

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. "The Second Year of Darius and the Prophet Haggai." *Transeuphratène* 5 (1992): 63-84.

TRANSEUPHRATÈNE 5, 1992

RECHERCHES PLURIDISCIPLINAIRES
SUR UNE PROVINCE
DE L'EMPIRE ACHÉMÉNIDE



GABALDA

TRANSEUPHRATÈNE

Recherches pluridisciplinaires
sur une province
de l'Empire achéménide

Éditeurs : L. ELAYI, J. SAPIN
Secrétaire de rédaction : A. SÉRANDOUR

Comité de rédaction : J. BRIEND, J. ELAYI, E. GUBEL, A. LEMAIRE,
T. RÖMER, J. SAPIN

Le Professeur Pierre Grélot ne souhaite plus, pour raison de santé, faire partie de notre comité de rédaction ; nous lui exprimons toute notre reconnaissance pour sa précieuse collaboration.

Série publiée avec le concours de l'ASPEP (Association pour la recherche sur la Syrie-Palestine à l'époque perse), de l'Institut Catholique et de l'Institut Protestant de Théologie de Paris.

Cette série publie les travaux de l'ASPEP. Elle accueille aussi tous les articles de recherche relatifs à la Transeuphratène (Phénicie, Syrie-Palestine et Chypre) dans toutes les branches : histoire, archéologie, épigraphie, numismatique, études bibliques, géographie historique, etc. Elle accueille enfin dans son *Bulletin d'information* les informations de toute nature susceptibles d'aider la recherche dans ce domaine. La série publie des articles en français, anglais, allemand et italien.

Les manuscrits, ainsi que toute correspondance relative à cette série, seront adressés à M^{me} J. ELAYI, 92 rue de Lourmel, 75015 PARIS, ou à Mr. J. SAPIN, 81 rue Henri-Barbusse, 93300 AUBERVILLIERS.

Pour les commandes, s'adresser aux Éditions GABALDA, 18 rue Pierre et Marie Curie, 70005 PARIS.

© 1992, by *Librairie Gabalda, Paris*
ISBN 2-85021-051-X
ISSN 0996-5904

The Second Year of Darius and the Prophet Haggai

J. KESSLER

Résumé : Le but de cet article est de déterminer comment la communauté juive de Palestine percevait la domination perse achéménide à l'époque des oracles d'Aggée. Selon l'A., la seconde année du règne de Darius correspond à l'année julienne avril 520-avril 519. Ainsi, loin d'exprimer une ferveur révolutionnaire, le livre d'Aggée constituerait la première étape d'un long processus d'accommodation avec un pouvoir politique extérieur, assorti de promesses eschatologiques à portée universelle.

Introduction

The purpose of the present study is a modest and specific one : it is to determine the situation in the Persian Empire at the time the prophet Haggai pronounced his oracles and how that situation was perceived by the Jewish community in Palestine. The majority of commentators opt for the correlation of the second year of Darius in *Haggai* with the Julian year 520-519. This assumption has been challenged, among others, by L. Waterman¹, J. Bright² and E.J. Bickerman³. The grounds for this challenge relate to the system of regnal calculation used in *Haggai* and concrete details within the books of *Haggai* and *Zechariah*. Given the recurring nature of the debate, the present article will seek to reconsider the question in the light of recent studies and to present new considerations on the issue.

1. L. Waterman, « The Camouflaged Purge of Three Messianic Conspirators », *JNES* 13, 1954, pp. 73-78.

2. J. Bright, *A History of Israel*², Philadelphia 1972, pp. 369-370.

3. E.J. Bickerman, « La seconde année de Darius », *RB* 88, 1981, pp. 23-28.

The present study, therefore, will be conducted as follows : the basic question remains the situation in the Persian Empire as perceived by Haggai between the 1st day of the 6th month (*Hag* 1,1) and the 24th day of the 9th month (*Hag* 2,20) of the second year of Darius. To respond to this question, the following questions will be dealt with : to what extent can the dates found in *Haggai* be considered historically viable (Section I) ? What conclusions can be drawn from the form of the dates (Section II) ? What was the geographic and chronological extent of the rebellions following Darius I's accession and what was the political situation of the Jewish community in Palestine and specifically the role of Zerubbabel (Section III) ? What system of scribal dating is used in *Haggai* (Section IV) ? And finally, does the text of the book indicate a situation of revolutionary fervour (Section V) ?

I. The validity of the dates

To what degree can the dates in *Hag* 1,1.15 ; 2,1.10.20 be viewed as historically viable ? Peter R. Ackroyd, in articles published between 1951 and 1957, challenged the notion of a rigorously historical use of the dates in *Haggai* — *Zechariah* 1-8 (henceforth *Hag-Zc*)⁴. He suggested that these dates might be regarded as a

*mechanism by which prophecy is authenticated[...] making it clear that the word which has been spoken is from the Lord and that it will ultimately find its fulfillment. Is it not possible that the framework material is an artificial production, based [...] on some traditional elements, and utilizing particularly the style of official documents with their precise dating, designed to give a fuller expression to the conviction that the Lord is operative and known in the precise situations of history*⁵ ?

For Ackroyd the aforementioned framework could have been put in place up to 100 or more years after the oracles were pronounced⁶.

The detailed analysis of W.A. Beuken published in 1967 inverts the place of the dates in the literary criticism proposed by Ackroyd. Although Beuken attributes the final form of *Hag-Zc* to a « Chronistic milieu », which reedited the book about 100 years after the proclamation of the oracles⁷, he pre-

4. P.R. Ackroyd, « Studies in the Book of Haggai », *JJS* 2, 1951, pp. 163-176 ; *id.*, *JJS* 3, 1952, pp. 1-13 ; *id.*, « The Book of Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 », *JJS* 3, 1952, pp. 151-156 ; *id.*, « Some Interpretative Glosses in the Book of Haggai », *JJS* 7, 1956, pp. 163-168 ; *id.*, « Two Old Testament Historical Problems of the Early Persian Period », *JNES* 17, 1958, pp. 13-27.

5. Ackroyd, *ibid.*, 1958, p. 22.

6. Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 4), 1951, pp. 163-176.

7. W. Beuken, *Haggai — Sacharja 1-8. Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der frühnach-exilischen Prophetie*, Assen 1967.

supposes a pre-chronistic edition of Haggai's oracles which included dates and a minimal redaction⁸. Thus for Beuken the dates were attached to the oracles at the earliest point in the literary development of the book of *Haggai*. Rex Mason, in 1977 and 1982, presented significant evidence calling into question Beuken's « Chronistic milieu ». Mason opted for a proto-theocratic group who, even before the final editing of *Zc* 1-8, incorporated the essentially eschatological oracles of Haggai into a theocratic framework⁹. Such a redaction would have taken place shortly after the completion of the temple in 515 B.C.E.¹⁰.

Just prior to 1984, C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers opined that *Hag* and *Zc* 1-8 were edited either by the two prophets themselves, or by Zechariah alone, or by a disciple close to the latter¹¹. The composite work was prepared in order to be read at the temple rededication in 515 B.C.E.¹². This date is proposed because the aforementioned ceremony « is not once mentioned in the *Hag-Zc* 1-8 corpus »¹³. Meyers and Meyers maintain that stylistically and theologically, nothing in the composite work clearly indicates a foreign hand in the redactional process¹⁴. The dates, therefore, are « important for dating the materials to which they are attached, for presumably the prophet or editor would not have bothered with them »¹⁵.

