

“Like ‘Ilu Are You Wise”

Studies in Northwest Semitic Languages
and Literatures in Honor of
Dennis G. Pardee

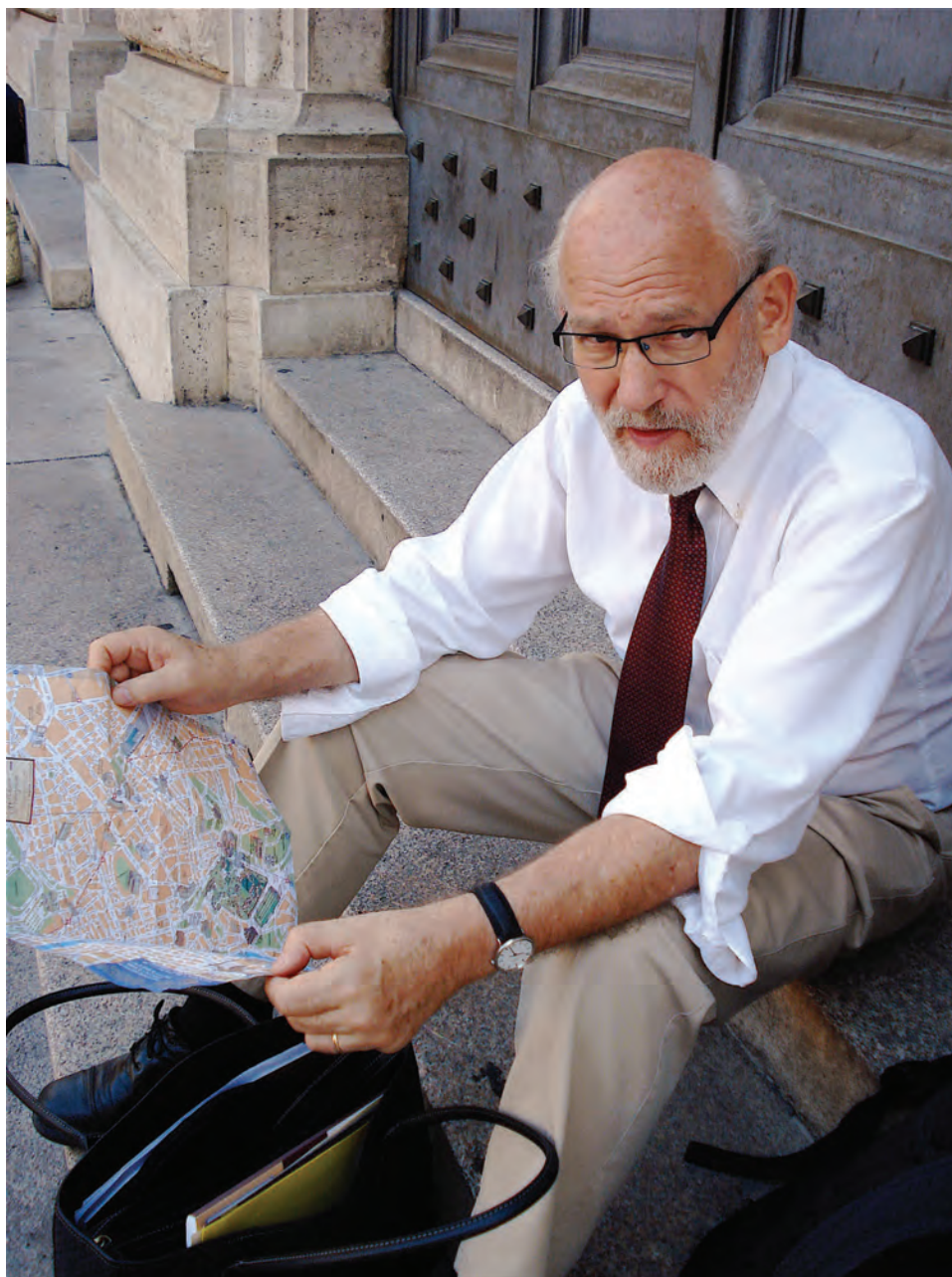
EDITED BY H. H. HARDY II, JOSEPH LAM,
AND ERIC D. REYMOND



STUDIES IN ANCIENT ORIENTAL CIVILIZATION • NUMBER 73
THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

(inside front cover)

“LIKE ’ILU ARE YOU WISE”



Dennis G. Pardee (photo by Nancy Pardee)

“LIKE ’ILU ARE YOU WISE”

STUDIES IN NORTHWEST SEMITIC LANGUAGES
AND LITERATURES IN HONOR OF DENNIS G. PARDEE

Edited by

H. H. Hardy II,
Joseph Lam,
and Eric D. Reymond

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INTRODUCTION

k il ḥkmt

“Like ’Ilu are you wise”

—The Kirta Epic (Pardee 1997q, 341)

THE PRESENT COLLECTION OF ESSAYS is the first of two projected volumes in honor of Dennis Graham Pardee and his contributions to scholarship. This first volume consists of contributions from colleagues and former students in the United States and other countries outside Europe. The essays were completed in the summer of 2017 and presented to Dennis at a celebratory event on September 25, 2017, hosted in the Oriental Institute Museum gallery and belatedly commemorating his seventy-fifth birthday on August 14. A soon-to-appear companion volume will contain essays from his colleagues in Europe and will be published by Peeters (Leuven) under the editorial guidance of Emmanuelle Capet, Robert Hawley, and Carole Roche-Hawley.

The two-volume format mirrors the pattern of Dennis’s academic career. Having taught for nearly five decades at the University of Chicago (beginning in 1972), the same institution where he completed his doctorate in 1974, Dennis is currently the Henry Crown Professor of Hebrew Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and at the Oriental Institute. He is one of the preeminent experts in America in Northwest Semitic languages and literatures, particularly Ugaritic studies, as well as the ancient Near East in general. The present volume offers a glimpse of Dennis’s professional ties in the English-speaking world, with his former students—many of whom hold academic positions in the United States and abroad—strongly represented.

At the same time, Dennis has long maintained close connections to scholarship in Europe, particularly in France. Indeed, his link to France goes back to his college days, during which he spent several years studying French language and culture. But, from a professional standpoint, his strongest academic bonds with French colleagues were forged through his participation as an epigrapher for the Mission de Ras Shamra–Ougarit beginning in the 1980s and more recently for the Mission Archéologique de Ras Ibn Hani. In conjunction with this association, starting around 1980, Dennis began publishing equally prolifically in French as in English (or perhaps even more). His French publications include a number of volumes in the Ras Shamra–Ougarit series that are among his most acclaimed works and that exemplify his detailed philological method: *Les textes hippiatriques* (1985d); *Les textes para-mythologiques de la 24^e campagne* (1988d); *La trouvaille épigraphique de l’Ougarit* (1989a, with Pierre Bordreuil—a catalog of all the inscribed material from Ugarit discovered during the 1929–88 campaigns at Ras Shamra and Ras Ibn Hani); *Les textes rituels* (2000e); and *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville*^{***} (2012k, with Pierre Bordreuil and Robert Hawley). He has also held visiting positions at the Collège de France, the École Pratique des Hautes Études, and the Institut Catholique de Paris. The companion volume of this Festschrift offers an opportunity for his European colleagues to celebrate this legacy and is due to be published in the near future.

In the following pages, Dennis’s career as a teacher, mentor, and scholar *par excellence* is honored. He is well known as a skilled classroom instructor, having received the University of Chicago Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching in 2009–10 (see also “A Personal Expression of Thanks to Dennis” in Gary A. Long’s essay in the present volume), and as an adroit mentor of countless students of the ancient Near East, most notably as the primary supervisor of at least thirty-seven doctoral dissertations (see “Dissertation Advisees”). His prolific publication record is superlative in quantity, breadth, and quality. His academic publications (see “Publications of Dennis G. Pardee”) are enumerated at nearly six hundred monographs, articles, dictionary entries, and reviews. They cover topics ranging from his early work on ancient Hebrew letters (1976a; 1978a; 1978c; 1978d; 1979a; 1979b; 1980a; 1982c; 1982d; 1983a; 1992b; 1997b; 1997i; 1997j; 1998c; 2002a–b; 2002e–f; 2005g; 2013d) to the English translation of multiple Northwest Semitic texts in the *Context of Scripture* volumes (1997c–e; 1997g; 1997o–q; 1997t–v; 1997x–z; 2002h; 2017a–e), and from the

French text editions and reeditions of the epigraphic finds in the Bronze Age kingdom of Ugarit (see *TEO et passim*) to the *editio princeps* of the 2008 discovery of an Iron Age stele at Zincirli (ancient Sam'al) inscribed with a mortuary dedication in a local Northwest Semitic dialect (2009b; 2014b; 2017b). Recognizing that this volume's contributors were limited to a subset of Dennis's professional colleagues, the topics represented in the essays nonetheless reflect this wide range of scholarly inquiry to which Dennis has given attention in his scholastic endeavors.

The greatest amount of Dennis's research output has concerned all things Ugarit. His first publication ("A Note on the Root *'tq* in CTA 16 I 2,5 (UT 125, KRT II)" [Pardee 1973a]) and his University of Chicago dissertation ("The Preposition in Ugaritic" [1974]), published in three parts in successive issues of *Ugarit-Forschungen* [1975a; 1976b; 1977d; see also 1979d]), dealt with aspects of Ugaritic grammar. His aforementioned role as an epigrapher for the Mission de Ras Shamra fit well with his interest in this Late Bronze metropolis and kingdom—from the epigraphy of Ugaritic tablets (*Les textes para-mythologiques de la 24^e campagne* [1988d]; *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville**** [2012k, with P. Bordreuil and R. Hawley]), to the grammar of the Ugaritic language (a 404-page review of J. Tropper's *Ugaritische Grammatik* [2003–2004a]; *Manuel d'ougaritique* [2004l, with P. Bordreuil], translated and revised as *A Manual of Ugaritic* [2009a, with P. Bordreuil]), to the interpretation of Ugaritic texts of all genres (*Les textes hippatriques* [1985d]; *Les textes rituels* [2000e]; *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit* [2002d]), to the elucidation of the history and society of the ancient city (1995j; 1996c; 1999b; 2000a; 2000d; 2001g; 2003b; 2004j–k; 2004o; 2004–2005; 2005e; 2006a; 2007c; 2010c–d; 2013k), and to the comparison of Ugaritic texts with other ancient literatures ("yph 'Witness' in Hebrew and Ugaritic" [1978e/2013l]; "Aspects of Epistolary Verbal Usage in Ugaritic and Akkadian" [1987a, with R. M. Whiting]). Further, he supervised dissertations on various Ugaritic-related areas, including ritual meals (Belnap 2007), sacrificial terminology (Clemens 1999), epistolography (Hawley 2003), incubation type-scenes (Kim 2010), the theme of life and mortality (McAfee 2015), the historical origins of the Amorite Dynasty (Buck 2018), iconography (Richey 2019), and the *Bunušu* (Prosser 2010).

Several essays in this volume deal with various aspects of Ugaritic studies representing a wide range of topics and approaches. Peter Daniels reexamines the early history of Ugaritic scholarship leading to the decipherment of the cuneiform alphabetic script. Ed Greenstein offers a defense of his previously published argument against the existence of a *yaqtul* preterite form in Ugaritic in the face of specific objections made in recent years. Theodore Lewis takes a fresh look at the text *KTU* 1.23 by focusing on its emphasis on 'Ilu and its concern with royalty at Ugarit. Miller Prosser examines the social organization of Late Bronze Ugarit and the concept of patronage. Jacqueline Vayntrub explores themes of filial duty and mortality in the Ugaritic poem of Aqhat.

From the initial stages of his career, Dennis has maintained an interest in the decipherment and interpretation of Northwest Semitic inscriptions written in linear alphabetic scripts. This topic was the subject of his first monograph (*Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters* [1982d, with collaboration from S. David Sperling, J. David Whitehead, and Paul E. Dion]), as well as of a number of influential articles spread throughout his career ("The 'Epistolary Perfect' in Hebrew Letters" [1983a]; "Le papyrus du marzeah" [1990a, with P. Bordreuil]; "Les documents d'Arslan Tash: authentiques ou faux?" [1998e]; "A New Aramaic Inscription from Zincirli" [2009b]). A significant part of his teaching responsibilities at the University of Chicago over the years also involved overviews of this material (e.g., at different times in his teaching career he taught year-long course sequences on Hebrew-Phoenician-Punic and Aramaic inscriptions). His supervision of dissertations on Old Hebrew grammar (Gogel 1987), Canaanite personal names (Layton 1987), Biblical Hebrew verbal roots (Penney 1995), Phoenician settlements (Treumann 1997), and Levantine curses (Sumner 2018) reflects these scholarly interests.

In keeping with this theme, a number of essays in this volume deal with inscriptional topics. Four essays offer revised readings or interpretations of previously published inscriptions: Dan Belnap on the second Arslan Tash plaque, Jo Ann Hackett and Aren Wilson-Wright on the Melqart Stele, Christopher Roll-

ston on the incised 'Išba'l inscription from Khirbet Qeiyafa, and Philip Schmitz on the Phoenician text of the trilingual Incirli inscription. In addition, two other studies address specific grammatical topics: William Schniedewind discusses the transitional particle *w't* in Epigraphic Hebrew set within its broader Northwest Semitic context, while Lawson Younger examines the preposition *b* in Sam'alian Aramaic from a cognitive linguistic perspective, offering a framework for classifying its primary and extended usages.

Another fruitful area of research for Dennis has been the study of Hebrew and Ugaritic poetry, particularly issues surrounding parallelism—its definition, description, and analysis. This research resulted in a monograph (*Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetic Parallelism: A Trial Cut* [*'nt I and Proverbs 2*] [1988j]) and numerous articles (notably Pardee 1988f; 1990b; 1993c). Multiple supervised dissertations connect with this theme (Long 1993; Owens 1997; Raymond 1999; Jobe 2015; Vayntrub 2015; Pickut 2017).

Several essays in the current volume take up this topic, engage with Dennis's literary method, and expand it to new areas of research. Four contributions focus on specific types of Biblical Hebrew poetic parallelism in order to elucidate their inner workings: F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp on so-called "number parallelism" (e.g., $x // x + 1$); H. H. Hardy II on the parallelism of grammatical gender; David Tsumura on the "vertical" grammar of parallelism, where elements in successive line segments correspond by constituting two indispensable components of a single grammatical utterance; and Simeon Chavel on a device he terms "alternation," in which two distinct utterances ($a-b$ and $x-y$) are combined in interlocking fashion ($a-x-b-y$). Other essays treat particular poems and/or broader issues in poetic analysis. Cynthia Miller-Naudé and Jacobus Naudé examine the acrostic poem of Lamentations 3 to ascertain the effect of the acrostic constraint on the word order of individual lines and conclude that the syntax of its bicola is in fact not aberrant; Koowon Kim conducts a detailed study of Psalm 1 to uncover its many levels of poetic structure; and Drayton Benner takes a statistical approach to line lengths in Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry, quantifying the approximate balance one finds between lines in a poetic unit.

While the term "philology" might seem outmoded in certain circles, it is unlikely Dennis would disavow the term. It is an apt descriptor of the holistic approach to the study of texts that Dennis has adopted throughout his career: situating a text (or a part thereof) in its historical and linguistic contexts, engaging in a meticulously close reading, and allowing this process to shape one's interpretation and understanding. Examples of this approach include Dennis's identification of the antiquity of the divine combat theme in a text from Mari ("Le combat de Ba'lu avec Yammu d'après les textes ougaritiques" [Pardee 1993a, with P. Bordreuil]) and *The Ugaritic Texts and the Origins of the West-Semitic Literary Composition* (2012i), the published version of his 2007 Schweich Lectures delivered before the British Academy. Examples of supervised dissertation topics employing this approach include ritual gestures (Calabro 2014), oath formulae (Conklin 2005), Hebrew pausal forms (Goerwitz 1993), biblical allusion (Mastnjak 2015), compositional history (Thomas 2013), priestly literature (Huff 2019), treaty texts (Polk 2020), and literary reversal and response (Burnight 2011).

A number of essays in this volume reflect such an approach in their attempt to elucidate particular terms or phrases within ancient Semitic languages and texts. Two essays address the third masculine singular pronoun when written with a *heh* mater: Eric Raymond's contribution attempts to explain what motivates this orthography in the Hebrew Bible and later literature, while Joel Baden's essay explores what the appearance of this form of the pronoun on the Hebrew word "tent" can tell us about the composition of the Pentateuch, especially as related to the J source. Several studies focus on a word or phrase that occurs in multiple languages. Joseph Lam reevaluates the meaning of the Hebrew root *bhl* based on the occurrence of the same root in an Ugaritic legal document. In similar fashion, Nathan Mastnjak reevaluates the sense of *gmr* in Hebrew based, in part, on the usage of this same root in Ugaritic. John Burnight critiques an explanation of Hebrew *ksl* and proposes a new interpretation of the root informed by the cognates in Akkadian and Ugaritic. Samuel Boyd traces the use of the phrase "King of Kings" from Ancient Egyptian through Akkadian, Persian, and Hebrew. Chaim Cohen gives a detailed explanation of different adjectival constructions in which the adjective precedes the noun it modifies, as exemplified in the Ugaritic expression *'ib 'iqn'i* "lapis-lazuli-pure."

Several of the essays also address historical and religious themes. Brian Schmidt's essay explores the exact nuance of *'ēlōhîm* in 1 Samuel 28:13, especially as it relates to the context of mantic ritual. Matthew McAfee investigates the biblical King Og in relation to what we know of the Rephaim from Ugaritic texts. Carolina López-Ruiz investigates the connection between Greek and Semitic deities with a special focus on the identity of Aphrodite. Adam Miglio explores the images associated with prophecy in an Akkadian letter from Mari—specifically the image of the flooding waters of the Euphrates.

In 2012, in a Festschrift honoring another prominent scholar in the field (John Huehnergard—a contributor to the present volume), Dennis published an essay titled “The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in a Nutshell,” articulating his views on the functions of the Biblical Hebrew verb forms; previously those views had only appeared piecemeal in reviews of other works (see Pardee 2012h, 285 n. 1). Even though much of Dennis's research is situated around understanding the languages of ancient Semitic peoples, he would be the first to say he is not a linguist. Yet he encourages his students to use the best methods available in their analysis of ancient texts and has directed dissertations that have advanced linguistic methodologies, such as metapragmatics (Miller 1992), semantics (Creason 1995), metaphor (Long 1993; Lam 2012), grammaticalization (Hardy 2014), language contact (Boyd 2014), and computational linguistics (Benner 2015).

Three essays in this volume deal explicitly with questions related to the Biblical Hebrew verbal system and one with linguistic issues. Building on Pardee (2012h), David Calabro provides a historical assessment of the ancient Egyptian verbal system and compares it to that of ancient Hebrew. Examining the linguistic phenomenon of formally distinct verbal complements, Stuart Creason presents “an initial foray” into the use of syntactic alternations and its importance for the analysis of Biblical Hebrew verbal syntax and semantics. Randall Garr distinguishes the Biblical Hebrew usage patterns of the so-called coordinated perfect, that is, the *wʾqatal* construction. And Seth Sanders examines diversity in the earliest strata of Northwest Semitic verbal systems.

Throughout his work, Dennis has also invoked matters of comparative Semitics. This interest is evident in his early publications on individual words, such as “The Semitic Root *mrr* and the Etymology of Ugaritic *mr(r)/brk*” (1978e), verbal usage of epistolary forms (1983a; 1987a, with R. M. Whiting; 2013d), Semitic onomastics (1988a; see also Layton 1987), and linguistic classification of texts, including the Deir ‘Alla Baalam Plasters (1991a) and Gezer Calendar (1997f; 2013a). More recently, he provided leadership to the 2007 international colloquium “Grammatical Case in the Languages of the Middle East and Europe” held at the University of Chicago Center in Paris (2011a), where he gave his own assessment of the Semitic case system in “Vestiges du système casuel entre le nom et le pronom suffixe en hébreu biblique” (2011e).

Three essays in this volume contribute to the study of comparative Semitic grammar. Aaron Butts examines the so-called terminative particle in proto-Semitic in reconstructing its form as postposition **-sʾa* (based on Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew *-ʾ*, and Ugaritic *-h*) and arguing also for a reflex of this particle in the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā*. Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee looks at another old problem, the origin of the third-person endings of the Semitic stative/suffix conjugation, and contends they are in fact grammaticalized forms of the original nominal endings marking gender, number, and case. John Huehnergard focuses on the issues surrounding the two reflexes of the proto-Semitic consonant **θ* in Ugaritic (*z* and *ḡ*) and proposes a sound rule for the conditioned change from (front-articulated) **θ* to (back-articulated) *ḡ*.

This volume concludes with an essay by Gary Long on the implications of recent work in the cognitive sciences on our understanding of human thought, conceptualization, and the notion of deities. This expansive essay, along with its personal note of gratitude to Dennis, serves as a fitting end to the collection.

EDITORS' NOTE

The essays in this volume were completed in 2017. The process of publication led to some unavoidable delays, and only minimal changes or updates could be made to the contributions during the final phase of editing in 2021.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ABD</i>	Freedman, David Noel. <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . 6 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992
<i>AfO</i>	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AfOSup	Archiv für Orientforschung Supplement
<i>AHDEL</i>	<i>The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language</i> . 3rd ed. Boston/New York/London: Houghton Mifflin, 1992
<i>AHw</i>	von Soden, W. <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> . Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1959–81
AION	Annali Istituto orientale di Napoli
<i>AJSLL</i>	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>
ALASPM	Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens
AMD	Ancient Magic and Divination
ANES	Ancient Near Eastern Studies
ANES Sup	Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement
<i>ANET</i>	Pritchard, James B. <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
<i>AnSt</i>	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
AO	Accession number in the Département des Antiquités orientales of the Louvre
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOS	American Oriental Society
<i>ArOr</i>	<i>Archiv Orientální</i>
ASV	American Standard Version, 1901
<i>AuOr</i>	<i>Aula Orientalis</i>
AYB	Anchor Yale Bible
AYBRL	Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Society of Overseas Research (Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research)</i>
BASORSS	BASOR Supplement Series
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i>
<i>BiOr</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
<i>BNJ</i>	<i>Brill's New Jacoby</i>
BO	Biblica et Orientalia
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BWL</i>	Lambert, W. G. <i>Babylonian Wisdom Literature</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960
CAD	Gelb, I. J., et al. <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956–2010
<i>CAT</i>	Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. <i>The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places</i> . ALASPM 8. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CDA</i>	Black, J., et al. <i>A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian</i> . 2nd (corrected) printing. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000
CEB	Common English Bible, 2011
<i>CEWAL</i>	Woodard, R., ed. <i>The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the World's Ancient Languages</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East

CIS	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum</i> . Paris: e Republicae Typographeo, 1881–
COS	Hallo, William W., and K. Lawson Younger. <i>Context of Scripture</i> . 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2017
CRAIBL	<i>Comptes rendus des scéances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CT	Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets
CTA	Herdner, Andrée. <i>Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découvertes à Ras Shamra–Ugarit de 1929 à 1939</i> . Mission de Ras Shamra 10. Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 79. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale/Geuthner, 1963
DCH	Clines, David J. A., ed. <i>The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew, Aleph–Taw</i> . 8 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993–2016
DCPP	Lipiński, E., ed. <i>Dictionnaire de la civilisation phénicienne et punique</i> . Paris: Turnhout, 1992
DDD	van der Toorn, Karel, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, eds. <i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> . Leiden: Brill, 1995
Di	Diyala
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DNWSI	Hoftijzer, J., and K. Jongeling. <i>Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions</i> . 2 vols. HdO 21. Leiden: Brill, 1995
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
DS-NELL	<i>Dutch Studies on Near Eastern Languages and Literatures</i>
DULAT	del Olmo Lete, G., and Joaquín Sanmartín. <i>Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition</i> . Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson. HdO 67. Leiden: Brill, 2002
DULAT ³	del Olmo Lete, G., and Joaquín Sanmartín. <i>Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition</i> . 3rd ed. Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson. HdO 112. Leiden: Brill, 2015
EAJT	<i>East African Journal of Theology</i>
ESV	English Standard Version, 2001
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GAG ³	von Soden, W. <i>Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik</i> . 3rd ed. Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1995
Ges ¹⁸	Gesenius, F. W. <i>Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament</i> . 18th ed. Edited by Rudolf Meyer and Herbert Donner. Berlin: Springer, 1987–2012
GKC	Gesenius, Friedrich W. <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> . 2nd English ed. Edited by E. Kautzsch and Arthur Ernest Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910
GLECS	<i>Comptes rendus du Groupe linguistique d'études chamito-sémitique</i> (Paris)
HALOT	Köhler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. <i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited by M. E. J. Richardson. Leiden: Brill, 2001
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible, 1999
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HS	<i>Hebrew Studies</i>
HSK	Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft / Handbooks of Linguistics and Communication Science
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
HUS	Watson, W. G. E., and N. Wyatt, eds. <i>Handbook of Ugaritic Studies</i> . HdO 39. Leiden: Brill, 1999
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
IOKU	Heltzer, Michael. <i>The Internal Organization of the Kingdom of Ugarit: Royal Service-System, Taxes, Royal Economy, Army, and Administration</i> . Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1982
JANER	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i>
JANES	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>

JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
JEOl	<i>Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JNSL	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JPOS	<i>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</i>
JPS	Jewish Publication Society of America Version, 1918
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement
JSQ	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
KAI	Donner, H., and W. Röllig. <i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften</i> . 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1966–68, 2002
KAR	Ebeling, Erich. <i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts</i> . Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1919
KJV	King James Version, 1611
KTU	Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. <i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit</i> . AOAT 24/1. Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker / Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1976
KTU ²	Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. <i>The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places</i> . ALASPM 8. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995
KTU ³	Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. <i>The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places</i> . 3rd ed. AOAT 360/1. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013
KUSATU	<i>Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt</i>
LSAWS	Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., and R. Scott. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . Revised by H. S. Jones. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968
LXX	Septuagint
MAD	Gelb, I. J., <i>Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary</i> . 5 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952–70
Manual	Bordreuil, Pierre, and Dennis Pardee. <i>Manual of Ugaritic</i> . LSAWS 3. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009
MARI	<i>MARI: Annales de recherches interdisciplinaires</i>
MDOG	<i>Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin</i>
MHH	Kaddari, Menachem-Zvi. מילון העברית המקראית [<i>Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew</i>]. Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2006
MT	Masoretic Text
Na	Narām-Sîn
NA	Neo-Assyrian
NAB	New American Bible, revised edition, 2010
NABU	<i>Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires</i>
NASB	New American Standard Bible, updated edition, 1995
NEA	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
NET	New English Translation, 1996–2006
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIDB	Sakenfeld, Katharine Doob. <i>New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006–9
NIV	New International Version, 2011
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible, 1985
NJPS	<i>Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Traditional Hebrew Text</i> . Philadelphia/New York/Jerusalem: Jewish Publication Society, 1985
NLT	New Living Translation, 1996
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version, 1989
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OEANE	Meyers, M., ed. <i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East</i> . 5 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997

OIMP	Oriental Institute Museum Publications
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications
OIS	Oriental Institute Seminars
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLZ	<i>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</i>
Or	<i>Orientalia</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PIHANS	Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul
PLO	Porta Linguarum Orientalium
POLO	Proche-Orient et Littérature Ougaritique
PPG ³	Friedrich, J., and W. Röllig. <i>Phönizisch-punische Grammatik</i> . 3rd ed. Edited by M. G. Amadasi Guzzo and W. R. Mayer. AnOr 55. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1999
PROBR	al-Maqdissi, M., and V. Matoian, eds. "L'Orient des palais": <i>Le Palais royal d'Ougarit au Bronze récent</i> . Documents d'archéologie syrienne 15. Damascus: Direction générale des antiquités et des musées, 2008
PRU III	Nougayrol, Jean. <i>Le palais royal d'Ugarit III: Textes accadiens et hourrites des archives est, ouest et centrales</i> . Mission de Ras Shamra 6. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1955
RA	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
RAI	Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
RBL	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>
RCAU	Heltzer, Michael. <i>The Rural Community in Ancient Ugarit</i> . Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1976
RCU	Pardee, D. <i>Ritual and Cult at Ugarit</i> . SBLWAW 10. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002
RdQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
RIH	Field number of tablets excavated at Ras Ibn Hani
RIMA	Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RIA	<i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie</i>
RS	Field number of tablets excavated at Ras Shamra (for a complete listing, see <i>TEO</i>)
RSF	<i>Rivista di Studi Fenici</i>
RSO	Ras Shamra–Ougarit
RSP	Fisher, Loren R., ed. <i>Ras Shamra Parallels: The Texts from Ugarit and the Hebrew Bible</i> . 3 vols. Analecta Orientalia. Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1972–81
RSV	Revised Standard Version, 1952
Sa	Sargon
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAAB	<i>State Archives of Assyria Bulletin</i>
SAACT	State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts
SANE	Sources from the Ancient Near East
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization
SBLABS	Society of Biblical Literature Archaeology and Biblical Studies
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSBSS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study Series
SBLWAW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World
SEL	<i>Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici</i>
SSL	Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
TAD	Yardeni, Ada, and Bezalel Porten. <i>Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt</i> . 3 vols. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1986–99
TCL	Textes cunéiformes du Louvre
TDOT	Botterweck, G. Johannes, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds. <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Translated by David E. Green. 15 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–

TEO	Bordreuil, P., and D. Pardee. <i>La trouvaille épigraphique de l'Ougarit</i> . Vol. 1: <i>Concordance</i> . RSO 1. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les civilisations, 1989
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: A Digital Library of Greek Literature
UBL	Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur
UF	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
UM	University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
UNP	Parker, Simon B., ed. <i>Ugaritic Narrative Poetry</i> . SBLWAW 9. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i> Supplement
WdO	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
YOS	Yale Oriental Series
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete</i>
ZAH	<i>Zeitschrift für Althebraistik</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>

UGARITIC ALPHABETIC TEXT CROSS-REFERENCES

CAT = Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places*. ALASPM 8. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995

CTA = Herdner, Andrée. *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découvertes à Ras Shamra–Ugarit de 1929 à 1939*. Mission de Ras Shamra 10. Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 79. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale/Geuthner, 1963

KTU³ = Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places (KTU: Third, Enlarged Edition)*. AOAT 360/1. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013

RIH = field number of tablets excavated at Ras Ibn Hani

RS = field number of tablets excavated at Ras Shamra

1. CAT TO RIH/RS

CAT	1.1	RS	3.361	CAT	1.22	RS	2.[024]
CAT	1.3	RS	2.[014]+	CAT	1.23	RS	2.002
CAT	1.4	RS	2.[008]+	CAT	1.24	RS	5.194
CAT	1.5	RS	2.[022]+	CAT	1.49	RS	1.022
CAT	1.12	RS	2.[012]	CAT	1.71	RS	5.300
CAT	1.14	RS	2.[003]+	CAT	1.96	RS	22.225
CAT	1.15	RS	3.343+	CAT	1.114	RS	24.258
CAT	1.16	RS	3.325+	CAT	1.175	RIH	77/18
CAT	1.17	RS	2.[004]	CAT	1.178	RS	92.2014
CAT	1.19	RS	3.322+	CAT	4.141	RS	15.022+

2. CTA TO RIH/RS

CTA	1	RS	3.361	CTA	21	RS	2.[019]
CTA	4	RS	2.[008]+	CTA	22	RS	2.[024]
CTA	5	RS	2.[022]+	CTA	23	RS	2.002
CTA	6	RS	2.[009]+	CTA	24	RS	5.194
CTA	16	RS	3.325+	CTA	36	RS	1.009
CTA	19	RS	3.322+	CTA	90	RS	11.788
CTA	20	RS	3.348				

3. *KTU*³ TO RIH/RS

<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.1	RS	3.361	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.123	RS	24.271
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.2	RS	3.367 + 3.346	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.140	RS	24.302
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.3	RS	2.[014] + 3.363 + 3.364	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.149	RS	24.644
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.4	RS	2.[008] + 3.341 + 3.347	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.150	RS	24.644 [A]
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.6	RS	2.[009]+	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.160	RS	28.059 B
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.8	RS	3.364	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.161	RS	34.126
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.9	RS	5.229	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.163	RIH	78/14
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.10	RS	3.362+	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.164	RIH	77/02 B + 77/06 + 77/19 + 77/26 A + 78/31
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.12	RS	2.[012]	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.168	RIH	77/10 B
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.14	RS	2.[003]+	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.169	RIH	78/20
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.15	RS	3.343+	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.170	RIH	78/11
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.16	RS	3.325+	<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.179	RS	92.2016
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.17	RS	2.[004]	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.1	RS	3.427
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.18	RS	3.340	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.4	RS	1.018
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.19	RS	3.322+	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.10	RS	4.475
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.20	RS	3.348	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.13	RS	11.872
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.22	RS	2.[024]	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.16	RS	15.008
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.23	RS	2.002	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.23	RS	16.078+
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.24	RS	5.194	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.39	RS	18.038
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.40	RS	1.002	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.40	RS	18.040
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.41	RS	1.003+	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.76	RS	34.356
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.43	RS	1.005	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.81	RIH	78/3 + 78/30
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.46	RS	1.009	<i>KTU</i> ³ 2.85	RS	92.2005
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.47	RS	1.017	<i>KTU</i> ³ 3.1	RS	11.772+
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.60	RS	2.[006]	<i>KTU</i> ³ 3.2	RS	15.111
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.80	RS	15.072	<i>KTU</i> ³ 3.5	RS	16.382
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.82	RS	15.134	<i>KTU</i> ³ 3.9	RS	[Varia 14]
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.87	RS	18.056	<i>KTU</i> ³ 3.10	RIH	84/33
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.90	RS	19.013	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.4	RS	2.[032]
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.92	RS	19.039	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.29	RS	3.320
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.96	RS	22.225	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.35	RS	8.183+
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.108	RS	24.252	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.40	RS	8.279
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.111	RS	24.255	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.43	RS	9.011
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.112	RS	24.256	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.68	RS	11.716
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.113	RS	24.257	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.102	RS	11.857
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.114	RS	24.258	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.133	RS	15.005
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.115	RS	24.260	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.137	RS	15.015+
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.119	RS	24.266	<i>KTU</i> ³ 4.141	RS	15.022+
<i>KTU</i> ³ 1.120	RS	24.269 + 24.297			

<i>KTU</i> ³	4.144	RS	15.032	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.618	RS	19.045
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.149	RS	15.039	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.624	RS	19.049 [A] + 19.049 [C]
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.182	RS	15.115	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.636	RS	19.097
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.243	RS	16.395	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.680	RS	19.178
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.290	RS	17.297	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.752	RS	29.097
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.337	RS	18.024	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.783	RIH	84/13
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.339	RS	18.026	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.791	RIH	84/04
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.341	RS	18.028	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.792	RIH	84/06
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.347	RS	18.035	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.807	RS	94.2050 + 94.2092
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.350	RS	18.039	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.841	RS	94.2064
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.401	RS	18.141	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.859	RS	94.2275
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.422	RS	18.293	<i>KTU</i> ³	5.9	RS	16.265
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.430	RS	18.301 [B]	<i>KTU</i> ³	5.10	RS	17.063
<i>KTU</i> ³	4.609	RS	19.016	<i>KTU</i> ³	5.11	RS	17.117

4. RIH/RS TO *KTU*³

RIH	77/12	<i>KTU</i> ³	8.31	RS	2.[022]+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.5
RIH	77/27	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.770	RS	2.[024]	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.22
RIH	78/02	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.771	RS	2.[031]	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.23
RIH	78/03 + 78/30	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.81	RS	3.320	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.29
RIH	78/14	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.163	RS	3.322+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.19
RIH	78/26	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.176	RS	3.325+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.16
RIH	78/30	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.81	RS	3.343+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.15
RIH	98/02	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.180	RS	3.348	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.20
RS	1.002	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.40	RS	3.361	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.1
RS	1.005	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.43	RS	3.367	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.2
RS	1.009	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.46	RS	4.475	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.10
RS	1.018	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.4	RS	5.194	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.24
RS	1.019	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.48	RS	5.197+	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.31
RS	1.[051]	<i>KTU</i> ³	6.6	RS	5.229	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.9
RS	1.[055]	<i>KTU</i> ³	6.9	RS	6.216	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.34
RS	2.002	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.23	RS	7.088	<i>KTU</i> ³	6.69
RS	2.[003]+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.14	RS	8.183+	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.35
RS	2.[008]+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.4	RS	8.201	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.35
RS	2.[009]+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.6	RS	8.202 [A]	<i>KTU</i> ³	9.7
RS	2.[012]	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.12	RS	8.202 [B]	<i>KTU</i> ³	9.8
RS	2.[014]+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.3	RS	8.279	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.40
RS	2.[019]	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.21	RS	11.772+	<i>KTU</i> ³	3.1

RS	11.788	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.86	RS	19.017	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.610
RS	11.857	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.102	RS	19.039	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.92
RS	11.872	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.13	RS	19.045	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.618
RS	12.063	<i>KTU</i> ³	5.6	RS	19.097	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.636
RS	15.005	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.133	RS	22.225	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.96
RS	15.008	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.16	RS	24.244	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.100
RS	15.015+	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.137	RS	24.247+	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.103
RS	15.022+	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.141	RS	24.252	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.108
RS	15.032	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.144	RS	24.257	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.113
RS	15.039	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.149	RS	24.258	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.114
RS	15.053	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.156	RS	24.266	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.119
RS	15.062	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.158	RS	24.272	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.124
RS	15.111	<i>KTU</i> ³	3.2	RS	24.277	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.127
RS	15.115	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.182	RS	24.302	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.140
RS	15.116	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.183	RS	24.312	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.141
RS	15.117	<i>KTU</i> ³	3.11	RS	24.323	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.142
RS	16.382	<i>KTU</i> ³	3.5	RS	24.327	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.144
RS	16.395	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.243	RS	24.643	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.148
RS	17.073	<i>KTU</i> ³	6.25	RS	24.654	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.155
RS	18.024	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.337	RS	29.097	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.752
RS	18.026	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.339	RS	31.043	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.754
RS	18.028	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.341	RS	34.126	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.161
RS	18.035	<i>KTU</i> ³	3.20	RS	34.356	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.76
RS	18.038	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.39	RS	88.2215	<i>KTU</i> ³	5.27
RS	18.041	<i>KTU</i> ³	1.86	RS	94.2050+	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.807
RS	18.086	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.377	RS	94.2064	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.841
RS	18.113 A	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.42	RS	94.2168	<i>KTU</i> ³	3.32
RS	18.113 [B]	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.43	RS	94.2275	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.859
RS	18.293	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.422	RS	94.2406	<i>KTU</i> ³	2.88
RS	19.016	<i>KTU</i> ³	4.609	RS	[Varia 14]	<i>KTU</i> ³	3.9

PART 1 — UGARITIC STUDIES

Alaouites

The state of the Alawi or Alaouites between Hatay and the Lebanon. A geographical part of Syria, it had a separate existence as a French mandate in 1920–30 and as a republic in 1930–6. On 22 September 1930 it took the name of its chief town, Latakia.⁴

Latakia

Stamps withdrawn 28 February 1937, after which stamps of Syria were used.⁵

The excavator, Claude Schaeffer, who in those days called himself F. A. Schaeffer, told the story of the discovery of the sites of Minet el-Baida and Ugarit for the general public in articles in French, English, and German magazines⁶ and finally in the October 1930 and July 1933 issues of the American *National Geographic Magazine*.⁷

The first tablets were found on May 14, 1929 (fig. 1.2);⁸ in his contribution to the Festschrift for Charles Virolleaud, Schaeffer⁹ recalled, poetically and dramatically, the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the first few tablets by the Turkoman workman Mohamed Moursal. The forty-eight tablets from that first season reached print by mid-April 1930.¹⁰ Accounts of their decipherment have been provided by Johannes Friedrich,¹¹ Ernst Doblhofer, Alan Corré, Cyrus Gordon, Maurice Pope, Peggy Day, and Pierre Bordreuil,¹² and in shorter compass by others. Most of them relied on the journal and book publications by the decipherers, but Day investigated newspaper accounts and archival materials for a fuller picture.



Figure 1.2. The first Ugaritic tablets (Schaeffer 1929, 295 fig. 5). Reprinted with permission.

THE FIRST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A brief summary of the initial work will thus suffice here. Three scholars, working by and large independently, with different methods, converged on a consensus within a few months of publication. Charles Virolleaud¹³ provided the key to the interpretation in his first decipherment article. He noted that some of the bronze axes bore a sequence of letters (fig. 1.3) and that this sequence also appeared at the top of a tablet

4 Wellsted, Rossiter, and Flower 1986, 219.

5 Ibid., 220.

6 *L'illustration* 4724, October 12, 1929; *Illustrated London News* 4727, November 2, 1929; *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* 4427, January 16, 1930 (references from Day 2002, 42 n. 31); the three accounts, consulted at the New York Public Library, are essentially the same article with the same photographs.

7 A small map was included with each of these *National Geographic* articles, but permission to reproduce the first one (Schaeffer 1930, 485) was refused, and an exorbitant fee was demanded for use of the second (Schaeffer 1933, 103). The two maps are not identical; the second is not merely the first one extended to the south to encompass Jerusalem and a bit of the Dead Sea—they are credited to different cartographers, A. B. Bumstead and Newman Bumstead, respectively. In the earlier one, place names are given in Arabic and English; in the later one, in French and English.

8 Schaeffer 1929.

9 Schaeffer 1956.

10 Virolleaud 1929.

11 Friedrich 1957, 83–86. Friedrich does not mention the three *aleph* letters and therefore omits his own contribution (see below). The two Germans, Doblhofer and Friedrich, emphasize Bauer's contribution and downplay those of the two Frenchmen, Virolleaud and Dhorme. Stanislav Segert (1983a, 135–39) helpfully catalogues the mistakes of the original decipherers and the reasons for them.

12 Doblhofer 1961, 203–26; Corré 1966; Gordon 1982, 103–13; Pope 1999, 117–22; Day 2002; Bordreuil 2009.

13 Virolleaud 1931a.



Figure 1.3. Virolleaud's first insight (Schaeffer 1929, pl. LX fig. 4). Reprinted with permission.

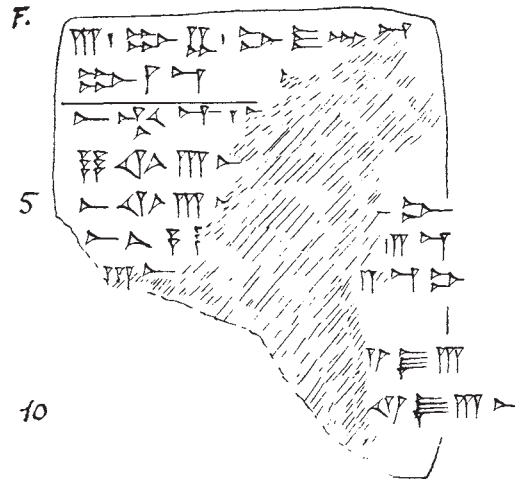


Figure 1.4. Tablet with a name (?) preceded by III (Virolleaud 1929, pl. LXXI no. 18 obv.). Reprinted with permission.



Figure 1.5. Virolleaud's second insight (Schaeffer 1929, pl. LX fig. 2). Reprinted with permission.

(divided into two words; the word divider was easy to recognize), preceded by the letter III (fig. 1.4). Supposing this to be the beginning of an introductory epistolary formula, he suggested it was the equivalent of Akkadian *ana* and that the sequence of letters was a binomial personal name. He also found the same (supposed) name on another axe preceded by a sequence of four letters; adducing parallels, he suggested that the sequence was the word for “axe” (fig. 1.5). The archaeologists pointed to Mycenaean–Minoan connections of the structures they had thus far discovered, so he suggested looking westward for potential languages. (Linear B would not be deciphered until two decades later.)

Day's research¹⁴ led her to a fairly low opinion of Virolleaud. She suggests that he got control of the tablets because he was Schaeffer's boss—though she does not see fit to note that no epigrapher was attached to Schaeffer's expedition, meaning that no one else would have been available to study the texts. She accuses him of misrepresenting the sequence of decipherment events among the three scholars. Nor does she recognize the importance of his two initial suggestions; and she does not credit the astonishing speed with which he got each new trove of tablets into print: every volume—nay, nearly every issue—of the journal *Syria* contained *editiones principes* of Ugaritic tablets.¹⁵ Without publication, no decipherment or interpretation could have happened.

The first scholar to announce results was Hans Bauer¹⁶ (table 1.1, line 1). Assuming a West Semitic language, he looked for letters frequently appearing in first or last place in a word—letters that could represent common prefixes and suffixes such as *y m n t* and monoliteral clitics such as *l b*. He had found a four-letter word for “axe,” *grzn*, in Hebrew, which gave him the *n*. Édouard Dhorme,¹⁷ meanwhile, looking for words containing *l* “to” (the *ana* equivalent), found *b l* and *mlk* and *š lš* and others, but he got some letters wrong—

¹⁴ Day 2002.

¹⁵ Anon. 1956.

¹⁶ Bauer 1930a.

¹⁷ Dhorme 1930. Until 1931, Dhorme published using his religious name, Paul (Day 2002, 42 n. 32).

Table 1.1. Stages of decipherment

	𐎀	𐎁	𐎂	𐎃	𐎄	𐎅	𐎆	𐎇	𐎈	𐎉	𐎊	𐎋	𐎌	𐎍	𐎎	𐎏	𐎐	𐎑	𐎒	𐎓	𐎔	𐎕	𐎖	𐎗	𐎘	𐎙	𐎚	𐎛	𐎜	𐎝	𐎞	𐎟	𐎠	𐎡	𐎢	𐎣	𐎤	𐎥	𐎦	𐎧	𐎨	𐎩	𐎪	𐎫	𐎬	𐎭	𐎮	𐎯	𐎰	𐎱	𐎲	𐎳	𐎴	𐎵	𐎶	𐎷	𐎸	𐎹	𐎺	𐎻	𐎼	𐎽	𐎾	𐎿	𐏀	𐏁	𐏂	𐏃	𐏄	𐏅	𐏆	𐏇	𐏈	𐏉	𐏊	𐏋	𐏌	𐏍	𐏎	𐏏	𐏐	𐏑	𐏒	𐏓	𐏔	𐏕	𐏖	𐏗	𐏘	𐏙	𐏚	𐏛	𐏜	𐏝	𐏞	𐏟	𐏠	𐏡	𐏢	𐏣	𐏤	𐏥	𐏦	𐏧	𐏨	𐏩	𐏪	𐏫	𐏬	𐏭	𐏮	𐏯	𐏰	𐏱	𐏲	𐏳	𐏴	𐏵	𐏶	𐏷	𐏸	𐏹	𐏺	𐏻	𐏼	𐏽	𐏾	𐏿	𐐀	𐐁	𐐂	𐐃	𐐄	𐐅	𐐆	𐐇	𐐈	𐐉	𐐊	𐐋	𐐌	𐐍	𐐎	𐐏	𐐐	𐐑	𐐒	𐐓	𐐔	𐐕	𐐖	𐐗	𐐘	𐐙	𐐚	𐐛	𐐜	𐐝	𐐞	𐐟	𐐠	𐐡	𐐢	𐐣	𐐤	𐐥	𐐦	𐐧	𐐨	𐐩	𐐪	𐐫	𐐬	𐐭	𐐮	𐐯	𐐰	𐐱	𐐲	𐐳	𐐴	𐐵	𐐶	𐐷	𐐸	𐐹	𐐺	𐐻	𐐼	𐐽	𐐾	𐐿	𐑀	𐑁	𐑂	𐑃	𐑄	𐑅	𐑆	𐑇	𐑈	𐑉	𐑊	𐑋	𐑌	𐑍	𐑎	𐑏	𐑐	𐑑	𐑒	𐑓	𐑔	𐑕	𐑖	𐑗	𐑘	𐑙	𐑚	𐑛	𐑜	𐑝	𐑞	𐑟	𐑠	𐑡	𐑢	𐑣	𐑤	𐑥	𐑦	𐑧	𐑨	𐑩	𐑪	𐑫	𐑬	𐑭	𐑮	𐑯	𐑰	𐑱	𐑲	𐑳	𐑴	𐑵	𐑶	𐑷	𐑸	𐑹	𐑺	𐑻	𐑼	𐑽	𐑾	𐑿	𐒀	𐒁	𐒂	𐒃	𐒄	𐒅	𐒆	𐒇	𐒈	𐒉	𐒊	𐒋	𐒌	𐒍	𐒎	𐒏	𐒐	𐒑	𐒒	𐒓	𐒔	𐒕	𐒖	𐒗	𐒘	𐒙	𐒚	𐒛	𐒜	𐒝	𐒞	𐒟	𐒠	𐒡	𐒢	𐒣	𐒤	𐒥	𐒦	𐒧	𐒨	𐒩	𐒪	𐒫	𐒬	𐒭	𐒮	𐒯	𐒰	𐒱	𐒲	𐒳	𐒴	𐒵	𐒶	𐒷	𐒸	𐒹	𐒺	𐒻	𐒼	𐒽	𐒾	𐒿	𐓀	𐓁	𐓂	𐓃	𐓄	𐓅	𐓆	𐓇	𐓈	𐓉	𐓊	𐓋	𐓌	𐓍	𐓎	𐓏	𐓐	𐓑	𐓒	𐓓	𐓔	𐓕	𐓖	𐓗	𐓘	𐓙	𐓚	𐓛	𐓜	𐓝	𐓞	𐓟	𐓠	𐓡	𐓢	𐓣	𐓤	𐓥	𐓦	𐓧	𐓨	𐓩	𐓪	𐓫	𐓬	𐓭	𐓮	𐓯	𐓰	𐓱	𐓲	𐓳	𐓴	𐓵	𐓶	𐓷	𐓸	𐓹	𐓺	𐓻	𐓼	𐓽	𐓾	𐓿	𐔀	𐔁	𐔂	𐔃	𐔄	𐔅	𐔆	𐔇	𐔈	𐔉	𐔊	𐔋	𐔌	𐔍	𐔎	𐔏	𐔐	𐔑	𐔒	𐔓	𐔔	𐔕	𐔖	𐔗	𐔘	𐔙	𐔚	𐔛	𐔜	𐔝	𐔞	𐔟	𐔠	𐔡	𐔢	𐔣	𐔤	𐔥	𐔦	𐔧	𐔨	𐔩	𐔪	𐔫	𐔬	𐔭	𐔮	𐔯	𐔰	𐔱	𐔲	𐔳	𐔴	𐔵	𐔶	𐔷	𐔸	𐔹	𐔺	𐔻	𐔼	𐔽	𐔾	𐔿	𐕀	𐕁	𐕂	𐕃	𐕄	𐕅	𐕆	𐕇	𐕈	𐕉	𐕊	𐕋	𐕌	𐕍	𐕎	𐕏	𐕐	𐕑	𐕒	𐕓	𐕔	𐕕	𐕖	𐕗	𐕘	𐕙	𐕚	𐕛	𐕜	𐕝	𐕞	𐕟	𐕠	𐕡	𐕢	𐕣	𐕤	𐕥	𐕦	𐕧	𐕨	𐕩	𐕪	𐕫	𐕬	𐕭	𐕮	𐕯	𐕰	𐕱	𐕲	𐕳	𐕴	𐕵	𐕶	𐕷	𐕸	𐕹	𐕺	𐕻	𐕼	𐕽	𐕾	𐕿	𐖀	𐖁	𐖂	𐖃	𐖄	𐖅	𐖆	𐖇	𐖈	𐖉	𐖊	𐖋	𐖌	𐖍	𐖎	𐖏	𐖐	𐖑	𐖒	𐖓	𐖔	𐖕	𐖖	𐖗	𐖘	𐖙	𐖚	𐖛	𐖜	𐖝	𐖞	𐖟	𐖠	𐖡	𐖢	𐖣	𐖤	𐖥	𐖦	𐖧	𐖨	𐖩	𐖪	𐖫	𐖬	𐖭	𐖮	𐖯	𐖰	𐖱	𐖲	𐖳	𐖴	𐖵	𐖶	𐖷	𐖸	𐖹	𐖺	𐖻	𐖼	𐖽	𐖾	𐖿	𐗀	𐗁	𐗂	𐗃	𐗄	𐗅	𐗆	𐗇	𐗈	𐗉	𐗊	𐗋	𐗌	𐗍	𐗎	𐗏	𐗐	𐗑	𐗒	𐗓	𐗔	𐗕	𐗖	𐗗	𐗘	𐗙	𐗚	𐗛	𐗜	𐗝	𐗞	𐗟	𐗠	𐗡	𐗢	𐗣	𐗤	𐗥	𐗦	𐗧	𐗨	𐗩	𐗪	𐗫	𐗬	𐗭	𐗮	𐗯	𐗰	𐗱	𐗲	𐗳	𐗴	𐗵	𐗶	𐗷	𐗸	𐗹	𐗺	𐗻	𐗼	𐗽	𐗾	𐗿	𐘀	𐘁	𐘂	𐘃	𐘄	𐘅	𐘆	𐘇	𐘈	𐘉	𐘊	𐘋	𐘌	𐘍	𐘎	𐘏	𐘐	𐘑	𐘒	𐘓	𐘔	𐘕	𐘖	𐘗	𐘘	𐘙	𐘚	𐘛	𐘜	𐘝	𐘞	𐘟	𐘠	𐘡	𐘢	𐘣	𐘤	𐘥	𐘦	𐘧	𐘨	𐘩	𐘪	𐘫	𐘬	𐘭	𐘮	𐘯	𐘰	𐘱	𐘲	𐘳	𐘴	𐘵	𐘶	𐘷	𐘸	𐘹	𐘺	𐘻	𐘼	𐘽	𐘾	𐘿	𐙀	𐙁	𐙂	𐙃	𐙄	𐙅	𐙆	𐙇	𐙈	𐙉	𐙊	𐙋	𐙌	𐙍	𐙎	𐙏	𐙐	𐙑	𐙒	𐙓	𐙔	𐙕	𐙖	𐙗	𐙘	𐙙	𐙚	𐙛	𐙜	𐙝	𐙞	𐙟	𐙠	𐙡	𐙢	𐙣	𐙤	𐙥	𐙦	𐙧	𐙨	𐙩	𐙪	𐙫	𐙬	𐙭	𐙮	𐙯	𐙰	𐙱	𐙲	𐙳	𐙴	𐙵	𐙶	𐙷	𐙸	𐙹	𐙺	𐙻	𐙼	𐙽	𐙾	𐙿	𐚀	𐚁	𐚂	𐚃	𐚄	𐚅	𐚆	𐚇	𐚈	𐚉	𐚊	𐚋	𐚌	𐚍	𐚎	𐚏	𐚐	𐚑	𐚒	𐚓	𐚔	𐚕	𐚖	𐚗	𐚘	𐚙	𐚚	𐚛	𐚜	𐚝	𐚞	𐚟	𐚠	𐚡	𐚢	𐚣	𐚤	𐚥	𐚦	𐚧	𐚨	𐚩	𐚪	𐚫	𐚬	𐚭	𐚮	𐚯	𐚰	𐚱	𐚲	𐚳	𐚴	𐚵	𐚶	𐚷	𐚸	𐚹	𐚺	𐚻	𐚼	𐚽	𐚾	𐚿	𐛀	𐛁	𐛂	𐛃	𐛄	𐛅	𐛆	𐛇	𐛈	𐛉	𐛊	𐛋	𐛌	𐛍	𐛎	𐛏	𐛐	𐛑	𐛒	𐛓	𐛔	𐛕	𐛖	𐛗	𐛘	𐛙	𐛚	𐛛	𐛜	𐛝	𐛞	𐛟	𐛠	𐛡	𐛢	𐛣	𐛤	𐛥	𐛦	𐛧	𐛨	𐛩	𐛪	𐛫	𐛬	𐛭	𐛮	𐛯	𐛰	𐛱	𐛲	𐛳	𐛴	𐛵	𐛶	𐛷	𐛸	𐛹	𐛺	𐛻	𐛼	𐛽	𐛾	𐛿	𐜀	𐜁	𐜂	𐜃	𐜄	𐜅	𐜆	𐜇	𐜈	𐜉	𐜊	𐜋	𐜌	𐜍	𐜎	𐜏	𐜐	𐜑	𐜒	𐜓	𐜔	𐜕	𐜖	𐜗	𐜘	𐜙	𐜚	𐜛	𐜜	𐜝	𐜞	𐜟	𐜠	𐜡	𐜢	𐜣	𐜤	𐜥	𐜦	𐜧	𐜨	𐜩	𐜪	𐜫	𐜬	𐜭	𐜮	𐜯	𐜰	𐜱	𐜲	𐜳	𐜴	𐜵	𐜶	𐜷	𐜸	𐜹	𐜺	𐜻	𐜼	𐜽	𐜾	𐜿	𐝀	𐝁	𐝂	𐝃	𐝄	𐝅	𐝆	𐝇	𐝈	𐝉	𐝊	𐝋	𐝌	𐝍	𐝎	𐝏	𐝐	𐝑	𐝒	𐝓	𐝔	𐝕	𐝖	𐝗	𐝘	𐝙	𐝚	𐝛	𐝜	𐝝	𐝞	𐝟	𐝠	𐝡	𐝢	𐝣	𐝤	𐝥	𐝦	𐝧	𐝨	𐝩	𐝪	𐝫	𐝬	𐝭	𐝮	𐝯	𐝰	𐝱	𐝲	𐝳	𐝴	𐝵	𐝶	𐝷	𐝸	𐝹	𐝺	𐝻	𐝼	𐝽	𐝾	𐝿	𐞀	𐞁	𐞂	𐞃	𐞄	𐞅	𐞆	𐞇	𐞈	𐞉	𐞊	𐞋	𐞌	𐞍	𐞎	𐞏	𐞐	𐞑	𐞒	𐞓	𐞔	𐞕	𐞖	𐞗	𐞘	𐞙	𐞚	𐞛	𐞜	𐞝	𐞞	𐞟	𐞠	𐞡	𐞢	𐞣	𐞤	𐞥	𐞦	𐞧	𐞨	𐞩	𐞪	𐞫	𐞬	𐞭	𐞮	𐞯	𐞰	𐞱	𐞲	𐞳	𐞴	𐞵	𐞶	𐞷	𐞸	𐞹	𐞺	𐞻	𐞼	𐞽	𐞾	𐞿	𐟀	𐟁	𐟂	𐟃	𐟄	𐟅	𐟆	𐟇	𐟈	𐟉	𐟊	𐟋	𐟌	𐟍	𐟎	𐟏	𐟐	𐟑	𐟒	𐟓	𐟔	𐟕	𐟖	𐟗	𐟘	𐟙	𐟚	𐟛	𐟜	𐟝	𐟞	𐟟	𐟠	𐟡	𐟢	𐟣	𐟤	𐟥	𐟦	𐟧	𐟨	𐟩	𐟪	𐟫	𐟬	𐟭	𐟮	𐟯	𐟰	𐟱	𐟲	𐟳	𐟴	𐟵	𐟶	𐟷	𐟸	𐟹	𐟺	𐟻	𐟼	𐟽	𐟾	𐟿	𐠀	𐠁	𐠂	𐠃	𐠄	𐠅	𐠆	𐠇	𐠈	𐠉	𐠊	𐠋	𐠌	𐠍	𐠎	𐠏	𐠐	𐠑	𐠒	𐠓	𐠔	𐠕	𐠖	𐠗	𐠘	𐠙	𐠚	𐠛	𐠜	𐠝	𐠞	𐠟	𐠠	𐠡	𐠢	𐠣	𐠤	𐠥	𐠦	𐠧	𐠨	𐠩	𐠪	𐠫	𐠬	𐠭	𐠮	𐠯	𐠰	𐠱	𐠲	𐠳	𐠴	𐠵	𐠶	𐠷	𐠸	𐠹	𐠺	𐠻	𐠼	𐠽	𐠾	𐠿	𐡀	𐡁	𐡂	𐡃	𐡄	𐡅	𐡆	𐡇	𐡈	𐡉	𐡊	𐡋	𐡌	𐡍	𐡎	𐡏	𐡐	𐡑	𐡒	𐡓	𐡔	𐡕	𐡖	𐡗	𐡘	𐡙	𐡚	𐡛	𐡜	𐡝	𐡞	𐡟	𐡠	𐡡	𐡢	𐡣	𐡤	𐡥	𐡦	𐡧	𐡨	𐡩	𐡪	𐡫	𐡬	𐡭	𐡮	𐡯	𐡰	𐡱	𐡲	𐡳	𐡴	𐡵	𐡶	𐡷	𐡸	𐡹	𐡺	𐡻	𐡼	𐡽	𐡾	𐡿	𐢀	𐢁	𐢂	𐢃	𐢄	𐢅	𐢆	𐢇	𐢈	𐢉	𐢊	𐢋	𐢌	𐢍	𐢎	𐢏	𐢐	𐢑	𐢒	𐢓	𐢔	𐢕	𐢖	𐢗	𐢘	𐢙	𐢚	𐢛	𐢜	𐢝	𐢞	𐢟	𐢠	𐢡	𐢢	𐢣	𐢤	𐢥	𐢦	𐢧	𐢨	𐢩	𐢪	𐢫	𐢬	𐢭	𐢮	𐢯	𐢰	𐢱	𐢲	𐢳	𐢴	𐢵	𐢶	𐢷	𐢸	𐢹	𐢺	𐢻	𐢼	𐢽	𐢾	𐢿	𐣀	𐣁	𐣂	𐣃	𐣄	𐣅	𐣆	𐣇	𐣈	𐣉	𐣊	𐣋
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be published later. Unfortunately for Albright, Virolleaud in the meantime came up with tablets identifying the site.²⁵ But astonishingly, Albright in his first(?) publication on Ugaritic texts²⁶ essentially adopted Virolleaud's values (as can be seen from the mistaken *p*₂ or *f* for 𐎢 ; table 1.1, line 5). In the first footnote he gives the equation—and insists that the name of the place is spelled *'Ikrt'*²⁷ He could have been the one to correctly interpret the *alephs*. (In his next article, he admitted he had been wrong.²⁸)

Johannes Friedrich was the first to set out the evidence for *ā*, *i*, and *ū* in detail. However, both in his *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* article²⁹ and in his review³⁰ of Bauer's *Das Alphabet von Ras Shamra*³¹ (a book I have not been able to consult), Friedrich says that Bauer had expressed this insight on page 32—though hesitantly (*wenn auch noch zweifelnd*). In view of that reported doubt, I prefer to assign credit to Friedrich (table 1.1, line 6). His first arguments are lexical: for initial *aleph*¹ he cites *āḥ* “brother,” *āl* (prohibition), *ān* “I,” and a number of other words. *Aleph*² begins *id* “then,” *imr* “lamb,” and several others; *aleph*³ appears in *ūgrt* and perhaps *ūdn* “ear.” Etymologically anomalous forms such as *ūšbt* “finger” seem to have misled Friedrich's predecessors. Medial *aleph*-letters occur in *mal'aku* “messenger,” *ša'ila* “he asked,” and *ru'umīma*, which should correspond to Akkadian *rēmu*, Hebrew רֶמֶה “wild cattle.”

But by far the clearest evidence is from the case-endings of *kussi'u* “throne.” Because the texts are so old, case-endings (as in Akkadian and Arabic) could be assumed to be preserved, and of course they would show up in this word. Friedrich notes that several examples of the word in the nominative case, in *u*, were already found in the first batch of texts in 1929. He goes on to find accusatives in *a* and genitives in *i*. Armed with these new tools, he then finds moods in III-? verbs.

In 1935, Zellig Harris³² noted a few anomalies between Friedrich's *aleph*-identifications and forms expected from etymology or morphology, such as *riš* instead of *rāš* “head” and *tikl* for **takulu* “you [pl.] eat,” and accounted for them by postulating a conditioned sound change *ā* > *ě* / ___'C (short stressed *a* becomes *e* before glottal stop, medially).³³ The change is registered by Gordon,³⁴ but such spellings are now generally interpreted as /a/, with {i} employed to spell a vowelless *aleph*.³⁵



In a few etymological observations on consonants, Friedrich³⁶ notes that **d* has become *d* even though *t* does not merge with *š*. A footnote refers to the confusion surrounding 𐎢 , with Virolleaud's *h*,³⁷ Albright's

25 Schaeffer 1932.

26 Albright 1932b.

27 Why *k* and not *g*? John Huehnergard (personal communication, April 1, 2016) suggests that Albright relied on the Egyptian spelling with *k3* (Gardiner sign D28 𓆎); the attestations are gathered by Giveon (1981).

28 Albright 1934, 109.

29 Friedrich 1933b.

30 Friedrich 1933a.

31 Bauer 1932.

32 Harris 1937.

33 Harris ends his article with the curious statement, “The change did not yield a new phoneme *e*, because this was but an alternant of the *a*-phoneme; the use of the *i*-aleph in Ras Shamra for this sound merely indicates that it was sufficiently different from the usual Ras Shamra *a*.” The concept of *phoneme* must have been quite new to Harris—the word does not occur in his 1932 master's thesis—and he may not have realized that it would be most unusual (though not entirely impossible) for a nonphonemic distinction to be noted in a writing system. (Gordon does not make use of the term “phonemes” for Ugaritic.)

34 Gordon 1965, 31, §5.16.

35 Verreet 1983, summarized in Sivan 1997, 16–18; Tropper 2000, 33–37, §21.322.1–4, details numerous alternative suggestions that have been proposed; see the cogent remarks in Pardee 2003–4, 26–28.

36 Friedrich 1933b.

37 On January 25, 1933, however, Virolleaud discussed “une consonne *g* (*ḡayn*), variante graphique du ‘ (*‘ayin*), et beaucoup moins fréquent que lui” (Virolleaud 1935a, 19); in the ensuing reported discussion, Marcel Cohen, not usually recognized for achievement in Assyriology, asserted that *g* was an independent phoneme in Akkadian.

z, and the ġ of David Hartwig Baneth (otherwise not known to Ugaritology, he became professor of Arabic at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). Baneth³⁸ offers several Arabic etymologies in support of ġain, against Albright's arguments for zā', and his argument, endorsed immediately by H. L. Ginsberg,³⁹ has proved to be correct. In the same one-page article, though, he suggests that ≡< simply be read not as p² or f but as ≡ followed by <, or p^ˆ.

Some seeming etymological aberrancies in words spelled with ≡ ġ that "ought to" show ≡< z have occasioned discussion over the years; Huehnergard⁴⁰ reviews the literature and suggests a conditioned sound change *θ > ġ / __u, i.e., partial contact regressive assimilation before a back vowel.

≡<

Credit for the correct identification of ≡< as z is not entirely clear. In his first "Notes on the Mythological Epic Text," James Montgomery⁴¹ follows "Albright (who has correctly identified the character for z)." But note that Albright had labeled as z the letter that Baneth was simultaneously showing to be ġain. Sure enough, in "Ras Shamra Notes. II,"⁴² Montgomery refers to "the enigmatic character which has been largely read as f (as I see now erroneously), and which may represent an emphatic -z (?)." In Montgomery and Harris's presentation of the texts with glossary (but without translation; table 1.1, line 7),⁴³ the letter ≡< is identified as z without question; on page 14, however, the text reads:

The sign transcribed ʒ [i.e., ≡<], originally read f, may in some cases be actually the two signs פפ as in רפע, פען.^[44] Otherwise it occurs only in a few words, as follows: [11 examples + 7 derivatives]. In the [5] words which are asterisked the sign may be shown to have the value z = ʒ (see Glossary).^[45] The virtual absence of this sign from the Tablets is to be noted. . . . The sign equated with × [i.e., ≡] has been variously given the value of z and ġ. In favor of the value z, note the words under × in the Glossary, and ר×ג, מ×י; for the value ġ, see ב×ר. It must be noted, however, that ġ coalesces with ˆ in this dialect (e.g., בער, עלם), while z seems to be satisfied by the sign ʒ.

The accounts of meetings of GLECS were not printed until 1935 (and even then received very limited distribution); the first volume reprinted summaries that were distributed informally to the members (report by René Labat, 2: 44). The publications seem to have been regarded almost as ephemera (Virolleaud's contributions are not even listed in Anon. 1956), unlike today's "working papers," and few copies may have crossed the Atlantic; they have not previously been reprinted or digitized.

38 Baneth 1932, 703.

39 Ginsberg 1933, 593.

40 Huehnergard 2016 (handout); cf. this volume.

41 Montgomery 1933, 98.

42 Montgomery 1934, 62.

43 Montgomery and Harris 1935.

44 Was this observation borrowed from Baneth?

45 One of these words is מַצֵּל, glossed as "roof," again anticipated at the March 22, 1933, meeting of GLECS (Février 1935); the text of the summary reads in full, "Le mot mšʕl de Ras-Shamra doit désigner un « abri (contre le soleil) » : il fournit un exemple du traitement à Ras-Shamra de la consonne qui est t-spirant en arabe, š en hébreu, t en araméen." In his comment Virolleaud adds, "Les textes inédits confirment l'observation précédente, par l'exemple sûr šʕl « ombre »"—but "Le šʕ de Ras-Shamra correspond indifféremment à tād et à t-spirant de l'arabe; le š ordinaire correspond surtout à š de l'arabe, mais aussi à t-spirant; très rarement un même mot a les deux graphies." Virolleaud (1935b) reverted to this topic eight months later, on November 23, with further varying uses of š for t but also the curious suggestion that because "samech²" (presumably ʕ), though it does not occur in the then-known literary texts, is now found in kse "throne" and ssw "horse," it "représente un dédoublement du phonème s."

Two years later, on April 30, 1935, Février (1937) suggested that because of the irregularities particularly in the writing of sibilants, the Ugaritic script may have been created for an earlier language and then applied, more or less successfully, to Ugaritic. Cohen in his comment espoused the position, today standard, that Ugaritic represents early Northwest Semitic—neither Canaanite nor Aramaic but not particularly connected with South Arabian, despite their corresponding elaboration of the consonantal array. As late as 1948, Février transliterated ≡< as "š = ʕ" and < as "Sifflante mal déterminée" (Février 1948, 175). A decade later, in his second edition, Février (1959, 176) lists ≡< as z and < as š, "une sifflante spéciale, ... qui paraît faire défaut dans tous les autres alphabets nord-sémitiques."

As late as 1936, Bauer, in his last Ugaritological publication, was still expressing doubt about both *ḡain* and *zā*.⁴⁶



The last letter to fall into place was 𐎧. At first it was considered simply a graphic variant of 𐎦 *š*, or as representing **š*⁴⁷ (as late as 1950, this was Virolleaud's transliteration for 𐎧, though he offered no phonemic or phonetic transcription);⁴⁸ or it simply went unnoticed. Already in his first "Notes," Montgomery remarked, "Also I would note variations in form of sign for 𐎦, with omission of the upright wedge leaving only the two sloping lateral wedges";⁴⁹ but he seems to want to connect this sign with **t* rather than **š*. Cantineau⁵⁰ records that Dhorme had suggested⁵¹ "que le signe 𐎧 pouvait peut-être équivaloir soit à arabe ځ soit à arabe ٣" (but omits the comment "ce qui permettrait d'expliquer les confusions apparentes avec *š*, *z*, dans les cas donnés").

Cantineau was greatly (one might say overly) concerned with the phonetics of the dead and reconstructed languages he was dealing with, perhaps because of his extensive fieldwork on Arabic colloquials. Already in 1932, Cantineau,⁵² rather than retrojecting the [θ] of Classical Arabic into the interpretation of Ugaritic, had introduced the symbol *t*₂, identified as "une occlusive dentale sourde *t* dont le point d'articulation serait un peu différent de *t*" for the letter 𐎧, while retaining the description "spirante interdente" for the Proto-Semitic sound **t* that he agrees is its ancestor. By 1940, in an article (dated April 1939) provoked by Guérinot,⁵³ Cantineau was describing a series **t*₂ **d*₂ **d*₂ "dont le point d'articulation aurait été plus en avant et l'occlusion moins ferme"⁵⁴—which could give rise to interdentals in Arabic and something else in Ugaritic (yet still yield *š* in Hebrew and Akkadian and *t* in Aramaic).⁵⁵ Finally, in his last statement,⁵⁶ he was ready to say what he actually meant: "une série apicale dans l'articulation de laquelle la pointe de la langue est dirigée vers le bas," a configuration that seems to be unknown to phoneticians.⁵⁷

By this point, the fact had become relevant that not all the "alphabetic"⁵⁸ tablets from Ugarit are written in Ugaritic. Only Dhorme seems to have mentioned early on that "on peut même se demander, pour quelques tablettes, si l'alphabet n'a pas été employé pour une langue non sémitique."⁵⁹ Bedřich Hrozný⁶⁰ receives the credit for identifying the language of a text published separately by Virolleaud⁶¹ as Hurrian (at

46 It is not clear why Bordreuil and Pardee 1995 and 2001 and Pardee 2007 transliterate 𐎧 with *d*, whereas Pardee 2004 and Bordreuil and Pardee 2009 use *z*; cf. n. 90 on assumptions regarding the language represented by an anomalous script.

47 Cf. n. 45. See n. 73 on potential confusion with 𐎦.

48 See also Guérinot 1938, 39f. The identity of A. Guérinot is elusive. A search of Persée (the French counterpart of JSTOR) reveals a specialist by that name in Jain studies but who also compiled a bibliography on Phoenician early in the twentieth century. The Necrology in *Syria* 23.3 (1942) lists simply, "A Guérinot 1871–1940 orientaliste."

49 Montgomery 1933, 99.

50 Cantineau 1940, 42.

51 Apud Virolleaud 1937.

52 Cantineau 1932, 166.

53 Guérinot 1938.

54 Cantineau 1940, 39.

55 Attention is also paid to the Ugaritic reflexes of the laterals **d*₂^l and **s*^l (1940, 48–53; cf. 1952, 84–87, where they are reconstructed as **t*₂^l and **s*^l).

56 Cantineau 1952, 81.



57 The phonologist Abby Cohn drew my attention (personal communication, January 9, 2016) to Dart 1991, which, however, as far as I can tell, provides no evidence of articulation of tongue tip toward or at the lower teeth.

58 I use this term here in deference to the history of the field, but, technically speaking, the Ugaritic writing system is an augmented abjad (Daniels 1990).

59 Dhorme 1930, 575.

60 Hrozný 1932.

61 Virolleaud 1931b.

that time otherwise known only from the Mittanni letter from El Amarna and a few fragments from Boğazköy).⁶² Friedrich⁶³ refers casually to “die subaräischen Texte von Ras Schamra,” as if their identification was well known.⁶⁴ Theodore Gaster⁶⁵ treats no fewer than seven tablets from the original 1929 group as his “New Asianic Language”—nos. 4, 7, 28, 34+45, 35, and 47. For Gaster, “Asianic” refers to what is now known as the “Anatolian” branch of Indo-European, and he happily compares Hittite, Luvian, and Palaic forms. He scrupulously distinguishes  and  (table 1.1, line 8).

Gaster appears not to be aware of H. L. Ginsberg and B. Maisler’s “Semitized Hurrians.”⁶⁶ They call attention to the use in Hurrian names of the two-wedged sibilant. On the basis of a Hurrian morpheme that appears in Akkadian cuneiform as both *zur* and *šar*, they suggest *ž* for this letter.

It fell to Zellig Harris⁶⁷ (table 1.1, line 7) to systematize the materials. Having found that the orthography of Ugaritic is quite regular, he notes:

The casual occurrence of a *š* with two wedges for the usual form with three, would, then be quite surprising. Actually, however, there is no such irregularity, for we find the two-wedged sign used as a distinct character. It appears only in certain words, and then consistently each time those words occur.⁶⁸

Since there was a connection with Hurrian, he consulted his colleague who had begun to take an interest in that language:

Professor Speiser . . . noted . . . that there is a sound peculiar to Hurrian which is represented by cuneiform *z* in the Nuzi tablets, and which may be the sound in question. The Nuzi tablets are written in Akkadian, in large part by Hurrian scribes, and the spelling often shows the linguistic background of the writers. Dr. Speiser pointed out that in these texts the Akkadian sibilants are completely confused, showing that the scribes could not recognize the differences between them. In the Hurrian proper names in the same tablets, however, *s* and *z* are kept reasonably distinct. Since the Hurrian scribes did not hear the difference between Akkadian *z* and the other sibilants, this *z* in their own proper names must have represented a peculiar sound, different from the Akkadian *z* and distinct from their own *s*. Its exact value is unknown, but Professor Speiser is of the opinion that it was an affricate rather than a simple sibilant,^[69] for there is evidence that the sound could be represented in writing either as a dental or as a sibilant.⁷⁰

Hence Harris’s title, “A Hurrian Affricate or Sibilant in Ras Shamra.” In this passage, Harris was introducing the phonemic principle to his philological readers without saying so (but cf. n. 33). Harris gives, however, no suggestion as to its phonetic nature.

And so things stood through the 1930s. Cyrus Gordon, in the 1940 *Ugaritic Grammar* (subtitled, unlike any of the later editions, *The Present Status of the Linguistic Study of the Semitic Alphabetic Texts from Ras*

62 I explored this question in Daniels 2012, offered a few weeks after the present paper.

63 Friedrich 1933a, 740 n. 2.

64 The identity, or nonidentity, of “Hurrian” and “Subarian” was a disputed point in the 1930s–1950s.

65 Gaster 1936.

66 Ginsberg and Maisler 1934, 244.

67 Harris 1935.

68 Ibid., 96.

69 A few years later, Speiser (1938, 176) attributed the suggestion of an affricate to Harris in this passage, and after an exhaustive study of the relevant materials—alphabetic and syllabic cuneiform; Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Hurrian texts; all previous discussion—concurred (ibid., 175–92). By the time of his definitive statement, *Introduction to Hurrian*, however, the affricate had disappeared. A paragraph on “The approximate phonetic values of *š* and *ž*” concludes that “it is best to regard *š* as a sound patterned between [t] and [š], and *ž* as the corresponding voiced sound” (Speiser 1941, 35, §46).

70 Harris 1935, pp. 98f.

Shamra), offered as the value of the letter 𐎗 \acute{s} \acute{z} \acute{d} \acute{t} , each letter with a question mark, and transliterated it $\langle \acute{s} \rangle$; that is also the treatment in the *Ugaritic Handbook* of 1947. Unfortunately for Gordon, clarification turned up almost immediately after—after ten years' hiatus, Schaeffer returned to Ugarit and in November 1949 came across the first of several abecedaries. Albright saw a photograph of it, on which the last letter at the end of each of the first two lines was not visible, and suggested⁷¹ that the sequence could be restored as:

$\text{'A B G H D H W Z H T Y K (L) M S N Z S}_1 \text{' P S Q R S (T) G T I 'U S}_2$

He takes this evidence as confirming his long-held opinion (long predating his decipherment of Proto-Sinaitic⁷²) that the earliest linear alphabet comprised something like 27 rather than 22 letters.⁷³

The abecetary (fig. 1.6; cf. fig. 1.7) was published, apparently first by Cyrus Gordon,⁷⁴ with Virolleaud's handcopy and a photograph by Schaeffer, presumably not the same one Albright had seen—Gordon transliterates

$a b g h d h w z h t y k s l m z n z s \text{' p s q r t g t i u s}$

and recognizes that “the five letters constituting the difference could only have dropped out of the longer to form the shorter version”; and then by Virolleaud⁷⁵ in handcopy and the rather odd transliteration

$a, b, g, (h), d, h, w, z, h, t, y, k, (s), l / m, (z),^{[76]} n, (s), s, \text{'}, p, s, q, r, s / (g), t, (i, u, s^2)$

where the parenthesized letters are those he says were inserted into the 22-letter original. In the very next *BASOR*, Albright,⁷⁷ referring to the “good photograph” and copy provided by Gordon (he does not yet know Virolleaud's article) revises his transliteration to

$\text{'A B G H D H W Z H T Y K (S) L M S N Z S}_1 \text{' P S Q R T G T I 'U S}_2$

So Albright has \acute{s} , Virolleaud has s , and Gordon has \acute{z} .

But then Speiser approaches the abecetary from both the Hurrian and the Common Semitic point of view⁷⁸ (table 1.1, line 9). Hurrian tells him that the sound was voiced (hence not Albright's \acute{s}); Semitic suggests that, in its few secure occurrences, it was the relative pronoun corresponding with Arabic and Proto-Semitic \acute{d} . Historical arguments and parallels with $\text{*}\acute{t} > \acute{t}$ further support the case. At his next opportunity,

71 Albright 1950a, 12.

72 Albright 1948.

73 Albright's use of overdotted \acute{s} for what is clearly *samek* and for the last letter is not explained; the symbol $\{s\}$ had been a bad choice going all the way back to Virolleaud 1931a, since—with one exception—there was no connection with Hebrew ש , for which it had long been the standard transliteration. On May 26, 1937, Virolleaud had asserted that because “le nom propre d'homme *Ewr-s²r* (*Syria*, XIV, pl. xxv, n° 2, l. 1) est évidemment le même que l'*E-wi-ri-sar-ri* (écrit aussi, idéographiquement, EN-LUGAL), qui s'est rencontré dans un texte babylonien de Kaṭna en Syrie centrale (*Syria*, XV, 83) ; et il en résulte que Ras-Shamra *s² = assyrien š*, bien que assyrien *šarru*, « roi », = hébreu *šar*, « prince », mot qui paraît figurer aussi à Ras Shamra, et sous la forme *šr*” (Virolleaud 1937, 89–90). This was too clever by half—as Virolleaud himself recognized, since the very next sentence reads, “Cependant, dans un autre nom propre d'homme (*Syria*, XV, 246, l. 7) *Arpšr*, qui est visiblement le même que l'*A-ri-ip-sar-ri* (ou *A-ri-ip-LUGAL*) des tablettes de Kirkouk et de Nuzi, le mot « roi » est écrit, non pas *s²r* (ou bien *šr*), mais *šr*” (ibid., 90).

74 Gordon 1950.

75 Virolleaud 1950.

76 In the *editio princeps*, Virolleaud's (1951, 22f.) z had become \acute{z} .

77 Albright 1950b.

78 Speiser 1951.

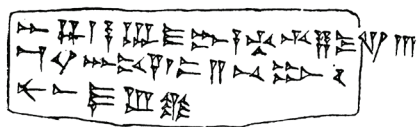


Figure 1.6. The first abecedarium (RS 12.063; Virolleaud 1951, 22). Reprinted with permission.



Figure 1.7. The first abecedarium (RS 12.063; Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 154 pl. 57; copy by Pardee). Reprinted with permission.

the *Ugaritic Manual*,⁷⁹ Gordon both transcribes and transliterates the letter as *ḡ*. (The phonetics of Hurrian remain unsettled.)

IN CONCLUSION

It thus took twenty-one years to arrive at the definitive interpretation and transliteration of the Ras Shamra signary. Hans Bauer had died in 1937; Édouard Dhorme (†1966) and Charles Virolleaud (†1968) both outlived their considerably younger colleague Ephraim Speiser, the former by one year, the latter by three. David Baneth lived to 1973, and Cyrus Gordon until 2001. The recovery of Ugaritic is sterling evidence that insight, serendipity, and sheer doggedness are all required for decipherment.

A NEW DEVELOPMENT

A curious footnote to the decipherment saga emerged from the ground in the 1988 excavations. One day around 1990, I happened to drop in on Dennis's office, and he pulled out the images of the surprising tablet RS 88.2215 (fig. 1.8). It had already been identified as a *halḥamary*—an “abecedarium” giving the Ugaritic letters in the South Semitic order (*h l ḥ m . . .*) rather than the familiar West Semitic order (*? b ḡ d . . .*),⁸⁰ but a number of letters did not look like ordinary Ugaritic letters; this is reflected in the transliterations provided in the initial announcement of the text⁸¹ and the *editio princeps*,⁸² and, three pages later, after the two discussions:

h l ḥ m q ? t r	h l ḥ m q w t r
b t ? ? k n ḥ ʿ	b t ḡ š k n ḥ ṣ
ṣ p ? ? (+ ?) ? n ḡ	s p ʾ ʿ ḡ ḡ ḡ
? a y ⁸³	t z y ⁸⁴

The editors had recognized the identity of the text and had aligned the letters with the South Arabian letter order, so in principle the anomalous letters could receive tentative identification. Apparently it was I who

79 Gordon 1955. I once complimented Cyrus Gordon on titling his successive editions—culminating in the *Ugaritic Textbook* of 1965—in alphabetical order, so that users could keep track of them. He professed not to have noticed.

80 The South Semitic order, similar though not identical to the order of the Ethiopic script, began to be identified only in 1951, when masons' marks used for arranging a series of paving slabs were discovered. Jacques Ryckmans (1981, 705 n. 17) lists the available evidence and collates it into a suggested South Semitic letter order. His subsequent article (1985), usually cited for the order, doesn't actually include a complete list but does illustrate several of the inscriptions that contribute to it. Further examples, including complete ones, were subsequently identified in a few Old North Arabian graffiti (Macdonald 1986).

81 Bordreuil and Pardee 1995.

82 Bordreuil and Pardee 2001, 341–48.

83 Bordreuil and Pardee 1995, 857; 2001, 341.

84 Bordreuil and Pardee 1995, 860; 2001, 344.

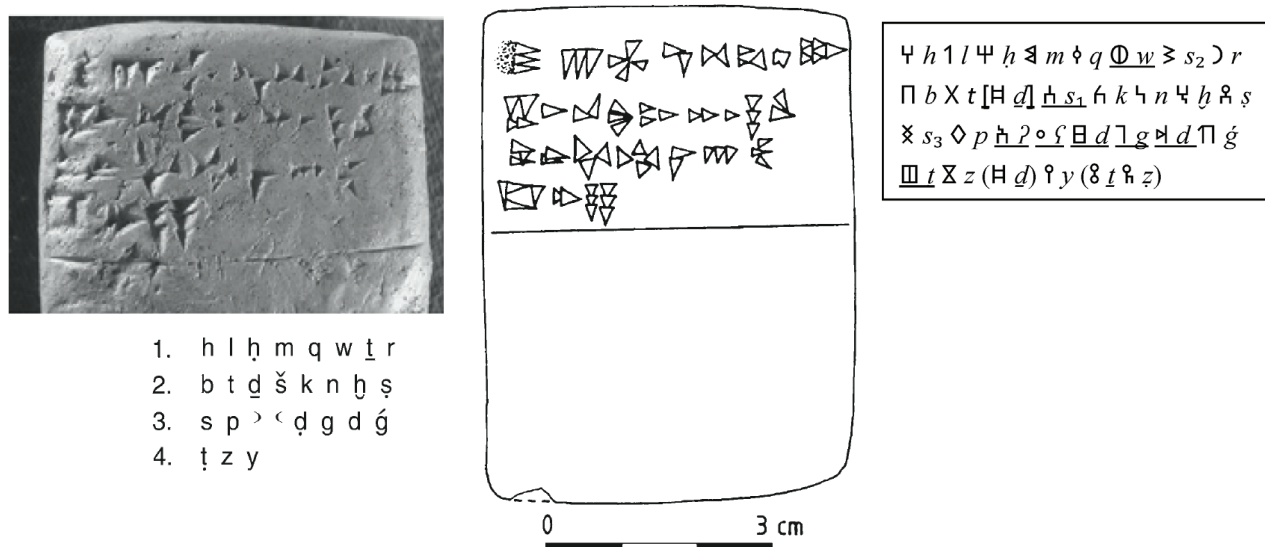


Figure 1.8. RS 88.2215 (Pardee 2007, 193; copy by Pardee); added at right, conventional South Arabian lettershapes with standard transliterations (Hasselbach 2012, 168); underlining indicates the locations of letters at first marked uncertain in the editions of the tablet.

first noticed that some of the letters were simply 90-degree rotations of their ordinary forms;⁸⁵ but I recall that what immediately struck me was the shape found in the {g} slot: it is a reproduction with two wedges of the familiar {g} shape of the West Semitic abjads—including the South Arabian. Should we not then seek South Arabian shapes among the question marks? And in fact, it is South Arabian shapes that best illuminate the anomalous forms of the wedge-letters (fig. 1.8).⁸⁶ Note that most of the outstanding wrong shapes are letters that in South Arabian comprise a bisected simple shape: ʾ w ḥ d ṭ; the first two are rendered with a pair of wedges and another wedge, the third with a square of four wedges.

85 Bordreuil and Pardee 1995, 855 n. *; 2001, 343 n. 6; is it coincidence that these are all and only the sibilants z s š ʒ (Bordreuil and Pardee 1995, 857)? I may have been particularly open to such an interpretation because I had, a few years earlier, presented an interpretation of the shapes of the Ugaritic letters in relation to the shapes of approximately contemporary linear “Canaanite” letters (Daniels 1982). At that time I considered the talk unpublishable, because it involved considerable use of the chalkboard to demonstrate rotations. I was also then unaware of Stieglitz 1971; but I find two problems with that article: the overlooking of the process of rotation, and the comparison of “standard” Phoenician forms dating several centuries later than the latest possible date for the introduction of the Ugaritic abjad.

In that talk I also observed that the three supplementals (to borrow a term from Greek epigraphy), *ṭ*, *ṭ*, *ṭ*, were probably created at the same time, because each of them involves a group of three strokes plus one stroke perpendicular to the three. Dennis objected, because *ṭ* is usually written as a vertical flanked by three Winkelhaken on each side; but, in searching the volume of photographs of tablets that was available at the time, just about the only *ṭ* I had found was as I described—and it was not the one isolated in the photograph in Pardee 2007, fig. 12.12, which has an inventory number indicating it was excavated only in 1994. The letter now transliterated as *ṭ* was identified as a sibilant from the beginning; full treatment in Segert 1983b. Tropper (1995) reconsiders its use in Ugaritic (coming to the surprising conclusion that it represents [ʃ]; see n. 33 on the unlikelihood of notating a subphonemic distinction) but appears to ignore its use in Hurrian texts, at least until the “Nachträge.”

86 The closest the editors come to acknowledging this possibility is the remark “quatre [signes] (ʿ, g, w, ṭ) pourraient s’expliquer comme se rapprochant d’une forme relevant d’une écriture linéaire,” with the footnote “Pour une discussion détaillée nous renvoyons à la publication des textes de 1986, 1988 et 1992 [i.e., Bordreuil and Pardee 2001]” (1995, 857 with n. 6). But there, only the Canaanite, not the South Semitic, lettershapes are considered, so that only “deux de ces formes pourraient éventuellement s’expliquer par la forme linéaire correspondante: les trois clous du [ʿ] représenteraient le museau et les deux oreilles/cornets de la tête de bœuf stylisée linéaire, et les deux clous de [g] seraient les deux traits du [g]” (2001, 343). Would a novice scribe even suspect that the shape of the Canaanite *ʾalp* letter represents an ox-head without the name of the letter? But we cannot be sure what the Ugaritic letter names were, despite the biscriptal abecedary in Cross and Lambdin 1960 (Daniels 1991), and the description of the letter applies equally to the South Arabian shape ḥ. The newly discovered cuneiform list of letter names(?) (Finkel 1998; Geller 1997–2000, 144; see comparison in Daniels [2013, 95 table]; cf. also Cross and Huehnergard 2003) confirms no more than [a].

My proposal for accounting for this tablet was at the time, and remains today, that it represents the fumbling attempt of a scribe visiting Ugarit from some southern realm who wanted to learn the local script: he tried writing the letters (a) using the unfamiliar medium of stylus on clay (is it safe to assume that South Arabians were already writing with a burin on wooden batons,⁸⁷ as they were doing some two centuries later and as has recently become known?⁸⁸), though (b) not in the unfamiliar *ā b g h d* order but in his own familiar order; and (c) making more and more mistakes along the way (i.e., by writing sometimes his own shapes instead of the unfamiliar ones). It thus seems to me that comparison of the Beth Shemesh tablet⁸⁹ is a red herring: its shapes are not anomalous, only its order—so it may represent the inverse of RS 88.2215, an attempt by a scribe accustomed to the Ugaritic “short alphabet” trying to learn the South Semitic order.⁹⁰

My proposal receives added weight from the information that the *halḥamary* is impressed on a fully erased tablet, a reused palimpsest.⁹¹ It thus cannot have been considered an important document worth saving but could have been treated like many school exercise tablets known from Mesopotamia—tablets whose surface is eroded from multiple tries and erasures of student attempts to imitate the teacher’s model.⁹²

ADDENDUM

Unbeknownst to me (cf. p. 3 above), by 2011 Dennis Pardee had participated in an article bearing on the topic of this contribution.⁹³ The claim of that article, on the basis of newly published correspondence between Marcel Cohen and Charles Virolleaud dating between October 1932 and December 1933,⁹⁴ is that Cohen had contributed significantly to the identification of four of the Ugaritic letters discussed herein (*y*, *g*, *z*, *t*).⁹⁵ Comparison with table 1.1 above, however, shows that Cohen was commenting on a table provided by Virolleaud that did not take into account the generally accepted results of the decipherment and evidently clung to Virolleaud’s early missteps, perhaps lending support to Day’s negative evaluation (see p. 5 above).

87 I would urge that “batons” be used as the English term for these objects, rather than “sticks,” which seems to have been introduced into English by the Belgian scholar Jacques Ryckmans as a *faux ami* of German (or Flemish?) *Stück*; cf. French “bâtonnet.” I had the privilege of viewing several specimens, under the guidance of Peter Stein, in Munich in October 2014 (cf. Stein 2021, which dates from that occasion). They most resemble segments of doweling or broomstick, rather than the thin lengths of twig suggested by the word “stick.”

88 Ryckmans 1993; Stein 2010.

89 Loundine 1987; Ryckmans 1988.

90 The identification of the Beth Shemesh tablet as a “short-alphabet” *halḥamary* resulted in numerous discussions, including several pages each in the two presentations of RS 88.2215. I will not contribute to the discussion, save to note that much of it hinges on the unwarranted assumptions that the existence of a distinctive script necessarily indicates the presence of a distinctive language to make use of the script and, moreover, that that language was used at the place where the script was found.

91 Bordreuil and Pardee 2001, 341.

92 A comparable example is illustrated in Robson 2001, 46 fig. 9. I thank Stephen Goranson for this reference.

93 Bordreuil, Hawley, and Pardee 2010, 1625–28. Dennis’s contribution may have been limited to the second part of the article, discussing the work of a particular scribe at Ugarit and Ras Ibn Hani.

94 Fauveaud-Brassaud 2008.

95 It is not clear why Bordreuil, Hawley, and Pardee 2010 attribute the identification of 𐎶 as *z* (𐎶) to Cohen. It is not found in the annotated table (their fig. 5), but it is found in the last page of Virolleaud’s letter of December 29, 1933 (their fig. 7); I cannot decipher Virolleaud’s handwriting, nor can I access Fauveaud’s article to learn what is on the previous page. It may thus be advisable to revise the discussion of 𐎶 on p. 8f. above to mention Virolleaud’s early, albeit unpublished, suggestion.

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2

A CRITIQUE OF THE COUNTER-ARGUMENT FOR *YAQTUL* PRETERITE IN UGARITIC

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DENNIS PARDEE, WHOM WE ARE honoring in this volume, has favorably characterized my extensive argument against the presence of a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic narrative verse as “revolutionary.”¹ Taking a long view, my thesis is not so radical.² For one thing, in two years of formal Ugaritic studies with David Marcus in the early 1970s and in subsequent exchanges, the idea of a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic was never raised. For another, Gordon mentions it reservedly—“It seems that *yaqtul* was also used to indicate the past as well as the jussive”—and Segert in his grammar does not entertain it at all.³

In the Ugaritic letters and administrative texts in prose, the past tense is conveyed exclusively by *qat-ala*—there is no *yaqtul* preterite.⁴ The hypothesis that a *yaqtul* preterite is found in the poetic texts in Ugaritic was developed for the most part in the 1980s.⁵ There were essentially three bases to the claim. One is completely hypothetical: a *yaqtul* preterite was found in Amarna Canaanite and was known in Biblical Hebrew.⁶ There are also two prefixed verb forms in Akkadian (*iprus* preterite and *iparras* present-future), thus making it pretty clear that in earliest Semitic, both the past tense and present-future tense were conveyed by prefixed forms of the verb. As Rainey wrote: “The fact that a *yaqtul*-preterite existed in W[est] S[emitic] with the same function as the Akkadian *iprus*, suggests the high antiquity of the form in the Semitic family.”⁷ It was assumed that an archaic West Semitic language such as Ugaritic must have had a *yaqtul* preterite. Such a predisposition leads one to latch onto any piece of evidence that might be interpreted as reflecting a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic.⁸

The other two bases to the claim that there is a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic, at least in the poetic texts, rest on an interpretation of linguistic evidence. First, prefixed verb forms with so-called energetic *nun* suffixes were taken to represent the *yaqtulu* present-future, while prefixed forms without the *n*-suffix were taken to represent the *yaqtul* preterite; e.g., *tštn* (*tašītuna*) “she puts” (CAT 1.15 iv 25) vs. *tšt* (*tašītu*) “[putatively] she put” (CAT 1.19 iv 44–45). Second, long (unapocopated) forms of the prefixed form of III-*y* verb stems were taken to represent the *yaqtulu* present-future, while short (apocopated) forms of such stems were taken to

1 Pardee 2012, 169; Greenstein 2006. I am very pleased to publish this study to honor Dennis Pardee, whose scholarship has been an inspiration and whose collegiality has been generous for four decades. My continued interest and work on this topic have benefited from correspondence and/or conversation with Mark Smith, Josef Tropper, and Dennis Pardee.

2 See already Greenstein 1988, 12–14; 1998, 409–13.

3 Gordon 1965, 72; Segert 1984.

4 Mallon 1982, esp. 128; cf., e.g., Hackett 2012, 112.

5 See especially Rainey 1986; Verreet 1988, esp. 72–74.

6 See now Rainey 1996, esp. 222–27, for Amarna Canaanite; Notarius 2012 and 2013 for Biblical Hebrew. Cf. Tropper 1998.

7 Rainey 1977, 41.

8 See, e.g., Greenstein 1989; more generally, Gadamer 1982, esp. 235–74.

represent the *yaqtul* preterite; e.g., *y'ny* (*ya'niyu*) “he speaks up” (CAT 1.16 i 24) versus *y'n* (*ya'nī*) “[putatively] he spoke up” (CAT 1.16 v 23).⁹

Building on these three bases, scholars constructed elaborate systems for parsing the forms of the Ugaritic verb. These systems distinguished, for the poetic texts in particular, between a modal or injunctive part, in which *yaqtul* serves a jussive or similar function, and an indicative part, in which *yaqtul* operates as a preterite, conveying the narrative past.¹⁰ These systems, somewhat refined, took full form in the two major grammars that were produced, by Sivan, Rainey’s former student, and by Tropper.¹¹

In 1988 and 1998 I had already questioned the existence of a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic.¹² But after the publication of Tropper’s grammar¹³ I published a full analysis of the prefixed verb forms in Ugaritic narrative verse. In that analysis I suspended the hypothetical premise that Ugaritic, as an archaic Semitic language, must have had a *yaqtul* preterite, and I attacked the assumptions underlying the interpretation of certain classes of forms as *yaqtul* and not *yaqtulu*.¹⁴

For one thing, I maintained that the presence or absence of a *nun* suffix on a verb form in Ugaritic cannot be presumed to be diagnostic of *yaqtulu* in contrast to *yaqtul*.¹⁵ The so-called energetic *nun* can be suffixed to any finite verb form, including forms of *qatala*.¹⁶ Moreover, prefixed verb “forms with and without *-n* occur in corresponding positions within similar formulaic sequences.”¹⁷ Third, prefixed verb forms with and without *-n* occur “side by side in sequence or in parallelism.”¹⁸ It would be passing strange for so many *nun*-augmented verbs to indicate a different tense, mood, or aspect than verbs that occupy analogous syntactic and formulaic positions. (I shall illustrate this phenomenon in replying to criticism below.)

Concerning the long and short forms of prefixed III-*y* verbs, I found, as in the case of *nun*-augmentation, that apocopated forms occur in the same formulaic and syntactic positions as unapocopated forms.¹⁹ The morphological distinction makes no semantic difference. Moreover, the verb *phy* “see” occurs only in apocopated form,²⁰ the verb *hdy* “look” occurs almost only in apocopated form, and the verb *bky* “weep” occurs almost only in unapocopated form. The selection of a form is governed more by lexical choice than by mood or tense. It is more stylistic than grammatical. On top of that, the forms of the verb *'ny* “speak up” display a curious pattern: in Aqhat there are twelve instances of the prefixed form, all apocopated and all preceded by the conjunction *w-*; in Baal there are nineteen instances of the apocopated form, all preceded by *w-*. (The situation in Kirta is mixed.) These data, and others that are adduced in my study, indicate that the apocopation or retention of the radical *y* in III-*y* verbs is a prosodic or phonological phenomenon. The short forms are consistently preceded, at least in Baal and Aqhat, with *wa-*, in order to maintain a quasi-metrical (phonological) balance. A similar phenomenon occurs in the use of the short form of the *shaf'el* verb *ššqy* “give to drink” in the Aqhat epic: the apocopated form (e.g., *yššq*) is repeatedly preceded by *wa-*, suggesting a prosodic and not a morphological function. This conclusion is supported by the fact that several nouns derived from III-*y* stems elide the *yod* preceding the case ending: *bk* “crying,” *hg* “counting,” *hr*

9 Or *ya'nū* (< /*ya'niyu*/); see Pardee 2012, 169–70.

10 See especially Rainey 1986; 1990; Verreet 1988.

11 Sivan 1997; Tropper 2000; cf. Sivan 1998. The presentation in Tropper 2000, it should be noted, is more nuanced than the brief presentation in Tropper 1999.

12 See n. 2 above.

13 Tropper 2000.

14 Greenstein 2006. Pardee (2003–4, 339–52) had also expressed skepticism regarding the full-blown system presented in Tropper 2000.

15 Greenstein 2006, 86–90.

16 So also Verreet 1988, 95–97; Zewi 1999, 185; Tropper 2000, 434.

17 Greenstein 2006, 87–88.

18 Ibid., 88–89.

19 Ibid., 81–86.

20 The verb is widely parsed as derived from the stem *phy*; see, e.g., del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2000, 346–47.

“impregnation,” *mdw* “illness,” *šp* “sighting.” Accordingly, the absence of final *y* on a III-*y yaqtulu* form cannot be presumed to be *yaqtul* morphologically. There is a tendency in Ugaritic to elide or contract final *yod*.²¹

Beyond my criticism of using a lack of *nun*-augmentation and of final-*yod* apocopation to identify forms of *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic, I added what I believed, and still believe, to be a clinching argument. In the three large narrative verse texts in Ugaritic, there is not a single instance of the short prefixed form of a III-*’aleph* verb stem.²² There are forty-five proper attestations of III-*’ yaqtulu* forms (with *’aleph-u* in the third radical position) and none of what would appear to be III-*’ yaqtul* (with *’aleph-i* in the third radical position). If there were a productive *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic, one would have expected to find at least some examples in the forms of III-*’* verbs in the three large epic texts. The absence of such forms makes it highly improbable that there were any *yaqtul* preterite verbs in Ugaritic.

My argument persuaded Pardee and Williams, who did not include a *yaqtul* preterite in their descriptions of Ugaritic grammar.²³ Schniedewind and Hunt present the *yaqtul* preterite without argument, as does Gianto,²⁴ and Huehnergard incorporates the *yaqtul* preterite with examples and a comment, disagreeing with my conclusions and adopting Hackett’s.²⁵ My argument has been challenged by Gzella briefly and by Hackett at some length.²⁶ In what follows, I shall respond to their arguments by challenging the evidence they adduce as well as the arguments and evidence presented by Gianto and Huehnergard.

THE COMPARATIVE IMPULSE

Gzella appeals to the presence of *yaqtul* preterite in other West Semitic languages, and especially the Amarna correspondence (mid-fourteenth century BCE), which is proximate in time and place to Ugaritic (mid-fourteenth to late thirteenth century BCE), as a basis for placing the burden of evidential proof on those who deny there is a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic.²⁷

However, the number of prefixed preterite forms in Amarna Canaanite is very limited. Moran found it to be rare at Byblos, where it was *qatala* that was routinely used to express the narrative past.²⁸ Even in more southerly sites, the apparent use of the *yaqtul* preterite is rare; most of the putative forms are Akkadian preterites such as *išpur* “he sent.”²⁹ Accordingly, although there is clearly a survival of the prefixed preterite in Biblical Hebrew,³⁰ and possibly a survival in Old Aramaic³¹ and perhaps even in Phoenician,³² the situation in Amarna, especially in a relatively northern Canaanite site such as Byblos, should give us pause before seeking a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic. There was hardly any use, if any at all, of the *yaqtul* preterite in northern Canaanite; the narrative past was conveyed by *qatala*, just as I have shown for Ugaritic.³³ Even

21 Cf. Sivan 1982; 1984; Huehnergard 1987, 287–88.

22 Greenstein 2006, 90–91; see already Greenstein 1998, 410. Please correct an error I made there by including the verb *d’y* “glide,” which is of course II-*’aleph* and not III-*’aleph*. As a result, I have reduced the number of instances of explicit III-*’* forms from forty-seven to forty-five. I was aware of only one apparent counterexample, from outside the corpus, from CAT 1.96.3 (*tspī*), and I addressed it in Greenstein 1998, 410, and 2006, 90 n. 78. I will discuss that form further below.

23 Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 48–50; Pardee 2011, 465–67; 2012; Williams 2013, 46.

24 Gianto 2012, 39–51.

25 Schniedewind and Hunt 2007, 170–71; Huehnergard 2012, 53–57.

26 Gzella 2010, cols. 369–71; cf. Gzella 2007, col. 547; Hackett 2012.

27 Gzella 2010, cols. 369–70.

28 Moran 2003, 48–49; cf. Rainey 1990, 409; 1996, 222, 227.

29 See Rainey 1996, 223–27. Note that the purely Canaanite gloss *yazkur(mi)* in EA 228: 19 is not preterite but jussive; so, e.g., Rainey 1990, 409; cf. Moran 1992, 290.

30 See, e.g., Greenstein 1988; Notarius 2012; 2013.

31 See Gzella 2010, cols. 369–70. See, however, my cautions in Greenstein 1998, 411–12 n. 411.

32 See Krahmalkov 2001, 185–89. The example, from Cyprus, looks questionable to me.

33 Cf. Smith 1995.

theoretically, as I have argued before, the extensive use of *qatala* in Ugaritic narrative verse, as in Ugaritic prose, suggests that the prefixed preterite had already waned.³⁴

Hackett counters that in Ugaritic epic, as in Biblical Hebrew poetry, the *yaqtul* preterite survived as an archaism.³⁵ That argument, however, would depend on the evidence for its use. We have seen that the evidence based on *nun*-augmentation and final-*yod* apocopation is at best ambiguous. Hackett would invert the order of the argument: it is not the short forms, which she presupposes are *yaqtul* preterite, that need to be explained but the elongated forms.³⁶ This proposal is not an argument from evidence but a purely theoretical assertion—one dismissable by noting that, by all accounts, the regular verb for relating narrative in Ugaritic epic is not *yaqtul* but *yaqtulu*.³⁷ Moreover, there is no doubt that *yaqtulu* exists. The sure existence of *yaqtulu* in Ugaritic is established by the writings of final *û* in III-*ʿaleph* verbs. The only unambiguous evidence we have rests on the final-*ʿaleph* verb forms.

The existence of *yaqtul* can also be established only by recourse to III-*ʿ* verbs when they show vowelless *ʿaleph*, represented by *ʿaleph-i*, in final position. No one doubts, for example, that there is a jussive form *yaqtul* in such writings as (w)*yṣi* (CAT 1.14 ii 32) = (wa)*yāṣa* *ʿ* “let (the army) go forth!”³⁸ The question at issue is whether a *yaqtul* preterite can be established on such an evidentiary basis. It is to putative examples of III-*ʿ* preterites that I now turn.

HOW MANY III-*ʿ* YAQTUL PRETERITES ARE THERE?

Hackett adduces two “certain examples” of the III-*ʿ* *yaqtul* preterite, one from the Kirta epic and one from the incantation against the so-called evil eye.³⁹ The example from Kirta simply does not exist—it is an erroneous restoration of CAT 1.14 iv 13–14 in which the indicative form *wyṣû* = *wayaṣa* *ʿu* “(the army) goes forth” was carelessly reconstructed (by me as well as Herdner) as *wyṣi*, which is the jussive form to which it corresponds in the command portion of the command-fulfillment pattern (CAT 1.14 ii 32–34).⁴⁰ Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín provide the proper restoration, in context, with *ʿaleph-u*.⁴¹

Verreet also cites an alleged instance of *yaqtul* preterite using the evidence of a III-*ʿ* verb in CAT 1.40.19, 22, 23, a text Pardee names a “ritual for national unity.”⁴² The form *thṭin*, which is indeed a *yaqtul* form, is not indicative, nor a preterite; it is rather subjunctive (in the general sense) and modal: not “you have sinned” but rather “(whether) you have sinned” or “(whether) you sin.”⁴³ That mood is what accounts for the apparently *yaqtul* form. It does not instantiate the *yaqtul* preterite.

The second “certain example” adduced by Hackett and by others may be the sole bona fide instance of an apparent *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic.⁴⁴ CAT 1.96.1–5 reads:

<i>ʿnn hlkt wšnwt /</i>	The eye roves and darts.
<i>tp āḥh k! nʿm</i>	It sees its brother so fair,
<i>āḥh / k ysmsm</i>	Its brother so handsome.

34 Greenstein 2006, 81, 91; cf. Notarius 2013, 86.

35 Hackett 2012, 112.

36 Ibid., 114, 115.

37 So, e.g., Rainey 1990, 410; Sivan 1997, 64–68; Greenstein 1998, 413; 2006, 79.

38 So also Hackett 2012, 113.

39 Ibid., 112–13.

40 Herdner 1963, 1.65; Greenstein 1997, 19.

41 Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín 1995, 38.

42 Verreet 1988, 73–74; Pardee 2002.

43 del Olmo Lete 1999, 147–48; Pardee 2002, 81–82.

44 Hackett 2012, 113; so also, e.g., Huehnergard 2012, 56–57; Pardee 2012, 170 n. 6.

<i>tspi širh / lbl ḥrb</i>	It consumes his flesh without a knife;
<i>tšt dmh / lbl ks</i>	It drinks his blood without a cup. ⁴⁵

Before discussing the interpretation of this passage and its forms, it must be taken into account that the status of the text is problematic. Hackett herself characterizes it as “very confusing.”⁴⁶ It is not a canonical source but the flipside of a scribal exercise in syllabic cuneiform (*tu ta ti* etc.).⁴⁷ Primary documents, even copies, are not written this way. One may therefore suspect that the text is less than official. This suspicion is confirmed by the presence of possibly three scribal errors in the first two lines. One is found in line 2: if the reading *w* preceding *n'm* is correct, it is certainly an error for *k*, a very similar sign; compare the parallel phrase *k ysmsm* in line 3.⁴⁸ If, on the other hand, it is read *k*, as some scholars do, there is no error in this writing.⁴⁹

Another possible error is that the form *tp* in line 2 makes the best sense, syntactically and typologically, if it is derived from *phy* “to see.”⁵⁰ The demonic eye sees before it otherwise acts. The problem is that one expects at the least the writing *tph*. As indicated above, the verb *phy* in Ugaritic always appears in its apocopated form, without *y*. However, I find no forms with both *y* and *h* elided.⁵¹ The spelling *tp* occurs in line 5 with the energetic and pronominal suffixes *-nn*, again without *h*.⁵² It is therefore possible that the spelling *tp(nn)* “it sees (him)” without *h* is more an oddity than an error. If, however, as I suspect, the scribe is still in training, the writing of *tp* for *tph* is very likely an error.

A third error may be found in the first word—*'nn*. In the past, the form was emended by many to *'nt*, the goddess Anat.⁵³ Ford’s comparative philological analysis, building on the work of del Olmo Lete and others, leaves little doubt, however, that the reference is to a wandering demonic “eye.”⁵⁴ The second *nun* on this form has long been recognized as a serious problem. There is no analogous form to hypothetical **'ēnānu* “the Eye.” Even if there were in West Semitic some particularizing or otherwise defining suffix **-ān*,⁵⁵ it would not comport with the grammar of the present context. The suffix would turn the feminine noun *'ēn* to masculine; but the verbs in this passage are all feminine.⁵⁶ I maintain that the only sound solution to the quandary of *'nn* is to regard the second *nun* as a scribal error of dittography. This solution means that there are probably two and possibly three scribal errors in the first two lines of the text—a less-than-reliable source of grammatical forms and writings.

It is in this text, and in this passage, that one finds the one seemingly solid instance of *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic. The parsing of *tspi* as a III-³ *yaqtul* preterite in the *qal* conjugation—*tispā*’ “she ate”—appears at first blush clear.⁵⁷ This verb follows two verbs that look like *qatala* (past tense) forms: *hlkt* and *šnwt* (line

45 I largely follow the philological analysis in Ford 1998. This stichometry is prosodically more balanced than that of del Olmo Lete 2014, 130, in which the verb *šnwt* is transitive, forming a long enjambed sentence—quite unusual in Ugaritic. For some additional details, see immediately below.

46 Hackett 2012, 113 with n. 8.

47 See already Greenstein 1998, 410.

48 So, e.g., Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín 1995, 111; Smith 1997, 225.

49 So, e.g., Ford 1998, 202, citing an oral confirmation by Dennis Pardee as well; del Olmo Lete 2014, 130.

50 See the discussion with bibliography on the history of interpretation in Ford 1998, 218–21 with notes.

51 See del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2000, 346–47.

52 See Ford 1998, 255–56; contrast del Olmo Lete 2014, 150–51. Hackett (2012, 113) finds here a unique (*ad hoc*) assimilation: /tiphay/ > /tiphē/ > [tippē].

53 See, e.g., Smith 1997, 224–25.

54 See Ford 1998, 203–17.

55 Cf. Tropper 2000, 823; del Olmo Lete 2014, 130, 143 with n. 15.

56 Gianto 1999, 297. Del Olmo Lete (2014, 143 n. 15) tries to counter this point, but his argument is entirely theoretical conjecture—he adduces no parallels in this or any closely related corpus.

57 Hackett 2012, 113; cf., e.g., Pardee 2012, 170 n. 6; Huehnergard 2012, 56. It is not at all necessary to parse *tspi* as *nif'al*, as Hackett and Pardee do; see, e.g., del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2000, 406. The verb in the *qal* provides the requisite sense; cf., e.g., *spū* “he consumes” (participle) in CAT 1.17 i 31 et al.; so, e.g., Parker 1997, 53; Pardee 1997, 344; contrast Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 174; but see the discussion in Wright 2001, 65.

1).⁵⁸ The first denotes movement, going about, and the second should denote something similar. Ford's connection of *šnwt* with Akkadian *šanū* "to run," first suggested by Sanmartín, makes the best contextual sense.⁵⁹ The eye roves.

The analysis of these two verbs as 3 fem. sg. *qatala* forms, however, is not at all certain. In the comparable Akkadian texts concerning the roving "evil eye" (*īnu lemuttu*), the verb form used to indicate the demon's locomotion is a Gtn participle—*muttalliktu*.⁶⁰ Although we do not have a Gt participle in our Ugaritic text, we may have a participle, which is the generically expected form. The writings *hlkt* and *šnwt* need not be parsed as *qatala* forms; they may very well be participles: *hālikatu* and *šāniwatu*, respectively.⁶¹ In that case, the contextual support for taking *tspi* in line 3 as a *yaqtul* preterite is weakened.

Now, if the form *tspi* is not a *yaqtul* preterite, what else could it be? It could be another scribal error—a writing of *tspi* instead of *tspū*, which would be a *yaqtulu* form. Alternatively, it could, counter to my own inclinations, be the only explicit instance of a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic. But even if it is, one should not use an exceptional form in an exceptional text as the basis for extrapolating *yaqtul* preterites throughout Ugaritic narrative verse.

