

[Biblical Hebrew Poetry and Word Play](#)

Reconstructing the Original Oral, Aural and Visual Experience

By David Steinberg

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TERMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND LINGUISTIC SYMBOLS

1. Abbreviations

abs. - absolute case of a noun or adjective as opposed to the [construct case](#)acc. - [accusative case](#)

adj. - adjective

a.p. - active participle

BCE - Before Common Era = BC; CE – Common Era = AD

BH - Biblical Hebrew, the language of the Hebrew Bible. Typologically it can be divided into [ABH](#), [CBH](#) and [PCBH](#). Its [registers](#) include prose and [poetic](#) varieties.BHA - [Biblical Hebrew](#), *its Antecedents and the Development of the Biblical Hebrew Reading Tradition of the Tiberian Masoretes* ([BHA phase 1](#) - [Phase 5](#)).C - [consonant](#)C(1, 2, 3, 4) - (first, second, third, forth) [consonant](#)C_x(C_x) - a given (same) [consonant](#)constr. - [construct](#) state in transcription indicated by [the secondary stress marker](#) , .

cp. - common plural

cs. - common singular

du. - dual

f. - feminine

fp. - feminine plural

fs. - feminine singular

gen. - [genitive](#)

imp. - imperative

inf. abs. - [infinitive](#) absolute

inf. constr. - [infinitive](#) construct

m. - masculine

ML - [Matres Lectionis](#)

mp. - masculine plural

ms. - masculine singular

MSA - [Modern Standard \(or literary\) Arabic](#)

MT - [Masoretic Text](#)

n. - (foot)note

N₁...N₂ - first noun ... second noun

nom. - [nominative case](#)

obl. - [oblique case](#)

part. - participle(s)

PC - [Prefix Conjugation](#)

pl. - plural

PMT - [Proto-Masoretic text](#) - the [consonantal text of the Hebrew Bible](#) inherited by the Tiberian Masoretes. Their addition to this text form of their accents and vowel signs produced the [Masoretic Text](#).

p.p. - passive participle

pro. - pronoun, pronominal

PS - [Proto-Semitic language](#)¹

s. - singular

SC - [Suffix Conjugation](#)

V - [vowel](#)

V(1, 2) - (first, second) [vowel](#)

V_x(V_x) - a given (same) [vowel](#)

2. Linguistic Terms and Symbols²

[Anceps vowels /ā/, /ī/, /ū/](#)

Colloquial Arabic - [current spoken varieties of Arabic](#)

Epigraphic Hebrew (EH) - the extra-biblical Hebrew inscriptions of Palestine which have been attributed to the period between the tenth and the sixth century BCE

[Koine, Koineization](#)

[Phonemes - consonants](#)

[Phonemes - vowels](#)

Phonologically distinct or phonological - refers to phonic differences capable of distinguishing meaning in a given language. Essentially it has them same meaning as 'phonemic'

Vowel Letters or *Matres Lectionis* (Latin for "mothers of reading") – abbreviation ML - א ה ו י when used to represent a vowel. For details see [these boxes](#).

' [Primary \(or Main\) stress](#) (occasionally phonemic) - this symbol is placed immediately before the syllable carrying primary stress with the stressed syllable itself marked bold e.g. ***ʾ**a'da:m/.

, [Secondary stress](#)³ (non-phonemic) - this symbol is placed immediately before the syllable carrying secondary [stress](#).

- For EBHP I assume that nouns in the construct have a secondary stress on the syllable which in the absolute case would carry the primary stress.
- For [TH](#) syllable:
 - In the case of nouns in the construct case, all syllables marked by Tiberian stress indicating accents are assumed to carry secondary stress⁴.
 - In all other cases all syllables marked by Tiberian stress indicating accents, other than the final one in the word, are assumed to carry secondary stress.

N.b. - In TH, originally short vowels are found in closed syllables carrying primary or secondary stress, and are pronounced long.⁵

[Syllable](#) break - a.a (used occasionally)

/t/ *virgules* mark [phoneme](#) boundaries

: colon placed between two words indicates [phonological contrast](#) minimally, a [minimal pair](#)

[t] *square brackets* mark [phonetic/allophone](#) boundaries.

