# ON THE BIBLICAL HEBREW VERBAL SYSTEM: A LINGUISTIC CRITIQUE IN DEFENSE OF THE MOSTLY TRADITIONAL

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## 1. Introduction

The monograph under review is the publication of the identical dissertation defended at the University of Oslo on May 24, 2005. As the title of the volume suggests, this work presents a new understanding of the verbal system of Classical Hebrew utilizing a linguistic methodology distinguishing between semantic and pragmatic factors. "New" is indeed an appropriate adjective to describe the work as Furuli has undertaken research which has never before been conducted: he has analyzed the 74,574 finite and infinite verbs of the Hebrew Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Hebrew Inscriptions (4,261 verbs from 2,106 passages are discussed and analyzed in the volume); he has used a linguistic methodology previously unused on Classical Hebrew; and he challenges almost every aspect of grammatical tradition regarding the verbal system of Biblical Hebrew (BH), including a substantial challenge to previous scholarship on the wider Semitic linguistic milieu.

As will soon be apparent, I disagree with Furuli at almost every point. The aim of this review is to provide a brief overview of the work and the associated problems with it since Furuli's "new understanding" is not without consequence: he himself sees an outcome of the acceptance of his work as that it "will mean that thousands of verbs [in the Hebrew Bible] are in need of a retranslation as far as the choice of English tense and aspect is concerned; the same is true for other modern languages" (p. 467). As will be demonstrated, the application of the chosen linguistic methodology directly

influences the results of the work, but is itself faulty. As such, this review will primarily focus on issues of linguistic methodology.[1]

## 2. Overview and Discussion

The monograph comprises 508 pages divided into nine chapters. In order to help the reader understand the work and retrieve information, a definition of linguistic terms (pp. 471–73) and (primarily) a taxonomy of cited biblical texts (pp. 479–91) are provided. The actual database is unfortunately not provided, though this is becoming increasingly common both in linguistic typology[2] as well as research on BH.[3]

Chapter one ("Viewpoints regarding the number of conjugations and their meaning") is an overview of previous research on the Biblical Hebrew verbal system (BHVS) under two headings: "theories viewing *waw* as more than a conjunction" and "theories viewing the *waw* as a normal conjunction". Furuli thus takes the theoretical division regarding the conjunction *waw* here to be determinative of a two-component view of the verbal system (his "theories viewing the *waw* as a normal conjunction") vis-à-vis a more-than-two-component view (his "theories viewing *waw* as more than a conjunction"). In reality, though, most Hebraists have moved on from the old "*waw*-inversive/conversive" theory, and acceptance or not of the existence of the "*waw*-consecutive" is in fact independent of ascertaining how many conjugations there are.[4] However, Furuli's aim here is to demonstrate

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1    This review has its origin in the one posted on the B-Hebrew email forum at the following address: http://lists.ibiblio.org/pipermail/b-hebrew/2007-March/031723.html. I am grateful for the comments of Janson Condren on this lengthier review. Since the linguistic methodology is foundational, I have chosen to center here; but much further discussion could be entered into over individual textual examples, etc. However, I have no intention of replicating Pardee's (infamous) review of Tropper's *Ugaritische Grammatik*.

2    For example, Martin Haspelmath et al., eds., *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

3    Steven W. Boyd, "A Synchronic Analysis of the Medio-Passive-Reflexive in Biblical Hebrew" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew Union College, 1993); Nicholas P. Lunn, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry: Differentiating Pragmatics and Poetics* (Paternoster Biblical Monograph Series; Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006).

4    For example, for Rainey it is the presence of short and long prefix verbs which account for his "more-than-two conjugation" model of the verbal system rather than the presence of *waw*-consecutive *per se* (Anson F. Rainey, "The Ancient Hebrew Prefix Conjugation in the Light of Amarnah Canaanite," *HS* 27 [1986]: 4–19; idem, "The Prefix Conjugation Patterns of Early Northwest Semitic," in *Lingering Over Words: Studies in Honor of William L. Moran* [ed. Tzvi Abusch, John Huehnergard, and Piotr Steinkeller; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990], 407–20; idem, "The *yaqtul* Preterite in Northwest Semitic," in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on*

that while the consensus basically maintains that the BHVS is comprised of more than two conjugations (most commonly, four), there are those who deny the "converting" power of the *waw*—viz. Simonis, Barker, and Bellamy[5]—and so propose a two-component verbal system—viz. Lee, Bate, Weir, and Barnes.[6] Furuli suggests that the "[w]eight of authority has mostly silenced these voices, and today there is almost universal agreement that the verbal system of classical Hebrew has four conjugations" (p. 23)—a view which he sets out to challenge throughout the remainder of the work.

Chapter two ("Methodology, definitions, and text") moves to methodological issues. Furuli critiques the modern tendency, at least in biblical studies, towards discourse analysis, suggesting that an approach similar to that of the natural sciences in which the smallest independent language units are studied is preferable. He argues that "[t]here is no reason to believe that what is stored in the mind are clauses or sentences or higher units, but rather single concepts, each one being signaled by one word" (p. 28). Furuli here seems oblivious to work, particularly in construction grammar, which demonstrates that constructions themselves are also mentally stored alongside lexical stock traditionally associated with the mental lexicon.[7] Blindly,

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the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday [ed. M. F. J. Baasten and W. Th. van Peursen; OLA 118; Leuven: Peeters, 2003], 395–407), while Anstey proposes his "more-than-two conjugation" model even though he denies the existence of the consecutive *waw* (Matthew P. Anstey, "Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis of Tiberian Hebrew" [published Ph.D. diss., Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2006]).

5   Johannes Simonis, *Introductio grammatico-critica in linguam Hebraicam* (Halle: Waisenhaus, 1753); William H. Barker, *A Plain Grammar of the Hebrew Language: Adapted to the Use of Schools with Biblical Examples* (Carmarthen: John Ross, 1773); John Bellamy, *Bible with Commentary: Genesis–Song of Songs: Holy Bible Newly Translated* (London: Luzac & Company, 1818–1841).

6   Samuel Lee, *A Grammar of the Hebrew Language Comprised in a Series of Lectures Compiled from the Best Authorities, and Principally from Oriental Sources, for the Use of Students in Universities* (3rd ed.; London: Duncan & Malcolm, 1841); Julius Bate, *A Hebrew Grammar Formed on the Usage of the Words of the Inspired Writers Being an Attempt to Make the Learning of Hebrew Easy* (London: J. Hodges, 1756); D. H. Weir, "Observations on the Tenses of the Hebrew Verb," *Journal of Sacred Literature* 4 (1849): 308–34; Oswald L. Barnes, *A New Approach to the Problem of the Hebrew Tenses and Its Solution without Recourse to Waw-Consecutive: Illustrated by New Translations of Various O.T. Passages with an Analysis of Each Verb* (Oxford: J. Thornton & Son, 1965).

7   Cf. the wide array of representative works: Charles J. Fillmore and Paul Kay, *Construction Grammar Coursebook, Chapters 1 thru 11 (Reading Materials for Ling. X20)* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993); Charles J. Fillmore, Paul Kay, and Mary Catherine O'Connor, "Regularity and Idiomaticity in Grammatical Constructions: The Case of *Let Alone,*" *Language* 64 (1988): 501–38; Paul Kay and Charles J. Fillmore, "Grammatical Constructions and Linguistic Generalizations: The *What's X Doing Y?* Construction," *Language* 75 (1999): 1–33; Adele E. Goldberg, *Constructions at Work: The Nature of Linguistic Generalization in Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); idem, *Con-*

then, Furuli proceeds to outline the nature of lexical mental conceptualization without any reference to grammatical constructions. He states that "[i]t seems psycholinguists are correct when they say that the central part, or the nucleus, of [the mental concept triggered by a lexical word] tends to be relatively clear, but the concept becomes more dim or fuzzy the further away from the nucleus we proceed" (p. 28). As will be demonstrated further below, Furuli's (partially-true) psycholinguistic insight here is actually in conflict with his advanced methodology. Moreover, it is even to some extent erroneous: moving away from the prototypical meaning of a word to non-prototypical meaning (Furuli's "dim" and "fuzzy" above) does not *have* to entail that the prototypical meaning (Furuli's "nucleus") is retained in such non-prototypical uses.[8] In other words, meaning is not static, and it is not simply non-referentiality which produces linguistic fuzziness (pp. 28–29) but also the related issues of grammaticalization;[9] constructional narrowing,

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*structions: A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); idem, "Constructions: A New Theoretical Approach to Language," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 7 (2003): 219–24; idem, "The Relationship between Verbs and Constructions," in *Lexical and Syntactical Constructions and the Construction of Meaning* (ed. Marjolijn Verspoor, Kee Dong Lee, and Eve Sweetser; Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science 150; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997), 383–98; Adele E. Goldberg and Ray Jackendoff, "The English Resultative as a Family of Constructions," *Language* 80 (2004): 532–68; Ray Jackendoff, "Twistin' the Night Away," *Language* 73 (1997): 534–59; George Lakoff, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Knud Lambrecht, "'What, Me Worry?': 'Mad Magazine Sentences' Revisited," *Berkeley Linguistic Society* 16 (1990): 215–28; Joan L. Bybee, *Morphology: A Study of the Relation between Meaning and Form* (Typological Studies in Language 9; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1985); William Croft, *Radical Construction Grammar: Syntactic Theory in Typological Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); William Croft and D. Alan Cruse, *Cognitive Linguistics* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Indeed, within Construction Grammar lexical words and syntactic constructions are *both* deemed to be instances of constructions but differing in terms of their complexity and schematicity, and standing at opposite ends of a continuum (see, e.g., Croft, *Radical Construction Grammar*, 17; idem, "Logical and Typological Arguments for Radical Construction Grammar," in *Construction Grammar: Cognitive Grounding and Theoretical Extensions* [ed. Jan-Ola Östman and Mirjam Fried; Constructional Approaches to Language 1; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2005], 273–314; Croft and Cruse, *Cognitive Linguistics*, 255). This syntax–lexicon continuum is sometimes termed a "construct-i-con" by analogy with the traditional lexicon (Goldberg, "Constructions").