More recently R.J. Coggins has proposed a lower date for the final editing of *Hag-Zc*, to coincide with the redaction of the book of *Ezra*¹⁶. He suggests that the editorial framework of *Hag-Zc* introduces the notion of a « new beginning after the exile » to the oracular material, such a notion being originally absent¹⁷. This would push the redactional date down to about a century after the original oracles, thus weakening the historical viability of the dates. Thus the general critical consensus, with the exception of Coggins, favours a high dating placing the incorporation of the dates near to the original time of utterance. It should be noted that this conclusion has long been maintained by Otto Eissfeldt, who dates the writing of the

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 184-216 ; D.L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8, OTL*, London 1984, pp. 37-38.

9. R.A. Mason, « The Purpose of the "Editorial Framework" of the Book of Haggai », *VT* 27, 1977, pp. 412-421 ; *id.*, « The Prophets of the Restoration », in *Israel's Prophetic Tradition*, R. Coggins, A. Phillips and M. Knibb eds., Cambridge, 1982, pp. 137-154.

10. Mason, *ibid.*, 1977, p. 145.

11. C.L. Meyers and E.M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8, Anchor Bible*, New York 1987.

12. *Ibid.*, p. xlv.

13. *Ibid.*, p. xlv.

14. *Ibid.*, p. xlvii.

15. *Ibid.*, p. xlvii.

16. R.J. Coggins, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, Sheffield 1987, pp. 30-31.

17. *Ibid.*

entire book to a relatively short time after the 24th of the 9th month of Darius' second year¹⁸.

In our opinion, it is likely that the dates were attached to the oracles at an early point, rather than a later one. It is theoretically possible that a redactor, some 100 years after the fact, could impose on the text a tightly ordered series of dates. Yet this seems unlikely for several reasons. First, what would guide the redactor's choice of dates, and why would he date the oracles with such precision? Second, the suggestion that the dates fulfill the specific function of demonstrating that the prophet's words come from the Lord, and as such will find their fulfillment, seems dubious in that the primary fulfillment, that is the completion and reconsecration of the temple, is not mentioned in the text of *Hag-Zc*. Third, how can we determine with certainty that the dates belong to the final redaction? If, as Ackroyd concedes¹⁹, they may be based on some traditional elements, why not presuppose that they were attached to the oracles at an early stage²⁰. Finally, it would appear unlikely that the oracles of Haggai should remain in an unwritten or unedited form for 100 years. Mason rightly notes the move towards the collection and writing down of Israel's prophetic traditions in the 6th century²¹. It would seem unreasonable that the divine intervention via prophetic speech through Haggai and Zechariah should be neglected and remain in an oral or unedited state for this long. This is all the more unlikely given the almost universally acknowledged movement towards codification, consolidation and preservation which characterized the post-exilic period.

In the view of the present writer, the literary criticism of the dates in *Haggai* must be determined with reference to their function in the text²². Is not the most likely reason for the inclusion of the dates a desire to date the giving of the prophetic word? Such an event was even in pre-exilic times considered to be of supreme importance, and divine utterances were dated, albeit with less precision than in *Hag-Zc*, with reference to external political or historical events (*Am* 1,1; *Is* 6,1; 7,1; *Jer* 1,2.3; 28,1; 39,1-2). Lemaire has noted the precision in the dating of economic and legal documents in the late exilic period²³. Would it not be normal to extend such a practice to the dating of cultic and religious events? In *Ezekiel*, the date framework is

18. O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament. An Introduction*, trad. angl., Oxford 1974, pp. 428-429.

19. Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 4), 1958, p. 22.

20. As do Beuken, Petersen, Meyers and Meyers.

21. Mason, *loc. cit.* (n. 9), 1982, p. 142.

22. The dates in Zechariah, being attached to visions, rather than oracles, assume a different role. An analysis of their function is beyond the scope of this study.

23. A. Lemaire, « Les formules de datation dans Ezéchiël à la lumière des données épigraphiques récentes », in *Ezekiel and His Book*, J. Lust ed., Leiden 1986, pp. 359-366.

detailed and extensive²⁴. Would such precision not also be accorded to the giving of a word from Yahweh when the *gôlâh* was entering a phase of new beginnings ? Would it not be completely natural to date, in the most precise of terms, such a divine intervention at that most critical moment ? Ackroyd affirmed that it is a well known fact that later amplifications of historical material tend to be more precise in their details than their earlier records²⁵. Yet the examples cited by him (the birth of Christ and the giving of the Law) are hardly comparable to the proclamation of Haggai's oracles. What is more, why should the oracles of *Hag-Zc* be singled out from among the prophetic corpus for such special embellishment ? It would seem more likely that the dates in *Hag-Zc* were attached to the oracles in order to mark the momentous event of the giving of Yahweh's word²⁶.

II. The form of the dates

In an influential article published in 1957, R. Yaron suggested that « the late, definitely post-exilic books, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Chronicles*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah* and *Esther* » reverse the typical pre-exilic biblical order of date sequences (i.e. year-month-day). These late books « disclose a trend to a new sequence day-month-year, or where the year is omitted, to day-month instead of month-day. This new mode of dating is the one later prevalent in Jewish documents²⁷ ». In 1968, B. Porten reaffirmed Yaron's conclusion²⁸. Ackroyd had suggested that this « new » sequence was a potential evidence of the late redaction and incorporation of *Haggai's* dates²⁹ but withheld judgement, awaiting a more detailed analysis of the biblical dates.

A detailed analysis of the biblical and Aramaic evidence, however, does not appear to support such a suggestion. First, the present form of *Hag-Zc*

24. Lemaire, *ibid.* ; K.S. Freedy and R.B. Redford, « The Dates in Ezekiel in Relation to Biblical, Babylonian and Egyptian Sources », *JAOS* 90, 1970, pp. 462-485, have argued that the date formulae in Ezekiel should not be discarded as historically unreliable.

25. Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 4), 1951, p. 172.

26. H.W. Wolff, *Haggai*, *BKAT*, Neukirchen 1986, p. 20, notes : « Das eigentliche Geschehen, das der Haggai-Chronist zu berichten hat und das alles folgende beherrscht, ist das Ergehen eines Jahwewortes. Dieses Ereignis, daß ein Gottesbote vom Worte ergriffen wird, bestimmt je und je Israels Geschichte. » It would seem that, more recently, Ackroyd has attenuated his position. He states : « If [the dates] were obviously schematic, it would be natural to suppose them invented to provide a specific emphasis. But there are no clear indications of such deliberation ; the dates themselves are sufficiently haphazard for a majority of scholars to accept them without question ». P.R. Ackroyd, « Problems in the Handling of Biblical and Related Sources in the Achaemenid Period », in *Achaemenid History*, III : *Method and Theory*, A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg eds, Leiden 1988, p. 42.

27. R. Yaron, « The Schema of the Aramaic Legal Documents », *JJS* 2, 1951, pp. 33-61.

28. B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, Berkeley 1968, p. 197.

29. Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 4), 1958, p. 22, n. 62.

reveals no consistent date sequence formula³⁰. The following patterns emerge : *Hag* 1,15 ; 2,10 and *Zc* 1,7, which include all three elements of the date, follow the admittedly standard « later » day-month-year pattern. When only two elements are mentioned, the order is once month-day (*Hag* 2,1) and once day-month (*Hag* 2,18). Twice the « older » order appears, i.e. in *Hag* 1,1 and *Zc* 7,1 (both texts include all three elements), possibly forming an *inclusio* to the text, with the latter two elements inverted. Furthermore, *Zc* 1,7 bears witness to the emerging use of the Babylonian month names in conjunction with a strict numerical system³¹. All of this, at the very least, suggests a period of transition rather than a later period of fixed dating formulae. Wolff suggests the possibility that the differences in the order of the date elements may reflect a two phase composition of the literary framework, but places both at a relatively early date³².