<ph> [graphemes](#)

? *Tequ* e.g. /'ħiʃy/ ([EBHP?](#)) > /'ħiʃi/ (EBHP?) means the pre-exilic Biblical Hebrew (BH) phonemic pronunciation was either /'ħiʃy/ or its later derived form /'ħiʃi/. It is impossible to decide based on current data.

/ [slash](#) separates contrastive or variant items, categories, etc.

√ root eg √gdl or √גדל

{ } encloses morphemic element, morphemic, element, morphemic junction or root.

() in transcriptions encloses: (a) an element included in an alternative reconstruction; or, (b) an omissible or optional element. Thus [EBHP](#) /qa'talta(:)/ indicates that the pronunciation was either /qa'talta/ or /qa'talta:/ or that either was an option at that time.

< 'derives from ...'

<< morphophonemic shift

← 'derives from...' omitting one or more intermediate stages.

> 'leads to ...'

>> morphophonemic shift

→ abridged shift (i.e. without intermediate stages)

{ } encloses morphemic element, morphemic, element, morphemic junction or root.

() usually encloses an omissible or optional element

terminal pause

∅ zero

≈ by analogy to

≈hyp. cor. [hypercorrections](#) or pseudo-correction. [Example forms such as באר \[bə'êr\]](#)

± 'with or without' or 'indifferent to'

2.1 Symbols Denoting Vowels - see [Vowel Phonemes](#)⁶

a) Vowel Length

- Transcribing diachronic examples -
 - I. [Irreducible Historically Long Vowels](#) i.e. vowels that seem to have been long as far back as we can reconstruct even if their quality has changed -

/ī/, /ē/ ([ē] or [ē]⁷), /ā⁸/, /ō⁹/, /ū/.

N.b. Such vowels can be gained by analogy as in the case of the [1cs. independent pronoun](#).
 - II. [Irreducible Long Vowels](#) which lengthened due to contraction and assimilation -

/î/, /ê/ ([ê] or [ê]), /â/, /ô/, /û/.
 - III. [Long Vowels](#) originating from [PH anceps](#) vowels, vowels lengthened due to stress ([tonic and pretonic lengthening](#)), long vowels whose origin is unclear, and long vowels in foreign names etc. e.g. פֶּרְעֵה /par'cō:/, סִיִּרָא /si:sə'ra:/ -

/ī:/, /e:/ ([ε:] or [ε:]), /a:/, /ɔ:/, /o:/, /u:/.
 - IV. **Vowels carrying primary stress when not otherwise marked** -

í, í, é, é, á, ɛ, ɔ, ó, ɔ, ú.
 - V. **Vowels carrying secondary [stress](#) in [TH](#) when not otherwise marked** -

ì, ì, è, è, à, ɛ, ò, ò, ɔ, ù.
- **Phonetic transcription and transcribing reconstructed text**
 - I generally use **IPA symbols**, thus historic /ō/, /ô/ and /o:/ (see above) are all transcribed [o:] in [\[EBHP\]](#).
 - [TH qāmeš](#) is transcribed [ɔ] in [\[TH\]](#) regardless of [its origin](#);
- [Word-final Vowels of intermediate or uncertain length](#)

I use the IPA symbol ˘ for transcribing reconstructed [\[EBHP\]](#) word-final vowels in two situations:

- when it is uncertain whether a word-final vowel was pronounced short or long e.g. TH תָּלְטָלְטָ which was a reflex of [/EBHP/](#) /qa'talta(:)/ i.e. /qa'talta:/ or /qa'talta/ reconstructed pronunciation [\[EBHP\]](#) [qe'telte']
- when a historically long word-final vowel is unstressed and [hence probably shortened in pronunciation](#) as in many Arabic dialects e.g. TH (3fs. SC) תָּלְטָלְטָ which was a reflex of [/EBHP/](#) /qa'talâ¹⁰/ reconstructed pronunciation [\[EBHP\]](#) [qe'tele']

b) *Restored Vowels* -

a, i, u in [/EBHP/](#) (*e, i, u* or ~~*e, i, u*~~ in my reconstructed [\[EBHP\]](#))¹¹ are used to indicate originally short vowels, which have been reduced to \emptyset/\emptyset (בְּ), עֵ (בְּ), יֵ (בְּ) or יֵ (בְּ) in TH. Their pronunciation in [\[EBHP\]](#), in descending order of probability -

