

ORIENTING THE EVENT: REGISTER AND THE DAY OF YHWH IN THE
PROPHETIC BOOK OF JOEL

By

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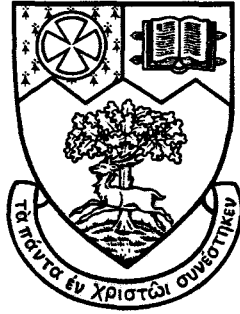
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ABSTRACT

“Orienting the Event: Register and the Day of YHWH in the Prophetic Book of Joel”

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This dissertation brings the insights of linguistic discourse analysis, and particularly of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), to bear on the prophetic book of Joel in order to clarify the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in the book. The concepts of register and genre as defined by SFL, along with the related concepts of context of situation, context of culture, and context of text (or co-text), provide helpful tools that both dovetail with the problems and goals of other kinds of synchronic analysis and give new and valuable insights. By applying register analysis to the various passages that deal with the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel, the dissertation identifies the registers of the four sections of the book and compares and contrasts the various registers of each of these sections, making use of this analysis to shed light on the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in each section. Following this is a description of the linguistic register, the context of situation, and the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel as an entire text.

The Day of YHWH in the book of Joel is a future moment of theophanic intervention, an inevitable day of destruction and salvation. Key to the theology of the Day of YHWH in Joel is the relational orientation of the readers/hearers of the book to YHWH. The book of Joel is thus a communicative act that calls for repentance grounded in worship of YHWH and that promises deliverance from the Day and a

glorious eschatological future for those who heed the book's call to proper orientation toward YHWH.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- BASOR* – *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BHRG – Van der Merwe, Christo H. J., Jan H. Kroeze, and Jackie A. Naudé. *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. London: Continuum, 1999.
BSac – *Bibliotheca Sacra*
BYU Studies – *Brigham Young University Studies*
CBQ – *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBR – *Currents in Biblical Research*
CTM – *Currents in Theology and Mission*
DBSJ – *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal*
GTJ – *Grace Theological Journal*
HUCA – *Hebrew Union College Annual*
IBHS – Waltke, Bruce K. and M. O'Connor. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.
IFG2 – Halliday, M. A. K. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 2nd Edition. London: Edward Arnold, 1985.
IFG3 – Halliday, M. A. K. and C. M. I. M. Matthiessen. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 3rd Edition. London: Hodder Arnold, 2004.
JANES – *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society*
JBL – *Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBPR – *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research*
JBQ – *Jewish Biblical Quarterly*
JHS – *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*
JL – *Journal of Linguistics*
JNSL – *Journal of Northwest Semitic Language*
J. Orthopt. Res. – *Journal of Orthoptera Research*
JOTT – *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics*
JETS – *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JSS – *Journal for the Study of Semitics*
JTS – *Journal of Theological Studies*
LHBOTS – *Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies*
LHS – *Language and the Human Sciences*
NICOT – *New International Commentary on the Old Testament*
OTL – *Old Testament Library*
RB – *Revue Biblique*
RBL – *Revue of Biblical Literature*
RQ – *Restoration Quarterly*
TTE – *The Theological Educator*
VT – *Vetus Testamentum*
ZAW – *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1. Introduction

The Day of YHWH in the book of Joel is a future moment of theophanic intervention, an inevitable day of destruction and salvation. Key to the theology of the Day of YHWH in Joel is the relational orientation of the readers/hearers of the book to YHWH. The book of Joel is thus a communicative act that calls for repentance grounded in worship of YHWH and that promises deliverance from the Day and a glorious eschatological future for those who heed the book's call to proper orientation toward YHWH.

The precise phrase יום יהוה occurs 13 times in the Minor Prophets or Book of the Twelve and 15 times in the Bible as a whole. It has been examined extensively, and the various investigations have included both diachronic attempts to determine the origins and development of the phrase in ancient Israel, and explorations of the phrase from a primarily synchronic perspective, often related to recent work in the so-called Book of the Twelve. These synchronic analyses identify the Day of YHWH as a major theological and redactional theme in the Book of the Twelve.¹

However, though there exists a great deal of scholarship on both the book of Joel and on the Day of YHWH in the prophetic literature, lacunae still exist in our understanding of the nature and function of the Day in the book of Joel. In cases where interpreters take significant note of genre and form in Joel, analyses tend to be grounded

¹ For an overview of the various arguments regarding the unity of the Book of the Twelve see: Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*; Nogalski, *Redactional Processes*; Nogalski, "Joel As 'Literary Anchor'"; Nogalski, "Recurring Themes"; Nogalski and Sweeney, *Reading and Hearing*; Redditt and Scharf, *Thematic Threads*; Rendtorff, "How to Read." The strongest dissenting voice is likely Ehud Ben Zvi. For his full argument see Ben Zvi, "Twelve Prophetic Books." My own view is that the Twelve should likely be regarded as something like a tightly bound anthology, over against a single book on the one hand, or a loose collection on the other hand. See section 2.2.4 below.

in the (at times problematic) assumptions of classic form criticism.² Consequently, recent developments in both form criticism and linguistic analysis are not taken into account. Additionally, synchronic explorations of the Day of YHWH in the prophetic literature, while becoming more numerous, have either focused on specific books or passages other than the book of Joel, or have taken a broader view, examining the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in the Book of the Twelve as a whole. Consequently, there is a need for a sustained exploration of the nature and function of the Day in the book of Joel specifically. A sustained examination of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel also provides an opportunity to bring to bear recent methodological perspectives on the linguistic examination of form and genre to the interpretive task.

Therefore, in this dissertation I will bring the insights of linguistic discourse analysis, and particularly of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), to bear on the book of Joel in order to clarify the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in the book. The concepts of register as defined by SFL (see ch. 2 below), along with the related concepts of context of situation, context of culture, and context of text (or co-text), provide helpful tools that both dovetail with the problems and goals of other kinds of synchronic analysis and give new and valuable insights. By applying register analysis to the various passages that deal with the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel, I will identify the registers of the four sections of the book and compare and contrast the various registers of each of these sections. I will then provide, for each section, descriptions of the linguistic register, and the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in that particular passage. When this task is complete, I will provide a description of the linguistic register,

² See, for instance: Wolff, *Joel*; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*. See ch. 2 below for more on this issue.

the context of situation, and the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel as an entire text.

The goals of this project are both thematic/theological and methodological. First, I will demonstrate that register helps to orient readers to the nature and function of the Day in specific passages, thereby contributing to the synchronic picture of the theology of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel as a whole. Second, I will demonstrate that register analysis grounded in SFL can help to illuminate the linguistic (and thus social-semiotic) context of biblical texts, thereby giving helpful contextual cues to aid in interpretation. This deployment of register analysis also provides a helpful methodological avenue for the greater project of biblical form criticism, particularly the so-called new form criticism.³

2. Background: The Day of YHWH and the Book of Joel

2.1. The Day of YHWH

The Day of YHWH has received considerable attention from biblical scholars during the past century.⁴ Initially this attention was focused primarily on identifying a basic theme or origin that might explain the use of the phrase in the prophetic literature.⁵

³ For an overview of the history and development of form criticism and a discussion of the rise of new form criticism in recent years, see Toffelmire, “Form Criticism.”

⁴ I will not interact here with pre-modern views on the nature of the Day of YHWH. For the most part these readings view the Day as synonymous with the coming of the Messiah (for Jewish interpreters) or the second coming of Christ (for Christian interpreters). For an overview of Christian readings in the pre-modern and modern periods (focusing in the modern period on Dispensationalist readings) see: Blaising, “The Day of the Lord,” 3–8.

⁵ Note that for the purpose of clarity I will use several words to describe the Day of YHWH, depending on what is meant. I will use “phrase” to refer simply to the phrase itself; “concept” to signify a broader, and essentially synchronic, notion or theology of the Day that may or may not be operative in the OT generally and the prophetic literature especially; and “tradition” to refer to a complex of ideas operative in the religion and culture of ancient Israel that may or may not underlie the use of the phrase in the biblical literature, and that is thus principally diachronic in perspective. Precisely what passages in the OT/HB include reference to the concept of a special or particular day related to YHWH is a matter of much debate. Some of the scholars I examine below limit conversation about the Day of YHWH to particular instances of the actual phrase (or, more commonly, the actual phrase and minor variations on the phrase). Others see the phrase as the starting point for a discussion of the concept that might range further afield

Explorations of the background of the phrase are often (although not always) related to the broader scholarly project of describing the history and development of the religion of ancient Israel.⁶ As the *religionsgeschichtlich* project has waned, however, interest in the Day of YHWH has not dwindled but merely shifted in focus. Two recent complementary (but not identical) strains of research into the prophetic literature, redactional and thematic/theological studies of the Book of the Twelve, have interacted with the phrase. Redactional studies have traced the use of the concept of YHWH's Day to illuminate the literary development of the Book of the Twelve (and its redactional precursors). Literary and theological analyses have similarly focused on the Day of YHWH, but with an eye to its function as a unifying theme or concept in the overarching theology and message of the Book of the Twelve. Scholars who argue for the internal literary or theological coherence of the Twelve have at times explained this overarching unity as a redactional feature. I have organized the following summary of research into the Day of YHWH around these three general programs of research. In so doing, I have stressed the work of particular scholars, in order to emphasize that, despite the variety of points of overlap and dependence of the various viewpoints, each scholar has significant and distinctive insights into the question of the nature and origins of the Day of YHWH.

into other texts. Still others suggest that there is no need to limit the conversation to or begin the conversation with reference to the specific phrase "the day of YHWH." Given that this dissertation examines the Day of YHWH as it occurs in the book of Joel, where the explicit phrase is used repeatedly, the question of the relationship between the phrase and the concept is, to a degree, moot. My general view on the matter is that examinations of the concept of the Day of YHWH in the OT/HB should not be limited to specific occurrences of the phrase, but that specific occurrences of the phrase are helpful starting points for exploring other references to a day or days related specifically to YHWH.

⁶ Though it is worth noting that redactional and thematic/theological explorations of the Day of YHWH still often make significant reference to the historical background and development of the concept.

2.1.1. The Day of YHWH in Diachronic Perspective

Boase summarizes the basic views on the background of the Day as follows:

“The Day of Yahweh as a day of battle, the day of Yahweh as an eschatological concept and the link with the enthronement festival as a day of Yahweh’s epiphany – dominate the discussion throughout the twentieth century.”⁷ In addition to these conceptualizations, scholars have also characterized the Day of YHWH as a broadly theophanic event,⁸ and as a reference to YHWH’s involvement in history.⁹ Many believe that these various descriptions of the nature and background of the Day overlap.

2.1.1.1. Gerhard von Rad

Essential to any discussion of the Day is von Rad’s seminal view that the Day of YHWH flows out of the Israelite Holy War tradition.¹⁰ He suggests that the Day of YHWH is a “pure event of war,”¹¹ and that “the entire material for this imagery which surrounds the concept of the Day of Yahweh is of old-Israelite origin.”¹² Von Rad also takes the somewhat unique perspective that, although the antiquity of the concept of the Day is of very great importance, the oldest occurrence (Amos 5:18) is not a serviceable starting place for an investigation into the tradition. That is, he believes that Amos is insufficiently “unequivocal” regarding the nature of the Day, and that other passages provide more fully developed treatments of the Day and a better foundation from which to work (e.g., Isa 13, 34; Ezek 7; Joel 2).¹³

⁷ Boase, *The Fulfilment of Doom?*, 108.

⁸ Weiss, “Origin”; Yair Hoffman, “The Day of the Lord.”

⁹ Everson, “Days of Yahweh.”

¹⁰ von Rad, “Origin.”

¹¹ von Rad, “Origin,” 103.

¹² von Rad, “Origin,” 104.

¹³ von Rad, “Origin,” 98–99.

2.1.1.2. Ladislav Černý

Ladislav Černý's work on the Day of YHWH suggests that the Day is, in the prophetic literature, a fundamentally eschatological concept, although its roots are not eschatological in nature.¹⁴ Černý grounds the pre-history of the concept in the ancient Hebrew tradition of YHWH's theophanic interventions in the history of the people of Israel. These interventions, including events like YHWH's destruction of the Amorites at Gibeon (Josh 10:10–14), form the substrate of what will later become a more fully-fledged Day of YHWH concept.¹⁵ This pre-existing tradition of a Day of YHWH's action was, in Černý's view, entirely unsystematic, and was neither singular nor eschatological in character. Over time the prophets came to regard the Day less as a somewhat nebulous moment of YHWH's intervention in the history of Israel and more as a singular Day with a scope that was no longer simply national, but global.¹⁶ Similarly, they came to a more eschatological understanding of the coming Day as YHWH's (primarily destructive) intervention.¹⁷ Černý thus rejects Mowinckel's cultic foundation hypothesis for the Day of YHWH (see below), although he does draw on Mowinckel to establish, over and against Gunkel and Gressmann, that the Day is a fundamentally Israelite tradition that is not imported from Israel's geographical and cultural neighbours.¹⁸

¹⁴ Indeed, for Černý the Day of YHWH is "the basic notion of Hebrew eschatology. . . ." (Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, vii).

¹⁵ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 53–59.

¹⁶ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 79.

¹⁷ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 80. For an evaluation of certain Day of the Lord texts that tends toward a similar notion of the establishment of YHWH's eschatological justice, but with a less negative emphasis, see: Kline, "Primal Parousia."

¹⁸ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 45.

Černý discerns three social elements that he believes were the impetus for the development of the Day from an indistinct tradition related to YHWH's historical intervention into a well-defined eschatology. These are: the shift from nomadic to agricultural or sedentary life, and the consequent social stratification; the dangerous geographical and geopolitical position of the Hebrew states (threatened by super-powers all around); and the drive within Yahwistic religion toward personal righteousness, exemplified particularly in the theology of the prophets.¹⁹ In concert with these factors, the historical realities of the Assyrian threat and internal political struggles created a situation of instability in Israel and Judah.²⁰

Consequently, Černý believes that “[w]ith Amos we are at the very end of that evolutionary process in Hebrew religion which led to eschatology,”²¹ whereas most scholars who examine the tradition of the Day of YHWH in the prophets use Amos 5:18–20 as their point of departure. So by the time of Amos, Israel and Judah had a well-developed eschatological vision of a coming Day of YHWH, and it is in this that Amos's opponents hope. Amos, of course, seeks to correct them as to the true nature of this coming eschatological Day. Thus the pre-exilic books portray the Day of YHWH as a day of terrible wrath and destruction, a day of punishment for the covenant infidelity of Israel and Judah.²² Although Černý takes little note of the development of the Day of YHWH tradition after the warnings of the pre-exilic prophets, he does briefly suggest that after the conquest of the two Hebrew nations Lam 2:21–22 makes retrospective use of the Day tradition by equating the Day with the destruction of Jerusalem.²³ The Day

¹⁹ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 87–88.

²⁰ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 92, 104.

²¹ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 80.

²² Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 92, 105.

²³ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 105.

tradition also undergoes a post-exilic shift in which the Day is directed not against the people of YHWH, but against the surrounding nations, thus making the Day a time of deliverance for God's people.²⁴ For Černý, then, the Day of YHWH is the sum total of Hebrew eschatology, which developed out of a pre-existing (though ill-defined) tradition of YHWH's intervention into the world. In pre-exilic times it had to do with warnings of YHWH's coming judgment upon his people, and in post-exilic times it expressed the future hope of YHWH's judgment on the nations and of his deliverance of his people.

2.1.1.3. *Joseph Bourke*

Joseph Bourke suggests that several underlying theological traditions come together to create a unique theology of the Day of YHWH in Joel. Nevertheless, Joel's theology flows organically from earlier understandings of the Day and other elements of Israelite theology. Although he regards the book as a unity, Bourke divides Joel into two related parts: chs. 1–2 and chs. 3–4.²⁵ Part 1 concerns the immediate historical reality of a plague of locusts and a drought. The Day in this section is localized and historically particular. Part 2 presents the Day as a future cosmic eschatological reality.²⁶ Bourke sees a kind of typological mirroring between these two separate Days. The first is localized, the second cosmic. The first is historically immediate (perhaps written in the

²⁴ Černý, *The Day of Yahweh*, 106.

²⁵ Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 2," 5. This is a relatively common division. For more on the structure of Joel see below.

²⁶ Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 2," 22. Bourke's definition of "eschatology" depends strongly upon that of Mowinckel. For Bourke, the eschatological orientation of Joel 3–4 (and especially 4) suggests a complete and final reshaping of the world (Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 194–95). Crenshaw sees a similar relationship between the Day of chs. 1–2 and chs. 3–4, noting that the latter involves a transfer of the calamities of the Day onto foreign nations in the wake of Judah's returning to YHWH (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 50).

midst of the plague), whereas the second is eschatologically near, i.e., “near in the sense that it can be anticipated already with readiness, though it may yet be unfulfilled for hundreds of years.”²⁷

The historically immediate Day (i.e., the locust plague) provides YHWH’s people with a final warning and an indication that YHWH’s patience with them is exhausted;²⁸ the eschatological Day provides them with hope and comfort. These functions are tied to Bourke’s understanding of the tradition of the Day of YHWH, and to the intersection of that tradition with elements of deuteronomistic and priestly theology in Joel. Bourke suggests that the Day of YHWH has its origins in the eighth century, which was a time of significant political and economic turmoil. In this context the people recalled the mighty works of YHWH in the past, and incidents of YHWH’s deliverance, such as Jericho and the defeat of the Amorites and the Midianites. These memories established, maintained, and assured Israel’s identity as a people and were grounded in Israel’s understanding of the character of her God.²⁹ From these ancient memories and traditions of YHWH’s deliverance, there developed the hope of a Day on which YHWH would utterly destroy Israel’s enemies and establish for himself a new people. In so doing, YHWH would demonstrate fidelity to his covenant with Israel.³⁰ Beginning with Amos, however, the prophets begin to speak of a day of judgment in the opposite sense: not *for* Israel, but *against* her, due to the sin of the people. This day has the same basic characteristics but, instead of emphasizing the promise of the covenant, it emphasizes the negative consequence of being in breach of the covenant. Violators are

²⁷ Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 2,” 22; “proche dans ce sens qu’on peut s’y attendre déjà avec empressement, quoi qu’elle soit encore éloignée de centaines d’années.”

²⁸ Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 2,” 23.

²⁹ Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 2,” 18–19.

³⁰ Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 2,” 19.

placed outside of YHWH's protection, and thus Israel is in danger of being categorized as YHWH's enemy on the day in which he destroys his enemies (i.e., the Day of YHWH).³¹

Since he grounds his understanding of the Day of YHWH in the concept of covenant, it is not surprising that Bourke suggests that the Day has its origins in YHWH's holiness. In this connection, Bourke also notes Joel's parallel theology of YHWH as Lord, which is tied both to Israel's tradition of Holy War and to the prophetic tradition of the distant enemy, or the enemy from the North.³² These war and enemy traditions are played out in Joel in relation to the locust plague, a literal plague that he describes metaphorically as a terrible invading army.³³

Bourke considers this tradition of the invading enemy to be an element of deuteronomistic theology, which is one of the theological traditions he weaves together to help to explain the use of the Day of YHWH in Joel.³⁴ Joel's message is tied in particular to the deuteronomistic theology of "Sin, Chastisement, Penitence, and Deliverance."³⁵ Bourke also notices elements of priestly theology, such as the sudden halt to the Day of YHWH in Joel 2 in response to the people's supplication. This incident has a parallel in Aaron's act of expiation in Num 16, which brings a stop to YHWH's judgment on the people.³⁶ He finds another incidence of priestly theology in Pt. 2 of Joel, and especially at the close of ch. 4,³⁷ where YHWH's manifest presence

³¹ Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 2," 19.

³² Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 203–04.

³³ Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 206–07.

³⁴ Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 191, 207–08.

³⁵ Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 192. "...Pêché, Châtiment, Pénitence, Délivrance..."

³⁶ Strangely, Bourke cites Num 17:6–15 here, but surely he must be referring to Num 16:46–50. In any case, the point concerning the warning and expiation theology of the deuteronomistic history remains (Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 192).

³⁷ Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 199. Bourke identifies Ezekiel as the essential source of this theology.

(כנר) and occupation of the mercy seat serve as a sign of his favour upon and protection of his people.

Bourke identifies three themes or movements in Joel behind which lie the three theological traditions discussed above. These three themes are the Day of YHWH and the invasion of the foreign army; the destruction and drought, followed by a restoration to fertility; and the eschatological age. The three traditions that underpin these are, respectively, the Day of YHWH, the deuteronomic theology discussed above, and an exilic and post-exilic eschatology that is grounded especially in the Priestly theology of Ezekiel.³⁸ The most important of these traditions is the Day of YHWH. Bourke suggests that “the prophets since Amos returned to the Sinaitic concept of Yahweh as a terrible God, burning and jealous, after the more benign and humanitarian emphases of the solomonic and post-solomonic periods.”³⁹ By the time of Joel, this theme has become fixed to the point of separation from its original historical referentiality (Israelite Holy War). Joel is therefore able to adapt it to refer to two separate events: the Day of the locusts, when the people of YHWH are endangered by their sin, and the infinitely enlarged eschatological Day, when the repentant people are saved and their enemies destroyed.⁴⁰

2.1.1.4. *Brevard Childs*

Childs argues that the Day of YHWH is connected to two tradition complexes. The first of these, the “northerner tradition,” is alluded to in Joel 2:20 (and in many

³⁸ Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1,” 210–11.

³⁹ Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1,” 210; “les prophètes depuis Amos retournent à la conception sinaïtique de Yahvé comme Dieu furieux, brûlant et jaloux, après l’accent plus bénin et humanitaire de la période salomonienne et post-salomonienne.”

⁴⁰ Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1,” 210.

other prophetic texts). Childs notes that locust plagues generally entered Israel and Judah from the south, and thus the identification of the locusts in Joel with the Northerner suggests a metaphorical reference to an army.⁴¹ To this ancient Israelite tradition the post-exilic text of Joel fuses theophanic language, and the ancient chaos tradition.⁴² The word רעש that connects Joel 2:10 and 4:16 is a technical term for “the final shaking of the world at the return of chaos.”⁴³ Thus, in Joel, the Northerner, which traditionally refers to a real military power,⁴⁴ combines with the chaos tradition so that the enemy takes on supernatural scope and power.⁴⁵ Childs sees in this both a movement toward apocalyptic eschatology in the late prophetic book of Joel, and the mythologization of a pre-existing historical tradition.⁴⁶

2.1.1.5. Sigmund Mowinckel

Sigmund Mowinckel links the Day of the Lord to his famous (or infamous) Day of Enthronement.⁴⁷ This yearly enthronement was purportedly the day of YHWH’s manifestation and was linked to the cultic New Year celebration. Mowinckel sees in the New Year celebration and the Day of YHWH a similar complex of ideas. The cultic day involved YHWH’s symbolic enthronement over the people of Israel, as well as YHWH’s victory over the cosmic enemy. The cult generally, and the enthronement

⁴¹ Childs, “Enemy from the North,” 197. So also: Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 232–33.

⁴² Childs, “Enemy from the North,” 197.

⁴³ Childs, “Enemy from the North,” 197.

⁴⁴ Childs makes particular reference to the use of the Northerner tradition in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel (Childs, “Enemy from the North,” 191–97).

⁴⁵ Childs, “Enemy from the North,” 197.

⁴⁶ Childs, “Enemy from the North,” 198.

⁴⁷ For a full description of the festival day see: Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel’s Worship*, 1:106–129. Both Mowinckel’s supposed festival and its connection to the Day of YHWH have been extensively criticized, and it is generally accepted that there is little evidence of the festival, and no particular evidence linking the supposed festival with the Day of the YHWH as found in the prophetic literature. See, for instance: Petersen, *The Royal God*, 30–31.

psalms in particular, are connected to the *Urzeit/Endzeit* themes found in the OT/HB and various kinds of ANE literature. Thus we find creation imagery, the occasional presence of the primordial monsters Rahab or Leviathan, and themes of YHWH's judgment and dominion.⁴⁸ Moreover, the cult becomes an idealization of the creation myth and the associated themes of YHWH's rule and dominion over all things (both earthly and heavenly). Here the great and fundamental truths of the world are played out in microcosm, and the enthronement psalms give us a window into that microcosm. Thus the Day of YHWH is connected with the yearly day of the cultic enthronement of YHWH, and consequently takes on both a mythic and eschatological character.⁴⁹ The yearly day of enthronement, then, was a day of new creation, new exodus, battle, salvation, judgment and doom, and the victory of YHWH.⁵⁰

Although the New Year festival was the original day of YHWH's epiphany, Mowinckel suggests that over the course of time the complex of ideas associated with this day became divorced from the actual festival. In so doing, he resolves a somewhat sticky problem with regard to the cultic origins of the Day of YHWH in the prophetic literature. As Jeppesen has noted, if the Day refers to a yearly festival, then one wonders why it does not appear to be an event with a fixed and knowable occurrence in Amos 5:18–20, which is generally considered the earliest prophetic reference to the Day of YHWH.⁵¹ According to Jeppesen, Mowinckel suggests, that YHWH's epiphany was originally a cultic event, but that over time there developed the notion that one might

⁴⁸ Mowinckel, *Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 1:140–151. Note that in appealing to creation and re-creation, and to primordial chaos imagery, Mowinckel actually subsumes Gunkel's more eschatological readings of these psalms under the cultic reading (Mowinckel, *Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 1:187).

⁴⁹ Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:109–15.

⁵⁰ Jeppesen, "The Day of Yahweh," 44.

⁵¹ Jeppesen, "The Day of Yahweh," 49–50.

anticipate an extra-cultic manifestation of YHWH's presence. What is more, this later development of an extra-cultic manifestation took on a distinctly political (i.e., concerned with Israel and the nations), as opposed to cosmic, dimension.⁵² Mowinckel uses the term "eschatology" (albeit hesitantly, and in an intentionally vague way) to refer to this later understanding of YHWH's epiphany. In its later prophetic instantiation, therefore, the Day of YHWH retained the notion of YHWH's victory, judgment, and reshaping of the world, while shedding its cultic *Sitz im Leben*, becoming reoriented toward the political arena, and becoming linked to an eschatological future.⁵³

2.1.1.6. Klaus D. Schunck

Schunck accepts von Rad's Holy War tradition as the underlying framework for the Day of YHWH but suggests that it is also necessary to establish the relationship of the concept to prophetic eschatology.⁵⁴ Schunck also rejects views that connect the Day to the Israelite cult (e.g., those of Mowinckel and Černý) and views that draw connections to the kingship of YHWH (e.g., those of Eichrodt and Vreizen).⁵⁵ Instead, he concludes that some, though not all, instances of the Day of YHWH should be characterized as eschatological. Those instances drawn from pre-exilic prophets such as Isaiah and Amos are, for Schunck, clearly non-eschatological in that they refer to YHWH's intervention in Israel's history. Post-exilic prophetic texts, however, suggest an eschatological future day.⁵⁶ Schunck thus envisages a distinct shift in the nature of the Day of YHWH concept as Israelite history unfolds.

⁵² Jeppesen, "The Day of Yahweh," 50.

⁵³ Jeppesen, "The Day of Yahweh," 50

⁵⁴ Schunck, "Strukturlinien," 321.

⁵⁵ Schunck, "Strukturlinien," 330.

⁵⁶ Schunck, "Strukturlinien," 329–30.

2.1.1.7. *Frank Moore Cross Jr.*

Frank Moore Cross Jr. observes two distinct strains of research into the Israelite cult, identified typically with von Rad and Mowinckel, respectively. In the strain associated with von Rad, the central element of the cult is the dramatic re-enactment of the covenant renewal ceremony. In the strain associated with Mowinckel, the central element is the enthronement of YHWH as king and victor in the great cosmogonic struggle.⁵⁷ The origin of the former view lies in the war tradition of ancient Israel; that of the latter in the mythic complex of early Canaanite religion involving the triumph of the deity over the great cosmogonic enemy (e.g., Ba'al over Yamm).⁵⁸ The purpose of Cross's essay is to suggest that in the Israelite cult these two emphases merged, and that "the two apparently opposite views of the history of Israel's cultus prove to be complementary."⁵⁹ What is of interest to our discussion of the Day of YHWH is Cross's suggestion that prophetic eschatology is a product of the interplay of these two tradition complexes in the Israelite cult. Thus for Cross, "[the]Day of Yahweh is the day of victory in holy warfare; it is also the Day of Yahweh's festival, when the ritual conquest was enacted in the presence of the Ark, the procession of the King of Glory to the Temple. . . ."⁶⁰ After a fashion, then, Cross suggests a rapprochement between the views of Mowinckel and von Rad.

⁵⁷ Cross, "Divine Warrior," 11.

⁵⁸ Cross, "Divine Warrior," 21.

⁵⁹ Cross, "Divine Warrior," 27.

⁶⁰ Cross, "Divine Warrior," 30.

2.1.1.8. *Meir Weiss*

Weiss departs significantly from von Rad and Cross by rejecting the Holy War tradition completely, suggesting, rather, that the Day of YHWH tradition is in no way pre-prophetic but that it was in fact coined by Amos as a part of “the ancient motif-complex of the theophany-descriptions.”⁶¹

2.1.1.9. *Yair Hoffmann*

Hoffmann also sees the Day of YHWH as a theophanic event, suggesting, like Weiss, that the military imagery found in some Day passages is due to the fact that theophanies at times have militaristic overtones, and not that the Day of YHWH is fundamentally militaristic.⁶² In addition to his focus on the Day as theophanic event, Hoffman also argues strongly for basing all decisions regarding Day of the Lord texts (that is, decisions regarding which are, and which are not, legitimate Day of the Lord texts) upon the precise “term” יום יהוה.⁶³ So, according to Hoffmann, texts that refer to some coming Day without making use of the “term” (i.e., the phrase, in my terminology) should be relegated to secondary status and can only legitimately be referred to as Day of YHWH passages to the degree that they are consistent with passages that make use of the technical “term.”

2.1.1.10. *Patrick D. Miller*

Miller’s brief study builds on the work of von Rad and Cross and suggests that the Holy War tradition that stands behind the Day of YHWH has an additional relation

⁶¹ Weiss, “Origin,” 60.

⁶² Hoffmann, “Day of the Lord,” 44.

⁶³ Hoffman, “Day of the Lord,” 38.

to the divine council of YHWH. According to Miller, “the divine council participates as a cosmic or heavenly army in the eschatological wars of Yahweh, those military activities associated with the Day of Yahweh, and...those conflicts (or conflict?) [involve] a joint participation of human or earthly forces and divine or heavenly armies.”⁶⁴ Miller traces the appropriation of this tradition in several prophetic passages, two of which are of particular interest. In Isa 13, first person suffixes related to “warriors” and “consecrated ones” suggest that the participants are the members of the divine council.⁶⁵ And in Joel, Miller sees the call to YHWH to “bring down your warriors” (Joel 4:11b) as a clear reference to the “heavenly army.”⁶⁶ Miller bridges the gap between the supposed original context of the Holy War tradition (the ancient tribal league) and the use of the tradition in the writing prophets by appealing to the appropriation of the tradition by the dynamic ninth century prophets Elijah and Elisha. He makes reference to 2 Kgs 2:11, 6:15–19, and 7:6 to show that these prophetic figures made reference to a divine army in the service of YHWH for the defence of his people.⁶⁷ So when the writing prophets make use of military language in the context of references to the Day of YHWH, this language has its roots in both the ancient Holy War tradition and in the tradition of the divine council as YHWH’s warriors.⁶⁸

2.1.1.11. *F.C. Fensham*

Beginning with but extending von Rad’s Holy War concept, Fensham suggests that the Day of the Lord is based on ANE suzerain/vassal contracts and that it represents

⁶⁴ Miller, “Divine Council,” 100–01.

⁶⁵ Miller, “Divine Council,” 102–03.

⁶⁶ Miller, “Divine Council,” 104.

⁶⁷ Miller, “Divine Council,” 106–07.

⁶⁸ Miller, “Divine Council,” 107.

the time when the curses in such contracts have come due. The Day is thus primarily a day of destruction for Israel's enemies and victory for Israel, save in those cases in which Israel is herself in violation of the covenant; then she is also categorized as an enemy.⁶⁹ Fensham also suggests that, as a monotheistic God, YHWH fulfills the roles that would generally be occupied by several deities in other ANE religions (e.g., Ninurta, Shamash, Adad, and Marduk), and so the manifestations of his divine power take on various forms on the Day of YHWH.⁷⁰

2.1.1.12. *Bernard De Souza*

Not unlike Schunk, De Souza sees multiple senses in the HB/OT uses of the Day of YHWH concept.⁷¹ He suggests nine characteristics of the Day of YHWH as it is found in the HB/OT: 1) it is a day of punishment, 2) the Day does not end history but involves YHWH's intervention in human history, 3) the Day does not concern individuals but nations, 4) the Day is an expression of YHWH's wrath, 5) it is a day of YHWH's vengeance, 6) YHWH uses a nation or nations as instruments of judgment, 7) the Day is sometimes accompanied by strange natural phenomena (e.g., the sun is darkened), 8) the Day is "close at hand," 9) the Day occurs many times.⁷² De Souza also suggests that each reference to the Day has one of three senses. The first, that of a day of

⁶⁹ Fensham, "Possible Origin," 92, 95.

⁷⁰ Fensham, "Possible Origin," 95.

⁷¹ It should be noted that De Souza's principal aim is to explore the relationship between the Day of YHWH theme in the OT and its appropriation and use in the NT and Christian theology. In this De Souza joins several theologians who examine the concept of the Day in relation to Christian theology. I will not give a full overview of the work of these scholars here, because they generally focus on issues relating to biblical and systematic theology, which are beyond the purview of this project. See, for instance, the following: Cole, "Prewrath Interpretation"; Cole, "The Day of the Lord Is Coming"; Mayhue, "Prophet's Watchword"; Pike, "Anatomy of an Expression." For an exploration of the Day of YHWH that is theologically oriented, but from a Jewish point of view, see: Bakon, "Day of the Lord."

⁷² De Souza, "The Coming of the Lord," 171–75. Note that De Souza recognizes that each reference to the Day of YHWH in the OT/HB does not present all nine of these criteria, but offers them as generalized common features.

intervention in human history as seen in past events, focuses on a day of judgment against YHWH's chosen people, e.g., the destruction of Jerusalem found in Lam 1:12 and 2:22. These features are associated with pre-exilic prophecy.⁷³ The second sense of the Day has to do with the exilic period. Here the Day still refers to YHWH's judgment, but the object of his judgment now becomes foreign nations.⁷⁴ The third sense of Day of YHWH applies to post-exilic texts that, once again, involve judgment against YHWH's people.⁷⁵ De Souza also contends that the Day can refer either to historical events or to eschatological events.⁷⁶ Significantly, for our purposes, he finds both historical and eschatological uses of the Day of YHWH theme in the book of Joel.⁷⁷

2.1.1.13. Gösta Ahlström

Like Cross, Ahlström believes that the Day of YHWH is related to both the cult and to the Holy War tradition, but that its basic foundation is the cult. The connection between the cult and the Day of YHWH is the concept of YHWH's manifestation or theophany. However, whereas Mowinckel regards the locus of YHWH's manifestation as being a development or departure away from the cult and toward a free-floating eschatological event, Ahlström continues to ground the Day of YHWH in the cultic event. "The cultic day of Yahweh is a day of his coming, his theophany, his war against his enemies, and his reestablishment of the covenant, complete with its accompanying *sedeqah*, for his people."⁷⁸ For Ahlström, standing behind even the Amos 5 reference to

⁷³ De Souza, "The Coming of the Lord," 170, 176.

⁷⁴ De Souza, "The Coming of the Lord," 176.

⁷⁵ De Souza, "The Coming of the Lord," 176.

⁷⁶ De Souza, "The Coming of the Lord," 171. De Souza does not clearly define "eschatological," but seems to mean by it some future intervention of YHWH in human history.

⁷⁷ De Souza, "The Coming of the Lord," 171.

⁷⁸ Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 69.

the Day of YHWH is a well-known cultic day that is being practiced incorrectly.⁷⁹ Using Cross's work as a bridge, Ahlström draws together this cultic theophany and von Rad's Holy War tradition, although here again he wishes to ground even this tradition of Holy War in the cult.⁸⁰ In Ahlström's view, von Rad glosses over YHWH's role as mythical/cosmic warrior in favour of YHWH as historical warrior. Ahlström rightly notes that there is no fixed line of demarcation between the "mythic" and the "historic" in ancient Israel.⁸¹ As for the question of the eschatological nature of the Day of YHWH, Ahlström turns again to the cult for explanations. "What has often been called eschatology is really but prophetic use of the old cosmogony as it was expressed in liturgy."⁸² Ahlström does not see eschatology in Joel, but rather the exploration of the mythic concepts that are the purview of religion, framed in a future time. In essence, Ahlström suggests that eschatology is entirely absent from the prophetic literature. This is, more than anything, a product of his overly narrow definition of eschatology as "a doctrine concerning the end of the worldly era..."⁸³ A broader definition of eschatology, which would include YHWH's decisive future incursion into world events, does fit within the scope of what Ahlström sees in prophecies like Joel 4.⁸⁴ In any case, Ahlström clearly considers the Day of YHWH to be a fundamentally cultic concept, and so he reads the entire book of Joel through a cultic lens.

⁷⁹ Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 64.

⁸⁰ Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 67.

⁸¹ Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 71.

⁸² Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 73.

⁸³ Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 89.

⁸⁴ See, for example, Barton's definition of eschatology as "a radical break with the ordinary progress of history" (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 27).

2.1.1.14. *Joseph Everson*

Everson begins with the suggestion that the more basic of the Day of YHWH texts are those that refer to past historical events. These include Lam 1–2, Ezek 13:1–9, Jer 46:2–12, and Isa 22:1–14.⁸⁵ Everson’s interest in these particular texts stems from his belief that they can be reliably located within their original historical situation, thus giving a clearer picture of the nature of the concept of the Day of YHWH.⁸⁶ From this starting point Everson goes on to suggest that the Day of YHWH was not concerned with some future day of judgment *per se*, but was instead “a powerful concept available to the prophets for their use in interpreting various momentous events – past, future or imminent.”⁸⁷ He also concludes that the Day is indeed connected primarily to the concept of war, though not in the sense that von Rad suggests. Rather, Everson contends that the notion of a day of God’s judgment does not have to do with a mythical conception of divine Holy War, because it was simply connected to historical wars that affected Judah, such as Sennacherib’s invasion, and the destruction of Jerusalem. Depictions of natural calamities and plagues found in (later and so-called “apocalyptic”) texts are simply an extension of this notion of historical war and represent war perpetrated on the people by YHWH.⁸⁸

2.1.1.15. *Douglas K. Stuart*

Stuart accepts von Rad’s basic conclusions regarding the Holy War tradition and the Day of YHWH, although he believes that some elements of the Holy War tradition

⁸⁵ Everson, “Days of Yahweh,” 331.

⁸⁶ Everson, “Days of Yahweh,” 335.

⁸⁷ Everson, “Days of Yahweh,” 335.

⁸⁸ Everson, “Days of Yahweh,” 336–37.

may have been imported into Israelite religion.⁸⁹ Of particular importance to Stuart is the connection between the Holy War tradition and the broader ANE concept that a king euphemistically wins an entire war on a single decisive day of victory.⁹⁰ Judgment in the OT/HB is regarded as a punctiliar event, and thus a “day” of judgment.⁹¹ But Stuart goes on to survey texts from Ur, Assyria, Syria, Hatti, Phoenicia, Egypt, and Moab, noting that where they recount a military conflict that spanned a considerable time they may refer to a single day of triumph.⁹² Thus references to a Day of YHWH need not refer to a literal day or moment, but may relate to a decisive or final moment at the end of a long drawn-out process, or may simply be a euphemism that underscores the power and efficacy of the divine king, YHWH. In addition to this argument regarding the temporal nature of the Day, Stuart also notes the breadth of the concept. He suggests that the OT/HB presents multiple Days, some of judgment and some of salvation. “A given day of Yahweh is thus ultimately what a particular author says it is.”⁹³

2.1.1.16. *Ronald Simkins*

Simkins, after a brief overview of the major positions on the tradition complex standing behind the use of the Day of YHWH in Joel (including especially those of von Rad and Mowinckel), takes up von Rad’s Holy War position as well as Childs’ views on the Northerner tradition. The book of Joel, for Simkins, is the result of the prophet’s attempt to make sense of a set of locust plagues that are devastating Judah. The second of the two plagues, described in ch. 2, is presented in grand cosmological terms that

⁸⁹ Stuart, “Sovereign’s Day of Conquest,” 159.

⁹⁰ Stuart, “Sovereign’s Day of Conquest,” 159.

⁹¹ Stuart, “Sovereign’s Day of Conquest,” 161.

⁹² Stuart, “Sovereign’s Day of Conquest,” 161–63.

⁹³ Stuart, “Sovereign’s Day of Conquest,” 161.

Simkins believes to be derived from the Day of YHWH tradition.⁹⁴ Additionally, the locusts become tied to YHWH's judgment of the nations. Simkins sees the judgment of Judah and the judgment of the nations as integral elements in the Northerner and Day of YHWH tradition complexes. For Joel the locusts are a natural embodiment of the enemy from the North – YHWH's army sent against his people – and the standard traditional conclusion to the incursion of the enemy is its destruction, and also the destruction of other offending foreign nations.⁹⁵ So the use of the Day of YHWH tradition incorporates into the locust event this standard theme of judgment against the nations.⁹⁶ “The locusts and nations, then, are like opposite sides of the same coin, two dimensions of the day of Yahweh.”⁹⁷ The second locust plague of Joel 2, the salvation of Judah in Joel 3, and the destruction of the nations in Joel 4 are all, therefore, references to the same event: the Day of YHWH.⁹⁸ Although Simkins draws on von Rad's conclusions, he also goes to great lengths to demonstrate that the traditional division between “history” and “nature” held by scholars like von Rad involves the importation of foreign thought-patterns to the prophetic literature.⁹⁹ Thus, for Simkins, the locust plague is not a “natural” phenomenon opposed to the “human” phenomenon of the enemy from the North. The locusts fit as naturally into that tradition complex as any human army, for both fall within the created order, which is representative of the true conceptual division native to the religion of ancient Israel, that of Creator and creation.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 269.

⁹⁵ Consider, for instance, the various oracles against the nations in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Simkins draws particular parallels to Ezek 38–39 (Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 270–71).

⁹⁶ Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 270.

⁹⁷ Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 273.

⁹⁸ Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 209.

⁹⁹ See Simkins's discussion of the influence of Hegel's philosophy of history on biblical scholarship (Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 1–30).

¹⁰⁰ Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 30.

2.1.1.17. *John Barton*

One of the more recent examinations of the Day of YHWH from a diachronic or historical perspective is Barton's essay on the Day, which takes the interplay between Amos and Joel as its basic biblical foundation. Barton proposes to consider the Day from both a diachronic and a synchronic (i.e., literary/canonical) point of view.¹⁰¹ With respect to the historical development of the Day of YHWH tradition, Barton reviews the positions of von Rad and Mowinckel as the majority positions and abstracts three very general points of agreement between them. First, there was in ancient Israel before the time of Amos a popular hope that YHWH would intervene in history and establish Israel/Judah's supremacy. Second, this hope had a degree of urgency, and its adherents expected that YHWH's intervention was imminent. Third, the people of Israel must have believed (like most ANE peoples), that YHWH's power extended over the entire world, but the classical prophets (or Isaiah and Amos at least) dramatically subvert this belief and prophesy that YHWH will actually turn on his own people (quite unlike standard ANE theology).¹⁰²

As far as the historical development of the Day tradition is concerned, Barton, like most interpreters, sees a dramatic reversal of expectations for the Day implied in Amos 5:18–20, which suggests that before Amos's time the Day was a fundamentally positive event in the popular *Zeitgeist*. In the book of Joel, which Barton dates to the post-exilic period, we find that the Day is an interpolation added by a redactor who uses it as a fundamentally hopeful eschatological concept.¹⁰³ Thus from the time of Amos to

¹⁰¹ Barton, "The Day of Yahweh," 68.

¹⁰² Barton, "The Day of Yahweh," 70–71.

¹⁰³ Barton, "The Day of Yahweh," 71–72.

the time of Joel “Amos’s prophecy of a coming day of judgment on Israel was gradually transmogrified into a hope for the great Day of Yahweh that would see other nations put down and Israel established in a position of leadership.”¹⁰⁴ There is, therefore, no real shift in the popular conception of the Day from before the time of Amos in the eighth century, to the time of Joel in the post-exilic period. Amos (and Isaiah) is thus an anomaly in the history of the tradition. This is an example, according to Barton, of Amos’s originality and genius.¹⁰⁵

Barton also briefly explores synchronic views of the Day of YHWH in the Minor Prophets. Here he interacts principally with Rendtorff’s work on the subject (see below). The synchronic Day of YHWH as interpreted canonically by Rendtorff and summarized by Barton is fundamentally hopeful. Joel provides a three-sided description of the Day: judgment against YHWH’s people, judgment against the nations, and final eschatological vindication for YHWH’s people.¹⁰⁶ By reading Amos as successive to Joel in the literary organization of the Twelve, Rendtorff also discerns in the final form of Amos’s prophecy a description of the three-fold nature of the Day.¹⁰⁷ Although Barton accepts that Rendtorff’s reading is synchronically legitimate, and that it has a kind of usefulness particularly for religious communities, he laments what he sees as the silencing of Amos’s distinct and original contribution. Rendtorff’s interpretation domesticates the radical “No!” of Amos, and no “radically incompatible” voice is left to challenge the comfortable and expected hopeful reading.¹⁰⁸ Despite some rather general commendations for the synchronic reading, then, Barton clearly prefers his own

¹⁰⁴ Barton, “The Day of Yahweh,” 73.

¹⁰⁵ Barton, “The Day of Yahweh,” 73.

¹⁰⁶ Barton, “The Day of Yahweh,” 75.

¹⁰⁷ Barton, “The Day of Yahweh,” 75–76.

¹⁰⁸ Barton, “The Day of Yahweh,” 77–78.

diachronic examination of the history of the Day of YHWH tradition, which presents very little (if any) development from the pre- to the post-exilic period.

2.1.1.18. *Daniella Ishai-Rosenboim*

With regard to the question of which passages should rightly be referred to as “Day of the Lord” passages, Ishai-Rosenboim argues against Hoffman’s suggestion that יום יהוה is a well understood term (or a term at all), and that this specific phrase should function as the primary criterion for determining possible passages that belong to a Day of the Lord motif. She defines a “term” as “one, specific and unchanged expression referring to one, specific and unchanged concept.”¹⁰⁹ Because the nature of the Day is not so specific and fixed as this, she consequently concludes that יום יהוה is not a specific term in the HB/OT, and so for the concept that she refers to as “‘The Day of the Lord’, ‘YHWH’s Day’ or the like,” the specific collocation יום יהוה should not function as the preferential starting point. Ishai-Rosenboim provides no alternative point of departure. She simply refers to the Day of YHWH as any day of YHWH’s interference in the natural course of history, but she does not indicate any particular criteria by which she has arrived at her conclusion.¹¹⁰

2.1.2. **The Day of YHWH in Redactional and Synchronic Perspective**

Besides the primarily diachronic attempts that I have just enumerated, several recent synchronic studies have also attempted to identify the sociological or historical

¹⁰⁹ Ishai-Rosenboim, “Ywm H’,” 395. It seems that Ishai-Rosenboim is referring to an extreme example of lexicalization, in which a word group achieves such a fixed status that it becomes a part of the accepted lexicon of a given language and should therefore no longer be treated as a group of words interacting syntactically. For an overview of this process of codification see: Halliday and Matthiessen, *Construing Experience*, 2–25.

¹¹⁰ Ishai-Rosenboim, “Ywm H’,” 401.

origins of the Day of YHWH motif. These generally attempt to show that the Day is an identifiable concept that can be traced in the prophetic literature, and especially in the Book of the Twelve. Significantly, these studies are not concerned only with the concept itself but with the broader goal of analyzing the Book of the Twelve as a redactional or thematic/theological unity.

2.1.2.1. *Willem S. Prinsloo*

Like Weiss and Hoffman, Prinsloo regards the Day of YHWH as an essentially theophanic event. However, he takes no stance on the development or pre-history of the concept. Instead, he grounds his view of the Day in his observations of the text of Joel.¹¹¹ Indeed, he suggests that the Day has different meanings when used by different prophets, implying that one must examine each text on its own terms.¹¹² As far as Joel's use of the Day is concerned, Prinsloo notes its close association with theophanic language, and suggests that a theophanic event occurs in each passage in which the term is found. In Joel 1 "the Yom tradition serves to stress the immanence of the Day, and its association with a crisis . . . of which Yahweh himself is the '*Urhehr*.'"¹¹³ The locust plague is a portent of the coming Day, and this understanding of the Day is continued and intensified in the second chapter of Joel.¹¹⁴ The Day of YHWH tradition is used differently in 3:1–5, where it no longer represents a terrifying warning but rather a source of hope for Judah. "In the present pericope [i.e., Joel 3:1–5] it functions

¹¹¹ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 35. Prinsloo's method is essentially descriptive biblical theology and is greatly influenced by Childs' work (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 1–2).

¹¹² Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 36.

¹¹³ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 36.

¹¹⁴ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 37, 40–41.

ambivalently, bringing salvation for Israel and doom for the nations.”¹¹⁵ This double-edged understanding of the Day continues in the final pericope of ch. 4.

2.1.2.2. *Greg A. King*

Greg King explores the Day of YHWH in the book of Zephaniah, providing a book-level synchronic reading.¹¹⁶ He believes that the restriction of the Day concept to occurrences of the precise phrase יום יהוה is unhelpful, but he does not provide specific criteria for determining when one is examining a passage connected to the concept.¹¹⁷ Additionally, he notes that previous Day of YHWH research has focused too heavily on the destructive nature of the Day and has failed to explore adequately its salvific nature. He aims to correct this imbalance in his examination of Zephaniah.¹¹⁸ Zephaniah, according to King, provides a multi-dimensional presentation of the Day. First, the Day is a time of YHWH’s intervention in human affairs, which is evident from the call to human silence before YHWH; the repeated use of פקד, which indicates visitation and adjudication; the fact that YHWH will search Jerusalem for wrongdoers; and the repeated use of first person declarations by YHWH regarding his intent to intrude in the lives of the people.¹¹⁹ Second, Zephaniah stresses not the Day itself but YHWH – this is the day of his coming. King sees this as a correction of the theological errors of Zephaniah’s audience (cf. Zeph 1:12).¹²⁰ Third, the Day demonstrates YHWH’s universal superiority over Judah and the nations, in terms of both his judgment and his

¹¹⁵ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 84.

¹¹⁶ King, “The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah,” 17. Like Prinsloo’s, King’s work is essentially descriptive biblical theology, though with more distinctly Christian overtones.

¹¹⁷ King, “The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah,” 16.

¹¹⁸ King, “The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah,” 16.

¹¹⁹ King, “The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah,” 18–19.

¹²⁰ King, “The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah,” 19–20.

salvation.¹²¹ Fourth, the Day involves the implementation of the terms of the Mosaic Covenant. The Covenant has, after a fashion, come due, and YHWH will mete out the concomitant curses and blessings.¹²² Related to this execution of the terms of the Covenant, the Day is simultaneously a time of judgment and salvation, depending upon one's stance in relation to the Covenant.¹²³ Finally, King notes that the Day is both an historical intrusion (like previous intrusions by YHWH into the history of Israel) and an eschatological event. Here King attempts to bridge two significant ways of seeing the Day, but he associates both with the tradition of YHWH's intervention on behalf of his people (e.g., in the Exodus), and with a final and complete intervention into the world. The Day of YHWH thus has the same character as YHWH's previous historical interventions, but it is final and conclusive.¹²⁴

2.1.2.3. *James Nogalski*

James Nogalski examines the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel in his discussion of the redactional function of Joel in the Book of the Twelve.¹²⁵ He argues that the use of the Day in Joel conforms closely to the use of the Day throughout the rest of the Book of the Twelve. This suggests to him "that Joel is the writing through which all major themes of the Twelve must travel."¹²⁶ The Day of YHWH in Joel is, for Nogalski at least, the key to understanding the function of the concept in the remainder of the Twelve. In a more synchronic vein, Nogalski examines explicit instances of יום

¹²¹ King, "The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah," 20–21.

¹²² King, "The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah," 26. Note that King suggests in passing that a covenant theology can be seen at work in Joel (27 n.33).

¹²³ King, "The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah," 29.

¹²⁴ King, "The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah," 32.

¹²⁵ For a more extensive examination of Nogalski's views on the role of Joel in the Twelve, see the overview of Joel scholarship below.

¹²⁶ Nogalski, "Joel as 'Literary Anchor'," 105.

יְהוָה, and their relationship with various other expressions that refer to days (e.g., בְּיוֹם הַהוּא) in a selection of passages from the Twelve. His goal is twofold: to gain a greater understanding of the Day of YHWH motif and to determine whether the Day motif provides evidence for thematic unity in the Book of the Twelve.¹²⁷ Confronting the question of which texts to include and exclude, Nogalski begins with the assumption that “[any] study of the day of YHWH must include more than the phrase יוֹם יְהוָה.”¹²⁸ He goes on to include variants with a modifying *lamed*, and to focus particularly on certain cases of the phrases בְּיוֹם הַהוּא and בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם.¹²⁹ The bulk of the study involves an examination of the days of divine intervention referred to in the books of Hosea, Joel, Amos, and Obadiah. Nogalski concludes that the four books present the Day concept in much the same way and that the similarities are particularly striking in Joel and Obadiah.¹³⁰

In addition to this redactionally oriented work, Nogalski has also provided an overview of the theology of the Book of the Twelve from a synchronic perspective. In this examination he identifies four unifying themes: the Day of YHWH, the fertility of the Land, the fate of God’s people, and theodicy.¹³¹ He begins his analysis of the function of the Day in the theology of the Twelve with two caveats; first, the Day is not a final day of judgment as “in later apocalyptic writings,”¹³² and second, the Day in the Twelve is not a single, unified concept. Different books see the Day in different ways, and individual books sometimes refer to multiple days of YHWH. For instance, “both

¹²⁷ Nogalski, “The Day(s),” 192. Even in his synchronic work, the redactional unity of the Twelve is a significant concern for Nogalski.

¹²⁸ Nogalski, “The Day(s),” 193.

¹²⁹ Nogalski, “The Day(s),” 193–194, and throughout.

¹³⁰ Nogalski, “The Day(s),” 212–213.

¹³¹ Nogalski, “Recurring Themes,” 125.

¹³² Nogalski, “Recurring Themes,” 125.

Joel and Obadiah envision a Day of YHWH's intervention first as the day of judgment against YHWH's own people, and as a broader day of recompense for the surrounding nations, particularly those who have taken advantage of Judah during its time of punishment."¹³³ The fundamental nature of the Day, for Nogalski, is as a time of direct intervention into the world by YHWH. He notes that this intervention always has three features: "the target, the time frame, and the means."¹³⁴ The Day may be directed against YHWH's people or against the nations (the target), in the near or imminent future or the distant future (the time frame), through the action of some tool (e.g., foreign armies) (means).¹³⁵

Although Nogalski does not trace the diachronic development of a Day of YHWH tradition, he does trace the literary development of the Day of YHWH concept in the Book of the Twelve. Thus, while abandoning the perspective of historical evolution, he emphasizes literary evolution, which leads him to conclude that the occurrences of the Day of YHWH motif at the close of the Book of the Twelve build consciously upon preceding instances. In Malachi, for example, he notices a movement away from nationalistic expectations for the Day and toward the Day as a time of the adjudication of individuals' orientation toward YHWH.¹³⁶ In terms of its place in the overall theology of the Book of the Twelve, the Day of YHWH supports the essential theme—that the listeners or readers of the Twelve must be "those who fear

¹³³ Nogalski, "Recurring Themes," 125–26.

¹³⁴ Nogalski, "Recurring Themes," 126.

¹³⁵ Nogalski, "Recurring Themes," 126.

¹³⁶ Nogalski, "Recurring Themes," 127.

YHWH”¹³⁷—by serving as both warning and comfort, “depending upon what one has learned from the story.”¹³⁸

2.1.2.4. *Marvin Sweeney*

In his exploration of the function of Joel in the Book of the Twelve, Sweeney briefly examines the nature of the Day of YHWH. Like Mowinckel, Sweeney believes that the yearly enacting of patterns of threat and deliverance in the cult were the foundation for a communal understanding of a Day on which YHWH acts.¹³⁹ He also regards the Day in Joel as both a time of threat and a time of deliverance for Judah and Jerusalem. The Day is a crisis that YHWH alone resolves.¹⁴⁰

2.1.2.5. *Rolf Rendtorff*

Rendtorff attempts, in a preliminary way, to read the Twelve as a theological unity. He traces the Day of YHWH as a developing theme that can be followed throughout the Twelve.¹⁴¹ His work, while notably synchronic in its focus on the entire Book of the Twelve and on tracing themes through the Twelve, also demonstrates a sensitivity to diachronic issues, which he considers to be “not only obvious but . . . marked explicitly.”¹⁴² Rendtorff also draws attention to the question of how other terms (particularly those related to repentance and salvation) relate to the Day motif in the Twelve.¹⁴³ He notes that the Day of the Lord is a significant theme that runs through the

¹³⁷ Nogalski, “Recurring Themes,” 135.

¹³⁸ Nogalski, “Recurring Themes,” 136.

¹³⁹ Sweeney, “Place and Function,” 143.

¹⁴⁰ Sweeney, “Place and Function,” 143.

¹⁴¹ Rendtorff, “Theological Unity.”

¹⁴² Rendtorff, “Theological Unity,” 87.

¹⁴³ Rendtorff, “Theological Unity,” 86.

Book of the Twelve,¹⁴⁴ and has both a degree of observable unity and a degree of contradiction and tension. He defines the Day as “a mighty, even terrible event, including destructive elements, coming from the divine sphere.”¹⁴⁵ The basic nature of the Day for Rendtorff is obviously negative. For instance, with respect to Joel 4, he observes that “the Day of the Lord affects only the nations...” and not Judah.¹⁴⁶

2.1.2.6. *Paul House*

House engages in a synchronic reading of the MT version of the Book of the Twelve, and a significant element of this reading consists of an exploration of the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in the Twelve. He attempts to investigate the connection between the judgment of YHWH and the people’s return to YHWH in the book of the Twelve.¹⁴⁷ By reading the Twelve synchronically, House sees shifts or developments in the Day of YHWH theme. As far as the book of Joel is concerned, the Day functions as a tool to bring about repentance, which it accomplishes.¹⁴⁸ As the book of Joel progresses, the Day no longer functions as a time of repentance (Judah has already repented), but as a Day of destruction for the nations. Both acts, repentance and judgment on the Day, “can give Israel a new beginning, since either option produces the end of dominant sin and the beginning of divine favour.”¹⁴⁹ In the book of Amos the prophet exhorts his hearers to avoid the Day by correcting their behaviour, but “[if] the prophet’s efforts fail due to a lack of returning, the day of the Lord itself will effect a

¹⁴⁴ And entirely central to the book of Joel (Rendtorff, “Alas for the Day,” 187).

¹⁴⁵ Rendtorff, “Alas for the Day,” 188. Rendtorff is somewhat vague when it comes to the time of the Day, or its relationship to eschatology.

¹⁴⁶ Rendtorff, “Alas for the Day,” 191.

¹⁴⁷ House, “Endings as New Beginnings,” 314.

¹⁴⁸ House, “Endings as New Beginnings,” 322–23.

¹⁴⁹ House, “Endings as New Beginnings,” 323.

new beginning.”¹⁵⁰ House reads the Day in Obadiah as judgment against the nations for their joy in the destruction of Jerusalem (which was itself a Day of YHWH against Judah).¹⁵¹ The Day shifts in Zephaniah to take on a universal scope, from which only individuals may escape. House suggests here that in earlier instances seeking YHWH forestalls the Day, but in Zephaniah the Day is inevitable.¹⁵² Finally, Zechariah and Malachi present the coming Day of YHWH as a time of judgment for the wicked, but of deliverance for the people of YHWH.¹⁵³ All in all House argues that a theology of returning to YHWH, whether through repentance or judgment on the Day of YHWH, is central to the Book of the Twelve.

2.1.3. The Day of YHWH: Preliminary Comments

The above review presents an extensive portrait of Day of YHWH research over the last several decades. This research reveals two basic points of departure for research into the Day. Diachronic work, like that of von Rad and Mowinckel, attempts to determine the nature of the tradition complex (or sets of complexes) underpinning the Day of YHWH in the religion and culture of ancient Israel. These examinations seek to establish which Day of YHWH text or texts should be considered more original and upon which traditions these texts depend. Diachronic scholarship attempts to bring to light the most accurate representation of the initial concept of the Day of YHWH and the ways in which that concept developed over the course of its use, and also attempts to describe the social context(s) in which the concept developed and was maintained. More recent studies have eschewed (or at least set aside) the question of the historical concept

¹⁵⁰ House, “Endings as New Beginnings,” 325.

¹⁵¹ House, “Endings as New Beginnings,” 326.

¹⁵² House, “Endings as New Beginnings,” 332.

¹⁵³ House, “Endings as New Beginnings,” 335–37.

of the Day in ancient Israel and have concentrated on examining the various Day passages, especially in relation to the problem of the redactional and thematic unity of the Book of the Twelve. This second approach pays somewhat less attention to determining the fundamental nature of the Day of YHWH as a tradition underlying the prophetic literature (although of course this question is not neglected completely).

Although diachronic analyses have increased our understanding of the Day of YHWH tradition, the movement away from determining the original, underlying, historical concept and its related context(s) is likely a helpful one because all attempts to unearth an underlying Day of YHWH tradition suffer from the fundamental methodological flaws of traditional historical criticism.¹⁵⁴ Yet although this new movement is now several decades old, its representatives have produced few systematic, monograph-length assessments of the Day of YHWH (in the Latter Prophets, the Book of the Twelve, or individual prophetic books) that are distinctly synchronic and focused on the motif itself, and not on other concerns such as redactional unity or disunity in the Twelve.¹⁵⁵ This dissertation addresses this gap in the research by using synchronic methods to examine the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel in order to clarify the nature of the concept in the prophetic literature in general and in the book of Joel in particular. Despite the fact that I use a principally synchronic approach and an explicitly text- and

¹⁵⁴ I am thinking here about such issues as determining which elements of a given book are more and less original according to problematic criteria, e.g., certain views of religious evolution. See, as an example of this thinking, Wellhausen's introduction to his famous *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*. For an assessment and deconstruction of historical criticism with respect to the prophetic literature, see: Conrad, *Reading the Latter Prophets*.

¹⁵⁵ For a very recent treatment of the Day of YHWH as a redactional issue, see Beck, *Der "Tag Yhwshs."* Beck's principal concern is whether or not the Day of YHWH passages in the Twelve can be considered evidence of intentional redaction for the collection as a whole. He concludes that there are indeed a great many literary relationships between Joel and various other prophetic books (including, but not limited to, the other books of the Twelve), but is unwilling to speak of a redacted Joel-Obadiah corpus or a Joel-related layer of editing in the Book of the Twelve (Beck, *Der "Tag Yhwshs,"* 201).

reader-centred hermeneutic,¹⁵⁶ the illumination of the use and function of the Day of YHWH concept in the book of Joel the results cannot but help any future attempt to understand the diachronic development of the theological tradition.

2.2. The Book of Joel

Although it consists of a mere 73 verses, the book of Joel has received considerable scholarly attention over the years. However, I will not provide a full overview of scholarship on every aspect of Joel, since this would be both onerous and entirely unnecessary for our purposes here. Rather, I will confine myself to a brief examination of certain central questions regarding the interpretation of the book. In so doing, I hope both to provide a sense of the scholarly discussions to date and to situate my examination of the Day of YHWH in Joel within a broader interpretive conversation.

This summary of the critical issues related to the book of Joel will include an examination of four topics: the debate about the provenance of the book, including questions of authorship and date of composition; the state of the text(s) of Joel; the structure of the book; and the place of Joel in the so-called Book of the Twelve.

2.2.1. Authorship and Date

Any discussion of the authorship of the book of Joel must contend with the fact that the book itself says nothing whatever about its author. There is, of course, the brief ascription of the words of the book to Joel son of Pethuel (Joel 1:1). One might argue

¹⁵⁶ By “text- and reader-centred” here I am referring, of course, to an ancient text and (principally) to its ancient readers. Consequently, there will still be significant discussion of and reference to historical context below. My understanding of the book’s “readers” or “implied readers” is consistent with Ben Zvi’s definition of a book’s “primary rereadership,” i.e., the readers suggested by the text itself, plus whatever additional historical information we may have about their social or material situation (Ben Zvi, “Prophetic Book,” 287).

that this superscription is evidence of an anonymous author or editor, who is recounting or arranging the prophecies of Joel son of Pethuel. The book never again mentions the prophet by name and it provides no other clear historical or situational markers, although the text contains much circumstantial evidence. Moreover, most scholars believe that no other biblical text refers to the Joel of the book of Joel.¹⁵⁷ Consequently, we have neither direct internal evidence nor external evidence as to the historical person Joel, nor to any conjectural author/editor who might have recorded his words, and so anything we might wish to say about Joel must be gleaned from the themes and message of the book that bears his name.

These deficiencies do not, however, put an end to the conversation about authorship. Indeed, the related question of the literary unity of the book of Joel has generated considerable discussion as to whether the book is the product of a single author, or of an author and a later editor or set of editors. As Crenshaw notes, most scholars assigned the book of Joel to a single author called “Joel” until critical scholars such as Vernes, Rothstein, and Duhm began to question the book’s unity. Duhm’s conclusions gained significant support in the early 20th century. “Duhm divided the book into prophetic speeches in poetic form (1:2—2:17) and speeches in prose with an apocalyptic bent dating from Maccabean times (2:18—4:21).”¹⁵⁸ Although the current critical consensus has shifted to favour unified authorship,¹⁵⁹ some scholars continue to propound a more complex history of authorship and redaction. The most prominent

¹⁵⁷ Certainly there are other Joels in the HB/OT, but none is referred to as the son of Pethuel, and in most cases some other lineage is specified. If nothing else, it is clear that “Joel” was a perfectly common name, especially in the post-exilic period. See 1 Sam 8:2; 1 Chr 4:35; 5:4, 8; 6:18, 21; 7:3; 15:7, 11, 17; 2 Chr 29:12; Ezra 10:43; Neh 11:9.

¹⁵⁸ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 29.

¹⁵⁹ Coggins, “Joel,” 93.

current defender of Duhm's hypothesis is likely John Barton.¹⁶⁰ He suggests that the theology and themes of parts 1 (1:1—2:27) and 2 (3:1—4:21 [2:28—3:21]) are fundamentally at odds with one another. The first half of Joel is not eschatological in the sense of being related to “a putative end time,”¹⁶¹ but part 2 is eschatological in this sense.¹⁶² Barton believes that Joel *may* be read as a unity, but that such a reading is not necessary, and that the text itself appears to be internally disjunctive.¹⁶³ Broadly speaking, proponents of multiple authorship suggest that the earlier elements, which include the bulk of chs. 1–2, refer to the historical reality of an actual locust plague, while the later elements, which include the bulk of chs. 3–4 and some additions to chs. 1–2 (notably the Day of YHWH references), are strongly eschatological, and perhaps even proto-apocalyptic in nature.¹⁶⁴ As Sweeney has indicated, such critiques tend to be the product of an implicitly developmentalist theory of genre, one that supposes that apocalyptic literature must have evolved (or devolved!) out of prophetic literature.¹⁶⁵

Proponents of the unity of Joel tend to argue their case on structural grounds. Wolff sums it up nicely in mentioning that Joel “very clearly exhibits two major parts. The possibility of understanding it would be foreclosed from the outset were we to attribute the parts to different authors.”¹⁶⁶ The argument in favour of unity thus accepts the fact that the book consists of two sections but then proceeds to suggest that these two

¹⁶⁰ Beck also accepts much of the basic hypothesis (Beck, *Der “Tag Yhwhs,”* ch. 5).

¹⁶¹ Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 13.

¹⁶² Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 14, 27.

¹⁶³ Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 14.

¹⁶⁴ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 29–30.

¹⁶⁵ Sweeney, “Place and Function,” 136. It should be noted that Barton admits at the outset that his conclusions are one possible interpretation of the evidence, and that they depend upon his existing assumptions about prophetic literature and the nature of the Old Testament corpus. It is also worth noting that the two commentaries that Barton sees as the most valuable in the last century or so are those of Wolff and Crenshaw, both of whom argue for the unity of Joel (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 3–4).

¹⁶⁶ The exception for Wolff is 4:4–8, which he sees as a secondary addition (Wolff, *Joel*, 7–8).

sections are integrally related.¹⁶⁷ If the two sections do show a strong resemblance, based on common phrasing, repeated themes, and consistent theological outlook, then the argument for disunity, built upon the foundation of an inconsistent and incoherent text, can be readily dismissed. Perhaps more than one hand was involved in the creation of the final form of the book, but that final form shows such homogeneity that the question of multiple authorship or editorship becomes inconsequential.

The argument for or against multiple authorship is thus related to whether one considers the book to be internally consistent or composed of fragments. As we shall see below, scholars have made many proposals with respect to the precise structure of Joel, and these proposals do differ in certain respects. However, the various arguments regarding the book's structure overlap significantly, strongly suggesting that Joel can reasonably be read as a single, unified text. My own analysis of the register of Joel suggests a similar conclusion: the book is a single communicative act, and can safely be called a text.¹⁶⁸ Consequently, I will hereafter refer to "the author" and to "Joel" interchangeably.

The dating of the book of Joel has also generated considerable debate. Scholars have often noted that the dated books in the Book of the Twelve progress in

¹⁶⁷ I will provide an overview of various views on the structure of the book later in this chapter. For a more extensive exploration of the interconnectivity of Joel see my examinations of identity and similarity chains in chs. 3–6.

¹⁶⁸ This does not necessarily mean that only one historical individual was involved in the creation of the book. It does imply, however, that if our interest is in the meaning of the final form of the text of Joel, our attention should be directed toward the ways in which that text as a whole functions, and not toward the meaning of theorized sub-strata from which the book may or may not be constructed. Discussions of multiple authorship will, therefore, be somewhat limited. For an overview of possible underlying redactional layers in Joel see section 2.2.4. below, which deals with Joel in the context of the theorized Book of the Twelve. For a redactional analysis of Joel that focuses on the book apart from the rest of the Book of the Twelve, see: Redditt, "Peripheral Prophecy." For an additional defence of the synchronic analysis of Joel (and other texts) see: Linville, "Mourning of the Priests in Joel," 100.

chronological order,¹⁶⁹ and since Joel stands between Hosea and Amos in the MT ordering, this could suggest an eighth century date. This suggestion is generally dismissed as very weak evidence, and literary reasons such as agreement in word or theme with Hosea and Amos are favoured as explanations for Joel's placement in the canon.¹⁷⁰ Since the canonical placement of the book constitutes weak evidence, and since the superscription of the book does not explicitly mention a date, we are left with circumstantial internal evidence. This deficiency has led to agnosticism with respect to date on the part of many (e.g., John Calvin and ibn Ezra), and so theories or conclusions regarding date should likely be held with considerable caution.¹⁷¹

Several issues are key to the discussion of the date of Joel. One of the main questions concerns the Temple, since the cult appears to have been operative in Joel's lifetime, and since the book mentions the porch and the altar (Joel 1:9; 2:17).¹⁷² This immediately excludes the years 586–516 BC as possible dates for authorship, due to the destruction of the Temple.¹⁷³ Proponents of an earlier date thus suggest that Joel must be pre-exilic. They tend to prefer the decades immediately preceding the invasion of Judah by Babylon.¹⁷⁴ Stuart, for example, suggests that Joel 1–2 concern a northern army,

¹⁶⁹ Nogalski, "Joel as 'Literary Anchor'," 91.

