morphological contexts in Hebrew, too.)

In addition, if the root of הוֹשַׁע is *יִתְע' [y.ṯ:] as Fitzmyer suggests, then the single occurrence of הוֹשַׁע in the Qumran texts (4Q243 f16.2) clearly testifies that it is a loanword from Hebrew and cannot be an internal Aramaic development, which would have produced הוֹתַע*. Furthermore, later Aramaic dialects know nothing of a verb אוֹשַׁע/הוֹשַׁע, or אוֹתַע/הוֹתַע, which suggests that the Hebrew loanword הוֹשַׁע was shortlived and perhaps limited to Qumran. (The same problem is true for Fitzmyer's note [124] about the name אֲשׁוּר in Aramaic instead of Imperial Aramaic, Syriac אֲתוּר, and Targumic Aramaic אֲתוּרִי, “Assyrian” [once אֲשׁוּרִי]. Thus, אֲשׁוּר in Qumran Aramaic does not attest to its being normal in Aramaic, but it, too, is most probably a loan from Hebrew.) Also, נָא *na* is the ubiquitous Hebrew particle of request, frequently occurring with simple, short-form imperatives. *Na* is extremely limited in Aramaic, and not natural to it. It occurs in Qumran Aramaic as an apparent loanword from Hebrew, but it is not in Aramaic translations from the Hebrew Bible and does not occur in the Syriac Bible or later Jewish Aramaic. One may only conclude that *hosha'-na* would be normal Hebrew, despite its lack of attestation in the Hebrew Bible. It most probably developed within a Hebrew environment, either directly within itself, or indirectly within a bi-/tri-lingual environment. Fitzmyer has that part of the language data exactly backwards. After Hebrew הוֹשַׁע-נָא (colloquial, indigenous, and non-biblical Hebrew) developed as a word of praise, it was then borrowed in wider Jewish and non-Jewish contexts by both Greek and Aramaic as a word of praise. Alternatively, הוֹשַׁע-נָא may also represent an Aramaic calque (loan translation), still from a Hebrew environment. Aramaic did not have a structure that corresponds to the “long” Hebrew imperative (e.g. הִכְתִּיבָה in Hebrew would be אִכְתַּב/אִכְתַּב in corresponding Aramaic; later Targumim to Biblical Hebrew הוֹשִׁיעָה use אִכְתַּב; see 2 Sam 14:4, 2 Kgs 6:26. (Note the different lexeme and lack of -ah suffix.) So, with loan words from Hebrew הוֹשִׁיעָה-נָא coupled with a loan translation of the -ah imperatival suffix, Jewish Aramaic could produce a calque of הוֹשַׁע-נָא/אוֹשַׁע-נָא. This would fit the morphology into a pattern that would be shared between Aramaic and Hebrew: הוֹשַׁע. In either case, whether

Hebrew term that was already becoming known in the young Christian Greek communities through Paul's letters. All three of these technical terms add specificity beyond local color, which is one of the reasons that foreign items are quoted in a literature throughout the ages and in various languages. Technical terms function as loan words within the communication. They do not represent a change to another syntactic clausal structure. Mark's sentences were still Greek. A full change of language should be reserved for a switch to a different sentence structure, syntax, and vocabulary.

8 Mark's Three Examples of Language Switching

Of Mark's three examples of full language switching, two of them are quite similar. Both 5:41 and 7:34 are healing accounts where Jesus is quoted switching into a foreign language. The important question is: Why? Why did Mark switch languages?⁴¹

Commentators tend to split and focus on two issues. Some point to the fact that translation is provided and assume that Mark is interested in adding local color to his account. For example, Morna Hooker notes: "Mark takes care to translate [the words] for his readers . . . Thus, they do not function as a foreign formula in Mark's account."⁴² Also, R. T. France observes: "Mark's preservation (and translation) of the Aramaic words is typical of his interest in vivid recreation of the scene (7:34), but the words are so ordinary that any idea that a "magical" formula is thus offered is quite without foundation."⁴³ But these approaches⁴⁴ show less insight at 7:34, where the word εφφρατα, "be opened,"

an internal Hebrew development or a parallel Aramaic calque/loan from Hebrew, or both, Mark, Matthew, and John have all used *hosanna* without translation, as a religious loan word in Greek already in the first century.