/a/ [[a](#)], [ě], [e], [ě], [ə], [Ø]

/i/ [[i](#)], [i], [e], [ě], [ə], [Ø]

/u/ [[u](#)], [ü], [ö], [ɔ], [ɔ̃], [ə], [Ø]

c) *Notes* -

- in diachronic examples, the [TH](#) phoneme /ɔ/ is transcribed /q/¹² [ɔ] when it originated from short *u*, and /â/ [ɔ] when it immediately originated from long *a*.
- in quotations from other authors I have generally kept their notation unless otherwise noted.

2.2 [Gemination](#)

[Were Word-Final Geminated Consonants Maintained in EBHP?](#)

[Long continuants](#)

[Long stops](#)

[Symbols for long vowels and consonants](#)

[List of words with final gemination](#)

2.3 *Stages of the Hebrew Language* ¹³

a) [PNWS](#) - Proto-Northwest Semitic ([BHA phase 1](#))

b) **PH** - Proto-Hebrew (*BHA phase 2*). The [Canaanite dialects](#) (c.1200-1000 B.C.E.) that would develop into Hebrew with the loss of the case endings. Pattern of long and short vowels and consonants carry on Proto-Semitic pattern. Vowel and consonant quality and length phonemic. Stress uniformly penultimate thus not [distinct](#).. Sources - see [Harris 1939](#), [Hendel-Lambdin-Huehnergard](#), [Sáenz-Badillos](#).

c) **AH** - Ancient Hebrew¹⁴ - All the Canaanite dialects written and spoken in the territory described in the Bible as being settled by the tribes of Israel from about 1000 BCE until the extinction of Hebrew speech with [the suppression of the Bar Kochba rebellion](#) in the mid-second century CE (*BHA phase 1 - Phase 4*).

PreExH - *Pre-Exilic Hebrew* (*BHA phase 3*). This encompasses both Judean and Israelian Hebrew i.e. all the dialects spoken and written in the villages and towns of the kingdoms of [Judah](#) and [Israel](#) c. early 10th to early sixth centuries BCE i.e. in the [First Temple Period](#).

Israelian Hebrew (some scholars call *Northern* or *Israelite Hebrew*¹⁵) (*BHA phase 3*) - This is not a dialect; it is a catchall term for all the dialects spoken and written in the villages and towns of the [Kingdom of Israel](#) c. 1000 BCE until at least the seventh century BCE. It does not imply that these dialects had more in common with each other than many of them had to some of the dialects spoken in the Kingdom of Judah and hence classed under the rubric *Judahite Hebrew*. It is possible that the major areas of the kingdom ([Samaria](#), [Galilee](#), the [Coastal Plain](#) and [Gilead](#)) developed recognizable regional dialects.

IEH - *Israelian Epigraphic Hebrew*

[EBHP_{isr}] possible reconstruction of Samaritan Hebrew [when probably at variance from EBHP](#).

Judahite Hebrew (some scholars call *Southern* or *Judean Hebrew*) (*BHA phase 3*) - This is not a dialect; it is a catchall term for all the dialects spoken and written in the villages and towns of the [Kingdom of Judah](#) during the [First Temple Period](#). The [spoken dialects ancestral to MH](#), falls under this rubric. Use of the term *Judahite Hebrew* does not imply that these dialects had more in common with each other than many of them had to some of the dialects spoken in the Kingdom of Judah and hence classed under the rubric *Israelian Hebrew*.

ABH - *Archaizing Biblical Hebrew* - The language of a few important poems¹⁶. These poems could have been authored at any time after 1000 BCE¹⁷ probably using a standard set of archaizing features¹⁸.

