

ON THE DATING OF HEBREW
SOUND CHANGES (* \dot{H} > \dot{H} AND * \dot{G} > \dot{C})
AND GREEK TRANSLATIONS
(2 ESDRAS AND JUDITH)

RICHARD C. STEINER

rsteiner@yu.edu

Yeshiva University, New York, NY 10033

Scholars have long recognized the importance of the Greek transcriptions of Hebrew made during the period extending from the Septuagint to the Hexapla.¹ Nevertheless, these transcriptions have yet to be fully exploited. In this article, I shall argue that they allow us to date both Hebrew sound changes (* \dot{h} > \dot{h} and, to a lesser extent, * \dot{g} > \dot{c}) and Greek translations of Hebrew books (2 Esdras and, to a lesser extent, Judith). I do not deny that linguistic dating of ancient literary material can be a perilous endeavor, particularly when it involves phonological change. Indeed, the example of such dating that springs to my mind is more of a cautionary tale than a model to be followed.²

For Joshua Blau, on his eighty-fifth birthday. I am greatly indebted to W. Clarysse, L. H. Feldman, J. H. Johnson, and S. Z. Leiman for their consistently gracious replies to my queries. As for Joshua Blau, my debt to him is not easily described in a brief footnote. He has been an inspiration to me on both the scholarly and the personal levels. In this article, my indebtedness to his *On Polyphony in Biblical Hebrew* is obvious throughout. I take this opportunity to reveal the unofficial subtitle of that monograph, which is not widely known. When I told him many years ago that my monograph on the pronunciation of $\dot{\text{v}}$ (*The Case for Fricative-Laterals in Proto-Semitic*) was to bear the subtitle “a study of original *sin*,” he replied that, by the same token, his monograph on the pronunciation of $\dot{\text{r}}$ could be subtitled “a study of the *het qadmon*.”

¹ See, e.g., A. Sáenz-Badillos, “El hebreo del s. II d. C. a la luz de las transcripciones griegas de Aquila, Simmaco y Teodocion,” *Sefarad* 35 (1975): 107–30 and the literature cited there.

² I refer to E. A. Knauf’s discussion of יִטּוּר. In “Jetur,” *ABD* 3:822, he notes that “in Safaitic, i.e., Arabic, the name of the tribe is spelled *yṯr*.” From this he concludes: “Orthographically, the Hebrew spelling *yṯwr* (instead of **yṯwr*) proves that this name entered the Hebrew tradition via (Official) Aramaic. The texts which refer to Jetur cannot, therefore, antedate the 7th century B.C.” Knauf does not explain why he believes *yṯr* would have been spelled יִטּוּר in Hebrew were it not for Official Aramaic mediation. Is it because Safaitic *ṯ* corresponds to Hebrew $\dot{\text{z}}$ in cognates? That is irrelevant in transcriptions, which are normally based on perceptions of phonetic similarity

I shall, therefore, proceed with extreme caution and a healthy dose of data.³

I. **Het* and **Gayin* before the First Millennium B.C.E.

It is generally agreed that Proto-Semitic had a voiceless uvular fricative (**ħ*) contrasting with a voiceless pharyngeal fricative (**h̥*). One minimal pair that may be plausibly reconstructed for Proto-West-Semitic (PWS) is **h̥ālum*, “sand” ≠ **hālum*, “maternal uncle.” In the second millennium B.C.E., loanwords in Egyptian show that the contrast was widely maintained in Northwest Semitic.⁴ However, there was a dialect written with a reduced version of the Ugaritic alphabet—probably Phoenician—in which this distinction and others had already collapsed or were in the process of collapsing.⁵ It was presumably

(especially in the absence of bilingualism). Is it because he believes that Hebrew ז was polyphonic, representing both *z* and a sound similar to Safaitic *z*? There is no basis for such an assumption. Is it because he believes that Safaitic *z* was an emphatic *z*? The traditional transliteration *z* is not phonetically accurate even for classical Arabic, let alone ancient North Arabian (including Safaitic). In classical Arabic, the sound was *ḏ*. In ancient North Arabian, it may still have been voiceless (i.e., *t̥*); see A. B. Dolgopolsky, “Emphatic Consonants in Semitic,” *Israel Oriental Studies* 7 (1977): 1–13. The use of Hebrew ז to render ancient North Arabian *ḏ* (or *t̥*) is no different from the use of cuneiform *d/t* to render that sound. According to Knauf himself (*Ismael* [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1989], 55 n. 267), Assyrian *Di-ih-ra-a-ni* (better: *Ti-ih-ra-a-ni*) is to be identified with the Arabian toponym *al-Dahrān*. We may also compare the use of Akkadian *t* to render ancient North Arabian *t̥*, not to mention Old Aramaic *t̥*, and Old Iranian Θ; see Knauf, *Ismael*, 6 n. 24; and R. C. Steiner, “Addenda to *The Case for Fricative-Laterals in Proto-Semitic*,” in *Semitic Studies in Honor of Wolf Leslau* (ed. A. S. Kaye; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 1506. By Knauf’s reasoning, the Akkadian Tell Fekherye inscription, usually dated to the ninth century B.C.E., would have to be dated to the seventh century or later, since it transcribes the Aramaic name *Had(d)-yit* 𐤆 (spelled 𐤇𐤃𐤀) as *Adad-it-ʾi* instead of **Adad-iš-ʾi*; see A. Abou-Assaf, P. Bordreuil, and A. R. Millard, *La statue de Tell Fekherye et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne* (Paris: Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1982), 18–19, 44, 80.

³ The reader who finds the quantity of data presented here wearisome can perhaps find some tiny comfort in the knowledge that the present article is actually quite a bit shorter than it could have been. In a desperate attempt to ease the reader’s burden, I have spun off parts of an earlier version into two additional articles!

⁴ J. E. Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 411–12.

⁵ J. Tropper, *Ugaritische Grammatik* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000), 73–79, 124. It is generally assumed that **h̥* was merged with *h* in Phoenician; see, e.g., Z. S. Harris, *A Grammar of the Phoenician Language* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1936), 16–17; and J. Friedrich, W. Röhlig, M. G. A. Guzzo, and W. R. Mayer, *Phönizische-punische Grammatik* (3rd ed.; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1999), 11 §9. In support of this assumption, we may note that Phoenician uses 𐤃 to render Demotic *h* and *h̥* (cf. n. 153 below), while Egyptian Aramaic, which preserved **h̥* (see below), uses 𐤇 for that purpose. (For the data, but a different interpretation, see Y. Muchiki, “Spirantization in Fifth-Century B.C. North-west Semitic,” *JNES* 53 [1994]: 125–30; I am indebted

the speakers of this dialect who were responsible for reducing the old Northwest Semitic alphabet to twenty-two letters.⁶

The existence of a voiced uvular fricative (*ġ) in Proto-Semitic, contrasting with the voiced pharyngeal fricative (*ʕ), is widely assumed (with a few prominent exceptions) but by no means easy to demonstrate. The East Semitic evidence for such a phoneme is tenuous at best,⁷ and even within West Semitic, ġ in one language often corresponds to ʕ in another.⁸ Nevertheless, there are a few lexical items that exhibit ġ quite consistently in West Semitic, e.g., Arab. *šaġīr*, Epigraphic South Arabian (ESA) *šġr*, Ug. *šġr*, Eg. Aram. **zġyr* < PWS **š-ġ-r*, “be small,” and Arab. *ġulām*, ESA *ġlm*, Ug. *ġlm*, Eg. Aram. **ġlm* < PWS **ġalmum*, “lad.”⁹ From the second of these we can reconstruct something close to a minimal pair: PWS **ġalmum*, “lad” ≠ **ʕalamum*, “eternity.”

II. The Preservation of **Het* and **Ġayin* in Hebrew and Aramaic

Greek Transcriptions of Hebrew and Demotic from Ptolemaic Egypt

Did **h* and **ġ* survive in Hebrew? Hebrew does not have separate signs for those phonemes in its twenty-two-letter alphabet, but, ever since the nineteenth century, many scholars have argued that the letters ה and ג were polyphonic, each representing a uvular fricative as well as a pharyngeal one.¹⁰ The

to J. Huehnergard for this reference.) We may perhaps also cite Arab. *mallaḥun*, “sailor” < Akk. *malāḥum*, “sailor.” Normally, Arabic has *h* in Akkadian loanwords; see n. 156 below. Unless the word for “sailor” was borrowed later than the others or was contaminated by a folk etymology (based on Arab. *milḥ*, “salt”), it must have reached Arabic via a Semitic dialect that merged **h* with *h* relatively early. Given Phoenician domination of the sailing profession, Phoenician could well have played such a mediating role with this word. See also at n. 126 below.

⁶ In so doing, they imposed the burdens of polyphony on others (Judeans, Arameans, etc.) who accepted their reduced version of the alphabet but not on themselves.

⁷ For a full discussion, see L. Kogan, “ġ in Akkadian,” *UF* 33 (2001): 263–98; and idem, “Additions and Corrections to ‘ġ in Akkadian’ (*UF* 33),” *UF* 34 (2002): 315–17.

⁸ Many of these irregular correspondences may be attributed to the proximity of *r*, which, like *ġ*, is a trill; see R. C. Steiner, *The Case for Fricative-Laterals in Proto-Semitic* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1977), 135 n. 3 and the literature cited there. The direction of the change is still unclear; if it is ʕ > ġ, we may speak of partial assimilation to *r*. Such a process could help to explain the substantial increase in the frequency of *ġ* in Arabic or even the genesis of *ġ* as a phoneme; see Kogan, “ġ in Akkadian,” 292–93. That genesis could have occurred in Pre-Proto-Semitic, as Kogan believes, or in PWS.

⁹ The reconstructed Egyptian Aramaic forms are from the Aramaic text in Demotic script (papyrus Amherst 63), where we find *s.hyrn*, “young (plur.)” (XIX/11, XXI/2), and *lrm.m*, “lad” (XVI/3, 4, 10), respectively. See further below.

¹⁰ See J. Blau, *On Polyphony in Biblical Hebrew* (Proceedings of the Israel Academy of

argument has been based on transcriptions of etymologically transparent names in the Septuagint (LXX), correlated with cognates in three other Semitic languages—Arabic at first, later ESA and Ugaritic.¹¹ The claim is that the LXX uses the Greek velar stops (normally χ and γ , rarely κ) to transcribe the Semitic uvular fricatives ($*h$ and $*g$) but zero, α , or ε for the Semitic pharyngeal fricatives (h and $ʕ$).¹²

The part of the theory dealing with $*g$ is more difficult to prove than the part dealing with $*h$.¹³ It is not surprising, then, that opponents of the theory (like R. Růžička) directed their fire at $*g$, while defenders (like J. W. Wevers) focused on $*h$.¹⁴ The difficulty with $*g$ (relative to $*h$) is not due solely to the comparative Semitic problem mentioned above. It is also due, according to the theory of J. Blau, to chronology: $*g$ was lost earlier than $*h$ in Hebrew.¹⁵ As we shall see below, the evidence of Josephus's transcriptions supports this aspect of Blau's theory.

In my view, Blau has succeeded in making a convincing case even for $*g$, and the entire theory must now be regarded as proven. Nevertheless, it may not be superfluous to add some corroborating evidence that has hitherto been

Sciences and Humanities 6/2; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1982) and the literature cited there.

¹¹ These and the Modern South Arabian languages have preserved both $g \neq ʕ$ and $h \neq h$. Akkadian has preserved h seemingly unmerged, but Akkadian h corresponds to West Semitic $*h$ in a considerable number of cases; see now J. Huehnergard, "Akkadian h and West Semitic $*h$," in *Studia Semitica* (ed. L. Kogan; Orientalia: Papers of the Oriental Institute 3 [Alexander Militarev volume]); Moscow: Russian State University for the Humanities, 2003), 102–19. Hence, Akkadian evidence for West Semitic $*h$ should be used cautiously, in conjunction with other evidence.

¹² Examples with α and ε : $\text{Αερμων} = \text{חַרְמוֹן}$, $\text{Ισαακ} = \text{צַחַק}$, $\text{Βαλααμ} = \text{בַּלְעָם}$, $\text{Γαλααδ} = \text{גַּלְעָד}$, $\text{Φαραω} = \text{פַּרְעֹה}$, $\text{Γαβαων} = \text{נַבְעֹן}$, $\text{Γαβαα} = \text{נַבְעָה}$, $\text{Ελεαζαρ} = \text{אֶלְעָזָר}$, $\text{Φινεες} = \text{פִּינְיָס}$, $\text{Γεδεων} = \text{גַּדְעֹן}$, $\text{Βηρσαβεε} = \text{בַּאֲרֶשֶׁבַע}$, $\text{Αλαε} = \text{חֶלֶח}$. In a future article, I hope to present examples of pharyngeals perceived as [a] from other periods and languages. An example from a source close to the LXX in time and place is $\text{Ραφια} = \text{רַפְיָה}$ (Eg. *Rph*, Akk. *Rapihu*) in the *Histories* of Polybius 5.80.3 and 5.86.2–8. Note that the final α cannot be a rendering of the Aramaic definite article, for the latter is not used with this toponym. In *Tg. Onqelos* (Deut 2:23), we find רַפְיָה , and in *Pseudo-Jonathan* (Deut 2:23), $\text{כּוֹפְרֵי־נִיאֵ דְרַפְיָה}$. (The latter form exhibits the Galilean Aramaic shift $h > ʕ$; see n. 69 below). Whether the final α can be the rendering of a furtive *patah* instead of η depends on whether furtive *patah* existed in that time and place; in any event, since consonants are frequently distinguished acoustically through their effect on an adjacent vowel, the two interpretations of the final α are not as different as one might imagine.

¹³ See Blau, *Polyphony*, 38.

¹⁴ R. Růžička, "Ueber die Existenz des g im Hebräischen," *ZA* 31 (1908): 293–340; J. W. Wevers, "Heth in Classical Hebrew," in *Essays on the Ancient Semitic World* (ed. J. W. Wevers and D. B. Redford; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 101–12. Other opponents include Z. Harris and S. Moscati; other defenders include P. de Lagarde, C. Könnecke, Gesenius-Kautzsch, G. Bergsträsser, P. Joüon, and P. Kahle.

¹⁵ Blau, *Polyphony*, 70.

overlooked. A pagan inscription on a limestone stele from Hermopolis Magna (78 B.C.E.) seems to make the same distinction as the LXX. It contains the name $\chi\epsilon\lambda\kappa\iota\alpha\varsigma = \text{ה}^{\text{ח}}\text{ל}^{\text{ק}}\text{ל}$, with χ rendering $^{\text{h}}$ (cf. Arab. *halaqa*, “he measured”), and two occurrences of the name $\text{Αγγιων} = (\text{ה}^{\text{א}})\text{ג}^{\text{י}}$, with zero rendering $^{\text{h}}$ (cf. Arab. *hajj*, “pilgrimage”).¹⁶ A similar contrast can be seen in the names of the two Jewish generals commissioned by Cleopatra III in Egypt at the end of the second century B.C.E.: $\chi\epsilon\lambda\kappa\iota\alpha\varsigma$ vs. $\text{Ανανιας} = \text{ה}^{\text{א}}\text{נ}^{\text{י}}$ (with zero rendering $^{\text{h}}$; cf. Ug. *h-n-n*, “be kind”).¹⁷ The form $\chi\epsilon\lambda\kappa\iota\alpha\varsigma$ stands in contrast to the form Ελκιας , found in Palestinian sources of the Roman period.¹⁸

More significant statistically are Greek transcriptions of h , h , and $^{\text{c}}$ in Demotic Egyptian names of the Ptolemaic period.¹⁹ In these transcriptions, Demotic h is normally rendered with χ , while h and $^{\text{c}}$ are normally rendered with zero.²⁰ Most telling of all are the cases in which the renderings of h and h

¹⁶ W. Horbury and D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 249–50 no. 156. Αγγιων is compared there with $\text{ג}^{\text{י}}$, but it seems closer to $\text{ה}^{\text{א}}\text{ג}^{\text{י}}$ and especially $\text{ה}^{\text{ח}}\text{ל}^{\text{ק}}\text{ל}$. Greek ω is used occasionally to render Hebrew *qames*. The true equivalent of $\text{ה}^{\text{ח}}\text{ל}^{\text{ק}}\text{ל}$ is Αγγιαος , attested in a different inscription (*ibid.*, 249).

¹⁷ These names are cited by Josephus (*Ant.* 13.10.4 §285) from Strabo of Cappadocia, who must have gotten them from an earlier source.

¹⁸ See at n. 72 below.

¹⁹ To avoid circularity, I have based this investigation almost entirely on names from bilingual inscriptions, where the Greek and the Demotic Egyptian appear together. They were collected for me by K. Rempel from E. Lüdeckens et al., *Demotisches Namenbuch* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1980–2000), henceforth cited as *DN*.