8      Cf., e.g., Croft and Cruse, *Cognitive Linguistics*, ch. 4; Dirk Geeraerts, "Cognitive Grammar and the History of Lexical Semantics," in *Topics in Cognitive Linguistics* (ed. Brygida Rudzka-Ostyn; Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science 50; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988), 654–55.

9      See, e.g., Martin Haspelmath, "The Geometry of Grammatical Meaning: Semantic Maps and Cross-Linguistic Comparison," in *The New Psychology of Language: Cognitive*

widening, or even neutralization of prototypical meaning;[10] and some semantic regions which seem typologically prone to multifunctionality (a large number of examples is provided towards the end of the review). It is thus important to note that when Furuli relates his lexical discussion to what he calls "morphosyntactic words"—instances of which are verbal conjugations—by saying that they are "non-referential" and as such "their concepts ... [are] much more fuzzy" (p. 28), what he means by this is *not* that prototypical meaning can be altered—as is actually admitted in prototype theory in psycholinguistics!

From this basis, the chapter moves to a discussion of methodology proper. Here Furuli states (pp. 31–32):

> In the study of the verbal system of a dead language, informants are lacking, so the question is: By what means can we hope to find the meaning of the smallest units of this verbal system as the Hebrews understood it? When we choose a methodology, it is extremely important to differentiate between the parts that have an intrinsic meaning that never change, and those parts whose meaning is dependent upon the context and are changeable. So we should differentiate between semantics and pragmatics.

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*and Functional Approaches to Language Structure: Volume 2* (ed. Michael Tomasello; Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003), 211–42; William Croft, Hava Bat-Zeev Shyldkrot, and Suzanne Kemmer, "Diachronic Semantic Processes in the Middle Voice," in *Papers from the 7th International Conference on Historical Linguistics* (ed. Anna Giacalone Ramat, Onofrio Carruba, and Giuliano Bernini; Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science 48; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1987), 179–92; Christian Lehmann, *Thoughts on Grammaticalization* (Lincom Studies in Theoretical Linguistics 1; München: Lincom, 1995).

[10]   Cf., e.g., Sonia Cristofaro, *Subordination* (Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Martin Haspelmath and Müller-Bardey, "Valence Change," in *Morphologie: Ein internationales Handbuch zur Flexion und Wortbildung* (ed. Geert Booij et al.; Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 17/2; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 1130–45; Goldberg, *Constructions*; idem, "The Relationship between Verbs and Constructions"; William Croft, "Event Structure in Argument Linking," in *The Projection of Arguments: Lexical and Compositional Factors* (ed. Miriam Butt and Wilhelm Geuder; Center for the Study of Language and Information Lecture Notes 83; Stanford: CSLI, 1998), 21–63; idem, "The Structure of Events and the Structure of Language," in *The New Psychology of Language: Cognitive and Functional Approaches to Language Structure* (ed. Michael Tomasello; Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998), 67–92; Laura A. Michaelis, "Entity and Event Coercion in a Symbolic Theory of Syntax," in *Construction Grammars: Cognitive Grounding and Theoretical Extensions* (ed. Jan-Ola Östman and Mirjam Fried; Constructional Approaches to Language 3; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2005), 45-88; Andrew Koontz-Garboden, "Aspectual Coercion and the Typology of Change of State Predicates," *Journal of Linguistics* 43 (2007): 115–52.

Just why such a differentiation is "extremely important" remains unstated. More significantly, it is simply *assumed* that "intrinsic meaning that never change[s]" is a linguistic reality, and remains throughout the work as an unsubstantiated assumption. However, the corollary of admitting to lexical fuzziness within linguistics is generally that there is not necessarily an attribute or set of attributes which is applicable across the uses of any given lexical item (or syntactic construction, etc.) such that non-prototypical uses may only *optionally* carry an attribute or set of attributes essential to more central use(s).[11] In other words, "they may show what is often called *family resemblances* or a *radial structure,* i.e., each meaning is linked by resemblance to some other meaning, but the network of meanings may be so large that meanings at different ends of it show no traces of similarities."[12]

It is here we see that Furuli's admittance to linguistic fuzziness is in conflict with his stated methodology of differentiating between semantics and pragmatics. Later, he speaks of making a "scrupulous distinction between semantic meaning (uncancellable meaning) and conversational pragmatic implicature (cancellable meaning)" (p. 47; also 46, n. 43, 49, 70, 77, *et passim*). What he means by this in relation to the BHVS is "that the features of the verbal system that cannot be changed or cancelled by the context represent *semantic meaning,* while features that can be changed or cancelled, represent *conversational pragmatic implicature*" (p. 33 [emphasis original]). So, as Furuli states, "[t]he aim of this dissertation, therefore, is to find those parts of the verbal system of classical Hebrew where this distinction can be made, and on this basis find the number of conjugations and their semantic meaning" (pp. 33–34). The great error, then, of the work stems from this assumption that intrinsic meaning exists and can be identified. It is not so much that this search for intrinsic meaning is wrong *per se,*[13] but it is the assumption that it *must exist,* rather than allowing for the possibility that not everything in language has an uncancellable attribute.[14]

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[11]  Cf. Geeraerts, "Cognitive Grammar", 654–55.

[12]  Martin Haspelmath, "The Semantic Development of Old Presents: New Futures and Subjunctives without Grammaticalization," *Diachronica* 15 (1998), 31 [emphasis in original].

[13]  Cf. William Croft, *Typology and Universals* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 269.

[14]  Of course, Furuli allows for *some* cancellation of meaning—but only in the sense, following Grice (H. P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation," in *Speech Acts* [ed. Peter Cole and Jerry L. Morgan; Syntax and Semantics 3; New York: Academic Press, 1975], 43–58), whereby "semantic meanings may not be cancelled without contradiction" (p. 33). This is simply false and the principle cannot account for the data raised below. Admitting to linguistic fuzziness is again at odds with the view presented and so it is not

The remainder of chapter two is a discussion of "procedural traits" (what is defined as "the kind of action that is seen by the interplay of the verb and its arguments, adverbials etc." [p. 36, n. 30]), *Aktionsart* (what is seen as "the kind of action of a single verb" [p. 36, n. 30]), and aspect (perfective, imperfective, etc.).[15] The discussion of procedural traits and *Aktionsart* touches issues of durativity and punctuality (Furuli's "punctiliarity"), telicity and non-telicity, and dynamicity and stativity. A privative model is proposed whereby if a particular verb is marked for a feature, say +telicity, then this feature is unable to be cancelled because of its +telic marking. However, the reality of language is much more complex than Furuli allows such that a prototype model is able to accord better with the linguistic facts whereby a feature such as telicity can be prototypically associated with a given verb without having to go as far as to say that the feature must be present in every occurrence. In fact, such "semantic marking" is simply better taken to be due to frequency of use—again, producing prototypical meaning—without implying that there may not be some variability (or even a lot!) from the more frequent or entrenched meaning(s).[16] Hence Furuli's uncancellable "marked" features have actually been demonstrated to show variability,[17] which is a problem for his methodology but not for one committed only to the existence of prototypical meaning.

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surprising that the work essentially neglects treatment on this in the remainder of the work.

[15]   While Furuli criticises some scholars for not maintaining a rigid distinction between aspect and *Aktionsart*, it is interesting to note, as pointed out by Lehmann (Christian Lehmann, "Aspectual Type(s)," in *Concise Encyclopedia of Grammatical Categories* [ed. Keith Brown, Jim Miller, and R. E. Asher; Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1999], 43), that the introduction of the term *Aktionsart* by Brugmann (Karl Brugmann, "Griechische Grammatik," in *Handbuch der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft: Band II* [ed. Iwan Müller; Munich: Beck, 1885], 1–126) covered all of what Furuli differentiates as *Aktionsart* as well as aspect, the differentiation only coming in Agrell (Sigurd Agrell, "Aspektänderung und Aktionsartbildung beim polnischen Zeitworte: Ein Beitrag zum Studium der indogermanischen Präverbia und ihrer Bedeutungsfunktionen" [Ph.D. diss., Lunds University, 1908]). Another interesting fact pointed out by Lehmann ("Aspectual Type(s)," 48) is that aspectually rich languages display little lexical aspectual distinction (Samoan), while languages with rich lexical aspectual distinction tend to be aspectually deficient (German), with mixed systems in between (Modern Greek).

[16]   Martin Haspelmath, "Against Markedness (and What to Replace It With)," *Journal of Linguistics* 42 (2006): 25–70.