CBH - *Classical Biblical Hebrew* (*BHA phase 3*) - The literary dialect of Jerusalem c.950-586 B.C.E (First Temple Period) as recorded in the passages of the Hebrew Bible reasonably dated to the pre-exilic period. It is represented by the PMT, of these passages, minus non-word final vowel letters. This is the only widely attested form of *Judahite Hebrew*. It is clear that: (1) CBH shows very little if any internal development¹⁹ suggesting later revision of any early texts, (2) all CBH biblical texts were transferred to the Aramaic script, modernized in orthography and possibly linguistically and/or textually revised in the post-exilic period. (3) CBH continued to be written, alongside PCBH, well into the Persian period²⁰. In the post-exilic period the author/editors would have used PMH or Aramaic as their daily speech and have written the very different CBH and PCBH in the way that modern Arabs write MSA, Iron Age Babylonian scribes composed in Standard Babylonian²¹ or as medieval Italians wrote Church Latin. N.b. the language of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, while being substantially CBH, show some PCBH features.

EBHP - Early Biblical Hebrew Pronunciation

/EBHP/⁺²² - This reconstruction includes -

- the phonemic transcription of reconstructed CBH (/EBHP/) recovering, as closely as possible, the pronunciation that a scribe in Jerusalem 700-600 BCE would have used in reading poetry and other literature to upper class Judeans or members of the king's court. Vowel and consonant quality and length and word stress phonological. N.b. It is quite possible that *Early Biblical Hebrew Pronunciation* continued to be used in some circles for formal literary reading of CBH and PCBH, alongside LBHP, well into the Persian period;
- the occasionally phonemic placement of primary word stress;
- the non-phonemic placement of secondary word stress; and,
- the non-phonemic distinction between the long vowels of various origins e.g. ī, î, î.

/EBHP/²³ the phonetic transcription of reconstructed Early Biblical Hebrew Pronunciation.

/EBHP+/ more probable of alternative reconstructions.

/EBHP-/ less probable of alternative reconstructions.

/EBHP?/ possible reconstruction usually used when it is impossible to decide, based on current data, between an earlier and later form.

/EBHPsam/ possible reconstruction of Samaritan pre-exilic Hebrew [when probably at variance from Jerusalem dialect](#).

JEH - *Judahite Epigraphic Hebrew* - inscriptions contemporaneous with pre-exilic [CBH](#). Scribes trained in [Jerusalem 700-586 BCE](#) were likely the authors of the bulk of surviving JEH e.g. [Siloam Inscription](#), [Lachish ostraca](#), [Arad ostraca](#). For their orthography see [Matres Lectionis in Hebrew](#). The same circles were likely the composers and/or transmitters of most of the pre-exilic biblical texts. Epigraphic Hebrew documents have been preserved in their original language and orthography and, [within limits](#), can serve as a guide to pronunciation. Except for archaisms used in poetry, the original orthography of the pre-exilic biblical texts would very likely to have conformed to the norms of JEH.

I am working on the assumption that in JEH -

- all final stressed vowels were long and generally marked by vowel letters;
- final unstressed long vowels were generally marked by vowel letters; and,
- final unstressed short vowels, were unmarked i.e. were not marked by vowel letters or in any other way.

PostExH - [Post-Exilic Hebrew \(BHA phase 4\)](#)

PCBH - *Post-Classical Biblical Hebrew (BHA phase 4)* - A literary dialect of Jerusalem c.500 B.C.E.- 70 CE. It is a direct continuation of, and very similar to [CBH²⁴](#) and like CBH texts the language of PCBH biblical passages shows [no discernable internal development](#).. However, it shows internal linguistic developments that were probably influenced by Aramaic²⁵ and contemporary spoken Hebrew. PCBH diverged increasingly from spoken Hebrew and should be considered a [diglossic](#) prestige language.²⁶ **In the post-exilic period the author/editors would have used PMH or Aramaic as their daily speech and have written the very different CBH and PCBH in the way that modern Arabs write MSA or as medieval Italians wrote Church Latin²⁷. *Sources* later books of the Bible such as [Chronicles](#).**

LBHP /[LBHP](#)/ (*Late Biblical Hebrew Pronunciation*) - [Phonemic](#) transcription of reconstructed reading tradition of BH c.500 BCE - 200 CE. Naturally it would have changed considerably over that period. It was increasingly affected by Aramaic and spoken Hebrew.

[\[LBHP\]](#) [Phonetic²⁸](#) transcription of reconstructed Late Biblical Hebrew *Pronunciation*.