¹⁷⁰ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 2; Wolff, *Joel*, 3; Nogalski, "Joel as 'Literary Anchor'," 91.

¹⁷¹ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 21; Allen, *Joel*, 19; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 9.

¹⁷² Crenshaw suggests that 1:9 refers to the regularized *tamid* offering, which is a fundamental aspect of regular cultic worship (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 24). Simkins is less sanguine that the sacrifices of 1:9 can be specifically identified as the *tamid*, but he notes that these sacrifices are certainly tied to the cult, which is then tied to the locust plague (Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 135).

¹⁷³ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 23; Wolff, *Joel*, 4. Allen mentions that Reike suggests a date of 520 BC, suggesting that the description of 2:17 need not indicate a fully reconstructed Temple but simply a partial cultic site including the porch and altar (Allen, *Joel*, 22). Ganzel also suggests a date between the decree of Cyrus and the time of Haggai (538–520 BC). This is due to theological, thematic, and intertextual affinities with Ezekiel and Haggai. Ganzel suggests Joel is an intermediary step between these other two prophetic books. See: Ganzel, "Shattered Dream," 2–3, and throughout.

¹⁷⁴ Allen, *Joel*, 21–22.

likely that of Assyria or Babylon, that is invading Judah. Consequently, he suggests 701, 598, or 588 as possible dates of composition for Joel's prophecies.¹⁷⁵

Critics of an earlier date, however, point to the fact that neither Assyria nor Babylon is among the foreign nations mentioned in the book. Joel instead focuses on Edom, Egypt, the Sabeans, and the Greeks.¹⁷⁶ Additionally, Joel 4:3 appears to refer to the captivity and deportation of Jewish children, which suggests the Babylonian exile.¹⁷⁷ Mention of the city of Sidon and the Sabeans (4:4, 8) also provides evidence regarding date. Although the Phoenicians and Sabeans were notable powers as early as the seventh century BC, by the fifth century BC, the Sabeans had lost to the Minoans their control over important trade routes,¹⁷⁸ and by the mid-fourth century BC the city of Sidon had been destroyed.¹⁷⁹ These various factors suggest a date after the return from exile, and after the cult was once again operative (which likely suggests the Temple had been rebuilt), but before the destruction of Sidon or the Sabeans' loss of influence. The possible time of composition, according to those who support a late date for the book, is therefore sometime in the late sixth to mid-fifth century BC (though some scholars propose later dates, particularly those who argue for multiple authorship).¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁵ Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 226.

¹⁷⁶ Allen, *Joel*, 20; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 24; Wolff, *Joel*, 4. Note that Wolff adds that this must imply a post-539 date (i.e., after Babylon is replaced by Persia as the dominant world empire from the perspective of Judah). Some commentators also believe that mention of the wall in Joel 2:7 suggests a time after Nehemiah but, as Crenshaw indicates, this is relatively weak evidence, as the wall appears to be damaged, but not utterly destroyed in the Nehemiah narrative (Crenshaw, "The Expression *Mî Yôdēa* '," 24).

¹⁷⁷ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 24; Allen, *Joel*, 20; Wolff, *Joel*, 4, *pace* Stuart, who notes that forced migration was commonplace in the Assyrian period, and so 4:1–8 could easily refer to some pre-exilic event (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 226).

¹⁷⁸ Crenshaw, "The Expression *Mî Yôdēa* '," 25, including n.24.

¹⁷⁹ Allen, *Joel*, 20; Wolff, *Joel*, 5. 343 BC is thus the *terminus ante quem* for Wolff.

¹⁸⁰ For another extended defense of a late Persian period date see: Nogalski, *Redactional Processes*, 48–57.

To establish a precise date for the book is likely impossible,¹⁸¹ and the prophet Joel is tied to no particular historical or social context. As I will discuss below, these features become integral to the rhetorical flexibility of the book. It is continually re-applicable, because of its de-historicized nature.¹⁸² As far as context is concerned, then, we must rely to a great extent upon the internal patterns of the book, i.e., upon its own represented context.

2.2.2. The Text of Joel

This dissertation will examine the book of Joel as it is found in the Masoretic text (MT), although I will also take note of important textual variants where applicable.¹⁸³ Fortunately, the text of Joel is very stable and well preserved in both the MT and the Old Greek (OG).¹⁸⁴ The text does include several issues worth noting. I will not examine all of these here, but these represent some of the notable textual problems in MT Joel. These and other textual problems will also be dealt with in the examination of the book of Joel below.

¹⁸¹ This is not to say that I am entirely cynical regarding a plausible date of composition. All other things being equal, a later date seems more likely, given the absence of Babylon and Assyria in the text and the presence of the Temple cult. Still, if this historical context were an important feature to be preserved, one imagines that a clearer superscription and more explicit historical cues would have been provided, either by the author or by later redactors.

¹⁸² Here I am drawing on the work of Ben Zvi, “De-historicizing and Historicizing Tendencies.”

¹⁸³ The preference here will tend to be toward the MT. This is not due to a bias with regard to the age or originality of the MT, but due to the fact that methodologically this dissertation is explicitly linguistic, and synchronically so. Because this is an examination of the semantic patterning of the Hebrew of Joel, I will prefer the Hebrew version of Joel unless there is some clear indication of scribal error. The point here is not that the MT is the better version of Joel (though it is an excellent text), but that the MT is more conducive to this project. It would thus, after a fashion, be fair to refer to this dissertation as an examination of the register of the MT book of Joel.

¹⁸⁴ Allen, *Joel*, 36; Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 5. Stuart also notes that the Syriac text and the Vulgate are of relatively little value, and that the Targum of Joel is “expansionistic and eccentric” (which is a fair representation of the character of Targum Jonathan of the Prophets at many points; Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 234). As far as notation is concerned, MT here refers, as is usual, to L, and particularly to BHQ, and OG refers to Ziegler’s eclectic text. Where specific variants from a given tradition (e.g., Theodotion or Symmachus) come into play, I will specify these as distinct from the main tradition.

The first problem occurs in 1:9, which has two significant discrepancies between the MT and OG. First, where the MT reads *לִבְלוּ* (mourn, Qal perfect), the OG reads *πενθείτε* (mourn, active imperative). Wolff tentatively suggests the OG here may be preferable according to his conjectural re-ordering of the oracle,¹⁸⁵ but both Allen and Crenshaw reject the OG reading as a mis-pointing of the verb.¹⁸⁶ The second instance is the question of whether the “ministers of YHWH” or the “ministers of the altar” is the better reading. The majority of OG mss disagree with the MT, reading *οἱ λειτουργοῦντες θυσιαστηρίῳ* (the ministers of the altar) where the MT, some Greek mss (including Theodotion), the Vulgate (Vg), the Syriac (S), and the Targum (Tg) read *מְשִׁרְתֵי יְהוָה* (the ministers of YHWH).¹⁸⁷ Stuart prefers the OG reading, although he does not provide an explicit justification for his view.¹⁸⁸ Wolff also prefers *θυσιαστηρίῳ*, suggesting that it fits the immediate context more readily, and that YHWH in the MT may be due to the influence of YHWH in the preceding clause.¹⁸⁹ Here the OG reading is at best no more satisfactory than the MT, and no clear determination can be made between the two. I will therefore make use of the MT in this instance.

The phrase *לְצַדִּיקָה לְמִוְרָה* in 2:23 is a well-known interpretive crux. Does it refer to a light rain, or a teacher of righteousness? Or is it an editorial corruption that should be emended in light of one of the versions? Although Crenshaw may well be correct that the various versional readings may suggest “that another word originally stood where *hammôreh* now does,” it is exceedingly difficult to determine what that

¹⁸⁵ Wolff, *Joel*, 18.k.

¹⁸⁶ Allen, *Joel*, 47 n.8; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 99. Barton notes that the OG reading may be preferable if Wolff’s reconstruction is correct, but he also concedes that there is no versional or manuscript support for that emendation (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 49–50 nn.a–b).

¹⁸⁷ See the apparatus in BHQ.

¹⁸⁸ Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 238 n.9.a.

¹⁸⁹ Wolff, *Joel*, 18–19 n.l

word might have been.¹⁹⁰ Gelston suggests that the OG's τὰ βρώματα (food) may represent either a different *Vorlage*, or simply an attempt to make sense out of a phrase that the translator could not decipher.¹⁹¹ Similarly, he suggests that הַמּוֹרֵה, which he sees as the same word as its duplicate in the second part of the verse, meaning “rain” (so also BDB), has been misread as “teacher” in Symmachus, Vg, and Tg because the words are homonyms.¹⁹² Although one might argue that “teacher” here represents the more difficult reading, and that it is thus preferable, it is so difficult as to be hardly sensible. This, in combination with a context into which “rain” fits eminently well, leads me to reject the versional evidence in favour of the MT.

In 4:8 the OG diverges from the MT, reading εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν (into captivity) in place of לְשַׁבְּאִים (to the Sabeans). Stuart, who prefers the OG reading here, sees לְשַׁבְּאִים as a corruption of לְשַׁבִּי (into captivity). This is a possibility, though it is notable that no other mss or version supports such a reading.¹⁹³ Significantly, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion all support the MT in this instance, although of course these may simply represent secondary corrections to bring the text into line with the Hebrew tradition. Still, since “Sabeans” is an acceptable reading, and since Stuart’s supposed corruption could well work in the opposite direction (and likely more easily), I will again follow the MT in this instance.

This overview of the text of Joel has not exhausted every problem but it has dealt with several major ones. The MT of Joel appears to be very stable, and at least as good

¹⁹⁰ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 155.

¹⁹¹ BHQ, 76*. Note that Wolff follows the OG here. Wolff, *Joel*, 55 n. i.

¹⁹² BHQ, 76*.

¹⁹³ BHQ, 77*.

as the other major textual traditions. This is helpful for our purposes here, because the stability of the MT of Joel makes it a good candidate for synchronic linguistic analysis.

2.2.3. Structure

As Allen notes, one of the most basic structural questions with regard to Joel is whether the two parts of the book should be divided at 2:27/28 or at 2:17/18. Wolff suggests that 2:17–18 represent the “decisive turning point” for the entire book.¹⁹⁴

Around this the remainder of the book forms a structural symmetry.

The lament over the current scarcity of provisions (1:4–20) is balanced by the promise that this calamity will be reversed (2:21–27). The announcement of the eschatological catastrophe imminent for Jerusalem (2:1–11) is balanced by the promise that Jerusalem’s fortunes too will be reversed (4:1–3, 9–17). The call to return to Yahweh as the necessity of the moment (2:12–17) is balanced by the pouring out of the spirit and the deliverance on Zion as the eschatological necessity (chap. 3).¹⁹⁵

This symmetrical structure, combined with the extensive use of catchphrases throughout the book, is evidence for Wolff of the book’s unity of authorship, and its structural, even literary, sophistication.¹⁹⁶

Sweeney challenges this basic two-part division on what he identifies as linguistic grounds.¹⁹⁷ He points out several linguistic features of the text that he believes

¹⁹⁴ Wolff, *Joel*, 7. Although the two-part division of the book is widely accepted, its pivot or centre-point is a matter of debate. For instance, Barton suggests that 2:28–30 represents the turning point. For him the first portion of the book is essentially a unified and coherent work, but “at 2:28 . . . the rot sets in. . .” (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 13). For a more extensive overview of specific proposals regarding the book’s structure, see: Crenshaw, *Joel*, 30–34.

¹⁹⁵ Wolff, *Joel*, 7.

¹⁹⁶ Wolff, *Joel*, 8–11.

¹⁹⁷ Sweeney, “Place and Function,” 137. Although he does not fully articulate the theory of language that undergirds his suggestions regarding linguistic structure, Sweeney does oppose the book’s “‘deep’ or ‘conceptual’ structure” to its “formal literary structure.” This seems to suggest that he is working with an opposition between deep and surface structure reminiscent of either Chomskyan linguistics or some version of functional linguistics that uses the term “deep structure” to refer to linguistic semantics (e.g., Dikian functionalism or Pike and Longacre’s tagmemics). Given his other observations, I suspect that it is the latter and not the former that is at work in Sweeney’s examination of the structure of Joel. While it is difficult to assess Sweeney’s claim, given that the underlying theory is not fully articulated, his opposition between “formal literary structure” and “conceptual structure” seems misguided to me. It suggests that there is something other than an integral relationship between the syntactic patterning and the semantic patterning of a text. Clearly it is possible to distinguish between syntax and semantics, but it is

should be integral to examinations of the book's structure. These include the frequent use of imperative forms, which Sweeney argues are integral to his first major sub-unit, 1:2–20, and to his second sub-unit 2:1–14. He also mentions that the third major unit, 2:15–4:21, “is defined by a succession of syntactically disjunctive introductory imperatives in Joel 2:15–16 . . . 2:21–22 . . . [and] 4:9–11.”¹⁹⁸ Sweeney points out that the *wayyiqtol* forms of 2:18–19, which are generally thought to mark the transition from one sub-section to another (and perhaps from the first half of the book to the second) instead “[indicate] a syntactical relationship with the preceding material that must be taken into account.”¹⁹⁹ Sweeney's emphasis on the linguistic structure of the book is laudable and, as my readers will see, I follow just such a line in this project. Nevertheless, he presents only a partial explanation and defence for his specific criteria, and his bifurcation of syntax and semantics (i.e., surface and deep structure) is theoretically questionable.

The importance of Sweeney's reassessment of the structure of Joel stems from the fact that it contains an implicit critique that also occurs in Prinsloo's and Stuart's comments on structure. After a thorough exegetical examination of Joel, Prinsloo notes that Wolff's neat symmetrical structure does not hold up under close scrutiny. First, 2:18 is not the dramatic turning point that Wolff argues it is. “Although 2:18 marks the start

considerably less clear that patterning in syntax and patterning in semantics are unrelated in a given text. For more on this question see ch. 2 below.

¹⁹⁸ Sweeney, “Place and Function,” 141.

¹⁹⁹ Sweeney, “Place and Function,” 137–38. Obviously, this implies that the *waw* in the *wayyiqtol* form is syntactically conjunctive/disjunctive. This is not the majority position with regard to the syntax of the *wayyiqtol* form at present. More commonly, it is thought that this is either a unified verbal form in which the *waw* plays no distinct syntactic role whatever, but is simply the pre-formative for the Hebrew preterite form (Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*; Holmstedt and Cook, *Student Grammar*, 57–58), or that it indicates a so-called verb chain, which may or may not involve an integral syntactic relationship to a preceding clause (BHRG 21.1; Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 3.5.1, 3.5.2). It should also be noted that discourse analysts often argue that the *wayyiqtol* form functions as a “narrative backbone” to Hebrew discourse (see Longacre, *Grammar of Discourse*).

of a new pericope, neither as regards form nor as regards content does it represent a definite break with the preceding part.”²⁰⁰ He goes on to argue that each sub-unit of Joel (and Prinsloo identifies nine of these) is integrally related, and that the structure of the book involves “a step-by-step progression, [with] each [pericope] representing a *Steigerung* on its precursor.”²⁰¹ And so the book is not made up of two parts, but of a continual succession of nested sub-units. Stuart identifies four main units (1:2–20; 2:1–17; 2:28–3:5; 4:1–21) but notes that the structure of the book is tight and overlapping.²⁰²

As the preceding discussion indicates, the structure of the book of Joel appears not to be disjointed but to consist of an overall integral unity. Identical themes and terminology frequently recur throughout the book as it unfolds. Consequently, in what follows I have sub-divided the text into the four commonly (though certainly not universally) accepted sections proposed by Stuart.²⁰³ If nothing else, this decision is an organizational necessity, because any attempt to analyze thoroughly the register of Joel as an entirety would be extremely complicated and difficult to follow. However, I must emphasize that I do not see each of these sections as a completely discrete unit, although each one does cohere internally, as we will see. Neither do I see each of these units as

²⁰⁰ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 123.

²⁰¹ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 123.

²⁰² Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 226–27. LaRocca-Pitts suggests that the dispute between the dividing point of the book is dependant upon the criterion of either content or form. If one subdivides by content, which for LaRocca-Pitts is a division between historical and eschatological sections, the line of division is 2:27/3:1. If one subdivides by form, which for LaRocca-Pitts is a division between lament/answer, the line of division is 2:17/2:18 (LaRocca-Pitts, “The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy,” 285; Leung suggests a similar division between historical and eschatological content: Leung, “Intertextual Study,” 64–65). LaRocca-Pitts’s divisions between historical and eschatological prophecy strikes me as unhelpful. It presumes that there cannot be an integral relationship between past event and future event, and also ignores the fact that there are references to the future in Joel 1:2–27 (e.g., 1:15, 2:1, 11), and references to the past in Joel 3:1–4:21 (e.g., 4:4–8). As I argue in this dissertation, there does appear to be a meaningful (though not dramatic) shift in register between 2:17 and 2:18, particularly with regard to the tenor of discourse. For more on this see ch. 7 below.

²⁰³ These divisions also basically match Kapulrud’s outline of the structure of Joel (Kapulrud, *Joel Studies*, 3–9).

having no internal structure of its own. Each contains smaller sub-sections; but to analyze each of these sub-sections would simply sub-divide the text into so many pieces that the analysis would become atomistic and difficult to follow.

In ch. 2 I will outline the method of this dissertation, and this will include a discussion of the concept of primary texts and sub-texts. In brief, this concept suggests that any given text may be made up of smaller identifiable sub-texts, which can themselves be subjected to register analysis. However, the register of each of these sub-texts contributes to the register of the primary text as a whole. One of the conclusions of this dissertation is that the book of Joel can legitimately be considered an identifiable text, with an identifiable register of its own. Consequently, while my analysis of Joel has been subdivided into four parts, one of the goals of my work is to demonstrate the ways in which the registers of these sub-texts (which I will refer to as “sections” of Joel, in order to avoid even more technical metalanguage) work together to support the register of the prophetic book as a whole.

2.2.4. Joel and the Book of the Twelve

In recent years a general consensus has emerged among biblical scholars that the twelve prophetic books often referred to as the Minor Prophets are, in fact, a single book or collection that was edited together intentionally to form a Book of the Twelve. While a full overview of the various arguments for and against this proposal are beyond the scope of this project, Joel figures significantly in some proposals regarding the development and logical structure of the Book of the Twelve, and so a brief discussion

is in order here.²⁰⁴ While this dissertation does not specifically address the question of the place of Joel within the Book of the Twelve—opting instead to focus on the register of the book as a single unit—my conclusions are related to discussions of both the formation of the Twelve, and to discussions of the theology and literary character of the various versions of the Twelve.

Among scholars who accept a unified redaction for the Twelve, it is generally agreed that the book of Joel is one of the later additions to the corpus. Nogalski argues that the addition of Joel to the corpus occurred at a crucial point in the development of the Twelve. This “Joel-related layer” was the point when Nogalski’s theorized Deuteronomistic corpus was combined with the Haggai-Zechariah corpus, and the more-or-less extant books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Malachi. The books of Joel and Obadiah were then compiled from existing material (one could refer to this as the moment of the creation of the book of Joel as a recognizable entity) for inclusion in the newly formed collection (containing all of the current Twelve, minus Jonah and Zech 9–14).²⁰⁵

Nogalski’s contention is that this addition of Joel, with its dehistoricized nature and references to the Day of YHWH, “eschatologized” the greater collection.²⁰⁶ Also,

²⁰⁴ For a full overview of the question of the Book of the Twelve see: Ben Zvi, “Twelve Prophetic Books”; Nogalski, *Literary Precursors*; Nogalski, *Redactional Processes*; Nogalski, “The Day(s) of YHWH”; Nogalski, “Joel As ‘Literary Anchor’”; Nogalski, “Recurring Themes”; Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*; Sweeney, “The Place and Function of Joel”; Schart, “First Section”; Jones, *The Formation of the Book of the 12*.

²⁰⁵ Nogalski, *Redactional Processes*, 275. Though different scholars propose variations in this editorial process, it is generally agreed that Joel belongs to one of the later stages, and is often located in the penultimate stage of the production of the Twelve. For an overview of the major views see: Redditt, “Formation,” 2–3, 16–19. For an extended critique of Nogalski’s view, including the conclusion that instances of intertextuality in the book of Joel are best explained by means of common traditions, and not redactional processes, see: Beck, *Der “Tag Yhwhs”*, 199–201.

²⁰⁶ Nogalski, “Joel As ‘Literary Anchor,’” 99–100; Nogalski, *Redactional Processes*, 27. See also Schart, who agrees broadly with Nogalski (depending also on the work of R. E. Wolff and E. Bosshard-Nepustil) that the majority of Joel was included as part of a Day of YHWH redactional layer (Schart, “Reconstructing the Redaction History,” 42–43, 45–46), though he does not agree that Joel is as centrally important to the Twelve as Nogalski claims (Redditt, “Formation,” 17).

because Joel was a product of the major redaction of the Twelve, the book acts like a kind of microcosm for the collection. As Nogalski puts it, Joel is “the writing through which all major themes of the Twelve must travel.”²⁰⁷

Sweeney comes to similar conclusions regarding the centrality of Joel to the overall character and theology of the Twelve, though from a different perspective. By comparing the OG and MT versions of the Twelve, he argues that a shift in the location of the book of Joel dramatically alters the unfolding theology of the Twelve if read successively from beginning to end. In the MT version the shift of Joel to an earlier position creates a stronger focus on the South and tension regarding the status of the nations and the role of Assyria and Babylon in relation to the fate of Judah and Jerusalem.²⁰⁸ In the OG order, however, Sweeney argues that Joel “provides an ideal transition between Hosea–Micah and Obadiah–Malachi.”²⁰⁹ Sweeney concludes by suggesting that the OG order is original, and that the MT ordering (which all of the earliest manuscripts of the Twelve reflect) represents an adjustment based on a late Persian period focus on Judah and Jerusalem as the locus of God’s people and God’s favour.²¹⁰ The conclusion that both Nogalski and Sweeney come to, despite differing methodological emphases, is that the book of Joel is a highly movable and highly influential unit in the Book of the Twelve.²¹¹

Nogalski also argues that the way in which the book of Joel was created and incorporated into the Twelve suggests that it is a fundamentally literary work. He argues that, while some of the prophetic material that was combined to form the various parts

²⁰⁷ Nogalski, “Joel As ‘Literary Anchor,’” 105.

²⁰⁸ Sweeney, “The Place and Function of Joel,” 149, 52.

²⁰⁹ Sweeney, “The Place and Function of Joel,” 152.

²¹⁰ Sweeney, “The Place and Function of Joel,” 154

²¹¹ Sweeney, “The Place and Function of Joel,” 154; Nogalski, “Joel As ‘Literary Anchor.’”

of the Twelve developed from organized anthologies of sayings that were edited into coherent wholes, other parts of the Twelve, including Joel, were composed from “source blocks”—i.e., large chunks of related material edited into a whole to form the book.²¹² Consequently, whoever gathered and formed the material that became Joel must have been, Nogalski argues, highly literate and literarily capable. Nogalski sees Joel as the product of “a scribal prophet artfully [combining] pre-existing texts with citations to other writings.”²¹³ Consequently, he sees no dynamic prophetic figure behind the book, but a careful and highly literate scribe (or group of scribes), combining and adjusting literary material into a coherent book.

I am not, unfortunately, able to incorporate a full engagement with these points of view on the formation and function of Joel in the Twelve into my examination of the register of the book. However, the conclusions that I draw here are certainly germane to that discussion. As I will argue, both the registers of each section (i.e., the sub-texts) of Joel, and the register of the book as a whole (i.e., the primary text) frame the ways in which the book is read, and consequently the ways in which the book might function within the Twelve as a whole. Additionally, as I have noted above, the Day of YHWH is an important theme in the Twelve, and my conclusions here certainly bear on a discussion of the theology of the Day as expressed in the Twelve.

At certain points my analysis of Joel, and the presentations of certain sub-texts within the primary text (i.e., sub-section and sections of the book as a whole), are consistent with Nogalski’s views that Joel was constructed from pre-existing source blocks (see esp. my analysis of Joel 4:1–21 in ch. 6). However, those source blocks do

²¹² Nogalski, “Where are the Prophets?,” 6–8.

²¹³ Nogalski, “Where are the Prophets?,” 9.

not now stand as disparate segments that have simply been set side-by-side in a collection of oracles.²¹⁴ Instead, these source blocks have been fully integrated into their greater sections, and these greater sections have been integrated into what is now the prophetic book of Joel. My work below demonstrates that, even though these sub-texts are identifiable within the book of Joel, they now function as elements of the register of the book as a whole. My goal here is to describe the register of each of the major sections (or sub-texts) of the book of Joel, and then to describe the register and context of situation of the book of Joel as a whole (as the primary text).²¹⁵ Within the context of research into the Book of the Twelve, however, another step is possible. One might go on to describe the book of Joel as a sub-text of the greater primary text called the Book of the Twelve. This next step is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but is certainly an avenue for future research.

3. Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation is to provide a linguistically oriented account of context for the book of Joel that will facilitate a greater understanding of the nature of the Day of YHWH, both within each specific section, and within Joel as a whole. Thus far I have provided a brief introduction to the theoretical and interpretive questions that surround the Day of YHWH, both as a diachronic tradition and as a synchronic concept in the prophetic literature. I have also given an overview of some of the basic issues involved in the analysis of the book of Joel. This overview of research suggests that a synchronic examination of Joel's use of the Day of YHWH concept, explored from the perspective

²¹⁴ This *contra* Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*.

²¹⁵ This is very much in line with Ben Zvi's suggestions regarding the prophetic book as a recognizable sub-set within the greater category of authoritative books in ancient Israel (Ben Zvi, "The Prophetic Book," 281–82). For more on this see ch. 7 below.

of functional linguistics, would be a valuable addition to both research related to the interpretation of the book of Joel and the ongoing discussion of the nature of the Day of YHWH in the prophetic literature. .

This linguistic examination of Joel will take the form of a description of the register of the book from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). I will accomplish this by examining the linguistic evidence of Field, Tenor, and Mode in each of the four sections of Joel in order to describe the book's register and to examine the register of each given passage in relation to the other passages under examination. Chapter 2 of this dissertation will provide a full orientation to both SFL and to register theory and its relationship to form criticism.

My examination of the register of Joel will demonstrate that, despite the significant degree of uniformity in the presentation of the Day of YHWH in the book, the specific register of each section serves to orient readers to the Day in different ways. I will demonstrate that the Day of YHWH in Joel is a single event in the indeterminate but immediate future, that it is intimately related to the relational orientation of the people of Judah to YHWH, and that it is an inevitable moment of YHWH's intervention in the world.

Chapter 2: Systemic Functional Linguistics, Register Analysis, and the New Form Criticism

1. Introduction

The goal of this dissertation is to contribute both to the ongoing discussion of the nature of the Day of YHWH in the prophetic literature (and especially in the book of Joel), and to the ongoing methodological discussion of genre analysis in biblical studies. There are a variety of perspectives from which one might analyze linguistic register or genre, and a variety of points of view on language one might take in order to engage in the linguistic analysis of a text or set of texts. For this project I have chosen to ground my work in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), a school of linguistics most closely associated with the work of Michael Halliday. In this chapter I will provide a short introduction to SFL, and especially to the theory of register propounded by SFL theorists and practitioners. I will also discuss the relationship between SFL register theory and the work of biblical form critics, because there are important areas of theoretical overlap between the two. Finally, I will describe the method I have used in this dissertation by summarizing the organization and content of the four analysis chapters (chs. 3–6).

2. Systemic Functional Linguistics

Before discussing the particulars of register analysis within an SFL framework, I will briefly introduce SFL itself.¹ There are four features of particular importance in an

¹ Note that SFL in this dissertation refers to the work of the so-called Hallidayan school, which especially includes the work of Halliday, Hasan, Matthiessen, Butt, and Lukin. It should be distinguished from the theoretically similar Cardiff school (exemplified by Robin Fawcett's work), and to a lesser degree from the work of James R. Martin, David Rose, and Peter White. All three of these "schools" share a common history and are very alike in theoretical terms in comparison to other schools of linguistic thought (e.g.,

introduction to systemic functional theory: 1) SFL is a functional and socio-semiotic theory of language, 2) SFL is a systemic theory of language and the language system is described in terms of different strata, 3) SFL describes language in terms of three metafunctions, and 4) language as described by SFL, because of its functional nature, is intrinsically contextual.

In his discussion about the various ways of approaching the study of language, Halliday refers to language as a system that can be approached from three possible perspectives: language as knowledge, language as behaviour, and language as art.² For the purposes of this dissertation, I am principally interested in language as a functional social system, i.e., in language as behaviour.³ The notions of register variation and genre fall clearly within the boundary of socio-semiotic examination, for both of these categories refer to a typology of language based upon a typology of social situation, whether that be a particular situation or a broader cultural situation (see the discussion of context below).

the various forms of Transformational Grammar, or Cognitive Linguistics), but are different enough from one another that it is important to make a distinction. A full engagement with all three types of SFL is far beyond the scope of this dissertation, but at appropriate points below I will engage with Martin's and Rose's theory of register and genre.

² Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 11, Fig. 1.

³ That said, there are also elements of the prophetic literature that evince artistic features, and so some emphasis will also be placed, when necessary, on the linguistic examination of verbal art. See: Hasan, *Verbal Art*; Butt and Lukin, "Stylistic Analysis." Biber and Conrad suggest that situational analysis is of lesser importance in instances of verbal art, or for stylistic analyses, because authors are "deliberately manipulating linguistic form for aesthetic effects, regardless of the actual situation context" (Biber and Conrad, *Register, Genre, and Style*, 51). Still, in such an instance, the manipulation of form for aesthetic effect is itself a part of the situational context. Additionally, even in complex, artistic communications, it is still the case that probabilities in the linguistic system will play a significant role (Butt et al., "Stylistic Analysis," 193). As Bakhtin notes, to some degree or other all speech is constrained ("Speech Genres," 81).

When Halliday uses the term “functional,” he is indicating that his theory, unlike the various forms of transformational grammar,⁴ describes language as a system of signs that is tied to use. Instead of examining various possible sentences and determining whether or not they are grammatical and why, Halliday is interested in examining actual instances of language use, and in determining what function language is playing when it is used. He stresses that this functional approach is not simply one way among many for understanding language. Language is functional by nature. In his words, “function will be interpreted not just as the use of language but as a fundamental property of language itself, something that is basic to the evolution of the semantic system.”⁵ He describes language as a realization system in which social processes are realized by the semantic system, which is in turn realized by the lexico-grammatical system.⁶

SFL also examines language as a set of interrelated systems, or a system of systems as it were. Thus every element within the semantic system is related to and affects every other element, and the nature of the meanings generated by the semantic system affects the lexico-grammatical system. Likewise, every element in the lexico-grammar is related to and affects every other element within that system.⁷ Halliday

⁴ Transformational grammar is generally associated with Noam Chomsky and his students. For both an historical overview of the development of Chomskian linguistics, and an examination of the fundamental theories of this type of linguistics, see Harris, *Linguistics Wars*; and De Beaugrande, *Linguistic Theory*, esp. ch. 7.

⁵ Halliday and Hasan, *Text*, 17.

⁶ Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 43. Halliday’s idiosyncratic “lexico-grammar” is his way of referring to the grammar or syntax stratum of language, and it is meant to indicate that the lexicon and the syntax are part of the same system, the lexicon being the most delicate description of that stratum. On language as a realization system, see also: Halliday, *Explorations*, 71. On realization versus process in language see: Lamb, *Language and Reality*, 137–38. I will explore below the issues of realization and construal and of linguistic strata.

⁷ Halliday, *Explorations*, 67. Thus, to draw another important distinction between SFL and Chomskyan linguistics, SFL considers syntax (i.e., lexico-grammar) to be intimately related to semantics, and therefore not autonomous from, semantics.

summarizes his views as follows: “Grammar is what the speaker CAN SAY, and is the realization of what [she or] he MEANS. Semantics is what [she or] he CAN MEAN; and we are looking at this as the realization of what [she or] he DOES.”⁸ In addition, the systemic nature of language suggests that no discrete element of lexis or grammar has meaning *per se*, for “the meaning is encoded in the wording as an integrated whole.”⁹

Halliday goes on to clarify that what a person CAN DO is part of a social system that lies outside of language, and consequently “semantics cannot tell us the rules of the game.”¹⁰ Language is thus one sub-system within the greater socio-semiotic of a given culture. Still, the linguistic system is perhaps the most important sub-system of the greater socio-semiotic. Also, it should be noted that language is a “semogenic” system. It does not merely *represent* meaning, but *creates* meaning.¹¹

One of the significant consequences of this way of understanding language, and a consequence that will be important in my textual analysis, is that grammatical structures allow multiple linguistic functions to operate simultaneously. Indeed, this is the purpose of the complex grammatical system. Halliday uses the metaphor of “polyphony” to describe the grammar’s ability to map multiple functions onto “any element in the syntagm. . . .”¹² This is vital, in that we may observe a single word (say a verb) doing several different things in a single clause. In ancient Hebrew, for instance,

⁸ Halliday, *Explorations*, 74.

⁹ Halliday, *IFG2*, xx. This focus on an interrelated synchronic linguistic system has been a hallmark of modern linguistics since Saussure’s *Course in General Linguistics*.

¹⁰ Halliday, *Explorations*, 74

¹¹ Halliday, “Methods–Techniques–Problems,” 60. Thus language is unlike other semiotic systems like traffic signals, which do not have this semogenic property.

¹² Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 56; Halliday, “Methods–Techniques–Problems,” 71.

the verbal system often grammaticalizes aspect and modality, as well as participant (gender/number) in a single syntagmatic item. The same polyphony operates within the semantic system, and so a single syntagmatic item may function simultaneously as Actor and Addressee (or whatever) in a given clause.

Although SFL pays significant attention to the syntagmatic axis of language (referred to as “structure” in SFL parlance), the analytical bias of this type of linguistics tends toward the paradigmatic, or systemic, axis of language (referred to as “system” in SFL parlance). This is not a question of relative importance, but is due to the fact that “system is taken as the more abstract category, with structure as deriving from it.”¹³ Significantly, SFL regards system and instance not as two distinct phenomena, but as one phenomenon (language) examined from two distinct perspectives. Halliday uses the analogy of “climate” and “weather” as different perspectives on the same phenomenon. Thus SFL explains linguistic features not as isolated elements of language but as instantiations of the overall system.¹⁴

Therefore, even though SFL is distinctly system-oriented, Halliday sees only “one set of phenomena . . . the text.”¹⁵ As I have already indicated, the relationship between system and instance is one of perspective. From the instantial perspective, we

¹³ Halliday, “Methods–Techniques–Problems,” 64.

¹⁴ Halliday, “Methods–Techniques–Problems,” 66. This represents yet another significant point of disagreement with the Chomskyan tradition. While Halliday sees “*langue*” and “*parole*” as two perspectives on human language (system/instance), Chomsky sees the matter quite differently. He suggests an opposition between competence (roughly related to *langue*) and performance (roughly related to *parole*), but notes that his understanding of competence is quite different from Saussure’s understanding of the nature of *langue*, and is instead related “to the Humboldtian conception of underlying competence as a system of generative processes” (Chomsky, *Aspects*, 4). The system of language is not, for Chomsky, an abstract reality arrived at by observing instances of speech, but an innate cognitive feature that enables language in the human animal. For a more recent perspective that remains consonant with Chomsky’s earlier views (though with some modification), see: Jackendoff, *Language, Consciousness, Culture*, 26–28. For additional critique of Chomskyan linguistics from an SFL perspective, see: Hasan, “Wherefore Context,” 8.

¹⁵ Halliday, “Methods–Techniques–Problems,” 80.

see the individual text; from the systemic perspective, we see the system of available choices with which one creates the text—the meaning-potential. However, we can only observe the language system as a construal of instances of text. Thus we can examine a text as an instantiation of the abstract system, or we can theorize the abstract system by examining many instances of text. What we are describing here is a cline, or sliding scale, with an instance of language at one pole (text) and the specific language system at the other pole (system).

Halliday believes that one can explore any element of language from three simultaneous perspectives: from above (as an instantiation of part of the linguistic system), from below (as a construal of part of the linguistic system), or from round about (set against other elements of the same sort).¹⁶ For example, when exploring the register of a text we might examine it as a realization of some linguistic context (from above), or as a pattern of semantic and lexico-grammatical features (from below), or in comparison with a set of other identifiable registers (from round about). In my examination of register in this dissertation I will tend to proceed from instance to system, i.e., “from below,” exploring semantic and lexico-grammatical features of the book of Joel in order to build a picture of the register of the various sub-sections of the book, and of the book as a whole. I have done so because few scholars have chosen to describe registers of biblical Hebrew texts using modern linguistics as a framework,¹⁷ and so I

¹⁶ Halliday, “Methods–Techniques–Problems,” 79–80. See also: Hasan, “Place of Context,” 169.

¹⁷ Longacre’s work on discourse types is one example of a linguistically informed analysis of typological features in biblical literature, but it should be noted that his discourse-type framework proceeds from a top-down perspective, and is also grounded in a different (though not entirely incompatible) theory of language, namely, Pike’s Tagmemics (Longacre, *Grammar of Discourse*, 8–21). Frank Polak has also given some attention to the question of register, and has done so using elements drawn from SFL theory (especially with reference to lexical density and the typological features of oral and written discourse), but his work has focused on narrative texts, and he has not, to my knowledge, provided any elaborated descriptions of registers in any of his work: Polak, “Forms of Talk”; Polak, “The Oral and the Written”;

have at my disposal relatively few existing descriptions of registers with which to compare Joel in a “round about” examination, and little in the way of research into linguistic contexts in the OT/HB from which to draw for a “from above” examination.

A vital component of the systemic view taken by SFL, which is implicit in the “above” and “below” language of the preceding paragraph, is that the system of human language can be subdivided into several strata. Different stratificational linguists posit different numbers and types of strata, but Halliday suggests four language-specific strata and one language-external stratum.¹⁸ The language-specific strata are phonetics, phonology, lexico-grammar, and semantics.¹⁹ The language-external stratum, which is integrally related to language, is context.²⁰

In addition to being system-oriented, SFL is also function-oriented. Halliday posits three highly abstract categories of language use or function. These three metafunctions are part of the semantic system and include the Ideational metafunction (with its sub-categories of logical and experiential metafunctions), the Interpersonal metafunction, and the Textual metafunction.²¹ The metafunctions are theoretical

Polak, “Style of the Dialogue”; Polak, “Parameters for Stylistic Analysis”; Polak, “Context Sensitive Translation”; Polak, “Sociolinguistics and the Judean Speech Community”; Polak, “Sociolinguistics.”

¹⁸ Martin and the SFL theorists who have followed his lead describe an additional stratum of language above semantics called “Genre” (Martin, “Modelling Context,” 31–34). Lamb, whose theory of language has been referred to as “stratificational linguistics,” has described four strata (Lamb, *Language and Reality*, 28).

¹⁹ In Hjelmslevian terms, phonology functions as the “expression plane,” and lexico-grammar and semantics as the “content plane” of language.

²⁰ For an overview of stratification in SFL, see: Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG3*, 24–26. Phonetics and semantics are considered “interface strata,” each in turn connecting language to its environment. Semantics interfaces with what is referred to as the “eco-social” environment, which might be summarized as the social-semiotic and material environment of a given culture. (On the relationship between the material and the semiotic, see: Halliday, “On Matter and Meaning.”) Phonetics interfaces with the “physiological (and physical) environment” of language production (Halliday, “Methods–Techniques–Problems,” 82). For more on the eco-social environment, see: Gregory Fewster, “Ethical Consumption,” 3–7. With thanks to Mr. Fewster for a copy of his unpublished paper.

²¹ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 45.

categories abstracted from observations of texts, and Halliday uses them to describe the ways in which we (1) use language to communicate ideas and experiences and to organize our world (Ideational); (2) communicate with other people, using language to encode the dynamics of the relationships that are involved (Interpersonal); and (3) use combinations of words in systematic relationship to do these things (Textual).²²

The problem of context, which Malinowski and Firth began to explore, and which has been the subject of extensive theorizing by systemic functionalists, is summarized nicely by Hasan. She observes that for many linguists outside the SFL fold, “instead of becoming an explanatory principle, the notion of context has become an a-theoretical appendage which functions as a mere trouble-shooter, a disambiguator of ambiguous sentences.”²³ This notion that context is an a-theoretical phenomenon that can be used in an *ad hoc* way to disambiguate ambiguous sentences is the by-product of the presupposition that context somehow precedes language, or is a phenomenon that is not integrally related to language. The very fact that context, even when ill-defined, is able to disambiguate a text implies an integral relationship between text and context. Context is not a theoretical appendage, but an integral component of the study of language, and must consequently be treated with the same systematic attention given to phonology, grammar, and semantics.²⁴

²² Note that in SFL theory these metafunctions are not merely heuristic categories. They are rather the result of a long process of examination of language by Halliday and others, who concluded that the continual clustering of features at the level of lexico-grammar suggested the existence of three distinct, parallel, selection systems in the semantics (Hasan, “Place of Context,” 173).

²³ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 220

²⁴ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 220–21; Hasan, “Wherefore Context,” 3. For a broader discussion of some of the issues involved, see: Lyons, *Semantics*, ch. 14, and esp. 14.4 for a discussion of Firth’s views on context.

Hasan argues that the relationship between context and text is not simply linear, with context creating or preceding text, but dialectical.²⁵ Language users have available to them a set of theoretically possible social contexts, and when users create a text these available contexts influence them in a probabilistic way. But as unique language users generate texts, the texts in turn construct their own semiotic environments and thus influence the set of theoretically available contexts in that culture. In other words, we must see context as both a set of “general regularities of a shared system familiar to the members of at least some specifiable social group” and also as a unique process engaged in by a language user.²⁶ What is more, the same relationship of system and instantiation operative for the language internal strata is theorized for the stratum of context. Thus the specific situation is an instance of the social-semiotic system, just as the specific text is an instance of the language system.²⁷

Halliday proposes three kinds of context: context of culture, context of text (co-text), and context of situation. Context of culture, a phrase coined by Malinowski, refers to the contextual relationship between a text and its cultural location. In relation to context of culture, Leckie-Tarry defines “culture” as “a large and complex knowledge system spread between the various members of a particular culture, and hence consisting of many sets of knowledges, including, in particular, the institutional and ideological.”²⁸ Therefore, context of culture explores the ways in which these widely diverse sets of knowledge are related to a given text or set of texts. Context of text, or co-text, can be

²⁵ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 220.

²⁶ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 223.

²⁷ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context;” Halliday, “The Notion Of ‘Context’,” 3.

²⁸ Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 20. In systemic terms, Hasan describes the system of culture as “an organization of the possible features of all possible situations in all their possible permutations, where ‘possible’ means socially recognizable. . .” (Hasan, “Place of Context,” 169).

defined in terms of both “intertextual” context and “intratextual” context. These refer, respectively, to the connections a text makes with other texts, and the elements of cohesion and coherence that make up the structure of any particular text.²⁹ Intertextual co-text is related to the context of culture, as it explores relationships between texts; intratextual co-text is related to the context of situation, as it explores connections within a given text.

Context of situation, which is the type of context that I will explore in this dissertation, refers to the relevant “environment of the text.”³⁰ Like context of culture, context of situation is a concept that was first explicitly proposed by Malinowski in his anthropological research with the Trobriander islanders.³¹ His observations of the islanders, and particularly of their uses of language, suggested an indissoluble link between utterance and social context. Firth, who was deeply influenced by Malinowski’s work, carried the issue of context into his work in linguistics. With reference to the question of meaning, Firth notes that “[a] Martian visitor would best understand this ‘meaning’ by watching what happened before, during, and after the words were spoken, by noticing the part played by the words in what was going on.”³² Halliday, who was Firth’s student, carried this notion of the relationship between context and utterance into SFL.

Context of situation must be regarded as semiotically constructed, and is not co-extensive with the “material situational setting” of an utterance. “Material situational setting,” or MSS, is a phrase coined by Hasan and elaborated on considerably by Cloran,

²⁹ Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 18. See also: Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 47–48.

³⁰ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 6.

³¹ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 5–9; Malinowski, *Coral Gardens*, 55–62, and esp. 59 n.1.

³² Firth, *Tongues of Men*, 126.

and “may be thought of as an actual physical space containing actual physical elements.”³³ This is distinguished from the linguistically relevant context, or the context of situation, which “is a theoretical construct abstracted for metalinguistic purposes from the MSS.”³⁴ Context of situation is not a material or historical reality, but a semiotic reality.

Hasan provides a helpful illustration to illuminate this distinction between MSS and context of situation. She notes that, “it is useful to make a distinction between the technical term *addressee* and everyday words *listener/hearer*. The most significant difference is that the addressee is built into the text as a prosody of its meaning and its structures: that is to say, what meanings will be at risk and how the social process will be conducted is responsive to the speaker’s relation to the addressee.”³⁵ The addressee, sometimes referred to as the “implied reader” by literary theorists, is a construct of the text. Similarly, “all aspects of the interactant relations – their respective status, their social distance, the specific attributes of the addressee—are *logically* entirely *created* by the language of the text.”³⁶ The context of situation is thus a theoretical abstraction of the text. It is a description of the context relevant to a given communicative act.

Because context exists as a stratum beyond specifically linguistic strata, a bottom-up examination of a text’s register, with the intent of describing the related context of situation,³⁷ will only ever be able to proceed so far. A precise description of the material and historical context of a text like the book of Joel is, perhaps, beyond the

³³ Cloran, “Context, Material Situation and Text,” 178. For example, the colour of the desk upon which my computer sits as I type this sentence is a part of the Material Situational Setting of this language act, and yet is irrelevant to the language act. Or, at least, it was irrelevant until I activated it as an example.

³⁴ Cloran, “Context, Material Situation and Text,” 178.

³⁵ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 237–38.

³⁶ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 238.

³⁷ I will elaborate on the relationship between context of situation and register below.

capacity of any examination that is limited to textual data. For example, many questions remain regarding the social and material context of ancient Israel, at all stages of its history. What context of situation provides is a theoretically adequate account of linguistic context that can serve as the basis for statements about the represented context of some given text. These descriptions of the context of situation must, of necessity, be somewhat general and tentative, but, of course, general and tentative is significantly preferable to nothing at all. The goal, then, is to describe the likely social context of the book of Joel as it has been inscribed linguistically.

3. Register, Genre, and Form

I will now discuss in more detail those elements of SFL, which, along with context of situation, are particularly germane to this dissertation. In so doing I will consider the related notions of register and genre, along with the particularities of register analysis. I will begin by defining register as described by SFL, and then move on to a brief discussion of the related concept of linguistic genre. From the perspective of biblical studies, genre has generally been the purview of form critics, and consequently I will also explore the ways in which register theory and my analysis of Joel are related to the concerns of form criticism, particularly in its more recent iterations.

3.1. Register

Halliday refers to register as “a semantic concept” that “can be defined as a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode, and tenor.”³⁸ Elsewhere he defines register as “the necessary mediating concept that enables us to establish the continuity between a text

³⁸ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 38–39.

and its sociosemiotic environment.”³⁹ Consequently, I must consider two significant features of register here. The first is the concept of a situation configuration, and particularly the SFL categories of field, tenor, and mode. The second is the characterization of register as a mediating concept between text and environment.

As I have already indicated, according to SFL, language can be thought of in terms of three categories of function, called metafunctions. Language is ideational (logical and experiential), it is relational, and it is textual.⁴⁰ That is to say, we use language to communicate ideas and experiences, we communicate with other people using language to encode these relationships, and in employing language we use combinations of words and grammar in systematic relationship to do these things. With respect to social situations, these metafunctions correspond to three matching categories: field, tenor, and mode.⁴¹

Field refers to what is happening “to the nature of the social action that is taking place” in any given text.⁴² This includes elements like participants, processes, objects, goals, and time. In Hasan’s words, field is “the nature of social activity relevant to speaking.”⁴³ Tenor refers to the interpersonal relationships involved in the text.⁴⁴ This includes elements like speech roles (mood), person, and polarity. Tenor is concerned with “the nature of social relation relevant to speaking.”⁴⁵ Finally, mode refers to the

³⁹ Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 145. For a similar definition, drawing on Halliday, see: Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 18.

⁴⁰ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 45.

⁴¹ This relationship between the three metafunctions and the three components of register is referred to as the “hook-up hypothesis,” which is itself a subject of theoretical discussion within SFL. See: Ghadessy, “Textual Features and Contextual Factors.”

⁴² Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 12.

⁴³ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 232.

⁴⁴ Although Halliday at one point includes the participants themselves under the heading of tenor (Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 12), later SFL work makes a clear distinction between participants as part of the field and participant relationships as part of the tenor. See below.

⁴⁵ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 232.

role the text itself plays.⁴⁶ This includes things like the level of cohesion in the text, the information structure of the text, the medium and channel of the text, and the kind of process sharing found in the text.⁴⁷ Mode is “the nature of contact for the conduct of speaking.”⁴⁸ With regard to the relationship between these three components of the register, it must be emphasized that choices in one do not determine choices in another, but neither are choices in the three components unrelated. Hasan has described the relationships as one of “mutual prehension: the echoes of a choice in one are found to some extent in the choices of the others.”⁴⁹

Leckie-Tarry elaborates on each of these three categories of register, and some of her additional categories are helpful for my purposes here.⁵⁰ She identifies three components of field: arena, participants, and semantic domain. Arena “refers particularly to the locations of the interaction, both in terms of their inherent features, and in terms of the social institutions which determine them.”⁵¹ Leckie-Tarry suggests that “participants” “refers to inherent features of the participants, that is, their physical and mental attributes and the knowledge they bring to bear on the setting and events.”⁵² Here I depart from her definition, and suggest that “participants” refers to entities and/or

⁴⁶ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 12.

⁴⁷ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 11–12, 34–35.

⁴⁸ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 232. See also: Hasan, “Place of Context,” 172.

⁴⁹ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 245. Hasan also warns that the theoretical categories of field, tenor, and mode should be considered heuristic and not absolute. These are “three . . . interrelated perspectives on the social context” and not three ingredients for context (Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 270, 272).

⁵⁰ I will make note of Leckie-Tarry’s elaborations on field, tenor, and mode where they overlap with my analytical framework (described below, and deployed in chs. 3–6). I will not mention elements of her work that I find theoretically suspect or not practically applicable, because a full critical exploration of her specific views is beyond the purview of this dissertation. Where I am modifying or adapting elements of her framework, I will elaborate briefly upon the logic of my adjustments. Note especially that I have not carried over any of her additional categories related to tenor.

⁵¹ Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 36.

⁵² Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 36.

phenomena represented as syntactic constituents in the text. Although my analysis of Joel will make particular note of sentient participants, it will also mention other participants. Semantic domain “refers to the broad domain, the general subject matter or content of the specific language event.”⁵³ Leckie-Tarry notes that arenas and semantic domains are not “randomly selected” but are drawn from the context of culture.⁵⁴ That is, the setting and subject matter of a given text are drawn from the settings and subject matters available in the broader culture. These may be more or less institutionalized and formal, but they are tied to the broader culture. Indeed, she sees the concept of social institution as a bridge between context of culture and context of situation.

In my analysis of field in Joel, I will make somewhat limited use of semantic domain. To some degree this is due to practical constraints, for to analyze every aspect of the semantic domains of various lexemes in a given text would be an extensive undertaking. However, I have also limited this aspect of the analysis in the field because semantic domain is, in fact, to some extent a feature of the mode of discourse. This is the case with the various types of co-extension (e.g., metaphor, metonymy, etc.). Therefore, I will explore much of what Leckie-Tarry calls “semantic domain” in the mode portion of my analysis of Joel.

In her account of participants, Leckie-Tarry distinguishes between participants as a component of field and participant relationships as a component of tenor. In distinguishing between features of participants that belong to field or tenor, she would, however, “claim . . . that tenor involves a social construction or perception of such features, while field relates to their existence *per se*, as physical or even biological

⁵³ Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 37.

⁵⁴ Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 38.

entities.”⁵⁵ It would be more accurate, however, to say that the distinction is between participants as socially constructed features of the field, and participant *relations* as socially constructed features of the tenor. This is not to say that the reality or unreality of the participants in a text is entirely socially constructed, but if we are examining the features of a text in order to describe the context of situation, reality is mediated through the text, and consequently all elements of the field are to some degree socially constructed. The distinction that I would make is that *participants* are features of the field of discourse, while *participant relations* are features of the tenor of discourse.

With regard to mode, Leckie-Tarry offers several sub-categories, two of which are of significance for my purposes. The first of these is feedback, which “refers to the distance available in the situation to the speaker/writer from the addressee, or ‘Interpersonal distance’ that is the distance (in terms of either space or time) between the participants in the language event.”⁵⁶ In my analysis of Joel, I will explore feedback by examining the encoding of process sharing in the text, and will relate this to the issue of the medium and channel of the text. Leckie-Tarry defines medium as a sub-category of mode, but here she neglects the work of Hasan, where medium is further sub-divided into medium and channel. Hasan describes channel as either phonic or graphic (referring to the manner in which language is physically encoded), and medium as either spoken or written. Thus we can draw a distinction between the physical form of the text (i.e., as sound waves or as graphic symbols), and the way in which a text represents its social

⁵⁵ Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 39.

⁵⁶ This element is particularly important as a rejoinder to van Dijk’s condemnation of mode as an element of discourse context. See: van Dijk, *Discourse and Context*, 47–49, where he provides a rather inaccurate reading of Leckie-Tarry’s work. Indeed, van Dijk’s entire summary and analysis of the SFL account of context is rather inaccurate, for it engages only a minute portion of the available work on register and context from an SFL perspective, and apparently misunderstands significant portions of even this.

context. It is then possible to analyze a text not only as “written” or “spoken” but also as “written-as-though-spoken” or “spoken-as-though-written,” which is a very helpful distinction. Hasan ties phonic and spoken discourse to dialogue, and graphic and written discourse to monologue.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, although the written/graphic and spoken/phonic pairings often coincide, it is also possible to have a graphic channel with a spoken medium, so that a text that appears in graphic form has the feel of a spoken dialogue. This is of particular importance for this dissertation, because this graphic/spoken overlap is precisely what we find in many (if not most) prophetic texts in the OT/HB.

3.2. Genre

The relationship between register and genre has been a source of some debate within the SFL camp.⁵⁸ Some SFL theorists use the terms to describe two different phenomena, while others use them to describe the same phenomenon from two different perspectives.⁵⁹ Here I accept the view that the notion of genre may be helpful if we think of genre as a label for the same phenomenon as register, but described from a different level of abstraction. Therefore, when I make a distinction in this dissertation, it will be in this sense of a difference of perspective, and not a difference of kind.

The SFL description of the relationship between text and system provides a helpful framework for describing the relationship between register and genre. An

⁵⁷ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 58–59.

⁵⁸ For a summary of some of the issues see: Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 12–15. See also: Martin and Rose, *Genre Relations*; Martin, “Modelling Context”; and Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context.” It should be noted that despite the significant points of overlap between the notion of linguistic genre and what might be called “literary genre” (i.e., explorations of genre from the perspective of literary theory), here I deal only with linguistic genre.

⁵⁹ Note that while Halliday does not see the importance of a concept separate from register, he does discuss the question of genre and register in this second sense at times. See: Leckie-Tarry, *Language*, 14; Halliday, “Interview,” 145–146; Lukin et al., “Halliday’s Model,” 189.

individual text can be described as an instance of the language system, and the system can be described as an abstraction of many instances of texts. The relationship between system and instance is, as I have noted, one of perspective and does not imply a difference of kind. It is also not an absolute distinction, but a graded one, implying a cline, or scale, between system and instance. Related to this description of the text/system cline, Halliday and Hasan posit a cline of register, with a specific instantiation of text at the text end of the cline, and all of the possible choices of text-type at the system end of the cline. One might describe the system end of the register cline from the perspective of “genre,” and the instance end of the cline from the perspective of “register.” It is important to reiterate, however, that this is not an absolute distinction, but a distinction of perspective.⁶⁰

This is also how Hasan chooses to describe what she refers to as Contextual Configurations (CCs), which are the situational equivalent of textual genres. “So, in effect, when we debate the question of the uniqueness of a CC, we are actually concerned with establishing some specific point on the continuing scale of delicacy. . . .”⁶¹ Porter distinguishes between register and genre with respect to context of situation and context of culture, equating register with situation and genre with culture.⁶² If we accept Halliday’s suggestion that the relationship between context of situation and context of culture is primarily one of abstraction, then it follows that the same is true regarding the relationship between register and genre. Where register can

⁶⁰ It is worth noting that in general Halliday does not speak of the system end of the register cline in terms of “genre,” but of “register.” That is to say, he uses the single term to refer both to the entire phenomenon, and to particular instances of the phenomenon. Nevertheless, he has indicated that if a distinction is to be drawn between “genre” and “register,” it should be drawn along the lines I have just described (Halliday, “Interview,” 145–146).

⁶¹ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 105.

⁶² Porter, “Dialect and Register,” 11–12.

be described as the textually inscribed nexus of the field, tenor, and mode of a given situation, genre can be described as a description of these same categories, but at a higher (that is to say less delicate) level of abstraction.⁶³

This distinction, in my mind, is principally a heuristic tool. Descriptions of linguistic genre deal with the same categories as descriptions of register, but since genre involves a less delicate level of description it is expected that much greater variation will be present. At what point variation becomes so great that we can no longer speak of a single genre is difficult to say, but certainly at some point it no longer becomes valuable to refer to two texts as a part of the same genre.⁶⁴ Of course, in many cases difference will be at least as interesting as sameness. As David Butt has put it recently, “register theory is not about things all being the same but that you can arrive at the logic by which they vary. The logic by which they vary offers you a chance for prediction.”⁶⁵ This dissertation deals with one specific text (the book of Joel), and is focused especially upon context of situation, and is therefore an analysis of register, and not of genre (if some distinction must be maintained).

I have not yet mentioned the context of text in this discussion of genre and register and their interrelationships. Halliday’s distinction between intra and intertextuality (see above) provides a touch point with regard to the relationship between

⁶³ Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 108. This account of the register-genre relationship is markedly different from the account provided by Martin, Rose, and White. The latter describe register as “the expression plane of genre” (borrowing Hjelmslev’s terminology), and thus posit an additional stratum in the linguistic system. Where Halliday observes three linguistic strata (semantics, lexico-grammar, and phonology), Martin observes an additional stratum above semantics, which he calls genre (Halliday, “Interview,” 145 n.12; Martin, “Modelling Context,” 31–34).

⁶⁴ On this subject Hasan speaks in terms of obligatory v. optional elements, and speaks of these in terms of their relationship to the CC, but in my mind she never adequately demonstrates that the identification of a given CC, and consequently of a given genre, is not arbitrary to at least some degree. See: Halliday and Hasan, *Language*, 59–69.

⁶⁵ David Butt, “Theory,” timestamp 36:43.

context of situation and context of culture. Intratextuality refers to connections within a text, and is related to context of situation and therefore to the notion of register.

Intertextuality, refers to connections with other texts and is related to the context of culture and therefore to the notion of genre. In this way co-text, or context of text in its dual instantiations, becomes a bridge between context of situation and register on the one hand, and context of culture and genre on the other. However, since my principal concern here is with the register and context of situation of the book of Joel, I will pay relatively little attention to intertextual relationships with other pieces of ancient Israelite or ANE literature.⁶⁶

Martin and Hasan both raise another difficult question related to register and genre: whether one can have multiple registers within a single text of some identifiable genre.⁶⁷ According to Halliday and Hasan's work on cohesion and coherence one of the hallmarks of a cohesive text is undifferentiated register.⁶⁸ Multiple registers in a single text would break its cohesion. But what about the case of the modern novel? In their examination of various genres of Australian English, Martin and Rose make reference to different kinds of narrative text, as well as procedural texts, within one novel, which is clearly a single text.⁶⁹ How might one then explain the use of multiple registers within it? Hasan presents a helpful solution, suggesting that any given text has only one

⁶⁶ Significant work has already been done on this front. See especially: Bergler, *Joel als Schriftinterpret*; Müller, *Gottes Zukunft*. Most of the major commentaries, and especially the more recent ones, give significant attention to quotations and allusions in Joel. See also: Beck, *Der "Tag Yhwhs"*; Crenshaw, "The Expression *Mî Yôdēa* "; Dozeman, "Inner-Biblical Interpretation"; Meinhold, "Zur Rolle des Tag-Jhwhs-Gedichts"; Sweeney, "Place and Function"; Tai, "End of the Book of the Twelve." For more on the question of inter- and intratextuality in SFL, see especially the work of Lemke (Lemke, "Intertextuality and Educational Research"; Lemke et al., "Ideology, Intertextuality, and the Notion of Register"; Lemke et al., "Ideology, Intertextuality and the Communication of Science").

⁶⁷ Martin, "Modelling Context"; Hasan, "Speaking with Reference to Context."

⁶⁸ Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion in English*.

⁶⁹ Martin and Rose, *Genre Relations*, 88. Note that the account provided by Martin and Rose of how embedded genres work is rather limited and unsatisfactory. Hasan's account is preferable.

register, which adds cohesion to what she calls the “primary text,” while other registers within that primary text present examples of “sub-texts.”⁷⁰ While sub-texts present a unique register of their own, the functional purpose of the sub-text is not to exist as a communicative act in and of itself, but to aid in the communicative act of the larger primary text in which it is found. Within the prophetic literature there are instances in which multiple registers might be described within a single text, and in these cases Hasan’s distinction between primary text and sub-text is a helpful tool for disambiguating these relationships.⁷¹ This concept of primary and sub-text will inform especially my final examination of the register of the book of Joel as a textual whole.⁷²

3.3. The New Form Criticism and Register Theory

For readers who are familiar with the discipline of biblical form criticism, much of the preceding discussion will be reminiscent of the work of form critics.⁷³ Particularly key are overlapping concerns with typical elements in a text, and with the social situation of a given text. One of the goals of this dissertation is to clarify and build on important work in recent form criticism, challenging existing notions of context and extending the possibilities of form critical work. This dissertation is entirely consonant with recent

⁷⁰ Hasan, “Speaking with Reference to Context,” 249–250.

⁷¹ Indeed, this distinction is consistent with Ben Zvi’s recent work, and provides helpful theoretical language to describe a feature he has observed about biblical texts. He notes, for instance, that while 2 Sam 22:2–51 and Ps 18 are basically identical texts, this does not mean that they are the same kind of text. They exist in distinct textual environments, and consequently must be treated in different ways (Ben Zvi, “Prophetic Book,” 281). With particular reference to prophetic books Ben Zvi also notes that elements in these books that resemble letters or speech are not really (or simply) letters and speech, but letters and speech as represented within a prophetic book (Ben Zvi, “Prophetic Book,” 291). These distinctions are significant and important, and will play a part in my analyses of Joel below, and especially in my final analysis of the register of the book as a whole in ch. 7 below.

⁷² See ch. 7 below.

⁷³ There is no space here for a full discussion of the history and development of form criticism as a method in biblical studies. In what follows I will make a general distinction between classic or traditional form criticism, with its concerns for original oral sub-strata and *Sitz im Leben*, and new form criticism, with its concerns with the final form of the text and *Sitz in der Literatur*. For a full analysis of the relationship between these two kinds of form criticism see: Toffelmire, “Form Criticism of the Prophets.”

attempts to revise and improve Gunkel's original project. Indeed, as I will mention below, the intellectual tradition from which SFL was born is organically related to Gunkel's work. Therefore, although I am not working within the theoretical framework of biblical form criticism *per se*, my methods and conclusions will, to a significant degree, relate to discussions of context and the nature of form and genre in recent form critical work.

Likely the greatest shift in the development of form critical work on the OT/HB prophets is the move away from the identification of a *Sitz im Leben* and towards the identification of a *Sitz in der Literatur* or *Sitz im Buch*.⁷⁴ In many ways this has been a helpful corrective against the tendencies of earlier scholars toward overreaching and overconfidence in their descriptions of the social situations underlying various prophetic oracles. It has also meant a return to the text as we have it, and consequently to less conjecture regarding evidence.

These are laudable shifts and should continue. One of the difficulties, however, is that these descriptions of situation or context are insufficient. Not only is the term *Sitz im Leben* frequently poorly defined and confused,⁷⁵ but it does not distinguish between specific social situations that produce texts and the broader cultural situation in which those specific situations exist; nor does it provide a clear distinction between material situation and linguistic situation. Additionally, the move away from *Sitz im Leben* and toward *Sitz in der Literatur*, while providing firmer evidentiary grounding, tends to downplay social situation and its importance in textual production and

⁷⁴ Kim, "Form Criticism," 94.

⁷⁵ Buss, "Idea of *Sitz im Leben*"; Becking, "Nehemiah 9," 254.

reception.⁷⁶ The account of context provided by SFL has the benefit of both distinguishing between context of situation, culture, and text, and of examining the interrelationships of these three accounts of context and their relationships with given texts.

Another significant problem with Gunkel's form-critical project is that the criteria for the examination of some given *Gattung* were never well established. Certainly Gunkel's three criteria of 1) *Sitz im Leben*, 2) thoughts and moods, 3) and common language associated with the form, are relatively well-known.⁷⁷ But the kinds of textual features one might explore are at best only hinted at. A register analysis provides a set of criteria that is grounded in an explicit theory of language and communication and related to specific textual features. Additionally, the underlying theory, because it is explicit, can also be challenged, changed, or expanded upon. Here I am attempting to do justice to the warnings of Hasan and Halliday that discourse analysis must be grounded in a clearly articulated linguistic framework, and to point to specific criteria for the analysis.⁷⁸

Among those who might be referred to as new form critics, Martin Buss provides a particularly helpful theoretical bridge between the concepts of linguistic register and register analysis, and the work of biblical form criticism. Since the publication of his doctoral dissertation, Buss has been exploring, promoting, and refining a method he initially referred to as "morphological criticism," and more recently refers to as

⁷⁶ This is certainly not a universal problem in current research on the prophetic literature. For extended treatments of extra-textual social situation, see especially the recent work of Ehud Ben Zvi (Diana Edelman and Ehud Ben Zvi, *The Production of Prophecy*).

⁷⁷ Gunkel, *The Psalms*, 149.

⁷⁸ Halliday, "Interview," 140. This is not to suggest that the linguistic framework I have adopted here is the only legitimate framework available. SFL has its biases and particularities, and even SFL theorists would be unlikely to suggest that theirs is the only legitimate perspective on human language.

“relational form criticism.”⁷⁹ Among his theoretical departures from the classic form critical project is a dismissal of the importance and validity of both the attempts to recover the *ipsissima verba* of the various Israelite prophets and the classificationist impulses of classic form criticism.⁸⁰ Hence the usefulness of form criticism does not lie in its capacity to uncover more original underlying layers in the prophetic literature or to draw sharp boundaries between various *Gattungen*. Buss suggests, rather, that, when grounded in relational theory,⁸¹ form criticism is able to describe various texts with reference to one another by observing both generic and unique features. Thus “the most important operation is not classification (contra Aristotelian essentialism) but attention to a variety of relations.”⁸² In this attention to the specific structure and patterning of individual texts, and the concern with drawing comparisons with other texts across a broad but well defined spectrum of features, Buss’s relational form criticism and SFL register analysis have much in common.

The seven principles underlying Buss’s relational form criticism overlap significantly (though, of course, not completely) with the concerns of register analysis, they are: 1) Genres in history are not cleanly divisible, 2) genres exist in a system and relate to one another, 3) genres are formed by multi-dimensional patterns and can therefore share significant features across genre “boundaries” (if such exist), 4) genres are probabilistic, not deterministic, 5) genres relate to human, not spatio-temporal situations, 6) genres change and develop as do human situations, and 7) structures are

⁷⁹ Buss, *The Prophetic Word of Hosea*; Buss, *Changing Shape*.

⁸⁰ Buss, *Changing Shape*, 23, 48 n.17.

⁸¹ Buss suggests that relational theory is a way of describing “particular objects that are not entirely independent, but enter into non-arbitrary relations with one another, these relations also having status in reality” (Toffelmire, “Review of Buss,” 1; Buss, *Changing Shape*, 146). For a fuller exploration of relational theory and the philosophical underpinnings of Buss’s thought, see: Buss, *Concept of Form*.

⁸² Buss, *Changing Shape*, 207.

not merely conventional, but exist within systems of choices.⁸³ The points of overlap between Buss's principles and register theory as described above should be relatively clear. Note particularly the focus on interrelationships, systems, and choices, which are emphasized heavily in SFL register theory. Additionally, Buss's theoretical grounding has a helpful flexibility reminiscent of register theory, in that it focuses on the probabilistic nature of genre choices and on the relative fuzziness of the dividing lines between genres.

Perhaps the most germane connection to my exploration of the relationship between biblical form criticism and register theory is Buss's thoughts on social situation. Buss attempts to recover that which is fundamentally useful in Gunkel's *Sitz im Leben*, while distancing himself from some of Gunkel's most central theoretical concerns. For example, he does not use social context as a tool for digging beneath layers of accumulated editorial dross. Instead, in a turn toward understanding genre from a communicational perspective, he appeals to social context as a means of describing what is going on in a given text as it is.⁸⁴ In this turn from excavation to interpretation, Buss actually seems to rescue the value of *Sitz im Leben* from Gunkel.

Intriguingly, in his overview of the question of *Sitz im Leben* across a wide variety of disciplines, Buss draws out what may well be an organic, historical relationship between Gunkel's work in biblical studies and Malinowski's work in linguistic anthropology (which was foundational for the development of SFL theories of

⁸³ Buss, *Changing Shape*, 85–92. One of the advantages of this approach to form/genre, which my use of register analysis shares, is that it eschews simplistic dichotomies between or myopic focus upon elements like structure and content. This is an advantage over, for instance, Ben Zvi's content-focused criteria for form (e.g., prophetic books as comprised of three elements: introduction, body, and conclusion; Ben Zvi, "Prophetic Book," 286).