[17]   See, e.g., Leonard Talmy, "The Relation of Grammar to Cognition," in *Topics in Cognitive Linguistics* (ed. Brygida Rudzka-Ostyn; Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science 50; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988), 165–205; idem, "Rubber-Sheet Cognition in Language," *Chicago Linguistic Society* 13 (1977): 612–28; Robert Botne, "*To Die* across Languages: Towards a Typology of Achievement Verbs," *Linguistic Typology* 7 (2003): 233–78; Ronald W. Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive*

Aspect is then addressed following the model constructed by Olsen in which the theoretical terminology of "event time", "reference time", and "deictic center" are introduced and explicated based primarily on English language data.[18] "Event time" is the time between the beginning and end of a given situation; "reference time" is the point of reference from which a given situation is viewed (often speech time); and "deictic center" is "the relationship between a vantage point (often speech time) from which an event or state is viewed, and the event or state itself" (p. 40, n. 32). With this model Furuli suggests that a scrupulous distinction can be drawn between uncancellable meaning and conversational pragmatic implicature, where, by eliminating pragmatic meaning, the number of conjugations can be identified and semantic meaning ascertained. In this way, his hypothesis that BH has only two aspectual conjugations—viz. imperfective *yiqtol, weyiqtol,* and *wayyiqtol* and perfective *qatal* and *weqatal*—can be tested. The trouble, he says, is that "[w]e can only hope to find the semantic meaning of a [verbal] form in situations where a particular sense *only* can be caused by the [verbal] form itself and not by other factors in the context" (p. 49, n. 49). Tense is denied outright as the semantic meaning of the verbal conjugations, with Furuli (p. 55, n. 61) favorably quoting Waltke and O'Connor, who questioned, "How can forms each of which 'represent' all three English major tenses have a primarily temporal value?"[19] The problem is that rarely does anyone from the "aspectual camp" address the equally valid reverse question, i.e., How can verbal forms, each of which "represent" perfective and imperfective aspect, have a primarily aspectual value? Furuli, to his credit, is acutely aware of this problem (pp. 56–58)[20] and so suggests that "both the imperfective and the perfective aspect are found in the Hebrew verbal system, though with a nature quite different from that of the English aspects" (p. 58). He claims that Olsen's model of aspect is "hardly universal" and that "because aspect is a kind of viewpoint, it is not obvious that it has the same nature in the different aspectual languages of the world" (p.

*Grammar: Volume 1: Theoretical Prerequisites* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 258-262; Croft, "Event Structure"; idem, "Structure of Events"; Michaelis, "Entity and Event Coercion"; Ping Li and Yasuhiro Shirai, *The Acquisition of Lexical and Grammatical Aspect* (Studies in Language Acquisition 16; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000).

18    Mari B. Olsen, *A Semantic and Pragmatic Model of Lexical and Grammatical Aspect* (Outstanding Dissertations in Linguistics Series; New York: Garland, 1997).

19    Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 460.

20    Cf. also pp. 279–80; and Randall Buth, *Living Biblical Hebrew for Everyone* (2 vols.; Jerusalem: Biblical Language Center, 2003), 2:337–44; Yoshinobu Endo, *The Verbal System of Classical Hebrew in the Joseph Story: An Approach from Discourse Analysis* (SSN 32; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1996), 47–49.

49). In light of this, Furuli redefines the traditional aspectual categories to suit BH (p. 69):

> The imperfective aspect is a close-up view of a small section of the event where the progressive action is made visible. The perfective aspect is a view, as if from some distance, of a great part of, or of the whole of the event, where the progressive action is not made visible.

He explains:

> While the end is not the final decisive factor in Hebrew as it is in English, it is important, because in most cases the imperfective aspect makes visible a small section before the end, and the perfective aspect includes the end. Because the area of focus of the imperfective aspect is so small, we will not expect that it includes both the beginning and the end, and if it includes the end of an event, it does not include the end of the resulting state. Because the focus of the perfective aspect is so broad, in most instances it includes the end of the event. Therefore the end is also important for the Hebrew aspects, but is in no way decisive.

It seems to me, however, that Furuli's definition is too elastic. Indeed, later in the work he says that the BH imperfective and perfective verbs are "not mutually exclusive" (p. 438) and that "if an overall picture [in any given context] is enough, different forms can be used with the same meaning" (p. 460)! The vagueness of definition breeds unbridled flexibility. Furuli is aware of this criticism, but suggests that his concepts of event time, reference time, and deictic centre "represent a sound scientific approach" (p. 465). However, others have used these *same* methodological concepts with respect to BH and arrived at vastly different conclusions,[21] which suggests to me that subjective interpretation of the data is still required. In any case Furuli has not even established whether his claim that the values traditionally assigned to verbal aspect as being "hardly universal" is indeed valid. Now I am fully aware of the non-universal nature of supposedly universal features of language.[22] This does not mean, though, that there are not typo-

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21   Cf. John A. Cook, "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System: A Grammaticalization Approach" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002); Tal Goldfajn, *Word Order and Time in Biblical Hebrew Narrative* (Oxford Theological Monographs; Oxford: Clarendon, 1998); Galia Hatav, *The Semantics of Aspect and Modality: Evidence from English and Biblical Hebrew* (Studies in Language Companion Series 34; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997); Max Rogland, *Alleged Non-Past Uses of* Qatal *in Classical Hebrew* (SSN 44; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003).

22   So, e.g., William Croft, "Parts of Speech as Language Universals and as Language-Particular Categories," in *Approaches to the Typology of Word Classes* (ed. Petra M. Vogel and Bernard Comrie; Empirical Approaches to Language Typology 23; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 65–102; idem, *Radical Construction Grammar*; idem, *Typology and Universals*; idem, "Logical and Typological Arguments"; idem, "Word Classes, Parts of Speech, and Syntactic Argumentation," *Linguistic Typology* 9 (2005): 431–41; idem,

logical generalizations with explainable exceptions.[23] Dahl and Velupillai's recent study of 222 languages (of which 101 made a traditional perfective | | imperfective opposition),[24] in which a reanalysis of the traditional definitions of aspect was not required, would suggest that the typological tendency of language, if an aspectual opposition is made, conforms functionally to the traditional view. Furuli's divergent claim requires functional justification in light of the strong typological tendency.[25]

Chapter three ("When did Classical Hebrew get four conjugations?") begins the search for the uncancellable meaning of the BH verbal conjugations. Furuli's hypothesis regarding the BH prefix verbs is that the verbal forms *yiqtol, weyiqtol,* and *wayyiqtol* together represent the one imperfective conjugation. Since this is extremely contentious, this requires elaboration, encompassing chapters three through six. Chapter three moves from a discussion of a diachronic approach vis-à-vis a synchronic approach, where he sides with a synchronic approach based upon his assessment that he has detected no change in meaning between early, classical/standard, and late Hebrew (both that of the Hebrew Bible as well as that of DSS and Ben Sira). Somewhat surprisingly this position is advanced even though diachronic treatment is in no way exhaustive. For example, the encroaching rise of the suffix verb into the paradigm of prefix verbs is not at all discussed,[26] even

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"Syntactic Theories and Syntactic Methodology: A Reply to Seuren," *Journal of Linguistics* 40 (2004): 637–54; idem, "Beyond Aristotle and Gradience: A Reply to Aarts," *Studies in Language* 31 (2007): 409–30; Matthew S. Dryer, "Are Grammatical Relations Universal?" in *Essays on Language Function and Language Type: Dedicated to T. Givón* (ed. Joan Bybee, John Haiman, and Sandra A. Thompson; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997), 115–43; William A. Foley and Robert D. van Valin, Jr., "On the Viability of the Notion of 'Subject' in Universal Grammar," *Berkeley Linguistics Society* 3 (1977): 293–320; Martin Haspelmath, "Pre-Established Categories Don't Exist: Consequences for Language Description and Typology," *Linguistic Typology* 11 (2007): 119–32; regarding BH, something of the sort is acknowledged by Francis I. Andersen, review of David J. A. Clines, ed., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew: Vol. 1* א, *ABR* 43 (1995): 50–71.

23   Cf. esp. Croft, *Radical Construction Grammar*; idem, *Typology and Universals*.

24   Östen Dahl and Viveka Velupillai, "Tense and Aspect," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (ed. Martin Haspelmath et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 266–81.

25   This point perhaps requires some clarification. I am not saying that a perfective ∷ imperfective opposition in any given language must necessarily be exactly the same as another (cf. Haspelmath, "Against Markedness", 53–54); rather, the typological prototypical meaning of the opposition is that of the traditional explanation, which in a particular language may have some functionally-motivated distributional variance from the typological prototype. But to dispense with this entirely, as Furuli has done, is to dispense with aspectual meaning altogether.

26   However, see Anson F. Rainey, "Reflections on the Suffix Conjugation in West Semitized Amarna Tablets," *UF* 5 (1973): 235–62; idem, *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets:*

though this has significant bearing upon the issue of determining the semantics and paradigmatic contrasts of the verbal system (it *is* a "system" is it not?!).[27] In this respect, Myhill's detection of the encroachment of *qatal* upon *wayyiqtol* should especially have received some treatment by Furuli.[28] Moreover, if the BHVS solely grammaticalizes aspect, as is argued by Furuli, and if *wayyiqtol* and *(we)yiqtol* together constitute the imperfective aspect, what conjugation expressed the perfective aspect when *qatal* was not part of the verbal system *per se*? This issue has significant bearing upon the position advanced, but is not addressed. What follows, though, is a discussion centering on the relevance of cognate language elucidation of the BHVS. Specifically, Furuli questions the often-expressed view that the BH *wayyiqtol* conjugation has its origins in an old short prefix verb, with Furuli's argument moving from Akkadian to Amarna Canaanite to Ugaritic to Phoenician and Punic to Aramaic to Proto-Semitic. The argument here is primarily (a) to demonstrate how previous scholarship has not made a "scrupulous distinction" between "past tense" (i.e., meaning which would be uncancellable) and "past reference" (i.e., meaning which would be context-dependent and so cancellable); and (b) demonstrating inconsistent labels used by scholars and the debate between them. It seems to me that the endeavour here is to muddy the grammatical waters and thus be able to paint a fuzzy cognate language picture so that BH *wayyiqtol* can be posited to have no connection. Thus Furuli is able to claim that the *wayyiqtol* conjugation is a Masoretic invention, a contention which is based on (a) what Furuli claims is lack of evidence of *wayyiqtol* in DSS; and (b) the lack of evidence for *wayyiqtol* in the Hexapla.

