

**Note:** This Work has been made available by the authority of the copyright owner solely for the purpose of private study and research and may not be copied or reproduced except as permitted by the copyright laws of Canada without the written authority from the copyright owner.

Kessler, John. "Haggai 2:5a: Translation, Significance, Purpose, and Origin."  
*Transeuphratène* 45 (2014): 69-89.

# Haggai 2:5a: Translation, Significance, Purpose, and Origin

J. KESSLER

*Résumé* : Ag 2:5a pose de nombreuses difficultés au niveau de sa critique textuelle et authenticité, de sa relation à son contexte, et de sa traduction, son sens et son but. Ayant évalué plusieurs hypothèses concernant divers aspects de ce texte, l'A. considère que 2:5a est une interpolation, rajoutée à 2:4-5, dont le but était d'explicitier l'attitude d'Aggée face à deux sujets de débat de l'époque : le statut de l'alliance du Sinaï et de l'esprit de Yahvé. L'interpolation souligne que, selon la pensée d'Aggée, l'alliance du Sinaï restait en vigueur et n'était pas supprimée par une nouvelle alliance, et que la présence de l'esprit de Yahvé n'impliquait pas que l'ère eschatologique était déjà arrivée. L'auteur de l'interpolation aurait fait partie d'un cercle proche du prophète Aggée, travaillant après la rédaction principale du livre, mais néanmoins assez tôt dans l'époque perse.

## 1.0. Introduction

Hag 2:5a is a notorious crux. These disputed words stand in the context of an exhortation to the leaders and people of Yehud to continue the work of rebuilding the temple (2:4a), undergirded by a promise of divine assistance (2:4b), the assurance that Yahweh's spirit is in the midst of them, and an exhortation not to fear (2:5b). Yet, Hag 2:5a poses significant problems. Its meaning is unclear: what exactly is the sense of the phrase: *אח הדבר אשר כרתי אתכם בצאתכם ממצרים*? Similarly, the relationship of 2:5a to its context is a puzzle: in precisely what way is the particle *אח* being used? What is the relationship of 2:5a to the words that immediately precede and follow it? Furthermore, the textual integrity of these words is in doubt: they are absent in the LXX and seemingly interrupt the rhythmic

and logical flow of the oracle in which they are embedded. These and other considerations have elicited great scholarly debate, without much consensus. In this paper I will reconsider the textual integrity, translation, and most especially the significance, origin, and purpose of these disputed words, and seek to move beyond earlier proposals. It is with great esteem and appreciation that I offer this study to my dear friend André Lemaire, whose scholarship, expertise, encouragement, and hospitality have meant so much to me, and to many others, over the years.

## 2.0. Survey of General Approaches to the Text of Hag 2:5a

To begin our study, let us examine several approaches to the questions posed by Hag 2:5a commonly taken in scholarly literature.

### 2.1. 'Radical' Approaches to Hag 2:5a

Numerous scholars have sought to deal with the interpretive issues raised by this text through what might be termed 'radical' approaches to it. These take two basic forms: complete excision, or textual emendation, involving the restoration of a supposed lost letter or word.

#### 2.1.1. Complete Excision

Several ancient and modern translations<sup>1</sup> and commentators<sup>2</sup> view these words as late, secondary insertions and advocate their complete excision, thus rendering 2:4-5: 'Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts, [ ] My Spirit abides among you; do not fear.' While such an approach clearly smoothes over the disruption caused by 2:5a, it is, however, problematic in several regards.

First, the disputed words are solidly attested in the proto-Masoretic tradition. The Murabba'at scroll is broken here but leaves space for the disputed phrase.<sup>3</sup> Second, it is by no means certain that these words were not present in the *Vorlage* of the LXX. D. Barthélémy insightfully notes: 'It is quite likely that the difficulty which the exegetes have encountered in their attempts to interpret 5a-alpha had already led to its omission by

1. LXX, Vet Lat. Peshitta, NEB, JB.

2. T. Chary, *Aggée-Zacharie, Malachie*, SB, Paris 1969, p. 26; H. G. Mitchell, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, ICC, New York 1912, p. 60; H. W. Wolff, *Haggai: A Commentary*, Minneapolis 1988, p. 51.

3. D.L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, OTL, London 1985, p. 61.

the LXX. It seems to be truly difficult to accept the idea this phrase, which so many view as having no logical reason for being here, has been introduced as a gloss (and a gloss of what?). Whether or not the phrase is a secondary addition, it is solidly attested in the proto-Masoretic textual tradition, and in any case originated from literary initiatives, not textual accident. To omit it would thus be an act of literary, rather than textual criticism.<sup>4</sup> Third, it is important to note that both the Hebrew and Greek texts of Haggai have undergone expansion.<sup>5</sup> Thus the relative plusses and minuses in the MT and LXX likely reflect differing stages of development in the two textual traditions. Furthermore, as P. Ackroyd noted over a half century ago, the glosses in Haggai LXX may not be late creations, but derive from Hebrew originals.<sup>6</sup> Finally simple excision simply sidesteps the complex discussion of the date and place of origin of the LXX (prophets), of subsequent revisions to it, and of its relationship to the MT.<sup>7</sup>

### 2.1.2. *Ellipsis and Restoration*<sup>8</sup>

A second type of 'radical' approach maintains that some sort of corruption of the text has occurred and suggests the restoration of a missing element. Some, such as T. Chary, suggest that a zayin has been lost before אַת and restores it to זֹאת: 'This is the covenant that I made with you.'<sup>9</sup> Others suggest the restoration of a lost verb, such as זָכַר. This yields either 'I will remember (זֹכֵר־תִּי) the covenant that I made with you'<sup>10</sup> or 'remember (זָכַר) the covenant that I made with you.'<sup>11</sup> On such a hypothesis the lost letter or verb could be part of either the original oracle, or the work of a secondary hand, either early or late. Finally, A. van Hoonacker has suggested that אַת is an Aramaism (derived from אִתִּי cf. Heb יֵשׁ there is, there

4. D. Barthélemy ed., *Critique textuelle de l'ancien testament. Tome 3. Ezéchiel, Daniel et les 12 prophètes*, Fribourg-Göttingen 1992, p. 928, translation mine.

5. Cf. D. Petersen, who states, 'At several points LXX includes material that is obviously late interpolation into the text (at 2:9, 14, 21, 22). And in one instance, MT includes interpolated material (at 2:5a) that is absent in the LXX manuscripts. These data would suggest the existence of two textual families, both of which were expansionistic, though at different points. The LXX. . . is. . . clearly more expansionistic.' Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 3), p. 39.

6. P.R. Ackroyd, 'Some Interpretive Glosses in the Book of Haggai,' *JJS* 7, 1956, pp. 166-67.

7. E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3d ed., Minneapolis 2012, pp. 127-47.

8. See the fuller summary in S. Amsler et al., *Aggée-Zacharie 1-8, Zacharie 9-14, Malachi*, CAT XI-c, Genève 1988, p. 32.

9. Chary, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 26. As noted above, he regards 5a as a late gloss and leaves it out of his translation, but suggests this reconstruction of its original wording.

10. T. André, *Le Prophète Aggée*, Paris 1895. Cited in Amsler, *op. cit.* (n. 8), p. 32.

11. H. Ewald, *Die Propheten des Alten Bundes*, cited in *ibid.*

are) and renders the verse ‘There is the covenant<sup>12</sup> that I made with you when you came out of Egypt.’<sup>13</sup> He sees a similar use of  $\text{אָ}$  in Zech 7:7; 8:17.