⁸⁴ Buss, *Changing Shape*, 48, 148.

register and context). It appears that the impetus for Malinowski's focus on the language of the Trobriander islanders may have been the result of a recommendation by his friend, the renowned Egyptologist Alan Gardiner. He, in turn, would certainly have been engaged to some degree with the guild of biblical studies, and did in fact spend time in Berlin at the same time as Gunkel.⁸⁵ It seems entirely likely, then, that the same matrix of ideas that produced Gunkel's presentation of *Sitz im Leben* for biblical studies was responsible for Malinowski's interest in the centrality of social context for linguistic communication. Thus the points of overlap between biblical form criticism and SFL register theory are not incidental, and possibly not even coincidental.

Both Buss and SFL register analysts stress the communicative function of social situation for any given utterance and the connection between social situation and the genre, or register, of a given text. An attempt to describe the register and related context of situation of a biblical text is therefore consistent with the work of biblical form criticism.⁸⁶ Register and context theory in SFL appear to have been born out of the same matrix of ideas in the early 20th century that birthed form criticism, but for various reasons emphasized and deployed this theory in quite a different way from Gunkel. Recent shifts in theory regarding *Sitz im Leben* amongst biblical scholars appear to bring the discipline of biblical form criticism more or less in line with the way SFL theorists have been exploring context and register for several decades. Consequently, analyzing the register and context of situation of the book of Joel from the perspective of Systemic

⁸⁵ Buss, *Changing Shape*, 153–56.

⁸⁶ Indeed, SFL provides significant methodological help to the thorny problem of how to describe and assess the social situations related to various registers. Becking notes that this has been a problem for form critics since Knierim (Becking, "Nehemiah 9," 22; cf. Knierim, "Criticism of Literary Features").

Functional Linguistics touches upon an ongoing theoretical and practical discussion within biblical studies.

4. Outline of Method

One can go about analyzing the register of a given text in a variety of ways. A fully-orbed discourse analysis of a text of even middling size is an enormous undertaking; it involves exploring a wide variety of grammatical and semantic features. Because I have grounded my examination of the book of Joel within a particular linguistic theory of register, I have endeavoured to maintain the framework offered by SFL theorists and discourse analysts, while simultaneously attempting to account for the particularities of ancient Hebrew. Consequently, I have divided my register analysis of each sub-section of Joel into analyses of the mode, field, and tenor of those sub-sections. Following a detailed analysis of each of these, I will describe the context of situation of the portion of Joel with which I am working. Finally, I will indicate the ways in which the register frames my understanding of the Day of YHWH in the passage in question.

My examination of the mode of the four sub-sections of Joel chiefly involves a description of the texture of the text and, consequently, a detailed examination of cohesive ties.⁸⁷ This includes instances of co-reference, co-classification, and co-extension in the text, and the ways in which these ties create identity and similarity chains that bind together the fabric of the text. In addition to demonstrating the degree to which the text coheres, these identity and similarity chains also indicate that, in all four sub-sections of Joel, certain grammatical participants can be grouped together into sets. The grouping of participants into identifiable sets and the elucidation of the cohesion

⁸⁷ Note that many of the technical phrases used in this brief outline of the method, such as “cohesive ties,” are explained more fully in the text and footnotes of ch. 3.

and coherence of the various sub-sections of Joel is the principal concern of the mode section in the register analysis.⁸⁸ In my examination of the mode of Joel 1, I will also devote some space to a discussion of the medium and channel of the text. Because Joel is a single text, medium and channel are the same for each sub-section, and so I will refrain from the redundancy of repeating my discussion of medium and channel for the other three sub-sections of Joel. Nevertheless, medium and channel are of significance for the register of the book as a whole, as well as for the individual sub-sections, and I will return to this issue briefly in my analysis of the register of the book of Joel as a whole.

The examination of the field of each sub-section will include several elements. First, I will describe the various participant sets in each text, as identified in the examination of mode. This description of participant sets will include a discussion of the syntactic and semantic functions of the various members of each set.

⁸⁸ Many SFL theorists pay significant attention to information structure in their descriptions of mode. I have decided, for two reasons, to exclude a full examination of the information structure of Joel in my analysis. First, the inclusion of information structure would have increased the size and detail of the dissertation very significantly, making an already highly detailed analysis even more intricate and (dare I say) ungainly. Second, the current state of affairs amongst Hebraists regarding the nature of information structure in ancient Hebrew remains decidedly undetermined. A wide variety of proposals has been presented, and the issue remains very much a matter of debate. For helpful explorations of information structure in ancient Hebrew, see: BHRG ch. 7; Heimerdinger, *Topic, Focus and Foreground*; Holmstedt, "Adjusting Our Focus"; Holmstedt, "Word-Order Variation"; Holmstedt, "Word Order and Information Structure"; Lunn, *Word-Order Variation*; Lambrecht, *Information Structure and Sentence Form*; Both, "Word Order Differences between Narrative and Non-Narrative Material in Biblical Hebrew"; Both, "Word Order in the Verbless Clause"; Floor, "Information Structure." An additional feature of mode that is often explored by SFL theorists is the text's lexical density. Because lexical density is generally used as a way of identifying oral vs. written texts (oral texts being more grammatically complex, but less lexically dense), and because no baseline for the relative lexical density of oral vs. written texts in ancient Hebrew is possible, I have chosen to exclude this portion of the analysis. Readers interested in the potential of the concept of lexical density in explorations of the biblical text should see the work of Polak, who has theorized lexical density as a tool for distinguishing between historical layers in some narrative texts (Polak, "The Oral and the Written"; Polak, "Sociolinguistics and the Judean Speech Community"; Polak, "Sociolinguistics").

Second, I will examine the arena of the text with respect to both location and time. My discussion of time in Joel will necessarily bring to the fore questions related to the nature of the biblical Hebrew verbal system (BHVS). The nature of the BHVS remains a subject of significant debate among Hebraists, and is centered especially on the question of whether or not ancient Hebrew is a tensed or aspectual language. In his recent description of the BHVS, Cook has argued strongly that the BHVS involves tense, aspect, and modality, but that the verbal system is aspect-prominent.⁸⁹ Consequently, it is quite difficult to determine, at times, the relative sequence of events in a given

⁸⁹ Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*. It is important to note that Cook's analysis of biblical Hebrew is grounded in a linguistic framework that is dramatically different from the perspective I have taken. Cook's work is grounded in a formalist approach known as Grammaticalization theory (see Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*, ch. 3, esp. 3.1.3), which makes use of observed diachronic shifts in language (e.g., from free-form to clitic) to suggest typological tendencies in language development. Cook is aware of the theoretical problems with this and almost every other attempt to suggest universal features across all human language. However, he makes quite clear that his use of Grammaticalization theory is principally heuristic (Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*, 186), and a careful reading of his work confirms this. Indeed, the core of Cook's description of the BHVS is grounded in careful linguistic observation of instances of use, from which he abstracts more general observations on the system. This is a significant difference between Cook's approach and common characterizations (some would say caricatures) of formalist linguistics. Throughout his book he consistently works to describe BH by means of empirical observation of the language of the OT/ HB itself. Consequently, although there is a significant theoretical gap between Cook's formalist allegiances and my own functionalist and systemic views, his work has immense value as a description of the way in which the BHVS functions. There are, obviously, other accounts of the BHVS. Cook gives a good overview of the history of research on the BHVS (Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*, 77–175; see also Penner's overview of the state of the debate: Penner, "History of the Research"). For opposing views amongst current Hebraists, see especially the tense and aspect-based theory of Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*; the discourse-analysis views of Longacre in *The Grammar of Discourse*; Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb*; Buth, "The Hebrew Verb"; Buth, "Functional Grammar, Hebrew, and Aramaic"; the sequentialist/aspect views of Endo, *The Verbal System of Classical Hebrew*; and Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. For a critique of aspectual views on the BHVS see: Joosten, "Finite Verbal Forms?" An excellent, albeit informal, interaction among several competing theorists (including John Cook and Robert Holmstedt, Randall Buth, Jan Joosten, Ken Penner, and John Hobbins) is available here: http://ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com/ancient_hebrew_poetry/files/tam_in_biblical_hebrew.pdf (accessed 18/07/2013). The frank truth is that the BHVS can likely be explained by means of several different theoretical models. I have chosen to make use of Cook's model because it appears to have the potential to best explain the flexible use of QTL, YQTL, and *wayyiqtol* forms in a wide variety of registers, while remaining true to the theory's fundamental description of verbal syntax, and eschewing mere *ad hoc* explanations. Thus, for the purposes of this project, I will accept Cook's description of the BHVS, which suggests that QTL indicates perfective aspect, YQTL imperfective aspect, *wayyiqtol* past (narrative) action, and weQTL generally has modal nuances.

prophetic text. Determining the ways in which time is encoded in the discourse is of considerable interest to interpreters, and it significantly informs any description of the field of discourse, but since the BHVS appears to be aspect-prominent, at times my description will be rather complex and tentative. For any given passage I will need to describe time by observing a set of inter-related features, and my analysis will therefore always be subject to certain interpretive decisions made with regard to the text as a whole. Such factors as the selection of verbal forms, the use of prepositions and other functional modifiers, instances of temporal deixis, etc., will be germane to my description of time in each sub-section of Joel.

Third, I will explore the verbal processes and transitivity structure of the text. The standard SFL description of English semantics includes several categories that helpfully inform my examination of ancient Hebrew, but some of its other categories are less helpful, or at least are much more difficult to substantiate, and so I will not include them in my examination of Joel. The categories that I will use include Material processes (which describe doing/happening), Mental processes (which describe thinking/feeling/perceiving), and Speaking processes (which describe saying/reporting).⁹⁰ All of these are instantiated by verb phrases (VPs) in BH, and there is seldom any difficulty in differentiating one from the other.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Note that for clarity I have capitalized the initial letter when referring to process types. I will continue this practice throughout.

⁹¹ Among criteria for differentiation, note that Speaking processes are very frequently marked by אָמַר, and are thus easily identified. Mental processes are associated with sentient participants (or non-sentient participants by means of metaphor), and involve a change within the consciousness of the given participant (Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG3*, 197). Material processes construe “a quantum of change in the flow of events as taking place through some input of energy” (Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG3*, 179).

SFL also includes Relational processes within its Ideational description of the semantic structure of English.⁹² However, although some Relational processes are instantiated by means of a VP in BH (היה is the most common verb in such constructions, although there are occasionally others), many, if not most, Relational clauses in BH are non-verbal, and consist of the apposition of two noun phrases (NPs). Two important features suggest that Relational processes should not be grouped with other verbal processes in descriptions of BH semantics. First, Relational processes only occasionally include an explicit verb; and second, Relational clauses appear to instantiate the same type of semantic relationship as inter-clausal relationships (parataxis and hypotaxis) in that they draw a comparison between two participants. I will therefore review both verbal and non-verbal Relational clauses as part of my analysis of paratactic and hypotactic clauses, because these also involve the construal of the logical interrelationships in the field of discourse.⁹³ These elements (Relational clauses and inter-clausal relationships) will constitute the final major element of the analysis of field, which is an examination of the logical relationships in the text.

My examination of the tenor of each section of Joel also involves two major elements. First, I will explore the participant relations, which is to say the ways in which

⁹² See Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG3*, ch. 5 for a full overview of the clause as “representation” in English semantics, and 5.4 for the description of Relational processes.

⁹³ The tension between the Experiential and Logical metafunctions in SFL theory is somewhat problematic, and this formal distinction in BH is illustrative of that tension. For an alternate account of the metafunctions, in which the Experiential and Logical are explicitly separated into two distinct typological categories, see: McGregor, *Semiotic Grammar*. Indeed, one of the factors that led McGregor to separate the Experiential and Logical into distinct overarching categories was his extensive analysis of the semantic structure of Gooniyandi (an Australian aboriginal language), in which Relational clauses are presented by means of the verbless apposition of two NPs, just as with BH (McGregor, *Semiotic Grammar*, 90–91). A full exploration of the verbless clause in BH is far beyond the purview of this dissertation, but I would theorize very tentatively that the reason some Relational clauses include an explicit VP is in order to mark the clause for tense/aspect/mood.

relationships between various participant sets are encoded in the text. Second, I will examine the use of polarity, interrogatives, and process sharing in the text.

After exploring each of these elements of the register of a given sub-section of Joel, I will conclude with a description of the register itself. Once this is complete, I will indicate the way in which the register of that sub-section of Joel relates to the function of the Day of YHWH. My goal here is to describe the nature of the Day and the way in which the register of each passage frames the Day for readers.

My analysis of each of the four sub-sections of Joel (chs. 3–6 of the dissertation) will proceed without much reference to the book as a whole. I will certainly indicate intratextual relationships, where these are applicable, but I will concentrate on describing the register of each of these four sub-sections of the book. When I have finished this exploration I will examine the register of the book as a whole. As my analysis will demonstrate, the book of Joel is a relatively unified and cohesive text, and so to describe the register of the book as a whole is not merely possible, but quite necessary. In conjunction with this description I will also present the related context of situation that the book suggests. Consistent with my description of context of situation above, this presentation will consist of a suggestive portrayal of the social, communicative context of the text.

5. Conclusion

This dissertation will examine the register and context of situation of the book of Joel, both as a whole and with reference to the book's four sub-sections. The method of this analysis is grounded theoretically in Systemic Functional Linguistics, which is a functional and socio-semiotic theory of language that is most appropriate for the exploration of context from a linguistic point of view. This theoretical stance differs

significantly in some respects from traditional examinations of the *Sitz im Leben* of biblical prophetic literature, and yet it is consistent with some of the concerns of form criticism in its classic instantiation, and even more consistent with recent shifts in thought among biblical form critics. Consequently, my examination of the register of Joel will provide both a helpful examination of the nature and function of the concept of the Day of YHWH in the book, and a practical demonstration of the potential value of SFL theories of register and context.

Chapter 3: Joel 1:1–20—Register Analysis

1. Introduction

As I mentioned in the preceding chapter, I will subdivide my analysis of Joel 1:1–20 into three sections, followed by a final analysis and set of conclusions. Because of the nature of SFL register analysis, the three central sections will consist mainly of the presentation of data. First, I will examine the mode of discourse, then the field of discourse, and finally the tenor of discourse. After completing this analysis, I will move on to a more synthetic discussion of the information contained in these sections and offer some conclusions regarding the register of Joel 1:1–20 and the function of the Day of YHWH within this passage.¹

2. Mode

2.1. Introduction

In the Mode section, I will examine two components of the textual organization of Joel 1. First, I will examine the channel and medium of the passage. I will then move on to a discussion of textual cohesion. In my discussion of textual cohesion, I will trace co-referential, co-classificatory, and co-extension chains through the text to determine the degree to which Joel 1 coheres. I will also consider the way in which the various elements of the field of discourse are organized and presented by means of the textual metafunction.

¹ Given the nature of register analysis, there will be both a degree of redundancy between what I present in the three central sections and a slight sense of disconnectedness as various individual elements of the passage are highlighted. The final synthetic analysis is quite critical and represents the real register analysis, whilst the central sections are simply the process by which this analysis proceeds.

2.2. Channel/Medium

As I noted in Chapter 2, I will use Hasan's two-part model of what is normally called "medium," which includes channel (phonic/graphic) and medium (spoken/written). There is an expected pattern of co-occurrence between these two categories: phonic co-occurring with spoken, and graphic with written.² What is helpful about making use of both categories is that it illumines those texts in which this expected co-occurrence does not obtain,³ thereby making available theoretical categories to describe texts that are in the graphic channel (i.e., written down as opposed to spoken aloud) and yet have characteristics of spoken registers (i.e., they are in spoken medium).

In Joel 1, we find just such a tension between channel and medium. The text is obviously presented in the graphic channel (as are all ancient texts), and to a degree it presents many characteristics that one might expect to find in a written medium. Compared to spoken media, the presentation includes significant rhetorical crafting, minimal process sharing, elements of formal style (e.g., parallelism and imagery), and very little exophoric deixis. Additionally, language itself plays a constitutive role in the text. There can be no communicative act in this text apart from the use of language (as opposed, for instance, to a situation where two people are standing face to face having a conversation). Although language *can* be constitutive in both the phonic channel and the graphic channel, it *must* be constitutive in the graphic channel.

Nevertheless, certain elements of the text lean in the direction of the spoken medium. While Joel 1 does not contain formal process sharing, it does include hints of dialogic characteristics, as noted below in the tenor section. It also makes extensive use

² Halliday, *Language*, 58–59.

³ Indeed, this tension appears to be a notable feature of the registers of biblical prophetic literature.

of second person address, particularly by means of imperative verbs, and some use of first person address—both of which suggest a conversation or dialogue (though admittedly a somewhat artificial one). Thus, although Joel 1 is, strictly speaking, a monologue, these elements create the sense of a virtual conversation.

In terms of communication, this tension suggests that listeners/readers have the opportunity to assign for themselves a role among those offered by the text. This also suggests the possibility that Joel 1 can not only be read silently (which of course it can be, and likely was in ancient contexts), but aloud, and that it can be re-read, and possibly even performed.⁴

2.3. Textual Cohesion

In order for a text to be a text, for it to have what Hasan calls “Texture,” it must be cohesive. That is to say, its various elements must be bound together by means of connective relationships. In SFL theory, these connections involve semantic relationships known as “cohesive ties and devices.”⁵ These cohesive ties are grouped into three types of semantic relationships: “co-reference,” “co-classification,” and “co-extension.” Co-reference refers to the relationship that is instantiated when two (or more) items in the text have the same “situational referent.”⁶ Co-classification refers to the relationship that is instantiated when two (or more) items in the text “belong to an identical class, but each end of the cohesive tie refers to a distinct member of this

⁴ On reading and re-reading prophetic literature in the post-monarchic period, see especially the work of Ben Zvi: “Setting an Agenda”; “The Prophetic Book”; and “Production of Prophecy.” On the concept of prophetic literature as performative, see Doan and Giles, *Prophets, Performance, and Power*. There are also examples in the OT/ HB of scribal figures reading texts aloud (or commanding that texts be read aloud) to others in religious settings. See, for example, Neh 8–9, 2 Kgs 22–23, and Jer 29.

⁵ Halliday, *Language*, 72–96.

⁶ Halliday, *Language*, 73.

class.”⁷ Co-extension refers to the relationship that is instantiated when two (or more) items in a text “both refer to something within the same general field of meaning.”⁸

Hasan mentions that these relationships can form more complex sets of connections with one another, called “identity chains” and “similarity chains.”⁹ Identity chains refer to the formation of sets of co-referential Participants across significant stretches of discourse, and similarity chains refer to the formation of relationships of co-classification and co-extension across significant stretches of text.¹⁰ In this sub-section I will present the co-reference, co-classification, and co-extension ties found in Joel 1 as a set of simple verse-by-verse descriptions. I will also note the ways in which these various ties form larger relationships across the text of Joel 1, grouping the Participants into recognizable sets and suggesting certain relationships about these sets.

2.3.1. Co-reference ties

Verse 2 begins with two 2mp suffixes, both of which are co-referential with the “elders, and dwellers in the land.” Verse 3 contains four co-referential suffixes. The 3fs suffix (“of it”) is co-referential with “this” from v. 2, and the 2mp suffix (“your children”) is co-referential with the elders and dwellers. One 3mp suffix (“to their children”) is co-referential with “your children” and the other (“and their children”) with the initial mention of “their children.” In v. 5 the 2mp suffix (“your mouth”) is co-referential with the drunkards and drinkers of wine.

Verse 6 opens with an instance of metaphorical co-reference: the “nation” that has come up is a metaphor for the locusts. Note that in the following verses this “nation”

⁷ Halliday, *Language*, 74.

⁸ Halliday, *Language*, 74.

⁹ Halliday, *Language*, 83–84.

¹⁰ Halliday, *Language*, 84.

does not engage in the kind of warfare that one would expect from a literal nation, but instead ravages only the land itself and its agricultural produce. Additionally, if גִּי is not metaphorical here, the locusts described in v. 4 simply vanish from the scene, which seems rather unlikely.¹¹ The consequence of this is, of course, that all items that are included in the cohesion ties associated with גִּי are also associated with the locusts, thereby creating an identity chain.

In v. 6 the 1cs suffix (“my land”) is co-referential with YHWH,¹² and the 3ms suffixes (“its teeth” and “teeth of a lioness are its”) is co-referential with “nation.” In v. 7 we find three 3ms verbs, the Subjects of which are co-referential with “nation,” and two 3fs suffixes that are co-referential with “fig tree” and/or “vine.”¹³ The clitic feminine singular Addressee/Subject of the imperative in v. 8 is co-referential with land (v. 6),¹⁴ and the 3fs suffix (“her youth”) is co-referential with בְּתוּלָה. In v. 13 the 1cs suffix (“my God”) is co-referential with the Speaking voice, which creates a wrinkle in

¹¹ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 16. As Assis notes, this involves the reversal of a common ANE metaphor in which nations or armies are represented as locusts (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 81). This *contra* Stuart, who sees the locusts as metaphors for the “nations.” Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 241.

¹² See also Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 17 and Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 23–24. In the 1cs suffixes of vv. 6–7, Assis sees an intentional ambiguity with regard to referent. See Assis, *Book of Joel*, 87–88. Although there may be a degree of ambiguity here, it is difficult to imagine that the people are intended as referents (why the singular form?). The prophet may be intended, if we understand “my land” in the sense of “the land to which I belong” (though this would perhaps be an odd way to read “my vine” and “my fig tree”). However, if true possession is intended, then YHWH must be the referent and these phrases indicate that the land is the ultimate possession of YHWH. Since the people can likely be excluded as referents and since YHWH presents a more plausible option, I will proceed upon the assumption that YHWH is the referent of these 1cs suffixes. Note, however, that the ambiguity here only goes to emphasize the tension in the YHWH/prophet Participant set described below (see tenor section). Cf. Allen, who sees this as “a personification of the nation” (Allen, *Joel*, 240).

¹³ As noted in section 2.3.3 below, these two possible co-referents are themselves bound together by co-extension, making the precise co-referential relationship relatively unimportant.

¹⁴ See also Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 18. Allen suggests that these are references to Jerusalem, given “the standard personified appellation of the capital, ‘virgin daughter Zion’” (Allen, *Joel*, 52). Such an identification may be possible, but it is not necessary given the close referent “land.” The form here is, of course, odd and unattested elsewhere in the OT/HB (cf. BDB). With the majority of modern commentators, I read this as a feminine, singular, Qal imperative. If pointed differently the word could instead be read as “my God,” for which Assis argues. For an overview of the issues at hand, see Assis, *Book of Joel*, 83–86.

the Participant structure, which will be discussed below in the description of tenor.¹⁵

The Speaker of the imperatives throughout ch. 1 is co-referential with Joel/YHWH, and the 2mp suffix (“your God”) here in v. 14 is co-referential with the Addressees of the imperatives. In v. 16 the two 1cp suffixes (“our eyes”, “our God”) are co-referential with one another, and also appear to be co-referential with the Addressees throughout. Additionally, the use of the common plural suggests that the prophetic voice should be included in this co-reference chain at this point, indicating a partial overlap between the Speaker and the Addressees. The 3rd person reference to “God” excludes YHWH from the Speaker co-reference chain here in v. 16, and this verse consequently indicates a case in which the prophetic voice speaks on behalf of the Addressees, and not on behalf of YHWH.¹⁶ Verses 17 and 18 contain isolated instances of co-reference. The 3mp suffix of v. 17 is co-referential with פְּרִדוֹת (“seeds”?), and the 3mp suffix of v. 18 is co-referential with עֲדָרֵי בָקָר (“herds of cattle”).¹⁷ In vv. 19 and 20 the 2ms suffixes (“to/for you”) are co-referential with God/YHWH, and the 1cs Speaker (“I call”) is co-referential with Joel (i.e., the prophetic voice).¹⁸

¹⁵ OG here does not have the first person possessive, and reads simply “God” (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 239 n.13b). Here Vg follows MT over OG. See Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 50 n.c.

¹⁶ It is also conceivable that this could be interpreted as an interjection by the Addressees, without including the prophet as part of that interjection. Assis interprets this as the prophetic voice speaking to the priests (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 111). I suggest that there is no need to identify a specific Addressee of the cry in v. 16. This is a statement of lamentation, and provides no new information for the priests, or any other sub-set of the Addressees. If anything, the specific address to YHWH in v. 19 suggests that vv. 16–19 are directed toward the deity.

¹⁷ See n.22 below on the crux interpretum of v. 17.

¹⁸ Barton sees this speaking voice as an anonymous “lament speaker” standing in for the community, and not as the prophet (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 63). Since the prophet is available as a discourse active Participant, I see no reason that he should not be considered the referent here. However, I agree that he functions as a representative of the community. As I have just noted, the prophet has been partially included in the Addressees Participant set in v. 16, which suggests that the prophet can fill this role as representative of the community (for more on this, see the tenor section below).

2.3.2. Co-classification ties

Joel 1 contains five co-classification ties. The first is found in v. 5, where שְׂבוּרִים is co-classificatory with שְׁתֵּי יַיִן. The second is in v. 9, where הַפְּהִיגִים may be co-classificatory with מְשַׁרְתֵי יְהוָה. In fairness, this may conceivably represent a single NP, and not two parallel NPs. The third and fourth instances of co-classification in the chapter are particularly significant, for they create cohesion ties between two different and otherwise unrelated sets of Participants.

In v. 12 a similarity chain is created by the repetition of יָבֵשׁ.¹⁹ This set of co-classification ties, which marks out a class of things defined by being “dried up,” includes the vine and trees. The inclusion of the final item in the series, “joy,” is intriguing. The other items in this chain are also tied together by other cohesion ties (specifically, by co-extension; see below), but שִׂשׂוֹן has no semantic overlap with the other lexical items in this chain.²⁰ The cohesive connection thus binds together two otherwise unrelated semantic fields, and ties the emotional and religious experience of the human Participants of the discourse to the state of the agricultural Participants of the discourse.²¹

Similarly, a co-classification tie exists, by means of אָכַל, between the references to locusts in v. 4 and אֵשׁ (fire) in vv. 19–20. Both the locusts and the fire devour the produce of the land, thus creating a semantic relationship between two otherwise unrelated Participants. Just as the emotional and religious experience of the people is

¹⁹ See n.41 below regarding the question of the lexical root of הָבֵישׁ.

²⁰ However, it should be noted that in Isa 51:3 the term does appear alongside desert/garden imagery.

²¹ Van der Merwe and Wendland suggest that the three clauses using יָבֵשׁ underscore the totality of the destruction (van der Merwe, “Marked Word Order,” 119). Prinsloo suggests that, in this section, “[these] crops, a sign and signal of Yahweh’s blessing and presence, are devastated, indicating that the harmony between Yahweh and his people has been disturbed” (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 19. This following Allen, *Joel*, 54).

tied to the state of the land, the two Participants that assault the land (locusts and fire) are tied to one another, suggesting a close relationship between the locust plague and the drought.²²

Finally, in v.16, verbal ellipsis creates a co-classificatory relationship between אֶכָּל and שְׂמֵחָה וְגִיל. This final instance of co-classification is particularly interesting. As with the previous two examples, it is not a product of any semantic relationship between the two elements apart from that instantiated in this particular text. That is to say, these two lexemes do not belong to the same semantic field in any way, and do not collocate anywhere else in the OT/HB. Here, however, they form a co-classification tie by means of verbal ellipsis. By means of the syntagmatic structure of these two particular clauses, both “food” and “joy and gladness” fall into the category of things that have been cut off. This connection is, in fact, integral to the message of the chapter because it creates an explicit semantic relationship between “food,” which, as we will see, is co-extensive with the many other instances of agricultural language in the chapter, and “joy and gladness,” which are themselves co-extensive with the abundant religious/cultic language in this chapter.²³ This consequently reinforces the relationship introduced by

²² As Simkins notes, locust plagues and drought can actually be mutually reinforcing phenomena (Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 117). For more on the physiology and behaviour of the gregarious desert locust, see Bomphrey et al., “Desert Locust Aerodynamics”; Hassanali et al., “Desert Locust Gregarization”; Lecoq, “Desert Locust Management”; Tanaka and Nishide, “Locust Hoppers”; Tanani et al., “Comparative Effects”; and Stevenson, “The Key to Pandora’s Box.” Plöger suggests that the plague and drought were initially separate historical incidents that have here been conflated due to similarities in danger and consequence, and because they represent the two major natural disasters common to Palestine (Plöger, *Theocracy and Eschatology*, 98–99).

²³ Therefore, the destruction of agricultural produce that is a result of the locust plague involves more than simply the destruction of the “bare necessities of life” (Rendtorff, “Alas for the Day” 187), though it certainly does that as well. But, more significantly, the plague also creates severe difficulties in religious and cultic terms. This need not imply that the daily offering is being intentionally withheld by the people (Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity in History and Nature in the Book of Joel*, 145), but does suggest that there is a relationship between the cessation of the sacrifice and the threat of the coming Day of YHWH (Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity in History and Nature in the Book of Joel*, 149).

the co-classification ties of v.12. The textural organization thus creates an explicit relationship between the agricultural semantic field and the cultic/religious semantic field, which is a key component of the message of Joel 1.

2.3.3. Co-extension ties

In 1:4 there is a set of co-extension ties created by the various types of locust listed. This creates a hyponymic relationship in which הַגָּזִם is presented as the superordinate and הַאֲרָבָה, הַיֵּלֶק, and הַחֲסִיל as the hyponyms.²⁴ The “mouth” of v. 5 is co-extensive with the drunkards/drinkers of wine. The two descriptions of teeth in v. 6 are co-extensive with “nation.” In v. 7 the “vine” and “fig-tree” are co-extensive with land, and “branches” is co-extensive with “fig-tree.” In v. 8 “virgin” is co-extensive with the feminine singular Addressee of the imperative. “The field” in v. 10 is co-extensive with the land, and thus with the Addressee of the imperative in v. 8. Also in v. 10, “ground” is co-extensive with “land,” and the grain, wine, and oil are all co-extensive with the field/land. The “harvest of the field” is co-extensive with grain, wine, and oil in v. 11. In v. 12 “vine” is co-extensive with “harvest” from v. 11, and the various types of trees listed are all also co-extensive with one another. The 1cp suffix (“our eyes”) of v. 16 is co-extensive with the Addressees of the imperatives of the preceding clause. That which is cut off from the Addressees’ eyes is אֶכָּל (“food”), which is itself co-extensive with

²⁴ A great deal of ink has been spilled over the precise meaning of these terms for the locusts. For a brief review of the issue among ancient exegetes, who tended to read the locust types metaphorically or typologically, see Lössl, “When Is a Locust Just a Locust?” More recent commentators have explored the possibility that the four types represent the ontogenetic stages of the gregarious desert locust. See, for instance, Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 237–38 n.4a–d. This cannot, of course, be an exact representation of those stages, as the desert locust goes through five or six, and not four, ontogenetic stages of development (Tanaka and Nishide, “Locust Hoppers”). However, as Wolff notes, to apply the standards of modern scientific observation to a document like Joel is absurd, and the identification of four locust types may well be the consequence of the imprecise nature of ancient observation of the insect (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 27). In any case, Allen is quite right to note that the rhetorical effect of listing the four names is to emphasize the extent of the plague. For a good overview of modern theories regarding the four names of the locusts, see Allen, *Joel*, 49–50, and esp. 49 n.19.

the agricultural terms which follow in vv. 17–18. In v. 17 the various agricultural terms (“seed”, “storehouses”, “granaries”, “grain”)²⁵ are co-extensive with one another, and this co-extensive tie also includes the pastoral terminology of v. 18 (“beasts”, “herds”, “cattle”, “pasture”, “flocks”). In v. 19 a co-extensive tie is created between מִדְּבָר and הַשָּׂדֶה, as they are both locations in which cattle/flocks graze. There is also a co-extension chain between אֵשׁ and לְהִבָּהּ as consumers/destroyers of the land. In the final verse of the chapter we find co-extensive ties to the various pastoral terms in the preceding verse, and also to “fire” in the preceding verse.

Note that these various co-extension ties create significant similarity chains that are related especially to the agricultural language in Joel 1. Also, both the locusts and the references to fire and flame form similarity chains that are bound to one another by means of the co-classification discussed above.

2.4. Mode of Discourse – Conclusions

These various cohesion ties demonstrate that Joel 1 functions as a unified and coherent text, but patterns of cohesion are also formed among the various ties that are related to the register of the text. Several such patterns are of significance. First, the three types of cohesion ties are bound together at various points by means of metaphor and metonymy, thereby tying together the various individual Participants by means of

²⁵ Verse 17 is, of course, something of an interpretive problem itself. מִגֵּרָפָה, פְּרָדוֹת, עֵבֶשׂוּ, and מִמְּגָרוֹת are all *hapax legomena*, and to a great degree the interpretation of the verse depends upon דָּגָן. Hence my translations “seed,” “storehouses,” and “granaries” should be taken with appropriate caution. For a fascinating and creative (albeit somewhat tendentious) reading of the MT text as a reference to parched riverbanks and broken cisterns, see Sprengling, “Joel 1, 17a.” OG here appears to read different forms than MT (or perhaps simply guesses at the same forms in a different way), and translates 17a as σκίρτησαν δαμάλεις ἐπὶ ταῖς φάτναις αὐτῶν (“the cows leap/stamp about in their manger/enclosure”). Wolff reconstructs from this the Hebrew פָּשׁוּ קְרוֹת בְּרִפְתֵיָהֶם. For a fuller discussion of the various versional issues, see Sprengling, as well as Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 19 n.z–z, 20 n.aa–aa. As Stuart puts it, it is very likely that the versions “are guessing just as much as we are at the meaning” (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 239 n.17.a).

identity and similarity chains. For instance, the various types of locusts are bound together by co-extension, then bound to “nation” by metaphorical co-reference, and then bound again to “fire” and “flame” by co-classification, thereby binding these three components together into an identity chain. Similar chains can be observed between the Addressees of the discourse and the various Participants that fall under the general category of “the land.” Note especially the convergence of the identity chain referring to the Addressees and the identity and similarity chains referring to the land and agricultural produce in v. 17; the cutting off of the land’s produce is an issue of extreme significance to the Addressees. Note also the relationship formed between Joel and YHWH as Participants, which involves at least some degree of co-reference (however, even though there is significant identity overlap between YHWH and the prophet, as I noted above, this overlap is not complete, and it is possible to point to instances—such as v. 19—in which the two Participants clearly refer to distinct entities). Thus, these cohesion chains not only bind the text into a unified whole, but by particular means (especially metaphor and metonymy) bind the various Participants into identifiable units or sets.

3. Field

I will divide my analysis of the field of discourse into three parts: the Participants, the Arena (which includes Time and Location), and the verbal processes. I will also subdivide Verbal processes into three categories: Material processes (doing/happening), Mental processes (thinking/feeling/perceiving), and Speaking process (saying/reporting). In terms of linguistic units, this includes the VPs in the text. Finally, I will provide an account of the logical relationships in the text, i.e., the

Relational clauses (both verbal and non-verbal) and the inter-clausal relationships, including both parataxis and hypotaxis.

3.1. Participants

Within the context of the locust plague—which, as I will show below, is the primary event in Joel 1—a wide variety of Participants may be found. I will group these Participants according to the Participant sets already suggested by my examination of the identity and similarity chains. I will also consider the lexico-grammatical (Subject, Complement, Adjunct) and semantic (Actor, Goal, Circumstance, Addressee of command/exhortation) roles of each Participant.

The first set of Participants is made up of the Addressees of the imperative clauses in the discourse. These include both the variously identified Addressees (ploughmen, vinedressers, ministers, priests, elders, etc.) and the Addressees who receive no explicit identification. All of these, of course, fill the lexico-grammatical role of Subject in their respective clauses. Related to the Addressees are the Participants “your children” (Subject) and “their children”(Subject) of future generations. In addition to being Addressees, “the priests” and “the ministers of YHWH” are also referred to in the third person in v. 9 (Subjects/Actors).²⁶ In v. 12 we find “the children of humanity” (Adjunct/Circumstance). The “elders and all the inhabitants of the land” (Complement/Goal), found in v. 14, are the last explicit members of this Participant set in Joel 1.²⁷ Given that many of these various Participants fill the semantic role of

²⁶ Note that OG here reads $\theta\sigma\alpha\alpha\sigma\tau\eta\rho\iota\omega$ instead of YHWH. See Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 238 n.9a.

²⁷ I have identified $\text{לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֲרָרָה}$ as the lexico-grammatical Complement and semantic Goal of this clause, although they could quite plausibly fill the roles of Subject/Addressee of the imperative. I have chosen the former reading for two reasons: first, אָרָר tends to take a Complement (see BDB); second, this is the third imperative clause in this verse, and the preceding two are addressed to a clitic Addressee and both have a Complement/Goal. See also Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 19. Alternatively, one might read $\text{לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֲרָרָה}$ as the Subject/Addressee of the clause and $\text{לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֲרָרָה}$ as the Complement/Goal. If the former

Addressee in the imperative clauses of Joel 1. I will refer to this set as the Addressees of the discourse (or simply the Addressees).²⁸

YHWH is referred to in vv. 1 (modifying “word,” with which it constitutes Subject/Identified), 9 (modifying “ministers,” with which it constitutes Adjunct/Circumstance), 15 (modifying “day,” with which it constitutes the Subject/Identified of the verbless clause), and 19 (Adjunct/Goal). The prophet Joel is referred to specifically in v. 1, and is clearly seen again in v. 19 as the Subject/Actor of the first clause. Apart from this, there is the question of the many imperative verbs in the chapter. These could conceivably be spoken by either YHWH or the prophet. As I noted above, this suggests a meaningful semantic relationship between Joel and YHWH as Participants. These two Participants clearly belong to a single set, with the prophet’s voice being all but indistinguishable from the voice of YHWH for the majority of the chapter. However, this set maintains a degree of internal tension because in one instance (v. 19) one member of the set addresses the other. I will discuss this tension at greater length in the tenor section.

interpretation is correct, one might expect a ׀ to connect the two elements of the constituent. Assis suggests that the difficulty created by the absent conjunction, as well as the absence of the expected preposition (אֶל) for the following phrase (בְּיַת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם), is an intentional rhetorical feature of the text, used to “create dissonance between the first and second parts of v. 14” (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 103). This may or may not be true, but in any case it would appear that the (supposed) absence of the conjunction and a preposition allow both the reading I have chosen and the alternative reading as possibilities. See also Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 29.

²⁸ Wolff suggests that the existence of multiple referents to whom imperatives are addressed, as well as the structure of the passage (he identifies multiple strophes), is indicative of the *Sitz im Leben* of the passage. They suggest a call issued multiple times to the various groups referred to in the passage, who could not have been gathered for one extended call (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 22). This may well have been true in the case of an original, oral prophetic word from Joel (if we accept that such a thing ever occurred), but in terms of the discourse-world of the text of Joel, the identity and similarity chains noted above bind the various Addressees specified in the text into a larger whole. Certainly one of the effects of this is that the reader is left with the impression that the call has gone out far and wide, to all who dwell in the land (i.e., from the drunkards to the elders, and everybody in between). Although he approaches the passage from a different methodological point of view, Prinsloo also points out the many close structural and semiotic relationships in vv. 8–14, which supports my view on the close relationship between the various Addressees of the imperative verbs. See Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 23.

The various types of locusts are referred to both explicitly in v. 4 and implicitly throughout the passage as Subjects/Actors, at times by means of metaphor.²⁹ The chapter also includes multiple references to plants, animals, and agricultural produce: wine (v. 5, Adjunct/Circumstance); the vine (v. 7, Complement/Goal); the fig tree (v. 7, Complement/Goal); branches (v. 7, Subject/Goal); fields (v. 10, Subject/Goal); the earth/ground (v. 10, Subject/Actor); grain (v. 10, Subject/Goal); wine (v. 10, Subject/Goal); oil (v. 10, Subject/Goal); wheat and barley (v. 11, Adjunct/Circumstance); קְצִיר שָׂדֵה (the harvest of the field, v. 11, Subject/Goal); the vine and various trees (v. 12, all of which fill the roles Subject/Goal); food (v. 16, Subject/Goal); seeds, storehouses, granaries, and grain (v. 17, all Subject/Goal); beasts (v. 18, Subject/Sensor); herds of cattle (v. 18, Subject/Goal); flocks of sheep (v. 18, Subject/Goal); fire and flame (v. 19, both Subject/Actor); מְרֵעָה (v. 18, Subject/Identified of verbless clause); נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר (v. 19, Complement/Goal); all the trees of the field (v. 19, Complement/Goal); and the brooks (v. 20, Subject/Goal). The passage also contains a variety of abstract concepts or calls to action related to abstract concepts: the מִנְחָה וְנֶסֶךְ (grain offering and drink offering, v. 13, Subject/Goal); a fast and solemn assembly (v. 14, both Complement/Goal),³⁰ and joy and gladness (v. 16, Subject/Goal).

As I noted in the mode section, identity and similarity chains tie these various participants into well-defined sets of Participants. These sets include the Addressees, God and the prophet, the locusts (including the fire and flame), the land and its

²⁹ On these co-referential and co-extension chains, see the mode section above. Note also that in v. 4 each type of locust is also part of the Complement/Goal in each clause, indicating what the following locust type eats.

³⁰ This may arguably be a case of human referents and not an abstract concept. In any case, the fast/assembly and the elders and inhabitants are related by means of cohesion chains. See section 2.3.4 above.

agricultural produce, and the various abstract concepts that might be grouped under the heading of the cult. These groupings enable one to see patterns with regard to the lexico-grammatical and semantic roles within each Participant set.

The Addressees of the discourse most commonly fill the roles of Subject/Addressee, and they are the Addressees of all of the imperative clauses in the chapter. This set is also at times Subject/Actor, Complement/Goal, and Adjunct/Circumstantial, although each of these is an isolated case. The Addressees therefore play a principally passive role, receiving the verbal action of the imperative clauses. Specific references to YHWH tend to be modifiers, but the YHWH/prophet set most commonly fills the role of Speaker of the various imperative clauses in the chapter. This set thus plays a principally active role, driving the verbal action of the various imperative clauses of the passage and serving as the principal voice of the passage. The locust/fire set fills the role of Subject/Actor and is thus a strong driver of the action of the passage. The land/produce set very often functions as the semantic Goal in Joel 1, and—this is significant—frequently in intransitive or stative clauses. As the Addressees receive the verbal action of the imperative clauses, the land/produce set receives the verbal action of many of the finite clauses, indicating its passivity. Similarly, the cult set is only found as semantic Goal, again indicating its passivity in the discourse. Hence the YHWH/prophet and locust/fire sets drive the verbal action of the discourse, while the Addressee, land/produce, and cult sets receive the verbal action of the discourse.

3.2. Arena

3.2.1. Location

The determination of location in Joel 1 is relatively straightforward. The most obvious and easily identified locative element is, of course, the land. As I indicated in the

Participants section above, this passage makes repeated reference to various agricultural elements in the land. Because of the incompleteness of the information in Joel 1, one can arrive at only an imprecise identification of the land and its boundaries. One of the locative elements specified in the land is the “house of YHWH, your God” and “the house of your God” (vv. 14, 16), which is a reference to the temple in Jerusalem. Thus the land in question must be Judah at least, but (again given only the information in Joel 1) it could conceivably include greater Israel. Of course, if we accept that Joel constitutes a cohesive text, then the possibility of reference to greater Israel is precluded.³¹

Although it is not possible to locate more specifically the action of ch. 1, it is possible to describe more fully the nature of the location. Significantly, apart from the brief mention of the Temple in vv. 13–14 and 16, the passage makes no mention of Jerusalem or any other city or town. Indeed, the heavy focus on agricultural language, obviously related to the locust plague and drought, strongly suggests rural, agricultural Judah as the setting.

3.2.2. Time

Because the BH verbal system does not grammaticalize tense as such,³² one cannot use verbal morphology alone to assign the designations past, present, or future to specific clauses. One can, however, observe the interplay between aspectual distinctions, as well as other lexico-grammatical elements, such as interrogatives and temporal particles, and thereby ascertain the basic contours of Time within a given passage.

³¹ If one were to accept the interpretation that “the nation” of v. 6 refers to a literal foreign power, and the locusts are thus metaphorical, then more could be said on the question of location in Joel 1.

³² See Chapter 2, n.87 for a brief discussion of the views regarding the BHVS adopted in this dissertation.

Joel 1 includes a massive preponderance of QTL verbs. Indeed, of the 39 finite verbs found in the chapter, 36 (92 percent) are QTL (the remaining 3 are YQTL). Both Cook and Endo have noted, although the QTL/YQTL opposition is not one of tense, the perfective/imperfective aspectual opposition that both propose as the basic opposition between QTL/YQTL leads to a probabilistic opposition between past and non-past time. That is, incomplete aspect will generally also mean non-past time, while complete action will generally mean past time.³³ Therefore, the extremely strong focus on aspectual completeness in Joel 1 does seem to indicate past time.

One can use the two instances of the use of interrogative particles to create rhetorical questions in the passage to gain a sense of when an event has taken place. For example, v. 2 contains the rhetorical question: הֲהָיְתָה זֹאת בְּיָמֵיכֶם וְאִם בְּיָמֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם (has this been in your days, or in the days of your fathers?),³⁴ which suggests two things regarding the temporal location of the event. First, that the event likely (but by no means certainly) occurred in either the past or the present, since the Addressee is presumably meant to be able to evaluate whether or not the event in question occurred in the days of his or her ancestors. Second, because the rhetorical question assumes a negative answer, that the event in question was not known during the time of the Addressees' fathers, nor during the bulk of the lives of the Addressees themselves.³⁵

³³ Endo, *Verbal System*, 64. Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*, 210–11. However, it cannot be overemphasized that this is merely a tendency. Perfective verb forms do not necessitate past time, nor do imperfectives necessitate non-past time. It is vitally important to combine these observations regarding verbal conjugation in Joel 1 with the examination of various other clues to the likely temporal circumstances of the text. As we will see below in the examination of Joel 2:1–17, it is perfectly possible for imperfective verbs to refer to past events.

³⁴ Note that the combination of the interrogative particle and וְאִם generally denotes a rhetorical question. See BDB, 49.

³⁵ Wolff suggests that this reference to the time of the Addressees' ancestors, coupled with the reference to the Addressees descendants, suggests that the event is "incomplete." This may be so, but it is by no means necessary. An event that had occurred in the recent past would fit the phrasing of vv. 2–3 equally well, and would fit the overall passage significantly better (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 20). This *pace* Barton,

Additionally, as Troxel notes, in v. 16 we find a description of the destruction “before our eyes,” “with the adverbial adjunct front-positioned for focus, [which] makes it improbable that these verses foresee calamity.”³⁶ The temporal situation, then, is unlikely to be an event from anything but the very recent past or present.³⁷ Because use of the QTL conjugation suggests aspectual completeness, a present time period (which would suggest aspectual incompleteness, or continuity) seems unlikely as well. Therefore, the most likely temporal situation for the event depicted in Joel 1 is the near past.

In the preceding sub-section I referred to “the event” as one aspectually complete, temporally past occurrence. This event, which frames and encompasses the whole of Joel 1 (and Joel 2, for that matter), is laid out clearly in v. 2, in the relational clause containing the rhetorical question to which I have just been referring. The demonstrative pronoun הַזֶּה , which has no anaphoric referent in the book of Joel, is presented in the initial address by the prophetic voice as a cataphoric reference to the locust plague and all of the subsidiary events and circumstances associated with that plague.³⁸

who suggests that this is simply a stock phrase that has relatively little value in the temporal placement of the event in relation to the Addressees (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 42).

³⁶ Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 83 n.30. This *pace* Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 69–70.

³⁷ Barton suggests that the call to “wake” in v. 5 suggests that the plague lies in the future. I see no reason that “wake” could not simply be functioning as a call to pay attention to an event that has already occurred, particularly since the specific Addressees of this imperative are those who are drunk (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 50–51).

³⁸ van der Merwe, “Marked Word Order,” 116. On the co-reference chains, see the mode section above. Regarding the possibility of this demonstrative as an anaphoric reference to the closing passage in the book of Hosea, see Nogalski, “Joel As ‘Literary Anchor,’” 94–99, and esp. 98n.15. As I noted in Chapter 1, while I do take the view that the Twelve can appropriately be interpreted as an intentional collection, the most reasonable course of action in circumstances like this one is to search first for a book-internal explanation, which in the case of this demonstrative pronoun is not at all hard to find. That this may also be an intertextual reference to Hosea is possible, but that it stands as a cataphoric reference to the locust plague is also perfectly plausible and has the advantage of greater simplicity and elegance.

Consequently, the locust plague is *the* event of Joel 1, and dominates the horizon of the chapter.

However, Joel 1 also contains a secondary event that is connected to the temporal distinction suggested by the QTL/YQTL opposition. The three instances of YQTL verbs, found in vv. 15, 19, and 20, suggest two other future events. The first of these, described in v. 15, is the Day of YHWH. This Day is described as an event that is both “near” (קָרוֹב) and “coming” (or that “comes”) (יָבוֹא).³⁹ The clearly future time frame is indicated by the adjective קָרוֹב, which precludes the possibility that the aspectually incomplete event suggested by the YQTL conjugation refers in some way to the internal dynamics of the locust event. This event is thus distinct from the aspectually complete description of the locust plague, and the Day of YHWH cannot be equated with that plague, at least in Joel 1.⁴⁰

Verses 19 and 20 describe two acts of supplication, one literal and one metaphorical.⁴¹ These are offset from the surrounding discourse by the use of the YQTL conjugation. The shift in Addressee in v. 19, from the various 2mp Addressees to whom the bulk of the chapter is directed to YHWH, also sets these two verses apart from the rest of the chapter. The cry to YHWH that is described in these two verses is, therefore, presented as aspectually incomplete. This may suggest the possibility of a future event of supplication, in which the 1cs speaking voice (the prophet) will cry out to YHWH for

³⁹ Note that “day” here does not refer to “a definite *extent* of time, but rather to a definite *event* in time whose nature is determined by the associated personal name” (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 33). See also Stuart, who mentions that the use of “day” to refer to an event that involved, strictly speaking, more time than a single day, was not an uncommon feature of descriptions of victory in war in the ANE (Stuart, “Sovereign’s Day of Conquest”).

⁴⁰ See also Wolff, *Joel and Amos*; LaRocca-Pitts, “The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy,” 287n.127.

⁴¹ The cry to YHWH by the speaker being the literal, and the panting of the beasts being the metaphorical mirror-image of the literal cry to YHWH.

relief, or it may suggest a present and ongoing act of supplication, as a response to the plague and drought. This moment of supplication cannot be considered a past event, since it is distinct from the primary past event of the locust plague and drought, involving, as it does, a response to the destruction and desolation caused by that event.⁴²

3.3. Verbal Processes and Transitivity Structure

Verbal Processes in Joel 1 tend heavily toward Material Processes of action, which constitute approximately 91 percent of all of the finite and imperative verbal clauses in the passage. As far as simple statistics are concerned, Mental clauses are next most common (4 percent), and there are no instances of Speaking clauses in this stretch of discourse.⁴³ The Processes in this chapter provide an overall sense of action and occurrence.⁴⁴ However, I am interested not only in statistics,⁴⁵ but, more importantly, in the relationship between the Participants/Referents and the various Material clauses.

Note that the Actors in a large portion of these material processes are the locusts, and, in particular, that the verbal action is initiated by the appearance and behaviour of the locusts in v. 4. Moreover, in a great many Material processes in which the locusts are not explicit Actors, stative verbs and passive stems imply that the action in question is due either directly or indirectly to the action of the locusts. For instance, the *מִנְחָה וְנֶסֶךְ* (grain and drink offering) is the grammatical subject of passive verbs in vv. 9 and 13, and the implied Actor in both cases is the locusts. In v. 10 *שָׂדֵה* and *דָּגָן* are each the

⁴² Although this is the first reference to destruction by fire, fire is associated with the locust “army” throughout ch. 2 of Joel, and is, as I have noted, co-classificatory with the locusts.

⁴³ Although Halliday and the SFL theorists consistently use the term “Verbal processes” to refer to processes that involve direct or indirect speech, for the sake of clarity I will refer to these as “Speaking processes” in order to distinguish this type of process from the common use of “verbal” (that is, to refer to lexical items that involve processes) in other linguistic models and in colloquial speech.

⁴⁴ The remaining 5 percent are Relational clauses, which will be dealt with below.

⁴⁵ One must always bear in mind that what counts are not simply particular patterns, but the overall patterning of patterns in this project. Cf. Hasan, *Verbal Art*, 15.

grammatical subjects of an instance of the passive **שָׁדַד**, and **יִצְהָר** is the grammatical subject of the passive **אֲמַלֵּל**. Indeed, the only active verb in v. 10 is the stative **יִבֵּשׁ**. The stative thus combines with the passives to create a sense of consequence or result. These very same passives and statives occur in v. 12 as well.⁴⁶ Indeed, of 39 finite verbs in Joel 1, 21 are stative (that is, the grammatical subject is also the semantic Goal, indicating state) and 13 are in a passive stem, leaving only five active finite verbal processes in the entire chapter.

It should also be noted that in v. 10 the grammatical Subject of **יִבֵּשׁ**, **תִּירוּשׁ** is also the semantic Goal or recipient of the verbal action. This pattern of constituents that are both grammatical Subject and semantic Goal occurs extensively in the chapter,

⁴⁶ The occurrence of **הִבֵּישׁ** in the final clause of 1:12 is an interesting case. The 3ms Hiphil of **יִבֵּשׁ** and **בוֹשׁ** are formally identical (in terms of consonants as well as vowel markers). In the preceding verses there are a number of instances of **יִבֵּשׁ**, which may well lead one to see this as yet another in that string of description (a co-extension chain). In such a case we would have a translation like that found in the ESV; “and gladness dries up from the children of man.” It is worth noting, however, that the ancient Greek versions do not read *ἐξξηραίνθη* here (as with the previous instances of **יִבֵּשׁ**) but *ἡγασταν* (dishonour/put to shame). Although this represents an interesting textual question, for the purpose of our argument here it makes relatively little difference to the point at hand. As I have already noted, **יִבֵּשׁ** appears as a stative verb in several preceding clauses in this passage, so if this is the correct reading, a stative sense is required. As for **בוֹשׁ**, while it certainly appears as a transitive verb many times in the OT/HB, there are also a variety of cases in which it appears, as here, that the grammatical subject is the only readily identifiable recipient of the verbal action, indicating a stative sense (Gen 2:25; Isa 30:5; Jer 2:26, 6:15, 10:14, 46:24; Hos 2:7).

Interestingly, however, this also coincides with a rather dramatic syntactic departure from the MT. In the MT (if the root in question is, in fact, **בוֹשׁ**) **שִׁשׁוֹן** is the only available grammatical subject (since the other phrase in the clause is controlled by the preposition **מִן**). However, the OG puts “children of man” in the nominative case, making it the grammatical subject of the clause (*οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων*), and puts “joy” in the accusative case (*χαρὰν*), making it the grammatical object of the clause. The consequent translation from the OG text would be something like “the children of men have shamed joy.” Bewer suggests the error in the OG is a result of haplography in the underlying text (Bewer, *Joel*, 84)

Although an absolute determination is impossible, particularly since standard text-critical principles offer little in the way of guidance here, I will proceed with the assumption that **יִבֵּשׁ** is the root of the verb here. The repetition of this lexeme in the verse and the apparent grammatical error in the OG translation suggest that this is a plausible, and perhaps preferable, reading. Wolff suggests that both roots may be implied here, though elects to translate the verb as “dries up” (Wolff, *Joel*, 19n.r). Barton reads the root **יִבֵּשׁ**, though also notes the play between **יִבֵּשׁ** and **בוֹשׁ** (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 54; so also Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 239 n.12.a). Alternatively, Prinsloo suggests that v. 12c is an instance of **בוֹשׁ**, and moreover that the recurrence of the verbs **בוֹשׁ** and **יִבֵּשׁ** follows a chiasmic pattern. It is difficult to see how one might be certain enough of the root in question in 12c to confirm the suggested chiasm. See: Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 21.

particularly in vv. 7, 10–14, 16–18, and 20. It applies to both human and non-human participants (particularly the latter), and again this indicates either a passive verb structure in which the Subject receives the verbal action or a stative verb structure in which the VP presents a state that applies to the Subject. In all cases, the implied Actor of the verbal action (or, for stative verbs, the action that leads to the state) is either the locusts themselves or some consequence of the locust plague.

The single exception in which human Participants are both Actor and Subject is found in v. 9, where *הַכֹּהֲנִים מִשְׁרְתֵי יְהוָה* (the priests, the ministers of YHWH) are both Subject and Actor for the VP *אָבְלוּ* ([they] mourned/mourn). This single intransitive clause is, for all intents and purposes, the only finite VP in which humans play an active role;⁴⁷ and since it is an intransitive clause there is no sense in which these human Participants make a change to the world around them. Following, as this clause does, an extensive description of destruction, even this active process is presented as a response to the event that overshadows the discourse.

3.4. Logical Relations

3.4.1. Taxis

Paratactic clauses in Joel 1 are marked by *וְ*, and in essentially all cases indicate extension. That is to say, there is a sense that the content of each clause is added to what precedes it. Take for instance v. 4, in which the three types of locust are presented. It contains three balanced clauses, each joined by a paratactic *וְ*, and each providing a new piece of information that is simultaneously logically connected to what precedes it. Verse 5 similarly presents three initial imperative clauses joined by two instances of

⁴⁷ Conceivably one might suggest that a finite verb is elided in 1:2, but even accepting this, my overall point stands. Human participants do not significantly change the world around them in Joel 1.

paratactic ׀, indicating three logically related actions that the Addressee is being called to undertake. A similar pattern also occurs in v. 7, where the destruction of various types of trees is bound together logically. In vv. 19 and 20 fire and flame (and their respective verbal actions) are equated, and then the drought and fire are connected logically. As far as the field of discourse is concerned, the chief function of paratactic clauses in Joel 1 appears to be to group sets of Participants and happenings together.

Hypotactic clauses in Joel 1 are marked almost exclusively with ׃ (in v. 5 we find hypotaxis marked with ׃, and in v. 18 with ׃). These hypotactic clauses are all enhancing, generally suggesting (as one would expect with so many instances of ׃) the cause or consequence of the head clause. These instances of parataxis are interesting in terms of the logical structure of the field. For instance, in v. 5 the two instances of parataxis connect the three imperative clauses with a passive clause at the end of the verse. This not only suggests a connection to the reason for the wailing (the wine has been cut off), but connects the imperative clauses with the sense of passivity outlined in Joel 2:3. This is followed by another hypotactic ׃ that connects these imperative clauses with the “nation” that has come up against the land (co-extensive with the locusts—see above). An almost identical set of structures occurs in v. 11, where two imperative clauses are followed by an instance of hypotactic expansion, indicating the reason for the call to shame and wailing. Verse 10 creates a similar connection, this time between two clusters of statives, intransitives, and passives, indicating that one state of affairs (fields destroyed, ground in mourning) is connected with another (grain, wine, and oil destroyed).

Verse 12 represents a particularly important instance of hypotaxis that involves the final clause in the verse. This final clause again provides an instance of hypotactic

extension and, given the use of כִּי in the rest of the chapter, it seems very likely that this extension indicates cause. Significantly, the Goal and Circumstance of this clause are the only human Participants in this particular similarity chain, which suggests that this clause forms the climax of the preceding co-extensive paratactic clauses.⁴⁸ This creates a logical connection between the destruction of plant/agriculture Participants and the loss of שָׂשׂוֹן for the human Participants. This logical connection between the domains of plant/agriculture and humans continues in v. 13. In this verse, the paratactic clause indicates that the preceding string of imperative clauses is needed because the מִנְחָה וְנֹסֶךְ have been cut off. The “grain and drink offering” are both abstract concepts related to the Israelite sacrificial system and concrete things related to agricultural production. This draws together the agricultural disaster with the loss of worship in the sanctuary.

Verse 15 contains a hypotactic clause that is central to our purposes here. The clause complex כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם יְהוָה וּכְשֶׁד מִשְׁדֵי יָבוֹא (because the Day of YHWH is near, and it comes like devastation from Shaddai) is an instance of hypotactic extension. The כִּי heading the clause complex appears to indicate cause, since it provides the reason for lamentation at “the day” in the preceding clause.⁴⁹ There is therefore a logical relationship between one of the cries to lament, marked by the interjection אֲהֵהּ, and a specific day of destruction referred to as the Day of YHWH.

Two similar instances of hypotaxis occur in vv. 17–18. Here, instead of hypotaxis following a string of imperatives, it follows sets of passives and statives. This

⁴⁸ Allen also reads this as related to the preceding כִּי clauses (Allen, *Joel*, 55 n.46). Prinsloo sees this כִּי as “affirmative” and not causal (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 21).

⁴⁹ For an alternative reading in which Troxel proposes that the “day” of the interjection is not co-referential with the “Day of YHWH,” see Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 85. Here Troxel is depending on the criteria for topicalization presented by van der Merwe and Wendland, but comes to a different interpretive conclusion. Cf. van der Merwe, “Marked Word Order,” 120.

is not a call to action accompanied by a justification for that action, but the presentation of a set of circumstances accompanied by the reason for those circumstances. Finally, in vv. 19–20 a new speaking voice—along with the beasts of the field—acts, and in this case the hypotactic clauses provide the reason for that action. This final set thus relates the eventual response of the new voice to the Event that has been described in the rest of the chapter.

As I indicated above, the most common way for BH to grammaticalize the semantic concept that Halliday refers to as a Relational process is with a non-verbal clause or a verbal clause using the equative verb. There are several instances of non-verbal Relational clauses in Joel 1:6. The verse opens with a Material process, indicating that a nation has come up against “my land.” This is followed by a set of three non-verbal clauses, each of which relates a set of features to this “nation.”⁵⁰ This is much the same relationship as paratactic elaboration, for it involves two units, neither of which is dependent upon the other, and one of which elaborates the other.⁵¹ Thus, in the case of Joel 1:6, יג is set in paratactic relationship with the following clauses, informing the reader that this “nation” is “great and beyond number,” has teeth like a lion’s, and the fangs of a lioness.

3.4.2. Relational Clauses

The two instances of Relational clauses marked by the equative verb in Joel 1 occur in the first two verses of the chapter. Both contain the third person QTL conjugation, which fits with the overall pattern of verbs in the chapter. In v. 1 the

⁵⁰ For the referential identity of the nation, and the co-referential chains involved, see the mode section.

⁵¹ Indeed, a case might be made that these are not Relational processes at all, but simply instances of parataxis lacking an explicit paratactic particle (such as ו). This possibility is one of the reasons that I have chosen to examine these non-verbal Relational clauses in the sub-section devoted to logical connections, and not in the sub-section devoted to verbal processes.

Subject/Identified of the Relational clause is the relative particle **אֲשֶׁר**, which is itself an instance of paratactic elaboration, in that it describes more fully the nature of the “word of YHWH.” The semantic relationship of the Relational clause is one of extension, equating the “word of YHWH” with an experience of the man Joel son of Pethuel. In the second Relational clause marked by an explicit verb, the demonstrative **זאת** functions as Subject/Identified, and the clause **בְּיָמֵיכֶם וְאִם בְּיָמֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם** (in your days, or in the days of your fathers) as Complement/Identifier. This Relational clause creates a semantic relationship of enhancement, giving a greater degree of specificity to the time-frame of the referent of **זאת**.

3.5. Field of Discourse: Conclusions

My analysis of the field of Joel 1 suggests a number of conclusions. First, the Arena of Joel 1, both in terms of location and time, is rather general but identifiable. The location of the events recounted in the chapter is the countryside, although the chapter twice mentions briefly a more specific location, that of YHWH’s temple (presumably in Jerusalem). The principal event of the passage, the locust plague, occurs in the near past. Joel 1 also makes a brief reference to a coming Day of YHWH that stands in the near future, and to a moment of supplication that may occur in the discourse present, or possibly in the future.

Second, the grouping of the Participant sets identified in the analysis of mode matches well the patterns of the verbal processes and transitivity structure of the passage. Each of the Participant sets tends toward relatively uniform patterns of transitivity. The locust/fire set and the YHWH/prophet set tend to be Subject/Actor or Speaker. The Addressees set tends toward passivity as Addressees of the imperative verb forms. The

land/agriculture set also tends toward passivity, and members of this set are often the Subject/Goal of intransitive and stative clauses.

Third, in terms of the logical relations in the chapter, instances of parataxis almost exclusively indicate extension, and instances of hypotaxis generally indicate enhancement and are almost exclusively marked by **כִּי**. Relational clauses (both verbal and non-verbal) are not common, and play a relatively minor role in the passage.

4. Tenor

In my analysis of the tenor of Joel 1 I will focus first on the Participant Relations found in the text, including an examination of the use of modality. I will then turn to a brief examination of the use of interrogatives in Joel 1 and the effect on the monologic/dialogic structure of the passage. Finally, I will examine the use of evaluative lexis in relation to the various Participants.

4.1. Participant Relations

In section 2.1 above I discussed the various Participants in the discourse. Here the aim is to examine the relationships established between these various Participants and their respective roles in the discourse. Again, this is a purely text-internal question, as are all of the data-level questions in this study, and so it is unaffected by questions of exophoric reference (for the moment at least). Of interest here is the use of modality and what this reveals about the relative power relationships of the participants in question.⁵²

Although YHWH is initially identified in the first clause and the content of the message is explicitly ascribed to YHWH by means of the common prophetic phrase **דְּבַר־יְהוָה**, he is also explicitly identified with the prophet Joel.⁵³ What this suggests is

⁵² There are 18 imperatives in Joel 1 alone.

⁵³ Joel 1:1 also implies an additional element of the interpersonal dynamics of the book of Joel that I will not explore at this point. This is the fact that the first verse of the book refers to the prophet Joel, and to

that YHWH is, in some fashion, the one who presents the content of this prophetic book to Joel. Of particular significance, is the fact that YHWH is not explicitly presented as a speaking Participant for the remainder of ch. 1. He does reappear at the close of passage, in v. 19, as the addressee of the 1cs speaking voice.⁵⁴

The second explicit Participant is Joel, the son of Pethuel, who is identified in the first verse of ch.1 and never referred to again for the remainder of the book. No explicit descriptions of Joel are provided, and no additional information is provided apart from the name of his father. Given the introductory phrase *דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְּיַד־יֹאֵל בֶּן־פֶּתוּאֵל*, the content of the book itself is meant to be ascribed to Joel, and consequently the many instances where an otherwise unnamed Speaker is found can, for all practical purposes, be considered co-referential with Joel.⁵⁵ However, at a number of points throughout the book Joel and YHWH overlap to some degree as Speakers and at times appear even to interact with one another.

Joel and YHWH at times blend into one *de facto* Participant in relation to the other Participants in the text. The imperative clauses that are so common in the first half of ch. 1 do not have an explicitly identified Speaker. These clauses appear to be spoken by the prophet on behalf of YHWH (or by YHWH through the prophet), thus collapsing the distinction between YHWH and the prophet. At other times, however—and v. 19 is a particularly good example of this—the prophetic voice is separate from YHWH and

YHWH, in the third person. There is, therefore, an additional voice, which we might refer to as a “narrating voice” or perhaps a “scribal voice,” and which appears to present the content of the book as a unit as a divine communication associated with a person called Joel. Because this particular element affects not only the register of Joel 1, but the register of the book as a whole, I will explore it at greater depth in ch. 7 below.

⁵⁴ Note that the word *יְהוָה* occurs a total of seven times in Joel 1, but in vv. 9, 14, and 15 it functions either as a reference to YHWH as an entity or as a modifier of some other entity or circumstance (e.g., the reference to the Day of YHWH in v.15 and the house of YHWH in v. 9).

⁵⁵ On these instances of co-reference, see the mode section above.

can, in fact, address YHWH himself. Also significant is the use of the 1cs voice in the chapter, which includes four instances of the 1cs pronominal suffix and one instance of a 1cs verb. All four pronominal suffixes modify a head noun. In vv. 6–7 a 1cs speaking voice refers to “my land” and “my vine . . . my fig tree.” Significantly, “land” and “vine” and “fig tree” are all here part of a single co-extension chain, and thus a similar relationship of modification is likely at work in each instance.

The question at hand, then, is what type of modifying relationship is in view.⁵⁶ The suffix of v. 6 may suggest that the speaking voice includes him/herself within the scope of the modified noun. In this scenario the speaking voice would be the prophet, and he would thus include himself within the scope of those who belong to “the land” (class/member is the logical relationship). Alternatively, this could be an instance of possession, and the speaking voice could be referring to a land that belongs to him/her.

The use of the 1cs suffix in v. 13 supports the first proposal (class/member). Here the only legitimate referential possibility is the prophetic speaking voice, because the suffix modifies “God.” Note also the 1cs verb אֶקְרָא in v. 19. Here again the only legitimate referential possibility is the prophetic speaking voice, as the Addressee of the preceding prepositional phrase. Thus, if only Joel 1 is taken into account, it appears that the prophetic voice is (at least plausibly) the speaking voice of v. 6.

If, however, all of Joel is taken into account—and there is good reason to suggest it should be—the situation changes.⁵⁷ Note that in 2:25–27 YHWH is clearly the referent of the various 1cs suffixes found in the phrases “my great army” and “my people,” and

⁵⁶ As van der Merwe, Naude, and Kroeze point out, essentially the same flexibility of modification is possible with pronominal suffixes as with construct chains. See BHRG 26.2.

⁵⁷ For a full argument in favour of the cohesion of the book of Joel, see the final analysis section at the close of this chapter.

in 4:2 YHWH is again clearly the referent of the various 1cs suffixes found in the phrases “my people” and “my land.” These later instances of 1cs suffixes, where the referent is YHWH and the sense is of possession, suggest that just such a reading in the case of 1:6 is not only plausible but likely.

The consequence of such a reading of vv. 6–7 is that Joel 1:2–20 then contains two distinct yet related speaking voices, YHWH and Joel the prophet, which are both represented by first person suffixes/verbs. For the majority of the text, a single Speaker is present, but vv. 6–7, 13, and 19 create a degree of tension in the presentation of that single Speaker. Although the prophetic voice is almost always indistinguishable from the voice of YHWH, these slight discrepancies separate the two Participants and also give us a sense of how they relate to one another. Although Joel the prophet is almost unilaterally portrayed as the mouthpiece of YHWH, he also fills the role of lamenting respondent, thus creating a sense of affiliation with both YHWH and the Addressees of the discourse.⁵⁸

A third Speaking Participant is found in v. 16. The referent is not specifically identified, but it may be a voice of response associated with the Addressees of ch. 1. The plural suffix distinguishes it from the singular voice that has thus far marked the YHWH/prophet set, but the voice laments the current state of affairs in the same way as the 1cs voice of v. 19.⁵⁹ Additionally, there has been no marked shift away from the

⁵⁸ Prinsloo also sees the prophet as an intermediary between the people and YHWH (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 11). Allen notices the shifts in voice between Joel and YHWH, but simply glosses over these as normal traits of prophetic literature. This may well be a normal trait of prophetic literature, but that does not somehow negate its import (Allen, *Joel*, 240).