QH - Qumran Hebrew i.e. the Hebrew of the non-biblical [Dead Sea Scrolls](#) (see [Qimron 1986](#)). Opinions differ as to whether it should be considered a highly idiosyncratic and Aramaized form of [PCBH](#) or a separate line of development²⁹. Most scholars consider it to have been a literary language probably spoken in formal situations much like [MSA](#) today in the Arab world. For the relation between BH and QH see [Young, Rezetko, Ehrensverd 2008](#) chapt. 10.

PMH - Proto-Mishnaic or Proto-Rabbinic Hebrew - see [Development of Proto-Mishnaic Hebrew](#) (c. 586 BCE-c. 70 BC).³⁰.

MH - [Mishnaic, Middle or Rabbinic Hebrew](#) - Basically the spoken Hebrew of some areas of rural Judah of the first and early second centuries C.E. Its population base was destroyed with [the suppression of the Bar Kochba rebellion](#). *Source* - Tannaitic Literature especially the [Mishnah](#). For the relation between BH and MH see [Young, Rezetko, Ehrensverd 2008](#) chapt. 9.

d) Tiberian Tradition of Reading Biblical Hebrew ([BHA Phase 5](#))

PTH - Proto-Tiberian Hebrew (part way through the developments in [BHA Phase 5](#) - c.400-c.500 C.E.) The developing traditional pronunciation of some circles of Aramaic speaking Palestinian scholars when reading the [Proto-Masoretic text](#) of the Hebrew Bible. All the linguistic developments listed under [BHA Phase 5](#) have been completed except for the final four -

- /a:/ > /ɔ:/; in some situations /u/ > /ɔ/

- /ɛ:/ > /e:/; /a:/ > /ɔ:/³¹

- All unreduced short vowels in open syllables and all stressed short vowels are lengthened. Often this lengthening is accompanied by a ["change in timbre"](#) (quality): /i/ > /e:/; /u/ > /ɔ:/

- Vowel and consonant length cease to be phonological.

This tradition underlies TH and is largely deduced from the phonology of TH.

[/PTH/](#)* This reconstruction includes -

- the [phonemic³²](#) transcription of [reconstructed PTH](#) ([/PTH/](#));
- the occasionally phonemic placement of [primary word stress](#);
- the non-phonemic placement of [secondary word stress](#);
- the allophonic [spirantization of the bgdkpt consonants](#) (*dageš qal* (Hebrew) or [dagesh lene](#) (Latin) - b/b, g/g, d/d, p/p, t/t; and,

- the non-phonemic distinction between the long vowels of various origins e.g. ī, î, î̇.

[PTH] [Phonetic](#)³³ transcription of reconstructed PTH.

TH - [Tiberian Hebrew](#) (- c.850 C.E.). TH accents and vowel points basically reflect the final development of [PTH](#) as it continued to develop from the fifth to the ninth centuries CE (see [Tiberian Vowel System](#)). Compared to [EBHP](#) there was a [decrease in the number of consonantal phonemes](#) and an [increase in the number of vowel phonemes](#). Short vowels remain only in closed unstressed syllables. [Vowel length non-phonological](#), consonant gemination carries light phonemic load. Vowel and consonant quality and word stress phonological.

As described in [Khan 1987](#) (pp. 24-25) -

"Although the Tiberian vocalization system marks all the major qualitative distinctions between the vowels, it gives only partial indication of relative vowel quantity. The reason for this is that ... vowel quantity was not phonemic. The vocalization system was concerned primarily with the phonemic quality oppositions. The few indications of allophonic distinctions of both quality and quantity were made by the Masoretes out of their desire to preserve correctly the phonetic details of the reading tradition."

[/TH/](#)⁺ In order to include the full range of word-level information provided by MT this includes:

- the [phonemic](#) transcription of TH ([/TH/](#));
- the occasionally phonemic placement of [primary word stress](#);
- the non-phonemic placement of [secondary word stress](#); and,
- the largely partly or largely allophonic -
 - *vocal šwa* and [hataf/hatep vowels](#)³⁴
 - [spirantization of the bgdkpt consonants](#) (*dagesh qal* (Hebrew) or [dagesh lene](#) (Latin) - b/b, g/g, d/d, k/k, p/p, t/t).

[TH]³⁵ [Phonetic](#) transcription of reconstructed TH assuming that vowels that the were as in the table [Tiberian Vowel System](#).

