The Nexus between Textual Criticism and Linguistics: A Case Study from Leviticus

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Forty-five years after James Barr's *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* appeared, it is time to reiterate his call for a balanced approach to philology and textual criticism. Though the essential issues are the same as when Barr wrote, the amount of textual data from the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as methodological challenges to the standard view of the linguistic history of ancient Hebrew have produced a significantly more complex situation. As scholars move forward in both subdisciplines of Hebrew studies—textual criticism and historical linguistics—it is more critical than ever to keep in mind that the history of the text and the history of the language are inextricably bound to each other. Using two variants in Leviticus, I will illustrate what a reasonably balanced approach looks like from the perspective of a Hebrew linguist, with the hope that textual critics and Hebrew linguists will see the need to work more closely with each other.

Forty-five years ago, James Barr addressed the application of historical-comparative linguistics, or comparative philology, to the text of Hebrew Bible. Although Barr's primary concern was establishing some methodological guidelines for the philological approach, the work also served to contrast the use of philology to solve textual difficulties with text-critical emendation. He noted that the pendulum seemed to have swung away from the emendation practices of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[1] Yet for all the philological examples in

[1] Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 301.

the book, he still acknowledged the need for the biblical scholar to understand and work with both approaches to the text, even though "they move the scholar in exactly opposite directions."[2] Thus, Barr's work served as a call not only for philological rigor but also for a balanced approach to the tension between philology and textual criticism.

This specter of imbalance now threatens the discussion again, though the specific issue has shifted from emendation versus comparative philology to textual fluidity and plurality versus diachronic linguistics and dating texts. In a number of recent works (with more forthcoming or in progress), a few scholars, especially Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensvärd, have begun to argue that the early, classical, and late stages of Biblical Hebrew represent not diachronic change but rather dialectal variation.[3] Besides challenging centuries-old pillars of Hebrew language history, these same scholars also question the very legitimacy of applying historical linguistic methodologies to the data. Central among the claims of those who forcefully argue against the consensus is a text-critical one—that the fluidity and pluriformity of the biblical texts in the late Second Temple period put "a question mark over the whole enterprise of linguistic dating before it has begun."[4]

Without a doubt, we must acknowledge the complex composition, redaction, and transmission history of the biblical texts; the "creative scribes in antiquity …

[2] Ibid., 7.

[3] Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts* (2 vols.; BibleWorld; London: Equinox, 2008). See also the following works by Young: "The 'Archaic' Poetry of the Pentateuch in the MT, Samaritan Pentateuch and 4QExodᶜ," *AbrN* 35 (1998): 74–75; "Late Biblical Hebrew and Hebrew Inscriptions," in *Biblical Hebrew: Studies in Chronology and Typology* (ed. Ian Young; JSOTSup 369; London: T&T Clark, 2003), 276–311; "Biblical Texts Cannot Be Dated Linguistically," *HS* 46 (2005): 341–51; "Late Biblical Hebrew and the Qumran Pesher Habakkuk," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 8/25 (2008): 1–38; "Is the Prose Tale of Job in Late Biblical Hebrew," *VT* 49 (2009): 606–29. For an orientation to the debate, see Ziony Zevit, "Historical Linguistics and the Dating of Hebrew Texts," *HS* 46 (2005): 321–26; idem, "What a Difference a Year Makes: Can Biblical Texts Be Dated Linguistically?" *HS* 47 (2006): 83–91; and, more recently, Ronald Hendel, "Unhistorical Hebrew Linguistics: A Cautionary Tale," *The Bible and Interpretation* 2011, online at http://www.bibleinterp.com/opeds/hen358022.shtml (accessed February 2012), the response in Robert Rezetko, Ian Young, and Martin Ehrensvärd, "A Very Tall 'Cautionary Tale': A Response to Ron Hendel," *The Bible and Interpretation* 2011, online at http://www.bibleinterp .com/articles/rez358028.shtml (accessed February 2012), and many of the essays in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew* (ed. Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit; Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 8; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012).

[4] Young et al., *Linguistic Dating*, 2:101. Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd use textual fluidity as a refrain and set up the complex histories of the biblical texts as an insurmountable barrier to diachronic analysis of the linguistic features in the texts. It is, however, untenable to make such an artificial distinction between the ancient texts and the linguistic data they contain. If Text A (containing Feature X) can be placed in a relative diachronic relationship to Text B (containing Feature Y), it is possible (although it must be established) that the linguistic features themselves also stand in such a chronological relationship.

[were] at once handing on and *composing* the scriptural text."[5] It does not some-how follow from this textually complex situation that, though we are able to iden-tify cases of scribal change, we are at the same time disallowed from using those data for reconstructing linguistic history. Even Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd discuss numerous examples where differences within the textual evidence show "that the language was subject to constant revision at the hands of editors and scribes who passed down the biblical tradition through many generations." But if such *revisions*, which are differences that stand in an obviously chronological rela-tionship, can be identified, then Young et al. have engaged in the very reconstruc-tion work they disallow for linguists.[6]

To take things a step further, given that a text is inextricably tied to the language used to create it, it only stands to reason that changes in language may actually guide the reconstruction of the textual history. If a scribe updates a text based on a processing difficulty or a development in his native grammar, which differs from the grammar of the text being copied, the text critic must also be aware of the possible diachronic changes in linguistic systems in order to under-stand properly the diachronic changes in the text. In this essay, I take up two variants in Leviticus to illustrate that linguistic changes represented by the variants may in some cases *precede* the identification of the earlier text.

I. The Text-Critical Problems: Leviticus 1:17 and 25:33

The first verse to examine is Lev 1:17 in B19ᵃ, given in (1).

1. Leviticus 1:17 in MT (B19ᵃ) (LXX, SamP, Pesh, Targ^Onq)

וְשִׁסַּע אֹתוֹ בִכְנָפָיו֙ לֹא יַבְדִּיל֒ וְהִקְטִ֨יר אֹתוֹ הַכֹּהֵן הַמִּזְבֵּ֗חָה עַל־הָעֵצִים אֲשֶׁר עַל־הָאֵשׁ עֹלָה ה֤וּא אִשֵּׁה רֵ֣יחַ נִיחֹ֖חַ לַיהוָֽה׃ ס

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[5] Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 74 (emphasis added); see also idem, "The Canonical Process, Textual Criticism, and Latter Stages in the Composition of the Bible," in *Shaʿarei Talmon: Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon* (ed. Michael Fishbane and Emanuel Tov; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 267–91; Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 258–85. For a similar discussion of scribal practices external to ancient Israel, see Breandán Ó Buachalla, "Scribal Practice, Philology and Historical Linguistics," in *Papers from the 5th International Conference on Historical Linguistics* (ed. Anders Ahlqvist; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1982), 425–32.

[6] Young et al., *Linguistic Dating*, 359; see also 351. For more extensive criticism of Young, Rezetko, and Ehrensvärd's methodology, see Ziony Zevit, "Afterword: Not-So-Random Thoughts Concerning Linguistic Dating and Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew," in Miller-Naudé and Zevit, *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew,* 455–89.

And he shall tear [the bird] by its wings; he shall not split (it) in two. And the priest shall send it up in smoke at the altar, upon the wood that is on the fire. A burnt-offering is it, a fire-offering[7] of soothing aroma to Y[hwh].