⁵⁹ As Nogalski notes, the shift to the plural indicates that the voice of the prophet has joined together with the Addressees in lamentation and prayer (Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 223). Assis suggests that this is the voice of the prophet, but does not elaborate on the question of why the plural is used (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 111).

prophetic voice as the speaking voice. These factors suggest that v. 16 is an instance of solidarity between the plural respondents (including both the people and the beasts of the land) and the prophet.⁶⁰ As Hayes puts it, “here an earthly chorus is joined by the people and the prophet to raise a single multivocal lament to God in the context of a plague of locusts.”⁶¹

Next we have the Addressees of the various imperative clauses, many of whom are identified with some degree of specificity. The identified Addressees of imperatives in Joel 1 include the elders (v. 2), the dwellers in the land (v. 2), the drunkards (v. 5), the drinkers of wine (v. 5), the land (2fs Addressee of the Imperative $\text{׃}^{\text{ל}}\text{׃}$ in v. 8),⁶² the ploughmen (v. 11), the vinedressers (v. 11), the priests (v. 13), the ministers of the altar (v. 13), and the “ministers of my God” (v. 13). Additionally, we have the Addressees of the string of imperatives in v. 14, who are not explicitly identified. As my analysis of mode has indicated, the cohesive ties between the various Addressees are extensive and significant, and it is therefore possible to speak simply of the Addressees of the discourse as a more or less unified set, as far as the Participant relations in the text are concerned. The Addressees of the discourse perpetrate no action upon the discourse world (as I noted above), but in all cases receive or are affected by the action of the chapter.

Two other Participants, both non-human, are involved in the Participant relations. The first is the locusts, which as I noted above are the only Participants that perpetrate positive action in the discourse world. The locusts take no part in the exchange between

⁶⁰ Hayes argues that this is not without parallel in other prophetic literature, noting Jeremiah specifically (Hayes, “When None Repents,” 121–22).

⁶¹ Hayes, “When None Repents,” 134.

⁶² See mode section above for an elaboration of this co-reference chain, which identifies the 2fs Addressee as the Land.

the Speaker(s) and Addressees, but the actions of the locusts incite that exchange. The second is the land, including all of the various Participants in ch. 1 that are co-referential or co-extensive with the land. Like the Addressees, the land perpetrates no verbal action upon the discourse world but only and always receives that action.

Joel 1 contains 18 imperative verbs, all but one of which are in the masculine plural. The single exception is the feminine singular imperative of v. 8, which, as I have noted, is co-referential with “my land” (v. 6) and consequently co-extensive with the Addressees of the discourse. This extensive use of the imperative, totalling roughly 30 percent of the verbs in the chapter, gives a strong sense of hierarchy to the text. YHWH, through the prophet, instructs the Addressees of the discourse on what they must do. The Addressees of the discourse do not respond directly to YHWH at any point, and the single response offered by the prophet in vv. 19–20 takes the form of supplication and is found in the indicative.

The picture that is presented to us, therefore, is of five Participants (or Participant groups), three of which are involved in a primarily monologic exchange. YHWH, the prophet, and the Addressees are involved in an exchange that is sparked by the action of the fourth Participant, the locusts. The fifth Participant—the land—receives the action of the locusts and, while never acting upon any of the other Participants in a direct way, is consequently part of the event that leads to the exchange between YHWH, the prophet, and the Addressees. I have indicated that this exchange is primarily monologic, because the Addressees themselves speak only once, and even this speech is not addressed directly to YHWH. The prophet, as a voice distinct from YHWH, speaks three times: once to the Addressees (v. 13), once with the people to YHWH (v. 16), and once as a singular voice to YHWH (vv. 19–20).

Although the destruction of the land is perpetrated by the locusts and the drought (or fire), the call to supplication (vv. 13–14) and the cries of lamentation (vv. 16–19) are directed at YHWH. This implies a relationship between YHWH and the locusts and drought. Whatever the reason for the coming of the locusts (something never made clear in the text), the ultimate cause is, in the eyes of the prophet and the Addressees, YHWH. Thus the Participant who functions as Speaker in the majority of imperative clauses is paired with the Participant that functions as Actor in many transitive clauses or as Cause in most of the passive and stative clauses. This creates a parallel relationship between the sentient Participant (YHWH) and the non-sentient Participants (the locusts and fire). A similar parallel relationship exists between the Addressees and the land. Whereas the Addressees receive the verbal action of the imperative clauses, the land receives the verbal action of many of the indicative clauses. This sets up two matched pairs of Participant relationships. YHWH acts through the locusts, and the Addressees experience this action through the state of the land. Standing as a pivot between these matched pairs is the prophet Joel. The prophet's voice simultaneously calls the Addressees to lament and response and calls to YHWH in lament.

A distinctly hierarchical set of Participant Relations is thus created. YHWH (through the prophet) is the primary speaker, and the locusts are the primary actors. The Addressees receive instructions, and the land receives the verbal action. Joel fills an intermediate role, as both the voice of YHWH and the sole voice of direct response to YHWH. Joel also stands outside of the actual action of the chapter. Although the prophet speaks, he does not receive verbal action of any kind, with the exception of the Relational clause of v. 1. Joel stands apart from the Addressees, apart from the locusts, apart from the land, and even on occasion apart from YHWH.

Yet, while the vast majority of the chapter paints this picture of a monologic text and an all-powerful deity, certain elements of vv. 15–20 stand in tension with this reading. The plural voice of the prophet and the people/land crying out in lamentation in v. 16, and the cry of the voice of the prophet to YHWH in vv. 19–20, especially drive against the grain of the rest of the chapter. To a degree these points of exception serve to throw into sharper relief the supreme agency of YHWH. But even so, both the cry of lamentation and the call for deliverance suggest an attempt by the people and prophet to reverse the current state of affairs by means of an appeal to YHWH. This indicates a slight ripple in the power dynamic represented in the passage, but one worthy of note.

4.2. Interrogatives

The use of interrogative forms in Joel 1 requires some comment. The chapter contains only two instances of interrogative particles (these occur in vv. 2 and 16). Both cases consist of rhetorical questions, one spoken by YHWH/Joel and the other by the Addressees. Significantly, both of these rhetorical questions are directed to the same Participants, the Addressees (that God is mentioned as a third person referent in v. 16 precludes his status as addressee of the question). These interrogatives are important in that they frame the discourse as a particular kind of dialogue. The multiple speaking voices as well as the use of interrogatives (which generally invite an answer) suggest this dialogic structure.

I note, however, that both questions are rhetorical, and consequently require no actual answer. Put another way, the text contains no explicitly encoded process sharing, no invitation for the other party to respond to the interrogative. Thus, while multiple participants are envisaged, as in a kind of directed interchange, that interchange is limited to the degree that no actual response is required. The Addressees are expected to

listen and to reflect upon what YHWH/Joel has to say, but they are not invited to talk back. The text thus has some minor dialogic features but is, in effect, very nearly a complete monologue.

This relates to the nature of the Participant relations in the text, because it reinforces the power structures observed above. Just as YHWH acts through intermediaries (locusts/fire) on the land and the Addressees while the Addressees (and the land) are passive, so also YHWH asks questions without providing a true opportunity for a response. The monologic structure of the text reinforces the top-down power hierarchy of the Participant relations.

4.3. Tenor of Discourse: Conclusions

My analysis of the tenor of Joel 1 suggests that YHWH is the primary agent in the text. It is YHWH who acts (through the locusts), and YHWH who speaks (through the prophet). Even instances of interrogatives serve to underscore the imbalance in the power dynamic of the text, as YHWH/the prophet asks questions that are clearly rhetorical. The text is, therefore, principally monologic in character. However, there are also instances in which the voice of the prophet appears to speak *with* the people (v. 16), and an instance in which the voice of the prophet addresses YHWH *on behalf of* the people (vv. 19–20). This indicates a slight, but noticeable, counter-current to the overwhelming flood of YHWH's agency.

The role of the prophet in ch. 1 is related to both YHWH's agency and the slight counter-current to that agency. The prophet does not act, and appears to speak only on behalf of either YHWH (in the majority of cases) or the people and land (in vv. 16 and 19–20). He stands, therefore, as a somewhat isolated figure, simultaneously integral to the relational dynamics of the passage, and yet always in a position of mediation.

5. Register Analysis of Joel 1

The register of Joel 1 suggests a strongly cohesive text, with five sets of Participants. The Participant sets are involved in a clearly hierarchical relational structure in which some significant tension exists. All of this is bound together with all three types of cohesive ties, and these cohesive ties also serve to bind together sets of Participants in unexpected ways.

The mode of discourse indicates a primarily monologic text, with some elements of dialogue, for which language is itself constitutive. The channel is clearly graphic, but elements of spoken medium combine with (much more prominent) elements of written medium to create a slight tension between channel and medium. This tension suggests a text that is meant to be read, re-read, and possibly performed or read aloud, and during which readers/listeners are to place themselves into the Participant role of the Addressees. My analysis of the cohesive ties suggests a strongly cohesive text, with extensive co-reference, co-classification, and co-extension ties running through the text and reinforcing one another, thereby creating identity and similarity chains that bind the diverse Participants into identifiable sets. Of particular note with regard to cohesive ties is that both the co-classification ties and co-extensive ties create cohesion between religious and agricultural semantic domains. This consequently creates cohesion between the two receiving Participants in the discourse, the land and the Addressees.

The field of discourse represents five Participants: YHWH/Joel, the Addressees, the locusts, the cult, and the land. Verbal processes lean heavily toward the category of Material processes, and there is a notable division with regard to which Participants function as semantic Actors. The locusts are presented as both Actor and Subject, whilst the Addressees and the land are primarily presented as Goal and Subject, by means of

passive or stative verbs. YHWH/Joel is a speaking voice that performs no direct action (that is, it is the Subject of no transitive clauses) but is the Speaker of all of the imperative verbs. The Arena of the Field involves one primary event, the plague of locusts, and two secondary events, the Day of YHWH and a time of repentance. The plague of locusts is presented as an aspectually complete event, most likely in the near past, while both the Day of YHWH and the time of repentance are presented as aspectually incomplete, and as indeterminately future events. Although the text contains a number of examples of parataxis (instantiated by paratactic ׀ and by non-verbal relational clauses), the use of hypotaxis is likely more significant. Hypotactic clauses in Joel 1 are almost all marked by ׀, and all indicate cause or reason, creating an emphasis on the action of the Addressees as logically related to the primary event.

The tenor of the discourse suggests both a hierarchical and a parallel Participant structure, in which YHWH/Joel speaks to the Addressees, who are Subject/Addressee of all of the imperative verbs, and the locusts act upon the land, which always receives the verbal action. The text contains no explicit process sharing, and thus even though the mode of discourse hints at a dialogic structure, Joel 1 is essentially monological. This reinforces the hierarchical nature of the Participant relations. There is also an interesting tension at work between YHWH and Joel, for although Joel speaks primarily on behalf of YHWH, in one instance he speaks directly to YHWH, in effect aligning himself with the Addressees of the discourse. Joel consequently becomes an intermediate Participant who is associated with both YHWH and the Addressees.

6. The Day of YHWH in Joel 1

The register of Joel 1 frames the nature of the Day of YHWH for the reader/listener, particularly with regard to the field and tenor of the discourse. The field of Joel 1

represents a destructive event—the locust plague and drought—as having occurred in the near past, and having ongoing results. These results and the current state of affairs for the Addressees are closely related to the Day of YHWH in v. 15. The Day is found in a paratactic clause, indicating that it is the cause or reason for lamentation. As Allen points out, v. 15 follows the final imperative clause directed toward the Addressees set.⁶³ This is notable, because it seems that in light of the discourse-current state of devastation in the wake of the locusts and drought there is little need for some additional justification for an exclamation of despair. This suggests to the reader that something greater, something more terrible, remains on the horizon. This Day is represented as not yet having occurred, due both to the use of the temporal particle קָרוֹב and the use of the YQTL conjugation. The Day is thus a potential event that stands in the indeterminate future, and is a cause for great concern and lamentation for the Addressees.⁶⁴

The tenor of Joel 1 is filled with imperatives directed at the Addressees set and originating with YHWH/Joel. This use of imperatives, coupled with the transitivity structure of the passage, creates a strongly hierarchical relationship between YHWH/Joel and the Addressees. Note also that the content of the imperatives focuses strongly on calls to lamentation in light of the current situation. Among these calls to lamentation is, as I have just noted, the Day of YHWH. In light of the fact that his Day is presented as a future event, the relational structure of the passage suggests that it serves as a warning. Significantly, the coming of the Day is presented without any

⁶³ Allen, *Joel*, 59.

⁶⁴ Prinsloo suggests that the plague and drought are “portents” of the Day, and that the Day underscores YHWH’s role as the author of the current crisis (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 33, 36). Indeed, the *Gattung* of Joel 1 is often identified as a “communal call to lamentation.” See esp. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 21.

modifiers that might suggest that it is merely a possibility. Indeed, the succinctness of the presentation indicates that the coming of the day is simply a future fact.

The implication that can be drawn from these observations concerning the field and tenor of Joel 1 is that the Day of YHWH functions as a warning of a coming event that is even more severe than the current plague and drought.⁶⁵ Thus the function of the current plague is not merely destruction; it is “a sign pointing the way to Yahweh.”⁶⁶ The Day is coming, and cannot be avoided, but the text suggests that the Addressees must respond to the warning by taking action. Indeed, the prophetic voice goes so far as to take the lead in crying out to YHWH (vv. 19–20). Joel 1 contains no promise of deliverance, nor any indication that lamentation will have a specific effect upon the situation. However, the implication of the calls to lamentation and the causal relationship with the coming Day of YHWH appears to be that heeding the call will have some kind of positive result. Again, the text gives no particular indication that the Day can be prevented (though this could perhaps be inferred), but it does not say that action on the part of the people will be futile. If YHWH requires a response by the Addressees, then one can reasonably conclude that this response may have some positive result. The register of Joel 1, therefore, suggests that a Day even more terrible than the destruction of the locusts is coming, but that a proper response by the Addressees toward YHWH may result in deliverance.

⁶⁵ Allen, *Joel*, 60.

⁶⁶ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 27.

Chapter 4: Joel 2:1–17—Register Analysis

1. Introduction

In this chapter I will analyze the register of Joel 2:1–17 according to each of the linguistic components I have described in ch. 3, namely, the mode, the field, and the tenor. I will follow my analysis with a summary, following which I will briefly discuss the register of Joel 2:1–17, and the nature of the Day of YHWH in light of this register analysis. The body of this section will, consequently, be oriented toward the presentation of data, and not toward analytical discussion, although I will do some analysis at points.

2. Mode

2.1. Channel/Medium

As was the case for Joel 1, the channel and medium of Joel 2:1–17 are primarily graphic and written, respectively. But, and this appears to be a feature of the prophetic register, the text includes a variety of features that reflect a spoken medium. These include multiple speaking Participants, the use of some process sharing devices (like interrogatives and imperatives), and the extensive use of 1st and 2nd person suffixes and verb forms. However, other significant features of the text suggest a written medium: the constitutive role of language, extensive rhetorical crafting, minimal process sharing (this is present, but extremely limited), and very little exophoric deixis.

The result of this written/spoken tension in the medium is a kind of virtual conversation. Certain Participants in this conversation (particularly human Addressees/Speakers) are represented by relatively generic social roles, and not by particular names or other specifying devices. Consequently, the human Participants in

the virtual dialogue function as roles into which readers/hearers might step in order to become Participants themselves. As I have noted above (ch. 3), this suggests a text that might be read, re-read, and read aloud.

2.2. Textual Cohesion

As I have mentioned in ch. 3, the cohesive ties present in Joel 2:1–17 include co-reference ties, co-classification ties, and co-extension ties.

2.2.1. Co-reference ties

Verse 1 begins with an imperative, the Speaker of which is co-referential with YHWH,¹ thus immediately binding the beginning of the second chapter of Joel to the preceding text. Also part of this same co-reference chain is the 1cs suffix (“my holy mountain”). The verse also contains a co-reference tie between the Addressees of the imperatives and the “dwellers in the land.” Because these are 3rd person referents, one might suspect that the “dwellers” are not co-referential with the Addressees of the discourse and that the Addressees are a sub-set of the “dwellers in the land” as a whole. This is unlikely, however, for in 1:1 the “dwellers in the land” are explicitly identified as Addressees of the imperatives (alongside various other groups). Here, then, we have a co-reference tie between the Addressees and the “dwellers in the land.” These Addressees are also co-referential with the Addressees of the imperatives from the preceding chapter. Finally, verse 1 contains a co-referential tie to 1:15, with the mention of the Day of YHWH;² this tie establishes a link between the two occurrences of “day” in v. 2.

¹ So also Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 46; Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 70.

² This mention of a Day of YHWH might conceivably be a co-classification tie, if it can be demonstrated that ch. 1 and ch. 2 refer to two different days of YHWH. Since I believe that the book of Joel refers only to one Day of YHWH, I have here categorized this as an instance of co-reference. Further

The “great and powerful people” of v. 2 are co-referential with the locusts of ch.1, and the following string of 3ms suffixes of v. 3 (“before it,” “after it,” “before it,” “after it,” “from it”) are all part of this set of co-referential ties: all of them refer to the locusts.³ Verse 6 also contains a 3ms suffix (“before it”) that is co-referential with these preceding 3ms suffixes and thus with עַם from v. 2. The text includes two indications that this is an instance of co-reference and not a reference to another entity (e.g., an actual army). First, in v. 3, fire, which is associated with the results of the locust plague in 1:19–20, is here again associated with the “great and powerful people.” Second, the descriptions in vv. 4–5 are similes (note the five occurrences of ׀, and particularly the phrase *בְּעַם עֲצוֹם עָרוּד מְלֻחָמָה*), indicating that this is not an actual army, but is, in a variety of ways, like an army.⁴ The similes more or less rule out the possibility that this

arguments for this position can be found in the final chapter of this dissertation in the analysis of the function of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel as a whole. Finley also appears to see the Day of YHWH in ch. 2 as co-referential to the Day of ch. 1. Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 41–42. This *contra*, for instance, Garrett, “The Structure of Joel,” 297; Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 91; Van Leeuwen, “Scribal Wisdom,” 39; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 129; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 30; Bewer, *Joel*. Bewer reads the two chapters as referentially distinct, but suggests that the events of ch. 2 precede the events of ch. 1 chronologically. Barton also reads this as a reference to the same day as ch. 1, although he suggests that the Day is co-referential with the locust plague. To support this reading he dismisses the particle קָרוֹב as a scribal gloss used by a later editor to re-interpret the Day as a future event. Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 71–72. In a similar vein, Bewer reads the entire reference to the Day of YHWH (both here and in v. 11) as an interpolation. Bewer, *Joel*, 95.

³ As Assis suggests, knowledge of the locusts in ch. 1 is integral to understanding the description of the army provided in ch. 2, indicating a close relationship between the two passages. Assis, “Structure and Meaning,” 409. Obviously, some interpreters do not accept that ch. 2 refers to a locust plague. Nor does most of this same group of interpreters accept that the locusts are literal referents at any point in the book of Joel (see Introduction for a brief overview of this issue). Note, however, that Wolff does see the enemy of ch. 1 as a literal locust plague, but here in ch. 2 believes that the enemy is YHWH’s apocalyptic army, described using metaphorical language related to the locust plague of ch. 1. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 42, 45, and throughout his exploration of Joel 2. Like Allen, I see the content of ch. 1 being presented again in ch. 2, but from a slightly different perspective; and, to borrow Allen’s phrase, “in a higher key.” Allen, *Joel*, 64. Cf. also Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 70.

⁴ Garrett’s claim that this is an instance of the so-called *kaph veritates* (Garrett, “The Structure of Joel,” 293), and thus not an instance of simile at all, is rather unlikely. As Finley points out, instances where ׀ indicates epitomization tend to be indicated where the second item of the pair represents the true, or ideal, realization of the first. This does not appear to be the case here. Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 46; Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 92. Assis also sees this as an indication that ch. 2 refers to literal locusts, although he also takes the rather novel position that the locusts are simultaneously literal referents and metaphors

is an actual army; and the association with fire, in conjunction with the lack of any indication of a change of subject matter from ch. 1 to 2, increases the likelihood that that the “great and powerful people” are co-referential with the locusts of ch. 1.

A shift occurs in vv. 4–5, in which the finite verbs have co-referential 3mp Actors/Subjects. For the relationship between these 3mp referents and the preceding 3ms referents, see the co-extension section below. This set of co-reference ties continues in v. 7, which includes a set of 3mp Actors/Subjects and a final 3mp suffix, and again in v. 8 which has another set of 3mp Actors/Subjects.

In v. 7 another shift to the singular occurs with $\psi\text{א}$, which is best understood as what Stein calls a “term of affiliation, which is to say, as an indicator that the referent belongs to some group or class.”⁵ The 3ms suffix in v. 7 (“his way”) is co-referential with $\psi\text{א}$, and this co-reference chain continues into v. 8, with a set of singular words (אָח, אָז, אָמַר) and masculine suffixes (“his companion,” “his path”). This creates a subset co-reference chain that exists within the larger chain of co-reference instantiated by the various mp suffixes and verbs (see the section on co-extension below).

for a terrible invading army on the Day of YHWH. Assis, “Structure and Meaning,” 402; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 35–36, 137. Both Wolff and Stuart appear to reverse the similes, reading them as though the horses and chariotry were being likened to locusts. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 46; Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 251. For an excellent analysis and rejection of Wolff’s argument that ch. 2 does not refer to the locusts, see Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 69. Given, then, the likelihood that ch. 2 refers to a literal plague of locusts, the question remains as to whether or not this is the same plague is described in ch. 1, or a different plague. Determining this based solely upon temporal reference is tremendously difficult, particularly if one accepts (as I have) the argument that verb forms apart from *wayyiqtol* in classical Hebrew do not grammaticalize tense. It seems to me that the simplest understanding of 2:1–17 is that it refers to the same plague as ch. 1, or to an additional wave of that same plague. To posit a second plague strikes me as the needless addition of an historical event that must then be explained in relation to the first plague. It is simpler to suggest that there is but one plague, and that these two passages (1:2–20 and 2:1–17) observe that event from two different perspectives. This explains the shift in both verbal aspect and location (both of which are explored in the Arena section, below), and is consonant with the fact that a single restoration is referred to in Joel 2:18–27. Consequently, while I accept the possibility that the book of Joel may be referring to multiple plagues of locusts, I suggest that it is equally plausible, and no less elegant, to read Joel 1:2–20 and 2:1–17 as references to the same event.

⁵ Stein, “The Noun $\psi\text{א}$ in Biblical Hebrew.”

In v. 9 another set of 3mp Actors/Subjects and 3mp suffixes occurs, all of which are co-referential to one another, and to the 3mp co-reference ties of vv. 4–5, and 7–8. Verse 10 returns to the 3ms reference (“before it”), but this creates a referential tie to עַם from v. 2, indicating reference to the locusts as a group, and not as individuals or as a set of individuals.⁶

Verse 11 contains a co-reference chain tied to YHWH (“his voice,” “his army,” “his camp,” “his word”).⁷ This chain continues into v. 12, although with a shift to the 1cs suffix (“to me”). Verse 11 also includes a 3ms Subject of יְבִילְנֵי that has no immediately available referent and does not appear to be a part of any co-reference chain.⁸ The verse ends with a 3ms object suffix that is co-referential with יוֹם־יְהוָה.

In vv. 12–13 a co-reference chain is created between the various 2mp suffixes. These are all co-referential with one another (and with the Addressees of the various imperative verbs in these verses). The 2mp suffix in v. 14 is also part of this co-reference chain. This co-reference chain thus ties the end of this section of text to the reference to the Addressees and “dwellers in the land” of v. 2. Verses 12–14 also contain a co-reference chain with YHWH as referent. This includes the 1cs suffix in v. 12, and the 3ms suffixes and Actor/Subject of vv. 13–14.⁹ Finally, the mention of the

⁶ So also Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 44; Allen, *Joel*, 66. Van der Merwe and Wendland follow Jeremias’ suggestion that the shift from plural reference to singular reference here suggests a shift in referent, from the locusts to YHWH. In support of Jeremias’s claim, they note that this would be an instance of cataphora consistent with 1:2, 3, 4, and 11, and thus a stylistic marker for Joel. Van der Merwe, “Marked Word Order,” 124; Jeremias, *Joel*, 26–27. So also Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 46; and Crenshaw, *Joel*, 125–26.

⁷ As Wolff indicates, Tg and Symmachus read “they who carry out,” referring to the army. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 38 n.m. I see no reason to think that this reading is original, although Allen does read the verse in this way. See Allen, *Joel*, 66 n.9; and also Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 24 n.11a–a.

⁸ See the tenor section below for an examination of this isolated referent.

⁹ Stuart reads the suffix in v. 14 as a reference to the invasion (“after it”) but also recognizes YHWH as a possible referent. Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 253.

“priests and ministers of YHWH” establishes a co-reference tie between v. 17 and 1:13; and the Addressees of the imperative verbs of vv. 15–16 are likely co-referential with the priests, since these imperatives appear to be calling for the priests to execute their duties as religious leaders in the community.¹⁰

2.2.2. Co-classification ties

A variety of co-classification ties binds together portions of vv. 1–17 and links this portion of Joel to the previous chapter. The use of אש and לְהִבֵּה in vv. 3 and 4 creates a co-classification tie between these verses themselves and between these verses and 1:19–20. Similarly, the use of אכל in v. 3 ties this verse to 1:19–20 and also to the action of the locusts in 1:4.

Of particular importance for the structure of ch. 2 are the co-classification ties between vv. 14–17 and 1:13–14. The use of אֶחָרָיו creates a co-classification tie with 2:3–4, indicating that both “fire” and YHWH produce some effect.¹¹ The repetition of מְנַחֵה וְנֹסֵף creates a co-classification tie with 1:13, indicating the renewal of the once-removed cultic sacrifice. The repetition of תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר בְּצִיּוֹן is co-classificatory with its first use in v. 1, the two events being referentially distinct.¹² Similarly, the instructions in v. 15 to “consecrate a fast, call a solemn assembly” repeat the language of 1:13–14, creating a co-classification chain between the two sub-sections of Joel. This repetition is also carried forward into v. 16, thereby strengthening and extending the tie.

¹⁰ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 151; Fleer, “Exegesis of Joel 2:1–11,” 152. Fleer extrapolates from vv. 15–17 to suggest that the priests are the Addressees of all of 2:1–11, but as Crenshaw points out, the priests can hardly be the only Addressees of the discourse as a whole because they are referred to in the 3rd person. Crenshaw, *Joel*, 117.

¹¹ Note this also involves a co-extension tie. See below.

¹² See Arena section below.

2.2.3. Co-extension ties

Beginning with v. 3 the use of garden/desert terminology creates a hyponymic tie to the extensive use of agricultural language in ch.1 (note the Participant set referred to above as “the land”).¹³ The instance of “people” in v. 3 is co-extensive with the 3mp suffix (“their appearance”) in 2:4 (meronymy). Verse 4 introduces language related to cavalry. The various lexemes within this semantic field, including סוּסִים, פָּרָשִׁים, and מִרְכָּבוֹת, indicate not only an equestrian semantic field, but a crossover between an equestrian and a military semantic field, which I have here referred to as a cavalry semantic field. These terms, then, are related by means of hyponymy (class membership) and create co-extension ties between vv. 4 and 5.

The “people” of v. 6 are co-extensive with the “dwellers in the land.” In this case, יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ may be a subset of עַמִּים, or vice versa, or it may simply be an instance of synonymy. I am inclined to suggest simple synonymy, since the likelihood of an isolated reference to a broader group of people than those in the land, and who have been a significant Participant group to this point, seems relatively unlikely, especially since the immediate co-text makes no additional reference to a broader group of people.

Verse 7 includes an important instance of hyponymy in which אִישׁ and its co-referential 3ms suffix (“his way”) is co-extensive with the 3mp Actor/Subject of the immediately preceding clause. This helps to create a temporary shift in focus from the locust plague as a whole to the individual members of the locust “army.” Another

¹³ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 130.

instance of this same co-extension tie occurs in v. 8, in which the 3ms suffixes are co-extensive with the 3mp Actors/Subjects of the finite verbs.

In vv. 9–10, two sets of co-extension ties have two different “locations.” The first of these is the co-extension chain in v. 9 that includes עיר, חוֹמָה, בְּתִים, and החֲלוֹנִים.¹⁴ In this case חוֹמָה, בְּתִים, and החֲלוֹנִים are all hyponyms of עיר, indicating the various places/things found within a city. The overall sense is of both the city as a whole and of all of the individual parts and places within the city. In addition, the reference to עיר is itself synonymous with צִיּוֹן in vv. 1 and 15, thus tying together the two calls to repentance to the city and its state as described in vv. 9–10.

The second set of co-extension ties related to location occurs in v. 10. It consists of two sets, one with two members, אֶרֶץ and שָׁמַיִם, and one with three, שָׁמַשׁ וְיָרֵחַ and כּוֹכָבִים. These are, of course, common parings found in the OT/HB, the former occurring together in 178 verses,¹⁵ and the latter in 21.¹⁶ These two sets form a co-extension chain with one another, the former indicating the entire expanse of creation, the whole cosmos,

¹⁴ Note that all of these are preceded by a locative בְּ.

¹⁵ Gen 1:1; 1:15; 1:17; 1:20; 1:26; 1:28; 1:30; 2:1; 2:4; 6:17; 7:3; 7:19; 7:23; 9:2; 11:4; 14:19; 14:22; 24:3; 24:7; 26:4; 27:28; 27:39; 28:12; Exod 9:22; 9:23; 10:21; 10:22; 20:4; 20:11; 31:17; 32:13; Lev 26:19; Deut 3:24; 4:17; 4:26; 4:32; 4:36; 4:39; 5:8; 10:14; 11:11; 11:17; 11:21; 25:19; 26:15; 28:12; 28:23; 28:24; 28:26; 30:19; 31:28; 32:1; 33:13; 33:28; Josh 2:11; Judg 5:4; 13:20; 1 Sam 2:10; 17:46; 2 Sam 18:9; 22:8; 1 Kgs 8:23; 8:27; 8:36; 8:43; 2 Kgs 19:15; Isa 1:2; 13:5; 13:13; 14:12; 37:16; 40:12; 40:22; 42:5; 44:23; 44:24; 45:8; 45:12; 45:18; 48:13; 49:13; 51:6; 51:13; 51:16; 55:9; 55:10; 65:17; 66:1; 66:22; Jer 4:23; 4:28; 7:33; 10:12; 10:13; 15:3; 16:4; 19:7; 23:24; 32:17; 33:25; 34:20; 51:9; 51:15; 51:16; 51:48; Ezek 8:3; 29:5; 32:4; 32:8; 38:20; Hos 2:20; 2:23; 4:3; Joel 2:10; 3:3; 4:16; Amos 9:6; Hab 3:3; Hag 1:10; 2:6; 2:21; Zech 2:10; 5:9; 6:5; 8:12; 12:1; Ps 8:2; 50:4; 57:6; 57:12; 68:9; 69:35; 73:9; 73:25; 76:9; 79:2; 89:12; 96:11; 102:20; 102:26; 103:11; 108:6; 113:6; 115:15; 115:16; 121:2; 124:8; 134:3; 135:6; 146:6; 147:8; 148:13; Job 20:27; 28:24; 35:11; 37:3; 38:33; Prov 3:19; 25:3; 30:4; Eccl 5:1; Lam 2:1; Dan 8:10; Ezra 1:2; Neh 9:6; 9:15; 9:23; 1 Chr 16:31; 21:16; 29:11; 2 Chr 2:11; 6:14; 6:18; 6:27; 6:33; 7:13; 7:14; 36:23.

¹⁶ Gen 37:9; Deut 4:19; 17:3; Josh 10:12; 10:13; 2 Kgs 23:5; Isa 13:10; 60:19; 60:20; Jer 8:2; 31:35; Ezek 32:7; Joel 2:10; 3:4; 4:15; Hab 3:11; Ps 72:5; 104:19; 121:6; 148:3; Eccl 12:2.

and the latter cosmic bodies within this expanse (thus hyponymy). These two sets also together form a co-extensive relationship with the immediately preceding “location” described in v. 9. This relationship is both hyponymic, in that the city falls within the entirety of creation, and antonymic, in that the city and the cosmos represent opposite extremes of the cline of the physical world. Note also that the land, described throughout chs. 1–2, falls within this cline, and so constitutes yet another sub-set location within the cosmos and an intermediate location standing between the cosmos and the city.

Verses 12–13 include a co-reference tie created by antinomy. Here the Addressees are called to repentance, characterized by the tearing of their hearts (לבב) and not their garments (בגד). The relationship of antonymy is established by an interior/exterior and essential/subsidiary distinction. Although לבב suggests one’s interior self, בגד suggests an exterior covering of any kind, i.e., one that is not essential for life.

Finally, vv. 14–17 include several sets of co-extensive ties. The first comes about by means of synonymy and repetition between several of the imperatives, including: קדש, קרא, אסף and, קבץ. The point of semantic similarity between these lexemes is the creation of a set, either by drawing together (קרא, אסף and, קבץ) or by setting apart (קדש). Hyponymy gives rise to ties by means of the various instances of words related to elements or components of cultic worship. Note, for instance, the recurrence (noted above) of מְנַחֵה וְנֹסֵד, the use of קהל, אולם, מִזְבֵּחַ, and הַכֹּהֲנִים מִשְׁרָתִי

יְהוָה. These various cultic terms form a set of co-extensive relationships, but there is also an interplay between these two sets of ties, which relates the drawing together and setting apart of the first set of ties to the cultic sense of the second set. This comes about by means of the lexeme *שָׁקַד*, which forms a part of both sets of cohesive ties. Note that *שָׁקַד* is used regularly in the OT/HB in cultic situations (e.g. Exod 29:27, 1 Kgs 8:64, 1 Sam 7:1, 2 Chr 26:18). This cultic sense is thereby connected to the various terms for gathering, which (apart from *שָׁקַד*) need not themselves indicate a religious or cultic situation.¹⁷ Moreover, the Addressees of the imperative verbs here, which are co-referential with the priests of YHWH (see above), are co-extensive with the Addressees of the other imperatives in the text (hyponymy).

2.3. Mode of Discourse: Conclusions

Like Joel 1, Joel 2:1–17 is a cohesive text, with extensive examples of lexical cohesion ties. Of particular importance here is the use of metaphor to establish co-reference, and of hyponymy to establish co-extension. This section of Joel also maintains strong ties to the preceding chapter, both by means of a continuing chain of co-reference, and by co-classification. Thus the register distinction that marked Joel 1, namely the use of metaphor and metonymy to bind various Participants into sets, is maintained in 2:1–17. However, in 2:1–17 these cohesive devices also serve to subdivide the text to a degree. Notice, for example, the dominance of destruction terminology and the land as a Participant set in vv. 1–5. As these elements recede in vv. 4–5, the military terminology and the locust Participant set move to the forefront. This movement also includes a shift from the land in general to the city in particular. The

¹⁷ Crenshaw also sees significant cohesion in vv. 12–17 arising from an abundance of cultic terminology. Crenshaw, *Joel*, 144.

locust/military cohesion ties are sustained until v. 11, but the city cohesion ties recede in favour of cohesion ties related to the cosmos as a whole in vv. 10–11. Finally, in vv. 12–17, all of these elements recede, and cohesion ties related to gathering and cultic/religious terminology give structure to the final portion of this sub-section. Yet, although this final set of cohesion ties binds vv. 12–17 together as a distinct sub-text, it also binds this sub-text to the beginning of ch. 2 (by means of *תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר בְּצִיּוֹן*) and to the existing cohesion ties in the previous chapter (especially 1:13–14).¹⁸ The result is an intricate and effective cohesive structure.

3. Field

3.1. Participants

Like those of Joel 1, the Participants of Joel 2:1–17 tend to occur in sets as a result of lexical cohesion (as discussed above), similarity in semantic domain, common co-occurrence in other texts, and similarity in transitivity structure. For the sake of organizational clarity I will group the Participants listed here according to these sets and will provide some brief comments about the semantic and syntactic roles and functions of these various Participants.

Chapter 2 of Joel opens with yet another imperative verb. This is not at all surprising, given the significant number of imperative verbs in ch. 1. This phenomenon occurs throughout vv. 1–17.¹⁹ The first set of Participants is the Addressees of the discourse. In v. 1 they constitute the Addressees of the imperatives (Subject/Addressee) and the “dwellers in the land” (Subject/Goal). From v. 2 to v. 12 the Addressees are

¹⁸ Assis, “Structure and Meaning,” 405, 10. Though Assis sees the trumpet call in 2:1 as more of a warning than a call to worship.

¹⁹ Imperative verb forms make up almost 22% (13 of 60) of all verbs found in Joel 2:1–17.

absent from the discourse. In vv. 12–13 the imperatives resume, and a set of co-referential ties (see above) binds together the various 2mp referents and the Addressees. More imperatives follow in 2:15–17, along with specifically identified Subjects/Addressees.

Verses 12–13 and 15–17 include Imperatives with unnamed Addressees, and v. 16 contains a string of Objects/Goals that functions as a merism, drawing together the various sub-sets of Addressees and indicating that they all have a role to play.²⁰ The instructions being given to the Subjects/Addressees of the Imperative verbs are apparently meant to involve the various social groups itemized in v. 16. Thus the people, congregation, elders, and children all fall within the Addressees Participant set. The bride and bridegroom and the priests and ministers of YHWH should also be included in this set, as should the Participants אֲנֵכֶם (Object/Goal),²¹ אֲתֵלְכֶם (Object/Goal), and the 3mp suffix (“their God”) of v. 17. As components of the response provided by the priests and ministers of YHWH (themselves part of the Addressees set), these Participants represent the Speakers’ reference to themselves.

The second Participant set includes the Speaking voice inherent in the imperative verbs, the referent YHWH, and the several pronominal suffixes that are co-referential with YHWH (see above). As was the case in Joel 1, this Participant set has a degree of internal tension, for YHWH is also at times referred to by name or in the 2nd/3rd person

²⁰ Assis, “Structure and Meaning,” 405; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 54; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 140–41.

²¹ Note that although אֲנֵכֶם is, in fact, part of a PP, the preposition עִי commonly serves to create a transitive relationship in clauses containing הוּא , which otherwise is found only in intransitive clause structures. Consequently the syntactic PP fills the semantic role of Goal. For the intransitive use of הוּא see: Deut 19:21; 25:12; Ezek 5:11; 7:9; 8:18; 9:10. For the transitive use, with עִי , see, for example, Deut 7:16; 13:9; 19:13; Isa 13:18; Ezek 7:4; 20:17; Ps 72:13. Of course, here in Joel 2:17 I am referring to a non-finite verb form, but the same fundamental semantic relationship, that of action directed toward a Goal, remains operative, although some aspects of the semantic and syntagmatic structure are certainly different.

by the Speaking voice (vv. 11, 12, 13, 14, 17).²² The additional Speaking voice is never explicitly identified, but since a similar tension characterizes ch. 1, and since 1:1 identifies Joel as the Speaking voice, one can reasonably conclude that this second speaking voice is the prophetic voice, which is at times indistinguishable from YHWH and at times distinct from YHWH. Note, however, that chapters 1 and 2 contain no instances (apart from 1:1) of deictic reference to the prophet, although ch. 2 contains several instances of deictic reference to YHWH, as was the case in ch. 1. It seems reasonable, then, to refer to this Participant set as the prophet/YHWH.²³

The third Participant set is the locust plague. This set begins with the Participant **עַם רֶב וְעֲצוֹם**.²⁴ From there, an extensive set of cohesion ties (see mode section above) bind together the various 3ms suffixes and Subjects/Actors of v. 4 and the string of Subjects/Actors in vv. 7–9. In some cases the locusts are referred to as a singular entity, particularly when the passage includes the metaphor **עַם**: In some cases the locusts are referred to as a plural mass, particularly in the string of YQTL verbs in vv. 4–9, and in some cases they are referred to as individual members of the mass, particularly in connection with **אִישׁ** and 3ms suffixes. This Participant set, although integral to the thrust of the passage, occurs only in the first half of the passage (vv. 2–11). In vv. 4–9 it predominates, serving as the Subject/Actor of almost every VP.

²² Among these, 2:17 represents a particular case, because the Speaking voice is explicitly identified as the Addressee of the direct quotation, which is ascribed to **הַכְּהֹנִים מִשְׁרָתֵי יְהוָה**. Crenshaw notes that this tension is common in the prophetic literature “because of the close identification between messenger and sender” Crenshaw, *Joel*, 134. This is true as far as it goes, but I am suggesting here that the tension indicates a more complicated and interesting participant structure. See tenor section below.

²³ Crenshaw suggests that the reference to the Day of YHWH indicates that all of 2:1–10 is spoken by the “divine person” Crenshaw, *Joel*, 117.

²⁴ For the rationale tying this Participant to the locusts of ch. 1 see the co-reference section above.

I will examine time and location more extensively in the Arena section below, but I should point out here that the text does include sets of Participants related to location. The first is the set of Participants related to the city (established primarily by co-extension, see above). The city is itself mentioned by name in v. 1 (בְּצִיּוֹן, Adjunct/Circumstantial), and again specifically in v. 9 (Adjunct/Circumstantial). Apart from this, the passage mentions various parts of the city, including the wall in v. 7 (Complement/Goal) and v. 9 (Adjunct/Circumstantial), and the houses (Adjunct/Circumstantial) and the windows (Adjunct/Circumstantial).

In addition to the city, the passage includes a set of Participants related to what I will call the cosmos. All references to this set occur in v. 10, and they include the common pairings mentioned above in the mode section: אֲרֶזֶן and שָׁמַיִם, and שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ and כּוֹכָבִים. Note that in syntactic and semantic terms all of the Participants in this set are Subject/Goal, with the exception of כּוֹכָבִים, which is Subject/Actor. The sense of location provided by the various PPs that specify location for the members of the city Participant set is entirely absent from v. 10. Instead, the primarily intransitive clauses give a sense of the gravity of the assault upon the city.

This passage also includes a small Participant set connected with the cult. The first of the Participants within this set is שׁוֹפָר (vv. 1, 15, Complement/Goal in both cases). Significantly, שׁוֹפָר is found in the context of both war and cult throughout the OT/HB, thus touching to a degree on two significant components of the passage, the military language associated with the locust “invasion” and the cultic response required

of the Addressees.²⁵ Other cultic Participants show up in vv. 14–17, including מְנַחֵה וְנֹסֵף (Complement/Goal), צוֹם (Complement/Goal), and הָאוֹלָם וְלְמִזְבֵּחַ (Adjunct/Circumstantial).²⁶

As I have demonstrated, the Participants in this passage can be grouped into relatively well defined sets according to the cohesive ties noted in the mode section and, to a lesser extent, according to similarity of semantic field and common co-occurrence in other OT/HB texts. These groupings also share similar patterns with regard to transitivity structure—Actors generally grouping with Actors, Goals with Goals, and Circumstantials with Circumstantials (transitivity structure will be discussed further below). The six sets of Participants, then, are: Addressees, prophet/YHWH, locusts, city, cosmos, and cult.

3.2. Arena

3.2.1. Location

Circumstantial Adjuncts specify location several times in vv. 1–17, and in each instance they create a sense of space related to the city.²⁷ Verses 1 and 15 include a

²⁵ For military contexts see: Judg 3:27, 6:34; 1 Sam 13:3; Zeph 1:16; Job 39:25. For cultic contexts see: Exod 19:6, Lev 25:9, 2 Sam 6:15, Ps 81:4. Wolff suggests that the reference to the horn in 2:1 is related to the military semantic field and that the reference in 2:15 is related to the cultic semantic field (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 43). So also Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 70. However, given the relative shortness of the text and its strongly cohesive character, there is no reason to suggest that both semantic fields are not in view in both instances. Even in Wolff's examples in Numb 9:9 and 10 there is no way to distinguish between the horn as war cry and the horn as call to worship. Both Allen and Sweeney mention the double-entendre (Allen, *Joel*, 67; Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 161–62). Fleer also draws attention to the presence of both semantic fields (Fleer, "Exegesis of Joel 2:1–11," 152). Ahlström suggests that we not "make this distinction too sharp since Yahweh's war against his enemies is a mythical event which is performed, heard, and/or seen in cultic actions" (Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 58).

²⁶ Note that I have not included here Participants that overlap with the Addressees set, such as עֲצָרָה and הַכְּהֵנִים מִשְׁרָתֵי יְהוָה. The overlap is, however, a notable and important component of the register, as represented by the various cohesive ties that join these two sets of Participants. This will be discussed further below.

²⁷ Assis also sees a shift from the Judean countryside to the city in 2:1 (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 124).

command to blow the horn בְּצִיּוֹן. Although a full discussion of the meaning of צִיּוֹן is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it certainly functions here, to some degree, as a referent for Jerusalem. This reference to Zion is co-extensive with the city (and its various parts) described in vv. 9–10. Thus one of the significant locations described in the passage is the city of Zion. In addition to the city itself, elements of the Temple, specifically הָאוֹלָם וְלִמְזֻבֵּחַ, are mentioned. When found together these always refer to a particular location in the Temple,²⁸ and so in this case they reinforce Zion as the primary location of this section of the discourse.

As I have mentioned above, this primary location (i.e., the city) is set in opposition to the whole of the cosmos (v. 10). The two locations can thus be considered the extreme poles of a cline of location. Along this cline of location is the land in general, which is the locative focus of Joel 1. Thus a shift, or sense of movement, occurs between chs. 1 and 2 of the book and, indeed, within 2:1–17. The focus on the land in general in ch. 1 narrows to Jerusalem/Zion at the beginning of ch. 2.²⁹ This perspective then expands dramatically in scope in v. 10, when the entire cosmos comes into view, and then narrows to an even tighter field of view in vv. 16–17. In these closing verses the phrases מִחֲדָרָיו (“from his chamber”) and מִחֲפָתָהּ (“from her canopy”) bring the reader into the most intimate of personal spaces, while the phrase בֵּין הָאוֹלָם וְלִמְזֻבֵּחַ (“between the porch and the altar”) brings the reader into the midst of the Temple (i.e., the sacral centre point of Zion). This shift in location also provides an explanation as to

²⁸ See Ezek 8:16, 2 Chr 8:13, 15:8. For a discussion of the precise nature of the “porch” see Assis, *Book of Joel*, 151–52.

²⁹ Barton also draws attention to this movement from the countryside to the city from ch. 1 to ch. 2 (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 70).

why the plague of locusts is described in both 1:2–20 and 2:1–17. The effects of the plague are being presented first from the perspective of the countryside, and then from the perspective of Zion, and more particularly the Temple. Thus these dramatic movements create a relationship between the land as a whole (especially in ch. 1), the city and its most intimate and sacred spaces, and the entire cosmos. The implication is that the goings-on in every part of the land of Judah, and especially in the sacral core of Zion, have cosmic import.³⁰

3.2.2. Time

The temporal structure of vv. 1–17 includes two noteworthy elements. The first is the aspectual opposition between QTL and YQTL verb forms and the interpretive consequences for the passage. The second is the question of the relative time of the events/actions described in the passage—in relation to both ch. 1 and the Day of YHWH mentioned in 2:1.

Significant to the field of this second portion of Joel is the dramatic difference in ratios between QTL and YQTL verb forms from ch. 1.³¹ Whereas ch. 1 has a preponderance of QTL forms (92%), the opposite is the case in 2:1–17, in which 25 of 36 finite verbs are YQTL and the remaining 11 QTL.³² These YQTL verbs form a particularly notable cluster in vv. 4–9. This clustering effect gives a sense of how the

³⁰ This close relationship between Temple and Cosmos is not at all surprising. As Ahlström notes, the Temple is, after a fashion, a mirror of heaven (Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 73).

³¹ Barton dismisses the alternation between forms far too abruptly. That such alternations between forms are difficult to explain does not preclude the importance of an explanation (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 75).

³² In v. 1 I read אָז as a participle, and not as a 3ms QTL, as some do. See also Crenshaw, *Joel*, 118; Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 85; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 43; Allen, *Joel*, 64n.26. Barton reads this as a finite verb, but suggests that it matters little to the interpretation of the passage (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 71). Two of these YQTLs are formal jussives: הִשָּׁי in v. 2, and תִּהְיֶינָה in v. 17. The latter I call formal marked because it is negated by לֹא, although it is also notable that the former, although clearly jussive, owing to the reduced medial vowel, is negated by אֵל.

action described in the discourse is organized logically, and it helps to shed light on the relationship between Joel 2:1–17 and Joel 1.

The first of these clusters, vv. 4–9, describes the appearance and actions of the “great and powerful people” that are co-referential with the locusts of ch. 1. Of the 16 finite verbs in this portion of discourse, 15, or roughly 94%, are YQTL and consequently aspectually imperfective. This overwhelming use of imperfective aspect emphasizes the internal action of the locust plague, which the passage describes as a military invasion. The temporally amorphous event present in ch. 1, the imminent descent of the locusts, is here expanded and given definition: the event described in 1:2–20 becomes unfolding action in 2:1–17.³³

The issue of relative time presents a difficulty here, for the following reasons. First, of course, is the perennial question of how YQTL forms are to be interpreted in terms of tense. As I have pointed out in the preceding section (and also in ch. 2), imperfective aspect has a tendency to coincide with non-past tense, but this is by no means an absolute rule. Based on this expectation, one might wish to read the YQTL

³³ Assis also suggests that the two passages describe the same event, although he sees this as multiple waves of a locust plague. Assis, “Structure and Meaning,” 408; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 122. Simkins sees the two chapters as referring to distinct instances of locust plagues (Simkins, *Yahweh’s Activity in History and Nature in the Book of Joel*, 257). This *contra* Garrett, who suggests that the QTL forms of ch. 1 must indicate past action, and the YQTL forms of 2:1–17 ongoing action, necessitating two distinct events (Garrett, “The Structure of Joel,” 291). Wolff takes a similar position (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 41–42). Troxel suggests that the YQTL forms in Joel 2 be read as iterative or habitual and the QTL forms as an expression of a universal state as a single event. This leads him to conclude that the forms as used in Joel 2 have more or less the same semantic value (Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 93). As I have noted above, Assis’s argument for multiple waves of the same locust plague is a possibility (though not a necessity). Similarly, Simkin’s argument that there are two plagues, described in the two passages, is a possibility that would not alter my interpretation of 2:1–17 drastically. Garrett’s (and Wolff’s) argument need not follow if the BHVS is, indeed, an aspectual and not tense-based system. And, while I do not accept Troxel’s conclusions regarding the semantic weight of the two verb-forms, his argument has little bearing on whether or not 1:2–20 and 2:1–17 refer to the same event. If the shift in verb-forms is discounted as a valid argument for demonstrating that the event of ch. 1 must precede the event of 2:1–17 (and this conclusion depends entirely on one’s understanding of the BHVS), then there is no other evidence in the text that *requires* that the events of the two sections be understood as referentially distinct.

verbs in vv. 1–17 as referring to present or future time. However, such a reading would create a degree of inconsistency with ch. 1. Some interpreters may wish to use this tension to advantage by suggesting that the two passages depict entirely different events or circumstances that are temporally divorced from one another, but a number of factors make this unlikely.

For instance, note the similarity between 1:2–3 and 2:2b. The first of these passages suggests that the event being described is utterly unique by making reference to past generations, and the second passage accomplishes the same effect by making reference to generations to come. Note also the use of similes in 2:4–5, which presupposes knowledge of the preceding chapter and its description of locusts. Indeed, without the locusts as a discourse active Participant, these similes are barely sensible.³⁴ In addition to these factors, there is the description of very similar types of destruction and damage in both sections, the locust-like behaviour of the invaders in 2:7–9, and the progressive movement from the countryside in 1:2–20 to the city, and then the Temple (with its related focus on cosmic upheaval).³⁵ All of these reasons suggest that it is eminently plausible to interpret 1:2–20 and 2:1–17 as explorations of the same event.

Instead, I suggest that the events described in 1:2–20 and 2:1–17 are identical in referential terms, and that the shift in verb forms involves a shift in both relative perspective (which I will discuss further in the tenor section below) and situational organization. Whereas 1:2–20 depicts the complete past event of the locust plague, with a particular emphasis on its consequences, 2:1–17 presents the interior action of the plague. The YQTL verbs, therefore, refer to the internal action of a past event, the

³⁴ Assis, “Structure and Meaning,” 408–09.

³⁵ Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 70.

particular elements of which are aspectually incomplete, even though the event as a whole is (at the discourse level) complete and in the past.

Not only does this interpretation bypass the problem that arises from trying to separate the two chapters from one another referentially, but by seeing 2:4–9 as a description of the internal action of the event described in 1:4, one can also make sense of the instances of QTL conjugations that *are* present in 2:1–17. Two particular instances of QTL verbs (v. 3 and v. 6) are worthy of mention here.³⁶

The first of these (v. 3) is perhaps the least problematic, because it could conceivably be explained as a case of syntactically parallel poetic structure. However, even if this were the case, the semantic functions inherent in the formal syntactic opposition may well still be operative. Here אָכְלָהּ (perfective aspect) precedes תִּלְהֶט (imperfective aspect).³⁷ The simplest explanation of this opposition is to see the depiction of the consumption or destruction of the plague as a whole (presented in perfective aspect) followed by a description of flames burning (imperfective aspect) behind the advancing “invaders.” Additionally, from the perspective of the literary structure of the passage, one might consider the first line of this couplet to be a perfective description of the locust plague, and the second line to be a shift in aspectual viewpoint from the fully-orbed event to the particular action of the event. The opposition thereby provides an entrance point into the description of the internal action of the event. The parallel lines aid in this shift, moving the reader from the perspective of the event as a whole in line one, to its internal particulars in line two.

³⁶ I will not deal here with the two instances of perfective הִיהָ because, as I have indicated above in the semantic system of BH, הִיהָ appears to perform a primarily logical function, creating relational links between two Participants, and so I will examine it in the relevant section on logical relations below.

³⁷ In v. 19 both verbs, also with exactly the same Subjects/Actors, occur in QTL.

The second instance of a QTL verb in this section of discourse, i.e., קבץ in v. 6, can be explained in a similar way. Again, this instance of QTL is in-parallel relationship with a YQTL verb, although the QTL follows in this case. If my initial suggestion regarding v. 3 is correct, namely that the shift to YQTL there marks a shift to interior action, then one might describe this second QTL as a perfective island linking that interior action to the full event from within. What is described in this second clause of v. 6 is the effect of the plague upon the faces of those who have experienced it.³⁸ This stands in parallel relationship with an imperfective description of the effects of the plague, thereby giving both an exterior and an interior view of the event.

This description of the interior action of the locust plague in vv. 4–9 is followed immediately by a description of the cosmic proportions of the destruction, and both descriptions use QTL verb forms. This signals a shift back to viewing the event and its consequences as a complete phenomenon. This shift back to the fully-orbed event is consistent with the cosmic scope of the terms used in v. 10.

As was the case in ch. 1 of Joel, 2:1–17 portrays the Day of YHWH as an event in the near future, as indicated by the use of קרוב. The next explicit instance of temporal deixis is found in v. 12, with the adverb עתה. The deictic nature of this adverb indicates the immediate possibility of repentance. The actions enjoined by YHWH, the Speaking voice, are to be undertaken at once, suggesting that repentance has not yet been

³⁸ The Object/Goal פֶּאֲרָרָה appears only here and in Nah 2:11. One cannot, with any degree of certainty, determine the word's meaning, but it is significant that in both of these contexts it describes the experience of a profoundly negative event; and in both cases פָּנִים is the Subject/Actor (although the precise construction is slightly different between the two passages). But, because of this uncertainty regarding פֶּאֲרָרָה, it is difficult to unravel the precise meaning of the phrase. Cf. Assis, *Book of Joel*, 133.

undertaken, at least within the context of 2:1–17.³⁹ This also suggests that the locust plague, which constitutes the background of this call to repentance, has already occurred, and that the Day of YHWH, which is a dangerous event that is “near” and “coming” (v. 1), has not yet occurred.

The second occurrence of *יִסְיִהוּנָה* is found in v. 11. Here another QTL verb stands at the beginning of the clause, and a YQTL verb at the end. In keeping with the pattern observed thus far, the perfective *נָתַן* is aspectually complete and thus encompasses the entire event of the locust plague. Given my interpretation of the relationship between chs. 1 and 2, I suggest that this also refers to a past event, i.e., to the locust plague that has just occurred, and in which, or by which, or during which YHWH has “uttered his voice.” Following this is the rhetorical question that closes v. 11. The relationship between this rhetorical question and the call to turn of vv. 12–13 helps to shed light on the temporal structure of the field of discourse. Without vv. 12–13 one might read v. 11 simply in light of the preceding text and thereby assume both that the Day of YHWH is co-referential with the destructive event just described, and that (consequently) the YQTL of v. 11 is a past time reference to the aspectually incomplete internal action of the event. However, when one continues on to vv. 12–13 this reading becomes rather unlikely, for the rhetorical question of v. 11 suggests that the Day of YHWH cannot be endured. The expected answer to the question “who can endure it” is,

³⁹ I have, up to this point, begged the question that the call of Joel 2 is related to repentance, which implies some sin or breach that must be remedied by the people. There is a long-standing debate regarding the question of sin and repentance in the book of Joel that is important for my discussion of this chapter, and of the book as a whole, but unfortunately this topic is not germane to this part of this chapter. I will continue to refer to the “repentance” of the people, but in my remarks on the Day of YHWH below I discuss this question more fully.

apparently, “nobody.”⁴⁰ But since vv. 12–13 continue on to indicate the possibility of return and repentance, and the consequent experience of the mercy of YHWH, one would have difficulty in reading the Day of YHWH as a past reference to the locust plague.⁴¹

Instead, if one reads this final YQTL as a reference to an aspectually incomplete future time, and thus considers the Day of YHWH to be an event that has not occurred but lies in the future, a picture of the temporal structure of vv. 1–17 emerges. The locust plague, described in the middle of the passage, lies in the past even though it is described in aspectually incomplete terms; and the Day of YHWH, referred to in vv. 1 and 11, is a distinct event that lies in the indeterminate future. The exhortations to a return to YHWH in vv. 12–17 can be understood as a call associated with the locust plague, but presented as a part of the discourse present, as indicated by the use of the temporal deictic phrase *וְגַם-עַתָּה* (“yet even now”). Thus, even though the aspectual oppositions between 1:2–20 and 2:1–17 are almost entirely reversed, the same basic temporal structure exists in terms of the field of discourse. What 2:1–17 adds is the response of supplication called for in 1:13–14, which occurs (after a fashion) in the exhortations of 2:12–17.⁴²

3.3. Verbal Processes and Transitivity Structure

As is the case in Joel 1, Joel 2:1–17 tends rather heavily toward Material processes (38/49, or 78%), although it includes a few Mental processes (5/49, or 10%)

⁴⁰ Mal 3:2 is an instance of a very similar rhetorical question (using a participle form, instead of the YQTL form found here in Joel 2), and in that case the answer is very clearly “nobody.”

⁴¹ Linville also draws a distinction between the invaders of 2:1–10 and the Day of YHWH in 2:11 (Linville, “Mourning of the Priests in Joel,” 102).

⁴² As I will note below in the tenor section, I read *יָבִינֵנוּ* as a standard imperfective YQTL and not as a jussive (as, e.g., the ESV). Thus v. 17 is not a call to repentance, but a description of repentance, which then leads to the consequent response of vv. 18–19. For the full argument see below.

and Speaking processes (2/49, or 4%).⁴³ And, as in ch. 1, these process types tend to cluster to a degree. This clustering is particularly important with regard to the Mental, Speaking, and Relational clauses (for this last see below). Moreover, significant patterns of transitivity structure overlap with process type and continue to add layers of information to what has been observed about the Participants thus far. I will begin the analysis that follows with an examination of Material processes and move from there to observations regarding the clusters of Mental and Speaking processes. I will also examine relevant instances of transitivity structure.

Since the vast majority of verbal processes in this section are Material processes, one cannot observe strongly offset clusters of Material clauses. What is notable is the way that Material processes and transitivity structure combine with certain Participants to give a fuller sense of the field of discourse. With this in mind, I will pay particular attention to vv. 4–11, so as to observe the way in which transitivity structure combines with verbal processes that are almost all Material processes.

Of the 22 finite verbal clauses in this sub-section, 11 are intransitive, 7 transitive, and 4 stative. The action of the locusts, which are the Actors/Subjects in almost all of these processes, receives extensive description here; and that description is accomplished primarily by means of intransitive clauses (only three of the seven transitive clauses in this section have the locusts or a co-referent as Actor/Subject). The general absence of Objects/Goals suggests a tendency toward what Halliday refers to as descriptive clauses, or clauses with non-directed action.⁴⁴ Consequently, this section

⁴³ Note that the remaining four verbal clauses are Relational. They will be discussed in the sub-section on logical relations below. As with previous statistics on verbal processes, these numbers include all finite verbs as well as Imperatives.

⁴⁴ Halliday, “Notes on Transitivity and Theme,” 43.

emphasizes the activity of the locusts, the actions of the Actors, and the action in general, but not the recipients of that action. Note also that v.10 contains several stative clauses, which creates a sense of description focused upon both the Subjects/Goals and the processes themselves.

Although most of the clauses in vv. 1–17 are Material process clauses, the passage also includes several instances of Mental processes; and of the five instances of this type of clause, four cluster in vv. 12–14.⁴⁵ Two of these processes are imperative clauses (vv. 12–13), and the Subjects/Addressees are the Addressees of the discourse (see Participants section above). The other two are finite clauses with YHWH as Subject/Actor in both cases (v. 14). Thus the first two Mental processes are instructions directed to the recipients of the discourse to “return/repent.” The identified Speaker of these imperatives is YHWH (יְהוָה, note also the use of suffixes). The second two are responses provided by the prophetic voice (though not necessarily YHWH; note the references to YHWH in the 3rd person), indicating the possibility (on modality here see below) that YHWH may, in turn, “return and relent.” This cluster of Mental processes follows the preceding description of the locust plague and its results, including the explicit tie to YHWH as the cause of the plague (v. 11), and it makes explicit what is required of the Addressees of the discourse and what they in turn can expect from YHWH.

⁴⁵ Note that this includes three instances of the verb שׁוּב, which, although it serves in many instances as a Material process, also represents in many instances the act of making a choice, and thus serves as a Mental process. The latter, while almost certainly a metaphorical extension of the former, is used so frequently in the OT/HB that I believe it can fairly be categorized as either a Material or a Mental process, depending on context. Here, because it collocates with lexemes like לָכֵן and נָחַם (the fourth Mental process in this cluster), it is a plural imperative with an entire people as Subject/Addressee. It appears to be enacted by Material processes that do not involve the Actors physically turning back or around (vv. 15–16), and so it can only be a Mental process, indicating an internal, cognitive decision.

The only two Speaking processes that occur in this portion of Joel are in v. 17. Significantly, one of these processes is actually nested within the other, creating a quotation within a quotation. In the case of the first Speaking process, the Speakers are the “priests and ministers of YHWH”, and the identified Addressee is YHWH. This first Speaking process thus describes the response of the priests and ministers, who in the preceding discourse belong to the Addressees participant set. The Speaking process thus creates a shift from the prophetic voice/YHWH as speaker to the Addressees as speakers. In addition, nested within this first Speaking process is a second Speaking process that forms a rhetorical question that the ministers and priests place into the mouths of “the peoples”. Speaking processes in Joel vv. 1–17 thus describe the speech of Participant sets that, until this point, have not taken the role of speaker in the discourse.

3.4. Logical Relations

3.4.1. Taxis

As was the case with verbal process types, noticeable clustering of taxic relationships occurs in Joel 2:1–17. This suggests the same basic structure that the preceding analysis has presented thus far, and it also gives a sense of why the passage is structured as it is. In this section I will begin by examining the clustering and discourse function of hypotactic clauses. I will then examine paratactic clauses, and finally Relational clauses (which, as I will demonstrate, serve a function consistent with paratactic clauses here).

As in Joel 1, the majority of hypotactic clauses in 2:1–17 are marked with כִּי. Consequently, the bulk of these hypotactic clauses create a relation of expansion between the head clause and the subordinate clause in the clause complex. The first two

instances of hypotaxis occur in v. 1, which includes two parallel phrases headed by כִּי, that indicate the cause for the action of the preceding clauses.⁴⁶ That is to say, the reason given, presumably both for the blowing of the שׁוֹפָר and for the fear of the “dwellers in the land,” is the impending Day of YHWH.

The second instance of hypotaxis is found in v. 3, where the final clause opens with וְגַם which, as van der Merwe suggests, serves to tie a clause to some preceding discourse event, indicating a relationship of extension.⁴⁷ In v. 3 this hypotactic clause simply serves to create a sense of completeness to the preceding description of destruction.

Not unexpectedly, vv. 4–10 contain no instances of hypotaxis. Not until v. 11 does another a cluster of expanding hypotactic clauses occur; and all of these clauses are marked by כִּי. The first two of these instances of hypotaxis provide the reason or rationale for the head clause, וַיְהוָה נָתַן קוֹלוֹ לְפָנָי חֵילוֹ (“and YHWH has uttered his voice before his army”). In other words, YHWH cries out before his camp because of its exceeding size, and because of the particular power of his words.⁴⁸ This seems to be an indication of both the astonishing power and size of the “army” itself, and the even greater power of its commander (i.e., YHWH). The third hypotactic clause in this sequence appears to function as the summation of what precedes, as the final indication

⁴⁶ This *pace* Finley, who reads these as “emphatic” (Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 42–43).

⁴⁷ BHRG 41.4.5. See also van der Merwe, *The Old Hebrew Particle Gam*.

⁴⁸ Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 252; Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 164. This *pace* Prinsloo, who sees all three instances of כִּי as “affirmative” (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 44). So also Finley (*Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 149). Crenshaw suggests that כִּי here indicates the grounds for the preceding verses, except for the 3rd instance, which might indicate reason (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 127). Wolff reads all three particles as expanding or explaining existing information, and not as giving cause (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 47–48).

of YHWH's greatness, and as the reason why even the cosmos trembles (v. 10). The structure of the clause itself does not clearly indicate whether the Day of YHWH described in this clause describes what has just occurred (i.e., the locust plague) or a coming event (as I have argued above). In any case, it certainly conveys a sense that the greatness and terror of the Day are directly related to YHWH's power and the uttering of his voice.

The second instance of וְגַם opens v. 12 and ties it closely to v. 11. Here the hypotactic relationship is one of extension, creating a sense of disjunction and opposition between v. 12 and the immediately preceding clause.⁴⁹ Thus עַתָּה is explicitly opposed to יוֹם־יְהוָה in temporal terms, which helps to shed light on the indeterminacy of the preceding clause. By creating this explicit opposition to the preceding clause complex, this instance of hypotaxis also serves to shift the discourse from a description of destruction and of the threat of the terrible Day of YHWH to a call to repentance.

This new subsection contains one more instance of expanding hypotaxis (v. 13). Marked by כִּי, this instance indicates the grounds upon which the repentance being called for is possible. The head clause in this clause complex, וָשׁוּבוּ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, ("and return to YHWH your god"), is the fundamental command both of this section and

⁴⁹ As van der Merwe and Wendland note, this is a phrasal *hapax legomenon*. They seem to accept Jeremias's reading of "Doch auch jetzt. . ." ("But even now. . .") (Van der Merwe, "Marked Word Order," 125, drawing upon Jeremias, *Joel*, 27). So also Prinsloo (*Theology of Joel*, 49). Wolff suggests that the phrase distinguishes this event from the event described in ch. 1, and indicates that *now* (as opposed to then) repentance is possible (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 42).

of the discourse as a whole; and the possibility of this return is, by means of the following hypotactic clause, predicated upon the character of YHWH.⁵⁰

Verses 1–17 also contain three examples of projecting hypotaxis, including the direct quotation in v. 12, and the direct quotation with a nested quotation in v. 17.⁵¹ The quotation in v. 12 is marked by both the common phrase *נְאֻם־יְהוָה* and a shift in person (see Mode section above). Both of the quotations in v. 17 are marked by means of the verb *אמר*. In the first case, the use of projection indicates direct speech by YHWH, and in the second it indicates direct speech by the priests/ministers.

The hypotactic clauses in vv. 1–17 thus serve several distinct functions in the creation of the field of discourse. First, hypotactic expansion by means of *כִּי* creates a relationship of act and consequence or reason among various happenings in the text. Second, hypotactic extension by means of *וְגַם* clarifies the relationship between events; and it is particularly important for determining the relative temporal relationship of the Day of YHWH to the main happenings of the text. Finally, hypotactic projection creates two small pockets of discursive space in which direct quotations of both YHWH and the priests/ministers rest.

As is the case in Joel 1, parataxis in 2:1–17 is primarily extensive (although with some examples of elaboration and enhancement); it adds information by joining clauses

⁵⁰ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 136.

⁵¹ “Projection” is the term used in SFL to indicate an instance in which a hypotactic clause presents an instance of direct or indirect discourse. That is to say, such a clause is projected through the main clause, creating a discursive space nested within the main discourse, as with direct speech, reported speech, or reported thoughts. For a fuller description, see Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG3*, 376–383.

into clause complexes, or strings of clauses.⁵² In some instances these examples of paratactic extension join together with instances of hypotaxis, but in most instances paratactic clauses cluster together with other paratactic clauses. In all instances in this section of discourse parataxis is marked by ׀ or by the unmarked apposition of two clauses or clause complexes.

Three clause complexes in vv. 1–17 include the combination of paratactic and hypotactic relationships. The first of these occurs in v. 1, in which a clause complex is created by ׀, joining the call to sound the שׁוֹפָר and the call to sound the alarm by paratactic elaboration. This complex is set in paratactic relationship with the following complex (unmarked apposition), which in this case is an extensive tie. Additional information is added in the second clause complex, as the generally negative overtones of the verb רָגַז qualify the preceding commands, indicating that fear and not celebration is being called for.⁵³ The hypotactic expansion described above follows this paratactic extension, thereby anchoring the entire complex in the coming Day of YHWH.

In v. 2, two paratactic clause complexes are set in apposition and are then followed by an instance of hypotactic extension. The first two clauses involve an instance of paratactic extension, indicating that destruction by fire goes before and behind the locusts. The second two clauses are similarly joined by paratactic extension, indicating that the land is one way before the locusts come, but another way after the locusts have come.

⁵² Here I am principally interested in inter-clausal parataxis, and not intra-clausal parataxis. Certainly there are many examples of the latter, also marked principally with ׀, and these tend to create word groups that then function as constituents within their given clauses.

⁵³ See the tenor section below for a more extensive examination of רָגַז.

The next instance of the combination of parataxis and hypotaxis occurs in v. 11, where the verse opens with a paratactic tie to the previous clause complex, thereby creating a relationship of expansion and providing the cause for the event described in v. 10 (and thus, in broader terms, for the one described in vv. 4–10). The utterance of the voice of YHWH is thus the (indirect) reason for the cosmic disturbance of v. 10; and this, in combination with the following hypotactic clauses, serves to indicate the logical relationship between YHWH and the “army” of vv. 4–9 (he is their commander) and between YHWH and the results of their action (he is the indirect but essential cause).