It would appear that *Haggai* stands, as Yaron suggests, within a process of transition in date formula notation. In *Jeremiah*, the full earlier formula year-month-day appears at 39,1.2 and 52,4.31. Furthermore the notices at *Jer* 52,6.12 presuppose the year mentioned at 52,4 and be construed as representing the full formula. *Jer* 28,1 and 39,1 contain only two elements and follow a year-month sequence. The situation in *Ezekiel* is that of a predominant year-month-day sequence (1,1 ; 8,1 ; 20,1 ; 24,1 ; 29,1 ; 30,20 ; 31,1 ; 40,1a). This conforms to pre-exilic usage. *Ezekiel* 26,1 and 32,17 follow the same pattern but lack the second element. *Ezekiel* 32,1 inverts the last two elements. In the books of *Chronicles*, only once do all three elements appear (*2 Chr* 3,2) and there the order is month-day-year, only partially bearing out Yaron's hypothesis. Where only month and day are noted, with the exception of *2 Chr* 15,10, the order day-month is followed consistently (*2 Chr* 7,10 ; 29,17 ; 35,1). In *2 Chr* 29,3 the order is year-month. Finally, in *Ezra-Nehemiah* no full three part formula is found. The preponderant sequence, however, is day-month (*Ez* 3,6 ; 6,19 ; 7,9 (twice) ; 8,31 ; 10,16 ; 10,17 ; *Neh* 8,2 ; 9,1). Month-day occurs once (*Ez* 10,9). The sequence year-month is found at *Ez* 3,8 and the reverse at *Ez* 7,8. The book of *Esther* follows day-month at 3,13 ; 8,12 and 9,15, while month-day is found at 9,1 and 3,12.

It is reasonable to conclude on the basis of the preceding data that, in so far as the biblical evidence is concerned, there is movement away from a year-day-month order to a day-month-year order. While *Hag-Zc* does use day-month-year three times, variant tripartite dates occur twice and a

30. It is beyond the scope of the present essay to discuss the possible dislocation of specific passages in *Hag*, especially 2,11-14. See the standard introductions and commentaries. The present author would not reject the possible dislocation of some material, but this should not effect the validity of the dates.

31. J. Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Princeton 1964, pp. 39 f.

32. Wolff, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 19.

divergent bipartite date occurs once. Thus the system in use was far from uniform, and *Hag-Zc* reflects a transitional period. Is it possible to date this transition? Evidence from the Egyptian papyri may be helpful here. Yaron notes that Papyrus Meissner (515 B.C.E.)³³ displays the order year-month-day. The documents of Yaron's group B, the earliest of which is dated in the year 471 B.C.E.³⁴ display the reverse, « post-exilic » order. He concludes that the link between the Aramaic papyri and Jewish legal usage may be closer than one might have assumed. Of course, it cannot be stated with certitude (1) when the shift took place in Palestine (2) whether papyrus Meissner is indeed typical of earlier usage or (3) at what point the shift may have taken place in Egypt. It is instructive that the dates in the Behistun Inscription are given in day-month³⁵. This being the « official » Persian scribal system, it would be altogether normal that it should progressively supplant the previous pre-exilic system, especially for the dating of legal documents. The significance of this observation will be expanded below. Two important points should be noted here. First, nothing in the form of dates of *Hag-Zc* precludes an attribution of these dates to a time immediately following of their purported utterance. Second, the form of the dates in *Hag-Zc* suggests a period of transition reflecting the growing acceptance of Babylonian and Persian scribal practices.

III. *Persia and Palestine*

If the dates in *Haggai* may be taken into consideration for purposes of historical reconstruction, what was the state of affairs in the Persian empire at the time? The principal primary sources for the events of this period are: the Behistun Inscription (henceforth referred to as DB) in its Elamite, Old Persian and Akkadian text³⁶, the Aramaic and Babylonian translations of DB³⁷; the Persepolis, Naqš-i Rostam and other inscriptions³⁸; and a series of Babylonian tablets³⁹. Secondary ancient sources include Herodotus,

33. Yaron, *loc. cit.* (n. 27), p. 34.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

35. See J.C. Greenfield and B. Porten, *The Bisitun Inscription of Darius the Great: Aramaic Version*, London 1982. See for example Sec. 23 line 55, 56; Sec. 25 line 59. No year references are given in the inscription.

36. See Porten, *op. cit.* (n. 28), p. 21, n. 78, for a recent bibliography on the inscription.

37. Greenfield and Porten, *op. cit.* (n. 35).

38. For a recent discussion, see J. Wiesehöfer, *Der Aufstand Gaumatas und die Anfänge Dareios I*, Bonn 1978, pp. 226-229.

39. For a detailed list, see R.A. Parker and W.H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology 626 BC — 45 AD*, Chicago 1946, pp. 14-17.

Ctesias, Polyaeus and other Greek historians⁴⁰. The most important source by far is the Behistun Inscription. The historical reliability of the inscription is variously assessed. R.T. Hallock⁴¹, J. Wiesehöfer⁴², and R.H. Frye⁴³ offer a basically positive evaluation of it. A.T. Olmstead⁴⁴ and M. Dandamaev⁴⁵ are more critical. With reference to the chronological data, however, the observation that Darius would hardly « put on stone and parchment and send throughout the Empire statements which could obviously be proved false, such as the adding up of dates »⁴⁶ is probably correct.

The chronological data and inferences in DB have evoked divergent opinions regarding specific details of Darius' initial months as Persian monarch⁴⁷. The debate centers on the specific number and order of the events described and their exact duration. Some, such as Hintz and Wiesehöfer⁴⁸, place the Margian revolt prior to 10 December 522 and consider the defeat of Araxa in Babylon in 521 to be the final victory. Others such as Hallock and Borger⁴⁹ see the first Babylonian revolt of 13 December 522 as being the initial event and the Margian repression dated the 28 December 521, as the last. Dandamaev places the Margian revolt just after the first Babylonian uprising⁵⁰. Similarly, the specific duration of Darius' famous « one year » is hotly debated. Some see the one year as comprising 14 months⁵¹, others 9 months⁵² while still others consider the slaying of Gaumata (29 September 522) as not to be reckoned in the one year⁵³, thus yielding a date of just under a year (Borger). Reference should perhaps be made to the antecedent Assyrian literary convention of attributing a king's most signi-

40. See A.T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, Chicago 1948, p. 108, for chapter references. See also J.M. Cook, « The Rise of the Achaemenids and the Establishment of their Empire », in *Cambridge History of Iran II*, I. Gershevitch ed., Cambridge 1985, pp. 200 sqq.

41. R.T. Hallock, « The One Year of Darius I », *JNES* 19, 1960, pp. 36-39.

42. Wiesehöfer, *op. cit.* (n. 38), p. 221.

43. R.M. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran*, München 1984, p. 100.

44. Olmstead, *op. cit.* (n. 40), p. 93.

45. Dandamaev, *Persien unter den ersten Achämeniden*, trad. all., Wiesbaden 1976, p. 120, cited in Frye, *op. cit.* (n. 43), p. 99.

46. Frye, *ibid.*, p. 102.

47. The basis for the calculations in the present study is the chronology of Parker and Dubberstein, *op. cit.* (n. 39).

48. Wiesehöfer, *op. cit.* (n. 38), p. 20.

49. Hallock, *loc. cit.* (n. 41), pp. 38-39. R. Borger, *Die Chronologie des Darius-Denkmal am Behistun-Felsen*, Göttingen 1982, pp. 113-115.

50. Dandamaev, *op. cit.* (n. 45), p. 255.

51. Kent and Olmstead, according to Hallock, *loc. cit.* (n. 41), p. 37, as well as Borger, *op. cit.* (n. 49), pp. 112 sqq.

52. Poebel, in Hallock, *ibid.*, p. 37.

53. Hintz in Hallock, *ibid.* and Wiesehöfer, *op. cit.* (n. 38), p. 219.

ficant exploits to his *rēsh sharrūti*⁵⁴. Were it not for the precise chronological notations in DB, the confirming tablets from other sources and the fact that the inscription was translated and disseminated rather quickly, a « literary » understanding of the phrase in question might be possible.