In sum, these more radical approaches have few adherents today.<sup>14</sup> Most prefer to make some attempt at understanding 2:4-5 as it stands in the MT. It is to such approaches that we now turn.

## 2.2. Explanations of Hag 2:4-5 in its Masoretic Formulation

There are two main lines of approach among those who attempt to read 2:5a without recourse to excision or consonantal emendation: (1) those who view the disputed phrase as original to the context of vv. 4-5 and fully integrated into the syntax of the sentence, and (2) those who view it as an interpolation or interjection into the otherwise coherent syntax of vv. 4-5. Let us examine these in turn.

### 2.2.1. ‘Fully Integrated’ Readings of Hag 2:5a

As noted, several interpreters view these disputed words as an integral part of the thought and syntax of vv 4-5.<sup>15</sup> Such approaches treat  $\text{אָ}$  as a direct object marker and find its governing verb in one or another of the volitives closest to it. This approach has two variations. The first views the disputed phrase as the direct object of the imperative  $\text{וַעֲשׂוּ}$  (do!), in v. 4. The text would be thus rendered, ‘Do the word (i.e. obey the covenant) that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit abides among you; do not fear.’ This reflects the traditional rabbinic interpretation (Ibn Ezra, D. Kimhi), and has been followed recently by C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers.<sup>16</sup> This view raises a number of core questions related to the interpretation of this text, and is perhaps the most plausible explanation of it, if these disputed words are not read as an exegetical addition to or clarification of other elements of vv. 4-5. I will therefore reserve my discussion of this position until section 3.0, *infra*.

The second variation of this ‘seamless’ approach, suggested recently

12. I will discuss the translation of  $\text{בְּרִית}$  below. A. Van Hoonacker, *Les douze petits prophètes: traduits et commentés*, EtB, Paris 1908, p. 561, renders it ‘pacte.’

13. Cf. Van Hoonacker, *ibid*.

14. Wolff, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 51 is a notable exception.

15. Some view 2:5a as original to the oracle, thus, for example C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, AB 25b, Garden City 1987, pp. 51-52. Others see it as a gloss, that is nevertheless so integrated into the syntax of vv. 4-5 such that a grammatically coherent reading is produced, thus for example Amsler, *op. cit.* (n. 8), p. 32; I. Willi-Plein, *Haggai, Sacharja, Maleachi*, AT 24.4, Zürcher Bibelkommentare, Zürich 2007, p. 33.

16. Meyers-Meyers, *ibid*, pp. 51-52.

by M. Rogland, views the disputed phrase as the direct object of the command 'fear not' in 5b.<sup>17</sup> He suggests the phrase be construed: 'Do not fear [i.e. do not be afraid to obey] the matter which I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, while my Spirit was abiding in your midst.'<sup>18</sup> This approach, however, is quite problematic. It fits poorly with the use of the stereotypical 'formula of re-assurance' ('fear not'/ *Heilsspruch*) in 5b. Where this formula is used, only rarely is the object of fear mentioned. Rather, it is generally followed by כִּי and the ground for re-assurance (as in Isa 41:10; 43:5; Jer 46:28).

Furthermore, where an object of fear is introduced, it is an enemy, it immediately follows the verbal form, and is introduced by מפני (as in Deut 31:6; Jer 1:8; 42:11).<sup>19</sup> M. Rogland suggests that Haggai is encouraging the community not to fear giving generously of its wealth in support of the temple. However the introduction of such an idea into 2:1-5 seems strained. It is the discouragement of the community that constitutes the object of fear to be overcome, not the cost of giving freely to support the reconstruction effort. Furthermore, Haggai is enjoining a renewed commitment to work (v. 4b), not the provision of financial support.<sup>20</sup> More problematic still is the suggestion that 'the matter which I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt' refers to the instructions for the construction of the tabernacle in the wilderness found in Exod 25:1-3, 8; 35:4-5, 10-11, and 36:5-7.<sup>21</sup> While Haggai does display an interest in some priestly themes (cf. Hag 2:10-14), it would be erroneous to equate Haggai's understanding of the Jerusalemite temple with the wilderness tabernacle of priestly thought. Rather, Haggai's interest lies in the confluence of the sacred institutions of temple, monarchy, and covenant, such as they are presented in 1 Kgs 8.<sup>22</sup>

### 2.2.2. Hag 2:5a as an Insertion or Interpolation

17. M. Rogland, 'Text and Temple in Haggai 2,5,' *ZAW* 119, 2007, pp. 410-15.

18. *Ibid.*, 411. Parentheses mine, cf. p. 413.

19. E.W. Conrad, 'The "Fear Not" Oracles in Second Isaiah,' *VT* 34, 1984, pp. 129-52; *id.*, *Fear Not Warrior: A Study of Al-Tira Pericopes in the Hebrew Scriptures*, Brown Judaic Studies, Chico 1985.

20. Significantly, in Hag 1:12 the people do fear Yahweh, but there it is in the context of their renewed obedience to Yahweh. However in 1:12 (unlike Hag 2:5) the expression is to fear before (מפני) Yahweh.

21. Rogland, *loc. cit.* (n. 17), p. 413.

22. See on this, my fuller discussion in J. Kessler, 'Curse, Covenant, and Temple in the Book of Haggai', in R. Bautch and G.R. Knoppers eds, *Covenant in the Persian Period*, Winona Lake, forthcoming; G.N. Knoppers, *Two Nations under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies. Vol. 1: The Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam*, HSM 52, Atlanta 1993, p. 113.

A second group of scholars views the disputed phrase as an insertion or interpolation which disrupts the flow of the otherwise rhythmic parallel phrases: 'I am with you' and 'my Spirit abides in your midst.' Among them, however, a wide diversity of opinion exists as to whether this interpolation was redactional yet still early, or added much later. As well, those taking this approach construe 2:5a in various ways. Three key issues are at play: first, the specific meaning and function of אֵת, second the meaning of הַדָּבָר, and third the relationship of Hag 2:5a to the surrounding clauses. In the brief, non-exhaustive survey that follows, I will present and then assess several proposals regarding these questions.

#### 2.2.2.1. A Loose but Close Relationship to the Preceding Clauses

Numerous scholars view אֵת as an adverbial accusative ('according to')<sup>23</sup> and associate it with v. 4b. In such reconstructions דָּבָר is generally taken as meaning as 'promise.' The NRSV (New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, 1989) is representative of such an approach: 'Yet now, take courage...; work, for I am with you, ... according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you, do not fear.' Read this way, 2:5a serves to ground the strength needed for the reconstruction project in the *Ermutigungsformel* and *Beistandformel* of v. 4.

#### 2.2.2.2. Loose but Close Relationship to the Subsequent Clauses

Others view אֵת as standing at the head of a new main clause which continues to v. 5b. It is generally construed in one of three ways. First, it is sometimes seen as serving either to emphasize or designate the subject. In point of fact this approach tends to yield two basic translations. In the first, 2:5a contains the first half of the compound subject (the promise that I made to you ...) and 2:5b the second half of the subject (and my Spirit), and the predicate עִמָּדָת (abide in your midst). Alternatively, 2:5b is seen as an expegetical introduction to 2:5b (This is the promise I made to you ... my Spirit abides).<sup>24</sup>

23. GKC (*Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, E. Kautzsch ed., Oxford 1910<sup>4</sup>), § 118 m suggests translations such as, 'in, with, as in the form or manner of, according to, in relation to, and with regard to.'