The Hebrew text of B19[a] is closely followed by the Septuagint, Samaritan Pentateuch, Peshitta, and *Targum Onqelos*. One text, given in (2), from Cave 4 at Qumran, however, provides some interesting departures.[8]

> 2. Leviticus 1:17 in 4QLev[b] (4Q24 fl_7:20–21)[9]

> ושסע אתיו בכנפיו ולא יבדיל [והקטיר אתו הכהן המזבחה על הע[צ̇ים אשר ע̇ל
> [הא[ש עלה <u>היא</u> ריח ניחוח לי[הוה]

> And he shall tear it by its wings; he shall not split (it) in two. [And the priest shall send it up in smoke at the altar, upon the wo]od that is on [the f]ire. The burnt-offering is *it*, (*or*: The burnt-offering *is*) a soothing aroma to Y[hwh].

The Qumran version exhibits three noticeable differences from B19[a]: two orthographic variants (the addition of the י in אתיו and the addition of the ו on ולא) and one lexical variation (the absence of אִשֶּׁה).[10] Toward the end of the verse, though, there is a difference that as far as I can tell has not been given due consideration: the third person pronoun, underlined in the example, is the 3rd fem. sg. pronoun,

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[7] Jacob Milgrom (*Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 3A; New York: Doubleday, 1991], 161–62) argues that the term אִשֶּׁה should not be derived from אֵשׁ ("fire"); rather, the sacrificial term, which he renders as "food gift," is to be connected to the Ugaritic word *ʾtt* ("gift") or the Arabic word *ʾaṯâṯu* ("possessions of every kind"). So also John E. Hartley, *Leviticus* (WBC 4; Dallas: Word, 1992), 13–14; cf. Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus* ויקרא: *The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 7–8 and 201 n. 24. Milgrom argues for the non–fire-related meaning for אִשֶּׁה because some items referred to as אִשֶּׁה never enter the altar fire and others that do enter the fire are not called אִשֶּׁה. For convincing counterarguments in favor of "fire-offering," see Christian Eberhart, "The Cult Term אִשֶּׁה (*Isheh*): Remarks on Its Meaning, Importance, and Disappearance" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 2005). Eberhart also musters evidence from the Septuagint suggesting that the interpretation of the אִשֶּׁה as a "fire-offering" existed in antiquity (p. 3; see also idem, "A Neglected Feature of Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible: Remarks on the Burning Rite on the Altar," *HTR* 97 [2004]: 485–93; see esp. 489 n. 16).

[8] Eugene Ulrich et al., *Qumran Cave 4.VII: Genesis to Numbers* (DJD 12; Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 179–80; and Eugene Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants* (VTSup 134; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 109.

[9] It is well known that the ו and י are not consistently distinguished in many Qumran texts. However, the particular scribe of 4QLev[b] did distinguish the two graphs, at least in the extant text. Thus, there is little doubt that the pronoun in question is היא and not הוא.

[10] On אתיו, see Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (HSS 29; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 59. Martin Abegg has pointed out (personal communication, May 13, 2011) that the addition of the ו to the negative לא is, for whatever reason, a characteristic of the biblical scrolls; the addition occurs seventy-seven times.

in contrast to the 3rd masc. sg. pronoun in the B19ᵃ. This difference in the pronoun is also reflected in one Aramaic Targum, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, given in (3).

3. Leviticus 1:17 in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*

ויתלע יתיה בגדפוי ולא יפריש גדפוי מיניה ויסיק יתיה כהנא למדבחא על קיסין
דעל אישתא עלתא <u>היא</u> קרבן דמתקבל ברעוא קדם ייי

And he shall tear it by its wings. But he shall not separate its wings from it, and the priest shall take it up to the altar upon the wood that is upon the fire. A burnt-offering is *it*, (*or*: a burnt offering *is*) a sacrifice that is received with pleasure before God.

As with the Qumran text, the pronoun standing after the noun עלתא ("burnt-offering") is the feminine pronoun היא instead of the masculine הוא of B19ᵃ. Thus, *Pseudo-Jonathan* witnesses the same pronoun difference as we see in 4QLevᵇ.

With the issues of Lev 1:17 in mind, now let us examine our second passage from Leviticus, given in (4), in which we face another pronoun problem.

4. Leviticus 25:33 in B19ᵃ (11QᵖᵃˡᵉᵒLev, SamP, Targᴼⁿۧ, Targᴾᴶ)

וַאֲשֶׁ֣ר יִגְאַל֮ מִן־הַלְוִיִּם֒ וְיָצָ֣א מִמְכַּר־בַּ֣יִת וְעִ֣יר אֲחֻזָּת֗וֹ בַּיֹּבֵ֑ל כִּ֣י בָתֵּ֞י עָרֵ֣י הַלְוִיִּ֗ם הִ֣וא
אֲחֻזָּתָ֔ם בְּת֖וֹךְ בְּנֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵֽל׃

and what should be redeemed among the Levites, it shall go out—from the sale of a house and the city of its property—in the Jubilee, because the houses [masc. pl.] of the cities [fem. pl.] of the Levites [masc. pl.] *it* [fem. sg.!] (is) their property [fem. sg.] in the midst of the children of Israel.

Note the pronoun that is underlined in the example, which is an example of the perpetual Qere wherein the 3rd fem. sg. pronoun in the Pentateuch is indicated by a vocalization at odds with the consonantal text. In other words, the *consonantal* text is that of a 3rd masc. sg. pronoun הוא, while the overlaid *masoretic vocalization* indicates a 3rd fem. sg. pronoun הִיא. In most cases of the 3rd fem. sg. perpetual Qere, the number and gender features fit the context. In this particular example, it creates grammatical tension: what is its antecedent? If the vocalized 3rd fem. sg. pronoun refers back to the closest logical referent, "cities" (3rd fem. pl.), it creates a number mismatch. If the pronoun refers back to the farther "houses" (3rd masc. pl.), there is a number *and* gender mismatch. Yet all but one of the ancient witnesses follow the 3rd fem. sg. interpretation of the pronoun, illustrated in (5), thus indicating that this is an old tradition.

5. Leviticus 25:33 in *Targum Onqelos*

ודיפרוק מן לֵיוָאֵי וְיִפְקוּן זְבִינֵי בֵיתָא וְקִרְוֵי אַחֲסָנְתֵיה בְּיוֹבֵילָא אֲרֵי בָתֵי קִרְוֵי לֵיוָאֵי
<u>הִיא</u> אַחֲסָנַתְהוֹן בְּגוֹ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃

> So that which should be redeemed among the Levites, it shall be released—the
> sales of house and cities of its inheritance—in the Jubilee, for the houses of the
> cities of the Levites *is* (!) their inheritance in the midst of the children of Israel.

The common explanation for this rare phenomenon is that the combination of no
obvious preceding referent and the 3rd fem. sg. noun immediately following the
pronoun, Hebrew אֲחֻזָּתָם and Aramaic אַחְסָנַתְהוֹן, caused a case of cataphora, or
forward *feature attraction*. This pre-theoretical solution, although incomplete,
may be on the right track. I will return to this below.

Now if we set aside the masoretic vocalization of Lev 25:33 and follow the
consonantal text, the 3rd masc. sg. creates the same set of problems, flipped: if the
3rd masc. sg. pronoun refers back to the closer "cities" (3rd fem. pl.), there is a
gender and number mismatch, and if it refers back to the farther "houses" (3rd
masc. pl.), there is a number mismatch. Consider, though, this latter mismatch
along with how the Peshitta renders the verse in (6).