Due to the considerable complexity of analysis and issues here, I can only offer a few remarks. First, secondary literature which has significant bearing upon the issues remains unreferenced and untreated.[29]

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*A Linguistic Analysis of the Mixed Dialect Used by Scribes from Canaan* (4 vols.; Handbuch der Orientalistik; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 2:365–66; idem, "The Suffix Conjugation Pattern in Ancient Hebrew: Tense and Modal Functions," *Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 40 (2003): 3–42; idem, "*yaqtul* Preterite", 407; Rudolf Meyer, *Hebräische Grammatik* (4 vols.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992), 2:96–110, 3:39–57; Hans-Peter Müller, "Zur Geschichte des hebräischen Verbs: Diachronie der Konjugationsthemen," *BZ* 27 (1982): 34–57; and John M. Myhill, "A Study of Aspect, Word Order, and Voice" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984), for some discussion.

[27] Significantly, even though Furuli's work as he presents it is a work regarding the Classical Hebrew verbal *system*, he explicitly sets out to eschew paradigmatic analysis (pp. 34–35).

[28] Myhill, "A Study of Aspect"; cf. also Rainey, "*yaqtul* Preterite", 407.

[29] E.g., Joshua Blau, "כינויי נסתר ונסתרת בני ובלעדיה בעברית המקרא [Pronominal Third Person Singular Suffixes with and without נ in Biblical Hebrew]," *Eretz-Israel* 14 (1978): 125–31; idem, "Marginalia Semitica III," in *Topics in Hebrew and Semitic Linguistics* (Jerusalem:

Second, scholars' arguments are unfairly represented. For example, Hatav's[30] view that *wayyiqtol* advances the reference time is argued to be unsatisfactory since "contradictory examples are seen in biblical books that were not part of her corpus, but there are similar examples in the books she used as well" (p. 287). Thus it is made out that Hatav presents an ignorant and inaccurate representation of her subject matter. But Hatav is fully aware of exceptions to her proposal, being able to explain some and actually leave others as not being analyzable as sequential.[31] Consequently, it

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Magnes, 1998; repr. from *IOS* 7 [1977]: 14–32], 247–65; idem, "Studies in Hebrew Verb Formation," in *Topics in Hebrew and Semitic Linguistics* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998; repr. from *HUCA* 42 [1971]: 133–58), 155–80; Hélène Dallaire, "The Syntax of Volitives in Northwest Semitic Prose" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew Union College, 2002); Amikam Gai, "The Reduction of the Tense (and Other Categories) of the Consequent Verb in North-West Semitic," *Or* 51 (1982): 254–56; Robert Hetzron, "Third Person Singular Pronoun Suffixes in Proto-Semitic," *Orientalia Suecana* 8 (1969): 101–27; Robert D. Holmstedt, "The Phonology of Classical Hebrew: A Linguistic Study of Long Vowels and Syllable Structure," *ZAH* 13 (2000): 145–56; Mayer Lambert, "De l'emploi des suffixes pronominaux avec *noun* et sans *noun*," *Revue des etudes juives* 46 (1903): 178–83; David O. Moomo, "The Meaning of the Biblical Hebrew Verbal Conjugation from a Crosslinguistic Perspective" (D.Litt. diss., University of Stellenbosch, 2004); idem, "The Imperfective Meaning of *weqatal* in Biblical Hebrew," *JNSL* 31 (2005): 89–106; Takamitsu Muraoka, "The Nun Energicum and the Prefix Conjugation in Biblical Hebrew," *AJBI* 1 (1975): 63–71; Myhill, "A Study of Aspect"; Rainey, "Reflections on the Suffix Conjugation"; idem, "*yaqtul* Preterite"; Rogland, "*Alleged Non-Past Uses of* Qatal"; idem, "Remarks on the Aramaic Verbal System," in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. M. F. J. Baasten and W. Th. van Peursen; OLA 118; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 421–32; Ahouva Shulman, "The Use of Modal Verb Forms in Biblical Hebrew Prose" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1996); idem, "The Function of the 'Jussive' and 'Indicative' Imperfect Forms in Biblical Hebrew Prose," *ZAH* 13 (2000): 168–80; Hermann-Josef Stipp, "Narrativ-Langformen 2. und 3. Person von zweiradikaligen Basen nach *qalY* im biblischen Hebräisch," *JNSL* 13 (1987): 109–49; David Talshir, "על ייחודי תחביר בלשון המקרא המאוחרת [Syntactic Patterns in Late Biblical Hebrew]," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies Jerusalem, August 4-12, 1985. Division D, Volume 1: Hebrew and Jewish Languages, Other Languages* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1986), 1*–8*; idem, "התפתחות מערכת העתיד המהופך בויקה אל המערכת המודאלית [The Development of the Imperfect Consecutive Forms in Relation to the Modal System]," *Tarbits* 56 (1987): 585–91; idem, "The Reinvestigation of the Linguistic Relationship between Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah," *VT* 38 (1988): 165–93; Anssi Voitila, "The Perfect Indicative in the Greek Pentateuch and the Hebrew Qatal," in *Verbum et Calamus: Semitic and Related Studies in Honour of the Sixtieth Birthday of Professor Tapani Harviainen* (ed. Hannu Juusola, Juha Laulaineen, and Heikki Palva; StudOr 99; Helsinki: Societas Orientalis Fennica, 2003), 415–23; Tamar Zewi, *A Syntactical Study of Verbal Forms Affixed by -n(n) Endings in Classical Arabic, Biblical Hebrew, El-Amarna Akkadian and Ugaritic* (AOAT 260; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1999); the significance of some of these to be mentioned below.

30    Hatav, *Semantics of Aspect and Modality*.

31    Ibid., 62–70.

seems that Hatav does not assume that even some outright exceptions negate her proposal, a fact unacknowledged by Furuli in his criticism of her view and one that challenges his own methodological assumptions regarding uncancellable meaning; rather, *wayyiqtol* is seen to be prototypically sequential, but this is not its sole nor uncancellable function—and it was never claimed to be so by Hatav.[32]

A further example is of Furuli's criticism of Rainey's treatment of EA 292:17–26,[33] specifically the following text (EA 292:22–26):[34]

| | |
|---|---|
| *a-nu-ma iṣ-ṣú-ru ù a-nu-ma iš-te-mu* | "Now I am guarding and now I am |
| *UD.KAM-ma ù mu-ša a-wa-te^meš ša* | heeding day and night the words of |
| *LUGAL EN-ia* | the king, my lord." |

Furuli (pp. 99–101) suggests that Rainey is simply wrong here in taking the *yaqtulu* prefix verbs—viz. *iṣ-ṣú-ru* and *iš-te-mu*—as indicating continuous or iterative actions. Instead, he says that this is a contextual nuance derived from the adverbial "day and night." However, Rainey's argument cannot be reduced so simplistically, and it is noteworthy that Furuli picks this one example from this one work to supposedly debunk Rainey's entire argument, whereas elsewhere Rainey adduces many more examples—even ones without such adverbials as the cited text.[35] The adverbial in the example may be taken as optional and its use makes explicit what was already implicit by the *yaqtulu* verbal conjugation. The tension here highlights the "efficiency and complexity" of language.[36]

Third, of the morphological characteristics traditionally deemed to characterize the short prefix verb vis-à-vis the long prefix verb, Furuli briefly treats the morphology of hollow verbs, Hiphils, and, at greater length, ה-III verbs. As such, the third-person pronominal suffixes augmented with *nun* receive no treatment. This is a significant oversight, since it has been argued that these suffixes may only be attached to indicative *yiqtol* and never to the

32 Anstey ("Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis", 187, n. 12) provides a helpful observation: "simple counterexamples to sequentiality are often provided to disprove a particular view of the TH [Tiberian Hebrew, DK] Verbal system, when in fact the counterexamples should be instead alerting us to the instabilities between narrative and event temporality."

33 Rainey, "Prefix Conjugation Patterns", 409–10.

34 Furuli incorrectly lists the text as EA 296:17–26.

35 Compare, e.g., Anson F. Rainey, "Morphology and the Prefix-Tenses of West Semitized El-Amarna Tablets," *UF* 7 (1975): 395–426; idem, *Canaanite*, 2:232–33.

36 Cf. John A. Hawkins, *Efficiency and Complexity in Grammars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

jussive or *wayyiqtol*[37]—even though *wayyiqtol* in the first-person inherits, perhaps by analogy with the suppletive and composite volitive paradigm, the cohortative form, which does bear the pronominal suffixes augmented with *nun*. Similarly, the fact that paragogic *nun* is only ever used with indicative *yiqtol* and never with the jussive or *wayyiqtol* is untreated by Furuli,[38] even though it is one more added morphological trait which points to a prefix verb morphology making a consistent distinction: the long prefix verb used for present-future/imperfective and a short prefix verb used as a narrative past tense. Additionally, even his conclusions regarding ‏ה-III‎ verb morphology are questionable since he lumps plurals into the results (pp. 129–35) when the forms that receive apocopation—outside of the first-person with its complicating morphological characteristic mentioned above which is perhaps dialectical[39]—are 3ms, 3fs, and 2ms.[40] As a result, the fact that 98.7 percent of all 3ms *wayyiqtols* (Furuli's statistic, p. 131) that can be apocopated actually are apocopated is glossed over, whereas this statistical dominance of an apocopated prefix verb being used as a narrative past tense vis-à-vis a non-apocopated prefix being used as a present-future/imperfective points strongly to the validity of the traditional explanation: that these are, in fact, two prefix verbs with different prototypical functions and different morphology. Further, Joüon and Muraoka's observation regarding the preference for the long prefix verb before a guttural or

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37  Cf. Anstey, "Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis", 124, 135, idem, "Towards a Typological Presentation of Tiberian Hebrew," *HS* 46 (2005), 102–3, 114; Blau, "‏כינוי נסתר ונסתרת בני ובלעדיה בעברית המקרא‎"; John Huehnergard, "The Early Hebrew Prefix-Conjugations," *HS* 29 (1988): 19–23; Lambert, "De l'emploi des suffixes pronominaux avec *noun* et sans *noun*"; Anson F. Rainey, "The Ancient Hebrew Prefix Conjugation in the Light of Amarnah Canaanite," *HS* 27 (1986): 4–19. The exceptions concerning *wayyiqtol* are dealt with by Lambert ("De l'emploi des suffixes pronominaux avec *noun* et sans *noun*," 180–82) and Muraoka ("Nun Energicum", 64–65).