SHORT AND LONG TOGETHER

A final challenge to my thesis about the use of different verb forms in Ugaritic narrative verse concerns the fact that short and long verb forms are used in tandem or in comparable contexts. I adduce this evidence to demonstrate that difference in length does not in these cases reflect a difference in tense or aspect.⁶² Others point to the formal differences as indexes of different temporal or aspectual meanings. Let us reconsider the issue by looking at some typical instances. First, the tricolon CAT 1.15 iii 17–19:

<i>tbrk ilm tity</i>	The gods offer blessing, they go;
<i>tity ilm lāhlhm</i>	The gods go home to their tents,
<i>dr il lmšknthm</i>	The circle of El to their dwellings. ⁶³

Hackett parses the verbs, which lack so-called energetic *nun*, as past indicative (preterites).⁶⁴ However, this tricolon belongs to a pattern that I have called "general : particular" and Fenton has called "forked parallelism."⁶⁵ The first line summarizes or relates an activity that is elaborated in the following two lines. This particular passage bears a very strong resemblance to a tricolon found in CAT 1.114.2–4:

<i>tlhmn ilm wtštn</i>	The gods eat and drink,
<i>tštn y<n> 'd šb'</i>	Drink wine till sated,
<i>trt 'd [škr]</i>	Vintage till inebriated. ⁶⁶

58 Hackett (2012, 115–16) makes a similar argument concerning the form *yšhk* (line 1) in CAT 1.178, an incantation against snakebite. The form is followed by the word *zb*, which Hackett follows Bordreuil and Pardee (2009, 221) in parsing as a *qatala* form of *zbb* "to foam." She translates the line: "One who is unknown has called you [*yšhk*], and moreover 'it' has foamed/frothed [*zb*]." However, Bordreuil and Pardee, as well as del Olmo Lete (2014, 173), evidently parse *yšh(k)* as *yaqtulu* or *yaqtula*: "When (a person you do not know) calls (to you)." The rhetorical response is also, by all accounts, present-future: *wānk ašhk* "then I will say to you" (line 2).

59 See Ford 1998, 217–18, with references there.

60 See n. 54 above.

61 So del Olmo Lete 2014, 130–31.

62 Greenstein 1998, 409–13; 2006, 83, 86, 87–89.

63 Greenstein 1997, 26.

64 Hackett 2012, 114.

65 Greenstein 1977, 78–79; Fenton 2004. For a survey of this phenomenon and its study, with examples from the Hebrew Bible and Egyptian literature, see Abbott 2011.

66 Lewis 1997a, 194.

In this passage, the prefixed verbs contain an energetic *nun* and are understood by virtually all scholars as *yaqtulu*. However, the structure of the passage—its pattern—suggests that the verbs will reflect the same tense or aspect whether or not they end in *-n*. That the difference in form has no impact on the tense or aspect of the verbs should be clear from CAT 1.22 i 21–22: *tlḥm rpūm tštyn* “The Shades eat, they drink.” In this line, a short prefixed form and a long prefixed form are side by side.⁶⁷ Although in the line’s recurrence in CAT 1.22 i 23–24 both verb forms are long, the form does not affect the semantics. The pattern is formulaic.

The point can be sharpened by comparing the numerous instances of the formula “he/she/they raised his/her/their voice and called out”—*yšū/tšū/tšā(n) gh(m) wyṣḥ/wtṣḥ/wtṣḥ(n)*.⁶⁸ The line has an invariable formulaic structure with many parallels in the Hebrew Bible.⁶⁹ The verb *nš* “raise” is always found (except in the dual) with *ʾaleph-u*, indicating that the form is *yaqtulu* and not *yaqtul*. In Biblical Hebrew prose, the first verb in the formula, “to raise” (which Polak terms the inceptive), and the following verb, “to call out, cry [etc.]” (which Polak terms the main action), are always in the same verb form—the preterite (*wayyiqtol*).⁷⁰ The burden of proof is clearly on those who would distinguish the tense or aspect between verbs in a formula.

Gzella challenges this principle and suggests that in the formula “she raises her voice and calls out” (*tšū gh wtṣḥ*), the first verb is to be understood as “imperfect” and the second as preterite; the first describes the circumstance in which an event takes place, and the second relates the events. Accordingly, Gzella translates, “raising her voice she declared.”⁷¹ He and Gianto analyze sequences of verbs in Ugaritic narrative verse in the same way: a long prefixed verb form preceding a short one will establish the background to a main event, and the short form will convey the main action.⁷² I shall first respond to Gzella’s contention concerning the “raising the voice” formula and then, through analysis of a passage treated by Gianto and Gzella, undermine their claim.

There is no evidentiary reason to assume that the verb *wyṣḥ/wtṣḥ/wtṣḥ(n)* “he/she/they called out” is short or preterite, while the initial, or inceptive, verb *yšū/tšū/tšā(n)* “he/she/they raised (their voice)” is transparently *yaqtulu*. It is only as a result of presupposing that the latter verb is *yaqtul* preterite that any difference in time or aspect reference would be suggested. Gzella proposes that the first verb, the first clause, in the formula is circumstantial. Hackett, too, seeks a nuance of difference in the semantics of the two clauses.⁷³ However, the established means of indicating circumstance is not by splitting the formula between two different verb forms but rather by preceding the main verb with an adverbial phrase.⁷⁴ One can precede the verb of “seeing,” for example, with the phrase “upon raising his eyes”: *bnši* (preposition + infinitive) *ʾnh wyphn* (CAT 1.17 v 9). Incidentally, note that the main action verb, “he sees,” appends a *nun* suffix, suggesting that it might be long or *yaqtulu*, contrary to Gzella’s thesis. Analogously, one can precede the main verb with an adverbial phrase composed of an infinitive or verbal noun and the adverbial suffix *m*—for example, *bkm tmdln ʾr // bkm tšmd phl* “Weeping, she saddles the donkey, // Weeping, she harnesses the ass” (CAT 1.19 ii 8–9).⁷⁵ There is no need to suppose that for the sake of a circumstantial clause, one must presuppose a *yaqtul* preterite.

Gzella and Gianto adopt a discourse understanding of the putative difference in use between long and short prefixed verb forms that actually inverts the difference I drew and illustrated between the very

67 See already Greenstein 1998, 409; cf. Sivan 1997, 212. Lewis (1997b, 204–5) unnecessarily emends the form *tlḥm* to *tlḥmn* in conformity with the later occurrence.

68 See already Greenstein 2006, 83. For the evidence, see Whitaker 1972, 458–59.

69 For the formula’s structure, see Polak 2006, esp. 290–91. For the distribution of the cognate formula and similar ones in the Bible, see Polak 1989.

70 Polak 2006, 291.

71 Gzella 2010, col. 370.

72 Gzella 2010, cols. 370–71; Gianto 2012, 41–51.

73 Hackett 2012, 116.

74 Cf. Sivan 1997, 125.

75 Greenstein 2006, 89. For similar examples, with preposition (*bkm bkyh* “as he cries,” *bdm ʾh* “as he weeps”), see below.

well-attested uses of *yaqtulu* and *qatala* in Ugaritic epic.⁷⁶ I suggested that in Ugaritic epic narration, the main line, or foregrounded, action is conveyed by *yaqtulu*, while background information and action are conveyed by *qatala*. I illustrated this usage in Ugaritic and compared the division of labor, so to speak, between *wayyiqtol* and *qatal* in biblical narrative.⁷⁷ The former relates on-line action and the latter off-line action. Gzella and Gianto replace my analysis of *yaqtulu* versus *qatala* as foreground versus background (and more subtle uses) with *yaqtul* preterite (foreground) versus *yaqtulu* (background). Gianto claims it is *yaqtul* that relates “a series of events building the backbone of a story,” while *yaqtulu*, lacking a specific definition in time, provides circumstantial information.⁷⁸

Let us examine one of their cases in point to judge the success of their proposal. In the first scene of action following the report of the death of Kirta’s family, the king reacts to his situation. Here is the text together with my translation of it (CAT 1.14 i 26–41):⁷⁹

<i>yʿrb bḥdrh ybky /</i>	He enters his chamber, he cries;
<i>bṭn ʿgmm wydmʿ /</i>	An inner alcove (?), and weeps.
<i>tntkn ūdmʿth /</i>	His tears are poured forth
<i>km tqłm ʾrṣh /</i>	Like shekels on the ground,
<i>km ḥmšt mṭth /</i>	Like five-weights on the couch.
<i>bm bkyh wyšn /</i>	As he cries, he falls asleep;
<i>bdmʿh nhmmt /</i>	As he weeps, there’s slumber.
<i>šnt tlúʾn / wyškbn</i>	Sleep overwhelms him, he lies down.
<i>nhmmt / wyqmš</i>	Slumber, and he crumples.
<i>wbḥlmh / il yrd</i>	Now in his dream, El comes down;
<i>bḏhrth / ʾb ʾdm</i>	The Father of Man, in his vision.
<i>wyqrb / bšʾl krt</i>	Now El approaches, asking Kirta:
<i>mʾt / krt kybky /</i>	“What ails Kirta, that he cries?”
<i>ydmʿ nʿmn ḡlm / il</i>	“That he weeps, the Pleasant Lad of El?”

There is general agreement concerning the activities. Kirta enters his chamber and cries; he falls asleep; the god El appears to him in a dream; El asks Kirta why he is crying. The last activity provides a rather clear interpretation of what is primary and what is secondary in Kirta’s activities. It is the crying to which El responds, as it was the crying, reflecting the king’s grief, that constituted his main reaction to the realization that he lost his family.⁸⁰

Applying my understanding of the discourse functions of the verb forms in Ugaritic verse, the crying is conveyed by the *yaqtulu* form, the form to which I assign the main line or foreground of the narrative. The unapocopated form *ybky* (lines 26, 39) makes that assignment certain. There is not a single verb in the entire passage that shows any outward sign, according to any theory, of being *yaqtul*. When the narrator relates that Kirta is falling asleep as a result of his weeping, circumstantial phrases in the form of preposition + infinitive are employed: *bm bkyh* “in his crying” (line 31), *bdmʿh* “in his weeping” (line 32). The same form is used in relating what El does as he approaches (*wyqrb*, a *yaqtulu* form in line 37) Kirta with a question: *bšʾl* “in asking” (line 38). Because the narration entails a chronological sequence, with one activity following directly after the other, the *yaqtulu* form is repeatedly employed. Accordingly, the overwhelming of Kirta by sleep is also conveyed by a *yaqtulu* form: *tlúʾn* (line 33).

76 For Gzella and Gianto, see n. 72 above; for my analysis, see Greenstein 2006, 91–102.

77 See the references in Greenstein 2006, 91 n. 86, and Notarius 2013, 7–22.

78 Gianto 2012, 41; cf. Gzella 2010, cols. 370–71.

79 Greenstein 1997, 13.

80 See, e.g., Parker 1989, 148–49.

Gzella and Gianto analyze the verb sequence differently.⁸¹ They parse the prefixed forms that show no explicit signs of length as *yaqtul* preterites. Only explicitly long forms (*ybkȳ*, *tlũân*) do they acknowledge as *yaqtulu*. Recall that for Gzella and Gianto, it is the preterite that carries the main narrative. Accordingly, the line *yʿrb bħdrh ybky* (line 26) they interpret as “he went into his chamber, crying.” For them the main action is entering the chamber, and the circumstantial clause is “crying.” This clause is conveyed by the *yaqtulu* in their analysis, even though, as we have seen, the very same notion of “crying,” as a circumstantial clause, is conveyed in this passage by an adverbial prepositional clause: *bm bkyh* “in his crying” (line 31), *bdmʿh* “in his weeping” (line 32). But what makes their analysis inapt is that they relegate the king’s crying to a circumstantial clause, while the narrative sequence shows it most clearly to be the main activity. Crying is how Kirta responds to his personal tragedy, and crying is what impels El to attend to him. Entering the chamber is secondary to weeping.

Similarly, Gianto renders *šnt tlũân wyškb* (lines 33–34) “while sleep was overpowering him and he lay down.”⁸² Again, according to this parsing, the sleep is secondary to lying down, which is hardly the case when looking at the entire narrative sequence. Gianto seems to recognize that such problems may arise on account of the frequent juxtaposition of short and long prefixed verb forms in Ugaritic narrative. He suggests a pseudoliterary solution to the problem by finding a shimmering effect in such juxtapositions.⁸³ This solution, however, flies in the face of the argument for distinguishing *yaqtul* preterite from *yaqtulu* present-future narrative action in Ugaritic verse—precisely to convey subtle differences in tense and aspect.

I have shown in my analysis,⁸⁴ and in my brief discussion here of how circumstantial clauses are produced in Ugaritic, that the distinction between *yaqtulu* as the main-line narrative form and *qatala* as the off-line narrative form, together with various means of conveying adverbials, suffices to convey the subtleties of action in Ugaritic narrative verse. In sum, there is little or no orthographic evidence for a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic, and, from a discourse perspective, there is neither any evidence nor any need for it.

ADDENDUM

After this article was submitted and edited, another article appeared that sought to undermine my detailed 2006 study in which I argued against the use of a *yaqtul* preterite in Ugaritic narrative verse: Alexander Andrason and Juan-Pablo Vita, “The YQTL-Ø ‘Preterite’ in Ugaritic Epic Poetry,” *Archiv Orientalní* 85 (2017): 345–66. Although the authors claim that they bring “new evidence” “in an exhaustive manner,” in fact their argument is not based on textual evidence but rather on theoretical assertions. Moreover, in the course of their argument they misrepresent some of the evidence and the nature of some of my arguments. They do not analyze a single passage to support their interpretative claims. The essence of their thesis is that Ugaritic *should* make use of a *yaqtul* preterite in the way that epic literature in ancient Semitic and elsewhere does. I have already answered all their criticisms in my 2006 study and in the present rebuttal of arguments counter to mine.

81 Gzella 2010, col. 370; Gianto 2012, 49–51.

82 Gianto 2012, 51.

83 Ibid., 41.

84 Greenstein 2006, 91–102; cf. also 2014, 87–90.

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3

GOD [ʾILU] AND KING IN *KTU* 1.23*

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Neither Hammurapi nor Darius, nor a Sassanid king nor Constantine relied on prayer alone to establish their kingships; but . . . from the authority and power of the god they sought to legitimize. The gods stand behind those who exercise worldly power. —Walter Burkert¹

RITUAL THEORISTS (E.G., CLIFFORD GEERTZ, Catherine Bell, Jonathan Z. Smith, Bruce Lincoln, David Kertzer) have articulated the many ways in which political rituals and mythologies serve as mediums to construct and reinforce the very nature of power and, by so doing, to promote the interests (and vital necessity) of god, king, and state. *KTU* 1.23 is a text known for both its ritual elements and its myth about ʾIlu's procreation. Though set against the backdrop of viticulture, the hypothesis here argues that *KTU* 1.23 is essentially about God and king.² It promotes ʾIlu's life-giving sovereignty (against that of the deadly ruler Môtu) as it buttresses the royal power of the Late Bronze Age kingdom of Ugarit.

GOD (ʾILU) AND KING—THE EPIC TALE OF KING KIRTA

Multiple sources underscore the preeminence of the king in Ugaritic society, including (a) texts of varying genres (treaties, international correspondence, economic texts, legal documents, land grants, funerary texts, seals, and colophons); (b) architecture (especially the prominence and prestige of the impressive Royal Palace); (c) the presence of the king's army, over which he was commander in chief; (d) royal administrative personnel; (e) royal land holdings; (f) royal prestige goods; and (g) royal artistic portrayals in precious metal, stone, ivory, and clay.

As for religion, the royal cult at Ugarit is known, in part, through epic tales and ritual texts. From the former comes the story of King Kirta, which tells of the god ʾIlu's personal patronage of the king as he faces three personal issues that in turn impact the stability of political, social, and sacral order: the problem of

* It is a pleasure to honor Dennis Pardee and to celebrate the way in which he has transformed Ugaritic studies in every aspect (epigraphy, grammar, interpretation), including his insightful illumination of the present text. See Pardee 1997 as well as his analysis with Pierre Bordreuil (Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 177–86).

1 Burkert 1996, 95.

2 The argument presented here makes no appeal to reconstructing a putative *hieros gamos* mythology, an edifice erected by “myth-and-ritual” advocates of the past but now mostly dismantled. For example, whereas myth-and-ritual advocates would turn our text's mention of the king (*mlk*) and the queen (*mlkt*) (*KTU* 1.23.7) into sexual partners, subsequent research shows that the title *mlkt* likely refers the king's mother (see below n. 51).

I am certainly not alone in pointing out the royal nature of this text. For others who underscored the royal connection, though with different emphases, see Foley 1980; Wyatt 1998, 324–25; 2007, 66–67; Pardee 2007a; Coogan and Smith 2012, 160. Though I part ways with Smith on some important interpretive matters (e.g., the destructive nature of the gracious gods and the identity of the Guardian of the sown land), I am in full agreement with his astute comments on the relationship of ʾIlu and king (see Smith 2006, 162–63). Smith insightfully writes: “[*KTU*] 1.23 expresses royal power by connecting the cosmic origins in the figure of El with the present reality in the person of the king . . . [*KTU*] 1.23 further reinforces the identification of god and king.”

succession, the monarch's personal health, and challenges to the king's rule. Divine benevolence toward the king is central in this epic tale, and to such a degree that Parker³ argues that the intention of 'Ilimalku (the author whose name could be rendered 'Ilimalku, "Ilu is king"⁴) is to underscore "the virtues of 'Ilu as the incomparable savior" of the king.

'Ilu's benevolence includes providing the king with a wife and children as recorded in the divine blessing in *KTU* 1.15.II.16–28:

<i>ks yiḥd [il b]yd</i>	['Ilu] holds a cup [in] his hand,
<i>krpn bm [ym]n</i>	A chalice in his [right han]d.
<i>brkm ybrk [‘bdh]</i>	He indeed blesses [his servant],
<i>ybrk il krt [t‘]</i>	'Ilu blesses [noble] Kirta,
<i>[ym]rm n‘m[n] ḡlm il</i>	[Favors] the goodly lad of 'Ilu:
<i>ātṭ [tq]ḥ y krt</i>	"The woman you take, O Kirta,
<i>ātṭ tqḥ btk</i>	The woman you take into your house,
<i>ḡlmt tš‘rb ḥzrk</i>	The girl you bring to your court,
<i>tld šb‘ bnm lk</i>	She shall bear you seven sons,
<i>wṭmn ṭṭnm lk</i>	Eight shall she produce for you.
<i>tld yšb ḡlm</i>	She shall bear the lad Yašsubu,
<i>ynq ḥlb nrt [. . .]</i>	Who will suck the milk of the Luminary . . . ,
<i>mšš ṭd dt [–][. . .]</i>	Suckle at the breasts of [. . .],
<i>mšnq[. . .]</i> ⁵	She who gives suck . . . "

Echoing the familial language we see in *KTU* 1.23, Kirta is portrayed as 'Ilu's son (*ḡlm il*; *bn il*) who is "goodly" (*n‘m*) as are 'Ilu's "goodly" sons (*ilm n‘mm*; *bn*) in *KTU* 1.23.1, 23, 58, 65, 67.⁶

In addition, as king (and thus as 'Ilu's representative on the earthly plane), Kirta is also a royal husband and father like 'Ilu in *KTU* 1.23. Kirta takes a woman who becomes his wife into his house (*ātṭ tqḥ bt*), whereupon she conceives and bears him multiple children (*KTU* 1.15.III.20–25) in echo of 'Ilu, who takes women (*ātṭm*)⁷ into his house (*yqḥ bbt*)—women who become his wives, who then conceive and bear him multiple children (*KTU* 1.23.36, 48b–49, 51b–53, 57b–58). Kirta's heir suckles at the breast of a goddess (*KTU* 1.15.II.26–28), as do 'Ilu's children in *KTU* 1.23 (*KTU* 1.23.24, 59, 61). Such a motif is well known and not surprisingly depicted on the ivory bed panel in figure 3.1 that was found adjacent to the Courtyard III garden of the Royal Palace.⁸

3 Parker 1977, 173–74.

4 See Smith and Pitard 2009, 727–28 (cf. EA 151: 45).

5 The readings of this section follow Pardee (2012, 184–88).

6 Elsewhere in the narrative, Kirta is called *n‘mn ḡlm il* "the goodly lad of 'Ilu" (*KTU* 1.14.I.39; 1.14.II.8–9; 1.14.VI.[41]; 1.15.II.15–[16]; 1.15.II.20); *bn il* / *bn-m il* "the son of 'Ilu" (*KTU* 1.16.I.10, 20; 1.16.II.48); *špḥ* "offspring (of 'Ilu)" (*KTU* 1.16.I.10, 21, 23; 1.16.II.43, 49); and *‘bd il* "the servant of 'Ilu" (*KTU* 1.14.III.49, 51; 1.14.VI.34–35; 1.15.II.[19]). 'Ilu is called Kirta's father (*āb*) in *KTU* 1.14.I.41; 1.14.II.6, 24; 1.14.IV.6.

7 On the plurality of 'Ilu's wives, see below.

8 The ivory panels were found in Room 44 off Courtyard III of the Royal Palace and have been dated to the middle of the thirteenth century BCE. See Gachet-Bizollon 2001, 28–36; 2007, 130–46, 269–71, figs. 40–43 and pls. 25–26, 79–87.



Figure 3.1. A goddess suckling two youths depicted on an ivory bed panel found in Room 44 off the Courtyard III garden of the Royal Palace. Reproduced by permission of Mission archéologique de Ras Shamra–Ougarit.

RITUAL TEXTS: THE UGARITIC KING AS PRIMARY CULTIC ACTOR

Such literary praise of benevolent divinity finds cultic expression in the Ugaritic ritual texts where the king offers cult to the gods. Echoing the views of most scholars, Merlo and Xella⁹ summarize that the king “was by far the principal officiant” and “often the main celebrant within a liturgy.” A few examples will suffice. In *KTU* 1.119 the king undergoes ritual washings (1.119.5), and though the text is primarily in honor of the god “Baʿlu of Ugarit,” it includes mention of the king’s sacrifice at the Temple of ʾIlu (*KTU* 1.119.13–14). Another royal ritual (*KTU* 1.41 and *KTU* 1.87) begins by mentioning the “cutting of a bunch of grapes for ʾIlu as a *šlmm*-offering” (*šmtr ūtkl l il šlmm*) in the month of “the first wine” (*rašu-ŷēni*).¹⁰ Once again the central focus is on the king as the primary cultic actor¹¹ who ritually washes himself clean (*yrthš mlk br[r]* *KTU* 1.41.[3]; 1.87.3–4a, 55), sits in a state of purity (*yṭb brr* *KTU* 1.41.7), makes recitations while ritually clean (*rgm ytt[b] [mlk] brr* and *[mlk] brr rgm yttb* *KTU* 1.41.[44], 46, 53; 1.87.[48]–49, 51), and most likely makes libations (though here the text is not explicit) (*√ntk* *KTU* 1.41.12). At a decisive stage, the Ugaritic king sacrifices on a roof (as did King Kirta in myth), likely at the Temple of ʾIlu (*KTU* 1.41.50–51).¹² Pardee notes that, though we have mention of “a fairly full panoply of deities” in *KTU* 1.41 and 1.87, the most conspicuous sacred space utilized is that of the Temple of ʾIlu. “Indeed a large proportion of the rites are either stated explicitly to have taken place (lines 38–54) in the temple of ʾIlu or may be assumed to have occurred there (lines 1–19).”¹³

Elsewhere we have descriptions of so-called “entry” rituals in which the king and other members of the royal family partake in processions of divine images (cf. *KTU*

1.43; 1.112). So-called “contemplative” rituals are attested and, though difficult to nuance, here too the king is the central cultic officiant who must “contemplate” (*√phy*; lit., “look upon”) the gods as part of the sacrificial ceremony (cf. *KTU* 1.90; 1.1.164; 1.168). Lastly, consider *KTU* 1.40, where the king (specifically Niqmaddu) and queen (referred to by *ātt* “wife”) are at the center of a national sacrificial ritual (although not officiating). All told, such ritual texts focus on the king at Ugarit as the central cultic actor, and to such a

⁹ Merlo and Xella 1999, 296.

¹⁰ Such viticulture references resonate with *KTU* 1.23. Pardee (1997, 277 n. 15) astutely points out the possible word play between “grapes” (*ūtkl*) and the binding of Mt-w-šr who wields a “scepter of bereavement (*tkl*)” in *KTU* 1.23.8.

¹¹ So Pardee 2002, 57.

¹² On King Kirta’s rooftop sacrifice in *KTU* 1.14.II.73–79; 1.14.IV.8–9, as well as the likelihood of the sacrifice of *KTU* 1.41.50 taking place at the Temple of ʾIlu, see Pardee 2002, 106 n. 75 and below, n. 16.

¹³ Pardee 2002, 57; cf. 2000, 143–213.

degree that Pardee¹⁴ bemoans how our ritual texts are virtually silent when it comes to describing the other officiants who actually performed the cult!

KTU 1.23 AND ROYAL CULT

In light of the king's centrality in the majority of ritual texts (e.g., *KTU* 1.40, 1.41, 1.43, 1.47, 1.90, 1.112, 1.115, 1.119, 1.161, 1.164, 1.168),¹⁵ it is likely that the religious officiant speaking in the first person at the beginning of *KTU* 1.23 ("let me invoke the gracious gods") is doing so in the service of (and at the behest of) the royal cult. That the king (*mlk*), the queen mother/queen (*mlkt*), and their royal attendants (*rbm*, *tnnm*) are subsequently mentioned a few lines later argues for such a likelihood as well. Two more lines of evidence add support: (a) part of the ritual (described in *KTU* 1.23.12) is said to be recited seven times at a seemingly royal location known as *ʿd*, a term used to designate a "throne room" in the Kirta epic (occurring in parallel to Kirta's *ks' mlk* "royal throne" and to *kḥt drkt* "the seat of his dominion" (*KTU* 1.16.VI.22–24) as well as a room in the temple of Baʿlu-ʿUgārīta where royal cult takes place (*KTU* 1.119.9; cf. *KTU* 1.123.13); (b) *KTU* 1.23.19–20 mentions eight "divine dwellings" (*mṭbt ʿlm*), which Pardee has suggested may correspond to the royal viticulture ritual in *KTU* 1.41.1–2, 50–51, where the king sacrifices on a roof (seemingly the roof of the temple of ʿIlu) and where there are eight "dwellings of cut branches" (*mṭbt ʾzmr*; cf. the ritual pruning in *KTU* 1.23.9–10).¹⁶

ʿILU AS KING: ḥṭ AS ROYAL SCEPTER

The god ʿIlu is often referred to as king (*mlk*) elsewhere at Ugarit,¹⁷ and this paper argues that there are also reasons to view ʿIlu as king in *KTU* 1.23—reasons that have gone unnoticed, though admittedly ʿIlu is here never explicitly given the title *mlk*. The first of these reasons is the way in which *ḥṭ* (in *KTU* 1.23.37, 40, 44, 47) refers to ʿIlu's royal scepter (in addition to his male member).

The word *ḥṭ* is used in four ways in Ugaritic: to designate (a) a regular stick, (b) a magical staff, (c) a penis, and (d) a royal scepter. We find the first meaning in *KTU* 1.114.8, where a rod is used for striking someone under a table. The use of *ḥṭ* as a magical staff occurs in the Šaʿtiqatu narrative in *KTU* 1.16.VI.8, where ʿIlu's exorcist uses a magico-medical *ḥṭ* to cure the ailing King Kirta. The third usage of *ḥṭ* is found in *KTU* 1.169.1–2, 5, where an exorcist cures the pain of a patient's penis. The fourth usage (that of *ḥṭ* as royal scepter) is best illustrated through the following passage, which is key for interpreting the *ḥṭ* of *mt wšr* at the beginning of *KTU* 1.23.

The most well-known clash of ʿIlu and Môtu in Ugaritic myth is found in *KTU* 1.6.VI.27–29, where ʿIlu is described as crushing the scepter (*ḥṭ*) of Môtu's rule as he (ʿIlu) overturns his (Môtu's) kingship!¹⁸

<i>l ys' ʾlt ṭbtk</i>	Surely he (ʿIlu) will remove the support of your throne,
<i>l yḥpk ksā mlkk</i>	Surely he will overturn the throne of your kingship,
<i>l yṭbr ḥṭ mṭṭk</i>	Surely he will break the <i>scepter</i> of your rule. (<i>KTU</i> 1.6.VI.27–29)

14 Pardee 2002, 239.

15 For an accessible translation of the various Ugaritic ritual texts, see Pardee 2002. For a comprehensive technical analysis including philological and epigraphic remarks, see Pardee 2000 with bibliography.

16 Pardee 1997, 275; 2000, 209; 2002, 56–65; 2007a, 3.

17 See *il mlk* "Ilu, the King" in *KTU* 1.4.IV.38, *il/mlk ʾb šnm* "Ilu//the King, the Father of Years (or Šunama)" in *KTU* 1.4.IV.24; 1.17.VI.48–49 (and in broken contexts *KTU* 1.2.III.5; 1.3.V.7–8), and *il mlk dyknnh* "Ilu, the King, who established/created (?) him" in *KTU* 1.3.V.35–36; 1.4.IV.48.

18 The speaker in this passage is Šapšu, warning Môtu of how his battle with Baʿlu ultimately cannot be successful due to the intervention of ʿIlu. Cf. a parallel passage in *KTU* 1.2.III.17–18, where Šapšu informs ʿAthtar that his bid for kingship will also fail due to ʿIlu's overturning his throne and breaking his scepter (*yṭbr ḥṭ mṭṭk*).

With this text as a backdrop, in *KTU* 1.23.8–11 we prefer to see the figure *mt-w-šr* as referring to the god Môtu, a deadly ruler wielding a scepter, rather than the alternative of translating *mt* as “male.”¹⁹

<i>mt wšr ytb</i>	Môtu-the-Ruler ²⁰ sits enthroned,
<i>bdh ḥṭ tkl</i>	A scepter of bereavement in one hand,
<i>bdh ḥṭ ūlmn</i>	A scepter of widowhood in the other.
<i>yzbrnn zbrm gpn</i>	May the vine-pruner prune him,
<i>yšmdnn šmdm gpn</i>	May the vine-binder bind him,
<i>yšql šdmth km gpn</i>	May he trim his tendrils like a vine. (<i>KTU</i> 1.23.8–11)

In addition to the royal aspect (*šr*) of his binomial name, Môtu is portrayed as sitting enthroned (*yṭb*),²¹ especially if the occurrence of *ḥṭ* in the next two lines designates a scepter (as in *KTU* 1.6.VI.29) rather than a normal staff. Using synonymous parallelism, *mt-w-šr* is portrayed with two scepters (one in each hand) that occasion bereavement (*tkl*) and widowhood (*ūlmn*).²² It is imperative that such a deadly threat be ritually bound in a text having to do with newborns and their mothers. Similarly, it is significant that the deadly scepters (*ḥṭ*) of “Môtu the Ruler” are made ritually ineffective (*KTU* 1.23.8–10) prior to ʾIlu’s employing his scepter (*ḥṭ*).

ʾILU’S SCEPTER AND YMNN AS INDICATORS OF ROYAL GENEROSITY

The bicolon in *KTU* 1.23.37 is one of the most debated passages in the text, for it is often used to describe the sexual nature of ʾIlu, with scholars taking opposing views with respect to his virility (cf. the parallel passages in 1.23.40, 43–44).

<i>il ḥṭh nḥt</i>	
<i>il ymnn mṭ ydh</i>	[<i>KTU</i> 1.23.37]

Scholars are mostly in agreement that we have a double entendre with the words *ḥṭ* and *mṭ* designating ʾIlu’s staff/scepter as well as his penis. Even those who see a nonsexual hunting stick here would agree that the overall context includes “explicitly indicated sexual activity” such that the vocabulary “seems to indicate the presence of sexual allusions.”²³

What is debated is the meaning of the two verbs (*nḥt*, *ymnn*) that describe the condition and/or use of ʾIlu’s “staff.” The first verb (*nḥt*) is well attested in Hebrew and very common in all phases of Aramaic with the meaning of “to go down” in the G stem and “to bring down” in the C stem (and occasionally the D

19 See ʾIlu as *mt* in 1.23.41, 46. Pardee (1997, 277 n. 13; cf. Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 178) vocalizes *mutu wašarru* and translates the two terms synonymously as “Warrior-Prince.” He sees the “role” of *mt* to be that of “a ‘man’ [who] prefigures that of ʾIlu in the principal myth and the name/figure may represent a previously unknown hypostasis of ʾIlu.” Though we prefer to see the figure *mt-w-šr* in *KTU* 1.23.8–11 as a reference to the god Môtu wielding a scepter, the alternative case could still work within our overall thesis of ʾIlu as king.

20 We follow those scholars (e.g., Bordreuil and Pardee, Caquot and Sznycer, Coogan and Smith, Gibson, Lewis, Pardee, Pope, Smith, van Zijl) who see *šr* (*šarru*) as a reference to ruling (cf. Hebrew *šar*; Akkadian *šarru*), as opposed to those scholars (e.g., Driver, Foley, Gaster, Gordon, Gray, de Moor, Tsumura) who see a reference to evil of some sort based especially on Arabic cognates (e.g., *šarra*). For bibliography and discussion, see Pardee 1997, 276–77 n. 13; Smith 2006, 40.

Compare the use of *šr* in conjunction with the royal term *ʾd* to designate hypostatic divinity in *KTU* 1.123.3 (cf. too *KTU* 1.12.II.51–52) as noted previously by Pardee 2000, 698; 2002, 151; Smith 2006, 40.

21 *yṭb* by itself can designate royal enthronement. See, for example, *KTU* 1.16.VI.37–38, where Yassibu’s proclamation *āmlk* “I will reign” is paralleled by *āṭb* “I will sit (enthroned).” Cf. Coogan and Smith (2012, 156), who note that Môtu is here portrayed as “an enthroned king, with royal scepters denoting his power in causing the deaths of children and husbands.”

22 Contrast Wyatt (1998, 326–27), who argues for a single staff as well as a reference to circumcision.

23 Thus Pardee 1997, 281 n. 51.

stem).²⁴ Outside *KTU* 1.23, in Ugaritic the verb occurs in *KTU* 1.2.IV.11, 18 to describe Kôtaru-wa-Ḥasisu's handing down a weapon to Ba'lu.²⁵ Though it does not use the cognate to *h̄t* that appears in our passage, the account of the battle in Isaiah 30:30–33 depicts “the descent of [Yahweh's] arm” (*naḥat zērô'ô*) as he smites Assyria with a rod/scepter (*šēbet*) and a staff (*maṭṭeh*).

Scholars have notoriously seen the descent of 'Ilu's “staff/penis” here to be a reference to his failing manhood, either due to his impotence as a *deus otiosus* or after exhausted intercourse with the women he has taken into his house.²⁶ The former position is difficult to maintain in light of the immediate context, which celebrates the length of 'Ilu's “hand” *yd* (*KTU* 1.23.33b–35a)—yet another euphemism for his phallus—and the overall context, in which 'Ilu does indeed impregnate two women. The latter position is constrained in that the sexual activity does not seem to begin until line 49b, and notably only after a period of courtship (lines 37–49) that includes an uncertain status for the women until lines 48b–49a, when they are given the prominent stature of “wives.”

A new alternative is that 'Ilu as king is lowering his scepter (*h̄t*) to the women in an act of royal benevolence. Images from history easily come to mind in which suppliants bow low before a gracious monarch enthroned on high. Suffice it here to refer to the account of a king's benevolence to his new wife (and queen) in Esther 8:3–5:

Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme that he had devised against the Jews. *And the king extended [= lowered] the golden scepter toward [the bowed] Esther.* So Esther arose and stood before the king, and said, “If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his sight and the thing seems right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written. . . .”²⁷

Yet can such a meaning of 'Ilu's graciously lowering his scepter to potential wives (*il h̄th n̄ht*) in the A-line square with the parallel B-line (*il ymn̄n m̄t ydh*), which has had its own share of notorious solutions? The various proposals for understanding the verb *ymn̄n* include (a) looking to Arabic cognates for the root *mnn* as having to do with being weary and hence fitting for a spent or impotent male member; (b) looking to Arabic, Akkadian, and Syriac cognates for the root *mnn* that give the impression of strength (and hence a virile 'Ilu); and (c) interpreting *ymn̄n* as a *qatlal* denominative verb stem from the root *ymn* (cf. Hebrew) and thus indicating 'Ilu's handling of his staff with his right hand. Each of these proposals has difficulties.

Curiously missing from the solutions offered to determine the meaning of the word *ymn̄n* is a most common Arabic cognate that (seemingly) has reflexes in western (“peripheral”) Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Hebrew. As can be seen from early (e.g., Jawhari, Ibn Manzur, Firuzabadi, Zabidi) to modern (e.g., Wehr) Arabic lexica, the verb *manna* means “to be benevolent, gracious, kind” as well as “to bestow, confer, or grant benevolence or benefits.”²⁸ Related nouns and adjectives include *manna* (“gift, favor, blessing, gracious bestowal”), *minna* (“benevolence, kindness, benignity”), *mannān* (“benign, generous”), *mamnūn* (“indebted,

24 The root *n̄ht* occurs already in the Old Aramaic bilingual Tell Fekheriyeh (line 2) as well as in Targumic Aramaic, Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, Judean Aramaic, and Syriac. In Ugaritic the root *n̄ht* in the causative sense (to bring down) seems to occur in the D stem in *KTU* 1.2.IV.11, 18 (*yanah̄hit*) and in the D (*nah̄hita*) and Dp (*nah̄huta*) stems *KTU* 1.23.37, 40, 43 (so too *DULAT*³, 620; cf. Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 161).

25 Alternatively, this passage has been translated with Kothar's *fashioning* a weapon, for which one could look to the Arabic *naḥata*, meaning “to hew, to dress (stone or wood), to carve.” Regrettably, *KTU* 1.2.IV.11 does not provide a synonymously parallel line to help us decide. We favor using the Northwest Semitic cognates.

26 For the history of research, see Smith 2006, 83–88.

27 Esth. 8:3–5; cf. 5: 1–3.

28 Ugartitologists are typically thorough in leaving no cognate stone left unturned. One of the possible reasons for ignoring this Arabic cognate may be the nature of Edward William Lane's lexicon, often used as a standard in the field. Regrettably, Lane died in 1876 while in the middle of completing the section on the letter “Qaf.” The lexicon was “completed” (by his great-nephew) using Lane's partial files, thus resulting in a superficial treatment from the letter Qaf onward (including the letter *m*). Thankfully, additional data are found in the Supplement to Lane as well as in the sources Lane had been using—primarily the *Lisan al-Arab* and the *Taj al-‘Arus*.

grateful, thankful”), *mamnūniya* (“indebtedness, gratitude”), *mumtann* (“indebted”), and *imtinān* (“indebtedness, gratitude”). Thus the translation offered here:

il ḥṭh nḥt ʾIlu lowers his scepter,
il ymnn mṭ ydh ʾIlu is generous with the staff in his hand. (*KTU* 1.23.37)²⁹

A cognate term *maninnu* occurs in western Akkadian to designate a most generous gift (a necklace of the finest quality made of gold, lapis lazuli, and other precious stones) used in international diplomacy and as a royal gift to the gods. Such benevolence is best attested in the Amarna archive, where *maninnu* exchange gifts promoted the “well-being” (*šulmānu*; cf. the royal *šlm* in our text, line 7) between kings.³⁰ Consider EA 21, where Tushratta, the king of Mittani, hopes that the *maninnu* necklace he is sending will rest on the neck of Amenhotep III for one hundred thousand years. Even more relevant for the context of *KTU* 1.23 (dealing with ʾIlu’s potential wives) are Tushratta’s wedding gifts, which accompany the giving of his daughter Tadu-Hepa to Amenhotep III to be his wife. One text alone (EA 25) repeatedly mentions nineteen *maninnu* necklaces (cf. too EA 22). A *maninnu* gift carried such cultural and symbolic weight that at Late Bronze Age Qatna it appears as a prestige object the royal dynasty presented to the gods.³¹

The benevolent nature of the Arabic root *manna* and Akkadian *maninnu* gifts suggests that *mnn* is the likely root for the Hebrew (*mān*, *mann*-) and Aramaic (*mannāʾ*) words for manna (i.e., a *qall* pattern noun used of geminate roots). As noted by Maiberger,³² connecting the Hebrew and Aramaic words for manna to the Arabic root *manna* (and divine benevolence) dates back as early as 1661.³³ The manna narratives in the Hebrew Bible emphasize the providential nature of Yahweh, who daily “rains down bread from heaven.”³⁴ That this divine provision occurs in the wilderness (*midbār*) will be relevant for our discussion below, which will advocate that it is ʾIlu who is the guardian (*nḡr*) providing substance in the *mdbr* in *KTU* 1.23.67b–76.

In addition to *KTU* 1.23.37, 40, 44, the root *mnn* also occurs in the onomastic record from Ugarit. Thanks to the research of Watson, we can document several individuals at Ugarit, as well as at Emar, who bore the

29 My vocalization of this bicolon would be:

ʾilu ḥaṭṭahu naḥḥita (D suffixal form 3ms)
 ilu yumānin maṭṭā yadihu (L prefixal form 3ms)

Options for vocalizing the parallel bicola in lines 40, 43–44 include:

naḥḥuta-ma/nuḥata-mi/naḥūtu-ma ḥaṭṭuka “lowered is your staff”
 (Dp suffixal form 3ms + enclitic *m*/Gp suffixal form 3ms + enclitic *m*/G pss ptc ms + enclitic *m*)
mumānin-ma/mumannanu-ma maṭṭū yadihu “generous is the staff of your hand”
 (L ptc ms + enclitic *m*/Dp ptc ms + enclitic *m*)

I previously translated these bicola in this manner in Lewis 1997, 210–11, but the poetic nature of the SBLWAW translation series did not allow explanatory philological footnotes. Thus it was that Smith (2006, 85) misinterpreted the cognate on which I was relying and misaligned my translation as following F. M. Cross’s theory.

30 On the importance of luxury objects as *šulmānu* greeting gifts for royal diplomacy (including *maninnu* necklaces), see Feldman (2006, 105–14), to whom I am indebted.

31 See Bottéro 1949, 158–59; Feldman 2006, 109. Feldman astutely points out how “the Qatna inventories share certain formal aspects with the Amarna archive inventories, in particular EA 22 and 25 . . . deriving from Mitanni.”

32 Maiberger 1983, 282–83; 1997, 390–91.

33 See Maiberger 1983, 280–308, for the long list of other proposals for the etymology of Hebrew *mān*, *mann*- and Aramaic *mannāʾ*. The notion of divine benevolence underlying the etymology of manna (and linked to Arabic *manna*) was commonly found in earlier editions of Wilhelm Gesenius’s lexicon (listed as “a portion, gift from heaven”) until it was omitted in later editions (including BDB) that favored the opinions of “English naturalists” who viewed manna as coming from tree (tamarisk) resin and/or insect secretions. Edward Robinson, who translated and edited later editions of Gesenius’s lexicon and is known for his Middle Eastern travels in search of Arab place names, demurs by adding an editorial note to the 1854 edition. He notes that none of the characteristics of manna described in the biblical text belong to the present notions of tree and insect manna, nor could such a naturalistic and intermittent supply be sufficient to feed very many people. Similar comments may be found in Robinson 1841, 109–10, 170–71.

34 Exod. 16:4; cf. Ps. 78:24. The precise vocabulary here of Yahweh’s “raining down” (*mamṭîr*) the manna resonates with how the verb *nḥt* is often used of gods’ sending down rain.

name *mnn*.³⁵ That a single text includes three individuals with the name *mnn* may attest to the popularity of the name, marking one who has received benevolence from a deity.³⁶ Also of note is that all these names occur in economic texts, and one wonders whether any individuals were so named because of their “indebted” status. Several Ugaritic texts from Ras ibn Hani are tantalizing in this regard, for they attest to a creditor, perhaps appropriately named Muninuya (“benevolent, debt lender?”), who loans silver to twelve debtors (see *KTU* 3.10, 4.783, 4.791, 4.792; 4.401).³⁷

In short, there is good evidence to argue that in *KTU* 1.23.37 'Ilu could be benevolently lowering his scepter (*h̄t*), as a king would do toward a favored subject, thereby expressing generosity (*ymnn*) to these two women (who will soon become his wives and sexual partners) with intentional vocabulary (*yd*, *h̄t*, *mt*) that alludes to his virility (see below).³⁸

'ILU AS KING: ROYAL WIVES, ROYAL MOTHERS

Turning to the recipients of 'Ilu's benevolence brings us to the social and ideological ways in which women (royal wives, multiple wives, and royal mothers) enhanced prestige. In *KTU* 1.23 'Ilu is associated with at least three (possibly four³⁹) women, two of whom become the focus of sexual relations and childbirth. In the first half of the text, we read of 'Athiratu, 'Ilu's consort, elsewhere referred to as *rabitu*, a queen mother in her own right.⁴⁰ In *KTU* 1.23, attention is given to her association with agriculture (i.e., mention of her *šd* “fields” in *KTU* 1.23.13, 28) and her suckling of the gracious gods (*KTU* 1.23.23–24), whose birth is the focus of the second half of the text. Depending on how one translates *KTU* 1.23.13, the text could explicitly make the connection between 'Athiratu's field and that of 'Ilu.⁴¹

Though the other two women are not named, our text gives considerable attention to them in *KTU* 1.23, where they are called *mšt'ltm* “offerers/servers”⁴² and *āttm* “women.” Indeed, they are central to an extended narrative, which includes (a) their initial interaction with 'Ilu (lines 31–33); (b) 'Ilu's bringing them into his house (palace), where he shows them benevolence (see above) and courtship (lines 36–39a); (c) an extended narration about their status—a narration that ends with their position as *ātt il* “'Ilu's wives” (lines 39b–49a), whom 'Ilu weds and to whom he gives bridal gifts (*itrh*,⁴³ line 64); (d) their amorous adventures with 'Ilu, which result in their pregnancy and the birth of the divine pair Šaḥru-wa-Šalimu; (e) an announcement of

35 The names are variously vocalized in the Akkadian syllabic spellings. See Watson 1995, 224–25; 1996, 101.

36 The three people are *mnn bn krmn*, *mnn bn qqln*, and *mnn bn šnr* in *KTU* 4.35.5, 13, 16 (RS 8.183 + 201). See McGeough 2011, 501–3.

37 For the texts and the reconstruction of the timeline of when the loans were made and repaid, see Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 278–82; McGeough 2011, 599–603.

38 Cf. Gen. 38:15–18 with its completely different (though sex-related) context, which has Judah pledging “the staff in (his) hand” (*maṭṭeh bēyād*) to ensure payment for procured sex.

39 Scholars are divided about whether Raḥmayyu in *KTU* 1.23.13, 16, 28 is to be identified with 'Athiratu or whether she constitutes another (fourth) woman in our text, with 'Anatu offered as a candidate due to her being called *rhm* in *KTU* 1.6.II.27. Here we lean toward seeing *rhm* as designating 'Athiratu. In addition, in light of the double occurrence of *rhm* in the very same text, it seems best to see *rhm* in line 13 as a simple scribal mistake (so too Pardee 1997, 278 n. 22). Finally, filling 'Athiratu into the broken section of 1.23.16 as a parallel to *rhm* is a very attractive suggestion.

An alternative view identifies the two goddesses at the outset with the two women who give birth later in the text. In this case, there would be a total of only two women in our narrative. For a review of various perspectives, see Smith 2006, 89–92.

40 Wiggins 1993, 65–71.

41 This connection would involve analyzing *šd ilm* as *šadû 'ili-ma* “the field of 'Ilu” ('Ilu + enclitic *m*). Cf. Smith 2006, 51, who notes that “the pairing of El and Athirat wa-Rahmay makes excellent sense.” Alternatively, one can just as easily see this phrase as *šadû 'ilima* “the field of the gods.”

42 For a detailed description of the many ways this term has been understood (including Pope's attractive proposal of being inflamed with passion), see Smith 2006, 74–77.

43 Cf. Akkadian *terḥatu*, the dowry or bridal gift given to the groom's family; CAD T, 353–54; Vita 1999, 475–76; Smith 2006, 116. For a mythological bridal gift elsewhere, see the use of *trḥtt* in *KTU* 1.111.20, paid for by the god Milku. See Pardee 2002, 90–93; 2000, 618–29.

their birthing (lines 52b–54); (f) repetition of their liaison with ʾIlu, its resulting pregnancy, and the birth of the gracious gods (lines 55–59a);⁴⁴ (g) a second birth announcement (lines 59b–61), and finally their departure for the wilderness together with their sons, sired by ʾIlu (lines 64bff).

It is important to ponder why the author of our text gives so much literary attention to these two women who become wives who become mothers—and of the highest order, viz., divine wives birthing sons of god. Royal wives played a central role in the ancient Near East in acquiring international prestige and wealth and, as royal mothers, in securing the dynasty and influencing the dynamics of succession. At Ugarit, compare the dowry of certain queens (especially Aḥat-Milku), whose considerable resources included male and female servants, oxen, asses, gold, silver, copper, and ivory (RS 16.146 + 161 = PRU 3, 182–86; cf. RS 17.355 = PRU IV, 209–10).⁴⁵ The extent of polygamy at Ugarit is hard to quantify statistically,⁴⁶ yet it is clearly a feature of wealthy households that can afford a bride price (*mhr*) and certainly of royalty.⁴⁷ The adjective *ʾadr̥tm* (“preeminent, noble”) is used throughout the household census list in *KTU* 4.102 to designate high-ranking wives. Legendary and ruling monarchs have multiple wives, from King Kirta, who has eight wives in the epic that bears his name, to King Niqmepa, whose wives are repeatedly mentioned in his treaty with Mursili II of Hatti.⁴⁸

Royal wives and royal mothers at Ugarit held considerable economic power, and their political and diplomatic overtures could be substantive and extensive.⁴⁹ Note especially the international correspondence of Aḥat-Milku, the Queen of King Niqmepa, only to be outdone by the prolific Tarriyelli, the Queen of King Ibiranu, whose lengthy political career extended (as dowager queen) to the time of her grandson King Ammurapi.⁵⁰ That *mlkt*, the queen mother (or the queen),⁵¹ is mentioned at the outset of *KTU* 1.23.7 beside the king, her son (or her husband), is significant for understanding the function of a text that articulates ʾIlu’s relations with two women who become his wives and the mothers of his children.

ʾILU AS KING: VIRILITY

Returning to *KTU* 1.23’s narrative about the two women, one wonders about the backdrop of lines 39b–49, where some type of negotiation of status takes place to decide whether the two women are to end up as “ʾIlu’s daughters” (*bt il*) or are to become “ʾIlu’s wives” (*ʾatt il*). As much as one might speculate about the imagery of international diplomacy (in which the daughter of a foreign king becomes the wife of a Ugaritic king), the author of *KTU* 1.23 gives agency to the two women. Moreover, the deciding factor is whether they, according to Pardee,⁵² “are mature enough to discern the sexual function” of ʾIlu’s seductive meal—a

44 Scholars are divided about whether Šaḥru-wa-Šalimu and the gracious gods (*ilm nʾmm*) are distinct or one and the same. Thus they are of two minds about whether we have here a single birth with a double birth announcement as a stylistic device, or two births, each with its own birth announcement. We lean toward the former. See below n. 107.

45 Granted, kings (e.g., Ammittamru II, Ammurapi) could lose these considerable assets upon divorce when the wife retained her dowry.

46 Cf. the contrasting interpretations of Liverani and Schloen on the household census list of wealthy merchants from Alašiya in RS 11.857 = *KTU* 4.102. See Liverani 1979, 1318–321, 1344; Schloen 2001, 323–26.

47 In mythological marriages, a god too can have a bride price (*mhr*) and, as one might expect, of a vast amount (*KTU* 1.24.19–23). Cf. also the incantation *KTU* 1.100.73–76, in which the bride price (*mhr*) is in snakes (*nḥš, bn bṭn*)!

48 There is a debate about whether the opening of the Kirta story refers to the loss of his seven wives or his seven sons. For the former view, adopted here, see Pardee 1997, 333; for the latter, see Wyatt, 1998, 180 n. 9. For Niqmepa’s treaty with Mursili II, see Beckman 1996, 59–64.

49 Cf. Thomas 2014; Marsman 2003, 629–38, 659–75, 684–88, 691–94, 719–22; Vita 1999, 469–70, 475–76, 481–82.

50 Singer 1999, 696–700.

51 On the use of the title “queen” (*mlkt*) to designate the queen mother, who could retain the title of *mlkt* after her husband has died, see van Soldt 1985–86; 2010, 249–50; Singer 1999, 679; Thomas 2014. See especially the lengthy career of Queen Aḥat-Milku, as well as the mention of Tarriyelli, Queen of King Ibiranu, in the Ugaritic funerary text alongside her grandson, King Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit (*KTU* 1.161.31–32; Singer 1999, 642, 679, 690–91, 696–700; Pardee 2002, 86).

52 Pardee 1997, 281 n. 53.

discernment that, as Smith⁵³ vividly notes, culminates in their seeing 'Ilu as a virile husband, not a father figure providing dinner, as they “favorably react to El in his aroused state” with “his staff probably at this point pointed in their direction.”

Judging from the “allusive” narrative of *KTU* 1.23.33b–61 with repetitive attention given to 'Ilu's “hand” (*yḏ*), “staff” (*mṭ yḏh*), and “scepter” (*ḥṭ*), the virility of 'Ilu the sovereign is certainly being underscored.⁵⁴ This virility is boldly stated when the poet proclaims the size of 'Ilu's “hand” (*yḏ*) to be “as long as the sea” (*ārḳ yḏ il kym*). It is not surprising that the 'Ilu we meet in *KTU* 1.23 elsewhere boldly boasts to 'Athiratu:

Does the “hand”/love (*yḏ*) of 'Ilu the King excite you?

The love (*āḥbt*) of the Bull arouse you? (*KTU* 1.4.IV.38–39)

As in *KTU* 1.23.33b–35, the word “hand” (*yḏ*) is used here in the Ba'lu Cycle euphemistically and, moreover, with a word play in which the homonym *yḏ* (“love” from *√ydd*) nicely parallels *āḥbt* “love” in the following line. What is not to be missed is that the virility of 'Ilu is that of 'Ilu “the King.” Also not to be overlooked is 'Ilu's other well-known epithet, Bull 'Ilu (*tr il*), another designation of his power and virility.⁵⁵ All three of 'Ilu's major epithets (Father, Bull, King) reinforce a unified picture of potency and vigor.

'Ilu's virility is also on full display in another lengthy section (*KTU* 1.23.49b–61)—one that celebrates how 'Ilu's amorous activities successfully impregnated the two women who then bear him sons. The doubling of the sections on 'Ilu's kissing to 'Ilu's impregnation to pregnancy to birth to birth announcement (*KTU* 1.23.49–53 // 1.23.55–61) is as much about 'Ilu's procreative success as it is about the women's travail. The poet does not merely sing that two women have given birth but more specifically that “the wives of 'Ilu” have given birth. The second announcement (1.23.55–61) serves rhetorically to redirect attention back to 'Ilu while at the same time advancing the prestige of the infants, who (like princes) suckle at the breasts of a senior goddess—in the present case, 'Ilu's consort (*šittu* = the lady = 'Athiratu; *KTU* 1.23.24).

ROYAL SONS AND SOVEREIGN PARENTAGE

As illustrated above using the tale of King Kirta, royal wives and the king's virility are tied to succession. Royal propaganda certainly would not miss a beat in drawing the picture that the reigning Ugaritic king (like the legendary Kirta) is the son of 'Ilu, with his male heirs suckling from the breasts of a goddess as Kirta's sons did (*KTU* 1.15.II.26–28) in imitation of 'Ilu's (*KTU* 1.23.24, 59, 61). The longevity and stability that comes with a smooth succession is the desire of every dynast. In addition, for public-minded monarchs, parentage is about much more than succession, since it was the perfect metaphor to promote their benevolence to their subjects.

Such a context of beneficent parentage is a fitting context within which to understand how 'Ilu in our text is called father and mother (*KTU* 1.23.32b–33a). Scholars view 'Ilu's being called “father, father” and “mother, mother” in one of two ways: either as looking to 'Ilu as an androgynous deity, or as a request asking for parental advice with childlike “daddy, mommy” language.⁵⁶ Neither interpretation is very satisfying.

In light of our thesis that royal ideology is central to *KTU* 1.23, it is telling that sovereign deities and human monarchs alike adopted the familial merism of “father and mother” to promote their benevolence to their subjects, whom they treated (or so they said) as compassionately as parents would their children. Hittite prayers and hymns to the male sun god (^dUTU) and to the male storm/vegetation god Telepinu refer

53 Smith 2006, 94.

54 Our text is known among commentators for its bawdy character, yet, as Pardee (1997, 280 n. 48) astutely notes, the sexual language per se is “allusive rather than direct.”

55 It is likely that a bronze bull figurine found along with anthropomorphic divine images in the South City Trench (block XIII, locus 38) attests to 'Ilu as a bull.

56 For examples of these interpretations, see Smith 2006, 78–79. The thesis of 'Ilu as androgynous seems most unlikely. As shown below, that male gods such as 'Ilu, Yahweh, Shamash, Telepinu, or Sin were referred to as “father and mother” is a descriptor of their role as divine parent, not an assertion of androgyny. Where we do have anthropomorphic iconography attested (e.g., 'Ilu, Shamash, Sin), the gods are portrayed as male, never female.

to the god as the “father (and) mother to all the lands,” as well as the “father (and) mother” of the orphan, the bereaved, the oppressed, and the widow.⁵⁷ Egyptian tomb inscriptions tell of how “God is a father and mother to him who takes him into his heart,”⁵⁸ and Egyptian creation hymns call both male and female deities (especially Amun-Re and Neith) “father of fathers, mother of mothers.”⁵⁹

A Neo-Assyrian hymn to the male moon god Sin includes an eightfold praise to “Father Nanna”:

Womb that gives birth to everything,
which dwells in a holy habitation with living creatures,
Begetter, merciful in his disposing,
who holds in his hand the life of the whole land . . .
O progenitor of the land . . . O father begetter of gods and men . . .
Father begetter, who looks favorably upon all living creatures.⁶⁰

Such father and mother language was not restricted to male deities. The Neo-Assyrian king Esarhaddon receives the following oracles of encouragement from the goddess Ishtar:

I am Ishtar of [Arbela] . . .
I am your great midwife;
I am your excellent wet nurse.
I am your father and mother.
I raised you between my wings.⁶¹

In biblical tradition, El is described as a father who sires his human children⁶² as well as a mother who writhed with labor pains in giving them birth (\sqrt{hwl}).⁶³ When describing Yahweh as a creator/potter, Isaiah 45:9–12 juxtaposes the images of a begetting father and a mother in labor.⁶⁴ The poet of Psalm 68 viewed Yahweh as his “God and King” (*ʿēli malkī*), who as a “father of the fatherless and champion of widows” provided protection and habitation in the desert as well as an escape from Death.⁶⁵ Other poets, especially Second and Third Isaiah, wrote of Yahweh as a mother giving birth and comforting her child⁶⁶ and as the true model of “father and mother” who will never forsake their child.⁶⁷

Human rulers adopted similarly caring parental language. Thus the late ninth century BCE Kilamuwa inscription found at Zinjirli reads: “to some I was a father, and to some I was a mother, and to some I was a brother.”⁶⁸ Rulers could be godlike in their parentage of their entire people. Thus the bilingual Phoenician-Hieroglyphic Luwian Karatepe inscription from the late eighth/early seventh century BCE has Azitawada proclaim, “Baal made me a father and a mother to the Danunians.”⁶⁹ Such an affirmation of benevo-

57 Schwemer 2015, 15–16, 21, 27, 35; Singer 2002, 30–40.

58 Assmann 2008, 80; cf. Wilson’s (1969, 371) translation of Papyrus Chester Beatty IV: “Do (not) widows say: ‘Our husband art thou,’ and little ones: ‘Our father and our mother?’”

59 von Lieven 2014, 20, 23, 32.

60 Stephens 1969, 385–86.

61 See Parpola 1997, xxxvi–xl, 7 (Text 1.6, lines 7’, 15’–18’), 18 (Text 2.5, lines 26’–27’).

62 Deut. 32:6.

63 Deut. 32:18; cf. Gen. 49:25; Ps. 2:7.

64 Cf. Job 38:28–29.

65 Ps. 68:6, 21, 25 (English 68:5, 20, 24); cf. Deut. 10:18; Hos. 11:1–4; Ps. 10:14; 103:13; 146:9–10.

66 Isa. 40:10–17; 49:14–15; 66:13.

67 Ps. 27:10.

68 *lmy kt ʾb wlmy kt ʾm wlmy kt ʾh* (KAI 24, lines 10–11).

69 The Phoenician reads: *pʿln bʿl ldnnym lāb wlʾm* (KAI 26 A I, line 3). The Hieroglyphic Luwian has: “Tarhunzas made me mother and father to Adanawa.” See Payne 2012, 21–22, 39.

lent, life-sustaining, caring parentage (fatherly and motherly) is a perfect proclamation for King ʾIlu in our text, for it contrasts his love of his wives and his begetting of new life, which he then sustains in the desert as Guardian (see below), with the deathly portrayal of Môtū, who uses his royal scepter to kill children and make widows of their mothers (*KTU* 1.23.8–9).⁷⁰

ʾILU AS KING: THE ROYAL HUNT

The references to hunting in *KTU* 1.23 can also support a royal portrait of ʾIlu. *KTU* 1.23.37b–39 (with parallels in 1.23.41 and 1.23.44b–45a) contain references to birds, which ʾIlu shoots (*yr*), plucks (*hrt*), and roasts (*hrr*). A significant amount of literature has been devoted to the sexual symbolism (and double entendre) of these birds and what is done to them; scholars have advocated the symbolism of either explicit intercourse or some type of ritual preparation for sex (e.g., a male potency ritual).⁷¹ Such an interpretation makes obvious sense in that ʾIlu has already taken the women into his house, where he has been “generous” in the offer of his “staff.”

Yet not to be missed is the use of the verb *ryr*, which has been taken to denote killing birds either by using a throw stick or more likely through archery.⁷² Thus ʾIlu is presented in *KTU* 1.23.37b–39 as an archer, yet not as a divine warrior or divine chastiser as we see with other deities elsewhere.⁷³ Rather, the image here is of the royal hunt, in which the sovereign demonstrates his hunting prowess.⁷⁴



Figure 3.2. Two images of royal bird-hunting using a throw stick (upper register) and bow and arrows (lower register) depicted on the golden shrine from the tomb of Tutankhamun. Egyptian National Museum, Cairo. Photo © François Guenet / Art Resource, NY.

70 Due to ʾIlu's being called “father and mother” in *KTU* 1.23.32b–33a, we have restricted our comments to this merism. For a general view, see the discussions of familial phrasing in Ugaritic political terminology by Schloen 2001, 256–62, who concentrates on male vocabulary within a patrimonial household model, and by Thomas 2014, who examines how the lives of royal women (especially the Queen Mother) significantly influenced negotiations among Ugaritic kings and their heirs, as well as with their Hittite superiors and with regional powers such as Amurru.

71 Pardee (1997, 281 n. 51) nicely summarizes: “One is constrained to see in the bird flesh as much an aphrodisiac as a restorative, and meant as much to entice the women as to keep ʾIlu's shooting apparatus in working order.” For a summation of various views, see Smith 2006, 80–88.

72 The verb *ryr* occurs in *KTU* 1.82.3, where it is used of archery with a specific mention of arrows (*hz*). For the use of *yrh* in Hebrew for archery, see 1 Sam. 20:20, 36; 2 Kgs. 13:17; 19:32; Isa. 37:33; Ps. 11:2; 64:8 [English 64:7]; Prov. 26:18; 2 Chron. 26:15. Though we have iconographic evidence from Egypt for hurling a throw stick at a bird (fig. 3.2 and fig. 3.4), there is no attestation of the root *yrh* in connection with a throw stick. Thus the use of *yr* in *KTU* 1.23.38 seems to have archery in mind rather than throwing the rod (*mt*) of line 37 (so Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 180).

73 Cf. Rashpu in *KTU* 1.82.3; Shaddai in Job 6:4; 16:12–14; and Yahweh in Deut. 32:23; Ps. 64:8 (English 64:7); Hab. 3:9. See too ʾAnatu and ʾAthtartu's hunting in *KTU* 1.114.23, ʾAthtartu's hunting in *KTU* 1.92.3, Shaddayyu's hunting in *KTU* 1.108.12, and Baʾlu's hunting in *KTU* 1.12.I.34. Although broken, see also the quiver and bow in RIH 98/02.30 that may be associated with ʾAthtartu, the main deity in the text that elsewhere describes her as a mighty, pouncing panther (RIH 98/02.4–5). On ʾAthtartu's hunting at Ugarit and Emar, see Smith 2014, 188–95.

74 The ideology of the royal hunt by human rulers is grounded in a theology of divine empowerment. This ideology is best typified in the words of Tiglath-Pileser I (Grayson 1991, 25; I am indebted to William Reed for this reference):

Tiglath-pileser, valiant man, armed with the unrivaled bow, expert in the hunt: The gods Ninurta and Nergal gave me their fierce weapons and their exalted bow for my lordly arms. By the command of the god Ninurta, who loves me, with my strong bow, iron arrow heads, and sharp arrows, I slew four extraordinarily strong wild virile bulls in the desert, in



Figure 3.3. Eighth century BCE Neo-Assyrian relief from the Palace of Sargon II at Khorsabad, Iraq, depicting the royal bird hunt using bow and arrows. Photo Kim Walton. Musée du Louvre, Paris, France.



Figure 3.4. Nebamun in his boat in the Nile marshes, hunting birds using a throw stick, from the painted tomb chapel of Nebamun, late Eighteenth Dynasty. British Museum Number EA 37977. Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.

Here ʾIlu's hunting skill serves to impress the two women whom he is courting. Ugaritic artists (borrowing New Kingdom royal imagery) portrayed the royal hunt—with the king wielding his bow and arrow from his horse-drawn chariot—on a gold dish from the Acropolis and on a cylinder seal from Minet el-Beida.⁷⁵ In addition, the cultic actors who accompany the king and queen in *KTU* 1.23.7, 26–27 include *tnnm* archers.⁷⁶ Iconography depicting royal bird hunting is readily at hand from Egypt and Assyria (e.g., figs. 3.2, 3.3, 3.4).⁷⁷ In contrast to muscular royal hunts that combat mighty animals (e.g., lion or bulls), shooting birds out of the sky is not filled with danger. Instead, such feats of marksmanship (especially with a bow and arrow) show incredible skill—skill whose goal is to “entice” (*pty*; *KTU* 1.23.39) the two maidens. It has been suggested that erotic notions underlie bird hunting in fertile Egyptian marshlands.⁷⁸ Thus it may not be a coincidence that scenes of the king's skill with weaponry (at war and on the hunt) decorated the celebrated ivory bed panels from the Royal Palace, mentioned earlier.⁷⁹ Feldman⁸⁰ has astutely pointed out that such motifs on bed panels would be fitting for the bed of a queen, “as is recorded in the dowry of Ahat-milki of Amurru”

the land Mittani, and at the city Araziqu which is before the land Hatti. I brought their hides and horns to my city Assur. (Tiglath-pileser I A.0.87.1 vi 55–69)

75 Caubet 2002, 219.

76 Soldiers obviously lend prestige to a king militarily, but also through their presence alongside the king as ritual and cultic actors. On *tnnm* as archers (vocalized *tannānūma* as a *qattāl* profession pattern), see Rainey 1965, 22–23, and Heltzer 1982, 122–23; cf. Akk *šanannu*. See too King Kirta's *tnnm*-archers (*// hpt*-soldiers) in *KTU* 1.14.II.38 and the list of cultic breeders (*nqdm*) in *KTU* 4.624 together with an inventory of their weapons, including arrows, quivers, spears, and shields (though no bows). See also *KTU* 4.68.70–73. For the reflex in Egyptian (*snn*) and its association with chariot archers, see Hoch 2014, 261–63, #371.

77 Silverman (1997, 63) notes that the popular, elite sport of fowling with weaponry in ancient Egypt is to be distinguished from the hunting of birds for sustenance, which would have used nets and traps.

78 E.g., Kamrin 2011, 108, following Derchain 1975, 55–74, esp. 62–64. See too Parkinson 2008, 130–32.

79 In addition, Feldman (2009, 89) wonders whether the two long, carved ivory strips with hunting scenes from Courtyard III may have been used on the struts of a bed. See Gachet-Bizollon 2007, pls. 32, 98, 121 (cat. nos. 275–276).

80 Feldman 2009, 89.

(cf. RS 16.146+16.161) or, one might add, perhaps even decorated the bed of the queen (*mlkt*) who was mentioned at the outset of our text (*KTU* 1.23.7).

GOD AND KING: AGRICULTURE AND VITICULTURE

Last, we turn to the final part of the text, beginning in line 62 with the hunger of the gracious gods and extending to the end with the sojourn (*tgrgr*) of 'Ilu's two wives and his sons in the steppeland (*mdbr*). There they hunt for food and ultimately call out to a "Guardian of the sown land" (*ngr mdr*'), who graciously provides them with the agrarian sustenance of bread and wine (*lhm, yn*).

Four diagnostic features of this final section stand out: (a) the motif of hunger and the steppeland setting of the narrative that follows; (b) the reason the wives and sons are in the *mdbr*; (c) the focus once again on viticulture (*yn*); and (d) the identity of the Guardian (*ngr*).

A. THE MOTIF OF HUNGER AND THE STEPPELAND SETTING

The motif of hunger is underscored by the ravenous appetite of the gracious gods, which cannot be sated even though fed with fowl and fish (*KTU* 1.23.61c–64a), followed by their presence along with their mothers in a steppeland setting. Three words (*mdbr, šd, pāt mdr*) are used in *KTU* 1.23.65b, 68 to designate semi-arid regions (suitable for hunting and grazing) in contrast to sown land (*mdr*') (*KTU* 1.23.68b–70, 73).⁸¹ The steppeland setting is certainly significant in that it too emphasizes a lack of a dependable agricultural food source for a protracted length of time (7//8 years; *KTU* 1.23.66b–67a). Though the gracious gods range and hunt (*šd*) for sustenance (*KTU* 1.23.67b–68a), they eventually cry out to the "Guardian of the sown land" and beseech him to open his bounty of agrarian provisions.

The setting of the *mdbr*, with its harsh terrain amid rock and trees (*ābnm, šm*), emphasizes seasonal deprivation (*KTU* 1.23.65b–66).⁸² Fittingly, the gracious gods and their mothers raise an offering (*šū 'db*) in the *mdbr*, which functions as sacred space (*mdbr qdš*).⁸³ Such language of sacred offering points to a religious hope whereby those in desperate need (here for a sustained food source) desire divine provision.⁸⁴ And such divine benevolence (according to the interpretation of *ngr* below) is exactly what they receive.⁸⁵

81 Here archaeological studies (e.g., van Zeist and Bakker-Heeres 1985; Akkermans and Schwartz 2003) and studies of ancient diet (e.g., Altmann 2013) prove instructive. Archaeological research reveals the complex nature of lands summarized under the rubric *mdbr* "desert/steppeland." Though rainfall was lacking, seasonal "shrub-steppe" and "dry" vegetation led to the predominance of sheep and goat pastoralism supplemented by hunting activity. Rollefson (2007, 102; cf. Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 72–73) underscores the "surprising array of animals" that could be hunted "in hyperarid deserts"; yet "due to their low densities, they are generally not dependable food sources." Such a scenario seems to be depicted in *KTU* 1.23.67b–68, which has the gracious gods roaming the steppelands and desert fringes in their hunting activity only to find it insufficient when compared to sustainable agricultural production.

82 Though it might be a place of cosmic danger elsewhere (cf. *KTU* 1.6.II.20; Deut. 32:10; Jer. 4:23–27), the *mdbr* does not seem to be such a place in *KTU* 1.23 (pace Smith 2006, 117). Though broken, the larger context surrounding *mdbr* in *KTU* 1.23.4 is that of feasting. The word *šd* ("field"), which occurs parallel to *pāt mdr* in *KTU* 1.23.68, also occurs in *KTU* 1.23.13, 28 in contexts related to fertility (see Pardee 1997, 278 n. 21). Nor is it likely that the *ilm n'mm* "gracious gods" are destructive in nature. See below, n. 108.

83 Scholars are divided about whether *mdbr qdš* designates a sacred place (the position taken here—see n. 85 below) or a geographical location Qadesh (cf. Ps. 29:8). Wyatt (1998, 334 n. 55), following Watson, suggests a most appealing change (the shift of a word divider) resulting in the raising of a throne ('*d*) in the midst of the holy steppeland (reading *šū 'd btk* rather than *šū 'db tk*). Cf. the use of '*d*' in *KTU* 1.23.12. As attractive as this change is (especially for the thesis of the present article), the use of the same expression for raising an offering (*šū 'db*) in line 54 argues against it.

84 Cf. earlier in our text (line 54), where (*šū 'db*) expresses a sentiment of thankfulness to the goddess Šapšu, along with star deities (*kbbm*; cf. *KTU* 1.179.8–12), for their assistance in bringing about the healthy birth of the gods Šahru-wa-Šalimu. See Pardee's new reading (above, n. 5) in *KTU* 1.15.II.26, which has Šapšu suckling royalty. Since parents are the typical providers of sustenance, this reading, too, could resonate with 'Ilu's being called "father and mother" (see above).

85 For analogous contexts and broad literary motifs, consider the Hebrew Bible's extensive collection of *midbār* traditions. (The word *midbār* occurs 271 times in the Hebrew Bible in contrast to a mere eight times in Ugaritic, three of which are in our text [*KTU* 1.23.4, 65, 68] and two of which are written defectively/incorrectly as *mlbr* [*KTU* 1.12.I.21, 35].)

B. THE REASON THE WIVES AND SONS ARE IN THE STEPPELAND

Interpreters of *KTU* 1.23 regularly assign pejorative language when discussing why ʾIlu's wives and sons are residing in the steppeland. Suggested descriptors include "banishment," "displacement," "exile," "disinheriting," "expelling," "eviction," "consignment," and even "ritual quarantine." Such a negative reason may indeed be on the right track, and perhaps if we had the end of the text we would know for certain.⁸⁶

Yet as it stands, the author of *KTU* 1.23 did not deem it important to provide readers with any hint of motivation for ʾIlu's command that his wives and sons reside in the steppeland.⁸⁷ Had such a motivation been crucial to the development of the plot, certainly such an explanation would have been included. The dominant reasons that typify biblical wilderness narratives (i.e., humanity's wickedness or occasions for testing) are nowhere to be seen in *KTU* 1.23. In addition, it seems difficult to see the gracious gods in the final section of the text as negative protagonists, who, in light of the opening lines of our text, have to be banished. But there they are summoned to a feast to provide well-being to the king and queen mother (*KTU* 1.23.1–7; 23ff).

It may very well be that the function of having the divine wives and sons in the steppeland is to serve as a plot device: to have them in a precarious situation (with dramatic tension as the years go by) so they can be rescued by ʾIlu to show, once again, his benevolence. If the core motif is one of ʾIlu's introducing the benefits of sustainable agriculture (hence we have here a text for a harvest festival), then again there is no need to assign to his wives and sons an ill motive that occasioned their presence in the steppeland.

C. THE FOCUS ONCE AGAIN ON VITICULTURE (YN)

The provisions in the sown land include the benefits of sustainable agriculture, bread (*lḥm*) and wine (*yn*), which echo the festive banquet at the outset of the text (*lḥm*, *ḥmr yn*, line 6)—a banquet seemingly set for the gracious gods, with the mention (albeit in a broken section) of a steppeland setting (*bmdbr špm*, line 4). The very end of the text is broken, but what is preserved repeatedly mentions wine (*KTU* 1.23.[72], 74, 75, 76). When combined with other references to wine (*ḥmr yn*, line 6), vineyards (*gpn*, lines 9–11), (arable) fields (*šd*, lines 13, 28),⁸⁸ branches (?) (*dlt*, line 25), grapes (*gnbt*, line 26), and sown land (*mdr*^c, lines 68–69), one wonders whether the agrarian emphasis is especially focused on viticulture (see below on *nḡr krm*). Should this emphasis be the case, it would be relevant to underscore ʾIlu's connection to viticulture (e.g., *KTU* 1.114; *KTU* 1.92.20–21; *KTU* 1.41.1–2, 50–51; *KTU* 4.149.17; and the *mrzḥ* texts) as well as that of Ug-

The *midbār* can indeed represent a place of hunger and thirst and thus potential death (Exod. 16:3; 17:1; Num. 20:1–4; Jer. 2:6). As such, like *mdbr qdš* in *KTU* 1.23.65b, it is often a sacred place of sacrifice and offerings (Exod. 3:18; 5:1, 3; 8:27–28; Lev. 7:38; Num. 9:5; 1 Chron. 21:29) and a place where theophanies (Exod. 16:10; Ps. 29:8) and divine oracles were thought to occur (Num. 1:1; 3:14; 9:1).

Thus in biblical lore, the *midbār* provides the perfect opportunity for God to meet people in their need for sustenance, feeding them (Exod. 16:32; 1 Kgs. 19:4–8) even with overflowing Edenic bounty (Deut. 2:7; Isa. 51:3), and their need for security (Ezek. 34:25). Though the contexts are different, Hosea 2:16–17 (English 2:14–15) has Yahweh alluring (*√pth*; cf. *√pty* in *KTU* 1.23.39b) the young woman he loves, whom he then leads through the *midbār* and presents with vineyards (cf. *KTU* 1.23.73–76). In a similar metaphorical vein, Jeremiah 2:2 tells of Yahweh's youthful bride loving him as she followed him in the *midbār*, even though it was a "land not sown" (*ʾereš lōʾ zērūʾā*). The Deuteronomic tradition has Yahweh carrying his young son in the *midbār* (Deut. 1:31), caring, guarding, feeding, and nursing the son whom he begat (Deut. 32:6b, 10, 13–14).

⁸⁶ It is also enticing to use *KTU* 1.12 as a parallel (cf. esp. Schloen 1993).

⁸⁷ The closest one comes is the use of the root *gr*, which Pardee (1997, 282 n. 66) suggests "seems to have the notion of displacement from one's own ethnic group." As wives and children of ʾIlu (whom we will argue is the "Guardian of the sown land"), one could imagine they are "foreign" in the nonarable *mdbr*; but such displacement would not imply they were banished due to their misdeeds. Granted, the children (but not their mothers) are voraciously hungry, but here too we see this picture of newborns (who seem to eat all the time!) as a pretext for addressing divine sustenance. Of note is that the nonnative *gr* could still participate in offerings (cf. Deut. 16:10–14 with harvest festivals), as the wives and sons do in *KTU* 1.23.65b.

⁸⁸ *šd* is multivalent, occurring in parallel to *pāt mdbr* in *KTU* 1.23.68 to designate the desert fringe while referring to divine fields (which would certainly be fertile) in a celebratory context in *KTU* 1.23.13, 28. For suggestions about the literary function of the *šd* here, see Pardee 1997, 278 n. 21.

aritic royalty (e.g., *KTU* 4.141, 4.149, 4.609, 4.618). We agree with Pardee (2007a, 2–3), who insightfully uses the parallel material of *KTU* 4.149 to argue that “the identification of the rite with a wine-making festival is likely”—to which he adds *KTU* 1.41 to underscore how ʾIlu and royalty were associated.

D. THE IDENTITY OF THE GUARDIAN (*NGR*)

Scholars have devoted more attention to the agricultural setting of our text than to the individual known as the “Guardian” (*ngr*) and the “Guardian of the sown land” (*ngr mdr*), who is mentioned five times in the capstone of our text (*KTU* 1.23.68–76) and who speaks in direct discourse to offer the bounty of bread and wine to the gracious gods in need. The Guardian’s position is typically minimized or mentioned as an afterthought, if it is mentioned at all. Trujillo, for example, simply notes that he is “probably one of the gardeners attached to the service of the royal palace,” then paradoxically adds, “the reasons why the gardener occupies such a prominent position in this ceremony are not entirely clear.”⁸⁹ Other scholars conclude that “the identity of the Guardian is unknown”⁹⁰ or “enigmatic,”⁹¹ or they offer irrelevant parallels to the guardian cherub in Genesis 3:24 or the gatekeeper in the Descent of Ishtar.⁹²

“Guarding/protecting” (*ngr*) is what gods do on a regular basis. One need only look to the formulaic greeting in letters (both royal and nonroyal) that reads, “May the gods guard/protect you and grant you well-being” (*ilm tgrk tšlmk*).⁹³ Though the language is stereotypical,⁹⁴ it nonetheless underscores a pervasive trust in the gods as protective agents. It seems likely that the author of our text here did not need explicitly to identify the prominent Guardian because he is none other than the god ʾIlu, the head of the pantheon, the dominant character of the second half of *KTU* 1.23, and the last person to speak (in lines 64b–66).⁹⁵ As for father ʾIlu’s here guarding/protecting his sons, the gracious gods, note how elsewhere ʾAnatu assures Šapšu that wherever she goes, Bull ʾIlu her father and beneficent begetter (*tr il ābk/ltpn htkk*) will certainly guard/protect (*ngr*) her (*KTU* 1.6.IV.10–11, 22–24; cf. Pardee 1997, 271). Analogously, one could call to mind the Deuteronomic tradition (noted above for its father/mother birthing language), whose vocabulary echoes that of *KTU* 1.23 with El’s protecting (*nšr*) his child in the wilderness (*midbār*) as he nurses (*ynq*) him with honey and feeds him with the produce of the field (*šādāy*), where he drinks fine wine (*tišteḥ ḥāmer*) made of grapes (*ēnāb*).⁹⁶ Psalm 146:9 has Yahweh watching over sojourners, orphans, and widows. Psalm 107:4–9 beautifully articulates the broad motif of wandering famished and parched in the steppeland and crying out to one’s deity, who then leads to an inhabited town and amply satisfies thirst and hunger.⁹⁷

Returning to the prominent theme of viticulture, it is noteworthy that ʾIlu may appear as the “guardian of the vineyard” (*ngr krm*) in *KTU* 1.92.20. Though the text is broken, the immediately following text speaks of a vineyard in connection with “her [ʾAthtartu’s] father,” who earlier in the text is identified as “Bull, her father ʾIlu” (*tr ābh il*; *KTU* 1.92.15).⁹⁸ Analogously, note how Yahweh is also the guardian (*nōṣēr*) of his

89 Trujillo 1973, 195.

90 Smith 2006, 122.

91 Gibson 1977, 127 n. 3.

92 Cf. Komoróczy 1971; Gibson 1977, 127 n. 3; Foley 1980, 117–18.

93 For a representative sample of Ugaritic letters, see Pardee 2002, 87–115.

94 Cf. too the variant “May it be well with you; May the gods guard/protect your well-being, may they keep you well” (*yšlm lkm ilm l šlm tgrkm tšlmkm*) in *KTU* 2.85.6–8.

95 Cf. Caquot, Sznycer, and Herdner 1974, 363–65. There is no problem in *KTU* 1.23.65b–66a with ʾIlu’s being the speaker who commands his wives and sons to raise an offering to ʾIlu. In another context in the Kirta epic, ʾIlu issues to King Kirta a similar command to raise his hands to the heavens as he sacrifices to Bull ʾIlu, his father (*KTU* 1.14.II.6–24).

96 Deut. 32:6, 10, 13–14.

97 See too the *midbār* traditions noted above in n. 85.

98 On *KTU* 1.92, see Pardee 2008, 14, 19, 27, who reconstructs “[. . . Il]u, son père la vigne,” and Smith 2014, 188–90. We agree with Smith 2014, 190, who wonders whether the “guardian of the vineyard” (*ngr krm*) in *KTU* 1.92.20 “may reflect a mythological counterpart to [the] administrative role” of the guardian of the vineyard/sown in *KTU* 4.141, and we would add that this guardian is none other than ʾIlu, as in *KTU* 1.23.

pleasant vineyard (*kerem ḥemed*), which he constantly waters and protects (*nšr*) day and night (cf. *šḥr wšlm* in our text; Isa. 27:2–3).⁹⁹

As it is fitting here to see ʾIlu as the Guardian of the sown land—the Guardian who provides bounty to his children in need—so too it makes sense to posit that kings would ideologically view themselves as divine representatives doing likewise. It is no mere coincidence that *KTU* 4.141.3.16–17 (found in the eastern archive of the Royal Palace) mentions royal workers (*bn mlk*) including *ngr mdr* “guardians of the sown land” followed by *ngr krm* “guardians of the vineyard.” Compare too *ngr mdr* in *KTU* 4.618.6, which comes from the southwestern archive of the Royal Palace.¹⁰⁰ Of special note is *KTU* 4.149 (also found in the eastern archive of the Royal Palace), which, while not containing the word *ngr*, does mention “the sacrifice of the queen/queen mother/royalty in the sown land” (*dbḥ mlkt bmdr*) in a text that also mentions wine (*yn*), the dwelling of the king (*yṯb mlk*), and the Temple of ʾIlu (*bt il*).¹⁰¹ This text has played a role in a debate between Smith and Pardee over the location underlying *KTU* 1.23’s rituals. As noted at the outset of this essay, we favor the view of Pardee,¹⁰² who argues for a ritual taking place either in a royal courtyard (comparing the garden and the well in the center of Courtyard III of the Royal Palace¹⁰³) or in the Temple of ʾIlu, similar to the vineyard rite of *KTU* 1.41.¹⁰⁴

CONCLUSION

With respect to *KTU* 1.23 overall, I agree with the honoree of the present volume¹⁰⁵ that “the ritual celebrates a passage from the desert to the sown (as is recounted at the end of the myth),” that “the identification of the rite with a wine-making festival is likely,” and that the ritual is royal, likely taking place either in the royal garden of the large Courtyard III or in the Temple of ʾIlu. What I hope to have emphasized anew is the portrayal of ʾIlu as King in *KTU* 1.23 and how such a portrayal functions ideologically to support the royal cult, whereby the ruling king would portray himself with similar traits.

In summation, how does *KTU* 1.23 function? What is the text all about? On the story level, *KTU* 1.23 begins, for a reason, by proclaiming (*qr*)¹⁰⁶ the gracious gods (line 1). This tale (with celebratory rituals and feasting) proclaims their epic story: (a) how they came to be born with King ʾIlu as their father; (b) how their mothers came to be the object of ʾIlu’s generous attention, courtship, and elevation to the status of wifehood; (c) how ʾIlu, the lover who bows to kiss their mothers’ sweet lips, impregnated their mothers;

99 The motif is so well known that the author of Isaiah 5:1–7 can play on the notion by reversing the imagery. Both passages have already been noted by Smith 2006, 122, who suggests that, when this imagery is coupled with *KTU* 4.141, one may see a broad royal backdrop behind the guardian figure in *KTU* 1.23. Yet Smith 2006, 32–33, 122, does not see the deity ʾIlu as the guardian (whose identity is “unknown”) and instead suggests a “correspondence” between the guardian and the unnamed ritual specialist speaking at the outset of our narrative in *KTU* 1.23.1—a ritual specialist who “would theoretically seem to be a priest” operating “outside of temple practice,” with the ritual itself taking place in the “sown land” (*mdr*). Smith 2006, 163 and n. 9, astutely notes elsewhere that *KTU* 1.23 “presents the king corresponding to El holding ultimate oversight over the sown” and suggests the king as the guardian as an alternative (following Clemens).

100 These texts have long been recognized in relation to *KTU* 1.23 (e.g., Trujillo 1973, 23, 192–95; Foley 1980, 102; Smith 2006, 122; Pardee 2007a; 2007b). For convenient translations, see McGeough 2011, 103–6, 342–44, although note the typographical error on *KTU* 4.141.16, which should read *ngr mdr* rather than *ngr krm*.

101 For *KTU* 4.149, see especially the new edition with epigraphic analysis by Pardee (2007b). A convenient translation is found in McGeough 2011, 111–12. Cf. *[d]bh m[l]kt* in *KTU* 1.170.1, on which see Pardee 2000, 855–58.

102 Pardee 2007a, 3.

103 Again, note the nearby presence of Room 44, the findspot of the ivory bed panels whose motifs resonate with *KTU* 1.23. See above, n. 8.

104 Contrast Smith, 2006, 33, 37, 50–51, who argues that the rituals occur in the “sown land” (*mdr*), a designation of a peripheral region “outside of temple practice” and “out from the traditional site of royal ritual.”

105 Pardee 2007a, 2–3.

106 The root *qr* in Ugaritic and Hebrew is multivalent, designating proclamation, invitation, and invocation. See *DULAT*³, 697–98 and *HALOT*, 1128–31.

(d) how they were birthed as “sons of ʾIlu” (and of radiant divine status);¹⁰⁷ (e) how they suckled at divine breasts; (f) how their ravenous hunger led them and their mothers to the steppeland, where they hunted for food that proved insufficient to sustain life; (g) how they survived the desert by calling out to ʾIlu, who sustained them as their Guardian; and (h) how they reaped the fruits of ʾIlu’s cultivated agriculture—and to an abundant degree, marked by the emphasis on wine.

On the ritual level, *KTU* 1.23 begins by inviting and invoking the gracious gods for a reason. With a feast of food and wine (line 6) echoing the abundant provisions they receive in the desert, they are invoked to bring blessing (*šlm*) to the reigning king and queen/queen mother, as well as to their royal attendants (lines 7, 26b).¹⁰⁸ With childbirth and viticulture as focal points (assuming a setting of a wine-making festival for the telling of the tale), the threat of sovereign Môtû (whose scepter can kill newborns) is dealt with ritually using viticultural symbolism (lines 8–11a). The importance of Môtû’s ritual pruning and binding is underscored by its sevenfold repetition (line 12) and within royal space (the ‘*d*’-room).¹⁰⁹ The symbolism of additional rituals is difficult to interpret, yet the mention of fields (*šd*, lines 13, 28), branches and grapes (*dlt*, *gnbm*, lines 25–26a), and divine dwellings (*mṭbt ilm*; cf. *KTU* 1.41.51) underscores an agrarian festival,¹¹⁰ and the mention of a sacrificial procession (*hlkm bdbḥ*) by the entourage (‘*rbm* and ‘*tnnm*, lines 26b–27) previously at the side of the king and queen/queen mother (line 7b) takes us back again to a royal setting.¹¹¹

On the ideological level, *KTU* 1.23 is ʾIlu-centric, and the picture it paints of him (together with his wives) contains royal images that construct and reinforce the power and prestige of Ugaritic royalty. Though both rulers wield royal scepters, it is life-giving, life-sustaining ʾIlu—not bereavement-dealing Môtû—who is the rightful king whose sovereignty is pictured at every turn. ʾIlu (who bears the epithet *mlk* elsewhere) is proclaimed as father and mother—imagery signifying procreation and benevolent parenting. ʾIlu is a “generous” (*mnn*) and virile king who lowers/offers his “scepter” to the two women, whom he courts in his palace with a display of his skilled archery. The two women achieve status as “wives [not daughters] of ʾIlu”—with multiple wives (along with *rabîtu* ʾAthiratu) affirming ʾIlu’s prestige. They fulfill every monarch’s desire for

107 *KTU* 1.23.52–53 mentions the gods “Dawn and Dusk” (*Šahru-wa-Šalimu*), but for some reason only twice and in a passive role (the mention of their birth). In contrast, the gracious gods (*ilm nʾmm*) appear five times (probably more, but we lack the full text of lines 1–5 and 71ff.) throughout the narrative and in very active roles—from blessing (1.23.1–7, 23–27) to nursing on divine breasts (1.23.24, 59, 61) to ravenous eating (1.23.61b–64) to making an offering (1.23.65b) to sojourning (1.23.66) to roaming and hunting (1.23.67–68) to approaching and crying (1.23.68b–70a) to entering and speaking (1.23.71–72) and then (restored in the final breakage) to dining. The contrast could not be more apparent. I align with those scholars who equate the gracious gods with *Šahru-wa-Šalimu*, (e.g., Pardee 1997, 274–75, 279 n. 35, 281 n. 58, 282 n. 59; 2007a, 3) and I see them as positive figures, not destructive figures (cf. n. 108 below). Regardless, as a whole *KTU* 1.23 focuses on the activities of the gracious gods, not on those of *Šahru-wa-Šalimu*.

108 The role of the gracious gods in bringing blessing to Ugaritic royalty, together with their epithet “goodly” (*nʾm*), supply the reasons I align myself with scholars who see these gods in a positive light (cf. Pardee 2007a, 4; 1997, 274–75, 276 nn. 5 and 11, 279 n. 39; pace Smith 2006, 68–69, 105–9). Destructive Môtû never receives cult in the preserved Ugaritic ritual texts (cf. Pardee 2002, 222–24), and thus the cult given to the gracious gods (lines 1–6, 23) argues for their beneficent nature. Cf. also how the sacrifices by the royal attendants in lines 26b–27 are called “sacrifices of goodness” (*dbḥ nʾmt*) and hence are probably also offered to the gracious gods (*ilm nʾmm*). As for the gods’ ravenous hunger as newborns (lines 61c–64a), I see this motif (indeed using vocabulary reminiscent of Môtû) as working on narrative and ideological levels, not as being symbolic of their association with destructive Môtû.

109 On *šbʾd yrgm* referring to what precedes rather than what follows, see Pardee (1997, 18) and Bordreuil and Pardee (2009, 178). If the response by the royal attendants known as “the enterers” is echoed antiphonally (‘*rbm tʾnyn*, line 12b), then the magical pruning and binding of Môtû is uttered 14 times. Cf. how Môtû is magically defeated in the Kirta story by ʾIlu’s surrogate exorcist Šaʾtiqatu (on which see Lewis 2013; 2014).

110 Granted, the symbolism here is mixed with the possibility that the (goat’s) milk (*hlb*, *ḥmât*) of line 14 and the implicit (undomesticated) meat of the hunt in line 16 underscores nomadic/nonagrarian aspects of the first part of the text. Even ʾIlu hunts and cooks bird meat (in lines 38–48) prior to the advent of the Guardian of the sown land in lines 69ff., where ʾIlu (according to our interpretation) presents agriculture. On the interpretation of dairy and meat in these passages with insights from studies on the anthropology of food, see Smith 2006, 52–57, 153–58.

111 See Smith 2006, 140, who, in correctly arguing against a “sacred marriage” interpretation, astutely emphasizes how *KTU* 1.23 “offers a representation of an imagined divine reality in which the situation on the ground, as conceived by the royal elite, is imagined. . . . What is celebrated in both the ritual and the mythic narratives is agricultural fertility” (my emphasis).



Figure 3.5. Copper scepter from Late Chalcolithic Nahal Mishmar with the heads of four ibexes and the head of a majestic goat with long, twisted horns. Collection of the Israel Antiquities Authority. Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by David Harris.

an heir (cf. Kirta) in bearing not one but two sons, who suckle at divine breasts. Captivating tales need conflict for the hero to overcome. Here ʾIlu comes to the aid of his hungry and thirsty sons in the desert by providing not just bread and water but bread and wine, the abundant fruits of sown agriculture, over which he serves as Guardian (*ngr mdrʿ*).

Clearly, the portrayal of ʾIlu functions on an ideological level that benefits the current royalty, who are, after all, reigning over the proceedings (*KTU* 1.23.7). That our text mentions the king and queen/queen mother (together with their royal attendants making sacrifice) is no mere coincidence. That the gracious gods are invoked to provide well-being (*šlm*, lines 7, 26b) to the reigning royalty is no coincidence. That our text echoes the royal Kirta epic and coincides with iconography unearthed from the Royal Palace (e.g., the ivory bed panels) is no coincidence. Most important, the setting of the ritual (a wine festival) and the capstone of *KTU* 1.23 (i.e., the provisions of the Guardian of the sown land) reinforce the very nature of agricultural sustenance and, by so doing, promote the interests (and vital necessity) of god, king, and state.

ADDENDUM

Three final notes deserve mention. The royal nature of *KTU* 1.23 has been noticed previously, though in different ways from those in the present essay, and often with the focus on *male* royalty. For example, del Olmo Lete writes: “The King’s presence is explicit in the text. . . . The King presides over and in this sense actualizes the reconciliation of the opposite forces that shape the fertility cycle.”¹¹² Yet the royalty that is buttressed ideologically

is male *and* female royalty. The presence of the queen/queen mother (*mlkt*) at the outset of *KTU* 1.23 and the amount of literary attention given to ʾIlu’s wives—when set against what we know of the power and influence of the *mlkt* elsewhere (in politics, economics, and religion [especially the mention of *dbḥ mlkt bmdrʿ* in *KTU* 4.149])—argues for an ideological focus on *female* royalty as well.

Second, it bears keeping in mind that our distance from the culture at hand means that we will not appreciate how symbols are even more multivalent than we acknowledge. A case in point is looking once again at ʾIlu’s scepter, which we have argued is both a sign of his royal benevolence and his virility. Yet it only takes a glance at the hundreds of copper scepters from Chalcolithic Nahal Mishmar (e.g., fig. 3.5) to remind us to adjust our preconceptions about what ancient scepters looked like.¹¹³ Perhaps ʾIlu’s royal scepter was imagined as having symbols of animal and vegetal life that would resonate with his provisions in both the steppeland and the sown land.

Third, the dénouement of our text is set in remote antiquity. As is easily demonstrated by what we know of Neolithic farming in Syria, including soundings at Ras Shamra and the archaeobotany of the Bronze Age,

¹¹² del Olmo Lete 2014, 89.

¹¹³ Cf. Bar-Adon 1980.

agriculture (including viticulture) would certainly not have been a new concept for the readers/listeners of our Late Bronze Age tale.¹¹⁴ Thus, as the Sumerian King List (and the Eridu Genesis) would ideologically claim that kingship descended from the heavens, so too *KTU* 1.23 constructs and reinforces the very nature of agrarian sustenance. *KTU* 1.23 would emphasize how the blessings of agriculture are ordained from time immemorial, from the hand of 'Ilu, and of royal patronage.

114 For Neolithic farming in Syria, see Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 68–79. For soundings at Ras Shamra, see de Con-
tenson 1992. For the archaeobotany of Bronze Age Syria, see van Zeist and Bakker-Heeres 1985. The gradual shift from
foraging to farming in the northern Levant is thought to have taken place in the late ninth to early eighth millennium BCE
(Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 72–74).

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4

PATRONS, BROKERS, AND CLIENTS AT LATE BRONZE AGE UGARIT*

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WHAT WERE THE ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES of the society of Late Bronze Age Ugarit? This question has troubled researchers for decades. It is a complex problem for many reasons. First, the question would be addressed best by first-person anthropological observation. This is not possible. Lacking this option, we would at least prefer abundant documentation of the personal and economic lives of many people at many levels of society. As the bulk of primary documents from Ugarit comes from the royal center, we lack a rich understanding of the lives of those in the rest of the kingdom. The question is difficult also because it requires identifying the social and economic institutions and how they interact. Does royal authority have any limits? What compels workers from the outskirts of the kingdom to work for the palace? What principles help organize and maintain economic relationships at Ugarit? At times it feels like the answers to these questions are just out of reach.

A model of the social organization of an ancient kingdom such as Ugarit does not withstand testing if the model is overly specified. In other words, if the model requires a broad set of principles to be true for the entire model to be true, then the model will be unsustainable. Further, if one proposes that a model applies too broadly, then it is unlikely to be defensible. In my estimation, the most serious attempts to describe Ugaritian society have suffered from one or both of these problems. In place of a highly detailed socioeconomic model, we may find interpretive value in a set of principles that, while general enough to avoid the trap of specificity, provide significant heuristic value. This paper proposes the principle of patronage as a flexible and very general concept that may help explain some of the socioeconomic relationships observable in the texts from Ugarit.

PREVIOUS VIEWS ON THE SOCIETY OF UGARIT, BRIEFLY

Some of the first Ugaritic texts discovered were economic and administrative in nature. As economic lists, contracts, treaties, and letters began to be discovered in larger numbers, descriptions of the economy and society of Ugarit became possible.

In the 1950s, nomenclature from feudal theory was employed. In some cases it seems that this set of terms was employed primarily because it may have been a familiar shorthand for basic concepts of land tenure and obliged service.¹ However, in other cases the principles of feudalism were applied more strictly,

* It is with a great measure of professional affection that I submit this paper in honor of Professor Dennis Pardee. One can only aspire to emulate his patience, generosity, and work ethic.

1 Taken as a unified group, Anson Rainey's work (1962; 1965a; 1965b; 1965c; 1966; 1967a; 1967b; 1967c; 1970; 1973; 1975) exemplifies the appropriate level of specificity that any given socioeconomic model should attain. He concentrates on the details of the texts and typically does not force those details to fit into a feudal model. One wonders whether the terms he borrows from feudalism are used as generic shorthand references to economic concepts and not as specific references to the concept of feudalism.

intending to describe Ugarit as a real, functioning, feudal society. Noted medievalist F. L. Ganshof describes feudalism in part as

a body of institutions creating and regulating the obligations of obedience and service—mainly military service—on the part of a free man (the vassal) towards another free man (the lord), and the obligations of protection and maintenance on the part of the lord with regard to his vassal.²

In the texts from Ugarit, some saw a system in which the king granted land to military vassals. In two oft-cited articles from the same year, John Gray³ proposed that the Ugaritian king distributed land to the military class, known almost exclusively as the *mrynm*, and that this land was granted in perpetuity.⁴ Georges Boyer, in his contribution to PRU III, provides a fair description of land tenure and other types of relationships between the king and the people. While he uses terminology from feudalism, he never truly insists on calling Ugarit a feudal economy. If one removes the term “fief” from Boyer’s essay and replaces it with a neutral term, such as “land tenure,” one finds that the concepts Boyer describes are less like feudalism and more like a type of patronage.

There are many reasons that weigh against accepting feudalism as a useful model for Ugarit. Land distribution with attached military obligations may have been one type of economic interaction at Ugarit, but it does not appear to be the only—or even the primary—defining aspect between parties. Whereas feudalism is typically described as being characterized by a decentralized authority in which the power of the king is granted to a class of nobles, the primary political and economic authority at Ugarit seems to have been concentrated in the royal palace, with a few other power centers acting in the society.

Beginning in the 1960s and continuing actively for the next two decades, a new theory described Ugaritian society as having been organized into two discrete sectors, the palace and the village. The so-called two-sector model proposed a major division of Ugaritian society into these two major categories based on their level of dependence upon or freedom from the influence of the royal palace, particularly regarding the ownership of land. The palace sector was composed of people who were dependent upon the king for their livelihood. From land holding to rations to certain aspects of basic family life, the people in the palace sector were highly subsumed by the controlling power of the central authority. On the other hand, the village sector was formed along traditional kinship ties, following principles of social organization that, in some fashion, were rooted in a more traditional, rural, and agrarian lifestyle.

Mario Liverani, professor of Ancient Near Eastern History and specialist on ancient society, economy, and politics, elegantly summarizes his interpretation of the two-sector model in his contribution to the *Dictionnaire de la Bible-Supplément*:

La société ugaritique est nettement répartie en deux secteurs: le secteur des dépendants du palais ou “hommes du roi” (*bnš mlk*), subdivisés en catégories de travail, et le secteur de la population “libre,” subdivisée en communautés de village.⁵

The palatine sector, in Liverani’s view, was populated by the aristocracy, the military and merchant elites, and their low-status dependents. The king sat at the pinnacle of the palatine sector and therefore at the pinnacle of the entire kingdom. He wielded power over the entire kingdom, but the palatine sector was more directly dependent than was the free-village sector. The free sector of village communities represented an ancient mode of land ownership and social organization, a mode that remained unchanged by urban revolution. Members of this discrete social sector were organized according to the patrimonial family and generated their primary source of income from their ancestral lands.

² Ganshof 1952, xvi.

³ Gray 1952a; 1952b.

⁴ Cf. CAD M/1, 281, *mariannu* “chariot driver.”

⁵ Liverani 1979, 1333.

In a series of influential articles and books, Michael Heltzer offered another compelling description of the two-sector model as applied to Ugarit. Within the system that Heltzer refers to as the royal service system, the royal dependents receive their main source of income in exchange for their service to the king, receiving payment in kind, silver, rations, products, animals, wool, or land (*IOKU* 14, 48). The key point here is that these payments are not simply for contracted or agreed upon tasks; they are something closer to a comprehensive income rendering the recipient a dependent person. The palace dependents were the smaller of the two sectors in Heltzer's model. The majority of the population fell into the other main category, the village communities. People in the village sector lived in self-governing communities and performed nonprofessional vocations (*RCAU* 21), with some exceptions. The village communities received raw materials and land (conditionally) from the king. They were organized in collective units whose means of production—primarily agricultural units, but also limited manufacturing efforts—were protected by social custom against excessive royal intervention, even though the royal authorities had “the power and skill to impose their demands on the rural communities” (*RCAU* 63–65). Much like the royal sector as Heltzer defines it, the village sector was required to provide a wide range of goods and services to the palace. In certain circumstances they had to perform military service (*RCAU* 18) or corvée service (*IOKU* 186). The villages were required to pay various taxes (*RCAU* 33–34), provide arms (*RCAU* 45), provide tribute (*RCAU* 5), and manufacture goods for the palace (*RCAU* 46). As becomes apparent, some of these detailed observations undermine the contention that the society of Ugarit was divided into two distinct sectors based on the ownership of the means of production. When the supposed distinction between various types of land tenure begins to blur, and the difference between a royal and village sector begins to overlap to a high degree, it becomes less productive to maintain such a strict distinction between the two. It is much simpler to propose that everyone who was connected to the king as a dependent was obliged to provide some type of return to the king whether a highly dependent individual living in the city of Ugarit or a rural farmer living in one of the many villages in the kingdom of Ugarit.

In my view, social and economic power were not controlled entirely by the palace sector. On the contrary, power was centralized in various places in the kingdom of Ugarit. Based on the available archaeological and textual evidence, varying elevated levels of power were exercised by (1) the king and his immediate family; (2) important members of the master class who lived in large houses in the capital city; (3) vocational brokers; (4) independent merchants; (5) family heads; and (6) vocational leaders.⁶ Some of these categories may have overlapped, but the general point still obtains that the vocabulary of center and periphery, urban and rural, or palace and village is neither accurate nor useful in describing Ugaritian society. It would be more accurate to describe the society in terms of varying levels of capital, power, and influence. The most powerful of the power centers were seated in the capital. However, this admission does not necessitate an analysis of the society and economy that would divide it neatly into dependent palace and free village sectors. Alternatively, it seems very likely that the kingdom was organized around various power centers, each of which served as the pinnacle in a complex series of unequal dependent relationships. The palace stood as the most powerful of these centers and therefore attracted—or demanded—the greatest number of dependents, clients, retainers, or followers. However, certain members of Ugaritian society could serve as patrons to their own dependent clients. For example, independent businessmen were patrons to their agents, and heads of households were patrons to their familial and nonfamilial subordinates. The path of dependency was not limited to a vertical connection between king and subject. It was characterized by a complex web of interdependencies.

6 This division of the society is reminiscent of I. J. Gelb's analysis of ancient Mesopotamia. Gelb (1972, 92) identified “a thin master class at the top . . . and a thin class at the bottom . . . and the mass of serfs in between, who represented the main productive labor employed in agriculture and processing of agricultural goods on large public households.” In his study of networks at Ugarit, Kevin McGeough (2007, 353) divides Ugaritian society into the following categories of actors: (1) elites within the kingdom of Ugarit but outside the city; (2) nonelites within the kingdom of Ugarit but outside the city; (3) local elites; (4) nonlocal elites; (5) the palace of Ugarit; (6) elites outside Ugarit's sphere of influence; (7) nonelites outside Ugarit's sphere of influence, and (8) other royal authorities.

In *House of the Father as Fact and Symbol*, David Schloen⁷ presents the patrimonial household as the primary organizing symbol of the social order at Ugarit and in the wider ancient Near East. According to this model, the symbol of the household served as a generative root metaphor of most relationships throughout the ancient Near East, with all other symbols serving as variations on this theme.⁸ Schloen rejects the division of Ugaritian society into two sectors, whether into free and nonfree, urban and rural, public and private, or specialist and agriculturalist. Instead, he describes Ugaritian society as “a complex and decentralized hierarchy of households nested one within another and held together by dyadic ‘vertical’ ties between the many different masters and servants who are found at each level of the hierarchy.”⁹ Schloen denies the type of divisions of society described by the proponents of the two-sector model. He finds no division based on the access to productive resources. Also, he concludes that there was no division between palace dependents and rural villagers. He specifies that “if there was a basic social division it was not between specialists and nonspecialists but between an elite of royal officials who were closest to the king and the rest of the populace.”¹⁰

One of Schloen’s central arguments is that household language “reveals the self-understanding of the social order that was at work in [patrimonial] societies.”¹¹ Terms such as “father,” “son,” and “brother” represent the social and political relationships between individuals. In his estimation, these terms were used “because alternative conceptions of social hierarchy were not readily available.”¹² As a counter to the two-sector model, I argued above that the society of Ugarit was characterized by multiple modes of organization crossing multiple centers of power. And while I would agree that traditional kinship ties were a primary organizing principle for Ugaritian society, and the symbol of the household likely played a major organizing role, it seems clear that there is a more complex network of social relationships involved, particularly in contexts where ascriptive kinship relations were not available or sufficient.

The purpose of an interpretive model, such as those summarized above, is to help investigate and understand the primary data. There is not much heuristic value in describing the society of Ugarit as feudal, for the relationship of the king to the other elites, and to the rest of the kingdom, does not align very well with the most common descriptions of feudal societies.

Second, it does not seem likely that Ugaritian society was divided into two sectors based on land tenure. When tested closely against the data, the two-sector model dissolves in such a way as to reveal that individuals in the royal palace and those in the villages shared many common social bonds based on many of the same types of relationships. The strict distinction between palace and village is very difficult to justify from the textual data. It seems more likely that the king exercised political and economic power over the entire kingdom, from the eponymous capital to the small villages of the hinterland. The economic lists hint at an underlying principle of administrative organization by which the towns throughout the kingdom of Ugarit were divided into districts for the purposes of census, taxation, and conscription, thus illustrating the extent of royal control.

Last, Ugarit would seem to be complex in ways that expand beyond the scope of the patrimonial household model. We may observe legal and contractual relationships and relationships characterized by a high level of subservience, such as slavery. In my view, these relational modes were likely supplemented by patron–client relationships, which fall somewhere between contractual and obliged. While the differences between these major relational modes probably cannot be mapped neatly onto a linear spectrum, since they overlap and share certain commonalities, none is the exclusive relational mode.

To be clear, patronage alone does not organize a society. Instead, patron–client relationships supplement other modes of social organization that “are predictable in that they prescribe substantively and pro-

7 Schloen 2001.

8 Ibid., 46–54.

9 Ibid., 65.

10 Ibid., 223.

11 Ibid., 255.

12 Ibid.

cedurally standardized patterns of interaction, and which are linked to other institutionalized relationships of society.”¹³ By default, one is born into a family that one does not choose. As social anthropologist Jeremy Boissevain describes it, one major difference between kinship and patron–client relationships is that in the kinship system one finds “ready-made . . . a network of persons with whom he has a series of jurally defined obligations.”¹⁴ When the resources of the kinship group are insufficient, one may supplement them through the association with a patron.

Thus the challenge is to find a set of terms that on the one hand prove useful in describing Ugaritian society while on the other hand do not impose order that is not evident. The existence of a complex system of dependent relationships in the social and administrative system of Ugarit in general and specifically in the relationships involving the men called *bnš* and *bnš mlk* led me to consider the analytical concept of patronage as one possible deductive approach for explaining the structuring of trust at Ugarit. As justification for the application of this anthropological concept, the brief observations that follow do not intend to suggest that patronage is the only heuristic model that yields productive analytical results. A complete introduction to the concept of patronage and its differing manifestations in societies around the world is clearly out of the scope of this essay. However, a brief introduction to some of the key principles will help frame the discussion regarding the forming and maintaining of economic ties at Ugarit.

DEFINING PATRONAGE

Anthropologists have used patronage models to describe the exchange relationships between actors of unequal status in contexts such as Classical Rome,¹⁵ twentieth-century Latin America,¹⁶ and rural pre-Communist China.¹⁷ Patronage is found in traditional kinship societies as well as in bureaucratic-universalistic societies. Patronage fills in where the primary organizing elements of society and economy do not provide the necessary connections, rules, and principles for ordering society. To be clear, this supplementary mode of interaction, while it differs from other, more primary modes of organization, is fully integrated with these more primary strategies. Patronage does not replace the foundational role played by ascriptive kinship relationships. It does not supersede royal authority. It supplements these modes of social interaction where none on its own can provide security from the ever-present risk of economic deficiency. Patronage has been used to explain unequal relationships in political, social, and economic spheres. These ties between a patron and client may be closer to friendship or to self-interest. On some level, each actor in this dyadic relationship manipulates the relationship to achieve an end.¹⁸

Patronage is a mode of resource allocation characterized by vertical asymmetric dyadic ties between patrons and clients, with the occasional facilitation by brokers. Patrons and clients enter into a bargain, typically a mutually beneficial relationship between unequal partners, which having been forged with the exchange of resources for service, honor, or other support addresses the socioeconomically conditioned goals or needs of each participant. Patronage typically supplements other forms of social cohesion and economic exchange, such as kinship ties, market economy, or political organization. There is no single, ideal form of patronage. Patronage develops differently in each of the many cultures where it is attested. The value of patronage in a heuristic model is realized best when explaining its role within the context of a specific cultural example.

13 Landé 1977, xviii.

14 Boissevain 1966, 21–22.

15 Saller 1982.

16 Foster 1963.

17 Fried 1953. The defining concepts of patronage and patron–client relationships have a rich secondary literature, both as theory and as applied to specific case-studies. For theoretic background, see for example Eisenstadt and Roniger 1984, Gellner and Waterbury 1977, Kettering 1988, Platteau 1995, Schmidt et al., eds. 1977, and Wallace-Hadrill 1989. For the use of patronage in a sampling of specific case studies, see Boissevain 1966, Bourne 1986, Foster 1961 and 1963, Galt 1974, Ishino 1953, Kenny 1960, Noel 1990, Paine 1971, Saller 1982, and Scott 1972.

18 Weingrod 1968, 379.

I propose that at Ugarit patronage served to supplement social and economic connections in a society characterized by a dominant royal palace that linked nearly the entire kingdom to its economic interests. Other power centers likely operated between the dendritic branches of royal control. These centers included the houses of important and powerful individuals, to the extent that they may be distinguished from the palace; the villages with their own resident power structures; and possibly various vocational groups.

Between the various power centers—palace, village, householders—and within the other modes of connectivity—kinship, contract, servitude—patronage acted as a supplementary mode of structuring trust.¹⁹ And in the context of a kingdom with a central, legitimate, and powerful king, Ugaritian patronage was another mode through which the primary power structure solidified its place.²⁰ This form of royal patronage shifts from being voluntary toward something more like an involuntary obligation. It becomes highly asymmetric. Royal patronage is ever present, durable, and essentially authoritative. This form of power allows the royal palace to mobilize hundreds of men for labor and military service, to redistribute fields, and to promote individuals to higher social statuses. While these authoritative actions may seem to be the dictates of a despotic ruler, they may be viewed instead as the prerogative of the superordinate actor in a vertical asymmetric dyad.

THE POWER AND LIMITATION OF PATRONAGE MODELS

With this general definition of patronage, viz., that it consists of a web of strategies through which people of unequal power and status forge relationships to improve their chances of survival, we run the risk of finding patronage everywhere. Every society in every historical period attests relationships between people of unequal power and status. Do we conclude that patronage existed in every culture and in every social interaction? John Waterbury, political scientist and former president of the American University in Beirut, warns about the danger of finding patronage everywhere. He argues,

for the concept of patronage to become something more than a residual category or a phenomenon so ubiquitous as to deprive it of any analytic utility, it is important to join the examination of any of its discrete manifestations with that of the general politico-economic context in which it is found. It is this context that can “explain” the characteristics of patronage networks rather than the other way around.²¹

Patronage at Ugarit served as a mode of social organization because it combined with other organizational strategies: royal ideology, traditional kinship ties, village ties, and possibly even vocational grouping.

ECONOMIC RESOURCES AT UGARIT

At its core, the patron–client relationship is based on limited access to productive resources. What are the productive resources at Ugarit, and who controls them? The economy of Ugarit was fueled by agriculture, trade, specialized production, and manpower. Most Ugaritians probably sustained themselves and their household dependents through agricultural production. The resources at Ugarit were not divided equally among all the inhabitants of the kingdom. As one might expect, the productive resources were controlled

19 Regarding the role of trust in ancient trade, Christopher Monroe (2009, 126) argues, “Commerce in non-industrialized settings often relies on strict codes of conduct that, besides being viewed as proper or correct, are rooted in trustworthiness. Information networks form along lines of trust woven with promises and reputations. . . . Networks frequently form along kinship or ethnic lines because the trust is already there.”

20 Emanuel Pfoh (2013) presents a cogent argument for patronage as a local understanding of political subordination in Bronze Age Syria-Palestine. With patronage as a native mode for structuring society, he argues, one can better understand the different responses to the Egyptian bureaucratic-military rule versus the Hittite style of rule by asymmetric alliance, the latter aligning more closely with expected relationships between parties of unequal power.