²⁰ E.g., $\text{Εφωνυχος} = iw\text{-}f\text{-}nh$, “Er lebt” (*DN*, 60); Απαθου (gen.) = $^{\text{c}}\text{-}ph\text{-}t$, “Groß an Kraft” (*DN*, 95); Χατοχωνσιος (gen.) = $h\text{-}f\text{-}hns\text{-}w$, “Er lebt für Chons” (*DN*, 100); Πμενχης = $p\text{-}z\text{-}mn\text{-}h$, “Der Vortreffliche” (*DN*, 188); Πεμψας = $p\text{-}z\text{-}msh$, “Das Krokodil” (*DN*, 191); Φατρεους (gen.) = $p\text{-}z\text{-}htr$, “Der Zwilling” (*DN*, 206); Πχορχωνσις = $p\text{-}z\text{-}hr\text{-}hns\text{-}w$, “Der Diener des Chons” (*DN*, 210); Πεταεπτης = $p\text{-}z\text{-}tj\text{-}hr\text{-}p\text{-}z\text{-}r$, “Der, den Horus-Re gegeben hat” (*DN*, 326); Πεταεποχρα(της) = $p\text{-}z\text{-}tj\text{-}hr\text{-}p\text{-}z\text{-}hr\text{-}t$, “Der, den Harpokrates gegeben hat” (*DN*, 328); Πεταεσεμθευς = $p\text{-}z\text{-}tj\text{-}hr\text{-}sm\text{-}t\text{-}z\text{-}w\text{-}j$, “Der, den Horus, der Vereiniger der beiden Länder, gegeben hat” (*DN*, 334); Πετεχων[σιος] = $p\text{-}z\text{-}tj\text{-}hns\text{-}w$, “Der, den Chons gegeben hat” (*DN*, 336); Πανεχατις = $pa\text{-}n\text{-}z\text{-}ht$, “Der der *ht*-Dämonen” (*DN*, 382); Παη[ς] = $pa\text{-}h\text{-}z\text{-}t$, “Der des Anfangs” (*DN*, 397); Παχοις = $pa\text{-}h\text{-}j$, “Der des Hohen(?)” (*DN*, 404); Παχωνς = $pa\text{-}hns\text{-}w$, “Der zu Chons Gehörige” (*DN*, 406); Μαρσιουσουχου (gen.) = $m\text{-}r\text{-}s\text{-}r\text{-}s\text{-}sbk$, “Marres, Sohn des Sobek” (*DN*, 582); Μαιθωτις = $m\text{-}r\text{-}thwt\text{-}j$, “Wahrhaft ist Thot” (*DN*, 583); Νεχθφαρους = $n\text{-}z\text{-}nh\text{-}t\text{-}f\text{-}r\text{-}r\text{-}z\text{-}w$, “Er ist stark gegen sie” (*DN*, 622); Νεβωνιχου (gen.) = $nb\text{-}sn\text{-}h$, “Herr des Lebens” (*DN*, 636); Νεχθμωθου (gen.) = $nh\text{-}t\text{-}mn\text{-}t$, “Stark ist Month” (*DN*, 650); Ονεους (gen.) = hwn , “Jüngling” (*DN*, 778); Ωρος = hr , “Horus” (*DN*, 786); Αρμυσσιος (gen.) = $hr\text{-}m\text{-}z\text{-}hs$, “Horus, grimmig blickender Löwe” (*DN*, 815); Αρσησις = $hr\text{-}s\text{-}z\text{-}is\text{-}t$, “Horus, Sohn der Isis” (*DN*, 834); Ασις = $hs\text{-}j$, “Seliger” (*DN*, 846); Χαιωφης = $h\text{-}^{\text{c}}\text{-}f$, “Möge er erscheinen” (*DN*, 873); Κοβαεθησις = $qb\text{-}h\text{-}h\text{-}z\text{-}t$, “Ihr (Sg.) Herz ist kühl” (*DN*, 976); Ταμενωτος (gen. of Ταμενως) = $ta\text{-}mn\text{-}h$, “Die des (göttlichen) Jünglings” (*DN*, 1187); Τανεχατι[ος] (gen.) = $ta\text{-}n\text{-}z\text{-}ht\text{-}w$, “Die der *ht*-Dämonen” (*DN*, 1192); Θοτευς = $thwt\text{-}j\text{-}iw$, “Thot ist gekommen” (*DN*, 1298); Θοτορις = $thwt\text{-}j\text{-}i\text{-}r\text{-}t\text{-}s$, “Thot ist es, der ihn gegeben hat” (*DN*, 1300); and Θοτομουτος (gen. of Θοτομους) = $thwt\text{-}j\text{-}m\text{-}r$, “Thot ist wahrhaft” (*DN*, 1302).

contrast in a single name:²¹ Αχοαπιος (gen.) = *ḥh-hp*, “Es lebt der Apis,”²² Αρμαχις = *hr-m-hj*, “Horus im Horizont,”²³ and Θοτορχης = *ḥwtj-ir-rh*, “Thot ist (all)wissend.”²⁴ Alongside almost 140 occurrences of names that follow this pattern, there are three exceptions: once we find *h* rendered with κ,²⁵ and twice we find apparent examples of *h* rendered with χ.²⁶ Such renderings are found in the LXX as well.²⁷ Scholars who do not accept the LXX as evidence for **h* have naturally adduced examples (or alleged examples) of χ for *h* in the LXX as counterevidence,²⁸ and it is therefore significant that Greek transcriptions of Demotic also have such exceptions.

It appears, then, that Demotic *h* and *h* are distinguished quite consistently in Egyptian Greek.²⁹ Moreover, the means of distinguishing are very similar to the means that have been posited for Hebrew **h* and *h* in the LXX. In short, these transcriptions reinforce the Greek side of Blau’s proof. We turn now to transcriptions that reinforce the Semitic side.

Demotic Transcriptions of Aramaic from Ptolemaic Egypt

Blau’s conclusion concerning the Egyptian pronunciation of Hebrew in the Ptolemaic period fits perfectly with the contemporary evidence for Egyptian *Aramaic*. Until twenty years ago, the conventional wisdom was that **h* and **ḡ* did not survive in Aramaic. In 1969, R. Degen referred to this as the *communis opinio*.³⁰ In the third unrevised edition of his *Altaramäische Grammatik*,

²¹ Cf. LXX Αχισααρ = 𐤀𐤇𐤍𐤁𐤀, cited by Blau, *Polyphony*, 41.

²² DN, 103.

²³ DN, 813. This example is not from a bilingual; the matching is established by means of prosopographic considerations.

²⁴ DN, 1299.

²⁵ Νεκθνιβιος (alongside Νεχθενιβιος) = *nhḫ-nbʿf*, “Stark ist sein Herr” (DN, 652). For κ rendering *h*, see also Muchiki, “Spirantization,” 126 n. 7.

²⁶ Αχμασι(ς) = *ḥh-ms*, “Der Mond ist geboren” (DN, 58, alongside Αμοσις, Αμοσις, Αμωσις) and Πχορχωνσις = *hr-hnsw*, “Horus - Chons” (DN, 832, alongside Αρχωνς and Αρχωνσις). Πχορχωνσις = *hr-hnsw* is an anomaly that is easy to explain, based on the note in DN: “Lautlich is Πχορχωνσις die griechische Wiedergabe von *p3-hr-hnsw*.” Indeed both Πχορχωνσις = *p3-hr-hnsw*, “Der Diener des Chons” (cited in n. 20 above) and Πχορχωνσις = *hr-hnsw*, “Horus - Chons” occur in a single papyrus (Berl P 3116).

²⁷ Blau (*Polyphony*, 49–51) lists a half-dozen apparent examples of *h* rendered with χ.

²⁸ For evaluation of an alleged counterexample cited in a standard work, see J. Blau, “Review of S. Moscati et al., *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages*,” *Lešonenu* 30 (1966): 141; and Steiner, *Fricative-Laterals*, 120 n. 28.

²⁹ Contrast the much later Greek transcriptions of Arabic *h* and *h* cited by Blau (*Polyphony*, 40–41).

³⁰ R. Degen, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Mainz: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1969) 37: “Die Verschiebung der ursem. Velare /h/ und /ḡ/ zu den Pharyngalen hat das Aa. nach communis opinio mit dem Phön(-Hebr.) gemein. Nachweisen kann man sie für das Aa. jedoch nicht.”

published in 1986, S. Segert still accepted this assumption.³¹ The few dissenting voices were largely ignored.

Today we know, thanks to papyrus Amherst 63, that this assumption is incorrect—at least for *Egyptian* Aramaic.³² It will be recalled that Amherst 63 is a long Aramaic text recorded in the Demotic Egyptian script instead of the normal Aramaic script.³³ The Demotic script has an abundance of signs for back fricatives, and so it was only natural for Semitists working on Amherst 63 to address the issue of **h* and **ḡ*. R. A. Bowman did so in his article on the text, published in 1944, writing: “[The parallel passages] also have aided us in determining that there is apparently no finer distinction between laryngeals in the papyrus than there is otherwise in Aramaic, despite the fact that there are several variant forms for some of the letters.”³⁴ This statement is not easy to understand, for *h* and *ḡ* are not laryngeals, and there is no way for the reader to guess that the “variant forms for some of the letters” are actually distinct Egyptian phonemes rather than allographs.³⁵ Accordingly, one may forgive T. H. Gaster for asking, in an unpublished letter to Bowman about the article: “Similarly, is there a distinction between \aleph and \aleph phonetically? In other words, is original \aleph distinguished from \aleph ?”³⁶ Bowman’s point had been formulated more clearly in the presidential paper that he read before the Midwest branch of the AOS on April 6, 1943: “There is apparently no fine differentiation [*sic*] between the laryngeals *ayin* and *ghayin*, or *ha* and *ḥa*.”³⁷

This initial impression has not stood the test of time. Indeed, one of the important linguistic contributions of the Aramaic text in Demotic script is its furnishing of conclusive evidence that the uvular fricatives—**ḡ* and **h*—survived in Egyptian Aramaic for a long time.³⁸ I pointed this out to various col-

³¹ S. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Leipzig: Verlag Enzyklopädie, 1986), 88: “Das für die älteste Phase des AA ermittelte System weist bereits eine Einschränkung des Konsonantenbestandes, besonders der Postvelaren und der Alveolaren auf. . . . Die alten Postvelare *h* und *ḡ* sind zu den Pharyngalen *h* und *ḡ* geworden.” He has since changed his mind; see n. 46 below.

³² However, it is probably not incorrect for the Aramaic spoken in Assyria; see R. C. Steiner, “*H* > *Ḥ*: On the Diffusion of an Assyro-Aramaic Sound Change to Babylonia, Iran, and Cilicia” (forthcoming).

³³ See R. C. Steiner, “The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script,” in *The Context of Scripture* (ed. W. W. Hallo and K. L. Younger, Jr.; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:309–27 and the literature cited there.

³⁴ R. A. Bowman, “An Aramaic Religious Text in Demotic Script,” *JNES* 3 (1944): 226.

³⁵ Bowman may have been misled by Nims’s use of numeral superscripts in transliterating the Demotic signs (into Hebrew). The signs that Nims transliterated \aleph and \aleph proved to be mere allographs of \aleph and \aleph , respectively, but the sign that Nims transliterated \aleph represents a sound phonemically distinct from \aleph in both Demotic and Aramaic.

³⁶ Letter from T. H. Gaster to R. A. Bowman, Nov. 19, 1944.

³⁷ I am indebted to J. A. Larson, Museum Archivist of the Oriental Institute, for providing me with photocopies of the handwritten lecture and the letter cited in the previous footnote.

³⁸ On the *Egyptian* side, it establishes a *terminus post quem* for the loss of *ḡ*, *h*, and *ḥ* that is

leagues at the University of Chicago a few weeks after I began work on the text there early in 1981,³⁹ and I have noted it briefly in print on a number of occasions, as has J. W. Wesseliuss.⁴⁰

Unlike the Greek alphabet and the cuneiform syllabary, upon which previous attempts to demonstrate the polyphony of π and ν in the Hellenistic period were based, the Egyptian script is reasonably well suited to the task of differentiating uvulars from pharyngeals. This is at least as true of the Demotic script in Amherst 63 as it is of the New Kingdom scripts used for Canaanite in the second millennium B.C.E. They all have contrasting signs for ʕ , h , and ħ , not to mention h . In fact, in addition to h , Demotic has a phonetically similar fricative transliterated h . The absence of a sign for ğ is a drawback, but not a serious one. In Amherst 63, h and ħ are used to render ʕ (as well as $\text{ʕ}h$); in New Kingdom texts, Egyptian q and g are the substitutes.⁴¹ Thus, there is never a need to appeal to transcriptions with zero, as there is in dealing with Greek and cuneiform evidence.

In Amherst 63, Aramaic ʕ and $\text{ʕ}h$ are consistently distinguished from ʕ^c and $\text{ʕ}h$, respectively, in dozens of examples. True minimal pairs are difficult to find, but one can come close: $\overline{\text{r}} = \text{ʕ}l$, “on” \neq $h.r = \text{ğ}l$, “enter!” (cf. Arab. *ʕalā*, “on,” *ğalla*, “he caused to enter, he entered”); $\text{ʕ}r\overline{\text{m}}n = \text{ʕ}mn$, “eternity” \neq $h.r.m.^m = \text{ğ}lm$, “lad” (cf. Ug. *ʕmn*, “eternity,” *ğlm*, “lad”); $h^r m^{\text{r}}.^m = h^m(h)$, “venom” \neq $h.mr.^m = hmr$, “wine” (cf. Ug. *hmt*, “venom,” *hmr*, “wine”). Examples of uvulars and pharyngeals occurring in close proximity are: *ekrū rhm^r h^m^r* [...] *eš^r t^r.m hmr.^m* [...] = *ʕklw lh^mh* [...] *ʕšt(y) hmr(h)* [...], “eat its bread [...] drink its wine [...]” (XVII/15–16); *h.rrk.^m hrm.^m e.nh.n.n^m erh.k.^m = ġl-lk ġlm(?) ʕnhn(h) n^r h^k*, “enter, lad; we will give you lodging” (XVI/4–5); *ir-hm^r t^r h.r.k = rhmty ġl-(l)k*, “my beloved, enter” (XVI/12). Many additional examples could be

far later than the ones supplied or hinted at by J. Vergote (“Egyptian,” in *Current Trends in Linguistics* [ed. T. A. Sebeok; The Hague: Mouton, 1963–], 6:535–36), J. P. Allen (“Languages [Egyptian],” *ABD* 4:191), and A. Loprieno (“Ancient Egyptian and Other Afroasiatic Languages,” in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* [ed. J. M. Sasson; New York: Scribner, 1995], 2142).

³⁹ I still have in my possession a small piece of note paper on which I jotted examples in 1981 and which I used to explain the discovery to Egyptologists and others.

⁴⁰ See already C. F. Nims and R. C. Steiner, “A Paganized Version of Ps 20:2–6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script,” *JAOS* 103 (1983): 263: “the Proto-Semitic contrast of h with ħ is perfectly preserved”; and R. C. Steiner and C. F. Nims, “You Can’t Offer Your Sacrifice and Eat It Too: A Polemical Poem from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script,” *JNES* 43 (1984): 93: “like the scribe, we distinguish velar ğ from pharyngeal ʕ .”

⁴¹ E.g., *ğdt/qdt = ġzt*, “Gaza,” *mgrt = mğrt*, “cave,” *qrnt = ġrnt*, “foreskin”; see Hoch, *Semitic Words*, 412–13. Egyptian ğ is used to render Anatolian ğ as well; see F. Starke, *Untersuchung zur Stammbildung des keilschrift-luwischen Nomens* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990) 142 n. 442a, 144 n. 449, 145 at n. 457. Thus, in New Kingdom texts, transcriptions of ğ ignore a manner of articulation, whereas in Amherst 63, they ignore the state of the glottis.

adduced.⁴² Moreover, the same distinction is maintained in Demotic transcriptions of Northwest Semitic names. Thus, the Hebrew name שֶׁחֶק (cf. Ug. *ṣ-h-q*, etc.) appears as *ṣyṣḥg* in an ostracon dated 153/152 B.C.E.,⁴³ while the Aramaic name שְׁחִיקָר (cf. Ug. *ah*, etc.) appears as *ṣhykl* and *ṣhygl* in Demotic fragments of the Aḥiqar story from the first century C.E.;⁴⁴ cf. also Αχι(α)χαρος in the Greek version of Tobit.⁴⁵ All of this proves beyond a reasonable doubt that Egyptian Aramaic—like Ugaritic, Arabic, and South Arabian—preserved the uvular fricatives unmerged. Recent works on Aramaic have accepted this as a fact.⁴⁶

Minimal Pairs, Homonyms, and Polysemes

It follows that Aramaic עֵל, “on,” vs. עָל, “he entered,” and שְׁלַח, “he sent,” vs. שָׁלַח, “he doffed,” were still minimal pairs—not homonyms—in Achaemenid Egypt: *ʿal*, “on” ≠ **ǵal*, “he entered,” and *šlah*, “he sent” ≠ **šlah*, “he doffed.”⁴⁷ Similarly, it is now clear that, throughout the biblical period, Hebrew חֲרִים, “Horites (LXX Χορραῖος)” (Deut 2:12), and חֲרִיבוֹת, “holes” (1 Sam 14:11), were pronounced with initial *ḥ*—in contrast to חֲרִיבוֹת, “nobles” (1 Kgs 21:8), which was pronounced with initial *h*. One should accordingly view

⁴² See R. C. Steiner and A. Mosak Moshavi, “A Selective Glossary of Northwest Semitic Texts in Egyptian Script,” in *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions* (ed. J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 1249–66 passim.