38  For a statement of the exact morphophonological conditioning, see W. Randall Garr, "The Paragogic *nun* in Rhetorical Perspective," in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives* (ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz; Jerusalem: Magnes, 2006), 67–68.

39  See Miles V. Van Pelt, "‏ה-III‎ in Biblical Hebrew: A Study of Short and Long Forms with Special Attention to the *Wayyiqtol* Conjugation" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2005).

40  Cf. Shulman, "Use of Modal Verb Forms", 4; idem, "Function of the 'Jussive' and 'Indicative' Imperfect Forms", 169; Henry Churchyard, "Topics in Tiberian Biblical Hebrew Metrical Phonology and Prosodics" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 1999), 724–30; E. J. Revell, "Stress and the *waw* 'Consecutive' in Biblical Hebrew," *JAOS* 104 (1984), 442; idem, "The System of the Verb in Standard Biblical Prose," *HUCA* 60 (1989), 13; Richard L. Goerwitz, "The Accentuation of the Hebrew Jussive and Preterite," *JAOS* 112 (1992): 198–203; Van Pelt, "‏ה-III‎ in Biblical Hebrew"; Stipp, "Narrativ-Langformen 2. und 3. Person".

with a disjunctive accent is neither mentioned nor integrated within the analysis.[41] Similarly Hetzron's proposal influencing the discussion of the existence of a *yaqtulu* form is unreferenced.[42]

Fourth, Furuli does not take into account in his analysis the complicating factor of word order as raised, for example, by Qimron.[43] The data examined by Qimron suggests that it is possibly word order (i.e., verb-first—Qimron's "consecutive" and "conjunctive imperfect") which begins to select the short prefix verb vis-à-vis the long prefix verb when morphologically possible. It seems, then, that with word-order determining jussive vis-à-vis indicative,[44] there is some confusion for speakers about what to do when placing an indicative prefix verb verb-first since verb-first defaults to the morphological short prefix verb when morphologically possible due to the preference of verb-first volitive word order. Similarly, the confusion exists when, in parallelism with a preceding jussive clause, the normal jussive word order is inverted.[45]

Fifth, it is in error to move from saying that "in unpointed texts, only two conjugations are visible" to claiming "that the Masoretes were the inventors of the four-component verbal model, not necessarily a semantic four-component model, but probably a pragmatic one" (p. 76). That is, how can we move backwards from a more elaborate orthography to a less differentiated orthography and claim that the forms actually elaborated by the more elaborate orthography cannot be found in the less elaborate? The methodology simply cannot work in such a situation. Using this methodol-

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[41] Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (SubBi 14; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1993), §79m.

[42] Hetzron, "Third Person Singular Pronoun Suffixes in Proto-Semitic." This even if the proposal is likely incorrect; see Blau, "בעברית המקרא ובלעדיה בני ונסתרת נסתר כינוי," 129–30.

[43] Elisha Qimron, "Consecutive and Conjunctive Imperfect: The Form of the Imperfect with *waw* in Biblical Hebrew," *JQR* 77 (1986–1987): 149–61.

[44] See John A. Cook, "The Hebrew Verb: A Grammaticalization Approach," *ZAH* 14 (2001): 117–43; idem, "Biblical Hebrew Verbal System"; Vincent DeCaen, "On the Placement and Interpretation of the Verb in Standard Biblical Hebrew Prose" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1995); Holmstedt, "Phonology of Classical Hebrew"; idem, "The Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew: A Linguistic Analysis" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2002); Alviero Niccacci, "A Neglected Point of Hebrew Syntax: *Yiqtol* and Position in the Sentence," *Liber Annuus* 37 (1987): 7–19; Revell, "System of the Verb"; Shulman, "Use of Modal Verb Forms"; idem, "Function of the 'Jussive' and 'Indicative' Imperfect Forms"; Peter J. Gentry, "The System of the Finite Verb in Classical Biblical Hebrew," *HS* 39 (1998): 7–39; Buth, *Living Biblical Hebrew*, 2:349.

[45] Cf. Andy Warren, "Modality, Reference, and Speech Acts in the Psalms" (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 1998), 193–95.

ogy, we could, if we so desired, claim that pre-Masoretic Hebrew had no vowels whatsoever because they are not apparent from the orthography! In any case, the comparison of the allomorphs of the definite article with that of *wayyiqtol* and *weyiqtol* (pp. 126–27) simply misses the fact that regarding the different forms of the definite article no meaning difference is intended (thus the forms being allomorphic), while the difference between *wayyiqtol* and *weyiqtol* prototypically equates to the meaning difference of narrative past tense and present-future/imperfective respectively (previous paragraph notwithstanding). That is, the definite article /haμ-/, with phonologically conditioned allomorphs [haμ], [hɔ-], and [hɛ], simply cannot be compared to /wayyiqtol/ and /(we)yiqtol/.[46]

Chapter four ("The infinitive forms and their use") covers the use of the infinitive (construct and absolute), with some discussion of the active and passive participle. The main contention here is that the "infinitive absolutes with past reference function in the same way as *wayyiqtols*" (pp. 155–56) and that the infinitive absolutes can function as narrative verbs (pp. 156–57). Furuli argues (p. 156):

> [I]f the fact that the *wayyiqtols* portray similar events [as to the examples raised of the infinitive] is taken as proof that the form *wayyiqtol* represents perfectivity, the same must be true regarding the two kinds of infinitive as well. But this is definitely not true.

And (p. 156):

> The fact is that in Phoenician, and to some extent in Ugaritic and in the Amarna letters, the infinitive absolute is used as a narrative verb. .... No one would argue that these infinitive absolutes have an intrinsic past tense or are perfective.

In response, I take it that even if the examples discussed lead to the conclusion that *wayyiqtol* represents perfectivity, this does not have to entail that this is true of the infinitive also. That is, these uses of the infinitive are in no way prototypical, whereas they are for *wayyiqtol*. It is thus misleading to suggest that they "function in the same way." The reduced infinitive verb in all of the examples raised by Furuli, even in the Karatepe inscription, can still be taken as a dependent verb form which still requires constructional elaboration of tense, aspect, and mood. Gai is unfortunately unreferenced and unassimilated into the discussion, and requires synthesis with the important typological research of Cristofaro.[47]

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[46]    The IPA realization here follows that proposed in Anstey, "Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis", chapter 3; idem, "Towards a Typological Presentation".

[47]    Gai, "Reduction of the Tense"; Cristofaro, *Subordination*.

Chapter five ("The *yiqtols*") is a detailed discussion of the *yiqtol* verbal conjugation as well as *wayyiqtol*, since Furuli takes the two as designating the imperfective aspect (hence the use of "*yiqtol*" here is ambiguous as both *yiqtol* and *wayyiqtol* are really discussed): non-sentence-initial *yiqtol* with pre-past reference; "sentence-initial *yiqtols*"; "clusters of *yiqtols* in prose texts"; the most common verbs indicating "that *yiqtol* and *wayyiqtol* belong to the same conjugation"; "semelfactive *yiqtols* with past reference"; "telic *yiqtols* with past reference"; and "pre-past and present-completed events expressed by *yiqtols*." The contention is that "[t]o know that a particular characteristic is an intrinsic part of a verb form, we need to find situations where we can eliminate any other factor as a cause for that characteristic, except the conjugation of the verb" (p. 280). So begins the search for uncancellable meaning proper and in earnest. As mentioned above, the underlying methodological assumptions of the entire analysis here are in error, and are addressed below.

Nevertheless, a few comments here are in order. First, I find it difficult to see how Furuli has achieved what he has stated, viz. that he has found situations where factors for the cause for a verb's meaning have been eliminated except for the conjugation of the verb itself, by which I take it he means in regards to verbal aspect, etc. The problem as I see it here is that the BH verbs are "tiered"[48] in that they simultaneously encode—aside from person, number, and gender—both Binyan as well as aspect/tense. However, Furuli provides minimal discussion of this issue, and as a result I am unsure if he has indeed entirely isolated aspectual meaning, since BH verbal meaning is a complex interaction of Binyan, verbal complements and adjuncts, and aspect/tense.[49] For instance, his discussion of what he terms "pre-past and present completed events expressed by *yiqtols*" (p. 278) is in reality a good example of the possible complex interaction between Binyan and the *yiqtol* conjugation, where most examples can in fact be taken as present–future with the resultative meaning being supplied alongside by the particular Binyan. Further examples are either hypothetical/conditional, present–future (despite Furuli's classification as present), or involve negation. Moreover, Furuli's contention that "in many cases the force of the im-

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[48]   Cf. A. J. C. Verheij, *Bits, Bytes, and Binyanim: A Quantitative Study of Verbal Lexeme Formations in the Hebrew Bible* (OLA 93; Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 23–29.