41 Some have assumed that Jesus' switched languages at these points (cf. Harris Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus* [Oslo: I kommisjon hos J. Dybwad, 1954]) and that Mark is merely following the form of the story that he received. While possible, such a consideration is unnecessary and we will find that a literary motif will join the three accounts of language switching in Mark. However, this motif, in turn, will reinforce the impression that Mark intends for the reader to assume or "feel" a language change in the story events.

42 Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel According to St Mark* (Black's New Testament Commentaries; London: Continuum, 2001), 150.

43 R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 240.

44 In a similar vein, other commentators focus on the word ταλιθα, "lamb/girl," and claim that the reason is to give local color or even to show compassion.

is about as commonplace as words can be and presents nothing significant of local color.

Others point more probably to the Hellenistic parallels and expectations of Mark's audience. Joel Marcus states:

The retention of Aramaic here is partly for effect: the exotic foreign words increase the sense of mystery about the miracle that is about to occur. Cf. Lucian of Samosata's reference to the tendency of faith healers to use *rhesis barbarike*, "foreign language" (*False Philosopher* 9). The only other healing story in which Jesus' words are rendered in Aramaic is the narrative about the deaf-mute in 7:31–37; in both cases, as Mussies ("Use," 427) points out, the Aramaic words are the verbal counterpart to the non-verbal healing action . . . and in both cases the healing takes place in seclusion. This combination of the motifs of seclusion and mysterious words is probably not accidental; Theissen (140–42, 148–49) notes that in the magical papyri, injunctions to silence frequently occur before or after occult formulae, in order to guard their secrecy . . . Also strikingly parallel to our narrative is Philostratus' story of the resuscitation of a dead girl by Apollonius of Tyana: "He simply touched her and said some secret words to her and woke her from seeming death" (*Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 4.45) . . . The combination of motifs is so close that it is difficult not to agree with Pesch (1.310) that our story reproduces typical techniques of ancient faith healing.⁴⁵

We must agree with Joel Marcus and with this overall perspective. However, we do not need to be torn between these two approaches to Mark's language switching. Mark wants the readers to know the plain, ordinary meaning of the words and Mark also wants to produce a literary effect. Mark has switched languages during a healing scene so that the actors in the story and Mark's audience can perceive words connected with miraculous power. Switching the language dramatically provides a mysterious, spiritual, power-effect to these words, even though their literal meaning is ordinary.

While it has long been noted that the language switch can imitate the effect of whispered, magical, mysterious, power words, commentators have sometimes retreated from this in the healing accounts, assuming that this explanation does not work well with the cry from the cross. If it does not work in

45 J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8* (AB 27A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 363. Marcus cited: Gerard Mussies, "The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic in the Greek New Testament," *NTS* 30 (1984): 416–432; Gerd Theissen, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition*, translated Francis McDonagh (SPCK; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1983).

Mark 15, then one might be justified in looking for a more generic reason at 5:41 and 7:34. We can approach this question from another angle. A Greek audience would naturally make the connection between the language switch and the healing. With this background we need to approach Mark 15:34 and to see how it might play for various audiences.

9 Mark's Purpose in Changing $\eta\lambda\iota \eta\lambda\iota$ into $\epsilon\lambda\omega\iota \epsilon\lambda\omega\iota$

As argued above, Mark probably received the story with the words from Ps 22 and the Elijah comment in Greek together with $\eta\lambda\iota \eta\lambda\iota$, or perhaps orally with יְלִי יְלִי . This raises a legitimate question: Why would Mark choose to put the foreign language transcription into a fully Aramaic form and against the natural flow of the story? The question is a legitimate part of reading the Gospel, but it must be acknowledged at the outset that we do not have an explanation from Mark himself and we will be required to read between the lines in a culturally sensitive manner.

One interesting motive might have been to refer to a targumic midrash associated with Ps 22. But we have no record of an Aramaic targum for Psalms being in existence in the first century in the land of Israel.