⁴³ DN, 3; W. Clarysse, “A Jewish Family in Ptolemaic Thebes,” *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 32 (2002): 7–9. The name is identified there with שְׁחֶק, but it is closer to שְׁחֶק, a variant that occurs four times in the Bible (twice in Amos). The postbiblical Jewish pronunciation of the name, which passed into Palmyrene Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic, was שְׁחֶק; see Steiner, *Fricative-Laterals*, 117; H. Ingholt, “Two Unpublished Tombs from the Southwest Necropolis of Palmyra, Syria,” in *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles* (ed. D. K. Kouymjian; Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1974), 50, 53 (שְׁמַעוֹן וְמוֹזְבֵּנָא וְאַסְחָק) (בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב). Demotic *ṣ* for Northwest Semitic **š* would seem to reflect, in this case, a Northern Israelite or Samaritan pronunciation; see Steiner, *Fricative-Laterals*, 43.

⁴⁴ DN, 38; K. T. Zauzich, “Demotische Fragmente zum Ahikar-Roman,” in *Folia Rara: Wolfgang Voigt LXV. diem natalem celebranti . . . dedicata* (ed. H. Francke et al.; Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1976), 180–85. Demotic *l* for Semitic *r* reflects the Fayyumic dialect. The same rendering occurs consistently in a text from Tebtunis; see R. C. Steiner, “Semitic Names for Utensils in the Demotic Word-List from Tebtunis,” *JNES* 59 (2000): 191–94.

⁴⁵ J. A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 37 n. 117, 122, etc.

⁴⁶ K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984–94), 1:101–2; V. Hug, *Altaramäische Grammatik der Texte des 7. und 6. Jh.s v. Chr.* (Heidelberger Studien zum alten Orient 4; Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag, 1993), 51; S. Segert, “Old Aramaic Phonology,” in *Phonologies of Asia and Africa* (ed. A. S. Kaye; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 1:118–19; T. Muraoka and B. Porten, *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic* (Leiden: Brill, 1998) 10 nn. 36–37.

⁴⁷ For other ramifications, see Steiner, “Addenda,” 1499–1501.

with suspicion the claim that the name of the Horites “could be explained by Heb. *hor*, Arab. *hurr*, ‘free, noble.’”⁴⁸

In the postbiblical period, ²הרִים < ²*hurrīm*, “holes” ≠ ³הרִים < ³*hurrīm*, “nobles, freemen,” turned into a pair of homonyms. But what of the other minimal pair, ¹הרִים < ¹*hurrīm*, “Horites” ≠ ³הרִים < ³*hurrīm*, “nobles, freemen”? Did this too turn into a pair of homonyms? Not according to Jerome; in his commentary on Obad 1, he interprets the outcome as a single polysemous lexeme:⁴⁹ “and [Edom] possessed that region, which is now called Gebalena,⁵⁰ and in the boundaries [of which] is Ελευθερόπολις, “Freetown,” where formerly the Horraei lived (which is translated ‘free men’), from which also the very city later got its name.”⁵¹ The idea that the name of the Horites is derived from the word for “free men” must have been irresistible to anyone who knew that the Horites were the aboriginal inhabitants of Seir = Edom (Gen 14:6 and Deut 2:12, 22) and that an important city of Idumea = Edom was called “Freetown.”⁵²

⁴⁸ E. A. Knauf, “Horites,” *ABD* 3:288.

⁴⁹ For this type of reinterpretation, see L. Bloomfield, *Language* (New York: H. Holt, 1933), 436; and S. Ullmann, *Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1962), 104–5, 164–65. If we define “polysemy” and “homonymy” in synchronic terms (as I believe we should), then we may state simply that, when minimal pairs are neutralized, the outcome is sometimes polysemy rather than homonymy.

⁵⁰ For the identification of Gebal(ena) with Seir in ancient sources (Genesis Apocryphon, Palestinian targumim, Josephus), see J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I* (3rd ed.; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 2004), 222, 237, and add טורא דנבלא = טעיר in M. L. Klein, *The Fragment-Targums of the Pentateuch* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1980), 1:115 (Deut 33:2).

⁵¹ S. *Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera*, Pars I, 6; *Commentarii in Prophetas Minores* (Turnholt: Brepols, 1969), 354. A similar idea is found in Genesis Rabbah §41 (מדרש בראשית רבא) [ed. J. Theodor and C. Albeck; Jerusalem: Wahrmann, 1965], 412) to Gen 14:6: ואת החרי — אליותרופולים — ולמה קורא אותה אליותרופולים שבררו אותה ויצאת להם לחירות בדור הפלגה Ελευθερόπολις ‘Freetown’. And why is it called Ελευθερόπολις ‘Freetown’? Because they chose it, and it gained its freedom for them in the generation of the separation.” However, this is midrash, not etymology. It is noteworthy that Jerome did not derive *Horraei* from the Hebrew word for “holes,” despite the fact that he knew that word and, like Philo, even used it in interpreting a well-known toponym: “Charran foramina . . .”; see S. *Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera*, Pars I, 1; *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum* (Turnholt: Brepols, 1959), 64; and L. L. Grabbe, *Etymology in Early Jewish Interpretation: The Hebrew Names in Philo* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 218. (I am indebted to J. L. Kugel for telling me of Philo’s etymology.) The point is that, by Jerome’s time, there was no longer any reason to prefer this etymology. Jerome had no inkling that the LXX distinguished two realizations of ה, using Greek χ for only one of them (see below).

⁵² In actual fact, the town of Bet Guvrin got this name in ca. 200 C.E., long after the disappearance of the Horites, when Septimus Severus conferred on it the privileges of a Roman city. Moreover, the home of the biblical Horites was east of the Jordan, while Eleutheropolos was west of it.

III. The Loss of **Ḥet* and **Ḡayin* in Hebrew and Aramaic*Dating the Loss in Egypt*

When did the uvular fricatives (**ḥ* and **ḡ*) merge with the pharyngeal ones (*ḥ* and *ʕ*)? For Egyptian Aramaic, Amherst 63 provides a *terminus post quem*. The text was probably reduced to writing (through dictation to a scribe trained in the fourth century B.C.E.) at the beginning of the third century B.C.E.⁵³ If so, the mergers of **ḥ* and **ḡ* in Egyptian Aramaic, if they occurred at all, must have occurred after that time. For Hebrew, we may rely on the LXX, which (leaving 2 Esdras and the apocryphal books aside for the moment) appears to have been completed by the end of the second century B.C.E.⁵⁴ If so, the loss of **ḥ* in Hebrew must have occurred after that time.

The inscription from Hermopolis Magna cited above—a pagan inscription not likely to have been influenced by the Septuagint—gives a slightly later and seemingly more precise *terminus post quem*: 78 B.C.E. The Demotic fragments of the Aḥiqar story cited above are even later; they come from the first century C.E. Unfortunately, we cannot deduce from the form *ḏhykl* that **ḥ* was still unmerged in the first century C.E., unless we make the unlikely assumption that the Aḥiqar story was not translated from Aramaic into Demotic until that time. Nor can we rule out the possibility that the form *Χελκίας* in the inscription from Hermopolis Magna is also phonetically anachronistic, as it appears to be in other, later inscriptions from Egypt. *Χελκίας* is attested in papyri dated 13 B.C.E. (Alexandria) and 59 C.E. (Babylon in the Heliopolite district) and in an ostrakon dated 106 C.E. (Edfu).⁵⁵ The last attestation is later than *Ελκίας* in Josephus's *Antiquities*, not to mention *קֶלֶךְ* at Masada.⁵⁶ Are we to conclude from this that **ḥ* survived longer in Egypt than in Palestine? Judging from Philo, Egyptian Jews knew very little Hebrew in the first century C.E. It is therefore unlikely that the form *Χελκίας* tells us anything about the pronunciation of Hebrew in Egypt in that century. What it tells us about the pronunciation of Hebrew in Egypt in the previous century must remain an open question.

According to Blau, the loss of **ḡ* was earlier than the loss of **ḥ*: “It was only

⁵³ Contra Nims and Steiner, “Paganized Version,” 261: “our papyrus is from the late second century B.C.E.” We thought at the time that it had been buried together with dated documents from that period in a single jar, but that seems much less likely today. I am at a loss to explain the origin of the first century B.C.E. dating that some writers have mistakenly attributed to us.

⁵⁴ E. Tov, “The Septuagint,” in *Mikra* (ed. M. J. Mulder and H. Sysling; Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1988), 162.

⁵⁵ V. A. Tcherikover, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957–64), 3:195.

⁵⁶ See below.

at the time of the translation of the Pentateuch that *g* was alive in Hebrew. Later, *g* disappeared from the spoken language, yet was still, it seems, retained in literary solemn language, as in the public reading of the Bible in synagogues.⁵⁷

Dating the Loss in Palestine: Reading versus Speaking

The distinction made by Blau between reading and speaking—a distinction of “style” or “register”⁵⁸—is crucial for making sense of the new data presented below. Reading is, by nature, more formal and conservative than speaking, even when the text being read is not a sacred one. In his studies of phonological variation, W. Labov found “a marked shift from the most formal elicitation [of careful speech] to the least formal reading.”⁵⁹ The pronunciation used for the public reading of the Bible was undoubtedly at the most formal end of the spectrum, for it was governed by tradition. Indeed, one may wonder whether to speak of a “reading style” (à la Labov) or a “reading tradition.”⁶⁰ The latter term is certainly correct for later periods, when Hebrew was no longer a spoken language; for the sake of simplicity, we shall use it for earlier periods as well. We shall deal with the spoken language separately, in a later section.

Blau’s distinction is particularly useful in dealing with Josephus, who, it appears, had **h* in reading but not in speaking (assuming, with many Hebraists, that Hebrew was still spoken in his time). He seems to allude to such a difference in explaining his decision to add Greek case endings to his transcriptions of biblical names in *Ant.* 1.6.1 §129:

With a view to euphony and my readers’ pleasure these names have been Hellenized. The form in which they here appear is not that used in our country, where their structure and termination remain always the same; thus Νωχος in Hebrew is Νωε, and the name retains this form in all the cases.⁶¹

It is striking that, according to most manuscripts, Josephus does not contrast Νωχος with *Νωχ, or *Νωεος with Νωε. There are *two* differences between Νωχος and Νωε: (1) the former has a case ending, while the latter does not; (2) the former has a χ, while the latter does not. The relevance of (1) is clear,

⁵⁷ Blau, *Polyphony*, 39–40.

⁵⁸ See also Blau, *Polyphony*, 7. For the distinction in sociolinguistic theory, see *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation* (ed. P. Eckert and J. R. Rickford; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) and the literature cited there.

⁵⁹ W. Labov, “The Study of Language in Its Social Context,” *Studium Generale* 23 (1970): 49.

⁶⁰ For the biblical reading tradition(s), see R. C. Steiner, “*Ketiv-Kere* or Polyphony: The ו־ו Distinction according to the Masoretes, the Rabbis, Jerome, Qirqisānī, and Hai Gaon,” in *Studies in Hebrew and Jewish Languages Presented to Shelomo Morag* (ed. M. Bar-Asher; Jerusalem: Bialik, 1996), *153 n. 5, *175 and the literature cited there.

⁶¹ *Josephus* (trans. H. St. J. Thackeray et al.; London: W. Heinemann, 1926–), 4:63.

but not the relevance of (2). É. Nodet solves this problem by simply emending Νωε to *Νωχ, against all of the manuscripts (both Greek and Latin) and previous scholars.⁶² However, the emendation may not be necessary. The second difference can be explained as reflecting the gap between the spoken language and the conservative reading tradition.⁶³ The meaning of Josephus's statement would then be: "Νωχος in Hebrew speech is Νωε."⁶⁴

The disparity between Josephus's reading tradition and his speech may perhaps also be seen in his transcription of three names borrowed from Akkadian. For biblical סנהריב < *Sin-ahhē-erība* and אֲשֻּׁר־אֲדִינָא < *Aššur-ah-iddina*, he has Σε(v)αχαι/ηριμ/βος (*Ant.* 10.1.1–5 §§1–23) and Ασαραχοδδας (*Ant.* 10.1.5 §23) respectively, with Greek χ rendering π < Akk. *h*. His transcription of extrabiblical מֶרְחַשׁוֹן < *Arahšammu*,⁶⁵ on the other hand, is Μαρ(ε)σουανης (*Ant.* 1.3.3 §80).⁶⁶ In this month name from spoken Hebrew or Aramaic, π < Akk. *h* is rendered by zero.

The tension between Josephus's reading tradition and his speech may also explain the variation in his transcription of π in the toponym יְרִיבְהָרִי (יריב). In his account of Solomon (*Ant.* 8.6.1 §152), he calls it Βητχωρα,⁶⁷ but elsewhere in his works (nine occurrences in *Antiquities* and *War*, eight of them postbiblical and hence from the spoken language), he writes Βη/ε/αθωρα/ω or the like, without χ.⁶⁸ It appears that Josephus intended the form Βητχωρα to be the tra-

⁶² É. Nodet, *Les Antiquités juives* (Paris: Cerf, 1990–), 1B.32 n. 8: "Les mss donnent Νωε, forme provenant de la LXX, mais il faut rétablir Νωχ pour que l'explication ait un sens." Alternatively, one could emend Νωχος to Νωεος. The latter is the reading of two manuscripts everywhere Noah is mentioned and is viewed as original by E. Hatch and H. A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1897–1906), 3:121.

⁶³ Blau's conclusion that **h* "disappeared from both spoken and literary Hebrew at the same time" (*Polyphony*, 70) does not take into account the evidence of Josephus and the inscriptions.

⁶⁴ According to this explanation, Josephus's use of the form Νωε has no connection with the LXX's use of that same form. The latter, unlike the former, is quite puzzling, since, as Blau notes, "its root seems to be √nwx" (*Polyphony*, 49). The root is attested with the meaning "rest" in Ugaritic and Modern South Arabian; see G. del Olmo Lete and J. Sanmartín, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 629; and T. M. Johnstone, *Harsūsi Lexicon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), 99. Note also the noun $\overline{mn}h\overline{t}^m = mnh\overline{t}(\overline{?})$, "rest," in Amherst 63 (XVIII/2) and Μαναχαθ = מנחה, Ιανωχ = ינוח in the LXX itself, and cf. Πμενχης = *p3-mnh*, "Der Vortreffliche," in n. 20 above. If so, the correct form in the time of the LXX would have been Νωχ. The same goes for Μανωε, the LXX's transcription of מנח, for which Josephus has Μανωχης. Does Josephus's transcription of יְרִיבְהָרִי (Σηχων vs. LXX Σηθων) also belong here?

⁶⁵ See S. A. Kaufman, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 114–15.

⁶⁶ The Greek manuscripts have Μαρσουανης, but A. Schalit (*Namenwörterbuch zu Flavius Josephus* [Leiden: Brill, 1968], 82) reconstructs Μαρεσουανης based on Latin *Maresuan*. F. Blatt (*The Latin Josephus I* [Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1958–], 133) gives the form as *Marehaseuan*. He lists many variant readings, only one of which is significant for our purposes: *Marechaseuan*.

⁶⁷ The χ is attested in all witnesses.

⁶⁸ See further below. There are no variant readings with χ for any of the nine occurrences.

ditional counterpart of Βηθωρα. However, the LXX (including 1 Maccabees and Judith) has Βαιθωρων and the like, agreeing with *Bi-t H-w-ru-n* in Egyptian (Shishak List) and the divine name *Hrn*, “Horon” (also *bt Hrn*, “temple of Horon”), in Ugaritic.⁶⁹ Clearly, the transcription with χ has no etymological basis, and yet it is attested in all witnesses to *Ant.* 8.6.1 §152. It appears to be a hypercorrection, reflecting the struggle to preserve $^{\circ}h$ in the reading tradition after it was lost in speech.⁷⁰

The same solution may be considered for Ραχαβ in Matt 1:5, usually identified with צרבה in Josh 2:1.⁷¹ The expected form, Ρααβ (cf. Ug. *rhb*, “wide,” etc.), is used elsewhere in the NT (Heb 11:31 and Jas 2:25), not to mention the LXX. The witnesses to Josephus (*Ant.* 5.1.2–7 §§8–30) are divided: four manuscripts read Ραχαβη, while three manuscripts have Ρααβη, agreeing with *Raab* in the Latin version.