[49]   Stuart Creason ("Semantic Classes of Hebrew Verbs: A Study of *Aktionsart* in the Hebrew Verbal System" [Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1995], 415) states clearly the requirement for research in this area.

perfective aspect is resultative" (p. 413) is patently contradicted by typological research.[50]

Second, while a long analysis of telic *yiqtols* (most actually *wayyiqtols* in reality, since *yiqtol* and *wayyiqtol* are lumped together) in past contexts is provided, a concomitant analysis of telic *yiqtols* in future contexts is not. Just such an analysis would be beneficial because telicity and aspect interact in grammaticalization to produce future verbs and in this way the future favors a default perfective construal.[51] This linguistic reality cuts against Furuli's contention that *yiqtol* and *wayyiqtol* are solely imperfective. Removing the complicating factor of modals from Furuli's statistics (p. 179) shows that 21% of non-modal *yiqtols* are presents and 57% are futures. There are 7% gnomics and 12% pasts, although this category would include both past habitual/iterative as well as archaic short prefix verbs, which Furuli does not recognize. All of these facts combine to suggest that *yiqtol* was once an imperfective,[52] but whose use in BH was being restricted to the future, most likely due to the rise of the progressive aspect participle being used for present tense signification[53] in line with the grammaticalization path elaborated by Haspelmath.[54] Its imperfective heritage is still apparent in its gnomic and past habitual/iterative uses, but in the future it is aspectually perfective with telic situations, thus becoming a true future. In this regard, it is significant, even though the numbers are relatively small, that *yiqtol* is restricted to the temporal adverb מָחָר "tomorrow" whereas under an aspectual(-prominent)

[50]   See, e.g., Vladimir P. Nedjalkov and Sergej J. Jaxontov, "The Typology of Resultative Constructions," in *Typology of Resultative Constructions* (ed. Vladimir P. Nedjalkov and Bernard Comrie; Typological Studies in Language 12; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988), 3–62; Jurij S. Maslov, "Resultative, Perfect, and Aspect," in *Typology of Resultative Constructions* (ed. Vladimir P. Nedjalkov and Bernard Comrie; Typological Studies in Language 12; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988), 63–85; Li and Shirai, *Acquisition of Lexical and Grammatical Aspect*.

[51]   Cf. Haspelmath, "The Semantic Development of Old Presents"; Bernard Comrie, "The Typology of Tense-Aspect Systems in European Languages," *Lingua e Stile* 25 (1990): 264.

[52]   So esp. Cook, "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System."

[53]   Cf. Mark S. Smith, "Grammatically Speaking: The Participle as a Main Verb of Clauses (Predicative Participle) in Direct Discourse and Narrative in Pre-Mishnaic Hebrew," in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishna, held at Leiden University, 15–17 December 1997* (ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 278–332; Jan Joosten, "Do the Finite Verbal Forms in Biblical Hebrew Express Aspect?" *JANES* 29 (2002): 49–79; Buth, *Living Biblical Hebrew*.

[54]   Haspelmath, "Semantic Development of Old Presents."

analysis perfective *qatal* would have been predicted, at least with telic situations.[55]

Chapter six ("The *wayyiqtols*") addresses *wayyiqtol* systematically: the issue of the function of infinitives in the Phoenician Karatepe inscription; the problem of non-sequential *wayyiqtol*; the *way(y)*- prefix being the simple conjunction; future and present reference of *wayyiqtol*; imperfective *wayyiqtols*;[56] and "the intersection of event time by reference time in *wayyiqtols* with past reference." Again, my main disagreement here is the assumption that there must be some component of meaning indicated by every *wayyiqtol* verb that necessarily must be uncancellable. This methodological assumption underpins the entire discussion in this chapter and directly influences its results, viz. the conclusion from chapters 3–6 that *yiqtol*, *weyiqtol*, and *wayyiqtol* collectively express the imperfective aspect in BH (though, imperfective aspect as redefined by Furuli). Important secondary literature is again neglected.[57]

Chapter seven ("The *qatals* and the *weqatals*") is a treatment of the BH suffix verb lead by an initial comparison of *qatals* and *yiqtols* with present reference and followed by a lengthier treatment of *qatals* with present reference. The so-called prophetic perfect (*qatals* with future reference) then receives treatment. The analysis then moves to center on *weqatal*, where the related issues of *waw*-relative, *waw*-copulative, and stress patterns are dealt with. The conclusion here is that *qatal* cannot be prized apart into two separate grammaticalized verbs, *qatal* and *weqatal*, but are better taken to be a single conjugation. Prophecies with *qatal* and *weqatal* are then discussed. The end result is that the uncancellable meaning of (*we*)*qatal* is perfective aspect, but perfective aspect redefined so that "the form can signal events

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55  This is pointed out clearly by Buth (*Living Biblical Hebrew*, 2:338–39) and Anstey ("Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis", 214–15).

56  One of the functions discussed here by Furuli is that of resultative. A good discussion of this issue which outlines a typology consistent with taking *wayyiqtol* to be prototypically a narrative past tense and *qatal* to be prototypically a past tense is provided by Vladimir Plungian and Johan van der Auwera, "Towards a Typology of Discontinuous Past Marking," *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 59 (2006): 317–49.

57  Viz. Randall Buth, "Hebrew Poetic Tenses and the Magnificat," *JSNT* 21 (1984): 67–83; idem, "The Taxonomy and Function of Hebrew Tense-Shifting in the Psalms (qāṭal–yiqtol–yiqtol–qāṭal, Antithetical Grammatical Parallelism)," *Selected Technical Articles Related to Translation* 15 (1986): 26–32; idem, "Methodological Collision Between Source Criticism and Discourse Analysis: The Problem of 'Unmarked Temporal Overlay' and the Pluperfect/Nonsequential *wayyiqtol*," in *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics* (ed. Robert D. Bergen; Dallas: SIL, 1994), 138–54; John M. Myhill, "Word Order and Temporal Sequencing," in *Pragmatics of Word Order Flexibility* (ed. Doris L. Payne; Typological Studies in Language 22; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1992), 265–78; idem, John M. Myhill, "Non-Emphatic Fronting in Biblical Hebrew," *Theoretical Linguistics* 21 (1995): 93–144.

and states that are open (where the end is not included), and events and states that are closed (where the end is included)" (p. 409).

I agree with Furuli that the traditional view of *qatal* and *weqatal* being two separate verb forms cannot be maintained, as has been convincingly demonstrated by Cook and Garr.[58] However, one does not have to abandon a traditional approach and follow Furuli with his modified aspectual view of perfectivity. In fact, Furuli seems unaware that his postulation of *qatal* as perfective aspect requires further functional elaboration in light of the typological tendency of the incompatible combining of perfective aspect with stative verbs without the concomitant grammaticalizing of perfective aspect to a past tense.[59] Instead, in a work unreferenced by Furuli, Roland has demonstrated that none of the uses as put forward by Furuli as negating the view that *qatal* is a past tense actually disqualify *qatal* from being taken as a past tense.[60] Moreover, a constructional analysis of *qatal* accepting multifunctionality leads to the conclusion that *qatal* prototypically represents past tense[61] or at the very least anteriority,[62] though Anstey mounts a sound case for past tense. Furuli for his part collapses everything into simple taxonomy, not even noting, for example, performative and conditional uses of *qatal*, whereas a constructional analysis is able to demonstrate systematic pairings of form to meaning.[63] For example, the seemingly aberrant use of *weqatal* to express the future is fully explainable as a cosubordinate or paratactic construction inheriting its tense, mood, aspect, and illocutionary force from the preceding main clause. This use is both diachronically explainable[64] and typologically comparable due to cross-linguistic similarity,[65]

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[58]  Cook, "Hebrew Verb"; idem, "Biblical Hebrew Verbal System"; idem, "The Semantics of Verbal Pragmatics: Clarifying the Roles of *wayyiqtol* and *weqatal* in Biblical Hebrew Prose," *JSS* 49 (2004): 247–73; W. Randall Garr, "Driver's *Treatise* and the Study of Hebrew: Then and Now," in Introduction to *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, by S. R. Driver (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), lxxiii–lxxxiv.

[59]  See, e.g., Li and Shirai, *Acquisition of Lexical and Grammatical Aspect.*

[60]  Rogland, *Alleged Non-Past Uses of* Qatal; see also the review: Cynthia L. Miller, Review of Max Rogland, *Alleged Non-Past Uses of Qatal in Classical Hebrew, CBQ* 67 (2005): 123–25.

[61]  See Anstey, "Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis," chapter 5.

[62]  Cf. Rogland, *Alleged Non-Past Uses of* Qatal; Ziony Zevit, *The Anterior Construction in Classical Hebrew* (SBLMS 50; Atlanta: Scholars, 1998); Hatav, *Semantics of Aspect and Modality*; Goldfajn, *Word Order and Time.*

[63]  Again, see Anstey, "Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis," chapter 5.

[64]  See, e.g., Rainey, *Canaanite*, 2:365–66; idem, "Suffix Conjugation Pattern."