6. Leviticus 25:33 in the Peshitta (Ambrosianus)

ܘܕܢܦܪܘܩ ܦܘܪܩܢܐ ܡܢ ܠܘܝܐ. ܢܦܩ ܗܘ ܘܒܝܬܐ ܘܩܪܝܬܐ ܕܐܚܘܕܗ.
ܒܝܘܒܠܐ. ܡܛܠ ܕܒܬܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܩܪܝܬܐ ܕܠܘܝܐ. ܗܢܘܢ ܐܢܘܢ
ܝܪܬܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܝܬ ܒܢܝ ܐܝܣܪܐܝܠ

And who(ever) redeems a ransom-object of the Levites, then it shall be released
—from the sale of the house and the city of his possession—in the return of
jubilee; because the houses [masc. pl.] of the cities [fem. pl.] of the Levites—they
[masc. pl.] *are* [masc. pl.] their possessions among the children of Israel.

The Peshitta translates with a plural demonstrative pronoun, ܗܢܘܢ, so that it
would match the masc. pl. referent "houses" (but not "cities," which is fem. pl. in
Syriac); and it added the copular use of the anaphoric pronoun, ܐܢܘܢ, immedi-
ately after. Thus, at least one ancient translator understood the pronoun to link in
some way with a preceding referent and so perhaps read the consonantal הוא not
as the 3rd fem. sg. perpetual Qere but as the masculine pronoun הוּא.

To summarize, the central question for both our passages, Lev 1:17 and 25:33,
is whether the pronoun differences between the B19ᵃ tradition and the non-
agreeing texts reflect transmission errors or intentional changes. To conclude that
it is a transmission error should be the last resort, forcing us to investigate whether
there is a discernible reason motivating the change. The question then becomes, if
the changes of the pronouns were intentional, what was the reason for each? As
with many text-critical issues, deciding which textual option is better is not simply
a matter of prioritizing certain manuscripts and the traditions they represent or
mechanically siding with the weight of manuscript evidence. In the case of Lev
1:17, for instance, while both the typically favored textual traditions and the num-
ber of manuscripts suggest that the 3rd masc. sg. הוּא is the older, better reading,

one could argue in response that *lectio difficilior potior*: the 3rd fem. sg. הִיא is the more difficult and thus older reading and the 3rd masc. sg. הוּא represents scribal correction. A similar argument can be made for the consonantal text of Lev 25:33.

But this is not the argument I suggest making. Rather, I suggest that the textual differences concerning the pronouns in Lev 1:17 and 25:33 highlight a feature of the grammatical system of Hebrew that is often overlooked and more often misunderstood. And it is this grammatical feature that points toward the text-critical solution.

II. THE LINGUISTIC PROBLEM[11]

At the heart of the pronoun difficulty in both passages is the syntactic role of the independent personal pronouns in Hebrew. In most cases, the anaphoric pronouns, such as הוּא ("he/it") and הִיא ("she/it"), are just that—pronouns referring back to a previously stated or assumed nominal referent. In some cases these pronouns are used demonstratively, as in הָאִישׁ הַהוּא ("that man"). And in some debated cases the third person pronouns may fulfill the role of the present tense copula "is," linking a subject and its predicate. The first and last of these roles pertain to the possible function of the pronoun in Lev 1:17, which I summarize in (7).

7. Grammatical Options for Leviticus 1:17 in B19ᵃ (and parallel witnesses)

>   (a) הוּא is an *anaphoric subject pronoun*, referring back to the sacrificial item (הָעוֹף from v. 14), with אִשֵּׁה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה in apposition, "a burnt-offering is *it*, a fire-offering of soothing aroma to Yʜwʜ."

>   (b) הוּא is a *resumptive pronoun* following עֹלָה as a *casus pendens* noun phrase with אִשֵּׁה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה as the predicate, that is, "a burnt-offering—*it* (is) a fire-offering of pleasing aroma to Yʜwʜ."

>   (c) הוּא is a *copular pronoun* serving to link עֹלָה with a classifying predicative phrase אִשֵּׁה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה, "a burnt-offering *is* a fire-offering of pleasing aroma to Yʜwʜ."

The first option (7a), that the pronoun is not related to the immediately preceding fem. sg. noun עֹלָה but refers back to a masc. sg. noun in a preceding verse, is the way that most modern interpreters understand the clause. The second option (7b), as a *casus pendens* with the resumptive use of the pronoun, is grammatically

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[11] At the suggestion of an anonymous reviewer, I have included at the end of this study a brief appendix with definitions for the grammatical and linguistic terminology employed throughout this section and the next.

problematic due to the lack of agreement between the fem. sg. עֹלָה and the masc. sg. הוא. The third option (7c) also suffers from lack of gender agreement, but as we will soon see, this is not necessarily an issue for the syntax of pronominal copulas.[12]

Assuming that the change of pronoun in the texts of 4QLev^b and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* does not reflect a scribal error in either text, there are three similar options for analyzing the grammar of the 3rd fem. sg. היא, which I provide in (8).

> 8. Grammatical Options for Leviticus 1:17 in 4QLev^b (and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*)
>
> > (a) היא is an *anaphoric subject pronoun*, referring back to some fem. sg. referent within the discourse unit of Lev 1:14–17, with ריח ניחוח ליהוה as appositional modification, that is, "a burnt-offering is *it* (?), a pleasing aroma to Yнwн."
> >
> > (b) היא is a *resumptive pronoun* following עלה as a *casus pendens* noun phrase with ריח ניחוח ליהוה as predicative modification, that is, "a burnt-offering—*it* (is) a pleasing aroma to Yнwн."
> >
> > (c) היא is a *copular pronoun* serving to equate עלה with ריח ניחוח ליהוה, "a burnt-offering *is* a pleasing aroma to Yнwн."

Whereas with the 3rd masc. sg. pronoun הוא of B19^a the second and third options are grammatically problematic, the case is exactly the reverse with the 3rd fem. sg. היא of 4QLev^b: the anaphoric option (8a) suffers from the lack of any suitable feminine referent within the context of vv. 14–17; there is no noun for היא to point back to. In contrast, the second (8b) and third (8c) options are grammatical for 4QLev^b.

Turning to Lev 25:33, there are fewer obvious grammatical options for the 3rd fem. sg. הוא of the MT. Since there are no 3rd fem. sg. referents immediately preceding the pronoun or in the larger preceding context, we are limited to two possibilities, which I summarize in (9).

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[12] There are also contextual considerations that aid in sorting through the options. The second and third options do not fit contextually. Whereas it makes sense for such-and-such sacrifice to be classified as an עֹלָה, which itself is further qualified (7a), it makes much less contextual sense for an עֹלָה to be classified as an אִשֶּׁה, another type of sacrifice, by a topicalization structure (7b: "X, it is Y") or a simple equative predication (7c: "X is Y"). On this last point, it is worth noting that Lev 1:9 lacks the pronoun between עֹלָה and רֵיחַ־נִיחוֹחַ לַיהוָה in B19^a:

וְקִרְבּוֹ וּכְרָעָיו יִרְחַץ בַּמָּיִם וְהִקְטִיר הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַכֹּל הַמִּזְבֵּחָה עֹלָה אִשֵּׁה רֵיחַ־נִיחוֹחַ לַיהוָה:

> and its entrails and its legs one shall wash with water and the priest shall send the whole thing up in smoke on the altar (as) a burnt-offering, a fire-offering of soothing aroma to Yнwн.