24. On אֵת as a designation of subject, see Rogland, *loc. cit.* (n. 17), p. 411, n. 11. He cites M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, Oxford 1985, p. 90; P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Rome 1991, p. 125 j 5; BDB, s.v. אֵת, p. 85, as examples. However proposals for the translational value of this construction vary greatly. C.F. Keil (*The Twelve Minor Prophets*, vol 2, Edinburgh 1880, p. 189) sees it as simply designating the grammatical subject, (which he regards as both the word given at the departure from Egypt, and Yahweh's spirit, both

Alternatively נא is understood as an adverbial accusative (as noted above), but associated with that which follows. The phrase is thus rendered, ‘according to the promise (or covenant) I made you when you came out of Egypt ... my Spirit abides in your midst’. A third approach understands נא as the preposition ‘with’ or ‘together with,’ thus: ‘along with the promise (or covenant) I made with you when you came out of Egypt, my Spirit abides with you. Do not fear’ (D.K. Marti, E. Sellin).<sup>25</sup> Refining my earlier position, I now feel that reading נא as the preposition ‘with’ best suits the context.<sup>26</sup> Be that as it may, in all of the approaches just discussed, 2:5a functions as a clear link between the Sinai covenant and Yahweh’s spirit, emphasizing that both are present realities in the life of the Yehudite community.

### 2.2.2.3. Enjambment/Two-Way Middle<sup>27</sup>

P. Verhoef views נא as the adverbial accusative ‘according to’ and connects it with both 4b and 5b. This produces the translation: ‘For I am with you, says the Lord Almighty, according to the promise I made with you when you came out of Egypt: my Spirit will always remain among you. Do not fear.’<sup>28</sup> As such 5a functions both as the ground of the injunction not to fear, and the formula of divine assistance in 2:4 and of the reassurance of the presence Yahweh’s spirit and the command not to fear in v. 5.

### 2.2.2.4. Loosely Related Interjection

Finally, E.B. Pusey regards נא as emphasizing the subject and loosely related to that which precedes and follows, thus: ‘Work, for I am with you, says The Lord of hosts – this is the word (covenant) that I made

standing as subjects to עמדה), without any particular emphasis. P. Joüon and T. Muraoka render it ‘this is’ (125 j 5). This is similar to the suggestion of D. Barthélemy, *op. cit.* (n. 4), p. 928. BDB, s.v. נא, suggests ‘concerning’ or ‘regarding’ (virtually equivalent to an adverbial accusative).

25. D.K. Marti, *Das Dodekapropheton*, KHAT 13, Tübingen 1904, pp. 385-86; E. Sellin, *Das Zwölfprophetenbuch*, Kat XII/2, Leipzig 1922, p. 410.

26. M. Rogland, *loc. cit.* (n. 17), p. 411 rightly notes that in my earlier work (J. Kessler, *The Book of Haggai: Prophecy and Society in Early Persian Yehud*, VT S 91, Leiden-Boston 2002) I appear to hesitate between the translations ‘regarding, concerning’ on p. 170, and p. 160 n. 8 and ‘This is. . .’ p. 160 (in my translation). This reflected the overlapping translational values suggested for the adverbial accusative, on the one hand, and the designation of subject, on the other (see preceding note).

27. On the use of this literary trope see M. Dahood, ‘Poetry, Hebrew’, *IDB[S]*, Nashville 1976, p. 671.

28. P.A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, NICOT, Grand Rapids 1987, p. 91.

when you came out of Egypt! – my Spirit remains among you; do not fear.<sup>29</sup> Despite their divergences, the difference between these proposals is minimal. Hag 2:4-9, read as it stands, constitutes one extended encouragement to persevere in the task of rebuilding the temple. It consists of one long thought moving from the thrice-repeated encouragement to be strong and to labour (2:4a), followed by two reasons to do so. The first begins in 2:4b, with the Formula of Divine Assistance, continues in 2:5a, with the reference to Yahweh's promise made at the time of the Exodus, and then moves to Yahweh's spirit dwelling in Israel's midst in 2:5b-alpha, and concludes with the formula of divine re-assurance in 2:5b-beta. The second reason to persevere (introduced by כִּי in 6a) is found in vv. 6-9—the imminence of the awaited divine in-breaking.

### 3.0. Translational and Redaction-Critical Options: Evaluation and Conclusions

In light of the preceding discussion it seems to me that the two most probable translations of Hag 2:5a are either an exhortation to keep the terms of the Sinai covenant (whether it be seen as part of the original oracle, or added subsequently), on the one hand, or an interpolation linking the Sinai covenant with the declaration concerning the presence of Yahweh's spirit with the community, on the other. Four considerations point to the latter option as most probable. First, despite the protestations of C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, the sheer distance between ועשו and את הדבר, and the question of what to do with the intervening words ('for I am with you, oracle of YHWH Sebaoth') makes linking the two syntactically a rather difficult undertaking. Viewing את הדבר as the object of ועשו would yield a sentence reading something like: 'take courage and obey for I am with you oracle of YHWH Sebaoth the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit abides with you. Do not fear.' When, however, this option is set beside its chief alternative, that is rendering ועשו as 'work,' treating את as an emphasis of subject, an adverbial accusative, or the preposition 'with,' and introducing the phrase which follows, (yielding the translation: 'take courage and work. This is/according to/along with the promise I made to you, my spirit abides with you, do not fear') the latter alternative seems simple and clear, and the former forced and unconvincing. Moreover, those scholars who view 5a as a later interpolation enjoining obedience to the Sinai covenant<sup>30</sup> are faced with the vexing question of why the gloss appears after 'YHWH

29. E.B. Pusey, *The Minor Prophets; V 2: Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi*, New York 1885, pp. 308-309.

30. Amsler, *op. cit.* (n. 8), p. 32.

Sebaoth' and not immediately following *ויעשו*, where the relationship between verb and direct object would have been obvious.<sup>31</sup>

Second, reading *את הדבר אשר כרתי אתכם בצאתכם ממצרים* as a reference to keeping the demands of the Sinai covenant is semantically difficult. As is frequently pointed out the collocation of *כרת* and *דבר* is unique in the OT/HB (Old Testament/Hebrew Bible). The noun *דבר* in the singular frequently refers to a divine utterance – either a promise or a prophetic word (Deut 9:5; 1 Kgs 2:4; 6:12; 8:20; 12:15; Isa 44:26; Jer 29:10; 34:14; 2 Chr 10:15; 2 Chr 6:10). Clear instances where it carries the sense of 'promise' include, among others, Deut 9:5; Jer 29:10; 34:14; 1 Kings 2:4; 6:12; 8:20; 2 Chr 6:10. When plural, the noun *דבר* often refers to covenantal demands (Exod 24: 3-4, 8; 34:27; Num 11:24; Deut 4:10, 13; 11:18; 27:3; 29:9; 2 Kgs 23:3, 24; Jer 11:2, 6). In Hag 2:5a the singular appears, rendering the translation 'promise' the most likely option.<sup>32</sup> To this may be added the observation that in the Persian period materials *ברית* comes to be understood as a solemn divine promise (cf. Gen 9:9, 15; 15:18; 17:7; Lev 26:44).<sup>33</sup> It is thus most likely that *דבר* here serves as the functional equivalent of *ברית* in this 'promissory' sense.<sup>34</sup> Interestingly too, Hag 2:5a, 1 Kgs 8:9 and 2 Chr 5:10 all contain the phrase *בצאתם [מארץ] מצרים*. Accordingly, with P.R. Ackroyd, P.A. Verhoef, and M. Fishbane, I would maintain that the meaning of *כרת* when conjoined with *דבר* in Hag 2:5a is most plausibly rendered 'to make a promise.'<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, should a glossator (or the prophet or his editors) have wished to speak of obedience to the demands of the covenant, numerous, less ambiguous terms were readily