[65]  See esp. Cristofaro, *Subordination*; Hanna Pishwa, "A Cognitive View of the Coordination of Predicates," *Functions of Language* 12 (2005): 241–73; cf. also William A. Foley and Robert D. van Valin, Jr., *Functional Syntax and Universal Grammar* (Cambridge

though the range of usages is remarkable. Further research, of course, needs to be done here, but some foundation has been laid by Winther-Nielsen, Anstey, Dallaire, Diehl, Givón, Baayen, and Talstra.[66] The examples below illustrate the point, with the first example inheriting its future tense from the preceding main clause, while in the second the *weqatal*-clause inherits mood and illocutionary force:

| | |
|---|---|
| וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־שָׁאוּל אַל־יִפֹּל לֵב־אָדָם עָלָיו עַבְדְּךָ יֵלֵךְ וְנִלְחַם עִם־הַפְּלִשְׁתִּי הַזֶּה | And David said to Saul, "No one must lose heart on account of him. Your servant will go <u>and will fight</u> this Philistine" (1 Sam 17:32). |
| וְעַתָּה הִשָּׁבְעוּ־נָא לִי בַּיהוָה כִּי־עָשִׂיתִי עִמָּכֶם חָסֶד וַעֲשִׂיתֶם גַּם־אַתֶּם עִם־בֵּית אָבִי חָסֶד וּנְתַתֶּם לִי אוֹת אֱמֶת. | "And now, please swear to me by Yahweh, for I have shown kindness to you, <u>and please show</u>—also you—kindness to the house of my father, <u>and please give</u> me a reliable sign" (Josh 2:12). |

Chapter eight ("Linguistic convention and the use of verbs") is an attempt (a) to trace any "clear patterns in the use of the different [verbal] forms"; and (b) to trace "the basis for the apparent lack of pattern when different forms are used interchangeably" (p. 411). This is achieved through a discussion, firstly, of "the linguistic background for a similar use of different forms"; secondly, "situations with similar or almost similar use of the [verbal] forms" (e.g., poetic parallelism, etc.); thirdly, "situations where the use

Studies in Linguistics 38; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Christian Lehmann, "Towards a Typology of Clause Linkage," in *Clause Combining in Grammar and Discourse* (ed. John Haiman and Sandra A. Thompson; Typological Studies in Language 18; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988), 181–225; Martin Haspelmath, "Coordination," in *Language Typology and Syntactic Description* (2nd ed.; ed. Timothy Shopen; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming); Robert E. Longacre, "Sentences as Combinations of Clauses," in *Language Typology and Syntactic Description: Volume II: Complex Constructions* (ed. Timothy Shopen; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 235–86.

66  Nicolai Winther-Nielsen, *A Functional Discourse Grammar of Joshua: A Computer-Assisted Rhetorical Structure Analysis* (ConBOT 40; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995), 53–62, 270–77; Anstey, "Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis," 115–16; idem, "Towards a Typological Presentation," 94–95; Dallaire, "Syntax of Volitives"; Johannes F. Diehl, *Die Fortführung des Imperativs im Biblischen Hebräisch* (AOAT 286; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2004); T. Givón, "The Evolution of Dependent Clause Morpho-Syntax in Biblical Hebrew," in *Approaches to Grammaticalization: Volume 11: Focus on Types of Grammatical Markers* (ed. Elizabeth Closs Traugott and Bernd Heine; Typological Studies in Language 19; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1991), 257–310; R. Harald Baayen, "The Pragmatics of the 'Tenses' in Biblical Hebrew," *Studies in Language* 21 (1997): 245–85; Eep Talstra, "Tense, Mood, Aspect and Clause Connections in Biblical Hebrew: A Textual Approach," *JNSL* 23.2 (1997): 81–103.

of the imperfective aspect is significant" ("resultative situations where the action ended some time in the past"; "one event or state intersected by another event"; conative and ingressive events"); and finally, the "linguistic conventions and patterns", i.e., "the broad patterns of the finite [verb] forms" and "the logic of this model from a linguistic point of view."

A few comments are in order here. First, Furuli attempts to present the analogy of phonology (pp. 414–15) to clarify his understanding of the BHVS. However, the analogy is inaccurate because the three allophones of /p/ as presented by Furuli are just that—there is no meaning difference between them despite their different phonetic realization. However, regarding the BHVS (and verbal systems in general), there is a discernable meaning difference between the conjugations such that Furuli's statement that "difference in meaning [between the BH verbal conjugations] is not made visible when the requirement for precision is low" (p. 415) is a distortion of linguistic reality. So, too, the statement that "[w]hen ... [verbal] forms are used in a way that seems to signal exactly the same meaning, the specific characteristics of each verb form are not conflated, but they are simply not made visible" (p. 415). Instead, it is better to say that there is some functional overlap, with the meaning of the verbal forms being prototypical, but that this does not deny extension of meaning and non-prototypical use.

Second, an effect of this, then, is that while Furuli thinks that he has indeed found situations which allow him to find the uncancellable meaning of the verbal conjugations—viz. the intersection of events/states, conative and ingressive events, etc.—these situations are instead additional constructional usages that do not allow for the pinpointing of "uncancellable meaning" any more than more "regular" uses disqualified by Furuli. The discussion here by Furuli misses any sort of constructional elaboration and could be informed by the typological treatment of subordination strategies as detailed by Cristofaro.[67] In any case, none of Furuli's examples here are at odds with still taking the BHVS to prototypically designate tense, i.e., *wayyiqtol* is prototypically a narrative verb; *qatal* is prototypically a past tense; *yiqtol* is prototypically a future tense; and predicative *qotel* in direct speech is prototypically a present tense—prototypical being the operative word, since all of the verbal conjugations, as in all languages, display constructional variance from the prototype (for diachronic reasons, politeness strategies, rhetorical emphasis, etc.).

The final chapter ("Concluding remarks"), chapter nine, presents a summary of the findings of the research, with some additional comments, viz. "the explanatory power of the [aspectual] definitions" assigned to the

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[67]    Cristofaro, *Subordination*.

BH verbal conjugations; "the application of the conclusions in practical work"; and "the Hebrew verbal system and the cognate languages."

## 3. Further Discussion on Methodology

I now raise two important questions related to the methodology of the monograph. First, is making a scrupulous distinction between uncancellable meaning and cancellable meaning linguistically tenable? This assumption lies behind the research of the entire volume, yet remains an assumption as Furuli does not demonstrate its linguistic sustainability. Here I raise evidence pointing to the fact that the assumption cannot be rigorously maintained (at least in the area of semantics—phonology, for example, is a different issue). I raise the evidence from the system of Binyanim as well as grammaticalization evidence (all of this could be multiplied endlessly due to diverse multifunctionality inherent in language).

Regarding the system of Binyanim, this area has proven just as difficult an area of research as the "verbal system" itself. Furuli states that "Waltke/O'Connor (1990: 396–409) argues [sic] convincingly in favor of a resultative and factitive application of many Piel verbs." However, the important thing to realize in connection here is that this is not the *only* function of the Piel; rather, the other main function of the Piel is that of verbal plurality.[68] What is the uncancellable meaning of the Piel, then? The methodology advanced by Furuli fails as the meaning of the Piel is multifunctional, being a factitive/resultative/causative/estimative (mostly of stative verbs) as well as verbal plurality. The Niphal as well is multifunctional, typologically aligning with what is known cross-linguistically as a middle–passive verb.[69] What is the uncancellable meaning of the Niphal? Furuli's methodology would force us to choose between the two, when the reality is that the Niphal is multifunctional, encompassing a range of meanings from middle to passive. Exceedingly problematic for Furuli's methodological assumption is

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[68] Abdelkader Fassi Fehri, "Verbal Plurality, Transitivity, and Causativity," in *Research in Afroasiatic Grammar II: Selected Papers from the Fifth Conference on Afroasiatic Languages, Paris, 2000* (ed. Jacqueline Lecarme; Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science 241; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2003), 151–85; Joseph H. Greenberg, "The Semitic 'Intensive' as Verbal Plurality," in *Semitic Studies in Honor of Wolf Leslau: On the Occasion of His Eighty-Fifth Birthday, November 14th, 1991* (ed. Alan S. Kaye; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 577–87.

[69] So Boyd, "Synchronic Analysis of the Medio-Passive-Reflexive"; Anstey, "Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis"; cf. Croft et al., "Diachronic Semantic Processes in the Middle Voice"; Suzanne Kemmer, *The Middle Voice* (Typological Studies in Language 23; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1993); Donna B. Gerdts and Donna E. Hurari, "The Halkomelem Middle: A Complex Network of Constructions," *Anthropological Linguistics* 48 (2006): 44–81.

the fact that multifunctionality is all-pervasive across languages: conjunctions with multiple functions;[70] demonstrative, interrogative, and relative pronoun multifunctionality;[71] demonstrative and anaphoric multifunctionality;[72] pronominal intensification and reflexive multifunctionality;[73] multifunctional person, number, and gender marking;[74] indefinite and interrogative pronominal multifunctionality;[75] multifunctionality in modality;[76] in-

[70]   Andrej L. Malchukov, "Towards a Semantic Typology of Adversative Contrast Marking," *Journal of Semantics* 21 (2004): 177–98.

[71]   Catherine Showalter, "Pronouns in Lyele," in *Pronominal Systems* (ed. Ursula Wiesemann; Schriftenreihe zur Linguistik 5; Tübingen: Gunter Narr 1986), 205–16.

[72]   Holger Diessel, "The Diachronic Reanalysis of Demonstratives in Cross-Linguistic Perspective," *Chicago Linguistic Society* 33 (1997): 83–97; idem, *Demonstratives: Form, Function, and Grammaticalization* (Typological Studies in Language 42; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1999); Nikolaus P. Himmelmann, *Deiktikon, Artikel, Nominalphrase: Zur Emergenz syntaktischer Struktur* (Linguistische Arbeiten 362; Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1997); Petra M. Goedegebuure, "Reference, Deixis and Focus in Hittite: The Demonstratives *ka-* 'This', *apa-* 'That' and *asi* 'Yon'" (Ph.D. diss., University of Amsterdam, 2003); D. N. S. Bhat, "Third-Person Pronouns and Demonstratives," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (ed. Martin Haspelmath et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 178–81; Bernard Comrie, "Pragmatic Binding: Demonstratives as Anaphors in Dutch," *Berkeley Linguistics Society* 23 (1997): 51–61; Francis Cornish, *Anaphora, Discourse, and Understanding: Evidence from English and French* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Jeanette K. Gundel, Nancy Hedberg, and Ron Zacharski, "Cognitive Status and the Form of Referring Expressions in Discourse," *Language* 69 (1993): 274–307; Irina Nikolaeva and Maria Tolskaya, *A Grammar of Udihe* (Mouton Grammar Library 22; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 753–62; Lesley Stirling, "The Multifunctionality of Anaphoric Expressions: A Typological Perspective," *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 21 (2001): 7–23.