If Βητχωρα and Ραχαβη reflect hypercorrect pronunciations of biblical names, we must also consider the possibility that χ in non-hypercorrect Josephan forms is occasionally the product of deliberate archaizing. This is particularly important in evaluating Josephus’s transcriptions of the names of people who lived in the first and second centuries B.C.E. for use in dating the loss of $^{\circ}h$. Take, for example, Josephus’s transcriptions of צבס(ר)הס and חלקהי. He mentions several postbiblical figures bearing the latter name. The one he consistently calls Χελκίας (four times) is from the end of the second century B.C.E.; the ones he usually calls Ελκίας (four times; Χελκίας once) are from the first century C.E.⁷² Similarly, Josephus mentions a cousin of Herod named Αχιαβος

⁶⁹ Blau, *Polyphony*, 53; A. Dolgopolsky, *From Proto-Semitic to Hebrew* (Milan: Centro Studi Camito-Semitici, 1999), 67; W. Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* (2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1971), 239; Olmo Lete and Sanmartín, *Dictionary*, 368. Helck transliterates *Bí-ta H-wa-rú-n*, but this is misleading; see R. C. Steiner, “Northwest Semitic Incantations in an Egyptian Medical Papyrus of the Fourteenth Century B.C.E.,” *JNES* 51 (1992): 192. The modern Arabic form of the toponym is *Bēt ‘Ūr* according to I. Press, ארץ ארץ (Jerusalem: R. Mass, 1951–55), 84. The shift $h > ^{\circ}$ took place in Galilean Aramaic before the Arab conquest; see n. 12 above and E. Y. Kutscher, *Studies in Galilean Aramaic* (trans. M. Sokoloff; Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 1976), 70–78 and passim (and add *Bēt ‘Ūr* to the list of toponyms on p. 86 entitled “original $h = ^{\circ}$ today”). Incidentally, the second half of the toponym is often cited with a short vowel ($^{\circ}Ur$), following F.-M. Abel, *Géographie de la Palestine* (Paris: Gabalda, 1938), 2:55; however, the macron may have been omitted there by accident. Press cites the toponym both in Arabic script and in Hebrew transliteration with a long vowel, which certainly makes more sense.

⁷⁰ See below. For the possibility of hypercorrection involving $^{\circ}g$ in the LXX, see Blau, *Polyphony*, 40. See also idem, *On Pseudo-corrections in Some Semitic Languages* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1970).

⁷¹ For a different solution, see Blau, *Polyphony*, 56 n. 92.

⁷² B. Niese gives no variant readings for any of these nine occurrences. We have already discussed the occurrence of Χελκίας in Egyptian documents of the first century B.C.E. and later; see at nn. 16 and 55 above.

(seven times) = צס(י)סס in connection with events that took place in ca. 28 B.C.E. and 4 B.C.E.⁷³ It appears that, in rendering **h* in the names of postbiblical figures, Josephus normally used zero for contemporaries but *χ* for people who lived before his time. How is this to be explained? Did Josephus copy the form Αχιαβος from a Greek source of the Herodian period? Or did he know the name צס(י)סס from a Hebrew or Aramaic source, written or oral, and transcribe it himself, using a deliberately archaic (and possibly anachronistic) rendering of *χ*? Until this question is answered, we cannot consider Αχιαβος as reliable evidence for the pronunciation of the Herodian period.

Dating the Loss in Palestine: Biblical Reading Traditions

In dating the loss of **h* and **g* in the biblical reading tradition(s), the obvious place to begin is the Masorah. The masoretic pointing systems (Tiberian, Palestinian, and Babylonian) and treatises provide a *terminus ante quem* for the loss, since they know nothing of a double realization for ן and ׀—unlike ש and כפרת.בנר כפרת.⁷⁴ The Masoretes did not add any distinguishing points, presumably because **h* and **g* were lost long before their time, and because each happened to merge with its polyphony partner, *h* and *ʿ* respectively—unlike *š*, which merged with *s* instead of its polyphony partner, *ṣ*.⁷⁵ Had they merged, say, with *k* and *g* respectively, we would have had a “left-pointed ן” (ח'ית שמאלית) realized [k] and [k̄]⁷⁶ alongside a “right-pointed ן” realized [h], and likewise a “left-pointed ׀” realized [g] and [ḡ] alongside a “right-pointed ׀” realized [ʿ]—just as we have a “left-pointed ש” (i.e., ש) realized [s] alongside a “right-pointed ש” realized [š].⁷⁷

It is also certain that the mergers occurred well before Jerome settled in Palestine (385–389 C.E.). Jerome interprets the use of *γ* to render ׀ in terms of *ʿ*, not **g*:

⁷³ For six of the seven occurrences, Niese gives no variant readings. In *Ant.* 15.10.5 §250, one witness out of seven has Αταβος.

⁷⁴ For the double realization of ן, see G. Khan, “The Pronunciation of the *res* in the Tiberian Tradition of Biblical Hebrew,” *HUCA* 66 (1995): 67–80 and the literature cited there. It is known only from literary sources (*Sefer Yesirah* and its commentaries as well as masoretico-grammatical treatises). With ן (unlike כפרת כפרת), no distinguishing points were needed to guide the reader, because the distribution of the two realizations was completely predictable.

⁷⁵ I am coining the term “polyphony partners” to refer to phonemes that are represented by the same grapheme, e.g., English /θ/ (t) and /ð/ (d), both represented by the digraph *th*, as in *ether* and *either*. If there is an existing term for this concept, I have been unable to find it.

⁷⁶ For the multiple realizations of ן in Samaritan Hebrew after *w* merged with *b*, see Z. Ben-Hayyim, *עברית וארמית נוסח שומרון* (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1957–77), 5:22 = *A Grammar of Samaritan Hebrew* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 33–34.

⁷⁷ For the last pair, see Steiner, “*Ketiv-Kere*.”

Gaza: strength; however, it should be known that, with the Hebrews, it does not have a consonant letter at the beginning but begins with the vowel *ain* and is pronounced *Aza*.⁷⁸

Similarly, he interprets the use of χ to render π in terms of *h* rather than **h*:

The Septuagint translators, who were unable to render into the Greek language the letter *heth* which has the sound of a double aspirate, often added the Greek letter *chi* to instruct us that we ought to make an aspiration in words of this sort. So in this verse they translate *Cham* for what is actually *Ham*. . . .⁷⁹

[T]he Septuagint translators, by whom the divine Law was translated into the Greek language, added certain letters to represent especially the letter *heth*, and *ain* and others of the kind, because they were unable to give a Greek rendering of the double aspirate. So it came about that for *Rahel*⁸⁰ they said *Rachel*, for *Jericho Jericho*, for *Hebron Chebron*, for *Seor Segor*.⁸¹

Jerome even calls attention to the fact that the revisers of the LXX sometimes revise the rendering of π in transcribed words. Thus, the word הַרְסִיָּה (derived from שָׁרָפָה , “earthenware,” according to Jerome) in Jer 19:2 is transcribed $\chi\rho\pi\sigma\theta$ in LXX but $\alpha\rho\sigma\theta$ by “the three”:

For “gate of earthenware,” Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion put the same Hebrew word *Harsith*, to which the Septuagint (translators), in accordance with their practice, add Greek *chi* for the aspiration of the letter *heth*, so that they say *Charsith* for *Harsith*, and so too for *Hebron Chebron*, and for *Jericho Jericho*.⁸²

It is clear that Jerome views *Harsith*, *Hebron*, *Jericho*, and *Aza* as being more faithful renderings because these names were pronounced with pharyngeals, rather than uvulars, in his time. Sutcliffe concludes, correctly in my opinion, that these remarks show that Jerome was unaware that, in the time of the LXX, π and ν each had two values.⁸³

⁷⁸ *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum*, 87; see also pp. 66–67 (Gomorra), 72 (Segor).

⁷⁹ *Saint Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis* (ed. C. T. R. Hayward; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 38 (with slight modifications).

⁸⁰ Cf. פְּרָחַל in M. Schwabe and B. Lifshitz, *Beth She'arim* (Jerusalem: Massada, 1973–), 2:94 no. 121. The majority of the catacombs at Beth She'arim come from the third century and the first half of the fourth century C.E., but see now H. Lapin, “Palestinian Inscriptions and Jewish Ethnicity in Late Antiquity,” in *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Cultures* (ed. E. M. Meyers; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 240 and the literature cited there.

⁸¹ Jerome's commentary on Titus 3:9 in S. Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis Presbyteri *commentariorum in Epistolam ad Titum*, PL 26:630. The translation is from E. F. Sutcliffe, “St. Jerome's pronunciation of Hebrew,” *Bib* 29 (1948): 120.

⁸² S. *Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera*. Pars I, 3; *In Hieremiam* (Turnholt: Brepols, 1960), 182. I am indebted to D. Berger for his assistance in translating this passage.

⁸³ Sutcliffe, “Jerome's pronunciation,” 118 and 121. So too A. Sperber, “Hebrew Based on

Finally, it is certain that the mergers occurred before Origen prepared his Hexapla (mid-third century C.E.). The Greek transcription of Psalms in the second column of the Hexapla normally has zero for π and ν ,⁸⁴ irrespective of their origin. Examples with original *h and *g include: $\alpha\tau\tau\alpha\epsilon\iota\mu = \text{אטטאימ}$ (1:1), $\epsilon\mu\sigma\eta\mu = \text{אמחצמ}$ (18:39), $\theta\alpha\rho\epsilon\varsigma = \text{שחרצ}$ (35:22), $\lambda\alpha\eta\rho\iota\mu = \text{לאחרים}$ (49:11), $\chi\iota \alpha\rho\eta$ [*sic*, for $\chi\iota\alpha\rho\eta$] = כירח (89:38), $\chi\alpha\alpha = \text{כאא}$ (35:14), and $\alpha\lambda\upsilon\sigma\mu\alpha\upsilon = \text{אלומוא}$ (89:46). A possible exception is $\epsilon\lambda\iota\sigma\sigma\upsilon\mu\omicron\chi = \text{אליסמוח}$ (35:19), if it is to be read $\epsilon\lambda\iota\sigma\mu\omicron\chi\omicron\upsilon$, as some have suggested.⁸⁵ This could be an isolated relic of the use of χ to render *h , since the Ugaritic cognate is $\check{s}m\check{h}$, “be glad, rejoice.”⁸⁶ However, other scholars reject this emendation in favor of various emendations without χ .⁸⁷

Pushing the *terminus ante quem* back beyond this point is no easy matter. Transcriptions of biblical names, etc., are available for the first and second centuries C.E. However, they are not as easy to interpret as the later transcriptions. They are inconsistent and, at times, even contradictory.

Our strategy will be to compare the transcriptions of Aquila and Josephus with those of the LXX—treating Ezra-Nehemiah = 2 Esdras separately, as recommended by Blau.⁸⁸ It is true that the LXX is today believed to reflect the Hebrew reading tradition of Alexandrian Jews, who could, in theory, have preserved an archaic pronunciation that had disappeared in their former homeland.⁸⁹ However, we have no reason to believe that this was the case in practice. Moreover, some of the Alexandrian translators may have been recent immi-

Greek and Latin Transliterations,” *HUCA* 12–13 (1937–38): 110–11. Contrast J. Barr, “St Jerome and the Sounds of Hebrew,” *JSS* 12 (1967): 21–22.

⁸⁴ E. Brønno, *Studien über hebräische Morphologie und Vokalismus auf Grundlage der mercurischen Fragmente der zweiten Kolumne der Hexapla des Origenes* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1943), 39, 413–14.

⁸⁵ O. Pretzl *apud* Brønno, *Studien*, 39; Sáenz-Badillos, “El hebreo,” 125.

⁸⁶ Olmo Lete and Sanmartín, *Dictionary*, 825.

⁸⁷ Brønno, *Studien*, 39–41.

⁸⁸ The transcriptions are collected in a number of works: Wevers, “*Heth*”; Blau, *Polyphony*; Hatch and Redpath, *Concordance*, 3:1–162, 219–72; Schalit, *Namenwörterbuch*; J. Reider, *An Index to Aquila: Greek-Hebrew, Hebrew-Greek, Latin-Hebrew*, completed and revised by N. Turner (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 319–23; A. Murtonen, *Hebrew in Its West Semitic Setting: A Comparative Survey of Non-Masoretic Hebrew Dialects and Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 1986–90), 1:29–341; and R. Hanhart, *Text und Textgeschichte des 2. Esrabuches* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 340–41. Wherever possible, I have checked these against the standard editions of Josephus (B. Niese, *Flavii Iosephi Opera* [Berlin: Weidmann, 1955]; Nodet, *Antiquités*; Blatt, *Latin Josephus*); Aquila (F. Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum* [Hildesheim: Olms, 1964]); and 2 Esdras (R. Hanhart, *Esdrae liber II* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993]).

⁸⁹ See, e.g., R. C. Steiner, “*Bittē-Yâ*, Daughter of Pharaoh (1 Chr 4,18), and *Bint(i)-‘Anat*, Daughter of Ramesses II,” *Bib* 79 (1998): 399–402. The Hebrew reading tradition of Babylonian Jewry exhibited a number of archaic features. Claims of this type have also been made for English and Swedish in America.

grants,⁹⁰ much like the grandson of Ben-Sira, a Palestinian Jew who migrated to Egypt and translated the book of Ben-Sira there.

The comparison of Aquila and Josephus with the LXX presupposes uniformity not only through space but also, to a limited extent, through time. Our working assumption will be that, for the most part, χ and γ continued to be used in the Roman period the way they had been in the Hellenistic period, viz., to render uvular fricatives (to the extent that they survived) but not pharyngeal ones. This assumption seems plausible and, as we shall see, it yields coherent results.

We begin with names that have υ transcribed with γ in the LXX. For these names, the later sources exhibit dramatic change:

TABLE 1

	Hebrew	LXX	Josephus	Aquila	II Esdras
1.	יעלם	Ιεγλο/ωμ	Ιολαμος ⁹¹	—	—
2.	כדרלעמר	Χοδολλογομορ	Χοδο/ωλαμορος ⁹²	—	—
3.	עזא	Γαζα	Γαζα	Αζα	—
4.	עותי	Γωθι	—	—	Ουθ(α)ι
5.	עי	Γαι	Αια, Γαι(α)	—	Αια
6.	עיבל	Γαιβαλ	Ηβη/ίλος, Γηβηλος	Ηβαλ	—
7.	עיפא	Γαιφα(ρ)	Ηφας	Γαιφα	—
8.	עמרר	Γομορρα	—	Αμορα ⁹³	—
9.	עפרר	Γοφερα	Εφραν/μ	Εφρα	—
10.	עציון גבר	Γα/εσιωνγαβερ	Γασιον Γαβελος	Ασεων Γαβερ	—
11.	עתליה	Γοθολια	Οθλια, Γοθολια	—	Αθελια
12.	צער	Ζογορα, Σηγορ	Ζο/ωορ ⁹⁴	—	—
13.	צבען	Σεβεγων	Ευσεβων	Σεβεγων	—
14.	רעו	Ραγαυ	Ρεους, Ραγαυ(ο)ς	—	—
15.	רעואל	Ραγουηλ	Ραουηλος, Ραγουηλος	—	—
16.	רעמא	Ρε/αγμα	Ραμος, Ρεγμος	—	—
17.	לדעל ⁹⁵	Θαργαλ ⁹⁶	Θαδαλος ⁹⁷	—	—

⁹⁰ See B. S. J. Isserlin, "The Names of the 72 Translators of the LXX (Aristeas, 47–50)," *JANES* 5 (1973): 191–97 and the literature cited there.

⁹¹ One MS (L) has Ιεγλωμς.

⁹² One MS (L) has Χοδολλογομορος.

⁹³ F. Wutz, *Die Transkriptionen von der Septuaginta bis zu Hieronymus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1925–33), 1:139 (see below). I have been unable to find any other reference to this form.

⁹⁴ *Ant.* 1.11.4 §204: "It is still called Ζοωρ, that being the Hebrew word for 'little.'"

⁹⁵ Equivalent to *Tudhaliya*, a name borne by several Hittite kings. In Ugaritic, the name appears as *tdgl* and *ttgl*; see F. Gröndahl, *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit* (Rome: Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1967), 296; and Starke, *Untersuchung*, 145 n. 455.

Of the seven forms ascribed to Aquila in table 1, we find zero for ν in five. The other two have been adopted from the LXX; they are unchanged in every detail—not merely in the rendering of ν . In the case of $\Gamma\alpha\phi\alpha$, it is immediately obvious that it does not reflect the phonological reality of the reading tradition known to Aquila, since it retains the diphthong $^{\circ}ay$ in an unstressed syllable (contrast $\text{H}\beta\alpha\lambda$, etc., etc.). As for Josephus, in the overwhelming majority of cases, he uses zero to render ν where the LXX used γ . Manuscript readings with γ are usually suspect on two grounds: (1) they occur alongside readings with zero, and (2) they are similar to LXX forms. $\Gamma\alpha\zeta\alpha$ is no doubt authentic, but it has little significance, since it was the standard *Greek* name of the city, used also by Ptolemy (*Geography* 5.16.6) and Byzantine writers.⁹⁸ We cannot rule out the possibility that a few of the other readings with γ are also authentic, perhaps reflecting the latest stage in the gradual disappearance of $^{\circ}g$ from the reading tradition(s).⁹⁹ In short, the evidence shows that $^{\circ}g$ was already largely or completely gone by the first century C.E.