Finally, note that v. 13 contains three paratactic clauses and one hypotactic clause. The first of these joins the clause complex of v. 13a with the preceding clause complex. The semantic relationship here is one of extension, v. 13a providing additional information, particularly by means of the verb קרע. Within the clause complex of v. 13a the paratactic relationship is one of elaboration, the second clause indicating the opposite action of that required in the first. This clause complex is then joined to the following complex by paratactic elaboration. That is to say, the rending of the heart is the substance of returning to YHWH. Thus the hypotactic expansion in the second clause complex provides the reason why the command in the initial clause complex is possible. The rending of the supplicant’s heart has value only because of the character of YHWH. The effective power of repentance is consequently grounded in YHWH, and not in the action of supplication.

Instances of more isolated parataxis occur throughout the text—so many, in fact, that one simply cannot analyze them all. Instead, let me suggest some exemplars and also some of the important functions of parataxis in this passage. Verse 7 has four

paratactic clauses, each of which is elaborative. Each clause provides a brief description of some feature of the locust army, and these descriptions are added one upon the other to give a fuller presentation of the character of the invading “army.” Indeed, throughout the passage paratactic links relationships apparently create logical connections between the descriptions of the various participants in the discourse. As is the case in ch. 1, this is the logical corollary of the participant sets created by cohesive ties, which I have examined above in the mode section.

In addition to creating logical connections between participant sets, paratactic ties also work together with Relational processes to tie features or actions to these participant sets. Note, for instance, v. 2, which contains only two finite verbs and is made up of only Relational processes.⁵⁴ Here word groups are connected in non-verbal clauses, and the resultant clauses are joined paratactically either by simple apposition or with γ . This connects the participants relationally and creates expanded descriptions of their actions or properties. These descriptions are connected to other descriptions by means of paratactic extension, which results in a full presentation of the participant set being described. Similar patterns can be observed in the description of the “army” in vv. 4–9.

The interplay between hypotaxis and parataxis in vv. 1–17 therefore both connects smaller components of the discourse with larger components and extends the reach of the various instances in which the reason or cause of some element or component is being described. Paratactic ties facilitate the grouping of participants into

⁵⁴ I will exclude v. 2a, the descriptions of the “day”, as these clearly belong to the preceding clause at the close of v. 1. Even $\eta\text{ס}^{\text{א}}$ here appears to be performing a relational function, creating a relationship of (negated) equation between its two constituents. For more relational uses of $\eta\text{ס}^{\text{א}}$ see the relevant entry in BDB, esp. heading 2a.

sets within the logical structure of the field and also tie particular features or actions to those participant sets by grouping Relational clauses. Hypotactic ties create relationships of cause or dependence between various actions and events and the various participant sets in the logical structure of the field. Thus it is possible to see how the Participants and the actions in the field relate to one another.

3.5. Field of Discourse: Conclusions

The field of discourse in Joel 2:1–17 is decidedly similar to that of Joel 1. It includes six Participant sets (Addressees, prophet/YHWH, locusts, city, cosmos, cult), each of which shows a remarkable tendency to form groups according to transitivity structure. The Addressees are seldom Actors in transitive clauses, and they tend to receive instruction from the prophet/YHWH. The locusts are almost always Actors/Subjects, but they also tend to appear in intransitive clauses that focus upon action and Actors over and above results or consequences. The city and the cosmos both tend to receive the verbal action. Finally, the participants with connections to the cult tend to be related to the action required by imperative verbs, either as the direct command or as the means by which these commands might be accomplished.

Although the dispersion of verb forms in vv. 1–17 is dramatically different from that of ch. 1, the basic structure of the temporal arena is the same in both passages. The destructive locust plague is in the immediate past (although it is portrayed by imperfective aspect), and the Day of YHWH is in the indeterminate, though immediate, future. The location of vv. 1–17 is Zion/Jerusalem (with some cosmic elements). This shift in location involves a movement inward toward the centre of the land, even to the

most intimate personal and sacral places, even though it ties the import of these specific locations to the very cosmos itself.

Again in vv. 1–17 verbal processes favour Material processes very heavily, particularly in the sub-section describing the assault on the city. As I have mentioned above, this portion also tends strongly toward intransitive clauses. Mental and Speaking processes cluster noticeably, with the former being restricted primarily to the call to repentance in vv. 12–14 and the latter to the final response the Addressees are instructed to give. Thus, while the preponderance of processes are Material, Mental and Speaking processes play a significant strategic role in the discourse.

Finally, as far as logical relations are concerned, paratactic ties and Relational clauses combine to unite Participant sets with particular qualities and actions. Hypotactic ties create relationships of cause or dependence, and at key points in the discourse help to link sub-sections of the text and to clarify the logical relations of the field.

4. Tenor

4.1. Participant Relations

Although I have identified six Participant sets above, two of these are of particular interest in this section, the prophet/YHWH (the speaking voice) and the Addressees. These two Participant sets are involved in the virtual conversation noted in the Mode section above. This is, of course, a continuation of the participant relationships in the first chapter of Joel.

The large number of imperative verb forms in this passage—as I have pointed out above (n.10), almost 22% of the verbs in the passage are imperatives—is significant

in and of itself, but more important is the fact that two of these are found in v. 1, and all of the rest in vv. 12–17.⁵⁵ That is to say, the center section of text, which describes the assault on the city by the locusts, contains no instances of direct address. This is, of course, entirely consistent with the description of the transitivity structure of these verses that I have provided above. This central section is concerned with the description of action. The action in question is related to the imperatives that precede and follow it, by means of the hypotactic relationships that I have analyzed above.

The logical segmenting of the field is thus consistent with the relational segmenting of the passage. The central section, bracketed as it is by instances of direct address, serves to support those instances of address. So as far as the participant structure is concerned, the locusts, the city, and the cosmos all play supporting roles; i.e., they describe the destructive crisis driving the exchange between the prophet/YHWH and the Addressees. All of these supporting participants are referred to in the 3rd person and are not a direct part of this exchange.

The exchange itself is not in reality much of an exchange. The facade of dialogue exists, as I have pointed out above, but in reality the prophet/YHWH as speaking voice is the subject of all of the imperatives. The apparent exception is v. 17, in which the priests and ministers address the final imperative to YHWH. Even here, however, the quotation is modally unreal, i.e., it is an instruction vis-à-vis what the

⁵⁵ Some (e.g. Bewer, *Joel*, 108) have chosen to reject the Masoretic pointing of the imperatives in vv. 15–16, and have re-pointed them as indicative QTL in agreement with the OG reading of these verses. Given that there is no particular text-critical reason to select one reading over another here, and that I have thus far focused on the MT of Joel, I will proceed on the presupposition that the MT pointing is correct. On this issue see also Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 79. For a possible reason for the use of a jussive and not an imperative form for the instruction to the bride/bridegroom in v.16, see Crenshaw, *Joel*, 140, and Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 84. Stuart also reads the YQTL form here as jussive. Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 253.

priests should or will say in response to the destruction of Zion/Jerusalem.⁵⁶ The only active speaking voice in the discourse is the prophet/YHWH, and this fact situates in the speaking voice (whether that be the prophet or YHWH) all of the authority implicit in the discourse. Not only does the speaking voice command, but it also does so with the expectation of being obeyed; and so the central section stands as a warning and threat in case of non-compliance. Between the prophet/YHWH and the Addressees there is no doubt as to who holds authority: it all lies with the prophet/YHWH.⁵⁷

Yet, as is the case with ch. 1, within the participant set that includes the prophet and YHWH a degree of tension exists. At times the speaking voice appears to identify with the Addressees of the discourse, as in vv. 13–14, where the speaker counsels a turn to YHWH founded on YHWH's gracious character. This contrasts with v. 12, in which YHWH speaks directly. In v. 12 the speaking voice uses the 1st person, but here the imperative clause complex is offset from the rest of the discourse by means of the identified Speaking process. Speech directly attributed to YHWH is, consequently, reported speech, as opposed to the direct speech that proceeds from the prophetic voice.

The instructions provided by the prophetic voice echo the words of YHWH's reported speech, extending it and applying it more precisely in terms of both specific Addressees and specific instructions. The string of imperative and jussive clauses that runs through vv. 13–17 seems to operate as a set of honest instructions for a return to

⁵⁶ Whether *יִבְכוּ* and *וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ* are taken as jussive or imperfective is of little consequence to this matter. In either case the weeping and speaking are actions that take place in the future, whether that future is volitive or descriptive.

⁵⁷ Prinsloo also notices this radical imbalance of power, especially in vv. 15–17 (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 60).

YHWH.⁵⁸ Just as YHWH has specifically said in v. 12, a return is possible under the conditions specified. Thus the climax is in v. 17, where the Addressees of the discourse (represented specifically by the priests and servants of YHWH) are instructed to respond in direct supplication to YHWH.⁵⁹ Although the text itself is for all intents and purposes monologic, this final instruction to speak invites a dialogue. The text cannot be categorized as entirely one-sided, since a response is not merely invited, but demanded.⁶⁰

An additional, and intriguing, problem in this virtual dialogue is the fact that the response projected into the mouths of the priests in v. 17 is not, strictly speaking, consistent with the declaration of YHWH in vv. 12–13. There YHWH instructs the people to “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, and weeping, and wailing” (v. 12). Yet the response the prophet suggests for the priests in v. 17 involves a challenge to YHWH’s own honour. It is not a purely submissive supplication, but a suggestion that if YHWH were to “make [his] inheritance a reproach, a byword among the nations” (v. 17b), this would reflect poorly upon YHWH in the eyes of the nations.⁶¹ One possible

⁵⁸ As I have noted already, no clear reason is given for the need to turn or return to YHWH. Some suggest that a sin or betrayal of some kind, one generally associated with the Deuteronomic covenant, is implied in the text. Others suggest that the lack of information is an integral feature of the text, and that no specific sin is in view. For examples of those who subscribe to the former view, see: Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 26; Bourke, “Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1”; Bourke, “Le Jour De Yahvé Dans Joel, 2.” For examples of those who ascribe to the latter view, see Crenshaw, *Joel*, 146; Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 78–80. For an interesting attempt to explain the call to response in terms of an honour/shame ethic see Simkins, “Return to Yahweh.” In a vein similar to Simkins, Assis sees the call to turn as a response to the natural catastrophe of the locust plague, and as integrally related to the broken relationship between YHWH and the people that followed the Babylonian exile (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 138, 40–41). For more on this question, see the discussion of the Day of YHWH below.

⁵⁹ Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 253.

⁶⁰ Allen, *Joel*, 83.

⁶¹ LaRocca-Pitts goes so far as to suggest that YHWH is himself responsible for this challenge from the people, suggesting that “Yahweh initiates a chain of events that has the purpose of motivating him to act” (LaRocca-Pitts, “The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy,” 287). However, perhaps this might be better understood as YHWH initiating a chain of events designed to encourage the people to *ask* him to act.

solution in this case is that וַיֹּאמְרוּ (“let them say,” v. 17) is, in fact, a mispointed *wayyiqtol*, and thus represents not the prophet’s suggested words to the priests, but the actual words of the priests. This would remove any tension between YHWH and the prophet, and would simply indicate that the priests did not respond according to the prophet’s instructions. The difficulty here is that there is no manuscript evidence to support this suggested emendation. Also, here the OG translates into the future indicative, which is consistent with its translations of other YQTL forms in this passage, and inconsistent with its translation of the four verbs pointed as *wayyiqtol* in the MT text of 2:18–19 (all of which are translated as aorists in the Greek). Consequently, it appears that both the Masoretes and the translators of OG Joel interpreted וַיֹּאמְרוּ as a waw+YQTL.

Still, there is a significant degree of consistency with regard to the speaking voice, which I have been referring to as “the prophet” or “the prophetic voice.” Apart from the divergences in vv. 12 and 17, which I have just discussed, a single voice both calls the Addressees to repentance and describes the destruction of the city. It is never self-referential and it does not explicitly identify itself with either YHWH or the Addressees, although it identifies itself to some degree with each of these groups. The presentation of YHWH’s words as reported speech, in conjunction with the subsequent reiteration and expansion of YHWH’s instructions, draws the prophetic voice onto YHWH’s side, as it were. The prophet presents the Addressees with YHWH’s desire for repentance as well as with an evaluative description of the locust plague and its connection to the need for repentance. Yet the prophet also identifies himself with the

Addressees by suggesting the very words of response that are required of them. The intermediary role observed in ch. 1 is maintained in 2:1–17.

4.2. Interrogatives

Although the use of interrogatives in discourse very often functions to signal turn-taking or process-sharing, indicating an invitation by one party for another party to offer a response, this is by no means the only semantic function that an interrogative can play in the interpersonal structure of a discourse. The use of interrogatives in Joel 2:1–17, far from creating a balanced and free-flowing exchange, helps to solidify (or challenge) the relative power structures at play between the prophet, YHWH, and the Addressees. This is accomplished by means of several interrogatives functioning as rhetorical questions, and by an interrogative with no clearly accessible answer.

The first of the interrogatives functioning as rhetorical questions occurs in v. 11. It is related to the Day of YHWH. “Who can endure it?” asks the prophet, after the extensive presentation of the account of the locust plague, including its cosmic consequences. The indeterminate referent of *מִי* can only be the Addressees, which suggests that the effect of the interrogative clause is to suggest that the Addressees cannot possibly endure the Day of YHWH. With respect to the relative power structure of the passage, this phrase operates as a threat against the Addressees, indicating that the prophet/YHWH has the power to threaten them. The prophet/YHWH stands in a position of authority, and the Addressees stand subject to that authority.

The second interrogative clause, which occurs in v. 14, adds a layer of complexity to this power structure that is consistent with the tension between the prophet and YHWH outlined above. This interrogative follows reported speech—

YHWH's call for repentance—and the prophet's summary and expansion of that call. The opening phrase of v. 14 is an interrogative and not a declarative clause, which suggests the possibility that the speaker may not know the answer. The preceding description of YHWH suggests that a positive response to repentance is possible, but the sense of certainty present in the rhetorical question of v. 11 is not present here.

Crenshaw, who provides a helpful exploration of the use of the phrase *מִי יִדְעָ* in the OT/ HB, suggests that in Joel 2 the phrase “serves as a prophetic ‘perhaps,’ thereby leaving the door open to a remote possibility of reprieve.”⁶² Hence the speaking voice is not itself certain regarding the outcome of an attempt at repentance. As Crenshaw puts it, “Joel grasps this fragile line and holds on for dear life.”⁶³ The prophet is thus separated from YHWH and stands in a much closer relationship to the Addressees than he has in the majority of the discourse thus far.

The final two interrogatives are placed, after a fashion, in the mouths of the Addressees. Verse 17 is presented as a response by the priests and ministers of YHWH, and is perhaps meant as a description of either present activity or hoped-for future activity (the former seems preferable given the response that follows in v. 18).⁶⁴ Just as

⁶² Crenshaw, “The Expression *Mî Yôdēa*,” 276. Prinsloo suggests that the phrase “indicates that there is no direct, causal connection between the people’s penitence and Yahweh’s response” (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 58). Similarly, Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 48. This *pace* Leung, who suggests that the rhetorical question, because of its connection to the Exodus episode and the appeal to God’s gracious character, implies a positive answer which is not in doubt (Leung, “Intertextual Study,” 136). While the allusion to God’s character and deliverance of his people in Exodus may, perhaps, tilt the ambiguity of the question in a positive direction, it strikes me that the greater effect is to highlight God’s freedom of action in both texts, as well as the role of the priestly voice in both circumstances to serve as mediator between the deity and the people.

⁶³ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 138. For an interesting discussion of parallels between the books of Joel and Jonah (including the use of this phrase), see Dozeman, “Yahweh’s Gracious and Compassionate Character.”

⁶⁴ While the majority of English translations read the two finite verbs (or at least the first of them) as jussive, this is by no means a necessary reading as no formal differentiation is possible. Indeed, given the extensive use of imperative forms directed to the Addressees throughout this passage (and the book as

the prophet/YHWH presents the Addressees with a rhetorical question in v. 11, the Addressees respond with just such a question here in v. 17, deputizing “the nations” into their petition that YHWH relent. The second interrogative, placed in the mouths of “the nations,” serves to drive home the message of the first. The question posed by “the nations” implies that no god (or no god of worth) is watching over the people of Zion/Jerusalem, hence the city and its land are destroyed. The question posed by the priests and ministers implies that if Zion/Jerusalem are destroyed, this is just what “the nations” will say.⁶⁵

This response casts significant light on the interpersonal relations in the passage, for although the priests and ministers respond with a degree of penitence (as the use of *בכה* suggests), the essence of their response is their two-fold rhetorical question, which in turn suggests that the total destruction of the people of YHWH will result in his defamation among the nations. The rhetorical questions of the priests and ministers are strikingly audacious, particularly in conjunction with the earlier rhetorical question in YHWH’s threat (which indicates that none who fail to repent will survive). They suggest that, although a failure to repent may result in destruction, said destruction will

a whole), one wonders why, if a command is intended here, another imperative is not present. An additional issue that speaks against a jussive sense is the response by YHWH in the following verse, in which he shows mercy, presumably because the supplication demanded in vv. 12–16 (and 17?) is provided. Of course, neither of these is anything like conclusive evidence for an imperfective reading of the first two finite verbs in v.17, but certainly they demonstrate the potential validity of such a reading. For an alternate possibility, see Troxel’s argument, which draws on Rudolph, that it is not uncommon in the prophetic literature to leave the response to divine commands unreported, even though the reader is expected to infer that those commands were followed appropriately (Troxel, “Time in Joel,” 82–83).

⁶⁵ This use of the nations as witnesses is operative regardless of whether *לְמַשְׁלֵיבָם גּוֹיִם* is read as “a byword among the nations” or “the nations rule over them.” For arguments in favour of the former, see Allen, *Joel*, 77 n.64; Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 82–83. For arguments in favour of the latter see Garrett, “The Structure of Joel,” 294; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 39 n. p; 52. Sweeney reads the ambiguity as an intentional double-entendre (Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 169).

result in disdain for YHWH.⁶⁶ Instead of pure repentance, then, the use of these two interrogatives gives the sense that the Addressees are “talking back” to YHWH to a degree.

Further complicating the depiction of interpersonal dynamics in the passage is the fact that this response, which is to be offered by the priests on behalf of the people, is an instance of projected hypotaxis (see above). That is to say, these words are being suggested by the prophet as the necessary response by the priests.⁶⁷ Consequently, the prophet, who serves as the messenger of YHWH throughout the book, is here suggesting a course of action for the priests that is not strictly consistent with what has been demanded by YHWH. As with Joel 1:16 and 19, this appears to be an instance in which the prophetic voice stands in partial solidarity with the people of YHWH, and in tension with YHWH himself.⁶⁸

These interrogative clauses thus reinforce and expand the picture of the tenor that I have set forth in the previous section on Participant roles. YHWH maintains his status as the dominant participant, threatening the Addressees with inevitable destruction if there is no repentance. The prophet’s intermediate status is also maintained, although here he stands somewhat closer to the Addressees than to YHWH, further complicating the representation of interpersonal relationships. Finally, the Addressees themselves maintain to a degree their role as the passive recipients of both action and command, albeit with a surprising degree of audacity, in that they use the

⁶⁶ Thus honour and shame do not merely indict the people, but provide an avenue for a response. Cf. Simkins, “Return to Yahweh’.”

⁶⁷ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 158.

⁶⁸ Again, see the work of Hayes on this matter: Hayes, “When None Repents.”

very rhetorical methods employed by YHWH to establish that YHWH himself also stands to lose from the destruction of the Addressees.

4.3. Tenor of Discourse: Conclusions

In the foregoing section of this chapter I have established the relative relationships among the three main participants in Joel 2:1–17. The central participant, the prophetic voice, stands as an intermediary between the Addressees and YHWH. For the vast majority of the discourse the prophetic voice stands in solidarity with YHWH, articulating his commands and describing the destruction of Zion/Jerusalem in order to stimulate repentance on the part of the Addressees. It never breaks ranks with YHWH, but it does at moments (as in the interrogative of v. 14) express a degree of solidarity with the Addressees in the course of YHWH's attempts to bring about a positive response to the calls for repentance. For their part, the Addressees, as represented by the priests and ministers, are almost entirely passive throughout the discourse; they receive commands and verbal action, but do not themselves act. Even in v. 17, where the response of the priests is represented, that response is projected through the voice of the prophet. However, in that projected response the prophet portrays the priests as expressing penitence but also asserting a degree of power by suggesting that their destruction will also have significantly negative consequences for YHWH.

5. Register Analysis of Joel 2:1–17

In this section I will analyze the mode, field, and tenor of Joel 2:1–17 in order to describe as fully as possible the register of the passage. As far as mode is concerned, the passage is clearly cohesive and coherent, and it is tied closely to the first chapter of Joel. As is the case in the first chapter of Joel, this section is in graphic channel in the form of

a primarily written medium, although it also demonstrates some features of a spoken medium (such as virtual process-sharing). The extensive use of metaphor and metonymy binds the various participants into recognizable participant sets and also sub-divides the larger passage into distinct (although still closely related) sub-passages. I have identified six participant sets, including the Addressees, the prophet/YHWH, the cult, the cosmos, the city, and the locusts.

In my analysis of the field I have employed these participant sets as an organizational feature of the text in order to compare and contrast the ways in which these sets are described, particularly with regard to transitivity structure. The Addressees, city, and cosmos in Joel 2:1–17 all play an almost universally passive role, either receiving instructions/commands (the Addressees), or receiving action (the city and cosmos). The cult as a participant set appears to serve a facilitating function that is connected to the commands given to the Addressees. The prophet/YHWH is the speaking voice in the text, and almost every imperative verb consists of a command given by the prophet/YHWH to the Addressees. The locusts are generally the Subjects/Actors of verbal processes, but these processes have a noticeable tendency to be intransitive, which shifts the focus of attention to the Actors and action, over against the recipients of that action.

The temporal Arena in this passage is referentially the same as that of the preceding chapter, but it is described in dramatically different terms. The locust plague, although it occurs in the immediate past (or possibly the present) receives an aspectually incomplete description that shifts the point of view to focus on the internal action of the event. The locative Arena shifts from the broader picture of Judah in ch. 1 to

Zion/Jerusalem, although with a sense of grand consequence provided by both the cosmic imagery and the intimate response related to the Temple. The verbal processes in this section tend strongly toward Material processes, and the few Mental and Verbal processes cluster in the final six verses of the passage, in which the prophet/YHWH speaks directly to the Addressees, who then respond. Finally, I have provided an analysis of the logical relationships in the text, demonstrating that the paratactic clauses tend to bind sub-sections together internally, particularly in the description of the action and the Actors, and that the hypotactic clauses help to bind some sub-sections into larger wholes and often indicate reason or cause.

In the tenor section I have explored the relations among the participants and have examined the ways in which the various participant sets relate to one another. Here I have emphasized the two speaking participant sets, i.e., the Addressees and the prophet/YHWH. As is the case in ch. 1, the latter presents noticeable internal tension, suggesting that the prophetic voice, despite its primary relationship with YHWH and its solidarity with the divine voice, stands at significant moments in a closer relationship with the Addressees. The Addressees are silent in this passage, though in v. 17 the prophetic voice suggests that the priests (on behalf of the Addressees) offer a surprisingly audacious reply to YHWH. The divine voice, of course, dominates in terms of relative power: commanding, instructing, and threatening throughout.

Although it presents several significant differences with respect to particular character and content, Joel 2:1–17 is still decidedly (and quite unsurprisingly) similar in register to Joel 1. For example, cohesive ties create similar, though not identical, participant sets. In addition, transitivity structures suggest similar patterns of activity

and passivity, and parataxis and hypotaxis serve almost identical functions. Finally, the relative power relationships and participant structure presented in Joel 1 are reproduced, and to a degree expanded, in Joel 2:1–17. Thus Joel 2:1–17 is entirely consistent with Joel 1 in linguistic register.

6. The Day of YHWH in Joel 2:1–17

The Day of YHWH performs a fundamentally threatening function in this passage. In the midst of (or immediately following) the locust plague, the Day of YHWH still looms on the horizon, a terrible day that cannot be withstood.⁶⁹ Such is the Day's catastrophic power that the prophet/YHWH employs it to advantage, in concert with the plague, as a means of driving the Addressees to a response. The Addressees, already ravaged by the locusts (which receive a more detailed description in ch. 2), must turn to YHWH. Indeed, the interpersonal structure of the passage, which concentrates almost all of the relational power with the prophet/YHWH, reinforces this necessity. As Wolff notes, the Day of YHWH is an event enacted by the voice of YHWH alone.⁷⁰

Included in this threat is, happily, the possibility of escape. The locative Arena of the passage both narrows the focus of attention to Zion, and especially the Temple in Zion, and widens it to a cosmic level. The Day of YHWH is especially associated with this cosmic frame of reference, and the repentance of the people is especially associated with the Temple. This shifting of settings simultaneously highlights the magnitude of the threat in question and the specific response required to avert that threat. The Day of

⁶⁹ As Allen notes, this involves a reciprocal relationship between the freighted language of the Day of YHWH tradition, and the terror of the locust event, thus mutually reinforcing the danger and fear associated with each. Allen, *Joel*, 74–75.

⁷⁰ Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 47.

YHWH is thereby associated with both YHWH's dramatic intervention in the created order and the need for correct Temple worship.

Yet, the question remains regarding why, exactly, the people are being called to return. The simple fact is that no specific sin is enumerated in the book of Joel. The Addressees are certainly being called to action, and this action feels very much like a type of repentance. The call to turn (v. 12), the invocation of cultic behaviour like fasting and the sacred assembly (vv. 12, 15–17), and the emphasis on the need for an authentic appeal to YHWH (v. 13) all appear to be the types of behaviour one would normally associate with repentance from sin. Consequently, some interpreters have assumed that some type of unknown infraction is a part of the background of the book.⁷¹

This view has been challenged most notably by Crenshaw.⁷² Crenshaw argues that the absence of specific reference to sin should be taken seriously, which leads to significant interpretive tension in the book as a whole. He notes that the picture of God presented in 2:12–14 is incommensurable with the picture of God presented in the preceding portion of the book of Joel.⁷³ YHWH in 1:1—2:11 appears to be an angry, and even capricious God, who sets out to destroy Judah even though there is no sense of what might be the cause or reason for this anger. The description of God in 2:12–14 recalls the language of Exod 32–34 and of Num 14:18—a connection that other interpreters have certainly observed.⁷⁴ Crenshaw suggests that this heavily modified recollection of the Exodus tradition involves an appeal to YHWH's nature that focuses

⁷¹ E.g., House, "Character of God"; Nogalski, "Joel As 'Literary Anchor'," 97.

⁷² Crenshaw, "Who Knows What Yhwh Will Do?"; Crenshaw, "Joel's Silence." See also Linville, "Mourning of the Priests in Joel."

⁷³ Crenshaw, "Who Knows What Yhwh Will Do?," 147.

⁷⁴ Crenshaw, "Who Knows What Yhwh Will Do?," 150–51.

especially on the deity's "compassionate traits" and "divine freedom."⁷⁵ He also notes that here in Joel the threat of being seen as a "byword" is attached to the people, and not (as in Exod 32:12) to YHWH's own reputation.⁷⁶ This creates a picture of God in 2:12–14 that focuses on his freedom and compassion, and appears to suggest the possibility (or perhaps even likelihood) that a turn to God will result in relief from the current disaster.

Linville builds on this characterization of God, as well as on Simkins's arguments regarding the division between Creator and Created in the book of Joel,⁷⁷ in order to argue that the call to ritual response in 2:12–17 is not about repentance from sin, but deliverance from chaos.⁷⁸ The description of the plague and drought of chs. 1–2 paint the picture of "a nightmare of a failed environmental, economic and ritual system."⁷⁹ In this situation the use of lament and a ritual of repentance is a way to affirm the existence of a merciful God, over and above the Addressees' existential reality of "a capricious and violent god."⁸⁰

The core of the tension here, which relates to the nature and function of the Day of YHWH in Joel 2:1–17, is between the power of YHWH and his control over the locusts/army (v. 11) on the one hand, and the fact that deliverance from this powerful God and his destructive force is grounded in his compassion on the other. When this is combined with the lack of specific reference to covenant infraction, the reader is left wondering why YHWH's plague has descended upon Judah if he is compassionate, or

⁷⁵ Crenshaw, "Joel's Silence," 164.

⁷⁶ Crenshaw, "Who Knows What Yhwh Will Do?," 150. See n. 60 above on the ambiguity of the phrase in question.

⁷⁷ Simkins, *Yahweh's Activity*, 30.

⁷⁸ Linville, "Mourning of the Priests in Joel," 101.

⁷⁹ Linville, "Mourning of the Priests in Joel," 110.

⁸⁰ Linville, "Mourning of the Priests in Joel," 105.

how the Addressees can expect his compassionate response to their repentance if the plague is a reality.

In the midst of such a conflict the threat of a coming Day of YHWH, a day more terrible even than the current disaster, increases the tension significantly. If there truly is no sin for which the people must repent, the addition of another threat merely serves to emphasize YHWH's apparently wrathful nature.

However, though Crenshaw counsels us to accept the silence of Joel on this matter,⁸¹ it strikes me that whatever conclusion one might infer from the book of Joel, it must, indeed, be an inference. Whether the people are sinless or sinful, the book provides nothing more than hints and possibilities. Crenshaw does not take seriously enough the allusions to the Deuteronomic threats that have been pointed out by scholars like Bourke, Stuart, and Ahlström.⁸² While I quite agree that these allusions do not constitute evidence of some specific sin, they do provide a suggestive framework which would help readers/hearers of the book to creatively re-interpret the book for later use.

House suggests a connection to the covenant curses of Deut 27–28 and 32, and also suggests that, given its position in the Book of the Twelve (the MT edition at least), Joel follows Hosea's more articulated covenant theology.⁸³ Therefore, it would have been possible for readers/hearers to infer a relationship between the existing state of judgement, and underlying Deuteronomic curses, and especially so if one were to read the Book of the Twelve as a whole.

⁸¹ Crenshaw, "Joel's Silence," 165. Crenshaw goes so far as to end his own essay with a rather abrupt silence.

⁸² Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 26; Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1"; Bourke, "Le Jour De Yahvé Dans Joel, 2"; Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 228. For an extensive comparison between Joel and Exod 32–34, including a strong argument for the covenantal grounding of the book of Joel, see: Leung, "Intertextual Study," 100–34.

⁸³ House, "Character of God," 131. On the relationship between Hosea and Joel see, for example, Nogalski, "Joel as 'Literary Anchor'," 94–104.

Assis argues that the Addressees of Joel's prophecies believed themselves to be abandoned by YHWH in the wake of the destruction of Jerusalem, and have therefore themselves abandoned their sacral relationship with YHWH.⁸⁴ The prophet's goal here in 2:1–17, then, is to enable the people to understand that this relationship has not been severed, that YHWH's power is still operative in the land, and that an opportunity exists to renew their sacral relationship with their God.⁸⁵ The invocation of allusions to the Deuteronomic covenant involves, for Assis, not an indication of currently operative curses, but an indication of the hope for covenant renewal described in Deuteronomy.⁸⁶

Yet, these various proposed inferences remain rather vague. The call to repentance or return in Joel 2:12–17 retains a high degree of flexibility. It comes as a response to plague and drought, which are classic elements of the covenant curses.⁸⁷ This serves to underscore the function of the passage as a whole, and the Day of YHWH within the passage. Joel 2:1–17 provides a picture of destruction and of ritualized repentance that may imply a breach in covenantal relationship. In the midst of the operative curses, the even greater threat of the Day of YHWH is raised. The consequence of inaction is not merely to remain in the current state of destruction (as bad as that would be), but is to court an even greater disaster.

Regardless of whether specific infractions (covenant or otherwise) are in view in Joel 2:1–17, the possibility of a renewed relationship with the deity is certainly in view. As Bourke notes, the voice of YHWH, while terrifying in contexts of betrayal or lack of

⁸⁴ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 125, 41–42. In a similar vein, Ganzel suggests that although “Joel asks the people to return to God (2:12–13) this is not a call of repentance but rather a request to come closer to God through renewed and heightened devotion and to honour him through acts of mourning” (Ganzel, “Shattered Dream,” 20). Ganzel depends, to a degree, on Simkins' arguments regarding honour and shame in the book of Joel. See Simkins, ““Return to Yahweh,”” 41–54.

⁸⁵ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 141.

⁸⁶ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 141–42.

⁸⁷ And to foreign invasion as well, depending on how one interprets 2:1–11.

fidelity, can be a source of life and protection to the people of YHWH. Thus, in Joel 2:1–17, the evocation of the threat of the Day of YHWH is not *only* a threat, but also provides a moment of opportunity. There is a dialogic element to this passage, which I have highlighted above, that is absent in YHWH’s interactions with the nations in Joel 4 (see ch. 6 below).⁸⁸ Because the possibility of response on the part of the priests (on behalf of the people generally) exists, the threat of the Day of YHWH in 2:1 and 11 is not absolute.⁸⁹ It exists precisely to provide an avenue for deliverance. What is more, the prophetic voice also facilitates the possibility of response. Where the voice of the prophet projects the potential or commended response of the priests, that response includes an attempt to leverage YHWH’s own character against the threat of both the current crisis and the coming Day. And so, while the register of Joel 2:1–17 frames the Day of YHWH as a coming moment of terror and destruction, that moment of threat also creates an avenue of response that may just provide an escape and a return to YHWH. However, the possibility of escape for the Addressees does not imply that the right response will forestall the coming of the Day itself.

⁸⁸ Bourke, “Le Jour De Yahvé Dans Joel, 2,” 27.

⁸⁹ Note that I disagree markedly with Redditt’s assessment that Joel represents a group ostracized from the priestly hierarchy (Redditt, “Peripheral Prophecy,” 225). Indeed, I would suggest that the appeal to the priests here in 2:14–17 and the central importance of the Temple mount and YHWH’s presence in 4:17–21 argue forcefully against such a conclusion.

Chapter 5: Joel 2:18—3:5—Register Analysis

1. Introduction

The first two sections of the book of Joel have relatively similar registers. The register of Joel 2:18—3:5 resembles that of Joel 1 and Joel 2:1–17 in some ways, but differs significantly from it in others. In this, the third portion of my register analysis of the book of Joel, I will concentrate on those aspects of register that do not overlap with those of the preceding sections. I will not, for example, reiterate the Medium/Channel analysis, because this aspect of register does not change significantly in 2:18—3:5. The most significant changes have to do with Participant relations and modality, although the Participant sets and the transitivity structure also undergo some degree of change. Despite this observable shift in register, 2:18—3:5 overlaps with the two preceding texts to the extent that all three remain moderately cohesive and typologically similar.

2. Mode

2.1. Textual Cohesion

As was the case in the previous two register analyses, one can identify a variety of cohesive chains in 2:18—3:5 that tie the various Participants in the passage together. These co-referential, co-classificatory, and co-extensive ties create linkages that bind the Participants together into recognizable groups or sets, particularly in the case of two of the Participant sets that have played a major role in the discourse thus far, YHWH/the prophet and the Addressees/people. In addition, these cohesion chains create partially cohesive relationships across Participant sets and also bind this portion of Joel to the two preceding sections of the book.

2.1.1. Co-reference ties

The first referent mentioned in 2:18 is YHWH, and this explicit mention of one of the primary Participants links this section to the one that precedes it. Verses 18–19 make several references to YHWH, both explicitly and by way of 3ms suffixes, and the projecting hypotaxis in the Speaking process of 2:19 (see the field section below) establishes the necessary shift in grammatical person with regard to YHWH. In the rest of the passage, all 1st person referents are co-referential with YHWH. This chain includes the 1cs suffix and 1cs clitic Subject/Actor of 2:19, the 1cs clitic Subject/Actor of the two initial verbs of 2:20, two 1cs clitic Subjects/Actors of 2:25 (“I will restore,” “I sent”), the 1cs suffix of 2:26 (“my people”), the 1cs suffix of 2:27 (“my people”), the 1cs clitic Subject/Actor (“I will pour out”) and the 1cs suffix (“my spirit”) of 3:1, and 3:2. In addition to this extended 1st person co-reference chain (which includes all of the 1st person Participants in this passage), YHWH is also referred to in the 3rd person a number of times. I have already mentioned the first of these (vv. 18–19), but the passage also includes several other instances, such as YHWH as Subject/Actor of לָגַל in 2:21, the 3ms clitic Subject/Actor of הָיָה in 2:23, the 3rd person reference to “your God” in 2:23, the explicit reference to YHWH in 2:26, the following co-referential relative phrase (“who has dealt. . .”), and the three explicit references to YHWH in 3:5. This passage, like Joel 1:1–2:17, thus demonstrates the cross-over of co-reference ties between 1st and 3rd person with respect to YHWH as Participant. This suggests the continuation of the same slightly strained Participant group that includes both YHWH and the prophetic voice that refers to YHWH in the 3rd person.¹

¹ Though it is also possible that the 3rd person references suggest a voice other than the prophets. This would be in keeping with the anonymous introductory voice of 1:1, and would not be particularly surprising here in 2:18–19, given the shift to *wayyiqtol* forms, and the fact that this seems to be an

Beginning with the first mention of the “people” in 2:18, another significant co-reference chain runs through the whole of this passage, this time with a greater degree of uniformity than is present in the previous set. All of the various 2nd person Participants in this passage, with two notable exceptions that I will discuss below, are tied by co-referential relationships to Participants that fall within the scope of the Addressees set. These include the 2mp suffixes of 2:19–20, which are co-referential with the “people” of 2:18. Another co-reference chain involving the Addressees set begins in 2:23, with “children of Zion,” and continues from there, including the 2mp suffixes of 2:23,² the 2mp suffix of 2:25, three 2mp clitic Subjects/Actors (“you will eat,” “you will be satisfied,” “you will rejoice”) of 2:26, and the 2mp suffixes of 2:26. Verse 26 also closes with another reference to the “people,” here incorporated into the “children of Zion” co-reference chain, and also makes a simultaneous connection to the earlier co-reference chain of 2:18–20. This co-reference chain continues by means of the 2mp clitic Subject/Actor “you will know” and the 2mp suffix “your God” (2:27), and the string of 2mp suffixes in 3:1, which closes out the co-referential ties for the Addressee Participant set.³ This set thus represents a much more unified group than the YHWH/prophet set and even the Addressees set from the previous two sections of Joel.

Although the co-referential ties just examined represent the bulk of the co-reference in this passage, a few isolated cases of co-reference help to add cohesion,

important structural break in the book (though this final point is, of course, rather heavily disputed). The intrusion of an additional, anonymous, narrating voice is a feature of other OT/HB books. See, e.g., the well-known interplay between the narrating voice and the voice of Qoheleth in Ecclesiastes (Beldman, “Framed!”, 139–64). However, it is also entirely plausible that the voice here is the prophetic voice standing in distinction from the voice of YHWH. This seems the more likely option in this case, given that no 3rd person reference is made to the prophet, and that the prophetic voice is an immediately discourse-accessible Participant.

² Crenshaw, *Joel*, 154

³ Note that I deal with *בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וְלֹא אֶשְׂרֶ-יְקָרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה* and *פְּלִיטָה* below in the co-extension section.

particularly over the shorter portions of the discourse. An important isolated co-reference tie occurs in 2:19, with the mention of “the nations.” It is co-referential with the preceding mention of the “nations” in 2:17, which ties these two sections of Joel together quite explicitly. In 2:19 the 3ms object suffix of וּשְׂבַעְתֶּם is co-referential with הַדֶּגֶן וְהַתִּירוֹשׁ וְהַיִּצְהָר (“grain, wine, and oil”), which not only ties these individual Participants to the following clause, but also binds them together into a single unit.⁴ The reference to “the Northerner,” (2:20) is followed by a string of 3ms suffixes and the 3ms clitic Subject/Actor of גַּל, all of which are co-referential with the Northerner.⁵ This creates a tight and clearly-bounded set of references to the Northerner. Although scholars disagree as to the relationship between “the Northerner” and the “locusts” (and related co-referential terms) in 2:18–27, it is plausible, and perhaps likely, that these Participants are co-referential with one another.⁶ Finally, there is the reference to the various types of locust in 2:25 ties 2:18—3:5 to 1:4.

2.1.2. Co-classification ties

Verses 2:18—3:5 include several isolated co-classification ties. The first co-classification chain occurs in 2:19. It creates another cohesive tie back to Joel 1 and also increases the existing cohesion of the present passage. The reference to grain, wine, and oil is co-classificatory with both the previous mention of these staples in 1:11–12, and the following mention of them in 2:24. Another instance of co-classification is the

⁴ Assis notes that the loss and restitution of grain, wine, and oil (along with various other elements of the restoration pictured here in Joel 2:18—3:5) are related to the Deuteronomic covenant, especially in Deut 11 (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 175, 95). See also Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 90; and Allen, *Joel*, 87, 93n.29.

⁵ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 68.

⁶ For arguments in favour of co-referentiality based on the structure of the passage, see Van Leeuwen, “The ‘Northern One’,” 88, 95; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 68. For dissenting views, see Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 62; Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 258–59.

mention of pastures/trees, fruit, the fig tree, and the vine, which links 2:22 to 1:11–12. In verses 21 and 22 the repetition of negated jussives creates a co-classification tie between “the land” and “the beasts of the field” (both are instructed not to fear).⁷ In concert with the various co-extensive ties noted below, this especially significant tie creates a cohesive chain between two Participant sets, the land and the Addressees. Finally, an instance of verbal ellipsis ties the first and second clauses of 3:3 together by co-classification.

2.1.3. Co-extension ties

The many co-extensive ties in this passage contribute to the cohesion of 2:18—3:5 and also link it with 1:1–2:17. The first set of co-extensive ties that are of particular interest are those that create a relationship between the Addressees set and the various references to the land. As I have already observed above, the land constitutes its own participant set in both of the preceding passages and, to an extent, in the current passage as well. In Joel 2:18—3:5 the land is not only recognizable as a Participant set but is in fact also joined to the Addressees Participant set by means of a series of co-extensive ties.

The first of these is found in 2:18, where “land” and “people” appear to stand in a poetically parallel relationship, which creates a synonymous tie. Verses 21 and 22 contain several notable ties. The personification of the “land” here (it is instructed not to be afraid) suggests that it is related metaphorically to the “people,” thus creating a tie to the Addressees set. Also, the “beasts of the field” Participant is tied to the “land” by means of meronymy (beasts as occupants of the land). Note also that the rejuvenation of

⁷ Although the imperative form here is in the masculine plural, the Subject is generally considered to be the feminine plural *בְּהֵמוֹת* (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 153; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 55n. f).

various elements of the land is given as the reason why the beasts should not fear. All of these elements are thus also tied to the “land” by means of meronymy (part/whole). The continued mention of agricultural elements, all bearing this same meronymic relationship to the “land,” continues on into vv. 23–25. Here the rejuvenation of these elements is tied more explicitly to the Addressees (here the “children of Zion”) in the sense that it benefits both the Addressees and the “beasts.” Note the mention of “Israel” in v. 27, which may refer either to the political entity or the geographical region. In either case, particularly in light of its close proximity to the repeated phrase “my people shall never again be put to shame,” the mention of “Israel” creates a tie between the “land” and the “people.” If “Israel” refers to the political entity, then the relationship would be one of meronymy (nation/citizenry); and if it refers to a geographical region the meronymy would be of a slightly different type (land/inhabitants). Finally, the mention of Mt. Zion and Jerusalem stands in hyponymic relationship with the “children of Zion,” binding together the latter part of the passage with the former, and increasing the cohesion between the Addressees and the place in which they live.

Co-extensive ties also occur within specific Participant sets. The references to the various recipients of dreams and visions in 3:1 all constitute instances of co-extension. In this case, the various Participants are related to the Addressees by means of the possessive suffixes (“your sons and your daughters,” etc.). These instances constitute examples of hyponymy, since the specified Participants represent sub-groups within the larger social structure of the Addressees.⁸

⁸ As Crenshaw observes, this constitutes “a vast merism” (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 165). So also Assis, *Book of Joel*, 202.

In addition to the creation of ties between two distinct Participant sets, the co-extensive ties in 2:18—3:5 also reinforce the cohesion of the book of Joel as a whole.⁹ Note the mention of rain (in various iterations) in 2:23,¹⁰ which stands in antonymy with the dry land imagery of 1:11–12. In addition, the statement “you will eat in plenty” (2:26) serves as a co-extensive tie (antonymy) with the mention of the locusts as eaters in both the immediately preceding context (2:25) and the preceding sections of Joel (1:4–7).¹¹ A similar contrast is also created between the new state of abundant food/drink and the total lack of agricultural produce described in 1:10–12. This contrastive relationship also draws in the positive picture of the land and agricultural produce found in 2:22–25, and the drought and death depicted in 1:15–20. Note also the relationship between 1:10 and 2:21. In the former the land mourns (אבל), and in the latter it is called to be joyful and glad (גיל/שמח). The two verses thus relate to one another antonymically. The mourning has been reversed. Co-extensive ties also bind Joel 3 to the first portion of Joel 2, as one can see from the repetition of terms and the

⁹ This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of the various cohesive ties between 2:18—3:5 and the rest of Joel. For more on this see Assis, *Book of Joel*, 169–70; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 156–58; Allen, *Joel*, 91; Van Leeuwen, “The ‘Northern One’,” 86; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 71.

¹⁰ The reference to *הַמּוֹרָה לְצִדְקָה* in 2:23 is notoriously difficult to understand. Crenshaw reads it as a reference to rain and suggests that *לְצִדְקָה* is related to an underlying philosophical sense of an ordered or well-structured universe. Crenshaw, *Joel*, 154–55. The OG (and the Syriac, perhaps following the OG, or its *Vorlage*) reads here τὰ βρώματα (food), which may represent a variant Hebrew text (so Crenshaw, *Joel*, 155). Wolff follows OG here (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 55n.i); as does Stuart (*Hosea–Jonah*, 256 n.25c); and Prinsloo (*Theology of Joel*, 66n.18). The Vulgate appears to read the same word here as MT, and translates it as *doctorem justitiae* (teacher of righteousness; so also Tg and Symmachus). Ahlstrom also accepts this reading of the Hebrew, suggesting that this is a reference to a Davidic leader (*Joel and the Temple Cult*, 98–110). So also Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 63. Cf. Roth, “Teacher of Righteousness.” As Crenshaw notes, the move from the restoration of the land to a Davidic leader is something of a non-sequitur. However, the use of *הַמּוֹרָה* as a reference to “rain” is also rather odd, and may only be found in one other passage (Ps 84:7). On this question see also: Assis, *Book of Joel*, 186–87; Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 85–86 n.c; Allen, *Joel*, 92 n.26, 93 n.29; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 55 n.j; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 66 n.17. Finley also suggests the possibility of metathesis here, with *מרוה* (saturated) becoming *מורה*. This may clear up the difficulty to some degree, but it is not attested in any extant MS (Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 68).

¹¹ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 158.

overlap of semantic range. Note the repetition of *הַשָּׁד* (2:2, 3:4), *אֵשׁ* (2:5, 3:3), *אָרֶץ* (2:10, 3:3), *שָׁמַיִם* (2:10, 3:3), *שָׁמַשׁ* (2:10, 3:4), and *יָרַח* (2:10, 3:4). A degree of semantic overlap also occurs between *עֲנָן* (2:2) and *עָשָׂן* (3:3), and of course between *דָּגָן* (1:10) and *בָּר* (2:24).¹² These various co-extensive ties create a significant degree of cohesion between both 2:18—3:5 and 1:1—20, and between 2:18—3:5 and 2:1—17.

2.2. Mode of Discourse: Conclusions

As is the case in 1:1—20 and 2:17, the cohesion chains, and especially the co-reference chains, help to identify relatively cohesive sets of Participants in 2:18—3:5. The primary Participant set consists of YHWH and the prophetic voice, and it displays the same tension that obtains in the rest of Joel.¹³ The second major Participant set is that of the Addressees, and it seems a great deal more unified than it does in the preceding sections, owing to a relative lack of disjunction between the direct addressees and the people as a whole. The other two Participant sets are the land, including the various agricultural and locative terms, and what one might call the antagonist set, which includes the Northerner and the locusts, both of which receive only brief attention.

In addition to these strongly cohesive units, 2:18—3:5 also includes weaker cohesive ties, especially by means of co-classification and co-extension, between the Addressees and the land. These connections occur at a variety of points, giving the sense that the fortunes of the one are intimately linked to the fortunes of the other. These ties are not formed by overlapping chains across all three spectra (reference, class, extension), because co-referential ties are essentially absent. However, the relationships that are formed are certainly significant.

¹² Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 259

¹³ For more on this see the tenor section below.

Finally, the passage as a whole is bound by cohesive ties to both Joel 1 and the first part of Joel 2. Indeed, these section-crossing cohesive ties appear to bind 2:18–27 rather closely with ch. 1, and 3:1–5 with 2:1–17.¹⁴ This, in conjunction with the many cohesive ties that bind these three portions of Joel into their own recognizable units, and the cohesive ties that bind ch. 1 with 2:1–17, creates a text that shows a significant degree of cohesion both within and across its various sub-sections.

3. Field

3.1. Participants

As I mentioned in the mode section, in Joel 2:18—3:5 the Participants can be grouped into relatively well defined sets, as is the case in the preceding two sections. As has been my practice thus far, I will group the various Participants in this section into these sets and will draw out the various syntactic and semantic functions of these Participants. This arrangement will significantly inform my discussions of both transitivity structure and Participant relationships.

The first Participant set that I will examine includes YHWH, the speaking voice, and various suffixes that are co-referential with YHWH, the speaking voice, or both (in those cases where they overlap). This represents a departure in organization from my first examination of the Addressees. This organizational shift conforms to a similar shift in Joel 2:18—3:5, in which the YHWH set becomes increasingly dominant, even more dominant than in the preceding two sections. This set runs throughout the passage, making an appearance in almost every verse. The predominant syntactical/semantic function of this Participant set is that of Subject/Actor (15 occurrences). It also functions as speaker in all the occurrences of modal verbs (jussive/imperative).

¹⁴ Deist, “Parallels and Reinterpretation,” 64.

The second Participant set is the Addressees. This set includes explicit references to YHWH's "people" in 2:18–19 (twice: Object/Goal in both instances). It shows up in 2:19 in the form of one 2mp clitic Subject/Goal ("you will be satisfied") and a 2mp suffix (Object/Goal). Another 2mp suffix from this set occurs in 2:20 (Adjunct/Circumstantial). After a brief gap, the set appears again in 2:23, which opens with a reference to the children of Zion as the Subject/Addressee of two imperative verbs. Following this are two instances of the PP לְכֶם (Adjunct/Circumstantial), both of which belong to this set. In 2:25 the Addressees again occur twice (Adjunct/Circumstantial in both instances). Verses 26–27 make abundant reference to the Addressees, as the clitic Subject/Actor of "you will eat," as the clitic Subject/Goal of "you will be satisfied," as the clitic Subject/Actor of "you will rejoice," as the Subject/Sensor of "my people will never be put to shame," as the clitic Subject/Sensor of "you will know," and as the Subject/Goal of the second occurrence of "my people will never be put to shame." Several distinct Participants are added to the set in 3:1, along with the various social sub-sets who will prophesy and see dreams/visions (all Subjects/Actors or Sensors).¹⁵ Finally, three significant Participants may also belong to this Participant set (as sub-sets of it, at least). They show up in 3:5, which mentions כָּל יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה (Subject/Goal of יִמְלֹט), פְּלִיטָה (Subject/Identified of תְּהִיָּה), and אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה קָרָא (Identifier in non-verbal Relational clause). The precise relationship between

¹⁵ Included among these is the phrase כָּל-בֶּשֶׂר ("all flesh"). Although this phrase very commonly refers to all of humanity in the OT/HB (see, for example, its frequent use in Gen 6–9, as well as in Lev 17:14; Isa 66:16; Jer 32:27, 45:5; Ezek 21:4, 9, 10; Zech 2:17; Ps 65:3; 145:21; Job 21:10; 34:15), most commentators agree that here in Joel 3:1 its scope is limited to the faithful of Judah. See Crenshaw, *Joel*, 165; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 202; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 67; Bewer, *Joel*, 125; Plöger, *Theocracy and Eschatology*, 103; Redditt, "The Book of Joel and Peripheral Prophecy," 236. Barton, who sees Joel 3:1–4:21 as a mishmash of inauthentic oracles by a later hand (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 92), suggests that if 3:1 is indeed secondary, then the phrase "all flesh" is meant in its traditional, universal sense of "all of humanity." This, he suggests, is an instance of a later hand universalizing Joel's prophecies (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 96).

the Addressees in general and these three Participants is not entirely clear. Some type of limitation is certainly at play here, for only those called by YHWH or those who escape the Day of YHWH are included here. However, it is not clear whether or not all of the Addressees will be included among the called-ones/escapees. In any case, at least some of the Addressees apparently fall within the (possibly) more limited sub-set implied in these final three Participants.

The third Participant set in this section is the land. It occurs in explicit references to ארץ, which functions as Object/Goal in 2:19, and as Subject/Addressee in 2:21. In addition, this set includes the various Participants that are co-extensive with the “land.” As I mentioned in the Mode section above, these include Participants like the “grain,” “wine,” and “oil” of 2:19 (all Object/Goal), and the “beasts of the field” (Subject/Addressee) of 2:22. The latter verse also includes various agricultural references, including the “pastures of the wilderness” (Subject/Goal), the tree (Subject/Actor), and the fig tree and vine (Subject/Actor). More agricultural references follow in 2:24, including the “threshing floor” (Subject/Goal), the “grain” (Object/Circumstance), the “vats” (Subject/Goal), and the “wine and oil” (Object/Circumstance). The passage also includes various instances of “Zion” (once as modifier in NP “children of Zion” in 2:23, and once as Adjunct/Circumstantial in 3:5) and “Jerusalem” (Adjunct/Circumstantial, 3:5).¹⁶ Although Participant sets related to location/environment function principally as Circumstantials in the preceding two portions of Joel, here they are frequently grammatical Subjects, and at times even Actors in transitive clauses. This shift from locative Circumstantial to more active Participant

¹⁶ I have excluded references to the “desert and desolate land” in v. 20 here because these do not refer to the land itself, but to space that stands outside of the land. See the Location section below.

roles stems from the co-extensive relationship established between this Participant set and the Addressees Participant set. The two sets, although quite distinct referentially, are even more closely related here than in the preceding texts.

Another Participant set related to location is the Cosmos set of 3:3–5. This includes the “heaven and earth” of 3:3 (Adjunct/Circumstantial), the “sun” of 3:4 (Subject/Goal), and the “moon” of 3:4 (Subject/Goal, ellipsis). Like the Cosmos set in 2:1–17, this set is limited to a relatively short stretch of discourse.

The other Participants in this passage do not fall into well-defined sets. Although I will not belabour the point by listing every isolated Participant, two of them warrant mention. The first of these is the Participant הַצְפוֹנִי (the Northerner), which occurs seven times in 2:20. The Northerner functions as the Object/Goal of רחק and גֵּדָח, modifies four NPs, and is the Subject/Actor of גָּדַל. Another significant group of Participants, which are related to the Northerner (as antagonists of YHWH’s people), are the various locusts mentioned in 2:25 (which are the Subjects/Actors of אָכַל).¹⁷

The Participant sets mentioned here are decidedly similar to those of Joel 1 and 2:1–17, although there are points of difference. YHWH/the prophet dominates here; and it is also a more unified set than it was in the preceding sections. The Addressees set also has a more uniform composition, although there is still the suggestion of a sub-set

¹⁷ Crenshaw regards the Northerner and the locusts as referentially identical (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 151). For an excellent critique of reading “the Northerner” as a reference to a human army, see Assis, *Book of Joel*, 176–81. Assis also suggests that the inclusion of this reference to the locusts as “the Northerner” helps to soften the ground for Joel’s coming shift away from a concern with the locusts and the agricultural situation and toward actual human enemies and the political situation (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 199). As Prinsloo notes, although this appears to be a reference to the locust plague, the use of “the Northerner” includes distinctly “mythological connotations” (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 74). Similarly, Ahlstrom suggests that the reference to “the Northerner” attaches mythic symbolism about a great and terrible army to the locust plague (Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult*, 34). Müller suggests that the reference implies personified eschatological evil (Müller, *Gottes Zukunft*, 164; similarly, Keller, *Joël*, 137).

within it. The land and the cosmos also reappear here, and the land shows a significant degree of affinity with the Addressees set. Among the variety of more isolated Participants, I gave particular emphasis to the Northerner and the locusts. As is the case in the preceding sections, each set also has a significant degree of internal consistency with respect to syntactic and semantic functions, although of course this consistency is by no means uniform.

3.2. Arena

3.2.1. Location

Location in Joel 2:18—3:5 is tied rather strongly to Zion/Jerusalem, although the text refers to additional areas/locations in the context of exclusion. This notion of exclusion begins in 2:20 with the mention of “the Northerner.” Although the passage neither explicitly identifies this Participant nor associates it with a particular location, the nominalized directional adjective used to identify this enemy suggests both an outside place of threat, and thus also an internal, positive place. These distinctions are rather amorphous. The text will soon specifically define the internal space, but the external space retains its amorphousness, which suggests a place other than here that stands in opposition to the locations described in vv. 22–27 and 3:5. This place is also described in terms of its relative location (it is to the North). In addition to the under-defined, clearly external, origin of the Northerner, the passage also provides several locations into which the Northerner is “removed.” These include the eastern sea (i.e., the Dead Sea) and the western sea (i.e., the Mediterranean), and also a place referred to as אֶרֶץ צִיָּה וְשִׁמְמָה (“a land of drought and devastation”). These two opposing directions, along with the descriptive phrase, which Dahood suggests is a generic reference to the South, evoke a picture of someone standing in Judah (or perhaps specifically in Zion),

and seeing the dispersion of the terrible enemy from the North into the East, West, and South.¹⁸ Hence the Northerner will be anywhere but “here.” This use of language emphasizes internal location, the “here”; and presents everything external to “here” as an amorphous whole where the enemy is destroyed.

On the other hand, the location relative to the speaking voice, what one might call the “internal” location, is relatively well defined. Not only are its boundaries partially established by the description of the Northerner and its fate, but the mention of Zion (2:22), Israel (2:27), and Zion and Jerusalem (3:5) also establishes a sense of specific location. The passage also includes relatively general descriptions of this location, which appear to function primarily connotatively. These include positive descriptions of field and pasture (2:22), trees and vines (2:22), and the threshing floor and vats (2:24). Because they are tied through co-extension to ch. 1, these descriptions also receive positive reinforcement through the contrast with the strongly negative language of the preceding section.¹⁹ The result is a picture of a prosperous Israel, and especially a prosperous Zion/Jerusalem, surrounded by an unclear and ill-defined, but certainly negative, external space.

In addition to providing this internal/external opposition, the passage also briefly describes a third “cosmic” space (3:3–4). Here references to the “heavens,” the “earth,” the “sun,” and the “moon,” frame the arrival of the Day of YHWH as an event occurring

¹⁸ Dahood, “Four Cardinal Points”; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 151; Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*, 170; Bewer, *Joel*, 112.

¹⁹ Crenshaw observes that the language of restoration is not merely related to the earlier descriptions of the devastation of the locust plague and drought, but is also reminiscent of Gen 1:11 and the description of Eden. The devastated land is not merely restored, it has become Edenic (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 153–54).

on a stage the size of the cosmos itself.²⁰ Like the inclusion of the cosmos in the field of discourse in 2:1–17, the references to the cosmos here underline the magnitude of the events described.²¹ In the same vein, the reference to the Northerner may function as more than a passing reference to some foe from the geographical North. As many scholars have noted, the Northerner may here refer to an enemy of mythic scale, associated with either the invasion of Judah from the north by terrible armies (e.g., Assyria and Babylon),²² or with the seat of foreign gods that was thought to be situated on a great mountain (or perhaps with both).²³ This language is consistent with the cosmic language of 3:3–4. Both describe an enemy of cosmic proportions that matches an event occurring on the cosmic stage. The creation of a positive internal space is not simply a matter of provincial isolation from an external threat, for it provides safety even in the tumult of an event that occurs on a cosmic scale: the Day of YHWH.

3.2.2. Time

As with the other passages in Joel, this passage defies any attempt to establish anything beyond a relative sense of its temporal setting. However, some temporal markers suggest that 2:18–27 function as a kind of “present” for this section, and

²⁰ Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 261. This *pace* Crenshaw, who suggests that “heavens” and “earth” function as a merism for “everywhere” (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 167).

²¹ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 205

²² Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*, 170.

²³ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 151; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 177; Childs, “Enemy from the North”; Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 89; Allen, *Joel*, 88. Note that Allen also suggests that “Northerner” may refer to the direction from which the locust plague arrived, from the subjective perspective of an inhabitant of Judah. Wolff sees here his apocalyptic army from 2:1–17 (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 62). Van Leeuwen refers to the north as “the area of disaster ‘par excellence.’” He suggests that, as YHWH’s destructive tool, the locust plague is thus the embodiment of disaster and destruction. He also notes that this terrible, destructive force is sent by YHWH who resides in Zion, which is the Israelite equivalent to the seat of the foreign gods in the North (Van Leeuwen, “The ‘Northern One,’” 96–97). Keller also sees the reference to the North as an allusion to the mountain of the gods, and he also suggests that in Joel this is juxtaposed with the enthronement of YHWH in Zion at the theorized New Year’s festival (Keller, *Joël*, 136). Bewer sees the reference to the Northerner as a late eschatological expression, and thus an interpolation (Bewer, *Joel*, 111).

possibly for the book as a whole. As is the case in the two preceding sections, the Day of YHWH appears to inhabit a future time here.

The two *wayyiqtol* verb forms that open this portion of Joel are the first of only seven occurrences of this form in the book as a whole (2:18, 2x; 2:19, 2x; 2:23; 4:3, 2x).²⁴ Although not all scholars agree on the nature of this form, I agree with Cook that it indicates both past tense and aspectual completeness.²⁵ Any sense of sequence here is a product of the semantic relationship between the closing verses of 2:1–17 and these initial statements of 2:18–19. The latter indicate that the prayer/demand of 2:17 has been fulfilled in 2:18–19. In the movement from 2:17 to 2:18, the tension and uncertainty, and “the hope that [God] might act” is resolved.²⁶ This implies that 2:18ff. follows 2:17 temporally. Given my preceding arguments that ch. 1 and the first part of ch. 2 represent the same temporal sphere, it follows that the events represented by 1:1–2:17 stand in the past from the perspective of 2:18—3:5, based at least in part upon these opening verses.²⁷

²⁴ Some translations and commentators have read these *wayyiqtol*s as other forms. Theodotion, for example, finds jussives in v. 18 (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 54n.a).

²⁵ Cook, “Semantics of Verbal Pragmatics.”

²⁶ LaRocca-Pitts, “The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy,” 293. However, I disagree with LaRocca-Pitts’s assessment that “Joel and his people” exist at the moment between 2:17 and 2:18. See below.

²⁷ For a discussion of various options with regard to the temporal relationship between 2:18 (and following) and 2:17 (and the preceding text) see Assis, *Book of Joel*, 163–64. Assis himself believes that vv. 16–17 are a suggested framework for how the priests might address YHWH, and vv. 18–27 a description of how YHWH might consequently respond. Crenshaw suggests that the *wayyiqtol* forms link 2:18ff. to the preceding verses, referring to them as “narrative verbs” (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 147). For Barton the use of these verbal forms presents a significant interpretive problem, given his view that all of the preceding material (1:2–2:17) refers to a future event (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 87). Of course, this problem dissolves if the locust plague refers to a past event. Sweeney accepts that the use of these *wayyiqtol* forms implies that YHWH has “already given his answer,” but goes on to note that these are instances of the so-called prophetic perfect, and consequently still refer to a future time-frame (Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 169). This may be possible, but there is no particular reason to complicate the picture being presented by the introduction of a questionable concept like the “prophetic perfect,” when these verb-forms may simply be performing their standard function of past-time reference. Nogalski suggests that either a future or past time-reference is syntactically possible, and that the literary context of the book suggests an “open-ended call to repentance” like that found in Hosea. He consequently argues

The internal temporal structure of this passage is comprised of four movements. The first is the temporal arena; it is marked by the just-noted *wayyiqtol*s that set the initial actions/emotions of YHWH in the past. The second are the promises spoken by YHWH, the first of which is the participial phrase *וְהִיְצִיָּהָר שֶׁלֶחַ לְכֶם אֶת־הַדָּגָן וְהַתִּירֹשׁ וְהַיַּיִן* (“[I am] sending to you grain, wine, and oil. . . .” (2:19). This initial participle is aspectually progressive, suggesting that the giving of grain, wine, and oil is either in progress or will occur in the near future.²⁸ The participial phrase is followed by a weQTL verb, which indicates aspectual completeness and has the additional modal sense of result (or possibly purpose, “I am sending . . . so that you will be satisfied).²⁹ This usage is consistent with a present/progressive sense for the participial clause, and it indicates that the giving of grain, wine, and oil is ongoing (from the perspective of the 1cs voice) and that the satisfaction of the recipients lies in the future. This pattern of an imperfective verb followed by a perfective verb is also found in vv. 20–22. It creates an alternation between a statement of intention or an instruction and the result or justification of that intention or instruction. Although none of these usages creates strict temporal markers,

that “Joel 2:18 portrays a future reality contingent on Israel’s repentance” (Nogalski, *Hosea–Jonah*, 235). In the first place, Nogalski’s claim that both past and future time-reference are syntactically possible is a questionable point. Secondly, the literary context does not, itself, preclude the possibility of a reference here to a discourse-past moment in which the people of YHWH did turn (or return) to their God, and that he, in turn, responded to them. It does not follow from such a conclusion that this return to YHWH was perfect, nor that the promised deliverance of chs. 3–4 was entirely actualized (as those do appear to be references to future events related to the Day of YHWH). Allen comes to a simpler and preferable conclusion, suggesting that vv. 18–19 imply to the reader the success of the appeal in v. 17 (Allen, *Joel*, 86). That said, Allen’s further conclusion that the crisis of 1:2–2:17 has been averted is, I contend, only correct in a certain sense. The locust plague(s) has not been averted (though it has been removed), but the threat of destruction on the Day of YHWH has, indeed, been removed. For Wolff, of course, the “decisive turn of affairs in the book of Joel comes with 2:18” (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 57).

²⁸ On the aspectual function of BH participles, see Cook and Holmstedt, *Student Grammar*, 68; BHRG, §20.3; Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*, 267–268. The possibility that a gnomic meaning is intended (a possibility for verbal participles) is rather unlikely, given both the nature of the action (the giving of a gift), and the aspectually complete resultative phrase that follows (*וְיִשְׂבְּעֻתֶם אֹתוֹ*, “and you will be satiated [by it”).

²⁹ On possible senses of what Cook refers to as “irrealis *qatal*” (including many instances of weQTL) see Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*, 249–56.

the overall result of the pattern suggests that a change of circumstance has just occurred, or is occurring, or is about to occur. In light of the progressive aspect of the initial participial clause, the temporal picture here is of a set of events that is either in the process of happening or on the cusp of happening.³⁰

In v. 23 the Addressees receive instructions, which are grounded in a set of actions and presented with aspectually complete verbs (QTL and *wayyiqtol*). The use of another *wayyiqtol* form here also fixes the temporal location of these justifying actions in the past, indicating that the hopeful commands to “be glad” and “rejoice” are based upon actions that YHWH has already taken. One can reasonably assume that this past-tense grounding carries over into the various other QTL forms that occur in vv. 24–27.³¹ This assumption appears to be born out by the fact that the text includes QTL forms that describe the destruction caused by the locusts, which is a past event from the perspective of this passage.³²

A significant temporal shift occurs in 3:1, with the use of temporal deixis in the phrase וְהָיָה אַחֲרֵי־כֵן (“and it will be after this that. . .”).³³ This simple phrase casts the

³⁰ Assis suggests that these events have not happened, and are not yet happening. Rather, they constitute the first real instance of foretelling in the book. “Until this point [i.e., the shift from 2:17 to 2:18], Joel was not prophesying; the descriptions of problems throughout the first part draw the listeners closer to the act of supplication. Here, prophecy begins for the future, which includes agricultural and political salvation” (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 164).

³¹ This *contra* Allen, who sees in the QTL forms of this section the so-called prophetic perfect (Allen, *Joel*, 90).

³² Allen suggests that 2:18–19 imply that the disaster of 1:2—2:17 was averted, but this strikes me as less likely than that the disaster has occurred but has now ended and that restoration has begun (Allen, *Joel*, 86).

³³ Note that de Vries has made an extended case for the use of phrases like this one (indeed, including this one) as redactional cues indicating that material has been added to an existing oracle. That may or may not be the case here, but if one considers the book from a synchronic perspective the question remains as to how this deictic phrase affects one’s understanding of the relative time of the various events represented in the book (De Vries, *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*; De Vries, *From Old Revelation to New*). So also Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 93–94. Crenshaw points out that the use of this temporal phrase in 3:1 suggests that, from a discourse-internal perspective, 3:1–5 cannot be seen as being isolated from the preceding text (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 164). So also Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 91; and Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 80. This *contra* Assis, who sees a sharp break between 2:27 and 3:1–5, including the latter, with 4:1–

following verses, i.e., 3:1b–5, into the indeterminate future.³⁴ In v. 2 this future-oriented temporal deixis continues by means of the phrase *בַּיָּמִים הַהֵמָּה* (“in those days”). This phrase, which appears 16 times in the OT/HB, is used to refer to a past event only once (Neh 13:15). This is also the only instance in which it appears in a QTL clause.

The use of temporal deixis in 3:1–2 serves to reinforce the sense that 2:18–3:1a (or at least 2:18–19) functions as the relative present for the 1cs voice in the book. That is to say, from the discourse-internal perspective of the speaking voice, the events that precede 2:18–19 (i.e., the locust plague) lie in the past; and the events that follow 2:18–19 (or possibly 2:18–3:1a; i.e., YHWH’s deliverance and restoration of the land and what follows in ch. 4) lie in the indeterminate future. Note also that the reference to the Day of YHWH in 3:4 falls in the future, as it does in both of the preceding references to the Day. What is more, the reference appears to follow not only the events of 1:1–2:17 but even the restoration of 2:18–27 and the pouring out of YHWH’s spirit in 3:1–3.³⁵ Furthermore, as Crenshaw suggests, the events of 3:1–5 appear to occur at a time later than what is described in 2:18–27.³⁶ This indicates that, in temporal terms at least, Joel 1–3 presents a consistent picture of the Day as a future event. The Day has not yet occurred from the discourse-internal perspective of the speaking voice.