[73]   Ekkehard König and Peter Siemund, "Intensifiers and Reflexives: A Typological Study," in *Reflexives: Forms and Functions* (ed. Zygmunt Frajzyngier and Traci S. Curl; Typological Studies in Language 40; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000), 41–74; idem, "Intensifiers and Reflexive Pronouns," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (ed. Martin Haspelmath et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 194–97; Ekkehard König and Volker Gast, "Focused Assertion of Identity: A Typology of Intensifiers," *Linguistic Typology* 10 (2006): 223–76.

[74]   Michael Cysouw, *The Paradigmatic Structure of Person Marking* (Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Johannes Helmbrecht, "Personal Pronouns: Form, Function, and Grammaticalization" (Habilitationschrift, University of Erfurt, 2004); D. N. S. Bhat, *Pronouns* (Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Anna Siewierska, *Person* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Greville G. Corbett, *Gender* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); idem, *Number* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[75]   Martin Haspelmath, *Indefinite Pronouns* (Oxford Studies in Typology and Linguistic Theory; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); idem, "Geometry of Grammatical

strumental and related multifunctionality;[77] temporal and spatial multifunctionality;[78] ... and the list could go on, each demonstrating the linguistic inapplicability and inappropriateness in making a scrupulous distinction between uncancellable and cancellable meaning in the area of semantics.[79]

However, the methodology is also contradicted by the evidence of grammaticaization (which is nevertheless related to the issues of multifunctionality raised above) where a linguistic entity, be it "lexical" or "syntactic," may enlarge and extend its functions, but not necessarily retain commonality between functions. For example, a reflexive may extend its meaning, as outlined clearly by Haspelmath,[80] to additionally express the function of grooming/body motion, to then additionally express anticausative, to then additionally express generic passive, to then additionally express passive. There is thus strong similarity between "nearby" functions; for example, between anticausative, generic passive, and passive on the one hand, and reflexive and grooming/body motion on the other. However, there is little similarity between grooming/body motion and passive, even though Russian *-sja* expresses, *inter alia*, these twin functions.[81] The meaning of any given linguistic item, consequently, is therefore only prototypical, not uncancellable. In regards to verbal meaning, Haspelmath raises some interesting diachronic observations,[82] particularly that progressive/present

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Meaning", 220–23; idem, "Indefinite Pronouns," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (ed. Martin Haspelmath et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 190–93.

[76] Johan van der Auwera and Vladimir A. Plungian, "Modality's Semantic Map," *Linguistic Typology* 2 (1998): 79–124; Johan van der Auwera and Andreas Ammann, "Overlap between Situational and Epistemic Modal Marking," in *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (ed. Martin Haspelmath et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 310–13.

[77] Haspelmath, "Geometry of Grammatical Meaning", 211–15, 226–30.

[78] Martin Haspelmath, *From Space to Time: Temporal Adverbials in the World's Languages* (Lincom Studies in Theoretical Linguistics 3; München: Lincom Europa, 1997).

[79] Even more extreme examples may be adduced such as "morphological reversals" (Matthew Baerman, "Morphological Reversals," *Journal of Linguistics* 43 [2007]: 33–61) and deliberate pronominal confusion (Jeffrey Heath, "Pragmatic Disguise in Pronominal-Affix Paradigms," in *Paradigms: The Economy of Inflection* [ed. Georg Bossong and Bernard Comrie; Empirical Approaches to Language Typology 9; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991], 75–89; idem, "Pragmatic Skewing in 1 <-> 2 Pronominal Combinations in Native American Languages," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 64 [1998]: 83–104), to name a couple.

[80] Haspelmath, "Geometry of Grammatical Meaning", 223–26.

[81] See Anstey ("Towards a Functional Discourse Grammar Analysis", 96–100) regarding the Hithpael and Boyd ("Synchronic Analysis of the Medio-Passive-Reflexive") regarding the Niphal; cf. also Mark A. Arnold, "Categorization of the Hithpa'el of Classical Hebrew" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2005).

[82] Haspelmath, "Semantic Development of Old Presents."

meaning can extend to both habitual meaning as well as future meaning, the verbal form being then multifunctional and expressing habitual, progressive/present, and future meaning. There is thus often futility in attempting to "box" a particular verbal form into either an aspectual category or a tense category. Rather, the linguistic reality is that most often multifunctionality is extant such that it is better to simply delineate prototypical meaning. Haspelmath goes on to outline how progressive/present meaning can be eroded over time to the extent that the verb form can be left expressing habitual and future meaning alone. As stated above, this process seems to be at play within BH; however, a methodology making a scrupulous distinction between uncancellable and cancellable meaning is unable to explain and adequately outline this. A problem, then, with Furuli's methodology is the binary opposition between uncancellable and cancellable meaning, which admits to no fuzziness of meaning or continuums (despite Furuli's claim that he accepts linguistic fuzziness) as a particular contextual meaning must be classified as either cancellable or uncancellable. Nothing by definition exists between these opposites. But the evidence of grammaticalization is that meaning shifts, often slowly, such that incomplete grammaticalization frequently exists. What this means is that meaning is extended or lost and that when a stage of incomplete grammaticalization is present there will not necessarily be nice, neat uncancellable and cancellable meaning differentiation—yet the basic premise of the monograph is that the meaning of a linguistic item must be one or the other! As such, I am unconvinced that the methodology, rigorously followed, is able to produce fruitful results in existent linguistic multifunctionality and whether the area of investigation exhibits incomplete grammaticalization—which verbal systems typically do.

Tied closely to this is the related question: Is the search for isolated syntactic environments to pin down uncancellable verbal meaning linguistically tenable? In other words, does the less frequent function(s) of a verbal conjugation wholly inform the more frequent function(s)? Furuli states, for example, that "[t]o demonstrate that *wayyiqtol* is a semantically independent conjugation, one has to show ... that the widespread use of *wayyiqtol* with past reference is due to the semantic meaning of the form, and not just to linguistic convention" (p. 48). From the perspective of psycholinguistic research, this is a nonsensical statement: linguistic convention (i.e., the regular choice of speakers to use the same linguistic token[s]) does in fact define meaning.[83] In other words, the entrenchment of meaning is directly related

[83]  See, e.g., William Croft, "Linguistic Evidence and Mental Representation," *Cognitive Linguistics* 9 (1998): 151–73; idem, *Typology and Universals*, 110–17; Croft and Cruse, *Cognitive Linguistics*, ch 11; Martin Haspelmath, "Explaining the Ditransitive Person-

to linguistic frequency. The prizing apart here of "semantic meaning" and "linguistic convention" results in the conducted search for contexts in which uncancellable meaning of the verbal conjugations may be ascertained. In contrast to Furuli, then, *wayyiqtol* may be taken as an independent conjugation due to (a) the clear prototypical function of *wayyiqtol* as a narrative verb form paradigmatically contrasting with *yiqtol, qatal, qotel*, etc.; and (b) the clear evidence of the regular choice of *wayyiqtol* as a narrative verb in BH. As a result, the functions outlined by Furuli identified in his isolated syntactic contexts are all better taken to be non-prototypical in relation to the narrative function of *wayyiqtol* rather than diagnostic and determinative. *Mutatis mutandis*, this is the same for *qatal, yiqtol, qotel*, etc.

## 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, let me say here that I am in admiration of Furuli for his large-scale research over an extended period of time on the BHVS. He has followed his methodology to the utmost extent—even to the point where very little of tradition regarding the BHVS remains unchallenged and verbal aspect has been required to undergo redefinition in order to be wholly applicable to BH.

However, it is just here that, as I have argued above, Furuli has gone astray in that his methodology has in fact assumed too much: it is better to outline prototypical meaning than to assume the linguistic reality of uncan-

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Role Constraint: A Usage-Based Approach," *Constructions* 2 (2004): 1–71; idem, "Against Markedness"; idem, "Creating Economical Morphosyntactic Patterns in Language Change," in *Language Universals and Language Change* (ed. Jeff Good; Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming); idem, "Frequency vs. Iconicity in Explaining Grammatical Asymmetries," *Cognitive Linguistics* 18 (forthcoming); Bybee, *Morphology*; idem, "Mechanisms of Change in Grammaticization: The Role of Frequency," in *Handbook of Historical Linguistics* (ed. Richard Janda and Brian Joseph; Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 602–23; idem, *Phonology and Language Use* (Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 94; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Joan L. Bybee and Paul Hopper, eds., *Frequency and the Emergence of Linguistic Structure* (Typological Studies in Language 45; Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2001); Michael Barlow and Suzanne Kemmer, eds., *Usage-Based Models of Language* (Stanford: CSLI, 2000); Rens Bod, Jennifer Hay, and Stefanie Jannedy, eds., *Probabilistic Linguistics* (Cambridge: MIT, 2003); Michael Tomasello, *Constructing a Language: A Usage-Based Theory of Language Acquisition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); Holger Diessel, "Frequency Effects in Language Acquisition, Language Use, and Diachronic Change," *New Ideas in Psychology* 25 (2007): 108–27; idem, *The Acquisition of Complex Sentences* (Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 105; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*; Goldberg, *Constructions*.

cellable meaning.[84] The value of Furuli's research, I suggest, is not to be found in his "new understanding" but rather in the helpful extended cataloguing of what I take to be non-prototypical and construction-dependent functions of the verbal conjugations of BH.

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[84]  Incidentally, the same methodological problems are encountered with Rodney J. Decker, *Temporal Deixis of the Greek Verb in the Gospel of Mark with Reference to Verbal Aspect* (Studies in Biblical Greek 10; New York: Peter Lang, 2001), who makes use of the same methodology of making a rigid distinction between uncancellable and cancellable meaning.