The evidence for $^{\circ}h$ is far less consistent:

⁹⁶ See M. C. Astour, "Tidal," *ABD* 6:551: "The original form of the name can be reconstructed as $^{\circ}tad\acute{g}al$, with the voiced pharyngeal [*sic*] g which had not yet merged with $^{\circ}$ in the pronunciation of Hebrew at the time of the LXX translation (r instead of d in LXX and Syr is due to the virtual identity of the two letters in the Aramaic square script . . .)." Is it possible that the substitution of r for d in LXX $\Theta\alpha\rho\gamma\alpha\lambda$ and Peshitta הרעיל has a phonetic basis rather than a graphic one? According to H. C. Melchert, "Indo-European Languages of Anatolia," in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, ed. Sasson, 2155, "one difference between Cuneiform and Hieroglyphic Luwian is that the latter shows frequent 'rhotacism'; that is, it replaces d (and often l) with r ." Was the rhotacized pronunciation of this Anatolian name somehow preserved by tradition together with the uvular realization of ν ?

⁹⁷ One MS (L) has $\Theta\alpha\rho\gamma\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$.

⁹⁸ L. Di Segni, "Dated Greek Inscriptions from Palestine from the Roman and Byzantine Periods" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 1997), 527, 694, 700, 709, 869. Josephus's use of $\Gamma\alpha\zeta\alpha = \text{הזע}$ is no different from his use of other older forms familiar to his Greek readers, such as $\text{B}\alpha\beta\upsilon\lambda\omega\nu(\iota\alpha) = \text{בבל}$, $\text{E}\lambda\upsilon\mu\omicron\varsigma = \text{עלם}$, $\text{T}\alpha\nu\iota\varsigma = \text{ענן}$, $\text{E}\kappa\delta\iota\pi\pi\alpha = \text{מכויב}$, $\text{I}\tau\alpha\beta\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\nu = \text{הבור}$, etc.

⁹⁹ Blau concludes that "it seems that in literary Hebrew g subsisted for a considerable time, although becoming less and less frequent" (*Polyphony*, 70). On the other hand, he points to the far-reaching disappearance of $^{\circ}g$ in the Greek translation of Chronicles (*Polyphony*, 70), which is dated to the second century B.C.E. (see below).

TABLE 2

	Hebrew	LXX	Josephus	Aquila	II Esdras
1a.	באב	Αχααβ	Αχαβος	Ααβ, Αχααβ	—
b.	באב/באב	Αχιαβ	—	Αιαβ	—
2.	אחא	Αχαζ	Αχαζο/ης	Ααζ, Αχαζ	—
3.	אחא	Οχοζ(ε)ι(ας)	Οχοζιας	Ααζια, Οχοζειας	—
4.	אחא	Αχ(ε)ιτωβ	Αχιτω/οβος	—	Αιτωβ; Αχιτωβ
5.	אחא	Αχ(ε)ια(ς)	Α/Εχιας	Αχεια	Αια
6.	אחא	Αχ(ε)ιμας	Αχιμας	—	—
7.	אחא	Αχ(ε)ινασ	Α/Εχινα	—	—
8.	אחא	Αχισαμαχ/κ	Ισαμαχος	—	—
9.	אחא	Αχ(ε)ικαμ	Ικαμος ¹⁰⁰	Αχεικαμ	—
10.	אחא	Αχ(ε)ιτοφελ	Αχιτοφελος	—	—
11.	אחא	Ασορ(αδ)δαν ¹⁰¹	Ασαραχοδδασ	—	Ασαραδ(δ)ω/αν
12a.	אב	Χοβο/ερ	Αβαρος ¹⁰²	—	—
b.	אב	Χαβερ	—	Χαβερ	—
13.	אב	Χωβα(λ)	Ωβα	—	—
14.	אחא	Χουσ(ε)ι	Χουσις	—	—
15.	אחא	Χ(ε)ιραμ	Ειρωμος; Χειρω/αμος ¹⁰³	Χιραμ	—
16.	אחא	Χολδαι	—	Ολδαι ¹⁰⁴	—
17.	אחא	Χαιλων	—	Αιλων	—
18.	(א)אחא	Χελκ(ε)ιας	Ελ(ια)κιας ¹⁰⁶	Ελκiaus, Χελκιας	Ελκια, Χελκιας
19.	אחא	Χαμ	Χαμας	Χαμ	—
20.	אחא	Χαρημ/β	—	—	Η/Ερε/αμ ¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ So in five manuscripts; a sixth has Αχικαμος. The form *Αικαμος is an emendation.

¹⁰¹ For the absence of χ in this form, see Steiner, “H > H.” The Greek version (short and long recensions) of Tobit 1:21 has Σαχερδονος. The aphesis exhibited by this transcription agrees with Old Aramaic סרחדן (but not 4QTob סרחדן!); see A. Lemaire, *Nouvelles tablettes araméennes* (Geneva: Droz, 2001) 26, 31; and Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 122. See also the examples of aphesis cited by S. Parpola, “National and Ethnic Identity in the Neo-Assyrian Empire and Assyrian Identity in Post-Empire Times,” *Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies* 18, no. 2 (2004): 16–17 and add the transcriptions of Aššur-bān-aplu as *Srnbnl* (Amherst 63 XVII/6, XVIII/3) and Σαρδαναπαλλος.

¹⁰² So all witnesses except for one, which has Χωβαρος.

¹⁰³ Josephus appears to have used these variants to distinguish two individuals (see below). However, some manuscripts blur the distinction, using Χειραμος at times instead of Ειρωμος.

¹⁰⁴ So Reider and Turner, *Index to Aquila*, 320. Field (*Origenis Hexaplorum*, 2.1021; Zech 6:10) has Ολδα.

¹⁰⁵ Jer 48:21.

¹⁰⁶ One manuscript has Χελκιας. For the postbiblical use of these names, see below.

¹⁰⁷ One witness has Χαρμ.

		TABLE 2 (cont.)		
Hebrew	LXX	Josephus	Aquila	II Esdras
21.	חרן	Χαρραν	Χ/Καρ(ρ)α	—
22.	חרסיח	χαρσιθ	—	αρσιθ ¹⁰⁸
23.	חתי	Χετταιος	Χετταιος	Εθ(θ)(ε)ι; Χετταιος
24.	טבק	Ταβεκ	Ταβαιοις ¹⁰⁹	—
25.	יואחז	Ιωαχας/ζ	Ιωαζος, Ιω(α)χαζος	—
26.	ירח	Ιερ(ε)ιχω	Ιεριχους	Ιεριχω
				Ιερ(ε)ια; Ιερ(ε)ιχω
27.	מנח	Μανωε	Μανωχης ¹¹⁰	—
28.	נח	Νωε	Νωχος ¹¹¹	Νωε
29.	נחור	Ναχωρ	Ναχωρης ¹¹²	Ναχωρ
30.	סיון	Σηων	Ση/ιχων(ος), Ση/ιων(ος)	— ¹¹³
31.	סנחריב	Σενναχειρ(ε)ιμ	Σεν(ν)αχη/ει- ρ(ε)ιμ/β(ος)	Σενηριβ
32.	פסח	Φασεκ/χ ¹¹⁴	— ¹¹⁵	Φα/εσε/α, Φασεκ ¹¹⁶
33.	פשחור	Πασχωρ ¹¹⁸	—	Πασχωρ
34.	צפנת פענח	Ψονθομφανηχ	Ψονθο/ων/μ φανη/ιχος	Σα(φα)μφανη
35.	רחל	Ραχηλ ¹¹⁹	Ραχηλα	—
36.	תחש	Τοχας	Ταυος	—

¹⁰⁸ See above.¹⁰⁹ Presumably from *Ταβαε.¹¹⁰ All witnesses have *χ/ch* except for one Latin manuscript (S), which has *Manue*. See further below.¹¹¹ See below.¹¹² One Latin manuscript (S) has *Naor*.¹¹³ Field (*Origenis Hexaplorum*, 1.315) gives Σηων for Aquila, but the Syrohexaplaric basis for this reconstruction is not reliable for our question.¹¹⁴ These forms occur only in Chronicles and (once) in Jeremiah. Elsewhere, we find Πασχα, the rendering of an Aramaic form.¹¹⁵ Only Π/Φασχα.¹¹⁶ Reider and Turner, *Index to Aquila*, 322 (Josh 5:10 Φασε; 2 Kgs 23:21–23 Φεσα); Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum*, 1.296 (Deut 16:1 Φεσε) and 1.345 (Josh 5:10 Φασεκ).¹¹⁷ Only Πασχα.¹¹⁸ It is usually assumed that this name is Egyptian and that the last syllable represents *Hr*, “Horus,” but the Greek transcription with χ casts doubt on at least the second part of this assumption. See also n. 26 above.¹¹⁹ Cf. Ραχηλις in Horbury and Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions*, 82–83 no. 96 (Leontopolis, mid-second century B.C.E.–early second century C.E.). See also n. 80 above.

In the Josephus column of table 2, we find readings with zero (alongside χ or not) for π in 33 percent of the names (10 out of 30). By contrast, in the Josephus column of table 1, we find readings with zero (alongside γ or not) for ϑ in 87 percent of the names (13 out of 15). Thus, the evidence of Josephus's transcriptions appears to corroborate Blau's conclusion that the loss of *g was earlier than the loss of *h .¹²⁰ This chronological asymmetry goes hand in hand with distributional asymmetries. The voiced fricative g is found in fewer of the world's languages than h , and it occurred less often than h in Hebrew. We may also compare Akkadian, where *g was apparently lost¹²¹ but *h preserved. So too in many later Hebrew reading traditions, \bar{g} (the spirantized realization of ϑ) was lost, but \bar{k} (the spirantized realization of ϑ) was preserved.¹²²

In the Aquila column of table 2, we find readings with zero (alongside χ or not) for π in 57 percent of the names (12 out of 21), almost twice as often as Josephus. This figure hardly tells the whole story. Many forms with χ in the Aquila column have clearly been adopted from the LXX; they are unchanged in every detail—not merely in the rendering of π . When we subtract those forms, we are left with the ones that presumably reflect the phonological reality of the reading tradition known to Aquila. They show that *h had already disappeared from that tradition by Aquila's time (ca. 125 C.E.).

The difference between Josephus's transcriptions and those of Aquila is well summarized by Franz Wutz:

Fl. Josephus kennt beide Stadien: sowohl die völlige Preisgabe des Gut-turalunterschiedes wie die doppelte Wiedergabe von laryngalem π . Ακ' bekämpft geflissentlich die alte Schreibung, die er doch sehr gut kennt und fordert für das alte Γομορρα—Αμορα (!), Οχοζιταc—Ααζιτα usw.¹²³

But what are we to conclude from this difference? Does it accurately reflect the progress of the change in the reading tradition(s)? It is normally perilous to use written records to date sound changes, because conservative scribal traditions—historical spelling and the like—can cause orthographic change to lag far behind phonological change.¹²⁴ Here, however, we are dealing with transcriptions. The latter provide more reliable information than the standard

¹²⁰ Blau, *Polyphony*, 70. According to Blau's table 3, the gap in time is more dramatic "in living language," but it is also discernible "in literary language."

¹²¹ See n. 7 above.

¹²² See S. Morag, "Pronunciations of Hebrew," *EncJud* 13:1139.

¹²³ Wutz, *Transkriptionen*, I:139.

¹²⁴ See R. C. Steiner, "Papyrus Amherst 63: A New Source for the Language, Literature, Religion, and History of the Arameans," in *Studia Aramaica: New Sources and New Approaches* (ed. M. J. Geller, J. C. Greenfield, and M. P. Weitzman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 200–203.

orthography, because they are usually much less bound by tradition.¹²⁵ Furthermore, Josephus's transcriptions of ש provide an excellent control, eliminating most other explanations. Put differently, many theories that seem adequate to explain the contrast between 33 percent and 57 percent are not capable of explaining the contrast between 33 percent and 87 percent.

Even in isolation, Josephus's transcriptions seem to exhibit change in progress. Sometimes the same name may appear in different forms, as in the case of Βητχωρα versus Βη/ε/αιθωρα/ω. We suggested above that Βητχωρα may be a hypercorrection, reflecting the struggle to preserve *h in the reading tradition after it was lost in speech.

We even find Josephus using different transcriptions for a single name borne by different individuals. Thus, in *Ant.* 8.3.4 §76, he distinguishes two biblical figures named מ(ו)רררר: "And Solomon summoned from Tyre, from the court of Ειρωμος, a craftsman named Χειρω/αμος, who was of Naphthalite descent on his mother's side . . . and whose father was Urias, an Israelite by birth." Here Josephus deftly creates clarity out of confusion, assigning a different referent to each variant. In choosing the form Ειρωμος for the Tyrian king, he was no doubt influenced by Dius and Menander of Ephesus, the historians of Phoenicia whom he quotes in *Against Apion* (1.17 §§112–25). They call the king Ειρωμος rather than Χειρωμος because, by their time, *h had long since merged with h in Phoenician.¹²⁶

The change in the reading traditions may have been accelerated, if not initiated, by the death and destruction that resulted from the rebellion against the Romans (66–74 C.E.). Born in 37 C.E., Josephus must have received his education well before the rebellion, even though he did not complete his *Antiquities* until 93 C.E.¹²⁷

My conclusion, then, is that *h did not complete its gradual disappearance from the biblical reading tradition(s) until the second century C.E. As for the beginning of the process, we must note that evidence from the LXX and the Qumran scrolls turns out, upon closer examination, to be questionable. Take, for example, Wutz's assumption that the change is already exhibited by Νααλιηλ = נחלי'געל (Num 21:19) alongside Ναχαλιγιατας = נחלי'געל (2 Sam 23:30).¹²⁸ Based on this assumption, he dates the beginning of the change to the second century B.C.E.:

¹²⁵ Ibid., 202–3.

¹²⁶ See n. 5 above.

¹²⁷ In an e-mail communication dated October 26, 2003, L. H. Feldman writes: "Josephus, *Ant.* 20.267, at the very end of the *Antiquities*, says that the 'present day' belongs to the 13th year of the reign of Domitian and the 56th of his life. This would be 93/94."

¹²⁸ Wutz, *Transkriptionen*, 1:139.

Vermutlich gehen die Anfänge dieses Wandels in der Auffassung der Gutturalen bis ins 2. Jahrh. v. Chr. zurück; denn . . . ist die völlige Nichtbeachtung aller Gutturalen in der Umschrift bereits im 1. Jahrh. v. Chr. im Prinzip durchgeführt.¹²⁹

However, as Blau notes, נחליאל is of uncertain etymology, since it may derive (or may have been taken by the translators to derive) from *n-h-l*, “inherit,” rather than *nhl*, “stream(-bed).”¹³⁰ In Blau’s view, the merger makes its first appearance in the canonical Greek version of Ezra-Nehemiah, also known as 2 Esdras or Esdras B (in contrast to the apocryphal 1 Esdras or Esdras A).¹³¹

In the Qumran scrolls, misspellings involving ן¹³² do not suffice to settle the matter one way or the other. Of the dozen examples of ן replaced by ן or ס in 1QIsa^a (125–100 B.C.E.) and 1QS (100–75 B.C.E.),¹³³ none involves *h.¹³⁴ That fact might perhaps be viewed as hinting at the preservation of *h. On the other hand, in 4QJer^a XI 7 (225–175 B.C.E.) the word לַמַּחֲרָה, “terror, ruin” (Jer 17:17), seems to have been miswritten as [תה]רַחַת, with the omitted ן < *h (cf. Ug. *h-t-t*, “be overcome”) inserted between the lines.¹³⁵ E. Tov assumes that “the *prima manu* text probably represents a phonetic omission.”¹³⁶ If so, the omission could be viewed as evidence for the merger of *h with h, since there is no reason to believe that a uvular *h would have been elided.¹³⁷ However, apart from this fragmentary and uncertain example, there are no examples of misspelling involving ן or ׁ in the text. This seems significant in view of what Tov writes about scribal corrections in the scroll: “The number of corrections in this text is exceedingly great. . . . No other Qumran text has as many corrections relative to the length of the document. . . .”¹³⁸ In my judgment, we cannot rely on 4QJer^a in dating the loss of *h. Were it otherwise, the early date of the text

¹²⁹ Wutz, *Transkriptionen*, 1:139.

¹³⁰ Blau, *Polyphony*, 58. In their interpretation of this name, the translators may have been influenced by personal names such as נַחְלִיָּאל, פֶּלְעִיָּאל, אֲחִירִיָּאל, עֲזַרְיָּאל, etc.

¹³¹ Blau, *Polyphony*, 43, 49, 65–67. For the date of 2 Esdras, see below.

¹³² The examples have been collected by E. Qimron for his forthcoming grammar of the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls. I am greatly indebted to him for providing me with a photocopy of the relevant pages and for further clarifications.