21 Waterbury 1977, 340–41.

by various centers of power, specifically the royal family, a small number of powerful nonroyal individuals, and possibly certain occupational sodalities, village elders, or prominent households. These persons or groups who controlled the resources, such as arable lands, held an elevated position in the society and thereby obtained the ability to increase their social standing and economic security.

Is there evidence from Ugarit that the limitations to the free exchange of resources had been institutionalized and that the flow of resources was based on something other than free-market exchange? The royal palace stood as the primary limitation to the free access to resources. Based on the data from the numerous land grants, it seems clear that the palace played a central role in limiting free access to plots of land. Regarding the royal land grants at Ugarit, Márquez Rowe concludes that “the land registry situated in, thus operating from, the royal palace would have been meant to control the organization of the royal landed estate.”²² The king forged economic dependencies by granting parcels of land to men in exchange for their service. It would stand to reason that a complex network of economic dependencies had been established over the course of decades and centuries, perhaps in parallel with and as a function of the development of the royal family. Royal land grants included various types of properties, such as houses, fields, or entire estates (RS 16.254 A), in some cases consisting of land from royal fields, and in other cases consisting of properties redistributed from other individuals to a new recipient. Unless exempted from his financial obligation (RS 16.133; RS 16.382), the man in receipt of a land grant had an obligation to the crown (RS 15.089; RS 16.262).

As the most powerful economic authority, the palace controlled—or at least had a high degree of involvement in—most of or all the production and trade of luxury items, especially metal items. For example, RS 18.024 illustrates the palace’s role as the distributing force in transactions of copper and tin. This text is a balance sheet that lists specific distributions totaling 300 shekels of silver.²³ The first two entries record distribution by the palace of large quantities of copper and tin through a mediator, perhaps a broker or the principle organizing force of the vocational group. In one transaction the metals are then delivered to a group of smiths. In the other transaction the metals are delivered to a specific person with no mention of the smiths.

In another text (RS 18.028), the palace appears to be the recipient of some prestige items: gold, wool, garments, a chain, bowls, and oil.²⁴ Some of the items pass through the hands of an intermediary to a final destination. For example, some of the wool is destined for dyers. Other actors in this text include the powerful personage Urtenu and even the temple of Ilu. Perhaps it is the involvement of these other significant parties that required the notation of value with the so-called *bēt pretii*. The exchange was more complex than a simple delivery of goods from one party to another. The palace likely relied upon its intermediaries to gather these items from various sources, a process that would naturally lead to the production of this sort of account summary. In my view, the king or some other high official ordered some agent(s) to gather up the needed items for an unknown reason—provisioning a temple, giving tribute to Hatti, or exchanging gifts with neighboring kings. The agent(s) gathered the items and returned to the palace official responsible for evaluating the goods. Either the agent or the official summarized the goods on this tablet. He noted the items, their numbers, or amounts. He noted the price in every case except for the oil. He noted the unspecified involvement of individuals in a few cases.

The majority of men involved in specialized manufacturing vocations that required raw materials, such as metal and wood for chariots or materials for fabrics and garments, are attached to the palace because they rely upon the financial backing of the king; therefore, they are known as *bnš mlk*, literally “men of the king.” The products of these specialized workers are things like chariots, arrows, bows, pottery, garments, and various cast-metal items. To describe the situation from another perspective, we may observe that the king is the most powerful economic force in the kingdom, and as such he initiates the demand for manufactured items. For example, the palace seems to have initiated the periodic production of garments to clothe

22 Márquez Rowe 2006, 97.

23 Pardee 2000.

24 Pardee 2007.

divine images. In RS 15.115, the palace engaged the services of an unnamed *bnš mlk* who specialized in the production of garments.²⁵

The palace also seems to have played a regulatory role in the circulation of rations within the kingdom. However one interprets the Ugaritic texts such as RS 16.395 and RS 19.097 that list place names and quantities of food, either as provisions sent from the central authority to these places or as a harvest tax sent to the central authority from these places, the role of the palace as an institutionalized regulatory force over the internal economy of Ugarit is apparent.

The result of the palace's role as the primary regulatory force was limited access to productive resources, a limitation that was counterbalanced primarily through a network of dyadic patron–client relationships. Thus the palace's involvement in various types of land distributions or redistributions, rations circulation, and various other exchanges of goods suggests that a wide variety of exchanges may have been institutionalized through the authority of the king and his agents.

In rare cases, the patron is another individual with the economic or social influence needed to attract and retain clients. The clients include men from throughout the kingdom, vocational specialists, general laborers, landholders, and potentially anyone else. Additionally, a person could at once be a client to various patrons and a patron to various clients. The resulting picture is one of multiple centers of power, multiple spheres, and numerous overlapping degrees of social protection and economic exploitation.²⁶

BROKERAGE

In certain contexts, patrons may seek brokers to organize a workforce, conscript a militia, or in modern democratic contexts to mobilize an electorate. The broker achieves these goals by exercising his position of relative power as the leader of a vocational association, as a village elder, or even as the head of a powerful household.

At Ugarit, the task of organizing groups of laborers for the palace fell to specific individuals. These individuals are the brokers who could bridge various gaps between patrons and clients to help connect the two. In certain contexts, the Ugaritic preposition *bd*, literally “in the hand(s) of,” may indicate the attachment of subordinate personnel to a broker. The preposition *bd* in a phrase such as *spr bnš mlk d bd prt*, “record of the men of the king who are under the authority of *PRṬ*,” indicates the attachment of clients to a patron, or possibly even to a complex hierarchy of patrons (RS 15.032). In this example the men were attached to the king (*bnš mlk*) through the agency of an intermediary (*bd PRṬ*). The duties of the broker at Ugarit may have involved tasks such as dispatching the men to their assigned location and overseeing the disbursement of rations to the men. This duty seems to have been the role of the man named *ʾdnʿm*, who apparently dispatched eleven of the fifty-eight men of the king who were in his charge (RS 15.022+). These eleven men were dispersed as follows: seven to a group of plowmen, three to a group of guards, and one to a city official.²⁷

A broker may also have served as the chief organizing member of a labor group composed of his family members and other personnel. And here is where the organizational structure becomes complex, for the organizational leader was also sometimes considered and summarized as part of the group—a group com-

25 This text may record the periodic supplying or replacement of garments for priests or divine representations (Pardee 2002, 226).

26 The examples of clients attached to specific persons are less numerous and less well-preserved than the examples of men attached to the king. RS 8.279 is a text that preserves three crews of men attached to ships' captains. In this case, it would stand to reason that the men are attached to the ships' captains to serve as crews. RS 29.097 records proper names and vocational groups with men at their disposal. Some men are apparently clients to priests, as attested in RS 3.320 and RS 1.018. RS 15.005 records three entries following the formula PN1 *tht* PN2. It may be possible to interpret this text as a record of subordinates “under” their superiors. One of the supervisors is listed as a smith (*nsk*), thus suggesting the text fits the context of skilled labor. If these examples, among others not cited, are accurately interpreted as recording the attachment of men to patrons other than the king, then the patronage system may have existed as an organizing element throughout much of the Ugaritian economy.

27 Prosser 2012.

posed of members who each had at their disposal various subservient individuals. For example, two texts (RS 94.2050+ and RS 94.2064) indicate that certain men, some of them with their heirs and some with an unknown person called a *údb*r, were organized into groups under a supervisor who was also a member of the group.²⁸ RS 94.2050+ calls these supervisors *rb šrt*, “a leader of a *šrt*-group.” Each entry consists of a proper name, an heir, or an *údb*r and is followed by the notation of a specific number of men at his disposal. The resulting arrangement may be described as a hierarchy in which the chain of patrons and clients begins at the top with the king, continues with the *rb šrt*, then the various individuals and their heirs, down to the unnamed men.

Brokerage probably existed in nearly every patron–client chain even if it is not visible in the texts. Some brokers were more closely associated with the patron than with the client. When the brokers served the interest of the king, these highly placed facilitators probably managed the conscription, mobilization, and assignment of laborers. Other brokers were more closely connected to the clients, such as the people of *Rašu* who have guaranteed their men in RS 18.035:2. Certain brokers likely also held positions of authority over the clients, at times on the same level as the patron–client relationship. Some may have been leaders of a vocational group or elevated members of a village. For example, if the clients originated from a given village, it seems likely that the low-level broker also came from that village but held a higher social or economic status. As such, he would be something of a primary contact, a group leader, or the responsible party.

The mediating role played by a broker seems to have led to what I describe as a patronage chain. A patronage chain at Ugarit may be characterized as a four-tiered hierarchy in its most complete form. The complete chain, in theory, would be composed of a patron, a high-level broker, low-level brokers (consisting of clients, organizers, or sodality chiefs), and primary clients. Patronage chains will vary in their composition but will conform to the basic structure of this simple model. The patronage chain probably played a central role in organizing dependencies for a variety of people. It connected workers to supervisors, specialized manufacturers to those who possessed the requisite raw materials, distant villagers to the central authority, and many other groups.

A four-tiered system appears simple on its face but becomes highly complex when it includes hundreds of people from various social strata. For example, a patronage chain that begins with the king and includes a broker, a leader of a work group, and the various primary-level clients could extend from the highest authority in the kingdom to the lower, nonroyal sectors of society. The first and second tiers of the chain were held by the fewest number of individuals, at the tiers’ narrowest definition by only two people. But the third and fourth tiers could be held by many men. The complexity of the patronage chain multiplies when the patron connects two or more of his dependency chains. The king could draw resources from one patronage chain and redistribute them—in whole or in part—to another patronage chain. The resulting patronage system is a complex interwoven lattice of men and resources.

PATRONAGE AND VOCATIONAL GROUPS

The administrative lists from Ugarit reveal that the palace viewed certain professions as discrete groups. But were groups such as *khn*m “priests” organized according to the same strategies as *nsk tlt* “coppersmiths” or *kzym* “horse grooms”?²⁹ If a specific vocation is organized under the authority or leadership of a *rb* “chief,” the hierarchy may indicate that the vocation exhibited an elevated level of institutional continuity, but it indicates little or nothing about the nature of the organization.

28 The word *údb*r, probably related to the root D-B-R, may refer to “someone made to swear an oath” (*Manual* 309 and text 46).

29 Vita (1995, 118–25) presents an extensive discussion of *kzym*. In short, he concludes the word probably refers to “chariot driver,” even though the Ugaritic texts provide little information on the precise nature and function of the vocation. Watson (2007, 141) suggests the “word is probably of non-Semitic origin.” Pardee (2003, 64) notes, “Whatever the origin of the word, the consistent writing with {y} in Ugaritic shows that the consonant was a part of the word in Ugaritic. Because most loanwords do not show that consonant, the first presumption must be that it is a native West-Semitic word.”

I propose that the vocational groups, especially those about which the palace recorded detailed information, may have been organized in part based on patronage.³⁰ It may be possible that the expense of the raw materials or the permission required to practice an occupation predisposed its members to asymmetrically dependent relationships. More specifically, those vocational groups that relied on the palace for resources—raw materials or permission—may be described as clusters of clients. In some cases these clients were attached directly to the palace. In other cases they were linked to the palace through a form of mediation. In short, the vocational groups that most interested the palace were those to which the palace would have dispersed resources.

There are at least three possible nodes where the patron–client relationships may have developed within the vocational groups at Ugarit. The patron–client relationship was forged (1) between a higher political, social, or economic authority (the king) and the members of the group (the *rb* and the other members); (2) between a high-ranking member of the vocational group (*rb* or *riš*) and the other workers; and (3) between the various members of the vocational group and their subordinates, who may or may not have been considered part of the group.

In the first type of relationship, the king is the highest-level patron, and his clients include the vocational leader—when present—and the other members of the group. It is within this context that it seems most likely we are dealing with *bnš mlk* “men of the king.”³¹ In the second type of relationship, various dependent personnel are under the auspices of a work leader. If the work is being performed for the palace, then these men may also be called *bnš mlk* (RS 15.022+); otherwise they may be recorded simply as *bnšm* (RS 8.279). In the third type of relationship, various members of work groups—both leaders and nonleaders—may have low-level workers at their disposal. In some cases the leaders and workers may be considered *bnš mlk*, depending on their own social and economic relationship with the king. The low-level workers are simply the *bnšm* who have forged a relationship with the leaders and the members of the particular work group. In a few cases these men are listed not by name but only by count. I suggest that the not-infrequent use of *LÚ* in list titles or summaries may refer to these low-level dependents (RS 94.2064 et al.). They are simply *bnšm* “men.”

Mobilization is a key part of the definition of some of the subordinate workers serving as general laborers. As part of his subordinate status, a client—often noted only as a *bnš*—may be required to work in his current village or to leave his home temporarily and relocate. Men from the city of Ugarit, from the villages throughout the kingdom, and men identified as originating from places beyond the borders of the kingdom were mobilized and incorporated into the economic machine.

Within the Ugaritian patronage system, the mobilization process may be outlined as follows. A palace official prepares a list of men who are attached as financial clients of the crown (possibly RS 18.293+). The palace instigates the mobilization of these men, possibly through the agency of a broker (RS 15.022+). The clients fulfill their obligation to the crown by responding to the royal conscription, in which the king exercises his prerogative to transfer some of the men to a variety of locations, including villages and estates (RS 15.022+; RS 19.045; and possibly RS 18.293+). The men return to their own places of residence after having fulfilled their obligatory service (RS 18.026).

A royal dependent could fulfill his requirement by serving among the personnel in the royal labor force working at the palace (RS 16.269), in the king’s fields, or possibly in military service. RS 15.015+ and similar texts record hundreds of personnel in some sort of service. These texts record only the number of these men at the palace, not their places of origin, their rates of remuneration, or their terms of service. Even without a specific description of the tasks these men performed in the king’s service, it is clear that the king could engage men in the service of his interests.

30 There is no clear evidence that all the vocational groups were permanent organizations that approached the level of guild.

31 For example, in RS 19.016 many of the entries record the name of a group leader with the rest of his contingent of men. The title of the text indicates they are *bnš mlk*.

As opposed to mobilizing to serve in person, the recipients of land grants may have had an alternative mode of fulfilling their service, viz., by providing rations for some of the royal work force. The texts preserve fewer attestations of ration providers than mobilized laborers. One possible example of the former is reflected in RS 19.016, the text that Pardee³² interprets as recording twenty-six categories of attached workers and quite likely eleven groups of ration providers. The attached workers are called *bnš mlk* “men of the king” and probably also *h̄zr* “auxiliary personnel.” The exact title of the ration providers is lost in a broken section of the tablet, but one part of their description is “field owners” (*bʿl šd*). The title “field owner” and the partially preserved indications of quantities of rations (*dd*) suggests that these persons are providing rations (*h̄pr* in line 1) to at least some of the men of the king listed in the first section of the text. Also, the broken title of RS 94.2275 reads {[. . .] šʿm . bʿl [. . .]}. It may be possible to reconstruct this title to read *bnšm bʿl šd* “men who are field owners” and to interpret it as referring to men who provided rations to some men of the king. Column two of that same text records men of the king who have received rations, *bnš mlk lqh h̄pr*, thereby providing a close parallel to RS 19.016. However, neither RS 19.016 nor RS 94.2275 explains the relationship between the field owners and the men who are receiving the rations. As already suggested, it may be possible to envision a scenario in which the field owners were obliged to provide rations to the other men of the king as a condition of their field ownership.

A list of ships’ rosters (RS 8.279) records the spatial mobilization and attachment of the *bnšm* from at least six different towns who most likely came to one central port location, quite possibly to *Maḥadu*, the main port of the kingdom of Ugarit. How were these men conscripted from these various towns? Did they have previous sailing experience? Were they unskilled conscripted laborers? How did they know when to mobilize? What level of coercion was employed? A number of the towns listed in this text are on or near the coast or near a major river. The men from these villages may have earned the required experience to qualify them for conscription as sailors.³³

And finally, in rarely documented cases royal dependents could buy their way out of their obligatory service, as seems to have been the case with *Abdiḥagab* and his sons. They paid twenty shekels of silver annually as the substitution for their service (*pilku*), for which they were also elevated to a new social status, the *md* status (RS 15.137).³⁴

USAGE OF THE WORD *BNŠ*

The word *bnš* has been referenced numerous times in this paper. It may be worth summarizing how the word is used in Ugaritic and how it fits into the patron–client relationship. In short, *bnš* is the common, nonpoetic term for a man, perhaps with the slight connotation of subordination. In the context of a patron–client relationship, a *bnš* most often serves as a client. But it would be overly specifying to conclude that it is the ancient Ugaritic word for “client.” Being integrated into a complexly woven hierarchy of ascriptive and nonascriptive associations, the Ugaritic man—at least as he is recorded in the economic texts—was defined by the economic and social relationships he forged and maintained with his superiors. The word *bnš* does not refer only to a specific juridical or legal status such as nonfree servant, to a specific vocation such as coppersmith, or to a specific economic category such as debtor. The word refers to all these things but is not restricted to any one of them. On the other hand, the term does not refer to every male in the kingdom.

³² Pardee 1999.

³³ van Soldt 2005, 95.

³⁴ The Ugaritic word *md* is probably borrowed from Akkadian, *mudū* “an acquaintance, person known” (CAD M/2, 167), which explains the lack of *ʾayin* present in the historical root YD: “to know” (Huehnergard 1987, 144–45). The authors of *DULAT* (p. 7) cite the relevant bibliography on *pilku*. As part of his section on the terminology of royal service in Ugarit, Schloen (2001, 246–51) discusses the etymology of *ubdy*, its relationship with *ilku*, *pilku*, and *unt*, and the occurrence of the term *ubadinnum* in a sale contract from the Assyrian trade colony Kültepe Kaneš. His conclusion is that the Akkadian and Ugaritic terms are “synonyms referring to the service owed by landholders to their overlord without regard to the status or profession of the landholder” (ibid., 246).

The word *bnš* is restrictive in that it refers to a subordinate in some type of asymmetric social or economic relationship.

When subordinate men were connected directly—or perhaps rather closely—to the interests of the king, they were apt to be described as *bnš mlk* “men of the king.” Some men were clients to patrons other than the king; these men were called *bnšm*. In a strict sense, these terms are not synonymous. However, it seems very likely that the scribes did not use the terms *bnš* and *bnš mlk* in a precise or technical sense. It seems likely, rather, that *bnš* was at times used as shorthand for *bnš mlk*. To further complicate the issue, there was no functional difference between the *bnšm* and *bnš mlk*. They appear in very similar contexts in the economic texts, and there is some overlap in their vocations. Both groups live throughout the kingdom and receive similar rations. Where we can specify, *bnš* refers to a broad category of men; the term does not designate a particular vocation, financial status, or discrete social category. The construct phrase *bnš mlk* is slightly more restrictive than *bnš* in that it specifies the king as the superordinate in the vertical asymmetric dyadic relationship.

There is a wide range in the autonomy of those persons considered *bnšm*, from men who are little more than servants to men who are accomplished vocational artisans (RS 19.016) or heads of households (RS 15.111). A *bnš* who is the proprietor of a plot of land may also contribute to the economy through a specialized skill. Terms such as “specialized artisan,” “land proprietor,” “general laborer,” “military conscript,” or “servant” each describe one aspect of a *bnš*, who may be characterized by multiple overlapping aspects. For example, there seems to be some overlap in the terms *h̄zr* and *bnš*. The former seems to refer to subordinate personnel or dependent clients who do not practice one of the skilled vocations but who are dependent upon their patrons for rations. In RS 19.016, the *h̄zr* personnel are recorded as the *bnš mlk* who have received rations. The rations are dispersed in return for their unskilled, probably agricultural, labor. As I would argue, *bnš* is a broader term for dependent personnel, including any subordinate client—even those working in the skilled vocations.

In contrast to the distribution and usage of *bnš*, Ugaritic *mt*, also a word for “man,” occurs almost exclusively in the literary texts. There are no certain attestations of *mt* in the economic lists. In a contract (RS [Varia 14]) apparently defining an internal agreement between the participants of a *mrzḥ* and the club’s leader, the word *mt* refers to the men who are disallowed to demand that the group’s host and leader give them back their investment of silver. Why does the text here use *mt* instead of *bnš*? It is my proposal that *bnš* refers to the subordinate member of an asymmetric dyadic socioeconomic relationship. The situation here seems not to be characterized by asymmetry. The men in this text were probably members of the *mrzḥ* club and, based on the requisite monetary dues, were part of an elevated class. Because *bnš* refers to subordinate men, it may be possible to suggest that *mt* refers to a man of relatively elevated social status who is on an equal standing with his fellows.

CONCLUSION

What does it all mean? Ugaritian society was organized according to various competing and supplementing principles. Probably most foundationally, ascriptive kinship relations served as a ready-made system of connectivity. Where this mode of organization was insufficient, other principles filled in. I have argued that patronage and patron–client relationships were among the supplementary modes of structuring trust. Where observed firsthand by anthropologists, patron–client relationships show a high degree of variation. As such, the concept is applicable as a heuristic tool because it is not based primarily on a culture from another time and place. Patron–client relations seem to develop in a wide variety of contexts where other modes of structuring trust are insufficient.

Why such a general theory? In my view, most of the previous attempts at describing the society of Ugarit have suffered from a high degree of specificity. The two-sector model, for example, requires too many aspects of the model to be true for the entire model to be true. Instead, one will find it possible to investigate Ugaritian society and describe it fairly well without such a specific model. A general principle such as patronage, particularly when combined with foundational concepts such as ascriptive kinship relations, can

explain a wide range of data. And until we are able to expand our knowledge of Ugarit to include textual and archaeological data from the periphery—and from other perspectives yet unrealized—a set of general principles is probably more productive than a highly specific model.

TEXTS CITED

The references below are to *KTU* for the alphabetic Ugaritic texts and PRU III for the logosyllabic Akkadian texts. This is not to imply that *KTU* is the first place of publication for these texts. However, in the third edition of *KTU*, the reader will find references to published editions and additional bibliographic references. For the Akkadian texts, one may reference Lackenbacher for translations and commentary.³⁵

Excavation Number	Cross-reference	Brief description
RS [Varia 14]	<i>KTU</i> 3.9	An agreement between members of a <i>mrzḥ</i> club
RS 1.018	<i>KTU</i> 2.4	A letter to the chief of priests
RS 3.320	<i>KTU</i> 4.29	A short list of men and donkeys
RS 8.279	<i>KTU</i> 4.40	Three ships' rosters
RS 15.005	<i>KTU</i> 4.133	Men listed possibly as subordinates
RS 15.015+	<i>KTU</i> 4.137	More than 350 men working at the palace
RS 15.022+	<i>KTU</i> 4.141	Men from Ra'šu in the service of the king
RS 15.032	<i>KTU</i> 4.144	Men of the king under the authority of PRT
RS 15.089	PRU III 53	A land transfer in which the <i>unuššu</i> tax is required
RS 15.111	<i>KTU</i> 3.2	A <i>bnš mlk</i> as a householder
RS 15.115	<i>KTU</i> 4.182	Replacing garments seemingly in a cultic context
RS 15.137	PRU III, 134	Royal land grant with social promotion
RS 16.133	PRU III, 59	Royal land grant with tax exemption
RS 16.254 A	PRU III, 66	Royal land grant of an entire estate
RS 16.262	PRU III, 67	Royal land grant with required <i>pilku</i>
RS 16.269	PRU III, 68	A man is free from working at the palace
RS 16.382	<i>KTU</i> 3.5	Royal land grant with tax exemption
RS 16.395	<i>KTU</i> 4.243	A list of rations for various men in various places
RS 18.024	<i>KTU</i> 4.337	An account of bronze-workers
RS 18.026	<i>KTU</i> 4.339	Men returning to Ugarit and Mulukku
RS 18.028	<i>KTU</i> 4.341	The purchase of a wide variety of items
RS 18.035	<i>KTU</i> 4.347	Men who have guaranteed other men
RS 18.293+	<i>KTU</i> 4.422	Men who have cattle
RS 19.016	<i>KTU</i> 4.609	A ration text

³⁵ Lackenbacher 2002.

Excavation Number	Cross-reference	Brief description
RS 19.045	<i>KTU</i> 4.618	A record of men and oxen by location
RS 19.097	<i>KTU</i> 4.636	A record of grain by location
RS 29.097	<i>KTU</i> 4.752	A mobilization of men through a broker
RS 94.2050+	<i>KTU</i> 4.807	A list of men in groups
RS 94.2064	<i>KTU</i> 4.841	A list of men in groups
RS 94.2275	<i>KTU</i> 4.859	A ration text

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5

TRANSMISSION AND MORTAL ANXIETY
IN THE TALE OF AQHAT*

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SONS AND MORTALITY

THE FATHER–SON RELATIONSHIP, ALONG WITH its ideals and potential failures, forms a central theme in the Ugaritic tale of Aqhat.¹ The narrative, however, does not simply establish or rehearse conventional expectations of sonship. Rather, the story establishes the father–son relationship as conventional in the space of the narrative in order to present an alternative: the blessing and success generated through the father–daughter relationship. Through the events of the story and the discourse of its characters, the narrative presents, delimits, and ultimately reshapes social relationships to conform to this agenda. While the story draws on real-world social concepts and experiences,² all the ideas presented to the reader are artificial products of the narrative generated through the structure and content of the discourse. The notion that the father–son relationship is a conventional path to success is just as much a function of the story’s artifice as the idea that the father–daughter relationship is unconventional. An artificial father–son relationship is normalized by the narrative so the father–daughter relationship can be presented by analogy but categorically as an alternative. This study examines how formal speech performances by characters in the Aqhat tale are structured to generate the ideals of sonship so these ideals may be dismantled for the alternative role of the daughter.

The tale opens with the primary problem motivating the plot’s movement: Dānī’īlu, the story’s hero, has no son. As one study has already observed,³ the protagonist’s childlessness and its resolution in the birth of a son—much like in the Kirta story—is a mere prelude to a more complex question upon which the story meditates: Can the father–son relationship, traditionally conceived, protect the father from his own mortality? The story generates this question through unexpected movements in the plot: the circumstances

* I am honored to offer this study of the father–daughter alternative to the father–son relationship in the Aqhat story to Dennis Pardee, a paragon of excellence in scholarship and dedication in training future generations.

1 A number of studies have already made this observation, in a variety of ways: Obermann 1946; Eissfeldt 1966; Koch 1967; Westermann and Günther 1976, 151–68 (from a nonliterary, history of religions perspective); Ashley 1977, 279–80; Healey 1979; del Olmo Lete 1981, 358–62; Avishur 1986; S. Parker 1989, 107; Margalit 1989, 267–84; Husser 1996; Greenstein 2000; Kim 2011, 100–101. Few studies, however, have examined the purpose of such a story, the social function of telling such a tale in the world of the authors. Two exceptions to this stand out: the unpublished dissertation of Eugene McAfee (1996) and, more recently, Zamora López 2017–19, 111–21.

2 According to Hayden White (1980), narrative serves as solution to conflicts between social ideals and experiences in the world. For an examination of the central social concepts of Late Bronze Age Ugarit, see J. David Schloen 2001. According to the recent dissertation of Christine Neal Thomas (2013), the geopolitical power of women in the Late Bronze Age has not been adequately considered by scholarship. Her study examines and theorizes, among other social relationships, the royal father–daughter relationship at Ugarit in the broader context of Hittite Syria and thus serves as an important corrective to this gap in scholarship.

3 Thomas 2013, 15, 34, 36, 39–42.

leading to the death of the hero's son and heir and the avenging of his death by the hero's daughter.⁴ These events are unexpected because the narrative has already established a set of expectations for the purpose and outcome of intergenerational relationships for the reader. In the context of understanding the tale as a reconceptualization of social ideals and expectations, the "filial duties" poem—the literary unit repeated in its entirety four times in the speech of four characters in the first half of the story—functions as a traditional answer to the problem of the father's mortality.

A number of previous treatments of the filial duties poem and its structural and thematic function within the larger story assumed the poem must have been an older, preexisting oral tradition incorporated into the text.⁵ Such a conclusion takes for granted certain problematic assumptions about the development trajectory of literary forms, viz., the idea that poetry, particularly certain types of nonnarrative poetry (gnomic, didactic), begins life in a literary tradition as simple, orally composed and transmitted songs assumes that literary traditions follow a determined trajectory.⁶ In this way of thinking about literary history, "originally oral" poems are also thought to be older, and are so distinguished by certain prosodic features. To give an example of this approach, Healey's study of the filial duties explicitly connected the poem's prosody to a presumed oral background: "This whole text is clearly a highly formalised unit and was probably part of oral traditional wisdom."⁷ Avishur claimed that the integrity of the literary unit in its fourfold repetition and its distinctive prosody apart from the surrounding narrative supports his argument that the "literary unit . . . existed independently and was integrated into the story because it fits the subject matter."⁸ Unlike Healey, Avishur did not explicitly assign an original genre to the poem based on its prosody. Nevertheless, he insisted the poem's thematic content indicated its relationship to wisdom literature.⁹

It seems that in identifying the prevalence of father-speakers in wisdom and instruction texts, Avishur had confused the thematic content of the wisdom genre with its framing device. While much of what scholarship conventionally categorizes as wisdom is depicted as advice from father to son, this relationship is a trope that serves to frame and authorize the wisdom claims made in these text.¹⁰ Filial duties—a son's activities for or on behalf of his father—are not central to instructional texts. In fact, the frame of father-to-son instruction indicates the opposite: a father's speech for the benefit of his listening son. The poem

4 A number of studies have pointed out that the actions of Dānī'ilu's daughter pose a paradoxical resolution of the narrative's central tension in the failure of the conventional expectations of the father-son relationship. See Margalit 1989, 438–40: "the quintessence of the message of *Aqht* . . . that in contrast to the men . . . who are expert in the *taking* of human life, the women are expert . . . in the *creation* of life, both in its ephemeral manifestation on earth as well as in its abiding manifestation in the Netherworld" (ibid., 439).

5 Eissfeldt 1966. Healey makes an explicit connection between the poem's prosody and its presumed oral background: "This whole text is clearly a highly formalised unit and was probably part of oral traditional wisdom" (Healey 1979, 356; also Avishur 1986, 57–58). Margalit argues against del Olmo Lete's (1981) characterization of the poem as "hymnic" by maintaining the poem is "a later, secondary accretion to the original poem, betraying a priestly hand" (Margalit 1989, 78, 280). Boda emphasizes the literary effect of the repetition of the poem in the first half of the narrative: "The four-fold repetition only enhances the increasing literary expectation in the book for the momentous birth date and once having taken the reader to these heights, prepares the way for the depths of disappointment at the death of Aqhat" (Boda 1993, 11).

6 Aristotle indicated that *paroimiai*, "proverbs," are defined by their conciseness, which is the reason he gives for their survival through time. Aristotle's book on *paroimiai* is lost (*Diog. Laert.* 5.26), but the work is quoted in the fragment of another lost work, *On Philosophy* (*Ecom. calv.* 22 = fr. 13 Rose). The idea of stages in the development of a literary tradition, with the gnostic or didactic at literature's beginning, can be traced in biblical studies to Johann Gottfried Herder (1833, 8–9) and generally in philological method to Giambattista Vico (1948, §211–216; §404).

7 Healey 1979, 356.

8 See Avishur 1986, 57–58.

9 "The duties of the son to his father belong to the area of wisdom and ethical literature" (ibid.). See also Healey 1979, 356.

10 Pardee notes regarding Akkadian wisdom texts found at Ugarit that these texts are presented in the context of advice from father to son (in the specific case of RS 22.439, as the parting advice of a father to a son embarking on a journey). This frame is a literary device in which to present the advice, and, as Pardee indicates, the frame as a literary device is apparent when the instructions presented no longer apply to the immediate performance context of "advice to a son embarking on a journey" (Pardee 2012, 110–11). For a recent thorough and theoretically informed study of wisdom texts contemporary and local to Late Bronze Age Ugarit, see Cohen 2013.

does demonstrate affinities with other wisdom texts. These affinities, however, have more to do with how the poem is presented in the space of the narrative: the poem presents a set of expectations for social relationships, which are transmitted, wholly intact, from one authoritative speaker in the narrative to the next.

Aside from the fact that it is impossible to determine whether or not the filial duties passage was an extant oral tradition incorporated into the narrative, such a line of inquiry does not seem to be particularly helpful in making sense of its function within the story. The poem's composition—its message of filial succession and corresponding reframing of funerary ritual, its parallelistic structure, and its oral performance by characters in the space of the narrative—is sufficiently “traditional” in its aesthetic and presentation to the story's audience that the poem's *actual* literary history as an independent unit is moot. Thus, instead of positing the compositional history of the narrative—that is, determining which elements were included at which point in time and via which medium—we might observe the literary effect of the poem's presentation, viz., the poem's oral transmission from one character to another in the story.

The filial duties passage is a self-contained composition performed by authoritative characters in the narrative (Ba'lu, 'Ilu, the messenger announcing the birth of 'Aqhatu, and Dānī'ilu, the protagonist himself). As such, the poem occupies a traditional space in the fictional world of the narrative. Similarly, Greenstein, against the narrow description offered by Parker,¹¹ articulates:

The repetition [of the literary unit] is not a mere epic convention; it is a critically placed feature whose dramatic significance is . . . in the fact that the audience hears it four times through. . . . The audience is expected to apply its background and habits of thinking toward a fuller understanding of the narrated text.¹²

Along these lines, I argue that the poem functions to establish the central tension between conventional expectations for human mortality and filial succession, on the one hand, and unconventional possibilities for immortality and success, on the other. The poem assures readers that a son's role is to mitigate the threat of the father's inevitable death by caring for the father in life and death and ultimately taking the father's place. The poem and its enduring promises, transmitted from one character to the next, are performed by authoritative male voices in the narrative.

These male voices of unchanging, seemingly conventional expectations in the first half of the story are set against claims and actions by female characters in the second half of the story.¹³ The poem's placement within the structure of the plot and its integrity throughout its transmission from one character to the next formulates its primary argument as a convention of the protagonist's world: the son is the guardian of the father's life. The poem's air of transmitted wisdom—its traditional aesthetic—is likewise achieved by its thematic structure, giving primacy to activities whose effects endure, and by reframing funerary ritual within the context of the intergenerational relationship.

11 S. Parker 1989, 37. McAfee (1996, 68–69) adds that the repetition intensifies the expectations of the audience for the son to perform according to the ideals claimed by the poem.

12 Greenstein 2000, 145.

13 The juxtaposition between the actions of male and female characters has been noted. Margalit explicitly argued for a feminist agenda in the Aqhat narrative: “The hero of Aqht is in fact a heroine: Aqht's sister, Pughat. The villain of the story is another female, the goddess Anat. And the narrator's voice that speaks to us from behind the literary trappings is a voice of protest . . . against the norms and values of a warrior-aristocratic society. . . . This social and moral critique, written from a feminist perspective if not actually by a feminine writer, permeates the texture of the narrative from beginning to end” (Margalit 1983, 67). See also his expanded study, Margalit 1989. More recently Julie Faith Parker (2006, 557–75) has argued that “the liminal position” of the female characters in the story “is the source of their power.” McAfee (1996, 41) likewise observed that the “actual solution” to the problem posed by these childless narratives, both Aqhat and Kirta, involved the assumption of traditionally filial rights and responsibilities paradoxically by daughters and not sons.

THE ENDURING BENEFITS OF A SON: THE THEMATIC STRUCTURE OF THE “FILIAL DUTIES”

Previous studies of the literary unit have attempted to discern its structure with varying results. In the following discussion, I argue that the poem is organized to give primacy to those activities having the most enduring effect from their singular performance: the establishment of the mortuary stela for his father. Accordingly, the poem concludes with duties having the least enduring effect from their performance: the hygiene and maintenance of the father's garment and roof of his home. The poem presents various social and ritual practices as filial responsibilities that serve to resolve the father's mortal anxiety. That is to say, the poem presents activities in which the son acts *on behalf of* and ultimately *in the place of* the father, thus serving as a living extension of the father's person (his ritual and social presence). In this way, the poem presents itself on the structural level as a conventional resolution to the mortal anxiety confronted by the protagonist.¹⁴

Studies of the poem have maintained the six-line couplet division first proposed by Herdner¹⁵ but have understood its arrangement of the son's responsibilities in different ways. Eissfeldt, following the poem's structure of six couplets, described the poem as a “Dodekalog,” a list of twelve distinct duties the protagonist believes a son will perform for him.¹⁶ Margalit determined Eissfeldt's calculus erroneous by finding “not more than eight discrete commandments.”¹⁷ Margalit identified the first duty, the raising of the monument of the father's deity (*nšb skn ilib*), as “the first, if not also principal, duty of the son.”¹⁸ Further, he connected the activity of the *nāšibu*, “one who raises (the stela),” to that of the *pāqidu*, the kin (fictive or actual) who cares for and feeds dead ancestors.¹⁹ Beyond the enumeration of eight “commandments,” Margalit did not discern a sense of organization of structure to the poem and found the presence of the final two duties to be particularly incompatible in the list:

The first two [duties] . . . refer to the proper burial of the deceased father and . . . acts of necromancy associated with the ancestor cult . . . the third and fourth . . . involve the protection of the living father . . . the fifth . . . depicts the assistance rendered by the son to a drunken father . . . the sixth . . . alludes to participation in the official cults . . . the seventh and eighth . . . refer to . . . menial household chores . . . [whose] association with the preceding occasions wonder.²⁰

14 Similarly, Wright argues that the claims of the poem and its fourfold repetition in the space of the narrative “show where Aqhat fits into the hierarchical scheme of things and how he is expected to behave,” and that its repetition “is a way of anchoring the list's ideals firmly in the reader's mind . . . provid[ing] a paradigm for how the son should behave” (Wright 2001, 69).

15 Herdner 1938. As Pardee (1976, 236) noted in his published dissertation, it was Herdner who first discerned the poem's structure.

16 Eissfeldt 1966, 39. Each of these twelve duties, according to Eissfeldt, was distinguished by twelve active participles, eleven explicit and one implied (*ibid.*, 43). Two of the lexical items Eissfeldt had identified as active participles (*ztr* and *dmr*) would be reanalyzed in subsequent studies as serving a different syntactic function in the clause: in both cases, the direct objects of the active participle of the previous poetic line. These two terms aside, Eissfeldt's reading of the other lexical items as active participles seems to have been upheld in subsequent studies.

17 Margalit 1989, 267. Margalit's description of the poem as a set of “commandments,” however, is problematic: a hortatory interpretation of the text assumes an older, preexisting literary history for the poem apart from its life in the Aqhat tale. Based purely on the performance context of the filial duties, the poem seems only to communicate ideals for the unborn son rather than to impose demands on a listening audience.

18 *Ibid.*, 268.

19 *Ibid.*, 269. For the use of the active participle in designating the activities of funerary ritual, specifically the activities of a ruler in the establishment of important dead individuals as the ruler's own kin, see Sanders 2012. He notes, with respect to the *pāqidu*, that “The analogous goal for the king in mortuary ritual was to step into the role of the *pāqidu* ‘ritual feeder and caretaker’ of certain politically important dead. If successful, the effect would be to actually *create* the right ancestors and allies to be related to, with the ensuing rootedness to the territory and kinship affiliations of these still-present dead . . . these rituals can work to claim or even generate ancestors” (Sanders 2012, 29).

20 Margalit 1989, 267–68.

Husser²¹ discerned the major division in the poem at the halfway point, with pronominal suffixes concluding each half-line in the first half of the poem and suffixes in the middle of each half-line in the second half of the poem. Wright likewise found the major division of the poem at the halfway point, and he described the third couplet and the final couplet as “mundane,” opposed to the others, which he classified as “ritual.”²² Avishur identified the first two lines as “cultic” in theme and the remaining lines as “duties to society and family.”²³ Boda disagreed with such a distinction; he argued, “We can never separate cultic activity from societal/familial activity in these ancient cultures.”²⁴ The discussion presented here assumes that the basic poetic structure of the literary unit should guide an analysis of the poem and generally agrees with Wright that, rather than enumerating any discrete number of “activities” listed, be they twelve or eight, the poem’s meaning is shaped by its structure of six couplets, “each of which is a conceptual unit.”²⁵

The analysis presented here does not find the various activities described in the poem to be categorically incompatible, since all those activities function thematically to outline ways in which the son replaces the father through care for him and performance of activities he would normally do for himself: maintaining his garments and residence, making offerings at the temple, and walking without assistance.²⁶ These activities *in place* of the father are listed according to the lasting nature of their effect and the frequency of their performance for continued maintenance. The activities range from their singular performance (the raising of a monument), to occasional but rare performance (defending the father against insults), to annual or seasonal performance (carrying the drunk father from a banquet, performing seasonal sacrifices in the father’s stead), and finally to frequent performance (attention to the hygiene of the father’s body and place of residence).

The text presented here is *KTU* 1.17 I 26–33, and this translation is largely based on that of Bordreuil and Pardee.²⁷ Deviations from this translation are indicated and explained. The translation is then followed by a presentation and analysis of the poem’s structural features.

TRANSLATION

1A	²⁶ <i>nšb . skn . ilibh .</i>	One who raises up ²⁸ the stela of his father’s god, ²⁹
1B	<i>bqdš</i> ²⁷ <i>ztr . ‘mh</i>	in the sanctuary the votive emblem of his clan;
2A	<i>lārš . mššû . qtrh</i>	one who sends up from the earth his incense,

21 Husser 1996, 96.

22 Wright 2001, 68.

23 Avishur 1986, 57.

24 Boda 1993, 23.

25 Wright 2001, 67.

26 So Pardee 1996, 279, and Husser 1996, 97.

27 The following analysis does not provide an in-depth commentary on all the lexical items in the poem, and it treats individual lexemes as necessary for the structural argument. The translation presented here largely follows the vocalization, transliteration, and translation of *KTU* 1.17 I 26–33 published by Bordreuil and Pardee (2009, 173–77). Deviations from their translation and analysis are explained. A preliminary discussion of the passage’s translation, its problems, and possible interpretations are discussed in Pardee 1976, 236–38.

28 It is generally accepted by scholars that *nšb*, *mššû*, *tbq*, *grš*, *āhd*, *m‘msh*, *spû*, *ṭh*, and *rhš* are all masculine singular active participles (*m‘msh* with a 3ms pronominal suffix), as reflected in my translation of these forms: “One who *participates in X activity*.”

29 The identification of *ilib* as “the god of the father,” and not the “ancestral deity,” follows Bordreuil and Pardee’s translation in *A Manual of Ugaritic* (2009), but see Pardee’s explanation in a separate, earlier publication (1996, 283–84 n. 17). In Pardee’s analysis, the name designates not divine dead ancestors, but rather “the god of the father,” and the activity of raising the stela marks the son’s perpetuation of the family cult. Wright (2001, 53–54) likewise assumes the activity described is one performed by the son during the father’s lifetime but arrives at an interpretation different from Pardee’s: “The father is alive when the son performs duty A and . . . the *ilib* is the father’s ancestor,” citing van der Toorn (1996, 160), who understood the activity to be in service of the ancestral cult.

2B	²⁸ <i>l'pr . dmr . âtrh</i>	from the dust the song of his place;
3A	<i>tbq . lht</i> ²⁹ <i>niṣh</i>	one who shuts up the jaws of his detractors,
3B	<i>grš . d . ršy . lnh</i>	one who drives out anyone who would do him in;
4A	³⁰ <i>âhd . ydh . bšk' r'n .</i>	one who takes his hand when (he is) drunk,
4B	<i>m'msh</i> ³¹ <i>[k]šb' . yn</i>	one who bears him up when he is full of wine;
5A	<i>spû . ksmh . bt . b'l</i>	one who supplies his grain(-offering) in the Temple of <i>Ba'lu</i> ,
5B	³² <i>[w]m' nth . bt . il</i>	his portion in the Temple of 'Ilu;
6A	<i>tḥ . ggh . bym</i> ³³ <i>[tī]t</i>	one who rolls his roof when rain softens it up, ³⁰
6B	<i>rḥš . npšh . bym . rt</i>	one who washes his outfit on a muddy day.

POETIC STRUCTURE³¹

I.	1A	a <i>nšb</i> One who raises up		b <i>skn ilibh</i> the stela of his father's god,
	1B	c <i>bqdš</i> in the sanctuary		b' <i>ztr 'mh</i> the votive emblem of his clan;
	2A	a <i>lārš</i> from the earth	b <i>mššû</i> one who sends up	c <i>qtrh</i> his incense,
	2B	a' <i>l'pr</i> from the dust		c' <i>dmr âtrh</i> the song of his place;
	3A	a <i>tbq</i> one who shuts up		b <i>lht niṣh</i> the jaws of his detractors,
	3B	a' <i>grš</i> one who drives out		b' <i>d ršy lnh</i> anyone who would do him in;
II.	4A	a <i>âhd</i> one who takes	b <i>ydh</i> his hand	c <i>bškrn</i> when (he is) drunk,
	4B	a' <i>m'ms</i> one who bears	b' <i>h</i> him up	c' <i>kšb' yn</i> when he is full of wine;
	5A	a <i>spû</i> one who supplies	b <i>ksmh</i> his grain offering	c <i>bt b'l</i> in the Temple of <i>Ba'lu</i>
	5B		b' <i>wmnth</i> his portion	c' <i>bt il</i> in the Temple of 'Ilu;
	6A	a <i>tḥ</i> one who rolls	b <i>ggh</i> his roof	c <i>bym tīt</i> when rain softens it up,
	6B	a' <i>rḥš</i> one who washes	b' <i>npšh</i> his outfit	c' <i>bym rt</i> on a muddy day.

30 Literally, "on a day of mud." See *DULAT* 892.

31 Alternatively, following a suggestion of the reviewer, one might maintain a poetic structure across lines by designating all the participles as *a*, the direct objects as *b*, and the adjuncts as *c*. As such, as the reviewer has astutely observed, one notes that all the direct objects receive the possessive suffix.

DESCRIPTION

The poem is organized into two halves, a division marked by differences in the syntactic structure. In the first half (couplets 1–3), the final term of each half-line bears a pronominal suffix (for example, *nšb skn ilibh* / *bqdš ztr mḥ* //); in the second half (couplets 4–6), the suffix comes before the final term of each half-line (for example, *āḥd ydh bškrn* / *m'msh kšb' yn* //).³² This difference in structure between the first and second halves of the poem highlights the distinct emphases of each one. The first half outlines activities performed by the son for the father that are not bound to a specific occasion or situation, whereas the second half emphasizes the son's duties *in specific contexts*: *bškrn* “when drunk”; *kšb' yn* “when he is full of wine”; *bt b'l* “(in) the Temple of Ba'lu”; *bt il* “in the Temple of 'Ilu”; *bym tīt* and *bym rt* “on a muddy day.” The distinction between the first and second halves, viz., that activities in the second half are outlined for specific situations or contexts, supports a reading of the poem that gives primacy to enduring and singular activities.

The first couplet emphasizes the most significant of the duties of a son toward his father, a guiding reason for having a son: that he may perform acts of memorialization so the father's presence and personhood may persist beyond his lifetime. These are socially meaningful acts that symbolically designate the son as acting, and ultimately existing, *in place* of the father. The first named activity, “rais[ing] up the stela of his father's god . . . the votive emblem of his clan,” outlines the most enduring act of duty.³³ The final line of the poem, by contrast, describes an activity that is the least enduring of them all: the incidental maintenance of the garment and roof of the father.

The first half of the poem outlines meaningful actions associated with establishing and maintaining the presence of the father beyond his natural lifetime. The first action refers to the material object that, if a text were inscribed upon it, would speak in the voice of the memorialized subject, thereby preserving the speaker's presence in perpetuity.³⁴ The activities described in the second couplet seem to be likewise supportive of establishing the ongoing presence of the father, though the social and ritual contexts of these lines are more obscure.

The son's duty to send up incense, specifically, the “smoke” of the father (*mššū qtrh*), has been lexically linked to the later passage in the story narrating Aqhat's death, where his *npš* “life-breath” and *brlt* “spirit” are described as *qtr bāph* “smoke from his nose.”³⁵ While the specific function or role of the “smoke” or “incense” alluded to here may be lost on the modern reader, the general context of the activity seems to be one of mortuary or memorial ritual. We may assume this context from the couplet's placement alongside

32 A feature recognized by Husser 1996, 96.

33 The root *NŠB* designates both the action of setting up a monument (the son's responsibility toward the father) and succession (or, in the case of Kirta's son, Yaššubu, usurpation). In the publication of his Schweich Lectures, Pardee (2012, 90) notes that Yaššubu's name “may itself be derived from the root that expresses the son's duty of raising a stela for his father” found in the poem under examination here. For recent treatments of this topic, see Suriano (2018), who examines the cultural meaning of Biblical Hebrew מצבת; Sanders (2019); S. Parker (1995, 532–59). See also Watson (1979, 807), who understands the social role of the firstborn son in Kirta to be the replacement of the father and interprets Yaššubu's premature claim to the throne in *KTU* 1.16 vi 52–54 (literally, his claim to sit in the place of his father) to violate the natural order of the son's replacement of the father.

34 See Green 2010. Wright (2001, 50–51), citing evidence of these kinds of stones around the ancient Near East and previous scholarship, understands *skn* here, as elsewhere in texts from Emar and Mari (*sikkānu*), to designate “stones . . . that represent deities or mark the divine presence.” If, however, the *ilib* is not in fact a divine ancestor but the god of the father—that is, the deity venerated by the father—then Wright's interpretation precludes these monuments from serving a memorial function, because they represent *divine* presence and not the presence of the father. Wright, however, understands the *ilib* to be the ancestral deity, the “father's deceased kin, who is also the son's kin” (ibid., 53). This interpretation would then imply that in 2 Samuel 18:18 Absalom sets up his own pillar for worship of his divine presence after his death, though there are no kin to venerate him: *ואבשלם לקח ויצב לו בחיו את-מצבת אשר בעמק-המלך כי אמר אין-לי בן בעבור הזכיר שמי ויקרא למצבת על-שמו* “Now Absalom, during his lifetime, took and raised up the pillar that was in the Valley of the King, for he said ‘I have no son to memorialize my name,’ and he called the pillar by his name.”

35 *KTU* 1.18 IV 24–26. Wright (2001, 55–56) discusses the potential issues with connecting these two passages, viz., that in the description of Aqhat's death the term is used in poetic imagery and not as a term specifically for the human “soul” or presence.

the first activity of raising the stela and the funerary associations of the named locations in the couplet (*lārš* “from the earth” and *l’pr* “from the dust”).³⁶ A number of possible translations have been proposed for the activity in parallel with *mššû qtrh* “one who sends up (the father’s) smoke,” viz., the phrase *dmr âtrh*.³⁷ The various possibilities will not be reviewed here. Instead, I will briefly examine how *dmr âtrh*, translated as “the song of his place,” fits into the context of memorial ritual and the theme of the first half of the filial duties poem. In a number of studies, the term *âtr* is understood to designate an actual cultic location.³⁸ Here I propose a different possibility for (*mššû*) *dmr âtrh* “(one who sends up) the song of his place”: *dmr âtr* would refer to the son’s performance of a funerary song, specifically a song known by its incipit, *âtr*, a song attested in a ritual text from Ugarit. In the ritual text RS 34.126 (*KTU* 1.161), the goddess Šapšu performs a song whose interpreted function is to transmit rulership from the dead ruler to the new, living ruler who takes the dead king’s place.³⁹ The song, like the first half of the poem of filial duties, articulates succession in the context of funerary ritual. The third couplet describes the son’s responsibility to protect the father’s reputation, a responsibility likewise taken by the textual medium itself in the mortuary inscription genre.⁴⁰

Generally, couplets 3–6 describe the activity of explicitly protecting a father from a variety of threats, both external and internal: (3) guarding a father from those who would destroy his reputation, presumably in death but perhaps also in life; (4) protecting the father’s bodily integrity while intoxicated; (5) making offerings on behalf of the father; (6) occasional maintenance of the home and vestments of the father. While the first three of these activities protect against vital threats (a destroyed reputation, bodily harm through intoxication, failure to make regular offerings), the final activity does not protect against a vital threat, only against the living father’s discomfort. Moreover, since this final activity is clearly performed only for the benefit of a living father, it is the least enduring activity of them all, since a roof will presumably need to be re-rolled and his garment will certainly require re-washing. Likewise, the presentation of offerings on the father’s behalf and the son’s physical support of his intoxicated father follow a greater degree of regularity, perhaps with increasing frequency as the father ages, than the activities in the first half of the literary unit, which were either performed once (setting up the stela) or without any predictable regularity (protecting the father’s reputation from detractors). Regular, systematic maintenance is a natural and necessary feature of relationships with the living. Only in the imagination of the needs of the dead and in the creation of ritual would a father–son relationship require regular maintenance activity.⁴¹

36 See Lewis 1989, 43–44.

37 See Pardee’s (1976, 236–38) review of previous attempts to decipher the meaning of *dmr âtrh* in the context of the phrase. Margalit’s (1989, 267–81) comprehensive analysis and review of scholarship on the entire passage is a significant collection of previous interpretations. In his introduction to the book (*ibid.*, xiii), Margalit claims that his inspiration for such a study was, in fact, a comment made by Dennis Pardee at a symposium in 1979 marking the fiftieth anniversary of Ugaritic Studies: the Ugaritic texts deserve “reasoned commentaries” like those of biblical literature.

38 Though noting that *âtr* occurs most frequently in Ugaritic as a preposition, Pardee already in his dissertation considered its usage to be connected to the other terms of location in the passage: “It is not impossible that the word *âtr* is to be construed as a noun ‘place’ . . . in this case, *dmr âtrh* would be interpreted ‘the song of his place (=sanctuary?)’” (Pardee 1976, 238). See this interpretation in the later studies of Dijkstra and de Moor 1975, 176; Dietrich and Loretz 1984, 57–62. Wright (2001, 60) provides a discussion of the various translation possibilities.

39 See Suriano 2009. In Suriano’s reading of *KTU* 1.161, the acknowledgment of succession is made by Šapšu, addressing the new king in the second person and referring to his predecessor’s place as *âtr b’lk*, “the place of your lord.” The imperatives directed at the new king to lower himself are explained by Suriano as the speaker’s “command[ment of Ammurapi] to publicly mourn” after “approach[ing] the throne of his lord and father” (*ibid.*, 9). Pardee (2002, 87–88) understands Šapšu’s address differently; he reads *âtr* here as a preposition, “After your lords,” and understands the addressee to be the dead king, a reading that accounts for the imperatives in line 22 (*rd wšpl* “descend and lower yourself”). If the phrase *dmr âtrh* means “the song of *âtrh*,” either reading of *âtr* in *KTU* 1.161 is possible, since *âtr* in the phrase designates merely the song’s incipit: “the song ‘His Place’” or “the song ‘After Him’” (Bordreuil and Pardee 1982). See also Tsumura 1993, 45–46.

40 See Suriano 2009, 20–22.

41 For example, feeding the dead. Sanders (2013, 50) shows how in West Semitic mortuary practices appetite and embodied presence were connected in ritual imagination: “the meal has a special kind of power to render someone’s personhood via need, and to perform the satisfaction of that need through feeding.”

Bordreuil and Pardee summarized the multidimensional and transgenerational character of RS 34.126 as “le Roi est mort . . . vive le Roi!”⁴² The filial duties poem in Aqhat can be similarly characterized, as it moves between the enduring and singularly symbolic actions performed by a son in succession of his father in death and the frequent and mundane activities performed by a son in protection of his father in life. The categorical boundaries between the actors shift constantly according to the cycles of human mortality: the king is dead, the king is alive, long live the king. The father dies, the son becomes the new father, who has a new son, and so on and so forth. The filial duties represent this cycle in its organization from the enduring to the ephemeral and everyday.

THE TRANSMISSION OF THE FILIAL DUTIES AND THE PROBLEM OF MORTALITY

The poem’s performance within the story, its transmission from one speaker to the next, likewise reflect such a presentation of the cyclical nature of human life and its shifting roles from one actor to another. It is important to keep in mind that the mapping of social relationships—the son who becomes the father, etc.—is part of the narrative’s artifice. In reality, individuals are individuals, sons do not “replace” their fathers. The idea that sons replace their fathers is one that is presented by authoritative speakers in the first half of the narrative. This idea functions in the story as a resolution to the anxiety of fathers that they do, indeed, die. The poem offers itself as a conventional response to this anxiety and does so through its presentation in the narrative as wisdom transmitted from one speaker to another.

The poem is performed four times by speakers in the first half of the narrative: first by Ba‘lu in counsel with ‘Ilū, then by ‘Ilū in response to Ba‘lu’s performance, then by an undetermined messenger (either ‘Ilū or some other character) in the form of a birth announcement to Dānī‘ilū, and finally, by Dānī‘ilū himself. At least twice these performances are given as a response to the immediately preceding performance of the same poem: ‘Ilū repeats the poem back to Ba‘lu⁴³ and Dānī‘ilū repeats the poem back to the messenger.⁴⁴ The poem remains unchanged from performance to performance, save the shifting pronominal suffixes. Whereas Ba‘lu and ‘Ilū refer to the benefits “he,” that is, Dānī‘ilū, gains from a son, the messenger addresses these benefits to Dānī‘ilū in the second person, and Dānī‘ilū in the first person:

Ba‘lu to ‘Ilū (1.17 I)

³² <i>tḥ . ggḥ . bym</i> ³³ <i>[tī]t</i>	one who rolls his roof on a muddy day
<i>rḥṣ . npṣḥ . bym . rt</i>	one who washes his outfit on a day of dirt

‘Ilū (1.17 I)

[these lines are missing; extant portions of the poem attest to a third person referent, as above]

Unnamed messenger to Dānī‘ilū (1.17 II)

⁶ <i>t[h]</i> ⁷ <i>ggk . bym . tīt .</i>	one who ro[lls] your roof on a muddy day
<i>rḥṣ</i> ⁸ <i>npṣk . bym . rt</i>	one who washes your outfit on a day of dirt

Dānī‘ilū (1.17 II)

²² <i>tḥ . ggy . bym . tīt</i>	one who rolls my roof on a muddy day
²³ <i>rḥṣ . npṣy . bym . rt</i>	one who washes my outfit on a day of dirt

These slight changes from speaker to speaker serve as reminders to the reader that while the poem presents seemingly universal expectations of sonship, its claims are framed to address the particular mortal anxieties of the story’s protagonist, Dānī‘ilū, not those of the deities.

42 Bordreuil and Pardee 1982, 128. See the relevant commentary by Suriano 2009, 22.

43 *KTU* 1.17 I 44–48.

44 *KTU* 1.17 II 16–23.

The first iteration of the poem is embedded in the first-attested direct speech of the narrative. These opening words outline the reader's expectations for order and meaning in the protagonist's world. Yet they are not uttered first by our protagonist, whose pious actions are recounted by the narrator. The poem establishes a notion of "natural order," what an individual such as Dānī'ilu can and should expect as a result of his social position and piety. These words come from on high, set in the mouth of Ba'lu, who, motivated by his compassion for the mortal protagonist, confers with 'Ilu on his specifically sonless condition.⁴⁵ The scene is reminiscent of the first dialogue between characters in Job's narrative frame, set in the divine realm between Yahweh and the Adversary on the allocation of reward or punishment to Job, the mortal protagonist.⁴⁶ Ba'lu argues in favor of Dānī'ilu to 'Ilu that the mortal's cries for a son⁴⁷ (which may have been the subject of the missing opening lines) deserve to be answered:

²³ <i>ltbrknn ltr . il aby</i>	Bless him, O Bull 'Ilu, my father,
²⁴ <i>tmrnn l bny . bnwt</i>	make him succeed, O Creator of creatures;
²⁵ <i>wykn . bnh . bbt .</i>	so that he may have a son in his house,
<i>šrš . bqrb</i> ²⁶ <i>hklh .</i>	a descendant within his palace.

Ba'lu's request that 'Ilu bless (*BRK*) Dānī'ilu and make him succeed (*MR[R]*)⁴⁸ is repeated in the narrator's description of 'Ilu's fulfillment of the request.⁴⁹ In Kirta, as here, a request by Ba'lu to 'Ilu, with these specific verbs—"to bless" and "to make succeed"—refers explicitly to the blessing of progeny:⁵⁰

¹⁴ <i>ltbrk</i> ¹⁵ <i>[krt .]t^c .</i>	Bless Noble Kirta!
<i>l tmr . n^cm[n .]</i> ¹⁶ <i>glm . il</i>	Make the pleasant [lad] of 'Ilu succeed.

The narrator tells of 'Ilu's fulfillment of Ba'lu's request in the same words, viz., that Kirta will indeed have a son:

¹⁸ <i>brkm . ybrk</i> ¹⁹ <i>[^cb^cdh] .</i>	Blessings he blesses [his servant],
<i>ybrk . il . krt</i> ²⁰ <i>[t^c .</i>	'Ilu blesses Kirta [the Noble,
<i>ymr]m . n^cm[n] . glm . il</i>	makes the pleasa[nt] lad of 'Ilu succeed.

As in Kirta, here in the tale of Aqhat these words designate the blessing specifically of a son. For this reason it is especially notable that these same words recur later in the story as a request by daughter Puḡatu to her father Dānī'ilu. At the beginning of the story the request for blessing and life comes through Ba'lu on Dānī'ilu's behalf; later, this request comes directly from daughter Puḡatu's lips, on her own initiative, to avenge her brother's death and restore justice to the household:

³² <i>ltbrkn . ālk brktm</i>	Bless me, I will go blessed,
³³ <i>tmrn . ālk . nmrrt</i>	make me succeed, I will go with success,
³⁴ <i>imḥš . mḥš . āḥy .</i>	I will slay my brother's slayer,
<i>ākl [m] ³⁵kl [y]l . ūmty</i>	I will finish [the one who] finished my mother's child.

45 The text reads in *KTU* 1.17 I 16: [w]yqrb . b'l . bḥnth, literally, "approaches ['Ilu] in kindness." That is to say, Ba'lu approaches 'Ilu motivated by his favor of, or kindness toward, Dānī'ilu. The identification of the addressee as 'Ilu is contextually discerned. See S. Parker 1997, 79. For this translation of ḥnt, see *DULAT* 366.

46 Job 1:6–12.

47 The text reads in *KTU* 1.17 I 16–18: ābynāt [d]nil . . . ānḥ ḡzr.

48 The semantic content of the verb here, *M-R* or *MRR*, is discerned on the basis of its parallel with *BRK* "to bless." On the problems of identifying this root with *MRR* "to be bitter" and tracing a semantic development in Ugaritic "to be strong," see Pardee 1978.

49 *KTU* 1.17 I 34–36.

50 *KTU* 1.15 II 14–16.

The request for Dānī'ilu's success, in his case in producing an heir, is issued through conventional means: pious devotion, mediated by Ba'lu to 'Ilu. When Dānī'ilu's daughter makes the same request at the end of the story, to Dānī'ilu, it is unmediated and without ritual context. The daughter's petition directly to Dānī'ilu, set against the established pattern of piety and male-mediated request for blessing in the first half of the narrative, is in the world of the narrative, unconventional.⁵¹

Returning to the initial scene of the Aqhat narrative, it is in this context (of Ba'lu's request that 'Ilu bless Dānī'ilu with an heir) that the poem of filial duties is first uttered by a character. 'Ilu responds to Ba'lu's performance of the poem by blessing Dānī'ilu⁵² and promising the successful outcome of intercourse with his wife,⁵³ repeating and confirming, word-for-word, Ba'lu's request, which frames his reiteration of the poem of filial duties:

⁴² <i>wykn . bnh</i> ⁴³ [<i>bbt</i> . <i>šrš</i>] . <i>bqrb hklh</i>	May he have his son [in (his) house, a descendant] in the midst of his palace.
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At this point, around line 47 of the first column, the tablet is badly damaged and the specific events that follow are unclear. The first lines of the second column are also missing, and when the text resumes, we find it in the midst of the performance of the poem of filial duties—yet again. This time, the poem is addressed to a second-person audience, and as becomes clear at the end of line 8, Dānī'ilu is the audience of this performance. The speaker, presumably a messenger announcing the birth of a son, remains unidentified. Dānī'ilu hears the performance and responds by reciting the poem for the last time in the narrative, this time in first-person reference to himself.

The transmission of the blessing and promises of a son in the form of the poem of filial duties now completed, the story resumes the initial device designating the passage of narrated time (“one day, and a second,” and so on), thereby generating anticipation for a shift in the protagonist's situation. Again, at the end of the second column, we reach the break in the text and miss the birth of 'Aqhatu. When the extant text resumes in column five, the narrative has shifted its theme of transmission from speech performance (the poem of filial duties) to an actual object: a bow, fashioned by Kôṭaru-wa-Ḥasisu, is given to Dānī'ilu, who then passes the object to his son. As the story goes, it is in fact 'Aqhatu's rigid fidelity to retaining the object passed to him by his father that results in his death. 'Aqhatu refuses 'Anatu's promises of material success and even immortality in exchange for the bow.

While the poem of filial duties implicitly promised a form of sustained existence for the father through the activities of the son, 'Aqhatu retains the bow in his explicit refusal of 'Anatu's promises of immortality. Elana Ashley, in a 1977 dissertation, identifies the human desire for immortality as a significant motif of the narrative.⁵⁴ In her study, she limits immortality explicitly to that which 'Anatu offers to Dānī'ilu in exchange for the bow: *blmt*, the condition of “deathlessness.”⁵⁵ Ashley sees this kind of desire for deathlessness in tension with what she calls “social convention,” that is, “prescribed rites . . . through which man

51 Although the daughter's words requesting Dānī'ilu's blessing are set against conventions for these requests established earlier in the narrative, her specific request for success—the success in avenging her brother's death—utilizes vocabulary used elsewhere to describe the goddess Anat's activities both here and in the Baal cycle. A sequence of repeated speech performance of 'Anatu's motive for killing Dānī'ilu moves from *YTPN*'s mouth in third-person reference to Dānī'ilu (*KTU* 1.18 IV 12–13) to 'Anatu's own words, directed to the now dead Dānī'ilu in second-person address (*KTU* 1.18 IV 40–41), and finally, presumably, 'Anatu's formal performance of this motive in first-person voice to the completed deed (*KTU* 1.19 I 13–16). This thrice-repeated motive describes 'Anatu's action specifically with the verb *MḤṢ*: *ʾl ḥṯh . imḥṣh . / kd . ʾl . qṣṯh imḥṣh* // “On account of his staff I slew him, that on account of his bow, I slew him.” Similarly, the verb *MḤṢ* describes 'Anatu's activities in her battle scene in the Baal cycle; see *KTU* 1.3 II 5–8: *whln . ʾnt . tmḥṣ bʾmq . . . tmḥṣ . lim . ḥpy[m]* “See! 'Anatu smites in the valley . . . she smites the people of the s[ea]shore.”

52 The narrator describes 'Ilu's actions and speech as a blessing in *KTU* 1.17 I 34–36a; in 1.17 I 36b–43a 'Ilu speaks and uses a vow formula declaring that Dānī'ilu will succeed in his attempts to have a son.

53 *KTU* 1.17 I 39–43.

54 Ashley 1977, 279–80.

55 *KTU* 1.17 VI 26–28; Ashley 1977, 372.

could realize his desires.”⁵⁶ Ashley refers to funerary ritual that one’s son would perform as the conventional means by which one could mitigate the inevitable fate of individual death. In the world of the story, the conventional expectation is that a man lives his life, sires a son, grooms him to be heir by passing to him his knowledge and possessions, and dies knowing that the son will continue in the manner of the father. The son continues the name and duties of the father while living in his stead.

Although Ashley does not state as much, it seems that the narrative holds the father–son relationship as the conventional path to life beyond death, a path in direct tension with an unconventional possibility—one offered by the goddess ‘Anatu:

²⁵ <i>wṭˁn . btlṭ</i>	²⁶ <i>ˁnt</i>	‘Anatu the girl replied:
<i>irš . hym . lāqht . ḡzr</i>		“Request life, ‘Aqhatu the hero,
²⁷ <i>irš . hym . wātnk .</i>		request life, and I will give (it) to you,
<i>blmt</i>	²⁸ <i>wāšlhk</i>	deathlessness I will bestow upon you.”

The offer of immortality is rejected as an impossibility according to ‘Aqhatu’s worldview and is framed in terms of other, related conventional views, such as traditional gender roles:

³³ <i>w . yˁn . āqht . ḡzr</i>	‘Aqhatu the hero replied:
³⁴ <i>āl . tš[r]gn . ybtlṭm .</i>	“Girl, don’t deceive ⁵⁷ me
<i>dm . lḡzr</i>	³⁵ <i>šrgk . ḥḥm</i> .
...	
³⁸ <i>mt . kl . āmt</i>	The death of all I will die,
<i>wān . mtm . āmt</i>	I will also surely die.
³⁹ <i>[āp m]tn . rgmm . ārgm .</i>	Another word I will say:
<i>qštm</i>	⁴⁰ [] <i>mhrm</i> .
<i>ht . tšdn . tīntt</i> .	will womenkind now hunt?”

The tension between these two possibilities for human (im)mortality is heightened by the juxtaposition of the quotidian, expected behavior from the mortal character, ‘Aqhatu, the dutiful son, against the other-worldly, unconventionally behaved (for human women) goddess, ‘Anatu.⁵⁹ While the brazen behavior of the goddess ‘Anatu can be assimilated into the reader’s understanding that gods do not play by the same rules as humans, daughter Puḡatu’s cannot. The appearance of Dānī’ilu’s daughter—her aspirations as blood avenger—comes as a surprise to the reader: Dānī’ilu sought a continuation through conventional means, through a son, when all the while he had a daughter who had the wisdom⁶⁰ to do right by the family and its name.

One need not interpret the entire Aqhat tale as having a “feminist agenda,” as Margalit does,⁶¹ or to read the story as an argument for feminine power in liminality, as Parker does,⁶² to observe the effectiveness

56 Ashley 1977, 280.

57 Literally, “to twist, entangle.” See *DULAT* 844.

58 *DULAT* 389.

59 While much of the interpretation offered by D. R. Hillers (1973) is based on long outdated approaches to the study of ancient literature (myth patterning and psychoanalysis; see Margalit 1989, 53), the insight that the feminine is set against the masculine in the structure of the narrative remains valuable. Margalit aptly summarizes the value of Hillers’ study: “Hillers may well have exaggerated the sexual aspects of the bow, but not its centrality to the plot—and its symbolism as denoting maturity and manhood. By depriving Aqht of his bow, Anat would unwittingly deprive the lad of the most eloquent testimony to his newly attained maturity . . . the bow is a symbol of the societal norms” (ibid., 75).

60 One of Dānī’ilu’s three epithets for Puḡatu is *yd’t hlk kbkbm* “One who knows the course of the stars” (*KTU* 1.19 II 1–3; IV 37). As Margalit (1989, 365) points out, “The only other dramatic person of whom this verb [YD’] is predicated in *Aqht* is the proverbially wise El (1.18:I:16).”

61 Margalit 1983, 67.

62 J. Parker 2006, 557–75.

of juxtaposing masculine and feminine voices in the narrative. One cannot say for certain why a story is told in one way or another, whether specific categories of social relationships are set against each other in the story in an intellectual exercise to highlight the limits of these categories, or whether the shape of the narrative serves a broader, real-life social agenda to legitimate the enduring power wielded by real-life father-daughter relationships. In a sense, posing such a question may yield less interesting results than trying to understand the ideas advanced by the narrative and how such stories are told.

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PART 2 — NORTHWEST SEMITIC INSCRIPTIONS

6

WHERE IS THE DEVOURER?

A REAPPRAISAL OF THE ARSLAN TASH II PLAQUE IN ITS ANE CONTEXT

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IN 1933, TWO LIMESTONE PLAQUES were bought in Arslan Tash, Syria. Both plaques contained inscriptions against various forms of misfortune, as well as images of what appear to be demonic figures. The smaller of the two plaques, though first seen in 1933, was not published until 1971, by André Caquot and Robert du Mesnil du Buisson.¹ Since then, it has been the subject of a number of studies, the most recent and exhaustive being that of Dennis Pardee published in *Syria* in 1998.² Presumed to have been written sometime in the seventh or sixth century BCE, the plaque bears orthography that suggests it is a Phoenician text concerned with the depredations of what is presumed to be the evil eye (figs. 6.1, 6.2, 6.3).³

Along with the incantation, the plaque is notable for the image that dominates the reverse side of the plaque. The image depicts what appears to be a superhuman figure in the process of devouring someone (see fig. 6.3). Scorpions make up or adorn the figure's feet, and there is what resembles a rooster's comb running along the head. Most conspicuous of all is the round, lidless eye prominently displayed in the figure's head. It is this feature that appears to be the focus of the plaque's text: an incantation against some form of the evil eye.

Though the image and accompanying text are unique, evidence suggests the plaque may be best understood as a localized variation of common incantatory practices. This paper explores the plaque's unique elements, while noting the common incantatory features. In particular, the relationship between image, text, and orthographical placement and their individual and combined roles in the plaque's efficacy are explored, along with noting similar efficacious elements (i.e., imagery and text) in incantations and their mediums elsewhere, thereby demonstrating the importance of the Arslan Tash II plaque in further studies concerning ancient Near Eastern incantations.

Section 1 / Obverse (Explanation of Incantation Need)⁴

Line 1	<i>lḥšt.lmzh.b'l</i>	An incantation against the Splatterer, the chief one,
Line 2	<i>'sr mrkbt⁵y w rb 'n</i>	(who) harnesses his chariot, and Great Eye
Line 3	<i>'ty.'l šyy [y]š</i>	with him. / 'l šyy went out

1 Caquot and du Mesnil du Buisson 1971, 391–406.

2 Pardee 1998, 15–54.

3 A number of Aramaisms in the text suggest it represents a local dialect of Phoenician. See Pardee's discussion in Pardee 1998, 39–40.

4 The transliteration reflects Pardee's version. See Pardee 1998.

5 In Phoenician, the *-y* suffix is often understood to represent the genitival form of the 3ms suffix. Thus, some translations understand *'sr mrkbt⁵y* to be a participial construction in apposition to *mzh/ b'l*. In these cases, the verbal aspect of the participle rather than the nominal aspect is expressed in the translation: e.g., “who harnesses his chariot” instead of “the harnesser of his chariot,” though the latter translation may be more accurate. Others have suggested the *-y* reflects the 1cs suffix, but difficulties arise in the rest of the translation, for the voice must be the malevolent entity referenced throughout the first section. With this said, it is possible the *-y* suffix here is being used in an accusative sense. Garr (1985, 101) has suggested



Figure 6.1. Photos of the Arslan Tash plaque. Courtesy of Wayne Pitard and Theodore Lewis.

Line 4	ʾš.bšdh.w gl ʿn	(like) fire in the field and round eye
Line 5	b šdh.ʾy.ʾl	was [also] in the field. Where is ʾl
Line 6	šyy.qrš.	šyy, the devourer/crusher?

Section 2 / Reverse (Preventative Measures of Incantation)

Line 7	nʿlt.mnʿl	I bolted the bolt!
Line 8	brḥ ʿyn	Depart, looker/Eye!
Line 9	bdd b rʾš mgmr.	Retreat from the head of the one who accomplishes
Line 10	bnt.b rʾš.ḥlm ky	understanding, from the head of the dreamer! For

Left Edge

Line 11	hlmt ʿn b tm.ʿn yt	whenever I strike the eye, in the destruction of the eye, destroyed
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Top Edge

Line 12	m. [] ⁶ nm	are the (two) eyes.
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Bottom Edge

Line 13	mnty.k mglt	My incantations are according to the scroll.
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that by the late eighth century BCE the distinction between the accusative (*ô*) and genitival suffixes (*iyû/i*) had begun to deteriorate, with the genitive vowel predominating.

6 The gap indicated by the brackets represents a gap between the letters caused by the protuberance from which the amulet was supposedly hung.

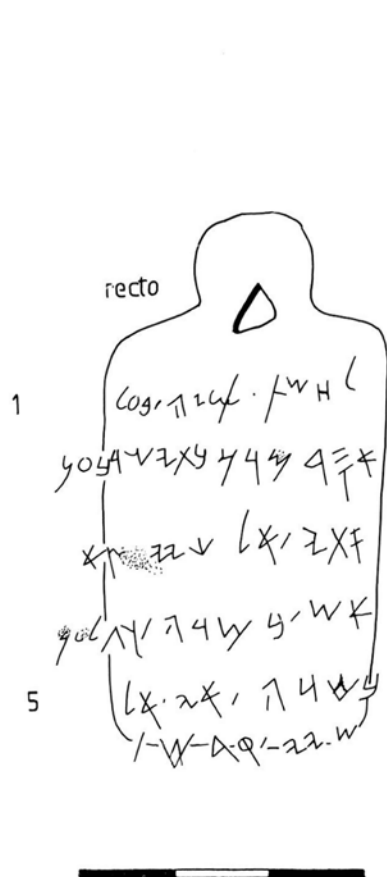


Figure 6.2. Pardee's (1998) handcopy of the descriptive section of text.



Figure 6.3. Pardee's (1998) handcopy of the reverse with preventative measures.

SECTION 1

Section 1 begins with an introductory clause: An incantation against the “splatterer” or “sucker,” depending on whether the root is a *yiphil* participle from *nzh* “to splatter” or a *qal* participle of *mzh* “to suck.”⁷ A similar introduction is found in the larger text found at Arslan Tash, perhaps thereby suggesting the forms represented common incantatory formulas.⁸ The participle is most likely either the actual name of the demon, That-Which-Sucks, or Splatterer, or the descriptive term for the type of malignant force, i.e., the thing that sucks/splatters (presumably the life fluids of the victim). As noted earlier, the depiction on the plaque is one in which the apparently malevolent being seems to be sucking on the torso of the unfortunate victim. Thus, the term connects the text with the image by identifying the perceived threat of the being.

The last word of line 1 is the common Semitic word *b'l*. While the reading is clear, the intent of the term is difficult to ascertain. Most scholars, including Pardee, suggest the noun refers to the deity *b'l* and begins the next sentence,⁹ though Pardee finds this case difficult to accept because of Baal's association with other figures in the incantation who appear to be malevolent. Cross, on the other hand, suggested that *b'l* be un-

7 See Gaster 1973, 20–21, and Lipinski 1974, 51, who argue for *mzh*. The final *-h* appears to be a *mater lectionis* denoting the Aramaic influence on the text.

8 For more on Arslan Tash I, see Pardee 1998, which addresses that text as well.

9 See Gaster 1973, 19; Lipinski 1974, 51; Röllig 1974, 29; Avishur 1978, 30; Gibson 1982, 89; Pardee 1998, 19. They all follow Caquot's lead in seeing *b'l* as referring to the deity *b'l*.

derstood as standing in apposition to *mzh*, thus providing the reading, “An incantation against the sucker, the chief one,” which appears to fit the overall context better, as will be shown.¹⁰

With that said, the first clause of line 2, “(who) harnessed his chariot,” appears to strengthen the reading of *b'l* in line 1 as the deity Baal, since Baal is associated in the Ugaritic literature with the riding and harnessing of a chariot.¹¹ The last clause, which comprises the last two words of line 2 and the first word of line 3 and which completes the sentence (“and Great Eye was with him”), describes an entity not associated with any account of Baal. Nevertheless, because of the apparent association of lines 1 and 2a, Gaster and others have suggested the scene is one of Baal as divine warrior attended by at least one other being embarking on a campaign against the demon *mzh*.¹²

The difficulties with a reading of *b'l* as a deity begin in the next sentence: “*ʾl šyy* went out (like) fire in the field and Open Eye [if the root is *gl ʿn*] / Round Eye [if from the root *gll*] was also in the field.” Though it appears to parallel sentence two, with *ʾl šyy* as the analogue to Baal and Round/Open Eye to Great Eye, the designation *ʾl šyy* also appears in line 6 in parallel with the participle of *qrš*, or “devourer”: “Where is *ʾl šyy*, the devourer?” Because of the similarity in orthography between the *daleth* and the *resh*, some read the last three letters of line 6 as *qdš*, suggesting “the holy one.”¹³ This reading supposedly completed the narrative arc in which an unknown voice, presumably the owner of the plaque, issued a plea for Baal as *ʾl šyy* to come with his entourage and protect the household or individual against the *mzh*.

But Pardee’s collation confirmed the middle letter as a *resh* instead of a *daleth*, thus reading the term as the substantive, “devourer.” With this reading, *ʾl šyy* should now be understood as related textually to the *mzh*, since both *mzh* and *qrš* reflect negative, demonic qualities. Moreover, such a reading provides a solution to a narrative problem arising from *ʾl šyy*-as-*qdš*-as-Baal, viz., the lack of an antagonist after the mention of *mzh* in line 1. With the orthography now confirmed, section 1 may be understood as a narrative whole in which a demonic entity, *Mzh-ʾl Šyy-Qrš*, with its entourage, Great-Open/Round Eye, is on the move and whose exact whereabouts are unknown, thus necessitating the incantation.¹⁴

Not only does this reading make better internal narrative sense, it also aligns this particular incantation with other evil-eye incantations, as imagery depicting the evil eye wandering the steppe and hinterlands is a common one in the incantation genre.¹⁵ For instance, in the Ugaritic incantation *KTU* 1.96, the evil eye is found on the move: *ʾnn.hlkt.wšnw* “the eye roams and darts.”¹⁶ Similarly, in one Mesopotamian text again the evil eye is described as roaming, while in another the eye searches the “corners,” “the side of the house,” and the “living quarters of the land,” and empties each one of life.¹⁷

10 Cross 1974, 271.

11 *KTU* 1.22 II 22; *KTU* 1.20, II, 3. Also the image of Baʿal riding his chariot is well known; see *KTU* 1.2 iv 8.

12 Gibson (1982, 90) asserts the usage here of the verb *ʾsr* should be seen in a military context.

13 Cross 1974. It should be said that the original reading by Caquot assumed a *resh*.

14 Beyond the identification of *ʾl šyy* with the malevolent entity, the meaning is unclear. While some scholars have attempted to see the title as the designation “Alashian” or Cypriote (see Caquot and du Mesnil du Buisson 1971; Lipinski 1974, 31; Rölli 1974, 31; Gaster 1973, 22), others have suggested it is another designation of Baal (Gibson 1982; Pardee 1998), though Pardee does note the problematic narrative that arises from such a reading. Cross suggested an etymology of “booty” (*šy*) with an adjectival ending similar to that found in some Ugaritic divine names, thus rendering the designation as “divine Spoiler” and therefore representing one of the malevolent entities described therein. Because of the uncertainty as to meaning, I have simply provided the transliteration and noted the designation’s relationship with the other identifications in the text.

15 Ford 1998, 211: “The ‘roaming’ of the eye refers, on one hand, to the ever-moving, searching glance of the physiological eye. On the other hand, roaming (with evil intent) is characteristic of demons and ghosts.” Much credit should be given to Ford for his seminal study on *KTU* 1.96 specifically and the evil eye in the ancient Near East generally. For more on the evil eye in Mesopotamian texts, see Marie-Louise Thomsen 1992, 19–32.

16 *KTU* 1.96, line 1. See also Pardee 2002, 12; Ford 1998, 202.

17 BM 122691:vs, line 1; CT 17, 33, lines 5–8. See also Ford 1998, 256–58 appendix 2. In Abusch’s recent study (2015) on the Maqlû incantation series, roughly contemporary to the Arslan Tash document (670 BCE), and specifically Maqlû III, lines 1–3, the malevolent entity (the witch) is described as one who “roams the streets | who continually intrudes into houses | who prowls in alleys,” while in Maqlû VI, lines 144–145, the witch is again described as a wandering entity: “You who (con-

The monstrous nature of entities may also be indicated by the locale in which they are wandering. Line 5 indicates they are “in the *šdh*,” an intermediary geography between urbanized settlements and the uncontrollable wilderness and which may or may not have been cultivated. Similarly, the Ugaritic cognate *šd*, often translated as steppeland, and the Akkadian *šadû* both suggest similar terrain and usage, and it is the dual usage that makes the demon’s presence within it particularly dangerous. While its presence may be expected in the true wilderness, its wandering through the liminal territory of the *šdh*, which is neither wilderness nor urbanized cosmos, renders the inhabitant of this geography particularly vulnerable.¹⁸

Finally, the association of the malevolent entity in the Arslan Tash II plaque with the evil eye may be seen in another associative set—that of the evil eye and fire. Line 4 begins with the word *š*, which some scholars have assumed to be a relative pronoun, thereby rendering the reading as “*l šyy* goes out [line 3], who is in the field” and thus emphasizing the hunting grounds of *l šyy*. Alternatively, Gibson suggests it be read as “fire,” thus providing a reading of “*l šyy* sends forth fire in the field” or “*l šyy* goes out [line 3], [like] fire in the field,” depending on whether one wishes to make the verb a *yipihil* or a simple *qal*.¹⁹ Either form works, since the intent would be to establish an association between the demonic entourage and fire. This association would emphasize the malevolent nature of either the entity’s movement (if one takes the verb as a *qal*) or the spreading of its influence (if read as a *yipihil*), both of which activities are likened to unchecked fire in a field: violent, destructive, lightning fast, and uncontrollable.

The textual description appears to have been reinforced by the imagery, for part of the malevolent entity’s physiology includes feet of scorpions, which were themselves often the subject of incantations and whose sting can be described as burning.²⁰ Certainly the sting was associated with illness. As to which of the fire readings is preferable, considering the incantation’s concern as to the location of the malevolent beings or, more precisely, the inability to locate them, reading the verb as a *qal* provides for a narrative structure that builds on a central theme: the unknown and therefore threatening whereabouts of the malevolence.

Moreover, it is possible that the mention of fire also alludes to the consumption of the victim. Like fire that survives by feeding, so the wandering malevolence feeds on its victims, as depicted on the image. Anthropophagy is a common characteristic of demonic entities throughout the ancient Near East. In *KTU* 1.96 we find the eye—“Without a knife it devoured his flesh, without a cup it guzzled his blood” (lines 3–4)—while in an Akkadian text from Ugarit, Lamashtu is described as follows: “You relentlessly con[su]me the . . . go[re] (?) of hum[ans]. Flesh which is not to be [eaten], bones [which are not to be . . .].”²¹ In another Akkadian incantation demonic entities are described as “Devourers of flesh, who cause blood to spurt, who

stantly) roam over all the lands | who cross to and fro over all mountains.” The wandering malevolence in Maqlu III may also be associated with the evil eye. According to lines 8–13, the witch “robbed the fine young man of his virility | she carried off the attractiveness of the fine young woman | with her malignant stare she took away her charms | she looked at the young man and (thereby) robbed his vitality | she looked at the young woman and (thereby) carried off her attractiveness | the witch has seen me and has come after me” (Abusch 2015, 71).

18 For more on the demonic wilderness, see Talmon 1966, 31–63; also see Wyatt 2005, 47–52. Though both studies concentrate on the *midbār* rather than the *šdh*, in at least one biblical reference, Joshua 8:24, *šdh* is paralleled with *midbār*, thus suggesting a greater semantic usage for *šdh*, which includes the dangerous wilderness as well as cultivated field.

19 Gibson follows a *yipihil* reading.

20 Avishur (1978, 29) believes the incantation is explicitly for a scorpion sting. Frankfurter has suggested the late Mesopotamian apotropaic inverted bowls evolved from the more mundane act of trapping scorpions that got inside dwellings (see Frankfurter 2015, 13–14). Subsequently, they became associated with more demonic entities: “While very few of the late antique Mesopotamian bowls actually mention or depict scorpions as manifestations of the demonic, the verbal and iconographic adjuration of scorpions was quite widespread in the ancient and late antique Near East, no doubt because of the lethal nature of these small creatures’ stings. Furthermore . . . the scorpion’s threat to children and domestic safety crossed ‘natural’ and demonic domains. That is to say, the practicality of averting or killing ‘real’ scorpions . . . regularly shaded over into demonic scorpions, or scorpions as manifestations of the demonic” (ibid., 14).

21 Ug VI, 396, lines 14–17: tal-ta-[na-at-ti ū]š a-m[i?-lu-ti | [niš-b]u?-ti | UZU ša la [a-ka-li] | UZU.GÌR.PAD. DU [ša la še-be-r]i(??)

guzzle [the blood of] the veins”—a description that resonates with the demonic entities in the Arslan Tash II plaque.²²

The anthropophagic nature of *Mzh/Qrš*, with the apparent anthropophagic qualities of Big Eye, and its association with fire may also allude to the manner in which one is afflicted by the evil eye or demonic presence. Illness may be described as a wasting away, or a consuming, of one's physical soundness, while the secondary symptom of fever may further associate the consumption with burning fire; the rapid experience of illness may also be associated with the spread of a fire in the wilderness.²³

As noted earlier, section 1 ends with the query, “Where is ʾl šyy the devourer?” which not only completes the narrative but also encapsulates the problem for which the plaque owns its existence, viz., the roaming presence of the demonic entourage, whose unknown whereabouts and deadly effects threaten the individual or household. Thus section 1 may be understood as descriptive or as diagnostic in nature. Section 2, which comprises the iconographic portrayal of the demonic figure surrounded by text, may be understood, then, as the preventative measures ensuring safety against the malevolence.

SECTION 2

The primary features of section 2 are, as has already been stated, (a) a demonic figure eating the upper torso of an individual and (b) the text itself. Though Big/Round Eye is not depicted independently of the entity, the image possesses a lidless, prominent eye, and thus the image appears to be a composite of the malevolent entities described in section 1. As for the text, it is read from the right side, up across the upper space of the image, down the left side of the plaque, and across the top of the plaque itself, ending on the bottom. Thus, the image is completely surrounded by the text (see fig. 6.3). While it is possible that the placement of the text merely fills the available space, at least one word appears to have been deliberately placed. In line 8, the only *plene* spelling of ʾyn is found directly above the image of the eye of the figure.

Line 7 begins the preventative measures: “I bolted the bolt.” No one has seriously challenged this reading since Caquot first suggested it in 1971. As for its intent, though both Arslan Tash plaques are small enough that they could have been worn, Van Dijk's suggestion they were hung up near a door or other entranceway explains the first preventative measure (cf. fig. 6.4).²⁴ Moreover, in the first plaque, both the door and the doorpost of the house are actually mentioned, while concern of the demonic entities entering into the dwelling place is explicit.²⁵ As for the act itself, in *KTU* 1.100, a Ugaritic incantation presumably addressing snakebite, mention is made of shutting up the house and sliding the bolt, apparently as part of the preventative measures, thus suggesting the preventative measure in Arslan Tash II does not represent an isolated mention but rather is commonly found in incantations.²⁶

Similar concern for the evil eye in liminal spaces can be found in other incantations. For instance, one Akkadian incantation declares: “The Eye, with evil (intent) called at the gate, the thresholds creaked, the beams quaked; in the house which it enters, [it does . . .]—it is the Eye!” Another incantation reveals the threat of the evil eye to the liminal space of the womb: “It passed through the doorway of infants and incited discord

22 CT 16, 14: iv 27: “*ākil šūri mušaznin damē šātū ušlāti*.” Similar anthropophagy is a characteristic of Ptolemaic Egyptian demons as well (see Ford 1998, 231). Though much later, an eighteenth century CE Ethiopic incantation against the demonic eye demonstrates the lasting association of anthropophagy with the eye: “A prayer concerning the illness, Ainat (the Eye). Ainat go away in red and black . . . God drives you out, greatly cursed one! One who eats flesh and drinks blood!” See Ford (1998, 231–33), who provides a greater discussion of these texts.

23 Though the association of fire and anthropophagy is not present in *KTU* 1.96, in his study Ford does note an Akkadian text from Ugarit (Ug V, 17, rev, line 24) that describes the demon *išātu* (“Fire”) as one who devours the flesh of the victim and who consumes the victim's bones. Demonstrating the ubiquitous nature of the demonic, an eighteenth century CE Arabic incantation also describes the fever of an illness as a fire that eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the victim (see Ford 1998, 235–36).

24 van Dijk 1992, 65–68, esp. 67.

25 Arslan Tash 1, lines 23, 26. See Conklin 2003.

26 *KTU* 1.100, lines 70b–71a: *bʿdh . bhtm . sgrt | bʿdh . dbt . tlt* “Behind her the house she has shut | Behind her she has set the bronze bolt.”



Figure 6.4. Nazar (evil eye amulets) protecting entrances (above door on the grating) in Christian Quarter, Old City Jerusalem, 2014; author's photo.

word seems to be a *plene* spelling of “eye” that many take to be a *qal* active participle,²⁹ thus providing a reading of “Looking one” or even “One who cast the [evil] eye.” It is equally possible, however, that the form of the word is merely the *plene* spelling of the noun, in which case it may be simply translated “Eye.” More significant appears to be the deliberate placement of *ʾyn* directly above the image’s prominent eye, thus suggesting an association between the image and the malevolent eye alluded to in the preventative measures. Functionally, this placement highlights not only the identity of the entity but also its location, which was the primary concern of section 1. Thus the *plene* spelling of the word and its placement do not appear coincidental but are deliberate, visual ways of addressing the two concerns of section 1, identity and location, thereby enhancing the incantation’s overall efficacy.

In fact, the relationship between textual placement and incantatory efficacy appears to be present beyond the *plene* spelling. As noted earlier, the figure appears to represent the demonic subject of the plaque, with the spread legs suggesting the mobility of the figure as noted in section 1. But unlike the description of the unimpeded movement of the demon in section 1, the depicted monster’s movement is completely surrounded by the text of the preventative measures. Thus, the lines of the text and the imagery may be understood as neutralizing the primary threats associated with the malevolent entity; the lines of text do so by encircling and restraining the entity in one locale, the image does so by depicting and thus identifying the malevolent being.³⁰

among the infants; it passed through the doorway of women in labor and strangled their babies. It entered the *bit qe* and broke the sealing.”²⁷ If line 7 of the Arslan Tash II plaque reflects not only the preventative act but also the placement of the plaque, then already the text is more than simply an incantation—it is a material object with apotropaic usage independent of the textual meaning, an aspect of the plaque’s efficacy more particularly revealed in line 8.²⁸

Like line 7, the textual meaning of line 8 is fairly straightforward: “Depart, Looker/Eye!” The first word appears to be a simple *qal* imperative, while the second

27 VAT 10018:15, lines 5–7; BM 122691:vs lines 4–9. For a bibliography of these texts, see Ford 1998, 206–8.

28 The role of visualization in the efficacy of the incantation is obvious from the integration of the imagery with the text. Kitz, speaking particularly of the making of visual boundaries in Mesopotamian incantations, suggests the visualization may have had psychological value: “Anyone can immediately appreciate the psychological boost the sufferer probably experienced when a visible representation of a boundary curse was drawn around his or her bed, house, and gate. This could not help but give the victim hope. For any patient would have difficulty recovering if he or she knew that the expelled hostile powers could freely return with impunity and wreak havoc all over again” (Kitz 2014, 275).

29 In Biblical Hebrew one is found with this root in 1 Sam. 18:9, with a *waw* as the *mater lectionis*.

30 The conceptualization of the evil eye as a demonic entity is not unique. In *KTU* 1.96 the eye is also described in demonic guise. See Ford 1998, 211: “In *KTU*² 1.96 the ‘Eye’ in addition to roaming (with evil intent), is also said to run and to devour its victim, both documented activities of demons, and is finally commanded to return to its master. This suggests a concep-

The role of textual placement in the efficacy of an incantation is not isolated to Arslan Tash II, as it appears also to play a role in the first and larger Arslan Tash plaque. Similar to the second plaque, the images and text interact, with the text not only surrounding the demonic images but also written across the images themselves. The clauses found on the malevolent entities as well as the presumed deity image either highlight the danger of their unimpeded mobility (“from a dark room she hereby passes immediately tonight / From my house [into] the streets she [hereby] goes”), similarly to the concerns of the first section of the Arslan Tash II plaque, or, in the case of the assumed deity, the protection/purification he will provide (“He [hereby] emerges to my door, and illuminates the doorposts. Šamš [hereby] emerges”).³¹

Efficacy via textual placement and its interaction with imagery is found elsewhere in the ancient Near East. Kitz, in her recent study, notes that some Lamashtu amulets and other Neo-Assyrian amulet plaques meant to “deter pestilence from entering a house” contain not only the textual incantation but also “occasionally use triangles in various areas of the tablet,” both along the borders of the amulets and in the smaller, rectangular extensions often found on the tops of the plaques. Kitz suggests the triangles represent battle nets, often associated with deities, with the purpose of their representation being to “catch” the malevolent entity that is the subject of the plaque. Often text is found in the space between the triangles, and Kitz suggests a reason for this placement: “nefarious powers are supernatural, there was always the possibility that they could slip through the mesh like small fish. To prevent this from happening, incantations were actually written in these vulnerable areas.”³² Similarly, many of the Lamashtu plaques include an image of the demon surround by *zi-pa/d₃* DN (“be cursed by the life of DN”) formulas incorporating a pattern familiar to that found in the Arslan Tash plaques.³³

Some of the Neo-Assyrian pestilence plaques also contain rectangular spaces divided into triangles, with text filling the empty spaces. Reiner suggests these areas are representations of “the sign of Aššur in the form of the BĀRA-sign (i.e., the shape of the magic square).”³⁴ Kitz, commenting on Reiner’s suggestion, suggested that it “strongly counsels a correlation between the tablet itself and the shape of the BARAG/BARA₂-sign. The sign, especially as written on the plaque, is indeed suggestive of the ‘amulet’ profile of the tablet.” She concludes, “If the inscription, the shape of tablet and sign, the Sumerian and Akkadian meanings of the word associated with the sign are all delightfully interconnected, then we may have a glimpse into the multilevel range of symbolic meanings upon which the object draws to be effective. One cannot help but feel that a combination such as this makes the amulet very powerful.”³⁵

Though they come from a later period, many of the Aramaic incantation bowls appear to assume the placement of orthography enhanced the efficacy of the object. Often demonic images are depicted on the interior bottoms of such bowls and encircled by text, which may or may not have been intelligible, again suggesting that textual placement had symbolic significance. In all these cases, textual placement worked with the imagery (or perhaps was viewed as part of the imagery itself) to depict the location of the perceived threat and isolate it so the rest of the incantation could be effective against it. In this respect, the *plene* spelling along with the surrounding incantation of the Arslan Tash II plaque may not be a unique innovation but a variation of a common feature found on inscribed incantations.³⁶

Recognition of the role of textual placement in locating and immobilizing the malevolence may inform a new reading of the last two preventative measures. The next sentence, comprising line 9 and most of

tualization of the evil eye as a distinct demon, as proposed by del Olmo Lete. Del Olmo Lete thus compares the Ugaritic text with CT 17, 33 and other Sumero-Akkadian incantations in which the ‘evil eye’ is presented acting independently of its owner and sometimes hypostatized, as a ‘monster’ or an animal.”

31 Conklin 2003, 89–101.

32 Kitz 2014, 289.

33 Ibid., 286.

34 Reiner 1960.

35 Kitz 2014, 287–89.

36 Frankfurter (2015, 12), noting the bowls appeared to act as traps that rendered the demon harmless by catching and thus incapacitating the entity, suggested the text worked in tandem with the image: “It is not the text that demands the inverted bowl (e.g., for its interiority or secrecy) but simply that the bowl serves as the graphic and ritual medium for the text.”

line 10, has traditionally been read as focusing on the further identification of the eye entity. The sentence begins with *bdd b r's*, with the first word often taken as a participle meaning “the one who separates,” thus rendering the clause as “the one who separates from the head.” In this reading, the object is the malevolent force, by implication the eye or looker mentioned in line 8. Thus line 9 continues the action from line 8 by identifying again the negative force, i.e., looker/eye (i.e., the one who separates from the head). If *bdd* is understood as a participle, then the last word of line 9, *mgmr*, would parallel *bdd*.

Based on the root *gmr*, the participle means either to “destroy completely” or “complete, finish.” If read as “one who destroys,” then lines 9b and 10 may be translated thus: “the one who destroys the understanding [*bnt*] in the head of the dreamer [the participle *hlm*].”³⁷ In this reading the malevolent force has been identified three times: looker/eye, one who separates (presumably thought or intelligence) from the head, and the one who destroys understanding. Such a reading is plausible, since one of the functions of the preventative measures is to locate and identify the malevolent eye, thereby neutralizing the threat of the eye.

Yet it is possible that *bdd* is not a participle describing the malevolent entity, rather, an imperative, in which case the line represents a command for the entity to leave or depart, with *bdd* now being parallel in form and function to *brh*. Such a reading affects the rest of the sentence, since the final participle of line 9 does not have to begin the next clause but may be read as part of the prepositional phrase *b r's mgmr | bnt* (lines 9 and 10 respectively). In this case, *mgmr* would now be part of a construct phrase paralleling *r's hlm* in the next sentence and describing the sufferer: “from the head of the one who accomplished understanding, from the head of the dreamer.”

This reading emphasizes the neutralization of the threat of the entity’s presence rather than the identity of the entity itself. This understanding makes sense in terms of the internal logic of the incantation, for the identity of the malevolent being, having been identified in a number of ways, has never been in question, while the location has been explicitly stated as unknown and thus represents the threat. The two sentences that make up lines 8–10 work as one unit, commanding the eye to retreat or flee now that it had been located and immobilized by the placement of the plene *yn* and the surrounding text.³⁸

Regardless of which reading is correct, both indicate the eye impaired the cognitive abilities of the afflicted. Though Gaster found problematic the explicit mention of the head (the heart’s being the organ often associated with cognitive and emotional processes), concern over the head may be justified in two ways. First, fever, headache, and hallucinations are often symptomatic of illness, whether the illness is bacterial/viral or inflicted via an insect or animal bite. These symptoms are associated physiologically with the head, particularly the seeing of things that are not reality. These same symptoms may also have been alluded to in section 1 in the cluster of images of fire and scorpions associated with the demonic entities. Second, the preventative measures so far have shown concern over unauthorized entry. The head contains a number of openings, all of which may have been understood as vulnerable and necessitated awareness of in the incantation’s repertoire. Thus the physiological location noted in these lines also served to reinforce the incantation’s imperatives.

The last preventative measure begins with a *ki* clause at the end of line 10 and continues through line 12: “(For) whenever I strike the eye, in the destruction of the eye, destroyed is two-eyes.” Past interpreters have had trouble determining both the word order and even the line order of the text. Cross believed line 11 ended with a complete word, *ny*, the supposed *taw* being merely a scratch, and therefore translated the word as “his eye,” implying the eye of the sufferer.³⁹ Cross then suggested the text continued in line 13, the

37 Some (see Avishur, Cross) have suggested an *ayin* rather than a *bet* begins line 10 and therefore have translated the first word as “eyes”; but Pardee’s collation has demonstrated the presence of the *bet*, thus rendering a reading of *bnt* “intelligence, understanding,” which provides a parallel with the next clause, “the head of the dreamer.”

38 Though *bdd* is commonly defined as “to be separate, withdraw,” the imperative may be better translated “retreat,” in keeping with the martial imagery suggested in section 1; just as the demonic entity sallied forth into the field, so now must it retreat from its position. Moreover, it is possible to understand the verb not only in the sense of departing from but also returning to a place of origin, which sense would reflect a reciprocal element early in this second preventative measure. As we shall see, the role of sympathetic reciprocity will be the culmination of this incantation.

39 For the difficulties of this reading grammatically, see Gibson 1982, 92.

bottom edge of the plaque, with the final line being line 12, the top edge of the plaque: “this charm is from the scroll of the enchanter(s).”⁴⁰ His reading appears to be an outlier, however, for most scholars see line 12 as a continuation of line 11, which they take as ending with a *taw*: “*yt/m*.” Others have seen line 12 end with *k* instead of *m* and thus render their readings as “your eye” or “thy casting of the evil eye.”⁴¹ Other readings take the first letter of line 11 as a *het* rather than a *heh* (thus understood as a parallel to the *hlm* in line 10).

Beyond the orthographical issues are questions as to how to read the lines. Caquot and Avishur understood ‘*n btm* to mean “eye of the serpent” (based on *btm* as a cognate of *bašmu* in Akkadian and *bṭn* in Ugaritic) and thus a reflection of the malevolent entity, while Gaster translated the same clause, “by virtue of the Unblemished Eye” (from *tmm*), therefore reflecting a belief that an evil eye is vanquished by a perfect analogue to it.⁴² Cross, who read the first *taw* of line 11 as a prefix to ‘*n* rather than a suffix to the first word, translated the clause, “Let his eye see perfectly!” as already noted. Similarly, variant readings are provided for ‘*n yt/m* (end of line 11, beginning of line 12); the most common readings assume that *yt/m* is based on the noun “orphan,” thus giving the reading “orphaned eye” or “eye of the Orphan,” the designation apparently being a negative epithet.

Again, Pardee’s collation has clarified some of the orthographical issues by reaffirming a reading of an initial *heh* to begin line 11 (thus the verb *hlm* “strike, beat” coupled with the first-person suffix) as well as a final *mem* at the end of line 12 (thus “eyes”). The latter clarification in particular allows for another approach to the preventative measure. Beginning in line 11, this final measure threatens the malevolent being with destruction via a threatened striking or smashing by the same actor of the preventative measures in line 7, with the object struck being the assumed object of each preventative measure, i.e., the malevolent eye itself. Thus, the preventative measure begins with narrative continuity both in terms of action (an act that prevents or dissuades the eye) and in subject/object. In terms of actual performance, it is possible that the instructions reflect some type of act in which a replica or simulacrum of an eye was actually struck. This insight opens the possibility that the actual image on the plaque, with its prominent eye, now located and immobilized by both the incantation and the placement of the text, was actually struck.⁴³

Regardless of whether the instruction could be read as providing an actual set of ritual instructions, the threatened destruction influences the meaning of the rest of the sentence. The problematic *btm* may now be read as a preposition coupled with the infinitive form of *tmm*, which can carry the meaning of annihilation as well as perfection/completion—thus, “in the annihilation or destruction of the eye.”⁴⁴ This clause is dependent on the preceding verb and suggests the striking of the eye, whatever it entails, will completely destroy the actual eye, thus reflecting sympathetic reciprocity common to incantations. This description of the potential act taken against the perpetrator, in turn, leads to the last clause of the measure, *yt/m nm*. Pardee’s confirmation of the *mem* to end line 12 suggests the first word of the clause is not “orphan” but an imperfect of *tmm* followed either by the dual or plural ‘*nm*. His reading assumes a *yiphil* form; the subject of action is implicitly Baal from section 1, thus “he destroys both eyes.” The two eyes referenced may either be the great eye and round eye mentioned in section 1 or perhaps allude to an actual human agent.⁴⁵ The latter possibility would reflect an understanding that the presence of the evil eye was not a random event but instead a threat caused by the activity of another being. In fact, the experience of the evil eye has often been understood to be caused by envy or the ill-will of others. Other incantations note the threat of demon-

40 Cross 1974, 272.

41 The latter is Gaster’s suggestion: “since the verb *yt/m* has masculine prefix, ‘*n* in ‘*nk* cannot mean ‘your eye’ (for ‘*n*, of course, is fem.), but must be parsed as the verbal noun of /‘-y-*n*, ‘cast the evil eye.”

42 Gaster 1973, 26.

43 This act is reminiscent of Egyptian execration figures in which text identifying the individual(s) with the figurine is written on the figurine in order that smashing or breaking it rebounds on the entities it represents. See Ritner 1993, 136–42.

44 See Jer. 24:10; Josh. 8:24; 10:20; 5:6 (until the demise of all people).

45 Found throughout the Maqlû series are declarations that the witch or sorcerer afflicted the victim by sending malevolent forces against him (or her). “Who have given me over to a dead man, who have made me experience hardship | Be it an evil *utukku*-demon, be it an evil *alû* demon | Be it an evil ghost, be it an evil (demonic) constable | Be it an evil god, be it an evil lurker-demon” (Abusch 2015, 57; Maqlu II, lines 51–54 [51–69]).

ic forces via witchcraft and thus address not only the malevolent force but also the witch or sorcerer who caused the experience in the first place.

An alternative reading sees *ytm* not as a *yiphil* but as a *yuphal* common plural imperfect: “the (two) eyes are destroyed.” Bringing the reciprocity of the third preventative measure full circle, as the eye is struck, in its annihilation the two eyes that were either its subordinates or the human agent who was the cause of the evil eye in the first place were also destroyed. At least one Syriac incantation bowl included a similar threat: “May the evil eye that has smitten Yoyia son of Rashnendukh | be confounded and smitten.”⁴⁶ Though such a *yuphal* appears to be unattested elsewhere, the reciprocal nature of the preventative measure in which the victim becomes the agent of retribution (“When I strike the eye . . . the eyes are destroyed”) is one found elsewhere, which presence may strengthen this reading.⁴⁷ Thus the threefold preventative measures increase in their severity, starting with simple barring from entrance to commanding the evil to retreat to threatening the sender with destruction, with all accomplished by immobilizing the malevolence and thereby rendering it vulnerable to injury.⁴⁸

The incantation ends with the final colophon, on the bottom of the plaque, almost universally accepted as “my incantations are according to the scroll.” *Minûtu*, stemming from the verb *manû* “to recite,” is found in Akkadian with the specific meaning of the “recitation” of an incantation. Similarly, *mnt* in Ugaritic appears to be the technical word for incantation and may be found in both incantatory and mythical genres.⁴⁹ The apparent derivation from the Akkadian seems to denote that either the inscription is an innovation of an older oral tradition, or that oral performance may have played a role in the praxis associated with the plaque itself.⁵⁰ In fact, the incantation contains a number of alliterations or quasi alliterations particularly in the preventative section, from preventative measure 1 to the alliterative *hālim kiy hālamti* of lines 10–11 and finally the *’ên bi tamu yutamū ’ênêṁ*, which alliterations are all suggestive of the incantation’s oral performance.

The final word, *mglt*, appears to be a noun form derived from the verbal root *gll* “to roll up” and, when coupled with the preposition *k-*, suggests the incantation, presumably in written form, could be found on a master text.⁵¹ Gibson further suggested this mention was probably made so as to “remind the demon (and for that matter the household) that the incantation had proved effective on other occasions in the past.”⁵² Either way, the reference suggests that though the plaque is singular in existence now, the incantation was either copied or derived from an older text or textual collection, which itself may have reflected an even older oral tradition.

What does seem clear is that, for all its unique features, the Arslan Tash II plaque fits well within the genre of “evil eye” and other demonic incantations, not only in terms of description but also in the pre-

46 See Naveh and Shaked 1993, 120–21, bowl 17 lines 1–2.

47 In the Maqlû series the victim is often the agent of retribution, particularly in Maqlû II, lines 161–80, in which the victim, following a recitation of the sorceries performed against him, states that he now does the exact same activities against the sorcerers (see Abusch 2015, 65–66).

48 The preventative measures reflect both apotropaic and exorcistic elements similar to those of the Aramaic incantation bowls. See Naveh and Shaked 1985, 15: “The idea of keeping demon-traps in the house need not strike us as more ridiculous than that of placing mouse-traps. In both cases the hated victim, once caught, is incapacitated and is made powerless to cause harm. A harmless demon caught by the bowl constitutes no menace to the safety of the house. The text of the bowls very often talks of chaining and pressing the evil entities; at the same time, it may also bid them go away, leave the house and desist from bothering the house-owner. The bowl thus serves both to entrap the evil powers and to reject them; there is not real contradiction between these two propositions.” The same can be said for the measures of Arslan Tash II. It is also interesting to note that the same threefold pattern can also be found in the Maqlû series.

49 RS 24.244, 21. Following the line and its couplet is what appears to be the actual incantation.

50 Häberl (2015, 369) notes that at least two later Mandaic bowls included text that explicitly mentioned the role of oral presentation in the incantatory praxis (“thoroughly bound, sealed, tied and charmed with whispers”; “you murmur and you whisper”).

51 Contra Avishur (1978, 36), who sees the final word to be from the root *glh*, referring back to the round eyes of the demon. Gaster (1973, 26), referring to amuletic scrolls that were individually worn, believes the final word should be a plural.

52 Gibson 1982, 92.

ventative measures it enumerates. Moreover, the apparent role of textual placement in the efficacy of the incantation overall suggests that, while there may have been regional variation in such incantations, the principles governing incantatory efficacy remained generally the same for centuries, perhaps even millennia.⁵³ Yet even as this obscure object reflects similarities to other incantations, its distinctive characteristics will continue to fascinate the student of West Semitics for years to come.⁵⁴

53 This paper has demonstrated similar incantatory principles from the second millennium BCE down to the last century. One intriguing possibility that might reflect continuity from the Arslan Tash II plaque specifically is the emergence of Abrasax or Abraxas amulets in late antiquity. These amulets commonly depict an entity with a rooster's head and serpents for legs or feet. For a brief introduction, see Rudolph 1987, 23, 311. For a more in-depth study on this figure, see Merkelbach 1990–96.

54 Thus we concur with Pardee (1998, 41), who suggested it would perhaps be best to understand the Arslan Tash plaques as local variations on greater general incantation forms.

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7

A REVISED INTERPRETATION OF THE MELQART STELE
(KAI 201)*

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IN THE 1930S, A BASALT statue dedicated to Melqart by a man named Bir-Hadad was found in Roman ruins in Bureij, Syria (7 km north of Aleppo). The stele is one meter high, and the vast majority of the meter is filled with a bas-relief figure of the Phoenician god Melqart (fig. 7.1).¹ The remainder of the stele contains a five-line inscription identifying the dedicant as Bir-Hadad, and to date most scholars have linked this individual with the various Bir-Hadads known from biblical and Mesopotamian sources to have ruled Damascus (fig. 7.2).² In this article, however, we offer a revised reading of the Melqart Stele, a reading that shows that Bir-Hadad was the king of Arpad, from the line of Gūš. We then situate Bir-Hadad within the historical context of Northern Syria in the eighth century BCE.

From the beginning, reading the Melqart Stele was a challenge. The inscription was carved in porous basalt that has abraded, particularly on the right side. Over time, however, the following scholarly consensus has emerged about the majority of the translation:

The statue which Bir-Hadad, son of . . . ,
 king of Aram, set up for his lord, for Mel-
 qart, which he [Bir-Hadad] had vowed to
 him [Melqart] because/when he [Melqart]
 heard his [Bir-Hadad's] voice.

Nevertheless, the second half of the second line remains disputed.

The contested area of the inscription contains the name of Bir-Hadad's father. To date, many scholars have tried to read this difficult section of the inscrip-



Figure 7.1. The god Melqart.

* Hackett presented a version of this paper at the 2012 American Oriental Society meeting in Boston. We would like to thank the audience members for their insightful comments. The interpretation is the result of an Old Aramaic class taught at the University of Texas, with Dr. Ryan Byrne as a guest. The students in the class, along with Dr. Byrne, made many suggestions that have influenced the readings in this paper. We are privileged to be participating in this volume in honor of a scholar who has had such a significant influence on us all.

1 All the photographs in this essay are courtesy of Wayne T. Pitard and the Department of Antiquities, Syria. They are available on InscripTifact; the photograph above is ISF_DO_43227.

2 InscripTifact ISF_DO_43231.

tion, but no one has offered a conclusive interpretation. W. F. Albright, for example, read “Bir-Hadad, son of *Ṭāb-Rammān, son of Ḥazyān*,” matching the “Ben-Hadad, son of Ṭabrimmōn, son of Ḥezyōn” known from 1 Kings 15:18.³ Frank Moore Cross, on the other hand, read “Bir-Hadad, son of *ʿEzer*,”⁴ who, he suggests, is the same as Hadadʿezer, king of Damascus. Assyrian sources indicate that Bir-Hadad, son of Hadadʿezer, ruled Damascus in the ninth century BCE, which is where paleography puts this inscription. Edward Lipiński suggested *Ezer-Šamaš* for the name of Bir-Hadad’s father,⁵ while William Shea proposed *Ezer of Damascus*.⁶ Pierre Bordreuil and Javier Teixidor, after a firsthand study of the stele, read *Ezra* and connect him with Beth-Rehob.⁷ André Lemaire has supplied the most unusual suggestion by reading “Bir-Hadad, son of *Ḥezion/Ḥazyān, son of*” and supplying *Hazael* in the lacuna.⁸ Overall, the assumption that Bir-Hadad ruled over Damascus unites these different interpretations.

Wayne Pitard was the first scholar to question this assumption. In 1985 he went to Syria to study the inscription and took high-resolution photographs of the stele. Based on his firsthand examination of the inscription, he read *ʿAttar-hamek* as the name of Bir-Hadad’s father and suggested the latter third of line two was left intentionally blank. He was also the first scholar to connect Bir-Hadad with Northern Syria instead of Damascus.⁹

The photos and interpretations in Pitard’s 1988 *BASOR* article provided the starting point for our new readings. Pitard’s drawing of the inscription (our fig. 7.3; = Pitard’s fig. 2, from p. 4 in his *BASOR* article cited above) shows even more how abraded the letters are. Notice again the large empty space at the end of line 2; this space seems odd given that the letters in the other lines are squeezed in fairly tightly.