Instead of a classifying clause "it is a burnt-offering, a fire-offering…," as we have in Lev 1:17, the absence of the pronoun prohibits a clausal analysis and forces an adverbial reading: "as a burnt-offering, a fire-offering.…"

9. Grammatical Options for Leviticus 25:33 in B19ᵃ (and ‖ Vrs) according to Masoretic Vocalization

(a) הִיא is a *resumptive pronoun* following בָּתֵּי עָרֵי הַלְוִיִּם as a *casus pendens* noun phrase with אֲחֻזָּתָם as predicative modification in which the resumptive pronoun agrees with the predicate instead of the hanging subject: "the houses of the cities of the Levites—*it* (is) their property."[13]

(b) הִיא is a *copular pronoun* serving to equate בָּתֵּי עָרֵי הַלְוִיִּם with אֲחֻזָּתָם, and the copular pronoun agrees with the predicate instead of the subject: "the houses of the cities of the Levites *is* their property."[14]

The question that remains for both of these options is why the pronoun, resumptive or copular, would agree with the predicate instead of the subject. The question is nearly the opposite for the similar two grammatical options for the contrasting consonantal text of B19ᵃ, which I summarize in (10).

10. Grammatical Options for Lev 25:33 in B19ᵃ according to the Consonantal Text

(a) הוא is a *resumptive pronoun* following בָּתֵּי עָרֵי הַלְוִיִּם as a *casus pendens* noun phrase with אֲחֻזָּתָם as predicative modification, and the resumptive pronoun agrees only in gender (not number) with the hanging subject: "the houses of the cities of the Levites—*it* (is) their property."

(b) הוא is a *copular pronoun* serving to equate בָּתֵּי עָרֵי הַלְוִיִּם with אֲחֻזָּתָם, and the copular pronoun agrees with its subject only in gender, not in number: "the houses of the cities of the Levites *is* their property."[15]

The direction of agreement exhibited in the consonantal text of B19a is between the pronoun and the subject, which is the expected direction (unlike the Qere). Yet there is still a number mismatch, which is not typical of resumptive pronouns.

To sort these options out and reconstruct a plausible history for the differences requires that we investigate the copular use of the pronoun in Hebrew.

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[13] So Tamar Zewi, "The Definition of the Copula and the Role of the 3rd Independent Personal Pronouns in Nominal Sentences of Semitic Languages," *Folia Linguistica Historica* 17, no. 1–2 (1996): 47–49; and Takamitsu Muraoka, "The Tripartite Nominal Clause Revisited," in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches* (ed. Cynthia L. Miller; Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 1; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 206–8.

[14] Geoffrey Khan, "Some Aspects of the Copula in North West Semitic," in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives* (ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz; Publication of the Institute for Advanced Studies, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1; Jerusalem: Magnes, 2006), 172.

[15] Ibid.

III. The Linguistic Solution

The status of the third person pronoun as a third element in verbless clauses has been a much studied issue. In nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century scholarship there were adherents of both the copular and noncopular analyses for examples like (11).

11. Joshua 2:11[16]

    Yhwh, your God, *is* God.   יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם ה֣וּא אֱלֹהִים

Many great Hebraists (e.g., C. Albrecht and Carl Brockelmann) related the function of the pronoun in examples like (11) to the Indo-European copula, reflected in a simple translation like "Yhwh, your God, *is* God";[17] other equally prominent scholars (e.g., Samuel R. Driver), though, interpreted such examples as a three-part compound sentence, reflected best by either an English "as for" construction ("As for Yhwh, your God—*he* is God") or *casus pendens* construction ("Yhwh. your God—*he* is God").

Proponents of the copular analysis have decreased in recent years, and it has become increasingly common to look for some special pragmatic function for the pronoun.[18] Steven A. Geller's argument is a case in point: he contends that the pronoun in (11) is a necessary part in forming a cleft sentence so that the clefted

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[16] For a classified list of tripartite verbless clauses in the Hebrew Bible, see Raphael Sappan, הייחוד התחביר של לשון השירה המקראית (Jerusalem: Kiryat-Sefer, 1981), 92–111. For a more complete, corrected list, see Robert D. Holmstedt and Andrew R. Jones, "The Pronoun in Tripartite Verbless Clauses in Biblical Hebrew: Resumption for Left-Dislocation or Pronominal Copula?" *JSS* (forthcoming 2014).

[17] C. Albrecht, "Die Wortstellung im hebräischen Nominalsatze, Teil II," *ZAW* 8 (1888): 249–63; Georg Heinrich August Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament* (trans. James Kennedy from the 8th German ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1879), 134–36, §297a; Carl Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen,* II. Band, *Syntax* (Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1913), 41, 104, §22; idem, *Hebräische Syntax* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1956), 26–27, §30a; Sappan, הייחוד התחביר; cf. Francis I. Andersen, *The Hebrew Verbless Clause in the Pentateuch* (JBL Monograph Series 14; Nashville: Abingdon, 1970), 42, 45.

[18] Samuel R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions* (2nd rev. ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1892; repr. with introductory essay by W. Randall Garr; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 267–71, §§198–99; A. B. Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax* (3rd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901), 148–51, §106; GKC §141f; Paul Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hebreu biblique* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1923), 466–70, §154; *IBHS* §16.3.3a–b; Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (Biblical Languages—Hebrew 3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 253; cf. Jan Joosten, "The Syntax of *hebərākāh ʾaḥat hîʾ ləkā ʾābî* (Gen. 27:38aα)," *JSS* 36 (1991): 207–21.

noun may be contrasted with contextual alternatives.[19] Examples that express no discernible contrast are taken to "emphasize the fact of the predication."[20] As for any copular function of the pronoun (PRON), Geller asserts that such a function did develop—illustrated in (12)–(14)—but not until after Biblical Hebrew.[21]

12. Qumran Hebrew (4Q393 frag. 3, line 6)[22]

אתה הוּא יהוה בחרתה באבותינו למקדם

you PRON(are) Yhwh; you chose our fathers from old

13. Rabbinic Hebrew[23]

וְלֹא הַמִּדְרָשׁ הוּא הָעִיקָּר אֶלָּא הַמַּעֲשֶׂה

And the central thing PRON(is) not the study but the deed. (*Avot* 1:17)

אִם אֲנִי הוּא הַטָּמֵא

If I PRON(am) the unclean one. (*Naz.* 8.1)

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[19] Geller, "Cleft Sentences with Pleonastic Pronoun: A Syntactic Construction of Biblical Hebrew and Some of Its Literary Uses," *JANESCU* 20 (1991): 15–33. He states, "Some of the explicitly contrastive examples refer to God; for example, Deut. 4:35 *kî YHWH hûʾ hāʾĕlōhîm ʾên ʿôd millĕbaddô* 'for it is YHWH who is God, none but He alone'; cf. also 4:39; Josh. 24:27; I Kgs. 8:60; 18:39; Jer. 14:22; Neh. 9:6, 7. It seems likely that, especially in the context of hymns and prayers, such references to divinity may always be understood to imply contrast with other gods or divine beings, even if unstated. The nuance may be expressed as 'God alone,' 'He alone,' 'I alone,' etc.; or, as required by context, 'God Himself,' 'You Yourself,' etc." (p. 20).

[20] Geller does not provide any sort of linguistic support for his idea of "emphasizing the fact of the predication." Moreover, he indicates that only half of the examples he collected exhibit a contrast (such as in 1 Kgs 18:39); the remaining fall into one of six functional categories that Geller discerns. Yet he relates all seven categories to a single general function, *deixis*: "All the clauses in which the pleonastic construction occurs 'point to' another aspect of the speech context, another clause or, in the case of syntactic resumption…, part of a clause, in regard to some aspect of syntactic, topical or rhetorical function" ("Cleft Sentences," 23).