The significant point for the study of *Haggai* is the following : Darius had asserted his authority over the majority of his Empire by the end of his first full regnal year (December 521). This assertion is universally accepted and need not be laboured. The independent documentary evidence for the end of Nabopolassar's reign and for the reacceptance of Darius, first published by Keiser, Strassmaier and Clay⁵⁵ and the subsequent studies of Cameron⁵⁶ and Poebel⁵⁷ confirm the reacceptance of Darius in the heartland of the Empire by 25 December 521⁵⁸. It is generally affirmed that columns 1-4 of DB were written and carved by 520⁵⁹ because of the absence of any mention of the quelling of the Egyptian revolt, assumed to have taken place in 519/18 B.C.E.⁶⁰. This reflects his unassailable position at the beginning of his second regnal year (spring 520 B.C.E.). The Babylonian and Aramaic translations would have been made and dispatched soon afterwards⁶¹. If the oracles of *Haggai* are to be dated after this time, then Darius' reign was indisputably entrenched.

The events after the end of Darius' first regnal year, recorded in column 5, are difficult to date and order. The campaign against the Saka in the north would hardly be considered a major threat to the solidity of the Empire⁶². The same may be said of the third Elamite revolt, sometimes dated at this time⁶³.

The Egyptian question is far more germane to our present study, yet beset by historical uncertainty. First, although DB mentions Egypt as having

54. H. Tadmor, « History and Ideology in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions », in *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions*, T.M. Fales ed., Rome 1981, p. 16 sq. See also E.H. Merrill « The Accession Year and Davidic Chronology », *JANES* 19, 1990, pp. 101-112.

55. Cited in Parker and Dubberstein, *op. cit.* (n. 39), p. 16.

56. G.A. Cameron, « Darius and Xerxes in Babylonia » *AJSL* 58, 1941, pp. 314-19.

57. A. Poebel, « The Duration of the Reigns of Smerdis the Magian, and the Reigns of Nebuchadnezzar III and Nebuchadnezzar IV », *AJSL* 56, 1939, pp. 121-145.

58. See Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 4), 1958, pp. 14-15.

59. Borger, *op. cit.* (n. 49), p. 112 following L. Trümpelmann, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Monumentes Dareios'I. von Bisutun und zur Datierung der Einführung der alt persischen Schrift*, Archäologischer Anzeiger, 1967, pp. 284 sq. ; Porten, *op. cit.* (n. 28), p. 21 ; Olmstead, *op. cit.* (n. 40), p. 116.

60. Porten, *ibid.*, p. 21.

61. Olmstead, *op. cit.* (n. 40), pp. 116-117.

62. Frye, *op. cit.* (n. 43), p. 103.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

rebelled, the nature of this rebellion is uncertain. Aryandes, the Persian satrap, appears to have represented Persian interests in the region, having gained control of Cyrene and Barca to the west⁶⁴. It may be that his rebellion consisted in a failure to lend Darius support in the months following his accession⁶⁵. Or, as Briant suggests, it may have consisted of the native population's refusal to pay the tribute levied by Aryandes⁶⁶. Second, the date of Darius' order for Aryandes' execution is doubtful. Earlier scholars, such as Olmstead⁶⁷ and Gray⁶⁸ placed it during Darius' « Egyptian campaign » of 518. More recently, however, historians such as Porten⁶⁹ and Cook⁷⁰ have situated Aryandes' death later, about ten years after 522. Herodotus (IV :166) does not clearly indicate the time of the removal of Aryandes. He associates the latter's displacement with his issuing of silver coinage. In a sense the primary source for the notion of the crushing of a rebellion in 518 is the second century A.D. Polyænus (ii. 17). It is possible that Darius' visit was less bellicose in intent and may have been a demonstration of his supremacy with reference to a satrap of dubious loyalty.

It is unlikely or at least unknown, despite the suggestion of Olmstead⁷¹, Bentzen⁷² and more recently Katzenstein⁷³, that Darius passed through Jerusalem or Yehud on route to Egypt. Rather, as Porten⁷⁴ and Cook⁷⁵ suggest, the route was probably through the « Arabian Desert ». Certainly no glimpse of such a visit can be found in the biblical texts. Conjectures regarding the removal of Zerubbabel by Darius rest entirely upon silence. Darius apparently saw no need to intervene in Judæan affairs⁷⁶. The decree for the temple's reconstruction had previously been granted and the situation was stable. It may be therefore concluded that Darius' rule was well

64. G.B. Gray, « The Reign of Darius », *CAH*, vol. 4, Cambridge 1969, p. 24.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 181. For an alternative interpretation of the Egyptian « rebellion », see G.A. Cameron, « Darius, Egypt and "The Lands Beyond the Sea" », *AJSL* 58, 1941, pp. 307-313.

66. P. Briant, « Ethno-classe dominante et populations soumises dans l'empire achéménide : le cas de l'Égypte », in *Achaemenid History* III, pp. 141-142.

67. A.T. Olmstead, « Darius and His Egyptian Campaign », *AJSL* 55, 1938, p. 374.

68. Gray, *loc. cit.* (n. 64), p. 181.

69. Porten, *op. cit.* (n. 28), p. 22.

70. Cook, *loc. cit.* (n. 40), p. 219.

71. Olmstead, *loc. cit.* (n. 67), p. 374.

72. A. Bentzen, « Quelques remarques sur le mouvement messianique parmi les juifs aux environs de 520 avant Jésus-Christ », *RHPPhR* 10, 1930, p. 495.

73. H.J. Katzenstein, « Gaza in the Persian Period », *Trans* 1, 1989, p. 74.

74. Porten, *op. cit.* (n. 28), p. 21.

75. Cook, *loc. cit.* (n. 40), p. 220.

76. Bentzen, *loc. cit.* (n. 72), pp. 495 sq.

entrenched from the end of his first regnal year and that his Egyptian « campaign », undertaken after the oracles of Haggai were pronounced, did not constitute a reaction to a major rebellion in either Palestine or Egypt.

A word should be added here concerning the political status of Judah in 521-520, and more specifically the role of Zerubbabel as *peḥah*.

Three major positions emerge. First, Alt, Galling and most recently McEvenue⁷⁷ maintain that Judah was annexed to Samaria by the Babylonians in 587. It remained a province of Samaria until the emergence of Nehemiah in 445. Stern, on the other hand, affirms a brief period of independence at the time of Zerubbabel, the Persian appointed governor, followed by transfer to Samaritan domination⁷⁸. Avigad and Meyers affirm an unbroken line of Jewish governors from Sheshbazzar to Nehemiah⁷⁹. With regard to the inscriptional evidence, it seems reasonable to conclude with Stern that the « Shelomith » seal (No. 14) has resolved the disputed reading in favor of *hpḥh* : « governor ». This indicates the possible existence of a series of *paḥāwōt* in Yehud (*Neh* 5,15)⁸⁰. Avigad dates this succession from Sheshbazzar on, Stern from Nehemiah on⁸¹. Meyers underlines the mention of Shelomith, daughter of Zerubbabel, in 1 *Chr* 3,19⁸². He regards Shelomith as Elnathan's wife or concubine and views her as having exercised political and administrative functions. He suggests that the marriage may have been politically motivated — to secure a link with the Davidic line. Freedman, in this connection, notes similar practices in the Solomonic period⁸³. (This writer favours the « high » chronology of Avigad and Meyers for the seals.)