3.3. Verbal Processes and Transitivity Structure

As is the case for the preceding passages, Verbal processes and transitivity structure tend to match well with the Participant sets defined above. YHWH/the prophet

17 based upon what he sees as a similarity between 2:27 and 4:17, i.e., that each closes off its respective section (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 198).

³⁴ Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 65. Note that for Wolff this shift to oracles concerning the future includes chs. 3 and 4.

³⁵ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 206–07; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 82.

³⁶ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 171. So also Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, 71.

tends to function as Subject/Actor, and the Addressees as Subject/Goal or Object/Goal, with the various other Participants playing supporting roles. Also notable are the relationships between the types of processes and the Participants with which they are associated. The picture presented here shows the dominant Participant set, YHWH/the prophet, directing the action and the responses of the surrounding Participants.

As is the case in the preceding sections, the bulk of the verbal processes in 2:18—3:5 are Material processes (roughly 64%). The YHWH/prophet Participant set fills the role of Subject/Actor in 15 of 26 clauses in which a single Participant is both Subject and Actor. The other Participants that function as both Subject and Actor are the Northerner (2:20), the locusts (2:25), and the tree and fig-tree/vine (2:22). Although these three instances involve Participants other than YHWH as Subject/Actor, YHWH remains the primary mover in these cases as well. In the case of the Northerner, the phrase *כִּי הַגִּדִיל לַעֲשׂוֹת* (“for he [the Northerner] has done great things”) is used ironically,³⁷ following as it does a description of YHWH’s destruction of the Northerner, and followed as it is by a parallel phrase in which YHWH functions as Subject/Actor—indicating that it is, in fact, YHWH who has acted greatly, and not the Northerner.³⁸ The text explicitly identifies the locusts of 2:25 as the possession of YHWH, which means that they function simply as proxies of YHWH, doing his bidding, even though they do function as Subject/Actor. As for the tree and the fig-tree/vine, the poetic structure of vv. 21–22 associates their action with the work of YHWH. Note the parallel repetition of

³⁷ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 180; Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*, 171; Allen, *Joel*, 89; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 20–21. Note that Stuart here reads YHWH as the Subject of the verb, and not the Northerner. Although this is syntactically possible, one wonders why there is no shift from clitic to fully articulated Subject here, as there is in the following verse. That the Northerner is the antecedent for the clitic Subject of *גָּדַל* is more likely (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 256n.g–g).

³⁸ Barton suggests deleting the repetition of the phrase in v. 21d, but this is unnecessary (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 85 n.b).

the phrases אֶל-תִּירְאוּ/אֶל-תִּירָאֵי at the head of each verse, indicating a close relationship between them. Note also that v. 21 closes with “for YHWH has done great things,” and that v. 22 closes with the action of the trees/vine. This juxtaposition implies that the fruitfulness of the flora of the land is the result of YHWH’s effective action. In short, despite the variety of Participants that fill the role of Subject/Actor in the passage, it is clearly YHWH who initiates all of the positive action.

The Participants that fill both the Object and Goal roles in Material clauses are principally inanimate Participants from the land set, but the passage also has several animate participants. The Participants from every set apart from YHWH (with the possible exception of 2:26, where the name of YHWH is Object/Goal) function at some point as Object/Goal. This underscores YHWH’s role as the principal Actor in this passage and indicates that all Participant sets are acted upon by YHWH.

Most of the instances in which a Participant functions as both Subject and Goal fall under the rubric of Mental processes, which I will discuss below. However, in a few instances Participants in Material clauses function as Subject/Goal. For example, in 2:20 the phrases בְּאִשׁוֹ (“his stench”) and צַחֲנָתוֹ (“his smell”) are each grammatical Subjects of their respective intransitive clauses, as are הַתְּגִנּוֹת (“the threshing floors”) and הַיִּקְבִּים (“the wine vats”) of 2:24. In addition, the 2mp clitic Subject of וְאָכַלְתֶּם (“you will eat”) is also the Goal of the intransitive clause 2:26.

The bulk of the processes involving non-divine animates as Subject are Mental processes. To begin with, the two 2mp Participants functioning as both Subject and Sensor both occur in Mental process clauses (2:26–27). Other Subject/Sensor Participants include YHWH (2:18), and “your sons,” “your daughters,” and “your elders” (all in 3:1). In addition, every imperative/jussive clause in this passage is a Mental

process (2:21, 23); and the corresponding Subjects/Addressees include the “land,” the “beasts of the field,” the children of Zion, and a 3mp clitic co-referential with the children of Zion. In two instances Participants in Mental process clauses function as Subject and Goal, namely, the 2mp clitic Subject of וְשִׂבְעֵתֶם (2:19) and the Participant “my people” in 2:27, both of which are Subjects of stative clauses. These Mental processes appear to cluster in 2:21–23 (“fear not,” “rejoice,” “be glad”), 2:26–27 (“be ashamed,” “know”), and 3:1 (“dream,” “see”).

The passage has only one Speaking process. It occurs early on, in 2:19, immediately following the scene-setting *wayyiqtol* clauses of 2:18–19. The Subject/Speaker here is, quite unsurprisingly, YHWH/the prophet, which serves to underscore the dominance of this Participant set in this passage.

This examination of the process types and transitivity structure of Joel 2:18—3:5 indicates some clear patterns. As is the case in the preceding sections, Material processes predominate, but Mental process clauses, which tend to occur in clusters, also play an important role. The principal Actor in this passage is YHWH; YHWH/the prophet is also the only Speaker. The members of the Addressees set function principally in the roles of Subject/Addressee, Subject/Sensor, Object/Goal, and Subject/Goal, and they occur, as one might expect, in imperative/jussive, stative, or intransitive clauses. The other Participant sets occur in a variety of process types and clause types, but tend to be dependent upon YHWH as the primary cause or ground of action. In the overall picture, then, YHWH acts and creates action, and the Addressees receive that action and respond to it, particularly in terms of cognitive and emotional responses (Mental processes).

3.4. Logical Relations

3.4.1. Taxis

Parataxis in 2:18—3:5 provides a sense of logical sequentiality. The passage includes a good deal of paratactic extension and a smaller, but still significant, number of instances of paratactic enhancement.

Paratactic extension establishes logical (and at times temporal) sequentiality in Joel 2:18—3:5. The passage contains a string of paratactic clauses, all marked by ׀. In 2:19 ׀ ties the clause “and you will be satisfied in it,” to the preceding clause, and sets up a relationship of cause and consequence. In the clause that immediately follows, “and I will no more make. . .,” the paratactic relationship does not clearly indicate whether this clause is a consequence of the preceding clause, or a parallel result of YHWH’s deliverance, but it certainly provides a sense of logical conjoinedness.

Likewise, the paratactic connection to the following clause in 2:20, וְאֶת־הַצָּפוֹנִי אֲרַחֵיק מֵעַלְיֵיכֶם (“and the Northerner I will cause to be removed away from you”) establishes that the removal of the Northerner is logically connected to the fact that the Addressees will be satisfied and will no longer be a reproach. Similar instances of paratactic extension in the rest of 2:20 connect the general removal of the Northerner to the specific actions and consequences of that removal.

Several more instances of paratactic extension occur in 2:23, beginning with the imperative clauses “and you children of Zion rejoice and be glad in YHWH your God,” which stand as the logical consequence of the two negative commands (“do not fear”) of vv. 21–22.

Verses 26–27 contain a series of four paratactic clauses beginning with the enhancing parataxis of וְלֹא־יִבְשׁוּ עַמִּי לְעוֹלָם (“and my people will not be shamed

forevermore”). This clause, although independent and thus paratactic (note that it is marked by ׀), presents the result of the preceding statements of the verse. The next two clauses are connected to one another by extending parataxis, and both are also connected to the preceding clause by extending hypotaxis. By this means the passage presents two logically connected character traits of YHWH, and these are connected to the preceding discourse as additional important information regarding YHWH’s deliverance of and care for his people. Finally, the resultative clause of v. 26 shows up again in v. 27, ending that section of the chapter with a repeated promise of security.

Chapter 3 includes two instances of enhancing parataxis: “and it will be after this” and “and your sons and daughters will prophesy” (3:1). The former indicates a sequential temporal relationship, thus tying ch. 3 formally to the preceding section in ch. 2. The latter instance facilitates a relationship of consequence or result, since the prophecy of the sons and daughters is tied to the pouring out of YHWH’s spirit.

The hypotactic clauses in 2:18—3:5 are significantly different from those of the preceding two sections of Joel. Like 1:1—2:17, this passage contains instances of enhancing hypotaxis, principally marked by כִּי, but it also has an abundance of elaborating hypotaxis, marked by the relative particle אֲשֶׁר. The instances of enhancing hypotaxis in 2:18—3:5 primarily provide evidence or grounds for YHWH’s positive characteristics; the instances of elaborating hypotaxis provide descriptions of events and Participants.

The first instance of hypotaxis does not fall into either of these categories, but is in fact an isolated instance of projecting hypotaxis. This is, of course, the beginning of the extended quotation in 2:19. This projection extends to at least the end of v. 20. The

imperative clauses of vv. 21–22 appear to mark the end of the projected quotation, as the shift in Addressee and the 3rd person reference to YHWH (v. 21) both suggest.

Verses 20–23 include several instances of enhancing hypotaxis. Note the parallel “he has done great things” of v. 20 and “YHWH has done great things” of v. 21. The former is used almost ironically, the hypotaxis indicating that the cause of the Northerner’s utter downfall is its powerful action.³⁹ That is to say, in its power it has overstepped its bounds.⁴⁰ The latter designates the powerful action of YHWH as the cause or basis for the Addressees’ hope. Three enhancing hypotactic clauses follow in vv. 22–23 (“for the pastures of the land have sprouted,” “for the trees have given their fruit,” and “for he has given to you rain. . .”). These present additional and more specific evidence for confidence in, and praise of, YHWH.⁴¹ Thus hope in YHWH is grounded in his powerful action, and his powerful action is evidenced in the renewal of the land.

Two more instances of enhancing hypotaxis occur in ch. 3. In 3:2 the particle ׀ again marks a hypotactic clause, indicating the addition of “manservant” and “maidservant” to the class of individuals upon whom YHWH’s spirit will be poured. In 3:5 the hypotactic clause is marked by ׀, but in this case the relationship is one of consequence or result. That is, those who call upon YHWH will be saved, and *therefore* escapees will be found in Zion/Jerusalem.⁴²

Elaborating hypotaxis predominates in 2:25—3:5. In a significant shift from the preceding two sections, not only are there many more instances of elaborating hypotaxis

³⁹ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 68.

⁴⁰ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 152.

⁴¹ Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*, 171; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 68–69.

⁴² See BHRG §40.9.2.

(which has been almost absent to this point), but these instances of elaboration are also marked by the relative particle אֲשֶׁר , which occurs only one time in Joel 1:1—2:17 (1:1). Hence phrases such as “the years which the locusts . . . have eaten” (2:25), “my great army which I sent among you” (2:26), and “you will know that I am in the midst of Israel” (2:27). Such hypotactic phrases continue in ch. 3: “and it will be that all who call on the name of YHWH” (3:5), “just as YHWH has said” (3:5), and “and among the survivors are those whom YHWH has called” (3:5). The previous two sections of Joel use non-verbal Relational clauses to provide descriptions or background information about a Participant. However, in the closing verses of ch. 2 and throughout ch. 3 the instances of elaborating hypotaxis perform this function.

3.4.2. Relational Clauses

In light of what I have pointed out with respect to hypotactic clauses in 1:1—2:17, it should come as no surprise that relatively few Relational clauses occur in 2:18—3:5. Although Relational clauses perform the bulk of the descriptive work in the first two parts of Joel, here that work is principally accomplished by means of elaborating hypotaxis in the form of relative clauses. Joel 2:18—3:5 does, however, contain a few Relational clauses. For example, 2:27 has two Relational clauses in which the 1cs voice functions as the identified Participant. This “I” is tied to the identifier “in the midst of Israel,” which places the speaking voice in direct relationship with both the land and the Addressees, and to the identifier “YHWH your God,” which provides a precise identity for the speaking voice. This serves to reinforce YHWH as principle Participant, and the relationship between YHWH and the Addressees as a fundamental component of the discourse.

The equative verbs that open vv. 1 and 5 in ch. 2 create an intriguing relationship between the clitic Subject/Identifier of the verb, and the phrases that function as Object/Identifier. In v. 1 the equative relationship is one of temporal deixis. The “it” (Subject/Identified) is equated with “after this. . .” (Object/Identifier), suggesting that an indeterminate temporal “it” will follow what has been described in the preceding verses. In v. 5 the repetition of the equative verb in the same form ties this verse to the indeterminate temporal deixis of v. 1, thereby establishing that the relationship between Identified and Identifier here will occur in this indeterminate future. Although the Relational clause of v. 1 is temporal, in v. 5 the relationship establishes *what* will occur at that indeterminate time. The Identified “it” is equated with the Identifier “all who call on the name of YHWH will be saved,” thereby establishing the fundamental character of this future event. The third instance of the equative verb in ch. 3 marks a locative Relational clause. Here the Identified פְּלִיטָה (“those who escape”) is set in relationship with בְּהַר־צִיּוֹן וּבִירוּשָׁלַם (“on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem”), indicating where the salvation referred to in the preceding clause will occur.

3.5. Field of Discourse: Conclusions

In this section I have identified the various logical relations that characterize Joel 2:18—3:5. I have also pointed out the significant degree of variance between the patterns in this passage and those of the preceding two passages. As is the case in the preceding passages, extension is the most common type of parataxis, but 2:18—3:5 has a much greater degree of hypotactic elaboration. This is marked in particular by the relative particle. Not unrelated to this explosion of hypotactic elaboration is the relative absence of Relational clauses, and especially of non-verbal Relational clauses. To sum up, the methods for creating various logical relationships, as well, to a certain degree, as

the types of logical relationships themselves, differ to a degree in Joel 2:18—3:5 from those of the preceding discourse.

4. Tenor

4.1. Participant Relations

The Participant sets that I have identified above correspond, more or less, to the sets I have identified in the previous sections of Joel, and this correspondence gives evidence of the significant degree of continuity that exists among the first three portions of the book. This continuity shows itself in the relative relationships between the various Participant sets. However, some important changes occur in 2:18—3:5. To begin with, changes in patterns of modality adjust the internal dynamics of the relative power relationship between the YHWH/prophet set and the Addressees set, even though the relationship itself continues to extend from more powerful to less powerful Participants. Secondly, the tensions within specific Participant sets begin to emerge. Finally, shifts related to the presence of interrogatives and process sharing now help to clarify the internal dynamics of the central Participant relationship.

I have already mentioned a number of ways in which Joel 2:18—3:5 differs from the preceding sections of the book, but perhaps the most significant shift concerns the use of volitives. Although imperative and jussive forms make up roughly 22% of the verbs of 2:1–17 and 30% of the verbs in ch. 1, 2:18—3:5 contains only four imperative verbs (only two distinct lexemes) and three jussives (only two distinct lexemes); these seven items make up approximately 15% of the finite verbs in the passage. What is more, not only does the number of volitives change, but the quality or nature of the volitives changes as well. In the preceding two sections of Joel most of the imperative and jussive forms serve to call the Addressees to specific actions, with which the Addressees are

expected to comply.⁴³ Here in 2:18—3:5 six of the seven volitives are Mental processes, all of which function to encourage and give hope to the Addressees. Note the repetition of the lexemes גיל and שמחה, both of which have strongly positive connotations. These lexemes occur together very frequently throughout the OT/HB (24 times), particularly in the Psalter (12 times); and they are universally positive in connotation.⁴⁴ The repetition of the lexeme ראה, also creates a sense of hope, for both instances (vv. 21–22) of this common, negative lexeme are negated. Finally, the occurrence of the jussive form of עלה indicates the desire of the speaking voice (YHWH) to see the destruction of the Northerner (“may his stench rise”), which from the perspective of the Addressees, is a desirable outcome. Thus the desires of YHWH, who is the primary agent in this passage, mirror the desires of the Addressees, thereby underscoring the positive disposition of YHWH to the Addressees.

The dominance of YHWH/the prophet in this passage is evident both from his role as Speaker in these volitive clauses and from the fact that this Participant set is co-referential with every instance of the 1st person in the passage (eight 1cs verbs, two 1cs pronouns, five 1cs pronominal suffixes).⁴⁵ In vv. 26–27 YHWH is co-referential with the 1cs possessive suffixes, thus making explicit YHWH’s possession of the Addressees.

However, YHWH is also referred to by means of the 3rd person on 20 occasions.⁴⁶ These include seven 3ms verbs (2:18 x2; 2:19 x2; 2:21; 2:23 x2; 3:5), three

⁴³ See the Participant Relations section of the preceding two chapters.

⁴⁴ In Prov 24:17 both verbs are negated, indicating an occasion in which joy and gladness are inappropriate. Here the negation underscores the generally positive connotations of the lexemes, making clear that the benefits or hope in question apply particularly to the Subject of the verbs.

⁴⁵ Assis correctly notes the significant amount of 1st person speech by YHWH, beginning in 2:18. However, the shift from the tension between the prophetic voice and YHWH’s voice in the preceding sections of Joel is not so significant as Assis believes (Assis, *Book of Joel*, 161).

⁴⁶ Wolff takes these changes in voice as an indication of shifts in form, and he analyzes this subsection of Joel into six separate parts. This is an excellent example of the application of classic form-critical assumptions to a prophetic text. See Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 58–59.

3ms pronominal suffixes (2:18–19), and 10 occurrences of the proper name YHWH (2:18; 2:19; 2:21; 2:23; 2:26; 2:27, where YHWH explicitly refers to himself; 3:4, where YHWH functions as a modifier; and 3:5 x3).⁴⁷ These 3rd person references to YHWH maintain the internal tension of the YHWH/prophet Participant set, which has characterized the book since the first chapter. However, the sense of internal disagreement that was noted in the first part of ch. 2 is not present here, although tension is present due to the 1st person/3rd person split. The references in question occur in clusters where the prophetic voice comes to the fore as a distinct Participant. The first of these, 2:18–19, constitutes the opening description of YHWH’s renewed jealousy for his people and the beginning of the extended quotation that runs until v. 20. The second cluster, in vv. 21–23, describes YHWH’s saving activity. Here the prophetic voice has apparently moved to the fore again; but despite being voiced by the prophet this portion of the passage coheres with the preceding section (the repetition of גַּדַּל). The instances of tension in vv. 26–27, however, appear to be self-referential, and so the 1st person voice is maintained. Finally, 3:5 contains four 3rd person references to YHWH.⁴⁸ Here again, the prophetic voice has apparently reappeared as an independent Participant. The final verse of ch. 3 appears to represent the closure of the passage, given the introductory deictic phrase of 4:1 (see below). Just as the prophet has recounted the change of heart that led to YHWH’s deliverance in 2:18, so YHWH in vv. 19–20 assures the Addressees of their deliverance. The prophet then reiterates this assurance in vv. 21–23. Finally, in 3:5, the prophet recounts the salvation YHWH has promised in his

⁴⁷ Crenshaw notes that the use of the 3rd person for YHWH in 2:26 is somewhat out of step with that portion of the passage (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 159).

⁴⁸ Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*, 173.

own voice in 2:19–20 and 2:24—3:4.⁴⁹ Although the two Participants in the YHWH/prophet set do come “out of phase” at several points, the message remains fundamentally the same.⁵⁰

The Addressees set is represented by 2mp in 10 of 11 occurrences of 2mp verbs and suffixes, and the Addressees are also referred to in the 3rd person on several occasions. One of these is 2:18–19, which includes two references to עַמּוֹ (“his people”). Here the 3rd person reference is not surprising since, as I have already indicated, these verses perform an introductory function; and so the voice of YHWH has not yet begun to speak. Two more 3rd person references occur in vv. 26–27, and here YHWH is indeed speaking in the 1st person. Like the self-referential use of “YHWH” in these verses, the 3rd person references to אֲנִי (“my people”) function rhetorically here, perhaps to suggest a “true” subset within the Addressees who might be identified as “my people,” or perhaps to indicate that the Addressees are, themselves, “my people.” The other instances in which members of the Addressees set are referred to in the 3rd person occur in 3:1–2. Here the references indicate specific sub-sets of the Addressees set: the sons and daughters, the elderly, young men, and male and female servants. In the case of all but the last two of these Participants, the relationship to the Addressees is made explicit by means of a 2mp possessive suffix. The 3rd person in these cases therefore simply functions to specify these sub-sets of the greater Addressees set, which is still referred to in the 2nd person.

⁴⁹ Note that 2:24 may belong to the stretch of discourse spoken by the prophet in vv. 21–23, and that 3:4 may, due to the 3rd person reference to YHWH (the Day of YHWH), belong with the final segment spoken by the prophet in 3:5. Neither of these adjustments alters the basic point being made here. Cf. van Van Leeuwen’s similar division of verses between speaking voices (Van Leeuwen, “The ‘Northern One’,” 86).

⁵⁰ In addition, as Müller notes, YHWH and the prophet tend to blend together to a remarkable degree in Joel, in part because of the general absence of the person of Joel (Müller, *Gottes Zukunft*, 190).

The other major Participant sets are represented, just as one might expect, in terms of grammatical person. The land, the Northerner, and the locusts are all referred to in the 3rd person; and grammatical number is simply assigned as appropriate in each case (generally these Participants are singular). As far as the Participant structure is concerned, these various 3rd person Participants support the primary relational interaction between YHWH/prophet and the Addressees. For example, Participants in the land set receive encouragement and redemptive action from YHWH (2:21–23), or perform action themselves that indicates their redemption by YHWH (2:24–25). YHWH’s actions express his character in relation to both the land set and, due to the metaphorical relationship between them (see the Mode section above), to the Addressees set. The Northerner and the locusts perform a similar supportive function, albeit in opposite ways.

4.2. Polarity, Interrogatives, and Process Sharing

The interrogatives and virtual process sharing of the first part of Joel 2 are entirely absent in 2:18—3:5. The passage contains interrogative particles, and the Addressees set does not speak, even in virtual terms. It also includes five instances of negation, two of which employ לֹא, and three of which use אֵל. The two instances of לֹא occur in the opening clauses of vv. 21 and 22, in which YHWH instructs the land and the beasts of the field not to fear. The three instances of אֵל (vv. 19, 26, and 27) all occur in declarative clauses in which YHWH states that his people will not henceforth be “made a reproach” or be “put to shame”. The negated jussives function as encouragement for the Addressees set and are consistent with the kinder and gentler tone of the relationship between YHWH and the Addressees in this passage. The negated declaratives likewise demonstrate YHWH’s intention for the future, and they emphasize that the

discipline/punishment warned of and recounted in the preceding two parts of Joel have now passed and no longer loom over the Addressees. These instances of negative polarity therefore serve both as reminders of the destruction and warnings of the preceding two sections and as an indication of a positive relationship for the future. YHWH is thus depicted as both destroyer and saviour.

4.3. Tenor of Discourse: Conclusions

The participant relations in this third part of Joel resemble in many respects those of the preceding passages, but they also depart from them significantly at times. The tension within the YHWH/prophet set has dissipated to a great degree by 2:18—3:5, and the intermediary role of the prophet that figures in the preceding section is basically absent here. The internal tension of the Addressees set is also absent in 2:18—3:5. Yet YHWH/the prophet remains the primary Participant set, controlling the action, maintaining the 1st person voice, and functioning as Speaker in the several instances of volative clauses. But these commands tend to be hopeful and positive, and they emphasize the thoughts and feelings of the Addressees. The use of polarity in the passage stresses the primacy and power of YHWH/the prophet and provides hope and encouragement to the Addressees. At the same time, it serves as a reminder of the descriptions of YHWH's judgment and destruction in the previous passages. The primary relationship in this text is, therefore, between YHWH/prophet and the Addressees. The other sets perform supportive roles, and the locus of power within that primary relationship still lies with YHWH/the prophet.

5. Register Analysis of Joel 2:18—3:5

Joel 2:18—3:5, like 1:1–20 and 2:1–17, is characterized by a variety of cohesive ties, similarity of ideational content, and overlap in interpersonal structure.⁵¹ However, its structure also departs somewhat from that of the other two passages. The greatest degree of similarity is in the category of mode. As is the case in the rest of the book, Joel 2:18—3:5 is generally cohesive, with co-reference, co-classification, and co-extension ties binding the various Participants together into identifiable sets, and also creating important relationships among these sets. The YHWH/prophet set and the Addressees set continue in this passage, thereby creating macro-cohesive ties to the rest of the book. The land set also continues, and it is tied to the Addressees set by means of co-extension. I have also demonstrated that important cohesive ties exist between 2:18—3:5 and the two preceding sections of Joel, and that ch. 1 seems to be tied particularly to 2:18–27 and 2:1–17 to 3:1–5.

In the field section I have identified the various members of each Participant set and their respective grammatical and semantic functions. The locative arena in this passage involves a distinction between a positive internal space, specified as Zion/Jerusalem, and a relatively amorphous negative external space. A third space, the cosmos, frames the Day of YHWH as an event that will occur on an enormous scale, despite being intimately related to what occurs in the small, positive internal space of Zion/Jerusalem. I have also suggested, in the Arena section, that 2:19b–20 (extending perhaps to v. 27?) represents the relative present for the 1cs voice of the book of Joel,

⁵¹ A great deal of research has been done noting the various relationships between the various sections of Joel. See, e.g.: Marcus, “Nonrecurring Doublets in the Book of Joel”; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 24; Deist, “Parallels and Reinterpretation,” 64, 70–73; Leung, “Intertextual Study,” 86, 89; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 169–70. See also, of course, applicable sections in the technical commentaries.

with the locust plague standing in the past, and the references to the Day of YHWH, including chs. 3–4 and portions of chs. 1–2, standing in the relative future.

My examination of transitivity structure has demonstrated that YHWH is the principal Actor in this passage, since the Addressees mostly play the roles of Subject/Addressee and Subject/Sensor. The Addressees also function as Subject/Sensor/Addressee in the majority of the Mental process clauses in this passage. The other Participants all fill a variety of roles, but in those cases where one of the Participants functions as Actor, that Participant frequently serves as a proxy for YHWH, thereby intensifying the role of YHWH as principal Actor.

The patterns of parataxis and hypotaxis in 2:18—3:5 are similar to those of preceding passages, but with some notable differences. As before, the paratactic clauses are primarily “extending,” and serve to create a sense of logical sequence. Some examples of enhancing parataxis also occur, particularly in ch. 3, which represents something of a departure from the preceding sections of Joel. Enhancing hypotaxis marked by **כִּי** occurs frequently throughout, as it does in the preceding sections. However, the frequent use of the relative particle **אֲשֶׁר**, in ch. 3 to mark hypotactic elaboration represents a significant departure from the preceding chapters, which contain only a single instance of the relative particle. I have also pointed out that in 2:18—3:5 non-verbal Relational clauses, as tools for providing extended description, appear to have been almost entirely replaced by this hypotactic elaboration. Finally, I have indicated the limited number of Relational clauses, most of which involve the explicit use of the equative verb, and specific examples of Relational clauses that establish temporal relationships and help clarify the relationship between the subsections 2:18–27 and 3:1–5.

The Participant relations that I have explored in the Tenor section also show a partial similarity to those of the preceding sections of Joel, but with some notable differences. Among the differences is the significant reduction in the number of volitive clauses, particularly in comparison to ch. 1. The shift in the connotative nature of the volitive lexemes is also a significant departure. The primary and most powerful Participant set in 2:18—3:5 is once again YHWH/the prophet. This set still demonstrates a certain degree of internal tension, since the prophet occasionally refers to YHWH in the 3rd person. However, that tension is significantly more muted here than in the two preceding sections, and the intermediary role that manifests itself in 2:1–17 is nowhere to be found in 2:18—3:5. The Addressees set, similarly, is much more uniform in this passage; and although specific sub-sets are identified (especially in ch. 3), no relational tension exists between these and the broader set or other sub-sets. Also of great significance is the general removal of tension between YHWH and the Addressees. Although the Addressees remain in a secondary power role, and although YHWH is still dominant (indeed, perhaps even more dominant), he does not utter threats, warnings, or calls to repentance. Instead, YHWH speaks encouragingly and hopefully to the Addressees.

The register of Joel 2:18—3:5 is similar to those of Joel 1:1–20 and Joel 2:1–17 in many ways, but it also differs noticeably from them. The similarities include extensive cohesive ties, the basic transitivity structure, the carry-over of several Participant sets, the relative consistency of both locative and temporal arenas, and the distribution of power between the central Participant sets, namely, YHWH and the Addressees. Important differences include a greater degree of uniformity within both the YHWH/prophet set and the Addressees set, a significantly reduced role for subsidiary

Participant sets, a reduction in the number of and a shift in the quality of volitive clauses, and the complete absence of tension between the two primary Participant sets. In light of these similarities and differences, one can reasonably conclude that, although Joel 2:18—3:5 belongs to the same genre as Joel 1:1–20 and Joel 2:1–17, it represents a different register. One might classify them both as “prophetic literature” but differentiate between them as to the kinds of prophetic literature they represent.

6. The Day of YHWH

The Day of YHWH in ch. 3 performs a dramatically different function than it does in chs. 1–2, but it does not appear to be dramatically different in nature or scope. Although I have identified it as “threatening” in 1:1–20 and 2:1–17, here it is explicitly tied to an event of deliverance that includes (at least some of) the Addressees. The character of the Day is also similar, as the cohesive ties in the mode section suggest, but the relationship between the Day and the Addressees has shifted as dramatically, and indeed in precisely the same way, as the relationship between YHWH and the Addressees. This is no coincidence.

Although the Day of YHWH no longer functions as a threat in 2:18—3:5, the nature of the Day itself does not appear to be dramatically different.⁵² It remains an event of cosmic scale that will take place in the indefinite future. Similarly, the language of destruction and theophany that characterizes the earlier instances of the Day (especially in 2:1) is present here in 3:4.⁵³ Although one cannot be certain, the text

⁵² This, *contra* Keller, who sees in the Day of 3:4 a radical departure from chs. 1–2, and thus an indication that 3:1–5 does not belong in the same unit as 2:18–27 (Keller, *Joël*, 141).

⁵³ On theophanic language in 3:1–5, especially in connection to the plague narratives of Exodus, see Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*, 173. See also Allen, *Joel*, 97, 100–01; and Keller, *Joël*, 143. Prinsloo sees significant overlap in themes and terminology especially between the Day of YHWH in 2:1–11 and 3:4, but notes the significant difference in the function of the theme (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 83).

appears to give no indication that this Day is referentially distinct from the Day of 1:15, 2:1, or 2:11.

The shift in the nature of the Day of YHWH in ch. 3 is therefore related to the shift in relationship between YHWH and the Addressees. Referentially, the Day remains the same: it is temporally near, destructive, and cosmic in scope. However, the subjective experience promised to the Addressees in Joel 3 is dramatically different than that of chs. 1–2. For those who call on the name of YHWH, this is not a day that should be feared but a day of promised salvation.⁵⁴ However, as Bewer notes, by implication this suggests that the Day remains a day of terror for all those who are not truly God-fearing.⁵⁵ The Day is still a time of disaster and destruction, and only from within the small and well-defined internal space of Jerusalem/Zion can it be viewed positively.⁵⁶ Thus Joel 3:4 stands as the response to the rhetorical “Who can endure it?” of 2:11.⁵⁷ The Day of YHWH *can* be endured, but only by those who are devoted to YHWH and saved by YHWH.⁵⁸ The shift in register from 2:1–17 to 2:18—3:5, especially with regard to tenor, creates a concomitant shift in the function of the mention of the Day of YHWH. It no longer functions as a threat for the purpose of bringing about desirable behaviour. It is rather a promise to those whom YHWH calls, and who in turn call upon YHWH.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Allen sees this as the activation of an ancient element in the Day of YHWH theme, which predated Amos’s understanding of the Day as a time of judgment (Allen, *Joel*, 100).

⁵⁵ Bewer, *Joel*, 124.

⁵⁶ It does not follow from this that, as Prinsloo suggests, the day functions ambivalently here in 3:4. Certainly destruction remains as an element of the Day, but in terms of its function to the Addressees of the discourse, it is a positive event, giving hope of salvation. Cf. Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 84.

⁵⁷ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 76.

⁵⁸ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 169; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 209; Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 68.

⁵⁹ As Keller notes, 3:5 is framed by the word קרא (Keller, *Joël*, 143).

Chapter 6: Joel 4:1–21—Register Analysis

1. Introduction

The fourth and final section of the book of Joel shares much of the subject matter of preceding sections, but presents several points of variation in terms of register. There are similar Participants in this chapter, but the set groupings are somewhat different (particularly with reference to the Addressees of the discourse). Other elements of the field, such as the function of taxis and Relational clauses, are generally similar to the preceding three portions of the book. The tenor of the text is the most notably different, in particular the Participant relations of the passage. Not only are there points of variation between this chapter and the preceding sections of Joel, but there are also points of minor variation within ch. 4 itself. There are three distinct sub-sections (vv. 1–8, 9–16, and 17–21), that I will identify by noting shifts in the field and the tenor of discourse.¹ That said, cohesive ties do bind all three of these sub-sections together, suggesting that ch. 4 is an identifiable unit in which the sub-sections serve the greater function of the whole.

¹ These divisions are not universally accepted. Assis, for example, suggests the final unit comprises vv. 18–21 (Assis, *Joel*, 245). See also: Crenshaw, *Joel*, 194. It has been frequently suggested that vv. 4–8 is an interpolation (Wolff, *Joel*, 74–75; Bewer, *Joel*, 130). This may well be the case, but if so I suggest that the editor in question has done fine work, and these verses fit well into the passage as a whole, and the first sub-section particularly. On this question see Crenshaw, *Joel*, 179. Stuart defends vv. 4–8 as original (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 265). Prinsloo also sees an integral relationship between vv. 1–3 and 4–8 (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 95). For an extended defence of the unity of vv. 1–8 and the originality of vv. 4–8, see Finley, *Joel*, 92–93. For my purposes these sub-section divisions are heuristically valuable as much as anything. I argue here for the coherence of the entirety of 4:1–21 (within, of course, the coherence of the entirety of the book of Joel). There are some aspects of this division of sub-sections that will help in my analysis here, as will be evident below. However, there are also aspects of the following analysis, particularly the examination of Relational clauses below, that suggest a degree of legitimacy for these sub-section divisions.

2. Mode

2.1. Textual Cohesion

Cohesive ties in Joel 4 bind the chapter together, creating chains across three sub-sections of the chapter. Ties also bind those sub-sections internally, particularly by means of co-extension. This passage is also tied to the preceding sections of the book of Joel throughout, by means of all three types of cohesive tie. As with the rest of the book, cohesion ties also help to create identifiable Participant sets, though points of tension remain within these sets.

2.1.1. Co-reference ties

Chapter 4 opens with a temporally deictic phrase, that creates a co-reference tie to the temporal circumstances of the preceding chapter. This links what follows in ch. 4 to the temporal situation already established, including a co-referential tie to the Day of YHWH mentioned in 3:4.² Consequently, the phrase “in which I will restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem” (4:1) is also co-referential to the temporal circumstances of the preceding chapter.³ The mention of “Jerusalem” also continues the locative circumstances established in ch. 3, and maintains the co-reference chain that includes “Jerusalem” and “Zion.”

The 1cs clitic Actor of 1:1 is co-referential with YHWH in 3:3, and ties ch. 4 with a co-reference chain that runs throughout the entire book. This co-reference chain runs through the entirety of ch. 4, instantiated most frequently as 1cs clitic Actor or 1cs

² For more on this see the field section below.

³ This *contra* Barton, who sees at most a loose, thematic relationship between chs. 3 and 4, and suggests there is no point in exploring how the two events are related to one another (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 99). Similarly, Bauer sees v. 1 as an editorial insertion (Bewer, *Joel*, 127). Sweeney sees this as an indication of both syntactical and logical connection to the preceding chapter. He suggests that what is recounted in ch. 4 is a “result or consequence” of the salvation of Judah recounted in ch. 3. As will become clear, I see the relationship in slightly different terms (Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 176).

suffix (vv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 17, 21).⁴ There are two instances in which YHWH is mentioned in the 2nd person (v. 11), and two instances of 3rd person co-reference (vv. 8, 16).⁵ YHWH also appears to function as the referent of at least some instances of the speaking voice in the string of imperatives in vv. 9–16. Here, however, there are both 2nd and 3rd person references to YHWH, which indicates that the tension observed in previous sections between the prophetic voice and the voice of YHWH is present here in ch. 4 as well.

A non-YHWH speaking voice (or set of voices), which may be co-referential with Joel the prophet, is clearly identifiable in vv. 9–11, where an unnamed set of Addressees (possibly including Joel?) is instructed (presumably by YHWH) to “proclaim this to the nations.” I will discuss this further below, but this appears to be an instruction given to some set of heralds whose precise identity is a mystery. The declarative phrases of v. 16, in which YHWH is a 3rd person referent, is most likely spoken by the prophet alone. It is also clear, however, that the referent of the speaking voice in v. 12, in which the speaking voice says *שָׁם אָשִׁיב לְשֹׁפֵט* (there I will sit to judge), can hardly be the prophet, and must be a reference to YHWH. Therefore, there is a significant but not total degree of conflation of YHWH and the prophet as referents in this portion of Joel. This feature is entirely consistent with the rest of the book. There is also an unidentified set of Participants in vv. 9–11 which performs a task similar to the prophet’s, but may or may not include the prophet.

⁴ Crenshaw also notes the heavy reference to YHWH, especially in vv. 1–3, and sees this as a focus in ch. 4 on YHWH’s direct concern for his people (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 172–73).

⁵ Note that this does not include the reference to the Day of YHWH in v. 14, nor to the identifying clause “I am YHWH” in v. 17, as in both of those cases “YHWH” is a modifier and not a referent.

In v. 2 we are introduced to כָּל הַגּוֹיִם (all the nations).⁶ This is a new referent in ch. 4, and the first instance of a co-reference chain that runs throughout the chapter. The nations are referred to in the 3rd person plural in the opening verses of the chapter (vv. 2, 3). There is then a shift in vv. 9–16 in which the nations are referred to in the 2nd and 3rd person plural, as the Addressees of several of the imperative verbs (vv. 9, 10, 11). Likely the phrase הַמּוֹנִים הַמּוֹנִים (v. 14) is also co-referential with the nations.⁷

A new co-reference chain begins in v. 4 with the rhetorical question מִה־אַתֶּם לִי מִה־אַתֶּם לִי (“who are you to me, Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia?”). This identifies Tyre, Sidon, and the regions of Philistia as referents. This chain continues with 2mp references to these nations in vv. 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Specific reference to these three nations disappears from the text thereafter, which reinforces the division of three sub-sections within this chapter.

A chain of co-reference begins in v. 2 with the mention of “my people.” This Participant is co-referential with “my possession” in v. 2, “my people” in v. 3, and the 3mp suffixes and clitic Actors in vv. 6–8. References to בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם (people of Judah and Jerusalem, or alternately simply the people of Judah, vv. 6, 8, and 19), and the 3mp suffixes of vv. 7, 8, 19, and 21, are also co-referential with “my people.” There is a significant break in this chain in vv. 9–15, with no instance of co-reference until v. 16, where there are two instances of co-reference, “his people” and “the children of Israel.”⁸ Finally, in v. 17 there is a reference to an unspecified 2mp Participant (you will know), which must be a part of this co-reference chain as well, given that it is followed by the

⁶ Barton suggests that this phrase is simply a generic way of referring to the Gentiles (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 99; so also Assis, *Joel*, 216).

⁷ Unless this is interpreted as the sound being made by the nations (i.e., “tumult, tumult,” instead of “multitudes, multitudes”).

⁸ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 194.

identification of YHWH as “your God,” and that the 2mp suffix in that case can hardly refer to anyone but the children/people of Israel. Additionally the 2mp Subject/Sensor of v. 17 follows a specific reference to “my people” and “the children of Israel.”

There are several locative terms used that are associated with the “people” but are not themselves co-referential with “people of Judah” or “my people.” These include “Judah,” “Jerusalem,” and “Zion.”⁹ There are six uses of the lexeme יהודה in ch. 4 (vv. 1, 6, 8, 18, 19, 20) and no co-referential pronouns or clitics. The lexeme ירושלים is found five times in ch. 4 (vv. 1, 6, 16, 17, 20), and there is one instance of a co-referential pronominal suffix (v. 17). Additionally, in ch. 4, ירושלים is co-referential with ירושלים in ch. 3 (e.g. 3:5) and the preceding portions of the book of Joel. Given that ציון is co-referential with ירושלים,¹⁰ this chain of co-reference also includes the three instances of the lexeme ציון (vv. 16, 17, 21), as well as the lexeme and its respective co-referential ties in chs. 2 and 3 (e.g. 2:15; 3:5).¹¹ Just as references to Participants co-referential with “my people” and “people of Judah” are absent or minimal in the middle section of Joel 4 (vv. 9–15), so also references to Jerusalem, Zion, and Judah, are also absent from this portion of the chapter.

2.1.2. Co-classification ties

The first set of co-classification ties in Joel 4 involves the temporal circumstances of the chapter, and creates a relationship of temporal co-classification between the two principle events of the discourse that will follow. Verse 1 begins with two instances of deictic temporal reference בַּיָּמִים הַהֵמָּה וּבְעֵת הַהִיא (in those days and at

⁹ See co-extension section below for the relationship between “my people” and these locative terms.

¹⁰ See the discussion of the relationship between Jerusalem and Zion in the preceding chapter.

¹¹ For a more general discussion of the echoes of chs. 1–2 in ch. 4, see Allen, *Joel*, 108; Assis, *Joel*, 224–25.

that time) that point to the action of v. 2, which describes YHWH's intent to "gather," "bring down," and "judge" the nations. However, v. 1 also contains the relative clause אֲשֶׁר אָשׁוּב אֶת־שְׁבוּת יְהוּדָה וְיְרוּשָׁלַם (in which I restore the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem).¹² This clause refers to action that is concurrent, i.e. temporally co-classificatory, with those deictic temporal references of the initial clause of v. 1. In other words, the restoration of Judah and Jerusalem and the judgment of the nations are temporally co-classificatory; they are events that co-occur. Another way of looking at this is to say that the pronouns הַהִמָּה and הַהִיא are co-referential with the referent of אֲשֶׁר. This co-referentiality does *not* apply to the two events (restoration and judgment), but to the time-frame in which we find these two events. This overlapping temporal co-reference and event co-classification serves as one of the sets of ties that bind the different sub-sections of ch. 4 into a coherent and cohesive whole, and ties ch. 4 to ch. 3.¹³

Another set of co-classification ties is found in vv. 5–6. These verses present a set of Participants with 1cs possessive suffixes, and list a set of things that belong to YHWH ("my silver," "my gold," "my treasures"). Earlier references to "my people," "my heritage Israel" and "my land" (vv. 2–3) should be added to this list. Finally, the reference to "my holy mountain" in v. 17 is also co-classificatory with these other Participants, as something owned or possessed or claimed by YHWH. YHWH lays distinct claim over the land of Israel, its inhabitants, its treasures (possibly the Temple

¹² Note the *ketiv/qere* for אָשׁוּב, which suggests it should be read as אָשִׁיב (i.e., *hifil*). The editors of BHQ prefer אָשׁוּב.

¹³ On the logical relationships between chs. 3 and 4, see also: Wolff, *Joel*, 76.

treasures),¹⁴ and what we might refer to as its sanctified status and very geography (“my holy mountain”).

Many of these Participants that are co-classified as possessions of YHWH also belong to another set of co-classification ties. This set deals with the actions of Tyre, Sidon, and the Philistines. These nations, referred to in the 2nd person, act upon the gold, silver, treasure, and people to which YHWH lays claim.¹⁵ Therefore, the gold, silver, treasure, and people are co-classificatory in that they are acted upon by the specified foreign nations, and also in that they are identified as YHWH’s by means of the 1cs possessive suffix. The sub-section is thereby bound not only by multiple cohesive ties, but also by overlapping cohesive ties.

An isolated instance of co-classification is found in v. 14. Here the phrase *בְּעֵמֶק* (on the plain of cutting)¹⁶ is repeated in two parallel lines, juxtaposed in the first instance with *הַהַרְוֵץ* (multitudes, multitudes) and in the second with *כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם* (for near is the Day of YHWH). The multitudes and the Day of YHWH are both “on the plain of cutting,” creating a co-classificatory relationship. This tie is isolated, but

¹⁴ The phrase *מִחֲמַדֵּי הַטְּבִים* at times refers to the Temple treasures, but as many commentators have noted, it may also refer to highly valued articles or other kinds. Given that the coastal people were not, as far as we know, involved in the sacking of Jerusalem, the Temple treasures may be unlikely candidates as referents (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 102; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 181; Wolff, *Joel*, 78; Bewer, *Joel*, 131; Finley, *Joel*, 90). This said, there are those who see this as a reference to the Temple treasures, and thus the possibility should be kept in mind (Assis, for instance, argues in favour of this as a reference to items from the Temple treasury; Assis, *Joel*, 218–19). See also Allen, *Joel*, 113.

¹⁵ See the co-extension section below regarding the semantic relationships between the particular verbs used to describe this action.

¹⁶ Note that the traditional translation of *עֵמֶק* as “valley” is likely somewhat misleading. The term appears to refer to a low-lying area that is open, and broad enough for cavalry and chariots to manoeuvre in battles. Indeed, *עֵמֶק* appears to be a geographical locale often associated with battle and warfare. See, e.g. Gen 14; Josh 17; Judg 1; 7; 1 Sam 31; 2 Sam 5; Isa 22; 1 Chr 10:14. I have consequently chosen to translate the term as “low-lying plain” or simply “plain”, to indicate a broad vale that is lower than the hills. So also: Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 99n.a; Allen, *Joel*, 109; Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 267; Wolff, *Joel*, 76; Bewer, *Joel*, 128; Keller, *Joël*, 147.

I will demonstrate in my discussion of the Day of YHWH below that it serves to draw two significant elements of the passage into close relationship.

A similar instance of geographic co-classification is found in vv. 17–18. Here Zion is referred to as הַר־קֹדֶשׁ (my holy mountain), and in the following verse there is a reference to הַהָרִים dripping with sweet wine. These mountains are not co-referential with the holy mountain, but both are represented as mountains of refuge or prosperity. Both Zion and the mountains dripping with wine fall into the class “mountain,” but refer to different specific mountains/mountain ranges.¹⁷

2.1.3. Co-extension ties

Co-extension in ch. 4 functions primarily to create cohesion within each of the first two of the sub-sections of the chapter. Each of these first two sub-sections is characterized by a set of associations tied to the semantic range of certain lexemes. In vv. 1–8 there is a heavy concentration of lexemes that refer to exchange or recompense, and that are consistent with trade or economic situations. In vv. 9–15 there is a concentration of lexemes that refer to violence or are consistent with descriptions of war or the military, as well as a significant concentration of lexemes related to agricultural production. This combines with references to judgment or decision (vv. 12, 14), in which war is the execution of the judgment in question.¹⁸ The final sub-section (vv. 17–21), presents a set of important co-extensive ties that evince a markedly positive tone, while not exhibiting the same clear pattern of co-extension related to semantic domain found in vv. 1–8 or 9–15.

¹⁷ This is also an instance of co-extension (hyponymy), in which the mountains that drip with wine are a reference to the entire Judean hill-country, of which Mt. Zion is a part. Note the consequent connection to the Judean hill-country in Joel 1.

¹⁸ Allen, *Joel*, 115.

I should clarify that there is significant conceptual overlap between the various semantic domains I have singled out. It would be overly simplistic and misleading to suggest that a semantic domain related to economics is not integrally related to a semantic domain related to war, or to agriculture. All three of these domains are closely related, which is perhaps why they are used in concert here. Still, a noticeable clustering of semantic domain occurs in Joel 4.

Beginning in v. 3 there is a group of terms in the first sub-section of ch. 4 that falls within a semantic field associated with exchange and in some situations with trade or economic situations. The first possible example of this set of co-extensive ties is 77' (cast lots?). There are a limited number of instances of this verb in the OT/HB, and none of these offers very conclusive evidence in favour of “casting lots” as the meaning of the lexeme. It does seem to involve the aftermath of the destruction and sacking of a city (Nah 3:10; Obad 11) which is consistent with Joel 4:3. It may be a term consistent with other lexemes in this sub-section of Joel 4 that are related to exchange and trade, or it may be related to the war and military terms discussed below (or to both).

The second term of significance is נתן, which is, of course, one of the most common verbs in the OT/HB.¹⁹ The standard gloss “give” is likely relatively close to the semantic kernel of the word, and should include giving of all types, including the giving of something in exchange for something else. Frequently this exchange involves the giving of money, goods, or services in exchange for items of value, or as a tax or penalty.²⁰ Synonymous with this exchange-related sense of נתן is מכר (vv. 3, 6, 8), a lexeme that has the consistent sense of the exchange of one thing for another, and that is

¹⁹ Over 2,000 occurrences.

²⁰ E.g. Gen 23:13; 47:2; Exod 21:22, 32; 30:12–13; Lev 27:23; Deut 14:26; 22:29; Judg 14:12; 1 Kgs 21:2; Jonah 1:3; Song 8:7.

frequently used in the context of slave exchange.²¹ Also partially synonymous with נתן are the terms גָּמוּל and שָׁלַם, both of which have the sense of giving, with the additional sense of recompense. שָׁלַם (substantive participle, v. 4) suggests the settling of accounts or completion in the sense of creating equity, and is at times used in economic situations.²² Similarly, גָּמוּל (vv. 4 [twice, plus verbal cognate], and 7) suggests equitability or recompense, and refers especially to one's actions and their consequences.²³ The final lexeme in this string of synonymy is שׁוּב (vv. 1, 4, 7), which has the general meaning of "return" and is used in a variety of situations that involve replacement or restoration, at times in economic terms.²⁴ There are, therefore, a set of co-extensive ties built around partial synonymy and repetition, running through vv. 1–8. The semantic overlap involves the exchange of one thing for another, and at least some of the lexemes in question are either explicitly economic or are used at times in situations that refer to economic exchange.

In addition to lexemes that refer to the exchange of items, there are lexemes in this stretch of text that function as items exchanged. Included among these are כֶּסֶף (silver) and זָהָב (gold), which refer to precious metals that were commonly used as indicators of wealth and for economic exchange,²⁵ and are found with great frequency in passages related to the tabernacle and temple, and in contexts related to idolatry or worship.²⁶ Collocated with כֶּסֶף and זָהָב here in Joel 4 is the term מִחְמָד, which refers to

²¹ E.g. Gen 37:27, 28, 36; 45:4, 5; Exod 21:16, 37 (note co-occurrence with נתן); Deut 21:14; 24:7; Amos 2:6; Neh 5:8.

²² E.g. Exod 21:37 (note co-occurrence with מכר); 2 Kgs 4:7; Ps 37:21.

²³ E.g. Isa 59:18 x2; 66:6 (note co-occurrence with שָׁלַם); Jer 51:6 (note co-occurrence with שָׁלַם); Obad 15 (note co-occurrence with נתן); Ps 28:4 (note co-occurrence with נתן and שׁוּב); 137:8; Prov 19:17 (note co-occurrence with שָׁלַם).

²⁴ E.g. Gen 20:7, 42:25; Exod 21:34, 22:25; Lev 5:23, 25:10, 13, 27, 28, 27:24; Num 7, 8.

²⁵ E.g. Gen 13:2, 24:35, 53, 44:8; Exod 3:22; 2 Sam 8:10, 21:4; Isa 39:2.

²⁶ E.g. Exod 20:23, 25:3, 26:32, 31:4, 35:5, 32, 36:36; Num 7:84; Deut 7:25, 29:16; Josh 6:19, 24; 1 Kgs 7:51, 15:15; 2 Kgs 14:14, 16:8; Isa 30:22, 31:7; Hab 2:19; Zech 6:11; Pss 115:4, 135:15; Ezra 8:33.

treasured possessions or items or people of significant personal importance.²⁷ It is also notable that, like כֶּסֶף and זָהָב, מִחְמָד refers to items of great worth in the Temple or related to the cult.²⁸ Consequently the presence of these three lexemes in Joel 4:5 reinforces the economic semantic range that is already active in elements of the lexemes related to exchange discussed above, and may also suggest the possibility of a connection to semantic ranges related to the cult or the temple.²⁹ Consequently, while the semantic relationship here does not fall into broad categories like synonymy or antinomy, the semantic overlap between these three lexemes and the various lexemes related to exchange is still an important example of co-extension.

If the first sub-section of ch. 4 is tied together by means of co-extension related to exchange and economic semantic ranges, the second sub-section is tied together by means of co-extension related to war/combat and to agricultural semantic ranges. The first instance of co-extension related to a war/combat semantic range is found in v. 9 with the call קִדְּשׁוּ מִלְחָמָה (consecrate for war) and the co-extensive term גְּבוּרִים (warriors, repeated in vv. 10 and 11). The terms גְּבוּרִים and מִלְחָמָה collocate frequently in the OT/HB, the former term apparently indicating an individual (or set of individuals) who is particularly successful or powerful with regards to the latter term.³⁰ Co-extensive with גְּבוּרִים is the phrase אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה (soldiers) which also occurs frequently in the

²⁷ E.g. with reference to wealth or treasure: 1 Kgs 20:6; Hos 9:6; with reference to people of deep significance or personal value: Ezek 24:16; Lam 2:4; Song 5:16.

²⁸ E.g. Isa 64:10; Ezek 24:21; Lam 1:10; 2 Chr 36:19.

²⁹ This is a matter of debate among scholars. See n. 14 above.

³⁰ See Josh 8:3; 10:7; 1 Sam 14:52, 16:18; 2 Sam 1:25, 27, 17:8, 23:9; 2 Kgs 24:16; Isa 3:2, 42:13; Jer 48:14; Ezek 32:27, 39:20; Jonah 2:7, 4:9; Zech 10:5; Ps 24:8; Eccl 9:11; 1 Chr 7:11, 40, 12:1, 9; 2 Chr 13:3, 17:13. Note that many famous or notable biblical figures are referred to as גְּבוּרִים, including Goliath (1 Sam 17:51), the Nephilim (Gen 6:4), Boaz (Ruth 2:1), the lion with respect to other animals (Prov 30:30), and even YHWH himself (Deut 10:17).

OT/HB and refers to individuals of a fighting age or capacity.³¹ These two terms are either synonymous, or *גְּבוּרִים* is hyponymous with *אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה*, indicating a special sub-class of fighting person (the latter is most likely). Both of these terms are co-extensive with *מִלְחָמָה* (hyponymy), as they indicate persons who engage in or perpetrate war. The term *הֶלֶשׁ* (defeated one, or perhaps prostrated one, v. 10) is also co-extensive with these terms for individuals who perpetrate war, and functions as an antonym directly contrasted with *גְּבוּר* (v. 10), and is consequently also antonymic to *אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה* (v. 9).

The references to tools of war in v.10 are also co-extensive with *מִלְחָמָה*. The lexemes *חֶרֶב* (sword) and *רֶמַח* (spear) are hyponyms of *מִלְחָמָה* (tools used for battle) and are thus co-hyponyms with *גְּבוּרִים* and *אֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה*. Not only are these war-tools co-extensive with other war-related terms in this sub-section, they are also co-extensive with the lexemes *אֵת* (iron tool, perhaps ploughshare) and *מְזַמְרָה* (pruning knife? See Isa 18:5). These latter lexemes are hyponyms of *חֶרֶב* and *רֶמַח*, belonging to the superordinate class of tool. They are also antonyms of *חֶרֶב* and *רֶמַח* in v.10, thus creating a two-part semantic relationship.

The lexemes *מְגַל* (sickle) and *גֵּת* (wine-press) in v. 13 are also co-extensive with *אֵת* and *מְזַמְרָה*, being hyponyms of the previous two agricultural tools. In addition to these clear references to agricultural tools, there is also the use of *תְּרוּץ* as a modifier for *עֵמֶק*. While *תְּרוּץ* is related to the verbal form *תָּרַץ* (cut, divide, divide in the sense of decide between two options), it is used in several places to refer to a threshing tool of

³¹ E.g. Deut 2:14; Josh 5:4, 6. Note that I have translated this phrase as “soldiers” and not with the more common “men of war” in recognition of Stein’s important analysis of the lexeme *אִישׁ*, which he identifies not as a reference to a male human being but as a particle indicating semantic affiliation. See Stein, “The Noun *אִישׁ*.”

some kind (Isa 28:27; 41:14; Amos 1:3; Job 41:22).³² Therefore we may here have a *double-entendre*, where the valley in question is both a place of decision, and a place of threshing. In paradigmatic terms these are hyponyms of the earlier mentioned agricultural terms, but in terms of the immediate textual context these agricultural terms are clearly functioning as metaphors, the cutting and stomping of grain and grapes being leveraged to create an image of violence which is consistent with the military language of the sub-section. Consequently, מִנְּל and נָת are also co-extensive with מְלַחֵמָה and its related terms by means of metaphorical extension. Here the overlap between semantic domains to which I referred above becomes integral to the connotative power of this sub-section. War is harvest, and harvest is war.³³

The third sub-section of Joel 4 (vv. 17–21) is also given internal coherence, and is tied to the preceding sub-section, by means of co-extensive ties. The first co-extensive tie is found in 16b, with the synonymous terms מְחֻסָּה (stronghold) and מְעוֹז (refuge). These two terms are applied to YHWH, and in v.17 Zion is described as the place in which YHWH dwells. If YHWH is himself a place of safety, then his dwelling place must also be a place of safety. Thus by metaphorical and logical extension (YHWH as refuge/stronghold, Zion as YHWH's dwelling place) Zion is presented as a refuge and place of safety. This tie also links the second and third sub-sections of the passage (i.e., vv. 9–16 and 17–21).

This image of safety is qualified by another instance of synonymous co-extension. Zion, the city of refuge, is synonymous with Jerusalem, which is presented as a place of exclusivity in which there will be no זָרִים (outsider, foreigner, other). A

³² Other instances may also be references to agricultural work, or to one who exemplifies hard work using this tool. See Prov 10:4; 12:24, 27; 13:4; 21:5. See also Bewer, *Joel*, 140; Keller, *Joël*, 152n.1.

³³ See also Assis, *Joel*, 230–31.

qualifying relationship is formed between the concept of refuge or safety and the absence of outsiders by means of the synonymous relationship between “Zion” and “Jerusalem.” Safety excludes זָרִים.

The representation of Jerusalem and Zion (and the surrounding territory) as a place of safety and prosperity is emphasized by the antonymous relationship between the terms שְׁמָמָה (desolation/waste) and מִדְבָּר (wilderness) in v. 19 (applied to Egypt and Edom respectively), and the lexeme יָשָׁב (dwell/inhabit) in v. 20 (applied to Judah and Jerusalem).³⁴ Whereas Judah’s enemies will be desolate and uninhabited, Judah and Jerusalem will be inhabited לְעוֹלָם and לְדוֹר וָדוֹר. Due to the fact that Edom and Egypt are also hyponymous with “the nations” of vv. 2, 11, and 12, this antonymous relationship also extends to that broader group.

2.2. Mode of Discourse: Conclusions

This examination of textual cohesion in Joel 4 suggests a number of things. First of all, identity chains create sets of Participants, as in the previous passages. The YHWH/prophet set is the first of these Participant sets, and is found throughout the passage. This set presents points of tension, with YHWH presented as the predominant speaking voice in most of the chapter, but referred to in the 2nd and 3rd at several points (vv. 8, 11, 16). The second Participant set in this passage includes הַגּוֹיִם (the nations) and the Addressees of most of the imperatives (the exception being, of course, YHWH in v. 11), all of which belong to the same identity chain. Included with this set are those specified nations (Edom, Egypt, Tyre and Sidon, the Philistines), which are co-extensive with “the nations” and thus form a similarity chain binding the two sets of referents into a coherent Participant set. The third Participant set is the people of YHWH, who appear

³⁴ Allen also notes this ironic juxtaposition (Allen, *Joel*, 117).

to be those who dwell in or are related to Judah and Jerusalem/Zion. It is notable that included in this set are some instances of reference to Judah, Jerusalem, and Zion (and co-referents).³⁵ Some references to the city/region are locative and, therefore, circumstantial and part of the arena of the passage, but others are related to the people of YHWH set by co-extension (metonymy) and are, therefore, a part of the set (e.g. 4:1). There are various other Participants in the passage, but these three make up the principal groupings suggested by our examination of cohesive ties.

In addition to the identification of Participant sets, cohesive ties in Joel 4 suggest that three sub-sections are identifiable, especially when one examines co-extensive relationships in the passage. In the first sub-section, vv. 1–8, there is a great deal of co-extension related to exchange, ownership, and other economic semantic domains. In the second subsection, vv. 9–16, one finds co-extensive ties related to war and agriculture. In the third sub-section, vv. 17–21, a particular semantic domain is less discernable, but co-extension related to concepts of safety and prosperity are present.

Not only is each sub-section internally cohesive, but identity and similarity chains help to bind these sub-sections into a larger cohesive discourse that encompasses the chapter, and even ties this chapter to preceding sections in the book of Joel. An identity chain that includes the various co-referential and co-extensive ties that create the Participant set “the nations” runs through all three sections. Another identity chain that includes the co-referential ties related to YHWH as Participant is also found in all three sections. The identity chain related to the people, which intersects with

³⁵ As I analyze Joel 4 I will not make explicit reference to a Participant set focused on Judah, Jerusalem, and Zion. These locations are strongly associated with the people of YHWH set, and so will at times be explored from that perspective. They are also, obviously, locations and so will be explored extensively in the arena section below.

Judah/Jerusalem/Zion as geographical location, ties together the first and third sub-sections. The identity chain related to the nations that ties together the first two sub-sections intersects with the co-extensive ties related to agriculture that bind the second and third sub-sections, as well as with the co-extensive ties related to the nations that tie the first and third sub-sections. These various overlapping ties create an identity and similarity chain that ties the discourse together as a whole.

In addition to the creation of coherence and cohesion in Joel 4, identity and similarity chains are also integral to an understanding of the Day of YHWH in this chapter. The co-referential and co-extensive ties that combine to create the similarity chain relating to the nations intersects in v. 14 with the identity chain related to temporal circumstance in the form of the co-classificatory relationship between **הַמְּוֹנִים הַמְּוֹנִים** and **יּוֹם יְהוָה**. In other words, the Day of YHWH is explicitly related to the “multitudes” and thus to the nations Participant set. This will be particularly important to my conclusions regarding the Day of YHWH in ch. 4 below.

3. Field

3.1. Participants

Four Participant sets are identifiable in ch. 4: YHWH/the prophet, the nations, Judah/Jerusalem (i.e., the land),³⁶ and the people of YHWH. In addition to these there are other Participants that do not fall into an identifiable set. As has been the practice in the preceding chapters, I will focus in this chapter on the main Participant sets, observing their various syntactic and semantic functions, which will prove important in our examination of transitivity structure below.

³⁶ I will address Jerusalem/Judah in the arena section, below.

The Participant set that dominates this portion of Joel is YHWH/the prophet. References to YHWH abound in Joel 4, and can be found throughout the chapter. The YHWH/prophet set appears frequently as 1st person Subject/Actor (vv. 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 12, 21). YHWH is also referred to as 3^{ms} Subject/Actor at several points (vv. 8, 16), which points to tension in this Participant set. At most points in which YHWH is a 3rd person referent the prophet Joel is the only logical candidate to fill the role of speaking voice (the exception being v. 11, see below). Apart from these particular instances of internal tension in the Participant set, however, the semantic role of Speaker in imperative clauses is filled uniformly by the YHWH/prophet set (vv. 9–13). Therefore, YHWH/prophet Participant set dominates the passage semantically as Actor and Speaker. In addition to these roles the YHWH/prophet Participant set is the referent of the 1^{cs} pronominal suffixes in ch. 4, all of which indicate possession (vv. 2, 3, 5, 17).

The second major Participant set is the nations. This set is also found in all three sub-sections of the chapter, though referents in this set are far more prevalent in the first sub-section. This Participant set appears frequently as Subject/Actor in both the 2nd and 3rd person plural (vv. 2–7 eleven times, v. 12 twice, v. 19), far outweighing other functions. It is found as Object/Goal twice in 4:2 (though note that co-extensive referents are Object/Goal in 4:7–8), and as Adjunct/Circumstantial in vv. 5 and 19. Members of this set occasionally function as Identified in Relational clauses (vv. 4, 14, and 19), and in one case a member of the set is Adjunct/Actor in a reflexive clause (4:2).

The third major set is the people of YHWH. It is possible to observe relatively clear patterns in terms of this set's syntactic and semantic functions, as with the other two major participant sets. Members of this set most frequently function as modifiers or Adjuncts of some type (vv. 1, 2, 3, 8, 15, 17, 21) or Objects/Goals (vv. 2, 3, 6, 7). In

only two cases is a member of this set Subject/Actor, both of which refer to a future situation (vv. 8 and 17; consequential in both cases). The people of YHWH set, therefore, plays a subsidiary role to the nations set and the YHWH/prophet set in this passage.³⁷

3.2. Arena

3.2.1. Location

I will explore three significant locative elements in ch. 4. These include: the valley/plain referred to in the first two sub-sections, the locative implications of the opposition between the nations participant set and the locative elements of the people of YHWH participant set, and the characterization of Jerusalem/Judah/Zion as location. I will demonstrate that there is a degree of continuity in terms of location with ch. 3, as well as points of connection between significant events and particular locations in ch. 4.

There are four references in ch. 4 to עֲמָק (low lying plain, valley; vv. 2, 12, 14 twice).³⁸ This location is identified in v. 2 as עֲמָק יְהוֹשָׁפָט, and is referred to as a place in which YHWH will judge the nations. The modifier יְהוֹשָׁפָט is repeated in v. 12, but is absent in the two instances in v. 14. In v. 14, instead, one finds the modifier חֲרוֹץ (thresher, cutter?). Traditionally this is translated as “decision,”³⁹ but as I have remarked already, there is a significant possibility that the use in this verse connotes some type of

³⁷ There is an additional Participant set that plays a small but important role in the section. This is the set that includes the plural Addressees of the imperative verbs in vv. 9–10 and 13, which I will discuss below.

³⁸ Commentators generally agree that the reference to these plains/valleys is symbolic, and that no actual geographical location in Judah is in mind. I will focus here on the discourse-internal identification of these locations, and their connotative effects. On this question see Allen, *Joel*, 109; Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 267; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 105; Wolff, *Joel*, 76; Bewer, *Joel*, 127; Keller, *Joël*, 147. While Crenshaw does suggest that the plain/valley is symbolic, he also suggests that the representation of the plain of judgment is consistent with the traditional nearness of the place of final judgment to the city of Jerusalem (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 174).

³⁹ So NIV, ESV, NRSV, NET, NJB, JPS. Note CEB reads “judgement.” Allen renders it as “Verdict Valley” (Allen, *Joel*, 117).

agricultural tool. The implication, given the metaphorical nature of the other agricultural language in this sub-section, is that some type of “cutting” or “threshing” will occur in this valley. Consequently, the standard translation “decision” may be at least somewhat correct, in that the metaphor implies separation.

The relationship between עִמָּק יְהוֹשֶׁפֶט and עִמָּק חֲרוֹץ is an important element of the Arena of ch. 4. Are two plains in mind here, or can we reasonably infer that they are one and the same? I suggested above that הַמוֹנִים הַמוֹנִים in v. 14 is co-referential with כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם מְסֻבִּיב in v. 11 (both belonging to the nations set). If this is so, and I grant that it is not necessarily so, then the two plains would also likely be co-referential. Also, the descriptions applied to the plains in question overlap semantically, which suggests co-referentiality. The plains noted in vv. 2 and 12 are both explicitly places of judgment or decision (note the occurrence of שֹׁפֵט in both instances). There is also an etymological relationship between the proper name יְהוֹשֶׁפֶט (which suggests something like “YHWH has judged”) and the verbal root שֹׁפֵט.⁴⁰ Additionally, the agricultural language that precedes and follows the mention of עִמָּק יְהוֹשֶׁפֶט in vv. 11 and 13 is semantically related to חֲרוֹץ. All of this suggests quite strongly that there is but one plain, which takes the proper name יְהוֹשֶׁפֶט (with its connotation of YHWH as judge) and is a place of cutting/decision (the metaphorical use of חֲרוֹץ).⁴¹ This plain is associated with both judgment and violence, and YHWH/the prophet and the nations are the Participant sets principally associated with the plain. Finally, the repetition of reference to the plain in

⁴⁰ Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 182.

⁴¹ So also Allen, *Joel*, 119; Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 183; Assis, *Joel*, 232. Keller suggests that the reason for the shift in name between vv. 2 and 12, and v. 14 is that there is a movement away from the process of judgment (highlighted in the earlier part of the chapter) and toward the execution of that judgment in the latter part of the chapter. Presumably this implies that vv. 13–14 (and following?) recount the actual destruction of the nations (Keller, *Joël*, 152).

vv. 2, 12, and 14 also ties the second sub-section of the chapter into the larger structure of the chapter as a whole, and especially to the first sub-section.

The second significant element of the locative arena is the opposition between Judah/Jerusalem/Zion as a location, and the various other nations referred to in the chapter. As I have already noted, the nations Participant set is found throughout the chapter in various ways. Not only do these references present us with one of the principal Participant sets of the passages, but as with the preceding two portions of the book of Joel these references to foreign nations also suggest a sense of geographical location. In my analysis of Joel 2:18—3:5 I argued that there is a strong sense of well-defined positive internal space standing in opposition to an amorphous but clearly negative external space. That internal space is associated with Israel/Jerusalem, and the external space with the ill-defined space associated with “the Northerner.”

Here in ch. 4, however, that external space is much more clearly defined and associated explicitly with the nations Participant set. This is especially the case in vv. 1–8, in which the nations set is first mentioned and several specific foreign nations are singled out. The specific nations associated with this set in the first sub-section of ch. 4 are Tyre and Sidon and the regions of Philistia. These are the nations to whom YHWH addresses his remarks, and who are condemned most strongly and specifically for their actions toward the people of YHWH. In addition to these regions to the immediate North of Judah, there is also a specific reference to Edom and Egypt in v. 19, where these nations are also specifically condemned for their negative behaviour toward the people of YHWH. In addition to these nations that are identified as specific threats to the people of YHWH, there is also reference to the Ionians (v. 6) and Sabeans (v. 8). These are far distant nations that are not specifically involved in the dispute between the

people of YHWH and the nations, though of course they are culpable as participants in the slave-trade. But these are distant nations (גְּחוּזִים, v. 8) both denotatively and connotatively. The connotative power of this distance is enhanced by the likely possibility that they are distant in opposite directions. Ionia is, of course, a reference to the Greeks, who inhabit a distant North-Western area, from the perspective of Judah. Sheba is likely a reference to a distant part of the Arabian peninsula, and is thus far to the South-East of Judah.⁴² The implication is that those who have sent the Judeans far from their homes into slavery in Greece will themselves be sent far from their homes in the opposite direction, to equally distant Sheba.⁴³

The presentation of location, then, opposes a highly positive and well-defined internal space (Judah/Jerusalem/Zion) with a highly negative and well-defined external space. That external space includes the nations to the immediate North (Tyre, Sidon, Philistia), South West (Edom), and South (Egypt). That is to say, it includes, after a fashion, all the nations round-about (vv. 11–12). Outside of this specifically defined external space is another, more distant, external space that is connotatively somewhat negative, given the representation of both Greece and Sheba as places of distant exile and slavery. Apart from being locations of exile, however, Ionia and Sheba appear to be of relatively little consequence to the conflict described in Joel 4.