Figure 7.2. Base of the Melqart stele with Bir-Hadad inscription.

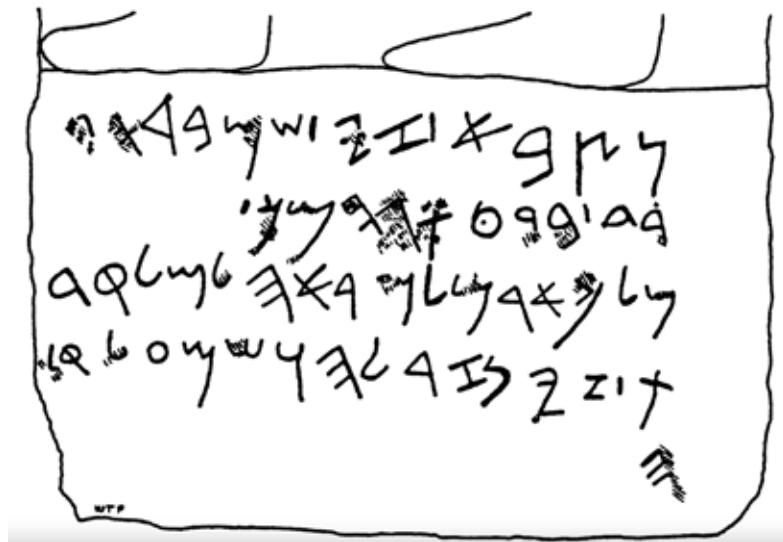


Figure 7.3. Pitard’s drawing of the inscription.

³ Albright 1942.

⁴ Cross 1972.

⁵ Lipiński 1974, 15–19.

⁶ Shea 1979.

⁷ Bordreuil and Teixidor 1983, 271–76.

⁸ Lemaire 1984.

⁹ Pitard 1988.

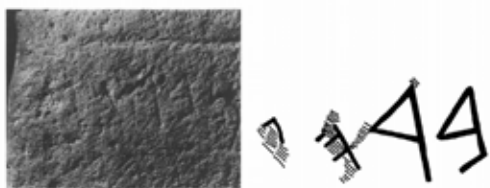


Figure 7.4. Photograph and drawing of the end of line 1, *brh* d¹.



Figure 7.5. Photograph and drawing of the middle of line 2, *tr*.

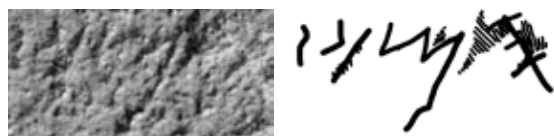


Figure 7.6. Photograph and drawing of the middle of line 2, *smk*.



Figure 7.7. Photographs and drawings of *sāmeks* from the Tel Dan inscription (left) and the Hadad inscription (right).

Until line 2, our reading follows the consensus view except that we concur with Pitard that the obvious smudge at the end of line 1 of his photo (our fig. 7.4; = Pitard's figs. 3 and 4, both on p. 5 of his article) shows evidence of an abortive and partially erased *dālet*. Apparently, the scribe intended to write two *dālets* after the *hē* but, unable to fit the second one in, he tried to erase the first one.¹⁰

Despite the divergent readings mentioned earlier, the name of Bir-Hadad's father actually begins easily enough, with a clear *ayin* and *tāw* (fig. 7.5). The third letter consists primarily of scratches, but there does seem to be part of a *rēš* there. The sequence *ayin-t-r* forms the divine name *Attar* as part of a theophoric personal name, so *rēš* makes sense in context. The fourth letter consists of a slanted vertical stroke, with several horizontal lines coming off it. Pitard could not tell whether any of these lines crossed the vertical stroke and therefore read this letter as *hē*. This reading gave him, in the end, an otherwise unattested name for Bir-Hadad's father, *Attar-hamek*. As figure 7.6 shows, however, we can see at least one cross-stroke intersecting the shaft of the letter and consequently prefer to read a *sāmek*. This *sāmek* is tilted farther counterclockwise than we expect in this early Aramaic script, but there are parallels. The Bir Hadad *sāmek* stands about 30 degrees counterclockwise from vertical. The *sāmek* on the left in figure 7.7 is from the Tel Dan inscription from the late ninth century and stands roughly 28–30 degrees counterclockwise from vertical, and the *sāmek* on the right in figure 7.7 is from the Hadad inscription from Zincirli, dated a century or so later. It stands about 20 degrees counterclockwise from vertical.

The last two letters and the following word divider are fairly clear: *mēm*, *kaf*, word divider. This reading yields a known and interesting name for Bir-Hadad's father: *Attar-sumkī*, a figure known from several Neo-Assyrian inscriptions as a king of Arpad. Émile Puech came to the same conclusion,¹¹ but he read the rest of the line as <BR.HDRM> "Bir-Hadrame," because Hadrame was the father of *Attar-sumkī* of Arpad. <HDRM> is too many letters for the available space, however.¹² Instead, we argue that "Bir-Gūš" is the best reading here.

As Wilson-Wright first noticed, line two ends with a clear *šin* (see fig. 7.8).¹³ One of the things we know about kings of this dynasty was that they could be called Bir-Gūš. In several Neo-Assyrian documents,

¹⁰ Pitard noted this fact in his article.

¹¹ Puech 1992, 315–16.

¹² Judging by the other lines, there is room for five letters at most at the end of line two. Bir-Hadrame consists of six letters, none of which is particularly compact in form.

¹³ Presumably, this *šin* is the same object that Puech interpreted as the head of a *mēm* when he read the end of line 2 as <BR.HDRM>.

ʿAttar-sumkī, the king of Arpad, is called Bir-Gūš, after the eponymous founder of the dynasty (see below). Arpad is referred to as Bīt-Agūsī “House of Gūš” in Neo-Assyrian records.¹⁴ We had reason, then, to see whether there might be *b - r - g* in what remained of the line. There are two candidates for the lefthand stroke of a *gimel* just to the right of the *šin* at the end of the line.

On the righthand side of one of them there is also a down-sloping diagonal stroke, which may be an imperfection in the rock face; but, if deliberate, the letter matches the *gimel* from the roughly contemporary Zakkur stele (fig. 7.9, Zakkur inscription *gimel*). The next easiest sign to make out is a *bēt* after the word divider (see fig. 7.8). The letter is not complete, but part of the triangular head and sloped base are there. The *rēš* is harder to see. All that remains of it are a few faint traces of the head and a little bit of the shaft, but *rēš* makes the most sense in context. Finally, we believe that the *wāw* in line 4 that has caused such consternation is actually a *kaf*. As figure 7.10 shows, the third stroke of a *kaf* is visible in Pitard’s photograph; the stroke slants down and away from the shaft. We suggest this *kaf* represents the enclitic temporal conjunction *kī* “because” before the verb *šmʿ*. When written as a separate word, this conjunction is usually written *ky*. In this case, the final phrase matches the common Phoenician votive formula: *kšmʿ ql* “because he heard my voice” (e.g., *KAI* 38:2).¹⁵ An alternative possibility is to see the *k* as the preposition, attached to the infinitive of *šmʿ*, so *ka-šamāʿ*, understood as “when he heard.” Figure 7.11 is a drawing of our reading of the letters in the inscription.

Transliteration:

1. nšbʿ . zy . šm br h {d}
2. dd . br ʿtrsmk . br gš
3. mlk ʿrm lmrʿh lmlqr
4. t . zy nzt lh kšmʿ lql
5. h

Vocalization:

1. našibaʿ dī šām bir ha{d}
2. dad bir ʿattarsumkī bir gūš
3. malk ʿaram li-marʿih li-milqar
4. t dī nadar lih kīšamaʿ li-qāli
5. h

Translation:

1. The statue which Bir-Ha-
2. dad, son of ʿAttar-sumkī, Bir-Gūš,
3. king of Aram, set up [šm, line 1] for his lord, for Melqar-
4. t, which he [Bir-Hadad] had vowed to him [Melqart], because he [Melqart] heard his [h, line 5 = Bir-Hadad’s] voice
5. e (i.e., answered his prayer)

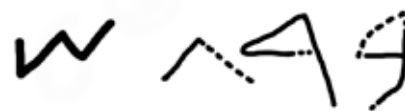


Figure 7.8. Photograph and drawing of the end of line 2, *br gš*.

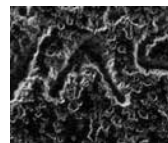


Figure 7.9. Photograph and drawing of a *gimel* from the Zakkur stele.

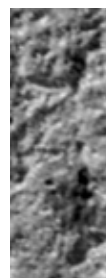


Figure 7.10. Photograph and drawing of the *kaf* from line 4.

¹⁴ For a convenient compilation, see Sader 1987, 99–143. See also Lipiński 2000, 195–219.

¹⁵ Contra Strawn 2005. It is not surprising to find a Phoenician votive formula in this inscription since it was commissioned in honor of a Phoenician god.

HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

We know several facts about ʿAttar-sumkī of Arpad and can add several inferences. ʿAttar-sumkī was a king from the line of Gūš, the founder of a dynasty originally from the tribe of Yaḥan in the early ninth century BCE.¹⁶ The tribe itself is first mentioned in the annals of Asšhur-dan II, who ruled in the second half of the tenth century and extracted tribute from the tribe of Yaḥan.¹⁷ (At that time, they were settled farther east than was the later tribe.) This group is the same one known as Bīt-Agūšī in Assyrian inscriptions.

By the time of Asšhur-našir-pal II, the tribe of Yaḥan had moved farther west; he mentions them ca. 870.¹⁸ Gūš's son, Hadrame, was ruling from the city of Arnē by 858, when Šalmaneser III expanded westward and defeated him, and was on the throne of Arpad in 834, when he lost to Šalmaneser III again.¹⁹ By this time, the Assyrian army had sacked Arnē, and Arpad had become the capital city. The Assyrian evidence suggests that Hadrame started his rule ca. 860, although we do not know how long he ruled after 834.

His son, ʿAttar-sumkī, succeeded him and was ruling Arpad during Šamshi-Adad V's reign and perhaps earlier, for he is named as an enemy of Šamshi-Adad V, who ruled from 824 to 811, in a fragmentary inscription in private hands published by Ḥayim Tadmor.²⁰ Unfortunately, we have no other evidence for Šamshi-Adad V's campaign against Arpad, so we cannot date it more closely. If ʿAttar-sumkī began his rule around 825 or 820, his father must have had a thirty- or forty-year reign—quite a long one. ʿAttar-sumkī is also known to have been the king of Arpad when Adad-nirari III (811–783) defeated it around 805.²¹ Finally, Pierre Bordreuil published a seal bearing the name ʿAttar-sumkī that he dates to the first half of the eighth century, but that dating could suggest any time between 800 and 750.²² Puech goes so far as to suggest that the line of Gūš contained both an ʿAttar-sumkī I and an ʿAttar-sumkī II in order to account for the gap in time between Šamshi-Adad V's campaign and the seal published by Bordreuil.²³

We now know from the Melqart stele that ʿAttar-sumkī's son and successor was named Bir-Hadad, and we know that he was none of the Bir-Hadads whom scholars have suggested since the first attempts to decipher this inscription. Those kings all ruled from Damascus, and *our* Bir-Hadad is a king in Arpad. The fact that he is called “King of Aram” does not mean he was king in Damascus. In the Sefire Inscriptions, Mati-El is called King of Aram, and we know he ruled from Arpad. The Zakkur inscription (lines 4–9) also mentions a man called Bir-Gūš:

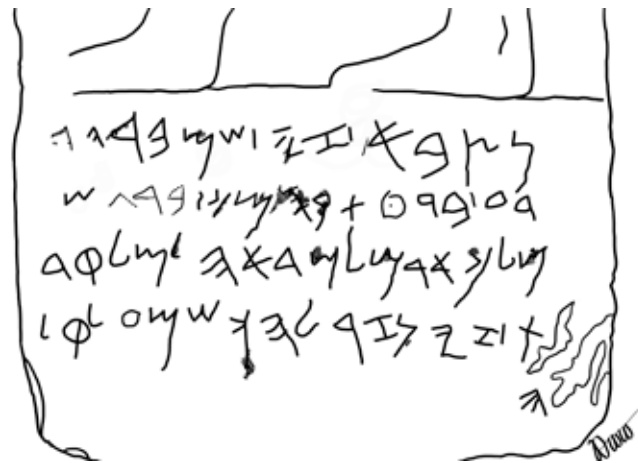


Figure 7.11. Drawing of the complete inscription.

16 Sader 1987, 37; Lipiński 2000, 195–96; Younger 2016, 524.

17 Lipiński 2000, 195; Younger 2016, 516.

18 Sader 1987, 99–100; Lipiński 2000, 195–96; Younger 2016, 516.

19 Lipiński 2000, 212, 214. Lipiński suggests it was Hadrame's loss to Šalmaneser III that triggered the former's moving the capital to Arpad.

20 Millard and Tadmor 1973, 57–64. On page 61, Tadmor rereads the initial publication of the fragment by V. Scheil, *RA* 14 (1917) 159–60.

21 Millard and Tadmor 1973, 59; Millard 1973, 162.

22 Bordreuil 1986, no. 86.

23 Puech 1992, 331–34; Younger 2016, 536.

Bir-Hadad, son of Hazael, king of Aram, united against me se[ven? ?] who were kings: Bir-Hadad and his army [presumably the Bir-Hadad son of Hazael just mentioned as leader of the rebellion]; and Bir-Gūš and his army; and the king of Que and his army; and the king of Umq and his army; and the king of Gurgum and his army; and the king of Sam'al and his army; and the king of Miliz and his army . . . they were seven kings with their armies.

The Zakkur inscription is usually dated somewhere in the early eighth century, but the Bir-Gūš who took part in the rebellion against Zakkur need not be ʿAttar-sumkī just because he is called Bir-Gūš on the Melqart stele. Bir-Gūš was simply a dynastic title applied to kings from the line begun by Gūš. After all, ʿAttar-sumkī is called Bir-Gūš in the Melqart stele, and we know his father was not Gūš but Hadrame.

Most epigraphers believe the script of the Zakkur inscription is later than that of the Bir-Hadad inscription on the Melqart stele, but not by much. The *zayin* in the Zakkur inscription is shaped like the English letter “z” and thus is a later form than the lines-and-crossbar *zayin* on the Melqart stele. Furthermore, at least one of the two ʿayins in the Melqart stele inscription (see line 2) still has an interior dot, unlike the ʿayins from the Zakkur inscription. Both inscriptions are incised on stone, so their scripts should be comparable, but of course the comparison is complicated because they were incised in different places: Zakkur was king of Hamath and Luash, while Bir-Hadad ruled in Arpad. Thus it is possible these paleographical differences reflect different regional styles. Nevertheless, most epigraphers would date Zakkur a few decades later than the Bir-Hadad inscription on the Melqart stele. If Bir-Hadad is writing inscriptions, his father ʿAttar-sumkī would already be dead, and since the Bir-Hadad/Melqart inscription predates the Zakkur inscription, ʿAttar-sumkī would have been dead when the Zakkur inscription was written. So the man called Bir-Gūš in the Zakkur inscription cannot be ʿAttar-sumkī, and is most likely the Bir-Hadad from the Melqart stele. He is perhaps called Bir-Gūš instead of Bir-Hadad in the Zakkur inscription to distinguish him from the other Bir-Hadad in the inscription—the Bir-Hadad who led the rebellion against Zakkur.²⁴

Since the man Bir-Gūš in the Zakkur inscription seems to be an important member of the coalition against Zakkur, we would expect him to be something other than a newly crowned king. If the Zakkur inscription is dated to around 780, we would assume that our Bir-Hadad of Arpad had ruled for a few years before that time. So ʿAttar-sumkī ruled from perhaps 825 till 790—another long, thirty-five-year reign, but not one of impossible length.

It is unclear how long Bir-Hadad reigned. We know from a treaty with Asshur-nirari V that a man named Mati-El from the same dynasty was ruling or at least important in Arpad by 754.²⁵ He is the same Mati-El who signed the Sefire treaties with Bir-Ga'yah of KTK, dated to the middle of the eighth century, and calls himself the son of ʿAttar-sumkī. Whether this self-designation means he was the physical son of a king ʿAttar-sumkī or was simply in his line is unknown, of course. So the end of Bir-Hadad of Arpad's reign must have been around 760 or perhaps even 750, thus making him the third king in a row with a very long reign even if there is some leeway with our paleographic dating.

In sum, we have very few solid dates on which to hang our various kings. The Aramaic inscriptions involved are dated by paleography and usually within a fairly wide range. So far we have found two solutions offered for reconstructing the line of Gūš. One view has Hadrame, ʿAttar-sumkī, and Bir-Hadad all ruling thirty-five or forty years. The second solution, suggested by Puech and mentioned earlier, is to posit the existence of two ʿAttar-sumkī's: ʿAttar-sumkī I, the father of Bir-Hadad and enemy of Adad-nirari III, and ʿAttar-sumkī II, the father of Mati-El and author of the seal inscription.²⁶ This theory would allow us to see Bir-Hadad assuming the throne sometime soon after 805, when ʿAttar-sumkī I was defeated by Adad-nirari III; making his vow and erecting the statue of Melqart thereafter; and surrendering the throne to ʿAttar-sumkī II, for whom we have no independent evidence but who would be the ʿAttar-sumkī from the seal and the physical father of Mati-El.

24 Lipiński 2000, 216.

25 Ibid., 216–19; Younger 2016, 537.

26 Puech 1992, 331–34; Younger 2016, 548.

Irene Winter (personal communication) has mentioned a third solution, which has also occurred to us, viz., that both Bir-Hadad and Mati-El are sons of the same ʿAttar-sumkī—a solution that would solve the problem of having evidence for only one ʿAttar-sumkī and that might also solve the problem of the long reigns. ʿAttar-sumkī was a king, after all, and kings are known to have had several wives and many children. If Mati-El was born to ʿAttar-sumkī in his old age, perhaps around 790 BCE, then at the time of the Sefire inscriptions Mati-El would have been only about forty years old and could have had a good long reign ahead of him. In this case, the line of Gūš would look something like the following:

Hadrame	860–825 BCE
Attar-sumkī	825–790 BCE
Bir-Hadad	790–760 BCE
Mati-El	760–??? BCE

The new context we have proposed here also helps clear up another problem with this stele, viz., that it *is* a Melqart stele. As long as scholars believed the dedicant of the Melqart stele ruled over Damascus, it was unclear how he came to worship a Phoenician god such as Melqart. This issue becomes much simpler if the dedicant of the Melqart stele ruled from Arpad, as we have argued here. The Phoenicians were merchants, of course, and traded far and wide: the Phoenician Kilamuwa inscription from Zincirli, for instance, was written at about the same time as our Bir-Hadad inscription, and the distance between Zincirli/Sam'al and Arpad is not very great. Lipiński points to a few more pieces of evidence, including the presence of a Phoenician scribe in Gozan at this same time.²⁷ This fact seems less important to us than the close proximity of the Phoenicians, well established in Anatolia in the late ninth century and beyond and always looking for metals and outlets to the Mediterranean. Arpad and Umq are the southern neighbors of Sam'al, so contact with the Phoenicians there would not have been at all strange.

These problems will not be solved without more evidence. But we hope to have at least put to rest the problem of a *Damascene* Bir-Hadad dedicating a statue to a *Phoenician* god, a statue that was found somewhere around *Aleppo*.²⁸ In fact, the Bir-Hadad of the Melqart stele was not from Damascus but was in the line of ʿAttar-sumkī of Arpad in Bīt Agūsi, not far from Aleppo, and in an area known to have a Phoenician presence. We should, then, not be surprised that a king from Arpad would make a vow to a Phoenician deity and erect a stele memorializing the vow and its success. Rather than being a problem, the inscription on the Melqart stele makes clear that its maker and its location were precisely what we might imagine.

²⁷ Lipiński 2000, 215–16.

²⁸ Layton and Pardee addressed the same question, but without resolution; see Layton and Pardee 1988, 172–89, esp. 177.

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8

THE INCISED ʾIŠBAʿL INSCRIPTION FROM KHIRBET QEYAFĀ
PALEOGRAPHIC, ONOMASTIC, AND HISTORICAL NOTES*

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THE *EDITIO PRINCEPS* OF THE ʾIŠBAʿL Inscription (fig. 8.1; note that the noun *baʿl* is a *qatl* segholate, so this noun was monosyllabic in the Iron Age, not bisyllabic¹) was recently published in the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*.² This *editio princeps* contains a fine discussion of the archaeological context of the inscription, some very good photographs, a brief synopsis of the script, reliable readings, a translation, and some discussion of the onomastics (personal names). The date for the *destruction of the site* is stated to have been the late eleventh century or very early tenth century BCE; thus the inscription was, of course, produced prior to that point (see more detailed discussion about the date below). It should be noted that an ostrakon (i.e., ink on pottery) was found at Qeiyafa during the excavations of 2008.³

According to the *editio princeps*, the readings of the incised ʾIŠBAʿL Inscription are: []. ʾšbʿl . {bn}. bdʿ. I believe these readings are correct. The authors of the *editio princeps* render the extant portion of this inscription (the very beginning of the inscription is not fully preserved, though some traces are present) as: “ʾIšbaʿal son of Bedaʿ.”⁴ They refer to the script as Canaanite, an acceptable term, although I have long preferred the broader term Linear Early Alphabetic. The authors of the *editio princeps* correctly note that this inscription was incised before firing and also that it is written sinistrotgrade (i.e., right to left).

DISCUSSION

The script of the ʾIŠBAʿL Inscription is typologically earlier than the Early Byblian Phoenician, including that of the Bronze ʿAzarbaʿl Inscription (fig. 8.2) and that of the ʾAḥiram Sarcophagus Inscription of the late eleventh and early tenth centuries BCE.⁵ However, the script of the ʾIŠBAʿL Inscription is much later than that of the incipient forms of the Linear Early Alphabetic script, namely, that of Serabit el-Khadem and Wadi

* I consider it a real privilege to be able to contribute to this volume honoring Dennis Pardee. I remember distinctly the first time I met Dennis. It was at the Aleppo Museum in 1995. He was reading and collating Ugaritic tablets at the museum, and I was about to begin excavating as a staff member of the Tell Umm el-Marra Expedition directed by Glenn M. Schwartz and Hans Curvers of Johns Hopkins University and the University of Amsterdam, respectively. Our excavation team had stopped by the Aleppo Museum for a brief visit. I was just a graduate student at the time. The thing I remember even now is the graciousness and kindness with which Dennis Pardee conversed with me. It was then I realized that not only was Dennis a tremendous scholar, he was also one of the finest people I had ever met. Through the years, his many kindnesses have continued. I shall always feel a great debt of gratitude to the scholar and to the man.

1 For discussion of segholates, see Huehnergard 2013, 520–22.

2 Garfinkel, Golub, Misgav, and Ganor 2015, 217–33.

3 Misgav, Garfinkel, and Ganor 2009, 243–57; see Rollston (2011, 67–82) for discussion and additional bibliography.

4 Garfinkel, Golub, Misgav, and Ganor 2015, 223.

5 For discussion of the Early Byblian Phoenician, see McCarter 1975; Rollston 2008a, 57–93; 2014, 72–99) and the primary and secondary sources cited therein.

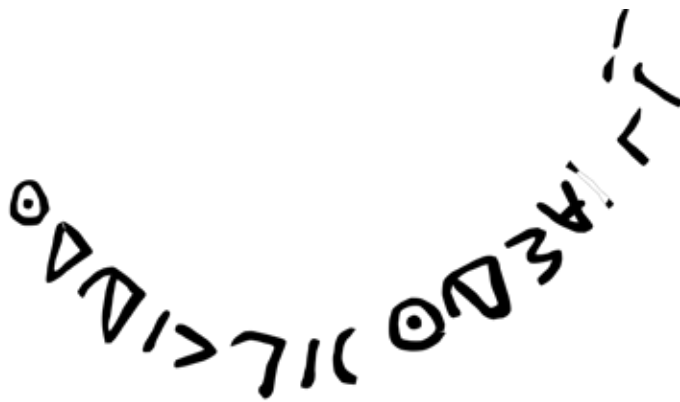


Figure 8.1. The 'Išba'1 Inscription.

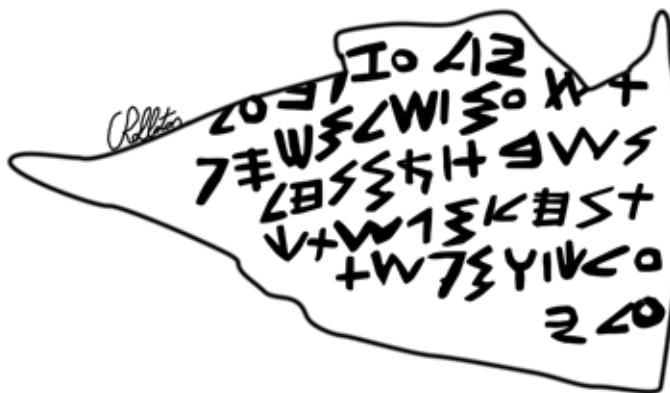


Figure 8.2. 'Azarba'1 (Early Byblian Phoenician).

el-Hol of around the eighteenth century BCE.⁶ The script of the 'Išba'1 Inscription, therefore, can be classified as the latest stage of Early Linear Alphabetic, just prior to the absolute dominance of the Phoenician script (though after the initial development of the distinct Phoenician script, which occurred in Phoenicia proper). The form of the word divider used in this inscription is that of a vertical downstroke, a form that is nicely attested in Linear Early Alphabetic (e.g., Qubur el-Walaydah).⁷

As for the stance in the 'Išba'1 Inscription of those fully preserved letters capable (in Early Alphabetic) of variable stances (e.g., 'alep, šin, bet, dalet), it is (i.e., the stance is) essentially rotated ninety degrees counterclockwise from the stance attested for the Early Byblian Phoenician inscriptions (e.g., 'Azarba'1, 'Aḥiram, 'Abiba'1, 'Eliba'1, Šipitba'1, etc.). To state it differently, the normal stance of these letters (i.e., 'alep, šin, bet, dalet) in Early Phoenician is rotated ninety degrees clockwise from the stance attested for these letters in the 'Išba'1 Inscription. In the case of *bet*, it is also written in “mirror image” (having to do with the variable direction of writing that was possible in the Early Linear Al-

phabetic script, that is, sinistroke, dextrograde, boustrophedon, or columnar), and (as mentioned above), the stance of *bet* is rotated ninety degrees counterclockwise from the stance of the Early Phoenician.⁸ In the case of *nun*, based on the traces present, it also seems to be written in mirror image.⁹ With regard to *lamed*, it is mostly preserved, and its stance arguably conforms to that attested in Early Phoenician (i.e., Early Byblian Phoenician and the Phoenician texts that come from succeeding chronological horizons).¹⁰ Of course,

6 For a brief discussion, line drawings, and bibliographic references, see Rollston 2010, 11–18.

7 For a good summary of the evidence for word division in Northwest Semitic (including Linear Early Alphabetic), see especially Naveh 1973, 206–8.

8 The discussion of the script of this inscription in the *editio princeps* is sometimes rather idiosyncratic (in terminology and the nature of the descriptions) and problematic, and it ultimately fails to display a thorough understanding of the essence of the Linear Early Alphabetic script. For example, the 'alep, bet, and dalet are said to “stand on” their “point.” Or again, regarding the *lamed*, it is said that “it stands on its closed part” (Garfinkel, Golub, Misgav, and Ganor 2015, 223, 227–29). And the discussion of the stance is far from elegant. Part of the difficulty is that the authors of the *editio princeps* of the 'Išba'1 Inscription use the Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostrakon (an Early Alphabetic Ostrakon) as their benchmark. But since there is so much variation in the stance and direction of Early Alphabetic inscriptions (including the Qeiyafa Ostrakon), it would have been more useful for the authors of the *editio princeps* to have used the Phoenician script as their benchmark.

9 For a script chart with some of the variable stances (including mirror image) of *bet* and *nun* attested in Linear Early Alphabetic, see Cross 1980, 16.

10 One of the most interesting aspects of the Tell Fakhariyeh Bi-Lingual Inscription is its *lamed*, as it is rotated 180 degrees from its normal stance in the Phoenician script (and its daughter scripts). See Abou-Assaf, Bordreuil, and Millard 1982, pl. XIII. Predictably, though, Fakhariyeh's rotation of *lamed* is also attested in additional Linear Early Alphabetic inscriptions (e.g., in the corpus of el-Ḥaḍr Arrowheads) and in some early Greek inscriptions. See Cross 1980, 16.

ʿayin is not a letter that has a particular stance here, per se, because of its morphology (essentially a circle, representing the eye, and a dot, representing the pupil of the eye). Regarding ductus, it is useful to emphasize that the “eye” of the ʿayin is made with two semicircular downstrokes, that is, the standard ductus. It should be also noted that although the presence of the pupil (i.e., the dot) in the letter ʿayin is normally considered an archaic feature, it (i.e., the pupil) does persist into the early first millennium, especially in more archaic or archaizing inscriptions. In short, the presence of the ʿayin with a pupil (dot in the center) is not surprising in the ʾIšbaʿl Inscription.¹¹

Regarding the quality of the script of the ʾIšbaʿl Inscription, it can be stated confidently that, without doubt, it represents the hand of a trained scribal professional. The morphology of the letters was executed with precision and deftness. The spacing between words was careful and precise. The word dividers were nicely done and consistent. This inscription constitutes further evidence for the presence of trained scribal professionals in the southern Levant during the late eleventh and early tenth centuries BCE. Those who wish to argue that there were no trained scribal professionals in ancient Israel and Judah during the tenth and ninth centuries continue to find themselves defending a position that flies in the face of the epigraphic evidence for the entire southern Levant.¹²

It should be emphasized, however, that this inscription does *not* constitute evidence for widespread literacy—either at Qeiyafa or in the region generally. One inscription with a personal name and patronymic simply cannot carry that sort of freight. There has at times been a desire on the part of some scholars to view an inscription, or a handful of inscriptions, as evidence for widespread literacy. This inclination takes a very romantic view of the evidence. In reality, however, the lion’s share of epigraphic evidence from the Iron Age is connected in some fashion with officials and officialdom, just as it is in the rest of the ancient Near East during this time period.¹³ The linear epigraphic evidence (Canaanite, Phoenician, Hebrew, Aramaic, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite) demonstrates that officials (scribes, government officials, military officials, tax personnel, religious personnel) were trained in reading and writing. But the nonelite populace (e.g., carpenters, blacksmiths, agriculturalists, pastoralists, etc.) was not literate. Many merchants, of course, probably found it useful to have at least some capacity for reading and writing. In any case, for there to be a convincing case for the ability of the nonelite, general population to read and write (which broad ability is required for there to be high levels of literacy), we would need to have inscriptions from such people with content explicitly revealing they were carpenters, blacksmiths, farmers, pastoralists, etc., capably writing and reading texts. We simply do not have that sort of evidence. We do have a few Northwest Semitic inscriptions that hail from the hand of those who did not have much formal training, and in such cases that lack is painfully obvious because of the low caliber of the script. In short, the ʾIšbaʿl Inscription constitutes additional evidence for trained professional scribes in the southern Levant during the late eleventh and early tenth centuries, but this fact cannot cogently be used to argue for widespread literacy in this region during this time period. After all, the item is a jar inscription with a personal name and a patronymic.

The personal name ʾIšbaʿl is interesting and important for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the fact that it also occurs in the Hebrew Bible (as the name of King Saul’s son and successor).¹⁴ In any case, regarding the meaning of this personal name, the authors of the *editio princeps* note that the “commonly

11 The Tell Fakhariyeh Bilingual Inscription is, of course, a *locus classicus* for the continued presence of the pupil of the eye (i.e., the dot inside the letter ʿayin) even down into the ninth century BCE. (The script of the Aramaic portion of Fakhariyeh is Phoenician.) Nevertheless, generally speaking, this feature (i.e., the presence of the pupil) is an archaic one that does not persist very often into the ninth century. Of course, the dot inside the ʿayin is also attested on the Kefar Veradim Bowl, which displays an inscription written in the Phoenician script as well. For a drawing of the Kefar Veradim Bowl, see Rollston 2010, 28.

12 For reference to the primary and secondary literature on scribalism and scribal education during the tenth through sixth centuries BCE, see Rollston 2006, 47–74; 2008a, 57–93; 2015, 71–101.

13 For discussion of this issue and reference to some of those who, on the basis of even the slightest such evidence, have argued for widespread literacy, see Rollston 2008b, 61–96; 2012, 189–96.

14 On this name in the Hebrew Bible, including the pejorative version of the name (ʾšbšt), see the discussion in Rollston 2013, 377–82, and the primary and secondary literature cited there.

accepted interpretation” of it is “man of Ba‘al.”¹⁵ The second element of this personal name is, of course, the uncontested *ba‘al* theophoric. However, regarding the first element of this name, that is, the *š*, there has been much discussion. After summarizing the secondary discussion in detail, P. Kyle McCarter distills the proposals down to three major categories: (1) *š* is the nominal morpheme meaning “man”; (2) *š* is derived from the morpheme **t*, meaning “exist” or “there is,” and is cognate with the predication of existence *yēš*; or (3) *š* is derived from the verbal root *ʾwš*, meaning “give.”¹⁶ All these proposals have learned proponents. But Dennis Pardee’s reasoning has convinced me that *š* is most easily and convincingly derived from the verbal root *ʾwš*. For Pardee has noted that “the element *ʾiš* ‘man’ is not attested in any Hebrew personal names other than *ʾišbōšet*—which appears in the form *ʾēšbāʿal* (pausal) in 1 Chron. 8:33 and 9:39. On the other hand, the verbal element *ʾwš* ‘give’ is attested in Hebrew personal names both Biblical (*yehōʾāš/yôʾāš*—six persons) and epigraphic (Lachish *yʾwš*).” Pardee concludes that the original meaning of the name *ʾIšbaʿl*, therefore, was “Baʿl has given” and that the precise form in the Bible is a *qil* base noun meaning “gift of Baʿl.”¹⁷ I understand this personal name in the Qeiyafa Inscription in this same fashion, that is, with the first element from the word “gift.” Thus I find myself in happy agreement with Pardee’s position.

Regarding the patronymic *Bdʿ*, the authors of the *editio princeps* note that *bdʿ* is not attested in the corpus of epigraphic Northwest Semitic, nor is it attested in the Hebrew Bible. They do note that the root *bdʿ* is attested in Arabic and Ethiopic with the meaning “to produce, to invent, to begin.”¹⁸ This interpretation is certainly possible, and it is reasonable to propose it for this difficult patronymic. Conversely, it has also been suggested (Ed Greenstein, personal communication) that we may have here a shortened form of the personal name *Bʿlydʿ*. This proposal is strengthened by the fact that Ugaritic does attest the personal name *Bʿlydʿ*.¹⁹ In this case, the form *Bdʿ* in the *ʾIšbaʿl* Inscription would be one in which the initial *bet* was used to represent the theophoric *bʿl*²⁰ and the *yod* has elided (as also in the attested Ugaritic personal name *Bʿldʿ* < *Bʿlydʿ* and in the preposition *bd* < *b-yd*).²¹ Nevertheless, I suppose it might also be reasonably suggested that the patronymic *Bdʿ* is a shortened form of the attested Northwest Semitic personal name *bdʿštrt* (as also suggested in the *editio princeps*). Alas, though there are numerous possibilities, none can be said to be decisive. Thus, at this juncture, it seems prudent not to render a decision but to hope that at some point in the future the turn of the spade will produce some useful new evidence. Finally, I should also like to note that the traces on the inscription prior to the personal name *ʾIšbaʿl* will continue to be problematic and difficult. The drawing in the *editio princeps* (by Ada Yardeni) suggests the reading *kpqt*.²² Conversely, Gershon Galil (personal communication) has suggested reading *kppt*. Reading a *kap* as the first letter is reasonable because of the traces present. And reading the third letter as a *qop* is also quite nice. But decisive readings for the rest of the traces are, in truth, not at all possible, so the candidates are quite numerous. For this reason, I do not wish to speculate on the possible restorations. To do so would be fruitless.

METHODOLOGICAL CAVEATS

It is also useful to emphasize some of the arguments that cannot readily be made on the basis of the *ʾIšbaʿl* Inscription. Most of my comments here are methodological in nature and mostly preemptive (i.e., addressing ideas I anticipate someone might try to argue for on the basis of this inscription).

15 Garfinkel, Golub, Misgav, and Ganor 2015, 230.

16 McCarter 1984, 86.

17 Pardee 1978, 313; see also Pardee 1990, 363. With these words, Pardee has built nicely upon the prior work of Cross 1966, 8–9.

18 Garfinkel, Golub, Misgav, and Ganor 2015, 230.

19 Gröndahl 1967, 117.

20 For a useful discussion of abbreviated names and hypocoristic elements in Northwest Semitic names, see especially Benz 1972, 232–37. Cf. also the Yahwistic theophoric *yhw* and its shortened forms (e.g., *yh*, *yw*).

21 Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 302 (sv *bd*).

22 Garfinkel, Golub, Misgav, and Ganor 2015, 227.

(1) Dating. According to the *editio princeps*, the first set of radiometric dates for the destruction of the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa are ca. 1020–980 BCE. The second set of radiometric dates for the destruction of the site are ca. 1018 and 948 BCE. The authors of the *editio princeps* state that when the radiometric dates “are combined, the end boundary, which indicates the destruction of the city, is calculated as 1006–970 BCE at 68.2%.”²³ Rather striking in this regard is the noting by the *editio princeps* authors that, in the past, scholars contended the transition from Linear Early Alphabetic (Canaanite) to Phoenician “took place at the end of the second millennium B.C.E.,” while the authors also state, “however, the radiometric dating of Khirbet Qeiyafa indicates a later date.” They add, “this find [Qeiyafa] provides a chronological anchor for the first time, showing that the use of the Canaanite script in southern Canaan extended into the 10th century BCE.”²⁴ Some scrutiny is required here. Joseph Naveh reflects the consensus in stating that the transition from Linear Early Alphabetic to Phoenician “took place in the mid-eleventh century BCE.”²⁵ By “mid-eleventh century,” I suppose Naveh was thinking ca. 1050 BCE, plus or minus twenty years or so. The radiometric dates for the destruction of Qeiyafa are late eleventh or early tenth century BCE. Storage jars often had a fairly long shelf life, certainly sometimes of at least ten or twenty years for a nicely fired pot (and it should be remembered that the pot was inscribed *before* firing—that is, at the time of production). Thus, if we go with the earlier of the radiometric dates for the destruction (ca. 1020 BCE) that Qeiyafa Excavator Yosef Garfinkel himself has provided, and if we posit that this storage pot was produced in the years prior to the destruction of the site (which obviously seems reasonable), we are right in the realm of Naveh’s mid-eleventh-century date. I certainly do believe that the current evidence suggests the Linear Early Alphabetic script persisted within the periphery (i.e., areas outside Phoenicia proper) down into the tenth century, but since the excavator’s own plus-or-minus dates for the time period of the destruction of Khirbet Qeiyafa include the late eleventh century BCE, it seems problematic for the *editio princeps* of this inscription to contend it constitutes evidence for the “first time” that the Linear Early Alphabetic script (= Canaanite script) persisted into the tenth century BCE. It might, but it might not. We all want our finds to be the biggest, the best, the earliest, or the latest. But we must be very careful in making such claims, and we must also be careful in stating that our new archaeological finds demonstrate that previous conceptions were wrong. Ultimately, on the basis of the script of the inscription considered here, a date in the eleventh century is most preferable, but because the Early Alphabetic script persisted longer in usage in peripheral regions (i.e., outside Phoenicia proper), I am also comfortable with a date in the early tenth century BCE. Finally, I should like to emphasize as well that the presence of the personal name ʾšbʿl in this inscription cannot be used in a convincing manner as evidence for dating it to a precise time frame. After all, the Baʿl theophoric element is widely attested in Northwest Semitic literature, and for long periods of time.

(2) Linguistic affiliation. There is nothing in this inscription that constitutes some sort of diagnostic linguistic element. Linguistic classifications must be based on distinctive, diagnostic criteria. We lack that sort of data, just as we lacked that sort of data with regard to the Qeiyafa Ostrakon.²⁶ The simplest and most convincing position, therefore, is that this inscription is Canaanite. Nothing more can be said about dialect.

(3) Furthermore, the presence of the Baʿl theophoric element in the name ʾšbʿl cannot reasonably be used as some sort of a marker of religion. After all, this theophoric is widely attested in the Southern Levant during the Iron Age. Moreover, based on the Epigraphic and Biblical Hebrew data, it can be stated that this theophoric could also be used of Yahwists. And it is perhaps also useful in this connection to mention a particular personal name attested in the Hebrew Bible, viz., Baʿlyah—“Yahweh is Baʿl.”²⁷ True, the Baʿl theophoric experienced pejoration and ultimately fell out of favor during the First Temple Period, but the fact remains that for methodological reasons (in the light of the usage of this theophoric in Epigraphic and

23 Ibid., 220, 222.

24 Ibid., 217.

25 Naveh 1987, 42.

26 On dialectology and the Qeiyafa Ostrakon, see Rollston 2011, 68–76.

27 1 Chron. 12:6.

Biblical Hebrew) the *Baʿl* theophoric should not be used as some sort of a marker of non-Yahwistic religion. The data ought not be interpreted in such a simplistic way.²⁸

(4) Because of the range of radiometric dates for this site's destruction, namely, from the final quarter of the eleventh century to the first quarter of the tenth century, the attempt to associate this inscription in some sort of definitive manner with King David is strained, tempting though doing so may be. After all, even assuming that David was a historical figure (and I do believe that to be the case), the upper end of the radiometric dates (i.e., 1020 BCE) for the *destruction of the site* are too early for David (r. ca. 1000 BCE?–960 BCE?). Of course, if the lower radiometric dates are actually correct, then perhaps a person could make such an argument. But *if* is a very big word. Conversely, someone might suggest this inscription is somehow to be associated with King Saul, perhaps even identified as his son and successor named *ʾšbʿl*. This suggestion may be even more tempting, but the patronymic *Bdʿ* rules it out. It would have been so very nice to have had a title (e.g., *ʿbd hmlk*) or the patronymic that would allow us to associate this inscription with a known personage. But we do not have that sort of data. That's just the way it is. Dramatic claims must be based on dramatic and decisive evidence. And we simply do not have that caliber of evidence.

In conclusion, this inscription is an important one. It constitutes evidence for trained scribes at the site of Qeiyafa (if the jar bearing the writing was produced there) during the late eleventh century (to which date I would probably assign this inscription) or the early tenth century BCE. The script is Linear Early Alphabetic. There is nothing in the inscription that allows us to classify it linguistically. The simplest and most defensible position, therefore, is that the language is Canaanite. Because within this inscription there is nothing connecting it historically with a known Levantine king, it is necessary, for methodological reasons, not to draw any conclusions about the king who might, or might not, have been reigning at the time of manufacture of the pot on which the writing appears.

28 Rollston 2013, 377–82.

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9

GRAMMATICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE
PHOENICIAN TEXT OF THE INCIRLI INSCRIPTION*

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THE TRILINGUAL INSCRIBED STELE DISCOVERED two decades ago near Incirli is now published in an admirably precise and careful edition with an English translation, epigraphic comments, and philological commentary.¹ The stele is rectangular, with a roughly semicircular top. The upper-left third of the front panel shows a recessed area shaped like the stele itself, in which is centered a standing figure facing right, wearing a conical winged headpiece, dressed in a rope-belted tunic, and holding a staff with both hands. The remainder of the front, left-side, back, and right-side panels are inscribed with texts in three languages and writing systems: Akkadian (cuneiform); Luwian (Anatolian hieroglyphic); and Phoenician (linear alphabetic). Only the Phoenician portion has been read and published so far.²

The Phoenician text is the longest written component of the stele. In the initial publication, Steven Kaufman has very thoroughly analyzed the inscribed text and made a clear English translation. The surfaces of the stele are badly worn, so a number of readings are visually difficult.³ Although reading the inscription has required years of effort, the results can be expected to win agreement from other specialists. Given the poor condition of the stone surface, the degree to which the first publication of the stele has produced a sound and reliable consonantal text is all the more astonishing, and praiseworthy, upon reflection.

The comments that follow are restricted to the Phoenician text on the front and left panels of the stele. The readings of individual letters found in the first publication provide a starting point from which new grammatical interpretation can proceed. The goal of this discussion is to sharpen the clarity of our understanding of the text. Beginning with the border description that constitutes the text's proem (front, lines 1–10), this commentary will offer several clarifications of grammatical and stylistic details. In the second segment (front, lines 11–15), I recommend more significant reinterpretation of the text. The hypothesis that this section includes a reference to the *mlk* sacrifice, thought by many scholars to be a ritual involving immolation of a human infant, is not confirmed by the interpretation presented here. In the third segment (left side, lines 1–26), I introduce several lexical and grammatical analyses diverging from the first publication of the text.

* Unless otherwise explained, abbreviations follow *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*, ed. P. H. Alexander, J. F. Kutsko, J. D. Ernest, S. Decker-Lucke, and D. L. Petersen (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999). Assyriological abbreviations follow the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* (CAD). Additional abbreviations appear in the reference list.

1 Kaufman 2007. Dodd (2012, 226–27) considers at length the possible original location of the stele.

2 Kaufman reports that “The Luwian hieroglyphs and the cuneiform on the right hand side are almost certainly beyond salvage with current techniques” (2007, 2 n. 3).

3 The readings are the result of years of collaboration between Steven Kaufman and Bruce Zuckerman, who directed the photographing of the stele's surface (Kaufman 2007, 1; Dodd 2012, 213). Kaufman (2007, 5) remarks: “There are so many different degrees of certainty (or more often, uncertainty) in the reading of the letters of this text that it is literally impossible to come up with an adequate system to indicate the various states of textual preservation or lack thereof.” He states clearly that his readings “are not intended to be definitive,” although in the segment of the text to be studied here, they are.

THE BORDER DESCRIPTION

The opening lines (1–10) of the front panel are partly concerned with establishing the function of the stele as a marker of the border between Assyrian territory and the territory governed by pacified local rulers. The king of Que, also referred to as king of the Danunites, whose name appears in the text as *wryks*, is the principal or narrator in whose words the text speaks.⁴ He enters the narrative quite subtly as animator.⁵ The first-person pronominal suffix of the word *ph̄ty* “my province” serves as a preliminary cue to the king’s role as animator, but he fully introduces himself only in the second part of line 8 with the statement *’nk wryks mlk z bt mp[š]* “I am Wraykas, king of the house of Mop[sos].”⁶ The following two lines (9–10) state his political affiliation (servant of Tiglath-Pileser) and territorial claim (king of Que, and ruler of all Hittite lands as far as Lebanon). However loyal a vassal (*’bd*, line 9) of Tiglath-pileser he might have wished to present himself as, one discerns that Wraykas dared not allow his name to precede the name of the Great King, his suzerain.

As pointed out by Kaufman, the name spelled *wryks* in the inscription appears to be the same royal name attested in the Çineköy inscription, written in Hieroglyphic Luwian as *wa/i+ra/i-i-[ka-s]â* (Çineköy §1) or *wa/i+ri-i-ka-sâ* (Çineköy §2).⁷ The Phoenician copy of the name in the Çineköy inscription is broken, but reconstructed *w[r(y)k]*,⁸ largely in consideration of the form *wryk* that occurs twice in the mid-seventh-century Phoenician inscription from Çebelres Dağı (KAI 287 A+B 3, 8). This name is the likely equivalent of the Assyrian forms *Ū-ri-ik*, *Ū-ri-ik-ki*, and *Ū-ri-ia-ik-ki*. The normalization *Wraykas* suggests the alphabetic spelling *wryks* (Incirli, front, line 8), which employs *samek* rather than *šin* (as would be typical of Phoenician in this period) represents Aramaic or Aramaic-influenced orthography.⁹ The Hieroglyphic Luwian and Akkadian forms of the name may imply that in the alphabetic spelling *wryks* the *yod* is a vowel letter.¹⁰ It is generally held that the name written in Hieroglyphic Luwian as *â-wa/i + ra/i-ku-sa* (KARATEPE 1 §2), corresponding to *’wrk* in the Phoenician text at Karatepe (KAI 26.2), also found (only in Phoenician) in the Hasanbeyli inscription (KAI 23.5), designates the same person, but this view is not certain.¹¹

To give the reader a basis for comparison as analysis proceeds, Kaufman’s translation of lines 1–8 from the first publication is presented below:¹²

4 Kaufman 2007, 21–22.

5 The terms “principal” and “animator” allude to Erving Goffman’s “conversational paradigm” for the metapragmatics of talk. Text production is decomposed into three roles: *author*, *animator*, and *principal* (Goffman 1981, 144–46). The author produces the words of the text; the animator conveys the words to hearers or recipients; the principal is responsible for the semantic content of the text. Jan Assmann’s (1983) distinction between *Assertor*, *Sprecher*, and *Zurechnungssubjekt* is similar. Pizziconi (2007, 51–53) discusses Goffman’s schema comparatively as an example of “facework.”

6 The normalization /Wraykas/ follows Simon 2014, 94–95. On the house of Mopsos, see Lemaire 2006; Oettinger 2008; and López-Ruiz 2009.

7 Kaufman 2007, 21–22.

8 Tekoğlu and Lemaire 2000, 994, 996.

9 Note that the final sibilant in contemporary Phoenician *krntryš* (**κορννητηριος*, KAI 26 A II 19; III 2–3, 4; C III 17, 19; IV 20) is *š*, in contrast to (later) Aramaic *qrplgs* (καρπολόγος, Tell el-Kheleifeh Ostrakon no. 2069, line 1 [DiVito 1993, 58–59, early fourth century; DNWSI 1035]). In representing Iranian, Anatolian, and Greek names, Aramaic consistently employs *š* for /s/. The Persian names Xerxes and Artaxerxes are spelled with *š* in Aramaic; see Saqqara, KAI 267 A.3, *חשיארש* and *ארתחשטש* in Aswan, TAD D17.1:4; see also, e.g., Kornfeld 1978, 32 (3.1.13.1), and entries on pages 98–120. (I thank H. Hardy for the Persian examples.)

10 The general statement by Segert (1978, 113) concerning vowel-writing in Aramaic must be modified to account for the very early spelling *nyrgl* with *yod* as a vowel letter in the Tell Fekherye inscription (KAI 309.23). Although “exceptional” in this period (Lipiński 1994, 33), this spelling persists in later Aramaic.

11 For example, Jasink and Marino (2007), Lanfranchi (2007; 2009, 128), and Oreshko (2013, 19 and n. 1) favor this position. Forlanini (1996) proposed a dynastic interpretation, nuanced by Röllig (2011, 119–21). Simon (2014, 91–93) distinguishes at least two royal names in these forms. For a plausible etymology, see Simon 2017.

12 Kaufman 2007, 15.

(1) This frontier region is the *gift* of Tiglath-Pileser, Puwal, king of Assyria, (2) to *the king and dynasty* of the king of the Danunites. The said frontier has been the border between *the* (3) *land/province of Beyond-the-River and the border of Kummuh* from the days of Shamshi-Addad, King of (4) of Assyria, until all the days of Tiglath-Pileser, Puwal, the *great* King of (5) Assyria. *This frontier region is the boundary between mount Gurgum and my province* (6) *this/that new one up to where the Assyrian province abuts this boundary through this* (7) *region of the Turtanu's dynasty* along (or: from the entrance to/of?) the river Sinis, *all the way to* (8) *Mount Urartu*.

From the perspective of lexicon and syntax, the most difficult section of the border description begins in line 5 and continues through the first two words of line 8. Kaufman's translation stages these lines as a single sentence, in keeping with the segmentation of the original. I believe it may be advantageous to introduce in this section a sentence division—admittedly a minor alteration—to make its argument structure more explicit. I will also point out idiomatic expressions that permit a somewhat more precise translation. Below is the Phoenician text¹³ with my English translation. A philological commentary follows.

INCIRLI STELE, FRONT, LINES 1–8

1. *hgbl z mtn* (or: *mtt*) *tklt'plsr p'l mlk 'šr*

This territory is a gift of Tiglath-Pileser—Pu'ul (or: Pûl), king of Assur,

2. *lmlk wlšph mlk dnnym hgbl gbl*

to the king and to the issue of the king of the Danunians. This territory has been a border

3. *pht* (or: *'rš*) *'br nhr wgb l kmḥ lmym swsdd šr*

of the province (or: land) of (?) Beyond the River and the border of Kummuh from the days of Shamshi-Adad, ruler

4. *'šr w'd kl ym tklt'plsr p'l ml[k]*

of Assur, until all the days of Tiglath-Pileser—Pu'ul (or: Pûl),

5. *'šr rb | hgbl [z] gbl hr [g]rgm wpḥty*

the great kin[g] of Assur. [This] territory is the border of the mountains of [Gu]rgum and my province.

6. *z' (or: h') ḥdšt 'd b' pht 'šr l hgbl z*

It is new up to (where) the province of Assur reaches it. This border is

7. *lm'br lbt trtn kb' nhr sns 'd*

from opposite the Estate of the Turtanu as the River Sinis goes, as far as

8. *[h]r [']rrṭ ...*

the mountains of [U]rartu.

COMMENTARY

Line 1

p'l It is possible that the Phoenician spelling of this name discloses its derivation from *p'l*, as in Arabic *fal*, plural *fu'ul* “favorable auspice, good omens.”¹⁴ John Brinkman's assessment that the “meaning and origin of the name are unknown” has heretofore been current.¹⁵ His discussion of the Akkadian form *Pūlu* and its

13 For clarity's sake, the various grades of visual uncertainty represented in Kaufman's transliteration of the text in Hebrew characters are not reproduced in the transliteration of lines 1–8. As mentioned above, the text of this section has been reliably established.

14 Lane 1863, 2325; Wehr 1994, 692.

15 Brinkman 1968, 240.

representation in later sources is thorough and accurate.¹⁶ The spelling *Pu'ul* (or: *Pûl*) in this translation assumes the etymology from *p'l*. About a century after the Incirli inscription, the Phoenician inscription from Çebelires Dağı (KAI 287) employs the letter *'alep* to write the vowel /ā/ in two of the three instances of the name *msn'zmš*, vocalized Masanāzamis (KAI 287 A+B 8, C 2).¹⁷ There is no evidence from this period for the use of *'alep* to write the vowel /ū/, although such orthography does occur in Neo-Punic.¹⁸

Line 2

šph This word is a kinship term designating a descent group or family,¹⁹ possibly comparable to Latin *gens*.²⁰ The translation “dynasty” is perhaps over-specific. “Issue” implies royalty in English but is also semantically near the Semitic root while retaining the vagueness of the Phoenician term.

Line 3

pht (or: *'rš*) It is difficult to select either term, for parallels differ. Attested Northwest Semitic usage designates this region by its governor's title, itself an Akkadianism: פְּחֻוֹת עֶבֶר הַנָּהָר “governors of Beyond the River” (Neh. 2:7, 9; 3:7).²¹ In Akkadian the general designation *mātum* (= KUR) “land, territory” occurs, as in Neo-Assyrian *ana KUR eber nāri* “to the land Beyond the River” (ABL 706 r. 3). The Akkadian usage may be more likely in this context, but the matter remains uncertain.

'br nhr The anarthrous adverbial phrase is morphologically consistent with other Phoenician examples of this type (PPG³ 211 §297.2). Note the comparable phrase *tht šmš* “under (the) sun” (KAI 13.7–8; 14.12).²² Biblical Hebrew, by contrast, employs either the unique plural phrase בְּעֶבְרֵי נָהָר (Isa. 7:20) or the more common singular construction בְּעֶבֶר הַנָּהָר (Isa. 24:2 and eleven other occurrences).²³ The Aramaic form of the phrase occurs in the coin legends of the satrap Mazday: *Mzdy zy 'l 'br nhr* (*whlk*) “Mazday, who is over Beyond (the) River (and Cilicia).”²⁴ In all its Northwest Semitic occurrences, the phrase is a loan translation representing Akkadian *eber nāri*.²⁵

kmh Kummuh had submitted to Assyria in 866 BCE during the reign of Assur-Nasirpal II. The later Urartian king Kuštašpi defected about 750 BCE but was defeated by Tiglath-Pileser III in 743; pardoned, he was still ruling in 732.²⁶ The border between Kummuh and Gurgum had been established by Adad-Nirari III after Assyrian intervention in 805 BCE and was reestablished in 773.²⁷

16 Ibid., 61–62, 240–41 n. 1544.

17 Note the Hieroglyphic Luwian text KARATEPE 4: 'DEUS-na-(OCULIS)á-za-mi-sá-há, normalized as *Masanāzamis* (Hawkins and Çambel 1999, 69).

18 See Kerr 2010, 47–50.

19 DNWSI 1181; Krahmalkov 2000, 476–77; Schmitz 2012, 92.

20 Schmitz 2011, 70 and n. 13.

21 For epigraphic Hebrew and Aramaic occurrences of the title *pht*, see DNWSI 904 s.v. *pht*. See also Stolper 1989.

22 The three-member phrase *'l pn šmš* (KAI 302.5) is likewise anarthrous. The complex preposition *'l pn* (preposition + noun) functions adverbially.

23 See also Rainey 1983.

24 See Lemaire 2009, 407, with literature.

25 On the relativity of this term's frame of reference, see O'Connor 1991, 1142 n. 8.

26 See the detailed account of Kummuh under Assyrian domination by Hawkins (Hawkins and Çambel 1999, 331–32).

27 Galil 1992, 58. See also the comments on *[g]rgm* (line 5) below.

Lines 4–5

ml[k] ʾšr rb The postposing of the adjective, as in this construction, sometimes called the “attributive genitive,” is common in Akkadian.²⁸ Although the syntax is common Semitic, this instance of the construction, if dependent on Assyrian royal usage, appears to calque the Assyrian title.²⁹ Note in contrast that in 2 Kings 18:19, the Assyrian royal title has been paraphrased: *הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר* “the Great King, King of Assyria.”

Line 5

hgbl [z] gbl is a nominal clause. This passage describing the specific territory claimed by Wraykas begins with this last segment of line 5 and ends in line 8. It presents three levels of difficulty. First, there remains a degree of textual uncertainty because of the poor state of some sections of the inscribed text, although overall textual uncertainty is mostly negligible. Second, the preposition *l-* is ambiguous in lines 6 and 7, since in either case it could form a prepositional phrase with the immediately following constituent or with an orthographically unrepresented pronominal suffix. The ambiguity resolves because two idioms involving the constructions *b' . . . l-* and *m'br . . . l-* are crucially specific. Third, the limits of individual clauses are difficult to recognize as well.

[g]rgm Conflict between Kummuh and Gurgum resulted in Assyrian intervention at least twice. The earlier settlement was imposed by Adad-nirari III between 803 and 797 BCE to reward Kummuh's resistance against the north Syrian alliance of Arpad, Gurgum, and other states.³⁰ Shalmaneser IV interfered in favor of Kummuh once again in 773, after Bar-Hadad stole the boundary stone erected by Adad-nirari III and took it to Damascus. It was recovered from Damascus and returned to its original location by the *turtānu* Shamshi-ilu.³¹ Later (ca. 743–740 BCE), Tiglath-pileser III granted towns from the territory of Gurgum to Sam'al (KAI 215.14–15 [Panamuwa II]).

Line 6

z' (or: h') The feminine personal pronoun *h'* is the more likely reading, for the sequence *phty h'*, with an independent personal pronoun copying the antecedent noun after the pronominal suffix, is the more typical kind of subject resumption in Phoenician.³²

hdšt Kaufman's translation “new one”³³ represents an analysis of *hdšt* as an adjective. Understood as a clause, *h' hdšt* can be rendered “It is new.” The syntax favors interpretation of this clause as a verbless sentence with an adjectival predicate.

‘d b' pht ʾšr l “up to (where) the province of Assur abuts it.”³⁴ The independent personal pronoun *h'* copies the antecedent subject of the sentence, the noun phrase *phty*.³⁵

b' . . . l- In Biblical Hebrew, the verb *bw'* does not often govern the preposition *la-*. With this prepositional complement, the predicate means “come upon, enter” (e.g., Jer. 22:23; Esth. 6:4). Note especially the similar construction in Ezra 2:68: *בְּבוֹאָם לְבֵית* “upon their entering the House (of the Lord).” The Phoenician construction in this case appears to imply arrival, juxtaposition, or contiguity.

28 Buccellati 1997, 93–34.

29 This construction is a type of *annexion* (GAG³, 189–90 §135). Note the different Phoenician expression *mlk gbr 'l y'dy* “powerful king over Y'dy” (KAI 24.2).

30 See Siddall 2013, 38–40.

31 Bryce and Baker 2012, 397. See also Hawkins and Çambel (1999, 331–32), and Bryce and Baker (2012, 264), with sources.

32 PPG³, 205 §286.3.

33 Kaufman 2007, 15.

34 Literally, “comes to it” or “arrives at it.” The felicitous translation “abuts” is Kaufman's (2007, 13). On the metaphor of movement, see below.

35 On the potential extent and strategic implications of claims made by Wraykas, see Dodd (2012, 228–29).

Line 7

m'br . . . l- “across from, opposite.” In Biblical Hebrew, the complementation pattern *מֵעֵבֶר לְ* can be found in Numbers 22:1 and twenty-five other examples, all signifying “across from” or “opposite.”

bt trtn Most of the Akkadian occurrences of *bīt turtāni* cited in CAD T 490 (s.v. *turtānu* b) appear to refer to an actual residence or estate rather than to serve as a toponym, even in the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser, e.g., *pīḥat bīt LÚ turtāni*.³⁶ In the Phoenician text, Kaufman considers *bt trtn* a place name,³⁷ corresponding to Akkadian *Māt Turtāni*.³⁸

A letter sent by Tiglath-pileser III confirms that the *turtānu* was “the highest-ranking military official of the Assyrian empire, after the king.”³⁹ Nimrud letter ND 2361, addressed by the king [. . . *ana LÚ*] *turtāni* “[. . . to the] commander-in-chief” (CTN 5 t37c, line 1),⁴⁰ continues “[Day and] night during my reign, you shall be my magnate (and) my deputy. You shall stand in my place; guarding you is for guarding me” (ibid., lines 4–6). Although this passage clearly summarizes the significance of the office, the individual office-holders cannot be identified in this period. “Unfortunately, except for Nabû-dā’inanni, eponym of the year 742, the names of officials who acted as the *turtānu* during the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II are uncertain.”⁴¹

The location signified by the phrase *bt trtn* may have been associated with a past holder of the office. One might speculate that the role of the powerful *turtānu* Shamshi-ilu in re-establishing the Gurgum–Kummuh border in 773 BCE (see the comments on *[g]rgm* above) raises the possibility that the toponym *bt trtn*, which is associated with the border in question, might have commemorated him.

kb' The adverb *k* introduces a clause of manner: “as goes.” The boundary apparently followed the course of the river.

nhr sns This river is the classical Singas, the modern Göksu.⁴² Probably near the crossing to Malatya (Arslantepe) along this river, Tiglath-Pileser III routed the Urartian forces of Sanduri II in 743 BCE.⁴³

Lines 7–8

'd [h]r [']rrt “as far as the mountains of [U]artu” Phoenician employs the preposition *'d* to specify a goal or destination (e.g., KAI 24 A I 4–5; II 2–3 [Karatepe]). In Biblical Hebrew, the preposition *עַד* can likewise imply a destination, e.g., Genesis 12:6 (2×); 13:3, 12, etc.

It is noteworthy that the boundary descriptions in this proem employ a “metaphor of ‘going’” compatible with “the notion of land appropriation through survey,” literary forms also identified in the boundary

36 Rost 1893, 46 line 36.

37 Kaufman 2007, 21.

38 Parpola 1970, 361.

39 Luukko 2012, IL.

40 Ibid., 5.

41 Ibid., IL, 5. In the Neo-Assyrian empire, “Northwestern, Northern, and Northeastern border regions were under the control of the lands of the high officials (*māt turtāni*, *māt masenni*, *māt rab sāqe*, and *māt nāgir ekalli*) of the empire, all of them including several provinces” (Dezső 2012, 199).

42 Kaufman 2007, 21.

43 Astour 1979, 16. The summary inscription of Tiglath-Pileser III records the aftermath: *ÍD.si-in-zi ÍD-tu ki-ma na-ba-si [aš-ru-up . . .]* “[I dyed] the Sinzi River as red as dyed wool” (Tadmor 1994, Summ. 748; RINAP 1 Tiglath-pileser III 47, 48 [<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/rinap1/Q003460/html>]).

descriptions of the book of Joshua.⁴⁴ These metaphors disclose the homunculus⁴⁵ whose location or trajectory underlies core cardinal terms of direction⁴⁶ and is vaguely personified in tour-language itineraries.⁴⁷

The expressions of the metaphor of movement in the Incirli inscription involve cosmological agents.⁴⁸ As I read the clause *‘d b’ pht ‘šr l* “up to (where) the province of Assur reaches it,” the Assyrian province itself is the entity in (metaphoric) motion. In the clause *kb’ nhr sns* “as the River Sinis goes,” the same metaphoric transfer has material appeal, for rivers are in actual motion and their courses described as movements universally.

REBELLION, SACRIFICE, AND AN ORACLE

Lines 8–10 of the front panel of the inscription introduce Wraykas and his royal titles. The narrative that constitutes the remainder of the inscription begins in line 11 and continues after line 15 on the left side and back panels of the stele, reaching its conclusion on the right-hand panel. The interpretation of this portion of the inscription presented below adheres for the most part to the consonantal text established in the first publication but departs significantly from Kaufman’s understanding of the narrative.

From the perspective of the following interpretation, the thesis that *mlk* might designate a type of human sacrifice is not clearly borne out in detail. On the positive side, the passage of text in lines 11–15 opens a small but significant window into the process of taking strategic decisions in the court of Mati’ēl, the king of Arpad. For military and social historians, as well as for historians of religion, this section of the text may prove highly engaging.

INCIRLI STELE, FRONT, LINES 11–15

11. *wkn mrd bkl mt h[t] wzbh mlk ‘rpd*

And there was a rebellion in all the land of Ha[titi]. And the king of Arpad sacrificed

12. *ly’n hdd mlk wgzrm kpr k ‘rpd*

to cause Hadad to aid the king. And diviners also made atonement, because Arpad

13. *pḥd mlk ‘šr ‘b’ w’s ḥkm l’ḥr*

feared the great king of Assur. And a sage advised, saying,

14. *kḥ hq ḥl’k ‘rpd whlb’ l’ tgzr ‘d[n]*

Like my lap is the king of Arpad! But Aleppo you must not canton (or: divide) Ada[na],

15. *[wqw] l’ tḥd k ‘m kp r’s pḥtk l’ yhr[b]*

[and Que] you must not fear. For if the head of your province bows down, it will not be laid was[te].

COMMENTARY

Line 11

mrđ nm “rebellion” Biblical Hebrew מִרְדָּה “rebellion” (Josh. 22:22).⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Seleznev 2003, 349.

⁴⁵ Signifying “(the little person, the human-shaped model) that orients Hebrew (and other Semitic) speakers” (O’Connor 1991, 1144).

⁴⁶ O’Connor 1991, 1144–45.

⁴⁷ O’Connor 1988.

⁴⁸ Similar to Hebrew *mizraḥ* “rising” (of the sun), *ma’arab* “entering, setting” (of the sun), *môṣâ* / -ṣē’ (Phoenician *mṣ’*) “going out” (east), and *mābô’* (Phoenician *mb’*) “going in” (west). This terminology was explored by O’Connor (1991, 1145).

⁴⁹ HALOT 632; cf. DNWSI 690.

Line 12

ly'n C inf. constr. *wn* “to help, assist, aid” Kaufman translates the text “for the benefit of Hadad-Melek (or: for the purpose of a molk-offering for Hadad).”⁵⁰ This translation reflects his analysis of the assumed bound form *ly'n* as corresponding to “Hebrew יען and למען and Old Aramaic למען, but the reading is particularly uncertain.”⁵¹ Against this analysis stands the observation that Biblical Hebrew יען is never preceded by the preposition ל. There is thus little reason to anticipate such syntax in Phoenician.

The segment *ly'n* cannot be an infinitive derived from *ny* “to answer,” for the III-y form would require a *t* suffix.⁵² The verb *y'n* is best derived from the root *wn* “help, assist, save, aid,” attested in Classical Arabic and OSA⁵³ and probably attested in the noun מוען “help, assistance” (Ps. 90:1 [HALOT 610]).

hdd mlk The divine name *Adad-milki* is not clearly attested in cuneiform sources,⁵⁴ and alphabetic *hdd mlk* is otherwise unattested in Northwest Semitic inscriptions. Kaufman’s hesitation regarding interpreting *hdd mlk* in the Incirli inscription as a divine name involves, on the one hand, the weak evidence for this name in cuneiform sources,⁵⁵ and, on the other, his consideration of the possibility that *mlk* is a sacrificial term.⁵⁶ Preferable syntax arises if *y'n* is recognized as the causative stem; then *hdd* is the agent.

gzrm nmp /gōzārīm/ “diviners” Note these Jewish Aramaic examples: לא חכמים אשפין חרטמין גזרין יכלין להחזיה למלכא “neither sages, exorcists, magicians, nor diviners are able to tell it” (Dan. 2:27); גזר והוא [י] יהודי “a diviner, [??] being a Judean o[f the exiles]” (4Q242 A.4).⁵⁷ Note additionally that the verb *gzr* appears in line 14b, as discussed below.

The explicit mention of *gzrm* “diviners” implies a context of extispicy. This variety of sacrificial ritual is explicitly conducted to bring to light secret knowledge otherwise reserved to the deities. Lenzi provides an instructive example that makes this purpose more apparent:

inaddin Šamaš ana mār bārê pirišti Šamaš u Adad
 Šamaš will give to the diviner the secret of Šamaš and Adad.

Lenzi observes, “Such a statement indicates clearly that the results of extispicy were considered secret knowledge from the divine realm.”⁵⁸ In the present context the motivation to seek hidden knowledge through sacrifice is at hand.

kpr D perf. 3p /kappirū/ “they made atonement” The reference is surely to a ritual, although more information is lacking.

Line 13

rb This restoration is conjectural; it simply repeats the phrase *ml[k] 'šr rb* from lines 4–5. Kaufman’s tentative restoration (*hy*)/(*l*) is also conjectural; it supports the interpretation of *mlk* as designating a variety of human sacrifice.⁵⁹ The hypothesis underlying Kaufman’s restoration is not confirmed by the interpretation offered here.

50 Kaufman 2007, 15.

51 Ibid., 23.

52 Attested in Late Punic *l'nt* “to respond” (Hr. Maktar N 76, line 9; DNWSI 875 s.v. *ny*₁).

53 Biella 1982, 358.

54 Deller (1965, 144) and Weinfeld (1972) favored the binominal interpretation of names having the form *Adad-milki/iški*. The Late Babylonian name ^d*Adad* (IM)-*mil-ki-iddina* (BE 80.8) from Nippur was cited by Zadok (1976, 116) as an example of *Adad-milki*. In all cases, Kaufman (1978, 104) favors the reading *iški*.

55 See also the discussion by Younger (2002, 308; 2004, 274).

56 Kaufman 2007, 23.

57 Cited from CAL s.v. *gzr*, *gzr'*. See further comments on this word by Lipiński (1999–2000, 497).

58 Lenzi 2014, 70.

59 Kaufman 2007, 8.

hkm It is noteworthy that the sage is mentioned immediately after an account of a sacrifice. The relationship between sages, sacrifice, and prophetic oracles in the Hebrew Bible has been a matter of ongoing discussion. Raymond van Leeuwen draws attention to the sage (וְחִכְמָם הָרְשִׁים) among the courtly deportees foreseen by Isaiah (3:3).⁶⁰ Note also that both groups appear in Daniel 2:27, cited above. These texts confirm the association but offer no explanatory background.

ʿš G perf. ʿwš / ʿāš / “he advised” The morphology is instructive here. The Biblical Hebrew noun עֲצָה and cognates are feminine, and in Phoenician would be written ʿšt. Hence this form must be verbal, from the root ʿwš. Kaufman’s translation “gave advice” shows the same interpretation of ʿš.

lʾmr Note the infinitive *lʾmr* (KAI 14.2 [Eshmunazor]),⁶¹ a construction common in Biblical Hebrew.⁶² The rhetorical implication of the frame is that the oracle that follows is spoken by the sage (*hkm*) mentioned previously in line 13.

Lines 14–15

The segment ʾrpd whlb in line 14 might at first glance seem ambiguous: Is this pairing conjunctive (as reflected in Kaufman’s translation cited below) or disjunctive? It is treated as disjunctive here.

Kaufman’s translation “King of Arpad and Aleppo”⁶³ implies that Matiʿel held both cities. This view gains weak support from the Aramaic treaty imposed by Bargaya, king of *Ktk*,⁶⁴ on Matiʿel, king of Arpad (KAI 222 A 1), the same royal figure featured in lines 11–15 of the front panel of the Incirli text and mentioned by name on the left panel (lines 7, 15). The king of Arpad is forbidden to permit any ally or vassal of Bargaya to seek asylum in Aleppo (KAI 224.4–7).⁶⁵ The implication is that Matiʿel was in a position to interfere in the internal affairs of Aleppo, thus indicating that the city was regarded as somehow under his jurisdiction. This information makes the exact character of his relationship to Aleppo no clearer, however.

On the other hand, in the same treaty text, Matiʿel is addressed as *mlk ʾrpd* “king of Arpad” (KAI 222 A 1 [restored], 3, 13–14 [restored]), 14, and repeated reference is made to future *mlky ʾrpd* “kings of Arpad” (KAI 223 C 15; 224.1, 3, 16, 27 [restored]). Aleppo is never added to the title even though it is mentioned (KAI 224.5).

The label *mlk ʾrpd* “king of Arpad” designates Matiʿel four times in the Incirli inscription: *wzbh mlk ʾrpd* “and the king of Arpad sacrificed” (front, line 11), *mtʿl mlk ʾrpd* “Matiʿel, king of Arpad” (left side, line 7),⁶⁶ *mlk ʾrpd* (left side, line 14), and *mtʿl mlk ʾrpd* (back, line 6). In other words, both inscriptions employ the same royal titulature. The title מֶלֶךְ אַרְפַּד “king of Arpad” occurs also in the speech of the messengers of Sennacherib in 1 Kings 19:13 (= Isa. 37:13). Thus the evidence of these two inscriptions and the biblical texts agree that *mlk ʾrpd* is the king’s full title. We can assume that the title occurs in line 14 of the Incirli inscription as well.

Considering that Incirli lines 14–15 are part of the discourse of a sage (*hkm*, line 13), the reader might reasonably anticipate an encounter with some of the syntactic structures characteristic of Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew verse or prophetic oracles.⁶⁷ Such structures are apparent in lines 14–15 of this inscription.

⁶⁰ Van Leeuwen 1990, 301–2.

⁶¹ For other Northwest Semitic epigraphic examples, see *DNWSI* 77 s.v. *ʾmr* §10 and Miller 1996, 164–67.

⁶² See Miller 1996, 163–212.

⁶³ Kaufman 2007, 15.

⁶⁴ On the identification of *Ktk*, see recently Wazana 2008.

⁶⁵ Greenfield (1991) reasoned that the temple of the storm god Hadad in Aleppo served as a place of refuge in the Aramaean realm. See also the remarks of Grosby 2002, 161–62.

⁶⁶ This example occurs in a statement attributed to Matiʿel himself.

⁶⁷ The “brief description” by O’Connor (1980, 67–88), detailing the syntactic and lexical constraints operative in Biblical Hebrew verse, remains foundational although recently neglected. The most comprehensive studies of parallelism are by Pardee (1988, briefly updated by Reymond 2011, 9–13) and Berlin (1992). On the question of quantitative analysis, see Reymond’s earlier survey (2004, 16–17).

<i>km ḥq mlk ṛpd</i>	Like my lap is the king of Arpad!
<i>whlb ṛl tgzr ḏ[n]</i>	But Aleppo you must not canton Ada[na],
<i>[wqw] ṛl tḫd</i>	[and Que] you must not fear.
<i>k ṛm kp rṣ pḥtk</i>	For if the head of your province bows down,
<i>ṛl yhr[b]</i>	it will not be laid was[te].

The following comments continue the philological analysis.

Line 14a

km Kaufman translates the passage *km ḥq mlk ṛpd whlb* “According to the law of the King of Arpad and Aleppo” without discussion.⁶⁸ The translation “according to” for *km* is possible, but in Phoenician (e.g., *KAI* 24.10, 13; 26 A IV 2; C V 6; 277.10) the particle *km* generally introduces a comparison (*PPG*³ 181 §252b). Biblical Hebrew poetry often depends on comparison also: כֶּמוֹ-אֶבֶן “like a stone” (Exod. 15: 5b); כֶּמוֹ-יַד “like a dyke” (Exod. 15: 8b); כֶּמוֹ-הָרָה “like a woman with child” (Isa. 26:17).

ḥq This word is to be read /*hêqī*/ “my lap,” implying the lap of the god Hadad, whose words are being conveyed, as the antecedent. The word is cognate to Biblical Hebrew *hêq*, which designates the human torso or its components, such as the pelvic area, groin, lap, and chest or bosom.⁶⁹ I do not find, however, a precise equivalent to the simile *km ḥq* “like my lap” in Biblical Hebrew or any other Northwest Semitic text. Akkadian texts employ a conceptually similar metaphor.⁷⁰ The point of the anatomical comparison is to convey to the king that he is precious to the deity (and therefore useful to his Assyrian suzerain), thereby cushioning the prediction about Aleppo while establishing a basis for the encouragement against fear.

Line 14b

gzr “cut” The translation above employs the somewhat outdated English verb *canton* because this word precisely conveys what the oracle appears to forbid.⁷¹ The prohibition appears not to limit its concern to acts that would divide the city of Adana itself into segments or destroy the city altogether. The implied whole entity of capital city and dependencies, *ḏ[n / wqw]* “Adana and Que,”⁷² is not to be cantoned or divided into separate districts. A military act of this sort by Aleppo would first necessitate an incursion into

⁶⁸ Kaufman 2007, 15.

⁶⁹ Using images from Egyptian sources, Steytmans (2014, 255 fig. 2; 263 fig. 3) delimits the scope of Biblical Hebrew חֵיק more clearly: “חֵיק denotes a body part that is both above and below the belt” (ibid., 271), “from the breast down to the upper part of the thighs” (ibid., 272). That range is also suitable to the Phoenician use of *ḥq* in the passage under discussion. I thank the editors for bringing this source to my attention.

⁷⁰ Akkadian metaphors indicate that the lap is the more likely referent of Phoenician *ḥq* in this instance, for kings are portrayed as seated in or otherwise associated with the lap of a deity (see, e.g., CAD s.v. *birku*, *sūnu* A). A clear example of this motif occurs in the following prophetic oracle:

¹³*ina terētim Addu bēl Kallassu* ¹⁴*[izz]az ummāmi ul anākū* ¹⁵*Addu bēl Kallassu ša ina birit* ¹⁶*paḥallīya urabbūšuma ana kussem bīt abīšu* ¹⁷*uterrūšu* (Mari letters A. 1121 + A. 2731, Nur-Sin to Zimri-Lim)

Through oracles, Adad, lord of Kallassu, would stand by, saying: “Am I not Adad, lord of Kallassu, who raised him (scil. the king) in my lap and restored him to his ancestral throne?” (Nissinen 2003, 18).

As a Mesopotamian example of the metaphor expressing “a place of shelter and protection,” Shalom Paul (2012, 137) cites this passage from the laws of Hammurapi: “In my bosom (*ultu*) I carried the people of the land of Sumer and Akkad” (xlvi 49–52). Also relevant is the Akkadian idiom *ana sūni šakānu* “to place in the lap,” meaning to place under protection (*AHW* 1059 s.v. *sūnu*[*m*] I; CAD S 388 s.v. *sūnu* A).

⁷¹ The word *canton* means “to divide (land) into portions” (*Oxford English Dictionary* s.v., 1a).

⁷² On the city and its territory, see Röllig 2011, 121–22.

Que; if successful, the cantoning would isolate Adana, a move that could be foreseen to alter the military and political parity between Adana and Arpad.⁷³

The verb phrase *ʿl tgzr* involves a G-stem prefix form. In Biblical Hebrew this verb generally refers to cutting (e.g., 1 Kgs. 3:25–26; 2 Kgs. 6:4), deciding (Job 22:28), or cessation (Hab. 3:17). It would seem prudent also to examine uses of the verb *gzr* in the contemporary Aramaic treaty of Matiʿēl with Bargāya. The grounds of comparison are limited: *wʿdyʿ ʿln zy gzar br gʿ[yh]* “this treaty, which Bargāya has concluded” (KAI 222 A 7); *[wʿyk z] / ygzar ʿglʿ znh* “[Just as] this calf is cut up” (KAI 222 A 39–40);⁷⁴ *ʿmk kn tzgr ʿplʿ* (context broken; KAI 222 B 43). The two discernible contexts, ratifying a covenant and butchering an animal, invoke—metaphorically and literally—the notion of cutting.⁷⁵

The homology between alterations of political allegiance and sacrificial immolation is established only implicitly through unspoken awareness of bodily destruction as the means by which both states—covenantal allegiance and sanctification—are achieved.⁷⁶ Ratification of an agreement by solemn oath is a social and political act, and the verb *gzr* in the Aramaic text of the Sefire inscription is demonstrably an element of the contemporary vocabulary of interstate politics. It is a short but uncertain step to suppose that *gzr* is likewise part of the political vocabulary of Phoenician-speaking Que.

In Biblical Hebrew, the phrase *אֶרֶץ נִזְרָה* specifies the terrain to which the scapegoat carries its burden of sins (Lev. 16:22), translated “solitary land” (RSV); “remote place” (NIV); and “inaccessible region” (NJPS). The word *נִזְרָה* designates a ritually restricted area of the Temple property in Ezekiel’s vision of the restored sanctuary (Ezek. 41:12–15; 42:1, 10, 13).⁷⁷ This label, referring to land, is semantically most similar to the Phoenician occurrence of *gzr* under discussion here.

Considered in the context of land use, the statement *whlbʿ ʿl tgzr* makes sense. One city (Aleppo) is forbidden to appropriate part of the territory of the other (Adana). The translation of *ʿl tgzr* as “you must not canton” secures the verb *gzr* as a technical term in the political discourse of interstate relations. Arpad is not to divide and apportion its neighboring state to achieve dominance. Because Aleppo is (at least implicitly) subject to Matiʿēl, the oracle also subtly authorizes a divine curtailment of the king of Arpad’s military and political power.

The restoration *ʿd[n / wqw]* involves minimal speculation and suits the space available at the end of line 14, where there is space for probably one letter. At the beginning of line 15 there is space for three letters. The name *ʿd[n]* “Adana” nicely fills the lacuna at the end of line 14,⁷⁸ and *[wqw]* likewise fills the three-letter lacuna at the beginning of line 15, unrestored in the original publication.

Line 15a

qw The name *qw* occurs twice elsewhere in the inscription, both times in the phrase *mlk qw* (front, line 9; right side, line 1).

73 Note in line 3 of the left side the phrase *brth*, representing **brt ʿh* “covenant of brother(hood),” implying a parity agreement between the two kingdoms.

74 Lipiński (1999–2000, 493–94) maintains that the verb refers to slaughtering, not butchering, in this passage.

75 On Ugaritic *gzr*, see Smith 2006, 114–15.

76 The second passage cited above (KAI 222 A 39–40) explicitly compares the slaughter or dismemberment of an animal to the political consequences of treaty violation. The treaty of Aššur-nerari V with Matiʿilu (SAA 02, 002, lines 10–35) makes these consequences gruesomely explicit.

77 See TDOT 2: 460 (Görg).

78 The phrase *ʿmq ʿdn* “the plain of Adana” (KAI 24 A I 4; II 2, 7) establishes the spelling. In the Çineköy inscription the phrase can be restored *ʿmq [ʿdn]* (Tekoğlu and Lemaire 2000, 994 line 4). Kaufman’s (2007, 12) restoration *ʿd[m]* serves the unlikely hypothesis that the inscription concerns human sacrifice.

Line 15b

k 'm The conjunction *k* introduces a conditional clause with 'm, as in Exodus 22:22 (English v. 23): כִּי אִם־צָעַק יִצְעַק אֵלַי “indeed, if he cries out to me.”

*kp r*š In Biblical Hebrew the verb *kpp* describes the declining motion of the head: הֲלֹכְךָ כְּאַגְמֹן רֹאשׁוֹ “is it to bow down his head like a bulrush?” (Isa. 58:5).⁷⁹

phtk The second-person pronoun undoubtedly refers to Mati^cēl.⁸⁰

yhr[b] The restoration of *b* as the final consonant is Kaufman's.⁸¹ It suits the context of this interpretation quite well.

The syntax of lines 14–15 seems ambiguous. There is syntactic matching and lexical repetition in the two sentences, but the boundary between the first and second sentence is difficult to discern. The following division of lines is attractive because it produces two partly matching sentences:

whlb 'l *tgzr* 'd[n]
[wqw] 'l *tpḥd*

In addition to manifesting syntactic symmetry, the line division shown above highlights the word-level trope of *binomination*,⁸² in this case geographical binomination.⁸³ In other words, the prose pair 'dn wqw “Adana-and-Que” (i.e., capital and state) is distributed over the two verse lines. The initial vocative constituent *hlb* is gapped (not represented) in the second line,⁸⁴ and the order of subject and object in the two lines manifests simple chiasm.⁸⁵ Individually and cumulatively, these features allow us to describe this oracle as verse.

In literary form, the passage in lines 14–15 can be regarded as a new example of the “salvation oracle” form.⁸⁶ The explicit statement *wzbḥ mlk rpd* “and the king of Arpad sacrificed” (line 11) indicates the cultic context in which the sage delivers an oracle of salvation and assurance of hope. The formal structure of this oracle can be described with the following outline:

- Sacrifice (line 11)
- Statement of divine response (line 12a)
- Divine response to king and diviners (line 12b)
- Statement of reason for diviners' activity (lines 12–13a)
- Statement of sage's response (line 13b)
- Sage's response (lines 14–15)
 - Oracle to Mati^cēl (14a)
 - Oracle to Aleppo about Arpad (14b)
 - Oracle about Adana and Que (14c–15a)
 - Oracle about the province (of Arpad) (15b)

The previously known epigraphic example of a “salvation oracle” from a Northwest Semitic inscription occurs in the Old Aramaic inscription of Zakkur:

⁷⁹ Note once again how metaphor evokes the implicit notion of the homunculus in motion, a rhetorical device discussed above.

⁸⁰ The proposed second-person discourse on the left side, line 1 (*k' tmrā* “because you would rebel” [Kaufman 2007, 16]) is excluded by new word divisions proposed below.

⁸¹ Kaufman 2007, 12.

⁸² O'Connor 1980, 112–13.

⁸³ Ibid., 376–77.

⁸⁴ On vocatives in Biblical Hebrew verse, see O'Connor 1980, 80–82; Miller 2010.

⁸⁵ On simple chiasm with gapping, see O'Connor 1980, 393.

⁸⁶ Begrich 1934; 1938; Harner 1969; Westermann 1991; Stackert 2014, 40–41.

[wy'mr.] b'lšmyn . 'l [.] t[z]hl . ky . 'nh . hml[ktk . w'nh . 'q]m . 'm[k] . w'nh [.] 'hšlk . mn [.]
kl . [mlky'] (KAI 202 A 12–14)

Baalshamayn [said], “F[e]ar not, for I have made [you] king, [and I will st]and with [you],
and I will deliver you from all [these kings].”⁸⁷

The “do not fear” oracle in KAI 202 A 12–14 is similar to Incirli, line 15a, and a defining component of the “salvation oracle” form.⁸⁸ The two passages share other important similarities as well: (1) explicit reference to human intermediaries (KAI 202 A line 12; Incirli, front, 13b); (2) first-person speech by the deity (KAI 202 A 13–14; Incirli, front, 14); and (3) assurance of deliverance (KAI 202 A 14; Incirli, front, 15b).

PURSUIT, APPREHENSION, AND PARDON

INCIRLI STELE, LEFT SIDE, LINES 1–26

The interpretation of this segment of the text is complicated by epigraphic limits. Most lines are ten letters in length, but eleven-letter and twelve-letter lines occur. Of the twenty-seven extant lines, however, only six lines (21–26) can be read entirely—about one-fifth of the total. Once again, however, Kaufman has established a text that need not face serious challenge. Insofar as readings can be established, those published in the first treatment withstand scrutiny.

As with many epigraphic texts, the chief difficulties are interpretive: finding word boundaries, distinguishing homographs, establishing sentences, and interpreting semantic and rhetorical cues. Beginning with the first words, the interpretation below offers a number of new suggestions. The narrative, as I interpret it, opens with a statement about the defeat and capture of Mati^oēl by the forces of the King of the Danunians. The text gives no significant attention to the cause or motivation of Arpad’s revolt. Mati^oēl is villified as the “traitor of the traitors of Arpad” (line 4), but apparently he survives, and the subsequent text, focusing on potential consequences of a future revolt, threatens harsh retribution by Que if the King of Arpad or his relatives should ever attempt another such rebellion.

TEXT

(1) kñkt mřđp 'hr (2) bgd by wr'm b (3) brth mlk dnnym[m] (4) šqr bgd bgd 'rp[d] (5) rħm bn w'm bt (6)
pn ymt w'l yh[rg] (7) mt' l mlk 'rpd (8) lbny wbn bn[y] (9) [b]šry wlb 'by] (10) kl mlk h'my qb (11)
'm mrd šqr h' (12) . . . mgd p 'rpd (13) lm tkħd šr [mt'] (14) l mlk 'rpd . . (15) bgd mt' l 'd (16) bšry w'p
pħty (17) 'l mlk dnnym k (18) b' 'rpd . . (19) wħsp hgblm (20) sp 'špt 'rpd (21) k'šr 'm bn 'm (22) bn bny
'm 'ry (23) bšry 'm bt ' (24) ry bšry k bnk [. . .] (25) ' mlk dnnym z (26) mrd bmlk 'šr (27) 'l bny [. . .]

(1) When I had defeated him (or: upon his defeat) by pursuit after (2) the traitor against me and (after) the breakers of the (3) parity covenant of the king of the Danunians, (4) the traitor of the traitors of Arpad dealt falsely. (5) They pitied son and *mother of a household* (6–7) lest they die, and Mati^oēl king of Arpad was not killed (8) by his son(s) or by the son(s) of his son(s) of (9) his flesh or by the house of his father. (10) Every king that his people cursed, (11) *if he is a deceitful rebel* (12) . . . speaking a *message* (lit., mouth) of Arpad, (13) “Why would you conceal an (or: my) enemy, [Mati^o] (14) ēl king of Arpad?” (15) (Should) Mati^oēl again betray (16) his flesh and also his province, (17) the king of the Danunians (will) go up there. (18) When he enters Arpad . . . (19) and strip away the borders: (20) “An end I will decree, Arpad! (21) When either his son or (22) a son of his sons or his

87 Translation by Nissinen 2003, 206. On the context, see Stökl (2012, 21–22).

88 The deity b'l šmyn is the source of the oracle to Zakkur (KAI 202 A 11–12) and is invoked in other Aramaic inscriptions (KAI 259.3; 266.2). The name b'l šmm appears (without oracle) in Phoenician texts also: KAI 4.3 (Byblos); 18.1, 7 (Umm el-‘Amed); 23.2 restored (Hassan Beyli); 24 A 3.18 (Karatepe); 64.1 (Cagliari), and the deity is probably mentioned as the recipient of a sacrifice in the Ivriz inscription, right side, lines 16–17 (Dinçol 1994, figs. 3–5; Röllig 2013).

relative (23) by blood (lit., his flesh) or the daughter (or: house) of a re (24) lative by blood, *if your son* [. . .] (25) [. . .] king of the Danunians [who] (26) rebel against the king of Assur, (26) against my (or: his; or: its) son(s) . . .”

COMMENTARY

Line 1

In the first publication, the words of this line are divided thus: *kñ k̄ tmrd̄ p̄ ḥd̄/r̄*.⁸⁹ The translation, italicized to indicate uncertainty, is “thus/there was, because you would rebel at the command of a foreigner.”⁹⁰ The translation offered here follows a different word division: *kñkt̄* is a temporal adverbial clause whose main verb is from the root *nky* “to smite, defeat.”⁹¹ A generally accepted example of this clause type is *ksth* “when they placed him” (KAI 1.1; PPG³ 186 §257.4). The clause *kñkt̄* can be translated “when I had defeated him” (G perf. 1cs + 3ms suffix) or “upon his being defeated” (N inf. constr. + 3ms suffix).

The remainder of the line can be reinterpreted *mrd̄p̄ ḥr̄*, parsed as the preposition /min-/, the infinitive *rdp̄* “to pursue,” and the preposition *ḥr̄* “after.”⁹² The preposition /min-/ probably expresses the means by which the verbal action was completed, as in Biblical Hebrew מִרְבּ “by the magnitude (of your guilt).”⁹³ The translation “by pursuit” reflects this analysis. Line 2 then introduces the objects of this pursuit.

Line 2

bgd /bōgēd/ G part. *bgd* “traitor”

r̄m G part. pl. *r̄^{cc}₂* “smash, shatter, break” Note the complement *b-* following this verb, as in Biblical Hebrew.⁹⁴ The Biblical Hebrew verb *r̄^{cc}₂* (HALOT 1270–71) is not explicitly associated with covenant-breaking, although it occurs in contexts having to do with the Temple and priests.

Line 3

brth (**brt* ḥ) lit., “covenant of a brother,” or “parity covenant.”⁹⁵ The aphaeresis of initial *’alep* is regular in Phoenician (PPG³ 12–13 §14c).

Line 4

šqr nm “breach of faith, lie” (HALOT 1648–50). In the Sefire treaty, the cognate verb describes treaty violation: *šqrt b’dy’ ln* “you have violated these treaty stipulations” (KAI 222 B 38; DNWSI 1189; TDOT 15: 471).

Line 5

rhm G perf. 3p “they had compassion, pity” (DNWSI 1068–69)

⁸⁹ Kaufman 2007, 12.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 16.

⁹¹ HALOT 697–98; Ugaritic *nkyt* (CAT 1.16:II:27) may attest to *nky* in the G stem (DULAT 632), but the context is broken. The verb also occurs in Old Aramaic (KAI 224.12–13). (I thank H. Hardy for this reference.)

⁹² In Biblical Hebrew the verb *rdp̄* frequently governs a prepositional complement introduced by /’āḥēr/.

⁹³ Ezek. 28:18; GKC §119.4; HALOT 598 s.v. *min* 4.

⁹⁴ בְּנִבִּיִּי אֶל־תַּרְעִו “do not harm My prophets” (1 Chron. 16:22).

⁹⁵ Compare Biblical Hebrew בְּרִית אֲחֵים (Amos 1:9).

Line 6

yh[rg] The restoration of two letters in the break at the end of line 6 creates a line of eleven letters. The average line length of the right-side panel is twelve letters, so the restoration is possible. From the context as understood here, the verb *hrg* must be N-stem or internal passive. The agent of the passive clause *ʿl yh[rg]* “and (Mati^oēl) was not killed” follows the verb and is marked with the preposition *l-* (*lbny wlb nny* “by his son or by his son’s son . . .”), typical syntax in Phoenician (PPG³ 196 §273).

Line 10

The word division of the first publication, *kl mlk hʿm yqb* “Every king, whether he curse,”⁹⁶ is unconvincing in its interpretation of the proposed form *hʿm*. The division of words *kl mlk hʿmy qb* is more likely. Here is the proposed analysis:

h- def. art.

ʿmy nm + 3ms suffix /ʿummiyyū/ “his people.” This masculine variant of the stem occurs also in Biblical Hebrew: כָּל־הָעַמִּים “all peoples” (Ps. 117:1).

qb G perf. qbb “to curse” (DNWSI 977–78)

The sentence *kl mlk hʿmy qb* is an example of the *h-* relative construction, as also found in Biblical Hebrew and later dialects. One of the constraints on this construction in Biblical Hebrew is that it may “relativize only the subject of the relative clause.”⁹⁷ That is the case in this instance also. The suffixal pronoun of *ʿmy* is assumed to refer to Mati^oēl king of Arpad.

Line 11

mrd This noun occurs earlier in the Incirli inscription: front, line 11.

šqr As in line 4 above; the context is uncertain in this line.

Line 12

mgd D part. *ngd* “speaking”

Line 13

lm /lam(m)ā/ interrog. “how? why?”

kḥd “hide, conceal, efface” (HALOT 469)

šr “enemy” Possibly attested in Samalian (KAI 214.30; see DNWSI 974 s.v.)

Lines 13–14

[mt^o]l This restoration is partly conjectural; it preserves the letter *taw* read by Kaufman near the end of line 13.⁹⁸ Restoring *[mt^o]* at the end of line 13 would create a count of twelve letters in the line, as in lines 3 and 7 of the same panel.

⁹⁶ Kaufman 2007, 16.

⁹⁷ Holmstedt 2016, 69; full description of the construction, *ibid.*, 69–71.

⁹⁸ Kaufman 2007, 8.

Line 15

‘d (‘wd₂) adv. “still, yet, again” (DNWSI 831–32)

Line 17

‘l G perf. ‘ly 3ms “he went up” or inf. “to go up” (see note on ‘špṭ in line 20 below). In Phoenician as in Hebrew, the verb is used in military contexts: k ‘l . hgbr . z’ [. ‘l]šy “For this warrior went up (against) [Al]ashiya” (KAI 30.2–3)⁹⁹; ‘š ‘l šd kš dl hms “that went up (to) the steppes of Kush with Amasis” (CIS I 112 b¹; var. in 112 a, b², c).¹⁰⁰

Line 19

hsp (hšp) “to strip away.” Compare Phoenician tḥtsp “you should strip” (KAI 1.2).

Line 20

sp /sōp/ (swp) “end” (HALOT 747). I understand the noun to be the object of the verb špṭ “to issue a verdict.” Kaufman’s translation “to the end”¹⁰¹ supplies the preposition, thus assuming continuity with the previous clause.

‘špṭ G prefix. “I will judge.” The future tense or modal aspect of this verb indicates the entire narrative of Wraykas’s movements and actions in lines 17–20 should be viewed as a threat of potential future punishment if Arpad rebels another time.

Line 22

‘ry Ug. ary₁ “kin” (DUL 111–12)¹⁰²

The back panel of the stele¹⁰³ is inscribed with twenty-six lines that continue the narrative, and another six lines can be read on the right panel.¹⁰⁴ Unfortunately, that the legibility of many letters is poor makes a continuous reading of the narrative virtually impossible. The translation of these sections of the text attempted by Kaufman¹⁰⁵ shows that the narrative about the suppression of revolt against Assyria and the Danunian king continues, probably to the middle of the eighteenth line of the back. The narrative voice is first-person from line 13 to line 22 of the back panel. The topic of lines 19–26 appears to be about postconflict retaliations by Wraykas. The text on the right panel¹⁰⁶ appears to be a curse intended to protect the stele itself.

CONCLUSION

The present study has sought to provide a degree of additional clarity in the translation of three major sections of the text. The textual foundation provided by the first publication is demonstrably sound and reliable, almost without exception. Translation and interpretation will differ to some degree with each new

⁹⁹ First published by Honeyman (1938).

¹⁰⁰ See Schmitz 2010, 323; 2012, 36–42.

¹⁰¹ Kaufman 2007, 14.

¹⁰² See Watson 2013, 25, with etymological discussion.

¹⁰³ Kaufman 2007, 13–14.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 11.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 16–17.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 17.

study until a measure of stasis is achieved concerning philological questions that arise in the interpretive process. The gains of this new study, in the author's view, may be some small improvements in understanding the border description, the identification of an oracle of the god Hadad in lines 14–15 of the front, and a more sharply focused interpretation of the capture of Mati^ʿel and the surprisingly lenient treatment of his family in the settlements that followed his military defeat.

The chief innovation proposed in this treatment of the inscription is to interpret lines 11–15 as an account of an oracle of the type referred to in English as a “salvation oracle.” The word *mlk* is translated as “king,” and this translation is incompatible with the hypothesis that the word *mlk* signifies a human sacrifice. Kaufman cautions this latter interpretation is “by no means certain.”¹⁰⁷ It is my own duty to caution that the interpretation proposed above must also be subjected to review by specialists before any greater degree of certainty can be ascribed to it. I am persuaded that the translation given above does justice to the vocabulary and apparent grammar of the passage, but the context is insufficiently established at this moment to warrant stronger claims of certainty.¹⁰⁸

In several other places as well, the interpretations presented above will require further discussion by specialists. Any resulting improvements have the potential to aid historians and biblical scholars to incorporate this important primary source more effectively in future studies of the conflict it describes.

107 Ibid., 4.

108 I thank the editors for their invitation to contribute this study in honor of Dennis Pardee. Although I was never formally associated with him as a student or colleague, he extended generous encouragement and advice to me at crucial moments in my own formation. This study would be the better for his critique, but I nonetheless offer it in gratitude and with congratulations.

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10

“AND NOW” $w^t(H)$

A TRANSITION PARTICLE IN ANCIENT HEBREW

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A transitional particle w^t found in Epigraphic Hebrew (Biblical Hebrew w^th) was identified by Dennis Pardee in an article on the Arad Letters¹ as well as in his coauthored *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters*.² Since the publication of Pardee’s study of the Arad Letters and his handbook, the discovery of several other inscriptions makes it worth revisiting this transition particle in the epigraphic and biblical records. Transitional markers were likely an important device learned by ancient scribes when writing letters, and this paper compares this marker with other devices in Northwest Semitics. The particle is thought to have its origins in oral discourse, and the relationship between oral discourse and scribal training is discussed. Finally, the paper concludes with some reflection on how understanding w^t as part of rudimentary scribal training might inform its use in biblical literature.

Pardee notes that although he translates w^t literally, “it corresponds more nearly to a paragraph division in English usage.”³ His description of w^t as a paragraph divider was quite apt. Indeed, paragraph dividers in letter writing serve a universal semantic function. In the Amarna Letters and Ugarit we find a graphic auxiliary scribal marker that serves as a functional equivalent to the lexical w^t —viz., both the Amarna Letters and Ugaritic regularly employ a horizontal line in a variety of ways to distinguish logical semantic units in texts, and this practice includes marking off sections (or “paragraphs”) within letters.⁴ Alphabetic Ugaritic letters often utilize a single horizontal line to separate the *praescriptio* (that is, the address and the greeting) from the body of a letter.⁵ Frequently, Ugaritic letters will separate both elements of the *praescriptio* with a line. Occasionally they omit the line, so the practice is not entirely consistent. A few examples will illustrate.⁶

Text 21 (RS 4.475; KTU 2.10)

(1) *tḥm . iwrdr* (2) *l . plsy* (3) *rgm*

(4) *yšlm . lk*

(5) *l . trǵds* (6) *w . l . klby* (7) *šmʿt . ḥtī* (8) *nḥtū. ht . . .*

1 Pardee 1978.

2 Pardee 1982.

3 Pardee 1978, 292.

4 See Mabie 2004.

5 *Praescriptio* is Pardee’s (1982, 145) term for the prologue of a letter, which may include the name of the sender, the recipient, and a formulaic greeting and blessing. The *praescriptio* are abbreviated in many Hebrew letters and often name only the recipient.

6 Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 233–36.

Message of Iwriḏarri: To Pilsiya, say: / May it be well with you. / Regarding Tarḡudassi and Kalbiya, I have heard that they have suffered defeat . . .

Text 23 (RS 11.872; KTU 2.13)

l . mlkt (2) úmy . rgm (3) tḥm . mlk (4) bnk .

(5) l . p'n . úmy (6) qlt . l . úmy (7) yšlm . ilm (8) tḡrk . tšlmk

(9) hlly . 'mny (10) kll . šlm (11) tmny . 'm . úmy [Lower edge] (12) mnm . šlm (13) w . rgm . ttb . ly . . .

Reverse

(14) bm . tyndr (15) itt . 'mn.mlk't'

To the queen, my mother, say: Message of the king, your son. / At my mother's feet I fall. With my mother may it be well! May the gods guard you, may they keep you well. / Here with me everything is well. There with my mother, whatever is well, send word (of that) back to me . . . / From the tribute they have vowed a gift to the queen. . . .

Text 24 (RS 15.008; KTU 2.16)

tḥm . 't'lm[y]'n' (2) l tḡryl . úmy (3) rgm

(4) yšlm . lk . ily (5) úgrt . tḡrk (6) tšlmk . úmy (7) td' . ky . 'rbt (8) l pn . špš (9) w pn . špš . nr (10) by . mid . . .

Message of Talminyāni: To Tarriyelli, my mother, say: / May it be well with you. May the gods of Ugarit guard you, may they keep you well. My mother, you must know that I have entered before the Sun and (that) the face of the Sun has shone upon me.

Some variety in the use of the horizontal line can be seen in these examples. While the horizontal line works as an auxiliary scribal device marking sections, Ugaritic lacks a lexical equivalent to *w't* that is employed regularly.

Likewise, the Amarna Letters frequently employ a single or double horizontal line to divide the *prae-scriptio* from the body of the letter, although the Amarna Letters are less consistent in using this auxiliary marker as a paragraph divider.⁷ It is also worth noting that the non-Canaanite letters (i.e., EA 1–59) employ the horizontal line(s) quite regularly in a similar manner to the Ugaritic letters, whereas the Canaanite letters (EA 60–382) are less consistent in employing a horizontal line(s). This situation can be traced to regional variation resulting from different scribal communities.⁸ Some examples from the Amarna Letters⁹ will illustrate some features of its usage:

EA 39

(1) a-na LUGAL KUR Mi-iš-ri Š[E]Š-ia (2) qí-bí-ma (3) um-ma LUGAL KUR A-la-ši-ia ŠEŠ-ka-ma (4) a-na ia-ši šul-mu (5) ù a-na UGU-ka lu-ú šul-mu (6) a-na É-ka NITLAM.MEŠ-ka DUMU-ka (7) DAM.MEŠ-ka GIŠ.GIGIR.MEŠ-ka ma-du ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ-ka (8) ù i-na KUR Mi-iš-ri KUR-ka (9) ma-gal lu-ú šul-mu

(10) ŠEŠ-ia LÚ.DUMU.KIN-ri-ia (11) ḥa-mu-ut-ta na-aš-ri-iš (12) uš-še-ra-šu-nu ù iš-mé (13) šu-lu-um-ka

⁷ Mabie (2004, 320–23) has shown that the variation in auxiliary markers in the Amarna corpus can be grouped geographically. The use of auxiliary markers in Ugaritic and the Amarna Letters show both commonalities and distinctions.

⁸ See *ibid.*, 322–23.

⁹ Rainey 2015.

- (14) LÚ *an-nu-ú* DAM.GÂR-*ia* ŠEŠ-*ia* (15) *na-aš-ri-iš* *ha-mu-[ut-t]a* (16) *uš-še-ra-šu-nu*
 (17) LÚ.DAM.GÂR-*ia* GIŠ.MÂ-*ia* (18) LÚ *pa-qá-ri-ka ul* (19) *ia-qá-ar-ri-ib* (20) *it-ti-šu-nu*

Speak to the king of Egypt, my brother, thus (says) the king of Alashia, your brother: It is well with me. May it be well with you. With your house, your spouses, your son(s), your wives, your chariotry, your many horses, and within Egypt, your country, may it be very well. / My brother, as for my messengers, send them quickly and safely so that I may hear of your welfare. / These men are my merchants. My brother, send them safely (and) quick[l]y. As for my merchant(s) (and) my ship, may your customs' inspector not draw near to them.

EA 276

- (1) [*a-na* LUGAL EN*ia*] (2) [DINGER.MEŠ-*ia* ^dUTU-*ia*] (3) *qí-bí-ma*

-
- (4) *um-ma* ^I[*l*] *a-a[h-zi-ba-da]* (5) *İR-ka ep-ri* [*ša*] (6) GİR.MEŠ-*ka a-na* GÈR.M[EŠ LUGAL EN*ia*]
 (7) DINGIR.MEŠ-*ia* ^dUTU-*ia* (8) *7-šu 7-tá-a-an* ^{am-qut} (9) *a-wa-at iš-tap-pár* (10) LUGAL EN*ia*
 DINGIR.MEŠ-*ia* (11) [^dUTU-*ia a-na ia-ši*] (12) [*a-nu*]-*ma i-šu-ši-ru*-*šu* (13) [*a-n*] *a* LUGAL EN*ia*
 (14) [^dUTU] *iš-tu* (15) AN *sa-mi*

[Speak to the king, my lord, my deity, my sun god:] / Message of [Y]a^c[zibadda,] your servant, the dirt [under] your feet: At the fee[t of the king, my lord,] my deity, my sun god, seven times (and) seven times have I fallen. As for the word that the king, my lord, my deity, my sun god, wrote to me, [no]w I am preparing it [fo]r the king, my lord, the sun [god] from heaven.

While the horizontal line is used as a section divider, it is certainly not used exclusively to separate the *praescriptio* from the body. Indeed, it is sometimes used to separate the parts of the *praescriptio*, and it can also be used in the body of the letter. The non-Canaanite letters share the most similarity with alphabetic Ugaritic in the use of this auxiliary mark. Actually, if anything, the wider use of the horizontal line(s) as sectional markers shares more with the use of w^t in biblical literature, which is used as a transitional marker in the entire oral discourse and not merely (or primarily) to mark the beginning of the discourse. The Amarna Letters do display a variety of lexical terms that are used to mark transitions (e.g., *anumma*, *inanna*, *enūma*, *amur*, *šanitam*), yet none of these terms are etymologically related to $w^t(h)$. Any similarities, however, seem to be strictly functional. The best functional equivalent to w^t in the Amarna Letters is *šanitam*; this word can be used to begin a new section right after a horizontal line and to begin the body of the letter after the *praescriptio* (see, e.g., EA 35:23, 27, 30, 43; 45:30; 47:12; 64:14; 105:6; 108:8; 132:8; 141:18; 142:11, 32; 157:34; 158:10; 161:35, 47; 169:16; 170:14; 171:22; 296:9).

As an aside, it is worth mentioning that the orthography of w^t in Epigraphic Hebrew has been the subject of some discussion.¹⁰ Biblical Hebrew spells it with a *mater lectionis*— w^t —with just one exception—in Psalm 74:6, where the *Qere* corrects the *Ketiv* to the Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) *plene* spelling.¹¹ It is difficult to make definitive conclusions about the orthographic choices of the ancient scribes given the often tenuous relationship between orthography and phonology.¹² Pardee correctly rejected David Noel Freedman's suggestion that the defective spelling in the inscriptions “indicates a pronunciation of ‘at or ‘ē^t.”¹³ Pardee favors Aharoni's vocalization, ‘attā, which was based on the variation in the spelling of 2ms verb forms (e.g., *yd^th*, Arad 40:9¹⁴). Indeed, Freedman's suggestion makes it difficult to account for the SBH

10 The one exception to the defective spelling is the “Silver, Pistachio and Grain” inscription, published from the antiquities market by S. Ahituv (2008, 199–202). I suspect this unprovenanced ostrakon is a forgery and should not be included in our dataset.

11 Additionally, there is the example of Ezekiel 23:43, where we find only ‘t “now” spelled defectively (and where the *Qere* corrects this example to the standard full spelling).

12 See the observations by M. Sebba (2007, 102–31).

13 Freedman 1969, 52; cited by Pardee 1978, 292.

14 See Aharoni 1981, 12.

orthography. Pardee suggests the SBH *ʿth* orthography represents a secondary lengthening of an originally short accusative vowel. This explanation raises the question of whether orthography should be viewed primarily as related to developments in pronunciation or whether other nonphonological issues may have factored into orthography.¹⁵ For example, the SBH orthography also became critical for distinguishing the Epigraphic Hebrew homographs, /*ʿēt*/ “time” and /*ʿāttah*/ “now,” which, given the related semantic fields, could have caused significant semantic confusion if they had remained homographs in biblical literature. In the end, as Pardee had noted, the vocalization of *wʿt* is uncertain, and it is difficult to know whether its status in Epigraphic Hebrew as a homograph with *ʿēt* “time” might have influenced the SBH orthography or whether its orthography was simply the reflection of a phonological development.

The use of *wʿt* as a sectional divider in Epigraphic Hebrew letters is quite consistent and impressive. It either occurs or can be restored from the context in seventeen of the Arad Letters (1:2; 2:1; 3:1; 5:1–2; 6:1; 7:1–2; 8:1; 9:1; 10:1; 11:2; 14:1; 16:3; 17:1; 18:3; 21:3; 40:4), and it appears five times in the Lachish Letters (2:3; 3:4; 4:1–2; 5:2–3; 9:3), once in a Wadi Murabbaʿat ostrakon, and once in a Moussaieff Ostrakon.¹⁶ Apart from Epigraphic Hebrew, *wʿt* was also used in other Iron Age Canaanite letters; for example, it is found in an Edomite letter from Horvat ʿUza¹⁷ and an Ammonite letter from Tell El-Mazār.¹⁸ In all these cases, *wʿt* serves as a transitional particle denoting the shift from the *praescriptio* to the body of the letter. From a formal point of view, *wʿt* marks the transition from a scribe’s announcing the sender and sometimes a formal stereotyped greeting to the actual content of the message, thus marking the shift in speaker from the scribe himself to the scribe as mouthpiece of the sender. *wʿt* realigns the focus from the metapragmatic structure of the letter to the actual letter itself.¹⁹ A few examples will illustrate both the variety and consistency of its usage:

- (1) Arad 1:1 *ʿl.ʿlyšb.w*
 1:2 *ʿt.ntn. lktym*
 To Elyashib: *And now*, give to the Kittim . . .
- (2) Arad 16:1 *ʿhk.ḥnnyhw.šlh lšl*
 16:2 *m.ʿlyšb.wlšlm bytk br*
 16:3 *ktk lyhwh.wʿt kšʿty*
 Your brother, Hananiah, sends for the welfare of Elyashib and for the welfare of your house. I bless you by Yahweh. *And now*, when I left . . .
- (3) Mura. 1:1 *ʿmr.[---]yhw.lk*
 1:2 *wʿt.ʿl.tšmʿ lk[l] dbr. ʿšr ydbr.ʿlyk*
 Message of [XXX]yahu to you: *And now*, do not listen to every word that he says to you . . .
- (4) Lachish 3:1 *ʿbdk.hwšʿyhw šlh.l*
 3:2 *hgd lʿdny yʿwš.yšmʿ*
 3:3 *yhwʿt ʿt ʿdny šmʿt šlm*
 3:4 *wšmʿt tḅ[.]wʿt.hpqh*
 Your servant, Hoshayahu, sends to tell my lord Yaush: May Yahweh cause my lord to hear a report of peace and a good report. *And now*, please open . . .

15 See, e.g., Sebba 2007; Jaffe, Androutsopoulos, and Sebba 2012.

16 See Dobbs-Allsopp et al., 2005, 381–82, 570–71.

17 Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985, 97–98.

18 Yassine and Teixidor 1986, 47.

19 Metapragmatics is the linguistic anthropology category that studies how language characterizes speech awareness, functions, and reference. In the present case, metapragmatics seems a useful theoretical category for *wʿt* inasmuch as it marks an awareness in the shift of the function of language and speakers. On metapragmatics, see Silverstein 2001 as well as Lucy 2004 for its role in reported speech.

- (5) H. Uza 1:1 $\text{'mr.lmlk. 'mr.lblbl}$
 1:2 hšlm. 't.whbrktk
 1:3 $\text{lqws.w't.tn. 't.h'kl}$

(Thus) said Lumalak, say to Balbal: Are you well? I bless you by Qaus. *And now*, give the food . . .

The use of w^t is so consistent in Iron Age inscriptions that one must assume it was a device scribes learned to use in writing letters. Herein, w^t is translated with a more formal equivalence as “and now,” but it can be more dynamically rendered simply by using a new paragraph; in this respect, it is similar to the Hebrew word lē'mōr , which is usually translated “saying” but can be more dynamically rendered into English by simply using quotation marks to mark direct speech.