31. E. Tov, *op. cit.* (n. 7), pp. 259-62 identifies two types of exegetical or explanatory additions: short glosses and exegetical additions or interpolations. The former were short explanatory notes added in the margins or between the lines (cf. also J.-L. Ska, 'Genèse xviii 6a – intertextualité et interprétation: "Tout fait farine au bon moulin"', in M. Sæbø and A. Lemaire eds, *Congress Volume: Oslo 1998*, VT S 80, Leiden 2000, pp. 61-70). The latter 'were added to the body of the text in a physically recognizable way, or inserted directly into the running text, thus expanding the source from which the scribe copied' (p. 260). Hag 2:5a clearly falls into the latter category.

32. I. Willi-Plein, *op. cit.* (n. 15), pp. 32-33 sees the interpolation to obey the demands of the covenant as inspired by Exod 24:3 ('Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, 'All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.' Thus the glossator, inspired by the imperative *ויעשו* v. 4 added the gloss in 5a. The presence of the sg. in Hag 2:5a renders this unlikely.

33. See especially S. D. Sperling, 'Rethinking Covenant in the Late Biblical Books,' *Bib.* 70, 1989, pp. 50-73.

34. It is worth pointing out that the noun *ברית* lacking in 1 Kgs 8:9 and its parallel in 2 Chr 5:10, both of which employ the verb *כרת* and refer to the establishment of Yahweh's covenant with Israel at Sinai. In Kings and Chronicles, however, the noun *דבר* does not occur 'as the object of *כרת*'

35. Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 6), pp. 163-64; Fishbane, *op. cit.* (n. 24), p. 49; Verhoef, *op. cit.* (n. 28), p. 100.

available. These could include the verb צוה or a reference to Yahweh's מצוה, מִצְוָה, מִשְׁפָּטִים or הַקִּיּוֹם, terms that occur numerous times, alone or in combination, in both Deuteronomic and priestly covenantal traditions. Third, as we shall discuss *infra*, Persian period literature manifests a growing interest in the role of the spirit of Yahweh, especially in relationship to Sinai (Isa 63:10-14; Neh 9:20, 30).<sup>36</sup> Thus drawing together Yahweh's spirit (5b) and the Sinai covenant as the basis for Israel's relationship would be consistent with Persian period reflection. Finally, introducing a command to obey the stipulations of the Sinai covenant would be a great jump in logic.<sup>37</sup> Verses 4-5 are an exhortation to perseverance. A reference to law-keeping would be entirely out of place. However a retrospective allusion to the Sinai covenant as a decisive moment in the community's history with Yahweh is not. It is sometimes suggested (erroneously, in my opinion) that the 'themes and vocabulary of the covenant' are alien to Haggai.<sup>38</sup> Covenantal motifs (both priestly and Deuteronomic) do appear in Haggai, but are more subtle, often consisting of the use of inter-textual allusions and stereotypical formulae.<sup>39</sup> Thus a reference not to the demands of Sinai, but to the relationship concretized by it, fits well with the context of Hag 2:4-5.

Summing up my conclusions to this point: First, Hag 2:5a is best explained as an insertion, whether a redactional comment, *relecture*, or *Fortschreibung*, into the syntax of 2:4-5.<sup>40</sup> Second נא here could be understood as an adverbial accusative (thus: 'according to the word') an indication of the subject (thus: 'this is the word') or the preposition 'with' (thus: 'along with the word').<sup>41</sup> Third, 2:5a could be rendered with 2:5b ('along with the promise I made to you when you came out of Egypt, my Spirit remains in your midst. Do not fear') or with 2:4b ('Work for I am with you, oracle of Yahweh Sebaoth, according to promise that I made to you when you came out of Egypt my Spirit remains in your midst. Do not fear'). Given the drawing together of the divine spirit and the Exodus and Sinai traditions noted above, the latter option seems preferable. Finally,

36. M.J. Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, NIVAC, Grand Rapids 2004, p. 122.

37. D.L. Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 3), p. 61 comments, 'An appeal to the Sinaitic tradition seems rather beside the point here.'

38. Thus Amsler, *op. cit.* (n. 8), p. 32.

39. Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 22) and *id.*, *op. cit.* (n. 26), pp. 54, 107, 127, 131, 138-40, 142-47, 153, 155, 168, 171-73, 184, 208-09, 214-18, 260. See also R.A. Mason, 'The Purpose of the "Editorial Framework" of the Book of Haggai,' *VT* 27, 1977, pp. 413-21.

40. As noted, D. Barthélemy rightly questions the oft-repeated description of 2:5a as a 'gloss.' He asks, 'glose de quoi?' (*op. cit.* [n. 4], p. 928). Indeed if one defines a gloss as a simple explanatory comment, these highly enigmatic words can hardly be considered to be one!

41. See the survey in Rogland, *loc. cit.* (n. 17).

although Hag 2:5a is only loosely related to its context, and to the structure of the book as a whole, its stress on the Sinai traditions is not foreign to vv. 4-5, or the rest of the book. In conclusion, as a working hypothesis, I propose that Hag 2:5a be attributed to a 'Haggai Tradent' who stands in literary continuity with the one(s) principally responsible for the production of the book. As such, the work of the Haggai Tradent in 2:5a need therefore not be seen as intrusive. Rather, it is entirely possible that the work of such a hand was simply one further contribution to a text whose elements manifest an overall, general continuity.

#### 4.0. The Purpose of the Interpolation

##### 4.1. Preliminary Observations

This brings us to our central question: what is the purpose of the interpolation, and when might it have occurred? Several preliminary observations are in order here. First, it is important to note that Hag 2:4-5 is structured around four common prophetic speech formulae, with two uncommon elements at the centre. These four stock formulae, fairly standard in prophetic speech and elsewhere, are the following: (1) the 'Formula of encouragement' (*Ermutigungsformel*, v. 4a, 3 times), generally translated 'Be strong'; (2) the 'Divine oracle formula' (*Gottesspruchformel*, v. 4a alpha; 4b beta), usually translated 'Oracle of Yahweh'; (3), the 'Formula of divine assistance' (*Beistandformel*, 4b alpha), 'For I am with you'; and (4), the 'Formula of re-assurance/assurance of salvation' (*Heilszuspruch*, 5b), 'Fear Not.' These elements are frequently found together<sup>42</sup> in the so-called 'priestly oracle of salvation' form.<sup>43</sup>

Two innovative expressions, calling for some comment, appear amidst these more standard prophetic speech formulae. The first occurs in Hag 2:5b where the prophet announces *ורוחי עמדת בתוככם* (Hag 2:5b). It is this unusual and evocative turn of phrase, (generally translated 'My Spirit abides in your midst'), which likely gave rise to 2:5a. I will therefore consider it first. Five points are important in regard to it. First, it is well known that there is significant interest in the Yahweh's spirit as an active force in later prophetic texts. References to Yahweh's spirit generally designate the power and imminent presence of Yahweh (Isa 11:2; 40:13; 59:21; 61:1; 63:14; Ezek 3:14; 11:5; 37:14; 39:29; Zech 4:6; 7:12).<sup>44</sup> Se-