¹³³ These dates, assigned by F. M. Cross more than forty years ago, are still accepted by recent writers; see D. N. Freedman and K. A. Mathews, *The Paleo-Hebrew Leviticus Scroll (11QpaleoLev)* (Philadelphia: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1985), 56; and C. Martone, *La “Regola della Comunità”: Edizione critica* (Turin: Silvio Zamorani, 1995), 14.

¹³⁴ 1QS VI 7 יִפְתָּה עַל הַלְיִפְתָּה for does involve uvular *h, but we cannot exclude the possibility that the ׁ represents uvular *g.

¹³⁵ E. Tov, “4QJer^a,” in *Qumran Cave 4, X: The Prophets* (ed. E. Ulrich et al.; DJD 15; Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 150, 153, 163 and pl. XXVII.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 153.

¹³⁷ The loss of the pharyngeals in Hebrew is normally ascribed to the fact that Greek did not have pharyngeals. Greek did have consonants that were close in pronunciation to the uvulars.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 151.

would force us to conclude that **h* was lost in Palestine long before it was lost in Egypt.

Similarly, in 11QPaleoLev IV 6 (ca. 100 B.C.E.), the word אַחֲזַח, “their holding” (Lev 25:32), is misspelled as אַחֲזַח, with omission of ן < **h* (cf. Arab. *ihādah*, “land which a man takes for himself”).¹³⁹ Here again the omission could be viewed as evidence for the merger of **h* with *h*. However, this misspelling needs to be evaluated in the light of the other misspellings in the same text: [ע] for ע, [ב] for ב, and כְּנַחָה for כְּנַחָה.¹⁴⁰ These omissions do not seem to have a phonological basis, and there are no other examples of misspelling involving ן or ע in 11QPaleoLev. As a result, we cannot put too much weight on 11QPaleoLev in dating the loss of **h*, even though a date after 100 B.C.E. would be quite compatible with the evidence presented below.

Dating the Loss in Palestine: Spoken Hebrew and Aramaic

Evidence from four sites—Jaffa, Masada, Jerusalem (Kidron Valley), and Gaza—can help us to establish a *terminus ante quem* for the loss of **h* in spoken Hebrew and Palestinian Aramaic.¹⁴¹

From the necropolis at Jaffa (first centuries C.E.), we have the name Αα, believed to be a transcription of אַחֲזַח.¹⁴² The name אַחֲזַח is well known from rabbinic literature; it is found also on an ossuary from Mt. Scopus (before 70 C.E.) and in inscriptions from the time of the monarchy.¹⁴³ Αα = אַחֲזַח is reminiscent of Ααζ = אַחֲזַח in Aquila and Αα = אַחֲזַח in 2 Esdras.¹⁴⁴

From Masada (66–73 C.E.), we have two examples of ה written for ח among the 791 inscriptions found there: חלקי for חלקי (= חלקיה) and הנהחמה, “the baker.”¹⁴⁵ By a fortunate coincidence, both of these examples involve **h*.¹⁴⁶ These spellings presuppose a sequence of two mergers; in all probability, we are dealing with **h* > *h* followed by *h* > *h*, not with **h* > *h*.¹⁴⁷

¹³⁹ Freedman and Mathews, *Paleo-Hebrew Leviticus*, 44.

¹⁴⁰ Freedman and Mathews, *Paleo-Hebrew Leviticus*, 12.

¹⁴¹ We assume that the loss of **h* occurred in spoken Hebrew and Jewish Palestinian Aramaic at the same time. This assumption is plausible, since most speakers of Hebrew in the Hasmonean and Roman periods spoke Aramaic as well. See Beyer, *Aramäischen Texte*, 1:102.

¹⁴² J. B. Frey, *CII* 2:119, 125 no. 902.

¹⁴³ L. Y. Rahmani, *A Catalogue of Jewish Ossuaries in the Collections of the State of Israel* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1994), 167 no. 396; T. Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002–), 1:61–62.

¹⁴⁴ See table 2 above.

¹⁴⁵ *Masada: The Yigael Yadin Excavations, 1963-1965: Final Reports* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989–), 1:24 no. 420 and 1:28 no. 429.

¹⁴⁶ Aramaic חַח, a borrowing of Akk. *nuḫatimmu*, “baker,” appears as *nh.t^m m.k.^m*, “your baker” in Amherst 63 (V/5).

¹⁴⁷ See n. 137 above.

From Jerusalem, we have the word כִּיך, “sepulchral chamber,” attested in the Kidron Valley dipinto (first half of the first century C.E.).¹⁴⁸ E. Y. Kutscher argued that this word, also attested in Mishnaic Hebrew, derives ultimately from Akkadian *kimahlu*, “grave.”¹⁴⁹ S. A. Kaufman took Kutscher’s theory a step further, claiming that the Jews borrowed this Akkadian word from the Nabateans.¹⁵⁰ If so, the final ך of כִּיך renders the ן (*h) of Nabatean כִּיך, “sepulchral chamber.”¹⁵¹ This conjecture is plausible in view of Kutscher’s demonstration that the Nabateans preserved *h longer than the Jews,¹⁵² and that, after the Jews lost *h, they used כ to render Nabatean *h.¹⁵³ Kutscher pointed to *y. Nazir* 1.1, 51a, כִּספָּא לחספָּא כספָּא, “it is a Nabatean expression, for they call חספָּא (pottery) כספָּא.” This statement appears to contrast Nabatean Aramaic with Jewish Palestinian Aramaic. According to Kutscher, it means that the Nabateans pronounce the word for “pottery” as *haspā* (written כספָּא) instead of *haspā* (written חספָּא).¹⁵⁴ His assumption that the Aramaic

¹⁴⁸ See J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (BibOr 34; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 168–69, 221 no. 67 and the literature cited there.

¹⁴⁹ E. Y. Kutscher, “כִּיך (ובני משפחה),” *ErIsr* 8 (1967): 273–79, reprinted in *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies* (Jerusalem, 1977), 431–43 (Hebrew section).

¹⁵⁰ Kaufman, *Akkadian Influences*, 64 and 142–43.

¹⁵¹ The initial כ of כִּיך renders the ן of כִּיך, either because the latter is a historical spelling for *kūh* (Kaufman, *Akkadian Influences*, 64 n. 160) or because “כִּיך” would have been impossible, since כ is phonotactically incompatible with כ in Hebrew roots (K. Koskinen, “Kompatibilität in den dreikonsonantigen hebräischen Wurzeln,” *ZDMG* 114 [1964]: 33). Kaufman’s explanation is difficult to reconcile with J. Cantineau’s comparison (*Le nabatéen* [Paris: Leroux, 1930–32], 2.77) of Nabatean כִּיך with Arabic *jūh*, “fosse, fossé.”

¹⁵² Kutscher (כִּיך, 276 = *Studies*, 436–37 [Hebrew section]); contrast Cantineau, *Nabatéen*, 1:44.

¹⁵³ Cf. Judeo-Arabic and Karshuni (Arabic in Syriac script), which use כ as the sign for Arabic *h*. See already the papyri (*terminus ante quem* ca. 900 C.E.) published in J. Blau and S. Hopkins, “Judaean-Arabic Papyri—Collected, Edited, Translated, and Analysed,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 9 (1987): 87–160, reprinted in J. Blau, *Studies in Middle Arabic and its Judaeo-Arabic Variety* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988), 401–74. Indeed, the Judeo-Arabic orthographic practice may well have pre-Islamic roots, going back to Jewish contacts with the Nabateans. Cf. also the Phoenician use of כ to transcribe Demotic *h* noted in n. 5 above.

¹⁵⁴ Kutscher, כִּיך, 276 = *Studies*, 436–37 (Hebrew section). So already H. L. Fleischer, cited in J. Levy, *Neuhebräisches und chaldäisches Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1876–83), 2:453. The explanation is accepted by O. Cohen and D. Talshir, the statement (R. Zeira or, according to *y. Ned.* 1.2, 37a, R. Simeon b. Laqish) was referring to the Nabateans of the Negev. According to B. S. J. Isserlin, Greek transcriptions of Nabatean/Arabian names from the Negev have zero for *h before the Muslim conquest (“The Nessana Papyri: The Greek Transcriptions of Arabic,” *ALUOS* 7 [1969–73]: 23). Thus, *h was lost there not only in Nabatean Aramaic but even in Nabatean Arabic! (The latter appears to have been influenced by the former in other respects as well, exhibiting *f*, *g* instead of *f*, *g* instead of *g*, *e* instead of *i*, *o* instead of *u*, etc.; see Isserlin, “Nessana Papyri,” *passim*.) As evidence that the zero-rendering of *h in the Negev goes back to the time of R. Zeira (ca. 300 C.E.) and R. Simeon b. Laqish (third century C.E.),

word originally was **haspā* with a uvular **h* is based on Arab. *hazaf* “(unbaked) pottery”;¹⁵⁵ the latter is probably derived from Aramaic ܢܫܦܢ or the like, which in turn comes from Akkadian *hašbu*, “clay, sherd, pot.”¹⁵⁶ In short, the use of ܨ, rather than ܦ, to render **h* in the Kidron Valley dipinto is evidence that the Jews had lost uvular **h* by the middle of the first century C.E.¹⁵⁷

Finally, we have the name Αλφιος on a lead weight bearing the date “year 86.”¹⁵⁸ If the weight is from Gaza, as generally assumed, “year 86” corresponds to 26 C.E.¹⁵⁹ Αλφιος cannot be separated from the NT name Αλφαιος. T. Nöldeke noted that the latter is rendered ܐܠܦܝܢ in the Peshitta, and he conjectured that the literal meaning of the name was “my replacement” (spoken by the mother).¹⁶⁰ Subsequent scholars have followed his lead in equating the

we may note the Nabatean/Arabian name Αλολεφα = *al-hulaifa* on a pre-Christian tombstone from Elusa (A. Alt, *Die griechischen Inschriften der Palaestina Tertia westlich der Araba* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1921], 27 no. 51), dated to 200–350 C.E. by A. Negev (“Personal Names in the Nabatean Realm,” *Qedem* 32 [1991]: 130). On the other hand, in the Hawrān region of Syria (Roman Auranitis), we find χ for **h* in the Nabatean/Arabian names Χαλιπος = ܗܠܝܦܘܫ and Χαμρωτη = ܗܡܪܘܬܝ; see M. Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik* (Giessen: J. Ricker, 1902–15), 1:219 no. 41 and Cantineau, *Nabatéen*, 1:44 and 2:97. Thus, R. Zeira or R. Simeon b. Laqish may have been referring to the Nabateans of that region.

¹⁵⁵ Kutscher, ܦܨ, 276 = *Studies*, 436 (Hebrew section).

¹⁵⁶ S. Fraenkel, *Die aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen* (Leiden: Brill, 1886), 169; Kaufman, *Akkadian Influences*, 54. This is not the only Akkadian word connected with pottery that came into Arabic, via Aramaic, with a uvular *h*. We also find Akk. *paḥāru*, “potter” > Arab. *faḥḥār*, “(baked) pottery,” and Akk. *ḥabū*, “earthenware jug” > Arab. *ḥābiya*, “a large jar.”

¹⁵⁷ Given the evidence of *y. Nazir* cited above, it is not necessary for the purposes of this article to decide whether or not ܨ already had a postvocalic fricative realization in Palestinian Aramaic, that is, whether or not spirantization of *k* had already occurred.

¹⁵⁸ Di Segni, “Dated Greek Inscriptions,” 542–43.

¹⁵⁹ B. Lifshitz, “Bleigewichte aus Palästina und Syrien,” *ZDPV* 91 (1975): 170; Di Segni, “Dated Greek Inscriptions,” 543. The attribution to Gaza is perhaps strengthened by the appearance of the name in the vicinity of Gaza in later centuries. Eusebius (*Mart. Pal.* 1.5) writes of an Αλφειος/Αλφιος (d. 303 C.E.) whose “family was of the most illustrious of the city Eleutheropolis”; see GCS 9:908 line 25 and *History of the Martyrs in Palestine* (ed. W. Cureton; London: Williams & Norgate, 1861), 5. The name is attested also in the Byzantine period at Birsame (Αλφιος), Ruhēbe (Αλφιος), Oboda (Αλφιος), Nessana (Αλφειος), etc.; see V. Tzaferis, “Greek Inscriptions from the Ancient Church at Horvat Be'er-Shema,” *ErIsr* 25 (1996): 77*–78* no. 3, 83*; Alt, *Griechischen Inschriften*, 35 no. 103; A. Negev, *The Greek Inscriptions from the Negev* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1981), 40–41 no. 39; and C. J. Kraemer, *Excavations at Nessana* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958), 3:67–68 no. 21, lines 36, 39.

¹⁶⁰ T. Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft* (Strassburg: Trübner, 1904), 98. So too M. Maragten, *Die semitischen Personennamen in den alt- und reichsaramäischen Inschriften aus Vorderasien* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1988), 165. Contrast Ilan, *Lexicon*, 1:24 §2.4.1.3 and 1:382. Nöldeke’s discussion has apparently been overlooked by NT scholars. F. E. Wheeler writes: “Identifying Alphaeus with Clopas/Cleopas is based on the claim that they are variations of a common Aramaic original. . . . Since the form of the original has not been established, such an argument offers little support for identifying Alphaeus with Clopas” (“Alphaeus,” *ABD* 1:162).

more usual form, Αλφιος, with הלפי.¹⁶¹ The latter appears at Masada (66–73 C.E.)¹⁶² and in the synagogue at Engedi.¹⁶³ The last letter of הלפי represents a suffixed pronoun (rather than, say, the *nisba* ending), like the last letter of the name הלפי, “our replacement/successor,” common in Aramaic ostraca from Idumea (fourth century B.C.E.);¹⁶⁴ cf. Jewish personal names such as אבני, “my father,” and אבני(א), “our father.”¹⁶⁵ The initial consonant of the name is *h, as in Arab. *half*, “successors,” the Safaitic and Sabaic name *Hlfn*, the Ugaritic name *Hlpn*, etc.¹⁶⁶

By another fortunate coincidence, the name הלפי also provides us with a *terminus post quem*, for it appears as Χαλφι in the Greek version of 1 Maccabees (11:70). In that work, the opposition between *h and h is still perfectly preserved. Some of the names may have been borrowed from the earlier LXX tradition, e.g., Χεβρων and Ιεριχω vs. Ανανιας, Ασωρ, Αδασα, Αμαθ-, Βαιθωρων, Ιωαννης, and Φινεες. Other transcriptions are not found in the LXX and hence are less likely to be phonetically anachronistic, e.g., Χαλφι vs. Ασιδαϊοι¹⁶⁷ and Ονιας.¹⁶⁸ Now, the Greek version of 1 Maccabees cannot be much earlier than 100 B.C.E.¹⁶⁹ Thus, the shift in the transcription of הלפי from

¹⁶¹ H. Wuthnow, *Die semitischen Menschnamen in griechischen Inschriften und Papyri des vorderen Orients* (Leipzig: Dieterich, 1930) 18, 141; Negev, “Personal Names,” 132, cf. 29–30; Tzaferis, “Greek Inscriptions,” 83°, 85° n. 10; Di Segni, “Dated Greek Inscriptions,” 915. This Syro-Palestinian name is not to be confused with the Roman gentilicium *Alfius*, for which see H. Cancik and H. Schneider, *Brill's New Pauly* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 504.

¹⁶² Ilan, *Lexicon*, 1:381–82; *Masada*, 1:27 no. 427.

¹⁶³ J. Naveh, על פסיפס ואבן: הכתובות הארמיות והעבריות מבית הכנסת העתיקים (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1978), 107 no. 70 (3x). According to Frey (*CIJ* 2:168 no. 982), the name also appears in a synagogue inscription from Capernaum, but Naveh (על פסיפס ואבן, 38–39 no. 18) reads הלפי.

¹⁶⁴ See the indexes in I. Eph'al and J. Naveh, *Aramaic Ostraca of the Fourth Century BC from Idumaea* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1996) and A. Lemaire, *Nouvelles inscriptions araméennes d'Idumée au Musée d'Israël* (Paris: Gabalda, 1996).

¹⁶⁵ *Masada*, 1:20 no. 389.

¹⁶⁶ Lemaire, *Nouvelles inscriptions*, 100; Maraqtan, *Semitischen Personennamen*, 165.

¹⁶⁷ Derived from חסיד, which appears as *h.syt^m* in Amherst 63 (XI/18). See Nims and Steiner, “Paganized Version,” 269.

¹⁶⁸ Other possible examples of zero for *h* are Αυαρον (1 Macc 2:5, rendered חורן in Peshitta; cf. Arab. *hawar*, “whiteness”), Απφους (1 Macc 2:5, rendered הפוס in Peshitta), Αβουβος (1 Macc 16:11, rendered הכוב in Peshitta; cf. Arab. *habib*, “beloved”).