But what of the role, status and authority of Zerubbabel as *peḥah* ? It is important to underline the fact that the Achaemenid Empire must not be construed as a modern centralized bureaucracy⁸⁴. Persian imperial policy,

77. S. McEvenue, « The Political Structure in Judah from Cyrus to Nehemiah », *CBQ* 43, 1981, pp. 353-364.

78. E. Stern, « The Persian Empire and the Political and Social History of Palestine in the Persian Period », in *The Cambridge History of Judaism* I, W.D. Davies and J. Finkelstein eds, Cambridge 1984, p. 72 ; *id.*, *Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period 538-332 B.C.E.*, Jerusalem 1973, p. 213.

79. Notably N. Avigad, *Bullae and Seals from a Post-exilic Judaean Archive*, *Qedem* 4, Jerusalem 1976, p. 34 ; E.M. Meyers, « The Shelomith Seal and the Judaean Restoration », *Erls* 18, 1985, pp. 31-38 ; E.-M. Laperrousaz, « Jérusalem à l'époque perse (étendue et statut) », *Trans* 1, 1989, pp. 55-66, esp. pp. 61-63.

80. Meyers, *loc. cit.* (n. 79), *passim*; H.G.M. Williamson, « The Governors of Judah under the Persians », *Tyn. B.* 39, 1988, pp. 59-82.

81. Stern, *op. cit.* (n. 78), p. 206.

82. Meyers, *loc. cit.* (n. 79), p. 356 ; cf. already Lemaire, *Syria* 54, 1977, pp. 121-131.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 35, n. 14.

84. P. Briant, « Pouvoir central et polycentrisme culturel dans l'empire achéménide », in *Achaemenid History* I, H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg ed., Leiden 1982, p. 2.

from the time of Cyrus, recognized both official imperial structure⁸⁵ as well as the principle of stability based on ethno-religious homogeneous units⁸⁶. A variety of competing and sometimes conflicting structures existed to govern the diverse subdivisions (ethnic enclaves, city states, tribal associations, temple based communities). E. Kuhrt suggests that the Achaemenids may have followed the Assyrian practice « whereby cities occupying a key-position in troublesome areas, or areas where there was likely to be international conflict, had their privileges and/or exempt status guaranteed by the central government⁸⁷ ». Similarly, the privileges of certain communities were guaranteed. Kuhrt cites the activity of Cambyses with reference to the temple of Neith in Sais (Egypt) and Darius' concern for the sacred grove of Apollo⁸⁸. It is therefore not unlikely that a degree of uncertainty existed regarding the interrelationship of the various local authorities. Local autonomy was encouraged to the extent that it did not interfere with imperial prerogatives. Logically the extent and expression of these would correspond to the relative importance of the communities involved. Hence flux and movement in the roles of governors would be inevitable and need not indicate a change of status. Thus the legitimate prerogatives of its *peḥah* and the extent of his local authority were left sufficiently vague, so as to necessitate repeated appeals for clarification⁸⁹ (*Ez* 5-6).

Whether this reconstruction is accepted or not, one point appears secure : Zerubbabel was an appointee of the Persian throne and owed whatever jurisdiction he had to the latter. This implies that the *gôlâh* in 520 B.C. enjoyed whatever autonomy it had by the good will of the Persian crown, and that official relations with the Persian administration would be viewed as a means *towards* the aspirations of the community, not a hindrance to it. This further implies that Persian imperial policy and practices would not be viewed with an inherent hostility. It was by means of these that Yehud enjoyed whatever freedom it did.

We may resume the argument of this section as follows : Darius was firmly in control of the heartland of the Empire by the end of his first regnal year. The news of this stability would have certainly been known in Yehud by the summer of 520 B.C.E. The so-called rebellion in Egypt does not appear to have been a massive uprising capable of eliciting politico-messianic hopes

85. Olmstead, *op. cit.* (n. 40), pp. 59 sq., 115-116 and McEvenue, *loc. cit.* (n. 77), p. 356.

86. This is evident from the Cyrus cylinder. See Olmstead, *ibid.*, p. 57.

87. E. Kuhrt, « The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy », *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 25, 1983, p. 93.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 94. One might wish to consider the suggestions of Kreissig, Weinberg and Kippenberg concerning the structure of the post-exilic community (See references in Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 8), pp. 29 sq.).

89. Petersen, *ibid.*, p. 27, suggests the possibility of a progressive movement towards regional autonomy.

in Judah. It is likely that Zerubbabel was an appointee of the Persian throne and that Persian imperial policy was not seen as entirely hostile and alien with reference to Judaeon life in Darius' second year.

IV. Early post-exilic scribal conventions

Perhaps the factor most essential for the present discussion is the system of regnal calculations used in *Hag-Zc*. As stated above, DB clearly views Darius' accession as having taken place at or after the death of Gaumata (29 September 522, DB § 13). Thus his 1st and 2nd regnal years would have begun on 14 April 521 and 3 April 520, respectively. But would this system of regnal calculation have been followed by the redactor of Haggai? This question may in part be answered by a survey of Jewish scribal practices from the late pre-exilic period onward. What kind of regnal calculation was used in Judah in the late pre-exilic and early exilic periods? In theory, three possibilities exist: antedating, postdating and « royal » or « absolute » dating (i.e. regnal years calculated from the date of accession, independently of the civil new year).

A secondary factor is that of the spring or fall new year, and the date of the transition from the latter to the former. There is, however, a general consensus that the numerical month notations refer to the Babylonian year calculated from Nisan⁹⁰. Attempts to reconcile the Babylonian Chronicle, *Jer* 52,28-29; *2 K* 24,12; 25,3.8.27; *Jer* 32,1; 39,1.2; 52,6.12; *Ezekiel* 33,21; 40,1 have elicited a variety of hypotheses and explanations. It is not our goal to rehearse these here⁹¹. Our concern is the method of regnal calculation, whatever the starting point. The approximate Hebrew equivalents of the Akkadian term *rēsh sharrūti* (*Jer* 26,1; 27,1; 28,1; 49,34) are sometimes cited as proof of the accession year system before 587. Given the fact that some view these as redactional⁹² or literary⁹³, it is preferable to draw conclusions from the inner correlation of dates. We shall analyze three issues in this regard: 1. the two captures of Jerusalem, 2. the reign of Jehoiakim, and 3. the reign of Zedekiah.

1. The two captures of Jerusalem

The conflict between BM 21946 and *Jer* 52,28-29, on the one hand, and *2 K* 24,12; *2K* 25,2.8; *Jer* 52,6.12 on the other, is well known. The former texts situate the two capitulations of Jerusalem in Nebuchadnezzar's 7th and

90. Finegan, *op. cit.* (n. 31), p. 37.

91. For a rapid survey of positions taken, see H. Cazelles, « 587 ou 586 », in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth, Essays in Honour of David Noel Freedman*, C.L. Meyers and M. O'Connor eds, Winona Lake 1983.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 428.

93. Merrill, *loc. cit.* (n. 54), p. 428.

18th years while the latter speak of his 8th and 19th years (the Babylonian Chronicle is lacking for the second date). For Freedman⁹⁴, Albright⁹⁵, Finegan⁹⁶, Cazelles⁹⁷ and Kutsch⁹⁸ the two groups of texts refer to the same precise date under varying Babylonian regnal years. BM 21946 and *Jer* 52,28.29 postdate. The system employed in the other texts is variously explained. It has been called either a form of antedating⁹⁹, or proof of the belief in Nebuchadnezzar's reign from 605¹⁰⁰. In either case postdating is assumed for all reigns in all texts except Nebuchadnezzar's in those texts which speak of his 8th and 19th years. Cazelles offers an alternative explanation of the discrepancy. A primitive Judaeon calculation, using an « absolute » or « royal » system (i.e. regnal years calculated from the precise date of accession — on the Egyptian model) ignorant of the use of the accession year, and based on a Tishri New Year, has undergone a post-exilic redaction in light of Babylonian practices. This redaction inserted accession years and calculated from a Nisan New Year. The result yields the following redactional equivalences : Jehoiakim 4 = Nebuchadnezzar 1 ; Zedekiah 1 = Nebuchadnezzar 9 ; Zedekiah 10 = Nebuchadnezzar 19. Thus pre-exilic absolute dating is translated to postdating in a later redaction¹⁰¹.