TH_{CST} [Conventional Scholarly Transcription of TH](#)

TH_{SBL} [Society of Biblical Literature](#) (SBL) *Academic Translation Style*³⁶. This is a widely used standard for TH_{CST}.

e) Other Written Traditions of Reading Biblical Hebrew

BH_{Qum} - Biblical Hebrew as reflected in the orthography of biblical [Dead Sea Scrolls](#) (2nd c. BCE-1st c. CE)³⁷.

BH_{Pal} - Biblical Hebrew pointed with Palestinian Vocalization (from c. 7th c. CE)³⁸.

BH_{Bab} - Biblical Hebrew pointed with Babylonian Vocalization (from late c. 9th c. CE)³⁹.

BH_{Gk-Lat} - Biblical Hebrew as reflected in Greek and Latin transcriptions (mainly 3rd c. BCE-4th c. CE)⁴⁰.

f) MidH - [Medieval Hebrew](#). Various forms of Hebrew c. 1000-c. 1850 C.E.

g) IH - [Israeli Hebrew](#) as spoken today. Specifically the [reading of biblical texts using Israeli Hebrew pronunciation](#). Stress mainly follows TH accents. [Influence of European Languages](#). No long consonants or vowels, no [emphatic consonants](#), no [gutturals](#). For the sound system of Israeli Hebrew see [Glinert](#) p. 9 see also [Berman](#).

[/IH/](#) Phonemic transcription of IH.

[\[IH\]](#) Phonetic transcription of IH. Note [Vowel System - Modern Israeli Hebrew](#)

¹ "long vowels were shortened in closed syllables in Proto-Semitic and Proto-Hebrew." [Blau 2010](#) §4.3.3.3.2.

"...in Proto-Semitic (and in Pre-Hebrew) no long vowels were tolerated in closed syllables." [Blau 2010](#) §3.5.12.2.14n.

² See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IPA#Suprasegmentals>.

³ See [Blau 2010](#) §3.4.5.5n, 3.4.2.6, 3.5.7.1.5, 3.5.7.4.2n.

⁴ An unusual case is עָלַי [ˈaːl] (Ex. 4:20 see [Khan 1994](#) p. 133).

⁵ Egs.

- the second vowel of קָטַל - /qáˈtal/ [qɑːˈteːl]
- constr. form יָדַי 'hand of-' - /yad/ [yeːð]

Note [Blau 2010](#) §3.5.7.1.2.

⁶ Order follows the natural scale of vowel qualities (see. [Joüon-Muraoka 1991](#) §6b).

⁷ Quite rare but found, for example, in /ˈmēt/ 'dead' (see [Gibson 1965](#) p. 37).

⁸ See [Did the Proto-Semitic Long Vowel ā Persist into Pre-Exilic Biblical Hebrew \(BH\)?](#).

⁹ Resulting from [Canaanite Shift](#)

¹⁰ See [Blau 2010](#) §3.5.7.2.1.

¹¹ I use *e, i, u* when placed beside /EBHP/ transliterations which clearly mark the restored vowels. Where this is not the case I use *ē, ī, ū*.

¹² See [Blau 1976](#) p. 10.

¹³ In transliterating consonantal [phonemes](#) I use the [Society of Biblical Literature](#) (SBL) *Academic Translation Style* ([THSBL](#)). I generally to use the [IPA](#) system to transliterate consonantal [phones](#).

¹⁴ "Outside of closed unstressed syllables, which excluded long vowels, Ancient Hebrew had a contrast between long and short vowels. However, between the Tannaitic period (c. 73-200 CE) and the time of the Masoretes, short vowels in stressed syllables lengthened, erasing the contrast in those syllables.." [Steiner 1997](#) p. 149.

¹⁵ See [Schniedewind-Sivan 1997](#) p. 304 footnote.

¹⁶ See [Archaic or Archaizing Poetic Texts](#).

¹⁷ See [Young, Rezetko, Ehrensverd 2008](#) chapt. 12; [Vern 2008](#).

¹⁸ See [Sáenz-Badillos](#) §3.3; [Kutscher 1982](#) p. 79 ff.

¹⁹ From [Young, Rezetko, Ehrensverd 2008](#) p. 57.