Not only is the positive internal space of Judah/Jerusalem/Zion opposed to a negative external space, but this internal space also receives significant description. It is

⁴² Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 101; Allen, *Joel*, 113–14; Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 180; Assis, *Joel*, 220; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 184; Wolff, *Joel*, 78; Keller, *Joël*, 148. For a dissenting view, see: Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 265 n.8a. He reads here “into captivity,” following the OG (εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν), and seeing לְשָׁבְאִים as a corruption of לְשָׁבִי.

⁴³ Stuart hears in the ironic reversal of exile onto enemies the echo of Deut 30:7 (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 268).

described as a place of safety (v. 16), as sacred (vv. 17–18), as prosperous (v. 18), as inhabited perpetually (v. 20), and as the dwelling place of YHWH (vv. 16, 21). That YHWH dwells in Zion is the key to those other positive elements.⁴⁴ It is by no means coincidental that YHWH’s dwelling in Zion is the final statement in the book of Joel. This represents the complete renewal of Zion as the dwelling place of the people of YHWH. Additionally, in the third sub-section of ch. 4 Judah/Jerusalem/Zion is also described in opposition to the principal location of the first two sub-sections of the chapter. I have already described the opposition to the negative external space of the surrounding nations, but note also that v. 18 opposes this renewed Zion to the plain of judgment and death of the preceding section. Where the agricultural imagery of vv. 9–15 implies destruction and war, the mention of wine, milk, and water in v. 18 implies prosperity and safety. Where the nations are called to *עֲמִקֵּי יְהוֹשֻׁפֶּט*, in the renewed Zion, water flows in *נַחַל הַשִּׁטִּים* (the river-valley of Shittim), creating an opposition between the place of judgment and the place of renewal.⁴⁵ There also exists an opposition between the low-lying plain and the mountain. The low-lying plain is a place of judgment and destruction (vv. 2, 13, 14), and is associated with the nations set. The mountain (*הַר־קִדְשִׁי*, v. 17) is a place of safety and security, and is associated with the

⁴⁴ Cf. Ezek 10, and the removal of the presence of YHWH from the Temple. Allen also notes the deeply sacral connotations of Zion as a place of perpetual safety, and the intimate link between the Temple and the land (Allen, *Joel*, 122, 26). So also Assis, *Joel*, 237–39.

⁴⁵ Allen, *Joel*, 124. As Sweeney suggests, this wadi or river seems to symbolize both agricultural and spiritual renewal (Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 184). Assis sees here a connection to Edenic imagery, and consequently a link to Joel 2:3 (Assis, *Joel*, 250–51). So also: Keller, *Joël*, 154. As Crenshaw (among others) notes, *נַחַל* refers to “a deep gorge between two hills,” and is thus opposed to the preceding occurrences of *עֲמִקֵּי* in physical terms as well. This is no vale or plain between mountains, but a steep cut flowing with water from the renewed Zion (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 200). Given the difficulty of identifying a specific geographical referent for the valley of Shittim, Wolff suggests that it is a kind of “apocalyptic cipher” (Wolff, *Joel*, 84). While the reference to the valley is very likely to be primarily connotative, identifying it as a “cipher” may be an overstatement. This particularly since the only other reference to Shittim in the Latter Prophets (Mic 6:5) is an allusion to Num 25:1, and consequently to an actual geographical location.

people of YHWH set (vv. 17–21).⁴⁶ These oppositions strengthen and clarify the description of Zion as sacred, safe, and prosperous.

Location in Joel 4 stands in continuity with the preceding chapters of the prophetic book, but brings additional clarity to both the negative external space, and to the positive internal space of Judah/Jerusalem/Zion. This is achieved especially by description of the plain of judgment, by the opposition between Judah and several specifically identified foreign nations, and by the description of Zion and the opposition of this description to the description of the plain of judgment.⁴⁷ The three spaces thus highlighted in this section of Joel are the plain of judgment, which makes up the location of the principal action of the chapter, the foreign nations, which are the negative space immediately surrounding Judah, and Judah/Jerusalem/Zion which is a positive internal space, and a place of promised blessing.

3.2.2. Time

Joel 4 begins with a pair of thematized temporal adjuncts, *בְּיָמִים הָהֵמָּה וּבְעֵת הַהִיא* (in those days and at that time), including two deictic demonstrative pronouns that function both anaphorically, to tie the temporal frame of ch. 4 to that of ch. 3, and cataphorically, as they are co-referential with the temporal frame indicated by the following relative clause. Therefore, the time indicated is, to some degree, co-extensive with the time of Judah and Jerusalem's restoration as recounted in 3:1–5 and 4:16–21. Having said this, the temporal frame suggested by “when I restore the fortunes of Judah

⁴⁶ Allen suggests that an additional connotation of this opposition between the plain and Zion is that the plain is was at one time the location of Judah's humiliation at the hands of her foes, and is now the place in which those foes will be judged and destroyed (Allen, *Joel*, 116).

⁴⁷ As Crenshaw puts it: “Concentric circles move ever inward to focus divine favour on the sacred city; together the country and its capital make up the residence of YHWH's covenant community” (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 174).

and Jerusalem” need not be strictly constrained to the period of time envisioned in 3:1–5 and 4:16–21. Indeed, all of ch. 4 appears to occur within this time frame.

Note the use of the YQTL verb form in v. 1, suggesting that the act of restoration is aspectually incomplete. Immediately following this we find three weQTL verbs, all of which indicate both aspectual completeness and purpose. These purpose statements are then grounded in four QTL and two *wayyiqtol* forms (in vv. 2c–3), indicating aspectual completeness, and also suggesting past action.⁴⁸ A past time frame is suggested both by the use of *wayyiqtol* forms (וַיִּשְׁתּוּ and וַיִּתְּנוּ, v. 3), which indicate past tense, and by the logical relationship between the weQTLs of v. 2 (וְהוֹרְדִיתִים, וְקִבְצִיתִי) and the QTLs of vv. 2–3 (מְקָרְו, יָדוּ, חָלְקוּ, פְּזָרוּ). The latter are the cause of the former. They indicate events that have occurred, and which have consequently led to YHWH’s disposition toward the nations.

The interrogative and conditional clauses of v. 4 also help to clarify the relative temporal situation. These suggest that some action has been undertaken by the nations, and that this is resulting in a concomitant response from YHWH. The actions of the nations occurred in a past time frame, and the actions of YHWH appear to be occurring in the present and immediate (though indeterminate) future—a future which may (shall?) come to pass. The participle מְעִירָם (I am rousing, v. 7) indicates progressive aspect, and reinforces the sense of an impending event.⁴⁹ YHWH is in the midst of bringing (or is beginning to bring) his people back from their captivity. The cluster of QTL forms in vv. 5–7a outlines the actions of the specified nations, and the cluster of weQTL forms in vv.

⁴⁸ The first two of these QTL forms (v. 2) fall within the relative clause, and give greater definition to the position of “my people and my inheritance Israel,” particularly in relation to “the nations.” For more on this relative clause see pg. 33 below, and the discussion of hypotaxis.

⁴⁹ On the BH participle as aspectually progressive and the participle’s relationship to future events, see Cook, *Time and the BH Verb*, 230, 32.

7b–8 outlines YHWH’s intended response. The perspective of the reader in vv. 2–8 is the middle ground in between the past action of the nations and the impending response of YHWH.

Verses 9–16 are marked by a great proliferation of imperative and imperfective forms. In terms of temporal reference, this is consistent with the preceding sub-section, for it suggests a set of aspectually incomplete actions, which may be beginning (or in progress) or may be anticipated in the indeterminate future. These actions appear to be related to YHWH’s promised response to the actions of the nations, suggesting that all of the action in vv. 9–17 exists in that same near-future time frame. In v. 13 one finds an isolated set of QTL forms. Here, functioning as they are within clauses indicating cause, these QTL verbs indicate a state of affairs that precedes the action that the imperatives demand. The focus here is on the readiness of the state of the harvest, winepress, and vats.

The other cluster of QTL forms in this sub-section, found in v. 15, may indicate a similar existing state of affairs. Might this suggest that the darkening of the heavenly bodies precedes the Day of YHWH, and is not then a constituent part of the event? Alternatively, the QTL forms of v. 15 may simply indicate the cosmic darkening viewed as a whole event, and contribute nothing to the sense of temporal sequence in the passage.⁵⁰

Sub-section three, vv. 17–21, contains weQTL clauses that carry a modal nuance, suggesting consequence or purpose. Additionally there are several YQTL clauses, which present the internal action of the state of affairs outlined by the initial weQTL verbs in

⁵⁰ Stuart suggests that the “Day of Yahweh has clearly begun, because the darkness associated with it has descended on all the sky’s sources of light” (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 269).

vv. 17–18. That is to say, the weQTL verbs in this section, with their modal sense, suggest a future time-frame, and the YQTL verbs describe that time-frame more fully. Additionally, there are two QTL clauses, both of which function just as the QTL clauses in the preceding sections of the chapter, identifying past actions that provide the grounds or cause for the future state of affairs described in this sub-section.

The Day of YHWH functions here just as in previous portions of the book of Joel, in terms of its relative temporal frame. It exists in the immediate, but indeterminate, future, as the use of קָרוֹב suggests.⁵¹ It is also explicitly connected to the future time-frame of judgment that is central to this chapter of Joel. Here at least the Day of YHWH is apparently meant to be synonymous with that coming day of judgment, since it explicitly occurs בְּעֶמְקַי הַחֲרוֹץ (in the valley of cutting/decision). Therefore, the future renewal of Judah/Jerusalem/Zion follows the Day of YHWH. Still, it is unclear whether the Day includes only the moment of judgment, or is also meant to include the renewal of the people of YHWH and their sacred home.⁵² As I have already argued, the relative phrase of v. 1 suggests that the time of judgment and the time of renewal overlap to at least some degree. Additionally, the placement of a statement about the destruction of members of the nation set (v. 19) alongside a statement about the renewal of Judah and Jerusalem (v. 20) strengthens this sense of temporal overlap.⁵³

⁵¹ This *pace* Barton, who suggests that it is unclear as to whether “near” suggests the Day has yet to occur, or has occurred. As I have noted above (see Chapter 3), קָרוֹב generally refers to an event that has yet to occur, but will occur very soon (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 105).

⁵² The use of the phrase בְּיָמֵי הַהוֹשָׁה suggests that at least some degree of temporal overlap is in mind. Sweeney sees this phrase as a simple reference to the future, which is co-referential with the Day of YHWH (Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 184; cf. also Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 117–18).

⁵³ This *pace* Allen, who sees vv. 15–17 as a depiction of the Day of YHWH, and vv. 18–21 as a depiction of a post-Day reality (Allen, *Joel*, 120).

Having noted the possibility of temporal overlap, we must also note that any such overlap cannot be entirely due to the nature of the two events in question. The judgment and destruction of the members of the nations set creates a change of state that involves their permanent destruction. But the renewal of Judah and Jerusalem leads to a state of perpetual occupation, which is made clear by the use of both לְעוֹלָם and לְדוֹר וָדוֹר (v. 20).⁵⁴ Consequently, whether or not the events of judgment and renewal overlap to some degree, the former appears to be a precondition of the latter.

The overall picture of the temporal setting of Joel 4 appears to be oriented particularly toward the future. Several past events are referred to, principally as grounds for the future action of YHWH. The implied reader of Joel 4 occupies a time that is in between the events described using QTL verb forms, and the events described using various weQTLs, imperatives, and YQTLs. Though there is a sense of immediacy to the future events (v. 14), no more can be said regarding the relative position of the past events and the future events to one another or to the discourse present. This is, of course, entirely consistent with the temporal structure of Joel 2:18—3:5. I argue above (ch. 5) that 2:18—3:1a function as the relative present for the speaking voice of the book (YHWH/the prophet), and ch. 4 appears to be a continuation of this situation. The events of 1:1—2:17 are in the past, and the destruction of the nations remains in the future, as does the renewal of the people of YHWH and their dwelling place Judah/Jerusalem/Zion. The Day of YHWH, in which the nations are judged (v. 14), is the decisive event that will serve as the turning point between the events of the past (including both the event of

⁵⁴ Note that this is only one of two passages in the OT/HB where these two phrases are used in parallel (the other is Prov 27:24). Note also that both have significant connections to themes of renewal throughout the prophetic literature, and that לְעוֹלָם is also frequently associated with texts describing destruction in the prophetic literature.

1:1—2:17, and the enslavement of YHWH's people described in 4:4–8), and the final state of affairs described in 3:1b–5 and 4:17–21.

3.3. Verbal Processes and Transitivity Structure

There is a huge predominance of Material processes in Joel 4, and just a handful of Mental and Speaking processes. These Material processes also cluster according to transitivity patterns that reinforce the three sub-divisions already identified above. The principal Actors are YHWH and the nations set, with the people of YHWH playing a primarily passive role. Salvation is achieved, in short, by what YHWH does, and not by what the people of YHWH do.

Material process clauses make up 94% of the verbal processes in this chapter, if Relational clauses are excluded from the tally (roughly 82% if Relational processes are included). The majority of these are transitive clauses, with either YHWH or the nations set functioning as Subject/Actor. In vv. 1–2a YHWH is Subject/Actor in several clauses, and Subject/Initiator in one (וְהוֹרֵדְתִּים). In vv. 2b–6 the Subject/Actor is always the nations set, with the exception of אָשִׁיב גְּמִלְתְּכֶם בְּרֹאשְׁכֶם in v. 4, where the speaking voice (in this case I assume YHWH) is the Subject/Actor of the verb. Verse 4 also contains the only instance in which verbal action is directed toward YHWH. The two participial phrases here suggest that the action of the nations outlined in this sub-section have been interpreted by YHWH as attempts of vengeance upon YHWH.⁵⁵ This is the only instance in the chapter in which YHWH receives explicit verbal action, but the implication of the verse is that YHWH has interpreted the actions directed against YHWH's people, which are described in this sub-section, as action directed against YHWH as well. In vv. 7–8 YHWH returns as the principal Subject/Actor, though the

⁵⁵ Vengeance for what exactly is not entirely clear.

people of YHWH set also makes one of only two appearances as Subject/Actor here.

The people of YHWH function as the proxies of YHWH, who remains the Participant that drives the action. This sub-section ends with a summary intransitive clause, indicating that the foregoing has been spoken by YHWH.

Consistent with this picture of YHWH and the nations as the drivers of the action, in the first sub-section Participants that function as Object/Goal include especially Participants that fall within the people of YHWH set. The overall picture of the transitivity structure of Material processes in vv. 1–8 suggests that the nations set performed or caused the completed past action and YHWH will perform or cause the coming action, which is a response to the action of the nations set. The people of YHWH are acted upon by the nations set especially, and function as proxies or partners with YHWH in his responsive action.

The second subsection of ch. 4, vv. 9–16, presents a significant degree of consistency with the first sub-section of the chapter, but with some shifts related to the presentation of the YHWH/prophet set and the nations set.⁵⁶ Members of the nation set function as Subject/Addressee of all of the imperative verbs,⁵⁷ and as Subject/Actor of the YQTL verbs in this sub-section, with but one exception.⁵⁸ The nations set is meant to perform the action, but this action is initiated by YHWH.

⁵⁶ I will, of course, explore the dynamics of this relationship below in the tenor section. Here the intent is simply to get a sense of the ideational picture presented by the transitivity structure.

⁵⁷ A possible exception to this interpretation is found in v. 13, with its plural imperative forms. See the discussion below.

⁵⁸ Alternatively these YQTL forms may be read as jussive verbs, in which case the nations set functions as Subject/Addressee just as with the various imperatives. Yet if these are meant to be read as jussives, one is left wondering why an alternation between imperatives and jussives is presented. The difference is not dramatic in terms of the representation of the situation, but it is notable. The exception to this pattern is found in v. 11 where we read הַנְּחִת יְהוָה גְּבוּרֵיךָ (bring down your warriors YHWH!). As commentators frequently observe, this switch in voice is something of a surprise. Barton reads גְּבוּרֵיךָ as a reference to foreign soldiers (i.e., the nations' soldiers), and not YHWH's soldiers (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 103n.b). I will discuss this difficult verse at greater length below.

One of the fundamental interpretive issues in this sub-section is which Participant or Participant set fills the semantic function of Speaker and Addressee with reference to the many imperative and jussive clauses.⁵⁹ The strong sense in vv. 1–8 is that YHWH is the 1st person voice, or at least that the voice of the prophet and the voice of YHWH overlap entirely. This overlap is reinforced by the final clause of v. 8, in which the prophet’s voice moves momentarily to the fore, explicitly noting that the preceding was spoken by YHWH. This impression carries over into the second sub-section, particularly given that the actions being commanded cannot reasonably be placed in the mouth of the prophet, apart from his role as messenger of YHWH. These are commands given to the nations calling them to war, but in v. 9a there is an explicit command given to “say this to the nations.”⁶⁰ What is more, this command is found in the plural. Consequently, the semantic role of Speaker in vv. 9b–11a cannot be filled by YHWH, but neither can it be the voice of the prophet (or at least, not of the prophet alone). This said, the commands given are divine speech (who else could hope to call the nations to war?), and thus what we have here must be an example of something analogous to messenger speech, though without the common “thus says” formula.

⁵⁹ Assis, *Joel*, 227–28.

⁶⁰ Barton suggests two possibilities regarding the Addressees of vv. 9–13. They may be the people of Judah, and specifically those responsible to muster the people for holy war. This does not seem like a serious possibility at all, given the clear reference to “the nations” as recipients of the call in v. 9. The second option Barton suggests is that this is the heavenly court or a set of divine messengers calling for the muster of the nations in order to destroy them. The image of beating plowshares into swords is therefore one of ironic futility (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 103–04). As Allen puts it, the nations “have been mustered to lose, not win, [YHWH’s] holy war” (Allen, *Joel*, 118; see also: Wolff, *Joel*, 80). Goldsmith sees behind this verse (as well as behind its parallels in Isaiah and Micah), a traditional call to muster a militia (Goldsmith, “Cutting Edge,” 14). As Kynes notes, this may well exacerbate the cutting irony of calling the nations to take up arms, in that they are not merely involved in an act of futility, but are also violating the spirit of peace established by Isaiah’s earlier inversion of the tradition (Kynes, “Beat Your Parodies into Swords,” 308–09). Cf. also Mariottini, “Joel 3:10”; Wolff, “Swords into Plowshares.” For a discussion of the relationship between Mic 4:3 and Joel 4:10 grounded in a synchronic reading of the Book of the Twelve as a whole, see: Sweeney, “Place and Function,” 149–150.

Additionally, vv. 12–15 appear to be direct speech by YHWH, particularly in light of v. 12b, where the first person voice commits to sitting in judgment over “all the nations round about.” Such an action can hardly be the work of anybody but YHWH.⁶¹

Yet the identity of YHWH’s proxies, his messengers, in vv. 9b–11a remains a problem. No immediately identifiable plural referent is available in the discourse to fill this role.⁶² The Addressees of קראו in all of its other imperative instantiations in the Latter Prophets are the people of YHWH. It seems tremendously unlikely that this is the case here in 4:9a. Consequently, it appears that this is an indication of a new referent in the discourse. This has generally been interpreted as a command directed toward YHWH’s heavenly messengers, and perhaps no better interpretation can be suggested. Still, given the lack of any explicit referent for the Addressees of this imperative, any identification should remain tentative.

In the midst of vv. 9–16, the address directed toward YHWH in v. 11b is something of an enigma.⁶³ There are at least three plausible Participant sets that might

⁶¹ A great many different types of Participant may function as Subject/Actor for שפט in the Latter Prophets, but there are two notable points here. With regard to judgment of central entities like the nations or the people of YHWH, only YHWH himself ever judges. There are two demonstrable exceptions to this, which are also the only two cases in which the prophet is the Subject/Actor of the verb שפט: Ezek 20:2 and 23:26. In both cases the verb is in the second person and is modified by an interrogative particle, and is then followed by an imperative clause. In both cases YHWH speaks to the prophet asking if he will judge, and then (with no explicit answer provided) YHWH provides the substance of what the prophet is to say. Thus, while the prophet does function as Subject/Actor in these cases, YHWH clearly functions as Initiator, and the act of judgment is therefore YHWH’s. See also: Assis, *Joel*, 229.

⁶² In the Latter Prophets, קראו is found a scant 15 times. Of these, 5 are pointed as 3mp imperative forms (Isa 12:4; Jer 4:5; Joel 1:14; 2:15; 4:9). It is conceivable that here in Joel 4:9 the verb has been mis-pointed, and should be read as a QTL (they have proclaimed this...). This might clarify the referent of the verbal Subject, as it could be interpreted as the nations having called their people to battle with YHWH. However, given that the imperative construction is perfectly sensible in grammatical terms, that there is no manuscript evidence of a tradition of pointing the verb otherwise, and that this form is clearly an imperative in its other two uses in Joel, re-pointing does not appear necessary (which is not to say that it is not possible).

⁶³ Here OG reads: ὁ πραῦς ἔστω μαχητής (let the timid one become a warrior). Allen follows this as a preferable reading, suggesting that the entirety of vv. 1–12 is divine speech, which cannot be interrupted (Allen, *Joel*, 107 n.7; so also: Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 265 n.11c–c; Bewer, *Joel*, 135, 39). While

be co-referential with this voice. The first possibility is that we have here an instance of the prophet's voice standing in contradistinction to the voice of YHWH.⁶⁴ Throughout my examination of the book of Joel I have observed that there is a degree of internal tension in this Participant set. That said, this tension appears to be at a low ebb in ch. 4, and this is one of only two places in which it may be found in the chapter. Additionally, while this may at first seem to be a particularly attractive candidate because vv. 9–11a appear to be a form of messenger speech, it is by no means clear that the prophet is among the plural messengers. Additionally, even if the prophet is the (or, a) semantic Speaker in vv. 9–11a, the content of the message is YHWH's, which only strengthens the impression of overlap between the prophet and YHWH.

A second option is that this voice is the voice of the people of YHWH. In the only other instance in the book in which YHWH is addressed using an imperative form (2:17) it is the ministers of YHWH who speak. Additionally, the people of YHWH is a significant Participant set in this chapter. Yet this does not seem to be a particularly likely candidate for the role of speaker given the almost entirely passive role of this Participant set in the rest of the chapter. In 2:1–17 the people of YHWH set plays a significant role (functioning as Addressees), which is simply not the case here in ch. 4.

The third possibility is the nations set. This Participant set frequently fills the function of Subject/Actor, and is also the clear Subject/Addressee of the various

Allen's justification is unconvincing, the OG reading does represent a potential alternative (Wolff provides a more clear and plausible defence: Wolff, *Joel*, 73 n.r). I have not followed it here as the existing reading in the MT is sensible (in that it can be understood, even if it is difficult to interpret), and there is no convincing textual evidence to suggest emendation. It seems most likely that OG here has itself emended the text due to the interpretive difficulty (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 93, 9 4n.11). Crenshaw suggests that phrase may be an editorial gloss (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 190).

⁶⁴ Sweeney reads this as the prophet asking YHWH to call out his warriors (Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 182). Finley reads it as an interjected prayer (Finley, *Joel*, 96–97).

imperative and jussive clauses in this middle section of Joel 4 (with the possible exception of v. 13). Of course, nowhere in the book (apart from, perhaps, here), does the nations set function as Speaker. Direct interaction between the nations set and YHWH would be unique to this verse in Joel. However, the relational dynamics between YHWH and the nations set is quite different in Joel 4 than in the rest of the book (see tenor section below), and so uniqueness is hardly a disqualifier here. Given these three options, the most likely possibility appears to be the nations set. The picture presented by v. 11 is of YHWH (through his messengers) calling the nations to come, and the nations responding by telling (taunting?) YHWH to bring down his own warriors.

Another important interpretive problem in this sub-section involves the identity of the Addressees of the imperative verbs of v. 13. Given that these are plural forms, they cannot be addressed to YHWH.⁶⁵ Plural imperatives in this section of the discourse have thus far been to the nations set, with the very notable exception of v. 9a.⁶⁶ If these imperatives are also directed toward the nations set, the sense of the verse is that the enemies of YHWH are being called to come to the valley to harvest and tread. In the broader scheme of the chapter such a command could only be understood ironically, as it is the nations who will be destroyed in the valley.⁶⁷ There are two possible alternatives to this reading.

⁶⁵ Though Wolff does suggest that YHWH is “the grape-treader.” He sidesteps the obvious problem with the plural imperative forms by suggesting that this is simply traditional wording, and that neither the heavenly host nor the people of Judah is referred to explicitly, and so cannot be the referents (Wolff, *Joel*, 81). As Bewer notes, it is not inconsequential that YHWH himself does not enter the battle (Bewer, *Joel*, 138).

⁶⁶ Prinsloo suggests that “12ab permits the inference that the imperatives are spoken by Yahweh to the *gôyim*” (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 97).

⁶⁷ This *pace* Barton, who suggests that v. 13 *cannot* address the nations (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 104).

Many commentators suggest that these imperatives, along with the imperative of v. 9a, are addressed to YHWH's angelic servants.⁶⁸ These heavenly beings function both as divine messengers, calling the nations to the valley of judgment, and as the executors of that judgment in v. 13. This certainly makes for a coherent reading of the passage, but it is significant that nowhere in Joel do we find any explicit reference to angelic or heavenly beings of any kind.

The second alternative is that the Addressees here are the people of YHWH, and that YHWH's people are called to come down to the valley of judgment in order to destroy their foes and persecutors. This reading has the advantage of a discourse-active Participant set in the people of YHWH. It is also significant that v. 8 explicitly refers to the "children of Judah" as participants in the vengeance exacted upon the nations.⁶⁹ Additionally, in Mic 4:13 (a passage already closely related to Joel 4) we find a call to "arise and thresh" directed toward Daughter Zion, and not a heavenly host.⁷⁰

That these imperatives are addressed ironically to the nations seems the least likely of these options. Between the second and third possibilities, I am inclined to accept the third explanation, that the people of YHWH are the Addressees here. But, whether this is a call addressed to unspecified heavenly beings or to YHWH's people, it is clear that YHWH as Speaker is the Initiator of the action. Those who go into the valley do so at his behest, fulfilling his wishes on his behalf.

⁶⁸ Allen, *Joel*, 107n.7, 18. Allen draws on Miller's work, which I have summarized briefly above (Miller, "Divine Council"). So also: Crenshaw, *Joel*, 187; Bewer, *Joel*, 135; Finley, *Joel*, 97; Keller, *Joël*, 151.

⁶⁹ Wolff, *Joel*, 79.

⁷⁰ LaRocca-Pitts, "The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy," 299 n.157. Though LaRocca-Pitts does also note Zech 14:5, where a heavenly army appears to be in view.

The second instance in the middle sub-section in which YHWH is a Participant but fills a function other than Speaker is in v. 16a. Here YHWH functions as third person Subject/Actor of the two YQTL clauses (one intransitive, one transitive). There is a slight shift in emphasis in vv. 14–16a, at the end of the middle sub-section. This shift to a great degree involves changes in terms of the Interpersonal metafunction and is, therefore, associated with the tenor of the passage, which I will discuss below. That said, there is also a shift in the representation of the social situation, which involves movement away from YHWH as the central speaking voice and toward a summary of the situation and description of YHWH by the voice of the prophet.⁷¹ Therefore, while YHWH is almost always represented as a first person Subject/Actor or as Speaker in Joel 4, there are some isolated instances in which this Participant is represented as Subject/Addressee (v. 11) and as third person Actor/Subject.

The nations set in the second sub-section generally fills the function of Subject/Addressee of imperative clauses, and Subject/Actor of YQTL clauses. In addition to the exception in which this set functions as Speaker (v. 11b), there are two additional exceptions to the basic pattern. In v. 11 there appears to be a reflexive use of the *niphal* stem with וְנִקְבְּצוּ (so they will gather themselves) in which a member of the nations set functions as Subject/Goal (the modal weQTL also suggests YHWH as semantic Initiator).⁷² In v. 12 there is another reflexive use of the *niphal* with יִעֹרוּ (they will rouse themselves).⁷³

⁷¹ Crenshaw, *Joel*, 195.

⁷² OG here reads *συνάχθητε* (aorist, passive, imperative), and Crenshaw on the basis of this suggests the MT should be corrected to read as a *niphal* jussive. However, it is likely that the OG has translated with an imperative to bring this clause into line with the two preceding imperatives in the verse. Cf., Crenshaw, *Joel*, 189. So also Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 93; Wolff, *Joel*, 72.

⁷³ The passive is, of course, a possible reading here. Given, however, that this verb is followed immediately by an active YQTL clause in which the same Participant functions as Subject/Actor, along

In addition to these patterns related to the YHWH/prophet and nations Participant sets, there are several clauses pertaining to Participants that do not belong to one of the three Participants sets. In v. 13 there are three stative QTL clauses with inanimate/non-sentient Participants (harvest, winepress, vats). Similarly in v. 15 there is an instance of stative קָדְרָה with “the sun and moon” functioning as Subject/Goal. And, of course, as with the occurrence of this same clause complex in 2:10, “the stars” functions as Subject/Actor in the clause כּוֹכְבֵימ אָסְפוּ נְגִהֵם (“the stars gather their brightness”), which appears to be an idiomatic expression.⁷⁴ Also, in v. 16, there is another stative clause, וְרָעְשׁוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ (“so the heavens and earth quake”), in which “heavens and earth” function as Subject/Goal. In this last case it is once again notable that, as with the reflexive weQTL clause of v. 11, this clause is a modal weQTL indicating consequence, and YHWH (the Subject/Actor of the preceding verbs) is, therefore, the the Initiator here.

In the final sub-section of ch. 4 YHWH/the prophet is significantly less active. There are several instances of Relational processes involving this Participant set, which will be discussed below, but in terms of transitive Material processes, there is only v. 21. Here the speaking voice, co-referential with YHWH, is the Subject/Actor of two clauses, the one nested within the other.⁷⁵ A member of the nations set is found in two Material

with the general pattern of the sub-section in which members of the nation set function as Actor, the reflexive seems more likely here.

⁷⁴ Cf. Assis regarding parallels to 2:10 (Assis, *Joel*, 233–34).

⁷⁵ Joel 4:21a is very difficult. OG here reads: *καὶ ἐκδικήσω τὸ αἷμα αὐτῶν καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀθωώσω* (and I will avenge their blood, and I will not hold [it] guiltless). The use of two different verbs here may indicate a *Vorlage* underlying OG that differs from MT. Vg reads: *Et mundabo sanguinem eorum, quem non mundaveram* (and I will cleanse their blood, which I have not cleansed), which appears to reflect MT. Some have suggested the possibility that the first clause is an unmarked interrogative, which results in something like: “Have I cleansed their bloodguilt? I have not!” The suffix in this case would presumably refer to the nations, and consequently fits well with v. 19 and the reference to the shedding of innocent blood by Egypt and Edom. Allen, who himself holds this view, provides an excellent overview of the various options (Allen, *Joel*, 117 n.47). See also Crenshaw, *Joel*, 202–03; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*,

process clauses in this sub-section. The first instance, the final clause of v. 17, is a negated YQTL that indicates the ongoing absence of זָרִים in the renewed Jerusalem/Zion. The second is found in the final clause of v. 19, and is a QTL clause functioning just as QTL clauses function throughout this chapter, which is to say as an indicator of completed past action that serves as a ground for present or future situations. The desolation of Edom and Egypt is a consequence of this past action. In v. 18 there are four stative YQTL clauses, all in the same semantic range, indicating the presence of streams and fountains of wine, milk, and water. The final clause in v. 18 is a transitive weQTL clause, the Subject/Actor of which is מַעְיֵן מִבַּיִת יְהוָה (“a spring from the house of YHWH”). Finally, in v. 20 “Judah” and “Jerusalem” function as Subject/Goal of the stative תָּשָׁב.

The significant (if unsurprising) conclusion of all of this is that, in terms of the transitivity structure of Material processes in ch. 4, there is only one instance in which YHWH receives verbal action. YHWH *acts* in this final section of the book of Joel. That said, the single instance in which action is directed toward YHWH implies that YHWH has interpreted the rest of the action of vv. 1–8 as a personal affront, and not merely as action against the people of YHWH. The nations set is the other central Participant set in this chapter, functioning as Subject/Actor or Object/Goal in the first sub-section, as Subject/Actor, Subject/Addressee, or Speaker in the second sub-section, and as Subject/Actor in one negated transitive clause in the third sub-section. The progressively shifting role of this set indicates that as the chapter unfolds its agency is continually

113–14; Wolff, *Joel*, 73 n.aa–aa and bb–bb; Bewer, *Joel*, 144; Finley, *Joel*, 103. Though I do not wish to minimize the difficulty here, Stuart’s words are apt: “Other translations and emendations are legion, but the overall point is clear: Yahweh’s (and Israel’s) enemies, signified by Egypt and Edom in v. 19, will not get away with the evil they have done” (Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, 265 n. 21a–a).

reduced, until that agency disappears entirely. The people of YHWH function almost uniformly as Object/Goal in the chapter, with the possible exception of v. 13 where this set may function as Subject/Addressee of the imperative verbs. Finally, a variety of non-sentient Participants is found in the second and third sub-sections, almost uniformly in stative or intransitive clauses.

Joel 4 has only two Mental process clauses, the first in v. 2 and the second at a rather pivotal point in v. 17. In v. 2 there is a reflexive clause, וְנִשְׁפָּטְתִי עִמָּם שָׁם (“and I will enter into judgment with them there”). Here YHWH and “them” (a member of the nations set) function as co-Sensors (though syntactically YHWH is Subject and “them” is part of the Adjunct phrase עִמָּם). Given the way that the Material processes unfold in the remainder of the passage, with YHWH or the nations functioning as Actor in most Material process clauses and interacting in dynamic ways, perhaps this reflexive clause at the beginning of the passage is here to signal that interaction between YHWH and the nations will be of primary importance in the chapter.

The second Mental process clause is found in v.17, וַיִּדְעֻם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שְׂכֵן, בְּצִיּוֹן הַר־קֹדֶשׁ (“so you will know that I am YHWH your God dwelling in Zion”). This opening clause in v. 17 indicates a significant moment in the movement from the second to third sub-section. The use of modal weQTL plus the Mental process ידע indicates knowledge gleaned from the preceding discourse. Additionally, there is a shift in Addressee, as the phrase “your God” can hardly be directed toward the nations set, who have been the Addressees of the preceding discourse. Therefore, in terms of the field of Joel 4, this indicates that a shift in perception or understanding for the people of YHWH set is a consequence of the preceding discourse regarding the judgment of the nations set.

There is only one Speaking process in Joel 4, found in v. 10. Here the words of הַחֲלֵל (the weak one) are quoted (hypotactic projection). This is consistent with the presentation of the situation in the second sub-section, in which all people associated with the nations set are called to war, and even those who are weak are to be considered warriors.

My examination of verbal processes and transitivity structure in Joel 4 has reinforced the picture already presented of the field of this chapter. YHWH is the principal Actor, driving the action of the passage. The nations set functions as Actor, both in relation to past action, and in relation to future action. As the parallel role of Addressee indicates, this future action is undertaken at the command or behest of YHWH/the prophet, who is Initiator or Speaker at various points in the chapter.⁷⁶ The people of YHWH set takes on a receptive role in most of the passage, though this set does function as Subject/Addressee in v. 13, and thus as YHWH's supposed proxies in the destruction of the nations, as well as being the Addressee of the Mental process clause in v. 17. Finally, various non-sentient Participants are found in intransitive and stative clauses in the second and third sub-sections of the chapter.

3.4. Logical Relations

3.4.1. Taxis

Taxic relationships in Joel 4 follow the general patterns found in the preceding sections of the book. Parataxis is generally marked by ו and extension or enhancement are the most common types of parataxis. Hypotaxis is marked by several particles,

⁷⁶ Prinsloo argues, quite rightly, that regardless of the precise identity of YHWH's army in vv. 9–16, the focus is on YHWH's sovereignty (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 102). As Keller puts it, "Cette grandiose scène de jugement est réalisée par un seul acteur, YHWH. Tous les autres personnages—les foules des nations, les serviteur de YHWH—ne sont que des comparses" (Keller, *Joël*, 151).

especially **אֲשֶׁר** and **כִּי**. The chapter presents a variety of types of hypotaxis. As with previous analyses of taxis, I will focus primarily on connections at the level of the clause complex, and not tactic relationships within particular clauses. Parataxis and hypotaxis are often both present in the logical structure of a given clause complex in Joel 4. Because pulling such integrated complexes apart and analyzing them separately would be unhelpful, I will move through the passage as a whole, examining the logical structure of several clause complexes and making observations on the ways that paratactic and hypotactic connections are deployed.

Chapter 4 opens with a paratactic clause followed by a hypotactic clause. The first of these, marked by **כִּי הִנֵּה**, creates a relationship of enhancement with the preceding discourse.⁷⁷ The temporal clauses that follow, and the chapter as a whole, are logically concurrent with ch. 3 and indicate the purpose of the following discourse in relation to the preceding chapter.⁷⁸ This paratactic connection to the preceding discourse is followed by a relative temporal clause, which is an instance of enhancing hypotaxis, and qualifies the temporal particles of the first clause.

Verses 2–3 present another set of interrelated instances of parataxis and hypotaxis. The clause complex in question begins with the weQTL clause **וְנִשְׁפְּטֵהֶם עִמָּם** (“I will enter into judgment with them there”). This is followed by an enhancing hypotactic clause marked by the preposition **עַל**, which indicates the reason for entering into judgment. This hypotactic clause has within it a second hypotactic clause, the

⁷⁷ Assis, *Joel*, 213; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 173, 77; Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 92.

⁷⁸ Note that the phrase **כִּי הִנֵּה** occurs 23 times in the OT/HB, almost uniformly in the Latter Prophets and Psalms (the sole exception is Song 2:11). In all cases the phrase indicates a relationship of purpose between two clauses. Generally the relationship is B is the reason/cause for A, but in a few instances the relationship is A is the reason/cause for B (Isa 3:1; Amos 4:2; 9:9).

relative clause אֲשֶׁר פָּזְרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם (“whom they have scattered”),⁷⁹ which elaborates on the preceding clause by giving further information about YHWH’s people (i.e., not only are they YHWH’s possession, but they have been scattered by the nations). Following this is an extending paratactic clause nested within the initial hypotactic clause. This final clause adds additional information that falls within the scope of the reason for YHWH’s judgment, which is the parcelling up of the land. YHWH indicates his intention to enter into judgment, and the purpose of this judgment is two-fold: YHWH’s people who have been scattered, and the parcelling up of YHWH’s land. Immediately following this rather long and complicated clause we find two paratactic clauses in v. 3, both of which extend the information already provided by indicating more specifically the actions of the nations against YHWH’s people.

Verse 4 opens with וְנָם which, as I have noted above, serves to indicate the specific addition of a discourse item (or set of items) to a preceding discourse item. In this case the set of new discourse items is Tyre, Sidon, and the regions of Philistia.⁸⁰ This is combined with paratactic ׀ to indicate the enhancement of the preceding clause (a possible English translation might be “And indeed what...”). Following this paratactic clause is the clause complex beginning with the conditional particle. The ׀ here, which is an instance of paratactic enhancement, indicates a relationship of consequence to the preceding portion of the verse. The apodosis of the conditional clause is an instance of hypotactic enhancement indicating consequence.

⁷⁹ As Holmstedt’s analysis of the relative clause in BH has revealed, there is little support for a causative use of אֲשֶׁר. Most every instance that is presented as causative can be read as a simple relative, a clause complementizer, a null-head relative, or an extraposed relative (Holmstedt, “Relative Clause,” 293–307). In the case of Joel 4:2 we have a simple relative clause.

⁸⁰ BHRG 41.4.5.1.2.b.

An instance of אֲשֶׁר, which is normally translated as causative, opens v. 5. This is likely an example of an extraposed relative whose referent is the phrase that follows.⁸¹ Consequently, this instance of the relative particle does not appear to be an indication of hypotaxis. Following this relative clause, however, is an instance of paratactic extension, indicating additional precious items that have been stolen by the nations. This paratactic clause is followed by another, which is also an instance of extension indicating that just as the nations have stolen silver, gold, and precious items from YHWH, they have also victimized YHWH's people. Finally an enhancing hypotactic clause indicates the cause of this theft, which is the emptying out of the land. This enhancement is applied particularly to the clause referring to the "children of Judah and children of Jerusalem," but due to the logical connection between the people of YHWH and the possessions of YHWH we can reasonably see the relationship of causation applied to the entire string of things/people that have been stolen. These logical connections help to paint the picture of a land emptied out for annexation.

There are two isolated hypotactic relationships in vv. 7–8. The first, in v. 7, is an instance of elaborating hypotaxis marked by אֲשֶׁר, and gives additional information regarding הַמְּקוֹם. The second, in v. 8, is the summary clause כִּי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר ("because YHWH has spoken"). This is an enhancing clause, and indicates the reason or grounds by which the preceding threats are (or will be) accomplished.⁸²

The second sub-section of the chapter begins with an instance of projecting hypotaxis. This is marked by the imperative of קרא and deictic (cataphoric) זאת, and

⁸¹ As Holmstedt notes a causative translation is not necessarily egregious in such cases since, and this is the case here, the semantic context of such extraposed relatives often suggests causation. See Holmstedt, "Relative Clause," 303.

⁸² Cf. Prinsloo, who sees this as an "affirmative" clause (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 96).

likely encompasses at least the majority of vv. 9–11 (until the reply by the nations). This is a command to speak, in which the messengers' voices are meant to relay the words of YHWH. Within this projected frame there is another instance of hypotactic projection in the final clause of v. 10, יֹאמֵר גִּבּוֹר אָנִי (“say ‘I am a warrior’”). This single, non-verbal relational clause is the sum-total of the content of this instance of projection.

There are several instances of hypotactic enhancement in the second sub-section of ch. 4. In v. 12 the call to come down to the valley of Jehoshaphat is followed by a purpose clause marked by כִּי. The nations are called to the valley to face YHWH's judgment. In v. 13 there is a string of 3 successive כִּי clauses, all of which mark enhancing hypotactic clauses. These clauses each indicate the reason for the command/statement they follow, and each hypotactic clause itself contains a non-verbal Relational clause. Prinsloo may also be correct to suggest that the final of these three clauses “is the substantiation of all the imperatives [of the clause]: they concern the wickedness of the gōjim.”⁸³

The final hypotactic clause in the second sub-section of the chapter is of particular importance for this dissertation. Here a כִּי clause follows the non-verbal Relational clause הַמִּוֹנִים הַמִּוֹנִים בְּעֵמֶק הַחֲרוּץ (“multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of cutting”), and is an enhancing hypotactic clause. The hypotactic clause provides the reason for the call to the multitudes. Therefore, here in v. 14 two integral elements of the Arena of the passage are brought together with a logical relationship of purpose. The vital locative circumstance, the valley, intersects the vital temporal circumstance, the Day of YHWH. The nations are brought to the valley of cutting because of the nearness

⁸³ Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 99.

of the Day. The Day of YHWH here in ch. 4 is a day for the judgment of the nations, which is consistent with the pattern of hypotaxis indicating purpose in this sub-section.

The second sub-section closes and moves into the third sub-section with a string of paratactic clauses in vv. 15–16. The two clauses of v. 15 are joined by extending parataxis, which indicates both the temporal and logical concurrence of the darkening of the celestial bodies. This is followed by the paratactic clause that opens v. 16, which is also extending and indicates the logical concurrence of the darkening of the heavenly bodies and the voice of YHWH. The first and second clauses of v. 16 are joined by elaborating parataxis, and the second clause essentially restates the content of the first. This is followed by a modal weQTL verb indicating result (“thus the heavens and earth quake”), and two more paratactic clauses. These final two clauses in v. 16 are generally translated as disjunctives. This may be justifiable, but conjunction would be reasonable as well. In any case the first is an instance of extending parataxis, and indicates an additional quality of YHWH, i.e., that YHWH is *מְחַסֵּה לְעַמּוֹ* (“a refuge to his people”). The final clause in v. 16 is an elaborating paratactic clause that restates the content of the preceding clause.

Verse 17 opens with a Mental process followed by an instance of hypotactic projection, indicating the content of what will be known. The final clause in this verse is an instance of parataxis, though it is difficult to determine whether it should be interpreted as extending or enhancing. Is Jerusalem holy, and therefore strangers will not pass through it (extending)?⁸⁴ Or is Jerusalem holy because strangers will not pass through it (enhancing)? Both are viable options.

⁸⁴ Assis prefers this reading. “Because God is in it, the city is holy, and because of its holiness, others cannot pass through the city” (Assis, *Joel*, 239; so also Wolff, *Joel*, 82).

Following this in v. 18 there are three instances of extending parataxis. These are preceded by the clause *יִטְפוּ הַהָרִים עֲסִיט* (“the mountains will drip wine”), creating a series of related clauses that all fall within the scope of the temporal Relational clause that opens the verse (“so it will be on that day”). Three depictions of prosperity are thus added one to another. A similar effect is produced by the single extending paratactic clause of v. 19. Here the characterization of Edom as a wilderness is added to the characterization of Egypt as a desolation. The *אֲשֶׁר* clause that closes v. 19 is an elaborating paratactic clause, which provides an additional description of the “wrong” that has been perpetrated against the children of Judah, clarifying that this sin is the shedding of innocent blood.

Verse 20 contains two extending paratactic clauses. The first is likely disjunctive, contrasting the experience of Judah with the destruction of the nations. The second is a near-synonymous extension of the first. The final paratactic clause in the chapter is *וַיְהִי* *שָׁכַן בְּצִיּוֹן*, which closes the book. This may be read as paratactic enhancement (*because* YHWH dwells in Zion), indicating that YHWH’s presence in Zion is the reason that Judah’s blood will be avenged, and thereby tying this final clause closely to the preceding clause. Yet, if such a semantic relationship were intended, one would expect a hypotactic clause marked by *כִּי*, and not a paratactic clause marked by *וַ*. More likely is that this is an extending clause (and YHWH dwells in Zion), indicating the final state of affairs presented by the chapter and the book, which is that YHWH is present in Zion. This presence summarizes both the content of the final sub-section of ch. 4, and provides a powerfully positive conclusion to the prophetic book as a whole.

Tactic relationships in Joel 4, therefore, follow, more or less, the same pattern as is found in the rest of the book. Almost all instances of parataxis and hypotaxis are

expanding, with only a few isolated examples of projection (though at least one of these, in v. 9, is integral to the structure of the discourse). There are a significant number of paratactic clauses, and these are most frequently extending, and on occasion enhancing or elaborating. There are fewer instances of hypotaxis, and these are generally either elaborating (especially אֲשֶׁר clauses) or enhancing (especially כִּי clauses). The reduction in the number of projecting clauses in ch. 4 is consistent with other observations I have made regarding the monologic nature of the chapter, particularly with regard to the YHWH/prophet Participant set.

3.4.2. Relational Clauses

There are several notable Relational clauses in Joel 4, both verbal and non-verbal. Indeed, the concentration of Relational clauses that explicitly use the Relational verb הָיָה is greater in this chapter than in previous sections of the book of Joel, and that concentration is especially notable in the final sub-section of ch. 4. In this section I will begin by examining non-verbal clauses, and then I will turn my attention to Relational clauses with an expressed verb.

Verse 4 begins with a non-verbal interrogative identifying Relational clause. The interrogative particle is the Identifier, and the 2mp pronoun the Identified. The interrogative is never disambiguated with an explicit answer, as the question is obviously rhetorical. The answer is meant to be “nothing” or some-such, and consequently the thrust of the Relational clause is “you are nothing in relation to me....”

The projected quotation in v. 10, in which “the weak” speak, is the second non-verbal Relational clause in ch. 4. This is an example of a non-verbal attributive Relational clause. The pronoun is the Carrier, and the nominalized participle the Attribute. The rhetorical power here is that this attributive clause assigns an Attribute to

the Carrier that is antonymous to the co-referential substantival adjective **הַחֶלֶץ**. That is to say, the speaker declares himself to be precisely the opposite of what he is, or is thought to be.

Verse 14 contains no verbs. Instead, there are two closely related non-verbal Relational clauses used to describe the Day of YHWH. The first of these is the clause **הַמוֹנִים הַמוֹנִים בְּעַמְקֵי הַחַרוֹץ** (“multitudes, multitudes on the plain of cutting”) is a circumstantial attributive Relational clause. This clause identifies the location in which the multitudes will gather (or have gathered, or are gathering). The second non-verbal Relational clause, **יּוֹם יְהוָה בְּעַמְקֵי הַחַרוֹץ** (“the Day of YHWH on the plain of cutting”), is also circumstantial and attributive, this time identifying the location of the Day of YHWH. The repetition of the phrase **בְּעַמְקֵי הַחַרוֹץ** using exactly the same grammatical and semantic structure indicates that a strong relationship is being drawn between **הַמוֹנִים** and **יּוֹם יְהוָה**. This brings together a Participant with what is arguably the central event of the chapter. It could hardly be clearer that the Day of YHWH is directed toward or against the multitudes (i.e., the nations set).

In v.16 there are two non-verbal Relational clauses, both of which are attributive. The first, **וְיְהוָה מְחַסָּה** (“for YHWH is a refuge”), predicates a quality of YHWH that is related to the judging/saving activity described in the immediately preceding discourse. The second, **וּמְעוֹז** (“[YHWH] is a stronghold”), functions in precisely the same way, though the Carrier of the attribute (YHWH) is elided in this second phrase.

The last non-verbal Relational clause in the chapter is in v. 17, within the projected frame of the Mental process **וַיִּדְעַתֶּם**. The first clause within this projected frame is an identifying Relational clause. The 1cs pronoun functions as Identified and the rankshifted participial clause **יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שָׁכַן בְּצִיּוֹן הַר-קְדְּשִׁי** (“YHWH your god

dwelling in Zion my holy mountain”) functions as Identifier. This presents to the people of YHWH the basic character of YHWH: YHWH is their god, and he dwells in Zion.

After this non-verbal Relational clause in v. 17, there is a shift to Relational clauses marked explicitly with the verb *היה*. The first of these, the clause *וְהָיְתָה יְרוּשָׁלַם קֹדֶשׁ* (“so Jerusalem will be holy”), is an attributive Relational clause. The attribute holiness is applied to the Carrier, Jerusalem, which follows consequentially from YHWH’s dwelling in Zion/Jerusalem (note the use of *weQTL*). The second is the temporal clause *וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם הַהוּא* (“and it will be on that day”). This is a circumstantial Relational clause. Here the phrase *בַיּוֹם הַהוּא* is the Circumstance, and the implied Subject of the verb is the Identified. That implied Subject is co-referential with the set of clauses that follows this Relational clause, *וְשָׁפוּ הַהַרִים עָסִים וְהַגְּבְעוֹת תִּלְכְּנָה חֵלֶב וְכָל-אֲפִיקֵי יְהוּדָה יִלְכוּ מָיִם וּמַעַיִן מִבַּיִת יְהוָה יֵצֵא וְהִשְׁקָה אֶת-נַחַל הַשְּׁטִיִם* (“the mountains will drip with new wine, and the hills will flow with milk, and all of the stream-beds of Judah will flow with water, and a stream will go out from the house of YHWH so that it waters the river-valley of Shittim”). This relational clause thus provides the temporal circumstance of the images of prosperity in v. 18. These things will occur “on that day.”⁸⁵

In v. 19 there are two other Relational clauses with an expressed verb. These are in syntactically and semantically parallel lines that describe the coming state of Egypt and Edom, and both are attributive Relational clauses. In the case of the first clause the Carrier is *מִצְרַיִם*, and the attribute assigned to this Carrier is the phrase *לְשִׂמְמָה*. In the second clause exactly the same structure is found, here with *אֲדוֹם* as Carrier and the phrase *לְמַדְבַּר שְׂמָמָה* as attribute.

⁸⁵ This phrase is at times taken as an indication of redactional activity. See Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 108. It is also taken by some commentators as an eschatological formula (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 198).

In this subsection we have explored a variety of Relational clauses in Joel 4. This portion of Joel contains Relational clauses of all types, including identifying, attributive, and circumstantial, and manifests these types with both verbal and non-verbal clauses. The interaction between the two circumstantial clauses in v. 14 is central to the exploration of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel. Also, the identifying clause of v. 17 is important to the discourse as it presents the speaking voice as YHWH, the god of the Addressees in the final sub-section, and thereby draws a close relationship between YHWH and the people of YHWH. The fact that the first two sub-sections of the chapter contain only non-verbal Relational clauses, and the third contains principally verbal Relational clauses is notable, and could suggest redactional activity. In any case, Relational clauses in Joel 4 function in a way that is consistent with Relational clauses in the other three major sections of the prophetic book.

3.5. Field of Discourse: Conclusions

My exploration of the field of discourse in Joel 4 indicates that, among the three major identified participant sets (YHWH/the prophet, the nations, and the people of YHWH), YHWH drives the action of this portion of the prophetic book. YHWH is found in all three sub-sections of ch. 4, and frequently fills the semantic role of Actor and Initiator. This conclusion is reinforced by verbal processes and transitivity structure in this section of Joel, where YHWH is the chief mover behind the verbal action, particularly with reference to future action. The nations are also found in all three sub-sections, though with decreasing frequency, and with decreasing agency as the chapter progresses. This set is often Object/Goal. The people of YHWH are generally passive, often filling the role of Adjunct, and are also found throughout the passage.

Location in Joel 4 is continuous with the preceding sections of the book, though the negative external and positive internal spaces noted above are given greater clarity and specificity. Judah/Jerusalem is a place of safety and blessing (indicating continuity with 2:18—3:5, and the inversion of 1:2—2:17) and is opposed to an external space occupied by certain specified foreign nations. Also central to the action of ch. 4 is the plain of judgment, where the Day of YHWH will occur. Time in Joel 4 is marked by an opposition between a set of past events (vv. 3–6) and the coming future event of the Day of YHWH. What is more, these past events are the grounds or cause for the coming Day. The implied reader stands between the past events in which the nations assaulted the people of YHWH, and the future moment of the judgment and destruction of the nations on the Day of YHWH. In this the temporal Arena of Joel 4 is a consistent extension of the temporal situation I observed in the preceding sections of the book. That said, it is also important to note that here, as with 2:18—3:5, while the coming Day has a sense of immediacy, temporal reference is at best vague.

Logical relations in this section of Joel are consistent with the rest of the book. The patterns of taxis I describe above are similar to those found in previous sections of Joel. I described Relational clauses of essentially every type in this passage, and noted the importance of the Relational clause of v. 14b for the theme of the Day of YHWH in Joel 4. Additionally, I noted that whereas the first and second sub-sections of this passage (vv. 1–16) have an abundance of non-verbal Relational clauses, the third sub-section of Joel 4 (vv. 17–21) presents an abundance of Relational clauses with the equative verb.

All in all, the field of Joel 4 evinces similar features to the field of preceding passages, though with some small but important shifts. There is an augmented focus on

the centrality of YHWH as Actor and Initiator, as well as a decrease in the role of the nations and the people of YHWH as Actors. Location in Joel 4 is more definite, and the temporal Arena, while still referentially vague, maintains the tension between past action and the coming Day of YHWH.

4. Tenor

4.1. Participant Relations

In this section I will examine issues of modality related to Participant relations, as well as the ways in which various Participants are represented in relation to one another in the chapter (especially in terms of grammatical person). An examination of these various relations reveals a decrease or adjustment in the internal tension of the YHWH/prophet set, explains the function of both the nations set and the people of YHWH set as Addressees, and provides suggestive information regarding the relational dynamic between the three main Participant sets.

Imperative clauses are not infrequent in ch. 4, making up approximately 17% of the finite clauses in the chapter.⁸⁶ All of these clauses are found in the second sub-section of the book, in vv. 9–13. The Addressees of all of these clauses (with the exception of vv. 9a and 13), are members of the nations set. Consequently, one of the central relational axes of Joel 4 is between YHWH/the prophet (as Speaker/Initiator) and the nations set (as Addressees). In my discussion of the temporal Arena of the chapter I noted that this middle sub-section contains numerous YQTL forms. Whether one takes these as jussives or as imperfectives (I prefer the latter), in combination with the concentration of imperative forms these have the effect of giving the entire subsection a

⁸⁶ If one reads the various YQTL clauses in the second sub-section as jussive, volitional clauses would make up 25% of all finite clauses in the chapter.

modally unreal sense. This portion of the chapter concerns what should or will occur, and thus represents the desire or intent of the Speaker/Initiator, who in this case is YHWH.

There is one exception to this pattern of YHWH as the Speaker of imperative clause: the clause found in v. 11b, where YHWH functions as Subject/Addressee. It is possible that the Speaker of this imperative clause is the nations set. If that is the case, some type of process sharing may be represented, suggesting an exchange between YHWH/the prophet and the nations. It is difficult to determine to what degree this imperative receives an answer. Given the interpretation of v. 13 that I have offered above, YHWH does indeed send down warriors, in the form of the people of YHWH. Yet, even given this use of the people in exacting judgment upon the nations, YHWH appears to act as sole judge. YHWH is the Speaker, and consequently the Initiator here. Therefore, while the nations set challenge or invite YHWH to bring down his warriors in v. 11, the call is answered only by judgment and destruction. The momentary instance in which the nations set functions as Speaker does not indicate a conversation or interaction. In fact, it casts the lack of real interaction into stark relief.

In terms of grammatical person, the dominance of YHWH as the principal Actor is underscored by the fact that of the ten instances of first person pronouns or suffixes, nine refer to YHWH. The single exception is the projected hypotactic clause of v. 10, in which “the weak one” speaks self-referentially. YHWH is also a third person referent ten times in the chapter (vv. 8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21). Of these one is an instance of self-reference (v. 17), two are instances in which the word *יְהוָה* functions as a modifier (vv. 14, 18), and in one instance YHWH is the Subject/Addressee of an imperative clause (v. 11b). The remaining five instances are all examples of the internal tension of the YHWH/prophet Participant set. Yet, while the tension in this set is notable in terms of

the interpersonal structure of the passage, there is no tension in terms of the content presented by the two separate Participants. The prophet does not challenge or disagree with YHWH at any point. When the voice of Joel comes to the fore what follows is summary (v. 8) or a description of YHWH's action on behalf of the people of YHWH (vv. 14–16, 21). Particularly in vv. 14–16 the voice of the prophet moves forward, and he engages in a description of the judgment scene. This involves not only describing the scene, but drawing a connection between this judgment and the relationship between YHWH and the people of YHWH. The power and judgment of YHWH is juxtaposed with his role as *מְחַיֶּה* and *מְעַזְּרֵם* to his people, suggesting that the latter follows logically from the former (see the sub-section above dealing with logical relations). In terms of the interpersonal metafunction and the representation of role relationships in Joel 4, the prophet sees YHWH's power as the source of salvation for the people of YHWH.

The nations set appears very frequently in the 2mp, which is entirely in keeping with its role as Addressee of much of the discourse. It is notable that many instances of pronominal/suffix 2mp reference occur in the first sub-section (fourteen times in 2mp, vv. 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10). The nations set is also referred to in the third person on several occasions. Singular references include proper names (vv. 4, 19) and there are several 3mp pronoun/suffix references (vv. 13, 19). The nations set is thus principally referred to in the second person, which is consistent with its function as Addressee of much of the discourse, but second person references to this set disappear entirely after v. 14. The nations are addressed only up until reference is made to the time of destruction (vv. 13–14).

The people of YHWH set occurs most frequently in the third person (vv. 6, 7, 21), and three times in the second (vv. 13, 17).⁸⁷ As I have already noted, instances of this set do not abound in Joel 4. Nevertheless we must consider the people of YHWH to be integral to the interpersonal relations of the chapter. The course of action taken by YHWH against the nations is justified based upon the actions of the nations against the people of YHWH. Additionally, the single instance of a second person reference to the people of YHWH is in one of the more important verses of the passage. The use of the 2mp suffix in 4:17 shifts the discourse from a tirade of judgment directed at the nations, to words of promise directed at the people of YHWH. Given that this shift moves the reader into the final sub-section of the entire book of Joel, it can hardly be seen as secondary or insignificant.

An examination of modality and grammatical person indicates first the primacy of YHWH. YHWH is the principal Actor, Speaker, and Initiator in the passage. The instances in which YHWH is described in the third person indicate tension in the YHWH/prophet Participant set, but this tension is quite minor in the chapter, since the prophet simply summarizes or describes the action of YHWH. In terms of relative power relationships, YHWH is absolute, and the prophet (where there is tension in the set) supports the actions and words of YHWH absolutely. The nations set is entirely subsidiary in the passage, referred to mostly in the second person. This set is ignored when it speaks (v. 11), and must perform when addressed (vv. 9–12). Its relative power is very low indeed. The people of YHWH set is also low on the scale of relative power in this chapter, referred to mostly in the third person, and addressed directly only in vv. 13 and 17.

⁸⁷ This is given that my reading of v. 13 above is correct.

4.2. Polarity, Interrogatives, and Process Sharing

Polarity in ch. 4 is generally positive. Indicative clauses describe action (whether perfective or imperfective), and imperative clauses describe action that is meant to be undertaken. There are no negated commands in the chapter as in the preceding section of the book. There are two instances of negation in the final sub-section of ch. 4. Here we find the phrase *לֹא־יַעְבְּרוּ־בָּהּ עוֹד* (“strangers will no longer pass through it”). The negated verb and adverbial modifier suggest that this describes a change in the state of affairs. At one point strangers did pass through, but in the redeemed Jerusalem/Zion this will no longer be the case.⁸⁸ This is consistent with the power dynamics outlined in the previous section, in which YHWH acts upon the nations set. The second instance of negation is the phrase *וְנִקְמְתִי דַמָּם לֹא־נִקְמִיתִי* (“so I will avenge their blood I did not avenge”). Here YHWH commits to action that he has formerly not performed, indicating a shift in relationship between the people of YHWH set (referents of the pronominal suffix) and YHWH, who will now act on behalf of his people.

Verse 4 contains the only instances of interrogatives in ch. 4. Here, as with Joel 2:1–17, the interrogatives do not function as indicators of process sharing but function rhetorically. The initial question, “What are you to me...?” is freighted with an implied negative answer. The nations carry no weight with YHWH, and they have no power in relation to YHWH (as I have argued above). The second rhetorical question, “Are you paying me back for something?”, is equally freighted with an implied answer, which is not merely that there is nothing reasonable for which the nations could be repaying

⁸⁸ Barton suggests that the Babylonian exile left a deep mark on “the Jewish consciousness,” which explains this radical exclusivism (Barton, *Joel and Obadiah*, 108). This *pace* Assis, who believes that Joel 4 is more inclusive and expansive in its vision of salvation and safety than was Joel 3, because there is no specific reference to a limited group that will be saved (Assis, *Joel*, 236).

YHWH, but that the nations are not in any position to make such a judgment in any case. Again, this rhetorical question reinforces the power dynamic of the passage as a whole, which is that the nations do not have the stature or power necessary to oppose YHWH.

There are no instances of process sharing in the chapter, whether true or virtual. The interrogatives of v. 4, as I have just noted, function rhetorically and not as invitations to a response. The extensive use of imperative forms and the second person would perhaps suggest an invitation to dialogue, but there is no true exchange here, and the voice of YHWH/the prophet dominates. The sole exception, the response of the nations in v. 11, is ignored utterly, which simply serves to reinforce the monologic feel of the entire chapter. Indeed, this is perhaps the most monologic discourse in the book of Joel, to the degree that even the tension within the YHWH/prophet Participant set serves to reinforce YHWH's dominance and centrality.

4.3. Tenor of Discourse: Conclusions

The tenor of discourse of Joel 4 emphasizes the supremacy of YHWH and the subjugation of the nations to YHWH. YHWH is the Initiator of all meaningful action, calling the nations to judgment, and sending warriors to destroy. YHWH is referred to in the 1st person in the majority of the discourse, which underscores his active role in this portion of Joel. God speaks, judges, and initiates action, and is challenged by nobody and nothing. The taunt of the nations in v. 11 is met with no reply but destruction. The nations are utterly passive in this chapter. They are referred to chiefly in the 2nd person, until vv. 13-14 when they are destroyed. The people of YHWH are also generally passive participants. They are acted upon by the nations, and they are saved by YHWH. In the possible instance in which the people act (v. 13) they function as proxies of YHWH. The rhetorical use of interrogatives in ch. 4 also serves to emphasize the

dominance of YHWH over the nations. Finally, there is no meaningful process sharing in the chapter. In the one instance in which the nations address YHWH they receive no response but annihilation.

5. Register Analysis of Joel 4:1–21

Joel 4 presents a linguistic register that is similar in many ways with the rest of the book of Joel. It is perfectly reasonable to refer to all of these sections of the book as examples of a “prophetic register.” That said, there are here, as with the preceding sections, important differences. These differences are found at all levels of the analysis, but particularly at the level of field and tenor.

Joel 4 is an internally cohesive and coherent text, with overlapping identity and similarity chains running throughout the chapter, and even overlapping into the preceding chapter. Similarity chains, made up especially of co-reference ties, identify three main Participant sets in the chapter: YHWH/the prophet, the nations, and the people of YHWH. The first of these has been present throughout the book of Joel. The second represents a set that is similar in many ways to Participant sets from preceding sections of Joel (e.g. the Northerner), but may not be precisely co-referential with those other sets. The third set is not inconsistent with similar Participant sets from chs. 1 and 2 especially, and may be co-referential with them. Cohesive ties in Joel 4 not only bind the chapter together as a whole, but also indicate three distinct sub-sections within the chapter, each of which presents a tightly coherent sub-text to the main text (i.e., to the chapter as a whole).⁸⁹ These sub-sections are vv. 1–8, vv. 9–16, and vv. 17–21. Co-reference ties bind together the chapter as a whole, and co-classification ties and (most

⁸⁹ In Hasan’s sense (“Speaking with Reference to Context,” 249–50). See ch. 2 above for a discussion of sub-text and main text.

particularly) co-extension ties bind the three sub-sections internally. The internal coherence of the first sub-section involves the semantic range of exchange or economy. The coherence of the second involves the semantic ranges of war/battle and agriculture, which also overlap metaphorically.⁹⁰ The third sub-section does not cohere so clearly around a single semantic range, but a focus on prosperity and safety in that sub-section is of note.

The field of Joel 4 includes the three Participant sets just noted. In terms of transitivity structure, the YHWH/prophet set functions as the principal Subject/Actor throughout, functions as Speaker and Initiator frequently, and does not function as Object/Goal at any point in the discourse.⁹¹ The nations set functions often as Subject/Actor, especially in the first sub-section, as Subject/Addressee in the second sub-section, and as Subject/Actor and Object/Goal in the third sub-section. The agential role of the nations set diminishes sharply as the discourse unfolds. The people of YHWH set functions generally as Object/Goal or as Adjunct/Circumstantial, and with only a few isolated exceptions has little or no agency in the chapter. The most significant agent in the chapter is YHWH, and the most significant interaction is between YHWH and the nations set.

The locative arena of the passage includes a plain or low-laying vale that is central to the action, and a strong distinction between positive internal space and negative external space. The plain of judgment/cutting appears to be the location of the action of the second sub-section, and the location of the event referred to as the Day of

⁹⁰ Prinsloo notes the military terminology of vv. 9–11 (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 97). Keller also sees a division between various sub-sections related to semantic domains of war, agriculture, and cosmic language (Keller, *Joël*, 150).

⁹¹ Assis also notes that YHWH appears more active in ch. 4 than in ch. 3 (Assis, *Joel*, 233).

YHWH. This is a place of judgment associated with war and destruction. The other significant locative element in the chapter is the opposition between an inner safe and prosperous place, identified with Judah and Jerusalem/Zion, and an outer place of desolation, identified with the nations set generally, and Edom and Egypt particularly.⁹² This negative external space is identified with Judah's immediate neighbours, but a space that stands beyond that, the extremely distant space indicated by reference to the Ionians and Sabeans, is presented as a neutral space into which Judah's enemies will be sold.⁹³ The opposition first presented in Joel 2:18—3:5, between a positive internal and negative external space, is given much greater definition in this chapter.

Temporal circumstance in ch. 4 is similarly tied to the preceding portion of the book. The deictic temporal phrases that begin the chapter, as well as the presentation of future consequences based upon past actions suggest that we are still in the discourse-present of 2:18—3:1. Here in ch. 4 past action, generally referred to as complete action using perfective verbs (QTL and *wayyiqtol*), refers to the actions of the nations set which have led to YHWH's response. Conversely the action of YHWH is presented principally using weQTL, YQTL, and imperative forms, and is thus presented as *irreal* action, indicating what should or will occur.

Logical relationships in ch. 4 tend to be consistent with what we have seen in the rest of Joel. Almost all instances of taxis are expanding, with only two instances of projection, in vv. 9 and 11. Paratactic clauses, generally marked by ׀, tend to be extending or elaborating, and are relatively common. Hypotactic clauses tend to be

⁹² Also, the image of Egypt as a wilderness is augmented by the existence of the Nile, which is a guarantor of Egypt's fertility. Compare this to Judah, where water would have been a concern (Crenshaw, *Joel*, 200).

⁹³ The particular animosity reserved for Judah's close neighbours is reminiscent of the ׀ of Deuteronomy (cf. Deut 20:17).

marked by בִּי when enhancing, and by אֲשֶׁר when elaborating. Relational clauses in sub-sections one and two are exclusively non-verbal, whereas Relational clauses in sub-section three are, with the exception of one clause in v. 17, marked by an expressed verb. The reason for this distinction is difficult to determine, though the הִיָּה clauses of sub-section three are aspectually and modally consistent with the other finite verbal process in that sub-section. Relational clauses of all three types, attributing, identifying, and circumstantial, are represented in the chapter.

The relational dynamics of the chapter, covered in the examination of Tenor, present YHWH as the dominant figure, acting upon all and acted upon by none. Additionally YHWH is presented almost exclusively in the 1cs, which is consistent with the role of primary power and authority. In those instances where YHWH is referred to in the third person we see indications of mild tension in the YHWH/prophet Participant set. This tension, however, is relatively minor, particularly when compared with the internal tension in this set in previous passages in Joel. Here, when the voice of the prophet speaks in distinction to YHWH, the prophet functions either as YHWH's spokesperson (vv. 9–11a) or describes the greatness and power of YHWH (vv. 14–16). There is no sense whatsoever of the prophet acting as mediator on behalf of the nations, and no sense that he would have to act as intermediary for the people of YHWH.