The second approach, whose best known advocates are Freedy and Redford¹⁰², and Malamat¹⁰³, harmonizes BM 21946 and the divergent biblical texts by positing a Tishri New Year, and insisting on a two phase deportation (Malamat). Postdating is thus assumed for all reigns in all texts including all references to Nebuchadnezzar.

While the Tishri New Year hypothesis allows the reconciliation of the majority of the dates involved, the existence of such a New Year has been seriously called into question by Lemaire with reference to the dating system in the Arad ostraca¹⁰⁴. A serious response is required. If a Tishri New Year is rejected, then at least some dates cannot be calculated by postdating. Cazelles proposes no specific date for the « Babylonian » redaction. Nor

94. D.N. Freedman, « The Babylonian Chronicle », *BA* 19, 1956, pp. 50-60.

95. W.F. Albright, « The Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar Chronicles », *BASOR* 143, 1956, pp. 28-33.

96. Finegan, *op. cit.* (n. 31), p. 208.

97. Cazelles, *loc. cit.* (n. 91), p. 427.

98. E.Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten des Ezechielbuches, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis*, Freiburg and Göttingen 1985, p. 196.

99. Finegan, *op. cit.* (n. 31), p. 208.

100. Freedman, *loc. cit.* (n. 94), pp. 57 sq.

101. Cazelles, *loc. cit.* (n. 91), pp. 429-430.

102. *Loc. cit.* (n. 24), pp. 462-485.

103. « The Last Kings of Judah and the Fall of Jerusalem », *IEJ* 18, 1968, pp. 137-156.

104. Lemaire, *loc. cit.* (n. 23), pp. 364-366.

does he explain why the accession year would be unknown in Judah immediately before the exile, despite the fact that a Nisan New Year was used from 603 or 597. Furthermore, *Jer* 52,28-29, which Cazelles does not reject as late, seems to date in conformity with an accurate Babylonian postdating system. In light of these considerations and the actual calculation of Jehoiakim's reign (see below), the present writer is reticent to deny late pre-exilic knowledge and use of the accession year.

An equally viable possibility is to accept the suggestion of Kutsch and those he follows, whereby Nebuchadnezzar's reign was exceptionally calculated from Nisan 605 in Judaeen sources. In any case, we note that some postdating is assumed in all of the previously cited systems of calculation. It is only totally eliminated from Cazelles' scheme if *Jer* 52,28.29 is considered as post-exilic.

2. *The Reign of Jehoiakim*

It is generally accepted that Jehoiakim assumed the Judaeen throne in the early fall of 609 following the death of Josiah at Megiddo in the preceding months¹⁰⁵. *2 K* 23,31 gives Jehoahaz his successor a 3 month reign (Siwan-Tammuz-Ab 609). Jehoiakim was installed by Neco either before¹⁰⁶ or after¹⁰⁷ Tishri 609. His 1st year is counted from either Nisan 608¹⁰⁸, Tishri 608¹⁰⁹ or Tishri 609¹¹⁰. He is said to have reigned 11 years (*2 K* 23,36 ; *2 Chr* 36,5). His reign was followed by the 3 month reign of his son Jehoiachin (*2 K* 24,8, *2 Chr* 36,5), who was deposed on 2 Adar 597 (BM 21946 ; *2 K* 24,8). It seems likely that Jehoiakim died or was deposed by Heshwan (Nov.-Dec.) 598. The significant point for our discussion is the following. If in attributing an 11 year reign to Jehoiakim the biblical texts cited antedate (thus reckoning Jehoiakim's 1st year from Nisan 609 or Tishri 610), the first capture of Jerusalem would fall in 599/598 (= Nebuchadnezzar 6), contradicting all biblical and Babylonian sources. If Jehoiakim was installed after Tishri 609, and his antedated 1st year was counted from 1 Tishri 609, and the calculation of the New Year was advanced from Tishri to Nisan around 605, as is sometimes maintained, then no conflict exists and antedating can be maintained.

On the system of « absolute » calculation, however, the end of Jehoiakim's 11th year would fall six months before 2 Adar 597, leaving a rather long gap for the 3 month reign of Jehoiachin. What is more, if we date

105. Finegan, *op. cit.* (n. 31), p. 200.

106. *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

107. Malamat, *loc. cit.* (n. 103), p. 141.

108. Kutsch, *op. cit.* (n. 98), p. 75.

109. Malamat, *loc. cit.* (n. 103), p. 141.

110. Cazelles, *loc. cit.* (n. 91), p. 429.

Jehoiakim's death as occurring three to four months before 2 Adar 597, it must be seen as taking place in approximately the second month of his 12th regnal year. It would thus seem that the internal coordination of the dates in *Kings* and *Chronicles* favours postdating, and precludes absolute dating for Jehoiakim's reign.

3. *The Reign of Zedekiah*

Zedekiah was enthroned on 2 Adar 597 and reigned 11 years (BM 21946 ; 2 *K* 24,17.18 ; 2 *Chr* 36,11). His 1st regnal year has been counted from either 2 Adar 597¹¹¹, 1 Nisan 597¹¹², or 1 Tishri 597¹¹³. Jerusalem's destruction is situated in his 11th year (2 *K* 25,2-4.8 ; *Jer* 39,2 ; 52,12). We need only note that if antedating is used, thus reckoning his 1st year from Tishri or Nisan 598, his 11th year would correspond to 588-587, Nebuchadnezzar's 17th year, contradicting all biblical and Babylonian sources. In this case, however, both absolute and postdating may yield an acceptable result — 587 (= Nebuchadnezzar 18).

The foregoing evidence inclines the present writer to posit the use of post-dating, not only in a putative post-exilic redaction to harmonize Judaeen and Babylonian chronologies, but in the internal calculation of the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah.

The data is far less abundant with reference to the exilic period itself. In *Ezekiel*, the vast majority of the dates are calculated from the beginning of Jehoiachin's captivity (1,2 ; 33,21 ; 40,1), and are thus not directly relevant to the system of regnal calculations. Similarly, the references to Evil-Marduk in 2 *K* 25,27 and *Jer* 52,31 are inconclusive.

Moving to post-exilic data, two extra-biblical texts which can be dated with precision confirm that the accession year system was still in use after the redaction of the book of *Haggai*.

Document number 33 in Grelot's *Documents araméens d'Égypte*¹¹⁴ refers to the *r's mlkwt' kzy 'rthššš*. This is undoubtedly a reference to an accession year. This text is probably to be dated 2 January 464 B.C.E. Papyrus 1 from Dāliyah contains the text « [...] *b20 l'dr šnt 2 r's mlkwt [d]ryhwš mlk' bšmry[n mdynt' ...]* »¹¹⁵. Evidently in 335 the 2nd year of Arses was also « the accession year of Darius the king ».

111. *Ibid.*

112. Kutsch, *op. cit.* (n. 98), p. 75 ; Finegan, *op. cit.* (n. 31), pp. 206-207.

113. Malamat, *loc. cit.* (n. 103), p. 147.

114. P. Grelot, *Documents araméens d'Égypte*, Paris 1972 = A.A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*, Oxford 1923, No. 6.

115. F.M. Cross, « Papyri of the Fourth Century B.C. from Dāliyah », in *New Directions in Biblical Archaeology*, D.N. Freedman and J.C. Greenfield eds, Garden City 1969, p. 48 ; « Samaria Papyrus I : An Aramaic Slave Conveyance of 335 B.C.E. found in the Wadi ed-Dāliyah », in *N. Avigad Volume, EriS*, 1985, pp. 7-17, pl. II.