¹⁶⁹ Most scholars believe that the Hebrew original was composed toward the end of the second century B.C.E.; see T. Fischer, “Maccabees, Books of,” *ABD* 4:441, and the literature cited there. As for the translation into Greek, “the usual view is that the Greek of 1 Macc was done by/for the Hasmoneans themselves, presumably not long after 1 Macc itself was written” (e-mail communication from S. J. D. Cohen dated August 24, 2004). Cf. F. Bechtel, “Machabees, The Books of,” *Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Appleton, 1907–12), 9:496: “The Greek translation was probably made soon after the book was written.”

Χαλφι to Αλφιος took place in the first century B.C.E. or the early first century C.E.

We have narrowed down the period in which **h* was lost to ca. 100 B.C.E.–26 C.E. It must be stressed that this dating is valid only for **h* in spoken Hebrew and Palestinian Aramaic. It is not valid for **h* in biblical reading tradition(s) or in Mesopotamian Aramaic.¹⁷⁰ Nor is it valid for **ġ*. Evidence for dating the loss of the latter in the spoken language is very difficult to find. We may note the name Ζηρα = 𐤆𐤇𐤁 found on an ossuary and thus dated to before 70 C.E.¹⁷¹ A. Dolgopolsky cites μάγαρον/μέγαρον, “ritual crypt/pit” = 𐤇𐤁𐤁 (cf. Arab. *maġārah*, “cave”) in Greek texts of the fourth century B.C.E. and later, but É. Masson (Dolgopolsky’s source) finds serious problems with this identification.¹⁷² Blau argues that **ġ* was lost in the spoken language not long after Genesis was translated into Greek.¹⁷³

Our conclusion concerning the loss of **h* differs in important respects from two recent suggestions for dating the change. Concerning Hebrew **h* ≠ *h*, Dolgopolsky argues that “the transcription found in the LXX (as well as in Josephus Flavius’s writings and the NT) was based on a tradition of Gk. transcription current among Jews of those times and based on pronunciation which had existed several centuries before the LXX.”¹⁷⁴ K. Beyer believes that, in all dialects of Aramaic, “wurden um 200 v. Chr. *h* > *h* und *ġ* > *ç*.”¹⁷⁵

In my opinion, Dolgopolsky’s theory is seriously flawed. He argues that his “hypothesis is confirmed by cases of transcription contradicting the etymology.”¹⁷⁶ However, most of the cases he cites are from 2 Esdras, even though he twice alludes to Blau’s view that 2 Esdras is later than the rest of the LXX.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, his claim that the transcriptions of the LXX (and Josephus) are anachronistic has little to recommend it. How is it possible for “a tradition of Gk. transcription current among Jews” of the third century B.C.E. (when the Pentateuch was translated into Greek) to be “based on pronunciation which

¹⁷⁰ See n. 32 above.

¹⁷¹ Ilan, *Lexicon*, 1:75. Note also Αβουζ Ζηρας, “Abun, the younger,” on a tombstone from Khushniyye in the Golan Heights (R. C. Gregg and D. Urman, *Jews, Pagans, and Christians in the Golan Heights: Greek and Other Inscriptions of the Roman and Byzantine Eras* [South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 140; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996], 184–85 no. 151). Gregg and Urman fail to note that Αβουζ Ζηρας bears the same name as 𐤆𐤇𐤁 𐤆𐤇𐤁 𐤇 in *y. Šeb.* 4.2, 35a.

¹⁷² Dolgopolsky, *Proto-Semitic to Hebrew*, 66; É. Masson, *Recherches sur les plus anciens emprunts sémitiques en grec* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1967), 88.

¹⁷³ Blau, *Polyphony*, 39 n. 69, 70.

¹⁷⁴ Dolgopolsky, *Proto-Semitic to Hebrew*, 67.

¹⁷⁵ Beyer, *Aramäischen Texte*, 1:102.

¹⁷⁶ Dolgopolsky, *Proto-Semitic to Hebrew*, 67.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 69 and 154 n. 16. See at n. 199 below.

had existed several centuries" earlier, that is, before the Jews began to use Greek?¹⁷⁸

Both Dolgopolsky and Beyer accept the widespread assumption that these mergers must precede spirantization, there being no trace of confusion between spirantized *k* and **h* or between spirantized *g* and **ġ*.¹⁷⁹ Since Beyer dates the beginning of spirantization to the first century B.C.E.,¹⁸⁰ it is legitimate to ask why there must be a gap of a century or more between the two developments. The question becomes more acute when we examine Beyer's evidence for dating spirantization. His earliest signs of spirantization come from Qumran scrolls "der Zeit um Christi Geburt," that is, two centuries after his date for the mergers.¹⁸¹ There is no need for such a large gap.¹⁸² If it is legitimate to assume that spirantization of *ḥ* began in the late first century B.C.E. (and I stress the word "if"),¹⁸³ there is no reason why the loss of **h* could not have begun in the early first century B.C.E.

A second assumption shared by Dolgopolsky and Beyer (although never stated explicitly) is that the entire *bgdkpt* class—not just *k* and *g*—resisted postvocalic spirantization until the old uvular fricatives **h* and **ġ* were lost. It is this assumption that makes it possible for Beyer to use *b ~ w* alternations to date the spirantization of *k* and *g*.¹⁸⁴ However, the assumption is undermined by evidence from the Samaritan reading tradition. In describing that tradition, early Samaritan grammarians speak of the double realization of *bpdw* rather than *bgdkpt*.¹⁸⁵ According to Z. Ben-Hayyim, *k* and *g* never developed spirantized allophones in Samaritan Hebrew.¹⁸⁶ If that is the case, the reason must be

¹⁷⁸ For the originality of Josephus's transcriptions, apparent in tables 1–2 above, see Murtonen, *Hebrew in Its West Semitic Setting*, 1:29–30.

¹⁷⁹ Dolgopolsky, *Proto-Semitic to Hebrew* 67, 74; Beyer, *Aramäischen Texte*, 1:102. So G. Bergsträsser (*Hebräische Grammatik* [Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1918], 40) and many other scholars. For critiques of this assumption, see Blau, *Polyphony*, 74–75; and R. C. Steiner, "Simplifying Assumptions and the History of Spirantization in Aramaic and Hebrew," to appear in *Festschrift Moshe Bar-Asher*.

¹⁸⁰ Beyer, *Aramäischen Texte*, 1:102, 126.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 1:128.

¹⁸² For the assumption that the two changes were causally related, as a chain shift, see E. A. Speiser, "Concatenated Sound-shift in Canaanite," *JBL* 58 (1939): vi–vii. If this was a "push-chain" (with **h* "pushed" out of the way by the newly spirantized *k*) rather than a "pull-chain" (with spirantization of *k* blocked until **h* got out of the way), there was no gap at all. In the push-chain scenario, we have an example of הַנֶּס מִקוּל הַפֶּחַד יִפֹּל אֶל הַפֶּחַח (Isa 24:18), for in fleeing from one sound (*k*), **h* collides with another (*h*).

¹⁸³ See Steiner, "Simplifying Assumptions."

¹⁸⁴ Beyer, *Aramäischen Texte*, 1:127–28; cf. Dolgopolsky, *Proto-Semitic to Hebrew*, 73. My discussion of Samaritan Hebrew in the remainder of this paragraph is from my forthcoming "Simplifying Assumptions."

¹⁸⁵ Ben-Hayyim, עֲבָרִית וְאַרְמִית, 5:21–22 = *Grammar*, 34.

¹⁸⁶ Ben-Hayyim, עֲבָרִית וְאַרְמִית, 5:22–23 = *Grammar*, 34.

that the spirantization of the velar stops was blocked by the preservation of **ħ* and **ġ*. Put differently, Samaritan speakers opted to forgo “ease of articulation” when pronouncing *k* and *g* after vowels, in order to avoid a conditioned merger with **ħ* and **ġ*.¹⁸⁷ Thus, they were careful to enunciate the final consonant of *pak*, “flask,” as a stop, in order to prevent confusion with *paħ*, “bird-trap, snare” (cf. Arab. *fahh*, “snare,” and Egyptian *phz*, “bird-trap”).¹⁸⁸ The uvulars were eventually lost in Samaritan Hebrew, but by that time, it seems, spirantization was no longer productive.¹⁸⁹

Diffusion from Phoenicia and the Hasmonean Conquest of the Galilee

In merging the uvular fricatives with the pharyngeal fricatives, Hebrew was following in the footsteps of its northern neighbor, Phoenician. Were the Hebrew mergers carried out independently, or were they the result of diffusion from Phoenicia? The latter alternative seems attractive in the case of **ħ* > *h*. Our discussion of the date of this merger suggests the possibility that it may have had something to do with the Hasmonean conquest of the Galilee at the end of the second century B.C.E. Phoenician influence was strong there, especially in the northern part, Upper Galilee.¹⁹⁰ There were probably many speakers of Aramaic and Hebrew there¹⁹¹ who had merged **ħ* with *h* under the influence of Phoenician.¹⁹² Some of these were Itureans from the Lebanon region (Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.18 §755) who had infiltrated into Upper Galilee; we learn from Josephus that Judah Aristobolus “made war on the

¹⁸⁷ The merger of *b* with *w* in Samaritan Hebrew is not entirely comparable. It is an unconditional merger, perhaps due to Greek influence.

¹⁸⁸ For the Egyptian, see Y. Muchiki, *Egyptian Proper Names and Loanwords in North-West Semitic* (SBLDS 173; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 253.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. the absence of spirantization after epenthetic vowels in verbs in the Tiberian Hebrew reading tradition (שָׁמַעְתָּ, יָיָהּ, etc.). Presumably, epenthesis in verbs was later; see R. C. Steiner, “On the Origin of the *hēḏer* ~ *hādār* Alternation in Hebrew,” *Afroasiatic Linguistics* 3 (1976): 9–10.

¹⁹⁰ See R. S. Hanson, *Tyrian Influence in the Upper Galilee* (Meiron Excavation Project 2; Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1980); S. C. Herbert, *Tel Anafa I: Final Report on Ten Years of Excavation at a Hellenistic and Roman Settlement in Northern Israel* (Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplement 10; Ann Arbor: Kelsey Museum, 1994), 1:5–7; R. Frankel, “Galilee (Prehellenistic),” *ABD* 2:894. Note also the alliance between the non-Jewish Galileans and the men from Ptolemais and Tyre and Sidon against the Jews of the Galilee in the time of Judah the Maccabee (1 Macc 5:15).

¹⁹¹ See Hanson, *Tyrian Influence*, 67: “Linguistically, the Jewish population used Aramaic predominately and Hebrew considerably. There was much less use of Greek there than in the Galilee district immediately to the south.”

¹⁹² See n. 5 and at n. 126 above. See also the statement in b. *‘Erub*. 53b that the Galileans “are not precise in (their use of) language” (לֹא דִיִּקְי לִישָׁנָא) (אֶבְרָהָם, “wine”; דֶּבִּיר, “donkey”; עֶבֶר, “wool”; and אֶבְרָם, “lamb.” Does this contain an echo of an earlier era when only דֶּבִּיר (**h*) and אֶבְרָם (**h*) were homonyms?

Ituraeans . . . and compelled [them], if they wished to remain in their country, to be circumcised and to live in accordance with the laws of the Jews” (*Ant.* 13.11.3 §319). Others were Jews from Jerusalem who received estates in the Galilee in the wake of the Hasmonean conquest.¹⁹³ The children of these Jerusalemite Galileans may have spread the Phoenician innovation to their cousins in Jerusalem.

The most prominent of these children was Alexander Jannaeus, whom John Hyrcanus had “brought up in Galilee from his birth” (*Ant.* 13.12.1 §322). It would be natural for Jannaeus to have acquired a Galilean “accent” during his childhood, and for his pronunciation to have been widely imitated once he became king. Jannaeus’s reign (103–76 B.C.E.) would therefore have been the perfect time for the loss of **h* to become widespread in Jerusalem.

This theory receives support from Peshar Habakkuk, a work that was probably composed during Jannaeus’s reign (or slightly later) and may even allude to him.¹⁹⁴ In 1QpHab XI 6, we find a Hebrew form אַבִּיהַ (= בבִּיהַ), also known from Mur 42:4 (Bar-Kokhba) and (alongside אַבִּיהַ) rabbinic literature. I have argued elsewhere that אַבִּיהַ ~ אַבִּיהַ, which has frequently been compared to Phoenician-Punic אַבִּיהַ (not to mention אַבִּיהַ, אַבִּיהַ, אַבִּיהַ, אַבִּיהַ, אַבִּיהַ), is an example of Phoenician influence on Hebrew,¹⁹⁵ because the development of a prothetic vowel with the preposition -בַּ but not the prepositions -לַ and -כַּ makes good phonetic sense in Phoenician but not Hebrew.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ S. Freyne, “Galileans,” *ABD* 2:877.

¹⁹⁴ Peshar Habakkuk appears to come from the period 84–63 B.C.E. (B. Nitzan, מְנִילַת פֶּשֶׁר, חֶבְקִיק [Jerusalem: Bialik, 1986], 132), and our copy (1QpHab) probably comes from the second half of the first century B.C.E. (M. P. Horgan, “Habakkuk Peshar,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations*, vol. 6B, *Pesharim, Other Commentaries, and Related Documents* [ed. J. H. Charlesworth et al.; Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994], 157). Nitzan argues that the wicked priest in Peshar Habakkuk is Jannaeus (מְנִילַת פֶּשֶׁר חֶבְקִיק, 132–35).

¹⁹⁵ See R. C. Steiner, “*Albounout* ‘Frankincense’ and *Alsounalph* ‘Oxtongue’: Phoenician-Punic Botanical Terms from an Egyptian Papyrus and a Byzantine Codex,” *Or* 70 (2001): 102 esp. n. 42. For other examples of Phoenician influence on Hebrew at various times and places, see *ibid.*, 101 n. 37; and W. R. Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 233.

¹⁹⁶ The argument (Steiner, “*Albounout*,” 102) may be briefly summarized as follows: (1) in Phoenician-Punic, prothetic vowels appear before initial consonants vocalized (before deletion) with **i* rather than **a* and (2) in Phoenician-Punic, -בַּ, unlike -כַּ and -לַ, was vocalized (before deletion) with **i* rather than **a*, while in Hebrew all three prepositions were vocalized with **a*. For *ba-* rather than *bi-*, see the names *Kul-ba-iá-di-il*, *Ba-a-a-di-il*, etc. attested in various Neo-Assyrian texts. These Northwest Semitic names, related to Akk. *Gabbu-ina-qāt-ili* and *Ina-qāt-ili* (Old Babylonian), appear in Aramaic, Hebrew, and Ammonite in alphabetic script (בִּדְיָאֵל and כְּלִבְיָאֵל); see K. L. Tallqvist, *Assyrian Personal Names* (Helsingfors: Reprografische Nachdruck, 1914), 78, 100, F. Vattioni, “I sigilli ebraici,” *Bib* 50 (1969): 361; M. Ohana and M. Heltzer, מְסֻרַת הַשְּׂמֹרֶת (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 1978), 37; Maraqtan, *Semitischen Perso-*

The geographical diffusion of phonological innovations, even across language frontiers, has been much discussed in historical linguistics and dialectology since the nineteenth century, when the so-called wave theory of language change was proposed. It has also been pointed out that, thanks to its ports, Phoenicia was an important center of linguistic innovation, exercising “linguistic control over southern Syria-Palestine.”¹⁹⁷ What is noteworthy here, if our conjecture is correct, is the glacial pace of the diffusion, with the merger taking more than a millennium to reach Jerusalem.¹⁹⁸

What of *ġ > ʕ? That merger appears to have occurred well before the Hasmonean conquest of the Galilee. Is it also due to Phoenician influence, or did it occur independently in Hebrew? That question will have to remain for future research.

IV. The Date of 2 Esdras

An interesting by-product of Blau’s investigation of *ġ and *h was the discovery of evidence for a relative dating of 2 Esdras: “It is quite certain that, among those books of the Bible containing a sufficient number of proper nouns to be representative, the last books to be translated into G[reek] were E/N; this is quite clearly proven by the absence of γ and χ transcribing ġ and h [sic, for h̄] respectively in their genuine transcriptions. . . .”¹⁹⁹ Table 2 shows this conclusion to be an understatement. In the 2 Esdras column, we find zero for ן in eight out of nine cases—around 89 percent of the time, as compared with Aquila’s 57 percent and Josephus’s 33 percent.²⁰⁰ Thus, the translator of Ezra-Nehemiah outdoes not only the rest of the LXX but also Josephus and even Aquila in transcribing *h̄ with zero.²⁰¹ It behooves us, therefore, to explore the

nennamen, 71–72, 136–37; F. M. Fales, “West-Semitic Names in the Šēḥ Ḥamad Texts,” *SAAB* 7 (1993): 146–47; and S. Parpola et al., *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1998–), 2:635–36. In the modern Samaritan Hebrew reading tradition, the prothetic vowel of בַּר (e.g., *abyom* = בַּיִם) has spread to לַ (e.g., *alyom* = לַיִם) but not to כַּ; Ben-Ḥayyim, עברית וארמית, 5:239–40 = *Grammar*, 316. This development is probably connected with the Samaritan pronunciation of the preposition לַ as *al*.