[21] Tamar Zewi makes a similar argument, that the tripartite verbless clauses including an independent pronoun are examples of "extraposed subject and a predicate clause" ("Definition of the Copula," 52). She allows, however, that the pronoun may have developed into a copula in modern Hebrew (p. 43).

[22] See Jackie A. Naudé, "A Syntactic Analysis of Dislocations in Biblical Hebrew," *JNSL* 16 (1990): 101–2; cf. Martin F. J. Baasten, "Nominal Clauses Containing a Personal Pronoun in Qumran Hebrew," in *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira: Proceedings of a Symposium Held at Leiden University 11–14 December 1995* (ed. Takamitsu Muraoka and John F. Elwolde; STDJ 26; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1–16, esp. 8–13.

[23] Miguel Pérez Fernández, *An Introductory Grammar of Rabbinic Hebrew* (trans. John Elwolde; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 19; cf. Moshe Azar, תחביר לשון המשנה (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, University of Haifa, 1995), 79–81, 82–84.

14. Modern Israeli Hebrew[24]

Dani *PRON(is)* a teacher at the university.	דני הוא מורה באוניברסיטה
Dani *PRON(is)* the math teacher.	דני הוא המורה למתמטיקה
Dani *PRON(is)* very nice.	דני הוא נחמד עד מאוד
Dani *PRON(is)* on the roof.	דני הוא על הגג

Not all scholars accept even this—that postbiblical Hebrew developed the copular use of the pronoun. In his study of the three-part verbless clause in Biblical Hebrew, Takamitsu Muraoka denies the shift to copular status in any stage of Hebrew, even in modern Israeli:

> I doubt that one can prove the existence of the copula in any Semitic language. The notion undoubtedly originated with Indo-European languages in which a nominal clause without a copula in the present tense is virtually nonexistent. Classical Syriac (in which the tripartite NC is the rule, especially when both S and P are nonpronominal NCs, and the bipartite NC is a rarity) can hardly be said to possess such a copula, as Goldenberg and I argued. Even a heavily Europeanized language such as Modern Hebrew does not appear to us to use הוא as a genuine copula fully comparable to its Indo-European namesake.[25]

Muraoka's objection to a copular analysis of the Hebrew pronoun reflects neither the consensus in comparative Semitics for such constructions nor an awareness of the support from language typology. Rather, he may be reacting to earlier nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century copular analyses that relied too heavily on comparison with Indo-European languages.[26] Be that as it may, it is clear that the presence of a verbless clause in ancient Hebrew—that is, a clause in which two noun phrases are equated without an overt verbal copula, as in (15), where I have marked the null copula with ∅—is precisely the type of environment in which nonverbal copulas develop in many languages of the world.[27]

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[24] The examples have been taken and slightly modified from Edit Doron, "The Pronominal 'Copula' as Agreement Clitic," in *The Syntax of Pronominal Clitics* (ed. Hagit Borer; Syntax and Semantics 19; New York: Academic, 1986), 315.

[25] Muraoka, "Tripartite Nominal Clause Revisited," 199; see also Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (rev. ed.; SubBi 27; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2006), §154i–j.

[26] Similarly, see Gideon Goldenberg, "Pronouns, Copulas and a Syntactical Revolution in Neo-Semitic," in *Studi Afroasiatici: XI Incontro Italiano di Linguistica Camitosemitica/Afro-Asiatic Studies: 11th Italian Meeting of Afro-Asiatic Linguistics* (ed. Alessandro Mengozzi; Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2005), 239–52; and idem, "Comments on 'Three Approaches to the Tripartite Nominal Clause in Syriac' by Wido van Peursen," in *Corpus Linguistics and Textual History: A Computer-Assisted Interdisciplinary Approach to the Peshitta* (ed. P. S. F. van Keulen and W. Th. van Peursen; SSN 48; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006), 175–84.

[27] For typological studies of the use of the pronoun as a copula, see Mushira Eid, "The Copula Function of Pronouns," *Lingua* 59 (1983): 197–207; Dan Devitt, "Copula Constructions

15. Joshua 22:34

Yhwh *Ø(is)* God.   יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים

Hundreds of languages with verbal and nonverbal copulas have been studied in the last thirty years, and two patterns relevant to the present discussion have emerged. First, according to Charles N. Li and Sandra A. Thompson in their seminal study (since confirmed many times over by others), the copular use of the anaphoric pronoun often develops out of a *casus pendens* construction.[28] Specifically, the anaphoric subject pronoun that resumes the fronted subject pronoun ceases to have any anaphoric function; it *grammaticalizes*, moving from anaphoric device to copular marker. Li and Thompson schematize the pronoun-to-copula developmental pathway as in (16) (with slight modification):

16. From Anaphoric Pronoun to Copular Pronoun

[NP NP]	/	[NP$_i$ [Pron$_i$ NP]]	→	[NP$_i$ cop$_i$ NP]
Subj Pred		Top Subj Pred		Subj Pred
Verbless Clause		*Casus Pendens*		*Copula Clause*

The pathway above represents the three-stage development from (1) a two-constituent null copula clause (NP NP) to (2) a *casus pendens* structure with an anaphoric pronoun as the resumptive (NP$_i$ Pron$_i$ NP) and finally to (3) a two-constituent clause (NP$_i$ cop$_i$ NP) with the pronoun from the *casus pendens* construction having been "copularized" (to coin a convenient term).

While in some languages the grammaticalization process appears to be complete, that is, the pronoun no longer functions as an anaphor in any environment, such as with *shì* in Mandarin Chinese, in other languages the pronoun has retained an anaphoric function in addition to the added copular function. Modern Israeli Hebrew and all varieties of Arabic that use the pronominal copula (Classical Arabic, Palestinian Arabic, Lebanese Arabic, etc.) belong to this

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in Cross-Linguistic and Diachronic Perspective" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, 1994); Leon Stassen, "Zero Copula for Predicate Nominals," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (ed. Martin Haspelmath et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 486–89; Holger Diessel, *Demonstratives: Form, Function, and Grammaticalization* (Typological Studies in Language 42; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1999); Timothy J. Curnow, "Towards a Cross-Linguistic Typology of Copula Constructions," in *Proceedings of the 1999 Conference of the Australian Linguistic Society* (ed. John Henderson; 2001, online at http://www.als.asn.au/proceedings/als1999/curnow.pdf [accessed   June 27, 2013]); Osama Abdel-Ghafer, "Copular Constructions in Modern Standard Arabic, Modern Hebrew and English" (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 2003); and Regina Pustet, *Copulas: Universals in the Categorizations of the Lexicon* (Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[28] Li and Thompson, "A Mechanism for the Development of Copula Morphemes," in *Mechanisms of Syntactic Change* (ed. Charles N. Li; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), 419–44.

latter group. So, too, does Biblical Hebrew. Examples like the two in (17) and (18), both of which exhibit lack of full agreement between the subject and the following pronoun, provide strong evidence that the pronoun has been reanalyzed as a copula.

17. Anaphoric Pronoun → Copula: 2 Kings 19:15

וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל חִזְקִיָּהוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֹּאמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרֻבִים אַתָּה־הוּא
הָאֱלֹהִים לְבַדְּךָ לְכֹל מַמְלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ

And Hezekiah prayed before Yнwн and said: O Yнwн, God of Israel, sitting (between) the Cherubim—You [2nd masc. sg.] *pron.3rd masc. sg.(are)* the God [masc. sg.], you alone, for all the kingdoms of the earth.