The later books of *Chronicles* and *Ezra-Nehemiah* are less relevant to our investigation and can be passed over more briefly. 2 *Chr* 36 concurs with 2 *K* and attributes to Jehoiakim (v. 5) and Zedekiah (v. 11) 11 year reigns. As noted above this may presuppose an accession year system. The first year of Cyrus (2 *Chr* 36,22 ; *Ez* 1,1 ; 6,3) is most likely the year begun in Nisan 538 following his conquest of Babylon. *Neh* 1,1 and 2,1 are inconclusive. An accession year calculation may be implied at *Neh* 5,14 where the 20th to 32nd years of Artaxerxes are calculated as 12 years. Had the non-accession system been used, the result would have been 13 years¹¹⁶.

The preceding discussion leaves us with the following question : according to what system would the compiler of the book of *Haggai* have reckoned Darius' rule ?

Perhaps the answer is best given in the following terms. The possibility that *Haggai* antedates cannot completely be ruled out. Nevertheless we do witness a progressive incursion of Babylonian scribal practices, specifically as it relates to chronological conventions, from the closing years of the 7th century. Numerically noted months appear. A Nisan New Year is used in non-biblical texts, and may be presupposed in some biblical texts. The order of the date elements moves in the direction of conformity to Babylonian and Persian usage. This being the overall situation we suggest, until new evidence emerges, that the compiler of *Hag-Zc*, at work around 516, would be most likely to postdate, beginning with 1 Nisan 521 as Darius' first year. The text of *Haggai* freely acknowledges Darius as king (1,1 etc.). The term *pehah* is applied to Zerubbabel without hesitation or embarrassment. The eschatological oracles of 2,6-9.20-23 are not to be read as anti-Persian. We thus see no reason for the book of *Haggai* to have used any other reckoning than the official Persian one. Waterman¹¹⁷ and John Bright¹¹⁸ argue on scribal grounds that *Haggai* uses the non-accession year system of dating. Waterman, however, cites only *Neh* 1,1 and 2,1 as proof of this practice. The relative lateness of these dates with reference to *Haggai*, and the alternative possible explanations proposed for them make this an unconvincing proof of antedating in *Haggai*.

A second approach is taken by E.J. Bickerman. He maintains that Darius, having assassinated Gaumata, would have antedated the beginning of his reign to coincide with the death of Cambyses and so deny any legitimacy to Gaumata¹¹⁹. He cites several historical examples of this phenomenon, including the regnal computation of Cambyses in Egypt. Thus *Haggai*, for Bickerman, counts the time of Gaumata's revolts in Babylon and Persia as Darius' accession year, and the calendar year beginning the 27 March 522

116. V. Coucke, « Chronologie biblique », *DBS* II, col. 1273.

117. Waterman, *loc. cit.* (n. 1), pp. 73-78.

118. *Op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 370, n. 66.

119. Bickerman, *loc. cit.* (n. 3), pp. 25 sqq.

as his first regnal year. The 2nd year of Darius, for *Haggai*, would have begun 14 April 521, when the Persian Empire as in the midst of revolutionary chaos.

The present writer suggests that Bickerman's hypothesis is not to be followed for the following reasons : first, it runs counter to Darius' own boasts in DB that his military successes were achieved in his first year as king. Whether with Borger we count the assassination of Gaumata as inaugurating the regnal year and being its first military success, or with Wiesehöfer we see Darius' year as beginning with the first military engagement following his assassination of Gaumata, it is clear that Darius, in DB at least, counts his accession from the date of Gaumata's death (DB, col. II, §§ 10-15).

Unlike Cambyses (with reference to Psammeticus III), Darius does not want the period of Gaumata's false kingship to pass out of memory ! In the text of the inscription, he specifically dates the slaying of Gaumata and counts this as the beginning of his reign¹²⁰.

Why then should Darius' accession have been dated from the time of Gaumata's accession by his court and (even more unlikely) by the author of the editorial framework of *Haggai* ? It would seem improbable that any official scribe should use a system which designated the year described in the Behistun Inscription « the first year of my reign » as the « second year of Darius ». In point of fact, it may well have been these same scribes who sent copies of DB throughout the Empire. Furthermore, as Wolff notes, the remainder of the year ending in April 521 had to be counted as Darius' accession year as it was already Cambyses 8th year¹²¹.

A second reason speaks against Bickerman's suggestion. He admits that the majority of exegetes believe that *Haggai* refers to the year 520-519 B.C. His only reason for pushing the date higher is the assumption that Haggai announced the imminent collapse of the Persian Empire in short delay. It is thus primarily an exegetical decision that determines his chronological position. The validity of this decision will be examined below. If the exegetical evidence is lacking, the need for the high « Persian Court » calculation is eliminated. It should be noted in passing that even if a 521 date were accepted, the intervals of time involved would be too large to assume, as do Waterman and others, that Haggai would have been unaware of the events in Persia¹²². The present author thus finds no conclusive evidence for the use of antedating in *Haggai*.

120. See the comments by Shahbazi cited in Wiesehöfer, *op. cit.* (n. 38), p. 218. Wiesehöfer insists that in DB « vor dem Tod des Magiers war Dareios noch nicht König ».

121. Wolff, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 56. Wolff includes a detailed refutation of Bickerman's position in his excursus on pp. 54-56. Wolff's conclusions in many respects confirm the positions reached by the present author.

122. Ackroyd, *loc. cit.* (n. 4), 1958, pp. 17-18.

V. Haggai and Judaeen independence

Before closing the present discussion, we must respond to the claim that the text of *Haggai* predicts the imminent collapse of the Persian Empire, encourages Zerubbabel to active rebellion and must be understood in the context of Persian instability. The response to this point cannot be fully developed here. It has been made elsewhere¹²³ and would go far beyond the scope of the present essay. Let two points, however, be made clearly. The first point concerns the temporal indicator 'ôd 'ahat m^eaṭ hî' (*Hag* 2,6) which is sometimes cited as evidence that Haggai's words presuppose a situation of political instability. With regards to the textual critical question, the LXX reading would seem to reflect only 'ôd 'ahat¹²⁴. Mitchell¹²⁵ (and with some hesitation, Ackroyd) following Wellhausen, suggests that the MT reflects a conflation of two alternative readings¹²⁶. The present writer finds it difficult to envisage 'ahat hî' standing alone as an alternative reading to 'ôd m^eaṭ. Thus with Wolff, Amsler, Chary, Petersen and Meyers and Meyers¹²⁷, we opt for the retention of the complete phrase. The latter two authors are probably correct in stating : « The uniqueness and strangeness of the term argue for its originality »¹²⁸. W. Rudolph, following E. Sellin, suggests the LXX may have dropped the last two words due to their failure to find fulfillment¹²⁹.

With reference to the meaning of these words, we can make the following observations. An idiom close to the present phrase is 'ôd m^eaṭ. It is found in *Ex* 17,14 ; *Ps* 37,10 ; *Is* 10,25 ; 29,17 ; *Jer* 51,33 and *Hos* 1,4. Its sense is quite simple « very soon » or « in just a little while ». It is integration of 'ahat and hî' into 'ôd m^eaṭ that renders the phrase perplexing. The feminine 'ahat is used to denote the adverbial abstract idea « once ». It can-

123. Bentzen, *loc. cit.* (n. 72), pp. 497 sq.

124. P.R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration*, OTL, London 1968, p. 153, n. 3.

125. G. Mitchell *et al.*, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, ICC, New York 1912, p. 65.

126. Ackroyd, *op. cit.* (n. 124), p. 153, n. 3. S. Amsler notes that the LXX is followed by Van Hoonacker, Sellin and Hurst. S. Amsler, *Aggée Zacharie 1-8*, in *Aggée, Zacharie, Malachie, Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament* XIc, Neuchatel 1981, p. 34.