(W)e agree with Hurvitz that it is impossible to discern linguistic development within EBH (my CBH) or within LBH (my PCBH).... For example, on the basis of language, we cannot date alleged preexilic EBH texts to the tenth as opposed to the seventh century, nor can we date possible sources within supposed preexilic books, such as Genesis or Samuel, to particular points in time. More explicitly, alleged preexilic EBH texts written over a potential span of hundreds of years (eg. 1000-600 BCE) do not reflect any discernible chronological linguistic variations.

²⁰ See [Ehrensverd 2004](#). The following is quoted from [Kofoed 2006](#) pp. 98-99 -

If there is ever any truly sharp division between two historical stages of a language over a relatively short time period, then it is an accident. Catastrophic change in language is not the norm. Current theory rebuts, therefore, the argument (often stated *ex silentio*) that only one kind of Hebrew was being used at any one time, and Davies is therefore right in arguing that one cannot automatically convert linguistic typology into linguistic chronology. A range of synchronic factors must be taken into consideration before a diachronic explanation can be settled: dialect, colloquial language, idiolect, sociolect, archaizing language, etc. This is also true for periods where such differing grammars are unattested in the written sources. Since writing is secondary to speech, vernaculars and dialects must by necessity have existed alongside the written *Hochsprache*. Before jumping to diachronic explanations of linguistic difference one

must acknowledge, therefore, that the dark side of the moon is just as real as the visible, and that the existence of additional contemporary grammars may account better for the linguistic differences than diachronic ones.

Furthermore, since language change is influenced by a number of unpredictable factors (time, society, and the individual) no linear development can be ascribed automatically to any language. Modern linguistic theory has, for the same reason, dismissed the idea that language change is governed by an internal "biological clock" that makes it possible for the historical linguist to reconstruct prior stages and to predict future developments of a given language....

²¹ From [Kofoed 2006](#) p. 103 -

The obvious choice of a comparative case study would of course be to pick a well-documented contemporary linguistic case in the same literary genre and from the same cultural stream. The closest match in that regard is probably the Babylonian "literary" language or "Standard Babylonian," which remained so stable that even distinguished scholars erroneously dated compositions late that later were proved to stem from Old Babylonian times.

²² See [Phones and Phonemes](#).

²³ **Note, in reconstructed [EBHP] transliterations and sound files -**

1. there is no spirantization of the bgdkpt consonants;
2. [vowel qualities are outlined here](#);
3. I use the most probable form. Where no one form stands out as most probable, I select the one closest to the MT vocalization.
4. when multiple forms are possible, the form used is underlined.

²⁴ See [Young, Rezetko, Ehrensvärd 2008](#) chapt.5.

²⁵ From [Young, Rezetko, Ehrensvärd 2008](#) p. 50 "Polzin minimises the influence of Aramaic on LBH emphasising instead the inner development or natural evolution of BH ([Polzin 1976](#): 2; cf. 13-14)."

²⁶ See [Ehrensvärd 2004](#).

²⁷ From [Young, Rezetko, Ehrensvärd 2008](#) p. 48.

First it has been recognized for a long time that the relative homogeneity of BH may be explained by its *function as a standard literary language* (e.g. [Chomsky 1957](#): 30-31, 46-49; [W. Weinberg 1993](#): 13). In other words BH was an artificial construct, a *Bildungssprache* or 'language of education', that was written by many scribes at many times and places, and whose linguistic differences may be due to proficiency and/or style. Ehrensvärd's reference to Arabic present in some respects a fair analogy. It shows that it is possible for a language to stay the same for many centuries. Also, Blau points out that 'there were Arabic

authors who wrote in a late period in a purely classical style and succeeded in avoiding not only neo-Arabic forms, but also post-classical forms ([Blau 1997](#): 28). In the same article he refers to the twelfth-century scholar Usama bin Munqidh who wrote his memoirs in Middle Arabic, i.e. heavily influenced by vernacular Arabic, but also wrote poetry in perfect Classical Arabic ([Blau 1997](#): 26 n.30).

²⁸ It seems likely that in LBHP: /t/ was pronounced as [t̤] ([pronunciation](#)); /s/ as [s̤]; and, /q/ as [k̤] (see [What was the Nature of the "Emphatic Consonants" in EBHP?](#)). However, for simplicity's sake, I will use the following equivalences in my [EBHP] transcriptions:

/t/ = [t̤]; /s/ = [s̤]; and, /q/ = [k̤].