The use of a device to mark the transition from the prologue to the body of a letter was similar (though more varied) in letters written in Official Aramaic. For example, Ezra uses wk^nt , wk^t , and wk^n as opening transitional particles in its letters.²⁰ The Hermopolis Papyri frequently employ wk^t (e.g., 1:3; 2:4; 4:4; 5:2; 6:3; 10:2); and we also find wk^n , k^n , k^nt , and wk^t in the Hermopolis and Elephantine papyri.²¹ These words all seem to be close functional parallels to w^t as it is used in Epigraphic Hebrew. A few examples will illustrate the functional similarities:

- (1) Ezra 4:11–12 “This is a copy of the letter that they sent: “To King Artaxerxes: Your servants, the people of the province Beyond the River, send greeting. And now [wk^nt], may it be known . . .”
- (2) Herm. 1:1 $\text{šlm byt nbw 'l 'h̄ty r'yh mn 'h̄ky mkbnt}$
 1:2 $\text{brtky lph̄ zy yh̄zny 'pyk bšlm šlm bntsr̄l w'rl}$
 1:3 $\text{w'sršt wšrd̄r hrwš š'l šlmhn wk^t šlm}$
 “Peace to the temple of Nabu! To my sister Reia from your brother Makkebanit: I bless you by Ptah! May he let me see you again in peace! Peace to Banitsarli, Uri, Isireshut, and Sardur. Haruz sends peace to them. And now, there is peace (to Haruz) . . .”
- (3) Eleph. 17A:1 $\text{['l 'my qwylyh brk[y --- šlm]}$
 17A:2 $\text{šlht lky k^nt hly hw[d^tky]}$
 “To my mother Qawwileyah from your son: I send you [peace]. Now, this is to make kno[wn to you] . . .”
- (4) Eleph. 19:1 'l hwš'yh
 19:2 šlmk k^n hzy
 “To Hoshayah: Peace/greetings! Now, watch over . . .”

There is some orthographic variation in the transitional particle (wk^t , wk^n , k^nt , and k^n), and the length of the *praescriptio* can vary from elaborate to minimalist, but functionally it follows the pattern we know from Iron Age inscriptions. However, this usage disappears in later Hebrew and Aramaic. As Pardee notes, the pronoun/conjugation š fills the semantic function in the Bar-Kokhba Hebrew letters while its semantic cognate $d(y)$ was used in Aramaic.²² It seems the use of w^t and semantic cognates continued in the scribal chancellery from the Iron Age until the demise of the Persian Empire.

The history of $w^t(h)$ in early Hebrew literature is also worth surveying. To begin, w^th is quite common in Biblical Hebrew—it appears 273 times. Indeed, more than half the 435 occurrences of th in biblical literature are with the conjunctive particle underscoring its predominant usage as a transitional expression. HALOT suggests that 241 of its 273 occurrences introduce a new section, while 24 times it may be translated

²⁰ Ezra 4:11, 17; 5:17; 7:12.

²¹ Lindenberger 1994.

²² Pardee et al., 1982, 149–50.

“but now.” However, some of these few adversative examples are suspect,²³ and the remainder seem to be concentrated in later Biblical Hebrew.²⁴ The use of *wʿth* abruptly disappears in later Hebrew—it appears only once in the Mishnah,²⁵ when it is quoting Genesis 20:7. Given that Rabbinic Hebrew is generally considered a textualization of a vernacular dialect, this development is significant. It is also worth noting that *ʿth* is replaced in later Hebrew by *kšw* “now,” but the expression *wʿkšw* “and now” is also uncommon and certainly not used as a paragraph divider in the way we find it used in Iron Age Hebrew letters. *wʿth* continued to be used in Qumranic Hebrew, although some of its uses seem curious. For example, *wʿth* is the first word of the Damascus Document from the Cairo Geniza (CD), where it certainly would not fit its use as a transitional particle, as Bongers noted: “Zum Schluss muss nochmals darauf hingewiesen werden, dass *wʿattāh* niemals am Anfang einer Ansprache erscheint.”²⁶ For this reason, Bongers was suspicious of the opening of CD, and as it turns out, rightly so. Fragments from Qumran (4Q266) indicate the text had a prologue; thus *wʿth* would have served as a transitional particle from the prologue into the body of the Damascus Document. In general, Qumran usage is biblicalizing; for example, *wʿth* in biblical literature is often followed by an imperative of *šmʿ* “hear, listen,”²⁷ and Qumran also features this use.²⁸

More generally, the expression *wʿth* has been considered a marker in oral discourse. Pardee writes, “Such a usage arose from standard speech wherein *wʿt* marks the point of transition between a preamble of any kind (historical, circumstantial, causal) and the point of a given statement.”²⁹ This suggestion is substantiated by a survey of the word’s use in biblical literature; for example, all twenty-six occurrences of *wʿth* in Genesis appear within direct speech, and this example represents well its use in SBH. However, *wʿth* seems eventually to have become a purely scribal device. If it had continued as a regular feature of oral discourse, then we might have expected it to continue in vernacular Hebrew and be represented in Rabbinic Hebrew. However, *wʿth* is not a regular feature of Rabbinic Hebrew. If a primary role of *wʿt(h)* had become that of a scribal discourse marker—a scribal device to mark paragraph division (as Pardee suggested)—then its disappearance from Rabbinic Hebrew can be explained as a change in scribal education. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the disuse of *wʿt* and its Aramaic cognates in letter writing seems to parallel the decline of the Aramaic chancellery of the Persian Empire.

In conclusion, the relationship between the use of *wʿt(h)* in Epigraphic Hebrew and in SBH warrants some reflection. To wit, is its regular usage as a transitional particle, essentially a paragraph divider, reflected at all in biblical literature? In addition to serving as a general lexical device to mark transition in oral discourse, a few examples recall its more formal use in letter writing. For example, we read in 1 Samuel 15:1, “Samuel said to Saul, ‘The LORD sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel; and now [*wʿth*], listen to the words of the LORD.’” Here the function of *wʿth* is both transitional and metapragmatic, as in Epigraphic Hebrew. Likewise, the common use of *wʿth* followed by the imperative *šmʿ* “hear” seems to harken back to the messenger formula utilized in letters.³⁰ For example, the narrator subtly employs features of a formal messenger scene in 1 Samuel 28:21–22: “The woman came to Saul, and when she saw that he was terrified, she said to him, ‘Your maidservant has listened to you; I have taken my life in my hand, and have listened to what you have said to me. And now, you also listen [*wʿth šmʿ-nʿ*] to your maidservant: let me set a morsel of bread before you.’” The role of *wʿth* in letters is most explicit in 2 Kings 5:6: “He brought the letter [*hspr*] to the king of Israel, which read [*lʿmr*]: ‘And now [*wʿth*], when this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant Naʿaman, that you may cure him of his leprosy.’” Similarly, we read in 2 Kings 10:1–2:

23 E.g., Gen. 32:11; Deut. 10:22.

24 E.g., Isa. 43:1; 44:1; 47:8; 48:16; 49:5; 64:7; Hag. 2:4; Ezra 9:8.

25 BabaQ 8:7.

26 Bongers 1965, 298.

27 E.g., Gen. 27:8, 43; Deut. 4:1; 1 Sam. 8:9; 15:1; 26:19; 28:22.

28 E.g., CD 1:1; 2:2; 2:14; 4Q185; 4Q525.

29 Pardee 1978, 292.

30 Examples of the expression *wʿth šmʿ* (or variations thereof) include Gen. 27:8, 42; Exod. 19:5; Deut. 4:1; 1 Sam. 8:9; 15:1; 25:7; 26:19; Isa. 44:1; 47:8; Jer. 37:20; 42:18; Amos 7:16; Prov. 5:7.

“So Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to the guardians of the sons of Ahab, saying [l^mr]: ‘And now [w^th], your master’s sons are with you.’” In these last two examples, the use of w^th most closely reminds us of Epigraphic Hebrew with regard to their context of written letters; it is worth noting that w^th actually follows l^mr , which is traditionally translated “saying” but is functionally a metapragmatic marker of a direct quotation. These examples indicate the awareness and probable influence of the metapragmatic use of w^t known from Epigraphic Hebrew letters.

It is clear that the usage of w^th as a paragraph divider was widespread in both Hebrew and Aramaic epistolary practice from the late Iron Age through the Persian period. Moreover, letter writing was one of the foundational exercises of a scribal apprentice; we find examples of scribal exercises in letter writing in Akkadian (see Veldhuis 1996; Tinney 1998),³¹ Ugarit (*KTU* 5.9; 5.10; 5.11), and Epigraphic Hebrew (Kunttillet ‘Ajrud inscriptions 3.1 and 3.6³²). We may suppose that $w^t(h)$ originated, as Pardee suggested, as a marker in oral discourse. Indeed, this suggestion is supported by the word’s prevalence in direct speech in biblical literature. From this, it might have been borrowed for formal use in the practice of writing letters—one of the main tasks of the scribal enterprise and one of the foundations of early scribal education. This would have bred scribal familiarity with the term. This may in turn explain why $w^t(h)$ came to be used so commonly in biblical texts. It certainly was a textual device of great familiarity to the scribes of biblical literature just as it was a regular feature in letters written in Epigraphic Hebrew.

31 I am especially indebted to Steve Tinney for his paper “Education in Ancient Mesopotamia,” presented June 30, 2015, at the conference on Second Temple Jewish Paideia in Its Ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic Contexts, in Naples, Italy.

32 See Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel 2012, 87–97.

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11

A STUDY OF THE PREPOSITION *b-* IN SAM'ALIAN ARAMAIC

A COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC APPROACH WITH RAMIFICATIONS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE KATUMUWA STELE

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IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE to offer this essay in honor of Dennis Pardee. His study of the Ugaritic prepositions, published in a series of essays, was a foundational start in establishing the actual semantic range of these prepositions, in particular that of *b-*, as opposed to the tendency prior to his work to assume simple “ambiguity” as the explanation for the wide ranges of usage for the Ugaritic prepositions.¹ In short, Pardee demonstrated that the Ugaritic prepositions were not to be dealt with as philological “wild cards.”² The modest study offered here in his honor will attempt to contribute to the study of the preposition *b-* in Sam’alian Aramaic. It will also look at some ramifications for the interpretation of the recently discovered Katumuwa Inscription.

Pardee summed up the data on the preposition *b-* in Ugaritic by stating, “the preposition *b* basically indicates position ‘within the confines of’.” In translation it appears most frequently as ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘from’, and ‘into’, depending on the nature of the verb and the author’s perspective.”³ He understood the semantic range of *b-* to be comprised of three classes. In class I, “*b-* indicates where (position in), when (time in which), or how (circumstances in which) an action takes place.” A semantic development of *b-* in class I was “(go) among” becoming “(go) with” (e.g., *hlk b-*). In class II, *b-* indicates “from which” (either with movement as the primary notion, e.g., *tb^c b-* “go away from,” or as partitive *b-* “[one/some] of”). This semantic usage, Pardee stressed, was the result of the particular verb/preposition combination. In class III, *b-* indicates position as a result of motion “into.” Finally, with certain verbs (*ly* and *yp^c*) *b-* appears in an adversative context and means “against.” He concluded, “the total impression left by an examination of the attestations of *b-* in Ugaritic, however, is that little semantic spread has occurred. Taking perspective into account, *b-* can be seen to have most frequently indicated position ‘within the confines of’, with movement ‘to’ or ‘from’ provided by the verb, adverbial markers, context, or idiomatic usage.”⁴

The culmination of the study of the semantic range of Ugaritic *b-* can be seen in Bordreuil and Pardee where the gloss for the preposition is given: “in, within, through, by the intermediary of, by the price of, etc.”⁵ The authors explain their understanding of the prepositions in Ugaritic in the following way:

The primary peculiarity of Ugaritic is the absence of a prepositional lexeme expressing the ablative “from, away from.” This absence is compensated by a complex system of verb + preposition combinations, where the translation value of the preposition can only be determined by usage and by context (Pardee 1975, 1976, with discussion of prepositional semantic ambiguity). The prepositional

1 E.g., Dahood 1966, 16; Gordon 1940 §9; 1947 §10; 1955 §10; 1965 §10; Sarna 1959; Chomsky 1970.

2 Pardee 1975, 334.

3 Pardee 1976, 312–13.

4 Ibid., 313.

5 Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 60.

system as a whole appears to function primarily to denote position rather than direction, a stative notion rather than a motional one. Directionality and motion were supplied primarily by the verb. What this means in practice is that virtually any preposition may appear in expressions of the ablative, and that the modern reader must depend on elements other than the preposition itself to reach a proper interpretation of a passage.

Pardee's work was an extremely important contribution to the advancement of the study of prepositions, not only in Ugaritic, but also in the other West Semitic languages.

In the current scholarly context, variation in prepositional usage is frequently attributed to verbal recitation.⁶ For example, Mikhal Oren has recently stated:

In many verb + preposition combinations the original spatial meaning of the prepositions is lost: *the prepositions serve merely as marks of the syntactic connection between the verb and its complements*, and do not necessarily reflect the semantic relations between the action and its participants or the state and the entities involved in it. Such verb + preposition combinations are therefore *arbitrary*, in the sense that synonymous or near-synonymous verbs can each govern a different preposition—cf. Hebrew מלך על “to reign over” vs. משל ב- “to rule over” (no. 1) or קצר על vs. אנף/התאנף ב- “to be angry with” (no. 2)—so that the preposition to be used with a particular verb cannot be determined by semantic considerations alone.⁷

This essay will argue that a cognitive linguistic approach provides a more comprehensive explanation for prepositional use than seeing their usage as mere arbitrary “marks of the syntactic connection.”⁸

In his important study on the inscriptions from Zincirli, Josef Tropper lists only the meaning for the Samʿalian preposition *b-*: “in, an, mit, aufgrund.”⁹ In an earlier study of the language, Paul Dion listed simply the passages where *b-* occurs, while offering no discussion.¹⁰ Now, with the recent discovery and publication of the Katumuwa Inscription,¹¹ as well as with the publication of a modern critical edition of the Ördekburnu Inscription,¹² there is a real need for addressing the usage of the preposition *b-* in the inscriptions from ancient Samʿal. Hence a study such as the one offered here is desirable.

Although the kingdom of Samʿal,¹³ also known as Yādiya and Bit-Gabbāri, was small—about 50 km north–south by 35 km east–west—its inscriptions manifest quite a linguistic complexity (Phoenician, Luwian, and two dialects of Aramaic: Samʿalian Aramaic and Standard Old Aramaic¹⁴ (see the discussion below). This complexity undoubtedly reflects a corresponding ethnic and social diversity. The majority of substantial texts from Zincirli are written in Samʿalian Aramaic.¹⁵ They include, in chronological order:

6 For Hebrew, see Malessa 2006.

7 Oren 2013, 1–3 (emphases mine).

8 For a very useful analysis of the Hebrew prepositions, see the grammaticalization study of Hardy 2021.

9 Tropper 1993, 229, 265.

10 Dion 1974, 163.

11 Pardee 2009; 2014.

12 Lemaire and Sass 2013. See the earlier, inadequate study of Lidzbazski (1909–15).

13 For the history of the kingdom, see Younger 2016, 373–424.

14 Or using Fales' designation (2011, 560): “Syrian Old Aramaic.”

15 This is not the place to discuss at length the controversy about the classification of the earlier known texts from Zincirli, the Panamuwa and Hadad inscriptions. See Friedrich 1951, 152–53; Greenfield 1968; 1978, 94; Dion 1974; Tropper 1993, 283–311; Huehnergard 1995; Gianto 2008, 12; Noorlander 2012; Fales 2013; and Gzella 2014, 74–75; 2015, 72–77. In his publication of the Katumuwa Inscription, Pardee (2009, 68) comments: “One may legitimately claim that *the more clearly Aramaic character of the language of the new inscription* [emphasis mine], in conjunction with its strong isoglosses with Samʿalian (in particular {*nk*} and {*wt*-}), provides a new argument in favor of the identification of Samʿalian as a dialect of Aramaic characterized by the even more archaic retention of case endings in the plural and the absence of nunation.” The Ördekburnu Inscription also adds evidence to this end (Lemaire and Sass 2013).

Kulamuwa's Golden Case Inscription (ca. 830–820), the Ördekburnu Inscription (ca. 820–760), the Hadad Inscription (ca. 755–750), and the Panamuwa Inscription (ca. 732).

From its initial publication, Dennis Pardee understood the Katumuwa Inscription (ca. 735) to contain some possible evidence for another dialect within Sam'alian Aramaic at Zincirli. Recently he put it this way: “The language of the Katumuwa Inscription is a previously unattested dialect of Aramaic, not quite so archaic as the language of the Hadad and Panamuwa inscriptions, but more so than the standardized language of the larger body of Aramaic inscriptions from the Aramaean kingdoms of the ninth to seventh centuries BC.”¹⁶ However, he admits:

This inscription would immediately be classified as Sam'alian were it not for the m.pl.abs. forms ending in {-n} ({ywmn} twice in line 10, probably {krmn} in line 4, and possibly {swd/rn} in that same line). That masculine plural nouns in the absolute and construct states appear in Samalian with a *mater lectionis* representing a vowel marking case (nom. = {-w}, obi. = {-y}) and without a following consonant in the absolute state is broadly accepted today. Indeed, in some respects, this is the defining isogloss of Samalian, with not a single exception to the absence of a final consonant in the absolute state listed by either Dion or Tropper. . . . On the other hand, this form ending in {-n} precludes the identification of the language as Phoenician and would appear to place the dialect, attested in an inscription from so far north, in the generally Aramaic camp (as opposed, for example, to Moabite, from which it is distinguished by other isoglosses). It is not, however, the Aramaic of the Barrakib inscriptions.¹⁷

In the light of the publication of the Ördekburnu Inscription, Lemaire has readdressed this issue and concluded that the Katumuwa Inscription is not an exemplar of another dialect but is simply another example of Sam'alian Aramaic.¹⁸ It seems very likely that king Panamuwa II and his minister Katumuwa spoke the same local dialect of Aramaic. It is difficult to envision two dialects of Sam'alian Aramaic in such a tiny, apparently self-contained, polity. Whether it was written in another dialect or not, for the purposes of this essay I will consider the Katumuwa Inscription within the Sam'alian Aramaic dialect.

A COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SAM'ALIAN PREPOSITION *B-*

Cognitive linguistics is a branch of linguistics that interprets language in terms of the concepts which underlie its forms.¹⁹ In this field of linguistics, particular attention has been given to the analysis of the usage of prepositions. For example, Tyler and Evans have examined the semantics of the English spatial particles

¹⁶ Pardee 2014, 45.

¹⁷ Pardee 2009, 66. On page 68 he adds two other features: (1) “the absence of an orthographic indication of a case vowel on all plural forms” and (2) “the orthography may also have been more conservative, with no certain case of an internal *mater lectionis*.” However, regarding (1), the inscription has only two construct plural forms: *mn . mn . bny* “whoever of my sons” (line 6) and *mn . bny* “whoever of the sons of anyone” (line 7). The phrase *mn . mn . bny* is identical to *mn mn . bny* attested in Sam'alian (Hadad, lines 15, 20, 24 [in line 24 *bty* has been read instead of *bny*; but this reading is problematic and doubtful; see Tropper 1993, 86]). The form *bny* corresponds to the written form of the normal construct state in Sam'alian (Tropper 1993, 202). In the case of (2), the issue of orthography, which Pardee himself considers uncertain, is not the best grounds for the determination of a dialect. As I have suggested, the spelling of the name of the goddess Kubaba/u (*kbbw*) (line 5) probably reflects a real pronunciation under the influence of Akkadian (see Younger 2009, 166–79). The issue of the appearance of the masculine plural absolute forms ending in {-n} in the Katumuwa Inscription are best explained as, following Fales' (2011) designation, “mutual dialect interference” between Sam'alian Aramaic and Standard Syrian Aramaic. While the coexistence of these two dialects in Sam'al/Yādiya is quite understandable, I believe positing another dialect within Sam'alian unnecessarily complicates the linguistic situation within a very small geographic context. The Ördekburnu Inscription has the feminine dual absolute *š'yn* “two ewes” ending in *n* (lines 7–8, 8, 9). See the discussion below.

¹⁸ Lemaire 2013. It is very interesting that all the major Sam'alian Aramaic inscriptions have clear connections with the ancestor cult. There are two statues: one of the storm-god Hadad, the other of the Sam'alian king Panamuwa II. There are also two steles: the Ördekburnu Stele, which has the relief and inscription of a royal woman, and the Katumuwa Stele, which has a relief of a high official with his inscription.

¹⁹ Evans and Green 2006; Geeraerts and Cuyckens 2010.

over, up, down, in, out, etc.²⁰ Their investigation of these spatial particles offers important insights into the relationship between language, mental representation, and human experience. They demonstrate that the meanings of these words, being clearly grounded in the human spatio-physical interaction with the world, are related in systematic and highly motivated ways. Tyler and Evans propose a polysemy approach to word meaning in arguing that the multiple, distinct meanings associated with the same lexical form are often related by means of human conceptualizations.²¹ They suggest the distinct but related senses associated with a single spatial particle constitute a semantic network organized with respect to a primary sense (i.e., a proto-scene).²² From this primary sense, “sense extensions” are conceptually developed.²³ Such sense extensions are essentially the result of a type of reanalysis: a usage-context became reanalyzed as a distinct sense, then was gradually applied to an increasing range of contexts of use. They contend that “sense extensions” for prepositions often—probably typically—arise from usage contexts in which a situated inference is reanalyzed as constituting a distinct sense unit. Evidence for the existence of such new senses comes from contexts of use in which the original motivating context is perhaps wholly absent.²⁴

Consequently, a cognitive-linguistic explanation for the use of a preposition would attempt to explain the cognitive reasoning (i.e., the conceptualization) underlying the grammar within the language under consideration rather than attributing that use to an arbitrary process. This conceptualization is embodied and situated in a specific environment. Thus, so-called verbal rection (verb + preposition combinations) is not arbitrary but is rather the result of the human process of conceptualization, wherein a lexeme plus particular particle accomplishes the conceptualization within a language—although in a different language it might be accomplished in a different way due to a distinctive conceptualization process.²⁵ It is not simply the verb which governs the preposition; it is the mental process by which a particular scene (sense extension) is conceptualized in the particular language that dictates the choice of particle or other means of expression. This is an important point because it explains the motivation for conventional uses of particular prepositions.²⁶

Thus a cognitive-linguistic approach to prepositional usage offers a replicable methodology for both breaking down and identifying a preposition’s semantic network of senses. This approach should be followed by an explication of how these constituent parts are interrelated within the semantic network.²⁷ By demarcating the primary sense (the protoscene) from which the semantic network has sprouted, a rigorous

20 Tyler and Evans 2003, 2–3.

21 Ibid., 3.

22 Tyler and Evans (ibid., 52) suggest: “the term proto captures the idealized aspect of the conceptual/mental relation, while the use of the term scene emphasizes the spatio-physical and hence perceptual (e.g. visual) awareness of a spatial scene.”

23 In this regard, it is interesting to note that Waltke and O’Connor (1990, 192) pay tribute to the notion of semantic primacy: “Most prepositions have a spatial sense, which it is convenient to take as basic. From this notion other senses, referring to temporal and logical relations, can be seen as having developed. The role of the spatial sense should be qualified: usage, not etymology decides meaning.” However, they do not provide an explication that explains the semantic network.

24 For instance, in the sentence “*The tablecloth is over the table*,” the “above” sense of *over* is clearly invoked. After all, the entity designated by *the tablecloth* is above and over the table. But crucially, a consequence of the nature of the tablecloth, viz., that it is larger than the entity it is above and over, is this: It covers and hence occludes the table from view. Thus in this sentence, “*The clouds are over the sun*,” the clouds are not above but rather below the sun—at least from the canonical earthbound perspective. Here *over* relates not to an above relation but rather to occlusion.

25 For example, while in one language the concept is accomplished through verb + preposition, in another language the concept is communicated through verb + a particular case ending (dative or ablative). Note: English “He entered (into) the house” vs. French “Il entra dans la maison” vs. German “Er hat das Haus betreten” or “Er kam ins Haus.”

26 A helpful illustration is given by Tyler and Evans (2003, 187–88 n. 9) when they discuss the distinction between American English and British English in describing the situation of a female dog’s being fertile. In American English, the “more natural” way of expressing this state is, “The neighbor’s dog is *in* heat.” In British English the “more natural” way of expressing the same circumstance is, “The neighbour’s dog is *on* heat.” The choice of particle is motivated: a state of “heat” is, relatively speaking, short, hence “on”; yet the animal cannot voluntarily escape this state, thus motivating the use of “in.” The choice is motivated by a (slightly) different way of conceptualizing the situation.

27 Lyle 2013, 52.

rendering of a preposition's semantic potential is provided, thus yielding a potential method of explanation that is not dependent on the interpreter's intuition or good hunches.

THE PRIMARY SENSE OF *b-* AS A SPATIAL PARTICLE

In what follows, I will attempt to give a cognitive-linguistic analysis of the Sam'alian preposition *b-*. In Sam'alian Aramaic, the preposition *b-* occurs sixty-seven times.²⁸ Based on predominance within its semantic network, it becomes clear that this spatial particle connotes a spatial-geometric configuration of "containment."²⁹ One might posit a protoscene in which a Motile Trajector (TR) is located within a Landmark (LM) that has three salient structural elements: an interior, a boundary, and an exterior.³⁰ This protoscene is envisioned in figure 11.1, where the LM is designated by the outer lines of the pottery jug while the TR is designated by the dark circle. Thus the protoscene for *b-* conceptualizes the notion of "containment."³¹ Some examples of this in Sam'alian can be seen in H 1, H 19, K 2, and K 5 (below).

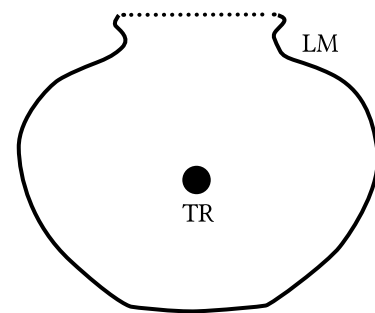


Figure 11.1. Protoscene of the preposition *b-* as a spatial particle.

Obviously, *b-* can apply to a wide range of spatial scenes. However, this ability alone cannot account for the relation described by *b-* or any other spatial particle in Sam'alian. Because of the flexibility of human conceptualization, the requisite spatial and functional components can be understood to exist with spatial scenes that do not involve canonical three-dimensional LMs. Hence, by virtue of there being an LM that can be conceptualized as having an interior which contrasts with an exterior, a boundary is entailed, and a concomitant designation of containment arises. (In a number of sense extensions, this move is a metaphorical one.) So, for example, an oasis (TR) can be conceptualized as being "contained" by a desert (LM), even though there are no physical barriers bounding the desert.³² Some Sam'alian examples of this usage can be clearly seen in P 2, P 2–3, P 4–5, P 5 (2×), etc.³³

(H 1) *zy . hqmt . nšb . zn . lhdd . b'lm y*

who erected this statue for Hadad in my eternal abode (i.e., burial chamber).³⁴

(H 2–3) *wn'ın . bydy . hdd . w'l . (3) wrkb'l . wšmš . wršp . ḥṭr . ḥlbbh*

And Hadad—and El and Rāḱib-El and Šamaš and Rašap—gave the scepter of dominion in(to) my hand.

28 Included in this count are the following inscriptions: Hadad (H = Tropper 1993, 54–97 = KAI 214); Panamuwa (P = Tropper 1993, 98–131 = KAI 215); Ördekburnu (ÖB = Lemaire and Sass 2013); and Katumuwa (K = Pardee 2009). The "Golden Case of Kulamuwa" (Tropper 1993, 50–53) is not included since the preposition *b-* does not occur in it. In contrast, the Hebrew spatial particle *b-* occurs more than 15,750 times (Jenni 1992, 46).

29 This sense is the primary one for such a spatial particle in a number of languages, due undoubtedly to the notion of the earliest attestation. See Tyler and Evans 2003, 47, 164. Note again the primary sense of *b-* in Ugaritic: "within the confines of," according to Pardee (1976, 312–13). I would doubt Jenni's primary sense of *b-* in Hebrew to signify "proximity of position" (see Jenni 1992, 30–32). It is more likely that "proximity" is a sense extension of the protoscene of "containment." In Sam'alian, only two occurrences denote "proximity of position" (see below).

30 Tyler and Evans 2003, 183. The landmark (LM) is typically the larger entity, in reference to which the smaller (often moveable) trajector (TR) is discussed. Thus the LM profiles the TR. For a fuller discussion, see Evans and Green 2006, 334.

31 Tyler and Evans 2003, 183.

32 Ibid., 184.

33 Tropper 1993.

34 Some scholars translate the term *b'lm y* "from my youth" (see Tawil 1974, 42–43; Dion 1974, 26; Gibson 1975, 65). But the translation here is more likely (see Tropper 1993, 61). The statue originates from the necropolis in Gerçin. This essay demonstrates that there is not one clear usage of the preposition *b-* in Sam'alian Aramaic conceptualizing the nuance "from."

(H 3–4) *pmz . 'hz . ⁽⁴⁾byd[y]*

So whatever I grasped in my hand,

(H 8–9) *wntn . hdd . bydy [.] ⁽⁹⁾htr hl[bbh]*

And Hadad gave in(to) my hands a scepter of dominion.

(H 19) *whwšbt . bh . 'lky*

And I caused the gods to dwell in it (i.e., the temple, lit., *byt* “house”)

(H 28) *wyqm . wth . bms'h*

and may he stand him in the middle.

(H 29–30) *h(?)n^o . 'n . šmt . ^omrt . 'l . bpm . ⁽³⁰⁾zr . 'mr*

Look, I have put these words in the mouth of a stranger! saying:

(H 30) *'w . ['n . šmt . 'mrt]y . bpm . 'nšy . šry*

or [I have put] my commands in the mouth of the enemies' men!

(P 2) *'zh . hwt . byt . 'bwh*

which was in the house(hold) of his father.

(P 2–3) *wšhšht [---] ⁽³⁾byt . 'bh*

And he destroyed(?) [] in the house(hold) of his father.

(P 4–5) *wšhšw . tšm[w .] ⁽⁵⁾hrb . byty*

And if you cause bloodshed in my house(hold),

(P 5) *wšm . hwyt . hrb . b'rq . y'dy*

then I also will make bloodshed in the land of Yā'diya.³⁵

(P 5) *'by . pnm . br . bršr . 'bdī/w . b'[rq]*

my father Panam<uwa>, son of Baršūr(?), [he?] destroyed(?) in the la[nd].

(P 8) *whrpy . nšy . bs[-----]*

and released the women in [].

(P 8) *wqbr [.] 'ln(?) . b(?)-----*

and he buried(?) them(?) in . . .

(P 18) *whqm . lh . mšky . b'rh*

And he set up for him a memorial in the way.

(ÖB 2) *[---]bny . bl/ihb[---]wbhlbbh*

. . . [my] sons in [] and in the dominion (2×)

(K 2) *wšmt . wth . bsyr/d . lmy*

and I placed it in the eternal chamber;

(K 5) *wybl . lnbšy . zy . bnšb . zn*

and a ram for my “deceased spirit” (*nbš*) that is in this stele.

35 For the vocalization, see Younger 2016, 381–84.

Within this conceptual range, one can include the usage of *b-* that connotes “in the midst of”:

(P 10) *wn/ṯšb . 'by . pnmw . bm't . mlky .[.] kbry .[.] m[n . mwq' . šmš . w'd . m'rb]*

And my father Panamuwa was esteemed in the midst of mighty kings [from the east to the west].

The second *b-* (*bk[l . 'r]qy*) in the following sentence also conceptualizes a containment nuance (“in, in the midst of, throughout”):

(H 10) *wbymy . ytmr . bk[l . 'r]qy . lnšb . ṯyrt . wlnšb . zrry . wlbny . kpyry . ḥlbbh*

And in my days it was commanded in/throughout al[l my lan]d to erect ṬYRT and to erect ZRRY and to build the villages of the dominion.

THE “SENSE EXTENSIONS” OF THE SPATIAL PARTICLE *B-*

B- as a Spatial Particle Conceptualizing Surety of Location

A bounded LM necessarily serves to locate the contained TR with surety.³⁶ In Sam'alīan, the area in which a chariot moves appears to provide a conceptualized bounded LM in which a person might run. Such a conceptualization yields the old grammatical category of the “local” usage, typically glossed in English as “in [proximity of],” “at,” “near.”

(P 12–14) [*wrš .*]⁽¹³⁾ *bglgl . mr'h . tgltpłsr . mlk . 'šwr . mḥnt(?) . 'w . mn . mwq' . šmš . w'd . m'rb*
. '[w .] mn ... (ca. 19 signs) ...⁽¹⁴⁾ *rb't . 'rq*

[And he ran] “in proximity of/at/near” the wheel of his lord, Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, (in) campaigns from the east to the west [and from the north to the south, over] the four quarters of the earth.

(P 16) *wgm . mt . 'by . pnmw . blgry*³⁷ *. mr'h . tgltpłsr . mlk . 'šwr . bmḥnt*

And my father, Panamuwa, died while “in proximity of/at/near” the feet of his lord Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, in the campaigns.

B- Conceptualizing an “in-situ Sense” Contained within Time

An experiential correlate of a TR's being located with surety is that the TR can be conceptualized as constrained by the LM in time, thus yielding a temporal “in-situ” sense: “in (the time of),” “within,” or “during.”

(H 10) *wbymy . ytmr . bk[l . 'r]qy . lnšb . ṯyrt . wlnšb . zrry . wlbny . kpyry . ḥlbbh*

And in my days it was commanded in/throughout al[l my lan]d to erect ṬYRT and to erect ZRRY and to build the villages of the dominion.

(H 12) *wbymy . ḥlb[ī . y .] xtn/i . ḡḥb . ḡ'hy*

And in the days of my dominion, an offering (?) was given to the gods;

(H 13–14) *wḥḥlbbty .* ⁽¹⁴⁾ *ntn . m't . ḥd[d . ----] ḡbn'*

and during my dominion Hadad has indeed given me [a commission] to build.

(H 19–20) *wḥḥlbbty/h' . ḥn't .* ⁽²⁰⁾ *['lhy]*

And during my dominion, I allotted [the gods] a resting place.

³⁶ Tyler and Evans 2003, 186.

³⁷ Understanding a metathesis of the noun *rgl* (see Friedrich 1951, 162).

(H 24) *wšnh . lmn^c . mnh . blyl'*

and may he withhold sleep from him in the night;

(P 1) *b^m- - - . šnt . [m]w^t[h]*

in [. . .] the year [of his death(?)].

(P 10) *wbywmy . 'by . pnmw . šm . mt . b^cly . kpyry . wb^cly . rkb*

And in the days of my father Panamuwa, he truly appointed lords of villages and lords of chariots.

(P 18) *bywmy . (-)šr . . . [ca. 21 signs]*

In my days [. . .]

(K 1-2) *žy^o . qnt ly^o . nšb . b⁽²⁾hyy*

who created a stele for myself in (during) my lifetime.

B- Conceptualizing a “State Sense”

The spatial particle *b-* can be employed with certain states that are conceptualized as constraining the TR or posing difficulty in leaving.³⁸ Such conceptualizations may arise from contexts in which a particular emotional state in a specific locale is experienced. Some of these conceptual associations may be expressive of what older analyses might term “manner.” The following are examples in Sam’alian.

(H 25-26) [*’l . yš*] *l^h . ydh . bhrb . b[-----]t/n^y . ’w . ⁽²⁶⁾ [b^hm^o . ’w . b]hm^o*

[May he not] stretch his hand with the sword against [] of my [hou]se [either in anger or in] violence

(H 26) *’l . yhrg . ’w . brgz . ’w . ’l . ’(?)--*

may he not commit murder, either in wrath or out of []

(H 33) [*’w . thrgh . b^hm^o[s . ’w .] b^hm^o*

or you slay him in violenc[e or] in anger

(P 21) *w^omr . b^mšwt*

and a lamb in roasted condition(?).

B- Conceptualizing Restrictive Functional Senses

The basic spatial sense of containment for the particle *b-* can invoke functional senses. One such functional sense may be “restrictive.” This restrictive sense appears to undergird many of the nonspatial meanings found in the usages of *b-*. The idea is that language users will employ available lexemes which fit a certain conceptualization in their minds by drawing on basic relevant notions of chosen lexemes, then extend those notions to form distinct but related nonbasic senses.

B- Conceptualizing Instrumentality

One restrictive function of *b-* can be seen in its use to conceptualize either a particular nonhuman instrument or a particular human agent. Older grammars designate this the *beth instrumenti*. In English, it is typically rendered “with” or “by.” In Sam’alian, present extant examples are only of nonhuman instruments.

38 E.g., in English: “She looked peaceful in (the state of) death”; “they are in (the state of) love.”

(H 25–26) [ʔl . yš]lḥ . yḏh . bḥrb. b[-----]ṯ/ny . ʔw . ⁽²⁶⁾ [bḥmʔ . ʔw. b]ḥmš

[May he not] stretch his hand with the sword against [] of my [hou]se [either in anger or in] violence.

(H 31) plktšh . bʔbny

and may they pound him with stones.

(H 31) plktšnh . bʔbny

and may they pound her with stones.

(ÖB 3–4) lyh⁽⁴⁾ny . ʔš[m][--]š [---]bḥrb

Let him make pleasing the na[me] . . . with the sword.

B- *Conceptualizing Relationship*

Quite akin to agency is the usage of *b-* to conceptualize a containment of a specific relationship with one and not another. Older grammars designated this *beth comitantiae*.

(H 11–12) wʔmn . hkrt . ⁽¹²⁾bḥy

And a sure covenant was concluded with me.

B- *Conceptualizing Adversarial Relationship*

This restrictive, functional usage of *b-* conceptualizes a containment of a specific adversarial relationship with one agent and not another (hence “against”). The concept conveyed by the predicate distinguishes the type of restricted relationship envisioned, but the spatial particle is the same (i.e., *b-*). The single example from the Samʿalian corpus is seen in the second *b-* in this sentence:

(H 25–26) [ʔl . yš]lḥ . yḏh . bḥrb. b[-----]ṯ/ny . ʔw . ⁽²⁶⁾ [bḥmʔ . ʔw. b]ḥmš

[May he not] stretch his hand with the sword against [] of my [hou]se [either in] anger or in violence.

B- *Conceptualizing a Restricted Specification of Price*

In this usage the price is envisioned as “contained in” (*b-*). This usage is the older grammatical *beth pretiti*, often rendered in English by “for, in exchange for,” “at [the cost of].”³⁹ Examples in Samʿalian are:

(P 6) wqm . prs . bšql

And a *parīs* stood (in exchange) for/at (the cost of) a shekel;

(P 6) wštrby . šmʔw/k . bšql

and ŠRB [of wine?] (in exchange) for/at (the cost of) a shekel;

(P 6) wʔsnb . mšḥ . bšql

and SNB of oil (in exchange) for/at (the cost of) a shekel.

³⁹ Fales (1986, 84) claims this nuance of the Aramaic preposition *b-* is due to the Akkadian influence of *ina/ana*. However, such a usage is found in a number of West Semitic languages and would negate Fales’s claim.

B- *Conceptualizing a Restricted Specification of Cause*

In this usage, *b-* renders the conceptualization of a restricted specification of cause. It is this self-contained cause that is envisioned. Older grammars identified this use as *beth causa*.

(P 1–2) *b[š]ḏq . ⁽²⁾ 'bh . plṭwh . 'lh . y'dy . mn . šḥth*

Because of/On account of the loyalty of his father, the gods of Yā'diya delivered him from the destruction.

(P 11) *bḥkmth . wḇṣdqh . p' . 'hz . bknṣ . mr'h . mlk . 'šwr . r(?)b(?)*

Because of/On account of his wisdom and because of/on account of his loyalty, he seized onto the skirt (robe) of his lord, the mighty(?) king of Assyria.

(P 19–20) [*bš]dq . 'by . wḇṣdqy . hwšbny . mr'[y . rkb'l . wmr'y . tglṭplsr . 'l . mšb .]* ⁽²⁰⁾ *'by . pnmw . br . brṣr*

Because of/On account of the loyalty of my father and because of/on account of my loyalty, [my] lord [Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, has caused me to reign on the throne] of my father, Panamuwa, son of Barṣūr.

B- *Expressing a Specification of Items or Beings*

In this case *b-* draws on the basic spatial sense of containment and its functional equivalent “restriction” to conceptualize a particular TR–LM configuration in which there is a restriction to specified items or beings.⁴⁰ This usage has already been observed in the Punic tariffs. David Baker has noted that these tariffs utilize the preposition *b-* specifically “for blood or blood plus bloodless sacrifices,” and they employ *'l* when designating bloodless sacrifices alone.⁴¹ He translates this type of usage of *b-* “for.” Baruch Levine pointed out that Mishnaic Hebrew evinces this usage and translated *b-* “in the case of, in the matter of.”⁴² Pardee notes this usage in the tariffs may be *based* (emphasis mine) on the so-called *beth* of price (*beth pretiti*; see above).⁴³ Thus in the Sam'alīan contexts the presentation of offerings is “to be restricted to specified designees.”

(ÖB 7–8) *brkb'l . š'⁽⁸⁾yn . lym*

for Rākib-El: two ewes for the day;

(ÖB 8) *wbkbb . š'y'n . lym*

and for Kubaba: two ewes for the day;

(ÖB 9–10) ⁽⁹⁾ *wḇṣṣqm . mlky . š'y'n . ly⁽¹⁰⁾[m]*

and for the royal tomb: two ewes for the day.⁴⁴

These three occurrences are preceded by the prefixed verbal form, *ly⁽⁷⁾šl' mṇḥ[-]* “Let him present an allotment,” yielding the syntax (3×): *b-* (two ewes) plus *l-* (the day). The text speaks of the offerings of two ewes for two important deities and the shrine itself (a total of six ewes; for a discussion of *š'y'n*, see below). The Katumuwa Inscription (K 11) has a similar usage of the preposition. The full context reads:

40 “The *beth* of specification serves to qualify the realm [my note: “the containment”] with regard to which the verbal action obtains” (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 198).

41 Baker 1987, 190.

42 Levine 1974, 119 and n. 4. See Levine for citations. Cooke (1903, 117) identified this usage of *b-* as a *beth* of reference. Donner and Röllig (1966–69, 2: 83) translated the preposition in this context with German *beim*.

43 Pardee 1997, 306 n. 9.

44 At the end of line 9, Lemaire and Sass (2013, 112) read *ly* and translate “for me.” Although at the beginning of line 10 (designed by them as “Pre-position 1”) the area is effaced, there is room for a *mem*, which would make eminent sense in the context.

(6) *w't . mn . mn . bny . 'w* ⁽⁷⁾ *mn bny 'š . wyhy . lh* ⁽⁸⁾ *nsyr/d . znn .*
wlw yqh . mn ⁽⁹⁾ *hyl . krm . znn . š'* ⁽¹⁰⁾ *ywmn . lywmn . wyh* ⁽¹¹⁾ *rg . bnbšy*
⁽¹²⁾ *wyšwy* ⁽¹³⁾ *ly . šq*

And now, whoever of my sons, or whoever of the sons of anyone should come into possession of this chamber, let him take from the wealth of this vineyard⁴⁵ a ewe each anniversary, and let him slay (*hrg*) (it, i.e., “the ewe”) for my soul (*bnbšy*), and let him assign for me a thigh.⁴⁶

In the *editio princeps*, Pardee understood the last word in line 9 /š'/ as a byform of šy, “gift, offering,” or more probably, in his estimation, a noun derived from NŠ', meaning “(presentation?)-offering.”⁴⁷ But such a noun from NŠ' is not actually attested in Aramaic. Pardee notes an apparent oddity, viz., that a sheep would not have been included among the “best (products) of this vineyard.”⁴⁸ Yet it seems equally odd that in the next sentence there is no direct object for the verb *wyhr*g. Surely an animal sacrifice is in view. Usually a specific animal is prescribed in such contexts, as for the deities in the earlier part of the Katumuwa Inscription. In the Ördekburnu stele, it would seem that š'yn must mean “two ewes.” Concerning š'yn, Lemaire and Sass state: “This is evidently the masculine of š'h, ‘ewe’, known from Panamuwa 6 and 9, and it provides a parallel to *ybl* in Katumuwa 3–5.”⁴⁹ However, since š't/š'h has no known masculine counterparts from which to derive,⁵⁰ and due instead to the broad attestation of the explicitly feminine forms,⁵¹ this analysis is doubtful. The already attested plural forms of the feminine noun š't/š'h are š'wn and š'n. The Aramaic feminine noun 'nth/'ntt/'nšh “woman,” with the plural forms nšyn/nswn “women,” comprises a wonderful analogy to š't/š'h “ewe,” with the plural forms š'n/š'wn “ewes.” Therefore, as with nšyn, it is very likely that š'yn is a plural (or dual) form of š't/š'h. In the context of the Ördekburnu stele, š'yn must be a dual, not a plural. Hence it would appear to me that š' is the Sam'alīan word for “ewe,”⁵² it being either a defective spelling or an orthographic variant for š'h.⁵³ This explanation solves the problem of what animal is to be slaughtered. Thus the slaying of a ewe (š') in the Katumuwa Inscription was to occur *b-* “for” (i.e., “in restriction to the specified designee”) Katumuwa's deceased spirit (*nbš*), just like the offerings of two ewes in the Ördekburnu stele were *b-* “for” the two deities and the shrine.⁵⁴

B- Conceptualizing the “In-Favor Sense”

Tyler and Evans hypothesize that the “in-favor sense” for the English spatial particle “in” derives largely from the tight correlation between gaining access or entry to certain kinds of bounded LMs and the desirability of the event or activity within the confines of the bounded LM.⁵⁵ In Sam'alīan, *b-* appears to conceptualize such a notion (both positively and negatively) in reference to sacrifices.

45 For the syntax of this sentence, compare Exod. 29:22; 35:5a; 36:3a; Ps. 50:9; Isa. 49:24; 51:22.

46 For important discussion concerning the logistics of this reading, see Herrmann (2014).

47 Pardee 2009, 65.

48 Perhaps the drawing in King and Stager (2001, 18, Ill. 10) illustrates a complex with vineyard and sheep that might apply in this case and at least caution against our modern assumptions. See Younger 2020, 14 fig. 6.

49 Lemaire and Sass 2013, 122.

50 Brugnatelli 1991, 174.

51 Tell Fakhariya 20: š'wn (שׁוֹנ) (plural) “ewes”; Sefire I A.21: š't (שׁת) (singular) “ewe”; Sefire I A.23: š'n (שׁן) (plural) “ewes”; Ördekburnu 7–8, 8, 9: š'yn (שׁין) (plural or dual; in the context dual) “two ewes”; Panamuwa 6, 9: š'h (שה) “ewe”; Brussels 59.3: š'h (שה) “ewe”; and TAD D7.8 2: š' (שה) “ewe.”

52 Thus the word š' is not the masculine form (contra Lemaire and Sass 2013, 122; Nebe 2010, 324–26) but the feminine form, and it contrasts with the *ybl* “ram” (a masculine sheep) of the deity-offerings in the first part of the Katumuwa Inscription.

53 Note the spelling of the name of the goddess Kubaba/u (*kbbw*) in Katumuwa, line 5 (see Younger 2009, 166–70).

54 For a more complete discussion, see Younger 2020.

55 Tyler and Evans 2003, 193–94.

(H 18) [wy]rqy . bh

May he (Hadad) look in (favor of) it;

(H 22) w'l[.] yrqy . bh

And may he (Hadad) not look in (favor of) it.

Uncertain Usages: b'sr

There are five occurrences of *b'sr* (all found in the Hadad Inscription). These occurrences are difficult to analyze.⁵⁶ On the one hand, this collocation might be understood as the preposition *b-* + a common noun (*'sr* “place”).⁵⁷ If this analysis is the correct one, then the preposition *b-* is used here with a sense extension. On the other hand, the two words might be combined, thus creating a new preposition. Indeed, this seems to be the case with *b'sr* in the Sefire inscriptions (e.g., KAI 222A, line 5) regarding Mati^cel's sons, who will come in his place (i.e., “after him”): *bnwh zy ysqn b'sr[h]*. However, in the Hadad Inscription this nuance does not appear to be the intended one.

(H 27–28) [phnw .]hh . yršy . šht . b'sr . ḥd . 'yhyh . 'w . b[']šr . ḥd . mwddyh . 'w . b'sr . ⁽²⁸⁾
ḥdh . 'yhl[h]

[But] may [his kins]man plot the destruction of/in the place of one of his kinsmen or one of
one of his relatives or of one of his kinswomen

(H 31–32) whnw . lw . šht . ⁽³²⁾ b'srh

But if indeed ruin (has struck) him (lit., in his place)⁵⁸

(H 32) wtl'y . 'ynk . b'[š]rḥ

your eyes should be weary of him.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to apply a cognitive-linguistic approach to the study of the Sam'alīan Aramaic spatial particle *b-*. The advantage of this approach over others in the explanation of the spatial particle is apparent. Rather than attributing the usage to ambiguity, some type of arbitrary marking, or reliance on the intuition or hunches of the interpreter, the cognitive linguistics method provides a comparative basis for analyzing the preposition's primary sense and for explaining its sense extensions sprouting from the conceptualizations within the usage of the language. Much of the previous work done in the identification of special usages of the preposition can now be drawn on to help construct the semantic network of that preposition and provide interpreters with a more comprehensive understanding of how the Sam'alīan dialect works.

56 DNWSI 127, s.v. 'sr, 8c.

57 Dion (1974, 33) translates “sur le territoire de l'un de. . .”

58 On this difficult sentence, see Tropper 1993, 95.

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PART 3 — BIBLICAL HEBREW POETRY

12

LINE LENGTHS IN POETIC UNITS IN UGARITIC AND BIBLICAL HEBREW POETRY

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Miklal Software Solutions

THE CHIEF CONSTITUTIVE DEVICE OF both Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry above the level of the line is parallelism. Dennis Pardee has made numerous contributions to our collective understanding of parallelism in both of these poetic corpora, so it is only fitting that, in honoring his exemplary work as a researcher and teacher, I seek herein to advance our understanding on one small aspect of poetic parallelism: line lengths in poetic units in Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew. Ugaritic and Israelite poets composed their poems primarily using poetic units consisting of two or three lines each, respectively called *bicola* and *tricola*. Scholars have long claimed there is a general tendency on the part of these poets to balance the lengths of the lines within a poetic unit. Historically, this tendency led to numerous metrical theories, but in more recent years, in no small part due to Pardee's influence,¹ scholars have increasingly recognized that these texts do not reflect the regularity of meter. Despite this lack of meter, can one justifiably assert more than a vague, general tendency for poets to balance the lengths of the lines within a poetic unit? Indeed, is even this statement accurate? The premise of this essay is that one can and should say something more accurate and precise by using statistics to find what is typical of Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry in order that what is typical might serve as a backdrop against which to read particular lines of Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poems and also against which to investigate particular linguistic and poetic features of these two languages. This paper thus examines a sample of poetry from each language to find a picture of the lengths of lines within typical poetic units. According to the sample of poetry examined herein, Ugaritian poets sought approximate balance in line lengths in *bicola*, and they sought approximate balance between neighboring lines in *tricola*. The quantitative balance within poetic units of Biblical Hebrew poetry, however, is slight. Lines within *bicola* are balanced in a significant but weak manner. Similarly, the first two lines of *tricola* are balanced in a slight but statistically significant manner; but the third line is not balanced with the first two lines once one takes into account the average length of the other lines in the poem.

Doing statistical analysis on the lengths of poetic lines requires having a measure of line length. In the absence of any treatises by Ugaritians or ancient Israelites explaining their poetic system(s), syllable counting—the most commonly cited measure, presumably on account of its prominent role in many metrical systems of poetry throughout the world—shall be used. In theory, it is possible that further research might inductively determine a measure that has greater explanatory power for these poetic corpora, though this outcome seems unlikely.² A sample of Ugaritic poetry will be examined first, followed by a sample of Biblical Hebrew poetry.

LINE LENGTHS IN UGARITIC POETRY

There are numerous difficulties associated with syllable counting in Ugaritic poetry. The texts are often broken, and our understanding of Ugaritic is limited enough that one will at times incorrectly divide lines

1 See Pardee 1981.

2 For vocable counting, see Freedman 1974. For word counting, see Margalit 1975.

and poetic units. Moreover, the orthography does not, by and large, include vowels, so some words have undoubtedly been analyzed incorrectly with regard to part of speech or nominal pattern. Furthermore, if there was any vowel reduction in Ugaritic generally or in Ugaritic poetry in particular, it is unknown to us. Similarly, we know little about the use of historical writing, secondary opening, or the possible occasional use of *matres lectionis*. Finally, there are numerous challenges with regard to particular grammatical features for which the orthography does not indicate the number of syllables. Are the plurals of the nominal patterns *qatl*, *qitl*, and *qutl* suppletive, containing an extra syllable? Should one parse a particular instance of a prefix-conjugation verb as G-stem or D-stem? Does a particular instance of a prefix-conjugation verb end with no vowel, -u, or -a? Do the different orthographic representations of III-weak verbs in the prefix conjugation represent different vocalizations with different numbers of syllables?³

With all these difficulties concerning counting syllables in Ugaritic poetry, one might be tempted not even to attempt a quantitative analysis using this measure. However, these difficulties are not insurmountable. First, one can choose texts for one's analysis from within reasonably well-preserved sections of texts, as is done in this study. Second, one can accurately reconstruct the vowels for most Ugaritic words by (a) consideration of the use of ' , the one consonant for which the orthography indicates some information concerning the following vowel, (b) attested syllabic writings of Ugaritic, and (c) comparative Semitic considerations. Moreover, most of the inevitable mistakes in vocalization a modern scholar makes relate to the quality or quantity of a particular vowel, rather than its presence, largely due to the relatively straightforward rules regarding syllabification in Semitic.⁴ Presumably Ugaritic avoided consonant clusters within a syllable. Finally, using descriptive statistical data and looking for statistically significant—rather than perfectly regular—patterns will cover over a multitude of vocalization errors, provided that the sample of Ugaritic poetry is sufficiently large. In particular, most of the statistical analysis concerns comparing the lengths of lines within a poetic unit, and there is no reason to expect that one's vocalizations will, for example, be consistently worse on the first line of a poetic unit than on the second. The errors in vocalization will largely cancel each other out in the aggregate.

Selections from six mythological texts⁵ are taken as a sample of Ugaritic poetry: Ba'lu, Kirta, 'Aqhatu, Šaḥru-wa-Šalimu, Ḥôrānu and the Serpents, and The Drunkenness of 'Ilu.⁶ The most basic observation concerning the poetic units in this sample is that bicola predominate, followed by tricola. While there are occasional monocola and a half-dozen poetic units with four lines, there are 130 bicola and 43 tricola that are sufficiently well-preserved and deciphered to collect length information on each of their lines. These bicola and tricola may be analyzed separately.

BICOLA

Typically, the lines in Ugaritic bicola are indeed fairly well-balanced. The lengths of the two cola are within two syllables of one another 90 percent of the time, with these syllables distributed nearly evenly around the peak difference of zero. The lengths of the two lines are shown in figure 12.1. The difference in lengths of the two lines is shown in figure 12.2. Note that the goal appears to be approximate balance, not perfect balance—an important distinction that should give the interpreter pause before emending *metri causa*. In the remaining, less well-balanced 10 percent of bicola, it is the first line that is longer than the second in all but one case. Some of these exceptional cases involve unusually long first lines, others involve unusually short

3 On these last two issues, see Greenstein 2006.

4 For unusual syllabification in Semitic, see Testen 1995.

5 Were there a large corpus of nonmythological Ugaritic poetry preserved, one might know whether the characteristics of Ugaritic poetry also varied with regard to genre.

6 Ideally, the sample would be chosen from among the Ugaritic poetic corpus at random and would not lean so heavily on the single scribe 'Ilimilku, but this approach is not practical. Lengthy, well-preserved sections of the texts were chosen. All the mythological texts analyzed by Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee in *A Manual of Ugaritic* (2009) were included, with the exception that most of the passage from Ḥôrānu and the Serpents found in *A Manual of Ugaritic* was omitted because it is repetitive. In the additional passages selected for inclusion, the vocalization system of Bordreuil and Pardee was employed.

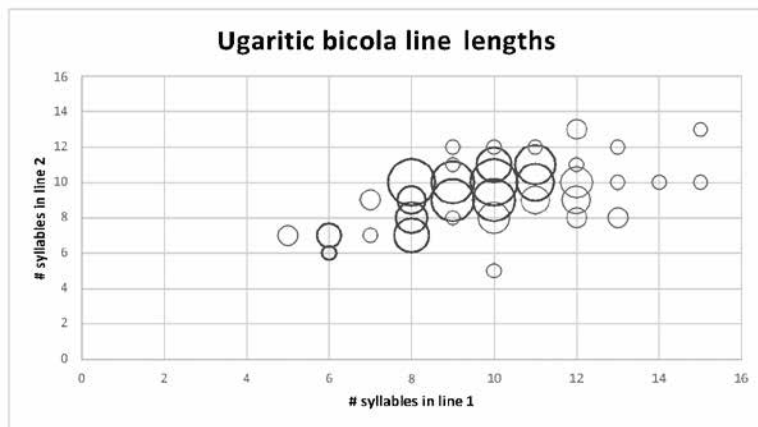


Figure 12.1. Comparison of line lengths in Ugaritic bicola. In this and subsequent bubble charts, the area of each circle is proportional to the number of data points at that location. For example, the large bubble centered at (10, 10) indicates that in the sample under consideration there are eleven bicola with ten syllables in each line, while the small circle centered at (10, 5) indicates that in the sample under consideration there is only one bicolon with ten syllables in the first line and five syllables in the second line.

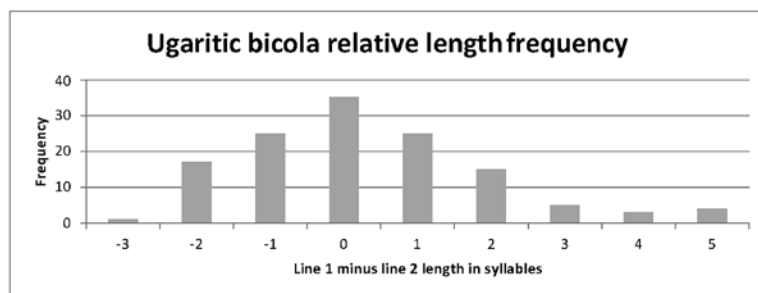


Figure 12.2. Ugaritic bicola relative length frequency: the difference between the number of syllables in line 1 and the number of syllables in line 2. The lines in Ugaritic bicola are generally approximately balanced; there is tolerance for significantly longer first lines than second lines but not the other way around.

second lines, and some involve a combination of the two. Thus, while in general the poet sought approximately to balance the lengths of the two lines in a bicolon, there was greater tolerance for imbalanced bicola in which the first line was significantly longer than the second. Because of these occasional, imbalanced bicola, the average length of the first colon is longer than that of the second: 9.74 syllables to 9.43. The standard deviation of the length of the first line (1.83 syllables) is also somewhat larger than that of the second (1.41 syllables). Nonetheless, for the first line, most (114 of 130) contain between eight and twelve syllables, inclusive. For the second line, most (121 of 130) contain between seven and eleven syllables, inclusive. Since the two lines have similar averages, one might be tempted to think the usual scholarly claim that the lines are typically well-balanced might be an illusion. In other words, it could be that all lines tend to be around nine or ten syllables long without a great deal of variation, so lines in general are well-balanced, regardless of whether they are parallel. However, this is not the case. The lengths of the two lines within a bicolon are fairly strongly positively correlated, with a Pearson correlation coefficient (ρ) of 0.49, indicating that the tendency toward well-balanced lines was intentional.⁷

TRICOLA

In the sample of Ugaritic poetry, there are forty-three tricola. The lines in tricola are, on average, slightly shorter than those of bicola, averaging approximately nine syllables for each of the three lines: 8.88, 8.91, and 9.02, respectively. The standard deviation of the length of the first and third lines of tricola (2.27 and 1.95 syllables, respectively) is a bit larger than is the case for the bicola, while the standard deviation of the length of the second line (1.61 syllables) is comparable to the variance in bicola. Again, there is evidence

⁷ The Pearson correlation coefficient is a measure of the linear correlation between variables. Its value ranges from -1 to 1. A value of -1 indicates that as one variable goes up in value, the other one goes down, and the value of one variable is perfectly predictable from the value of the other variable. A value of 1 is similar except that as the value of one variable goes up, the value of the other goes up as well. A value of 0 indicates that the value of one variable provides no information concerning the value of the other variable. Of course, one cannot prove there is not some confounding factor that makes the observed correlation between the lengths of the two lines of a bicolon not the result of causation, but this case is highly unlikely.

that the poet was seeking to balance the lines. However, what is perhaps surprising is the way in which the poet appears to have sought quantitative balance.

There are various ways in which a poet could attempt to balance three lines. One could try to balance all three lines to one another equally. Alternatively, one could seek to balance each of the second and third lines—independently of each other—to the first. Yet another way would be to balance the second to the first and then balance the third to both the first and second. However, the poet appears not to have taken any of these approaches. Apart from two outliers with especially long first lines yielding a large gap in size between the first and second lines, the distribution of differences between the lengths of the first line and second line is approximately evenly distributed around zero, as is the distribution of differences between the lengths of the third line and the second line. The length of the second line is fairly strongly correlated with the first ($\rho = 0.61$), and the length of the third line is fairly strongly correlated with the second ($\rho = 0.62$), but the correlation between the first and the third is much weaker ($\rho = 0.33$). The relationships among each pair of lines can be seen in figures 12.3, 12.4, and 12.5. Using multiple linear regression,⁸ the correlation between the first and third lines can be explained—at least to the level of statistical significance—by the mutual correlation of the first and third lines with the second. Thus the poet sought to balance the second line with the first line, then the third line

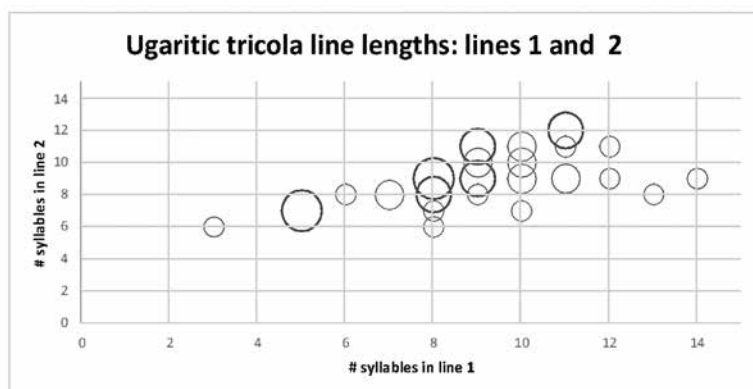


Figure 12.3. Ugaritic tricola line lengths: lines 1 and 2. The generally upward-sloping trend indicates that the lengths of these two lines are positively correlated. A short first line is often balanced by a short second line, and a long first line is often balanced by a long second line.

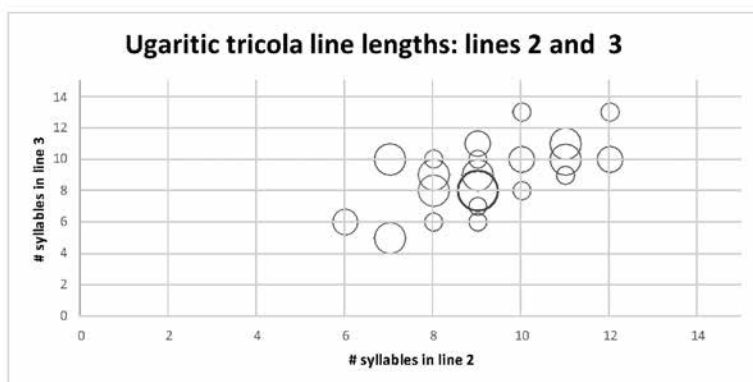


Figure 12.4. Ugaritic tricola line lengths: lines 2 and 3. The generally upward-sloping trend indicates the lengths of these two lines are positively correlated. A short second line is often balanced by a short third line, and a long second line is often balanced by a long third line.

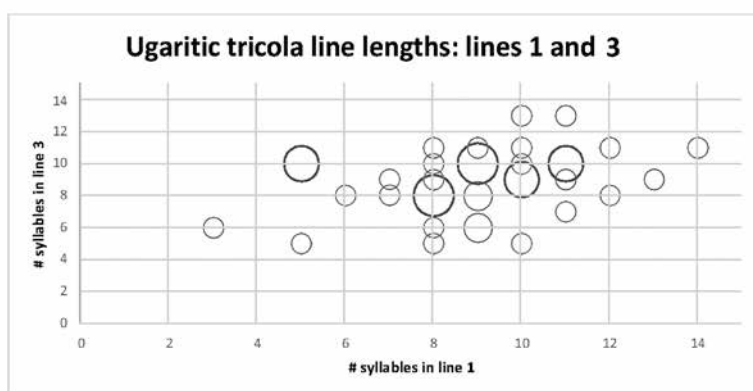


Figure 12.5. Ugaritic tricola line lengths: lines 1 and 3. The trend slopes upward, but the trend is far less pronounced than in the previous two figures.

⁸ Multiple linear regression models the relationship between one dependent variable and two or more independent variables in an effort to find on which of the independent variables the dependent variable is dependent. In this case, multiple linear regression is used to determine whether the length of the third line (the dependent variable) is dependent on the lengths of either or both of the first two lines (the independent variables).

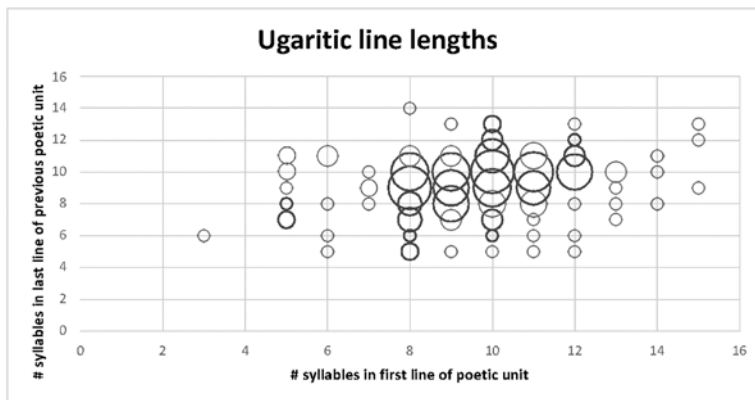


Figure 12.6. Ugaritic line lengths: first line of a poetic unit and last line of the previous poetic unit. The trend slopes upward, but the effect is fairly weak.

esis may be tested by pairing the first line of each poetic unit with the final line of the preceding poetic unit to see whether these lengths are correlated. This relationship is plotted in figure 12.6. Such pairs are indeed correlated ($p = 0.19$), and the correlation is statistically significant ($p = 0.007$); poets did have a tendency to continue the next poetic unit using a similar line length as the final colon of the previous poetic unit. However, this correlation is fairly weak; it is distinguishable from and much weaker than the correlation between the lengths of adjacent lines within a poetic unit.

In sum, Ugaritic poets appear to have composed primarily using bicola and tricola, with the former being more common. The length of a line within a poetic unit is fairly strongly correlated with the length of the previous line; but in tricola the poet considered only the length of the second line, to the exclusion of the first line, when composing the third line.

LINE LENGTHS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW POETRY

For a corpus of Biblical Hebrew poetry, the entire Book of Psalms was chosen, and I followed *Codex Leningradensis*, as *BHS* does. Unlike when considering Ugaritic poetry, we do not have to deal with broken texts with Biblical Hebrew poetry; but there remain two major difficulties associated with syllable-counting in Biblical Hebrew poetry. First, the poets did not indicate the lines and poetic units visually, so we will inevitably make mistakes in dividing lines and poetic units. The temptation is always present for the researcher to divide the lines and poetic units, and even emend the text, in a fashion that would lead to the desired results.¹⁰ To circumvent this potential problem, I chose to follow *Codex Leningradensis* precisely, even in the very rare cases of straightforward scribal errors in this particular manuscript. In addition, I did not on my own delineate Biblical Hebrew poetry from scratch. Instead, I followed the delineation of an outside group, viz., the translators of the English Standard Version (ESV). Following the ESV is advantageous for several reasons. First, the ESV is an essentially literal translation, hewing closely to the Hebrew text, so the translators' understanding of the lineation and poetic units is almost always clear from the translation. Second, unlike the NRSV—another modern, essentially literal translation—the ESV rarely follows emendations but rather generally follows *Codex Leningradensis*. Third, the ESV has been aligned to the text of *Codex Leningradensis* as encoded digitally in the *Westminster Leningrad Codex*,¹¹ thus allowing the divisions in the ESV to be used in dividing the text of *Codex Leningradensis* algorithmically. There are three instances in which I

with the second line without regard for the length of the first line.⁹

The fact that, in composing the third line of a tricolon, the poet only took into consideration the length of the second line and not the length of the first line may lead one to hypothesize that the poet always sought to balance a line with the previous one, regardless of the poetic divisions. This hypothesis would make sense of the correlation between the two lines of a bicola and the somewhat surprising way in which the poet balanced the lines of a tricolon. Further, the hypoth-

⁹ Statistically speaking, it is also possible that the poet chose the contents, or at least the length, of the second line, then independently chose the lengths of the first and third lines, but this possibility is rather unlikely as a cognitive process.

¹⁰ J. P. Fokkerman's (1998–2004) work on line lengths in the Psalms is in many ways a fine study, but Fokkerman is open to the charge that his lineation and especially his textual emendations may be motivated by his theory on line lengths.

¹¹ Benner 2014.

had to assign the endpoints of lines by hand rather than algorithmically: (a) when there were untranslated Hebrew words at the border of lines; (b) when the ESV followed a variant Hebrew text or an ancient translation rather than *Codex Leningradensis*; and (c) when the ESV's translation rearranges the word order of the Hebrew by moving one or more words across line boundaries, generally for purposes of English style or because the subject has been elided in the first Hebrew line. However, these issues affected fewer than 4 percent of all lines.

Second, the pronunciation indicated by the Masoretic orthography does not always match the pronunciation in the biblical period. For example, according to Origen's transliteration in the late second century CE, the anaptyctic vowel had not yet been added to resolve final consonant clusters in segholate nouns. Its absence or presence affects the number of syllables in singular segholate nouns. Changes involving vowel reduction, secondary opening, and secondary closing surely occurred in the postbiblical period as well. Even within the biblical period alone, the vowels were less stable than the consonants over time and place. Various vocalic sound changes likely took place over the course of the many centuries in which the psalms were written, and there were also regional variants. It is difficult to identify the time and place of composition of many psalms. Some psalms may even have reached their final form through multiple hands that wrote on opposite sides of various vocalic changes. This problem is mitigated by the fact that we are using statistical techniques over a sizable corpus of Biblical Hebrew poetry. The statistical techniques employed can tolerate occasional errors, especially because we have no reason to believe these errors will be more prevalent in certain lines than in other lines. For example, there is no reason to believe the mistakes will bias the data in the direction of longer first lines in bicola and shorter second lines in bicola or vice versa. Thus the Masoretic pronunciation is followed here. The number of syllables in each word was determined algorithmically using a transliteration of the Hebrew Bible that resolves orthographic ambiguities in the Masoretic text (e.g., *šureq* vs. *waw* and *dagesh*).¹² In the case of *Ketiv/Qere* words, the reconstructed, vocalized *Ketiv* text provided by the *Westminster Leningrad Codex* was followed.

BICOLA

In our division of the Book of Psalms into lines and poetic units, there are 2,345 bicola—easily the largest sample of poetic units in this study. The lines are slightly shorter than their Ugaritic counterparts, with the first line averaging 8.54 syllables and the second averaging 8.17 syllables. The standard deviation of the lengths of the first line is 1.75—about the same as it is in Ugaritic—while the standard deviation of the length of the second line is 1.99—larger than in Ugaritic. While Israelite poets appear to have made some effort to balance the lines of bicola, the effect is extremely small. Whereas the line lengths were within two syllables of one another in 90 percent of Ugaritic bicola, the same is only true of 72.4 percent of bicola in the Book of Psalms. The lengths of the two lines are shown in figure 12.7. The difference in the lengths of the two lines is shown in figure 12.8. On average, the first line is slightly longer than the second line in Biblical Hebrew poetry, as was the case with Ugaritic; but figure 12.8, contrasted with figure 12.2, shows this difference surfaces for a different reason. In Ugaritic, there were occasionally highly imbalanced bicola in which the first line was significantly longer than the second. In Biblical Hebrew, however, the difference in line lengths is not the result of a handful of outliers. There does appear to be a broad-based tendency to have the first line be slightly longer than the second. Put mathematically, the entire plot appears to be a discrete distribution centered on the mean difference between the two lengths of the lines.

As can be seen by contrasting figure 12.7 with figure 12.1, the lines are much less balanced in Biblical Hebrew bicola compared to Ugaritic bicola. Put quantitatively, whereas the Pearson correlation coefficient for the lengths of lines in Ugaritic bicola is 0.49, it is only 0.16 for the lengths of lines in Biblical Hebrew bicola, which result is statistically significant but fairly weak. Put differently, the length of the first line explains only 2.6 percent of the variance in the length of the second line. This variance indicates in no un-

12 This transliteration of the Hebrew Bible, as yet unpublished, is the result of my joint work with James R. Covington and Benjamin D. Thomas.

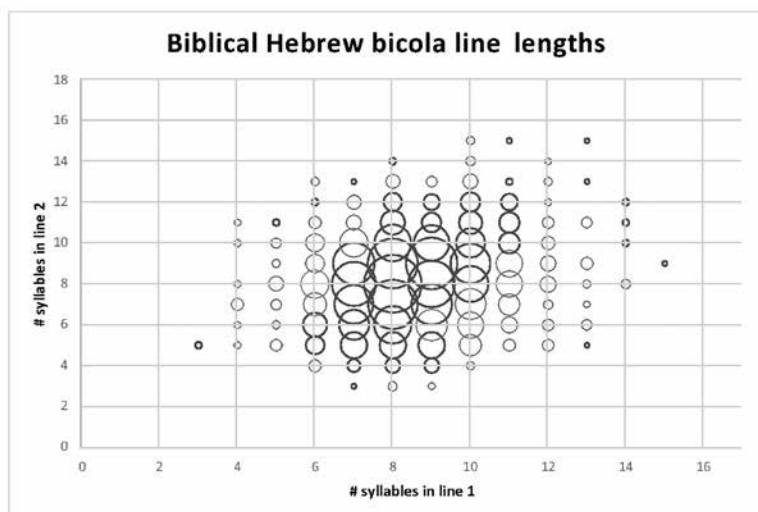


Figure 12.7. Biblical Hebrew bicola line lengths. The trend slopes upward, but it is very slight.

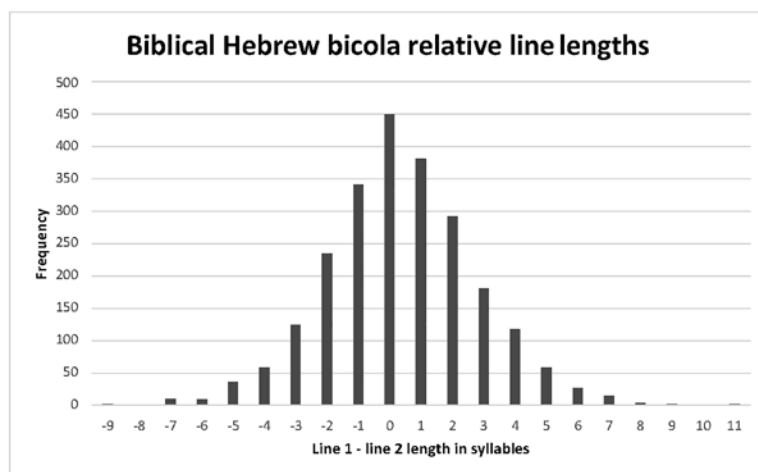


Figure 12.8. Biblical Hebrew bicola relative line lengths. The plot appears to be a discrete approximation of a continuous function that is centered just above zero.

certain terms that there is no straightforward, consistently applied metrical system based on syllable counting in Biblical Hebrew poetry. Indeed, even this weak correlation overstates the poets' attempts at balancing the lines in a poetic unit because of a confounding variable. Some psalms use, on average, longer lines than others. If one wishes to predict the length of the second line of a particular bicolon, which piece of information is more useful: the length of the first line in the bicolon, or the average length of the lines in the psalm apart from the two lines in this particular bicolon? The latter is actually far more predictive than the former. Whereas the length of the first line alone explains 2.6 percent of the variance in the length of the second line, the average length of the lines in the poem alone, excluding those in this particular poetic unit, explains 14.9 percent of the variance in the length of the second line in the bicolon. Using multiple linear regression, the length of the first line continues to be useful in predicting the length of the second line at a statistically significant level ($p = 2.3 \times 10^{-6}$), but the effect is very slight. The coefficient in the regression line for the average length of lines in the psalm, excluding the poetic unit in question, is 10.5 times the coefficient for the length of the first line. Indeed,

the usefulness of the length of the first line in predicting the length of the second line might be entirely illusory. The scholarly consensus that lines are typically at least approximately balanced may have influenced the translators of the ESV in their delineation of lines and poetic units, and occasional mistakes in the delineation biased in the direction of balanced lines could yield this result.

TRICOLA

In our division of the Book of Psalms into lines and poetic units, there are 321 tricola, a much smaller sample than was the case for bicola. Just as the first line of Biblical Hebrew bicola is, on average, longer than the second line of Biblical Hebrew bicola, so the first line of Biblical Hebrew tricola is, on average, longer than the second and third lines of Biblical Hebrew tricola. They average 8.58, 7.92, and 7.99 syllables, respectively. The standard deviations of the lengths of the lines are 2.12, 1.87, and 2.23 syllables, respectively. The lengths of each pair of lines are shown in figures 12.9, 12.10, and 12.11.

In Biblical Hebrew tricola, the lengths of the first two lines are weakly correlated ($\rho = 0.22$); the length of the first line explains 4.7 percent of the variation in the lengths of the second line. While quite weak,

this correlation is stronger than the correlation between the two lines in Biblical Hebrew bicola. Moreover, while the weak correlation between the lengths of the two lines in Biblical Hebrew poetry was mostly attributable to the fact that some psalms use longer lines than others, the same is not true of the first two lines of Biblical Hebrew tricola. When doing multiple linear regression, with the length of the second line as the dependent variable and with both the average length of the lines in the psalm (excluding the tricolon under examination) and the length of the first line of the tricolon as independent variables, one finds that only the length of the first line helps to predict the length of the second line in a statistically significant manner. As with bicola in Biblical Hebrew poetry, the scholarly consensus that lines are typically at least approximately balanced may have influenced the translators of the ESV in their delineation of lines and poetic units, and occasional mistakes in the delineation biased in the direction of balanced lines could yield this weak tendency observable in the data toward balanced first and second lines of a tricolon.

Given this weak correlation between the lengths of the first two lines in the tricolon, it is surprising to find that something similar does not hold for the third line of the tricolon. The length of the third line is more strongly correlated with the average length of lines in the psalm (excluding the tricolon under examination [$\rho = 0.27$]), than it is with the length of the first line ($\rho = 0.13$) or the length of the second line ($\rho = 0.12$). Performing multiple linear regression on all three factors shows that the length of the third line is not dependent on the lengths of the first and second lines in a statistically significant way. In sum, there is evidence of quantitative balancing of the first two lines in a Biblical Hebrew poetic unit, but it is a very small effect, and there is no evidence of a statistically significant attempt at balancing the third line with the first two lines.

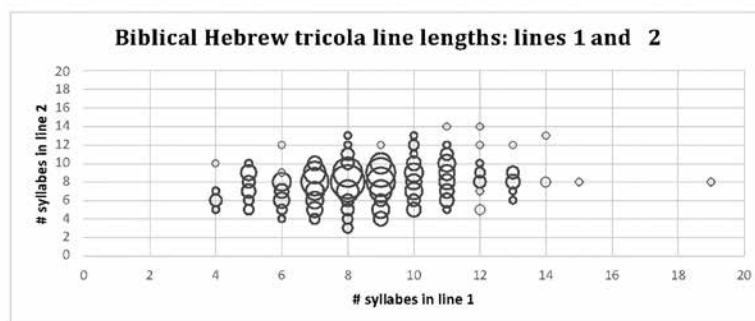


Figure 12.9. Biblical Hebrew tricola line lengths: lines 1 and 2. There is a slight upward-sloping trend, thus indicating these two lengths are weakly correlated.

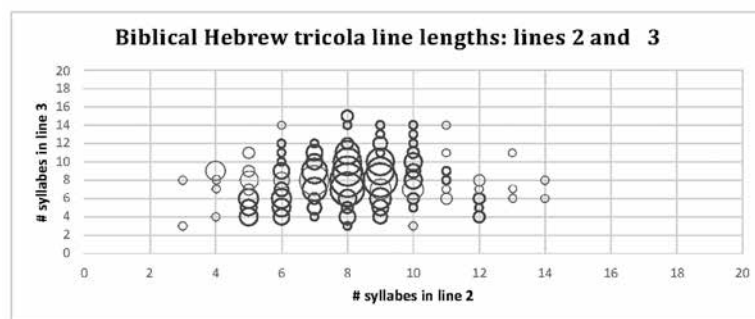


Figure 12.10. Biblical Hebrew tricola line lengths: lines 2 and 3. The extremely weak correlation, indicated by the slight upward-sloping trend, can be explained by other factors than the poets' desire to balance these lines.

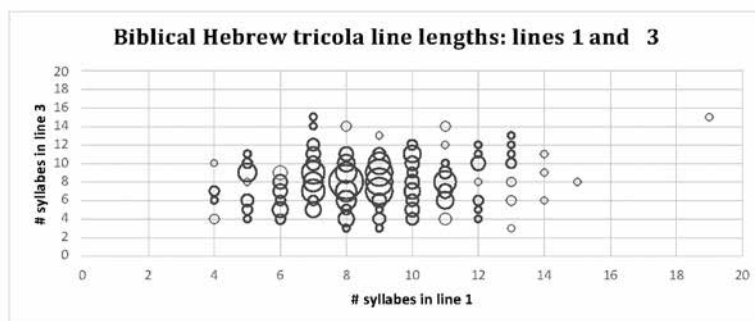


Figure 12.11. Biblical Hebrew tricola line lengths: lines 1 and 3. The extremely weak correlation, indicated by the slight upward-sloping trend, can be explained by other factors than the poets' desire to balance these lines.

CONCLUSION

It has been more than thirty years since Pardee challenged the claim that there is a metrical system in Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry, and scholarly opinion has followed him since that time. While the present study does not address all the metrical systems that have been proposed by scholars and reviewed by Pardee, it has found strong evidence against a straightforward, frequently used metrical system based on syllable counting in both Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry. Emending lines *metri causa* has fallen out of favor in recent decades, and this study provides more evidence against its use.

There are limitations to this study. The inherent difficulties in identifying lines and poetic units in both Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry, together with the difficulties in vocalizing both corpora, have been discussed above. In addition, with the exception of the bicola in Biblical Hebrew poetry, the sample sizes are not terribly large. Moreover, it is possible that parallelism in the Book of Psalms works differently from the way it does in other poetic books of the Hebrew Bible.

Despite these limitations, this study nonetheless provides a more precise analysis of the lengths of lines within poetic units in both Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry than has been undertaken previously. This statistical analysis of the most outstanding feature of Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry, viz., parallelism, clarifies one aspect of poetic style in these corpora. Ugaritian poets generally balanced lines in bicola quantitatively, excepting that poets showed greater tolerance for a much longer line to be followed by a much shorter line, and they only labored to balance a line within a tricolon with the previous line. However, this quantitative balance should not be overstated: the tendency was toward approximate balance, not a regular metrical system. More surprising are the results for Biblical Hebrew poetry. Before the last thirty to forty years, many scholars held that Biblical Hebrew had a metrical system, and even since that time it has generally been believed that Israelite poets sought to balance the lines within a poetic unit. However, the data from the Book of Psalms indicate that achieving quantitative balance, even approximate balance, was not as significant a concern for Israelite poets as it was for Ugaritian poets. According to the division of the text into lines and poetic units used in this study, the lengths of some of the lines in poetic units are too well-balanced for that outcome to have occurred by chance, but the effect is quite weak. At best, the poets considered approximate quantitative balance to be a lower priority than other artistic ends. Indeed, since the data for this study is dependent on a division of the text into lines and poetic units by scholars who presumably believed that Israelite poets sought to achieve approximate quantitative balance, it is quite possible that the weak but statistically significant quantitative balance that is observed is purely the relic of this scholarly belief.

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13

BIBLICAL “ALTERNATION” AND ITS POETICS*

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EVER SINCE ROBERT LOWTH (1710–1787) lectured on biblical poetry and its chief feature, parallelism, more than 260 years ago (1753), scholars have proceeded to extend and refine its typology and to amass a comprehensive registry of all the rhetorical figures—forms of patterning—in the Hebrew Bible, their building blocks, and their complex and diverse realizations.¹ Many of the figures structure widely varying amounts of text, whether defined quantitatively, by the number of words, or qualitatively, by linguistic unit, from single words, such as the use of an adjective, to whole compositions. They appear along the entire spectrum of biblical genres, in the writings of all the hypothetical schools, from the hand of author and editor alike, in prose as well as poetry. Together, the ubiquity and versatility of these figures testify to the primacy they commanded in Israelian and Judean literary conception and expression, whatever their debt to oral composition.

This paper aims to introduce into the ledger—or, more accurately, to establish in it—an additional entry under the title “alternation.” In this rhetorical figure, two utterances are arranged such that they interrupt each other in turns, which creates four seemingly discontinuous segments; utterance a–b and utterance x–y appear in the order a–x–b–y. To make proper sense of such speech requires recognizing that in a sequence of four constituents, segments, or clauses, the second two complete the first two in respective fashion; one reads the whole in alternation.² In some cases, the second two complete the first syntactically or grammat-

* It is a pleasure to offer this piece of scholarship in honor of a premier scholar and generous colleague, Dennis Pardee. I first presented publicly on the figure at the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Edinburgh, July 2–6, 2006. Thanks to Ronnie Goldstein for insisting I publish on the figure and for discussing examples with me over many years, to Noam Mizrahi and Jordan Skornik for helpful comments on a draft of this paper, and to Joseph Lam and Eric Reymond for judicious editing of it. Citations of the MT follow Dotan 2001. All translations in it are mine except where noted otherwise.

1 Lowth 1787. For several very different, key treatments of biblical parallelism, see (in order of original publication) Kugel 1998; Greenstein 1983; Berlin 2008; Pardee 1988; Dobbs-Allsopp 2015, 3–177. For some surveys of rhetorical figures in biblical poetry, see Watson 2005; also 1994; and Avishur 2002 (despite the narrow title).

2 Lowth (1778, xxiv–xxv) recognized it at Song 1:5 and Isaiah 15:3 and described it as alternating. Klein (1987, 28) recognized it at Song 1:5; Psalms 33:20–21; 113:5–6 and referred to it as *תקבולת מתחלפת* “alternating parallelism.” In the mid-nineteenth century, Meir Simha Hakohen of Dvinsk recognized it at Deuteronomy 21:23 and employed a technical term for it as a known figure, *שיטת המוגבלות* (Kopperman 1983, 3.152) “the technique of mingling” (*AHDEL*, 1158, in the note on synonyms of “mix”: “*mingle* implies combination without loss of individual characteristics”); Fishbane (2015, 34–35), on Song 1:5, refers to it as vertical parallelism (“read vertically as two parallel pairs”); and Zakovitch (personal communication) made the elegant suggestion to refer to it as *תקבולת מושהית* “delayed parallelism.” Meir Simha’s term describes what the author has done and Fishbane’s the reconstituted flow; “alternation” highlights the reading process itself. Using or evoking the much-contested term parallelism as Klein, Fishbane, and Zakovitch do creates terminological confusion. Moreover, instances such as that at Genesis 27:27–28 show that alternation occurs in discourse that does not fall under any useful definition of parallelism. Others have used the terms “alternation” and “vertical parallelism” for distinct phenomena connected specifically with complete sentences, parallelism, and poetry. Willis (1987) employs “alternation” to refer to what essentially boils down to repetitious parallelism, and Tsumura (2009) employs language of verticality to refer to the way the parallel lines of a couplet can complete each other—an aspect, in his view, of the fact that parallelism is the utterance of one sentence in two lines.

ically. In other cases, they continue them logically or even just topically.³ Though typologically one might be drawn to describe and even define the phenomenon by the cases of two poetic lines, examples range far beyond that type of case. Like other rhetorical figures, alternation has served biblical authors in wide-ranging fashion as a supple tool for casting textual speech of varied genre and extent.⁴

Historically, one can identify continuous awareness of biblical alternation within the Jewish literary tradition, from as far back as the homiletical Targums and Rabbinic sources, through the medieval commentators interested in grammar and literary context, down to moderns of traditional and critical ilk alike—the father of the Jewish Enlightenment, Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), who digested Lowth’s lectures in his own commentary at Exodus 15, the innovative traditionalist Meir Simha Hakohen of Dvinsk (1843–1925), and the maverick critic Arnold Bogumil Ehrlich (1848–1919).⁵ From Ehrlich one can trace a direct line to a narrow circle of twentieth (and twenty-first) century scholars, including Ezra Zion Melamed,⁶ Isaac Leo Seeligmann,⁷ Alexander Rofé, and Yair Zakovitch. In broader scholarship, one finds isolated passages parsed along the lines of alternation, but haphazardly, not as a replicable method. In any case, scholars have not, properly speaking, analyzed the figure—only produced incrementally growing lists.

This study aims to provide such an analysis. It attempts to illustrate some of the linguistic features of alternation, the different ways in which biblical Hebrew may mark it, and any anomalies it may generate. The study examines some of the poetics of alternation, how it shapes meaning. It does so by taking examples of varying types and extent from across the spectrum of biblical genres, both as transmitted and as reconstructed, in poetry and prose, in the mouths of varied speakers—divine, human, and framing—and created by editors as well as authors. The survey should demonstrate the versatility and ubiquity of alternation.

Given its aim of establishing alternation as a rhetorical figure and making it identifiable, the study highlights ambiguities and anomalies posed by a piece of discourse, which can then be explained, overcome, or obviated in an alternating reading. However, given its aim of demonstrating the possibilities of its poetics, the study does not see fit to lay out an historical spectrum of all the false leads or for that matter to locate every scholar who happened to identify an instance, even though (contemporary) theological claims or (ancient Jewish) *halakhic* ones can be at stake. In that vein, it does merit mention that alternating discourse has produced recurring types of (mis)interpretation, such as a distributive reading, which applies both elements of the second pair to both elements of the first; namely, when utterances a–b and x–y are expressed in the sequence a–x–b–y, segments b and y together are considered to modify both segment a and segment x.

As a final point of contextualization, note that the figure named here “alternation” exists in many languages and literatures and goes under several names. Studies of “correlative verse,” Latin *versus rapportati*, and Arabic *laḥf wa-nashr* show the figure to have a far more variegated repertoire than even the biblical set below illustrates and, whether ancient or modern, learned discussion of them seems never quite to encom-

3 From this point of view, chiasm refers to two sequential utterances in which the second repeats elements of the first in reverse order; it represents a variety of parallelism, not an alternative to it.

4 In an insightful, very preliminary discussion, O’Connor (1980, 421–22) mentions the phenomenon under a broader rubric of “supralinear-level mixing.” He divides the cases into those in which two independent clauses are followed by two subordinate clauses (“clause mixing”) and those in which they are followed by two phrases, or “phrase-lines” (“phrase mixing”). But he sees a distributive relationship, in which the second pair together qualify each of the previous clauses, as the general, predominant one for both types of cases, and he sees an alternating structure as a possible, minor variant. (Thanks to Eric Reymond for pointing me to O’Connor’s discussion.)

5 Mendelssohn 1783, 2.80b–84b. Though Ehrlich’s commentaries, *Mikra ki-Psheshuto* (1899–1901), *Die Psalmen* (1905), and *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel* (1908–14), all appeared before Meir Simha’s *Meshek Hokmah ‘al Hatorah* (Kopferman 1973–82), Meir Simha wrote his commentary as a young man but followed his grandfather’s advice to shelve it until he published on the Talmud lest he be thought a dilettante; it was first published posthumously (Domb 1994, 9). It would seem, therefore, that the two commentators were unaware of each other’s work; neither refers to Mendelssohn.

6 Melamed 1945, 185–86.

7 Seeligmann (1996, 252 n. 26 = 2004, 301 n. 26) put the figure into the context of two questions posed together and then answered together without explicit coordination of the responses beyond topical relevance. For example, at Genesis 31:26–32, Laban asks two questions—in verses 26–30a, “Why did you sneak off?” and in verse 30b, “Why did you rob me?”—and Jacob replies to both—in verse 31b, “I was afraid,” and in verse 32a, “I did not.”

pass the complete range. In all the traditions, the figure has a venerable history, contested categorization, confusion over similar figures, and classic examples of debated representativity.⁸ Study of these parallels in particular but also of both the history of rhetorical traditions generally and the scholarly enterprise around them would surely prove illuminating for the way language, as used even at the most seemingly elite, i.e., controlled, levels, can persistently elude the grasp of systematizers and scholars.

Reflecting the problems of classification posed by such robust usage, the survey below follows no particularly clear order. Generally speaking, it treats first poetic texts (§§2–5) then prose ones (§§7–11), and within each of the two groups it moves, according to my intuition, from fairly necessary, obvious, or persuasive instances to ones that are less so.

ISAIAH 62:8–9

The first example comes from Judea of the Persian period, when farming Judeans toiled in an economic system that distributed their meager yield mainly to others, apparently Phoenicians and Greeks.⁹ To these circumstances speaks a consoling piece of poetic prophecy in Isaiah 62:8–9, to be precise, a text staged and framed as a human voice quoting speech by Yahweh. The piece comprises five lines. The first line (v. 8a) is a one-line introduction by the prophetic voice.

נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה בְּיָמִינוּ וּבִזְרוֹעַ עֹזוֹ

Yahweh swears by his right, indeed, the arm of his might

The segment gains independent weight as its own complete line through alliteration of the consonants *bēt* and ‘*ayīn* (בְּיָמִינוּ // וּבִזְרוֹעַ עֹזוֹ), internal semantic and grammatical parallelism (נִשְׁבַּע . . . בְּיָמִינוּ וּבִזְרוֹעַ עֹזוֹ),¹⁰ and *-ō* rhyme (נִשְׁבַּע וּבִזְרוֹעַ עֹזוֹ), and it has a sense of closure through bottom-heavy repetition in the consonants ‘*ayīn* and *zayīn* and the vowels *-u-* and *-o-* (וּבִזְרוֹעַ עֹזוֹ). Then come four lines (vv. 8bα, 8bβ, 9a, 9b) in which the prophet cites Yahweh in direct speech, in two couplets distinguished formally by particles (asseverative אִם vs. motive כִּי) and by address (direct 2fs יַגֵּעַת . . . תִּירוּשֶׁךְ . . . לְאִיבֶיךָ vs. indirect 3mp וּמִקְבְּצָיו יִשְׁתָּהוּ וְהָלְלוּ . . . וּמִקְבְּצָיו יִשְׁתָּהוּ).

נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה בְּיָמִינוּ וּבִזְרוֹעַ עֹזוֹ

אִם-אֶתֶן אֶת-דִּגְגֶּךָ עוֹד מֵאֶכֶל לְאִיבֶיךָ
וְאִם-יִשְׁתּוּ בְּנֵי-נֶכֶר תִּירוּשֶׁךָ אֲשֶׁר יַגֵּעַת בּוֹ
כִּי מֵאֶסְפָּיו יֵאָכְלוּ וְהָלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה
וּמִקְבְּצָיו יִשְׁתָּהוּ בְּחִצְרוֹת קִדְשִׁי

Yahweh has sworn by his right, indeed, by the arm of his might:

“If I deliver your (fs) grain anymore as food to your (fs) enemies . . . !
And if foreigners shall drink your (fs) wine that you (fs) toiled for . . . !”¹¹
“For those who gather (mp) it shall eat (mp) it and praise (mp) Yahweh
and those who collect (mp) it shall drink (mp) it in my holy courts!”¹²

8 See Wansbrough 1968 (sincere thanks to Andras Hamori for the reference); Brogan and Mignani 1993.

9 See Dan 1990; further Stern 1995; Stern 2001, 379–422, 559–61.

10 For this word-pair, see Isa. 63:12; Pss. 44:4; 89:14; 98:1. On the phenomenon of word-pairs, see Yoder 1971.

11 I take the statement, formulated as a conditional subordinate clause unfollowed by a main clause, to be an unstated threat on the model of “If you dare do that . . . !” in self-directed statements too. See Ewald 1891, 273 (§356a); Brockelmann 1956, 161–62 (§170b–c); Blau 1993, 113–14 (§117.1). The partial blending (“mutual contamination”) of curse and oath idioms described by Joüon (1996, 620 §165g–h) would seem to reinforce the view rather than negate it.

12 The term קִדְשִׁי here may denote “temple” rather than holiness (Noam Mizrahi, personal communication), but the common use of the term as an attribute in construct phrases, in Isaiah 40–66 and elsewhere, makes the case debatable and in need of argumentation. For discussion and instances, see Licht 1976; Kornfeld-Ringgren 2003; also HALOT 3.1076–78 esp. 1078 §6.

Lines 2–3 name first grain (דָּגָן) then wine (תִּירוֹשׁ), and lines 4–5 refer back to these crops through pronominal suffixes. However, instead of using the masculine *plural* pronominal suffix, “them,” מֵאֲסִיפֵיהֶם יֹאכְלֻם and so forth, lines 4–5 have the *singular*, “it,” “it,” “it,” and “it.” This string of singular pronominal suffixes would appear to create a problem. For line 3 (v. 8bβ) discusses wine (תִּירוֹשׁ), whereas line 4 (v. 9a), which refers obliquely to an antecedent food, depicts eating it (יֹאכְלֵהוּ). In the Hebrew Bible the only liquid referred to as “eaten” (אָכַל-כֹּל) is blood;¹³ all other fluids consumed or otherwise absorbed are either drunk (שָׁתָה) or rubbed (סָבַח). If, as אָכַל-כֹּל “eat” suggests, line 4 refers back to the grain of line 2 (v. 8bα), then it awkwardly skips over the closest preceding explicit subject to seek its antecedent in a more distant one. Similarly, on the heels of the repeated use of the pronominal suffix “it” in line 4 (v. 9a), the recurrence of “it” in line 5 (v. 9b) should continue to refer to the same antecedent, grain, yet once again the verb used resists this pull. For שָׁתָה forces the reference to go back no farther than the wine in line 3 (v. 8bβ).

Viewing the text comprehensively, at a glance, illuminates the phenomena discussed as part of a deliberate pattern of alternating subjects and references to them. Graphic presentation helps clarify the relations. Horizontally, as read and heard, ambiguous, confusing references mire the analyst. Vertically, as considered, two subjects parallel in sentiment and expression alternate.

	נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה בְּיָמִינוּ וּבְזִרְעוֹ עֹזוֹ:
וְאִם-יִשְׁתּוּ בְּנֵי-יִגְדְּךָ תִּירוֹשְׁךָ אֲשֶׁר יִגְעֶתָ בּוֹ	אִם-אֶתְּנֶנּוּ אֶת-דִּגְגְּךָ עוֹד מֵאֶכָּל לְאִיבֶיךָ
וּמִקְבָּצָיו יִשְׁתּוּ בְּחִצְרוֹת קִדְשֵׁי	כִּי מֵאֲסִפָּיו יֹאכְלֵהוּ וְהִלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה

Yahweh has sworn by his right, indeed, by the arm of his might:

“If I deliver your *grain* anymore as *food*
to your enemies . . . !

For those who gather it shall *eat* it
and praise Yahweh

And if foreigners shall *drink* your *wine* that
you toiled for . . . !

(and) those who collect it shall *drink* it in my
holy courts”

Reflecting awareness of the structure of the text, *Targum Jonathan* removes the ambiguity in it by substituting the appropriate explicit subject for each of the pronominal suffixes in lines 4–5 (v. 9):¹⁴

אֲרִי דְכַנְשׁוּהִי לְעִבּוּרָא יִכְלוּנִיה
וּדְעִצְרוּהִי לְחִמְרָא יִשְׁתּוּנִיה

For those who gather *the grain* shall eat it
And those who collect *the wine* shall drink it

What knowledge or experience does the alternating structure generate? Most fundamentally, it casts the speech as two couplets, and it is the framework of two couplets that enables and animates the poem.

Each line of the first, asseverating couplet (v. 8b) opens with the conditional “if” (אִם); uses the imperfective, “I shall deliver” (אֶתְּנֶנּוּ) and “they shall drink” (יִשְׁתּוּ); and addresses Judea in the second feminine singular, “your enemies” (לְאִיבֶיךָ) and “your wine that you toiled for” (אֲשֶׁר יִגְעֶתָ בּוֹ). Beyond those correlations, though, the lines lack semantic, alliterative, and rhythmic balance. The absence of these stronger patterning characteristics suggests a highly charged, emotional mood in the initial moment of asseveration. As Yahweh describes the predicament of his people Judea, he feels their pain. With the pivotal particle כִּי, Yahweh shifts into a more solemn, controlled mood, one that befits his declaration about the future and realizes itself in tight patterning. In the second couplet (v. 9), each line begins with a more distant participial third

13 Presumably, that is because it is imagined still to be in the meat, at least for the overwhelming majority of cases.

14 See also Rashi and Ibn Ezra (all three in Cohen 1996, 380–81). In an alleged instance likewise driven by pronouns, Ehrlich (1899–1901, 1.184) purports to solve the long-perplexing crux of the two verbs תִּשְׁמְטֶנָּה וְנִטְשָׁתָה at Exodus 23:11 by viewing each as referring to a different antecedent in verse 10: “six years you shall sow your land (f) and gather its produce (f), and (in) the seventh you shall *š-m-t* it”—the land (i.e., don’t sow it)—“and *n-t-š* it”—the produce (i.e., don’t gather it). See also the discussion of Qoh. 4:13–14 below.

masculine plural address with masculine singular pronominal suffix followed by imperfect third masculine plural with masculine singular pronominal suffix, and together they achieve palpable, quantifiable balance:

מֵאֲסָפִיו יֹאכְלֶהוּ
מִקְבָּצָיו יִשְׁתֶּהוּ

those who gather it shall eat it
those who collect it shall drink it

To the agriculturally minded, the grain and the wine may represent the beginning and end of harvest, chronologically or at least typologically;¹⁵ the effect suggests a chronological merism, *from* the first grain ingathering *through* the storage of wine with no disruption—peace and bounty, indeed.

Juxtaposing lines 4 and 5 does more than signal meaning through analogy and merism; it provides the structural support for a web of associations that emerges as one reads or hears the poem. In line 4 (v. 9a), the alliteration of consonants *hē* and *lāmed* and vowels *-u-* in יֹאכְלֶהוּ and וְהָלְלוּ, a quantitative relationship, reinforces a qualitative relationship, that of causality; enjoying the fruit of one’s labor inspires wholehearted gratitude and its expression. At the same time, though, וְהָלְלוּ (v. 9aβ) creates a segue to line 5, about drinking wine (v. 9bα), through sound-play, for it reverberates with הַלּוּלִים, the grape harvest and wine inauguration festival (וְהָלְלוּ . . . יִשְׁתֶּהוּ). The end of line 5 (v. 9bβ) amplifies the strain in similar fashion: although בְּחִצְרוֹת קֹדֶשׁ means “in my holy courts,” the term קֹדֶשׁ “holy” carries over the association of the הַלּוּלִים “first-fruits” evoked by the term וְהָלְלוּ (v. 9aβ), as in the text: יְהִי כָּל-פְּרִיו קֹדֶשׁ הַלּוּלִים לַיהוָה “all its fruit will be holy, *hillûlim* to/of Yahweh.”¹⁶

Moreover, as in so many other cases of corresponding clauses, juxtaposing the two declarations about the future has the effect of mutual illumination and signification. Just as the heads of the two lines (vv. 9aα and 9bα), מֵאֲסָפִיו יֹאכְלֶהוּ and מִקְבָּצָיו יִשְׁתֶּהוּ, directly correlate with each other to suggest an identical relationship of work and enjoyment, so too in the two tails (vv. 9aβ and 9bβ)—וְהָלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה—bears an intimate relationship with בְּחִצְרוֹת קֹדֶשׁ, that of action defined by space: they shall praise Yahweh in his holy courts.¹⁷

וְהָלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה
בְּחִצְרוֹת קֹדֶשׁ

מֵאֲסָפִיו יֹאכְלֶהוּ
מִקְבָּצָיו יִשְׁתֶּהוּ

those who gather it shall eat it and they shall praise Yahweh
and those who collect it shall drink it in my holy courts

15 Grain and wine occur frequently (9×) as a representative pair of edible crops, but more frequently (17×) together with olive oil (יִצְהָר); cf. Gen. 27:28, 31; Deut. 33:28; Isa. 36:17; Hos. 2:11; 7:14; Zech. 9:17; Ps. 4:8 with Num. 18:12; Deut. 7:13; 11:14; 12:17; 14:23; 18:4; 28:51; Jer. 31:12; Hos. 2:24; Joel 1:10; 2:19; Hag. 1:11; Neh. 5:11; 10:40; 13:5, 12; 2 Chron. 32:28 (twice with a fourth element, honey or preserves [דְּבַשׁ]: 2 Kgs. 18:32; 2 Chron. 31:5). As a pair, grain and wine represent the two main types of crops, those replanted annually and those planted once. The trio grain, wine, and oil represent field, vineyard, and orchard. The addition of preserves (דְּבַשׁ) responds to the fact that the list includes products rather than the crops themselves—wine and oil in their final, long-lasting form—and extends it to include other extracts meant to endure. Cases of editorial expansion arguably appear in Exodus 21:10–11 (Chavel 2011, 246) and 2 Kings 18:32 (cf. Isa. 36:17). On the agricultural seasons, activities, and produce, see Borowski 1987, 31–38, 47–139 (apart from his historical periodization, festivals, and cultic aspects). On the intellectual character of the Gezer Calendar, see Vayntrub 2015; on its paleographical profile as late tenth/early ninth century BCE, see Rollston 2010, 29–31.

16 Lev. 19:24; also Judg. 9:27. Against the Masoretic scoring, the term הַלּוּלִים stands in apposition with קֹדֶשׁ rather than in a construct phrase with it (Rashi [Katsenelenbogen 2005, 5.187]; Ehrlich 1968, 2.67; Milgrom 1991–2001, 2.1683). It serves as the name of the crops or products themselves, i.e., the *hillûlim* of Yahweh or the *hillûlim* given to Yahweh, not to describe what attends the bringing of the crops, i.e., a rejoicing about Yahweh or a festival of such activity; so too at Judges 9:27. See Bertheau (1845, 143–44), who reckons with the use of עֲשֵׂה in Judges 9:27 and resists forcing a distinction between Canaanite and Israelite referents for the same single Hebrew word הַלּוּלִים (compare Licht 1954; Kenaʿani 1961, 776b–77a; also, e.g., Moore 1895, 256–57; Boling 1975, 177).

17 Further on in the text, a passage explicitly locates praise in the Temple: בֵּית קֹדֶשְׁנוּ וְתַפְאָרַתְנוּ אֲשֶׁר הָלְלוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ הָיָה לְשָׂרֶפֶת אֵשׁ “our holy and beautiful temple where our ancestors praised you has become the burnt-out remains of a conflagration” (Isa. 64:10).

This blending of lines, the vertical reading, does not deny the impressions gained during the sequential reading experience. On the contrary, those impressions continue to play a role in the text's meaning. Upon the conclusion of line 4 (v. 9a), the audience imagines the harvester mopping his or her brow, sighing deeply, and impulsively praising Yahweh in the fields or in the home. Line 5 (v. 9b), suggesting that the praise takes place formally in the Temple, does not erase that impression as a mistaken one, but rather, through parallelism, amplifies it with a complementary one: not only praise at home, but also hymns at the Temple. The reality envisioned will have the Judeans singing Yahweh's praise impulsively in the fields and formally at the Temple.

DEUTERONOMY 32:42

Semantic agreement constitutes the key to an instance of alternation in the so-called Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32. The poem has a literary context, Deuteronomy 31:16–22 + 31:30–32:44a. According to its staging—which is narrative—Yahweh told Moses that after Moses' death subsequent generations of Israel will spurn Yahweh and he will expose them to the misfortunes of the world. As proof that those misfortunes will have come as punishment by Yahweh for their misdeeds, he will now teach Moses a poem that anticipates the scenario and explains it; indeed the poem describes the arrival of a terrible enemy from whom Yahweh saves Israel just before the final blow in a way that points to his control and reinforces his reputation—and disallows any misimpression of Israel's righteousness.¹⁸ Moses should teach the poem to Israel, and they should memorize it and retell it until events so unfold as to make its message pertinent. Moses both writes the poem and has Israel memorize it.

In the poem, in the context of describing how terrible his vengeance against the enemy will be once he does decide to reverse the enemy's course, Yahweh exclaims (v. 42):

אֲשַׁכִּיר חֲצִי מַדָּם וְחֶרְבִי תֹאכַל בָּשָׂר מַדָּם חָלָל וְשִׁבְיָהּ מֵרֹאשׁ פְּרָעוֹת אוֹיֵב

Read and rendered in straightforward fashion, the statement says:

I drench my arrows with blood and my blade consumes flesh from the blood of corpse and captive, from the wild heads of the enemy.

However, this reading leads to the baffling sequence, “my blade consumes flesh from the blood of corpse and captive.” No matter how one slices it, flesh does not come from the blood of corpse and captive; on the contrary, the blood comes from the flesh. Relatedly, the immediate juxtaposition of two nonsequential, uncoordinated prepositional clauses—“from the blood of corpse and captive” (מַדָּם חָלָל וְשִׁבְיָהּ) followed by “from the wild heads of the enemy” (מֵרֹאשׁ פְּרָעוֹת אוֹיֵב)—in a kind of stutter creates a false appositive: the wild head of the enemy simply does not qualify the blood of corpse and captive. Third, as in Isaiah 62:8–9, semantic agreement “leapfrogs.” The root ש-כ-ר “drench” of the first clause (v. 42aα) requires liquids, while the sword consuming flesh in the second clause (v. 42aβ) seeks a body part. Together, the three phenomena point to the presence of alternation:¹⁹

18 The stance that recent escape from near-total destruction does not demonstrate Israel's righteousness but Yahweh's awesome will, control, and mercy recalls Isaiah 1 and 2 Samuel 24. Together, the three texts appear to have events of the late eighth century BCE in view.

19 Ibn Ezra (Katsenelenbogen 2005, 7.290); Lowth 1787, 2.43; Mendelssohn 1783, 2.85b; Luzzatto 1993, 564; Ehrlich 1968, 2.346 (“Here we meet again a native speech-figure of Hebrew rhetoric,” in which line c qualifies מַדָּם of line a and line d qualifies בָּשָׂר of line b). None have specified the syntactical dependence that requires the speech to be read in alternation. O'Connor (1980, 422) says of the alternating reading here, “it may be,” and his reference to the syntactically and logically indeterminate case of 2 Samuel 1:22 as similar (ibid.) underscores that he misses the force of the syntax here. For a possible instance of purely topical alternation within the poem in Deuteronomy 32—one that follows the vertical geography of high and low—see verse 22, in which Yahweh's fiery rage begins in his nose (clause a) and reaches to the deepest parts of the world (clause b), blasting first the surface of the earth (clause c), then the mountain bases below it (clause d).

וְחִרְבִּי תֹאכַל בְּשָׂרַךְ אֲשֶׁכִּיר חֲצִי מַדָּם
מִרֹאשׁ פְּרָעוֹת אוֹיֵב מַדָּם קָלַל וְשִׁבְיָהּ

I drench my arrows with blood and my blade consumes flesh
with the blood of corpse and captive from the wild heads of the enemy.

Reading the verse in alternation rather than sequentially resolves it into two coherent, consistent statements: Yahweh drenches his arrows with the blood of corpse and captive, and his blade consumes, or cuts up, the flesh by severing heads from their respective bodies. The language in the verse has even marked this flow of clauses explicitly through the repetition of מַדָּם “with (the) blood” in the first and third clauses (vv. 42aα and 42bα). Recognizing the continuity indicated by this repetition helps illuminate the consecutive use of the preposition מֵן in the two clauses that make up the second line, viz., in clauses three and four (v. 42b). In the first instance (v. 42bα), when repeating מַדָּם from the first clause of the first line, the preposition modifies the verb (“drench”) with an instrumental sense (“with blood”), whereas in the second instance (v. 42bβ) מֵן qualifies a noun, the direct object of the second clause of the first line (“flesh”), with a partitive sense (“of the head”).

The technique in this instance has several effects. First, thematically it divides and rearranges the two parts of the utterance into the two stages of the fight: engaging the enemy, and decimating it after the main victory. This doubling up has the effect of slowing the pace, which allows the imagination time to catch up to the description and bring out its vividness. Second, in looking at the particulars of the textual units, a martial logic comes to the fore. First Yahweh’s volley of arrows inflicts widespread losses from afar, causing mayhem and despair; then Yahweh goes in for the close-quarter slaughter by the sword. So, too, for the deathblow afterwards. With the blood of the wounded running everywhere, Yahweh strides about the battlefield decapitating the enemy. Third, to rhetorical effect, the alternating structure first pairs up Yahweh and his weapons, which highlights the dynamic elements of cause, method, action, and agent; next it pairs up and offsets the more static elements of effect and the inert objects. Moreover, moving back and forth between stages of the fight undermines the sense of sequence, which has the effect of highlighting Yahweh’s overwhelming valor, undeniable victory, and ultimate invincibility: for him simply to have engaged in battle is already to have won it.

ISAIAH 34:6A

The motif of Yahweh’s sword drawing blood and flesh recurs in another text, likewise of alternating structure, viz., Isaiah 34:6a. In this case, a single subject stands at the head; two predicates follow, without conjunction, to characterize the subject. Then come two prepositional phrases—without a conjunction between them—each one of which extends a different predicate and signals as much by repeating the final word of the predicate it extends:

חֶרֶב לַיהוָה מְלֵאָה דָם
הַדְּשָׁנָה מִחֶלֶב מַדָּם פְּרִים וְעֵתוּדִים
מִחֶלֶב בְּלִיזֹת אֵילִים

The sword of Yahweh
is full of *blood* has been fattened *with fat*
of the blood of rams and goats *with the fat of rams’ kidneys*

The unit of speech at Isaiah 62:8–9 comprises essentially four complete sentences. By contrast, the unit of speech at Deuteronomy 32:42 comprises two independent clauses joined by the conjunction *wāw*, each clause with its own explicit subject, followed by two dependent clauses juxtaposed asyndetically. Differently from both passages, in the unit of speech at Isaiah 34:6a two independent clauses share a single explicit subject but are juxtaposed asyndetically, and they are followed by two dependent clauses that are linked to

their respective antecedents as appositive clauses and, like the antecedents, are, again, juxtaposed to each other asyndetically.

PSALM 113:5–6

The next instance opens with an initial single subject in an independent clause, followed by two balanced but nonconjoined qualifications, followed by two more dependent clauses conjoined by *wāw*.

In this untitled and unintroduced textual speech about Yahweh's greatness, an unframed voice addresses an audience in second plural and first plural terms and speaks of Yahweh in third masculine singular terms. After calling for Yahweh's praise (v. 1),²⁰ declaring Yahweh's name blessed forever (v. 2), confirming that Yahweh is indeed praised the world over (v. 3), and asserting Yahweh's high-as-the-sky elevation over all (v. 4), the voice expresses Yahweh's incomparability by posing a rhetorical question:

מִי כִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַמַּגְבִּיחַ לְשֹׁבֵת הַמַּשְׁפִּילִי לָרְאוֹת בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Who can compare to Yahweh our god, who ascends to sit, who descends to see(,) in the heavens
and on the earth?²¹

The question poses several problems. First, which of Yahweh's actions takes place “in the heavens and on the earth,” ascending to sit, descending to see, or—despite the lack of a conjunction between those actions—both?²² Second, what would it mean for Yahweh to ascend to sit both in the heavens and on the earth—is there one throne, as it were, for both spheres, or a different throne in each one? If, as the Masoretic versification has it and most interpret, Yahweh descends to see in both the heavens and on the earth,²³ from where does he descend—somewhere “beyond” the heavens? Where does he ascend to sit? Is that place where he sits the place from which he descends to see? Moreover, for what purpose does he do so? The reading also creates an imbalance in the specification of locale: omission of any detail versus concrete spheres. Third, the images themselves are unclear—ascending to sit and descending to see. One might think the reverse more appropriate: Yahweh should descend to sit, i.e., sit down, and ascend to see, i.e., rise from his seat. Finally, what precisely does the framing voice of the speech find praiseworthy—particularly with respect to descending to see?