The nations set are referred to principally in the second person. This suggests that the primary relational axis in the chapter is between YHWH as Speaker and the nations as Addressee. To the degree that this is accurate (I will problematize it somewhat below) it is also notable that these two Participant sets follow opposing trajectories through the chapter in terms of their relative power relationships. While the nations function commonly as Actor in the first sub-section, this role is progressively

reduced, first to Addressee and then to referent in Relational clauses by the third subsection. YHWH, however, grows more central as the passage progresses, and YHWH's presence in Zion is the final circumstance noted in the chapter and the book.

The third set, the people of YHWH, play quite a minor role in the relational dynamics of the passage. They are referred to mostly in the second or third person, and function often as Object/Goal. Even in those rare instances in which the people of YHWH function as Subject/Actor, the impression is that they are essentially proxies of YHWH. Compare this with the preceding sections of the book of Joel, in which the people of YHWH/Israel often filled the role of Addressee, or other syntactic and semantic roles more central to the discourse. Yet here, in a passage in which the outcome is unilaterally positive for the people of YHWH set, they play little role in the interpersonal dynamics of the discourse.

The dynamics of process sharing, interrogatives, and polarity in ch. 4 are consistent with this strongly one-sided discourse. There are no instances of real process sharing. Even the brief moment in v. 11b where YHWH functions as Subject/Addressee of an imperative clause serves chiefly as an exception to prove the rule. No response is given to the command to "bring down your warriors, YHWH!"; the passage simply proceeds as though nothing had been said.⁹⁴ Similarly interrogatives in the chapter are not indications of process sharing, but are used rhetorically to accentuate YHWH's authority relative to the nations set.

⁹⁴ While I have interpreted this demand as something expressed by the nations set, my point here regarding the lopsided power dynamics holds true regardless of who it is that calls for YHWH to bring warriors. That the request/command is apparently ignored suggests that the Addressee, YHWH, was in no way required to respond to it, which serves to accentuate YHWH's centrality in the passage.

The internal relational dynamics of Joel 4 are quite clear: YHWH interacts with the nations, condemns them, and promises deliverance for the people of YHWH. But certain elements of the mode of this discourse that have been taken for granted to this point must be considered. Joel 4, like the rest of the book, is in a graphic channel and presented in at least a partially spoken medium. But the nature of the graphic channel is a text, written in Hebrew. It is difficult to imagine how the nations set, or even individuals who might identify with the nations set, would come into contact with such a written, Hebrew text.⁹⁵ If, therefore, one of the principal interactants in the relational dynamics of the passage is not likely the actual addressee of the work, one wonders at the rhetorical dynamics at play here. Instead of the principal relational dynamics of Joel 4 being between YHWH/the prophet and the nations set, it is more likely between YHWH/the prophet and the people of YHWH. The actual recipients of the discourse are, within the discourse world, passive observers. There is little for the people of YHWH to do in the way of helping the course of events along, because what happens is simply presented as a result of YHWH's will. Even if we interpret v. 13 as a call to the people of YHWH to go down and destroy the nations on the plain (and this not the only possible reading of that verse), it is obvious from the surrounding text that this destruction is accomplished by the power and authority of YHWH. The nations thus appear to be a prop used to demonstrate YHWH's greatness to the people of YHWH.

The register of the final chapter of Joel might be summarized as a description of YHWH's coming triumph over the enemies of the people of YHWH.⁹⁶ YHWH is

⁹⁵ I am not suggesting that this is an impossibility, simply an implausibility.

⁹⁶ Prinsloo sees in this passage a combination of "legal procedure" and "call to war" *Gattungen*, nested within an "address by Yahweh." The core of this, however, is the focus on judgment, and the other forms contribute to this core *Gattung* (Prinsloo, *Theology of Joel*, 101–02). This summary of the passage

dominant, in terms of both the action in the field of discourse and the relational dynamics of the tenor of discourse. The three sub-sections suggested by our analysis of the mode of discourse function as three sub-texts, and present sub-registers that serve the greater purpose of the primary text. The first sub-section is an indictment of the enemies of the people of YHWH, the second sub-section is a call inviting those enemies to battle with YHWH, and the third sub-section is a description of prosperity and wholeness that will result from YHWH's actions on behalf of the people of YHWH.

6. The Day of YHWH

The Day of YHWH in Joel 4 is a time of simultaneous destruction and restoration. The register of Joel 4 frames this event in such a way that these two elements of the Day function as related promises for the people of YHWH, who are presumably the implied audience of the chapter (and the book) as a whole. The Day is presented as a future event, and is closely related to certain oppositions in terms of location and Participant sets.

The mode of Joel 4 explicitly juxtaposes the Day of YHWH and the nations in v. 14. Here the nations are to be found on the "plain of cutting," and the Day of YHWH occurs on the "plain of cutting." The act of judgment is thereby brought together with the moment of the Day, indicating that here in Joel 4 the Day of YHWH is a time of judgment and destruction for the nations. Related to this is the opposition between the plain as a place of judgment and the mountain (specifically Mt. Zion) as a place of refuge and safety. The former is where the nations meet their end, and the latter is where the people of YHWH find everlasting security. This is consistent with the overall

as a description of YHWH's judgment is acceptable, and consistent with my examination of the passage's register.

opposition between sacred and safe internal space (Judah/Jerusalem/Zion) and negative external space (the specific surrounding nations, and the general outside world). All of this frames the Day of YHWH in Joel 4 as a time of simultaneous salvation and prosperity (for those who are inside, i.e., the people of YHWH) and destruction and judgment (for those from the outside who are brought to the plain of judgment/cutting, i.e., the nations).

The time of the Day is, once again, referred to as “near.” The relative temporal relationship between the judgment described in the second sub-section and the prosperous vision of Judah/Jerusalem/Zion presented in the third sub-section is not entirely clear. The vision of destruction is never explicitly realized, and the presentation of the Day of YHWH, which begins in v. 14 and appears to run until at least v. 16, does not have clearly defined boundaries. Consequently, the salvific portrait of vv. 17–21 may overlap temporally with the Day of YHWH, or may follow it. The use of other temporal phrases like “on that day” in vv. 1 and 18 suggest that there is a degree of temporal overlap between the time of the destruction of the nations, and the time of the restoration of Judah. It appears that the destruction of the nations inaugurates the restoration of Judah, and that the Day of YHWH represents the end of the old (the domination of the nations over Judah), and the beginning of the new (Judah’s perpetual independence and prosperity). Additionally, the Day is presented as a future event. From the perspective of the discourse present of Joel 4 (and the book as a whole), it lies in the future.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ This *contra* Finley, who suggests that the nearness of the Day here in ch. 4 is “virtually equivalent to its actual presence” (Finley, *Joel*, 97).

In all of this YHWH *acts*. Throughout the chapter we see an increase in the agency of YHWH and decrease in the agency of the nations. Also, the agency of YHWH is related to that which *will* occur and the agency of the nations to that which *has* occurred. This coming action is on behalf of, and for the benefit of, YHWH's people. As with 2:18—3:5, this is a significant shift from the first two sections of the book of Joel. From the perspective of the audience of the book, the negative state of affairs caused by the locust plague will be overturned, and not worsened, in the coming Day of YHWH.

In all of this the prophet never challenges or questions YHWH. Where he stood as a partial defender of the Addressees in 1:1—2:17, here he is quite on the side of YHWH. The nations have no defender, nor do they have recourse. Though the nations are the Addressees of much of the discourse, as were the people of YHWH in earlier parts of the book, there is no sense of an attempt to change behaviour, and this address comes to an abrupt end with vv. 13–14. The destruction of the nations on the Day of YHWH seems to be integrally related to the salvation of the people of YHWH, with whom the prophetic voice appears to identify throughout the book of Joel, at least in part.

The Day in Joel 4 is, therefore, a time of destruction and of salvation. It is the end of the nations but the beginning of a perpetual Judah. It occurs in the plain of judgment and cutting, but also upon Mt. Zion. It is a definitive moment for both the nations and for the people of YHWH. But, whereas the threat of destruction on the Day served as a call to repentance for the people of YHWH in preceding sections of Joel, here it functions as impending and inevitable doom for the nations and unstoppable redemption for the people of YHWH.

Chapter 7: Register and the Day of YHWH in the Prophetic Book of Joel

1. Register and the Day of YHWH

The Day of YHWH in the book of Joel is a more or less unified concept, but functions in different ways in the various sections of the book.¹ These shifts in function are integrally related to shifts in register, which re-orient one to the nature of the Day as the book progresses. Additionally, the registers of each of the sections of the book, and the shifts they create in the reader's understanding of the Day of YHWH, together contribute to the register of the book of Joel as a whole. The combination of conceptual similarity regarding the Day of YHWH, and register difference in the various sections (i.e., sub-texts) of Joel, facilitate the rhetorical possibilities of the book as a whole, and allow it to function as warning and promise simultaneously.

As I have progressed through the book of Joel, analyzing its four major sections, I have presented summaries of the register of each section and of the function of the Day of YHWH in those sections. It is not my intention to repeat those conclusions here, but to reflect instead upon the book of Joel as a whole, and the ways in which the register of each passage relates to the register of the book, as well as the ways in which the function of the Day of YHWH as illuminated by the register of each passage relates to the function of the Day of YHWH as the principal theme of the book of Joel.

In addition to a specific concern with the way that shifting register affects one's understanding of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel, this project also makes an important methodological contribution to the field. Biblical form criticism is a method

¹ Sweeney also suggests that the Day of YHWH is a relatively unified concept in the book, but ties this concept to yearly cultic patterns of threat and salvation (Sweeney, "Place and Function," 143). While I am sympathetic to the importance of cultic worship and theology to the tradition of the Day of YHWH, I do not see the cyclical pattern that Sweeney notes played out in the book of Joel.

of analysis in the midst of significant shifts in perspective. The movement away from a search for original oral sub-units, the problems associated with the notion of pure forms, and the complexities involved with discussions of *Sitz im Leben* or *Sitz in der Literatur* have created space for new approaches to questions surrounding genre and context in the analysis of biblical literature. As I have demonstrated in this dissertation, register analysis grounded in SFL has enormous potential to provide a framework for describing typological elements in a text or set of texts. This method can also be used as a tool to describe the social context of a given text (the context of situation), as I will demonstrate below.

With these two foci in mind, this chapter will proceed in three stages. First, I will examine the ways in which SFL register analysis as I have practiced it here fits with the greater methodological concerns of OT/HB form and genre analysis, along with a description of the context of situation of the book of Joel. Second, I will present a summary of the register of the prophetic book of Joel, examined according to the now familiar categories of mode, field, and tenor. Third, I will discuss the function of the Day of YHWH in the prophetic book of Joel, and the ways in which an understanding of the book's register sheds light on that function.

2. Form, Genre, Register, and Context of Situation

Gunkel's form-critical project, with its simultaneous focus on genre, social situation, and religious history, has been both fruitful and frustrating as it has evolved in the discipline of biblical studies. The focus on the evolution or development of religion in ancient Israel, and especially the various presuppositions about how religions "evolve," has been rejected to a significant degree by more recent form critics.² Also, discussions

² See esp. Floyd, "Write the Revelation!" (Hab 2:2)"; "Basic Trends."

of core or pure forms are of declining interest, and more nuanced examinations of shifting genres or genre function are becoming more prevalent in the work of theorists and practitioners of form and genre analysis.³ But even though these shifts are taking place, a great deal of work remains to be done. There are three important ways in which SFL discourse and register analysis function as a helpful addition to examinations of form and genre. These three issues are the form of the text, the genre of the text, and the context of the text.

The analysis presented in chs. 3–6 of this dissertation is a detailed examination of the semantic patterning of the major sections of the book of Joel. Detailed analyses of the specific patterns of specific texts could, by some definitions, be referred to as an analysis of the form of the passage.⁴ I have used the theoretical framework of SFL to examine the form, or more precisely the semantic patterning, of the book of Joel. What this provides is a set of tools (within a specific theoretical framework) for building a picture of the type of texts we find in Joel, and to do this starting from the lower level of intra- and inter-clausal relationships, and building up to the higher level of relationships and patterns within a given text, and then across a set of texts, finally encompassing the entire book in a “bottom-up” analysis. Of course the application of a particular theoretical framework represents a “top-down” decision, because that framework has determined to a degree which patterns or features were observed or given significance. However, that theoretical framework has been outlined (see Chapter 2) and can be

³ The influence of Bakhtin’s theories regarding genre have been one important development in recent years. See Boer, *Bakhtin and Genre Theory*; esp. Newsom, “Spying out the Land.” On genre function see, for instance, Boda, “Form Criticism in Transition”; Nasuti, *Defining the Sacred Songs*.

⁴ The word “form” has been problematic in the history of form criticism, used to refer at times to patterns in a specific text, and at times to text-types or genres. For more on this question see Blum, “Formgeschichte.” I am using it here to refer to observable features and patterns of a particular text.

challenged, and I have also made significant efforts to incorporate the work of biblical critics and linguists who may not share this particular theoretical point of view.

The goal of the thorough analysis of the discourse of Joel is not simply to observe and describe the semantics of the text, but to observe and describe the ways in which various semantic patterns create larger patterns that suggest an identifiable type of text. Put differently, patterns abstracted from the specific details of one text can be compared with patterns abstracted from the specific details of another, and conclusions can be drawn regarding the relative sameness of those two texts. This is an attempt to think about text-types or genres not as ideal, pre-existing things, with specific formal characteristics, but instead as patterns of patterns that overlap in interesting and meaningful ways. With Buss, I would suggest that the essentialist approach to genre does just what I am describing, but in an intuitive way that can be difficult to evaluate and engage.⁵ Consequently, I have not attempted to assign pre-determined genre labels (e.g. oracle of salvation, oracle of destruction, etc.) to the texts of Joel.⁶ Labels like this provide a helpful shorthand, and there is no particular reason to discontinue their use, but what I have presented here is an examination of the semantic patterning of specific texts in Joel in order to provide information that might usefully be compared with other specific texts in Joel, the Twelve, the prophetic literature, and the literature of the OT/HB generally. As those comparisons proceed the use of short-hand labels like “oracle of salvation” may indeed prove useful, but only when one understands that they are not pure, essential genres manifested imperfectly in a text, but similarities abstracted from many particular instances. In the course of my analysis of Joel, I have provided an

⁵ See Buss’s discussion of essentialist approaches to genre in Buss, *Changing Shape*, 81–85, and throughout his body of work.

⁶ Cf. Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 10–11.

abstract analysis of the semantic patterns of each section, and described the register of those individual sections. Below I will draw comparisons between these four passages within Joel, giving a better sense of similarities and differences between the registers of each passage, and observing how each register functions as a part of the register of the book as a whole.⁷

The third area of significant interface between form criticism and register analysis is the question of context.⁸ Form criticism generally, and Gunkel especially, is probably most famous for the idea of a *Sitz im Leben* that corresponds to some given genre. While often misinterpreted, *Sitz im Leben* refers not to the particular historical situation of a given document, but to the social situation in life to which the genre of that document corresponds.⁹ As I noted in ch. 2, this concept of a social situation related to linguistic communication is a central feature of the SFL approach to language. In SFL, however, the notion of linguistically relevant context is sub-divided into three types of context: context of situation, context of culture, and co-text (context of text).

Of these three accounts of context, co-text is the one that most readily resembles the popular notion of context. That is to say, co-text is context in the sense of the various relationships between elements “specific to a particular linguistic environment.”¹⁰ These co-textual relationships have been an integral part of the analysis of Joel above, and so I will not expand upon the specifics here.

⁷ I envision that the next stage in this analysis, which is beyond the scope of this particular project, will be to engage in a similar analysis of other prophetic books, and to build up a sense of the various linguistic registers of the prophetic literature and the ways in which they function in the various prophetic books.

⁸ For a fuller exploration of context in SFL, see ch. 2 above. I will summarize the key issues here in order to refresh the reader’s memory preceding the discussion of the context of situation for the book of Joel below.

⁹ For more on this see: Toffelmire, “Form Criticism,” 259–64; Buss, *Changing Shape*, ch. 4.

¹⁰ Porter, “Dialect and Register,” 11.

Context of culture refers to the overall cultural system, and the relationship of a text to that system. As Hasan puts it, “the system of culture is not simply an inventory of all its situations; it is an organization of the possible features of all possible situations in all their possible permutations, where ‘possible’ means socially recognizable – something that the acculturated can interpret, act on and in, and evaluate....”¹¹ In terms of the analysis of speech situations in the OT/HB, our knowledge of the cultural system of ancient Israel and post-monarchical Yehud/Judea is mediated principally by the texts of the OT/HB itself. The context of culture has been an implicit component of the analysis of Joel thus far, and will continue to play a role in the presentation of the register of the book of Joel below. That said, the context of culture for Joel is not the specific focus of this project.

The third type of context in SFL is context of situation, and it is this that most closely resembles the idea of *Sitz im Leben*. Context of situation is the linguistically inscribed situation of a particular text. It stands in distinction to the material situational setting (MSS), which refers to the actual material setting of a particular text or utterance. As Cloran notes, there are a myriad of elements of the MSS of any text that are not relevant to the linguistic communication. The MSS “may be thought of as an actual physical space containing actual physical elements.”¹² Some elements of this physical space or these physical elements may be relevant to a given communication, but seldom are all relevant, and often none are relevant. Context of situation must be distinguished, therefore, from the material setting in which the communication took place. The degree of overlap between MSS and context of situation varies between texts, but one important

¹¹ Hasan, “Place of Context,” 169.

¹² Cloran, “Context, Material Situation and Text,” 178.

way of determining to what degree the two are co-extensive is to examine whether or to what degree language is itself constitutive or ancillary to the communicative action. “Where language is largely constitutive of the activity – where the verbalising *is* the activity...the writer’s MSS would seem to be irrelevant to the text, being relevant to the task of creating the text only to the extent that it does not impede its execution.”¹³ In the case of the book of Joel, language is constitutive of the communicative activity. The book *is* a linguistic activity, and cannot exist apart from language. The MSS is thus relatively unimportant. The historically oriented cues found in some prophetic books (e.g., superscriptions related to a particular king, as in Zephaniah) are absent from Joel, distancing the book from its MSS to an even greater degree.

In contradistinction to the MSS, the context of situation can to a degree be reconstructed by reference to the text alone.¹⁴ By analyzing the linguistic register of a text it is possible to reconstruct the context of situation to some degree. We can thereby describe features that suggest possible or probabilistic situations for a given text, even though describing actual historical situations is probably beyond our capabilities in terms of the literature of the OT/HB. This is consistent with Buss’s suggestions regarding the description of context relative to genre in the OT/HB. He notes that genres are not “tightly connected with spatial or temporal settings” but are instead related to what he calls “human situations.”¹⁵ To return, then, to the concept of *Sitz im Leben*, if one is to understand this to mean the specific material, historical, or institutional situation related to the creation and preservation of a given text, then the concept should

¹³ Cloran, “Context, Material Situation and Text,” 180.

¹⁴ Cloran, “Context, Material Situation and Text,” 182.

¹⁵ Buss, *Changing Shape*, 89. This may be a slight oversimplification, as some linguistic registers might be related to specific MSS. In terms of the literature of the OT/HB, however, it is quite accurate.

perhaps be set aside as too lofty a goal (see Becking's critiques on this front). If, however, one is to understand the phrase to refer to a social situation, or "human situation" in Buss's parlance, then we have something roughly analogous to the SFL notion of context of situation, which refers to the social situation relevant to and encoded in the text.¹⁶ Given our extensive analysis of the book of Joel above, some comments regarding the context of situation of the book are indeed possible.

The book of Joel appears in the graphic channel, but in the (at least partly) spoken medium, or perhaps what we might call a written-as-spoken medium. The use of the graphic channel means that language is constitutive of the social action, suggesting that the MSS is of relatively low importance. Additionally, exophoric deixis is essentially absent from the book, which further reduces the importance of the MSS. That the language is graphic/written-as-spoken suggests that the book is meant to be read and re-read, probably to an audience of some kind who could fill (in some cases at least) the role of second person addressee, and identify with the people of YHWH Participant set.

The other side of this graphic/written-as-spoken coin is that the book of Joel is, in fact, a book.¹⁷ It demonstrates a significant degree of coherence and cohesion, including cohesion across the boundaries of sections and sub-sections. I would not want to press these observations regarding cohesion too far. There is also a degree of discontinuity between the four sections of the book, and particularly between 1:2—2:17

¹⁶ This exists, of course, in an endlessly dialectical relationship with what is known about the context of culture for ancient Israel and the broader ANE, which is itself in a state of constant flux and re-evaluation within the scholarly community (cf. Becking, "Problematic Concept of Context," 253–54). This is different, then, from Ben Zvi's modified understanding of the *Sitz im Leben* of prophetic books, which is the reading community (Ben Zvi, "Prophetic Book," 287). While this is one significant element in a helpful understanding of the use and function of prophetic books, I suggest that the text itself encodes, to a degree, a social situation. Reading and re-reading communities then inhabit elements of this encoded situation in their appropriation of the book.

¹⁷ Cf. Ben Zvi, "Prophetic Book," 278–79.

and 2:18—4:21. The possibility that the book is the product of some type of redaction history seems to me a very plausible conclusion. Having said this, the book as it stands does cohere. However many authors or editors may have had their hands in the text over the course of its development, the end product is well crafted and notably literary. Cohesive ties are frequently metaphorical, particularly across section boundaries, and those metaphors often involve some kind of creative reinterpretation. This book is clearly the product of a person (or set of people) who is highly literate and conversant in much of the literature that we refer to as the OT/HB.¹⁸ This book benefits from significant re-reading in order to be well-understood, and so while some features of the mode of the text suggest the possibility of a text read aloud, other features of the mode suggest a detailed literary work. These need not, of course, be mutually exclusive features.

Related to this graphic/spoken tension is the nature of the book as a mediated divine communication. That Joel is (at least ostensibly) divine communication is apparent from the dominance of YHWH as both Actor and Speaker throughout the book. Yet this divine communication is mediated through the prophetic voice of Joel. This is evident in the tension within the YHWH/prophet Participant set that was observed in all four sections of the book of Joel. That Joel is an instance of mediated divine communication suggests two important questions. Mediated by whom, and mediated to whom?

The first thing that must be said of the figure of Joel in the book of Joel is that almost nothing can be said of him. He is an empty shell. We are given a personal name

¹⁸ Cf. ch. 2, n.66. Note also the corollary of this fact, which is an implied readership that would have been capable of engaging such a book. Cf. Ben Zvi, "Prophetic Book," 287n.47.

and his father's name, but no other personal information. But even this lack of information is informative. If Joel is an empty shell, then it is possible for later readers (whether private or public) to step into his place. This is consistent with my suggestion that the book is a written communication meant to be read, and likely read aloud. But, while little personal information regarding Joel is available from the book, some salient details regarding the prophetic voice and other figures in the book are worth noting.

The prophetic voice appears to be at least somewhat sympathetic toward the people of YHWH, or the Addressees of chs. 1–3. Note that in 1:19–20 the prophetic voice is directed in supplication to YHWH on behalf of the land. Similarly in 2:13–17 the prophetic voice encourages the people to repent, suggesting that YHWH may relent. In both cases the prophet appears to stand in between YHWH and the people. Also relevant is the fact that the prophetic voice is sympathetic to the priesthood and the Temple cult. Repentance in the book of Joel is a cultic affair (2:1–17), though it is important to note that this includes warnings regarding authenticity in the practice of the cult (2:12–13).¹⁹ Note also that in chs. 3 and 4 the vision of the renewed Jerusalem/Zion is as the dwelling place of YHWH, which in terms of the context of culture appears to be a distinctly cultic notion as well.²⁰

Yet while sympathetic to the priesthood and to priestly repentance, there is no sense that the prophetic voice is a priestly voice. The prophetic voice stands at the edge of the community. With but one exception he does not identify himself with the

¹⁹ This *contra* Redditt (“The Book of Joel and Peripheral Prophecy,” 235), who suggests that Joel is basically critical of the cult. But, if Joel is unilaterally critical of the cult, how can an appeal to the cult be a reasonable response to the threat of the Day of YHWH?

²⁰ Cf. the presence of YHWH amongst the people as blessing in Exodus–Deuteronomy and the removal of YHWH's presence in Ezek 10. As Collins notes, the Temple has become the source of ultimate blessing by Joel 4:16–21 (Collins, *Mantle of Elijah*, 68). On the theology of divine presence in Joel, see also Bourke, “Le Jour De Yahvé Dans Joel, 1”; Bourke, “Le Jour De Yahvé Dans Joel, 2.”

Addressees, whether the people of YHWH, the priests, or the nations. That one exception is 1:16, where the only two first person plurals in the book stand in the midst of a call to repentance directed toward the priests, elders, and inhabitants of the land. We might think of the prophetic voice, therefore, as inhabiting a mediating space, standing at the very edge of the community, speaking to the people with YHWH's voice, and to YHWH with the people's voice.²¹ This is significant because it suggests that readers and re-readers can (should?) identify the prophetic voice as an entity that speaks to the people, including the priests and elders, from the outside. We can thus isolate a distinct role for the prophet amongst the community in the book of Joel.

This also suggests to whom the divine communication of the book of Joel is being mediated. The Addressees of the book as a whole are the people of YHWH. By this I mean several things. In the first place these people would recognize YHWH's authority as their God, since that authority is central to the book. Secondly, they would see the various cultic exercises of repentance as legitimate and functional and effective for turning aside YHWH's wrath (2:17–18). Thirdly, they would identify strongly with the particular geographical region of Judah, and especially with the city of Jerusalem/Zion. Finally, they would envision themselves as the future recipients of a promised deliverance which puts them on the winning side of history. These four qualities are significant, but also very broad. Consequently, like the figure of the prophet, the Addressees are something of a shell as well. No very particular person or group of people is suggested by the book (e.g. no names are given apart from general place

²¹ Note that this is a more complex description of the prophet's role in relation to the broader community than Redditt's suggestion that Joel is essentially a marginal or peripheral figure (Redditt, "Peripheral Prophecy").

names), and thus a great many people would be able to inhabit the role of the Addressees.²²

That said, there are certainly those who would not comfortably be able to inhabit the role of Addressees: namely, anybody who is unwilling to self-identify as one of the people of YHWH. The extraordinarily strong division between positive internal space (Judah/Jerusalem/Zion) and negative external space (the specified surrounding nations, and everything else outside of the positive internal space) in Joel creates an equally strong division between “us” (the Addressees) and “them” (everybody else). Space, both physical and socio-cultural, thus plays a vital role in the context of situation for the book of Joel.

Over all of this looms the Day of YHWH. While I will provide an extended description of the Day below, some brief comments are germane here. The Day of YHWH is arguably the central theme of the book of Joel. It is found in every section, and plays a significant, and even pivotal role in every section. It is simultaneously a day of destruction, judgment, fear, victory, and deliverance. There is no sense in a synchronic reading of the book that more than one day is envisioned. What this suggests in terms of context of situation is a community in which a belief in YHWH’s intervention into the world is palpable and powerful. Threats are threats of YHWH’s direct intervention, and promises are promises of YHWH’s direct intervention. In this sense the book of Joel is fundamentally eschatological and theophanic in character.

What all of this suggests regarding context of situation is a book designed to function as both a call to repentance and a promise of redemption. There is something of

²² And this breadth of possibility only increases if one is to interpret some portion of the book of Joel metaphorically or symbolically. See, for instance, the appropriation of Joel 3 in Peter’s sermon in Acts 2.

a stick and carrot routine at work in the book of Joel. The first two sections of the book are warnings to the people of YHWH, but warnings marked with the sincere possibility of restoration.²³ The second two sections promise the exaltation and triumph of the people of YHWH and the debasement of their enemies. One particularly notable element of this dynamic is that the specific sins of the community are not enumerated. Just as the prophet is a shell and the people are a shell, so the sins are a shell, or perhaps a vessel into which readers/hearers might pour whatever specific misdeeds were necessary.²⁴ The consequent picture is a text that functions as threat and challenge to those who have not turned (2:12–14) and promise to those who have. Such a text could be re-applied in innumerable ways.²⁵

3. The Register of the Book of Joel

In each of the analysis chapters above I have given summaries of the register of the four sections of the book of Joel. It is not my intent to simply reiterate those summaries here, but instead to describe the register of the book as a whole. This will include observations about patterns that are common throughout the book, but also observations about patterns specific to particular sections. Shifts and changes in the register of individual portions of the book are certainly germane to an analysis of the register of the book as a whole. The book is simultaneously a single unified work and a series of prophetic texts. Though this may suggest tension or a lack of unity, Hasan's

²³ House, "Character of God," 132.

²⁴ These misdeeds should probably be thought of in covenantal terms. Nogalski, for instance, argues convincingly in favour of allusions to covenant unfaithfulness, and especially to the Deuteronomic covenant, in the book of Joel. See Nogalski, "Presumptions of 'Covenant' in Joel," 12. See also: Bourke, "Le jour de Yahvé dans Joel, 1," 206–07; House, "Endings as New Beginnings," 322.

²⁵ This is consistent, though not identical, with Assis's recent conclusions that the loss of covenant relationship, and the people's belief that they stand under YHWH's curse is the situation that initiated Joel's prophetic activity (Assis, "Structure and Meaning," 413–15; Assis, *Book of Joel*, 196–99 and throughout). Certainly this is the type of situation for which the book of Joel would be eminently suitable.

suggestions regarding primary and sub-texts, and registers within registers, are highly relevant here.²⁶ The registers of the four sub-texts of Joel (and the registers of the sub-texts of those sub-texts) function to support the function and thus the register of the primary text of the book as a whole. As with the register analyses of each section of Joel, my summary here will proceed using the categories of mode, field, and tenor.

3.1. The Mode of the Book of Joel

I have already noted one of the centrally significant aspects of the mode of the book of Joel, which is the channel/medium tension present throughout. The book is in the graphic channel, and the spoken, or perhaps written-as-spoken, medium.²⁷ Language is thus constitutive of the social activity at work in the book of Joel. The medium, which is at least partly spoken as the various forms of second person address and first person declaration suggest, is well structured and presents aspects of intentional rhetorical shaping (e.g. rhetorical questions).²⁸ The channel/medium of the book is presented in the MT tradition (and in the OG tradition, though my focus has been on the Masoretic tradition) as a text with an identifiable beginning and conclusion. It is thus a clear instance of a single graphic text.²⁹

The four sub-texts of Joel present a high degree of internal cohesion, with various overlapping identity and similarity chains.³⁰ One of the chief functions of these

²⁶ Hasan, "Speaking with Reference to Context." For a fuller exploration of the concept of primary and sub-texts see ch. 2 above. Note that as I am referring to the sections and sub-sections of Joel in the context of a discussion of primary text and sub-text, I will use Hasan's terminology here. Thus Joel as a whole is the primary text, its sections are sub-texts, and its sub-sections are sub-texts of sub-texts.

²⁷ It is perfectly plausible that at some point some or all of the content of the book was in the aural channel, but we are working here with the book as it is found in the MT text tradition.

²⁸ On the use of rhetorical questions in Joel (and other biblical literature), see Crenshaw, "The Expression *Mî Yôdēa* ' in the Hebrew Bible."

²⁹ This is one of Ben Zvi's basic requirement for the genre of "authoritative book" and its sub-set genre of "prophetic book" (Ben Zvi, "Prophetic Book," 278–79).

³⁰ Specific cohesive ties across books are noted in the analysis chapters above.

identity and similarity chains is to create sets of Participants. At the level of the primary text some of these sets remain; and some are distinct but suggest a degree of similarity. While I will explore these sets fully in the field section below, note for the time being that the central Participant sets that are identifiable due to cohesive ties are the YHWH/prophet set, the people of YHWH/Addressees set, and then three more distinct sets, none of which run the course of the entire book but all of which are related to some degree: the locusts, the Northerner, and the nations.

This analysis of mode suggests that it is legitimate to identify Joel as a single text: a book. This is suggested both by its existence as a single graphic text in the manuscript traditions and by the various cohesive ties that bind the book together across its four sub-texts. It presents Participants that can be grouped into identifiable sets, both within the sub-texts of the book and across the primary text as a whole. The four major sub-texts, as well as their various smaller sub-texts, serve the overall communicative function of the book as a whole.

3.2.The Field of the Book of Joel

While there is a degree of variation in terms of the ideational content of the four sections of Joel, a significant degree of similarity is also present. Here I will present those aspects of the field of Joel that are observable throughout the book, as well as some brief comments regarding points of dissimilarity or difference between sub-texts in Joel. As with the main analysis chapters this includes summary statements regarding Participants, arena, processes and transitivity structure, and logical relations.

The most consistent set in the book of Joel is the YHWH/prophet set. This set is present in all four sub-texts of the book and dominates the primary text as a whole, functioning as the primary Actor and Speaker throughout. Apart from a degree of

movement in terms of the internal tension in this set, it remains consistent throughout the book. The second significant set is the Addressees or people of YHWH. In the first three sub-texts of the book this set appears consistently as the second person Addressee of the discourse. This shifts in ch. 4, where the people of YHWH set moves into a thoroughly subsidiary role, appearing sparingly and functioning mostly as Object/Goal or as proxies for acts instigated by YHWH. As I have noted above, however, this subsidiary role in ch. 4 does not suggest that the people of YHWH are not the Addressees of the book as a whole, but that the passive and subsidiary status of this set in the ch. 4 sub-text serves the function of the primary text.

In addition to these two Participant sets that are identifiable in each section of Joel, there are three distinct Participant sets that present a degree of similarity: the locusts, the Northerner, and the nations. All of these sets are presented as enemies of or dangers to the people of YHWH. The locusts tend to function as third person Subject/Actor, though very often in intransitive or stative clauses (esp. in 2:1–17). This set is present in both the first and second sections of Joel, but vanishes thereafter.³¹ The Northerner functions mostly as Object/Goal, and plays a significantly smaller role in 2:18–3:5 than do the locusts in 1:2–2:17 or the nations in 4:1–21. The nations set in ch. 4 also functions frequently as Subject/Actor and occasionally as Object/Goal, but the novelty of ch. 4 is that the nations set functions as the Addressee of the discourse, filling the role of Subject/Addressee of the various imperative verbs in the passage, and referred to frequently in the second person.

³¹ This presumes the interpretation that the locusts are actual locusts, and not a metaphorical representation of an army, which might suggest a greater degree of continuity with the Northerner and nations of 2:18–4:21.

Though functioning as Addressee of the discourse in ch. 4, the nations set is opposed to YHWH, and is eventually subjected to destruction on the Day of YHWH. The middle sub-section of ch. 4 contains various lexemes that fall into an agricultural semantic range, which is decidedly reminiscent of ch. 1 and the destruction of the land by the locusts. This suggests a parallel between these two enemies/threats.

There is a progression in the representation of these enemy/threat Participants through the book as a whole. In the first two sub-texts (1:2—2:17) the locusts are active Participants, but function basically as proxies of YHWH, fulfilling his judgment against the people of YHWH. After the shift in interpersonal orientation between YHWH and the people of YHWH in 2:17–18 (see tenor section below), the enemy/threat suffers a significant reduction in agency and power, and is acted upon by YHWH (2:18—3:5). In the final sub-text (4:1–21) the destruction of the enemy/threat becomes of central importance, and while the nations set functions frequently as Actor, it is notable that within the chapter that agency is opposed to YHWH's agency and is also continually reduced as the chapter progresses, until it disappears entirely in the final sub-text of ch. 4 (vv. 17–21). Thus, while these various Participants may not be co-referential, their function and the shifting nature of that function are integral to the ideational representation of the situation in the book as a whole.

Ellie Assis's recent work also suggests an important relationship between the locusts of 1:2—2:17 and the northerner/nations of 2:18—4:21. He suggests that even though chs. 1–2 both refer to literal locusts, the increasingly militaristic description of the locusts in 2:1–17 is meant as a hint at the possibility of greater military or political problems on the horizon, which is designed as an encouragement to the people to repent

and return to YHWH.³² Assis suggests that in some cases the locusts of 2:1–17 are simultaneously literally referential and metaphorical. This involves a softening of the ground, as it were, as readers transition out of the first half of the book (1:2—2:17) in which literal locusts are the threat, to the prayer of the priests and their reference to shame before the nations (2:17),³³ and then into the second half of the book (2:18—4:21) in which the threat is a political and military enemy (i.e., the Northerner/nations).³⁴ This ingenious solution to the tensions between the two halves of the book of Joel is consistent with my examination of the mode of the text. Thus, to return to the terms of reference I have been using in this project, there exists a co-extensive relationship between the locusts of 2:1–17 and the Northerner/nations of 2:18—4:21. This creates a degree of continuity between the locusts, the Northerner, and the nations, and thus between the various sub-texts of the book of Joel.

Two elements are central to the temporal arena of Joel. The first of these is the opposition between real and unreal events. In each of the four sections of the book we find an opposition between actions that have taken place or are taking place, and actions that should or will take place. Events in the past and present are used to press the people of YHWH toward a specific response in the first half of the book, and events in the past or present suggest a justification for YHWH's actions (both on behalf of his people and against the nations/Northerner) in the future. There is thereby a critical dynamic between what has occurred and what should or will occur as a result.

³² Assis, "Structure and Meaning," 415.

³³ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 44.

³⁴ Assis, *Book of Joel*, 48. This approach has the distinct advantage of taking seriously the apparent connections between the various sub-texts of Joel, and treating it as a unified book (following Wolff and many others), without the need to resort to the identification of the locusts of 1:2—2:17 as an invading army in order to maintain the coherence of the two halves of the book.

The second element of the temporal arena worth noting here is related to this real/irreal dynamic. The presentation of events in the book suggest that 2:18–3:1 function as the discourse present of the entire book. The locust plague and the consequent demanded repentance lay in the past from the point of view of the entire book, and the Day of YHWH as a judgment against the nations, as well as the final redemption and blessing of Judah/Jerusalem/Zion, stand in the discourse future. This is integral to the overall function of the primary text. The repentance required in 1:2—2:17 is (apparently) enacted and YHWH relents and saves the people of YHWH.³⁵ What follows is YHWH's act of salvation and blessing for the people. The implication is that negative circumstances arising from a divine curse can be alleviated by a return to YHWH and the curse can then be turned to future blessing.

Locative arena includes three components that run through the book. The first of these is the city. Notably the city is a central location in chs. 2–4. It is first a place of destruction and judgment, as the locale of the locust plague in 2:3–9, but as one progresses into chs. 3–4 the city, now specified as Jerusalem/Zion, becomes a place of particular redemption and blessing. Related to this focus on the city is a generalized focus on the land of Israel/Judah. In ch. 1 the land is a generalized locale, not specified until ch. 2 with the reference to Zion, but in terms of the discourse of the entire book it is clear that the land of ch. 1 is co-referential with Israel/Judah.³⁶ What is unclear is whether references to “Israel” suggest that we should think of the land in terms of the

³⁵ Certainly a specific moment of redemption with an express acceptance by YHWH is not present in the book. It need not follow, however, that repentance is not integral to YHWH's response in 2:18ff. Given the demand for repentance in 2:12–14 the salvation in 2:18ff. seems to rest upon an implied return to YHWH. If this were not the case, some explanation for YHWH's change of mind regarding the need for a turn would be required. See the exploration of this section in chs. 4 and 5 above.

³⁶ So also LaRocca-Pitts, “The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy,” 287.

boundaries of unified Israel or if those are merely references to the theological/sociological reality Israel, and the significant number of references to “Judah” imply that the geographical boundaries of Judah are in view. In the end it makes relatively little difference, and questions of specific geographical borders may simply be beside the point. The real issue at hand is the third component of the locative arena of Joel, which is the distinction between positive internal space and negative external space. Particularly in the third and fourth sections of the book, internal space is represented as safe and blessed. That blessing, what is more, is connected to the presence of YHWH (see esp. 3:1–5; 4:17–21). External space, however, is uniformly negative throughout the book. In 1:2—2:17 it is the place from whence the locusts come to destroy. In 2:18—4:21 it is the place inhabited by the Northerner and the nations, the place of exile into which the people of YHWH were sold (and to which YHWH will in turn send their oppressors), and the place subject to YHWH’s judgment.

Both temporal and locative arena in the book of Joel are consistent with other patterns observed at the level of the book thus far. Arena also serves to underline the function of 1:2—2:17 as a call to repentance, and 2:18—4:21 as visions of YHWH’s salvation of his people and judgment against the enemies of his people.³⁷

Verbal processes in the book of Joel tend heavily toward Material processes, with a few important instances of Mental and Speaking processes. Of particular note is the use of Mental processes in key places such as 2:12–14 when the people are called to repentance, and 4:17 where the people’s understanding of YHWH is predicated upon his saving and judging actions. Mental processes are thus invitations for consideration and

³⁷ This is consistent with Wolff’s understanding of the relationship between the two halves of the book, and supports (to some degree at least) his conclusions on this front (Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 57).

reflection, which is consistent with the overall function of the book for later readers and re-readers. Speaking processes are almost entirely absent from the book. The few instances of reported speech are found in the mouths of YHWH (2:12–13a), the priests (though only as projected through the prophet's exhortation, 2:17), and the nations (by a similar projection in 2:17, and possibly again in 4:11). But these isolated instances of Verbal processes do not lead to exchanges or dialogues.

I have hinted at the transitivity structure of the book above in my discussion of Participants. The majority of finite verbal processes in the book are transitive. The function of Subject/Actor is filled most consistently by YHWH/the prophet, the locusts (who are proxies of YHWH), the people of YHWH (though only in 1:2—2:17, where they are Addressees), and the nations. The function of Object/Goal is filled by diverse Participants, but notable among these is the relegation of the people of YHWH to this role in ch. 4, where the agency of that set is reduced to almost nothing. Finally, the function Subject/Addressee in imperative clauses is filled in 1:1–3:5 by the people of YHWH, and in ch. 4 by the nations.

An analysis of logical relations in the book of Joel does not yield any strongly suggestive pattern. Relational clauses of all types are used at various points, and while these are certainly important at specific moments in the discourse, they do not appear to present any particular overarching pattern. The book contains many instances of enhancing hypotaxis marked by ׀. This may serve as a point of comparison with other text-types, such as various kinds of narrative, or similar text-types, such as texts from other prophetic books, to determine the relative frequency and types of hypotaxis or subordination present in different text-types.

The field of discourse of the book of Joel shows a significant degree of uniformity and consistency. The two primary Participant sets, the prophet/YHWH and the people of YHWH, are found throughout the book. There is significant overlap between the roles and functions of the other principal Participant sets, the locusts, the Northerner, and the nations. With regard to these other sets, who are antagonistic forces in the book, there is a progressive lessening of agency as the book progresses. Another significant element of the field is the opposition between past and future, or the real and the unreal.³⁸ There is, throughout the book, a critical dynamic between what has occurred and what will or should occur in the future. The former is the grounds or basis for the latter. Note also that, when examined as a whole text, the discourse present of the book of Joel is found in 2:18—3:1. This is the time occupied by the book's implied readership, and it follows the end of the locust plague, but precedes the Day of YHWH and the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem. The sacred city, and its environs (the countryside, Judah) is the central location in the book. It is a positive internal space that is opposed to the negative external space that includes the origins of the locust plague and the various nations immediately surrounding this positive internal space. The book has a heavy concentration of Material Verbal Processes. There are also some key instances of Mental processes (esp. 2:12–14 and 4:17), as well as some Speaking processes that are not truly dialogical. Finally, I observed no clear patterning in the logical relations of the book.

³⁸ While this opposition, particularly with reference to field, is especially related to past and future, I have referred to it in terms of real/irreal in order to highlight the fact that it refers at times to an opposition between what has happened and what will happen, and at times to an opposition between what has happened and what should happen (i.e., desired future behaviour).

3.3. The Tenor of the Book of Joel

There are several clearly observable patterns in the interpersonal semantics of the book of Joel. These suggest a power dynamic at work between the speaking voice of the book, represented by the YHWH/prophet set, and the Addressees of the book, represented principally by the people of YHWH set. These patterns, observable in the various role relationships of the book, as well as in the use of polarity, interrogatives, and process sharing, are consistent with the ideational representation of the social situation discussed above in the field section.

The YHWH/prophet Participant set is found most frequently in the first person singular. There are exceptions to this rule. The prophet is referred to once in the third person (1:1), and YHWH is referred to a variety of times in the third person. While the third person reference to Joel in 1:1 may seem trivial, it is of interest for two reasons. In the first place, as Ben Zvi notes, prophetic books in the OT/HB have as a distinguishing feature association with one (and only one) prophetic figure, who is presented as YHWH's representative or messenger, bringing YHWH's words to his people.³⁹ In the second place, a 3rd person reference to Joel, who is the principal Speaking voice throughout the book, indicates some other individual who has recorded and arranged "the word of YHWH that was [given to] Joel, son of Pethuel" (1:1).⁴⁰ The reader/listener is consequently made aware that the hands of another (or several others) have been at work in the creation and transfer of the text. One consequence of this inference for the register of the book is that the spiritual authority of the prophetic figure Joel has,

³⁹ Ben Zvi, "Prophetic Book," 282.

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the possible redactional history of Joel, see ch. 1, 2.2.4 above.

apparently, been transferred along with (or perhaps one might say, transferred into) the text itself.

The third person references to YHWH suggest that some degree of tension is operative within the YHWH/prophet set throughout the book. That said, this tension serves different functions in different sections, and lessens as the book progresses.

At first the voice of the prophet comes to the fore in distinction to the voice of YHWH in order to call the people of YHWH to repentance (1:19; 2:13–14). In 2:18—3:5 there are twenty third person references to YHWH, which is the highest concentration in any sub-text of the book. But, even though there are a significant number of third person references, all of which represent the prophetic voice in distinction from the voice of YHWH, these references are not directed to YHWH and do not represent challenges to him or to his actions. Instead these references to YHWH are directed at the people of YHWH, the recipients of YHWH's saving work, and all represent exhortations to thankfulness and praise of YHWH for his actions. Similarly in ch. 4 there is a split between the prophetic voice and the voice of YHWH at several points, notably in vv. 9–11a and vv. 14–16. Here the addressees of the prophet appear to be the nations in vv. 9–11a and the people of YHWH in vv. 14–16. As with 2:18—3:5, in ch. 4 the content of the words of Joel do not stand in tension with the words that belong to the unified set.

The dynamic between the prophet and YHWH thus serves two distinct but complementary purposes, which are quite in line with the overall purpose of the book. In the first two sections of the book the split in voice between the two allows the prophet to function as a mediating voice, speaking to YHWH on behalf of the people, or encouraging repentance of the people toward YHWH. This is consistent with the

warning and call to repentance in this portion of the book. In the second two sections the split in voice allows the prophet to function as a voice of encouragement to the people of YHWH, describing YHWH's work on behalf of his people (in 2:18—3:5 and 4:14–19), and (perhaps) as one of the voices calling the nations to conflict with YHWH, which leads to the final deliverance of the people of YHWH.

The people of YHWH set appears most frequently in the book in the second person. These second person occurrences are limited to chs. 1–3, in which the people of YHWH are clearly the Addressees of the discourse as a whole. Generally this set is consistent and unified, but in 2:15–16 particularly the discourse may be directed at some specific sub-set within the overall Participant set. The Addressees of the various imperative verbs here are instructed to exhort identifiable cohorts among the people (people, congregation, elders, children, etc) to repentance. Verse 17 may suggest the priests and ministers of YHWH as the particular recipients of these commands, given that they appear to take the lead in the interaction with YHWH. In any case, this internal tension in the set is relatively minor.

The exception, in which the people of YHWH set is found almost exclusively in the third person, is ch. 4. Here the nations, which are related to a degree to the other Participants that function as threats or enemies to the people of YHWH (the locusts and the Northerner), are the semantic Addressees of the majority of the passage, which is a role entirely out of step with the presentation of those other enemies or threats. This reversal from the normal pattern serves the rhetorical function of allowing the people of YHWH, who are the Addressees of the discourse of the book of Joel as a whole, to watch from the sidelines as YHWH destroys their enemies.

The Participant sets that fill the role of enemy or threat in the rest of the book, namely the locusts and the Northerner, are only found in the third person. There is no interaction with either of these Participants, and their roles in the discourse are supportive of the relational dynamic between YHWH/the prophet and the people of YHWH.

Negative polarity is almost absent from the book, and where it is found it does not serve a particularly significant function in terms of the tenor of the discourse. Similarly there are only a few scattered interrogatives in the book. These are all used rhetorically. They underscore the terrible nature of the Day of YHWH (1:1, 16; 2:11), suggest the possibility of YHWH's turning (2:14), exert pressure on YHWH (2:17), and underscore the relational distance between YHWH and the nations (4:4). Of these the two interrogatives of 2:17 are the most interesting from an interpersonal perspective. They both function rhetorically, but there is some degree to which they also hang as true questions from the people of YHWH to YHWH. It is difficult to imagine that 2:18–19, while not containing an explicit verbal response from YHWH, represents anything other than YHWH's response to this challenge. This is consistent with the overall picture of process sharing in the book of Joel. There are no instances of true process sharing, but the use of rhetorical questions, and especially this instance in 2:17, suggests a kind of virtual process sharing, which is relevant to the interpersonal dynamics of the Participants.

The tenor of the book of Joel presents an interpersonal interaction between the YHWH/prophet set and the people of YHWH set. In this interaction power lies almost exclusively with YHWH. There is some minor tension between YHWH and the prophetic voice, in which the prophet functions as a mediator between YHWH and the

people of YHWH. LaRocca-Pitts's suggestion that the prophet is either an outsider speaking to insiders, or an insider speaking to outsiders does not take this mediatorial function seriously enough.⁴¹ The prophet does stand apart from the people of YHWH, speaking on behalf of YHWH, but he also stands with the people of YHWH, appealing to YHWH on their behalf, or aiding in their appeals to the deity. An additional element of this relational dynamic is the virtual process sharing present at some points, most notably 2:17. The virtual engagement of the people of YHWH, represented by the prophets and ministers of YHWH, with YHWH appears to be directly related to the shift of relational orientation that begins in 2:18. That shift in orientation is the most significant element of the tenor of the book of Joel, and is related to the internal dynamics of the YHWH/prophet set. Whereas in the first two sections of the book tension in that set allowed the prophetic voice to function as mediator between YHWH and the people of YHWH, the estrangement that necessitated the mediation is absent in the third and fourth sections of the book, and from that point forward the prophetic voice serves to encourage the people of YHWH. Similarly, while the people of YHWH are the semantic Addressees of the first three chapters of the book, in ch. 4 the people of YHWH move into an observational role, as YHWH brings the nations to judgment and destruction, and completes his redemption of his people.

4. The Day of YHWH in the Book of Joel

Inarguably central to the book of Joel, the Day of YHWH is constantly in view in each section of the book.⁴² The analysis of the register of the book of Joel, both as a

⁴¹ LaRocca-Pitts, "The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy," 329–30.

⁴² Leung, "Intertextual Study," 62, 64. Deist goes so far as to suggest that the book is not historically referential at all, "but was compiled to serve as a 'literary theology' of the concept of 'The Day of the Lord'" (Deist, "Parallels and Reinterpretation," 63).

whole and in individual sections, suggests several important conclusions regarding the way that the linguistic register of the book frames the Day of YHWH. Central among these is the tenor of the register, but significant observations related to field and mode will be noted as well. After examining the way that register frames the Day in the book, I will present a summary of the function of the Day in each section, and then present a picture of the nature of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel.

The interpersonal dynamics between the YHWH/prophet and people of YHWH sets are of central importance with regard to the nature of the Day in the various sections of the book. Positive or negative orientation to the Day is directly related to the nature of the relationship between YHWH and the people. Therefore, for the people of YHWH the experience of the Day is changeable. For other Participant sets this is not the case. For the locusts there is no meaningful interpersonal dynamic with YHWH; they act simply as YHWH's proxies against the people of YHWH. The Day for the locusts holds no threat because they are unrelated to it, except as a tool of YHWH. For the Northerner and the nations sets the Day is a time of unilateral destruction, and there is no sense that this destruction is avoidable.⁴³

But for the people of YHWH the Day is clearly negative in 1:2—2:17, but clearly positive in 2:18—4:21. The difference is, of course, the dramatic shift in tenor from the first two sub-texts to the last two sub-texts of the book. The change in YHWH's relational orientation to the people of YHWH does not remove the Day from the field of discourse, but it does change the way that the people of YHWH experience the Day. In the first and second instances where the Day is mentioned (1:15; 2:11),

⁴³ This implies, of course, that the Northerner and the locust are not co-referential. See ch. 5, n. 15 above.

imperative verbs are addressed to the people of YHWH immediately before or after in the discourse, and these commands are directly related to responsive behaviour to be undertaken by the people. In the second two occurrences (3:4; 4:14) no imperatives are found in the immediately surrounding discourse, and there is no sense of instructions related to the Day that might serve as a response to it or that might mitigate its severity. In chs. 3 and 4 the Day is noted, but it does not serve as a threat to the people of YHWH.⁴⁴

The Day of YHWH is a factor in the field of discourse in each section of the book. There are two commonalities in the field of discourse in these cases. In 1:15, 2:11, and 4:14 the Day appears in non-verbal relational clauses, and enhancing hypotactic ׀ clauses. In 3:4 the Day is found within a rankshifted clause functioning as a circumstantial adjunct to the main clause. Consequently, in three cases the Day appears as the reason or warrant for another element of the discourse, and in one case it is the temporal circumstance of another element of the discourse. The second, and more important, feature common to the Day in each of its occurrences is that it is always presented as an unrealized or future event. As I have noted above, the opposition between real and unreal is a feature of the field of the book of Joel. It is thus significant that the Day of YHWH is, in every instance, presented in the future, as having yet to occur. Put bluntly, the Day of YHWH never occurs in the book of Joel. I suggest above that it looms large over the book, but looming is all that it does. This facilitates the relational dynamic noted above, allowing the Day to function as both threat and promise.

⁴⁴ This is generally consistent with the movement from judgment to salvation that Ben Zvi observes in certain so-called “tripartite” prophetic books (e.g., Isaiah, Zephaniah, Ezekiel), which involve a movement from judgment against Israel, to oracles against the nations, to the salvation of Israel. Ben Zvi notes that in this structure one must pass through judgment against Israel to arrive at judgment against her enemies, and then to her final salvation. See Ben Zvi, “Understanding the Message,” 94.

The most notable characteristic of the Day of YHWH with regard to mode is that it gives a significant degree of cohesion to the book as a whole, because there are significant cohesive ties between the individual references to the Day. Similar semantic fields co-occur with the day in different passages. These include semantic fields related to agriculture and war (chs. 1 and 4), cultic semantic fields (chs. 1 and 2), and cosmic semantic fields (chs. 2, 3, and 4). The various instances of the Day are thus connected by instances of co-extension. In chs. 2 and 4 the Day is referred to as “near” (קָרוֹב), which may suggest either co-classification or co-reference. Add to this the simple fact that the precise phrase יוֹם יְהוָה is repeated in each case, and co-reference is strongly suggested. There is but one Day of YHWH in the book of Joel.⁴⁵

What then of the function of the Day of YHWH? In both 1:2–20 and 2:1–17 the Day functions as a threat or warning. It is integral to the arguments of these sections, which are both concerned with the repentance of the people of YHWH, indicating that those who do not return to YHWH will find themselves on the wrong side of the Day of YHWH, of which the locust plague is but a precursor. In 2:18—3:5 the Day of YHWH functions as a promise. This section, which is a direct response to 2:1–17, contains no instructions apart from “fear not” and “be glad” (vv. 21, 23). The picture of the Day of YHWH is one of a relationship between YHWH and the people of YHWH that has been entirely renewed. In 4:1–21 the Day of YHWH functions as a threat of judgment against the nations, and by consequence of salvation for Jerusalem/Zion. As I argued in my analysis of ch. 4, the nations function simply as virtual Addressees of the passage, and

⁴⁵ Thus Nogalski’s suggestion that the Day in Joel is first a day of judgment against the people of YHWH, and then a day of judgment against the nations is incorrect. The Day functions as a threat of judgment against the people of YHWH, but is not an event of judgment for them. Cf. Nogalski, “Recurring Themes,” 125–26.

thus the Day does not really function as threat at all. Instead, it is a threat against the enemies of the people of YHWH, and thus a promise of vindication for the people of YHWH. The nations that once tormented Judah will be laid low, and YHWH will dwell in Zion. The Day of YHWH in ch. 4 is a day of promise for the people of YHWH, much as it was in ch. 3, though the promise is framed in ch. 4 as a threat to the people's enemies.

Given that the Day of YHWH is a singular, future event in the book of Joel, what do these varied functions suggest regarding the function of the Day of YHWH in the book as a whole? The Day is, first and foremost, a moment of YHWH's incursion into the world. What is more, this incursion involves an assault on those who oppose YHWH and his rule—be this against his own people or against the enemies of his faithful ones. As LaRocca-Pitts puts it, “the Day of Yahweh became, among the Hebrew prophets, the situation *par excellence* for describing a conflict between Yahweh and his antagonists.”⁴⁶ It is consequently possible that the Day might be a moment of judgment or of salvation. Whether judgment or salvation, on the Day of YHWH, YHWH moves particularly and significantly in the everyday world.⁴⁷ The Day is thus a theophanic event. The Day is also always a day of destruction and of salvation. The nature of the event does not change. Certainly there is a dramatic inversion with regard to the Day of YHWH in 2:18—4:21, as Deist notes.⁴⁸ This is not due to any difference in the Day, but to a difference in those who hear and heed the message of the prophetic book. The orientation of the people of YHWH toward YHWH changes, and so their experience of

⁴⁶ LaRocca-Pitts, “The Day of Yahweh as Rhetorical Strategy,” 327.

⁴⁷ This is consistent with King's description of the Day of YHWH in Zephaniah (King, “The Day of the Lord in Zephaniah”).

⁴⁸ Deist, “Parallels and Reinterpretation,” 72–73.

the Day changes. The Day is a threat of a coming moment of judgment and destruction in both ch. 1 and ch. 4, but in ch. 4 the people of YHWH are oriented properly toward YHWH, and thereby toward the Day. They are saved while the nations are destroyed.⁴⁹ Similarly, in both 1:14 and 2:11 it is clear that destruction on the Day of YHWH is not a forgone conclusion, but is related to the behaviour of the people.⁵⁰ Finally, the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel appears to be inevitable. The shift in relational orientation between 1:2—2:17 and 2:18—4:21 does not forestall the Day, it simply changes the way that the people of YHWH experience the Day.⁵¹ In the book of Joel the Day of YHWH is intimately related to the interpersonal dynamic of YHWH and his people, it is a future event, it is a moment of theophanic intervention, it is a day of destruction and salvation, and it is inevitable.

⁴⁹ Thus House's conclusion that the Day is a tool used to bring about repentance is true, but too limited (House, "Character of God," 322–23). Even after the dramatic shift in relational dynamic between the people and YHWH in 2:18, the Day remains the primary theme of the remainder of the book.

⁵⁰ This is somewhat different from, but not inconsistent with, Deist's view that there are three or four different interpretations of the nature of the Day in Joel, which are mutually reinterpreting (Deist, "Parallels and Reinterpretation," 75). That said, I do not agree with his final evaluation that, with ch. 4 as the final stage in this process of mutual reinterpretation, the book of Joel must be understood as apocalyptic literature (Deist, "Parallels and Reinterpretation," 75).

⁵¹ This buttresses arguments in favour of some type of relational breach (whether covenant-related or not) between the people of YHWH and their God in the first two sub-texts of Joel (cf. my longer discussion of this in ch. 4 above). The dramatic shift in the Addressees' experience of the Day of YHWH—a shift directly related to the transition from 2:17 to 2:18—indicates a broken relationship that has been repaired.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study

1. Summary of Results

The goal of this work has been to examine the ways in which linguistic register in Joel orients readers to the nature and function of the Day of YHWH, both in each Day of YHWH passage and in the book as a whole, in order to clarify the nature of the Day of YHWH particularly as found in the book of Joel. I have demonstrated that the book of Joel is a unified communicative act that calls its readers and hearers to an appropriate relationship to YHWH, and that the Day of YHWH functions simultaneously as a threat against those who are not properly relationally oriented to YHWH, and as a promise for those who are. The Day itself is a singular event that involves the inevitable future incursion of YHWH into the world. Shifts in the description of the Day of YHWH in the book of Joel are not the product of different Days, or of a change in the essential nature of the Day, but are the product of a shift in relational orientation between the people of YHWH and their deity.

A secondary goal of this dissertation has been to demonstrate the methodological usefulness of register analysis for the examination of biblical texts with relation to form and genre. My examination of the register of each successive section (i.e., sub-text) in the book of Joel has demonstrated that despite the fact that there is a clearly unified concept of the Day of YHWH in the book, that concept functions differently at different points in the book due to certain differences in linguistic register. Additionally, I have described the context of situation of Joel, which is consistent with recent theoretical shifts among form critics and provides a helpful and linguistically grounded account of social context for the book.

2. The Day of YHWH in the Book of Joel

In each successive section of the book of Joel, the reader is oriented to the Day of YHWH in a different way by shifts in linguistic register. In the first section (1:2–20), a terrible locust plague and drought is described. In this context the Day of YHWH functions as a warning of an even more severe and terrible event that stands in the near future. The Day appears to be inevitable, and yet the Addressees are called to respond to the threat of the Day and to the calamity of the plague and drought. One of the notable elements of the register of Joel 1:2–20 involves the prophetic voice. Even though the Participant I have referred to as “the prophet” or “the prophetic voice” is closely related to the Participant “YHWH” by means of various overlapping identity chains, and though the prophet/YHWH is best described as a Participant set in terms of the field of discourse, there are significant elements of tension in this set. The prophetic voice actually goes so far as to side with the Addressees, by voicing the needed lament to YHWH (vv. 19–20). This suggests that, though no promise of salvation from the Day is provided (whether conditionally or otherwise), a proper response from the Addressees, which follows the example of the prophetic voice, may have a positive outcome. The Day of YHWH in Joel 1:2–20, therefore, functions as a threat, and the register of the text orients the text’s readership as recipients of that threat, though with the suggestion of the possibility of deliverance.

In Joel 2:1–17 this possibility of deliverance is made more explicit. In a similar way to the first section of the book, the Day of YHWH in 2:1–17 functions as a threat, or warning. The same characteristics of theophany, inevitability, and nearness characterize the Day here, but the register of this portion of the book frames the

relational dynamic between YHWH and the people of YHWH in such a way that there is hope for deliverance. Intriguingly, one of the features of the tenor of the register of 2:1–17—YHWH’s power-dominance—creates a point of tension. YHWH, who has created the terror of the locust plague, and who is himself the origin of the coming Day of YHWH, is also the origin of potential salvation from the coming Day. What is more, references to the character of YHWH (grounded in allusions to previous texts like Exod 32–24) also ground this possible deliverance in that nature of the deity. Consequently, tensions in the tenor of discourse similar to those in 1:2–20 crop up in 2:1–17. The prophet continues to stand in tension with YHWH, functioning as a mediator between the people of YHWH and their God. What is more, it is the prophet who commends to the people (and their representatives, the priests) YHWH’s merciful and compassionate character (2:13). Consequently, even though the Day of YHWH remains a threat in 2:1–17, the crisis of the locust plague and the threat of an even more terrible coming moment of judgment creates the possibility of a return to YHWH that might lead to an outpouring of mercy.

The third section of the book brings a significant shift in the way in which the register frames the Day of YHWH. Whereas the Day functioned as threat and warning in 1:2—2:17, in 2:18—3:5 it functions as a promise of deliverance and religious intimacy between YHWH and his faithful people. The nature of the Day is the same referentially. It remains a time of destruction, it remains cosmic in its scope, it remains a moment of theophany, and it remains temporally imminent. The shift from 1:2—2:17 to 2:18—3:5 involves especially a shift in the tenor of discourse, as the Addressees are

now represented as being in correct relationship with their God, and are consequently on the right side of the Day.

Similarly, the Day in Joel 4:1–21 is a time of salvation, but only for those who are in correct relational orientation to YHWH. For the enemies of YHWH's people, whom I have referred to as the nations set, the Day is a time of judgment and destruction. The Day occurs both on the plain of cutting, where the nations are obliterated, and on Mt. Zion, where the people of YHWH experience religious wholeness and agricultural blessing. Again the Day is not referentially different from preceding instances in the book. Rather the same relational shift that characterized 2:18—3:5 is operative in 4:1–21. For the people of YHWH the Day in Joel 4:1–21 is a time of unilateral salvation and victory over old enemies.

The final step taken in this dissertation was to move to the level of the register of the book of Joel as a whole, and to examine the nature and function of the Day of YHWH from this perspective. Given that the Day is a singular, future event of YHWH's incursion into the world in all of the sections (sub-texts) of the book, this characterization remains legitimate for the nature of the Day in the book as a whole. The Day is first and foremost a time of YHWH's decisive incursion into the world. This incursion involves judgment against any who oppose YHWH's divine rule, whether this means his own unfaithful people, or the enemies of his faithful followers. From the perspective of the book as a whole, the Day might be a moment of salvation or destruction. What matters is the readership's relational orientation toward YHWH. This is not due to a change in the basic nature of the Day as a moment of theophany and

judgment, but is due instead to a change in the nature of those who hear and respond to the message of the book of Joel.

3. Register and Context of Situation in the Prophetic Book of Joel

This study suggests that the book of Joel is a unified literary work—a primary text made up of several sub-texts, the interplay of which is important for understanding the book as a whole. My exploration of the mode of the book indicates a text bound together by a wide variety of similarity and identity chains. Joel is also a single graphic text in the manuscript traditions. Cohesive ties bind together a wide array of Participants into identifiable sets.

The field of discourse for the book represents two major Participant sets that run through the entire text. These are the prophet/YHWH and the people of YHWH. The prophet/YHWH functions principally as Speaker, Actor, or Initiator, driving the action throughout. There is also notable tension in this set, and I have observed several cases in which the prophetic voice stands in sharp distinction to YHWH. In addition to these two main Participant sets, there are three sets that are closely related as antagonists to the people of YHWH or YHWH: the locusts, the Northerner, and the nations. While not referentially identical, these sets share similar qualities and patterns in the field of discourse. Of particular note with reference to these antagonist sets is the diminishing of agency over the course of the book. This reduction in agency corresponds inversely to the antagonist's function as proxy for YHWH. That is, where the antagonist is YHWH's proxy its agency is high, and where it is YHWH's enemy its agency is reduced. I also observed several important oppositions, particularly with reference to the arena of the passage. The temporal arena is marked by an important opposition between past/present

and future, where events in the former serve as grounds for events in the latter. I also noted that 2:18—3:1 serves as the discourse present for the book, and is consequently a tipping point between this past/future division. The locative Arena is marked by oppositions between Jerusalem/Zion/Judah as sacred internal space, and a less clearly defined external space associated especially with the immediately surrounding antagonist nations. The book has a heavy concentration of Material processes, and some important but uncommon instances of Mental and Speaking processes.

The key relational axis represented by the tenor of the book of Joel is between the people of YHWH set and the prophet/YHWH set. In this relationship almost all power lies with YHWH, but there are important moments in which the people of YHWH (at times with the aid of the prophetic voice) respond to YHWH, and even leverage a certain kind of power against the deity. The prophetic voice stands apart from both YHWH and the people of YHWH to a degree. While the prophet speaks the words of YHWH for the most part, I observed a few significant moments in which the prophet stands with the people in lament or in appeal to YHWH's character of love and mercy. The prophetic voice thus serves an important mediating function between those readers/listeners who self-identify with the people of YHWH and their God. He is able simultaneously to stand with the deity and with the people, bridging the gap between them constructively. The estrangement between YHWH and his people is, of course, absent from the second part of the book, meaning this mediating function is consequently unnecessary and therefore absent by the end of the book. Similarly, as the book progresses the people of YHWH shift from their role as the semantic Addressees of the text to 3rd person observers. Clearly the implied readership has not changed by

Joel 4:1–21, but the role that this readership occupies within the structure of the text has shifted so that they are no longer being addressed but are observing the destruction of their foes.

What, then, of the context of situation for the book of Joel? The book exists in the graphic channel and a written-as-spoken medium. Language is consequently constitutive of the communicative act, but the book suggests the possibility of being read, re-read, and quite possibly read aloud. The book is cohesive and coherent as a single text, but does show some signs of discontinuity that might suggest progressive editing over time. The book is also a represented divine communication, meant to be read especially by those who self-identify with the people of YHWH set. This also suggests that the context of situation includes some person or group able to step into the role of the prophetic voice, thus mediating the relationship between YHWH and his people. Both the people of YHWH and the prophetic figure are intriguingly flexible, empty personae. This gives the book a high degree of flexibility with regard to re-appropriation and re-application. Many people at many times might slip easily into the role of prophetic voice or of addressees of the discourse. Some things required of those who might appropriate the book include sympathy for the Jerusalem cult and priesthood and for Jerusalem/Zion, as well as devotion to the God YHWH. Related to all of this is the Day of YHWH, which functions simultaneously as threat and promise. This enables the book of Joel to function as either a call to repentance or a divine promise of salvation, or as both of these simultaneously. Related to this flexibility of function is the fact that no specific sins are enumerated in the book, even though sin appears to be related to a worldview grounded in covenant theology. As I noted above, the sins of the

addressees of the book of Joel are a kind of empty vessel, into which later readers/listeners might deposit their own sins in a process of lament and hoped-for deliverance.

4. Suggestions for Further Study

The results of this dissertation suggest two particular avenues for further study. The first of these is the expansion of the scope of this work to include additional Day of YHWH passages, especially in the Book of the Twelve. This would serve to bolster recent research into the possibilities of reading the collection as a literary unit, and help to mark off areas of similarity and difference with relation to linguistic register in the various Day of YHWH passages in the Twelve. A related possibility would be the application of different synchronic methodological perspectives to the question of the nature of the Day of YHWH in Joel and in the rest of the prophetic literature, in order to support or challenge my conclusions regarding the nature and function of the Day in the book of Joel.

Another possible avenue for exploration would be the application of register analysis to additional passages in the OT/HB. This might take the form of a continued exploration of the prophetic literature, an attempt to provide a fully-orbed representation of the possible registers in the prophetic literature, or perhaps even a rudimentary system-network for this semantic sub-system of Classical Hebrew. Alternatively, one might expand this study by drawing comparisons between the registers of texts in the OT/HB that are related to different supposed genres in order to describe carefully the nature of differences and similarities between such texts (e.g., between “prophetic” literature and “wisdom” literature). This would serve to bring greater illumination to the

nature of sameness and difference between the texts that comprise the OT/HB, and could help to bring greater clarity to the context of situation and the context of culture of these various texts, and of the great collection of the OT/HB itself.

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