42. E.g. Deut 31:6; Josh 10:25; 2 Sam 13:28; 1 Chr 22:13; 28:20; 2 Chr 32:7; Is 35:4; Dan 10:19.

43. Amsler, *op. cit.* (n. 8), p. 31.

44. See R.J. Sklba, "'Until the Spirit from on High Is Poured out on Us" (Isa 32:15): Reflections on the Role of the Spirit in the Exile,' *CBQ* 46, 1984, pp. 1-17.

cond, as noted *supra*, this growth of innovative theological reflection on the role of Yahweh's spirit can be seen in the introduction of references to Yahweh's spirit into the Exodus traditions in certain Persian period texts, such as Neh 9: 20, 30 and Isa 63:10, 11, 14.<sup>45</sup> Third, there is significant interest in the spirit of God/Yahweh in various priestly texts and traditions (cf. Gen 1:2; Exod 31:3; 35:31; Ezek 3:12, 14, 24; 11:1, 5, 24; 36:26–27; 37:1, 14). Fourth, the participial עֹמֵד indicates an ongoing and present reality.<sup>46</sup> Fifth, and finally, the use of עֹמֵד is evocative of numerous aspects of the Sinai-Exodus traditions, especially priestly ones.<sup>47</sup> Many of those who view Hag 2:5a as an insertion see it as having been inspired by either רוּחַ or עֹמֵד, suggesting some allusion to the Sinai covenant.<sup>48</sup> Such allusions could include the pillar of cloud and fire (note assonance with עֹמֵד Exod 33:10; Num 14:14); the appointment of the priests to 'stand' and minister for Yahweh (cf. Num 16:9; 18; Deut 18:7); and in the priests who carried the ark and 'stood' in the Jordan (Jos 3:8, 13, 17; 4:10).<sup>49</sup> The second innovative expression is the one which forms the object of our study here: אֵת הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר כָּרַתִּי אִתְּכֶם בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to my discussion of its syntax, translation, and contextual relationship above, two further comments relating to its use of broader Israelite traditions are in order here. First, whereas the motif of Yahweh bringing Israel up out of Egypt (hiphil of יָצָא) is relatively common in both Deuteronomic and priestly traditions (Exod 3:17; 6:6; 7:5; 12:17, 51; 13:3, 14; 16:6; 20:2; 29:46; Lev 19:36; 23:43; 26:45; Num 15:41; Deut 4:20; 5:6; 6:21; 26:8; Josh 24:5–6; 1 Sam 12:8; 1 Kings 8:16, 21, 51; Jer 11:4; 31:32; 32:21; 34:13; Ezek 20:9), as well as numerous prophetic texts of various traditional rootings (Jer 2:6; 7:22; 11:7; 16:14; Ezek 20:6; Amos 2:10; 3:1; 9:7; Mic 6:4), the theme of Israel coming out of Egypt (qal of יָצָא) is far less frequent (Exod 12:41; Deut 4:45; 1 Kgs 8:9; Mic 7:15; 2 Chr 5:10). The former group of texts (hiphil of יָצָא) stress Yahweh's activity on Israel's behalf, for which Israel owes Yahweh a debt of grateful obedience. The latter (qal of יָצָא) simply refer to Israel's departure from Egypt, and to the covenantal relationship established at that moment.

45. Boda, *op. cit.* (n. 36), pp. 122–23, 129; *id.*, *Praying the Tradition: The Origin and Use of Tradition in Nehemiah 9*, BZAW 277, Berlin-New York 1999.

46. *IHBS* (B.K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, Winona Lake 1990), § 37.6.d–e.

47. See, for example, Mitchell, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 60.

48. J. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, TOTC, London 1972, p. 47; Mitchell, *ibid.*, p. 60; Sellin, *op. cit.* (n. 25) p. 410.

49. Tg and a few commentators see the reference to Yahweh's Spirit in Hag 2:5b as a reference to the prophetic office (Beuken, Wolff, Chary).

50. On the translation of this phrase see *supra*.

In Hag 2:5 the *qal* of אָר appears. However Hag 2:5a goes even further than simply designating the moment when Yahweh's relationship with Israel was officially inaugurated. It goes on to insist that this relationship perdures to the present day. As such Hag 2:5a is strikingly similar to the highly unique, phrase in Hos 12:10 [ET 9] and repeated in 13:4, where Yahweh declares 'I am your God from the land of Egypt.' In these texts the emphasis falls on the fact that Exodus event serves as the beginning point of a relationship which is still in existence.<sup>51</sup> I will return to the significance of this observation *infra*. Second, while it is true that the language of 2:5a is compatible with both priestly and Deuteronomic traditions, it may be that the considerations noted above with reference to priestly interest in Yahweh's spirit, the potential 'catchwords' in the priestly Sinai-exodus traditions which may have inspired the interpolation, and the priestly conceptualization of Yahweh's covenant as 'eternal' (cf. Lev 26:44-45)<sup>52</sup> it might be suggested that the author of 2:5a was greatly influenced by priestly modes of thought and expression.

## 4.2. The Motivation for the Interpolation

With these considerations in mind let us pass on to the issue of the motivation for the interpolation.

### 4.2.1. *Proposals*

#### 4.2.1.1. An Exhortation to Obedience

As we have noted, one approach to these words understands them as having been inserted to enjoin faithful keeping of the law of the Sinai covenant.<sup>53</sup> However this suggestion is problematic, for the reasons discussed *supra*.

51. Thus A.A. Macintosh who translates, 'But I am Yahweh your God from the [time of] the land of Egypt' and notes, 'The force of the preposition is likely to be virtually temporal i.e. from the time of the exodus from the land of Egypt and thereafter': *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Hosea*, ICC, Edinburgh 1997, p. 499. This gives a slightly different flavour to the verse than the Peshitta and Tg which add 'who brought you up from the land of Egypt', in line with the texts cited in the first group, above.

52. See here R.J. Baultch, 'An Appraisal of Abraham's Role in Postexilic Covenants,' *CBQ* 71, 2009, pp. 42-63; *id.*, *Glory and Power, Ritual and Relationship: The Sinai Covenant in the Postexilic Period*, LHB/OTS 471, New York-London 2009, and S.D. Mason, 'Eternal Covenant' in the *Pentateuch: The Contours of an Elusive Phrase*, LHB/OTS 494, New York-London 2008.