Romantic, modern ideas that the language change might show us in which language Jesus did his teaching do not help us either. Mark missed many opportunities to give us transliterated words of teaching, and the cross is certainly not a teaching scene. The words may convey some "local color," too. They certainly do bring the audience right into the scene. But this is a climax that goes far beyond "local color."

More promising is a cultural phenomenon, mentioned in Jewish traditions, that will mesh well with the mysterious, spiritual power that is associated with Mark's other two language changes. In the late Second Temple Period the *bat qol*, or heavenly voice, sometimes speaks in Aramaic.

Shmuel Safrai explained this:

Tannaic and amoraic literatures contain references to prophetic utterances which were heard by various sages or by high priests in the Holy of Holies in the Temple . . . These utterances are set in early contexts such as the wars of the Hasmoneans, the period of Hillel the Elder, or the attempt to set up an idol in the Temple during the reign of the Roman Emperor Gaius Caligula (37–41 C.E.).

There are many references in tannaitic and amoraic sources to heavenly voices, most of which are in Hebrew even when within an Aramaic context (e.g. *b. Ketub* 77b). However a number of utterances are in Aramaic,

including some of the early ones. For example, according to rabbinic tradition the heavenly voice heard by John Hyrcanus in the Temple in the last decade of the second century B.C.E. proclaiming that his sons who had gone to fight in Antioch were victorious, was in Aramaic (*t. Sotah* 13.5 and parallels; cf. *Ant.* 13.282).^[15] [Footnote 15: See S. Safrai, “Zechariah’s Prestigious Task,” *Jerusalem Perspective* 2.6 (1989): 1, 4.] The heavenly voice heard by a priest from the Holy of Holies which announced that Gaius Caligula had been murdered (41 C.E.) and that his decree ordering the erecting of his statue in the Temple had been abrogated, is also in Aramaic.^[16] [Footnote 16: *T. Sotah* 13.6. The utterance that the priest heard was, “Abolished is the abomination that the hater wished to bring into the sanctuary.] The rabbinic source even stresses that “he [an anachronistic reference to Shim’on the Righteous] heard it in the Aramaic language.” Samuel ha-Katan’s words (circa 115 C.E.) pertaining to the future troubles of Israel likewise is in Aramaic (*b. Sotah* 48b; and *b. Sanh.* 11a). The sources note that “he said them in the Aramaic language.”

The apparent reason for the heavenly voices being in Aramaic is the desire of certain sources to signal the general decline in the level of Israel’s holiness, and to point out that the charismatics of later generations who merited such heavenly utterances were not on par with biblical prophets such as Moses or Isaiah. Only in the third to fourth centuries C.E., did the phenomenon of recording heavenly voices in Aramaic come to an end. Then, like other important material such as halakah or prayer, heavenly voices were recorded in Hebrew.^[17] [Footnote 17: Even in later rabbinic sources, however, a number of heavenly voices were recorded in Aramaic (*y. Peah.* 15d; and *b. Baba Batra* 3b, *et al.*).]⁴⁶

Now we are not required to accept the historicity of the rabbinic records, nor can we ignore them. They become important to the degree that they reflect the cultural views of Jewish people during the first century. We should look at one of Safrai’s examples that has external support:

יוחנן כהן גדול שמע דבר מבית קדש הקדשים
נצחין טליא דאולי לאגחא קרבא באנטוכת
וכתבו אותה [שעה] ואותו היום
וכונו ואותה שעה היתה שנצחו

46 Shmuel Safrai, “Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus,” *Jerusalem Perspective* 4, no. 2 (March–April 1991); online www.jerusalemerspective.com.

[Heb] Yochanan the high priest heard a word inside the holy of holies
 [Aram] “The little kids who go to wage war against Antioch are getting
 the victory”

[Heb] and they wrote it at that very hour and day
 and they checked and it was the very hour that they were victorious.