²⁹ From [Morag 1988](#) -

In describing General Qumran Hebrew (GQH) as essentially a continuation of Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH), one would not do justice to this type of Hebrew. Although some of the features examined in this article constitute a continuation of LBH ... GQH as a whole possesses a number of prominent grammatical traits that are not related to the fabric of LBH. These traits probably represent a continuation of an old dialectal variation.... To our mind, the impact of stress variation is evident... It is thus clear that the proposition that GQH was a literary continuation of LBH can hardly be sustained. Literary continuation as well as archaization are to be found in the level of style-but typologically a language cannot be defined on the basis of stylistic evidence. As observed above, in a number of its features GQH does indeed continue LBH, but such a continuation need not necessarily be literary. However, what we have attempted to stress is the weight that must be assigned in defining the nature of GQH to those features that disclose no continuation of LBH. These features of GQH are too numerous and too grammatically salient to be assigned a secondary standing. Such phenomena as the contraction of the final diphthong *aw* (feature no. 2), the dissimilation CC>nC (feature no. 3), or the morphophonemic and morphological structures created by variations in the stress patterns (features nos 5 and 6), are all to be ascribed to phonological processes. Processes of this kind must, needless to say, come into being in a living, spoken, language. It would be difficult to envisage their coming into existence in a language whose character is literary. The same holds good for the morphological features dealt with above: the long forms of the pronouns (*hw'h*, *hy'h*: feature no. 7; the *-mh* ending of the second person masculine plural in the perfect and in the suffixed pronouns: feature no. 9). Such features, as well as several others that have not been dealt with here, can in no way be regarded as having been originated in a literary, archaizing, language, which had BH as its model of writing, or as indicating a linear development of LBH. They are part and parcel of the morphological structure of certain Hebrew dialects of the Qumran period.

³⁰ See [Yadin et. al. 2002](#); [Kutscher 1971a](#) col. 1590; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, IV, 237-238, 1971..

³¹ [Khan 1994](#) p. 141.

³² A case can be made that the PTH reflex of the TH vocal *šwa* /ə/ is not phonemic (cf. [Gibson 1965](#) pp. 41-42). However, for clarity I will assume its phonemic status in PTH.

³³ It seems likely that in PTH: /t/ was pronounced as [t̥] ([pronunciation](#)); /š/ as [s̥]; and, /q/ as [k̥] (see [What was the Nature of the "Emphatic Consonants" in EBHP?](#)). However, for simplicity's sake, I will use the following equivalences in my [EBHP] transcriptions:

/t/ = [t̥]; /š/ = [s̥]; and, /q/ = [q].

³⁴ [Blau 2010](#) §3.5.6.5.3. states -

It is clear that *ḥaṭaf qamaš* stands in phonemic opposition to *ḥaṭaf pataḥ/mobile šwa* (which, according to Tiberian tradition, were pronounced identically)

See also [Blau 1976/93](#) §3.5.

³⁵ It seems likely that in TH: /t/ was pronounced as [t̥] ([pronunciation](#)); /š/ as [s̥]; and, /q/ as [k̥] (see [What was the Nature of the "Emphatic Consonants" in EBHP?](#)). However, for simplicity's sake, I will use the following equivalences in my [EBHP] transcriptions:

/t/ = [t̥]; /š/ = [s̥]; and, /q/ = [q].

³⁶ From *The SBL Handbook of Style For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* by Patrick H. Alexander, Hendrickson Publishers, 1999 sect. 5.1.1.

³⁷ See [Qimron 1986](#); [Sáenz-Badillos](#) pp. 86-94; [Manuel 1995](#) pp. 130-146.

³⁸ See publications of [Revell](#); [Sáenz-Badillos](#) pp. 86-94; [Manuel 1995](#) pp. 168-198.

³⁹ See [Yeivin](#); [Sáenz-Badillos](#) pp. 94-105; [Manuel 1995](#) pp. 199-225.

⁴⁰ See [Sáenz-Badillos](#) pp. 80-86; [Manuel 1995](#) pp. 130-167; [Hoffman](#) pp. 85-117.