53. Vg, Ibn Ezra, Meyers and Meyers (as part of primary text); Wolff, Amsler (as a late secondary insertion).

#### 4.2.1.2. An Edifying Expansion or Proto-Midrashic Insertion into vv. 4-5

A second approach sees the disputed words as an edifying expansion or proto-midrashic insertion into vv. 4-5. There are several variations of this approach. As noted, many see it as an allusion to an element or event in the Sinai traditions inspired by the term עמדת.<sup>54</sup> A variation on this approach is taken by M. Boda who sees here an allusion to the promise of Yahweh's Presence and the renewal of the covenant after the golden calf apostasy.<sup>55</sup> Still others propose an allusion to the priestly theme of Yahweh's dwelling with Israel. As such, scribe's marginal reference to Exod 29:45-46 has become embedded in the text.<sup>56</sup> M. Fishbane has suggested that 2:5a is an intertextual reference to the exodus tradition introduced to strengthen the motivation to work through a reference to the continuous presence of God since Sinai.<sup>57</sup> D. Petersen views the phrase as the work of a 'prophetic traditionist' who feels Haggai's words lack specificity, and who anchors them to the concrete events of the exodus and the covenantal relationship established at Sinai.<sup>58</sup>

#### 4.2.1.3. A Clarifying Expansion in Light of 5-4th C BCE Debates

Having rejected the proposal that understands 2:5a as an exhortation to covenantal obedience, I would propose a third alternative, one which retains the basis thesis of the second approach, yet goes beyond it. I concur that the insertion in 2:5a does use language evocative of the exodus-Sinai traditions. However, I would suggest that the insertion was made, not out of inner-biblical theological reflection, or creative midrash, but to make certain specific ideological or theological clarifications regarding the meaning of Haggai's words in the broader context of key issues of dispute in the context of Judean and Diaspora communities of the 6th-4th centuries. An examination of the Israelite literature of the period reveals two

54. See n. 47, *supra*.

55. Boda, *op. cit.* (n. 36), pp. 122-23. I am disinclined to see 2:5a as referring specifically to the events of Exod 32-34, and the covenant-renewal and promise of Exod 34:14. Although the motif of covenant rupture and renewal motif is clearly to be seen in Zech 1:1-6, I do not find evidence of it in Haggai. On this see J. Kessler, 'Tradition, Continuity and Covenant in the Book of Haggai: An Alternative Voice from Early Persian Yehud,' in M.J. Boda and M.H. Floyd eds, *Tradition in Transition: Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 in the Trajectory of Hebrew Theology*, LHB/OTS 475, New York-London 2008; *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 22). See further, n. 64, below, for my broader point of agreement with Boda's thesis.

56. Baldwin, *op. cit.* (n. 48), p. 47; Mitchell, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 60.

57. Fishbane, *op. cit.* (n. 24), pp. 48-50.

58. Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 3), p. 66.

key areas of concern germane to our discussion here: differing understandings of (1) the status of the Sinai covenant, and (2) the relationship between the presence of Yahweh's spirit and the expected world renewal. Let us discuss these two issues in turn.

### 3.1. What is the status of the Sinai Covenant?

Numerous Babylonian and Persian period texts give evidence of significant diversity regarding the status of the Sinai Covenant. S. Olyan, in a survey article, underlines several major lines of division regarding the Sinai covenant. Is it still intact? Has it been broken and renewed? Has it been superseded by a new covenant?<sup>59</sup> I have also taken up this issue in my own work at several points.<sup>60</sup> The books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel are especially significant in this regard. As is well known, Jer 31:31-33 speaks of a 'new covenant' which emerges as a successor to the Sinai Covenant which had been 'broken' (Heb פָּרַר). Similarly, within the priestly reflection, there is great ambivalence regarding the place of the Sinai covenant, especially in light of the destructions and devastations of the 6th C. Much debate surrounds the question of whether priestly thought viewed the Sinai covenant as 'secondary' to the ancestral covenant in Genesis 17 (cf. Neh 9:7-8, 32) or a separate entity in its own right.<sup>61</sup> Similarly much discussion surrounds the Ezekielian tradition regarding Sinai. Ezekiel's references to Yahweh's commandments which were broken in 11:12, his command not to 'follow the statutes and judgments of your ancestors' (20:18), or the statement that Yahweh gave Israel 'statutes that were not good, and ordinances by which they could not live' (20:25), suggests a strong ambivalence toward Sinai's demands, if not an outright discontinuity between Sinai and the new-post judgment age as understood by that prophetic tradition.<sup>62</sup> What is more, in the new era Yahweh

59. S.M. Olyan, 'The Status of Covenant During the Exile,' in R. Ebach *et al.* eds, *Berührungspunkte: Studien Zur Sozial- Und Religionsgeschichte Israels Und Seiner Umwelt. Festschrift R. Albertz*, Münster 2008, pp. 333-44.

60. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 26); *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 55); *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 22).

61. H. Cazelles, 'Alliance du Sinai, alliance de l'Horeb et renouvellement de l'alliance,' in *Beiträge zur Alttestamentlichen Theologie. Fest W. Zimmerli*, Göttingen 1977, pp. 69-79. Of course the matter becomes even more complex if one factors in differences in approach that may have existed between the 'Priestly' and 'Holiness' schools. On the ongoing significance of the promise to Abraham (Gen 17) for Persian Period covenant renewal see M. W. Duggan, *The Covenant Renewal in Ezra-Nehemiah, (Neh 7:72b-10:40): An Exegetical, Literary, and Theological Study*, Dissertation Series/SBL, Atlanta 2001, pp. 172-73.

62. Cf. the recent discussion in J.S. Bergsma and S.W. Hahn, 'What Laws Were "Not Good"? A Canonical Approach to the Theological Problem of Ezekiel 20:25-26,' *JBL* 123, 2004, pp. 201-18.

declares: 'I will place my statutes and my judgments in your hearts' (36:27). That which is most striking here is that the four texts just mentioned are the only places in Ezekiel where the nouns statutes and judgments (קִנּוּן and שְׁפָטִים respectively) are used together. Furthermore, Ezekiel sees Israel's transformation as being animated by the presence of Yahweh's spirit (Ezek 36:22-30).

It is widely acknowledged that Haggai's language is often general and imprecise.<sup>63</sup> As such, his declaration regarding Yahweh's spirit dwelling in the midst of the community *could* be read through the schema (as is found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel), of a future 'new' covenant replacing one that was deficient, irretrievably broken, or obsolete. I would suggest that, through the phrase 'along with the promise that I made to you when you came out of Egypt' in 2:5a, the 'Haggai Tradent' takes position against such a reading of the prophet's words, and makes explicit that which is implicit elsewhere in the oracles and framework: that the Persian period community in Yehud stands in unbroken continuity with the generation that came out of Egypt, and shares in the same covenantal arrangement.<sup>64</sup> Van Hoonacker rightly observes that in Hag 2:5a Yahweh brings to mind 'the covenant of Sinai still in existence in order to re-affirm the commitment he has made to remain with his people.'<sup>65</sup> And as I have argued elsewhere, Haggai is in many regards unique among the Persian period prophetic texts, in that it emphasizes continuity between the past and present and makes no mention to the Sinai covenant as ever having been severed or even severely damaged.<sup>66</sup> Thus for the Haggai Tradent, as for the prophet before him, the Sinai covenant stands unbroken, and the presence of Yahweh's spirit with the beleaguered community in Yehud was not a reality that had been hitherto unknown.

63. See the comments in Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 3), pp. 66-67, 106.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 66 appropriately comments, regarding 2:5a, 'in order to give the oracle (in 2:4-5) a distinctive character, a prophetic traditionist has introduced language focusing on a concrete event, the exodus, and a specific relationship, the covenant at Sinai, as a basis for Yahweh's admonitory language here. Yahweh is with Israel now, this traditionist claims, because of the specific relationship made possible by Yahweh's covenant with Israel.' Here I agree with Boda's assertion, mentioned above (cf. n. 55, *supra*), that Hag 2:5a asserts Yahweh's ongoing presence with the community. However, as noted, I do not see 2:5a as referring exclusively to the renewal and promise of Exod 32-34, but also to the broader covenantal relationship made with Israel at Sinai (esp. Exod 19:5-6), embodied through Yahweh's presence with the people in the pillar of cloud and fire, and then renewed in Exod 32-34.