With this we compare Josephus, *Ant.* 13.282:

παράδοξον δέ τι καὶ περὶ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως Ἰρκανοῦ λέγεται
 τίνα τρόπον αὐτῷ τὸ θεῖον εἰς λόγους ἦλθεν φασὶν γάρ
 ὅτι κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν καθ' ἣν οἱ παῖδες αὐτοῦ τῷ Κυζικηνῷ συνέβαλον
 αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ ναῷ θυμιῶν μόνος ὢν ἀρχιερεὺς ἀκούσειε φωνῆς
 ὡς οἱ παῖδες αὐτοῦ νενικήκασιν ἀρτίως τὸν Ἀντίοχον

Now a very surprising thing is related of this high priest Hyrcanus, how
 God came to discourse with him; for they say that on the very same day
 on which his sons fought with Antiochus Cyzicenus, he was alone in the
 temple as high priest offering incense, and heard a voice, that his sons
 had just then overcome Antiochus.

Here we have confirmation from Josephus that the tradition that Hyrcanus
 heard a heavenly voice was in popular circulation in the first century. We must
 trust the rabbinic quotation for the data that this was in Aramaic. The special
 notices in similar stories with an Aramaic *bat qol* cited by Safrai (ובלשון
 עממי שמי, “and in Aramaic he heard it”) add credibility and memorability to
 that part of the tradition. This suggests that the Hyrcanus story, and others,
 included an Aramaic *bat qol* in the popular mindset of the first century. Note
 that Hyrcanus was in the temple when he heard this. As Safrai points out, there
 is a strong link between an Aramaic *bat qol* and the temple.

Mark's relationship to the temple cannot be covered in the present study.
 There is just one curious fact that should be brought out. We can assume that
 Mark was aware of the actual geography of the temple and Golgotha. All of our
 geographical knowledge makes it probable that the centurion could not have
 seen the temple veil, the פרוכת, τὸ καταπέτασμα, when standing at the cross.
 The temple faced east to the Mount of Olives, it was surrounded by a wall,
 and was far above the immediate surroundings in the Kidron Valley. Golgotha
 was most likely west of the temple. However, literarily, this does change the
 atmosphere of the story. It is fair for us to conclude that Mark saw a link
 between the power words on the cross and the temple damage. But we should
 not think that Mark thought that the centurion himself saw the temple veil

being torn. This should be read as privileged information that Mark supplies for the reader, or at least ambiguous information for the reader. The reader cannot know if the centurion saw the veil as it ripped, but the centurion certainly heard Jesus last words and final cry.

The connection to the temple is therefore a Markan connection more than a centurion connection. If indeed there is a Markan connection, we may speculate that Mark's choice to introduce a language switch at this point was strengthened by the confluence of two effects: (1) The foreign language serves as a sign of a power event, something extra-dimensional, and (2) the foreign language is connected to a strange phenomenon at the temple, not too differently from a *bat qol*.

In other words, Mark was presenting these words from the cross as miraculous and efficacious, like a *bat qol*. For Mark, Jesus' words from the cross were a voice from heaven. This literary connection is strengthened by the centurion's conclusion and by the structure of the book as a whole. Many have seen an *inclusio* (literary echo) between the opening of the Gospel at Jesus' baptism and the crucifixion scene. Mark 1:10–11 has a splitting of the heavens and Mark 15 has a splitting of the temple veil. Both have a top down orientation. Mark 1 is heaven to earth, Mark 15 is top-down ripping. At both the baptism and crucifixion it is declared that Jesus is God's Son. The centurion's evidence for his statement is the foreign sentence from the cross and a loud cry. Here, we can add that the voice from heaven at the baptism can be paralleled by the mysterious, power effect of a foreign language at 15:34. Mark was presenting this Aramaic cry as the equivalent of the baptismal heavenly voice. Furthermore, the choice of full Aramaic for Mark is reinforced by its association with the language switching for two miracles earlier in the Gospel, by its cultural association with the *bat qol*, by the Aramaic background to קבש,⁴⁷ and by the association of the *bat qol* with the temple.