18. Anaphoric Pronoun → Copula: Joshua 13:14

רַק לְשֵׁבֶט הַלֵּוִי לֹא נָתַן נַחֲלָה אִשֵּׁי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ

Only to the tribe of Levi he did not give an inheritance; the fire-offerings [masc. pl.] of Yнwн, the God of Israel, *pron.3rd masc. sg.(is/are)* its inheritance [fem. sg.].

As with the Qumran and Rabbinic Hebrew examples in (12) and (13, #2), the 3rd masc. sg. pronoun הוא in (17) does not agree with the 2nd masc. sg. subject pronoun אַתָּה.[29] The 3rd masc. sg. pronoun in (18) agrees fully neither with the preceding 3rd masc. pl. referent nor with the following 3rd fem. sg. referent. The lack of full agreement in (17) and (18) suggests that dialects represented by these examples have developed far enough along the copular path that they may use the 3rd masc. sg. pronoun as a nonverbal copula to make the present tense of a predication unambiguous.

   The second path of development for the copular pronoun is through the demonstrative pronouns. As (19) illustrates, the mechanism of the second path is the same as the first path—a *casus pendens* or similar type of fronted Topic construction in which the demonstrative pronoun is resumptive.

19. From Demonstrative Pronoun to Copular Pronoun[30]

[NP NP]	/	[NP [Dem$_i$ NP$_i$]]	→	[NP cop$_i$ NP$_i$]
Subj Pred		Top Subj Pred		Subj Pred
Verbless Clause		*Casus Pendens*		*Copula Clause*

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[29] Lack of person agreement also occurs in modern Israeli pronominal copula clauses, for example, אני הוא מר יוסף, "I am Mr. Joseph"; see Susan Rothstein, "Small Clauses and Copular Constructions," in *Small Clauses* (ed. Anna Cardinaletti and Maria Teresa Guasti; San Diego: Academic Press, 1995), 34–38; cf. Li and Thompson, "Mechanism," 430; Doron, "Pronominal Copula," 326 n. 16.

[30] Modified from Diessel, *Demonstratives,* 147. Note that the subscript i in the scheme in (19) indicates agreement, not coreferentiality. That is, the demonstrative points back to the fronted Topic noun phrase but agrees in gender and/or number with the second noun phrase.

Like the pathway in (16), the pathway in (19) represents the three-stage development from (1) a two-constituent verbless clause (NP NP) to (2) a *casus pendens* structure with a demonstrative pronoun as the resumptive (NP Dem_i NP_i) and finally to (3) a two-constituent clause (NP cop_i NP_i) with the demonstrative from the *casus pendens* construction having been copularized.

Although in a *casus pendens*, one expects the resumptive pronoun to agree with the hanging noun, when the demonstrative is the resumptive, the typological evidence is often to the contrary: the demonstrative agrees with the predicate over the hanging noun when there are competing agreement features. Consider the modern Israeli Hebrew example in (20):[31]

20. הבית שלך זאת דוגמה טובה

> Your house [masc. sg.] *PRON.3rd fem. sg.(is)* a good example [fem. sg.].

The forward direction of agreement—the demonstrative agrees not with the fronted subject but with the following predicate noun—is due to the spatial deictic[32] nature of demonstratives. As spatial deictics, demonstratives relate to their referents differently than anaphoric pronouns. Given that the Hebrew third person independent pronouns may have had a demonstrative origin, it is quite possible the *demonstrative-to-copula* path is behind the B19ᵃ, 11QpaleoLev, Samaritan Pentateuch, *Targum Onqelos*, and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* versions of Lev 25:33, in which the pronoun agrees with the following noun rather than with the preceding noun.[33] Examples of this are not common in the Hebrew Bible, but they do exist, as in (21) and (22), and there are few other ways to explain the syntax in a cross-linguistically meaningful way.

21. Demonstrative Pronoun → Copula: Genesis 27:21

הַאַתָּה זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו אִם־לֹא

You *DEM. masc. sg.(are)* my son Esau, or no? (That is, Are you my son Esau or not?)

22. Demonstrative Pronoun → Copula: Daniel 8:21

וְהַקֶּרֶן הַגְּדוֹלָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּין־עֵינָיו הוּא הַמֶּלֶךְ הָרִאשׁוֹן

and the great horn [fem. sg.] that is between its eyes *PRON.3rd masc. sg.(is)* the first king [masc. sg.]

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[31] Lewis Glinert, *The Grammar of Modern Hebrew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 189.

[32] Diessel describes the spatial deictic function of demonstratives as follows: "They indicate the relative distance of an object, location or person vis-à-vis the deictic center (also called the *origo*), which is usually associated with the location of the speaker" (*Demonstratives*, 36).

[33] On the pronoun's possible demonstrative origins, see *IBHS* §17, esp. n. 2, and Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar,* 500 n. 6.

Not only is the development of a copular pronoun in Hebrew supported typologically; it is even more strongly supported by comparative Semitic evidence. Many Semitic languages witness the use of the anaphoric or demonstrative pronouns as nonverbal copulas. And for some languages for which we have adequate data the historical change is observable. For example, Old Aramaic shows no copular use of the pronoun, but this feature has developed by Imperial Aramaic and Middle Aramaic, for which the examples from Ahiqar in (23) and Daniel in (24) are illustrative.[34]

    23. Ahiqar C1.1.46

        I *PRON.3rd masc. sg.(am)* Ahiqar   אנה הֻו אחיקר

    24. Daniel 2:38

        you *PRON.3rd masc. sg.(are)* the head of gold   אַנְתְּ־הוּא רֵאשָׁה דִּי דַהֲבָא

Moreover, the use of the anaphoric pronoun as a copula is nearly ubiquitous in Classical Syriac, as in (25) and above in the Peshitta of Lev 25:33 (6), and remains a feature of modern Aramaic dialects.[35]

    25. John 8:39 Peshitta

        our father *PRON.3rd masc. sg.(is)* Abraham   ܐܒܘܢ ܗܘ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܗܘ

Similarly, Akkadian does not use the pronoun as a copula in any of the third- or second-millennium languages as they exist in Mesopotamia,[36] but this form of

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[34] Many of the so-called tripartite verbless clause examples in Muraoka and Porten's grammar should be analyzed as copular constructions as well (Takamitsu Muraoka and Bezalel Porten, *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic* [rev. ed.; HO 32; Leiden: Brill, 2003]).

[35] For Syriac, see Theodor Noldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1904), 246–47, §311; Wido Th. van Peursen, "Three Approaches to the Tripartite Nominal Clause in Syriac," in van Keulen and van Peursen, *Corpus Linguistics and Textual History,* 157–73; and, in the same volume, Takamitsu Muraoka, "A Response to 'Three Approaches to the Tripartite Nominal Clause in Syriac' by Wido van Peursen and a Bit More," 189–96; and Jan Joosten, "Comments on 'Three Approaches to the Tripartite Nominal Clause in Syriac' by Wido van Peursen," 185–88. On modern Aramaic, see Khan, "Copula."

[36] John Huehnergard argues that the copular use of the pronoun not only existed in the oldest layers of Akkadian but was likely Proto-Semitic ("On Verbless Clauses in Akkadian," *ZA* 76 [1986]: 218–49). Huehnergard (p. 240 n. 79) references Li and Thompson's "Mechanism" study, but his own analysis does not reflect the developmental and thus chronological implications of Li and Thompson's work. If the use of the pronominal copula is typically a feature that develops out of another construction and in fact represents the grammaticalization of the independent pronoun, it is unlikely that it developed in Proto-Semitic, was used sparingly in Old Babylonian—to the point of being an extreme rarity—but then developed freely in West Semitic (including

copula did develop in Western Peripheral Akkadian of the second half of the second millennium (26) and is also used in Neo-Assyrian (27) and Late Babylonian (28).