127. Wolff, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 51 ; T. Chary, *Aggée-Zacharie-Malachie*, Paris 1969, pp. 26-27 ; Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 8), pp. 61-62 ; Meyers and Meyers, *op. cit.* (n. 11), p. 52.

128. Meyers and Meyers, *ibid.*, p. 52.

129. W. Rudolph, *Haggai, Sacharja 1-8, 9-14, Maleachi, KAT XIII-4*, Gütersloh 1976, p. 41. One could argue that hî' is in fact the predicate of m^eaṭ. The question of subject-predicate accord in nominal phrases is a delicate one. In Cowley's papyrus no. 33, l. 20, a similar gender accord problem occurs. Cowley calls it a simple mistake. One could similarly argue for an orthographic error here. On the other hand, in certain cases, rules of accord may have been more flexible than is often assumed.

not modify *m^eaṭ* because of its gender, and word order¹³⁰. *hī* supplies the predicate, and is feminine presumably by attraction to *'aḥat* or out of a sense of generality¹³¹.

Two translations seem possible. One might presuppose with Wolff and Meyers and Meyers the insertion of *'aḥat* into the phrase *'ôd m^eaṭ* to give a sense of urgency¹³². *hī* would provide the copula. This would yield the translation : « Nur noch eine kurze Frist ist es » or « in only a moment ». Alternatively, with T. Chary one may conclude that « les deux parties se complètent bien, sans être synonymes, comme l'a sans doute pensé le traducteur grec qui n'a conservé que le *'ôd 'aḥat* » and translate : « Encore une fois — ce sera bientôt »¹³³. Similarly Rudolph translates, « Einmal noch — in Bälde.¹³⁴ »

As Petersen succinctly points out, the principal question is whether or not to attribute a repetitive sense to *'ôd*¹³⁵. It is clear that *'ôd* can carry both a continuous (*Gen* 18,22) or repetitive (*Gen* 4,25) sense. The question is simply the following : does the term here refer to a waiting period that will continue or an act of shaking to be repeated ? If *'aḥat* is an interpolation into *'ôd m^eaṭ* a repetitive sense is difficult to see. If, on the other hand, *'aḥat* functions adverbially, as in *Ex* 30,10 ; *Lev* 16,34 and *2 K* 6,10 and *'ôd* is given a repetitive sense as in *Zc* 1,17 ; 2,16b and 8,4¹³⁶, then the first two words read, quite smoothly, « once again ».

With reference to the historical context reflected in the text of *Haggai*, one point seems crystal clear whatever option is chosen : the expression betrays absolutely nothing about the political situation in Palestine or Persia. It merely announces the imminent hope of eschatological intervention. The complaint of the seer in *Zc* 1,11 simply laments the fact that the appointed time has not arrived. It by no means indicates a radically different historical context for *Zc* 1 and *Hag* 2. In fact, if the repetitive sense of *'ôd*, mentioned above, is accepted, the phrase virtually implies that the political turmoil of the Empire had ceased but would begin again in the future. However, even if a repetitive sense is not allowed, the formula does not allow us to glimpse the state of affairs in Yehud or Persia. What is clear is that Haggai accepts the provisional benefits of Persian rule without admitting the ultimate triumph of Gentile power. Although the Persian crown temporarily afforded the *gôlâh* the possibility of temple reconstruction, its domi-

130. Rudolph, *op. cit.* (n. 129), p. 41 ; Mitchell, *op. cit.* (n. 125), p. 65.

131. GKC, p. 141 : 1-h ; Joüon, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique*, Rome 1947, p. 154 : 1-j.

132. Wolff, *op. cit.* (n. 26), p. 51 ; Meyers and Meyers, *op. cit.* (n. 11), p. 52.

133. Chary, *op. cit.* (n. 127), p. 27.

134. Rudolph, *op. cit.* (n. 129), p. 41.

135. Petersen, *op. cit.* (n. 8), pp. 61-62.

136. Rudolph, *op. cit.* (n. 129), p. 41. An elipsis of *pa'am* is also possible, cf. Mitchell, *op. cit.* (n. 125), p. 65.

nion over Yehud was, for the prophet, transitory. That Haggai should announce these eschatological events as imminent tells us more about his theology and faith than the political situation around him. O. Kaiser, commenting on the similar and more frequently used expression 'ōd m'e'at in its occurrence in *Is* 10,25, states : « In the fundamental note of this oracle of salvation, that it will be fulfilled soon, we can see that all true faith is at the same time an imminent expectation »¹³⁷. The same must be said of *Haggai*. Space does not permit an analysis of *Hag* 2,6-9.20-33. We maintain, however, that these oracles employ traditional eschatological terminology and cannot, in an uncritical and wooden fashion, be used to reconstruct the then current political climate.

The second point concerns the role of Zerubbabel in 2,6-9.20-23. On what grounds can it be argued that he is being urged on to a messianic conspiracy or any active role against the Persian forces¹³⁸ ? All the verbs in 2,6-9.20-23 put either Yahweh or the armies of the nations as subject¹³⁹. It is Yahweh who will shake the heavens, the earth and the nations (2,6.7). It is He who will bring in the treasure and fill his house with glory (2,8-9). It is He who will overthrow the thrones of the nations. The armies of the nations will destroy one another¹⁴⁰ and, out of the smoldering ruins of this eschatological chaos, Zerubbabel will be installed as Yahweh's chosen and Precious one. Like the eschatological scenarios of *Zc* 14 and *Dan* 7, the elects of God remain quiet until the Kingdom is given to them. This is surely the significance of « that day » (2,23) — the day of Yahweh's eschatological intervention, deliverance and establishment of His kingdom...

We conclude this section by affirming that there is no evidence to indicate that the author of *Haggai* used any other system of reckoning than the Babylonian-Persian one. This system was known and used in Palestine from the late pre-exilic period. Furthermore there are no unequivocal indications in the text of *Haggai* of any instability in the Persian Empire or political aspirations on the part of Haggai or Zerubbabel.

Conclusions

The present study has led this author to the following conclusions :

1. The date formulae in *Haggai*, based on their form and function, may be taken into account for purposes of historical analysis.
2. The situation in the Persian Empire was by and large restored to calm by the end of Darius' 1st year (March 520). Zerubbabel was the delegated

137. O. Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-12 : A Commentary, OTL*, Philadelphia 1972, p. 49.

138. Bentzen has successfully demonstrated the extreme unlikelihood of this, given the theological climate of the day, *loc. cit.* (n. 72), *passim*.

139. *Ibid.*; p. 497.

140. Here, with Beuken, we see a typically chronistic scenario.

Persian representative of the Jewish enclave around Jerusalem and exercised an authority commensurate to his post. He was loyal to the Persian throne.

3. The regnal calculation of the book of *Haggai* is consistent with Persian and later Jewish procedures. An accession year system is to be assumed.
4. Nothing in the text of *Haggai* belies a situation of imminent imperial collapse or revolutionary fervour.

The present writer concludes therefore that the 2nd year of Darius in the text of *Haggai* corresponds to the Julian year April 520 — April 519, and that Haggai's oracles must be heard against the backdrop of the *Pax Persica*, not the uncertainties of Darius' 1st regnal year. In light of the foregoing evidence, it would seem that the book of *Haggai* should not be read as an incitement to nationalistic and political aspirations in Judah. Rather it should be considered as a first step in a long and sometimes stormy process of accommodation to the political rule of a foreign power, while tenaciously clinging to received eschatological hopes, universal in scope. It is in this climate of « partial realisation » of the hopes of the community of returnees that this early reflection of post-exilic thought must be understood¹⁴¹.

141. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Professor A. Lemaire for his help, suggestions and criticism during the preparation of this study.