There is an interesting sign during the Great War (66–70 C.E.) related to danger for the temple reported by Josephus at *War* 6.299:

κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἑορτὴν ἢ πεντηκοστὴ καλεῖται
 νύκτωρ οἱ ἱερεῖς παρελθόντες εἰς τὸ ἔνδον ἱερόν
 ὡς περ αὐτοῖς ἔθος πρὸς τὰς λειτουργίας
 πρῶτον μὲν κινήσεως [ἔφασαν] ἀντιλαβέσθαι καὶ κτύπου
 μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα φωνῆς ἀθρόας
 “μεταβαίνομεν ἐντεῦθεν”

47 See below for a fuller discussion of קבש in both Hebrew and Aramaic.

Moreover, at the feast which is called Pentecost,
 the priests on entering the inner court of the temple by night,
 as their custom was in the discharge of their ministrations,
 reported that they were conscious, first of a commotion and a din,
 and after that of a voice as of a host,
 "We are departing hence."⁴⁸

Here is a voice, similar to a *bat qol*, that is connected to the temple. Josephus also gives an account of the temple doors swinging open of their own accord in the middle of the night during a Passover feast before the War.⁴⁹ If the Gospel of Mark was written before the Great War, then this becomes an interesting cultural parallel. However, if Mark wrote after the outbreak of the War, and even more so after the destruction of the Temple, then Mark may have heard a version of one or more of these stories.

Mark is certainly someone who is interested in moving things around for literary effect. A close parallel is provided by the parable of the Tenants. Against an original order of throwing out the owner's son and then murdering him, testified by the minor agreement of Luke and Matthew, Mark puts the murder inside the vineyard. Because of the connection in the parable between the vineyard and the temple, Mark appears to be magnifying corpse uncleanness on the part of the temple authorities.⁵⁰ They do not just murder, they commit murder in the vineyard! A second example can be brought from Mark's handling of the cursing of the fig tree and the chronological differences with Matthew's account. Mark puts the cleansing of the temple between two references to the cursing of the fig tree.⁵¹

For all of these reasons or for some of them, it appears that Mark had both the skill and literary precedent to alter the words on the cross slightly into a full

48 For text and translation, see H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus*, Vol. 3, *The Jewish War, Books IV-VII* (LCL; London: Heinemann, 1928; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968).

49 Josephus, *War* 6.290-96.

50 See R. Buth and B. Kvasnica, "Temple Authorities and Tithe Evasion: The Linguistic Background and Impact of the Parable of the Vineyard, the Tenants and the Son," in *Jesus' Last Week* (ed. R. Steven Notley, Marc Turnage and Brian Becker; Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels 1; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 53-80.

51 See David N. Bivin, "Evidence of an Editor's Hand in Two Instances of Mark's Account of Jesus' Last Week?," in Notley, Turnage, and Becker, eds., *Jesus' Last Week*, 211-24. (A revised version of this essay is available online, www.jerusalemerspective.com.)

Aramaic form $\epsilon\lambda\omega\iota \epsilon\lambda\omega\iota$. Mark wanted the reader to perceive the power behind the words and to feel their impact.

10 Matthew's Presentation of $\eta\lambda\iota \eta\lambda\iota \lambda\epsilon\iota\mu\alpha/\lambda\alpha\mu\alpha \sigma\alpha\beta\alpha\chi\theta\alpha\nu\epsilon\iota$

Once it is clear that Matthew's text is $\eta\lambda\iota/\eta\lambda\epsilon\iota$ and that it is Hebrew, we can make some observations and ask some interesting questions.

Assuming that Matthew saw Mark's account of the crucifixion, it becomes clear that Matthew has changed Mark's text, most probably consciously.⁵² Matthew has changed an Aramaic text into a text that is Hebrew at the beginning. The change is a language change. In multilingual societies language switching is commonplace, of course, and there are certain expectations and practices that can be observed. Once the threshold or reason for fully changing a language has been triggered, the communication tends to stay in that language for some time, even after the initial reason may have lost its validity.⁵³ Therefore, we would expect that the remainder of the sentence would be Hebrew after Matthew consciously changes language. If the cry from the cross was originally in Hebrew and according to Ps 22, we would expect something like *lama azabtani*, similar to what is found in Codex Bezae. The same would be true if Matthew was assimilating the cry to the words of the psalm. But Matthew's text is different. Since Matthew is either correcting Mark or documenting his own source, and since $\eta\lambda\iota$ is clearly Hebrew, and since full language change normally stays in the same language, this sentence is probably being presented by Matthew as a Hebrew sentence. This is within what Mishnaic Hebrew scholarship would expect. Outside of Mishnaic Hebrew scholarship one might ask if such a Hebrew reading of the text is possible, and in any case one may ask if it is probable. How should one interpret the verb *shvaqtani*, a verb that is common in Aramaic and means "you left me"?