65. Van Hoonacker, *op. cit.* (n. 13), p. 561.

66. Cf. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 26), esp. 183-85; *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 22). As noted above, the Sinai covenant and its conceptual framework are not alien to Haggai. On this see nn. 38-39 above and the discussion there.

### 3.2. Does the Presence of Yahweh's Spirit with the Community Indicate that Yahweh's Long-Awaited Intervention has Arrived?

The second area of dispute concerns the relationship between the presence of Yahweh's spirit and the anticipated age to come.<sup>67</sup> Babylonian and early Persian period literature manifests a significant hope for a coming dramatic intervention of Yahweh, culminating in the defeat of Israel's enemies, the 'restoration of the fortunes'<sup>68</sup> of various nations, and the exaltation of Zion and Israel.<sup>69</sup> R. J. Sklba notes the diverse theologies and ideologies of the spirit of Yahweh that emerged in the Babylonian Period.<sup>70</sup> Generally speaking, in much of this material, the presence and activity of Yahweh's spirit is seen as a future creative work of God, and a theological *novum*. Through the agency of Yahweh's spirit, the despair of the present age was to be transformed and the creation renewed (Isa 32:13-17; 34:8-17; 42:1-4; 44:1-5; 48:14-16; 61:1-4; Ezek 36:22-30; 37:1-14; Joel 3:1-2[ET 2:28-29] Zech 4:6-7; 6:1-8). By contrast, in other Persian period texts Yahweh's spirit is seen as having been present with the community in the past. However such texts frequently involve motifs of Israel's persistent stubbornness. This is especially the case in Neh 9:20, 30 and Isa 63:10, 11, 14, cf. Ps 51:13[ET11].

Haggai's reference to Yahweh's spirit standing in the midst of the community (2:5b) could be taken by some to imply that Haggai saw the 'new age of Yahweh's spirit' as present in a way that had been hitherto unknown. Indeed, some earlier commentators (erroneously) have taken Haggai's words in this way. T. Chary, for example suggests that the exhortation of v. 4 alongside the allusion to Yahweh's spirit in v. 5b 'would have left Haggai's hearers in no doubt regarding that which was at stake in the promise of Yahweh's presence. The spirit here represents the regenerative force which would bring about the messianic era with its expected renewal.'<sup>71</sup> It is often noted that as time went by, it became clear

67. See J. Kessler, 'Prophecy at the Turning of the Ages: Imminent Crisis and Future Hope in Hag 2:6-9; 20-23 and Zech 2:10-17 [Et 6-13],' *Trans* 40, 2011, pp. 97-133.

68. On this see J.M. Bracke, 'Sub Sebut: A Reappraisal,' *ZAW* 97, 1985, pp. 97-133 and several of the contributions in J. Vermeylen ed., *Les prophètes de la Bible et la fin des temps: XXIII<sup>e</sup> Congrès de l'association catholique française pour l'étude de la Bible*, (Lille, 24-27 août 2009), LD, Paris 2010.

69. Mic 4:1-4; Isa 2:1-4; 60-66; Ezek 25-39; Zeph; Joel; Hag 2:6-9, 20-23; Zech 1:7-6:15 are frequently cited in this regard. See also Kessler, *loc. cit.* (n. 67) and the literature cited there.

70. Sklba, *loc. cit.* (n. 44). He cites Ps 139:7; Ezekiel 3:12; 8:3; 11:5, Isa 32:15, 17; 42:1; 61:1; 63:11, Joel 3:1[ET 2:28]; Zech 4:6; 6:8; 12:10.

71. Chary, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 27.

that the long awaited transformation had not come.<sup>72</sup> Some may have even viewed Haggai's words as having been proven false by the disappointing circumstances in early Persian Yehud which continued after Haggai's disappearance from the scene.

I suggest that the Haggai Tradent seeks to correct such an idea. By inserting the reference to the solemn promise made to the community as it left Egypt, and attaching it to the reference to Yahweh's spirit, the Haggai Tradent stresses that Haggai did not view the presence of Yahweh's spirit as *reserved* for the future, expected age. The Haggai Tradent thus stresses that Haggai's reference to Yahweh's Spirit was to be set in the context of the unbroken and enduring Sinai covenant, and that for Haggai, the presence of Yahweh's spirit did not serve to differentiate the early years of Darius' reign either from previous epochs (such as the time of the exodus) or from the future expected era of renewal. Indeed, as the temporal note, *אז עוד אחת מעט היא* at 2:6a<sup>73</sup> makes clear, for Haggai, despite the present reality of the presence of Yahweh's spirit, the community still awaited a time of future renewal. Put another way, the presence of Yahweh's spirit in the present did not gainsay hope for a future, glorious, divine intervention.

#### 5.0. The 'Haggai Tradent' and the 'Book of Haggai'

To conclude this study, we turn to questions concerning the relationship between the 'Haggai Tradent' and the rest of the book, and the Tradent's milieu.<sup>74</sup> Clearly any suggestions here can only be speculative. A few comments may be made concerning the dating of 2:5a relative to the creation of the rest of the book. The dating formulae, extensively investigated by André Lemaire,<sup>75</sup> as well as other considerations, indicate that the book of Haggai reached its present form (apart from a few possible exceptions)<sup>76</sup> at a time not long after the last date alluded to four

72. On the importance of this motif in the textual development of the Zecharian tradition see M.J. Boda, 'Messengers of Hope in Haggai-Malachi,' *JSOT* 32, 2007, pp. 117-19 and J. Wöhrle, 'The Formation and Intention of the Haggai-Zechariah Corpus,' *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 6, 2006.

73. On this phrase see Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 26), pp. 160-61; 173-75.

74. I will leave to one side, for the most part, considerations relating to the relationship between the Haggai Tradent and the Book of the Twelve.

75. A. Lemaire, 'Les formules de datation dans Ezéchiel à la lumière de données épigraphiques,' in J. Lust ed., *Ezechiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, BETL 74, Leuven 1986, pp. 359-66; *id.*, *Nouvelles inscriptions araméennes d'Idméc au musée d'Israël*, Suppléments à *Trans*, 3, Paris 1996, Gabalda; *id.*, 'Les formules de datation en Palestine au premier millénaire avant J.-C.,' in F. Briquel-Chatonnet and H. Lozachmeur eds, *Proche-Orient Ancien. Temps Vécu, Temps Pensé*, Antiquités Sémitiques 3, Paris 1998, pp. 53-82; *id.*, 'Zorobabel et la Judée à la lumière de l'épigraphie (fin du VI<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.),' *RB* 103, 1996, pp. 48-57.