26. Western Peripheral Akkadian[37]

šar(LUGAL) *māt*(KUR) *ú-ga-ri-it be-li* <u>*šu-ut*</u>

the king of Ugarit PRON.3rd masc. sg.(is) my lord' (RS 20.16:10–11 / *Ugaritica V* 118, no. 38)

27. Neo-Assyrian[38]

ayyāru urḫu ṭābu <u>*šū*</u>

Ayyar PRON.3rd masc. sg.(is) a good month (*ABL* 652, 13)

28. Late Babylonian[39]

N. PRON.3rd masc. sg.(is) my brother (*BIN* I 9, 14)   *N. aḫū'a* <u>*šū*</u>

And to round out the comparative Semitic picture by moving into the first millennium C.E., both Classical Ethiopic (Gəʿəz) (29) and Classical Arabic (30) use the independent pronoun—especially the 3rd masc. sg. pronoun—as a nonverbal copula.

29. Classical Ethiopic[40]

this is my pact (Gen 17:10)   *zāti yəʾəti śərʿatəya*

Western Peripheral Akkadian) as well as in Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian. Moreover, none of the examples adduced by Huehnergard is unambiguously the copular use of the pronoun. The pronouns in each of the examples agree fully with the nominal subject, and Huehnergard does not provide the context (or make any reference to the context), so it is impossible to tell from his examples whether a Topic–Comment structure might make equal (or more) discourse sense. The type of data needed for a clear case is precisely those we see in later Semitic examples—cases in which the pronoun (typically 3rd masc. sg.) does not fully agree with the subject NP. Grammaticalization typically proceeds in only one direction; it does not often reverse itself. Thus, it is highly questionable that the pronominal use of the copula was a Proto-Semitic feature, regardless of the development of the predicative state in Akkadian.

[37] Huehnergard, "Verbless Clauses," 244–46.

[38] Modified slightly from Wolfram von Soden, *Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik* (3rd ed.; AnOr 33; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1995), §126f.

[39] Ibid.

[40] August Dillmann, *Ethiopic Grammar* (2nd ed. enlarged and improved [1899] by Carl Bezold; trans. James A. Chrichton; London: Williams, 1907), 439–40, §194.

30. Classical Arabic[41]

ʾulāʾika <u>humū</u> ʾal-kaʾfirūna

those *PRON.3rd masc. pl.(are)* the unbelievers (al-Maʾida 5.44)

Placing the Biblical Hebrew data in fuller comparative and typological relief not only provides circumstantial support for the view that the pronoun developed a copular use even in the biblical period; it also suggests that Hebrew would have been the odd language not to have done so.[42] I suggest that the pronoun had begun to be reanalyzed in Biblical Hebrew, though the process never was completed and the personal and demonstrative pronouns maintained their pronominal functions throughout ancient Hebrew.

IV. Conclusion

In both of the passages from Leviticus we face manuscript evidence that diverges on the gender of a pronoun. Building on my case for the copular use of the pronoun in Hebrew, which appears to have been just emerging in ancient Hebrew as well as contemporaneous Aramaic, I suggest that it is possible to reconstruct a plausible history for both text-critical issues.

For Lev 1:17, B19ᵃ and those versions agreeing with it represent the older text.[43] The 3rd masc. sg. pronoun הוא is anaphoric, but its referent is three verses previous (in 1:14). Long-distance anaphora such as this is difficult to process. The long-distance anaphora as well as the known—even if rare—copular use of the pronoun allowed or provoked the scribe of 4QLevᵇ to update the text to provide a grammatically smoother reading in the immediate context. In other words, by virtue of one consonantal change (ו to י) the scribe converted the 3rd masc. sg. anaphoric pronoun into a 3rd fem. sg. copular pronoun, intentionally or not. The 3rd fem. sg. pronoun in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* may be explained similarly, particu-

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[41] Wolfdietrich Fischer, *A Grammar of Classical Arabic* (trans. Jonathan H. Rodgers; 3rd rev. ed.; Yale Language Series; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 192.

[42] For a fuller treatment of this issue, see Holmstedt and Jones, "Pronoun."

[43] Sarianna Metso takes the absence of the אִשֶּׁה in 4QLevᵇ and the presence of it in B19ᵃ as an indication that B19ᵃ represents a later tradition, in which אִשֶּׁה was a clarifying or harmonizing addition ("Evidence from the Qumran Scrolls for the Scribal Transmission of Leviticus," in *Houses Full of All Good Things: Essays in Memory of Timo Veijola* [ed. Juha Pakkala and Martti Nissinen; Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 95; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2008], 507–19). Such a reconstruction, though, does not explain the variation in the third person pronoun. I suggest, instead, that the אִשֶּׁה was lost, perhaps due to an editorial judgment that it was redundant, before the *Vorlage* of 4QLevᵇ was made. It is this omission and the resulting adjacency of the עלה, the third person pronoun, and ריח ניחוח that provided the context in which the pronoun could be (mis)taken as copular and so copied as היא to match the interpretation.

larly in light of the greater use of the copular pronoun in Aramaic, or it may be that the *Vorlage* for this targum lies in the tradition spawned by the change in the 4QLev[b] text.

So, too, with the Lev 25:33 passage, the masoretic tradition represented by the *vocalization* of B19a and the supporting versions should be taken as the older text. The 3rd fem. sg. pronoun agreeing with the predicate instead of the initial subject is likely evidence of a parallel, demonstrative path by which the nonverbal copula developed in ancient Hebrew. The 3rd masc. sg. pronoun of the consonantal text of B19[a] should be understood as an adjustment to how some scribe processed the grammar of the text, even to a phenomenon that, while it remained a minority strategy throughout ancient Hebrew, was nonetheless grammatical.[44] The Peshitta reformulation reflects both a clarification of the verse with the demonstrative pronoun, which may reflect the translator's reading of the consonantal הוא, and the productive use of the pronominal copula in Syriac.

By way of a final reflection, it is unsettling how rarely linguistic analysis and textual criticism are used in balance. This lack of interaction is highlighted in perhaps the most prominent full-scale description of textual criticism—Emanuel Tov's twice-revised textbook and reference work.[45] As Michael O'Connor noted, "The discussion of 'linguistic emendations' related to Biblical Hebrew grammar takes up a page and a half" in Tov's 482-page work.[46] Surely if I have stumbled across just two examples from Leviticus in which linguistic analysis plays a critical role in the process of reconstructing the textual relationships, common sense suggests that there are very likely many more examples to be found in the Hebrew Bible.

Martin Abegg has argued that we are poised for a veritable sea change in theories about the history of transmission of the Hebrew Bible brought about by Dead Sea Scroll studies.[47] He suggests that, while it is undoubtedly true that elements of the [Frank Moore] Cross *regions*, Tov *affiliations*, [Shemaryahu] Talmon's *sociology*, and [Eugene] Ulrich's *editions* approaches are correct, what the field has not faced fully is the role of both subconscious and conscious grammatical choices by scribes. To put it another way, Abegg has concluded that the diversity of variants has as much to do with the linguistic sensibilities of the scribes and their readers as they do with the region, versional *Vorlage*, programmatic edition, or sociological

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[44] See Holmstedt and Jones, "Pronoun."

[45] Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (3rd ed., revised and expanded; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011).

[46] O'Connor, "Discourse Linguistics and the Study of Biblical Hebrew," in *Congress Volume: Basel 2001* (ed. André Lemaire; VTSup 92; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 41 n. 86. Note that the length or substance of linguistics-related discussion has not changed in Tov's third edition.