52 Of course, Matthew may have been encouraged to substitute his transliteration simply through acquaintance with a pre-Markan form of the story.

53 For an example of this sociolinguistic phenomenon in a biblical text, note the canonical text of Ezra 4:8–22 and 4:23–5:7. The citation of the actual correspondence with the Persian king uses the original language (4:8–22), then the story of Ezra continues in Aramaic even after the conclusion of the letter. A second letter is cited in 5:7–17, with continuing narrative in 6:1–2, another Aramaic document in 6:3–12, more Aramaic narrative in 6:13–18, but returning to Hebrew narrative in 6:19–7:11. Then an Aramaic letter is quoted in Ezra 7:12–26 with a return to Hebrew in 7:27 for the author's personal words, staying in Hebrew for the rest of the book.

The verb שבק is used in a Hebrew parable in *Pesiqta Rabbati* 44. Parables were traditionally given in Hebrew and may be considered to be an understandable register of language. It may be granted as “a given” that parables were intended to be understandable to common folk.

דבר אחר [שובה ישראל]
 אומרים על הושע ועל אליהו אכזריים היו
 חס ושלום לא היו אכזריים, האכזרי היה מציל
 אלא למה הדבר דומה
 לבן מלכים שדגנו המלך ונתחייב שריפה, מה עשה [סנוקנתרו] [סנוקתדרון]
 אמר למלך
 שבקו בבית האסורים וירעב
 (אותה) [ואתה] שורפו
 והוא חשב לומר עד שתשוב חמתו

Another example: [Concerning “return O Israel” (Hos 14:2)]

They say that Hosea and Elijah were cruel.

In no way, the cruel person would have been someone who was a lifesaver.

To what does the matter resemble?

To a king's son whom the king had judged and was found liable of death by burning.

What did the king's counselor do?

He said to the king,

“Abandon him שְׁבֹקוּ in the prison and let him starve!

And then you can burn him.”

He was thinking, saying to himself, “until his anger stops.”

However, even though this is an excellent example of שבק entering the Hebrew language, the *Pesiqta Rabbati* collection is late, dated to 845 C.E., though containing old material. Alone, it would carry little weight for the first century.⁵⁴ Further support can be brought from the Mishnah. *M. Gittin* 9.3 has the phrase איגרת שבוקין, “letter of divorce,” but it is in the midst of an Aramaic sentence.

54 שבק is later attested as an idiom (a metaphor related to Aramaic in *b. Ber.* 61b) in medieval and modern Hebrew: שבק חיים, “he passed away, died.” Despite the connection with “death,” this idiom is obviously not related to the saying from the cross, where “God” is the subject of שבק.

גופו שלגט
 הרי את מותרת לכל אדם
 ר' יודה אומ'
 וְדוּ דִּי יְהוּי לִיד מִינִי
 סִפֵּר תִירוּכִין [[ו]]א[ג]גרת שבוקין [וגט גרושין]
 מִהַדְּ לְהִתְנַסְבָּה לְכָל גְּבַר דִּיתְצַבֵּיין⁵⁵

“The essential formula of the writ of divorce is,

‘Lo, thou art permitted to any man’.

R. Judah says: [His formula is given in Aramaic]

‘Let this be from me

your writ of divorce, letter of dismissal, and deed of liberation,

that thou mayest marry whatsoever man thou wilt.”⁵⁶

Moshe Bar Asher makes the point that the morphology of *shibbuqin* is “pure Hebrew.”⁵⁷ But the context of the sentence is Aramaic.

Likewise, the existence of some names in the Hebrew Bible (ישָׁבַק, Gen 25:2 and 1 Chr 1:31, and שׁוֹבַק, Neh 10:25) might suggest that the verb had been used at one time in Hebrew. But these are not evidence for its use in Hebrew in the first century.