76. See the extended discussion in Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 26), pp. 31-57; cf. also M.J. Boda,

times in the book, the 24th of the 9th month, of the second year of Darius (Hag 2:10, 15, 18, 20, generally understood to be Dec. 18, 529 BCE).<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, with J. Wöhrle and M. Boda, and in contrast to many alternative suggestions,<sup>78</sup> I view Haggai to have substantially reached its present form independently of Zechariah 1-8 or Malachi, and before its integration into any larger prophetic collection.<sup>79</sup> This conclusion is reinforced by the clear evidence for the coherent literary structuration of the book,<sup>80</sup> carried out by the hand responsible for the presentation of Haggai and his words in the form in which we now have them.<sup>81</sup> If my hypothesis regarding the motivation for the addition of Hag2:5a be sound, what then can be said regarding its relationship to the rest of the material in Haggai? Hag 2:4-5 is frequently understood to consist of original oracles of Haggai, which have been re-formulated and inserted into their present position.<sup>82</sup> It would seem most likely that the redactional activity in evidence in 2:4-5 formed part of the literary process that resulted in the overall presentation of the book. Two options thus emerge with reference to the relationship between Hag 2:5a and the book as a whole. The insertion of 2:5a into 2:4-5 could have followed the initial inscribing of the prophet's oracles but preceded the more over-arching redaction of the book, if 2:4-5

'Zechariah: Master Mason or Penitential Prophet?', in R. Albertz and R. Becking eds, *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Period*, STAR 5, Assen 2003, pp. 49-60; id., *loc. cit.* (n. 72), pp. 116-17. M.J. Boda suggests that Hag 1:13 may be a later addition, inserted as a part of redactional joining of Haggai, Zech 1-8, and Malachi prior to their insertion into the Book of the Twelve.

77. On the absolute dating of the Second year of Darius see J. Kessler, 'The Second Year of Darius and the Prophet Haggai,' *Trans* 5, 1992, pp. 63-84; Wolff, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 75-76.

78. See the extensive inventory in Boda, *loc. cit.* (n. 72).

79. *Ibid.*; Wöhrle, *loc. cit.* (n. 72).

80. Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 26), pp. 247-53.

81. Several approaches are taken to the literary history of the book. See especially P.R. Ackroyd, 'Studies in the Book of Haggai,' *JJS* 2, 1951, pp. 163-76; *id.*, 'The Book of Haggai and Zechariah 1-8,' *JJS* 3, 1952, pp. 151-56; *id.*, 'Studies in the Book of Haggai,' *JJS* 3, 1952, pp. 1-13; *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 6); W.A.M. Beuken, *Haggai - Sacharja 1-8: Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der frühnachexilischen Prophetie*, SSN 10, Assen 1967; M.J. Boda, 'Haggai: Master Rhetorician,' *TynB* 51, 2000, pp. 295-304; *id.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 72); M.H. Floyd, 'The Nature of the Narrative and the Evidence of Redaction in Haggai,' *VT* 45, 1995, pp. 470-90; Kessler, *op. cit.* (n. 26), pp. 31-57; Mason, *op. cit.* (n. 39); Meyers-Meyers, *op. cit.* (n. 15), pp. xliv-lxiii; R.W. Pierce, 'Literary Connectors and a Haggai/Zechariah/Malachi Corpus,' *JETS* 27, 1984, pp. 277-289, 401-411; P.L. Redditt, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, Grand Rapids 1994, pp. 11-12; O.H. Steck, 'Zu Haggai I, 2-11,' *ZAW* 83, 1971, pp. 355-79; Verhoef, *op. cit.* (n. 28), pp. 9-17; Wöhrle, *loc. cit.* (n. 72).

82. Thus Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 6), pp. 166-69. Was this re-formulation carried out by the hand that produced the book as a whole and inserted at that time? Or was 2:4-5 part of an earlier collection, and subsequently used in the creation of the book? The former seems the most likely option.

existed in some earlier collection before being incorporated into the book as it is presently structured. Alternatively, it may have been inserted subsequent to the book's final formulation. To me it seems most likely that the oracles of 2:4-5 were brought together at the time of when the book was given its present shape. Thus the insertion of 2:5a would have taken place during the final phase of the production of the book. If one accepts the thesis that Haggai Tradent was highly familiar with Haggai's thought, and eager to clarify its meaning with reference to two significant questions of the day, it might well be argued – tentatively, to be sure – that the Tradent was active at a time relatively early in the Persian period.

A few comments are possible regarding the theological rooting of our tradent. First, as suggested above, the Haggai Tradent takes ideas implicit in the oracles and framework of Haggai and sets them in bold. The ongoing validity of the Sinai covenant is already implicit elsewhere in Haggai through the use of the covenant maledictions (widely used in both priestly and Deuteronomic traditions, cf. 1:3-11; 2:4-5), allusions to priestly rulings regarding purity (2:10-15), the use of Deuteronomic language to describe the obedience of the people in 1:12-14, and to stereotypical formulae of encouragement used in broader priestly and Deuteronomic traditions (2:4-5).<sup>83</sup> It is evident that our tradent was aware of the traditions of Israel's departure from Egypt. As noted, the language of 2:5a is compatible with both priestly and Deuteronomic traditions, with perhaps a slight tendency toward the former.<sup>84</sup> The anticipation of a coming divine intervention, not yet realized, can be clearly seen through the use of *עוד אהת מעט היא* in 2:6a followed by the *futurum instans* and a series of verbs in the future perfect in vv. 6b-9 and v. 22, and the use of *ביום ההוא* in v. 23. By clarifying the prophet's words in the manner suggested above, it seems entirely probable that our Tradent was part of a scribal tradition closely attached to Haggai, and intimately aware of the prophet's thought.

One further detail concerning the milieu of origin of the Haggai Tradent bears mentioning here. As we have noted, the motif of Yahweh's 'bringing up Israel out of Egypt' or Israel's having 'come up out of Egypt' is highly generalized in Israelite theological traditions. That said, the concept of Yahweh's having been present since Sinai and continuing to be is far less common.<sup>85</sup> Interestingly, it occurs twice near the beginning of the 'Book of the Twelve', in the final sections of Hosea. The first occurrence is in Hos 12:7 where, in the context of an indictment of the Northern Kingdom, Yahweh declares: 'I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt. I will make you live in tents again, as in the days of the appointed

83. On this see n. 39, *supra*.

84. See the observations of I. Willi-Plein who suggests that the writer of 2:5a had the text of Exod 24 *sous les yeux*, Willi-Plein, *op. cit.* (n. 15), p. 33.

85. See n. 47, *supra*.

festival.' A second occurs in 13:4, again in the context of an indictment, which repeats 12:7, but adds a different element to its conclusion: 'Yet I have been the Lord your God ever since the land of Egypt; you know no God but me, and besides me there is no saviour.' Hag 2:5a takes the theme of Yahweh's continued presence, but inserts it into a context of blessing. The community is not to fear because the one who has been with it since Sinai, continues in its midst even still. Whether this correspondence indicates that the Haggai Tradent was also aware of Hos 12-13 in some form, or is simply a matter of coincidence, must remain an open question.

### Conclusion

Haggai 2:5a is a redactional insertion consistent with the overall direction of the rest of the book of Haggai. And while this insertion certainly contains intertextual allusions, it is more than a mere exercise in textual association. Its purpose is to make explicit the meaning of the oracles of Haggai with reference to two important questions of significant theological and ideological debate in the Jewish communities of the 6th-4th C BCE: the status of the Sinai covenant, and the presence of Yahweh's spirit relative to the anticipated age to come. The Haggai Tradent asserts that, in contrast to numerous other ideologies of covenant during the Babylonian and Persian periods (or later), for Haggai the Sinai covenant still stands as it had from its inauguration at the Exodus. Similarly, in contrast to other ideologies of Yahweh's Spirit, the Haggai Tradent asserts that for the prophet, the presence of Yahweh's spirit is no *novum*, signalling the dawn of a new age. Rather, like the Sinai covenant, Yahweh's spirit has stood with the community since its departure from Egypt, and stands with it still.