¹⁹⁷ Garr, *Dialect Geography*, 235.

¹⁹⁸ Assuming that the Northwest Semitic dialect written with the reduced version of the Ugaritic alphabet was Phoenician; see at n. 5 above. For a case of diffusion in Dravidian spanning two millennia, see A. M. S. McMahon, *Understanding Language Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 51–52.

¹⁹⁹ Blau, *Polyphony*, 71; cf. Hanhart, *Text und Textgeschichte*, 340–41.

²⁰⁰ It is also instructive to compare 2 Esdras with Josephus in lines 4, 5, 11, 18, 23, 26, and 32 of table 2, and 2 Esdras with Aquila in lines 5, 18, 23, 26, and 33.

²⁰¹ Wutz goes even further: “Einzelne Formen von II. Esr. scheinen sogar über die Zeit der 2. Kol. hinauszuführen” (*Transkriptionen*, 1:138).

possibility that the canonical Greek translation of Ezra-Nehemiah is later than Aquila.

This is not the first time that such a late date has been suggested for that work. Over the past three centuries, 2 Esdras has been attributed to Theodotion by many scholars,²⁰² most notably C. C. Torrey.²⁰³ According to Torrey, "Theodotion's translation of Chron.-Ezr.-Neh. was not made until (at least) the middle of the second century A.D.,"²⁰⁴ somewhat later than Aquila's translations. This is not the place to give a full account of the controversy surrounding this theory.²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, some aspects of the debate must be mentioned.

One bone of contention is the account of the history of David and Solomon given by the Hellenistic Jewish historian Eupolemus in the middle of the second century B.C.E. Torrey and G. Gerleman agree that this account came from a Greek version of Chronicles, but they differ on the identity of that version. Torrey believes that it came from an early Greek translation of Chronicles only two chapters of which have been preserved, at the beginning of 1 Esdras.²⁰⁶ Gerleman, on the other hand, argues that Eupolemus's source was Paralipomena, our canonical Greek translation of Chronicles.²⁰⁷

Gerleman's argument, if correct, might appear to undermine Torrey's dating of 2 Esdras, since Torrey believes that 2 Esdras and Paralipomena form a single work, produced by the same translator(s). However, Gerleman also argues, following B. Walde, that Paralipomena and 2 Esdras are separate works.²⁰⁸ This latter view is further supported by the transcription of π and ϱ in these books. According to Wutz:

Im grossen und ganzen hat sich diese Scheidung in der Eigennamenschreibung erhalten bis zur Chronik, erst die Bücher Ezra-Neh. haben sie definitiv aufgegeben z. B. Αθλει - Γοθλει (Par.) ἰηϰ Αἰτωβ - Αχειτωβ sonst.²⁰⁹

Blau adduced many more examples of this contrast between Paralipomena and 2 Esdras.²¹⁰ We may add that it is not only the *names* in Paralipomena that

²⁰² See, e.g., the literature cited by C. C. Torrey, *Ezra Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910), 66; G. Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint*, II, *Chronicles* (Lund: Gleerup, 1946-), 5 n. 1; and L. C. Allen, *The Greek Chronicles* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 1:6-11, 12.

²⁰³ Torrey, *Ezra Studies*, 66-82.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁰⁵ For an excellent *Forschungsgeschichte*, see Allen, *Greek Chronicles*, 1:6-17. See also E. Tov, "Transliterations of Hebrew Words in the Greek Versions of the Old Testament," *Textus* 8 (1973): 79 n. 5 and the literature cited there.

²⁰⁶ Torrey, *Ezra Studies*, 82-83.

²⁰⁷ Gerleman, *Studies*, 9-13; cf. Allen, *Greek Chronicles*, 1:15-16.

²⁰⁸ B. Walde, *Die Esdrasbücher der Septuaginta* (Freiburg: Herder, 1913), 29-37; Gerleman, *Studies*, 6-7.

²⁰⁹ Wutz, *Transkriptionen*, 1:139.

²¹⁰ Blau, *Polyphony*, 37, 65-67.

exhibit χ for $*h$. The same transcription is found in common nouns and verbs (or, at least, words understood as such by the translator): 1 Chr 18:8 $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\beta\eta\chi\alpha\varsigma$ = מִשְׁבַּחַת (cf. Ug. *t-b-h*, “sacrifice, butcher,” etc.),²¹¹ 21:20 $\mu\epsilon\theta\alpha\chi\alpha\beta\iota\nu$ = מִתְּחַבֵּאִים, “hiding” (cf. Arab. *tahabbaʿa*, “hide”), 2 Chr 25:18 $\alpha\chi\sigma\upsilon\chi$ = חִתְּתֵה, “the thistle” (cf. Akk. *hahī(n)nu*, “a thorny plant”).²¹² The form $\alpha\phi\phi\omicron\upsilon\sigma\omega\theta$ = תּוֹתֵפְשׁוֹת (*ketib*) in 2 Chr 26:21 may be an exception (cf. Ug. *bt hptt*),²¹³ but if so, it is an exception found also in LXX 2 Kgs 15:5.

It seems clear, therefore, that Paralipomena is separate from, and earlier than, 2 Esdras. Hence, a finding that Paralipomena existed already in the middle of the second century B.C.E. tells us nothing about the date of 2 Esdras. Torrey could still be right about the latter, for, in the words of L. C. Allen, “Par must be evaluated independently of II Esdr.”²¹⁴

A century of research has undermined Torrey’s theory in another key area. Torrey’s Theodotion—a man who flourished in the middle of the second century C.E. and whose “chief characteristic [was] his tendency to *transliterate* the difficult or doubtful words of his Hebrew text”²¹⁵—no longer exists as a historical figure. Thanks to D. Barthélemy, much of the work previously ascribed to the post-Aquila Theodotion—including the transcriptions of difficult words—is now commonly dated within the period 50 B.C.E.–50 C.E.²¹⁶ This revised dating has left 2 Esdras in limbo. Barthélemy was unable to reach any firm conclusion concerning 2 Esdras, and the book, together with Torrey’s theory, has been ignored by most of Barthélemy’s successors.²¹⁷ One of the few recent studies of 2 Esdras known to me concludes only that “the translation of 2E was contemporary with or later than the work of the *καίγε* group.”²¹⁸

²¹¹ Olmo Lete and Sanmartín, *Dictionary*, 887.

²¹² As pointed out in n. 11 above, Akkadian evidence for West Semitic *h* needs to be corroborated by other evidence. As corroborating evidence, we may note that, according to *AHw* 308, Akkadian has both a *hahlu* III “Dorn(strauch), Haken?” and a *hahlu* II “Pflaume(n-baum).” If these two lexemes have a common origin, they are both cognates of Syrian Arabic *hauh*, “plum.”

²¹³ Olmo Lete and Sanmartín, *Dictionary*, 402.

²¹⁴ Allen, *Greek Chronicles*, 1:16.

²¹⁵ Torrey, *Ezra Studies*, 69.

²¹⁶ Tov, “Septuagint,” 182–83; P. J. Gentry, “The Place of Theodotion-Job in the Textual History of the Septuagint,” in *Origen’s Hexapla and Fragments* (ed. A. Salvesen; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 229. There is no simple answer to the question asked by T. McLay in a recent article (“It’s a Question of Influence: The Theodotion and Old Greek Texts of Daniel,” in *Origen’s Hexapla and Fragments*, 231): “Who is Theodotion and what is the extent and nature of his work?” Fortunately, the question is not crucial for our study.

²¹⁷ T. Janz, “The Second Book of Ezra and the *καίγε* Group,” in *IX Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (ed. B. A. Taylor; SBLSCS 45; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997) 153.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 168. The question of dating is not even mentioned in Hanhart, *Text und Textgeschichte*.

In the absence of any new consensus about the date of 2 Esdras, we must return to the wreckage of Torrey's theory to see what can be salvaged. Two observations made by Torrey seem to have stood the test of time: (1) Josephus uses 1 Esdras, but not 2 Esdras, as a source for his *Antiquities*,²¹⁹ and (2) there are no Hexaplaric readings ascribed to any of "the three" for 2 Esdras (in contrast to Paralipomena).²²⁰ To these two, we add: (3) "a large number of Hebrew-Greek equivalences typical of Aquila are consistently employed by 2 Ezra,"²²¹ and (4) the translator responsible for 2 Esdras transcribes ^h with zero more often than Josephus and even Aquila.²²² Taken individually, each of these facts can be explained away,²²³ but taken together they suggest that 2 Esdras was produced in the middle or end of the second century C.E.

V. The Date of the Greek Version of Judith

When was Judith translated into Greek? According to C. A. Moore, "the translation was made no later than the 1st century A.D., since Clement of Rome (30?-99) alluded to Judith in 1 Clem 55:4-5."²²⁴ Transcriptions of ^h can help us push back this *terminus ante quem*.

The translator of Judith normally uses χ for ^h, e.g., $\text{Xελους} = \text{ג'לר} (1:9)$, $\text{Xωβα} = \text{חבה} (?) (4:4, 15:5)$, $\text{Iεριχω} = \text{ירחו} (4:4)$, $\text{Aχιωρ} = \text{ח'יור} (5:5, \text{etc.})$. The only apparent exception is in the list of Judith's ancestors (8:1), where we find an $\text{Eλκια} = \text{ק'יה}$ as well as a $\text{Xελκιας} = \text{ק'יה}$; however, a few Greek manuscripts (supported by the Syriac version) read Eλκiana for the former.

Let us examine two of the above transcriptions more closely, comparing them with Greek transcriptions of the same names in literary sources of the first century C.E. Xελους ²²⁵ (Jdt 1:9) renders the Hebrew name²²⁶ of Elusa, a prominent Nabatean town in the Negev. The town's Arabic name appears (with

²¹⁹ Torrey, *Ezra Studies*, 81; R. Hanhart, *Esdrae liber I* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), 23; idem, *Esdrae liber II*, 21. This was noted already by William Whiston in 1722, according to Allen, *Greek Chronicles*, 1:6.

²²⁰ Torrey, *Ezra Studies*, 66.

²²¹ Janz, "Second Book of Ezra," 153. The reference is to translation (lexical) equivalences, not transcription (phonetic) equivalences.

²²² See above.

²²³ See, e.g., S. Jelicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 294: "The 'LXX' might well have been in existence, but rejected by Josephus in favour of the Greek Esdras, which he preferred on account both of its superior style and of its less complicated literary sequence."

²²⁴ C. A. Moore, "Judith, Book of," *ABD* 3:1124.

²²⁵ Cf. Xελλης , the LXX's transcription of the personal name ג'לר .

²²⁶ Contrast Eλουσα below, with final α reflecting the Aramaic definite article.

a definite article) as *al-Ḥalūš* in the Nessana papyri and in R. Saadia Gaon's translation of the Torah, where it is identified with Gerar.²²⁷ Its Aramaic name appears (also with a definite article) as חלוצא/חלוצה in the Palestinian targumim (*Targum Neofiti* to Gen 16:7, 14, Exod 15:22; *Fragment Targums* to Exod 15:22; *Pseudo-Jonathan* to Gen 16:14, Exod 15:22) and *Genesis Rabbah* (to Gen 16:7); in these sources, it is identified with Shur and Bered.²²⁸ Josephus's transcription of the name is Αλουσα (*Ant.* 14.1.4 §18),²²⁹ reflecting the merger of **h* with *h* in Palestinian Aramaic (Jewish and Nabatean).²³⁰ Ptolemy's *Geography* (5.16.10) has Ελουσα, as do the Byzantine sources.²³¹

Χωβα (Jdt 4:4 and 15:5; cf. Χωβα in 15:4) is another toponym that may be relevant to our discussion, assuming that it does not come from the LXX. If Χωβα represents חובה (as it does in LXX Gen 14:15)²³² rather than חובה*, the chances are good that we are dealing with **h*. Regardless of the true etymology of the toponym חובה, it would have been difficult for the translators to resist connecting it with Aramaic חובה/חוב, “debt, sin,” which appears with *h* in Amherst 63 (X/13), in the expression *mḥ.b^m* = מרי חובה, “the creditor.” If Χωβα is to be identified with el-Meḥubbi, between Tubass and Besan,²³³ it is even more likely that we are dealing with **h*. For the חובה of Gen 14:15, Josephus (*Ant.* 1.10.1 §178) has a form that reflects the loss of **h* in his reading tradition: Ωβα.

The evidence considered above makes it likely that the Greek version of Judith is earlier than Josephus's works. If Ελακνα (rather than Ελακιας) is the original reading in 8:1, we may say that the translator was completely consistent in transcribing **h* with χ, as was the translator of 1 Maccabees. Now, Moore argues that the Hebrew original of Judith was a Hasmonean work from the end of the second century B.C.E.,²³⁴ around the time that the Hebrew original of 1 Maccabees is believed to have been composed.²³⁵ Although there are many uncertainties, it seems reasonable to conjecture that the Greek translation of

²²⁷ Cohen and Talshir, הקפין, 145. For the later Arabic name of the town, *al-Ḥalaṣah*, see Press, ארץ ישראל, 259.

²²⁸ *The Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch: Codex Vatican (Neofiti 1)* (Jerusalem: Makor, 1970), 28, 29, 143; *The Fragment-Targums of the Pentateuch* (ed. M. L. Klein; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1980), 1:80, 172; *Pseudo-Jonathan* (ed. M. Ginsburger; Berlin: S. Calvary, 1903), 27, 126; מדרש בראשית רבא (ed. J. Theodor and C. Albeck) 454 line 7 (3 MSS).

²²⁹ Some manuscripts have Λουσσ(σ)α.

²³⁰ For the loss of Nabatean Aramaic **h* in the Negev and specifically at Elusa, see n. 154 above.

²³¹ Di Segni, “Dated Greek Inscriptions,” 708, 869, 871. The same form appears on the Madeba map.

²³² Moore, *Judith*, 149.

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ Moore, “Judith, Book of,” *ABD* 3.1123.

²³⁵ See n. 169 above.

Judith, like that of 1 Maccabees, was also a product of the Hasmonean period. The use of the form $\chi\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ (= Hebrew $\chi\lambda\lambda$) instead of $^*\chi\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\alpha$ or $\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\alpha$ (= Aramaic ܫܠܘܨܐ) may hint that the translator shared the affinity of the Hasmoneans for the national language.

VI. Conclusions

The old uvular fricatives, *h and *g , survived in Hebrew and Western Aramaic throughout the biblical period, but they disappeared at different times. The merger of *h with h is later than the merger of *g with ς . The earliest evidence for $^*h > h$ in spoken Hebrew and Western Aramaic comes from the Masada inscriptions (66–73 C.E.), the Kidron Valley dipinto (first half of the first century C.E.), and a lead weight from Gaza (26 C.E.). However, the merger may have taken place well before the first century C.E. Evidence for the retention of *h in the spoken languages seems to peter out in ca. 100 B.C.E.

The latter date suggests the possibility that the loss of *h had something to do with the Hasmonean conquest of the Upper Galilee at the end of the second century B.C.E. Phoenician influence was very strong in that region; there were probably many speakers of Hebrew and Aramaic there who had merged *h with h in imitation of Phoenician. Once these speakers came under Hasmonean rule, the way was open for the innovation to spread gradually to Judea over the course of the following century. Another Phoenician innovation that appears to have made its way south in this period is the form ܐܒܒܝܬ [abbe:t] = בבית ; it is attested in Peshar Habakkuk, whose composition has been dated to the period 84–63 B.C.E.

The biblical reading tradition(s) was/were more conservative than the spoken languages. The transcriptions of Josephus and Aquila show that *h did not disappear from that/those tradition(s) until the second century C.E., although signs of its decline are already apparent in the first century C.E. The preservation of *h , without support from spoken Hebrew and Aramaic, is an impressive achievement of the proto-Masorettes. The successful transmission of the double realization of פ from one generation of readers to the next must have required long periods of training. Readers had to learn the correct values of פ by rote, verse by verse.²³⁶ Such training was clearly impossible during the war with

²³⁶ Contrast ש , whose realization as [s] was supported, in many words, by spoken Hebrew and Aramaic, and שׁ , whose emphatic pronunciation was restricted to a single word; see Steiner, “*Ketiv-Kere*”; and idem, “Emphatic שׁ in the Masoretic Pronunciation of דָּן 11:45 ” (in Hebrew), in *Hebrew and Arabic Studies in Honour of Joshua Blau* (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1993), 551–61.

Rome. It appears that when the last readers trained before the war died, the tradition died with them.

Our study of Greek transcriptions of **h* provides a tool for dating Greek translations of Hebrew books. The transcriptions in 2 Esdras, the canonical Greek translation of Ezra-Nehemiah, belong to the the second century C.E., while the transcriptions in the Greek version of Judith appear to be earlier than the first century C.E.

Copyright of Journal of Biblical Literature is the property of Society of Biblical Literature. The copyright in an individual article may be maintained by the author in certain cases. Content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.