A better parallel to what may be happening in Matthew can be seen in a text from the Mekhilta of Rabbi Ishma‘el on Exod 12:4.

55 The Hebrew text is from Accordance Bible Software, “Kaufmann Mishna,” Version 2.2 (Oak Tree Software, 2009).

56 Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah, Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1933): 319.

57 Moshe Bar Asher, “Mishnaic Hebrew: An Introductory Survey,” in *The Literature of the Sages, Second Part* (ed. edited by Shmuel Safrai, Zeev Safrai, Joshua Schwartz, Peter J. Tomson; Compendia Rerum Judaicarum ad Novum Testamentum, Section Two, the Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud [3b, Midrash and Targum, Liturgy, Poetry, Mysticism, Contracts, Inscriptions, Ancient Science, and the Languages of Rabbinic Literature]; Assen: Royal van Gorcum and Fortress Press, 2006), 567–96. Bar Asher writes (p. 587): “Similarly the word, found in the expression שבוקין (m. Git. 9:3, ‘bill of divorce’) is a Hebrew form, following the pure Hebrew pattern *pi’ul*,^[82] but based on the Aramaic root š.b.q. meaning ‘forsake.’ [Footnote 82: Many terms related to family life are formed in MH on the pattern of *pi’ul* in the plural (*pi’ulîn*). Examples are *qiddušîn*, ‘betrothal’; *nissū’in*, ‘marriage,’ *gērūšîn* (< *girrūšîn*) ‘divorce’; and *šibbūqin*, ‘release.’]”

איש לפי אכלו תכסו על השה
 רבי יאשיה אומר, לשון סורסי הוא זה,
 כאדם שאומר למכירו
 כוס לי טלה זה

“You shall estimate (*takossu*) the persons for the lamb according to what a person eats.”

Rabbi Yoshiya says, This is Aramaic, like when someone says to his friend, “Butcher this lamb for me.” [כוס is used in place of normal Hebrew שחט]

Yohanan Breuer has clarified this situation:

The Aramaic verb נכס does not appear in Mishnaic Hebrew, and here it is considered Aramaic (‘a Syriac expression’). Nevertheless, it appears in a purely Hebrew sentence—כוס לי טלה זה—ascribed to “one saying to his neighbour.”^[7] [Footnote 7: While the verb is adduced in order to explain the verse, such a sentence could not have been framed without suitable background in the vernacular.] It may thus be concluded that it was by virtue of the close relationship between the two languages that so free a borrowing of a verb could take place from one language to the other. These two examples show that in the spoken Hebrew there existed a certain degree of “openness” towards Aramaic, which enabled the Hebrew speaker to borrow a word from Aramaic on occasion and to use it in his natural speech, without considering the question whether it actually belonged to the stock of the Hebrew vocabulary.⁵⁸

The distillation of all of this is that Matthew is probably recording a Hebrew sentence, although we can recognize the language as “Aramaized” Hebrew. Our text in Matthew becomes a good example of what Yochanan Breuer was describing: words can be inserted in Mishnaic Hebrew without hesitation. This exactly fits what Mishnaic Hebrew scholarship has been learning about the first-century language situation. Thus, the hearers around the cross in Matthew’s account heard a Hebrew sentence, at least any who heard *eli eli*.

58 Yohanan Breuer, “The Aramaic of the Talmudic Period,” in Safrai, Schwartz, and Tomson, eds., *The Literature of the Sages, Second Part*, 599. Incidentally, it is irrelevant to this discussion that the biblical text is technically using a different verb כָּסַס, “was numbered” than נכס. The point is that it was considered natural and normal to borrow an Aramaic verb in a Hebrew sentence.

A more interesting question now becomes the intention and fuller context of the statement. If we project the story into its historical context, a couple of interesting points arise.

First of all, the text does not quote Ps 22:2 exactly but introduces a word substitution of שבקתני for עזבתני. Spoken in Hebrew, this would introduce an allusion to the technical divorce terminology שיבוקין, giving a sense of “divorce” to the rejection.