To begin explicating the unit of speech one can turn to the pairings—ascending and descending, heavens and earth—and to the seemingly strange feature of asyndesis in the first pair and syndesis in the second. Together these features suggest the presence of alternation, as many have indeed understood.²⁴

20 The structure of the speech in this verse follows that of Psalms 92:10; 93:3; 94:3; Hosea 2:23; 11:8; and Song of Songs 4:8, viz., what some call “climactic parallelism” and others “staircase parallelism.” An utterance begins a thought, interrupts itself with a vocative, then repeats the beginning and completes itself—and this phenomenon occurs through two lines (a couplet), three lines (a triplet), or two half-lines (line-internal parallelism). Here in Psalm 113:1 (see Ibn Ezra [Cohen 2003, 146]):

Praise—O servants of Yahweh!—
Praise the name Yahweh!

21 For H גִּבַּח used intransitively (or inwardly transitively) see Job 5:7 (debatably also Obad. 4; Job 39:27) and for H שָׁפַל see Jeremiah 13:18 (possibly also Ezek. 21:31). On intransitive or inwardly transitive or internal H, see GKC, 145–46 §53d, f; Joüon 1996, 151 §54d; and esp. Waltke-O'Connor 1990, 439–41 §27.2f–g in the context of their broader discussion distinguishing H (causing an event) from D (bringing about a state); 433–39 §§27.1–27.2e.

22 So Radak (Cohen 2003, 147). One opinion has it that the phrase qualifies the opening clause: “Who in the heavens or on the earth can compare to Yahweh our god?” (Rashi [Cohen 2003, 146]; Kraus 1966, 2.755; Oesterley 1962, 2.469; Hossfeld-Zenger 2011, 180–81).

23 E.g., Briggs 1969, 2.389.

24 Moses b. Jacob Ibn Ezra cited by Abraham Ibn Ezra (Cohen 2003, 147); an anonymous opinion cited by Radak (ibid.); Hizzequni (Katsenelenbogen 2005, 4.86); *Ba'alei Hatsofot* (Chavel 1981, 287–88 in the note to the comment on Exod. 25:7); Lowth 1787, 2.44–45; Mendelssohn 1783, 2.86a; Ehrlich 1905, 286; Melamed 1945, 186. See also Graetz 1882–83, 2.597; Hupfeld 1888, 2.506; Duhm 1920, 258; Kirkpatrick 1902, 678.

מִי כִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
הַמְּשַׁפִּיל לְרֵאוֹת
הַמְּגִבִּיהַ לְשִׁבְתָּ
בְּשָׁמַיִם (ו) בְּאָרֶץ

Who can compare to Yahweh our god,
who ascends to sit who descends to see
in the heavens (and) on the earth?

In this reading, the speech describes two of Yahweh's traits: dwelling on high, where he sits upon his throne, and profound care for his earthly creatures below. The rhetorical question at the head of the sentence pits the two traits against each other as fundamentally incompatible—loftiness and intimacy—and asserts that Yahweh succeeds in encompassing them both. Yahweh's majesty remains unsullied by his abiding concern for his lowly subjects, while at the same time his exalted nature does not hold that concern in disdain and restraint.

What does the alternating structure do? It groups together two phrases made up of a participle + infinitive construct with the preposition *lāmed*, the two word-types that share features and functions of both verbs and nouns, and it pairs off the two indirect objects in prepositional phrases headed by *bēt*. The first pair highlights activity—movement—and purpose, but the use of verb/noun word-types shades into the sense of state of being and serves to characterize an essence: Yahweh's character is ever that of one ascending the throne, the most highly charged, triumphant of moments, but also ever that of one descending to look, the most decisive and pivotal moment of sympathy—the turn to another. To flesh out the motifs of the first pair, the deity classically ascends the throne after having vanquished the forces of chaos, which action effects creation, a world generating and sustaining life; the creation of the world stands alongside the deity's concern for justice and well-being among humanity, his concern for those whom the fissures of creation have left vulnerable. Meanwhile, the second pair highlights the loci of those activities, the spheres of those characteristics. Moreover, biblical authors who portray the sky and describe its nature consider it solid²⁵—a surface for the heavenly realm just as the crust of the earth serves as the surface for the human realm²⁶—and place Yahweh's throne on top of it.²⁷ The two spheres are bounded physical realms.

Separating each activity from its realm to list first the two opposed activities, then the two opposed realms, compounds the sense of incompatibility: the activities do not suit each other qualitatively, and they take place in separate spheres physically. In the specific case of heavens and earth, these spheres stand in opposition as up and down not just vertically, i.e., as a matter of physical relations, but also hierarchically, viz., in social relations. To the degree that the participial-infinitive phrases convey movement, the two activities of ascending the throne and descending to inspect do not simply occur in different spheres, up and down, but actually have vectors pulling them apart in two opposed directions, upwards and downwards, again not just physically but also socially: as one becomes more supreme, namely, in control of the many and the much, so does one become the less accessible to and interested in individuals. The correlation can be expressed by the visual experience that as one physically rises above the ground, its individuated elements blend in a single mass.

Subsuming this set of stark binaries, these repelling vectors, under a single rubric named “Yahweh,” emphasizes Yahweh as singularly able to bridge the unbridgeable, to make the incompatible coherent. With the chasm between the two characteristic behaviors and the two spaces collapsing, a single sphere of movement, action, and character emerges. The single actor of two characteristic activities, each in their own

25 Gen. 1:6–8. See Halpern 2003, 74*–76*. See, as well, Gen. 7:11; 8:2; also 2 Kgs. 7:2, 19; Isa. 24:18; Mal. 3:10; likewise Ps. 104:2; Hag. 1:10; 2:6, 21.

26 See Isa. 40:22; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; 48:13; 51:13, 16; Jer. 12:12 (= 51:15); Joel 2:10; 4:16; Amos 9:6; Zech. 12:1.

27 Cf. Ezek. 1:22–28; also Isa. 66:1.

sphere, constitutes a single universe. And as the grammar has these activities ever occurring, they suggest Yahweh's ever-presence both in the heavens and on the earth.²⁸

The instances of alternation at Deuteronomy 32:42 and Isaiah 34:6a contain an uncoordinated, asyndetic juxtaposition of prepositional clauses that combines with other infelicities to alert the reader or audience to the presence of alternation.²⁹ At Psalm 113:5–6, by contrast, the alternating cast of the utterance generates a conjunctive *wāw* between the two complements, בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ. However, in the reconstitution of the lines of thought, this conjunction becomes extraneous. The previous instances of alternation show the conjunction neither to be necessary for one reason or another nor to disprove the presence of an alternating cast.

The next instances do not occur in texts of poetry but in texts of prose. As a rule, within prose discourse any individual lines may be poetic, and one may make the argument that such is the case in some of the instances below. Lists, which are highly patterned, highly repetitious speech, lend themselves to the devices of poetry. Other types of cases, though, might prove more difficult. Either way, the next instances, which continue to employ both the asyndetic juxtaposition of dependent clauses and the use of the conjunction, expand the range of logical relationships, syntactical phenomena, and rhetorical effects of alternating formulations.

JEREMIAH 34:9

The literary staging of Jeremiah 34:8–22 has the prophet Jeremiah voicing Yahweh, who cites the royal edict of general manumission (Heb. דְּרוֹר) made recently by the Judean king Zedekiah, confirmed by the nobles of Jerusalem, and subsequently broken by them, in the early sixth century BCE. In that edict, Zedekiah had decreed:

לְשַׁלַּח אִישׁ אֶת-עַבְדּוֹ וְאִישׁ אֶת-שִׁפְחָתוֹ הָעִבְרִי וְהָעִבְרִיָּה חֲפָשִׁים

to set each his slave and each his maidservant, Hebrew and Hebrewess, free.

Obviously, the attribute “Hebrew” refers back to the male “slave” and “Hebrewess” to the female “maidservant.” The language signals the respective nature of the pair of qualifications through its marking of gender: masculine הָעִבְרִי “Hebrew” modifies masculine עַבְדּוֹ “his slave,” and feminine הָעִבְרִיָּה “Hebrewess” qualifies feminine “his maidservant” שִׁפְחָתוֹ. In English, an author could simply add the adverb “respectively,” but in biblical Hebrew the audience or reader follows the gender inflection and perceives, in alternation:

28 See similar and related sentiments in, e.g., 1 Sam. 2:10; Deut. 26:15; 28:12; Jer. 23:23–24; Hab. 3:3 (D כ-ס-י in the sense of “envelop”); Pss. 76:9–10; 102:20–21; 103:19; 104. For a cautionary adaptation of the idea, see Qohelet 5:1. Solomon’s prayer at 1 Kings 8:23–53 rejects the notion that the earthly Temple houses Yahweh by appropriating the idea that Yahweh pays attention to suffering on the earth and focalizing the idea at the Temple: the Temple is the place where people invoke Yahweh’s name with their complaints because he in the heavens is particularly attuned to hearing his name there.

29 Other examples of sequential asyndetic dependent clauses following two clauses and indicating an alternating cast: (a) Song of Songs 1:5 בְּרִיעוֹת שְׁלֹמֶה / בְּרִיעוֹת שְׁלֹמֶה / בְּרִיעוֹת שְׁלֹמֶה / בְּרִיעוֹת שְׁלֹמֶה, in which the charged vocative יְרוּשָׁלַם and the climactic שְׁלֹמֶה at the two line-endings create a deft echo in sound and association. This widely recognized case (*Targ.*, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Qara, Joseph Qimhi, di Trani [Cohen 2012, 6–9, despite the printer’s confusion]; Lowth 1787, 2.46; Ehrlich 1968, 7.3; also Budde 1898, 3; Harper 1907, 3) needs no emendation to שְׁלֹמֶה (Klein 1987, 28; contra, e.g., Wellhausen 1957, 218 n. 1). That the line has nothing to do with race, see Bellis 2021; Chavel forthcoming. The midrash at *Song Rab.* §1:38 (Dunskey 1980, 31) interprets the text distributively. (b) Mic. 1:4 בְּמִזְבֵּחַ מִגְרִים / בְּמִזְבֵּחַ מִגְרִים / בְּמִזְבֵּחַ מִגְרִים, in which clauses 1 and 3, about melting wax (see Pss. 22:15; 68:3; esp. 97:5), describe a downward effect, and clauses 2 and 4, about bubbling explosion, an upward one (for ג-ג-ג as less to pour out than to bring up what is below or behind, see esp. Mic. 1:6; Ps. 75:9; also Lam. 3:49). (c) Ps. 33:20–21 נִפְשֵׁנוּ חֲתָה לַיהוָה / עֲזָרְנוּ / עֲזָרְנוּ, in which yearning pairs up with rejoicing and defense pairs up with the sense of security; note also the ubiquitous pairing of לֵב “heart” and נֶפֶשׁ “throat,” the seats of will (voluntary and involuntary, articulate and inarticulate, or conscious and subconscious, but not thought and feeling) in ancient Hebrew idiom (Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 11:13, 18; 13:4; 26:16; 28:65; 30:2, 6, 10; Josh. 22:5; 23:14; 1 Sam. 2:35; 1 Kgs. 2:4; 8:48; 2 Kgs. 23:3, 25; Isa. 44:20 [on an a-b-b-a model]; Jer. 32:41; Ezek. 36:5; Pss. 13:3; 84:3; Prov. 2:10; 6:32; 15:32; 24:12; 1 Chron. 22:19; 28:9; 2 Chron. 6:38; 15:12; 34:31).

לְשַׁלַּח אִישׁ אֶת־עַבְדּוֹ הָעִבְרִי וְאִישׁ אֶת־שִׁפְתָּתוֹ הָעִבְרִיָּה חֲפָשִׁים

to set each his Hebrew (ms) slave and each his Hebrew (fs) maidservant free (mp).

One can represent this relationship graphically, in which the horizontal sequence, the order in which all the elements are first presented and perceived, is qualified by the vertical realignments once the contents are considered:

	וְאִישׁ אֶת־שִׁפְתָּתוֹ	לְשַׁלַּח אִישׁ אֶת־עַבְדּוֹ
	(וְ)הָעִבְרִיָּה חֲפָשִׁים	הָעִבְרִי
to set each his	slave and each his	maidservant
Hebrew	(and) Hebrew	free.

Recognizing the alternating structure and understanding how it works help crystallize the fact that inflection for gender allows divergence from standard norms of word order. In addition, for the sake of the sequential reading, alternation generates between “Hebrew” and “Hebrewess” (הָעִבְרִי and הָעִבְרִיָּה) a conjunction (וְ), “Hebrew *and* Hebrewess” (וְהָעִבְרִיָּה וְהָעִבְרִי).

From the point of view of poetics, what is the effect of deferring, juxtaposing, and offsetting the ethnic qualifiers in this manner? It does not serve in a legal capacity to limit the manumission to Hebrew slaves and maidservants. For that delimitation, it would have sufficed to distribute the adjectives among their respective nouns. Rather, offsetting the ethnic qualifiers has a rhetorical effect. Doubling up the evocative gentilics works to pull more forcefully on the heartstrings of brotherhood and make compliance a more compelling response.³⁰ Accordingly, those who subsequently broke the agreement to return their slaves look doubly wretched.

EXODUS 25:7

The selection of texts in the Torah (and Joshua) that scholars string together as having belonged originally to a priestly work make up a prose narrative staged as a telling by an anonymous voice that knows what the deity thinks and feels. That the story contains many lists and list-like passages, especially in the speech of the narrator and of Yahweh, has led scholars generally to malign its style as dry and schematic. However, many instances are better heard as the measured cadence that befits the majesty of the narrative’s main character, Yahweh, or the solemnity of its sublime, mythic subject matter, Yahweh’s fructifying descent to live like a noble lord amid a people upon the earth.³¹ Moreover, the nature of all lists consists precisely in formal patterning, which invites elegant deviation and can quickly shade into poetry or poetic-like discourse. The next example of alternation occurs in one such passage.

Yahweh’s instructions for the architecture, interior design, and staffing of his majestic mobile home, in Exodus 25–31, begin with a list of materials the Israelites will want to contribute. Expressing the reciprocity that will characterize this donation of resources, Yahweh twice employs the verb חָקַל, first with the sense of “bringing (to),” then with the sense of “accepting (from)”; the subject switches accordingly, from the Israelites to Moses and whoever will help him: the Israelites will bring, and Moses and company will receive (25:2):³²

30 Indications actually suggest that the pair of attributes is unlikely to have been an original feature of the text and has been added by an editor. In this case, the rhetorical effect could be an unintended consequence of a factor such as convenience. Cf. Chavel 1997, 85–88.

31 Paran (1989, 29–237) provides a survey of the rhetorical figures and turns of phrase that give the Priestly history its distinctive quality with the aim of demonstrating its poetic or near-poetic character (ibid. 11–25). However, he does not explain the character of the discourse along the lines of character-speech or relate it to the theme of the work.

32 Several verbs of motion do not denote one vector (or point of view) in particular but either of the two possible vectors (or points of view), i.e., to or from. Note חָקַל, e.g., Exod. 10:1, “Go to Pharaoh,” and Jer. 36:5–6, “I can’t go . . . you go” (instead of “come”); חָקַל, e.g., Song 5:4, “My beloved *pulled* his hand from the hole” (instead of “sent”); חָקַל, e.g., Song 8:14, “Run *hither*, beloved” (rather than “run *away*”); also חָקַל, e.g., Isa. 5:2, “and he removed its stones” (lit., “threw its stones”).

34 Ehrlich (1899–1901, 1.194) identifies another instance in the Priestly history in this same speech by Yahweh to Moses—that at Exodus 29:27, הָיָה הַתְּנוּפָה וְאֵת שֹׁק הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר הֵינִי וְאֲשֶׁר הָיָה—in which the verb of each relative clause activates the same root as the noun it modifies (הַתְּנוּפָה-הַיָּה and הַתְּרוּמָה-הָיָה). The consistent distinction between two roots, ה-נ-ו and ה-ר-מ, suggests that for each type of gift a different activity effects its transfer to the divine domain and may have different results within the divine domain. However, the full descriptions at Exodus 29:19–28 and Leviticus 8:22–29 appear to use the terms interchangeably, so Rabbinic opinion reads Exodus 29:27 distributively, applying both activities to both types

The poetry of this alternating set of clauses, all the formal features and their effects, comes together with the place of the clauses as the final entry in the list of donated items. Simply to mark the end of a list represents a sufficient and common enough aim of intensified use of verbal devices such as alternation. Still, the alternation here does more work than that. The perceptible closure of a list nested within a broader discourse implies a continuity between the speech before the list and after it. In verse 2, Yahweh instructs Moses to relay to the people that they should bring him materials and goods, but Yahweh does not specify the purpose. In verses 3–7, Yahweh digresses slightly to provide an itemized list of donations. In verse 8, Yahweh completes the hierarchically prior discourse of donation and its purpose: these goods, properly configured, will house and maintain Yahweh in Israel’s midst.

דִּבֶּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ־לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי...
וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכְנָתִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם

Tell the Israelites to bring me a contribution; from every person whose heart (so) moves him accept my contribution . . .

. . . And they shall make me a holy place that I may dwell in their midst.

Framing the list with an introduction and conclusion does not seal it off entirely from the surrounding discourse. While the list parenthetically specifies the items Israel should contribute, it also mediates the transition from the commandment to contribute goods in verse 2 to their function in and as Yahweh’s majestic house in verse 8. The list of materials has three sections, differentiated by the use of conjunctive *wāw* and specification of function.³⁵ The first section (vv. 3b–5) lists metals, fabrics, skins, and wood, all linked by a conjunctive *wāw*, but does not specify any functions.

זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנַחֲשֶׁת וְתַכְלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ וְעִזִּים וְעֹרֹת אֵילִם מְאָדָּמִים וְעֹרֹת תְּחָשִׁים וְעֵצֵי שִׁטִּים

Gold and silver and bronze and blue and purple and crimson fabrics and fine linen and goat-hair and reddened ram-skins and *taḥaš*-skins³⁶ and acacia wood

The next section (v. 6) lists viscous and possibly powdery extracts and explains the purposes of each one as it does so; the materials have no conjunctive *wāw* between them, but the functions do.

שֶׁמֶן לְמָאֵר בְּשָׂמִים לְשֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וְלִקְטֹרֶת הַסָּמִים

Oil for lighting, balsamic oil for the anointing ointment and for the fragrant incense

The third, final section (v. 7) lists the gems and their purposes in an alternating structure that bundles the purposes together in the very final position of the complete list; a conjunctive *wāw* appears both between the substances and between their purposes.

אֲבִנֵי־שֹהַם וְאַבְנֵי מִלְּאִים לְאַפֹּד וְלַחֹשֶׁן

Carnelian stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastplate

Together these subtle variations in conjunction and function work gradually to bring function to the fore, until climactically it appears offset in the final position. As the conclusion of the list, the clause of functions

of gifts (esp. *Sifre Naso* §37 [Horovitz 1966, 40]; also *m. Men.* 5:6 [Albeck 1988, 5.75]; *t. Men.* 7:17–19 [Zuckerman 1970, 523]; *b. Suk.* 37b; *b. Men.* 61a). See the complex discussion of Milgrom 1991–2001, 1.461–81.

35 Cassuto (1959, 225–27) noted both aspects of the discourse—purpose and conjunction—and the variations in their deployment, but he did not identify through them the patterning of the speech.

36 For a survey of the proposals regarding the meaning and derivation of *taḥaš*, see HALOT 4.1720–21; add the view of Jacob (1992, 768, citing Franz Delitzsch), that it is sheepskin. Recently, Mastnjak (2017) connected it with the *tuḥšum*-cover of the royal tent of Zimri-Lim at Mari in the context of other parallels to biblical tent-material.

acts as a pivot preparing the way for the return (in v. 8) to Yahweh's primary line of thought and the point he is up to in it, viz., the function of contributing goods to construct him a home among the Israelites.

דְּבַר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ-לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לְבוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת-תְּרוּמָתִי
וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאֵתָם:
• זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנַחֲשֶׁת וְתַבְלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ וְעִזִּים וְעֹרֹת אֵילִם מְאָדָּמִים וְעֹרֹת תְּחָשִׁים וְעֵצֵי שִׁטִּים
• שֶׁמֶן לְמָאֵר בְּשָׂמִים לְשֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וְלִקְטֹרֶת הַסָּמִים
• אַבְנֵי-שֹׁהַם וְאַבְנֵי מִלֵּאִים לְאַפֵּד וְלַחֹשֶׁן
וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְּתוֹכָם

Tell the Israelites to bring me a contribution; from every person whose heart so moves him accept my contribution.

These are the contributions that you should accept from them:

- Gold *and* silver *and* bronze *and* blue *and* purple *and* crimson fabrics *and* fine linen *and* goat-hair *and* reddened ram-skins *and* *taḥaš*-skins *and* acacia wood;
- Oil for lighting, balsamic oil for the anointing ointment and for the fragrant incense;
- Carnelian stones *and* setting stones for the ephod *and* for the breastplate.

And they shall make me a holy place that I may dwell in their midst.

Finally, one may entertain the inference that, highlighted as the climax of the list, on the one hand, and juxtaposed with Yahweh's framing idea about the list as a whole, on the other, the *ephod* and breastplate hold particular importance. Just as the tabernacle will house Yahweh in Israel's midst, so the *ephod*-and-breastplate represents the point at which Israel and Yahweh meet and communicate. Yahweh's later thoughts on the matter seem to express this very idea (Exod. 28:29):

וְנָשָׂא אֹהֶרֶן אֶת-שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּחֹשֶׁן הַמִּשְׁפָּט עַל-לְבוֹ בְּבֹאֹ אֶל-הַקֹּדֶשׁ לְזִכְרוֹן לִפְנֵי-יְהוָה תָּמִיד

This way, Aaron shall bear the names of the Israelites on the breastplate of justice over his heart when he comes into the sanctuary, as a perpetual reminder before Yahweh.

In this case of alternation, then, recognizing its presence in a literary work normally dismissed as hopelessly technical and devoid of discursive—poetic—interest triggered recognition of a whole set of formal factors, deviations, and manipulations and their dynamic interaction with concepts, meaning, and value.

QOHELET 4:13–14

The book of Qohelet is staged as the speech of one anonymous character to another in which the anonymous speaker quotes a long lecture he once heard given by a figure referred to alternately as Qohelet and "the *qōhelet*." Among the many claims and counterclaims in the long lecture is one about the relative value of shrewd intelligence, age, and circumstances:

טוֹב יֶלֶד מִסֶּכֶן וְחָכָם מִמֶּלֶךְ זָקֵן וְכִסִּיל אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדַע לְהִזָּהֵר עוֹד בֵּי-מִבְּיַת הַסּוּרִים יֵצֵא לְמֶלֶךְ כִּי גַם בְּמַלְכוּתוֹ נוֹלַד רָשׁ

Better a poor but shrewd lad than an old and silly king who no longer knows caution, because from jail he can emerge to rule, because even in his rule he can become impoverished.

Read sequentially, the motive clauses make no sense. First of all, the remark seems to deprecate the silly old king because he can emerge from jail to rule. But such success is laudable rather than laughable. Second, it is unclear syntactically how the second motive clause, about becoming impoverished, connects with the first, about emerging from jail. The motive frame "because . . . because" does not suggest a consecutive relationship in which *first* he (re?)gains the empire, *then* he loses it (yet?) again. Third, the reading raises the logical question of how an old king lands himself in jail in the first place. Fourth, it seems rhetorically odd

38 Rimmon-Kenan 1989, 1–28.

and handing him a tray full of fresh meat. Jacob approaches Isaac, leans in to kiss him, and Isaac speaks (Gen. 27:27–28).

וַיִּגַּשׁ וַיִּשְׁקֶלּוּ וַיֵּרַח אֶת־רִיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר רֵאָה רִיחַ בְּנֵי כְרִיחַ שְׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכּוּ יְהוָה וַיִּתֶּן־לָךְ
הָאֱלֹהִים מִטֵּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירֹשׁ

He (Jacob) approached and kissed him. He (Isaac) smelled the scent of his clothes, and he blessed him, and he said, “See, the scent of my son is like the scent of the field blessed by Yahweh, and may God give you from the dew of the heavens and the fat of the earth, and an abundance of grain and wine.”

The long string of five *wayyiqtol* verbs, וַיִּגַּשׁ - וַיִּשְׁקֶלּוּ - וַיֵּרַח - וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ - וַיֹּאמֶר “he approached–he kissed–he smelled–he blessed–he said,” raises the questions of whether the subject changes and whether any of the verbs is subordinate adverbially to any of the others. In this case, the way the last verb, וַיֹּאמֶר “he said,” follows upon וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ “he blessed him,” a verb of speech, readily suggests that וַיֹּאמֶר functions adverbially, like לֵאמֹר: “he blessed him, saying.” As a result, it subordinates all of Isaac’s following speech to the main clause וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ “he blessed him” and marks that entire speech as the contents of the blessing, including Isaac’s opening words, about the scent of the blessed field coming off Jacob’s clothes. Within Isaac’s speech, the *wāw* that, following the remark about the clothing, begins what reads naturally as the contents of the blessing וַיִּתֶּן־לָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים “and may God give you” similarly would seem to indicate the two statements belong to one and the same framework, that of the blessing.

However, all that said, it remains unclear logically how the statement about Jacob’s clothes can function as part of the blessing. Although the narrator introduced Isaac’s speech as one of blessing, in fact Isaac’s blessing only begins part of the way into his speech. Moreover, what Isaac says before he begins blessing Jacob, a comment about the scent of the field, has a topical antecedent in the narrator’s depiction of the scene: smelling Jacob’s clothes, which comes right before the narrator’s statement that Isaac blessed Jacob. So the narrator has described two actions, smelling and blessing, and Isaac utters speech regarding each one—how wonderful the scent of his son, which he says to himself,³⁹ and the blessing itself, which he says to Jacob:

וַיִּגַּשׁ וַיִּשְׁקֶלּוּ וַיֵּרַח אֶת־רִיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר: “רֵאָה רִיחַ בְּנֵי כְרִיחַ שְׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכּוּ יְהוָה וַיִּתֶּן־לָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטֵּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירֹשׁ”

When he (Jacob) approached to kiss him, saying:

he (Isaac) smelled the scent of his clothes
“Ah, the scent of my son is like the scent
of the Yahweh-blessed field.

and he blessed him,
May God give you from the dew of the
heavens and the fat of the earth, and an
abundance of grain and wine.”

To return to the *wayyiqtol* verbs, Jacob leans in to kiss Isaac, who first smells him, then is moved to bless him. The verb of speech, וַיֹּאמֶר, modifies adverbially *both* the smelling and the blessing; it introduces the utterance that attends both. Note that Isaac’s first word, רֵאָה, does not begin a discourse but marks the stimulation of a sense, expresses the sencer’s awareness, and conforms to the biblical penchant for representing internal cognition as externalized speech. The translation “Ah!” captures the sense perfectly.⁴⁰ The wonderful aroma emanating from Jacob’s clothes so overpowers Isaac that he can’t help but note it. More importantly, it quickens in him both the inspiration and the power to bless. The scent of the Yahweh-blessed field drives Isaac to bless Jacob with God-given abundance.

In this case, the form of the verb וַיִּתֶּן that opens the blessing, viz., imperfect preceded by conjunction, requires explication, for logically the conjunction is superfluous. Possibly, the form indicates volition, “let,”

39 Ibn Ezra (Katsenelenbogen 2005, 2.28).

40 So NJPS.

“may,” and the like.⁴¹ However, alongside the בָּרוּךְ (and אָרוּר) and related formulas,⁴² another of the classic forms of blessing (and cursing) features the third singular imperfect without conjunction, followed by divine subject, e.g., Numbers 6:24–26 (יִשָּׂא - יֵאָר - יִבְרַךְ); Deuteronomy 28:7–9, 12 (יִתֵּן - יִצּו - יְקִימֶךָ - יִפְתָּח); and Psalm 20:2–6 (יִתֵּן - יִזְכֹּר - יִשְׁלַח - יִשְׁגְּבֶךָ - יַעֲנֶךָ, with poetic reversal of word order in parallel clauses). Two instances in the book of *Ruth* are particularly illuminating, since they show it to be the form even when the characters issuing the blessing have already been directing speech to the addressee of the blessing. When heading out for Judea, Ruth implores her Moabite daughters-in-law to return home, then follows immediately with a blessing, which shows how fully and sincerely she means it (1:8–9): . . . יִתֵּן יְהוָה לָכֶם . . . לְכֹנֶה! שְׂבִנָּה! אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אִמָּה! יַעֲשׂ יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד . . . יִתֵּן יְהוָה לָכֶם. And in response to Boaz’s call to affirm his purchase (4:9–10 (עֲדִים אִתָּם הַיּוֹם . . . עֲדִים אִתָּם הַיּוֹם)), the townsfolk affirm, then follow immediately with a blessing for him (v. 11): . . . יִתֵּן יְהוָה. In the case of Isaac, who had been speaking to himself first, the turn to address a blessing to Jacob is even less likely to begin with the conjunction. Possibly, then, the conjunction comes, as it does in other instances of alternation, as a reflex of the alternating cast of the speech.⁴³

The effect of casting the events in alternating discourse in this text differs from previous ones. Prior instances, all in the voice of a single speaker, effectively delayed the completion of a thought, or of two thoughts. The present instance, which crosses the lines of two speakers, separates components of a single event. As Isaac breathed in the aroma of Jacob’s clothes, he remarked on it. Then he performed a blessing of particular spoken content. Casting the discourse of the text in an alternating manner cuts up simultaneity and redistributes the parts along several different schematic lines of pairing. Most definitive of all, first the narrator does all its speaking, then the character Isaac does all his. The narrator depicts from its external, objective vantage point and the character expresses from his internal, subjective one. The narrator provides external, categorical description, which creates the outline of the moment; Isaac’s expression conveys the experience of the moment—indeed, it *is* the experience. The narrator offers general terms, the character Isaac, the concrete realization with all its details and particularity.

Providing sustained lines of discourse for two speaking characters has dual impact on the scene and its reception by the audience. Having the narrator depict the complete set of actions without the speech that attended some of them creates a seamlessness between them that bespeaks both naturalness and inevitably. Having Isaac speak his two pieces one right after the other—the voiced sensory experience and the articulated blessing—intimates the causal relationship between them. The scent puts Isaac in another state of mind and the blessing issues forth, which strengthens the sense of inevitability.⁴⁴ Once set in motion, events careen fatefully forward; Jacob will be blessed. Finally, in encompassing both narrator and character, this instance of alternation throws rarely appreciated light on the narrator as a character in the text and also on the author as distinct from the narrator, as the creator of the narrator, and as the one responsible for the planning of the entire text, with all its speakers.⁴⁵

41 E.g., Num. 9:2. Joüon 1996, 612–13 §1771.

42 See Crawford 1992; Aitken 2007.

43 Making it less egregious, however, is the possibility—an understudied phenomenon, actually—that, as simple “and,” the conjunction actually belongs to the narrator, who employs it in place of repeating another fullblown introduction of speech, וַיֹּאמֶר “And then he said”: וַיִּתֵּן לָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים. See further n. 44.

44 In the light of this comprehensive analysis of the effect of alternation on the presentation of the scene and on its reception by the audience, one can appreciate the choice to minimize the narrator’s presence, namely his speaking part, in the midst of Isaac’s, by employing the unobtrusive “and” (ו) rather than a full “and then he said” (וַיֹּאמֶר), as considered in n. 43. Older source-critics saw Isaac’s use of two divine names, Yahweh in his remark about the aroma coming off Jacob’s clothing and Elohim in his blessing, as an indication that the two parts of the speech actually come from two separate texts that an editor has conflated here (Dillmann 1886, 330; Holzinger 1898, 180; Carpenter 1900, 2.41; Gunkel 1901, 281; 1910, 306). However, though it did serve to initiate source-critical analysis of biblical literature, the use of divine names as a primary signal for editorial work has always been problematic both in theory and in practice (Baden 2012, 1–33, esp. 21–23, 29–31; also, Schwartz 2011, esp. 177–99; Chavel 2011, esp. 232–37). Knobel (1860, 227) already pointed to the use of both names, Yahweh and Elohim, within the one episode at Genesis 9:20–27 (see also Driver 1963, 16).

45 For a sustained, ambitious, and rewarding analysis of the narrator, or narrators, in biblical narrative, see Sternberg 1987, though one might resist the theological considerations he not so much infers as imposes.

1 SAMUEL 6:19

The next instance of alternation belongs entirely to the speech of a single character, the narrator, and comprises no analytical discourse, just the telling of an event. In the story, the Philistines, who had captured the ark of Yahweh in a war against the Israelites (1 Sam. 4:1–22), then suffered terribly from its presence (5:1–12), set the ark on a path to the Israelites of Beth Shemesh (6:1–12). The people of Beth Shemesh receive the ark in great joy, set it on a boulder, and offer sacrifices to Yahweh (vv. 13–18). Then tragedy strikes:

וַיִּדָּבֵק בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית־שֹׁמֶשׁ כִּי רָאוּ בַּאֲרוֹן יְהוָה
וַיִּדָּבֵק בָּעָם שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ

He struck the people of Bet-Shemesh, because they looked in the ark of Yahweh,
He struck among the nation, seventy people, fifty thousand people.

The narrative of the entire episode is riddled with problems, but the narrator's description of the event at this point presents several difficulties of its own. First, the enumeration of Israelites struck, "seventy men fifty thousand men," ascends in orders of magnitude rather than descends, and it lacks coordination.⁴⁶ Second, two clauses in a row begin with the same action-verb, וַיִּדָּבֵק "he struck," but have different objects, בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית־שֹׁמֶשׁ "the people of Beth Shemesh" and בָּעָם "the nation," which seems to indicate two different strikes or a strike against two different populations. Third, though the formulations are identical and seem to suggest identity, the particle *bet* seems to function differently in the two clauses. In the first it seems to mark the direct object, and in the second, the indirect:

וַיִּדָּבֵק בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית־שֹׁמֶשׁ כִּי רָאוּ בַּאֲרוֹן יְהוָה
וַיִּדָּבֵק בָּעָם שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ

He *struck the people* of Bet-Shemesh, because they looked in the ark of Yahweh,
He *struck among the nation* seventy people, fifty thousand people.

Fourth, the terms for the body of people shift back and forth in this verse and the next (vv. 19–20):

וַיִּדָּבֵק בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית־שֹׁמֶשׁ...וַיִּדָּבֵק בָּעָם...וַיִּתְאַבְּלוּ הָעָם...וַיִּדָּבֵק בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית־שֹׁמֶשׁ

He struck *the people of Beth Shemesh* . . . he struck among *the nation* . . . *the nation* mourned . . .
the people of Beth Shemesh said . . .

Targum Jonathan accounts for all the irregularities here by understanding the narrative to refer to two segments of the population and taking each number to apply to a different segment: וקטל בסבי עמא שבעין גברא ובקהלא: חמשין אלפין גברא "He struck among the elders of the people seventy men and among the community fifty thousand men."⁴⁷ This interpretation goes beyond the terms of the story, which has no elders (*זקנים). But the idea that two groups were struck combines with the doubled striking clauses, the doubled enumeration clauses, and the now-familiar phenomena of two conjoined main clauses followed by two asyndetic dependent clauses to suggest an alternating text, one that, as in the case of Psalm 113:5–6, contradicts the MT's division of the verse:

46 In Rabbinic literature, R. Abahu and R. Elazar take the formulation seriously as apposition and interpret it to imply equation: seventy leaders, each of whom was worth fifty thousand people, or fifty thousand people, each of whom was equivalent to the seventy members of the *sanhedrin* (*b. Sot.* 35b). The LXX supplies the missing conjunction, ἐβδομήκοντα ἀνδρας καὶ πεντήκοντα χιλιάδας ἀνδρῶν, but too many aspects of the LXX in this verse and in the episode as a whole show a tendency of intervention in the text, because of its many difficulties (for the LXX, see Brooke, McLean, and Thackeray 1906–40). Much of the intervention—for instance, the plus at the beginning of verse 19 and the variant order and wording in the part paralleling MT—shares features of editorial activity in multiple manuscript traditions of Samuel; namely, it belongs to the stage of Hebrew copyists prior to the translation (chiefly if not exclusively). See, e.g., 4QSam^a at 1 Sam. 1:22; LXX and 4QSam^a at 1 Sam. 2:9–10; 4QSam^a at 1 Sam. 2:13–17; MT at 1 Sam. 2:22b; 4QSam^a at 1 Sam. 10:27; and compare Rofé 1989.

47 Cohen 1999, 32–34.

וַיִּדָּבֵק בְּעָם . . . בֵּית־שֵׁמֶשׁ
 חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ

He struck among the people of Bet-Shemesh . . . He struck among the nation
 seventy people fifty thousand people.

The strike was so devastating that it took seventy lives in Beth Shemesh and fifty thousand lives around the nation.⁴⁸

Recognizing that the narrator speaks in alternation of two groups sheds light on the continuing narrative as likewise shifting between the two groups. The nation mourned deeply on account of the massive strike, while the people of Beth Shemesh, no better than the Philistines before them, had to resort to ridding themselves of the dangerous ark.

וַיִּדָּבֵק בְּעָם . . . בֵּית־שֵׁמֶשׁ
 חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ
 וַיִּתְאַבְּלוּ הָעָם כִּי־הָכָה יְהוָה בְּעָם מ
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲנָשֵׁי בֵית־שֵׁמֶשׁ
 מִי יוּכַל לַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים הַקְּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה
 וְאֵל־מִי יַעֲלֶה מֵעַלֵּינוּ

He struck among *the people of Bet-Shemesh* . . . He struck among *the nation*
 seventy people fifty thousand people.
 And *the nation* mourned,
 because Yahweh struck *the nation* a massive blow.

And *the people of Bet-Shemesh* said,
 "Who can withstand this holy god Yahweh,
 and to whom will he go, away from us?"

Formally, a sequence emerges of two strikes, against the Beth-Shimshites and against the nation, followed by two responses, by the nation and by the Beth-Shimshites: Beth Shemesh–the nation–the nation–Beth Shemesh. Shifting between the two scenes in this manner creates several effects. In terms of the action, the shift sets up Beth Shemesh as representative of the entire nation; what is happening there is happening everywhere. Moreover, the cutting back and forth indicates it is happening simultaneously.⁴⁹ Within the larger story, the widespread devastation and the local reaction that they must put distance between themselves and the ark repeat what just took place among the Philistine cities, which repetition signals that the Israelites are no better. Yahweh has not returned the ark on their account, as though they deserve it. The circumstances that led to the ark's capture in the first place have not achieved resolution. The priesthood of Shiloh may have come to an end and the temple of Shiloh may have been invalidated, but there is yet no worthy replacement.⁵⁰

48 So Eskin 1995, 112–13. As precedent, she points to Deuteronomy 23:4–5, which both Nachmanides and Ehrlich read in alternating fashion: the Ammonites are barred from Israel for having refused them safe passage to Canaan, and the Moabites for having hired Balaam to curse them (ibid., 111–112). But the syntax suggests a single compound motive that applies to both Ammon and Moab: they refused Israel safe passage and moreover hired Balaam (any divergence from Numbers 21–24 [and Judges 11] is, of course, beside the point). Eskin (ibid., 112 n. 11) notes that the editors of *Megadim* referred her to two more instances: Deuteronomy 20:19, according to Ibn Ezra, and Isaiah 52:12, according to Rashi; only the second instance works.

49 The use of alternation to convey simultaneity expands the discussion of Talmon 1993.

50 See 2 Samuel 6. The complex notion advanced by the story, that limited restoration or salvation serves to prove Yahweh's control over events, rather than that of another deity or entity, while maintaining Israel's unworthiness, drives the poem of Deuteronomy 32 as well and finds expression in other passages in the Hebrew Bible.

The way the alternating discourse introduces the doubled focus of Beth Shemesh and the nation and helps generate the significance of what occurs calls attention to another element in the discourse, the motive clause between the two striking clauses. The motive clause explains that the seventy people of Beth Shemesh were killed because they looked at or inside the ark: וַיִּדּוּ בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית־שֹׁמֶשׁ כִּי רָאוּ בְּאֲרוֹן יְהוָה וַיִּדּוּ בָּעָם. Most importantly, having a local offense trigger the devastation undercuts the message of general Israelite unworthiness and throws the widespread devastation into question: why should it even have occurred? In terms of the style of alternating discourse, the motive clause creates an unusual imbalance within the alternating discourse and obscures its very presence. To judge by all the cases surveyed, authors (and editors) intend for alternating discourse to be perceptible by audiences and to be operative in interpretation, like nearly all other rhetorical figures.

The LXX's version of the verse goes one step beyond the MT by also attributing the devastation of fifty thousand people to looking at the ark. It does so by situating the motive clause ahead of the depiction of the strike, collapsing the two striking clauses into one, omitting the nation as a separate body, and joining the numbers through "and": Καὶ οὐκ ἠσμένισαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰεχονίου ἐν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν Βαιθσάμυς, ὅτι εἶδαν κιβωτὸν Κυρίου καὶ ἐπάταξεν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἑβδομήκοντα ἄνδρας καὶ πεντήκοντα χιλιάδας ἀνδρῶν "And the Jechoniahites did not rejoice among the Beth-Shimshites because they saw the ark of the Lord and He struck among them seventy people and fifty thousand people."⁵¹ This version eliminates any comparison between the people of Beth Shemesh and the Philistine cities and centers the event on looking at the ark.

Overall, the LXX's version of 1 Samuel 6:19 looks secondary. At one and the same time, its various moves suggest that the motif of having looked at the ark is itself secondary and the logic behind its addition. The original version, or the version to which the MT preserves a response, would have presented the two striking clauses one right after the other, followed by the two sets of numbers in an alternating discourse (וַיִּדּוּ בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית שֹׁמֶשׁ וַיִּדּוּ בָּעָם שְׁבַעִים אִישׁ חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ), and highlighted clearly the unapproachability of the divine ark apart from divine will, in Israel as in Philistia. A reader who elected to intervene in the text did not appreciate the logic of the story and sought a specific offense for the devastation described. Evidently, they found it in what otherwise seems a positive depiction earlier on, at verse 13; when the ark showed up, the people rejoiced *to see it*: וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־עֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּרְאוּ אֶת־הָאֲרוֹן וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ לִרְאוֹת. Taking their cue from the cultural norms and social poetics animating such warnings against uninvited, invasive looking as those at Numbers 4:17–20 and Leviticus 16:2–3,⁵² this reader clarified, most likely through an interlinear addition,⁵³ that the people of Beth Shemesh looked in an inappropriate manner, which fired up the deity.⁵⁴ Whether, as the MT has it, the motive clause was copied into the running text as the editor intended, between the two striking clauses, or through misunderstanding when in fact the editor had thought it should go elsewhere, the next version, as the LXX has it, streamlined the account. In the MT, the original alternation remains identifiable and effective; in the LXX it ceases to exist altogether.

In terms of an analytical survey of the rhetoric of alternating discourse, the author has the narrator tell in this manner, namely, the author presents this style of speech as the artistry of a narrator. It presses the limits of narrative as a form defined mainly by action, temporal sequence, and causality; it does so in order to present two scenes at once, to convey the simultaneity of the events occurring in them, and to signal the equivalence of their meaning for the story.⁵⁵

51 It is tempting to speculate that whoever named those who understand the impropriety of the joyous looking at the ark "Jechoniahites" thought it fitting due to its assonance with the word for "(religious) attendant": יְכֹנְיָה - כהן.

52 On the social poetics of looking at the deity in the Hebrew Bible, see Chavel 2012.

53 On the prevalence of interlinear interpolation and the rarity of marginal interpolation in Judean texts of the late Second Temple period, see Tov 2004, 226–27.

54 For premodern, precritical commentators reading the MT who continue to elaborate the precise violation of looking at the ark and seek cues in the description of its arrival on the scene at Beth Shemesh, see Eskin 1995, 113 n. 12.

55 Sufficient cues raise the possibility that all the clauses about the nation have been interpolated into a prior version of the story that only mentioned the people of Beth Shemesh, again in response to features of the narrative. But the reconstruction of this process would not further the analysis of alternation and its poetics.

CONCLUSION

The study of alternation reviewed nine instances closely.⁵⁶ Along the way it noted another eleven⁵⁷ and two additional candidates.⁵⁸ The list is hardly exhaustive; more instances occur throughout the Hebrew Bible.⁵⁹ These twenty to thirty instances occur as poetic discourse but also as prose, in poetic texts and nonpoetic texts, across a range of genres with very different uses, narrative and nonnarrative alike, in the speech of narrators and of characters. Such speakers include Yahweh and humans—humans addressing Yahweh or each other—and they apply the figure to the giving of instructions, the making of promises, self-description, the lauding of others, the recounting of past events, and to any other of the many speaking situations that exist. One instance encompasses the speech of two speakers, a narrator and the character whose speech the narrator introduces.⁶⁰ Even by the most conservative reckoning, the instances span several centuries of literary production. The figure, in sum, belongs to the basic repertoire of ancient Hebrew literary composition.

56 Gen. 27:27–28; Exod. 25:7; Isa. 62:8–9; Deut. 32:42; 1 Sam. 6:19; Isa. 34:6a; Jer. 34:9; Ps. 113:5–6; Qoh. 4:13–14.

57 Deut. 12:7; 14:24; 21:23; 22:25b–27; 25:13–14 (see all in n. 37); 32:22 (see n. 19); Isa. 15:3 (see n. 2); 52:12 (see n. 48); Mic. 1:4; Ps. 33:20–21; Song 1:5 (see all in n. 29).

58 Exod. 23:11 (see n. 14); 29:27 (see n. 34).

59 E.g., (a) Exodus 33:1–3, in which verse 3a qualifies verse 1 (through apposition), and verse 3b qualifies verse 2 (as explanation); (b) Leviticus 1:10a, in which the partitive phrases with sheep and goats stand in apposition to the previous partitive, and the purpose clause “as a wholly-burnt type” complements the noun phrase “his offering”; (c) Jeremiah 15:3b, in which the birds peck the corpses and the wild animals break them apart (Ronnie Goldstein, personal communication)—an instance that, as in Exodus 25:7, concludes a list; (d) Isaiah 46:3b–4a, in which Yahweh bears Israel-Jacob from womb to old age; (e) Psalm 35:23, in which the two vocatives and the two objects belong, as it were, each to a different imperative: *העירה אלהי למשפטי // והקיצה אדני ליריבי* (Melamed 1945, 185); and (f) Proverbs 30:8–9, in which the evils of lies, poverty and wealth are explicated in reverse order—both complex variations very much like those found in other literatures and discussed as correlative verse and *laff wa-nashr* (see above n. 8). See also four additional examples mentioned by Holmstedt and Jones (2017: 43–45) as a variety of apposition: (g) Genesis 13:1, in which the list of travelers qualifies the initial subject *אברהם*, and the directional *הנגבה* qualifies the partitive *ממצרים*; (h) Numbers 17:17, in which the three clauses of verse 17b qualify the corresponding elements in verse 17a—out of order; (i) Deuteronomy 1:15, in which the list of types of leaders qualifies the general term *ראשים*, and the specification *לשבטיכם* qualifies the collective *עליכם*; and (j) Joshua 22:10, in which the locale *על הירדן* qualifies the deictic particle *שם*, and the clause about the altar of great size, *מזבח גדול למראה*, qualifies the earlier nondescript reference, *מזבח*.

60 Gen. 27:27–28.

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14

SO-CALLED “NUMBER PARALLELISM” IN BIBLICAL POETRY

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GRADED SEQUENCES OF TWO NUMBERS are found in succeeding lines of (mostly) parallel couplets in biblical poems. A good many of these instances involve the numerical sequence $x // x + 1$, in which the second number, appearing in the second line of the couplet, is one unit higher ($x + 1$) than the first (x), which comes in the couplet's initial line, with sequences of numbers from one to ten being the most common. In some cases, the sequence is clearly intended to enumerate a definite number ($x + 1$) of items, as the items are then listed in following verses. Proverbs 30:18–19 is a good example of this type:

<i>šlōšâ hēmmâ niplē'û mimmennî</i>	Three things are too wonderful for me;
<i>wē'arba' lō' yēda'tîm</i>	four I do not understand:
<i>derek hannešer baššāmayim</i>	the way of an eagle in the sky,
<i>derek nāḥāš 'ālê-šûr</i>	the way of a snake on a rock,
<i>derek-'ōniyyâ bēleb-yām</i>	the way of a ship on the high seas,
<i>wēderek geber bē'almâ</i>	and the way of a man with a girl. (NRSV)

In other instances, it is just as clear that a definite tally is not intended. Micah 5:4–5 is perhaps the best example of this type:

<i>'aššûr kî-yābô' bē'aršēnû</i>	As for Assyria, when he comes into our land
<i>wēkî yidrōk bē'admātēnû¹</i>	and when he treads upon our ground,
<i>wahāqēmōnû 'ālāyw šib'â rō'im</i>	then we will raise against him seven rulers
<i>ûšēmônâ nēsikê 'ārām²</i>	and eight Aramaean chiefs.
<i>wērā'û 'et-'ereš 'aššûr baḥereb</i>	And they will rule the land of Assyria with the sword,
<i>wē'tet-'ereš nimrōd bappētiḥā³</i>	and the land of Nimrud with a dagger.
<i>wēḥiṣṣilû⁴ mē'aššûr</i>	And they will rescue (us) from Assyria
<i>kî-yābô' bē'aršēnû</i>	when he comes into our land
<i>wēkî yidrōk bigbûlēnû</i>	and when he treads upon our borders.

1 Cf. LXX ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν ὑμῶν. The MT reads *bē'armēnōtēnû* “our palaces” (see Hillers 1984, 68 n. b).

2 Emendation following Hillers (ibid., n. e). The MT reads *'ādām*, lit., “man.”

3 As proposed in BHS (cf. Hillers 1984, 68–69 n. h). The MT reads *bīptāḥeyhā*, lit., “in its openings.”

4 Emendation following Hillers (ibid., 69 n. i). The MT reads the singular, perhaps influenced by the singular forms in the larger context (e.g., Mic. 5:1–3). An infinitive absolute (*wēḥaṣṣēl*) would also suffice: “and delivering (us) from Assyria” (see Waltke and O'Connor 1990, §35.5.2).

In what follows, I focus initially on the subset of examples represented by Proverbs 30:18–19 and Micah 5:4–5 but eventually expand the discussion to include the other varieties of numerical sequences in biblical verse.⁵

Since R. Lowth,⁶ parallelism has been the principal frame of reference for understanding these graded sequences of numbers, with most scholars thinking of them as a variety of synonymous word-pairs (A–B terms), a “peculiar” sort of “number parallelism.” W. G. E. Watson’s explanation is typical: “since no number can have a synonym the only way to provide a corresponding component is to use a digit which is higher in value than the original.”⁷ The rub—implicit in Watson’s “no number can have a synonym”—is that these numbers “are clearly not synonymous,” as M. O’Connor emphasizes.⁸ Rather, as W. M. W. Roth notices, the presence of parallelism, and of what kind,⁹ is determined by “the parallelism of the verse in question.”¹⁰ That is, following O’Connor, the “core” of parallelistic play in verse is most commonly syntactic: “when syntactic frames are set in equivalence by p[arallelism], the elements filling those frames are brought into alignment as well, esp[ecially] on the lexical level.”¹¹ The tendency for modern scholars to privilege synonymy (or its absence, i.e., antithesis) in their understanding of poetic parallelism—a bastardization of even Lowth’s already too tidy tripartite matrix—has meant that synonymy has become the chief category scrutinized in analyzing these number sequences.¹² But, of course, parallelistic play can turn on other standards of coordination, such as the sequence of the alphabet¹³ or merism.¹⁴ The only limits to the kind of knowledge poems can trope are set by larger historical and cultural considerations—poets cannot play on matters about which they do not or cannot know. Given that the numbers in these numerical sequences are not synonymous (at least beyond their categorical identity as numbers), I suggest, instead, that the syntactic frames at the heart of parallelism in these instances align the numbers such that their coordination turns not chiefly on synonymy but instead on a range of mathematical knowledge, including most especially that of counting, numeration, and elementary arithmetic.¹⁵ Talk of actual “number parallelism” is mostly beside the point, literally nonsensical, and badly misleading. This is a return, of sorts, to Lowth, who, unlike so many contemporary biblical scholars, was patently aware of the nonsynonymy of these sequences. He treats them—the originary treatment!—in his discussion of “Synthetic or Constructive” parallelism—they “cannot be of any

5 It is a pleasure for me to offer this essay in celebration of the life and work of Dennis Pardee, in whose scholarship the topic of poetic parallelism both at Ugarit and in the Bible has often figured prominently.

6 Lowth 1787, 2: 51–52; Lowth 1778, xxiii–xiv.

7 Watson 2001, 144; cf. Gevirtz 1963, 17–22; Haran 1972, 239 and n. 1, 241. Watson (and others) has in mind when making this observation the underlying numeral. Obviously, one may well have multiple ways of referencing singular numbers linguistically (or otherwise), e.g., “twelve” and “a dozen” (cf. Alter 1985, 11; Watson 2001, 144 n. 84).

8 O’Connor 1980, 378; cf. Kugel 1981, 42; Alter 1985, 11. That is, they do not express “identical” concepts (as in Haran 1972, 266), for the numbers by definition are not identical, i.e., three is (equal to) three and not four.

9 Cf. 1 Sam. 18:7!

10 Roth 1962, 303.

11 O’Connor 1993, 877.

12 So Roth (1962, 307 n. 3), who at some level gets that the putative synonymy of the numbers themselves is not the crucial bit (i.e., the parallelism is determined by the larger couplet, etc.), nevertheless persists in speaking about “synonymous parallelism”—presumably because there seems to him “no difference in meaning between $x/x + 1$ in synonymous and in synthetic parallelism.”

13 E.g., *gimel* . . . // *dalet* . . . (Ps. 112:2).

14 E.g., heaven and earth (Deut. 32:1).

15 This suggestion is not entirely novel. Sauer 1963, 7–25; Pope 1962, 561–67, esp. 562–64; and Lee 1973, 1–24, in one way or another, embed their own discussions of these numerical sequences within a larger framework of number knowledge. All three scholars are writing before the refinement of our understanding of the dynamics of biblical parallelism, which only begins in earnest toward the end of the 1970s, thus perhaps explaining (at least in part) why ultimately they do not make more out of their insights. Still, they very much point in the right direction. R. Alter’s (1985, 11) understanding of the logic of the parallelism in these number sequences, “an assertion of *a fortiori*,” is also initially couched in basic mathematical terminology: “The invariable rule . . . is that if you introduce a number in the first verset, you have to go up in the second verset, either by adding one to the number or by moving to a decimal multiple of the first number or a decimal multiple plus the number itself.”

other kind than the Synthetic kind.”¹⁶ And while Lowth too readily (mis)used this third kind of parallelism as a catch-all kind of category, his own mature expression of what he understood this category to consist in is worth citing, as one can see in it the (barest) lineaments of the Jacobsonian paradigm to which many modern students of parallelism subscribe:

The Third sort of Parallels I call Synthetic or Constructive: where the Parallelism consists only in the similar form of Construction; in which word does not answer to word, and sentence to sentence, as equivalent or opposite; but there is a correspondence and equality between different propositions, in respect of the shape and turn of the whole sentence, and of the constructive parts; such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative.¹⁷

And more critical to the present essay, looking at the phenomenon of “number parallelism” through Lowth’s eyes makes clear at the very least that a putative synonymy of numbers is nowhere in view.¹⁸

COUNTING

I begin by following up on Roth’s insight that whatever parallelism is involved in these numerical sequences comes off as a result of the larger informing framework, not because of any putative synonymous identity between the numbers themselves. The initial clue for Roth comes in what he describes as the “antithetical parallelism” of 1 Samuel 18:7:

<i>hikkâ šā’ûl ba’ālāpāw</i>	Saul has slain his thousands,
<i>wědāwīd bēribēbōtāyw</i>	but David his ten thousands!

The contrast on which the antithesis turns—which is made clear in Saul’s interpretation of the couplet in the following verse—requires that the numbers not be synonymous, that tens of thousands are greater than thousands. Moreover, the same numerical sequence is used elsewhere, as in Psalm 91:7,¹⁹ without any antithesis:

<i>yippōl miššiddēkā ’elep</i>	A thousand may fall at your side,
<i>ûrēbābâ mîmînekā</i>	ten thousand at your right,
<i>’ēleykā lō’ yiggāš</i>	but to you it will not come near.

The difference in uptake—in the Samuel couplet “the two numbers are contrasted with each other,”²⁰ while in the psalm they work together to implicate that “a great many might perish”—has nothing to do with the numbers, which after all are exactly the same in both passages, but with how the numbers are posed.

Consider again Proverbs 30:18. The cardinal numbers three and four happen to be the nouns that are slotted into an otherwise parallel couplet involving gapping and in which word order and syntax form the principal frame of equivalence:

N (<i>šēlōšâ</i>) + PN (<i>hēm̄mâ</i>) + VP (<i>nīplē’û mimmennî</i>)	
N (<i>wě’arba’</i>) + VP (<i>lō’ yēda’tîm</i>)	

This syntactic alignment of the adjacent lines facilitates the play of correspondence. The numbers are obviously alike in category, whereas the verb phrases are alike in semantics. Yet there is difference, too. The

¹⁶ Lowth 1778, xxiii.

¹⁷ Ibid., xxi.

¹⁸ However, in emphasizing the lack of synonymy I do not mean to discount the role of semantics in the overall force of this kind of parallelistic play. As J. B. Couey reminds me (email, June 11, 2014), “simply having a member of the same category [in these instances, numbers] can be sufficiently cohesive.” Rather, I am trying to clarify the informing logic of the semantics.

¹⁹ Cf. Deut. 32:30.

²⁰ Roth 1962, 303.

numbers are not identical, and the verb phrases themselves are composed quite differently: the first is affirmative and includes a dependent prepositional phrase (lit., “they are more wonderful than me”), while the second is negative and singular (lit., “I do not know them”). So the correspondence here cues our discovery of both similarities and differences.

That verse 19 follows by listing precisely four “ways” implies there is still more to the number play than similarity (they are both numbers) and difference (they are different numbers). In this case, the “more” being played with and on, I believe, has to do with counting. “It is counting,” writes T. Dantzig, “that consolidated the concrete and therefore heterogeneous notion of plurality . . . into the *homogeneous abstract number concept*, which made mathematics possible.”²¹ Counting, as it turns out, is “a rather intricate mental process.”²² It requires a concept of distinct units and the ability to aggregate them. That is, (abstract) counting presumes knowledge of basic addition: it “requires that the whole numbers be arranged in a sequence in which each number, after 1, is obtained by adding 1 to the number before it.” Once such a numeration system is in place, explains Dantzig, “*counting a collection* means assigning to every member a term in the natural sequence [i.e., one, two, three, etc.] in *ordered succession* until the collection is exhausted. The term of the natural sequence assigned to the last member is called the *ordinal number* of the collection,” which is, of course, precisely equivalent to the number of members in the collection. The logic that the parallelism in Proverbs 30:18 trades on with respect to the numerical sequence “three . . . // and four . . .” is not really that of synonymous word-pairs (as three and four, like thousands and ten thousands, are not at all synonymous) but of number knowledge (i.e., that there are numbers, their sequence, etc.), especially counting. The last number—here “four”—is, after Dantzig, the “ordinal number” of that which is being counted, the precise number of “ways” that are not comprehended, which are then related in the following verse (v. 19). The counting up of the four “ways,” in other words, is no accident. The additive logic itself is plain to see and replicated in other examples,²³ though the enumeration itself can be grouped differently and carried out over fewer or greater numbers of lines. Examples of this same counting trope appear outside the Bible at Ugarit (CAT 1.4.III.17–21) and in Ahiqar (TAD C1.1.187–88) and Ben Sira (23:16–17; 25:7–11; 26:5–6, 28; 50:25–26).

More could be said about the larger saying in Proverbs 30:18–19 (e.g., how the gapping gives the couplet the unbalanced shape of the so-called *qinah* meter, what to make more precisely of the “too wondrous” nonknowledge of the several “ways” listed),²⁴ but what is clear is that number knowledge and counting are crucial to its logic. The summing here literally gives us the shape of the whole saying.²⁵ That the counting trope here and in other examples is a sequence of only two numbers is a factor primarily of the dominantly distichic structure of biblical verse and the abbreviation required when the trope is enacted on a contracted scale.²⁶ The fact of abbreviation is not problematic. As G. Ifrah stresses, “any natural integer presupposes its preceding numbers as the cause of its existence,” “it subsumes all preceding numbers in the sequence.”²⁷ In other words, rehearsal of the entire counting sequence is not needed in order for the additive force of the counting to be implicated—i.e., the sequence of three and four (in this instance) is sufficient to signify the

21 Dantzig 2007, 6.

22 Ibid., 1.

23 E.g., Ps. 62:12–13; Prov. 6:16–19; 30:21–23, 29–31; Job 5:19–22.

24 For some details and orientation, see Fox 2009, 870–73.

25 Cf. Watson 2001, 147.

26 The fact of the poetic medium is not insignificant. Counting in oral and dominantly oral cultures, minus tabular aids, which are products of writing, tend to be highly contextual and concrete—“counting cows is different from counting cow-ries” (among the LoDagaa of northern Ghana studied by Goody 1977, 13). Counting in oral (oral-derived) poems, if it is to come off, like thinking with words more generally, must be shaped “in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in . . . formulaic expressions, in standard thematic settings . . . , in proverbs which are constantly heard by everyone so that they come to mind readily and which themselves are patterned for retention and ready recall, or in other mnemonic form” (Ong 1982, 34).

27 Ifrah 2000, 1: 20.

ordinal number of the collection, the sum of its contents. In fact, Ifrah’s point holds, as it must mathematically, with the mention of only a single number:

Four (*’arbā’ā*) things on earth are small,
yet they are exceedingly wise . . .

(. . . the ants . . . badgers . . . locusts . . . lizards . . . [Prov. 30:24–28])

Extended longer literal counts are well attested in both Akkadian and Ugaritic narrative verse.²⁸ A common example from Ugaritic is the count of seven used to give verisimilitude to the passing of time, as in a journey:

<i>lk. ym. wīn.</i>	March a day, and a second.
<i>tl̄t. rb^c. ym</i>	A third, a fourth day.
<i>ḥmš. td̄t. ym.</i>	A fifth, a sixth day.
<i>mk. špšm bšb^c,</i>	Then at sunrise on the seventh . . . (CAT 1.14.III.2–4)

The pairing of numbers here in a single line is likely a (formulaic) convention arising in the first place from the constraints imposed by line length. Note that if singular numbers are to occupy a line of their own, whether at the limit of elapsed time (e.g., CAT 1.14.III.3–4; IV.32–33, 46) or even in *x // x + 1* sayings (e.g., CAT 1.16.II.22–23), they must be extended in some way to fill out the line.²⁹ And seven, as commonly throughout the ancient Near East, is a cipher of wholeness.³⁰ Abbreviations of various sorts also frequently occur, including various renditions of the seven-day/year period with only the literal mention of the seventh increment (CAT 1.17.V.3–4; cf. 1.19.IV.13–18); when the elapsed time is telescoped into three and four periodic increments (e.g., CAT 1.14.IV.32–33, 44–46); and even once where Baal’s absence is rendered in a parallel couplet as lasting for “seven years . . . / (and) eight . . .” (CAT 1.19.I.42–44).

Extended counts on the scale of the Ugaritic examples are not attested in biblical verse, although there is at least one example of a count involving more than two numbers and encompassing several couplets—Isaiah 17:6:

Gleanings will be left in it,
as when an olive tree is beaten—
two or three (*šēnayim šēlōšā*) berries
in the top of the highest bough,
four or five (*’arbā’ā ḥāmiššā*)
on the branches of a fruit tree,
says the LORD God of Israel. (NRSV)

The sequence of two numbers comprising a single line is very reminiscent of the Ugaritic examples cited above.

No doubt the abbreviated counts attested in the graded numerical sequences in the Bible, beyond the shaping force of the distich, presume (if only logically) knowledge of longer literal counts. In fact, listings with summary counts do appear in narrative texts in the Bible,³¹ and vestiges of the counting-based technique for the narrative representation of the elapse of time are also common (three- and seven-day periods are especially common), though verisimilitude is often suggested in ways other than through literal repe-

28 Freedman 1970–71, 75–80, esp. 81; Lee 1973, 80–127, 128–98; Parker 1989, 46–52.

29 This likely is part of the explanation as to why in the telescoped version of the travel trope in CAT 1.17.IV.44–46 we find, oddly, the mention of both “a third, a fourth day” and “then [*aḥr*] at sunrise on the fourth.”

30 See Avishur 1973, 1–55 (Hebrew; as cited in Paul 1991, 30 n. 195).

31 Roth 1965, 10–17; cf. Lee 1973, 158–82.

tition (e.g., through details).³² An interesting poetic echo of the technique, in abbreviation (not unlike *CAT* 1.16.II.22–23 or 1.19.I.42–44), occurs in Hosea 6:2:

<i>yěḥayyēnû miyyōmāyim</i>	He will revive us after two days,
<i>bayyôm haššēlîšî yěqîmēnû</i>	on the third day he will raise us up,
<i>wēniḥyeh lēpānāyw</i>	and we will live before him.

Interestingly, there are several instances of short, holistic numerical sequences, viz., those involving the sequence “one // two.”³³ These occurrences are precisely fitted to the Bible’s preferred distichic manner of grouping lines. In Psalm 62:12–13a, that which is counted is a couplet of divine speech, a summing of one line of verse added to a second:³⁴

<i>ʾaḥat dibber ʾēlōhîm</i>	One (thing) ³⁵ God has spoken,
<i>štayim-zû šāmāʿtî</i>	two which I have heard:
<i>kî ʾōz lēʾlōhîm</i>	that strength belongs to God
<i>ûlēkā-ʾādōnāy ḥāsed</i>	and to you, O Lord, steadfast love.

All the counts exemplified to this point—whether biblical or nonbiblical, narrative or nonnarrative, whole or abbreviated—are literary figures, tropes shaped to specific literary ends. That is, they are not at all required. Plenty of instances exist of nonenumerated counts in the Bible,³⁶ especially when the tally is no more than four or five, the normal capacity of most human beings’ innate (i.e., unaided by abstract knowledge or mind-external devices) number sense.³⁷ Furthermore, they all trade on real world, nonliterary counts and counting abilities. The epigraphic Hebrew corpus alone attests eloquently to such knowledge. Most striking is a large, multicolumned practice (?) ostrakon from Kadesh-Barnea (*KBar* 6) that contains over the course of several of its columns (I.19–III.12) a sequential count of some entity (represented through II.18 by an obscure sign that looks like a Greek epsilon) from one to ten and then in turn by tens, hundreds, and thousands through ten thousand.³⁸ And abbreviated counts, which are at the heart of mathematical logic, are patent throughout the corpus, whether it be in summing a single *hin* (*Susa* 1), four jars of grain (*Jslm* 3.2), thirty shekels (*Qas* 2.2), sixty-seven *heqats* of flour (*Arad* 112.1), or three hundred loaves of bread

32 Perhaps the best example of the repetitive technique appears in the seven-day framework of the Priestly creation narrative (Gen. 1:1–2:4a). In the depiction of the fall of Jericho (Joshua 6), the first day’s march around the city is elaborated with generous details (vv. 12–13), the second day’s march is merely reported (v. 14), and the remaining days’ activities are referenced in summary form—“thus they did for six days” (v. 14). The climax, as traditionally, comes on the seventh day: “On the seventh day they rose early, getting up at dawn . . .” (v. 15). So given is the conventional seven-day period that it can even be spoofed or played off, as in Judges 19, where a man, seeking to reclaim his “concubine,” spends three days visiting with his father-in-law (v. 4) but does not leave on the fourth day (v. 5) or even early on the fifth day, but only as evening approaches on that day (v. 9). By this point in the narrative the perceptive reader will begin to suspect something is amiss, since characters in biblical narrative never depart for a journey on the “fifth” day and certainly not usually at sunset. More frequently, the climax is simply related: “The Israelites journeyed forth and arrived at their cities on the third day” (Josh. 9:17). Cf. Gen. 22:2–3; Exod. 19:10–11; 24:15–16 (and discussion in Lee 1973, 164–65).

33 Ps. 62:12; Job 33:14.

34 Contra Haran 1972, 254–56, who argues in a convoluted manner such that the emphasis is to be placed on the first number alone, i.e., what is itemized is only one matter—“the word ‘twice’ . . . only being intended to round off the parallelism.” In fact, all the examples Haran treats in this manner (Ps. 62:12–13; Job 33:14; 40:5; Mic. 5:4 [against his own interpretation]) are, as he admits (*ibid.*, 253), debated at best or uncertain.

35 The implied reference is to the divine speech that follows (see Hossfeld and Zenger 2005, 111 n. g), i.e., words, and even words shaped specifically, as they are here, into poetic lines.

36 E.g., Prov. 30:11–14.

37 Dantzig 2007, 4–5; Ifrah 2000, 5–8.

38 For details, see the treatment in Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 251–60.

(*Arad* 2.4).³⁹ Therefore, the explanation of those graded numerical sequences with subsequent specification of $x + 1$ items⁴⁰ is not that of a quasi-kind of number parallelism, where “the preceding number is forced in by the parallelism,”⁴¹ however “strange to us,”⁴² or even a “parallelism of equivalents,” where “the second number is intended to express more exactly, to correct what is stated in the first colon concerning the quantity.”⁴³ Rather, the parallelism in these couplets is staged, as is customary in biblical poetry, principally by syntax, which brings the numbers into alignment and thus enables the possibility for all sorts of plays, including, yes, those of synonymy (at least at the level of category). But it also enables plays of difference (the numbers are always different, e.g., x and $x + 1$) and especially and most importantly those of counting, as it is the counts—the “ordinal number” of that which finally gets detailed and itemized (counted!) in the subsequent lists—that are all crucial to the meaning of these figures.

NUMBER SYSTEM(S)

The numerical sequences routinely treated under the rubric of “number parallelism” turn out not to be monolithic. The capacity to count, with its implied knowledge of addition, is not the only mathematically based concept employed. In fact, counting itself also presumes knowledge of the integers, i.e., of the basic number system in use. “To create a counting process,” writes Dantzig, “we must devise a number *system*,” which entails both arranging a model collection “in an ordered sequence, a sequence which progresses in a sense of growing magnitude, the *natural sequence*: one, two, three . . .” and numerating it, devising a phonetic (symbolic, gestural, etc.) scheme for passing “from any larger number to its *successor*.”⁴⁴ All arithmetical operations, in fact, tacitly assume “that *we can always pass from any number to its successor*.”⁴⁵ But not all number systems are the same—and the nature of the system ultimately impinges on the kind of math that is imaginable.⁴⁶ There are two basic number systems in use in ancient Israel and Judah: one represented phonetically through number words (as in the Hebrew Bible and commonly in West Semitic)⁴⁷ and one which uses hieratic numerals borrowed from Egypt (as often in the epigraphic Hebrew corpus).⁴⁸ The two systems are mostly isomorphic to one another and thus easily transposable. At their base is the additive principle: “the rule according to which the value of a numerical representation is obtained by adding up the value of all the figures it contains.”⁴⁹ So, for example, the hieratic numerals through four, represented by sequences of vertical strokes (e.g., $/// = 3$), are additive in origin, i.e., the vertical stroke is repeated as many times (here only up to four) as needed (decomposition: $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$). Purely additive systems, however, are overly cumbersome, especially for writing large numbers. The hieratic numeral system is modified chiefly through abbreviation. Instead of notating with figures having single absolute values (e.g., as in Egyptian hieroglyphic), the hieratic system uses “nine special signs for the units, nine more for the tens, nine more

39 Economic texts from other parts of the southern Levant, Egypt, and Mesopotamia are far more numerous and ramify the point. And, of course, there are mathematical texts, too, especially from Egypt and Mesopotamia, in which specialized number knowledge is abundantly on display.

40 E.g., Prov. 30:18–19.

41 Haran 1972, 256.

42 Roth 1962, 304.

43 Weiss 1967, 418—citing Ginsberg 1946, 40f.

44 Dantzig 2007, 8; cf. Ifrah 2000, 1: 20; Haran 1972, 256.

45 Dantzig 2007, 9.

46 So all modern mathematics requires the number zero, which was not given any visibility in the number systems from antiquity—zero is a comparatively recent invention. Cf. Ifrah 2000, 1: 340–46.

47 Waltke and O’Connor 1990, §15; cf. Ifrah 2000, 1: 136–37. For Ugaritic, see Sauer 1963, esp. 24–35; Loewenstamm 1969, esp. 174–78; Lee 1973, 25–44.

48 Aharoni 1966, 13–19. However, number words also occur in the inscriptions. Sometimes the two systems are used in the same inscription (e.g., *Arad* 7), thus showing empirically that both existed at the same time and were congenial to users moving back and forth between the two. For the use of cuneiform numerals at Ugarit, see Lee 1973, 57–61.

49 Ifrah 2000, 1: 325.

for the hundreds, and so on.”⁵⁰ The writing out of large numbers in such a system becomes much simpler though still essentially additive: “7,659 = 7,000 + 600 + 50 + 9.”⁵¹ The phonetic system of Hebrew number words also involves abbreviation; separate words are assigned to each of the nine units and nine tens. Additionally, there are also distinct words for every power of ten, up through ten thousand (*eśer*, *mē’â*, *’elep*, *rēbābâ*), with intermediate sequences in the higher powers (above one hundred) formed on a multiplicative principle.⁵² The number 6,000, for example, is written out as *šēšet ’ālāpîm*, lit., “six one thousands,”⁵³ which is to be decomposed as: $6 \times 1,000$. The same number in the hieratic system, as in *KBar* 6.III.8, in contrast, is represented with a single numeral. The Hebrew word-based system for numbers, then, is literally a hybrid system, combining both additive and multiplicative principles:⁵⁴

$$\begin{aligned} 53,400 &= \textit{šēlōšâ waḥmiššîm ’elep wē’arba’ mē’ôt} \text{ (Num. 1:43)} \\ &= \text{lit., “three and fifty thousands and four hundreds”} \\ &= (3 + 50) \times 1,000 + (4 \times 100) \end{aligned}$$

What our two lead examples, Proverbs 30:18–19 and Micah 5:4–5, have in common is the use of the Hebrew number system (i.e., knowledge of the integers, their names, and their ordered sequence) both to structure the couplets and as a part of the parallelistic play. Only in the former is the number system put to the additional task of counting, summing a specific number of “ways”—there is no indication whatsoever that Micah is counting rulers who could thwart the Assyrians. The sequence is simple and confined to the units but not completely unremarkable for those characteristics. Like other bits of cultural knowledge (e.g., human anatomy in the several *waṣṣ*s in the Song) and natural discourses (e.g., letters), the number system is always potentially amenable to being fictionalized and troped. The literary foregrounding of the sequentiality inherent to the number system is most reminiscent of the way alphabetic acrostics in the Bible capitalize on the sequence of letter forms in abecedaries. The acrostic, however, is almost always employed in the Hebrew Bible as a trope of wholeness,⁵⁵ whereas number sequences, with the exception of one/two sequences, always appear in abbreviation.⁵⁶ But the basic logic of sequentiality (*aleph*, *bet*, *gimel* . . . ; . . . *šālōš*, *’arba’*) holds in both and may be exploited to literary ends.⁵⁷

Once we move beyond examples involving sequences of units only, it becomes increasingly evident that the poets most often are not just troping numbers generally in these graded sequences but, more specifically, the language of numbers, the lexicon itself devised for representing numbers in Hebrew and its implied system (as sketched above). Sequences involving the tens,⁵⁸ at first blush, seem similarly basic. But recall that the Hebrew phonetic number system is abbreviated precisely with respect to the nine words for both units and tens. Roth explains the logic well: “If x is a multiple of ten, $x + 1$ is the next higher multiple of ten.”⁵⁹

50 Ibid., 328.

51 Ibid. As Ifrah reports, the same number in the hieroglyphic system required twenty-seven signs.

52 Additionally, dual forms are used for “two hundred” (*mātayim*) and “two thousand” (*’alpayim*); see Waltke and O’Connor 1990, §15.2.5b.

53 1 Sam. 13:5.

54 Cf. Ifrah 2000, 1: 137.

55 Nahum 1:2–9 might well evidence the intentional use of half an acrostic. But if so, I suspect part of its overall significance lies in the breaking of the whole.

56 Presumably this phenomenon reflects the point emphasized above, viz., that the nature of the number system itself and arithmetic more broadly requires the capacity to abbreviate, for every number to presuppose the number that precedes it as its cause. The sequence of the alphabet, though conventional, is in no way as crucial, hence it can be symbolized only by repeating a substantial portion of it—i.e., one letter does not presuppose its immediately preceding letter.

57 For other tropes of sequentiality in biblical poetry, note the general north-to-south sequence of cities in Isaiah 10:27–32 (cf. Mic. 1:10–16) or the head-to-toe sequence of body parts in Song 5:10–16.

58 E.g., seventy/eighty (Ps. 90:10; cf. CAT 1.15.IV.6–7).

59 Ifrah 2000, 1: 306 n. 1.

However, his equation is wrong. It should be $x // x + 10$,⁶⁰ which is important precisely because it shows that the logic here follows the contours of the number system itself (as opposed to the sequence of natural numbers). Graded sequences of natural numbers, such as “for thirty-five . . . , and thirty-six . . . ” or “for four hundred . . . , and five hundred . . . ,” assuredly may be expressed in Hebrew, but only compositionally; i.e., they lack special words for such numbers. That most of the sequences attested involve only the foundational vocabulary of the system is likely not accidental. In other words, these examples reveal both a knowledge of numbers and the specific system of language used in Israel and Judah to represent this knowledge. And it is the contours of the latter that seem especially significant.⁶¹

Even more telling is the common sequential pairing of “one thousand” (*’elep*) // “ten thousand” (*rěbābā*).⁶² This time the logic expressed algebraically would be $10^x // 10^{x+1}$.⁶³ Here, too, it is the sequential contours specifically of the word-based number system, which has special words for the powers of ten through ten thousand,⁶⁴ that are critical. Deuteronomy 32:30 is especially revealing:

<i>’ēkā yidrōp ’ehād ’elep</i>	How can one route a thousand,
<i>ûššēnayim yānîsû rěbābā</i>	and two put to flight ten thousand?

The couplet contains two sequences of numbers, “one” // “two” and “thousand” // “ten thousand.” As Gevirtz supposes, it is reasonable to think the two sequences will share some commonality (i.e., “*thousand* is to *ten-thousand* as *one* is to *two*”), and it is obviously not the progression of natural numbers (i.e., the natural sequence), which would require “one thousand” // “one thousand *and one*.”⁶⁵ Rather, the sequential logic being drawn on for poetic effect is that of the system of number words: “just as *two* is the next higher unit after *one*, so *ten-thousand* is the next higher unit [i.e., in order of magnitude] after *thousand*.”⁶⁶

There is also Amos 5:3, which moves in descending order, but again precisely according to the number system— $1,000 > 100 // 100 > 10$:

For thus says the LORD God:
 “The city that marched out a thousand (*’elep*)
 shall have a hundred (*mē’ā*) left,
 and that which marched out a hundred (*mē’ā*)
 shall have ten (*’āšārā*) left.” (NRSV)

As it happens the logic of the sequence’s deployment is informed as well by an understanding of basic arithmetical procedures—the point is to “explicate and clarify the reason for the dirge,”⁶⁷ viz., that in each case the troop count is reduced by one order of magnitude, by a power of ten ($10^x // 10^{x-1}$).⁶⁸ The next step

60 Lee (1973, 199, 215 n. 1, 223) also clearly shows that the $x // x + 1$ logic holds for only some of the examples in Ugaritic and Hebrew—viz., those involving numbers less than ten. He too gives $x // x + 10$ shorthand for the tens (ibid., 200).

61 Language is not neutral, even when it comes to numbers. The particular mode of numeration is crucial to the kind of mathematics that is achievable. For example, the number zero was not known in antiquity, thus severely limiting the body of mathematical knowledge that could be generated (Ifrah 2000, 1: 340–46).

62 E.g., Deut. 32:30; 1 Sam. 18:7; Pss. 91:7; 144:13; cf. CAT 1.1.III.2–3; 4.I.25–28. For a complete listing of Ugaritic examples, see RSP 1: 114.

63 Cf. Lee 1973, 200.

64 Curiously, instead of using a hieratic figure for the numeral “10,000” (e.g., HP II, 650), KBar 6.III.12 and VI.6 express the numeral in combinatory fashion: the hieratic numeral for “10” followed by the Hebrew number word *’lpm* “thousands.”

65 Gevirtz 1963, 22–23. Gevirtz’s reasoning is very much on target, though his formulation is muddled by the supposition of “number parallelism” and his “mathematical” imprecision. It is not that the sequences are “without regard for mathematical consistency,” it is simply that Gevirtz’s notion of math and number knowledge is not at all sophisticated.

66 Ibid., 23.

67 Paul 1991, 160.

68 Haran (1972, 239–40) is forced to explain this example away because he does not approach the phenomenon from the perspective of number knowledge, rather, from the putative break up of stereotyped word pairs.

down in the number system, from ten to one ($10 > 1$, or 10^0), occurs in Isaiah 5:10, where it is paired with an equivalent reduction expressed with measures of volume, a homer to an ephah (the latter being one-tenth of the former⁶⁹):

For ten (*‘āseret*) acres of vineyard shall yield but one (*‘ehāt*) bath,
and a homer of seed shall yield a mere ephah. (NRSV)

The change-up to the language of measures in the last line emphasizes that the poetic play is not just with numbers *qua* numbers but more precisely with a culturally specific language for numbers.⁷⁰

Also significant is the fact that one can always play on numbers without implicating sequentiality of any kind. The ascending sequence in Song 6:8 is a case in point:

<i>šiššîm hēmmâ mēlākôt</i>	There are sixty queens,
<i>ûšēmōnîm pîlagšîm</i>	eighty concubines,
<i>wa‘ālāmôt ‘ên mispār</i>	and girls without number.

Like many of the examples so far discussed, the pairing in Song 6:8 increases in magnitude and implies both knowledge of the natural numbers and the informing Hebrew word-based number system. But what is explicitly *not* being troped here is the sequential structure of either system, for “eighty” does not follow directly upon “sixty” naturally or in the lexicon devised to give expression to numbers.

In sum, then, all examples of so-called “number parallelism” in the Bible betray awareness of the phonetic word-based numbering system in use in ancient Israel and Judah. And most more specifically trade on the foundational lexicon devised for this system and the sequentiality and logic implied by this specific way of naming—the nature of the sequential logic (i.e., $x // x + 1$, $x // x + 10$, $10^x // 10^{x+1}$) differs precisely according to how the system gets abbreviated (number words for units and tens) and mixes in a multiplicative dimension (number words for the powers of ten through ten thousand).

ARITHMETIC

Most often knowledge of the number system and its vocabulary comes smuggled along with other kinds of number knowledge, as evidenced above all by the counting examples with which I started. Besides counting, basic arithmetical operations constitute the largest class of number knowledge put to use in the graded numerical sequences. These operations include knowledge of addition and multiplication and an ability to compare and evaluate number values. Consider the little poetic fragment in Genesis 4:23–24:

And Lamech said to his wives:
“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice,
O wives of Lamech, give ear to my word!
Yeah (*kî*), a man I have killed for my wound,
a boy for my bruise.
Yeah (*kî*), sevenfold (*šib‘ātayim*) is Cain avenged,
and Lamech seventy-seven (*šib‘îm wēšib‘â*)!

The special multiplicative *šib‘ātayim*—which otherwise may be expressed through the phrase *šeba‘ pē‘āmîm* “seven times”⁷¹—presumes the logic of multiplication—“sevenfold.” The whole is a poetic play on Yahweh’s earlier promise that any who killed Cain would “suffer a sevenfold vengeance” (*kol-hōrēg qayin šib‘ātayim yuqqām*⁷²). In effect, Lamech boasts that his own murder of a man avenges Cain in the same way that Yah-

69 See Ezek. 45:11.

70 Of course, number knowledge figures prominently in metrology (see Powell 1992, 897–908).

71 E.g., Gen. 33:3; Lev. 4:6; Josh. 6:15; 2 Kgs. 5:10.

72 Gen. 4:15.

weh threatened any who might kill Cain, and seventy times more as well. The choice of “seventy-seven” in the second line of the couplet in Genesis 4:24 is motivated, in the first place, by the continued play on the number seven—all the words here are derivations of the same base number word, *šeba* “seven”: *šib’im* “seventy,” through addition of the masculine plural morpheme *-im*; *šib’ātayim* “sevenfold,” through the addition of the feminine dual morpheme, *-tayim*. That is, the choice of specific numbers is not accidental but is motivated poetically, literarily. Additionally, the added hyperbole of the final line requires both that the second number be greater than the first and be substantially so—hyperbole turns on exaggeration.⁷³ Such figuring can come off only if there is a capacity to compare and evaluate number values, i.e., to know that seventy-seven is greater, and indeed far greater, than seven. The math, in fact, is likely not accidental either.⁷⁴ With eleven as a multiplier, both the number punning and increased magnitude required for the hyperbole are eloquently achieved.⁷⁵ The same multiplier appears in Ugaritic:

<i>ṭṭ. lṭṭm. āḥd. ‘r</i>	Six and sixty cities he seizes,
<i>šb’m. šb’. pdr</i>	seventy-seven towns. (CAT 1.4.VII.9–10; cf. 1.5.V.19–22; 1.12.II.48–49)

The figured nature of the couplet is cued above all by the chiasmic rendering of the number words themselves.⁷⁶ And the hyperbole here, too, is evident in the specific sequence of numbers chosen, which, as M. S. Smith and W. T. Pitard observe, “are clearly intended not to be taken literally, but to mean a large number in general.”⁷⁷ And again it is likely that the pleasing alliterative play of root and consonants which multiples of eleven so naturally facilitate accounts (at some level) for this specific number trope.⁷⁸

Large numbers, or numbers significantly larger than required by the context, appear to be a frequent means, especially in the graded numerical sequences, for effecting hyperbole. So Song 6:8 references the royal court, with its myriads of females—queens, royal women, servants of various sorts—all imagined “as the most beautiful and pampered of women.” But they cannot compare to the boy’s lover, who is even more beautiful—“one in a million,” says J. C. Exum, using her own bit of hyperbole to make the point—the girl’s singularity (*’aḥat* [v. 9]) explicitly contrasted with these countless (*’ēn mišpār*, lit., “without number” [v. 8]) other women.⁷⁹ The third line of the triplet, in verse 8 (“women without number”), glosses and thus makes evident the evaluation of the numbers in the preceding lines (“sixty” and “eighty”) as contextually large.⁸⁰

Hyperbole is likely at least part of the fuller significance of the sequence of “seven . . . // and eight” rulers in Micah 5:4. This verse and other examples like it (e.g., CAT 1.19.I.42–44), where the sequence of numbers does not end in a specific count, are normally explained as signifying “an indefinite number.”⁸¹ But this explanation is at best only partly correct. It is true that the literary context does not call for a particular number or set of numbers (e.g., through counting logic or the like), and thus the numbers are “indefinite.” But the sense is not quite like that, predicated on similar-looking (but possibly unrelated) prosaic idioms,

73 Cf. Sauer 1963, 57–58; Haran 1972, 206 n. 3.

74 Cf. Watson 2001 [1984], 145.

75 Squares of high numbers (like one thousand/ten thousand in Dan 7:10; $(10^x)^2 // (10^{x+1})^2$) may achieve something of the same effect.

76 Smith and Pitard 2009, 652.

77 Ibid., 662.

78 The logic expressed algebraically is $11x // 11(x + 1)$, which emphasizes the equation’s multiplicative character (so Watson 2001, 145, 144 n. 86; Roth’s calculus (1962, 305 n. 9) is far less eloquent). Sauer (1963, 57–58) does not think multiplication enters in but instead emphasizes the linguistic play involved. Lee (1973, 55–56) is rightly critical of Sauer’s dismissal of the multiplicative logic as well as Sauer’s own rendering (“sechs, ja sechs . . .”), which completely misunderstands the numbers here.

79 Exum 2005, 220.

80 Song 6:8 also shows the potential for extending the graded numerical sequence trope beyond the couplet (cf. S. Gevirtz 1973, 167–70; Watson 2001, 146–47).

81 Hillers 1984, 68 n. d.

i.e., “about five or six times.”⁸² As Hillers notes of Micah 5:4, the numbers are “indefinite . . . but fairly large (not ‘two or three’).”⁸³ That is, not just any indefinite set of numbers will do here. The context is quintessentially hyperbolic; thus what is called for is a quantity larger than normal, i.e., larger than the truth-value the literal statement would require. In this example, surely one good leader to check the anticipated Assyrian assault would be literally sufficient. But the Micah passage is not a military manual or the minutes from a council of war; instead, it is a rhetorically troped prophetic vision—note especially the inclusio that rings (and thus contains and delimits) this bit of poetry. The rhetorical upshot of the number play must be something like, “We have the capability to raise up more than enough leaders to meet the threat.” Other sequences of sufficiently larger numbers could have served equally well, but “seven . . . // and eight” rulers makes Micah’s point most satisfactorily.

The factoring of hyperbole is all the more apparent in examples where the sequence of numbers is fantastically high, as prototypically in the sequence “one thousand”// “ten thousand.”⁸⁴ The large magnitude is implicated in this sequence—“a standard way of expressing a very large number in parallel lines of poetry”⁸⁵—was readily appreciated, as is made clear in Kirta, where the mass of Kirta’s “very large host” (*šbûk* . . . *mâd*), arranged in ranks of “thousands” (*âlp**m*) and “ten thousands” (*rbt*), is said explicitly to be without number or count (*dbl. spr // dbl. hg* [CAT 1.14.II.35–42, etc.]). And it is this perception of largeness that gets exploited most prominently in these sequences, whether rhetorically⁸⁶ or as a gesture of fabulousness.⁸⁷ In Micah 6:7, for example, the rhetorical question about the kinds of sacrifices and offerings that please Yahweh, which sets up the call for justice in the immediately following verse (v. 8), is punctuated by the fabulously high numbers specified: “thousands of rams” (*bē’alpê ’êlîm*) and “tens of thousands of rivers of oil” (*bēribbôt nahālê šāmen*). And similarly in Deuteronomy 32:30, the bite of this rhetorical question—its literal over-the-topness—comes in the distance between one and a thousand and two and ten thousand. In Psalm 144:13, the thousandfold and ten-thousandfold increase in sheep figures the surpassing nature of Yahweh’s blessing, which on the lips of the adorant in turn constitutes praise befitting such a gracious deity. The sequence in Deuteronomy 33:17 (inverted this time) also serves as a figure of blessing—the surpassing numbers of Ephraim and Manasseh.

The version of the sequence inserted in 1 Samuel 18:7 (cited above) is masterfully manipulated by the author. Taking the narrative (in the MT) at face value and in sequence, the little couplet, put in the mouths of “the women from all the towns of Israel,” is sung in celebration of “King Saul” and his commander, David. The narrative logic is well articulated by Gevirtz (arguing rather pointedly against the idea that the couplet was ever intended to slight Saul):

And is it not furthermore incredible that the welcoming party of women—singing and dancing, obviously pleased and proud of the accomplishment of their men—should be thought to have seized just this opportunity, his return from victory, to insult their king? The song contains no insult. It is a lavish praise of both Saul and David, utilizing the largest (single) equivalent numerals available in Syro-Palestinian poetic diction.⁸⁸

That is, the couplet trades on the trajectory of magnitude that may be posited of this particular numerical sequence elsewhere, viz., as the kind of overstatement appropriate to celebratory or hymnic state-

82 2 Kgs. 13:19. Cf. Roth 1962, 300. For an explicit genealogy linking the numerical sequences to prosaic idioms, see Watson 2001, 145 (implied in Roth 1962).

83 Hillers 1984, 68 n. d.

84 Cf. Lee 1973, 207.

85 McCarter 1980, 312.

86 E.g., Deut. 32:30; Mic. 6:7.

87 E.g., Ps. 144:13; CAT 1.4.I.27–29; V.24, 56–57.

88 Gevirtz 1963, 24; cf. McCarter 1980, 311–12, who affirms Gevirtz’s logic, though only as applied to the original meaning of the song before it was inserted into the Samuel narrative.

ments—“Saul and David have slain a great many of the enemy!”⁸⁹ But just as assuredly, as M. Weiss particularly stresses, Saul chooses not to hear the song in this way: “And Saul became exceedingly angry and the saying was evil in his eyes. He said: ‘They give to David tens of thousands [*rēbābôt*], but to me they give (only) thousands [*hā’ālāpīm*]*—*what more is there for him to have but the kingdom!’”⁹⁰ Saul’s take is an intentional mishearing or misreading, a reading against the grain, if you will, and like all such (mis)readings, if they are to hold any appeal at all, his takes its cues from the text. It is not made up out of whole cloth. Instead of understanding the couplet as a celebratory whole, a “lavish praise” rendered through the number words with the largest numerical values, Saul exploits the system of number words in a different way. He seizes on the difference in the order of magnitude to which the system gives expression and the fact that David gets aligned with the higher order of magnitude. He equates the larger number with greater adulation—an explicitly arithmetical kind of reasoning. Note how this equation is achieved: the numerical sequence is inverted,⁹¹ so David and the higher kill-count come first, and the couplet’s conjunctive *waw* is construed disjunctively through a change-up in word order.

In the end, it is not a matter of discerning the one correct reading of the couplet, as Roth and Gevirtz, for example, suppose (however differently). Nor is it only a diachronic issue—the couplet’s having an “original” meaning that then gets shifted once it is inserted into the prose narrative of Samuel. The story, in fact, requires both meanings. One of the narrative aims of the cycle of stories about Saul in their current setting (1 Samuel 9–31) is to show Saul as a flawed and failed character, someone ultimately not fit to be king. In 1 Samuel 18:6–9 we witness something of the disintegration of Saul’s sanity, which ultimately is to David’s advantage. If the story’s audience is to be able rightly to judge Saul’s misreading of the celebratory ditty for the paranoid misreading that it is, they must also appreciate its innocent intent to lavish praise. That is, Saul must be seen as misreading and the misreading itself appreciated as a misreading, a deformation of something otherwise, something altogether obvious, in order for Saul’s growing instability and the disintegration of his character to be made narratively apparent. That the intent to praise Saul *and* David is the natural/literal/traditional understanding of the couplet (*à la* Gevirtz) and would have been assumed by a contemporary readership is suggested by the lack of markedness in the text⁹² (as opposed to the need to make the misreading explicit in verse 8) and the commonality with which this particular numerical sequence figures hyperbolically in the Bible. In the end, even delusional and paranoid characters on occasion (in stories especially) can get things right. These stories, after all, are ultimately told to David’s benefit and glory, and it is he who eventually becomes king—“what more is there for him to have but the kingdom!” Saul, as it turns out, was right to worry over David, to “eye” him suspiciously and enviously (v. 9). And, indeed, the ditty itself also in due course redounds to David’s sole acclaim⁹³ and even the imputation of kingship—“Is this not David, the king of the land?”⁹⁴ But however heard, misheard, or reheard, the couplet’s meaning depends on understanding the logic of its numbers, the specific Hebrew lexicon devised to represent them linguistically, and the arithmetical capacity to (e)valuate lesser and larger amounts.

As noted above, Amos 5:3 also plays on the capacity to value the different orders of magnitude, though the ultimate need is reduction, not magnification.

There is at least one outstanding example of an explicit poetic summing—adding up—of numbers in sequence. The Ugaritic Kirta Epic opens with the near extinction of Kirta’s royal household—“a house of seven brothers, // eight mother’s sons!” (CAT 1.14.I.7–9). The extinction itself is told in a series of graded fractional sequences:

89 McCarter 1980, 312.

90 1 Sam. 18:8.

91 As in Deut. 33:17; cf. Deut. 32:30; Ps. 91:7.

92 This means that current readers can access this reading reconstructively, as do Gevirtz (1963, 15–24) and McCarter (1980, 310–14).

93 1 Sam. 29:5.

94 1 Sam. 21:12.

<i>młłtt. ktrm. tmt</i>	A third died in health,
<i>mrḅṯ. zbln.</i>	a fourth by disease.
<i>mḥmšt. yitp ršp</i>	A fifth was gathered by Rashap,
<i>mṯdtt. ḡlm ym.</i>	a sixth by the boy of Yamm.
<i>mšḅṯhn. bšlh ttpl.</i>	A seventh part was felled by the sword. (CAT 1.14.I.16–21)

The chief effect of the extended sequence here is to slow down the action such that the audience hears (and in hearing imagines) the ruination of Kirta's family, part by part, until the last little part (the seventh part) is massacred and thus the whole wiped out; the reductional logic at the heart of fractions is most congenial to the broader literary theme of this passage. As often noticed, this sequence of fractions adds up to a little more than one.⁹⁵ And, indeed, getting the math right ($1/3 + 1/4 + 1/5 + 1/6 + 1/7 = 1.093$) is critical to the meaningfulness of the extended literary trope, i.e., the whole house, not just part, must be destroyed. But there is more here than just the summing, more than just an addition problem, and literally so as the sum comes to a little more than the whole required (i.e., there is a remainder). The mathematical logic is staged literarily and to specifically nonmathematical ends. Potentially, the extinction could be figured in many ways, even using numbers, e.g., a triplet with each line telling the demise of a third of the household.⁹⁶ The choice of this fractional sequence alludes to and tropes the conventional sevenfold sequences (e.g., of time and distance) that, as we have seen, are typical of Ugaritic epic style (see above). That is, the fractional numbers here are all *m*-prefixed forms in which the numerical base is transparent (e.g., *łłt* "three" in *młłtt* "one third")⁹⁷ and thus readily identifiable with those other similar sequences of whole numbers. Therefore, ending the telling with the demise of the seventh part of the household would appear to be preordained, a conventionally informed stopping point. And the troping of the sevenfold pattern, prefigured already in the "seven"// "eight" sequence in lines 7–9, likely also dictates the starting with a third. The fraction "one half" in Ugaritic (as in biblical Hebrew) gets verbalized lexically with a special word, *ḥst* "half," and not through a number word-based form as in all the other fractions from one-tenth and higher. That is, starting with a half—literally *ḥst* (not **mł[n]t*) in Ugaritic—would not allow so transparently for troping of the sevenfold listing pattern. Starting with a third, in contrast, and preceding in order of decreasing fractional amounts through a seventh gestures toward the conventional pattern⁹⁸ and also gets the math (approximately) right. It is only by adding the last fractional amount, a seventh, that the tally reaches one (i.e., $1/3 + 1/4 + 1/5 + 1/6 = 0.95$) and can thus figure the destruction of the whole house. Achieving the exact sum, which makes no literal literary sense (= 1.093), is not the chief issue, whatever one posits about the ancient Ugaritians' abilities to manipulate fractions. We are not to imagine members of the ancient audience quickly doing the sums in their heads or whipping out reed and clay tablet to figure the calculation in writing. The math matters only insofar as it reaches one (or beyond), presumably an exercise that is achievable from concrete experiences of dissolving or breaking up quantities into smaller equal parts. And, in the end, it is only the poet-scribe who needs to know his maths, for he has built in any number of nonmathematical helps for the correct summing to help the mathematically challenged in his audience—e.g., ending with the seventh part, as stopping on the seventh day, cannot be accidental and must surely imply the narrative has reached its desired destination, in this case, the destruction of Kirta's household. The summing is crucial to a point. But it is a summing ultimately in the service of and posed by specifically literary matters.⁹⁹

95 E.g., Sauer 1963, 62–64; Lee 1973, 213–14; Greenstein 1997, 42 n. 6; my translation follows loosely that of Greenstein. Pardee (1997, 333) takes the sequence entirely differently in presuming it speaks of the deaths of a series of Kirta's wives (cf. Cassuto 1950, 18–20).

96 Cf. Ezekiel 5.

97 See Tropper 2000, §64.

98 The force of the allusion is shown in Lee's (1973, 214) parenthetical comment on the opposing downward trajectory of the fractional sequence: "This is in sharp contrast to the fulfilment by which the other long sequence, $1/2/3 \dots x-1/x$, is characterized."

99 Cf. Sauer 1963, 63–64 (and a striking quotation from *A Thousand and One Nights*).

I want to look at one last example of the graded number sequence before closing, viz., the refrain in Amos 1:3–2:16:

‘al-šēlōšâ piš‘ê dammešeq For three transgressions of Damascus
wē‘al-‘arbâ‘â lō’ ‘āšibennû and for four, I will not revoke it. (Amos 1:3; cf. 1: 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6)

This verse may well be the best-known—if also most debated—example of “number parallelism,” already cited by Lowth.¹⁰⁰ The complicating issues are at least two and center on the number of transgressions itemized after each refrain. In the first seven instances only a single transgression is enumerated. By contrast, in the eighth oracle, this one focusing not on a foreign nation (or Judah) but on Israel, many more transgressions than one are itemized, though as S. Paul notes, “no consensus yet exists as to the exact number of charges cited by the prophet” against Israel.¹⁰¹ Most scholars, however, count either four¹⁰² or seven¹⁰³ crimes. So there is (1) the fact of different enumerations and (2) the debate about the specific number of transgressions attributed to Israel. On the one hand, then, the numerical sequence is not of the “self-contained” variety of “indefinite” usage¹⁰⁴ in which no illustrations follow.¹⁰⁵ And, on the other hand, only for those who count four transgressions itemized for Israel does the usage of the numerical sequence line up with another known usage, viz., that in the “elegant examples” of Proverbs 30 (esp. vv. 18–19),¹⁰⁶ which count up the items listed. Lowth, presumably among those who number more than four transgressions for Israel, senses the misfit with attested usage and offers a description that splits the difference by noting how here “a Definite number is twice put for an Indefinite”¹⁰⁷ and, as “it sometimes happens” elsewhere in the Bible,¹⁰⁸ “the circumstances afterwards enumerated do not accurately accord with the number specified.”¹⁰⁹

100 Lowth 1787, 2: 52.

101 Paul 1991, 76.

102 E.g., Zakovitch 1979, 183–84 [Hebrew; English summary, xiii–xiv].

103 E.g., Weiss 1967, 420; Paul 1991, 76.

104 E.g., Deut. 32:30; 2 Sam. 18:7; Mic. 5:4.

105 Weiss 1967, 417.

106 Lowth 1778, xxiv.

107 Ibid., xxiii—a clarification of his earlier statement in the Lectures (Lowth 1787, 2: 52): “a definite number is put for an indefinite,” i.e., the sequences in question are composed of two “definite” numbers. The other passages Lowth cites as exhibiting this practice, Psalm 62:12 and Job 5:19, are not so obvious. The former on my reading clearly counts out two lines of verse that are spoken, and the latter may tally up as well. Roth’s (1962, 300–301) emphasis on the many examples of numerical sequences where definite counts are entailed is well made.

108 He also cites Ps. 62:12 and Job 5:19.

109 Lowth 1787, 2: 52. This surely must be the origin of the “indefinite” language often used by scholars with reference to these numerical sequences. However, the term is used in three slightly different ways. It is often applied in its original Lowthian middling sense especially in those cases where the following enumeration is not easily tallied, as for example in Job 5:19, about which C. Newsom (1996, 381), for example, writes, “That the following list exceeds seven is not atypical of the form,” thus implying this idea of indefiniteness (though that the LXX, ἑβδόμῳ “seventh” [cf. V], renders the second numeral with an ordinal suggests this translator is counting seven; cf. Roth 1962, 302 n. 1). A second sense is the “self-contained” variety of indefiniteness, stressed especially by Weiss (1967, 417) and exemplified by Micah 5:4 (see Hillers 1984, 68 n. d). Yet a third kind of indefiniteness appears in mostly asyndetic sequences of two numbers in a single phrase (e.g., “two or three eunuchs” [2 Kgs. 9:32]). This is very clearly an idiomatic means of gesturing toward a rough or indefinite number—“such a phrase never implies a precise number” (Haran 1972, 238). But it seems doubtful to me that this usage is in any way connected to the numerical sequences under review here, let alone to their source, as suggested by Haran (1972, 239; also Watson 2001, 145). Rather, it is better to keep the two usages separate, as Roth maintains (1962, 308). They pattern and mean differently. The phrasal pattern is always found as one phrase, is restricted to small numbers (less than ten), and is a widely used kind of idiomatic gesture. The supposition that the poetic numerical sequences evolve from the breaking up of such phrases—“as any hendiadys may be broken up” (Haran 1972, 239; cf. Weiss 1967, 421–22)—is entirely unmotivated. And to the contrary, there is positive evidence that the phrasal idiom is used in poetry as it is in prose, i.e., with the phrase intact (esp. Isa. 17:6; cf. Qoh. 11:2). And of course, the graded sequence comes to be used in verse at times to a very *definite* end, which use directly opposes its putative origin as an idiom of indefiniteness.

At any rate, it is incredible to think that Amos's usage of the graded numerical sequence is naïve, an unthinking repetition of a traditional trope that is little more than a rhetorical placeholder.¹¹⁰ Such a supposition is belied by this prophet's own rhetorical proclivities, on evidence throughout the collection of oracles and visions edited under his name, and by the explicitly literary and tropological usages to which such sequences are put elsewhere in the Bible, as detailed above. Indeed, the eightfold repetition itself in Amos tells that this sequence is a knowing and intentional deployment of this number pattern. Obviously, any final appreciation of Amos's usage of graded numerical sequences in these oracles will require determining precisely the tally of transgressions attributed to Israel. I do not attempt to arbitrate that finding but consider the usage, somewhat heuristically, in the light of the most commonly posited counts, four or seven. In both cases number knowledge seems to me to be germane.

On any reading, the usage in the first seven instances of the refrain in Amos 1–2 is “exceptional,” as emphasized by M. Haran: “there is found only one case of a graded numerical verse which is followed, not by a full itemization of the things implied in the given number, but by mention of only one of the things alluded to.”¹¹¹ I am inclined to take the misalignment with other known usages at face value and to think that Amos's original audience would have shared Haran's perception of oddity. Certainly, both “self-contained” and counting varieties of “number parallelism” existed. And the misalignment of three or four and one—especially as the one is marked explicitly with the *‘al* that also frames the number sequence¹¹²—would have surely been felt, especially since it is repeated over and over again. The refrain is not self-contained and overstates the reality. I take this misfit to be a bit of foregrounding, telegraphing (especially noticeable retrospectively) the oracle's ultimate trajectory. The nagging sense of a skewed number logic comes home to roost only with the Israel portion of the oracle where the numbers at last seem to add up, one way or another. The whole oracle has something of the form of a pattern poem in which the repetition is ultimately played on or off at the end.¹¹³ This pattern, combined with the audience's chauvinism—Amos's assured assumption that the targeting of the various foreign nations (and Judah) would find easy assent among an Israelite audience—are the basic stuff of the setup for the “gotcha” that ultimately has its final sights set on Israel.¹¹⁴ If the number of Israel's crimes listed is four, then the “gotcha” exploits the logic of counting that is otherwise well-attested in such numerical sayings.¹¹⁵ That is, the count is correct only once Amos turns to the chief target he had in view all along.

If the number of crimes is, instead, seven, as so many think, then the “gotcha” is still achieved through number logic. The math in this case adds up literally. Weiss espouses just such a solution: “That is to say, the two numbers here represent merely the most natural components of the number seven, which is what the prophet intended. . . . I suggest, therefore, if the sentence had not been constructed in parallelism it would have read: Because of *seven* transgressions . . . I will not turn it back.”¹¹⁶ Only Weiss does not argue the point from the perspective of arithmetic—an example of basic addition, i.e., $3 + 4 = 7$ —but as an example

110 So Weiss (1967, 419), for example, “Bound by this compositional rule of poetry, Amos was forced to express himself in this manner.”

111 Haran 1972, 257.

112 See Cassuto's observation that “only one sin alone is connected to the word *‘l* in the numerical saying,” as cited in Weiss 1967, 420 n. 17.

113 There is of course a long history of discussion surrounding the authenticity of each of the component oracles that comprise Amos 1:3–2:16. For example, the oracles against Tyre (1:8–10), Edom (1:11–12), and Judah (2:4–5), because of formal anomalies, are sometimes thought to be secondary (e.g., Wolf 1977, 139). The collection as a whole clearly manifests many signs of editorial intervention. For the purpose of the present explication, however, I abstain from this larger discussion and am content to read the text (more or less) as a whole as it appears in the MT (so also Paul 1991, 16). The play on pattern and repetition comes off even if the original number of foreign nations was smaller, say four (1:3–5, 6–8, 13–15; 2:1–3) instead of seven.

114 E.g., much like Isa. 5:1–7.

115 E.g., Prov. 30:18–19.

116 Weiss 1967, 419.

of the break-up of stereotyped word pairs.¹¹⁷ The logic has been found wanting,¹¹⁸ compounded by the fact that no close parallels exist, as Weiss himself readily acknowledges.¹¹⁹ If Weiss’s own logic is not overly compelling, his solution nonetheless finds support in the general thesis of this essay, viz., that the basic key to understanding “number parallelism” is the numbers themselves and number knowledge. If I still cannot bring forward an absolutely parallel example, much may nevertheless be said positively in favor of the supposition that what we have finally revealed in Amos’s eighth repetition of the “three and four” refrain is a numerical sequence whose logic falls out additively.¹²⁰ We may assuredly presume the capacity for adding to have been widespread in ancient Israel, especially in concrete situations.¹²¹ For example, basic addition skills are exemplified in the sums for the census lists in Numbers 3:14–39 (see v. 39) and 4:1–49 (see v. 48). Moreover, as already noted, a basic additive logic underlies both the number system(s) in place in ancient Israel (and Judah), and the capacity to count and add is played on explicitly in these graded numerical sequences more generally. Indeed, the very syntax for the expression of large numbers with its use of the conjunctive *waw* (e.g., *šēmōnat ’ālāpīm waḥāmēš mē’ōt ûšēmōnīm*, lit., “eight thousands *and* five hundreds *and* eighty”¹²²) is explicitly additive—as is the base sense of the conjunctive *waw* itself (as Tyndale glosses it so regularly, “and”). This suggests that summing the additive syntax in the Amos number sequences is a distinct possibility, viz., “for three crimes . . . // *and* for four. . . .”¹²³ Finally, the example of the addition of fractions in Kirta, if not quite a precise parallel, still is very close and demonstrates explicitly the capacity of the ancient poets to trade on a logic of summation, addition. In the end, then, whatever the number of Israel’s crimes, four or seven,¹²⁴ the logic of the “number parallelism” in Amos, as in every other example of these kinds of graded sequences, is a logic of numbers, numeration, and/or basic arithmetic.

CONCLUSION

In sum, my thesis is that the key to understanding so-called “number parallelism” in biblical poetry is appreciating the numbers themselves, their system of reference, and the logic of arithmetic by which they are manipulated. I have belabored the point throughout mainly because of its obviousness and because of the way parallelism in this instance has blinded scholars from seeing this obviousness. In other words, that these sequences involve the manipulation of numbers should have naturally suggested the exploration of number logic as a possible and even probable (and certainly most logical) means for understanding their meaning and usage. But this approach appears to have been short-circuited, already beginning with Lowth, by the very supposition of parallelism. It is not that these couplets do not involve parallelism. They do. At issue, rather, is what the parallelism plays on or allows to be played on in these number sequences. On my reading, it is number knowledge of some form or another.

117 Haran and Watson favor the same kind of logic in accounting for the origin of the numerical sequence more generally; of course, that these are word-pairs is purely a supposition from the start.

118 For a summary statement, see Paul 1991, 28.

119 Weiss 1967, 421.

120 It is perhaps not completely irrelevant that the final count of “seven” crimes in the MT matches the sum of both the number of foreign nations and their crimes. That is, here too an additive logic may be perceived, whether editorially or authorially.

121 Cf. Goody 1977, 12–13; Pope 1962, 561–67.

122 Num. 4:49.

123 Cf. Gen. 11:16: “And Eber lived four and thirty years” (kjv).

124 The “gotcha” logic works as well for those like Lowth who emphasize the indefiniteness of the final count (cf. Sauer 1963, 90–91). That is, only with the Israel oracle does the sequence “for three . . . and for four” become meaningful as a gesture of approximation or indefiniteness, because only then is there more than one crime listed. Instead of counting or addition, the arithmetical logic on display here is that of approximation or estimation, an evaluation skill critical to all mathematical knowledge.

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15

PRONOMINAL GENDER PARALLELISM AS A POETIC DEVICE
IN BIBLICAL HEBREW*

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ALTERNATING THE GRAMMATICAL GENDER OF paralleled constituents is a recognized feature of Canaanite poetry.¹ Cassuto isolates several examples,² including the final lines of column six of the fourth tablet of the Ba'lu myth (RS 2.[008]) that alternate between male and female offerings given to masculine and feminine deities: *špq ilm krm y[-] špq ilht ḥprt* “He provides the gods with rams [. . .] He provides the goddesses with ewes” (KTU 1.4 vi 47–48).³ According to Dobbs-Allsopp, such morphological patterning “figures as a part of punctuating or counterpointing rhythmic clusters.”⁴ Watson demonstrates a comparable patterning of gendered nouns within Ugaritic and Hebrew poetic lines—a patterning he designates as gender-matched synonymous (GMS) parallelism.⁵ He suggests that GMS functions to improve parallelism, portray destruction and the inversion of state, reinforce similes, and denote certain sex-related functions.⁶

Building on the recognized alternation of gendered elements, the current investigation identifies a Biblical Hebrew poetic device in which pronouns of alternating grammatical gender are used as part of the parallel structure of corresponding lines. Following a brief discussion of grammatical gender in Biblical Hebrew, three types of this poetic figure of speech are isolated and examined. These categories involve alternating pronominal elements with (a) different, (b) related, and (c) identical referents. Accompanying the description and exemplification of these categories, several philological insights regarding the use of pronominal reference in these contexts will be treated in reference to the poetic device. The goal, then, is to recognize the intentional use of this parallel structure and suggest—against most commentators—that these examples may be read as original and meaningful without resorting to emendation or correction.

* It is a distinct pleasure to contribute this article in honor of my graduate supervisor, Dennis Pardee. His “steady hand” has served for me as a kindly *conseiller* demonstrating what a scholar and mentor, at his best, is. This study is a meager offering but apropos in light of his own careful studies of Hebrew and Ugaritic parallelism (Pardee 1984, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 1990, 1992, 1993).

1 Berlin 2008, 41–44; also for general studies of Biblical Hebrew parallelism, see Alter 1985; Collins 1978; Dobbs-Allsopp 2015; Follis 1987; Geller 1979; Kugel 1981; O'Connor 1980; Pardee 1988c; Watson 1984.

2 Cassuto 1971, 44–46.

3 Also see Watson 1994, 221–22, with the textual discussion, reconstruction, and commentary in Smith and Pitard 2009, 589, 600, 630–34. Dahood (1972) lists a number of Ugaritic–Hebrew parallel pairs, which include identical pronouns (*ānk* // *ānk* “I” [§54]; *hw* // *hw* “he” [§161]; *hm* // *hm* “they” [§168]) and alternating pronouns (*ānk* “I” // *āt* “you” [§55]) with a small inventory of Biblical Hebrew data, but do not address the gender alternation of forms discussed here.

4 Dobbs-Allsopp 2015, 153.

5 Watson 1994, 192–239. See, also, Watson 1980. Andersen (1986, 88–89) provides a helpful caution to giving too much weight to this criterion apart from other parallelism strategies.

6 Watson 1994, 199.

GRAMMATICAL GENDER IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

All communities represent sex in their language systems as an expression of fundamental sociocultural structures.⁷ The linguistic representation of maleness, femaleness, and other gendered classifications, however, is neither arbitrary nor symmetric across languages but follows the organizing principles of each community.⁸ Each speech community must be studied independently to understand properly its referential categories,⁹ but broader, culturally determined patterns may be grouped together using like characteristics of gender marking.¹⁰ In the world's languages, the representation of gender is expressed in what have been called grammatical-gender languages, natural-gender languages, and genderless languages.¹¹

Biblical Hebrew would be classified in this schema as a grammatical-gender language. This gender structure differentiates all grammatical constituents into either marked or unmarked (i.e., zero-marked) categories for the purpose of agreement.¹² The stratification is further correlated with gender polarity wherein the marked gender is feminine and the unmarked masculine.¹³ This correlation holds for most linguistic elements in Biblical Hebrew: the grammatically marked form is feminine, and the unmarked form is masculine.¹⁴ The situation for plural entities is more complex. Generally speaking, marked singular nouns when pluralized take the ending *ot* and unmarked nouns *im*.¹⁵ These gendered properties may be mapped according to perceived sexual characteristics or assigned to words without reference to sex or perceived gender.