[47] Abegg, "1QIsa[a] and 1QIsa[b]: A Rematch," in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov; London: British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2002), 221–28.

environment.[48] I suggest that the study presented here balances the use of textual complexity to stifle productive investigation of Biblical Hebrew diachrony and points toward the necessary next stage of investigating the history of the text and the language—histories that are, after all, inextricably bound together.

Appendix: Linguistic Terms

Like all technical fields, linguistics thrives on specialized terminology. Unfortunately, the terminology often results in a high "fog index" (in the words of an anonymous reviewer) for biblical and textual studies scholars who have not been trained in linguistics. Yet it is often not desirable to avoid all technical terminology: doing so would not only result in unwieldy verbosity but would remove studies like this from their explicit grounding in a linguistic theory and/or specific linguistic studies. To facilitate the nonlinguist's reading of this study (and, I would hope, future studies like it), I provide here a short list of linguistic terms used in sections II–III above. I have also included well-known terms such as "demonstrative" and "pronoun" only so that I can include information specific to my analysis of these items in Hebrew as well as point to general linguistic resources that inform my understanding. For convenience and to point the reader to perhaps the single most useful linguistics volume for the nonlinguist, I have based the definitions on David Crystal's eminently useful and accessible dictionary.[49]

Anaphora (also *anaphoric pronoun*, *long-distance anaphora*) [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 25]. The process or result of a linguistic item (e.g., pronoun) deriving its interpretation from some previously expressed unit or meaning (the antecedent). Anaphoric reference is one way of marking the identity between what is being expressed and what has already been expressed. In such a sentence as "He did that there," each word is anaphoric and is thus anaphorically related to a corresponding referent in the preceding context. Anaphora operates within clause boundaries and across clause boundaries, although the greater the distance between the anaphor and its antecedent, the greater potential there is for other constituents that also agree with the anaphor to intervene and create difficulty for interpretation.

Casus Pendens [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 273, s.v. *left dislocation*; 418, s.v. *right dislocation*]. A type of sentence in which one of the constituents appears in initial (left) or final (right) position and its canonical position is filled by a pronoun or a full lexical noun phrase with the same reference, for example, "John, I like him/the old chap" or "I know that woman/her, Julie." See Walter

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[48] Martin G. Abegg, Jr., e-mail communication, May 13, 2011. Cited with permission.
[49] Crystal, *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (6th ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).

Gross, *Die Pendenskonstruktion im biblischen Hebräisch* (Studien zum alt-hebräischen Satz 1; St. Ottilien: EOS, 1987); Naudé, "Dislocations"; and Robert D. Holmstedt, "Constituents at the Edge in Biblical Hebrew" (paper presented at the 222nd Meeting of the American Oriental Society, Boston, Massachusetts, March 16, 2012).

Cleft Sentence [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 79]. A construction in which a single clause has been divided into two separate sections, each with its own verb, one of which appears in a dependent relative clause. For example, the single clause "Yhwh is God" can be turned into a cleft sentence by moving "Yhwh" into its own clause and turning "is God" into a relative: "It is Yhwh who is God" (see Geller, "Cleft Sentences").

Copula (verbal, nonverbal, null) [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 116]. A linking verb, that is, a verb that has little independent meaning and whose main function is to relate other elements of clause structure, especially subject and complement. In Hebrew, the verbal copula is היה. The verbal copula is omitted more often than not in favor of a null copula (i.e., a phonologically unexpressed copula) that defaults to the tense aspect of the discourse context. A nonverbal copula is an overt constituent (i.e., not a null item but an overt item such as a pronoun) that is used to link the two components of a copular clause. For further discussion of the copula in Hebrew, see Pustet, *Copulas*; also Doron, "Pronominal Copula"; Rothstein, "Small Clauses"; David Kummerow, "Functional-Typological and Constructional Linguistic Studies on Tiberian Hebrew: Anaphora, Deixis, and the Verbal System" (Th.D. diss., Australian College of Theology, Sydney, 2011); and Holmstedt and Jones, "Pronoun."

Deixis (deictic) [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 133]. The process of (and as an adjective, the words used in) referring directly to the personal, temporal, or locational characteristics of the situation within which an utterance takes place, whose meaning is thus relative to that situation; for example, the first and second person pronouns אֲנִי, אֲנַחְנוּ, אַתָּה, אַתְּ, אַתֶּם, and אַתֶּן are deictic, as are the demonstrative זֶה, זֹאת, and אֵלֶּה, and also nonpronominal words such as הִנֵּה and עַתָּה. Within a discourse, deixis is relativized and thus concerns the backwards or forwards reference in discourse (anaphora and cataphora respectively), for example, English "that," "the following," "the former." For a typological discussion of demonstratives and deixis, see Diessel, *Demonstratives,* 35–47.

Demonstrative [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 135]. A class of items whose function is to point to an entity in the situation or elsewhere in a sentence. The Hebrew items זֶה, זֹאת, and אֵלֶּה (and when used to modify nouns, הוּא, הִיא, הֵם, and הֵן) have their reference fixed by gestures, speaker knowledge, or other means. Depending on their grammatical role, they are often called demonstrative

determiners (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, "on that day") or demonstrative pronouns (מַה זֹּאת עָשִׂית, "what is this you have done?"). Demonstratives fall within the general class of deictic expressions and are sometimes contrasted with pure indexicals. For a typological study of demonstratives, see Diessel, *Demonstratives.*

Grammaticalization [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 218, s.v. *grammar*]. The process whereby a word with semantic content is used to express grammatical functions. An example of grammaticalization (grammaticization) is the use of the English motion verb "go," as in "She is *going* to London," which has become a marker of tense in "It's going to rain." A case of grammaticalization in Hebrew concerns the word אֲשֶׁר, which seems have been a noun "step, place" in pre-Biblical Hebrew (based on Semitic evidence) but has grammaticalized into a function introducing nominal (relative, complement) clauses. For a discussion of אשר and grammaticalization, see Robert D. Holmstedt, "The Etymologies of Hebrew *ʾăšer* and *šeC-*," *JNES* 66 (2007): 177–91.

Linguistic Typology [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 499, s.v. *typological linguistics*]. A branch of linguistics that studies the structural similarities between languages, regardless of their history, as part of an attempt to establish a satisfactory classification, or typology, of languages. Typological comparison is thus distinguished from the historical comparison of languages—the province of comparative philology and historical linguistics—and its groupings may not coincide with those set up by the historical method. For example, in respect of the paucity of inflectional endings, English is closer to Chinese than it is to Latin.

Pronoun [Crystal, *Dictionary*, 391–92]. A term referring to the closed set of items that can be used to substitute syntactically for a noun phrase. Pronouns are often divided into classes, such as personal, demonstrative, interrogative, reflexive, indefinite, and relative. Additionally, anaphor and deixis differences indicate that first and second person pronouns must be distinguished from third person pronouns. Such a divide is clear in Hebrew, where the third person subject pronouns הוּא, הִיא, הֵם, and הֵן are also used as distal demonstratives and, as argued above, nonverbal copulas. On pronouns in general, see D. N. S. Bhat, *Pronouns* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); and, for a discussion of pronouns in Phoenician (which is directly applicable to Biblical Hebrew), see Robert D. Holmstedt, "The Syntax and Pragmatics of Subject Pronouns in Phoenician," in *Linguistic Studies in Phoenician* (ed. Robert D. Holmstedt and Aaron Schade; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 84–110.