Secondly, this alteration of the text leads the listener to consider the “interpretation” of the passage and to consider the whole context, something that was commonly done in midrashic and ancient exegesis. The end of Ps 22:22–32 does have a hopeful conclusion. Other items are of interest in the psalm. The verb tense in Ps 22:22, עניתני, “you have answered me,” is special. It is in the context of a request and follows four imperatives, and implies the confidence of a sure answer. The next verse continues from the new perspective, from a state of salvation, “I would recount your name to my brothers, in the midst of the congregation I will⁵⁹ praise you.” The rest of the psalm implies a salvation. Modern scholarship has sometimes been reluctant to include such a positive reading of this cry from the cross,⁶⁰ but its presumed circulation by the first generation of the Jerusalem Jesus-community, leading to its adoption by Mark and Matthew, probably guarantees that such an interpretation was understood within that Jewish community.⁶¹ In the full context of Ps 22, the texts of

59 This follows the MT, with its *energic*, “more indicative” אהללך.

60 Cf. E. Rivkin, *What Crucified Jesus?* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984), 108, cited by W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; London: Continuum, 2004), 3:625: “the words are ‘among the most pathetic ever uttered in the annals of history.’”

61 Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 3:625) reject such an interpretation: “Others have supposed that, whatever be the truth regarding Jesus himself, our evangelist and his first readers would have understood the quotation of Ps 22.2 to be like a Jewish midrash, in which the first part of a verse is quoted and the rest assumed; and as Psalm 22 moves on from complaint to faith and praise, so should Jesus’ words imply the same. This interpretation dulls the impact of our verse, which is the culmination of a Matthean theme.”

Yet Davies and Allison accept its basic point anyway: “The abandonment, although real, is not the final fact. God does finally vindicate his Son.” This admission by Davies and Allison reinforces the view that the context of the psalm was probably known and understood when the story about the cry from the cross circulated, assuming that it was not invented by Mark. The “final vindication” would have colored the interpretation of the reference to Ps 22, from the beginning of the circulation of the story within the new community, especially within a Jewish community that was accustomed to sophisticated reading of scripture. The only thing that Davies and Allison are really denying is that Matthew, and perhaps Jesus, would have been party to such a salvific intention when quoting

Matthew and Mark are neither expressing ultimate despair, nor incompatible with the more reverential reference to Ps 31 in Luke.

11 Conclusion

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark have separate transcriptions and the Gospel authors probably had separate literary purposes.

Matthew has recorded a Hebrew reference to Psalm 22:2 that was explicitly midrashic and that uses language that was connected with divorce. He probably intended for the audience to include the interpretive framework of the whole psalm, which included a faith in God's salvation. The transliteration ηλι ηλι λειμα σαβαχθανι/ηλει ηλει λαμα σαβαχθανει in Matthew has a better claim to historical accuracy and to a pre-Synoptic version of the story than the one in Mark. In addition, Matt 27:46 is the earliest attestation of Mishnaic Hebrew שבק.

Mark has taken a pre-Synoptic story about the word from the cross and Elijah and has rewritten the transliteration fully into Aramaic for a consistent literary effect, probably including a linguistic allusion to a *bat qol*. For Mark, this continues his use of Aramaic language switching to provide the reader with a sense of mystery, awe, and spiritual power. Mark appears to treat the cry from the cross as if it were a "voice from heaven" and also to present the centurion as reacting to the word from the cross as if it were a "voice from heaven." This creates a literary analogy (*inclusio*) between the baptism scene, Mark 1:11, where a heavenly voice mentions a "son" along with a ripping of the sky, and the scene at the cross where the centurion concludes that this was a "divine son" and the temple curtain rips. Mark wanted the reader to feel the impact subliminally behind the words on the cross.

This essay has also demonstrated the help that current Mishnaic Hebrew scholarship is able to contribute to New Testament studies, especially in cases of textual complexity where there is a need for linguistic sensitivity, as in the case of Jesus' words from the cross. Reciprocally, the New Testament data, even in Greek dress, makes a small contribution to Mishnaic Hebrew studies.

Ps 22:2. That is beyond our knowledge, of course. The midrashic interpretation of the verse stands as a reasonable reading of the linguistic data in the citation by Matthew.

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