GENDER ALTERNATION IN BIBLICAL HEBREW PARALLELISM

Arranging complementary morphosyntactic and semantic elements is arguably the principal characteristic of ancient Canaanite poetry. Two or three poetic lines, sometimes designated “cola,” are linked through this rhetorical device. The parallel arrangement may extend to some or all linguistic elements within the colonic organization, thus forming a continuum of less strict to more well-structured parallelisms. It will be demonstrated that alternating the grammatical gender of pronouns may be used as a Biblical Hebrew poetic device to match paralleled referents. Whereas independent personal pronouns or pronominal suffixes can alternate gender from one colon to another, the morphological categories of person and number remain the same for these matched pairs. As for the syntactic arrangement of the constituents, they are no different from other clause participants: the matched pairs may be situated, for instance, in parallel or chiasmic relationships.

Three categories are discernable based on different pronominal referent types. The pronouns may refer to different, related, or identical referents. These referential differences provide the schema to discuss this poetic device in the following sections.

7 Stahlberg et al. 2007.

8 Butler 1990, 18–46. For a sociological perspective, see Epstein 2006 with particular reference to Deaux and Major 1987. Elsewhere, McConnell-Ginet 2013 provides a critique of natural gender as the driving sociolinguistic factor connecting sex with pronoun choice in English. Alvanoudi 2015 further discusses the intersection of cognition, culture, and grammatical gender.

9 Corbett 1991.

10 Hellinger and Bußmann 2001–3.

11 Stahlberg et al. 2007, 164–66. Others specify classifier and noun-class languages (Hellinger and Bußmann 2001–3, 4–6; Unterbeck 2000).

12 Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 99–105.

13 This understanding is essential to the term “social gender” preferred by some linguists (Stern 2008; 2013). On gender identity as dimorphic, see Huffmon 2002.

14 In the Afroasiatic language family, however, certain cardinal numbers invert this relationship—the marked form is masculine and the unmarked is feminine (Dombrowski and Dombrowski 1991; Hetzron 1967).

15 Notable exceptions to these strategies include אֲבוֹת “fathers” and נָשִׁים “women” (compared to the paired terms אִמּוֹת “mothers” and אֲנָשִׁים “men”).

ALTERNATING GENDER WITH DIFFERENT REFERENTS

The first category comprises paralleled pronouns referring to different entities of contrasting grammatical gender. The line structure provided in these examples suggests the masculine and feminine pronominal elements make up matched pairs. And the alternating pronouns provide a poetic figure of speech mixing antithetical gendering with synonymous meaning. One example from the Book of Job, one from Isaiah, and two from Jeremiah are identified in this category. The pronominal elements include one pairing of second-person independent pronouns,¹⁶ two examples of third-person pronominal suffixes,¹⁷ and one instance of alternating third-person independent pronouns.¹⁸ Two examples list the masculine constituent first, followed by the feminine, and two instances designate the feminine constituent first and the masculine second. Both animate and inanimate referents are found in this parallel structure.

The first example, Jeremiah 2:27, combines the paired metaphor of Father Tree and Mother Stone to highlight the folly of idolatry. Beginning in verse twenty-five, these oracles serve as a warning for those who worship falsely. The poetic allusion connects the worship of domestic gods with the inanimate materials from which the idols were made. In this third stanza, the materials of wood or rock are linked to masculine and feminine referents as father and mother. Using hyperbole, the prophet explains that these idolaters cry out to their divine parents for rescue only to be answered by silence from the lifeless objects. Lundbom underscores a further gender reversal and irony where the tree—a symbol of the mother goddess Asherah—becomes a male fertility symbol, and the phallic stone is designated as a feminine symbol.¹⁹

- (1) אִמְרִים לַעֵץ אָבִי אֶתָּה
וְלֶאֱבֶן אִמִּי יְלִדְתָּנִי

Those saying to the tree (m): “You [ms] are my father,”

And to the stone (f): “You [fs] have begotten [fs] me.”²⁰ (Jer. 2:27a)

The poetic line of example (1) designates the divine addressees whom the speakers invoke. In the first colon, the metaphorical father (עֵץ “tree”) is entreated: אָבִי אֶתָּה “You [ms] are my father.” Addressing the matching feminine referent, אֶבֶן “stone,” as mother, the second colon avows, אִמִּי יְלִדְתָּנִי “You [fs] have begotten [fs] me.” The alternating masculine and feminine second-person independent pronouns highlight the referential switch between male and female parents. Using this gender-matched parallelism, the subject-predicate arrangement (אָבִי אֶתָּה . . . אִמִּי יְלִדְתָּנִי) provides a chiasmic poetic structure with the semantically similar predicates denoting parentage of the distinct referents.

Second, Isaiah 15:3 alternates pronominal suffixes: a masculine reference to Moab and the feminine reference to particular cities within Moab.²¹ Example (2) shows the alternation between the two paralleled constituents, that is, the fronted locative prepositional phrases. The construed merism provides an acute depiction of the extent of the mourning ritual describing the geographic extent of the grieving in both the streets of Moab and the housetops and plazas of the cities.

16 Jer. 2:27.

17 Isa. 15:3; Jer. 42:16.

18 Job 31:11.

19 Lundbom 1999, 284–85.

20 This reading follows the *Ketiv* and is vocalized according to the identical form in Jeremiah 15:10 (see also רָמִיתָנִי “you [fs] betrayed me” at 1 Samuel 19:17 and כָּלִיתָנִי “you [fs] have restrained me” at 1 Samuel 25:33). The original Semitic second-person feminine suffix conjugation as **tī* (Bauer and Leander 1922, §42 d, k; Blau 2010, 208, 210; Brockelmann 1908, 572; Diem 1997, 14–42; Lonnet 2008; Nöldeke 1884, 414–15; for a recent treatment of the feminine **tī*, see Butts 2010a and 2010b, 83) is attested quite frequently in the book of Jeremiah (2:27; 3:4; 4:19 [addressing the נְפֹשׁ]; 15:10; 31:21; 51:13) and in Ezekiel 16 (vv. 13, 18, 22, 31 [2×], 43 [2×], 47, 51, 58).

21 The subject–verb gender agreement is feminine with the cities in v. 1 (עַר מוֹאָב נִדְמָה . . . קִיר־מוֹאָב נִדְמָה) “[The city of] Ar of Moab was sacked . . . Kir of Moab is sacked”) and masculine with Moab in v. 2 (מוֹאָב יָלַל) “Moab wails”).

- (2) בְּחוֹצֹתָיו חָגְרוּ שָׂק
עַל גִּגּוֹתֶיהָ וּבְרָחֳבֶיהָ
כָּלָה יַיִל יֵרֵד בִּבְכִי

In its [m] streets, they gird themselves with sackcloth;
On its [f] rooftops and its [f] open squares,
All²² are wailing—weeping bitterly. (Isa. 15:3)

Third, gender alternation is used in Jeremiah 42:16 with the referential pair of *sword* and *famine* as instruments of divine destruction. The syntactic and semantic parallelism is nearly identical in the first two clauses of example (3). Each clause begins with a noun designating a promised disaster—the feminine noun חֶרֶב “sword” is matched with the masculine noun רָעָב “famine” in the second part. These words are followed by a relative clause designating *fear* (דָּאג // יִרָא). The pronominal alternation is then observed with the third-person resumptive pronominal suffixes, מִמֶּנָּה “from her” and מִמֶּנּוּ “from him,” found in the relative clauses, referring to the two afflictions. As with the previous examples, the pronouns correspond to semantically similar ideas even though the alternation of the pronominal elements matches the actual gender of the referents.

- (3) וְהִיָּתָה הַחֶרֶב אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם יֹרְאִים מִמֶּנָּה שֶׁם תִּשְׁיֹג אֶתְכֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
וְהָרָעָב אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם דָּאֲגִים מִמֶּנּוּ שֶׁם יִדְבֹק אַחֲרֵיכֶם מִצְרַיִם וְשָׁם תָּמּוּתוּ

The sword [f] which you fear shall overtake [f] you there in the land of Egypt.
The famine [m] of which you are afraid shall follow [m] you there to Egypt, and there
you shall die. (Jer. 42:16)

Finally, example (4), from Job 31, uses a gender solecism to highlight the connection between the bicola. Here we find an example that uses gender not merely as referential but also as a poetic device or word play. The discussion of adultery is described using two juxtaposed judicial terms, זִמָּה “deviance [f]” and עוֹן פְּלִילִים “punishable offense [m].” The independent pronouns (or demonstratives), הוּא “he” and הִיא “she,” function as the corresponding subjects of each colon.²³ The expected order, however, is inverted using enallage (intentional use of grammatical disagreement) to link the cola through gender alternation.²⁴ Further underlining the abstracted referential nature of this offense, the following verse (v. 12) refers to a similar transgression with the (usually feminine) noun אֵש “fire.” The gender situation may be understood as resulting from various nouns being used to highlight the multidimensional assessment of these activities.

- (4) כִּי-הוּא זִמָּה
וְהִיא עוֹן פְּלִילִים

For that [m] is a deviance [f],
And that [f] is a punishable offense [m]. (Job 31:11)

This example from the Book of Job provides a link between the instances in the first category of gender alternation of pronouns with different referents and those with related referents described in the following section.²⁵ The abstracted concept of punishment provides a notional epicene referent that could be extended to the other concepts, thus allowing for the observed flexibility in gender agreement.

22 On the use of the 3ms suffix with consonantal *heh*, see Reymond 2021.

23 The Masoretic *Qere* corrects to the standard Hebrew usage where the subject matches the gender of the predicate nominal. See further Holmstedt 2013. This reading is followed in Targum Job, whereas the Syriac version uses the feminine pronoun for all three lines. The flattening of the gender reference is a common strategy in the early translations and even found in the biblical texts from the Dead Sea.

24 An alternative reading of the gender variation (suggested by an anonymous reviewer) is to take the referents as the corresponding subjects of the first clauses of vv. 9–10: the masculine לִבִּי “my heart/mind” and the feminine אִשְׁתִּי “my woman/wife.”

25 Another possible instance of alternating gender parallelism may be distinguished in Ezekiel 13:20 with the second-person plural pronouns. The parallelism is clear in this verse even though the referents and meaning are less certain:

ALTERNATING GENDER WITH RELATED NOTIONAL REFERENTS

A second category of pronominal gender alternation is identified where the grammatical referents are different syntactic constituents with related semantic notions.²⁶ The referenced word-pairs share a notional category but are bifurcated based on the gender agreement with the specified nouns. Five illustrative examples are found in prophetic texts: three instances appear in Ezekiel 23, one in Isaiah, and one in Jeremiah. The semantic categories of these paired referents relate to time or adultery.

Temporal Word-Pairs

Gender alternation of pronominal elements is evidenced with temporal references—“day” and “time.”²⁷ This alternation accounts for the pronominal gender matching in example (5). The masculine noun הַיּוֹם “the day” is referred to by the masculine demonstrative pronoun (הוּא) and the masculine pronominal suffix (כְּמֹהוּ) in the first half of the verse. In the second half, the feminine pronoun (הִיא) and suffix (מִמֶּנָּה) are connected to the feminine temporal element עֵת “time, occasion.”

הוּא כִּי גָדוֹל הַיּוֹם הוּא מֵאִין כְּמֹהוּ (5)
וְעַתָּצָרָה הִיא לִיעֲקֹב וּמִמֶּנָּה יִשָּׁע

Because great is that [m] day [m], there is none²⁸ like it [m];

It [f] is a time [f] of distress for Jacob, yet he shall be saved from it [f]. (Jer. 30:7)

Another temporal word-pair with gender alternation is detectable at Isaiah 38:16. Commentators have widely recognized the difficulty of the MT reading and even described this verse as an “exegete’s nightmare.”²⁹ Some scholars have tried, with little success, to understand the text by appealing to inexact linguistic correspondences,³⁰ while others have resorted to emendation following 1QIsa^a in an attempt to flatten the gender of the pronominal suffixes in the first two cola.³¹ The gender difference of the pronouns need not be eliminated to understand this crux properly,³² instead the alternation may be read as an integral part of the parallelism of the cola and the entire poetic unit (vv. 10–20).

הִנְנִי אֶל־כַּסְתוֹתֶיכֶנָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲתַנֶּנָּה מִצְדָּדוֹת שָׁם אֶת־הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת לְפָרְחוֹת . . . וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי אֶת־הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם מִצְדָּדוֹת אֶת־נַפְשֵׁיכֶם לְפָרְחוֹת “Behold, I am against your magic-bands {with} which you [fp] are hunting [fp] {there} the souls [f] for birds . . . and I will send away the souls [f] with which you [mp] are hunting [fp] for the souls [m] of birds.” The suggested emendation of שָׁם would require בָּם and not כָּם (contra Block 1997, 411 n. 10); compare further Targum Jonathan (בִּהוֹן) and Syriac (ܟܡܝܢ) but Old Greek (ἐφ’ ἃ ὑμεῖς συστρέφετε ἐκεῖ ψυχάς).

26 The difference between syntactic and notional categories concerns the dissimilarity of grammatical gender agreement and the designation of sex that exists in nature (Ibrahim 1973, 11).

27 The pairing of these two elements is known elsewhere from the book of Jeremiah (33:15; 50:4, 20) and the prophets (Joel 4:1).

28 The reading here as מֵאִין follows the idiom in Jeremiah 10:6–7.

29 Beuken 2000, 399.

30 “The fact that a masculine suffix and a feminine suffix are parallel to one another (עֲלֵיהֶם / בָּהֶן), can be categorised under the phenomenon whereby alternation of gender sometimes serves to express entirety” (Beuken 2000, 399–400). The reference here is to so-called “gender doublets” (GKC 394 §122 s–v; Ben-Asher 1978; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 106) or “double gender nouns” (Zehnder 2004).

31 Barré (1995, 389) assumes “neither reading [of the MT or 1QIsa^a] makes sense in the present context since there is neither a masculine plural nor a feminine plural antecedent in the text to which either of these words could refer . . . there is no cogent reason for maintaining that בָּהֶן is the preferred reading.” The weight of the textual evidence, however, appears to be in favor of the more difficult reading of the gender variation as found in 1QIsa^b, Targum Jonathan, and the Syriac versions. The Greek translates the first pronominal as feminine singular and omits the second altogether: κύριε, περὶ αὐτῆς γὰρ ἀνηγγέλη σοι, καὶ ἐξήγειράς μου τὴν πνοήν.

32 The typical strategies of eliminating agreement difficulties are reviewed in Slonim 1939.

- (6) אֲדֹנָי עֲלֵיהֶם יֵחִיו
וּלְכָל־בָּהֶן חַיֵּי רוּחִי

Lord, may they live during³³ them [m, i.e., “my days”],

And may the life of my spirit be for all in them [f, “my years”]. (Isa. 38:16a)

The pronominal gender parallelism of MT Isaiah 38:16, example (6), includes a preposition with a third-person pronominal suffix as the second clause constituent: the first line contains the masculine *עֲלֵיהֶם* “upon them [m]” and the second the feminine *בָּהֶן* “in them [f].” The parallel structure is unmistakable, but the referents are less clear.³⁴ The nearest and most obvious referent is the feminine plural entity *שָׁנֹתַי* “my years” in the preceding line. A plausible masculine plural referent is more distant and problematic. Neither *עֵינַי* “my eyes” in verse 14 nor *חַיִּי* “my life” in verse 12 provides a sensible reference.³⁵ A more workable solution is to understand both the masculine and feminine pronominal suffixes as pointing to a similar notional referent but alternating the gender of the nouns, as with the previous examples in this section. In verse 10, the masculine plural entity corresponding to the feminine *שָׁנֹתַי* “my years” is *יָמַי* “my days,” which also appears in the final cola of the poetic unit.³⁶ This gender-alternating word-pair designates the broader cognitive category of time. If these temporal notions are to be taken as the pronominal referents, the modifying phrases would designate Hezekiah’s requested extension of life. Moreover, understanding this bicolon as a request for more time complements the repeated theme of the entire poem.

Adulterer Word-Pairs

The extended allegory of the adulteresses, Oholah and Oholibah,³⁷ provides several instances of alternating gender parallelism from Ezekiel 23. In examples (7) and (8), a judicial assessment using pronominal gender alternation is pronounced on both male and female offending parties.³⁸

- (7) וְאֲנָשִׁים צָדִיקִים הִמָּה יִשְׁפֹּטוּ אוֹתָהֶם
מִשְׁפַּט נֹאֲפוֹת וּמִשְׁפַּט שִׁכְבוֹת דָּם
כִּי נֹאֲפֹת הִנָּה וְדָם בִּידֶיהָ

Righteous men will judge them [m],

With a judgment of adultery and a judgment of bloodshed,

Because they [f] are adulterers [f] and blood is on their hands [f]. (Ezek. 23:45)

- (8) הָעֵלָה עֲלֵיהֶם קָהָל
וַיָּבִיאוּ אוֹתָם לְזִמְנוֹה וּלְבִז

Bring up an assembly against them [m]

And make them [f] a terror and a spoil. (Ezek. 23:46)

Several examples of pronominal gender alternation may be observed in verses 45–46 with related notional referents of male and female adulterers.³⁹ The first instance juxtaposes two different referents: *אֲנָשִׁים צָדִיקִים*

33 A durative notion of *עַל* is likely the best functional equivalent in the light of the temporal complement. For more examples of this function see *DCH* (6: 395).

34 Blenkinsopp (2000, 481) declares this verse in the MT “is unintelligible and the line seriously corrupt.”

35 Airoidi (1973, 257) suggests the translation: “Mio Signore, che rivivano in essi (occhi) e per tutto in esse (ossa) le vitalità del mio spirito,” where the plural referents are *עֵינַי* “my eyes [m]” (v. 14) and *עֲצָמוֹתַי* “my bones [f]” (v. 13).

36 These plural nouns are well known as a word-pair (Gen. 1:14; Deut. 32:7; 1 Sam. 29:3; Ezek. 22:4; Mal. 3:4; Pss. 61:7; 77:6; 78:33; 90:9, 15; 102:25; Job 10:5; 15:20; 32:7; 36:11; Prov. 3:2; 9:11; 10:27).

37 van Dijk-Hemmes 1993, 169–76.

38 Kamionkowski 2003, 134–49.

39 See Rooker (1990, 78–81) for a discussion of the use of the plural suffixes in later Hebrew.

“righteous men” with the masculine plural pronoun (הֵמָּה) and נָאֲפֹת “adulterous women” with the feminine pronoun (הֵנָּה). Second, the masculine and feminine plural suffixes of אוֹתָהֶם and בִּידֵיהֶן (v. 45) designate those on whom judgment is augured, that is, אֲנָשִׁים “men” (vv. 40, 42) and אִשְׁתֵּי הַזָּמָה “fornicating women” (v. 44).⁴⁰ Each constituent is employed in a syntactically similar position by standing at the end of its respective clause. The intervening phrases function as a nexus between the first and last lines designating the resulting judgments on both groups. Third, similar clause constituents are aligned in the following verse, example (8). The infinitives absolute are followed by alternating masculine (עֲלֵיהֶם) and feminine plural suffixes (אֹתָהֶן). The pronominal elements designate the adulterous female and male participants as in the preceding verse, with each element following the order of judgment: masculine, then feminine.

Alternating Gender with Identical Referents

The third category consists of examples with alternating gendered pronouns that have the same notional and syntactic referent. These referents include groups of animals or humans that are distinguished linguistically into subgroups based on gender. The resulting alternation functions stylistically and semantically within the poetic line to designate the whole through referring to females and males of that group.

Ezekiel 34 provides several prototypical examples of alternating-gender pronouns with identical referents. In example (9), the third-person suffixes are arranged in consecutive bicola with a masculine suffix (עֲלֵיהֶם, אֹתָם) followed by a feminine (אֹתָהֶן, לָהֶן). The first and final suffixes are attached to prepositions (עֲלֵיהֶם, לָהֶן), while the second and third are with the object marker (אֹתָם, אֹתָהֶן). The resulting pattern of the head elements is AB–B’A’, and the pronominal arrangement of the complements is AB–A’B’. Both pairs of constituents hold the same clause position—second in example (9a) and third in example (9b).

- (9a) וְהִקְמַתִּי עֲלֵיהֶם רֹעֶה אֶחָד
וְרֹעֶה אֹתָהֶן אֶת עַבְדִּי דָּוִיד
- (9b) הוּא יִרְעֶה אֹתָם
וְהוּא־יִהְיֶה לָהֶן לִרְעֶה
- I will set over them [m] one shepherd,
And he will shepherd them [f], my servant David.
He will shepherd them [m],
And he will be a shepherd to them [f]. (Ezek. 34:23)

The referent of each pronominal suffix is the collective noun צֹאן “flock” found in verse 22 (וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי לְצֹאֲנִי “I will rescue my flock”). This term may conceptually be a masculine or feminine plurality, likely because a herd has both female and male ovine members. As for grammatical agreement, collectives designate females and males simultaneously,⁴¹ so feminine or masculine concord may be used.⁴² The metaphors of the flock and shepherds in Ezekiel 34 refer to the nation and rulers. As such, a mixed herd, the nation, contains women and men over which the shepherds rule.⁴³ The suggestion that שֶׁה “sheep” (v. 22) and צֹאֲנִי “my flock” (v. 22) are the masculine and feminine referents is unlikely. First, שֶׁה “sheep” is consistently used for a single member of a flock; only once is it used as a potential collective.⁴⁴ Second, verse 22 designates the two groups

40 Joseph Lam (personal communication) suggests rightly, in my estimation, the possible use of the nonstandard feminine plural form, אִשְׁתִּים, in this context as the deliberate avoidance of the standard masculine-sounding form, אֲנָשִׁים (construct נָשִׁים), adding to the gender bifurcation.

41 Ibrahim 1973, 45.

42 In Ezekiel 34, for example, the subject–verb agreement is concordant with masculine plural (v. 6) and feminine plural (vv. 8, 10, 22); the pronominal suffixes are masculine plural (vv. 4, 11, 12, 15, 31) and feminine plural (vv. 17, 21); and adjective concord may be masculine plural (vv. 12, 19) or feminine plural (vv. 4, 12). See Revell (2002) for an assessment of the “regular patterns” of number concord with collectives.

43 Greenberg 1997, 702.

44 Jer. 50:17.

as antithetical—that is, the “flock” is saved, while the “sheep” are judged—but verse 23 uses synonymous parallelism in reference to both groups being fed and shepherded. The more elegant solution, then, is to conclude that the pronouns designate the same syntactic referent of the “flock.”⁴⁵

In the direct speech of example (10), the parallelism consists of alternating-gender second-person independent pronouns. These feminine and masculine pronouns (אַתָּן, אַתָּם) serve as the clause subjects arranged in a chiasmic structure with the predicates. In this instance, the referent is unambiguously צֶאֱן “sheep,” for it is present within each colon. The metaphorical reference to people is also clear from the use of אָדָם “man, human” in the second colon.

- (10) וְאַתָּן צֶאֱן
 צֶאֱן מִרְעִיתִי אָדָם אַתָּם
 You [fp] are my sheep,
 You [mp], O man, are the sheep of my pasture! (Ezek. 34:31)

In Jeremiah 23:3–4, צֶאֱן “flock” is used again as a collective with alternating-gender pronouns. This instance may not be characterized as strict parallelism, but the formulaic nature of the speech is perceptible with several features, including the motif, וּפָרוּ וְרָבוּ “they will be fruitful and multiply,” and the repeated use of the first-person verbal forms in all three lines.⁴⁶ The masculine pronominal suffix אֹתָם “them [m]” in the second line of example (11a) designates the object of the verb. The masculine pronoun may be utilized in this line to distinguish its referent from the nearer feminine plural הָאֲרָצוֹת “the lands” in the same line. The subsequent clause in example (11b), however, switches to the feminine pronominal suffix as the verbal object (אֹתָהֶן) and with the prepositional phrase (עַל־גִּוְהֶן). Both pronominal referents clearly designate the flock. Following וּפָרוּ וְרָבוּ “they [c] will be fruitful and multiply,” the gender of the pronominal suffixes referring to the flock reverts to the masculine form in (11a). The masculine suffixes in example (11c) further function in a prepositional phrase (עֲלֵיהֶם) and as a verbal complement (רָעוּם), thus providing a chiasm with the previous examples in (11b).

- (11a) וְאֲנִי אֶקְבֹּץ אֶת־שְׂאֲרֵי צֶאֱן
 מִכָּל הָאֲרָצוֹת אֲשֶׁר־הִדַּחְתִּי אֹתָם שָׁם
 וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי אֹתָהֶן עַל־גִּוְהֶן
 וּפָרוּ וְרָבוּ
 וְהִקְמַתִּי עֲלֵיהֶם רָעוּם וְרָעוּם
 וְלֹא־יִירָאוּ עוֹד וְלֹא־יִחַתּוּ וְלֹא יִפְקְדוּ
 I will gather the remnant of my flock
 From all the lands where I have driven them [m].
 I will bring them [f] back to their [f] pasture—
 They [c] shall be fruitful and multiply.
 I will establish shepherds over them [m], and they will pasture them [m];
 They [m] will not fear, be dismayed, or be afflicted any longer. (Jer. 23:3–4)

Another occasion of alternating-gendered pronouns referring to a mixed group of animals is found in Isaiah 34:17. The preceding verses discuss two types of birds: קַפּוֹז “owl” (v. 15) and דִּיּוֹת “hawks” (v. 16). Both terms

45 The alternative explanation that the masculine referent is signaling an abandonment of the flock image in favor of a masculine entity, possibly “the people” (Zimmerli 1983, 209, 211), seems implausible in the light of the continued use of the animal imagery of the anti-flock in verses 25–30 (e.g., v. 25, חִיָּה רָעָה “evil [wild?] beasts”; v. 28, חִית הָאָרֶץ “the beasts of the land”) and the explicit return to the term for flock and the feminine suffix in v. 31.

46 Concerning GMS, Watson (1994, 220) remarks similarly that “Gender parallelism . . . is by no means confined to poetry.” For a discussion of prophetic poetry specifically, see Holladay 1966; Haak 1988; and Lundbom 2000. Also, gender discord has been suggested as a literary device in the Book of Ruth (Davis 2013).

are grammatically feminine, being referred to as such in verse 16 using the distributive phrase, אִשָּׁה רְעוּתָהּ “her with her companion,” and a feminine plural suffix at the end of verse 17, קִבְּצָן “he gathered them [f].” In the following verse, presented here as example (12), two plural pronominal suffixes are arranged in paralleled prepositional phrases. The first colon with לָהֶן “to them [f]” references the same feminine plural referent found at the end of verse 17. The second colon with לָהֶם “to them [m]” is structurally parallel. Because of the parallelism and the fact that no masculine plural referent is manifest, the pronominal suffixes must refer to the same plural entity found in the previous colon, that is, the collective birds. The result is an alternating-gendered pronominal pair referring to the female and male subgroups of the same referent.

- (12) וְהוּא־הִפִּיל לָהֶן גּוֹרֵל
וַיִּדּוּ חֲלָקָתָהּ לָהֶם בְּקוֹ
He casted a lot for them [f],
And his hand apportioned to them [m] with a line. (Isa. 34:17a)

The final example, from Amos 4:2, employs the metaphor of cattle with alternating-gender pronouns to refer to those who presume on Yahweh’s grace by making themselves fat. In Amos 4:1, those who take advantage of the destitute and poor are described as פְּרוֹת הַבָּשָׁן “the cows of Bashan” and אֲדֹנֵיהֶם “their [m(!)] husbands.”⁴⁷ Example (13) designates the resulting judgment proclamation, יָמִים בָּאִים עֲלֵיכֶם “days are coming upon you [mp].” The punishment in the following two lines promises the removal of the offenders and their posterity regardless of gender. Andersen and Freedman recognize the clear synonymous parallelism but do not provide a resolution for what they describe as a “clash in gender.”⁴⁸ The gender alternation of second-person masculine plural suffix (אַתְּכֶם) with a matching second-person feminine plural suffix (אַחֲרֵיתְכֶן) in the following line designates the common reference of the verb-phrase complement and adjunct. The referent includes the masculine and feminine entities addressed in the aforementioned abusive hegemonic positions. The gender alternation, then, provides an obvious figure of speech to describe a mixed group of individuals on whom judgment is due.

- (13) נִשְׁבַּע אֲדֹנֵי יְהוָה בְּקֹדְשׁוֹ
כִּי הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים עֲלֵיכֶם
וְנָשָׂא אֶתְכֶם בְּצִנּוֹת
וְאַחֲרֵיתְכֶן בְּסִירוֹת דּוֹגָה
The Lord Yahweh swore by his holiness
Behold, days are coming upon you [mp]:
He will carry you [mp] away with hooks,
And your [fp] descendants with fish-hooks. (Amos 4:2)

CONCLUSION

Previous investigations have detailed gendered elements in Ugaritic parallelism and gender matching within Biblical Hebrew poetic lines. These studies primarily examined gender matching of nouns. Building on these findings, this analysis has identified instances of alternating masculine and feminine pronouns used as a figure of speech in Biblical Hebrew parallelism. To attain this literary trope, referential agreement may be varied from conventional concord. As these strategies are central to recognizing this figure of speech, the referential types have been categorized into three groups based on different, related-notional, and identical referents. Examples of each of these groupings were provided with descriptions of the parallelism structure.

47 For discussion of this verse, including the differences between men and women as oppressed individuals in Biblical Hebrew, see Bird 1996.

48 Andersen and Freedman 1989, 423.

For several difficult passages, innovative solutions were theorized that, if accepted, would resolve apparent textual abnormalities without appealing to textual corruption or emendation and would heighten the lyrical cohesion through the use of this proposed poetic device.

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16

ON PSALM 1
STRUCTURE AND MEANING

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One of Dennis Pardee's original contributions to Ugaritic and biblical studies is his elucidation of parallelism.¹ Though the centrality of parallelism in biblical poetry is beyond question, its definition has been a subject of much controversy.² While not denying James Kugel's insight on parallelism as a rhetorical device, whose function is to "second" or "heighten" a statement,³ Pardee aligns himself with Roman Jakobson's linguistic model of "pervasive parallelism that inevitably activates all the levels of language"⁴—namely, that the phonetic, grammatical, and semantic equivalences interact with one another across lines throughout an entire poem.⁵ Pardee explains his own contribution to the discussion of parallelism in these terms:

What I see as my contribution is the insistence that the possible distributions be classified systematically in any study of the macrostructure of a given poem and that all types of parallelism (repetitive, semantic, grammatical [including morphological and syntactic], and phonetic) be systematically sought in each of these distributions.⁶

The present paper, as a contribution to a volume in Pardee's honor, attempts to analyze various types and distributions of parallelisms in Psalm 1 and to chart them using the notational system Pardee himself has devised to register parallelism of an entire text.

Two caveats are in order. First, the poetic quality of Psalm 1, a postexilic introduction to the Psalter, has often been the subject of debate. Bullough, for instance, says that Psalm 1 is "a half page of prose providing an edifying preface to the ensuing collection of psalms."⁷ His negative assessment of the poetic quality of Psalm 1, however, is rooted in his conception of biblical poetry as strictly metrical. Hence he does not even take parallelism into consideration. But more recent scholarly consensus on biblical poetry forces us to rethink Bullough's negative evaluation of the poetic quality of Psalm 1. Scholars have pointed out, first, that biblical poetry lacks anything that can be legitimately called meter,⁸ and, further, that parallelism constitutes the very core of biblical poetry; in other words, parallelism is the constructive device the

1 Pardee 1981, 113–30; 1984, 121–37; 1988a; 1988b, 163–70; 1990, 239–80; 1992, 117–38; 2005, 153–83.

2 For a survey of this topic, see Berlin 1985, 1–17; O'Connor 1997, 29–54.

3 Pardee 1988a, 194; cf. Kugel 1981, 2–58.

4 Jakobson 1966, 423.

5 Cf. Reymond 2004, 17; Berlin 1985, 8.

6 Pardee 1988a, 7.

7 Bullough 1967, 46. He argues that the meter of Psalm 1 is "uncertain" at best and, furthermore, sees it awash with prosaic styles.

8 Ibid., 45–49.

9 Pardee 1981, 113–30; O'Connor 1997, 67; Kugel 1981, 141; Alter 1985, 9; Vance 2001, 497. Cf. Reymond 2004, 16 n. 15.

biblical poets employed to craft a poem in order to communicate a message.¹⁰ The poetic quality of Psalm 1, therefore, should be evaluated in terms of the degree to which parallelism is utilized as a literary device in constructing the message. Hence this study, after analyzing various types and distributions of parallelisms employing Pardee's notational system, proceeds to a discussion of the rhetorical structure of Psalm 1 at the end.¹¹

Second, this study begins with a quantitative analysis. Although scholars are generally dubious about any assertion regarding meter in Hebrew verse, "the quantitative measurement of lines of poetry remains an important aspect of any poetic analysis."¹² This statement is reminiscent of the time-honored observation of the rabbis that biblical poems are made up of short, pithy lines of approximately the same length. The quantitative analysis, therefore, will focus on what Dennis Pardee calls "approximate comparability of length of line."¹³ Although the comparability of the length of line does not function as the sole means for determining line division of a verse, it may be used, along with parallelism, for such determination.¹⁴ A quantitative analysis is particularly important for the study of Psalm 1, since its poetic quality is often called into question on the basis of putative meter.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Table 16.1 registers the number of consonants, syllables, and words for an assessment of the relative length of each line of Psalm 1. Also included are O'Connor's syntactic constraints, viz., clause predictors/constituents/units.¹⁵

Table 16.1: Consonants, Syllables, Words, and O'Connor's Constraints

Verse	Con.	Syl.	Wo.	O'Connor	
1a	11	6	2	0/2/2	ʾšry hʾyš ʾšr ¹⁶
1b	14	9	3	1/2/3	lʾ hlk b ʿšt ršʿym
1c	15	10	3	1/2/3	w b drk ḥṭʾym lʾ ʿmd
1d	15	9	3	1/2/3	w b mwšb lšym lʾ yšb
2a	17	10	4	0/2/4	ky ʾm b twrt yhwh ḥpšw
2b	20	12	4	1/3/4	w b twrtw ygh ywmm w lyh
3a	7	5	2	1/2/2	w hyh k ʿš
3b	13	7	3	1/2/3	štwl ʾl plgy mym
3c	14	9	3	1/3/3	ʾšr pryw ytn b ʿtw

10 Berlin (1985, 10, 16) calls the effect of parallelism on the message "the poetic function" and argues that it distinguishes the poetic use of parallelism from its nonpoetic use.

11 Seow's (2013, 275–93) recent attempt to elucidate the poetic excellence of Psalm 1 focuses more on its aesthetic features, such as its imagery contrast and its subtle use of ambiguity and polyvalency, than on its sophisticated use of parallelisms.

12 Raymond 2004, 16.

13 Pardee 1981, 127.

14 Raymond 2004, 17. Kugel (1981, 71) observes in a similar vein that "terseness and compression of style accompany parallelism in a great many cases. This terseness makes for very brief, semantically stripped clauses which, though not metrical, often contain no more than four or five major words and thus make for a certain regularity of length in clause after clause and (where lines are binary) line after line."

15 For their definitions and constraints, see O'Connor 1997, 86–87; Holladay 1999, 19–32.

16 The vertical bar *pāṣēq* after ʾšr in the Masoretic text may be taken as an indication of colon division, contrary to the syntactical perception that the relative pronoun introduces the second colon of verse 1. For a Canaanite example of the use of a vertical stroke as a poetic unit marker, see de Moor 1988, 150–51.

Verse	Con.	Syl.	Wo.	O'Connor	
3d	11	7	2	1/2/2	<i>w 'lhw l' ybwl</i>
3e	15	9	3	2/3/3	<i>w kl 'šr y'šh yšlyh¹⁷</i>
4a	10	6	2	0/2/2	<i>l' kn h rš'ym</i>
4b	7	4	2	0/1/2	<i>ky 'm k mš</i>
4c	11	6	2	1/2/2	<i>'šr-tdpnw rwh</i>
5a	20	12	4	1/3/4	<i>'l kn l' yqmw rš'ym b mšpt</i>
5b	16	10	3	0/2/3	<i>w ḥt'ym b 'dt šdyqym</i>
6a	19	11	4	1/3/4	<i>ky ywd' yhwh drk šdyqym</i>
6b	13	8	3	1/2/3	<i>w drk rš'ym t'bd</i>

The number of words in each line shows more regularity than consonants and syllables, partly because, following Pardee's lead, I exclude particles (prepositions and 'šr, w, l', ky) from this count except for compound particles (ky 'm, 'l kn). Typical of biblical poetry, Psalm 1 on an average has three words per line. It should be further noted that none of the poetic lines violate the syntactic constraints O'Connor lays down for his corpus. Just as in O'Connor's corpus, line types I (1/2/2, 1/2/3, 1/3/3/) and II (1/3/4, 2/3/3) account for most of the poetic lines (thirteen out of eighteen). The number of units, which roughly corresponds to that of "words," ranges from two to four, with three being dominant, again demonstrating the comparability of the length of the lines. The impression that Psalm 1 reads like prose might arise from the frequent use of particles ('šr, h, ky 'm, 'l kn, w, etc.) and several allusions to other narrative texts.¹⁸

REPETITIVE PARALLELISM

Repetitive parallelism refers to the repetition of a word or words derived from the same root.¹⁹ The third column of table 16.2 registers various distributions of repetitive parallelism. Pardee distinguishes four distributions of parallelisms: (1) internal or half-line parallelism; (2) regular or intercolonic parallelism; (3) near parallelism (that of elements of contiguous poetic lines); and (4) distant parallelism (that of elements of two or more lines separated from each other by at least one other poetic line).²⁰

Table 16.2: The Repetitive Parallelism of Psalm 1

Principal words:

YHWH	2, 6	distant
RŠ'YM	1, 4, 5, 6	near, distant
DRK	1, 6 ^{bis}	regular, distant
ḤT'YM	1, 6	distant
TWRH	2 ^{bis}	regular
ŠDYQYM	5, 6	near
YŠB	1 ^{bis}	internal

17 It appears like a monocolon. But Kraus (1993, 114) takes it as a secondary addition, not part of the original poem.

18 Josh. 1:8; Gen. 39:3, 23. Bullough 1967, 48.

19 Reymond 2004, 19. For the problem of the probable definition of repetitive parallelism, see Pardee 1988a, Appendix I and II.

20 Pardee 1988a, 187.

Particles:

šr	1, 3 ^{bis} , 4	near, distant
l'	1 ^{tris} , 3, 4, 5	regular, near, distant
w	1 ^{bis} , 2, 3 ^{tris} , 5, 6	regular, near, distant
ky	2, 4, 6	distant
'im	2, 4	distant
l	3, 5	distant
kn	4, 5	near
k	3, 4	near
b	1 ^{tris} , 2 ^{bis} , 3, 5 ^{bis}	regular, near, distant
h	1, 4	distant ²¹

Repetitive parallelism in Psalm 1 occurs prominently in distant distribution. Especially noteworthy are the three words (RŠ'YM, DRK, ḤṬ'YM) that occur *verbatim* without any morphological differentiation both in verses 1 and 6. Together with the proper noun YHWH also occurring in distant parallelism (vv. 2 and 6), they practically enclose the whole psalm and create strong poetic effects. Near parallelism, which is mostly formed by particles, is also noticeable so that one may find a repetitive element between any pair of neighboring verses in Psalm 1. For instance, particles *w* and *b* occur in verses 1, 2, and 3, while verse 3 is tied to verse 4 by the repetition of *šr*, verse 4 to verse 5 by the repetition of RŠ'YM and *kn*, and verse 5 to verse 6 by the repetition of ŠDYQYM, RŠ'YM, and *w*. Internal and regular parallelisms are, however, not as prominent in terms of their numbers of occurrences. This pattern of distribution may have something to do with the fact that repetitive parallelism is by far the most perceivable of the types of parallelisms. Repetitive parallelisms, both near and distant in distribution, characterize Psalm 1 as constituted of a highly complicated network of parallelisms.

SEMANTIC PARALLELISM

Some comments on Pardee's notational system are in order before elucidating various distributions of semantic parallelism. If the traditional A // A' or A // B discerns the semantic parallelism within a poetic unit,²² in this case, in a bicolon, Pardee's system is intended to discern the semantic parallelism in an entire poem.²³ The procedure is to assign a number to each word of the text (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4 . . .) with parallel terms to any one word considered as subsets of that word and given an additional Roman numeral (e.g., 1 I, 1 II, 1 III . . .). A superscript Arabic number denotes the number of times a given word has occurred thus far in the text: thus, for instance, "9 II²" in line 5b (see table 16.3) indicates this is the second occurrence of the word "9 II" in Psalm 1. One can consult table 16.4 to find the word "9 II" refers to ḤṬ' "the sinner." Table 16.4 lists all the words of Psalm 1 with their semantic equivalences.²⁴

21 Although Masoretic vowels show two more cases of definite article (4b, 5a), I have not included them here in repetitive parallelism. But as shown in tables 16.3 and 16.4, they are registered as semantic parallelism.

22 For this case, see the second and third columns of table 16.3. A // A' indicates either a synonymous or an antithetical parallelism, while A // B indicates a synthetic parallelism according to Lowth's "types" of parallelism (cf. Kugel 1981, 12).

23 Pardee 1984, 121.

24 For a more detailed explanation of Pardee's notational system, see Reymond 2004, 21–22. For Pardee's own explanation, see Pardee 1984, 121.

Table 16.3: The Semantic Parallelism of Psalm 1

1a	ʾšry h'yš ʾšr	A	a b	1 I 2 ¹ 3 4 ¹
1b	l' hlk b ʿšt rš'ym	B	c d	5 ¹ 6 I 7 ¹ 8 I 9 I ¹
1c	w b drk ḥṭ'ym l' ʿmd	B'	d' c'	10 ¹ 7 ² 8 II ¹ 9 II ¹ 5 ² 6 II
1d	w b mwšb lšym l' yšb	B''	d'' c''	10 ² 7 ³ 8 III 9 III 5 ³ 6 III
2a	ky ʾm b twrt yhw hpsw	A	a b	11 ¹ 12 ¹ 7 ⁴ 13 ¹ 14 ¹ 15
2b	w b twrtw ygh ywmm w lyh	A'	a' c	10 ³ 7 ⁵ 13 ² 16 17 I 10 ⁴ 17 II
3a	w hyh k ʿš	A	a b	10 ⁵ 18 19 ¹ 20 I
3b	štwl ʿl plgy mym	B	c d	21 22 ¹ 23 I 23 II
3c	ʾšr pryw ytn b ʿtw	C	e f	4 ² 20 II 24 7 ⁶ 17 III
3d	w ʿlhw l' ybwl	C'	e' g	10 ⁶ 20 III 5 ⁴ 25 I
3e	w kl ʾšr yʿsh yšlyh	A	a b	10 ⁵ 26 4 ³ 27 28
4a	l' kn h rš'ym	A	a b	5 ⁵ 29 ¹ 2 ² 9 I ²
4b	ky ʾm k mš	A	a b	11 ² 12 ² 19 ²
4c	ʾšr-tdpnw rwḥ	B	c d	2 ³ 30 4 ⁴ 31 32
5a	ʿl kn l' yqmw rš'ym b mšpṭ	A	a b c	22 ² 29 ² 5 ⁶ 6 IV 9 I ³ 7 ⁷ 8 IV
5b	w ḥṭ'ym b ʿdt šdyqym	A'	b' c'	10 ⁶ 9 II ² 7 ⁸ 8 V 1 II ¹
6a	ky ywd' yhw drk šdyqym	A	a b c	11 ³ 33 14 ² 8 II ² 1 II ²
6b	w drk rš'ym t'bd	A'	c' d	10 ⁷ 8 II ³ 9 I ⁴ 25 II

Table 16.4: All the Words of Psalm 1 with Their Semantic Equivalences

1. Righteous	I	ʾŠR	1a	distant
	II	ŠDYQ	5b, 6a	
2. Def. Art.		H	1a, 4a, 4b, 5a	
3. Man		ʾYŠ	1a	
4. Particle		ʾšr	1, 3c, 3e, 4c	
5. Prep.		l'	1b, 1c, 1d, 3d, 4a, 5a	
6. Motion Verbs	I	HLK	1b	regular, distant
	II	ʿMD	1c	
	III	YŠB	1d	
	IV	QWM	5a	
7. Prep.		b	1b, 1c, 1d, 2a, 2b, 3c, 4a, 5a	
8. Way of Life	I	ʿŠH	1b	regular, distant
	II	DRK	1c, 6a, 6b	
	III	MWŠB	1d	
	IV	MŠPṬ	5a	
	V	ʿDH	5b	
9. Wicked	I	RŠ'c	1b, 4a, 5a, 6b	regular, distant
	II	ḤṬ'	1c, 5b	
	III	LŠ	1d	
10. Conj.		w	1c, 1d, 2b ^{bis} , 3a, 3d, 3e, 5b, 6b	

11. <i>Conj.</i>		<i>ky</i>	2a, 4b, 6a	
12. <i>Particle</i>		<i>'m</i>	2a, 4b	
13. Torah		TWRT	2a, 2b	
14. Yahweh		YHWH	2a, 6a	
15. Delight		ḤPṢ	2a	
16. Meditate		HGH	2b	
17. Time	I	YWMM	2b	internal, near
	II	LYLH	2b	
	III	‘T	3c	
18. Become		HYH	3a	
19. <i>Prep.</i>		<i>k</i>	3a, 4b	
20. Aboreal	I	‘Ṣ	3a	regular
	II	PRY	3c	
	III	‘LH	3d	
21. Planted		ŠTL	3b	
22. <i>Prep.</i>		<i>’l</i>	3b, 5a	
23. Aqueous	I	PLG	3b	internal
	II	MYM	3b	
24. Give		NTN	3c	
25. Ruin	I	NBL	3d	distant
	II	’BD	6b	
26. Entirety		KL	3e	
27. Do		‘ŠH	3e	
28. Prosper		ṢLḤ	3e	
29. <i>Particle</i>		<i>kn</i>	4a, 5a	
30. Chaff		MṢ	4b	
31. Drive away		NDP	4c	
32. Wind		RWH	4c	
33. Know		YD‘	6a	

Semantic parallelism is more dominant in the sections in literal language (vv. 1–2 and vv. 5–6) in comparison to the sections with simile (vv. 3–4). Semantically similar words occur in regular distribution in verses 1 and 5, while semantic contrast characterizes the regular parallelism in verse 6. Especially noteworthy in verse 1 are the three groups of semantically similar, though not identical, words (numbers 6, 8, and 9 above), which are enumerated both in concentric and parallel symmetry (c d // ḏ é // ḏ è, see table 16.3). It even appears that an escalating relation obtains among the three cola (1b, 1c, and 1d). For instance, RŠ‘YM (number 9 I in 1b), ḤṬ‘YM (number 9 II in 1c), and LŠYM (number 9 III in 1d) not only belong to the same semantic field in context, but in addition they are so arranged that many commentators discern a crescendo.²⁵ The same can be said about the enumeration of the three verbs in verse 1: HLK (number 6 I) // ‘MD (number 6 II) // YŠB (number 6 III).²⁶ Furthermore, the parallel structure that shapes verse 1 seems to force a link between DRK (number 8 II) in line 1c on the one hand and ‘ŠH (number 8 I) in line 1b and MWŠB (number 8 III) in line

25 Gruber 2004, 173; Seow 2013, 280.

26 Kraus 1993, 115; Schaefer 2001, 4.

1d on the other, though one may argue against classifying DRK in the same category as the latter two.²⁷ Semantic parallelism occurs in distant distribution, too, particularly between verses 1–2 and verses 5–6, thus bookending the whole poem. Table 16.4 shows that all the words that occur in verse 1 have semantic equivalences in verses 5 and 6 except for YD^c (number 33). The distant distribution of semantic parallelisms is not only a function of the repeated words such as DRK (number 8 II: 1c, 6a, 6b), RŠ^cYM (number 9 I: 1b, 4a, 5a, 6b), YHWH (number 14: 2a, 6a), and ḤṬ^cYM (number 9 II: 1c, 5b), but also a result of the poet's artistic use of true semantic parallels (number 1 “Righteous,” number 6 “Motion Verbs,” number 8 “Way of Life,” and number 9 “Wicked”).

The sections embodying the two similes (vv. 3–4) display a lesser degree of semantic parallelism in both near and distant distribution. Of the principal words, only Ṭ in line 3c, RŠ^cYM in line 4a, and NBL in line 3d form a parallel in near or distant distribution. This feature may be due to the nature of simile itself: a comparison from beyond the immediate context.²⁸ However, the lack of semantic parallelism in verses 3–4 is compensated in two ways: first by wordplay, second by repetitive parallelisms of particles such as š^r (vv. 3^{bis} and 4), l^c (vv. 3.4), w (vv. 3^{tris}), and k (vv. 3 and 4). Two objects of simile, Š (number 20 I) and MŠ (number 30), are semantically distant from each other, but the similarity in sound—monosyllabic words ending in /š/—ties them together as functional or contextual equivalences. Additionally, the use of the verb HYH in the simile of the righteous man (3a) and its absence from the other simile (4b) may have something to do with the paronomastic connection between YHWH and HYH, the poetic function of which would be to associate the good destiny of the righteous with Yahweh.²⁹ Repetitive parallelism compensates for the lack of semantic parallelism in verses 3–4, where repeated particles function as binders of the two similes that otherwise would stand isolated from each other. The repetition of particles also connects the two similes (vv. 3–4) to the other sections of the poem (vv. 1–2 and vv. 5–6). Most notably, *ky*, occurring in 2a, 4b, and 6a, seems to link all three major sections of Psalm 1 (cf. table 16.7).

MORPHOLOGICAL PARALLELISM

Since grammatical parallelism is not nearly as strong a binder as the previous two types and usually is not perceivable in near and distant distributions without support of repetitive and/or semantic parallelisms, my notation is designed to demonstrate regular parallelism in each verse. Repeating morphological elements are notated with capital letters to make explicit the parallel relation. I restrict this analysis to the principal words that have morphological variations. Hence particles are excluded.

1a	š ^r ry / h ^c yš	mp.cstr. / ms.abs.def.
1b	hlk / š ^t / rš ^c ym	3ms.perf.Qal[A] / fs.cstr./mp.abs.indef.[B]
1c	drk / ḥṭ ^c ym / ṣ ^d	fs.cstr. / mp.abs.indef.[B] / 3ms.perf.Qal[A]
1d	mwsb / lšym / yšb	fs.cstr. / mp.abs.indef.[B] / 3ms.perf.Qal[A]

Semantic parallelism is reinforced by morphological parallelism in lines 1b, 1c, and 1d. The semantic correspondences in these three cola are couched in the same morphology. This morphological repetition becomes all the more significant when noting it is not the outcome of repetitive parallelism, as in the case of verse 6.

27 Dahood (1965, 1–2) translates DRK as “assembly” and thus makes the semantic parallelism more complete. Quite apart from the question of evaluation of his translation, Dahood seems to fail to realize that a simple enumeration of synonyms does not make for good parallelism. Translating the word as “assembly” and thus flattening out the multivalences of the text does not do justice to the sophistication the author or redactor managed to craft into his work.

28 The regular parallelism of Š, PRY, LY (number 20 I, II, III) has a minimum poetic effect, since they are all part of the same simile within the same poetic verse.

29 The relation of the divine name Yahweh to the basic stem of the verb HYH may be more etymological than paronomastic. Lewis argues that Yahweh, a qal prefixal conjugation of HYH, relates to the idea of “active presence of God.” In other words, Yahweh denotes the deity actively participating in the life of his worshippers, helping and acting for them. For further discussion of the name Yahweh, see Lewis 2020, 213–23.

The numbers of the first four nouns stand in a chiastic arrangement: plural–singular–singular–plural. The definiteness of the singular $\text{'}y\text{'š}$ is contrasted with the indefiniteness of the other plural *nomina recta* ($r\text{'š'ym}$, $h\text{'t'ym}$, $l\text{'šym}$). As Seow aptly puts it, “one perceives a tension between the singularity of the commendable one and the plurality of the pernicious others.”³⁰

- 2a $twrt / yhw\text{'h} / h\text{'p}\text{'š}w$ fs.cstr. / DN / ms.cstr+3ms.pron.suff
 2b $twrtw / yhgh$ fs.cstr+3ms.pron.suff / 3ms.imf.Qal

It is noteworthy that we have what Berlin calls “a noun/pronoun pair”³¹ (The Torah “of Yahweh” vs. “His” Torah) between line 2a and line 2b. Note also that the last word of line 2a and the first word of line 2b both have a 3ms suffix.

- 3a $hyh / \text{'š}$ 3ms.perf.Qal / ms.abs.
 3b $\text{'š}wl / plgy / mym$ ptc.ms.abs.Qal.pass. / mp.cstr. / mp.abs.
 3c $pryw / ytn / \text{'tw}$ ms.cstr.+3ms.pron.suff. / 3ms.imf.Qal[A] / fs.cstr.+3ms.pron.suff.[B]
 3d $\text{'lhw} / ybw\text{'l}$ ms.cstr.+3ms.pron.suff.[B̃] / 3ms.imf.Qal[A]
 3e $kl / y\text{'š}h / y\text{'š}lyh$ ms.abs. / 3ms.imf.Qal[A] / 3ms.imf.Hif

Prefix conjugation verbs of 3ms *qal* (ytn , $ybw\text{'l}$, $y\text{'š}h$) form regular parallelism. A slight change transpires at both ends of the verse. Instead of imperfect, we have a *waw* consecutive perfect (hyh) at the beginning of the verse and *hiphil* instead of *qal* at the end ($y\text{'š}lyh$). It is also interesting to note the two cola subsumed under $\text{'š}r$ (3c, 3d) are connected through two abutting nouns with 3ms pronominal suffix [B–B̃].

- 4a $hr\text{'š'ym}$ mp.abs.def.
 4bc $m\text{'š} / t\text{'d}pnw / rw\text{'h}$ ms.abs.(def.) / 3fs.imf.Qal+3ms.pron.suff. / fs.abs.
 5a $yqm\text{'w} / r\text{'š'ym} / m\text{'š}p\text{'t}$ 3mp.imf.Qal / mp.abs.[A] / ms.abs.(def.)
 5b $h\text{'t'ym} / \text{'dt} / \text{'š}dyqym$ mp.abs.[A] / fs.cstr. / mp.abs.[A]

Morphological parallelism occurs in two ways in verse 5. First, there are three substantivized adjectives with an identical morphology (A). Second, there is an alternation of the number of substantives: plural ($r\text{'š'ym}$) / singular ($m\text{'š}p\text{'t}$) // plural ($h\text{'t'ym}$) / singular ('dt) / plural ($\text{'š}dyqym$).

- 6a $ywd\text{'} / yhw\text{'h} / drk / \text{'š}dyqym$ ptc.ms.abs.Qal / DN / fs.cstr.[A] / mp.abs.[B]
 6b $drk / r\text{'š'ym} / t\text{'bd}$ fs.cstr.[A] / mp.abs.[B] / 3fs.imf.Qal

The semantic contrast between the first and the second cola seems to be intimated by morphological contrast. This contrast is reflected in the change of gender (from masculine to feminine) and verbal form (from participle to imperfect) of the verbs $ywd\text{'}$ and $t\text{'bd}$.

A few points that are not reflected in the above notation deserve mention. First, the definiteness of a noun constitutes a distant parallelism. Considering the structural position in which it occurs (v. 1 and v. 4) and its relative rarity in biblical poetry, here the definite article seems intended as a structural device. Further, the fact that the two words limited by the article ($\text{'y}\text{'š}$ and $r\text{'š'ym}$) form a contrastive parallel, not to mention *Leitwörter*, seems to confirm the pivotal role the definite article plays in Psalm 1. Second, although verbal aspects in poetry can be very precarious, they seem to be used here in a rather consistent manner. Though Dahood assigns a temporal significance to them,³² taking them solely as aspectual markers seems more appropriate in the context. Berlin says with regard to *qtl*–*yqtl* parallelism, “There is no intent to

30 Seow 2013, 281–82.

31 Berlin 1985, 56.

32 Dahood’s argument that “The *qātal* forms of vs. 1 (*hālāk*, *āmād*, and *yāšab*) refer to past time; the nominal sentence of vs. 2a and the *yiqtol* form of vs. 2b signifies the present, while vs. 3 *w’hāyah* refers to future time” is unconvincing. Verse 1

convey a real difference in time, and so even though there appears to be a ‘present tense’ and a ‘past tense,’ the tense of both parallel lines should be translated the same way.”³³ Instead of seeing a temporal contrast, for instance, between verse 1 (three perfectives) and verse 2 (one nominal and one imperfective), one may postulate two contrastive aspects, the functions of which are to give a global view of action and to express iterativity, respectively.³⁴

SYNTACTIC PARALLELISM

Table 16.5 registers syntactic parallelism. The capital letters denote such syntagms as subject (S), predicate (P), modifier (M), and object (O), whereas the small letters indicate part-of-speech information, such as noun (n) or verb (v). In particular, transitivity and intransitivity of verbs are indicated (“vt” and “vi”). So, for instance, “nS” denotes a noun serving as subject, while “viP” indicates an intransitive verb serving as predicate. Finally, the syntactical backbone of Psalm 1 is noted by indenting all modifying clauses with an upward arrow (↑).

Table 16.5: The Syntactic Parallelism of Psalm 1³⁵

1a	šry h'yš šr	nP // nS
1b	l' hlk b št rš'ym	↑ / ~viP / M
1c	w b drk ḥt'ym l' 'md	↑ / M / ~viP
1d	w b mwšb lšym l' yšb	↑ / M / ~viP
2a	ky 'm b twrt yhwh ḥpšw	ppP // nS
2b	w b twrtw yghg ywmm w lylh	M / viP / M
3a	w hyh k š	viP / M
3b	štwl 'l plgy mym	↑ ptcP / M
3c	šr pryw ytn b 'tw	↑ nO / vtP / M
3d	w 'lhw l' ybwl	↑ nS // ~viP
3e	w kl šr y'šh yšlyḥ	nO / vtP
4a	l' kn h rš'ym	~advP // nS
4b	ky 'm k mš	ppP
4c	šr-tdpnw rwh	↑ / vtP // nS
5a	'l kn l' yqmw rš'ym b mšpṭ	~viP // nS / M
5b	w ḥt'ym b 'dt šdyqym	// nS / M
6a	ky ywd' yhwh drk šdyqym	ptcP // nS / O
6b	w drk rš'ym t'bd	nS // viP

does not concern the past of the righteous man. Nor do I see any temporal progression in verses 1–3 as Dahood (1965, 3–4) suggests.

³³ Berlin 1985, 56.

³⁴ Contra Seow (2013, 282). Although many modern scholars are reluctant to see any temporal significance in the aspects of the perfect verbs in verse 1, the Old Greek and the Vulgate render them to refer to events that have already taken place. So Seow argues that the use of perfect verbs in verse 1 may suggest that verse 1bcd refers to past acts of the blessed, so then Psalm 1 is not about anybody at all but about someone who has already made a commitment to faith by resisting any associations with the wicked.

³⁵ Notations: //: division between subject and predicate; /: division between any syntagms other than the division of subject and predicate; P: predicate; S: subject; O: object; M: modifier; ↑: Modifier on a clause level; ~: negation particle; n: noun; pp: prepositional phrase; vi: intransitive verb; vt: transitive verb; ptc: participle; adv: adverb.

Verse 1 is made up of a nominal clause modified by three negative clauses. The pattern of syntactical parallelism is coterminous with those of semantic and morphological parallelisms: a combination of concentric symmetry (\sim viP M // M \sim viP in 1bc) and parallel symmetry (M \sim viP // M \sim viP in 1cd), with line 1c (M \sim viP) nestled in both symmetries. The presence of the negative particle *l'* binds together three cola as one unit. The syntagm “ \sim viP,” which figures prominently in verse 1, appears to form distant parallelism with the same “ \sim viP” in lines 3a and 5a. The poetic effect of this distant parallelism is reinforced by semantic parallelism (number 6 in table 16.4), and the contrastive subject of the verbs (*h'yš* in 1a vs. *rš'ym* in 5a). A positive verb in 2b (viP), however, seems to stand in a contrast to the negative verbs in 1bcd (\sim viP). The closeness of the intercolon relationship in verse 2 seems to be indicated by the juxtaposition of the two nouns with the same pronominal suffix (*hpsw* and *twrtw*).

As in verse 1, three cola modify a subject noun in verse 3. But they show, in contrast to those in verse 1, a syntactic irregularity. They consist of one nominal clause and two verbal clauses, one of which is affirmative and the other negative. The latter makes a good example of what Berlin calls “positive-negative parallelism.”³⁶ Furthermore, this irregularity may have been introduced to make explicit a chiasmic arrangement of the positive-negative parallel: negative (1bcd), positive (2b), positive (3abc), negative (3d). Also note the first appearance of transitive verbs in line 3c (*ytn*) and line 3e (*yšlyh*). Four transitive verbs occur in Psalm 1, none of which has *rš'ym* as subject. Lack makes a rhetorical point out of it: “the wicked realize nothing, their life outlets nothing.”³⁷ Even “the righteous” is not explicitly registered as the subject of any transitive verb: “the righteous” becomes the subject of a transitive verb in line 3c (*ytn*) only through its simile, a tree. Only “Yahweh” is registered explicitly as the subject of the transitive verb in line 6a. Furthermore, “Yahweh” serves as an implicit subject of two other transitive verbs (*štwl* and *yšlyh* in 3b and 3e).³⁸ It is interesting to note that there are only two participles in Psalm 1 (*štwl* and *ywd*), both of which have “Yahweh” as subject implicitly in line 3b and explicitly in line 6a. Just as the subject of the second participle is “Yahweh,” so the implicit actant of the passive participle *štwl* is “Yahweh.”

The syntactical structure of verse 4 is concise. It has a minimum modifier—one relative clause. The function of *šr* in line 4c recalls that of *šr* in line 3c in leading a clause modifying a word of simile (*š* and *mš*). It is no coincidence that *š* “tree” and *mš* “chaff” resonate with each other, thus reinforcing the poetic effect of their functional parallelism. While the two clauses with a positive-negative alternation are subsumed under *šr* in verse 3acd, only one clause follows *šr* in verse 4bc. This terseness in verse 4bc resembles the one in line 4a. According to Auffret, what verses 1–3 do with the righteous, verse 4 does with the wicked, in a telescoping way: Just as verses 1–3 describe the righteous in a negative and positive way, verse 4 does so in a very succinct manner.³⁹ It is also noteworthy that “the wicked,” even in its simile, does not appear as the subject of a transitive verb, while the simile of the righteous, “a tree,” does feature as the subject of a transitive verb in line 3c. The wicked is, in contrast, only visible in the suffixal object of the verb *tiddəpennū* (4c).

Except for the gapped verb *l' yqwm* (\sim viP), line 5a and line 5b are syntactically identical (nS / M). The loss of length in the gapping seems to be compensated by the prolonged prepositional phrase with a construct chain in line 5b. The one occurrence of “ \sim viP” in verse 5 recalls its three occurrences in verse 1. This difference in frequency coincides with the poet’s tendency to be reticent in describing the affairs of the wicked. What is conspicuous in verse 6 is the chiasmic structure, P–S–O–S–P. It is interesting to note that the first predicate is in the *qal* participle, whereas the second is in the *qal* imperfect. In other words, the same syntactical function (P) is performed by two different forms: one is nominal and the other verbal. As for the word *drk*, the situation is converse. The same morphology is used for two syntactical functions: in 6a as object (O), while in 6b as subject (S).

36 Berlin 1985, 56.

37 Lack 1976, 159.

38 I will discuss the verb *yšlyh* in some detail in the “Structural Analysis” section.

39 Auffret 1978, 33–35.

PHONETIC PARALLELISM

Phonetic parallelism is, in many cases, a byproduct of repetitive or semantic parallelism. Only the phonetic parallelisms that are not the result of repetitive or semantic parallelism are indicated in table 16.6.

Table 16.6: The Phonetic Parallelism of Psalm 1

1ab	אשרי . . . איש . . . אשר . . . רשעים	/ʔš/. . . /ʔš/. . . /ʔš/. . . /šʕ/	internal, regular
2ab	יהוה . . . יהגה	/yhwh/. . . /yhgh/	regular
2ab, 3a	יהוה . . . יהגה . . . והוה	/yhwh/. . . /yhgh/. . . /whwh/	near
2b–	תורתו יהגה יומם ולילה	/t/. . . /m/. . . /l/	near
3b	שתול על פלגי מים	/t/. . . /l/. . . /m/	
3b	שתול על פלגי	/l/. . . /l/. . . /l/	internal
3e	אשר יעשה יצליח	/š/. . . /š/. . . /š/	internal
3e–	וכל אשר יעשה	/kl/. . . /šr/	near ⁴⁰
4a	לא כן הרשעים	/lk/. . . /rš/	
1a, 4a	אשרי . . . רשעים	/ʔšr/. . . /ršʕ/	distant
6ab	יודֵעַ . . . תאבֵד	/ō-ē/. . . /ō-ē/	regular

A few further comments are in order. The presence of a couple of possible examples of phonetic parallelism in near distribution and distant distribution may serve a poetic function in communicating the message. The first example is the phonetic parallelism between verses 2 and 3. The sounds of /y/, /h/, and /w/ create a phonetic connection between 2ab and 3a. Also, as Auffret argues, *štwl* 'l-*plgy* with three /l/s in line 3b harkens back to *lylh*, which contains two /l/s in line 2b, and *mym*, with two /m/s in line 3b, back to *ywmm*, also with two /m/s in line 2b. It may further be noted that the final /ge/ sound of *yhgh* (2b) anticipates the similar sound in *plgy* (3b), not to mention the /t/ of *twrtw* (2b) and *štwl* (3b).⁴¹ This phonetic parallelism may create a contextual connection between Yahweh('s Torah) in verse 2 and the general fate of the righteous in verse 3. It may also intimate that the implied subject of the passive participle *štwl* in verse 3 is none other than Yahweh in verse 2. The second example may be found in the only case of distant distribution of phonetic parallelism: *ʔšry* in line 1a and *ršʕym* in line 4a. Auffret observes that the consonants of *ršʕ* in 4a present “an inverse succession of consonants” in relation to *ʔšr* in 1a.⁴² Such phonetic parallelism seems to be reinforced by the morphological parallelism marked by the definiteness of both words. All this points to the contrast between “the blessed” and “the wicked.” Thus the chiasitic inversion of consonants in *ʔšry* and *ršʕym* may have been intended as the structuring device of Psalm 1.

Finally, the phonetic similarity between the word *ʔšry* “blessed” and the relative pronoun *ʔšr* should be mentioned. Although one may refute the idea that some particles (*h*, *t*, *ʔšr*) are prosaic by definition,⁴³ the frequent use of the relative pronoun (1a, 3c, 3e, 4c) warrants some explanation. The high frequency of *ʔšr* may be intended by the poet to echo *ʔšry* “the blessed” to permeate the poem with the idea of *ʔšry*. Its first occurrence in line 1a not only balances out the otherwise incomparable length of the poetic line but also establishes the impressionistic association between *ʔšry* and *ʔšr*. The relative pronoun in line 3c and line 4c serves to connect the two major similes in Psalm 1, *ʕ* and *mš*, to their modifying clauses, while *ʔšr* in a monocolon (3e) summarizes the fate of *ʔšry* “the blessed.”

40 Especially interesting to note is the phonetic parallelism created by the two chiasitic pairs of sounds in verses 3e–4a: /k–l–l–k/ and /š–r–r–š/.

41 Auffret 1978, 29.

42 Ibid., 33.

43 Cf. Seow 2013, 279 n. 27.

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

The above analysis demonstrates Psalm 1 to be a complex network of parallelisms operating at all linguistic levels and in every possible distribution. Such complexity subjects Psalm 1 to many different, sometimes contradicting, structural analyses—perhaps because different parallelisms appeal to different readers. However, this circumstance does not make our structural analysis of Psalm 1 wholly subjective. Since not all parallelisms are equally important to our understanding of the poem, only those with what Berlin calls “poetic function” will play a more significant role in our structural-rhetorical analysis of Psalm 1.⁴⁴ With that caveat, my structural-rhetorical analysis of Psalm 1 may be summarized as in table 16.7.

Table 16.7: The Rhetorical Structure of Psalm 1

- I: The way of the blessed/righteous (vv. 1–3)
 - I–1: Who he is (1a)
 - I–2: The negative relation to the wicked (1bcd)
 - I–3: The positive relation to Yahweh (2ab)
 - I–4–a: Simile (3abcd)
 - I–4–b: Interpretation of simile (3e)
 - II: The way of the wicked (vv. 4–5)
 - II–1: Who he is (4a)
 - II–4–a: Simile (4bc)
 - II–2: The negative relation to the righteous (5ab)
 - III (I+II): The contrastive fates of the righteous and the wicked (v. 6).
 - III–1: The fate of the righteous (6a)
 - III–2: The fate of the wicked (6b)
-
- 1a Blessed *is* the man who
 - 1b does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
 - 1c nor stand in the way of sinners,
 - 1d nor dwell in the gathering of sinners.
 - 2a But his delight *is* in the law of Yahweh,
 - 2b and on his law he meditates day and night.
 - 3a And he is like a tree
 - 3b planted by streams of water
 - 3c which yields its fruit in its season,
 - 3d and its leaf does not wither.
 - 3e So, *Yahweh* makes prosperous whatever he does.
 - 4a The wicked *are* not so,
 - 4b but *are* like the chaff
 - 4c that the wind blows away.
 - 5a Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
 - 5b *nor* sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
 - 6a *Yahweh* knows the way of the righteous,
 - 6b but the way of the wicked will perish.

⁴⁴ Berlin 1985, 17.

Not many scholars would seriously object to the major division between section I and section II. But the division of section II and section III is debatable. Auffret, for instance, prefers to start section III in verse 5. For him, verse 5 is more tightly connected to verse 6 than to verse 4—hence verses 5–6’s forming one unit. The purpose behind such a division seems to present the whole psalm in what he calls “*symetrie croisee*” (cross symmetry), which is a combination of a chiastic arrangement (I–II–II’–I’) and a parallel symmetry (A–B–A–B). The following is Auffret’s analysis.⁴⁵

Content (I–II–II’–I’)	Length (A–B–A–B)	
I : Confrontation and resistance of the just to the wicked	3 clauses	A (v. 1)
II : Conduct and fate of the just	3+3 clauses	B (vv. 2–3)
II’ : Conduct and fate of the wicked	2 clauses	A (v. 4)
I’ : Confrontation of the wicked to just and respective outcome	2+2 clauses	B (vv. 5–6)

It is certainly true that there are many levels of parallelisms underlying verses 5–6 that draw them together as a single unit.⁴⁶ Repetitive parallelisms of *rš’yym* and *šdyqym* occur in a chiastic arrangement in verses 5–6. Further, verses 5–6 are introduced by *l kn* and *ky*, respectively, similarly to the first and second cola of verse 4, whose unity is not in question. Auffret goes on to argue that the cross symmetry that occurs in 1bcd informs verses 5–6. He says, “These two verses 5 and 6 successively present a parallelistic symmetry (5a and b), and then a concentric symmetry (6a and b), the opposite of verse 1 which successively presents a concentric symmetry (1bc), and then a parallelistic symmetry (1cd).”⁴⁷ He is in essence saying that just as the unity of verse 1, structured in a cross symmetry, is unquestioned, so too is the unity of verses 5–6 indubitable, since it is also informed by the same structure, albeit in inverse order.

On closer examination, however, one may realize that there are many mitigating factors to his statements. The cross symmetry Auffret finds in verses 5–6 is of a different nature from the one in 1bcd. In the latter, line 1c performs a dual function: it forms the second half of the chiasmus, a–b–b’–a’ [1c], and at the same time it opens the parallelistic symmetry, b’–a’ [1c] – b’’–a’’. In 1bcd, the chiasmus and the symmetric parallelism are interlocked with the axis of 1c, thus creating a sense of unity in the whole verse. However, the parallelistic symmetry in verse 5 and the chiasmus in verse 6 do not cross at any point. In other words, they are not a cross symmetry in the strict sense of the word. The mere juxtapositioning of parallelistic symmetry and chiasmus does not bind the two verses together. In addition, the near parallelism that exists between verses 5 and 6 does not necessarily lead to Auffret’s conclusion. We have another near parallelism in verses 4–5 that is as strong as the near parallelism in verses 5–6. Besides, the phonetic parallelism of *l’–kn* in 4a and 5a seems to be as strong as that of *kn–ky* between verses 5–6. All this goes to confirm the complexity of parallelisms in Psalm 1—a complexity that creates both ambiguity and potentiality. Auffret, driven by his desire to see cross symmetry as the structural principle of Psalm 1, seems to have exclusively emphasized only the evidence that supports his own analysis of the structure, while he ignores other possibilities.

The main reason I take verses 4–5 as one unit, while considering verse 6 as a separate unit, is related to the unique positions of 2ab and 3e in my structural analysis. As table 16.7 makes evident, section II repeats the major topics of section I: “who he is” (I–1, II–1), “the negative relation” (I–2, II–2), and “simile” (I–4a, II–4a). But the topics in I–3 (2ab) and 1–4b (3e) do not have any correspondence in section II. This lacuna in section II is partly noted by Magne—“Verse 2 on the love of Torah does not have its equivalent in the way of the wicked (vv. 4–5)” —and thus renders the symmetry imperfect between verses 1–3 and verses 4–5.⁴⁸ It

45 Auffret 1978, 41.

46 Schaefer 2001, 4; Seow 2013, 286.

47 “Ces deux verset 5 et 6 présentent successivement une symétrie parallèle (5a et b), puis une symétrie concentrique (6a et 6b), à l’inverse du v. 1 qui présente successivement une symétrie concentrique (1aβγ) et une symétrie parallèle (1aγ et 1b)” (Auffret 1978, 36–37).

48 Magne 1958, 191–92, cited from Auffret 1978, 28.

appears to me that such asymmetry in structure is a necessary outcome of the asymmetry that obtains in the semantic level of the psalm: the fundamental difference between the righteous and the wicked in their relationship to Yahweh.

The verb *yšlyh* in verse 3e should be understood bearing this fundamental difference in mind. This word is the only *hiphil* verb in Psalm 1. I would take Yahweh as the subject of the transitive verb *yšlyh*, thus the translation “Yahweh makes prosperous whatever the (blessed) man does.” This translation is not only fitting within the context but is also philologically defensible. BDB lists two glosses for the *hiphil* form of *šlh*. One is transitive/causative, “make prosperous,” and the other intransitive, “experience prosperity.” When used as intransitive, *hšlyh* almost always occurs with a human subject. Only in Judges 18:5 is a thing the subject. But even in that case, the thing happens to be *drk*, which is well attested as the object of *hšlyh* when the verb is used transitively. One is thus hard pressed to argue, based on this one case, that the nominal phrase *kl ’šr y’šh* functions as the subject of an intransitive *yšlyh*. Even if the blessed man is the implied subject of that intransitive *hiphil*, it seems unlikely that the nominal phrase can function as an unmarked adverb.⁴⁹ A better and less complicated solution would be to take *yšlyh* as a transitive *hiphil*; and, if one recalls the close connection established by various types and distributions of parallelisms between verse 2 and verse 3, it is only natural to take Yahweh as the implied subject of the transitive verb and the nominal phrase *’šr y’šh* as its object. Interestingly, such a composition is attested to twice in the Hebrew Bible: one in Genesis 39:3 and the other in Genesis 39:23. In both places, the subject of *yšlyh* is Yahweh and the object is the nominal phrase composed of *’šr* and *’šh*. The only difference between the two passages in Genesis and the last line of Psalm 1:3 is that the subject is explicit in the former but implicit in the latter. This difference appears to have to do with the poetic nature of the psalm: terseness and ambiguity.

The fact that line 3e is epexegetical to the preceding simile (3abcd) renders my translation more plausible. A tree does not bear fruit automatically. As *štwl* implies, in order to bear fruit, it has to be planted in the ground near a stream of water. The focus of the simile lies not on the fruit-bearing ability of a tree but rather on where it would flourish. Lack argues in his structural analysis of Psalm 1 that water forms a positive pole of fecundity by providing life to anything it touches. In other words, according to Lack, the simile simply shows how water transforms the ground and the tree planted in it into a life-reproducing entity.⁵⁰ The point of the simile is, therefore, that it is water that enables a tree to bear fruit. Line 3e recapitulates in literal language what the simile in 3abcd expresses in metaphor. Just as water enables the tree to bear fruit, so Yahweh makes prosperous the way of the righteous.⁵¹

All this goes to show that verse 2 and the last line of verse 3 underscore the fundamental difference between the righteous and the wicked. Yahweh manifests himself in the lives of the former, but he is absent from the lives of the wicked. This impression is further strengthened by the use of *hyh* only in the simile for the righteous: *whyh k’š*. The verb *hyh* is indeed reminiscent of the divine name *yhwh*, whose original meaning may denote “the deity actively participating in the life of his worshippers.”⁵² Further, the semantic parallelism of temporal words (number 17) serves a similar function by connecting the simile of a tree that bears fruit in its “season” (number 17 III) with the reading of Torah “day and night” (number 17 I and II).

The theme of relation to Yahweh is taken up again in a climactic way in the final verse of the psalm. Verse 6 summarizes section I (vv. 1–3) and section II (vv. 4–5) by way of conclusion. Notice that Yahweh is conspicuously present in the final destiny of the righteous, whereas the wicked do not know Yahweh even in their perdition. Further note that Yahweh is not mentioned in line 6b, as though Yahweh does not want anything to do with the wicked even in their perdition. Auffret’s rhetorical structure, which takes verse 6 to be in direct parallel to verse 1, appears problematic, since verses 1 and 6 do not make the same rhetorical point. Verse 1 concerns “the confrontation and resistance of the just to the wicked,” as Auffret argues. But

49 Cf. 2 Chron. 32:30.

50 Lack 1976, 162–63.

51 This interpretation becomes more compelling in the light of the intertextuality with Joshua 1:7–8 (Seow 2013, 285; Waltke and Houston 2010, 128 n. 59).

52 Lewis 2020, 218.

there is no such theme in verse 6. The just do not confront the wicked, nor do the wicked the just. There is no resisting or confronting one another. They are on different planes. Verse 6 concerns the outcomes of their respective ways: one with Yahweh, the other without Yahweh. It is apparent that the contrast in the destiny of the righteous and the wicked depends on their relationship to Yahweh, and the rhetorical structure of Psalm 1 reflects this dependence.

CONCLUSION

Despite the “wrong” impression created by frequent use of particles and allusions to some passages from biblical narrative, Psalm 1 is, to quote Seow, “exquisite poetry . . . [that] deserves to be considered among the finest in the Psalter and indeed the Bible.”⁵³ If Seow demonstrates the poetic excellence of Psalm 1 by analyzing mostly its aesthetic features, the Pardee-style analysis attempted in this article does so by elucidating its formal structure informed by a complex network of parallelisms, with the “poetic function” serving to get across the poet’s message. Though Pardee’s notational system is not immune from criticism,⁵⁴ his conviction that a study of the different types and distributions of parallelism provide a variety of insights into the structure of a given poem⁵⁵ is still valid. I hope this article serves as a good illustration of that.

⁵³ Seow 2013, 293.

⁵⁴ According to Pardee (1988a, 193) himself, the most serious criticism is that Pardee’s system does not permit the notation of bifurcations in parallelistic passages. For other criticisms, see Pardee 1988a, 136 n. 2.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 193.

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17

ACROSTIC STYLE AND WORD ORDER

AN EXAMINATION OF MACROSTRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND
LOCAL SYNTAX IN THE ACROSTIC POEM OF LAMENTATIONS 3*

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ACROSTICS EXHIBIT CONTROL OVER THE shape of the poem by constraining the phonological structure at the beginnings of lines.¹ Acrostic style thus produces a macrostructural feature, which does not necessarily constrain or affect the internal shape or syntactic structure of the lines.² The “highly artificial nature” of the acrostic pattern has been highlighted,³ as well as the fact that these poems were written “primarily for aesthetic reasons.”⁴

In this research project, we were interested in determining to what extent the poet’s concern to produce the acrostic structure may have affected the word order of the individual lines. In other words, in the process of producing the macrostructural feature of acrostic style, did the poet alter or reshape the local structure of the lines to fit the overriding concern for acrostic style—or, did the poet’s skill “transcend” the “self-imposed literary form” of the acrostic?⁵ To explore this question, we analyzed the acrostic poem in Lamentations 3, which exhibits the most tightly structured acrostic in Lamentations, with three successive verses beginning with a letter of the alphabet. Each verse comprises a poetic bicolon. We are therefore particularly interested in the word order of the first line of the bicolon, since its first word contributes to the acrostic macrostructure.

This study is structured as follows. Firstly, we identify grammatical items that obligatorily occur in initial position and that occur at the beginning of bicola in Lamentations 3. Secondly, we identify items that usually appear in sentence-initial position and that occur at the beginning of bicola. Thirdly, we identify

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1 The connection of acrostic poems to scribal traditions and particularly abecedaries (see Dobbs-Allsopp 2009) should not exclude their connection to oral-aural performance. Writing in ancient Israel occurred within an oral society; orality and writing cannot be separated, nor can one be privileged to the exclusion of the other (see Naudé and Miller-Naudé 2016).

2 Beginning in the nineteenth century, the study of the acrostic poems in Lamentations was an important focus of scholarly research (see Seybold 2013, 594). As O’Connor (1980, 142) notes, the acrostic poems are the only group of biblical poems that has been consistently scrutinized in terms of “gross structure.” On the various ways in which biblical manuscripts from Qumran highlighted (or downplayed) the acrostic macrostructure of acrostic poems, see Dobbs-Allsopp 2015, 172–73.

3 Watson 1984, 191.

4 Soll 1988, 322.

5 Gordis 1974, 124.

lines with syntactically and pragmatically marked word order. Fourthly, we discuss bicola with unusual or difficult word order.

ITEMS THAT OBLIGATORILY OCCUR IN INITIAL POSITION

We begin with grammatical forms that must obligatorily occur in initial position in a sentence. In Lamentations 3, a number of these forms occur in initial position in the bicolon as well.

The *wayyiqtol* verb form must absolutely occur in sentence-initial position. In Lamentations 3 it occurs in initial position in the three *waw* bicola, as illustrated in example (1):

(1a) Lamentations 3:16–18

וַיִּגְרַס בְּחֶצֶץ שְׁנֵי הַכִּפְּיִשְׁנִי בְּאַפֶּר

He has broken my teeth on gravel, he has ground me into the dust.

(1b) Lamentations 3:17

וְתִזְנַח מְשָׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי נְשִׁיתִי טוֹבָה

You have rejected my soul from peace;⁶ I have forgotten happiness.

(1c) Lamentations 3:18

וְאָמַר אֶבֶד נִצְחִי וְתוֹחֲלִתִי מִיְּהוָה

I thought (lit., said): “My endurance has perished and my hope [has perished] from the LORD.”

Since, practically speaking, no Hebrew lexemes begin with *waw*, acrostic poets made regular use of a form of the conjunction *waw* for the *waw* lines. In the other acrostic poems in Lamentations, *wayyiqtol* forms are also used at the beginning of *waw* lines,⁷ whereas other forms of the conjunction appear in other acrostic poems.⁸

Interrogatives must also occur in sentence-initial position (though they may be preceded by a conjunction, such as the conjunction *waw*).⁹ There are two examples of interrogatives at the beginning of bicola in Lamentations 3:37 (example 2a) and 3:39 (example 2b):

(2a) Lamentations 3:37

מִי זֶה אָמַר וְתִהְיֶי אֲדֹנָי לֹא צוּה

Who has spoken and it came to pass, if the Lord has not commanded?

6 The translation maintains the pointing of the verb in the MT וְתִזְנַח (so also Kraus 1968), even though there are changes in deixis with respect to the deity—third person (v. 16) to second person (v. 17) to third person (v. 18); these kinds of deictic alternations are not unusual in biblical poetry. Most English translations understand “my soul” as the subject of the verb (e.g., the NASB’s “And my soul has been rejected from peace”) by repointing as a *niphal* (HALOT s.v. זָנַח; Renkema 1998, 375).

7 See Lam. 1:6; 2:6; 4:6.

8 E.g., Ps. 119:41–48, where the eight verses of the *waw* stanza each begin with conjunctive *waw*.

9 When an interrogative sentence has as its focus the object of a preposition, the interrogative marker follows the preposition and the prepositional phrase as a whole is usually in initial position in the sentence (e.g., לְמִי־אַתָּה “to whom do you belong” [1 Sam. 30:13], בְּמָה אֲדַע כִּי אֵיךְ־שָׁנָה “with what shall I know that I will possess it?” [Gen. 15:8]). When a definite object is the focus of an interrogative sentence, the interrogative marker follows the definite object marker (e.g., וְאֵת־מִי עֲשָׂקִיתִי אֶת־מִי “And whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed?” (1 Sam. 12:3)).

(2b) Lamentations 3:39

מֶה־יִתְאָוֶנֶן אָדָם חַי גָּבֵר עַל־חַטָּאוֹ

Why should a living person complain?¹⁰ [*Why* should]¹¹ a man [complain] about his guilt?¹²

Interrogatives beginning with *mem* thus frame the beginning and end of the *mem* lines in this acrostic.¹³

Some conjunctions also occur only in sentence-initial position, especially subordinating conjunctions, which conjoin a dependent sentence to a matrix sentence. In Lamentations 3, the subordinating conjunction כִּי occurs prominently in sentence-initial position. Each of the *kaf* verses begins with this conjunction. In verses 31 and 33, the conjunction serves to introduce the reason for the statement in the preceding verse:

(3a) Lamentations 3:31

כִּי לֹא יִזְנַח לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי

For the Lord does not reject forever.¹⁴

(3b) Lamentations 3:33

כִּי לֹא עֲנָה מִלְּבוֹ וַיַּגֵּה בְנֵי־אִישׁ

For he does not willingly afflict and grieve the sons of men.

In verse 32, the conjunction is followed by the conditional conjunction אם:

(4) Lamentations 3:32

כִּי אִם־הוֹגָה וְרַחֵם כְּרֹב חֶסֶד־וֹ¹⁵

For if he afflicts, then he has compassion according to the greatness of his steadfast love.

In verse 8, the conjunction כִּי occurs in combination with גם:

(5) Lamentations 3:8

גַּם כִּי אֶזְעַק וְאֶשׁוּעַ שְׁתֵּם תִּפְלְתִּי

Even when I cry and plead, he shuts out my prayer;

10 The interrogative ordinarily means “what” and not “why” (see BDB, 552), although the compound מֶה־יִתְאָוֶנֶן in 1 Kings 21:5 is understood by Holladay (1971, 184) as equivalent to “why.” Understanding the interrogative as “what” suggests a translation such as “*What* should a living person complain about? A man [should complain] about his sins.” The NJPS is similar: “Of what shall a living man complain? Each one of his own sins!” Understanding the interrogative as expressing “why” (especially in a rhetorical sense), may be supported by the fact that, before verbs of emotional distress, this sense seems to be in view. See, for example, Exodus 14:15, 17:2; Psalm 42:6; Job 15:12. Most English translations translate the interrogative with “why” (e.g., NRSV, ESV, etc.).

11 In the translations, square brackets indicate elliptical constituents; parentheses indicate words added to clarify the meaning or to produce a smooth translation.

12 The singular noun of the *Ketiv* (חַטָּאָה) in the sense of “guilt” is followed (see also the LXX’s τῆς ἀμαρτίας αὐτοῦ) rather than the plural noun חַטָּאוֹת of the *Qere*.

13 See also the interrogative at the beginning of the *mem* line in Lam. 2:13.

14 The subject (אֲדֹנָי) is extraposed (moved to the end of the sentence) from its normal position after the finite verb. For extraposition within acrostic poems, see Naudé and Miller-Naudé, forthcoming.

15 *Qere* חֶסֶד־וֹ.

Although **גַּם** alone does not necessarily occur in sentence-initial position,¹⁶ the combination **כִּי גַם** always does occur in sentence-initial position in the Hebrew Bible.¹⁷ In other words, when **גַּם** precedes **כִּי**, its scope is the entire sentence rather than a phrasal constituent.

When **עַד** “until” is used as a subordinating conjunction, it occurs in the dependent sentence in sentence-initial position.¹⁸ In prose, this subordinating conjunction is often followed by **אֲשֶׁר**; the relative marker makes the clausal nature of the conjunction explicit.¹⁹ In poetry, the compound **עַד אֲשֶׁר** is almost never used,²⁰ but **עַד** occurs more frequently.²¹

In Lamentations 3, the conjunction **עַד** is found at the beginning of the bicolon in verse 50 (with verse 49 provided for context):

(6) Lamentations 3:49–50

	עֵינַי נִגְרָה וְלֹא תִדְמָה מֵאֵין הַפְּגוֹת
My eye(s) will flow and will not stop, without respite,	
	עַד-יִשְׁקִיף וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם
Until the LORD looks down and beholds from heaven.	

The preposition *lamed* followed by an infinitive construct occurs at the beginning of an embedded sentence that is dependent upon a matrix finite verb. In three instances in Lamentations 3 (vv. 34, 35, 36), successive bicola begin with *lamed* followed by an infinitive construct clause. Verse 33 is provided for context:

(7) Lamentations 3:33–36

	כִּי לֹא עָנָה מִלְּבֹו וַיִּגָּה בְּנִי-אִישׁ
For he does not willfully afflict or bring grief to humans,	
	לְדַכָּא תַּחַת רַגְלֵיו כָּל אֲסִירֵי אֶרֶץ
to crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth,	
	לְהַטּוֹת מִשְׁפָּט-גֹּבֶר נֶגֶד פָּנָי עֲלִיוֹן
to deny a man justice in the presence of the Most High,	
	לְעוֹת אָדָם בְּרִיבֹו אֲדֹנָי לֹא רָאָה
to wrong a man in his lawsuit, the Lord does not approve (lit., see).	

Infinitive construct clauses introduced with *lamed* are dependent upon a matrix finite verb. There are multiple questions concerning how the three infinitive construct clauses in verses 34–36 relate to a finite verb. First, there are two adjacent verses that provide finite verbs which could serve as the matrix verb(s) of the infinitives construct, viz., the preceding verse (v. 33) and the second half of the last verse (v. 36b). In prose, an infinitival clause introduced with *lamed* ordinarily occurs after the matrix verb, but either order is possi-

16 A sense of the range of flexibility in the placement of **גַּם** can be obtained by observing where it occurs elsewhere in Lamentations: in 1:8 at the beginning of the sentence (and line) before an independent subject pronoun; in 2:9 at the beginning of the sentence (and line) before a noun-phrase subject; in 4:3 at the beginning of a bicolon (and sentence) before a noun-phrase subject; in 4:21 at the beginning of a sentence (and line) before a prepositional phrase. In 4:15, it occurs in the middle of a sentence (and line) preceding a finite verb.

17 This combination occurs in prose at the beginning of a sentence in narrative (Josh. 22:7) and at the beginning of a direct speech quotation (Ruth 2:21); in poetry at the beginning of a sentence and the beginning of a verse (Ps. 23:4; Hos. 8:10); and in poetry at the beginning of a sentence and the beginning of the second half of a verse (Prov. 22:6; Isa. 1:15; Hos. 9:16).

18 See, e.g., Isa. 22:14; Ps. 57:2. The use of **עַד** as a conjunction (at the head of a sentential unit) must be distinguished from **עַד** as a preposition (at the head of a phrasal unit; see, e.g., Judg. 16:2). As a preposition, **עַד** does not usually or necessarily occur in sentence-initial position.

19 See, e.g., Exod. 32:20.

20 See Hos. 5:15 and **אֲשֶׁר אֶם** **עַד** in Isa. 6:11.

21 E.g., Song 3:4 [2×], Ps. 123:2.

ble.²² Second, all three infinitive construct clauses do not necessarily depend upon the same matrix verb(s). Third, an infinitive construct clause introduced with *lamed* may serve as the complement of the matrix verb, or it may be an adjunct to the matrix verb. As an adjunct, the infinitival clause may express the purpose or accompanying circumstance of the matrix verb. Interpreters and translators of these verses thus have multiple possibilities to consider. The finite verbs of verse 33 are understood as the matrix verbs of the following infinitive(s) construct by some interpreters.²³ Other interpreters, however, such as Renkema, understand verse 33 as ending a canto and verse 34 as beginning a new canto.²⁴ He interprets all the sentences with *lamed* followed by infinitives construct as dependent upon *לֹא יִרְאֶה* in verse 36.²⁵ An important aspect in determining the relationships of the infinitive construct clauses to matrix verbs involves overt and covert anaphoric pronouns. Within the infinitival clauses, there are overt possessive anaphoric pronouns in verses 34 and 36. In verse 34, the possessive pronoun (*his* feet) must refer to the covert subject of the infinitive construct (to crush). In verse 36, the possessive pronoun (*his* lawsuit) must refer to the man who is wronged. Each infinitive construct contains a predication and thus a covert subject pronoun. If the infinitive constructs are read as adjuncts of the matrix verbs in verse 33, then the covert subject of the infinitive must have the same referent as the subject of the matrix verbs. This is possible in verses 33–34: “For he_i does not willfully afflict or bring grief to humans by crushing under his_i feet all the prisoners of the earth.” However, in verse 35, the prepositional phrase “in the presence of the Most High” precludes an infinitival clause in which the LORD is the covert subject of the infinitive. In verses 35 and 36, the best approach is rather to see the matrix sentence as *The LORD does not approve* from verse 36b.

In all the examples in this section, the local syntax of the sentence is completely normal.²⁶ The poet has exploited grammatical forms that must appear in sentence-initial position for use at the beginning of the bicola as part of the macrostructure of the acrostic pattern.

ITEMS THAT USUALLY OCCUR AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SENTENCE

We now identify those lines that have usual or unmarked sentence word order. In these lines, the grammatical constituent or form at the beginning of the bicolon usually (but not obligatorily) appears at the beginning of a sentence.

It is striking that so many of the bicola in Lamentations 3 begin with a sentence in which a *qatal* or *yiqtol* finite verb is in initial position. In nineteen bicola, a *qatal* verb form is in initial position (vv. 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 43, 44, 46, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61).²⁷ An instance of two consecutive verses with *qatal* verbs is given in example (8):

(8) Lamentations 3:4–5

בָּלָה בְּשָׁרִי וְעוֹרִי שִׁבַּר עַצְמוֹתַי

He has worn away my flesh and skin; he has shattered my bones.

22 See Genesis 47:4 for an example of an infinitive construct clause introduced with *lamed* occurring before its matrix verb (GKC, §114g).

23 For example, the NJPS translates: (33) “For He does not willfully bring grief Or affliction to man,” (34) “Crushing under His feet All the prisoners of the earth.”

24 Renkema 1998, 408–18.

25 So also ESV, NRSV, HCSB, CEB, NAB, NIV, NJB.

26 In the chapter under analysis, ellipsis of the verb occurs in verses 14, 18, 47, and 61, and ellipsis of the verbless predicate occurs in verse 10. Ellipsis of the negative marker occurs in verse 33. On the linguistic relationship of elliptical structures in prose and poetry, see Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2019; see also Miller 2005, 2007; Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2017b.

27 Giffone (2010, 58–61) notes the increased usage of *qatal* verb forms as opposed to *yiqtol* verb forms in the alphabetic acrostic poems as opposed to other poems in the Hebrew Bible. Callaham (2009, 126) also indicates that verb-initial lines are the most common pattern in the acrostic poem in Psalm 119, but, in the most constrained stanzas, there is a reduction of verb-initial lines.

בְּנָה עָלַי וַיִּקַּף רֹאשׁ וּתְלָאָה

He has built around me and surrounded (me) with bitterness and weariness.

In eight bicola, a *yiqtol* verbal form is in initial position (vv. 28, 29, 30, 40, 41, 64, 65, 66). In example (9), the three verses beginning with *yod* are illustrative:

(9) Lamentations 3:28–30

יֹשֵׁב בְּדָד וַיִּדָּם כִּי נָטַל עָלָיו

Let him sit alone and be silent, because he has laid (it) upon him.

יָתֵן בְּעָפָר פִּיהוּ אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ תִּקְוָה

Let him put his mouth into the dust—there may yet be hope.

יָתֵן לְמַכְהוֹ לְחִי יִשָּׁבַע בְּחִרְפָּה

Let him offer his cheek to the one who smites him; let him be full of reproach.

In verses 40–41, the 1p forms are used for two of the *nun* verses; in verses 64–66, the 2ms forms are used for the *taw* verses. Taking together the *qatal* and *yiqtol* verbs, it is striking that in more than one-third of all bicola in Lamentations 3, one of these finite verb forms is in initial position in the bicolon.

In two instances, a cognate infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb and occurs in initial position in the line:

(10) Lamentations 3:52 (see also v. 20)

צוּד צִדּוֹנִי כַּצִּפּוֹר אֵיבִי חָנָם

My foes have utterly snared me like a bird, without cause.

As noted by the grammars, the usual order for a cognate infinitive absolute is to precede rather than to follow the finite verb.²⁸

Verbless (or, nominal) sentences also display ordinary sentence word order. In a sentence of identification, the normal order is Subject–Predicate, as exhibited in verse 1:²⁹

(11) Lamentations 3:1

אֲנִי הַנֶּגֶד רָאָה עָנִי בְשִׁבְט עֲבָרָתוֹ

I am the man (who) has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath;

In verse 19, the verbless sentence again displays Subject–Predicate order; the subject is an infinitival complement:

(12) Lamentations 3:19

זָכַר-עָנִי וּמִרּוֹדִי לַעֲנָה וְרָאשׁ

To recall my distress and my misery was wormwood and poison;

Verbless clauses of classification display the order Predicate–Subject. This order is attested three times, twice with the predicate adjective טוב in verse 25 and verse 27.³⁰

(13) Lamentations 3:25 (see also v. 27)

טוֹב יְהוָה לִקְנוֹ לְנֶפֶשׁ תִּדְרֹשְׁנוּ

The LORD is good to those who trust in him, to the one who seeks him;

28 van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, §20.2. With the imperative or participle, the infinitive absolute regularly appears after the verb (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 585). See also GKC, §113l–r.

29 Waltke and O'Connor 1990, §8.4.

30 See also Lamentations 3:26, discussed below as example (26). Each of the *tet* verses begins with the adjective טוב; as Callaham (2009, 125) notes, “repetition of the leading word of each line in a stanza is the path of least resistance for any writer composing under the acrostic constraint pattern.” On determining the linguistic category to which טוב belongs, see Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2016a; 2017a.

In verse 10, the verbless clause of classification also has the order Predicate–Subject in the first half of the bicolon. In the second half of the bicolon, there is ellipsis of the pronominal subject and prepositional phrase לִי from the first half of the verse:

(14) Lamentations 3:10

דָּב אֲרֵב הוּא לִי אֲרִיָּה בְּמִסְתָּרִים

A lurking bear he is to me; a lion in hiding [he is to me].

What we have seen in this section is that the ordinary or unmarked word order is followed in a large number of bicola, both those with verbal sentences and those with verbless sentences. With the obligatorily initial constituents in section 1 and the unmarked word order of constituents in section 3, forty-seven of the sixty-six bicola of the poem are accounted for.

LINES WITH SYNTACTICALLY AND PRAGMATICALLY MARKED WORD ORDER

We now turn to lines that exhibit syntactically and pragmatically marked word order in that a nonverbal constituent occurs at the beginning of the sentence. All examples in Lamentations 3 involve topicalization, a syntactic construction in which a nonverbal constituent is moved to the beginning of the sentence but within the sentence boundary.³¹ The constituent at the beginning of the sentence may function pragmatically as either the topic of the sentence (i.e., it serves to orient the sentence in terms of information structure) or as the focus of the sentence (i.e., it serves to contrast the constituent with other explicit or implicit alternatives).³² An example of topicalization occurs in verse 2:

(15) Lamentations 3:2

אֹתִי נָהַג וְיָלַךְ חֹשֶׁךְ וְלֹא-אֹר

Me he has driven and brought (into) darkness and not light;

The pronominal object occurs at the beginning of the sentence and serves to focus on the fact that it is the speaker (and not some other individual) whom God drove into darkness.

A noun phrase as the object of the sentence is topicalized in a number of verses, as illustrated in verse 56:³³

(16) Lamentations 3:56

קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתָּ אֶל-תַּעֲלֹם אָזְנְךָ לְרוֹחֹתִי לְשׁוֹעָתִי

My voice you heard. Do not shut your ear to my groan, to my cry!

In verse 45, the verb is ditransitive, with two objects—the primary object (suffixed to the verb) and the secondary object (two coordinated nouns), which is topicalized:

(17) Lamentations 3:45

סָחִי וּמֵאוֹס תְּשִׁימוּנוּ בְּקֶרֶב הָעַמִּים

Filth and refuse you make us in the midst of the peoples.

Adjuncts may also be topicalized, as illustrated in verse 48:

(18) Lamentations 3:48

פְּלִגִּימִים תֵּרַד עֵינִי עַל-שֶׁבֶר בֵּת-עַמִּי

(With) streams of water my eye(s) flow over the ruin of the daughter of my people.

The topicalized noun phrase is not the object of the intransitive verb, but rather an adjunct.

31 Left dislocation is another form of marked word order. There are no instances of left dislocation in Lamentations 3, but see the discussion on verse 22, example (22) below.

32 Holmstedt 2009, 2014; see also Naudé 1990; 1994; 1999; 2002; Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2015a; 2017b. For descriptions of topic and focus from a functional viewpoint, see Rosenbaum 1997; Moshavi 2010.

33 See also 3:11, 63.

A prepositional phrase is topicalized in three verses, as illustrated in verse 6:³⁴

(19) Lamentations 3:6

בְּמַחְשָׁבִים הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי כְּמֵתִי עוֹלָם

In darkness he made me dwell like those long dead.

In verse 3, the prepositional phrase that is topicalized is preceded by the constituent adverb אֵד:

(20) Lamentations 3:3

אֵד בִּי יָשָׁב יְהִפֹּךְ יָדוֹ כָּל־הַיּוֹם

Surely against me he turns his hand again and again the whole day long.

The subject is topicalized in five verses, assuming that the unmarked word order is verb–subject and not subject–verb.³⁵

(21) Lamentations 3:49

עֵינַי נִגְרָה וְלֹא תִדְמָה מְאִין הַפְּגוֹת

My eye(s) will flow and will not stop, without respite.

In one example, a constituent has been topicalized, but its grammatical function within the sentence depends on how the verb in the first line of the bicolon is understood:

(22) Lamentations 3:22

חֲסִדֵי יְהוָה כִּי לֹא־תִמְנוּ
כִּי לֹא־כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו

According to the MT, the verb תִּמְנוּ is a 1p form and the topicalized noun phrase functions as the adjunct of the verb.³⁶ The form is irregular; the regular form would be תִּמְנוּנוּ.³⁷ The bicolon is then translated:

(22a) *(Because of) the LORD's kindnesses, indeed we are not finished,*
indeed his mercies do not end.

Most commentators and translators, however, emend the verb to a 3p form so that the two lines correspond syntactically to a greater extent.³⁸ The topicalized noun phrase is then the subject of the verb:

(22b) *The kindnesses of the LORD, indeed they have not ended;*
indeed his mercies are not finished.

Regardless of how one reads the verb in the first line, the topicalized constituent has moved to the beginning of the sentence past the conjunction כִּי, which marks a sentence boundary. This situation is unusual, because topicalization ordinarily moves a constituent only to the beginning of the sentence but not farther. By contrast, in left dislocation a constituent occurs at the “left” edge of the sentence *outside* the sentence boundary, with pronominal resumption inside the sentence.³⁹ We have argued elsewhere that this con-

34 See also 3:38.

35 See also 3:42 (the subject is the independent pronoun), 47 (for the same construction of הָיָה לָנוּ “happened to us,” see the prose example in 1 Samuel 6:9 and the poetry example in Lamentations 5:1), 51.

36 This grammatical interpretation is followed by the KJV, ASV, HCSB, and NIV.

37 Bauer and Leander 1922, §439p'; Schäfer 2004.

38 The emendation is supported by the Targum and Syriac and the 3mp verb in the second line (Biblica Hebraica Quinta Commentaries on the Critical Apparatus 2004). Mayer Gruber (personal communication) in a forthcoming commentary on Lamentations in the Illumination series draws attention to the presence of the 3p form of the verb in the use of this verse in the Jewish Prayer known as the “Eighteen Benedictions.” He suggests the prayer provides support for the third-person reading of the verb in the biblical text.

39 See Naudé 1990, 1994, 1999, 2002; Holmstedt 2014; Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2015, 2019, 2021; and Naudé and Miller-Naudé 2017 for linguistic descriptions and examples of left dislocation in Biblical Hebrew.

struction is best described as “heavy topicalization,” a marginal but fully grammatical type of topicalization because there is no resumption of the initial constituent within the sentence.⁴⁰

Topicalization is a normal syntactic configuration involving a nonverbal constituent in initial position in a sentence. In every case of topicalization within Lamentations 3, the usual pragmatic effect of topic or focus seems to be at work. There is therefore nothing unusual about these syntactically and pragmatically marked constructions.⁴¹

BICOLA WITH UNUSUAL OR DIFFICULT WORD ORDER PATTERNS

We now turn to bicola with unusual or difficult word order patterns. There are four bicola left for us to discuss.

First, in one bicolon (v. 24), the direct speech quotation occurs in initial position preceding the quotative frame:⁴²

(23) Lamentations 3:24

חֲלִקִי יְהוָה אֲמָרָה נַפְשִׁי עַל-בֶּן אֹחִיל לוֹ

“The LORD is my portion,” says my soul; therefore I will hope in him.

The quotative frame “my soul says” follows rather than precedes the quotation in the first line. While this syntactic arrangement of direct speech quotation and quotative frame is extremely rare in prose, it is not unusual in poetry.⁴³ Whether the second line (“therefore I will hope in him”) should be understood as a continuation of the quotation in the first line is completely ambiguous since it represents the internal deliberations of the speaker.⁴⁴

Second, in one bicolon (v. 23), the verbless sentence has only a predicate and not a subject within the line. However, the subject must be understood from the preceding bicolon—the Lord’s kindnesses or mercies.⁴⁵

(24) Lamentations 3:23

חֲדָשִׁים לְבָקָרִים רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ

[They] (are) *new* every morning—great (is) your faithfulness!

While it is not common for the subject of a verbless sentence to be implicit, it does occur.⁴⁶

Third, within verse 62 are two possible syntactic analyses:

(25) Lamentations 3:62

שִׁפְתֵי קָמִי וְהִגִּיוֹנָם עָלַי כָּל-הַיּוֹם

One way to analyze the bicolon is as a verbless clause:

(25a) The lips of my assailants and their thoughts (are) against me the whole day.

40 Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2019, 2021. Holmstedt 2014 also identifies the construction as a variety of “fronting” and calls it “heavy topic focus.”

41 The analysis of this section does not identify any evidence of “defamiliarised word order,” described in Lunn 2006 as a feature of word order in biblical poetry.

42 See Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2015b; 2016b.

43 See the discussion of positional variants of direct quotative frames in Miller 1996/2003, 213–17. A prose example of a final quotative frame (i.e., a frame that follows the quotation) occurs in Leviticus 13:45. If the second line of the bicolon is understood as a continuation of the quotation from the first line, then the quotative frame is medial within the quotation; a prose example of a medial quotative frame occurs in 2 Kings 20:16–18. See O’Connor 1980, 411–14, for a discussion of the positional variants of direct quotative frames in poetry.

44 The English translations are divided on this question. The NJPS, NET, and CEB do not see the second line as a continuation of the quotation. The NIV, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NJB, NASB, and NLT interpret the second line as a quotation.

45 Keil (1980, 414) and Renkema (1998, 388) interpret the subject as יְהוָה חֲסִדִּי rather than רַחֲמֵי. However, the two noun phrases form a parallel word-pair in the preceding bicolon and should be understood together as the antecedent.

46 Joüon and Muraoka 2006, §154c.

According to this analysis, the sentence is a verbless clause with the order Subject–Predicate.

Another way to analyze the bicolon is as a continuation of the bicolon in the previous verse with ellipsis of the verb:

(25b) Lamentations 3:61–62

שָׁמַעְתָּ חֲרָפָתָם יְהוָה כָּל־מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם עָלַי

You have heard, O LORD, their taunts, all their designs against me,

שָׁפַתִּי קָמִי וְהִגִּינוּ עָלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם

[You have heard] the lips of my assailants and their thoughts against me the whole day.

In the second analysis, the noun phrases at the beginning of verse 62 are also objects of the verb שָׁמַעְתָּ from the beginning of verse 61.⁴⁷

The fourth bicolon is in many respects the most difficult:

(26) Lamentations 3:26

טוֹב וְיָחִיל וְדוֹמָם לַתְּשׁוּעָה יְהוָה

The bicolon is usually translated: “It is good to wait patiently for the salvation of the LORD.”⁴⁸ However, syntactically there are three words conjoined with the conjunction *waw*—טוֹב וְיָחִיל וְדוֹמָם—and those three words seem to form the predicate of the verbless sentence. The second word, יָחִיל, is a hapax legomenon. It has the morphological shape of an adjective and is identified as an adjective by the lexica; however, it could be a noun as well.⁴⁹ The third word, דוֹמָם, occurs two other times in the Hebrew Bible. In one instance⁵⁰ it is an adverb; in the other instance⁵¹ it is clearly a noun, since it is within a construct phrase.⁵² The first word, טוֹב, can also be identified as an adjective (“good”) or as a noun (“goodness”). As Schäfer explains in the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* text-critical commentary, various emendations have been suggested: דוֹמָם יוֹחִילֵי “that they should wait quietly”; וְדָמָם הָחִיל “to tarry and be still” (based on Aquila and the Targum, which both use infinitival forms); or וְדָמָם יָחִיל “and waits and is quiet” (based on Old Greek).⁵³ As he notes, however, the construction of the MT is difficult but “by no means impossible,” and “it is easier to regard the variation in the ancient versions as a result of the translator’s efforts to facilitate the syntax.”⁵⁴

The fact that the three words are conjoined means they must be of the same grammatical category so the phrase as a whole can function as a constituent in the sentence. We therefore suggest that the three conjoined words be understood as nouns: “goodness and patience and silence.” The sentence can then be translated: “Goodness and patience and silence belong to (or, are associated with) the salvation of the LORD.” If this translation is correct, then the sentence is a verbless sentence with the word order Predicate–Subject, and there is nothing unusual about the word order.

47 Dobbs-Allsopp (2002, 120) notes that 3:25–39 has a number of syntactically “convoluted” and problematic lines, but most of the cases he considers relate to the lack of correlation between the syntax and the poetic lines (i.e., enjambment; see also Dobbs-Allsopp 2001a; 2001b).

48 See the translations of the NJPS, ESV, NRSV, CEB, NAB, NASB, NET, NIV, NJB, and NLT.

49 On the linguistic issues involved in differentiating adjectives and nouns in Biblical Hebrew, see Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2016a, 2017a.

50 Isa. 47:5.

51 Hab. 2:19.

52 Pace Keil (1980, 414–15), who argues that the “constant employment” of דוֹמָם as an adverb prevents taking it as an adjective.

53 Schäfer 2004. Berlin (2002, 4) suggests that “wait and be still” is a hendiadys for “wait patiently.”

54 Schäfer 2004.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have seen that out of sixty-six bicola, thirteen begin with a grammatical item that must obligatorily occur at the beginning of a sentence. Thirty-four bicola (just over 50 percent) begin with grammatical constituents that usually occur at the beginning of the sentence. Fifteen bicola begin with syntactically and pragmatically marked word order involving topicalization. Sixty-two out of sixty-six of the bicola (94 percent) thus exhibit no difficulties in word order. Only four bicola were discussed as having difficult syntax, but upon further examination the word order of these bicola is also not aberrant. We therefore conclude that the ancient Hebrew poet composed an acrostic poem with the phonological macrostructure of the alphabetic acrostic, while simultaneously producing syntactically normal and unremarkable bicola.

In 1999, Talstra raised the question of whether a particular feature of Hebrew poetry and especially word order should be understood as relating to linguistics or literary structure.⁵⁵ He expressed his belief that it is unlikely that literary and linguistic devices should be different within a single text. Our research into the literary device of the acrostic poem and the linguistic structure of word order has provided further evidence that Talstra's judgment concerning Hebrew poetry is correct. In other words, the syntactic differences between poetry and prose in Biblical Hebrew are shallow rather than deep. In linguistic terms, Biblical Hebrew has one linguistic system in prose and poetry.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Talstra 1999.

⁵⁶ On the analysis of the linguistic system of Biblical Hebrew as a doculect and the interplay of linguistics and philology, see Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2020.

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18

VERTICAL GRAMMAR OF PARALLELISM
IN UGARITIC POETRY

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The Lowthian classification of parallelism as (1) “synonymous,” (2) “antithetical,” and (3) “synthetic” was accepted by biblical scholars for nearly two centuries.¹ And the initial stages of the study of the Ugaritic poetic texts after their discovery in 1929 were also influenced by this classification. However, this semantic classification has recently proved to be inadequate with the identification of stylistic categories such as the repetitive type.² It seems that at the present stage of scholarship Lowth’s third category, “synthetic” parallelism, either no longer exists as an independent category³ or has been broadened to include such phenomena as the so-called “expanded colon,”⁴ Clines’ “parallelism of greater precision,”⁵ etc., and the term “synthetic parallelism” has become almost meaningless.⁶

Poetic parallelism, however, can be analyzed not only semantically but grammatically and phonetically as well. In this regard, Pardee’s 1988 analysis of Proverbs 2 and Anat I is a significant contribution furthering the understanding of the nature of parallelism by noting in detail *both* grammatical *and* phonetic parallelism.⁷

In this paper I shall discuss the *vertical* grammatical feature of poetic parallelism in Ugaritic texts.

1 Lowth 1835; 1848.

2 For repetitive parallelism, see the treatment in Pardee 1988, 6–7.

3 Berlin (2008) refers to “synthetic parallelism” only once in the index, while Watson (1984) does not mention it at all.

4 Loewenstamm 1969; 1975.

5 Clines 1987.

6 For a good summary of the history of the study of parallelism up to 1980, see Pardee 1988, Appendix I, 168–92.

Recently, Pardee (2012, 56 no. 31) noted that I did not make any reference to Clines’ important work in my 2009 article. My paper, however, was about grammar, while Clines’ important observation on the nature of parallelism is semantic rather than grammatical. I would like to call Clines’ “parallelism of greater precision” “hyponymous” parallelism to distinguish it from synonymous parallelism. “Hyponymous” is usually used to describe the relationship between two words. Berlin (2008) describes the meaning relation between two words, such as *yd* “hand” and *ymyn* “right hand,” as “a term // subordinate, that is, *yd* is the more general term and *ymyn* is a subcategory of it” (ibid., 15), a relationship sometimes called “hyponymous” (see Tsumura 1988; Lyons 1977; 1968, 453–55). But here I use “hyponymous” for the relationship between two parallel lines. In other words, the first line presents a theme or item in a general sense, while in the parallel line it is focused by a detailed description with “greater precision.” In such a case, the meaning relation between two parallel lines is not so much “synonymous,” as “hyponymous,” since what the first line refers to includes what the second line refers to.

7 Pardee 1988. Also, in a 1982 article included in the appendix of that book, Pardee called our attention to the importance of the study of types of parallelism, “especially in the relatively new field of grammatical parallelism and in the relatively neglected field of phonetic parallelism.” See “Appendix II: Types and Distributions of Parallelism in Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetry” in Pardee 1988, 193–201.

VERTICAL GRAMMAR, NOT VERBAL ELLIPSIS

In my previous work I have suggested that the grammar of Hebrew parallelism is characterized not only by horizontal grammar but also by vertical grammar,⁸ as exemplified in

PSALM 18:42

יִשְׁעוּ וְאִין־מוֹשִׁיעַ
עַל־יְהוָה וְלֹא עָנָם:

They cried for help (*a*), but there was none (*b*) to save (*c*);
to the Lord (*d*), but he did not (*b*) answer them (*c*).

Traditionally, this bicolon would be analyzed as *a-b-c // d-b'-c'*. Here, two elements in the first line, *b* and *c*, have corresponding elements in the second line, *b'* and *c'*. However, the remaining elements, *a* and *d*, do not correspond to each other, that is, they would be considered nonparallel. Actually, however, this parallelism is better analyzed as *a-x // b-x'*,

They cried for help (*a*), but there was none to save (*x*);
to the Lord (*b*), but he did not answer them (*x'*),

since the element *b* (“to the Lord”) grammatically depends on *a* (“They cried for help”), while the whole *x'* (“but he did not answer them”) is simply a “restatement” of *x* (“but there was none to save”). Thus, while the grammatical relationship of *a* and *x* is *horizontal*, that of *a* and *b* is *vertical*.⁹

It should be noted that this is not the same as *verbal ellipsis* (VE), which we see for example in Psalm 18:15,¹⁰

c b a
וַיִּשְׁלַח הֶחָצִיו וַיִּפְּצֵם
וּבְרָקִים רַבִּים וַיַּהַמֵּם:
c' B' (a')

And he sent out (*a*) his arrows (*b*) and scattered them (*c*);
and (*a'*: he sent out) great lightnings (*B*) and routed them (*c'*).

Here the structure is *a-b-c // B'-c'*, where it is best to take the verb “he sent out” (*a*) as ellipticized in the second line, with a ballast variant (*B*) in the second line, since the direct object appears in both lines. Another example of *vertical grammar* is:

HABAKKUK 3:16A

x a
שָׁמַעְתִּי | וַתִּרְגַּז בִּטְנִי
לְקוֹל־צִלְלוֹ שִׁפְתֵּי
x' b

This bicolon has a more complicated structure than that in Psalm 18:42 and has usually been taken as having the structure of *a-b-c // d-b'-c'*. It may be translated literally as:

I listened and my body trembled;
to the sound my lips quivered.

⁸ Tsumura 1993; 1996; 2003; 2009b; 2013; 2017; 2019a; 2019b.

⁹ See Tsumura 2009b.

¹⁰ In my 2009 *JBL* paper I cited Psalms 18:15 and 105:20 as examples of vertical grammar, but now I believe these two examples are better classified as those of verbal ellipsis.

Here the phrase “to the sound” is usually understood as governed horizontally by the verb “quivered,” as in the following translation:

I hear, and my body trembles;
my lips quiver at the sound. (ESV)¹¹

However, it is more likely that it should be analyzed as $a-x // b-x'$, where the element לקול “to the sound” (b) in the second line is rather *vertically* the object of שמעתי “I listened” (a) in the first line, while the other elements תרגו בטני “my body trembled” (x) and צללו שפתי “my lips quivered” (x') are a merismatic pair. In other words, the element a has a grammatical dependence vertically with b as well as horizontally with x . Hence the entire bicolon may be translated:

I listened (a) to the sound (b),
my body trembled (x) and my lips quivered (x').

PROVERBS 2:1

Pardee, in his 1988 monograph, noticed the occurrence of a grammatical relationship between elements of different lines. For example, in his grammatical analysis of Proverbs 2:1, he took

a	b	c	
<i>b^enī' im-tiqqah 'āmārāy</i>			My son, if you accept my sayings,
<i>ūmiṣwō^w tay tiṣpōn 'ittāk</i>			Store up my commandments,
c'	d	a'	

as “grammatical but not semantic parallelism” and explained that “ $d = b$ grammatically.”¹² Thus he recognized there is a grammatical relationship between the element b in the first line and the element d in the second. However, he did not develop this feature of poetic parallelism further.

Recently, from the aspect of modern linguistic focus theory, Lunn discussed “intercolon relations,” i.e., “relationships that adhere between one colon and the other(s) with which it is joined.” However, Lunn considers only “semantic, logical, or grammatical”¹³ relationships, not phonetic ones. Hence, based on his narrow definition of parallelism, Lunn would probably take Pardee’s example as nonparallel.

I hold with Pardee that here a complex sentence is divided into two parallel clauses. The first clause (“if you accept . . .”) in the first line is *vertically* dependent on the second clause (“store up . . .”) in the second line. In other words, in this bicolon the action “to store up” is not similar to but rather subsequent to the action “to accept.” To give one more example:

HABAKKUK 2:8A

(c	b	a)	A
כִּי אַתָּה שָׁלַחַת גּוֹיִם רַבִּים			
יִשְׁלַחַת כָּל-יֵתֶר עַמִּים			
(C'	b')	B	

Because you have plundered many nations (A),
all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you (B). (ESV)

This text is a bicolon in which two elements of the second line correspond to two of the first line: כי “Because” (a) אתה שלחת “you have plundered” (b) גוים רבים “many nations” (c) // ישלחת “they shall plunder you”

¹¹ See also Andersen 2001, 341.

¹² Pardee 1988, 94.

¹³ Lunn 2006, 22. See my review in Tsumura 2009a.

(*b*) כל־יתר עמים “all the remnant of the people” (*C*). The bicolon as a whole constitutes a complex sentence in which the first line is subordinate to the second line, which is the main clause. That this structure is not simple prose is supported by the presence of several poetic features in this parallelism: e.g., rhymes of $\bar{a} - \bar{a} - \bar{i} - \bar{i}$ in the first line and of $\bar{i}m$ at the ends of both lines. Therefore, the two lines naturally hold a *vertical* grammatical relationship, in which the action in the first line is the cause of the action in the second line.

The clearest examples of the phenomenon of *vertical grammar* are simple sentences divided into two parallel lines in which at least part of the first line *vertically* depends on part of the second line of the parallelism. However, there are some difficulties in distinguishing *verbal ellipsis* and *vertical grammar*. The former involves a compound sentence in its deep structure, the latter a simple sentence. For example,

MICAH 7:3B

	<i>a</i> <i>x</i>
The prince (<i>x</i>) asks (<i>a</i>),	הַשֹּׁאֵל שֶׁאֵל
and the judge (<i>x'</i>), for a bribe (<i>b</i>).	וְהַשֹּׁפֵט בְּשֻׁלֹם
	<i>b</i> <i>x'</i>

This text is usually analyzed as $a-b-(c) // a'-(b')-c'$, with the object elided in the first line and the verb in the second line:

The prince (*a*) asks (*b*) ([*c*]);
and the judge (*a'*) ([*b'*]) for a bribe (*c'*).

Hence the text is understood as a compound sentence in its deep structure and is thus translated:

the ruler demands gifts,
the judge accepts bribes. (NIV)

However, a combination of forward and backward ellipsis seems unnatural.¹⁴ It seems better to analyze it as $x-a // x'-b$, where בְּשֻׁלֹם “for a bribe” [*b*] is vertically dependent on שֶׁאֵל “asks” [*a*].

The prince [*x*] asks [*a*]
and the judge [*x'*] for a bribe [*b*].

The meaning of the entire bicolon is, “The prince and the judge ask for a bribe.” This translation is exactly that of the RSV, though the English translation does destroy the Hebrew parallelistic structure.

PSALM 2:6

	<i>c</i> <i>b</i> <i>a</i>
	וְאֲנִי נִסְכַּחְתִּי מֶלֶכִּי
	עַל־צִיּוֹן הָרֹקֶדְשִׁי:
	<i>D'</i> <i>d</i>

I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.

While some may consider these two lines nonparallel, I consider them to constitute a parallelism with a rhyme קדשי // מלכי (-i // -i), i.e., a phonetic parallelism. In fact, the repetitive use (alliteration) of /i:/ in the bicolon as well as that of /al/ - /har/ (assonance) is intentional.¹⁵ In this parallelistic structure, the first line

¹⁴ For forward and backward ellipsis, see Miller 2003, 263.

¹⁵ For similar examples of a phonetic parallelism, see Song 5:1, 2, etc., discussed in Tsumura (forthcoming).

(s–v–o) certainly holds a vertical grammatical relationship with the modifier (prepositional phrase) “on Zion, my holy mountain” in the second line, since the entire two lines constitute a simple sentence.

Such vertical grammatical relationships are also recognizable in tricolons. For example,

PSALM 19:15

<i>x</i>	<i>a</i>
יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי־פִי	
	וְהִגִּינוּ לְבִי לִפְנֵיךָ
<i>b</i>	<i>x'</i>
	יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי:
	<i>C</i>

May the words of my mouth (*x*) and the meditation of my heart (*x'*)
 be acceptable (*a*) in your sight (*b*),
 O Lord, my rock and my redeemer (*C*).

The two subjects, אִמְרֵי־פִי “the words of my mouth” (*x*) and הִגִּינוּ לְבִי “the meditation of my heart” (*x'*), are in the first and second lines and constitute a merismus. These two noun phrases as a whole serve as the subject of the verb יְהִי in the first line. The prepositional phrases, לְרָצוֹן “acceptable” and לִפְנֵיךָ “in your sight” (lit., “before you”) are also dependent on the verb; the first prepositional phrase modifies it horizontally, while the second modifies it vertically. Thus the grammatical features of *verticality* are recognizable in the poetic parallelism of this simple sentence too.

UGARITIC EXAMPLES

Such cases of vertical grammar can be recognized also in some Ugaritic poetic texts, though they are harder to find in Ugaritic due to its lack of vowel letters in most words. One recognizable example is:

KTU 1.14 I 26–27

<i>y'rb</i> . <i>b</i> ḥdrh . <i>ybky</i> /	He enters (<i>a</i>) his room (<i>b</i>), he weeps (<i>x</i>),
<i>b</i> ṭn[h] gmm . w ydm ^c	while speaking forth (<i>c</i>) (his) grief (<i>d</i>),
	and he sheds tears (<i>x'</i>). ¹⁶

According to Wyatt, the *waw* in the second line occurs because of “an erroneous transposition.”¹⁷ He translates the text as follows:

He went into his chamber (and) wept;
 redoubling his lamentations, he sobbed.

However, the text makes good sense as it is when we recognize here *vertical grammar*. In this text, the phrase *b* ṭn . ḡmm (*c–d*) in the second line is grammatically dependent on the verb *y'rb* (*a*) in the first line and thus means, “He enters his room, while speaking forth (his) grief.” On the other hand, the verbal phrases *ybky* (*x*), in asyndeton, and *w ydm^c* (*x'*) correspond to each other synonymously: “(and) he weeps and sheds tears.” The entire bicolon (*a–b–x* // *c–d–x'*) may be paraphrased thus:

16 See Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 170:

He enters his room, he weeps,
 as he speaks forth (his) grief, he sheds tears.

17 Wyatt 2002, 183 n. 25.

He enters his room while speaking forth his grief,
(and) he weeps and sheds tears.

However, there are cases that look similar to the above text but should be treated as *verbal ellipsis*, such as the following example:

KTU 1.14 I 33–35

šnt . tlúân (tlúnn) / w yškb . Sleep (a) overcomes him (b) and he lies down (c),
nhmmt / w yqmš . slumber (A'), and he curls up (c').

The structure of this parallelism is *a-b-c // A'-c'*. Here the verbal phrase *tluan* “overcomes him” (b) is ellip-
ticized in the second line, as in Psalm 18:15 above:

Sleep overcomes him and he lies down;
slumber (overcomes him) and he curls up.

nhmmt (A') is a ballast variant for *šnt* (a) in the first line.

Thus in Ugaritic poetic texts, too, there exists the same feature of vertical grammatical relation between two or more parallel lines that we see in Hebrew poetic texts. In his 2012 paper,¹⁸ Pardee said he found my 2009 paper useful.

As in Hebrew poetic parallelism, such *verticality* in Ugaritic poetic parallelism can be typically observed in bicolons in which two lines constitute a simple sentence.¹⁹ For example, in

KTU 1.3 I 20–21 (V-S // M-M)

yšr . ġzr . ṭb . ql The good-voiced youth sings
ʿl . bʿl . bšrt For Baal in the heights of Šapan.²⁰

the two lines constitute a phonetic parallelism with the assonance of [r], [l], [b], [ʿ], and [ġ] while gram-
matically comprising a simple sentence.

The next example also displays *vertical grammar*, since the nucleus of a sentence (S[V₁-V₂-V₃]) is in the first line and the modifier is in the second line, though the sentence is not a simple sentence.

KTU 1.3 I 18–19

qm . ybd . yšr He arises, chants, and sings,
mšltm . bd . nʿm Cymbals (being) in the hands of the goodly one.²¹

The structure of this bicolon (SV₁-V₂-V₃ // M) is *a-b-c // d-e-f*. None of the words in the first line corre-
spond semantically to any in the second line; so one might consider the lines nonparallel. However, phonet-
ically, the assonance of [m] suggests a parallelistic structure.²² The entire bicolon constitutes a complex sen-
tence. It is clear that the second line as a whole holds grammatical dependence with the first line *vertically*.

Another example is found in

18 Pardee 2012, 56–58.

19 E.g., in Ps. 24:6; also the tricolons in Hab. 3:8a; 1:7b; etc. See Tsumura 2017, 196 and 201.

20 Pardee 1988, 2.

21 Ibid.

22 For this phenomenon, see Tsumura (forthcoming).

KTU 1.2 IV 15–16 (ALSO 13–14, 20–21, 23–24)

yrtqš . šmd . bd b'l . The club swoops from the hand of Baal
 km . nšr / b ūšb'th Like an eagle from his fingers.²³

One might take this as an example of *verbal ellipsis* in the second line,

The club swoops from the hand of Baal;
 [It swoops] like an eagle from his fingers.

But another explanation is that the phrase “like an eagle” (*b*) modifies the verb “to swoop” in the first line *vertically*, especially since the verb “to swoop” is usually connected with the image of falconry.²⁴ The prepositional phrase “from his fingers” (*x'*) is simply a restatement of the phrase “from the hand of Baal” (*x*). Hence the structure of this bicolon is *a-x // b-x'* and the bicolon as a whole can be translated as follows:

The club swoops like an eagle from the hand of Baal,
 namely from his fingers.

Yet another example appears in

KTU 1.18 IV 24–26, 36–37

tši . km / rḥ . npšh . Let his soul go out like wind
 km . iṭl . brlth . Like a gust his spirit
 km / qṭr . b āph Like smoke out of his nose!²⁵

with the structure V–M–S // M'–S' // M''–AdPh.

Pardee translates similarly:

So that his life force rushes out like wind,
 like spittle his vitality,
 like smoke from his nostrils.²⁶

The phrase “smoke out of his nose/from his nostrils” might be taken as an image of an angry person, as suggested by Psalm 18:8 (Yahweh's wrath) and Job 41:20 (the smoke out of Leviathan's nostrils). However, here in the Aqhat story anger does not seem to be involved in the description of the hero's death; it is simply a description of the “departure” of his breath, as in Psalm 146:4.

In the parallel structure of this tricolon, there are three metaphors, or similes, “like wind” (*x*), “like spittle” (*x'*), and “like smoke” (*x'*), for the hero's “life force” (*b*) and “vitality” (*b*). The phrase “from his nostrils” (*c*) in the third line is most likely to be taken as an adverbial phrase modifying the verb “rushes out” (*a*) in the first line. Thus we should recognize here too the phenomenon of vertical grammar over three lines of parallelism.

“rushes out” (*a*) – “like wind” (*x*) – “his life force” (*b*)
 “like spittle” (*x'*) – “his vitality” (*b*)
 “like smoke” (*x'*) – “from his nostrils” (*c*).

In other words, this tricolon most likely constitutes a simple sentence and should be translated in a prose style as follows:

²³ Gordon 1977, 73.

²⁴ See Canby 2002, 161–201.

²⁵ Gordon 1977, 19.

²⁶ Pardee 1997, 350.

So that his life force, namely his vitality, rushes out from his nostrils
like wind, like spittle, and like smoke.

The next example is a tetracolon²⁷ in which the first line is a sentence nucleus (S–V–O), and the next three lines are the modifiers.

KTU 1.3 III 28–31

<i>ātm . w ānk / ibgyh .</i>	Come and I will explain it (to you)
<i>b tk . gry . il . špn /</i>	in my mountain, Divine <i>Šapunu</i> ,
<i>b qdš . b gr . nhlty /</i>	in the holy place, in the mountain that is my personal possession,
<i>b nʿm . b gbʿ . tlyt /</i>	in the goodly place, the hill of my victory. ²⁸

Here we can see a vertical grammatical relationship between the first and second lines,

Come and I will explain it (to you)
in my mountain, Divine *Šapunu*,

and the next two lines, i.e., the third and fourth lines, are simply in apposition to the second line. Thus the four-line parallelism, i.e., tetracolon, as a whole constitutes a simple sentence.

In the next example, the strophe as a whole exhibits the poetic feature of verticality.

KTU 1.3 III 45–IV 3

<i>mḥšt . k . lbt . ilm . išt /</i>	I have smitten <i>ʾIlu</i> 's bitch <i>ʾIšatu</i> (Fire),
<i>klt . bt . il . ḏbb .</i>	have finished off <i>ʾIlu</i> 's daughter <i>Ḍabibu</i> (Flame),
<i>imthš . ksp / itrṯ . ḥrṣ .</i>	proceeding to smite for silver,
	to take possession of the gold of ²⁹
<i>ṯrd . bʿl / b mrym . špn .</i>	him who would have driven <i>Baʿlu</i>
	from the height of <i>Šapānu</i> ,
<i>mšṣṣ . k . ʿsr / ūdnh .</i>	him who would have caused (him) to flee
	like a bird (from) (the seat of) his power,
<i>gršh . l ksi . mlkh /</i>	him who would have banished him
	from his royal throne,
<i>l nḥt . l kḥt . drkth /</i>	from (his) resting-place,
	from the seat of his dominion. ³⁰

Before entering a discussion of the macrostructure of the strophe, let us analyze the constituent parts, i.e., the individual parallel structures. Here the first two lines constitute a straightforward bicolon, *a–b–c //* *a'–b'–c'*, with a *qtl* verb in each line:

<i>mḥšt . k . lbt . ilm . išt /</i>	I have smitten <i>ʾIlu</i> 's bitch <i>ʾIšatu</i> (Fire),
<i>klt . bt . il . ḏbb .</i>	have finished off <i>ʾIlu</i> 's daughter <i>Ḍabibu</i> (Flame),

27 Tsumura 2019a; 2019b.

28 Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 165.

29 Cf. "I have smitten for silver, have (re)possessed the gold of" in Pardee 1997, 252.

30 Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 166.

These lines are followed by a monocolon with a *yqtl* verb, which constitutes an internal parallelism: *a – b* // *a'–b'*:

<i>imthš . ksp / itrṯ . ḥrṣ .</i>	to smite for the silver of,
	to take possession of the gold of.

Then follows a tetracolon, the modifier of the “silver” // “gold” of the preceding monocolon, thus:

him who would have driven Baal from . . .
him who would have caused (him) to flee like . . .
him who would have banished him from his royal throne,
from (his) resting-place, from the seat of his dominion.

In other words, the relation between the monocolon and the tetracolon is grammatically *vertical*, just as the relation between the monocolon and the preceeding bicolon is. Thus the monocolon becomes a hinge between the bicolon and the tetracolon.

In Ugaritic poetry as in Hebrew poetry, therefore, we can detect a *vertical* grammatical relationship between two separate lines of parallelism. We find cases not only between two parallel lines but also between three and four parallel lines. Grammatically, these lines constitute either a simple sentence or a complex sentence in both Hebrew and Ugaritic texts. Moreover, in Ugaritic poetry, the *verticality* can be carried through the entire strophe—perhaps due to the nature of the epic style of the Ugaritic mythological texts, for it seems that such *verticality* is reflected beyond a simple bicolon more frequently in Ugaritic poetic texts than in Hebrew ones. Thus it is significant for the study of both Hebrew and Ugaritic poetry to take note of such *vertical* grammatical features, i.e., the “verticality” of the parallelism, for a better understanding of these texts.

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PART 4 — SEMITIC PHILOLOGY

19

“HIS TENT”

PITCHED AT THE INTERSECTION OF ORTHOGRAPHY
AND SOURCE CRITICISM

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THIS ESSAY ORIGINATED FROM A brief conversation with my colleague Eric Reymond, who stopped by my office a few years ago to check in about a paper he was preparing on the 3ms suffix with a *heh* mater.¹ When presented with his thorough list of such forms, my eye was caught by one particular segment of the list: the distribution of the noun אהל “tent” with the 3ms suffix. With four occurrences featuring the *heh* mater (all in Genesis), this form is one of the most widely attested in the Hebrew Bible (the MT of the Leningrad Codex), surpassed only by בלה (eighteen times, almost entirely in the prophetic corpus) and matched only by המונה (four times, exclusively in Ezekiel). As a pentateuchal scholar and source critic, I was immediately struck by the fact that the form אהלה “his tent” occurs only in texts attributed (traditionally and by me) to the J source, while the form אהליו, with the more standard *waw* mater, occurs regularly in texts attributed to E and P within the Pentateuch, as well as outside the pentateuchal corpus. This essay is an attempt to make sense of this distribution pattern and draw out what I believe to be some potentially substantial ramifications regarding the composition and transmission history of the Pentateuch.

I

The noun אהל “tent” occurs with the 3ms suffix twenty-five times in the Hebrew Bible. Of those occurrences, twenty-one have the standard *waw* suffix, while four have the “archaic” *heh* suffix. The distribution is as follows:

אהלה: Gen. 9:21; 12:8; 13:3; 35:21

אהליו: Gen. 26:25; 31:25; 33:19; Exod. 16:16; 33:8, 10; 35:11; Lev. 14:8; Num. 11:10
Josh. 7:22, 24; Judg. 4:11; 20:8; 1 Sam. 17:54; Jer. 37:10; Ps. 26:5, 6; Job 18:6, 14, 15; 20:26

It is not surprising that half of the attestations of the suffixed form (thirteen) should occur in the Pentateuch, since it is in this period of Israel’s narrated history that the people, from the individual patriarchs to the nation as a whole, were not yet settled in the Promised Land but lived in tents rather than houses. Nor, for the same reason, is the concentration in Genesis of the pentateuchal examples particularly noteworthy. It is, however, striking that within Genesis the forms are roughly distributed evenly: four with the *heh* mater and three with the *waw*.²

1 It was with great delight that I discovered that Reymond’s paper would also be included in this volume. It is with even greater delight that I offer this study, at the intersection of philology and source criticism, in honor of Dennis Pardee, who both trained me as a philologist and sent me off (if somewhat reluctantly, at least on my part) to pursue my work in biblical studies proper. My thanks to Eric for his comments on this paper as it was in progress.

2 The data for Genesis in particular show that this cannot be an example of what Young describes as “the influence that a form which is the majority form in a certain section of the Bible can have over the scribal transmission of that section by bringing minority forms into line with it” (Young 2001, 231).

Such a distribution might lead to the suspicion that the situation here is similar to that in Ezekiel, where we find the two forms *המונה* and *המונו* “his multitude” even in the same chapter (Ezek. 31:18 and 31:2, respectively), or, likewise, *בתוכה* and *בתוכו* “in its midst” (Ezek. 48:15, 21 for the former and 48:8 for the latter). This kind of proximate variation lends itself nicely to the argument put forward by Reymond in his contribution to this volume, namely, that the choice of suffix was conditioned by the presence of either final-*waw* or final-*heh* forms in the immediate context of the word. It is indeed the case that in some of the examples with *אהל*, in Genesis particularly but across the Pentateuch as a whole, there are immediately adjacent words that could be understood as potentially nuancing the choice of mater for the suffix. With the *heh*, there is Genesis 13:3 (*אהלה בתחלה*) and 35:21 (*אהלה מהלאה*); with the *waw*, Genesis 26:25 (*אהלו ויכרו*); Exodus 16:16 (*באהלו תקחו*); 33:8 (*אהלו והביטו*); 33:10(–11) (*אהלו ודבר*); 35:11 (*אהלו ואת-מכסהו*); Numbers 11:10 (*אהלו ויחר*). Yet it is clear that context cannot account for all of the examples. Indeed, in Genesis 9:21–22 we find *אהלה וירא*, which is formally parallel to the types of collocations seen in Genesis 26:25; Exodus 33:8, 10; and Numbers 11:10. Yet the presence of the immediately following *waw* in the first word of Genesis 9:22 seems not to have resulted in the form *אהלו*; rather, the final-*heh* form *אהלה* is retained.

A seemingly more determinative factor in the distribution of these forms is that of source assignment. To wit: all four forms that employ the *heh* mater in the Pentateuch and indeed in the entire Hebrew Bible—Genesis 9:21; 12:8; 13:3; and 35:21—belong to the J source. It is obviously beyond the scope of this paper to justify or defend the existence of the J document, or the (Neo-) Documentary Hypothesis in general.³ Suffice it to say that the source attribution of these four verses is, among documentary scholars past and present, not in dispute.⁴ Were these the only attestations of *אהלה* in Genesis, or in the Pentateuch, it would be possible to conclude that this word represented a fixed pentateuchal form, akin to the exclusively pentateuchal orthography of *הוא* for the 3fs independent pronoun. Yet, as is often the case, it is the presence of a regularly attested byform, in this case *אהלו*, that militates against such a conclusion. And the equally striking source assignments of *אהלו* elsewhere in the Pentateuch strongly suggest that this is no random pattern.

The three examples of *אהלו* in Genesis—Genesis 26:25; 31:25; and 33:19—all belong to the E document.⁵ Outside of Genesis, two of the pentateuchal examples belong to E (Exod. 33:8, 10) and three to P (Exod. 16:16; 35:11; Lev. 14:8).⁶ Only one attestation of *אהלו* in the Pentateuch belongs to J: that in Numbers 11:10.⁷ It would thus appear that there is a marked tendency for the 3ms suffix on *אהל* to be a *heh* in J (four out of five examples), while in the E and P sources it is always a *waw*.

3 For such a justification and defense, see Baden 2012.

4 For Gen. 9:21, see, e.g., Bacon 1893, 115; for 12:8, see, e.g., Holzinger 1898, 137–38; for 13:3, see, e.g., Driver 1926, 151; for 35:21, see, e.g., Gunkel 1997, 370–71.

5 Most notable among these examples is the case of Genesis 26:25, which is not a unified verse. The first half—“He built an altar there and invoked Yahweh by name”—contains standard and exclusively J concepts and language (cf. esp. Gen. 12:8; also Gen. 4:26; Exod. 33:19; 34:5). The connection between the first and second halves of the verse, however, is awkward, because the logical (or typical) order of elements seems to be reversed. It is elsewhere the case that the Patriarchs first settle in a location, then build an altar (see Gen. 12:8; 13:18; 33:19–20; 35:1). The source division of Genesis 26 is complicated; the following brief summary represents my current position. To J belong the following: vv. 1–12, 16, 23–25aα, 26–31; all these verses are about the interaction between Abraham and Abimelech, with the second confrontation dealing exclusively with Abimelech’s recognition that Yahweh has blessed Abraham. To E I assign vv. 17, 19–23, 25aβb, 32–33, all of which deal with Isaac’s digging of wells. (Note that v. 23 is assigned to both J and E. In both sources, Isaac must move from one place to another. It is likely, if not provable, that in E the text did not say that Isaac went to Beersheva but rather to some other GN, which he subsequently renamed Beersheva.) To P belong vv. 13–15, 18, 34–35; while the last two verses are generally uncontroversial, on the description of the Philistines and Abraham in vv. 13–15, 18 see Baden 2009, 215–18.

6 On the assignment to E of Exodus 33:8, 10, see, e.g., McNeile 1917, 211–14. For Exodus 16:16, see, e.g., Brightman 1918, 240; on the composition of the chapter as a whole, see Baden 2010. Exodus 35:11 and Leviticus 14:8, being part of the Tabernacle instructions and the ritual purity laws, respectively, require no justification for their assignment to P.

7 The source division of Numbers 11 is almost universally accepted; for details, see Baden 2012, 82–102. Although one could posit any number of explanations for why this single example from J does not read *אהלה*—for example some sort of distinction between Genesis and Exodus–Numbers—we should not be particularly surprised to find isolated counterexamples, especially given the clear trend in the scribal transmission of the text to shift the 3ms suffix from *heh* to *waw*.

II

It is unlikely that this distribution of suffixes could have transpired by mere chance, in part because the division between J and all the other texts in this regard is so sharp—not merely a high percentage of *heh* suffixes in J and a low percentage elsewhere, but attestation exclusively in J—and in part because the contextual argument offered by Reymond for the preservation of the *heh* suffix does not explain the pattern observed in the case of אהל. More broadly relevant, however, is the mechanism by which either *heh* or *waw* 3ms suffixes came to be present in the text in the first place.

If the preexilic inscriptional evidence is taken as a guide, it would appear likely that any preexilic biblical writings would have originally employed the *heh* mater for virtually all 3ms suffixes, both nominal and verbal.⁸ The use of the *waw* mater in the received text of early corpora would therefore be in every case a matter of subsequent scribal updating. By the same token, the preservation of the *heh* mater would thus also be a scribal decision. Whatever the reason for such a decision might have been—Reymond provides a number of alluring possibilities—the presence of the *heh* mater for the 3ms suffix would be an indication of the relative antiquity of the underlying material.

Such a statement seems to be challenged by the presence of the *heh* in postbiblical texts, such as Ben Sira and the Qumran scrolls. These texts appear to indicate that the *heh* long remained a productive variant of the more common *waw* for the 3ms suffix.⁹ Yet the data from the MT, in conjunction with the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) evidence, suggests something slightly different: not a continuity of productivity but a recrudescence following a substantial gap. The distribution of the *heh* mater for the 3ms suffix in the MT shows a marked chronological terminus. Of the approximately fifty attested forms with the *heh* mater, only one—Daniel 11:10, on which see below—belongs indisputably to the postexilic period. The rest are confined squarely to the preexilic/exilic period, as is clearest perhaps from the distribution within the prophetic corpus: one occurrence in Hosea;¹⁰ two in First Isaiah;¹¹ one in Nahum;¹² eight in Jeremiah;¹³ three in Habakkuk;¹⁴ ten in Ezekiel;¹⁵ and none in Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel, or Second/Third Isaiah. Similar (albeit more limited) is the evidence from Psalms: the three *heh* maters in this corpus are found in Psalms 10:9; 27:5; and 42:9, while none are found in the later collections located farther along in the book.

Despite the evidence for the increased use of the *heh* mater in the Qumran corpus, it should be observed that this use is restricted almost entirely to the nonbiblical material.¹⁶ Indeed, the biblical writings from Qumran show a remarkable consistency with the MT in regard to the form of the 3ms suffix.¹⁷ Of all the attested biblical passages, the 3ms suffix—whether it be *heh* or *waw*—is the same in the DSS as it is in the MT.¹⁸ In short: while the *heh* does seem to have been productive to a degree in the Qumran era, it was

8 See Gogel 1998, 159–62.

9 As argued by Young 2001. See also Reymond 2022, in this volume.

10 Hos. 13:2.

11 Isa. 15:3; 16:7.

12 Nah. 2:1.

13 Jer. 2:21; 8:6, 10 [2×]; 15:10; 20:7; 48:31, 38.

14 Hab. 1:9, 15; 3:4.

15 Ezek. 11:15; 12:14; 20:40; 31:18; 32:31, 32; 36:10; 39:11; 48:15, 21.

16 And it should probably not be overstated: the *heh* mater for the 3ms suffix occurs in only a select few nonbiblical Qumran texts, notably in the Damascus Document text 4Q266 (בה בדרשה, e.g.); the calendrical text 4Q321 (multiple times with the form דוקה); and perhaps once in the pesher to Nahum 4Q169 (חירה).

17 The Qumran biblical manuscripts are generally quite close to the MT, obvious examples such as 1QIsa^a notwithstanding. See Tov 2012, 107–10.

18 The single ostensible exception is 1 Samuel 20:38, which, however, is a unique case in more than one respect. In the MT, the text reads אחריו הנער. 4QSam^b, however, reads אחר עלמה, which appears to be the noun עלם with the 3ms suffix rendered as *heh*. Thus this reading does not constitute an exception to the rule: it is not a case in which the MT has a *waw* suffix and the DSS has a *heh*. Rather, it may well be (especially as it comes from 4QSam^b, the version of Samuel most dissimilar to that of the MT) an authentic remnant of an original preexilic orthography. Given the oddity of the form and the disputes about

so only for (relatively) new writings; when it came to copying older texts, the scribes evidently remained beholden to the suffixal orthography of the transmitted text.

This scribal consistency is relevant for the dating and distribution of texts that use the *heh* mater. The concentration of the *heh* mater in preexilic and exilic biblical texts, to the exclusion of postexilic biblical texts, in both the MT and the DSS, means that in the period roughly between the sixth and third centuries the *heh* mater must not have been productive. It returned to productivity, in a more limited nature, only substantially later, in the era of Ben Sira and the DSS—the era also of Daniel 11, thus accounting for the one clear postexilic example in the Hebrew Bible.¹⁹ The fact that the DSS themselves do not replace the more common *waw* with *heh* in copying the biblical texts (even in contexts that would theoretically fit one or more of Reymond's categories) further suggests that the *heh* maters we do find in both the MT and the DSS are not later, archaizing replacements of *waw* but are indeed remnants of the original preexilic/exilic orthography.²⁰

If this conclusion is granted, it would seem plausible that, with the exception of those that are very late (such as Daniel 11), biblical texts in which we find even a single *heh* mater can be considered preexilic or exilic.²¹ And this, in turn, is revealing when it comes to our particular case of אהל. For with the exception of Job, in which אהל appears four times,²² every other corpus in which אהל appears—the E source,²³ the P source,²⁴ Joshua,²⁵ Judges,²⁶ Samuel,²⁷ Jeremiah,²⁸ and the early Psalms²⁹—also employs the *heh* suffix (on nouns other than אהל) at least once.³⁰ That is, the majority of cases in which אהל is used are very likely cases of scribal orthographic updating from *heh* to *waw* rather than original orthography. The only exceptions to this updating tendency are the examples from J. If, therefore, we know that scribes were indeed changing the *heh* suffix to the *waw*, repeatedly, even on this very word, the fact that they did not do so exclusively in texts attributed to J is rendered increasingly meaningful.

We can safely rule out the possibility that a scribe, copying the (nearly) canonical Pentateuch some time after its compilation in approximately the mid-fifth century, could have preserved the older orthography of אהל only in texts ascribed to J. Once the Pentateuch was compiled, its redaction from multiple original documents (or layers, depending on one's scholarly perspective) effaced those earlier distinctions.³¹ That is, there was no J document once the Pentateuch was compiled—there was only the Pentateuch. It is thus

its origin and meaning, I am not including in this discussion the DSS forms that employ the 3ms -וה suffix (on which see Reymond 2022, in this volume).

19 For the second-century dating of Daniel 11, see, e.g., Collins 1993, 38.

20 See Andersen and Forbes 1986, 60–62.

21 This observation has important consequences for the dating particularly of the P source of the Pentateuch, which contains two forms with the *heh* 3ms suffix: Leviticus 23:13 and Deuteronomy 34:7. The counterfactual is obviously unsupportable: it is not the case that those texts without any *heh* maters are by definition late (although it may be noted, along with Young [2001, 228], that every book of the Pentateuch and the Deuteronomistic History, the three major prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the Book of the Twelve contains at least one such form; only if we delve into the individual books of the minor prophets do we find any gaps, as in Amos and Micah).

22 Job 18:6, 14, 15; 20:26.

23 Gen. 26:25 et al.

24 Exod. 16:16 et al.

25 Josh. 7:22, 24.

26 Judg. 4:11; 20:8.

27 1 Sam. 17:54.

28 Jer. 37:10.

29 Ps. 27:5, 6.

30 Exod. 22:4, 6 (E); Lev. 23:13; Deut. 34:7 (P); Josh. 11:16; Judg. 9:49; 2 Sam. 2:9; Jer. 2:3; 22:18; Pss. 10:9; 27:5; 42:9.

31 See Baden 2013.

inconceivable that a scribe would be capable of maintaining a separate orthography for passages that were, in a previous life, part of the J source.³²

The isolation of an older orthographic feature in a particular source thus requires that the scribal updating that should have eliminated that feature cannot have taken place post-compilation; rather, it must have taken place at the stage when the sources were still independent. Even if we restrict ourselves entirely to the word אֱהִלָּה, the shift to אֱהִלּוֹ must have happened not on a canonical level but on the level of each source or (in the case of Samuel, Jeremiah, and Psalms) corpus independently. Admittedly, there is no obvious reason why, of all the words in the J document, אֱהִלָּה should have preserved the *heh* suffix.³³ But the lack of an explanation for the phenomenon does not change the fact of the phenomenon.

III

The ramifications of this observation are significant with regard to both the J document and the process of pentateuchal compilation and transmission. Perhaps most immediately obvious is that these data provide evidence for the existence of a J source. No pentateuchal scholar has ever identified J on the basis of orthography; thus the fact that every example of אֱהִלָּה falls into the corpus traditionally identified as J cannot be chalked up to circular logic.³⁴ There is, moreover, no unifying or distinctive feature among the four אֱהִלָּה passages other than their attribution to J. It is not their presence in Genesis, for there are also examples of אֱהִלּוֹ in Genesis—but not from J. It is not their proximity to other final-*heh* words, for two examples of אֱהִלָּה have no such words nearby. It is not their specific content, for at least one אֱהִלָּה passage³⁵ is nearly identical in content to an אֱהִלּוֹ verse.³⁶ As far as I am aware, there are no alternative theories of pentateuchal composition that would link these four אֱהִלָּה passages (to the exclusion of the אֱהִלּוֹ passages) either as a composition or as a redactional layer. It is only under the rubric of the documentary theory, and the J document in particular, that this otherwise seemingly random set of verses has any identifiable commonality, and it is only the existence of a preexisting commonality that accounts for the unique preservation of the *heh* suffix in these particular verses.³⁷

Furthermore, these data would seem to require that this J document was not only composed independently of the rest of the Pentateuch but transmitted independently as well. The classical documentary theory, in which J and E were combined into a “JE” text relatively early on (no later than the preexilic period) cannot explain the shift from אֱהִלָּה to אֱהִלּוֹ exclusively in E, particularly as that shift almost certainly took place in the postexilic period.³⁸ Newer pentateuchal theories, in which the text grew by accretion, similarly cannot do justice to the evidence in this case, especially as most such theories would attribute at least some of the אֱהִלָּה passages to a relatively early layer of the text—again, most likely preexilic.³⁹ In both cases, the problem is that the independent identity of J (or its equivalent) is immediately erased once

32 Indeed, the Samaritan Pentateuch, which revises the MT text-type in numerous regards, including updating its linguistic elements, renders virtually every 3ms *heh* suffix with *waw*, including three of the four cases of אֱהִלָּה—the exception being Genesis 35:21, where the preservation of the *heh* may be an excellent example of Reymond’s contextual orthography, given the phrase אֱהִלָּה מֵהֶלֶא. On the SP data, see Young 2001, 231–32.

33 There are, of course, other words in the J source that similarly preserve the *heh* 3ms suffix, though there is no attested byform with the *waw* (in J or elsewhere): Genesis 49:11 (עִירָה, עֹסֶתָה); Numbers 10:36 (נִחָה); 23:8 (קִבָּה).

34 It has long been an unfortunate tendency of source-critical scholarship to select linguistic or stylistic features that are “typical” of a given source and then proceed to assign texts to sources on those bases. Most famous is surely the use of the divine names יְהוָה and אֱלֹהִים, though there are many other examples; see, e.g., the extensive “style” lists in Holzinger 1893, 93–110, 181–91, 283–91, 338–49; Carpenter and Harford-Battersby 1900, 185–221.

35 Gen. 12:8.

36 Gen. 26:25.

37 The uniquely J orthography of אֱהִלָּה may thus stand as a challenge to Barr’s contention that “the difference between spellings of words cannot as a rule be correlated with documentary or source hypotheses” (Barr 1989, 21).

38 On “JE,” see Baden 2009.

39 See, e.g., Carr 1996, 177–232.

it has been combined with other textual material, and with that identity goes source-specific orthography, making impossible the simultaneous preservation of אהלה in originally J texts, on one hand, and shift to אהל in originally non-J texts, on the other. Post-combination there is but one hand, and it should, for scribal purposes, be treated consistently throughout.

It must rather be the case that the J document had its own independent process of scribal transmission—one that participated in the apparently Hebrew-wide orthographic shift from the 3ms suffix *heh* mater to the *waw* mater but not, for whatever reason, when it came to the word אהל.⁴⁰ It is also required that this scribal adjustment of the preexilic/exilic *heh* suffix have taken place before the compilation of the Pentateuch sometime in the fifth century BCE, since a post-compilation shift would have leveled all the pentateuchal sources equally. This means that the window for this adjustment is in fact relatively well circumscribed: it must have taken place between the mid-fifth century at the latest and the middle of the exile at the earliest (taking Ezekiel as providing the latest exemplar of the *heh* suffix).⁴¹ This is a window of approximately one hundred years—a short period for such a widespread scribal phenomenon, but certainly long enough, judging by the standard of other known orthographic shifts.⁴² And, of course, the timing orthographically coincides nicely with the commonly observed shift from Standard Biblical Hebrew to Late Biblical Hebrew on the morphological and syntactic side.⁴³

Though not directly related to the form אהלה, we can also make some strong suggestions regarding the timing of the widespread disappearance and recrudescence of the 3ms suffix *heh* mater in Hebrew. Again, Ezekiel marks our latest productive occurrence of the *heh* mater in the biblical corpus until Daniel 11—a span from the mid-sixth century to the mid-second century BCE, precisely when we see evidence of the *heh* suffix being used productively also in Ben Sira and, perhaps, in some of the earlier nonbiblical Qumran texts.⁴⁴ We can thus produce a tentative, rough timeline of the *heh* suffix: (1) used commonly, perhaps indeed universally, in the preexilic/exilic period;⁴⁵ (2) falling entirely out of use in the LBH period, during which the vast majority of preexilic/exilic examples were also scribally altered to *waw*; and (3) experiencing

40 This same sort of document-specific transmission history attested by orthographic distinctiveness can be observed in other texts as well, e.g., Ezekiel's strong preference for המונה rather than (the equally preexilic [Judg. 4:7; Isa. 5:13]) המון.

41 The terminus of the mid-fifth century, being based on the date of the compilation of the Pentateuch, may well be peculiar to the pentateuchal corpus; it is certainly possible that other corpora underwent these sorts of orthographic revisions at different times, though probably not too far in either direction.

42 A fine modern example is the disappearance in print of the long *s*, *f*, best known to most Americans from early documents such as the Bill of Rights, with its prominent "Congrefs." This letter-form began to disappear from printed publications across America and Europe in the late eighteenth century, with its virtually complete evaporation by the late nineteenth century. An ancient example (with thanks to Eric Reymond for noting it) may be found in the Elephantine papyri, where the spelling of the 1cp independent pronoun is initially אננה with no final mater but is decidedly אננה or אננה with final mater by the end of the fifth century—a spelling that more or less continues on into the Samaria papyri as well as into the DSS and Biblical Aramaic. See Folmer 1995, 152–61, 703–4.

43 See the many works of Avi Hurvitz, esp. 1972; 1982; 2000. Here again we may challenge Barr's (1989, 21) statement that "the compounding of the sources, if such did take place, took place at a time earlier than the development of spellings that has led to our present form of the text." In fact, the orthographic shift from *heh* to *waw* in the 3ms suffix clearly occurred in the early postexilic period, while the "compounding of the sources" cannot be dated earlier than the mid-fifth century. Barr does, however, allow that some evidence for orthographic differences among the sources could be discerned in particular cases: "It is possible in theory that some correlation with earlier sources may be found: but it will have to be specially proved" (ibid.). This essay is an attempt to provide just such special proof. And we may admit to Barr's main point, which is that there is no universal or consistent orthographic distinction among the sources of the Pentateuch in almost any other regard.

44 See Reymond 2022, in this volume.

45 The complicating factor for this stage is the *waw* suffix in the Ketef Hinnom inscription (Amulet 1, line 11: בו). Although it is possible that, if the amulets are dated, as traditionally, to the seventh century BCE, this form could suggest a preexilic development of the *waw* suffix in place of the *heh*, the fact that there is but a single attestation from the preexilic period does not diminish the basic pattern established here. The rarity of this form is such that its very existence here has driven some scholars to suggest that the Ketef Hinnom inscriptions might be dated significantly later than they traditionally are (Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005; Na'aman 2011, 187–88; both also point out a number of other orthographic peculiarities in the amulets that may give cause for doubt as to its preexilic dating).

a revival of sorts in the mid-second century BCE for the production of new texts but not in the copying of older “biblical” texts.

This last point—that the late revival of the *heh* suffix was not imposed on preexisting texts—serves as a reminder that the same is true of the reverse suffixal shift: as the Qumran scrolls demonstrate, the remnant *heh* suffixes were not updated to *waw* even in the four hundred years or so when the *heh* suffix seems to have gone completely unused. What’s more, if it is the case that the updating of most 3ms suffixes to *waw* took place before the compilation of the Pentateuch, then we may also learn something about that process of compilation: even as multiple sources were being combined into a new, unified text, their individual orthographies were preserved—thus the uniquely J orthography of אהלֶה was preserved even as J’s independent existence was being wiped out. This orthographic consistency testifies further to the fundamentally conservative and conservationist principles by which the redaction of the Pentateuch took place, principles that are more readily evident in the preservation of multiple contradictory narrative elements.⁴⁶ Although it is sometimes assumed or argued that in the process of redaction editors had a relatively free hand with regard to their source material, אהלֶה seems to be strong evidence to the contrary: not only did they not have a free hand, but the pentateuchal editor(s) even went so far as to retain the orthographic peculiarities of their sources.

The presence of an orthographic feature—in this case the *heh* mater for the 3ms suffix—exclusively in a single pentateuchal source is a rather remarkable phenomenon and deserves more than a casual mention. In the pages above, I have tried to make sense of this phenomenon, to account for the linguistic and scribal developments that could account for the textual situation. If I have pushed the envelope a bit in drawing out the potential ramifications, I consider myself merely to be emulating my beloved teacher, Dennis Pardee, who has often recognized that a scarcity of linguistic data means that every clue is, relatively, worth far more than it might otherwise seem.

46 See Baden 2012, 214–29.

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20

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PHRASE “KING OF KINGS”*

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TERMS FOR PEOPLE OF HIGH rank in a society are varied and are often the result of phrasing for specific functions in a given sector of a culture. For example, the Akkadian *rabi amurrim* in Mari texts refers to a particular type of prominent officer, and in Hittite culture an *antupšalli* was a high court official. However, a term that functioned in various situations for both royalty and divinity in the ancient Near East was the phrase “king of kings.” This phrase was used in multiple contexts, such as in epistolary introductions where an inferior addressed a superior, in royal inscriptions, and in texts as an eponym for Yahweh in Judeo-Christian traditions. In the following study, I will analyze the history of the term “king of kings” in order to trace, as much as possible, its transmission from culture to culture.

The diversity of use and duration of the phrase through time, from second millennium BCE texts in Egypt and Ugarit to the Christian adoption of this title for Jesus of Nazareth in the first and second centuries CE, suggest that systematizing the spread of the title from its origins to its varied manifestations is difficult if not impossible. In some cases, such as the use of “king of kings” in New Kingdom Egypt and at Ugarit, borrowing from one culture to another is plausible. In other cases, such as the adoption of Assyrian and Persian usage of the phrase in the Hebrew Bible, a subsequent or less powerful culture borrowed “king of kings” directly from a preceding or more powerful culture. Thus I shall examine and observe the correlation and spread of the term across societies and through time where possible, while tracing the history of the phrase “king of kings” to its reception in Jewish and Christian sources, at which point the use of the title proliferates.

GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PHRASE AND PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

The discussion of the grammatical formulations of “king of kings” in this section provides a linguistic mapping for the appearance of the formula in the following historical survey. Laying out the ways in which the phrase occurs in the various languages examined in this study allows for a streamlined presentation of the historical and literary data. Thus the purpose of this section is neither to establish a cross-linguistic relationship between how the formula for “king of kings” was expressed in these ancient languages nor to exclude the importance of alternate divine and royal epithets. Each language and text group also used other phrases to communicate divine and royal superlatives (such as *šar-ru in LUGAL-rí*, “king over/among kings,” in Akkadian), many of which were used alongside “king of kings.”¹ Instead, the following discussion specifies in a preliminary manner the modes of expressing the phrase “king of kings” that will simplify

* It is my honor to make this small contribution in recognition of my primary advisor, professor Dennis Pardee. It seems fitting to pay respect to him through the study of a superlative title. His prompt responses in communication, attention to detail when grading exams and papers, and, ultimately, his care for the success of his students make him, in these ways and more, an “advisor of advisors.”

1 See CAD, Š, 2: 80, and below in this study for more examples from the time of Hammurabi. This phrase, *šar-ru in LUGAL-rí*, shows the partitive use of *ina*, “king from among kings.”

further analyses below and aid in specifying which texts and excerpts are relevant for this study and which are not.

Across languages and contexts of use, from epistolary documents to royal inscriptions, the common denominator with respect to how the title functions is the grammatical means of expressing the superlative. In the Semitic languages, as well as Old Persian, the construction is produced by following the first element (“king”) with a plural, obliquely marked second element (“of kings”). The Semitic languages that do not include vocalization in their writing systems and, therefore, do not explicitly mark case in orthography,² such as Ugaritic (which only explicitly marks case in III-³ nouns) and Palmyrene, nonetheless follow the same pattern, as evident from the consistent comparative linguistic data.³

The Egyptian pattern of this construction is syntactically similar, though without indication of case in morphology. Instead, there exist two possible ways in which Egyptian expresses the genitive: (1) the direct genitive, accomplished by “juxtaposing two nouns (putting one after the other), with the possessor noun second,” and (2) the indirect genitive, with a “genitival adjective”⁴ connecting the two related nouns.⁵ The examples which occur in texts indicate that the direct genitive was the more productive form of the phrase “king of kings,” or *ny-sw.t-ny.w-sw.t*,⁶ though the indirect genitive, *ny-sw.t-n-ny.w-sw.t*, also occurs.⁷ The juxtaposed form of the direct genitive is similar to the *nomen regens* and *nomen rectum* construction in Semitic languages. As I show in the following sections, these Egyptian constructions of the phrase are particularly important for the history of “king of kings.”

EGYPTIAN DATA

The first attested use of the phrase “king of kings” appears in Egyptian texts from the Eighteenth Dynasty and continues into the Nineteenth Dynasty.⁸ The phrase *ny-sw.t-ny.w-sw.t*⁹ and its alternative formation in the indirect genitive *ny-sw.t-n-ny.w-sw.t* were used for two different, though related, referents, viz., king

2 While case would not have, in these instances, been indicated in script, it would have been indicated in the actual production of the spoken language.

3 Superlatives and elatives can be expressed in other ways in Semitic languages as well. For adjectival superlatives in Ugaritic, see Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, §4.1.1.3. For superlatives formed by juxtaposed nouns plus enclitic *-m*, see Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, §4.1.3.5. Akkadian forms the superlative either through the bound form of the adjective or a nominal form to another nominal form, or through the *š* verbal adjective (Huehnergard 2005, §27.3). Classical Arabic has three ways of forming the elative, all of which involve this morphological pattern based on the C-stem. The most common way involves this pattern used in absolute (nonconstruct) state. The other two, rarer elative constructions involve the adjective in the *aqtala* pattern in construct with either a definite plural noun or an indefinite singular noun (Fischer 2002, §127). In Old Persian, the phrase is formed by the noun in juxtaposition with a genitive plural. For the declension of *-o-* stems, which is the declension for “king,” *xšāyaθiya-*, in Old Persian, see Kent 1953, §171. For an analysis of *xšāyaθiya xšāyaθiyānām*, “king of kings,” as an expression of the partitive genitive (“a king among kings”), see Skjaervø 2002, 44. For Hebrew, see the comments concerning the “absolute superlative” in Waltke and O’Connor 1990, §14.5b.

4 The genitival adjectives (following the head noun) are *n* when the *nomen regens* is masculine singular, *nw* when the *nomen regens* is masculine plural or dual, and *nt* when the *nomen regens* is feminine, either singular or dual (Allen 2000, §4.13.2; Gardiner 1994, §85).

5 For more examples of the uses of the genitive in Egyptian, see Allen 2000, §4.13.1–2, 7.9–10.

6 Foy Scalf was instrumental in directing me to grammatical explanations of this construction in Egyptian, as well as to resources that list attestations.

7 The transliteration above follows the suggestion of Foy Scalf, though other transliteration systems appear. For instance, Leitz (2003, 332) lists the form as *Nsw-nsww* in the direct genitive, and *Nsw-n-nsww* in the indirect genitive. The indirect genitive, according to Leitz, is used in eight of thirty-one occurrences, with the rest of the attestations (approximately 74 percent of total occurrences) using the direct genitive (ibid.).

8 The Ugaritic attestations are contemporaneous with the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Dynasties, and the Assyrian examples, beginning with Tukulti-Ninurta I in the thirteenth century BCE, are shortly after the Eighteenth Dynasty in Egypt. See the discussion below.

9 The *ny* (sometimes simply written *n*) is a *nisbe* marker, and *sw.t* (or, also written *swt*) means “sedge,” the symbolic plant of Egypt (Allen 2000, §4.15). The phrase therefore means “the one of sedge.” The *w* in *ny.w* makes the *nisbe* plural, meaning “the ones of sedge.”

and god.¹⁰ Moreover, the distribution divides neatly between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties on the one hand and later appearances of the title in Hellenistic Egypt during the Ptolemaic period (304–30 BCE) on the other, with no occurrences between these periods in Egyptian. The data will be considered in the following discussion along chronological lines, followed by a preliminary conclusion.

The use of the title “king of kings” in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties in Egypt refers both to kings and to gods.¹¹ The inscriptions that include this title with reference to kings appear at Amada in a temple in Nubia during the reign Amenophis II (Amenhotep II), of the Eighteenth Dynasty, as well as during the reigns of Amosis at Karnak¹² and Tutmosis III.¹³ In this period, various deities were also called “king of kings,” such as Amun,¹⁴ Amun-Re,¹⁵ Osiris,¹⁶ Chontamenti,¹⁷ and the Sun God.¹⁸ The evidence from this period of attestation in Egypt suggests the phrase was only applied to gods and kings in royal and cultic (though nonritual) contexts, since no other application of the phrase is yet known in this era within Egypt.¹⁹

Attestations of the phrase *ny-sw.t-ny.w-sw.t* “king of kings” occur in similar literary contexts in late, Greco-Roman period Egypt, when the title was used for both kings and gods, much as in the earlier period. Inscriptional evidence indicates it served as a title for the Ptolemaic kings, such as those at Philae.²⁰ In this later period, the title was applied in inscriptions not only to gods, such as Horus,²¹ Chnum,²² and Horus-Chentechtai,²³ but was also used in texts that functioned in ritual settings.²⁴ This use in ritual texts therefore seems to be a *novum* within late-period Egyptian application of the phrase.

A few observations become apparent regarding the evidence from Egypt. It seems to be the first language to use the phrase “king of kings,” but the large gap between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties and the Greco-Roman period is remarkable. No attestations of the phrase exist for the intervening period. The resurgence of the title in the later period could be explained either as a borrowing from other empires, which retained the phrase both as applicable to deities and kings (see below), or as a nontextual retention of the earlier Egyptian usage from the New Kingdom. In the latter case, assuming there was some memory or preservation of the phrase in local Egyptian society, the use of “king of kings” to refer to Ptolemaic rulers makes sense as a way to create continuity with Egypt’s past, given the self-presentation of Ptolemaic kings

10 The distinction between king and divinity, however, was often slight, and many New Kingdom pharaohs were deified after death. For the deification of Amenhotep I, Thutmose I, Amenhotep III, and Amenhotep IV, see Shaw 2000, 223–24, 232, 261–63, 275–76.

11 For a list of occurrences divided between references to kings and references to gods, see Erman and Grapow 1953, 2: 480, specifically numbers 6 (for kings) and 7 (for gods).

12 Sethe 1907a, 15.

13 Sethe 1907b, 887.

14 See Ostrakon CG 25653 in Černý 1930, 50, 70*.

15 See Gödicke and Wente 1962, 82; see also ostrakon 1593 in Posener 1977–80, 76–77, pls. 46–46a.

16 Budge 1913, 1: 185; Assmann 1991, 1: 137 (text 196, line 7); Pyramidion Cairo JE 32020 in Rammant-Peters 1983, 151.

17 Kitchen 1975, 289, line 3.

18 Zandee 1992, 2: 581 (strophe 14, VI, 10).

19 For example, there are no occurrences yet of its use within Egyptian epistolary greetings, such as from a subservient aristocrat to a more powerful overlord. The use of the phrase at Ugarit, where “king of kings” was employed in epistolary texts from the vassal king of Ugarit to the suzerain Egyptian king, will be discussed below. The preceding comments are meant to indicate only that there is no available evidence for the functioning of “king of kings” as an epistolary greeting in Egyptian correspondences among Egyptians or in texts leaving the Egyptian mainland. Given the Egyptian dominance of the ancient Near East at the time, the latter scenario, wherein an Egyptian is referring to a foreign king as “lord of lords,” would be unlikely, to say the least.

20 See Erman and Grapow 1953, 2: 480. Another Greco-Roman inscription to a ptolemaic king appears in Sethe 1904, 17.

21 See the Satrapen-stele in Kamal 1905, 168–71 (stele 22182). See also Sethe 1904, 17.

22 Sauneron 1959, 2: 304 (text 184, line 27).

23 Kamal 1905, 119–20 (stele 22137).

24 See Leitz 2003, 332. Most of the texts labeled 12–31 fall into this period and this use of the title “king of kings.”

as Pharaohs (beginning with Ptolemy Soter I). More definite conclusions about the absence of the phrase in the intervening period is difficult, if not impossible, to determine.

UGARITIC DATA

Although the gap in the attestation of “king of kings” in written evidence in Egypt between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties and Ptolemaic Egypt is difficult to explain, the usage of the phrase in the New Kingdom coincides with the epistolary use of the title at Ugarit. This phase in Egyptian history lasted between 1550 BCE and 1186 BCE,²⁵ which span of time overlaps that of the literary evidence available from Ugarit. In this section, I will analyze the superlative as it appears in Ugaritic texts, both in its occurrence alongside other superlatives and in its role within these epistolary texts. Then I will make some preliminary conclusions about the epistolary function of this phrase at Ugarit and its possible relation to the Egyptian uses.

In letters from Ugarit, various titles appear for lords and superiors—titles such as “king” and “my lord.” These titles seem at times to have an overlapping function with “king of kings” or to modify the phrase “king of kings” in some manner. For example, “king, my lord” occurs in *KTU* 2.42.10; 2.75.5 and elsewhere. This observation is relevant to the examination of “king of kings,” since “my lord” qualifies “great king, king of kings” in *KTU* 2.76.1, and a variant of “king, my lord” appears in reference to the king of Egypt in *KTU* 2.76.8, viz., “great king, my lord,” as well as in *KTU* 2.76.9–10. Therefore, while “king, my lord” is used separately in epistolary formulae, I shall explore only its use in the contexts of the superlative “king of kings” in the following discussion. I shall examine these modifying elements as they appear as a constellation of titles for the king of Egypt and analyze their order of appearance for any patterns.

The phrase “king of kings,” or *mlk mlkm*, occurs in *KTU* 2.76 (RS 34.356). This letter is addressed to the “Sun,” which del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín claim refers to the Egyptian king in this text.²⁶ Although there is no explicit identification of the king as the king of Egypt in the letter in the second edition of *KTU*, in the third edition the editors find part of the name of Egypt in line 9, and they restore it as missing in line 10.²⁷ The introduction contains four titles, the order of which is as follows: in line 1, “the Sun,” “great king,” “king of kings,” and in line 2, “my lord.”²⁸ In line 4,²⁹ the phrase “Sun, great king, my lord” appears—in the same order as the introduction, though without “king of kings.”³⁰ In the main body of the letter in lines 6 and 7, the titles “my lord” and “Sun, my lord” occur, again without the further title “king of kings.”³¹

Another string of titles commences in line 8, which begins, “Sun, great king my lord.” The end of line 8 is broken, and line 9 either continues the titles in line 8 or begins a new series with “to the sun, great king, king of kings, my lord,” with a restoration necessary for part of “to the sun, great king.”³² The latter option is

25 See Shaw 2000, 481.

26 Because *špš* refers to a specific person, the word “Sun,” which can designate both the pharaoh and the Hittite king, is capitalized in translation, following Pardee 2002, 99.

27 Del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín provide two listings for “Sun” as royal titles, one pertaining to the king of Hatti, the other with respect to the Egyptian king (del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2015, 2: 825). Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín read the end of line 9 as *mlk . [[mlk]] mšr[m . b'l]*. Whereas in the second edition of *KTU* they read *[l . ml]k . rb . mlk . mlk[m b'l]* “to the great king, king of kings, my lord,” in the third edition they have *[l . špš? . m]lk . rb . mlk . [[mlk]] mšr[m . b'l]* “to the sun, great king, king, king of Egypt, my lord.” The second edition also has *nmy*, a common Egyptian name, in line 5, which in the third edition appears as *any*.

28 Line 1: *[l . špš . ml]k . rb . mlk . mlk[m]*. Line 2: *[b'ly]*.

29 The word *ht* appears in line 5 after these titles. The function of *ht* is often to transition from topic to comment of a piece of rhetoric, thereby introducing the content of the document, in which case the following portions of the letter after line 5 contain the content the author wants to convey.

30 The break at the end of line 3 is followed by a restoration in line 4: *[špš .] mlk . rb . b'ly*.

31 Line 6: *b'ly*. Line 7: *špš . b'ly*.

32 The third edition of *KTU* has line 8: *[šp]š . mlk . rb . b'ly . [n'm?]*; line 9: *[l . špš? . m]lk . rb . mlk . [[mlk]] mšr[m . b'l]*; line 10: *[kl . h]wt <mšrm> . mlk . mlk[m . b']ly*. Cf. with the second edition of *KTU*: line 8: *[šp]'š' . mlk . rb . b'ly* [. . .]; line 9: *[l . ml]k . rb . mlk . ml'k[m . b'ly]*; line 10: *[kl . h]'w't . m'l'k . ml'k[m . b'ly]*.

more likely, since the phrase *l . špš . mlk . rb* commences another greeting using the same string of phrases as line 1, all the other elements in line 1 appear in lines 9–10, the content of what follows seems to be a new section of the letter, and there is space for the restoration of the phrase *l . špš . mlk*. This section would differ slightly from the series of titles in line 1 with the addition of “lord of all the lands” (“of Egypt” perhaps to be added in the light of scribal omission), with the possible repetition of “king of kings” in line 9, and with a certain repetition of the superlative again in line 10. Line 9 presents difficulties, as the third edition of *KTU* indicates that the reading “king of kings,” present in the second edition as a partial restoration of signs (*mlk . mlk[m]*), should actually be understood as *mlk . [[mlk]]mšr[m]*. The surer reading of the grapheme *š* and the erasure of *[[mlk]]* before *mšr* suggests scribal error and correction, the scribe’s perhaps writing by mistake the same formula found in line 1, including *mlk . mlkm*, but correcting it in line 9 to “king of Egypt” *mlk . mšrm*. A kind of parallelism exists in the introduction to the second part of the letter with this new reading, with “king of Egypt, my lord” ending line 9 and “king of kings, my lord” ending line 10. In sum, “king of kings” occurs at the beginning of each of the sections of *KTU* 2.76. Whenever titles for the Egyptian king appear in the body of the letter, “king of kings” is absent, though when the phrase appears (two or perhaps three times total) it precedes “lord” or “my lord.”

The other letter that contains “king of kings” is *KTU* 2.81 (RIH 78/03 + 78/30). The first three lines contain titles for the king as follows: line 1—“to the Sun, great king, king of Egypt”; line 2—“wonderful king, righteous king”; line 3—“king of kings, lord of all the land of [line 4] Egypt.”³³ A similar string of titles appears in lines 10–12: line 10—“to the Sun, great king, king of Egypt”; line 11—“wonderful king, righteous king, king of [line 12] kings.”³⁴ Then the text is broken, so the next title could be “lord of all the land of Egypt,” which would match the series of lines 1 to 3. The text becomes increasingly difficult to read and restore; however, line 16’ may have the repetition of this formula, since it contains “Sun, great king . . .,” though the fragmentary nature of the tablet prevents certainty with respect to this suggestion.³⁵ The litany of titles begins again in lines 19–20 following the preposition “with,” ‘m: line 19—“with the Sun, great king, king of Egypt”; line 20—“[wonderful king], righteous king, king of kings.”³⁶ Then a break appears in the tablet, but the next few letters (according to the space and letters given in *KTU*) do not indicate that “lord of all the land of Egypt” is likely, and Bordreuil and Caquot leave the beginning of line 21 (line 9’ in their configuration) untranslated.³⁷ The last string of these titles occurs in lines 30–31: line 30—“the Sun, great king, king of [line 31] [the land of Egy]pt,³⁸ wonderful king, righteous king.”³⁹ The tablet ends without extending the titles to “king of kings” (*KTU* does not indicate a break or any further writing, nor do Bordreuil and Caquot); therefore, if the writing ends here, “king of kings” was omitted, or there was a break.

While the Ugaritic data are sparse, these two letters allow for some provisional observations about the use of “king of kings.” First, “king of kings” is used only when addressing “the Sun” when this royal title referred to the Egyptian king, but it was not used with the king of Hatti, who was also called “the Sun.”⁴⁰

33 Line 1: [*l . špš . mlk . rb . mlk . mšrm*]. Line 2: [*mlk . n’ m . mlk . šdq*]. Line 3: [*mlk . m]lkm . b’l . kl . ḥwt*]. Line 4: [*mšr]m*.

34 Line 10: [*l . špš . m]lk . rb . mlk . mšr[m]*. Line 11: [*mlk . n’ m . mlk . š[dq . mlk]*]. Line 12: [*mlkm]*.

35 Line 16 of the verso lines up differently in *KTU* compared to Hawley’s reading, where the phrase beginning line 16 in the verso is [*. . .] ‘-’ . thm hy . klm . ḏr’* and, presumably, then line 15 would correspond to line 16 of *KTU*. On the difficulty of reconstructing the verso of this tablet, see Pardee 2002, 99 n. 84, in which his discussion of line numbers follows Hawley. Given the fragmentary state of the tablet, however, precision of lines may be difficult to establish, thus leading to the different readings and counting of line numbers. See Hawley 2003, 175 n. 416.

36 Lines 18’–19’ according to Hawley’s counting, but lines 19’ and 20’ in the third edition of *KTU*: ‘*m . špš . mlk . rb . mlk . mšrm* [*mlk . n’ m . mlk . šdq . mlk . mlkm*].

37 Bordreuil and Caquot 1980: 357–58.

38 Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín indicate a break at the beginning of line 31 (line 30’ in my handcopy) with enough space for “land” and part of “Egypt” ([*ḥwt . mš]rm*; Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín 2013, 210). This addition of “land” would be a slight deviation from before, which is otherwise simply *mlk . mšrm*.

39 Lines 29 and 30 in my handcopy: *špš . mlk . rb . mlk* [*ḥwt . mš]rm . mlk . n’ m . mlk . šdq*.

40 For example, see *KTU* 2.19.2; 3.1.19; and elsewhere. In 3.19.12, a legal text, “sun” is probably to be restored; it is followed in line 13 by “great king, his lord,” a similar sequence as in *KTU* 2.76, though without “king of kings” placed between “great king” and “lord.”

Second, the title “king of kings” was not always used when addressing the king of Egypt and therefore cannot be posited as a standard epithet for the pharaoh at Ugarit. For example, the attendant “great king” and “my lord,” consistently used in connection with “king of kings” in the two epistolary documents above, appear in *KTU* 2.23.1–2, 7, 9–10, 24, and elsewhere, with all letters sent to the Egyptian king.⁴¹ Third, when “king of kings” is used, a common order appears. In both texts, “king of kings” follows “great king” and precedes “lord.” Fourth, the first text (*KTU* 2.76) shows flexibility with “king of kings” inasmuch as the repetition of the title “the Sun” does not include the superlative term. The second text (*KTU* 2.81) is more consistent, though if the text ends without using “king of kings” and “lord of all the land of Egypt,” then it, too, is flexible in its employment of the relative phrase. In sum, “king of kings” was used for the king of Egypt, the superior to the Ugaritic king and, therefore, was used when the inferior king addressed the pharaoh. While “to the king, my lord” was used when someone from Ugarit wrote to the king of Ugarit (*KTU* 2.40, etc.), the diplomatic letters from the king of Ugarit to the king of Egypt employ “king of kings” as one means of communicating the vassal’s knowledge of his status with respect to the suzerain. Assuming the string of titles in the two documents are in some fashion a normative list,⁴² the place of “king of kings” in the series of titles for a superior ruler follows “great king” and precedes “lord,” though as *KTU* 2.76 indicates, there may have been some flexibility in use of the title.

More interesting, but even more uncertain, is the correlation between use of the phrase in Egyptian inscriptions and Ugaritic epistolary texts. The frequency of attestations in the New Kingdom era of Egypt is not sufficient to establish “king of kings” as a well-known epithet for the pharaoh. Moreover, the appearances of the phrase in Egypt pertaining to the pharaoh occur once in the sixteenth and twice in the fifteenth centuries BCE, which means these occurrences are two to three centuries removed from the writing of *KTU* 2.76 and 2.81. At present, there is no readily identifiable use of this phrase in Hittite,⁴³ though such a lacuna could be explained by the number of tablets available for examination.⁴⁴ If the phrase was not used in Hittite, its nonuse might explain why the Ugaritic scribe used “great king” and “lord” for the king of Hatti but added “king of kings” to his address to the king of Egypt.⁴⁵ The foregoing analysis provides a tempting correlation between Egyptian and Ugaritic usage of “king of kings,” and, though arriving at certain conclusions with the existing attestations is impossible, the use of “king of kings” in epistolary texts at Ugarit provides a datum for situating the early history of this title in New Kingdom Egypt.

ASSYRIAN, NEO-BABYLONIAN, AND PERSIAN-ERA AKKADIAN DATA

While both Egyptian and Ugaritic attestations are sparse, the appearances of “king of kings” in Akkadian royal inscriptions are much more numerous.⁴⁶ Because of the high frequency of the phrase’s occurrences in Akkadian texts, especially from Persian-era Akkadian, a discussion of the specifics of each example would require more space than a short study such as this one allows. Instead, therefore, I will discuss the broad

41 Del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín (2015, 2: 825) identify that this letter was addressed to the Egyptian king. Although the letter is fragmentary, the titles for “Sun” are mostly intact and do not indicate that “king of kings” was used in the letter.

42 This suggestion is speculative and offered not as a proposition to be defended but as a heuristic statement to allow for preliminary conclusions to be reached in the light of the sparse data available—conclusions that may be revised, if not controverted, if more evidence is attained.

43 The list of attestations under the entry for king, or *ḥaššu-*, in Puhvel’s (1984) etymological dictionary does not include any examples of the phrase “king of kings,” and the *Chicago Hittite Dictionary* has not yet been published for words beginning with *ḥ*.

44 Hoffner and Melchert (2008, §0.6) give an approximate number of thirty thousand tablets—by no means a small number compared to the Ugaritic corpus, though small compared to the Akkadian and Egyptian evidence.

45 Other letters addressed to the king of Egypt, for example, do not use “king of kings,” even as other terms, such as “Sun,” “great king,” and “my master,” are employed. See *KTU* 2.23.

46 Bilabel (1927, 209) speculates the appearance of the phrase in Akkadian texts in the later part of the Neo-Assyrian era (Essarhaddon and Assurbanipal) was not due to the development of a homegrown use, “sondern seine Eroberung Ägyptens (ebenso wie bei seinem Vater) die direkte Veranlassung zur Beilegung des Titels war.”

characteristics of its use and the orthography of each era, while making note of representative examples where relevant.

The first attestation of “king of kings” in Akkadian comes from the Middle-Assyrian Empire in a royal inscription commissioned by Tukulti-Ninurta I in the thirteenth century BCE. In this era, the phrase was used in royal inscriptions and epistolary texts addressed to the king. Although the underlying phonological expression of the phrase “king of kings” would have been *šar šarrāni*, or *šarri šarrāni*, a variety of orthographic expressions for the phrase appears in Assyrian inscriptions in logograms. For example, Seux cites the following: LUGAL LUGAL.MEŠ, LUGAL LUGAL.MEŠ-*ni*, and LUGAL LUGAL.MEŠ.⁴⁷ The Middle-Assyrian kings who used the titles were Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243–1207), Assur-nadin-apli (1206–1203),⁴⁸ Tiglath-Pileser I (1114–1076), and Assur bel-kala (1073–1056). Neo-Assyrian kings include Assurnasirpal II (883–859),⁴⁹ Esarhaddon (680–669), and Assurbanipal (668–627). While the record of this title in Akkadian is more prevalent than in Egyptian sources, gaps, such as in the tenth and eighth centuries BCE, also appear in the Assyrian records. This situation might suggest that while “king of kings” was by no means unknown or sparse in the Neo-Assyrian Empire, it had not become a standard epithet of all kings. If it had become a standard title, one might think that the prominent kings of the eighth century (Tiglath-Pileser III, Shalmaneszar V, Sargon II, and Sennacherib) might have also used the phrase. Nonetheless, the title seems to have reached a certain currency of usage so as to become much more frequent than in Egyptian and Ugaritic sources.

The Neo-Babylonian evidence presents a different scenario. While the Neo-Assyrian usage of “king of kings” referred to the heads of the empire, in the Neo-Babylonian period the title was applied only to Marduk.⁵⁰ This distinction will become important later when discussing the data from the Hebrew Bible (where Nebuchadnezzar is called “king of kings,” even though Neo-Babylonian documents do not attest the usage in reference to royalty). At this point, however, it is simply worth noting that the same phrase that gained prominence in the Neo-Assyrian period as a reference to kings was later, in the Neo-Babylonian period, reserved only for Marduk.⁵¹

Although the Old Persian data will be discussed below, the Achaemenid rulers used the phrase “king of kings” in Akkadian extensively. The kings who used the title in Akkadian inscriptions were Darius I and Xerxes (who perhaps used the phrase more extensively in Akkadian than any other Achaemenid king), Artaxerxes I, Artaxerxes II, and Artaxerxes III. The orthography differs somewhat from Neo-Assyrian orthography, as the latter used logograms and abbreviations almost exclusively, but the former spelled “king of kings” both syllabically and logographically.⁵² The options for the writing of the title in this era include LUGAL LUGAL.MEŠ, *šá-ar-ri šá-ar-ri*.MEŠ, *šá-ar-ri šá-ar-ra-a-nu*, LUGAL *šá* LUGAL-LUGAL.MEŠ, and LUGAL *šá* LUGAL.MEŠ. As an example, an inscription from Xerxes reads: *anāku RN LUGAL rabû LUGAL ša LUGAL.MEŠ LUGAL mātâte LUGAL naphari lišānu gabbi LUGAL qaqqari rabītu rapaštu* “I am Xerxes,

47 Seux 1967, 318 n. 271. See also similar Akkadian phrases: *šar-ru in* LUGAL-*rí*, “king over (lit., among) kings,” Ungnad 1915, text 133, col. 2, line 2; LUGAL *in* LUGAL-*rí* in King 1976, text 57, line 42. See also LUGAL *bēlē*, “king over lords,” as in Assurnasirpal’s inscription in Budge and King 1902, 260, col. I, line 19; LUGAL *bēl* LUGAL.MEŠ, “king lord of kings,” Harper 1892–1914, 923, line 8.

48 Itti-Marduk Balatu (1139–1132) of the second Isin dynasty also used the phrase in one of his inscriptions (Seux 1967, 318). Notably, the orthographic representation of “king of kings” differs from the Neo-Assyrian kings; Itti-Marduk Balatu spelled the phrase *šar šar-r[i]*.

49 Sarduri I, king of the Urartians in the middle ninth century BCE, also used the title (*ibid.*).

50 For Marduk as “lord of lords and king of kings,” see Schrader and Zimmern 1903, 373. Although it seems as though Neo-Babylonian kings did not use the title “king of kings,” the title “king of Babylon” appears frequently in their royal inscriptions (*šar bāb-ili*.KI). For examples, see Langdon 1912, 70–71, 78–79.

51 As a testimony to the narrow attestation of the phrase in Neo-Babylonian literature compared to Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, as of the 1920s Bilabel (1927, 210) stated, “Aus Babylon ist mir der Titel [König der Könige] nicht bekannt.” The more narrow usage perhaps is indicative of fewer attestations in the Neo-Babylonian period, hence fewer data, thereby explaining Bilabel’s presentation of various texts from the Neo-Assyrian period but lack of citations of texts from the Neo-Babylonian period.

52 Seux 1967, 318 n. 271.

the great king, king of kings, king over the lands, king over all nations, king over the vast wide earth.”⁵³ The string of royal titles includes phrases often associated with “king of kings,” such as “great king” (also attested at Ugarit used with “king of kings”) and “king over the lands” (similar to Ugaritic “king of the land of Egypt”).

In Akkadian, the use of the phrase “king of kings” varied slightly. In both the Assyrian and Persian uses of the phrase, it was employed extensively for references to the king. The orthography of the title in the former was limited to logographic representation,⁵⁴ while the latter also shows syllabic forms of the phrase. In Neo-Babylonian, however, the title was used only for Marduk.⁵⁵

PERSIAN DATA

Achaemenid kings not only used the phrase “king of kings” in Akkadian inscriptions, but they rendered the title in inscriptions in Old Persian as well.⁵⁶ The grammatical construction is similar to the examples in the Semitic languages above, where the head noun stands in genitive relationship with the *nomens rectum* (in Old Persian: *xšāyaθiya: xšāyaθiyānām*).⁵⁷ Skjaervø describes this function as a “partitive” in Old Persian, with the phrase thereby meaning “king among kings” and being reminiscent of other Old Persian phrases, such as “greatest of gods.” In this sense, the partitive functions similarly to the comparative and superlative, though the latter are more precisely formed by adding *-tara-* (*-θara-*) or *-īyah-* in the case of comparatives to adverbs and adjectives respectively, and *-tama-* (to adverbs) or *-išta-* (to adjectives) in the case of superlatives.⁵⁸ The following is a representative sample of texts as found in Kent’s grammar.

The first inscription describes Arsames, who perhaps was king only briefly before he ceded power to Cyrus II.⁵⁹ The text was discovered at Hamadan and claims that Arsames was fully considered to be a king of Persia. The Hamadan inscription includes the title “king of kings” in the introduction: (1)*Aršama: xšāyaθiya: vazraka: x(2)šāyaθiya: xšāyaθiyānām: x(3)šāyaθiya: Pārsa: Ariyāramna: xš(4)āyaθiyahyā: puça: Haxāmanišiya* “Arsames, the Great King, King of Kings, King (in) Persia, son (of) Ariaramnes the King, an Achaemenian.” Although some dispute the legitimacy of this inscription, the Behistun inscription contains eight Achaemenid kings who preceded Darius, one king of which would have to be Arsames in order to arrive at the designated number.⁶⁰

Darius also used the phrase a number of times. In the Behistun inscription, he announces himself as the “king of kings” in the introduction: (1):*adam: Dārayavauš: xšāyaθiya: vazraka: xšāyaθiya: xšāyaθiy(2)ānām: xšāyaθiya: Pārsaiy: xšāyaθiya: dahyūnām: Višt(3)āspahyā: puça: Aršāmahyā: napā: Haxāmanišiya* “I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King in Persia, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, grandson

53 Weissbach 1911, 119.

54 In Akkadian letters of the Neo-Assyrian period, the word *šarru* was not spelled syllabically but instead was rendered logographically as LUGAL or MAN. See the entry for *šarru* in the indices of Parpola 1987; Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990; Parpola 1993; Fuchs and Parpola 2001; Luukko and Buylaere 2002; Dietrich 2003; and Reynolds 2003. In each volume, no syllabic listing is given for *šarru*, but only the logographic designations. For the spelling *šar šar-ra-a-ni*, see Köcher 1953, text 139, line 5. For ideological motivations for using MAN as a logogram in the Neo-Assyrian period, see Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 175.

55 While Neo-Babylonian texts reserve the title for Marduk, the Babylonian correspondence of Esarhaddon (written in Neo-Assyrian) includes the title LUGAL LUGAL.MEŠ and LUGAL ša LUGAL.MEŠ for letters written to the king (see Reynolds 2003, texts 8, 101, 185, and 186).

56 According to Blenkinsopp (1988, 147), Persian kings borrowed the title from the Assyrians and Babylonians.

57 Cross (1979, 43–44) claims the Phoenician phrase *ʾdn mlkm wrkm* “lord of kingdoms and dominions” “reflects roughly the Persian titular *xšāyaθiya xšāyaθiyānām xšāyaθiya dahyūnām*, ‘king of kings, king of dominions.’” Given the closeness of the former phrase to the Persian phrase, and given the chronological proximity to the Persian usage, his conclusion is plausible. If the correspondence is there, however, it is rough, as he correctly states, since “king of kings” and “lord of kingdoms” are not exact equivalents, though both phrases might be used to communicate royal superlatives. For a Hellenistic dating of *ʾdn mlkm* in Canaanite languages, see Ginsberg 1940, 71–74.

58 Skjaervø 2002, 84.

59 Kent 1953, 116.

60 Huyse 1998, 423–24.

of Arsames, an Achaemenian.”⁶¹ Two inscriptions from Persepolis also use the title in the introduction. The Persepolis E royal inscription begins: (1)*adam: Dārayavauš: xšāyaθiya: vaz*(2)*raka: xšāyaθiya: xšāyaθi-yānā*(3)*m: xšāyaθiya: dahyūnām: tyai*(4)*šām: parūnām: Vištāspahyā: (5)puça: Haxāmanišiya* “I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of many countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian.”⁶² Likewise, the Persepolis H inscription begins: (1)*Dārayavauš: Xš: vazraka: Xš: Xšyanām: Xš*(2)*: dahyūvnām: Vištāspahyā: puça*(3)*: Haxāmanišiya* “Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, and Achaemenian.”⁶³ In the Naqš-I-Rustam A inscription, he also uses the phrase “king of kings,” though not in the introduction: (8)*adam: Dārayavauš: xšāyaθiya: va*(9)*zraka: xšāyaθiya: xšāyaθiyānām*(10)*: xšāyaθiya: dahyūnām: vispazanā*(11)*nām: xšāyaθiya: ahyāyā: būmi*(12)*yā: vazrakāyā: dūraiapiy: Vištās*(13)*pahyā: puça: Haxāmanišiya: Pārsa: P*(14)*ārsahyā: puça: Ariya: Ariya:ci*(15)*ça* “I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries containing all kinds of men, King in this great earth far and wide, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, having Aryan lineage.”⁶⁴

The examples above indicate that the phrase “king of kings” had a productive role in the introduction of an inscription—a role that helped to establish the supremacy of the Persian king. The beginning of an inscription was not the only location for the placement of the phrase, since the Naqš-I-Rustam A inscription does not include the title until line 9, after a brief introductory section describing how Ahuramazda made Darius king. Regardless of its placement, the number of attestations of “king of kings” increased significantly in the Persian period relative to Egyptian, Ugaritic, Assyrian, and Neo-Babylonian sources.

PALMYRENEAN DATA

The Persian usage of the title “king of kings” survived into the Sassanid empire and was adopted by a Palmyrene king, Septimius Odainat, and his wife, Zenobia, who bestowed the title upon her son after her husband’s death. This usage was short-lived, as Palmyra was defeated by Rome around 272 CE. The Palmyrene usage, therefore, did not become a major avenue for the continuation of the phrase “king of kings,” though its attestation deserves a few comments before discussing the reception of the phrase from Persian usage into the Hebrew Bible, which would preserve the title for proliferation in later Jewish and Christian sources.

Septimius Odainat was the leader of Palmyra, which was situated between the Roman Empire and the Sassanian Empire, ruled at that time by Shapur I. In 267 CE, Septimius Odainat, ostensibly as a loyal adherent to the Roman Empire, repelled the Persian forces. In doing so, he intimated his ambition for an independent Palmyrene Empire by adopting the Persian title “king of kings” in Aramaic, the same title that was predominant in the Achaemenid Empire and that was retained in the Sassanian Empire.⁶⁵ To commemorate this victory, Zenobia, his wife (who was perhaps responsible for her husband’s suspicious death in 267 CE), erected a monument in 271 in Palmyrene, a dialect of Aramaic, with his title *mlk mlkm*, “king of kings,” in line 1 as part of the introduction.⁶⁶ Thus the phrase the Achaemenids borrowed from the Mesopotamians persisted into the Sassanid Empire and was attributed to Septimius Odainat, the king of Palmyra.

Zenobia ruled Palmyra with her son after the death of Septimius Odainat, and she became increasingly aggressive in her quest to expand the Palmyrene Empire. As a statement of the dynastic line that inherited the kingdom left by Septimius Odainat, she gave her son the title “king of kings,” which, in her view, was rightly his epithet after the death of his father. In a bilingual Greek and Palmyrene inscription (with a later Latin addition), she commissioned a work dedicated to the health of her son as well as to her own health, as

61 Kent 1953, 119.

62 Ibid., 136.

63 Ibid., 137.

64 Ibid., 138. Naqš-I-Rustam is potentially where Darius was buried.

65 Browning 1979, 45. See also Millar 1993, 319–36; Sartre 2005, 350–57. For more on the history of Palmyra, see recently Bryce 2014, 275–318. Note in particular the chapter titled “Syria’s ‘King of Kings’: The Life and Death of Odenathus.”

66 CIS 2: 3946.

she was the mother of the “king of kings.”⁶⁷ Her aggressive expansion incurred the ire of the Roman Empire, which defeated Zenobia and the Palmyrene Empire. With the downfall of Zenobia’s rule, the phrase “king of kings” also ceased to be used in Palmyra.

HEBREW BIBLE DATA

This prevalence of the title “king of kings” in the Achaemenid era influenced the use of the phrase in the Hebrew Bible. Of the three occurrences of the phrase in the Hebrew Bible, two appear in Aramaic texts⁶⁸ and one in an exilic Hebrew text.⁶⁹ Whereas the Aramaic texts can be explained as borrowings from Persian usage, the passage in Ezekiel presents more difficulties.

The Aramaic usages in Ezra and Daniel are both rendered in a hebraized form, מלך מלכיא (*melek malkayyā*), instead of the expected Aramaic מלך מלכיא (*mleḵ malkayyā*). The referent of the phrase in each case designates kings and not deities. In Daniel 2:37, the king is the Neo-Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar, whereas in Ezra 7:12 the king is the Persian king Artaxerxes. The appearance of the title in Ezra 7:12 is expected, given that Artaxerxes used the title of himself (though not as much as Darius and Xerxes did), and this observation perhaps indicates the decree in Ezra is, in some manner, authentically Persian.⁷⁰ Such an assertion does not necessitate that the document as it appears in Ezra 7 was recorded verbatim from the Persian administration. Rather, it is likely that Ezra 7:12–26 is an etiology for the promulgation of the Torah in similar manner as the Letter of Aristeas is an etiology for the divine nature of the LXX but which nonetheless contains some accurate historical information, such as the title of the Achaemenid king.⁷¹

The more difficult passage to explain is Daniel 2:37, which applies the epithet “king of kings” to Nebuchadnezzar—a title he evidently never used for himself (nor did any Neo-Babylonian king use it as a royal title). Although the final form of Daniel comes from the second century BCE, many scholars argue the book nonetheless draws from older stories that may go back to royal court tales of Judeans in the Babylonian and Persian palaces.⁷² Since non-Ptolemaic (or non-Egyptian) Hellenistic rulers evidently did not use the title,⁷³ the appearance of “king of kings” as a title for Nebuchadnezzar may have resulted from applying a Persian epithet to a story originating in the Neo-Babylonian court.⁷⁴

The one example of the phrase “king of kings” in the Hebrew portion of the Hebrew Bible comes from Ezekiel 26:7 and also refers to Nebuchadnezzar. The form of the title is the expected מלך מלכיא (*melek mālākīm*), a construct phrase that can denote a superlative (“the greatest king,” much like *šîr haššîrîm* means “the song of songs” or “the greatest song”).⁷⁵ The difficulty of the phrase in Ezekiel stems from the fact that the book, or at least much of Ezekiel 1–39, likely comes from between the years of 597 and 587 BCE, and in its final form from the Exilic period itself or later. Unlike Daniel 2:37, which could be blending

67 CIS 2: 3971, lines 2 and 6.

68 Ezra 7:12; Dan. 2:37.

69 Ezek. 26:7.

70 Williamson 1985, 100.

71 Hagedorn 2007, 72; Kratz 2007, 94–96. On the apologetic and nonhistorical nature of Ezra 7, see Grabbe 2006, 551–55.

72 Beaulieu 2009, 274–76; Collins 1993, 181. For more on the Babylonian background of Daniel 1–6, see Paul 2001, 1: 55–68.

73 While Hellenistic rulers may not have used the title themselves (see Williamson below), Hellenistic authors such as Hippocrates used the phrase of the Persian kings in imitation of the Persian usage (βασιλεὺς βασιλέων μέγας Ἀρταξέρξης, in Littré 1839–61, 9: 316, letter 3, line 1). Plutarchus used the phrase “king of kings” to describe the Armenian king, Tigranes (Ziegler 1969, chap. 14, section 6, line 7). For more on the Armenian use of “king of kings,” see also Bilabel 1927, 211.

74 Williamson 1985, 100. Such confusion of traditions has parallels elsewhere in the Book of Daniel. For example, the madness and exile of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel more likely reflects perceptions of Nabonidus’ mental state and his exile from Babylon (Beaulieu 2009, 275). Other examples of the confusion between Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus could be adduced.

75 Murphy 1990, 119; Pope 1977, 294. Note, however, the definite *nomen rectum* in “song of songs.”

both Neo-Babylonian and Persian traditions in order to apply a Persian title to a Neo-Babylonian king, Ezekiel 26:7 is part of a book that seems to be mostly Neo-Babylonian in origin.⁷⁶

This situation results in a few possible explanations, none of them certain. First, Ezekiel could be appealing to older, Neo-Assyrian uses of the title.⁷⁷ Second, perhaps the prophet was aware of the usage of the title in Neo-Babylonian literature but was unaware it was reserved for Marduk. Ezekiel, therefore, applied a Neo-Assyrian title wrongly to a Neo-Babylonian king on the assumption that the usage of the title was transferred similarly from the former era to the latter.⁷⁸ A third possibility is that Nebuchadnezzar did apply the title to himself, but the available records do not attest this convention and the lacuna in attestation is a result of lack of evidence and not lack of usage.⁷⁹ A final explanation is that a later, Persian editor inserted the title in Ezekiel 26:7.⁸⁰

The first, second, and fourth options are more likely than the third. Given the usage of the phrase over time in the ancient Near East, and given its fairly consistent appearance in Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, there is no reason to suppose that a sixth-century prophet or prophetic circle was unaware of the title, even if the prophet applied it in a manner Nebuchadnezzar would not have used. The consistency with which “king of kings” was applied only to Marduk in the Neo-Babylonian inscriptions indicates there was likely no application of this epithet to other deities or to kings, in which case the second option is the least plausible. Without more data, however, these statements are informed conjectures at best.

CONCLUSION

The appearance of the phrase “king of kings” throughout the ancient Near East was generally part of a larger phenomenon of cultural contact, wherein elements of one culture were adopted by another culture. At times it is uncertain whether cultural contact was responsible for the transmission of this title from one language to another. Indeed, the case examined above between Egyptian and Ugaritic provides a possible line of transmission from the first known occurrence of the phrase in New Kingdom Egypt into Semitic languages via Ugaritic epistolary texts. In other instances explored in this study, the borrowing of “king of kings” from one language and culture to another is clearer. For example, the lines of transmission from Akkadian use to Persian texts, and from Persian texts to the Hebrew Bible, are manifest. While I have analyzed above the use of “king of kings” from its beginnings in the textual record through the appearance of the title in the Hebrew Bible, the reception of this phrase continued from culture to culture. This process eventually led to its adoption into New Testament texts, such as 1 Timothy 6:15, Revelation 17:14, and Revelation 19:16, though an examination of these texts is beyond the purview of this study.⁸¹ Given its presence in both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, “king of kings” then became part of early Jewish and Christian liturgy and a standard title for Yahweh, at which point the phrase proliferated in these written

76 Some scholars propose that Ezekiel 40–48 was attached to Ezekiel 1–39 at a later time and was the product of various exilic and postexilic expansions (Zimmerli 1983, 547–53). See also Ganzel and Holtz 2014 for the Babylonian background of Ezekiel’s Temple. For a discussion regarding the Persian origins of parts of the book, see Gerstenberger 2011, 337–53.

77 Zimmerli 1983, 36.

78 Allen 1994, 76; Block 1998, 2: 40.

79 Zimmerli 1983, 36.

80 Manhot 1888, 14: 442–43. The LXX and MT may show a similar issue in Ezekiel 29:3, where the LXX has “Behold, I am against Pharaoh,” whereas the MT adds the title “king of Egypt” (“Behold, I am against Pharaoh, king of Egypt”). While there is no manuscript variation in Ezekiel 26:7 with respect to the phrase “king of kings,” a similar process could result in the addition of the title in this verse from the Persian period, thus matching the known occurrences of the epithet from that era but being anachronistic in the context of Ezekiel. Such expansions of titles are well known in text criticism. See Mackie 2015, 94–95, for examples and bibliographic information.

81 For the influence of Daniel’s use of “king of kings” on Revelation 19:17, see Beale 1985, 618–20.

sources.⁸² Understanding the history of the phrase until this proliferation offers a window into the complex development of a title that has become common currency in many religious traditions.

82 Early Jewish writers adopted the phrase freely—writers such as Philo (see Cohn 1896–1930, 4: 41 line 3; 5 [bk. 1]: 18 line 3). With respect to rabbinic sources, passages such as Tosefta Sanhedrin 8:4 employ the formula:

דבר אחר למה נברא יחידי להגיד גדולתו של מלך מלכי המלכים

“Another matter: Why was man created alone? To declare the greatness of the king of kings of kings.”

In this example, the superlative, applied to Yahweh, is reinforced by a single nominal followed by two plural nominals. In Ethiopic, the phrase “king of kings” became productive in both theological and political contexts. For example, the king Menelik II referred to himself as ንጉሥ ነገሥት (*nəgusa nagast*) “king of kings” (Bilabel 1927, 212). This epithet was a political title honorific of the rightful heir to the Ethiopian throne until the end of the monarchy in 1974 and was used in Ethiopia since the 296 CE Sassanid victory over Rome, in which conflict Ethiopia sided with the Sassanids (Kobishchanov 1979, 195). The biblical idiom was translated directly as *nəgusa nagast* in Daniel 2:37 and Ezekiel 26:7 (Dillmann 1865, 361; Löfgren 1927, 16). The phrase is often common in prayer scrolls referring to ለግዚአብሔር (*‘əgzī’abher*), the Ethiopian designation for Yahweh, such as scroll 31 in the Duke Ethiopic Manuscript Collection. (My thanks to Aaron M. Butts for pointing out this specific example.)

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21

AKKADIAN *KASLU*, UGARITIC *KSL*, AND HEBREW כֶּסֶל
A (VERY TARDY) RESPONSE TO MOSHE HELD

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THE HEBREW SEGHOLATE NOUN כֶּסֶל has traditionally been translated “loin(s)” in its physical sense and either “stupidity” or “confidence” in its figurative senses.¹ With its physical meaning, the term occurs five times in Leviticus in instructions for animal sacrifice² and in both Psalm 38:8 and Job 15:27 to describe the “loins” of a person.³ The remaining six biblical examples of כֶּסֶל, as well as the two occurrences of the byform כֶּסֶלָה, are typically interpreted as having one of the two proposed abstract/figurative meanings, “confidence” or “stupidity,” with the latter sense often being compared to the more common כֶּסֶיל (“stupid fellow, fool”).⁴ The eight occurrences of כֶּסֶל and כֶּסֶלָה with their derived meanings are thus translated as “stupidity,” “folly,” “boast,” or “confidence,” depending on the context. In his 1978 commentary on the book of Job, Robert Gordis proposed the following development of the derived meaning from the physical:

The root כֶּסֶל has the original meaning “fat”; cf. כֶּסֶל (Lev. 3:4; 10:15; Job 15:27). It then develops the secondary connotation of “fool” in כֶּסֶיל, a semantic relationship exhibited also by טָפַשׁ “grow fat” (Ps. 119:70) and mishnaic Hebrew טַפֵּשׁ “fool,” probably because the fool is one whose heart, the seat of understanding, is overlaid by fat. . . . Moreover, the fool, unlike the wise man, is one who trusts everyone too easily. . . . Hence, the tertiary meaning “trust, confidence” develops in כֶּסֶל (Ps. 78:7; Pr. 3:26; Job 8:14; 31:24) and כֶּסֶלָה “trust, confidence” in [Job 4:6].⁵

In a widely cited study published in the Landsberger Festschrift in 1965, however, Moshe Held rejected the traditional interpretation:⁶

Yet it is quite obvious that Hebrew כֶּסֶל cannot mean “loins.” Suffice it to call attention to the fact that כֶּסֶל, unlike words for other parts of the body is never used in the dual. This holds true not only of כֶּסֶלים in Leviticus but also of כֶּסֶלי in Ps. 38:8. For in the latter verse כֶּסֶלי is obviously in the plural and means “my sinews.”⁷

Held instead proposed, adducing comparative evidence from Akkadian and Ugaritic, that the meaning of כֶּסֶל in its primary sense should be understood as “sinew/tendon.” He goes on to argue that in its derived sense כֶּסֶל (and כֶּסֶלָה) means “inner strength”—reflecting the strength provided by sinews—and so develops connotations of “confidence” (i.e., mental strength or belief in one’s abilities). His concluding paragraph is worth quoting in full:

1 Cf., e.g., BDB, 492–93; HALOT, 489. DCH (4: 444) glosses the physical meaning as “thigh.”

2 Always as the plural כֶּסֶלים; see Lev. 3:4, 10, 15; 4:9; 7:4.

3 It is the singular כֶּסֶל in Job 15:27 and the suffixed form כֶּסֶלִי in Psalm 38:7.

4 Also cf. the *hapax legomenon* כֶּסֶלִית “stupidity” in antithetic parallelism with חֲקִמּוֹת in Proverbs 9:3.

5 Gordis 1978, 47. Also cf. Klein 1987, 282.

6 Held 1965, 395–406. The relevant section for *ksl* appears on pages 401–6.

7 Ibid., 402.

To summarize: (1) There is but one verbal root כסל in Hebrew, and it denotes stupidity, bad habits, lack of manners and education, and the like. Thus, Hebrew כסל is in no way different in meaning from Akkadian *saklu*. (2) Hebrew כסל, like Akkadian *kaslu* and Ugaritic *ksl*, is a primary noun meaning “sinew/tendon” and cannot be derived from any verb כסל. (3) The primary noun כסל-כסלה, “sinew,” “tendon,” comes to denote, in a derived meaning, “inner strength,” “confidence.”⁸

Held’s study offers a convincing refutation of the traditional view that כסל means “loin, fat of the loin.” There are, however, problems with all three points of his conclusion. Implicit in the first point, for example, is the claim that כסיל “fool” and כסילות “foolishness” are derived from a verb entirely unrelated to the primary noun כסל that means, according to his proposal, “sinew/tendon.” Oddly, this final paragraph is the first—and therefore only—time he mentions this verbal root, and he offers no further evidence or comment on the matter. This lack, as will become evident, is a weakness in what has come to be viewed as a very influential essay.⁹ In addition, Held does not address the biblical examples of כסל and כסלה for which “folly” is the widely accepted meaning and where “inner strength” would be untenable.

A survey of the various usages of the cognate terms in Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Classical Hebrew¹⁰ also reveals difficulties with his assertion that the primary noun means “sinew/tendon.” To anticipate my conclusion, I will instead propose that the primary meaning of *KSL* is specifically associated with the back: the singular is most frequently used as a collective referring to the spinal column (perhaps including the *erector spinae* muscle group, or “sinews of the back”), and the plural for the bones of the vertebrae. I will also argue that the derived meanings of כסל and כסלה in Classical Hebrew are best understood as “overconfidence, false confidence, hubris”—perhaps developed from “spine” in the sense of an erect, haughty posture—and that these terms are in fact etymologically related to כסיל and כסילות.

AKKADIAN EVIDENCE

Held notes that several Akkadian words, *matnu*, *šir’ānu*, and *gīdu*, can all mean “sinew, tendon, cord, string of a bow” and acknowledges that Akkadian *kaslu/kislu* is not widely attested with the same meaning.¹¹ Indeed, in its entry “kislu (*kaslu*),” CAD gives the primary definition as “transverse process of the vertebra.”¹² Nevertheless, Held writes that the key passage in Akkadian for his assertion that *kaslu* means “sinew” is a medical text originally published by René Labat,¹³ which he transcribes as follows: *š. lâ’û šap-pu ul-tu kišâdi-šû adi ešenšêri-šû GAZ-LU-šû paṭrû^{meš} imât*. Labat leaves GAZ-LU untranslated and renders the line as “Si, le bébé, . . . depuis sa nuque jusqu’à sa colonne vertébrale, ses . . . sont relâchés: il mourra.”¹⁴ Held, however, translates it as “if a . . . baby’s sinews [*kaslû*] (extending) from its neck to its backbone are loosened the baby will die.” He then asserts that the expression *kaslû piṭṭurû* is “in no way different from *puṭṭurû riksûa*, ‘my sinews are loosened,’ in Ludlul II 104.”¹⁵

While this text certainly seems to preclude reading the term as “loin, fat of loin”—since the region of the loin is understood to be restricted to the lower part of the torso—it does not prove that *kaslu* in Akkadian should be understood as “sinew.” There are known medical conditions afflicting infants in which their musculature might be described as “loose” (e.g., ligamentous laxity, low connective tissue tone), but

8 Ibid., 406.

9 Held’s essay has been cited in the CAD and by numerous Ugaritic and biblical scholars. In his commentary on Leviticus 1–16, Jacob Milgrom (1991, 207) writes, “the customary rendering [of כסלים as] ‘loins’ has been definitively refuted by Held.”

10 This survey will include all the Akkadian examples listed in CAD’s entry “kislu (*kaslu*)” (8: 425), the Ugaritic examples in the concordance of Cunchillos, Vita, and Zamora (2003, 1928–29), and all the occurrences in Classical Hebrew.

11 Held 1965, 402.

12 CAD 8: 425.

13 Labat 1951, 222: 41.

14 Ibid., 222–23.

15 Held 1965, 403. Foster (1997, 489) translates this phrase, “my joints were separated.”

these conditions typically improve over time. Such ailments would therefore hardly justify the categorical diagnosis that “the baby will die,” even without the benefit of modern medical technology.¹⁶ CAD offers a different reading of the line, again glossing the term with its primary definition “transverse process of the vertebrae.” The “transverse process” might seem to be superfluous in this case, but it is significant that the Akkadian text refers to the part of the baby “from the neck to the backbone.” If the term here is simply read as “vertebrae,” then the infant with the *kaslū puṭṭuru*—separated or “loosened” vertebrae—would be suffering from spina bifida, a well-known malady that is life-threatening if surgery is not performed (and so would be fatal in the ancient world).¹⁷

Held discusses the other Akkadian texts containing the term in a long footnote. One of these texts is a list of instructions for making glass: *ešemta* [. . .] *ša kaslī immeri taḥaššal*.¹⁸ He translates this instruction as “you crush the bone [. . .] of a sheep’s tendons” and directs the reader to CAD IV 342d.¹⁹ But the resulting expression is rather peculiar: what would “bone of a sheep’s tendons” mean? In fact, CAD does not translate *kaslu* in the entry to which Held refers but instead renders the phrase simply as “you crush the bone [. . .] of a sheep’s *kaslu*.”²⁰ Again, the “bone of a sheep’s vertebrae” would seem more appropriate, given the use of bone powder in the manufacture of dyes and mortar for the mixing of pigments (see discussion of the Ugaritic evidence below).

In the same footnote, Held completes his analysis of the Akkadian evidence by discussing the three Old Babylonian texts in which *kislu* is associated with *kunuk ešemšēri* (lit., “the seal of the backbone”²¹). These are the texts that led to CAD’s primary definition of the term as “transverse process of the vertebra.” Held writes, “they are in reality one in the same passage in different transmissions,” and indeed the phrasing and terminology of all three is very similar.²² The first of these passages is YOS 10 48:35, which Held transcribes as *šumma kunuk ešemšērim 2 kislī imittim šumēlam itiq*;²³ CAD translates it, “if, of the two transverse processes of the vertebra, the right one is longer than the left. . . .” Held reads the second (*RA* 38 85:10) as *kunuk ešemšērim kislūšina imittum eli šumēlim lī[ter]* “as to the vertebra (connected with) two *kislu*’s, may the right one [‘exceed’] the left one,”²⁴ and the third (Harvard Semitic Museum 7498:28) *kunuk ešemšērim kišrī šina imi[tum šumēl]am lītiq* “as to the vertebra (connected with) two *kišru*’s, may the ri[ght one] go beyond the [left one].”²⁵

Held acknowledges that CAD seems “to have good reason for identifying the two *kislu*’s as the ‘transverse processes’” in these passages but goes on to write that “None of the three passages are syntactically correct” and that the translation suggested in CAD “would call for the following text: *šumma kunuk ešemšērim šina kaslū<šu> ša imittim ša šumēlim itiq*.” The immediate relevance of his grammatical critique

16 Even with more serious conditions such as Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, the lifespan is rarely affected.

17 This is, in fact, the CAD’s (8: 425) proposed interpretation, though the entry does contain a note that the meaning “transverse process of the vertebrae” may not be appropriate for all occurrences of the term, including this one (“. . . there are difficulties which might indicate that one or two other words *kaslu* are involved”), and in fact CAD cites Held’s study in this connection. If the condition being described is in fact spina bifida, then *ešemšēri* might refer to the whole spine and the plural *kaslū* the individual bones of the vertebrae.

18 Also see Zimmern 1925, 200 lines 33f.

19 Held 1965, 403 n. 114.

20 CAD 4: 342–43. It is of course possible that the lacuna might provide an explanation, but it is odd that Held seems to view this interpretation as the most likely one.

21 Ibid., 344 d.

22 Held 1965, 403 n. 114. In one text (Harvard Semitic Museum 7498:28), *kišru* is used; CAD (8: 425) reads *kunuk ešemšērim ki-is-lu* (text *-ri*) *ši-na i-me-e[t-tum šu-me-l]am li-te-iq*.

23 Goetze 1947, pl. CII. The phrase is repeated almost verbatim in the next line (36), with the only difference being the replacement of *šumēlam* with *šumēlim* and *imittim* with *imittam*. It is also repeated in 49:7f.

24 Nougayrol 1941, 85. CAD (8: 425) restores *l[ītiq]* in place of Held’s *lī[ter]*.

25 Hussey 1948, 23. Hussey translates the phrase as “may the seal of the back-bone be fused, the two right segments to the left,” and writes that *kunuk ešemšērim* “may confidently be identified with the os sacrum, a triangular composite bone between the lumbar and coccygeal region of the spinal column.”

is not apparent, but his second point more directly touches on his main argument: “In view of Arabic *matnā al-ẓahr*, ‘the two portions of flesh and sinew next the [sic] back-bone, on each side’ (Lane 1893, 3017), one is inclined to assume that *kislu* denotes the ‘ligaments attached to the spine’ rather than the ‘transverse processes.’”²⁶ He does not, however, explain what it would mean for one “sinew” to “be longer” than the other one; this situation would be a peculiar one since the length of such musculature is determined by the bones to which they are attached. Nevertheless, with this comparison he acknowledges an important point: even according to his interpretation, these passages are concerned with the backbone or spine.

In fact, *all* the Akkadian examples of *kaslu/kislu* he cites—including his “key text” describing the unfortunate infant—seem to support the idea that *kaslu*, whatever its exact meaning, is associated with the vertebrae rather than simply designating any “sinew” or “tendon” anywhere on the body. The comparative evidence from Ugaritic, too, will confirm this assessment.

UGARITIC EVIDENCE

After asserting that the primary meaning of Hebrew כֶּסֶל as “sinew, tendon” is “clearly indicated by its derived connotation ‘inner strength,’ ‘confidence’” (but see discussion below), Held writes the following:

Such a connotation is understandable when we bear in mind that both *ksl* and *mtn* are well known for their strength and are therefore used in the making of a bow. It may be recalled that in the Aqhat epic *gdm* and *mtnm* are mentioned among other materials for making a composite bow. It must be admitted that the word *ksl* is not attested in that description. However, it is clearly mentioned as a part of a bow in the expression *ksl qšt* in the Anath texts. While this passage is not free from difficulties, it is at least clear that the warrior-goddess drives away her opponents with the staff (*mṭ-m*) and the string of her bow (*bksl qsth*).²⁷

While *mtn* may be well known for strength, such a claim about *ksl* is more dubious: he seems to be placing an inordinate weight on a single example from Ugaritic that, as Held himself acknowledges, is found in a passage “not free from difficulties.” In a footnote, Held proposes that the ‘Anatu passage he adduces (in the Ba‘lu Myth [KTU 1.3 II 15f–16]), *mṭm . tgrš šbm . b ksl . qsth . mdnt*, could be plausibly translated, “She (Anath) drives off captors with the staff, with the string of her bow (she drives off) opponents.”²⁸ Perhaps I am being overly literal, but the context here does not seem conducive to her actually *firing* her bow: according to the previous line, she is wading “up to her neck in the gore of fighters,” and in any case even a warrior as prodigiously talented as ‘Anatu would find it difficult to wield a staff and fire a bow at the same time. Still, since the passage is poetic, reading *ksl* as a bowstring is not implausible if Held is in fact correct that the primary meaning is “sinew, tendon.”

There is another possibility, however—one that would better fit the comparative evidence from Akkadian: that *ksl* is being used to refer to the “stave” of the bow. This meaning would provide a suitable parallel to *mṭm* in that ‘Anatu would be wielding both items like clubs—one in each hand—as she “wades up to her neck in gore,” while driving off her enemies. De Moor has already proposed such a meaning for Ugaritic *ksl* both for this occurrence and for another one in the ‘Aqhatu Legend.²⁹ In the latter passage, though the tablet is badly damaged,³⁰ the general context is a feast at which ‘Anatu first sees ‘Aqhatu’s bow. KTU renders the

26 Held 1965, 403 n. 114.

27 Ibid., 403–4.

28 Ibid., 403 n. 121. Pardee’s (1997, 250) translation is similar: “With (her) staff she drives out the (potential) captors, with her bowstring the opponents.”

29 de Moor 1980, 425–26. He compares this usage to the description of Marduk’s “artfully constructed” bow in the *Enuma Elish* (Tablet VI, line 84). Cassuto (1971, 87) translates *b ksl qsth* in the ‘Anatu passage as “with the back of her bow.” Held (1965, 404 n. 125) notes this translation and writes that “this is untenable for more than one reason” but does not provide any; his subsequent remarks (ibid., 404–5) address the infeasibility of the meaning “loins,” not “back,” in Ugaritic.

30 Pardee (1997, 346) writes, “the first fifteen lines of this column are too badly damaged for even an approximate translation, though certain words and phrases are well enough preserved to allow a general interpretation.”

relevant line (*KTU* 1.17 VI 11), part of the description of the bow, as follows: [] *xl . kslh . k brq*; de Moor translates this line, “[Beautiful the sh]ape of its stave, [its arrow] like lightning” (with the partially restored *brq* in line 11 modifying an assumed “arrow” in the lacuna with which line 12 begins).³¹ If *ksl* does in fact mean “spine,” it is easy to see how the term could be used to describe the “stave” of a bow, given its shape and flexibility.³²

The “stave” or “spine” of a bow would appear to be a better fit than “tendon, (bow) string” for both the occurrences of *ksl* in Ugaritic discussed above, particularly when one considers the terminology used in—and absent from—the famous passage describing the components of a composite bow a few lines farther along in the ‘Aqhatu Legend. When ‘Anatu encounters ‘Aqhatu and demands his bow, ‘Aqhatu—who understandably does not wish to give it up—instead promises to give her the materials for another (*KTU* 1.17 VI 20–24): *w y’n . áqht . ġzr . ádr . tqbm b lbnn . ádr . gdm . b rúmm ádr . qrnt . b y’lm . mtnm b ‘qbt . tr . ádr . b ġl il . qnm*. Pardee translates this sentence, “Valiant ‘Aqhatu replied: I’ll vow ash wood from Lebanon, I’ll vow sinews from wild bulls, I’ll vow horns from rams, tendons from the hocks of a bull, I’ll vow reeds from ĠL ‘IL.”³³ It is significant that, as Held admits, *ksl* is omitted from the list of the components, despite there being two other words used to describe the necessary “tendons” and “sinews” (*gdm* and *mtnm*).³⁴ This omission makes sense in a list of materials, however, if *ksl* means the “stave” or “spine” of the bow, since one would not expect a reference to the stave—a composite of wood, tendons, and animal horns³⁵—until it was actually constructed.

In several of the other Ugaritic passages where *ksl* occurs, the term—as with the Akkadian examples discussed above—is clearly associated with the region of the back. In *KTU* 1.3 III 32–35, *ksl* occurs twice in a passage describing ‘Anatu’s fear at the approach of Ba‘lu’s divine messengers: *hlm . ‘nt . tph . ilm . bh . p’nm ttt . b’dn . ksl . ttbr ‘ln . pnh . td’ . tġš . pnt kslh . ānš . dt . zrh*. Pardee translates the passage, “When ‘Anatu sees the two deities, her feet shake; behind, her back muscles [*ksl*] snap; above, her face sweats; her vertebrae [*pnt kslh*] rattle, her spine goes weak.”³⁶ In a footnote (89), he writes that “back muscles” is a “somewhat free translation of *ksl*, which, with the adverbial phrase *b’dn*, should mean, lit., ‘the sinews (of the back)’; *ksl* also appears in *pnt kslh*, ‘vertebrae,’ lit., ‘the points of the sinews (of the back).’” If, however, *ksl* itself means “spine”—with *zr* simply retaining its more commonly understood meaning, “back”³⁷—then the meaning of the passage would be similar, if more literal: “behind, her spine cracks [note that *ksl* is singular here]; above, her face sweats; the points [‘transverse processes’?³⁸] of her spine rattle, her back goes weak.”

This formula is repeated twice more,³⁹ with minor variations: once more in the Ba‘lu cycle (*KTU* 1.4 II 16–20, partially restored) to describe ‘Aṭiratu’s fright at the arrival of Ba‘lu and ‘Anatu, and once in ‘Aqhatu

31 de Moor 1987, 237. Del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín’s (2003, 461–62) entry on *ksl*, which cites Held, renders this phrase, “its sinew is like lightning.” Though Wyatt (1998, 271 n. 96) also interprets *ksl* as the “string” of a bow here, he remarks that “sinew” and “lightning” are “hardly to be construed together,” and he believes—like de Moor—that the lightning simile applies to the arrows shot from the bow.

32 See also Tsumura (1996, 356), who writes, “the term *ksl*, which normally means ‘the back,’ the ‘curved spine,’ would refer to the ‘stave’ (of a bow) rather than the ‘string.’”

33 Pardee 1997, 346–47.

34 Held 1965, 403.

35 See Margalit 1989, 290–91.

36 Pardee 1997, 252. Also see Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 165–68.

37 See, e.g., del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2003, 1005; Tropper 2000, 160 (“Rücken”); Huehnergard 2012, 161 (“back, top”); cf. Arabic *zahr* “back.” Bordreuil and Pardee (2009, 337) gloss the term as “back(bone), top.”

38 Huehnergard (2012, 154) glosses *pnt* as “joint, vertebra.”

39 Pardee (1997, 252 n. 89) writes that these lines “represent a formulaic and stylized reaction to unexpected visitors and bad news.”

(*KTU* 1.19 II 44–47,⁴⁰ also partially restored) when Dānī’ilu learns of ’Aqhatu’s death. Including the restorations,⁴¹ the three passages would thus contain six more examples where *ksl* denotes part of the back.

The term is also found in connection with the back in the Kirta Epic, in a passage (*KTU* 1.16 VI 48–50) where Yašsubu chastises his father Kirta for not performing his duties: *l pnk l tšlhm . ytm . b’d kslk . ālmnt* (Pardee translates, “Before you, you do not feed the orphan; behind your back the widow”⁴²). Held mentions this example and admits that *ksl* appears to refer to the “back” in this passage, but he advances the following argument in defense of his interpretation that the primary meaning of *ksl* is nevertheless “sinew, tendon”:

The meaning of *ksl*, “back,” in II K vi 48–50 must be considered secondary, the development being “sinew” > “sinew of the back” > “back,” fully analogous to Akkadian *šašallu*, “back.” The latter is a loanword from Sumerian SA.SAL, “the tender sinew” extending from the neck along the whole back, and it is only in a derived meaning that it comes to denote the back itself. A similar development can be observed in Arabic *matn*, “sinew” > “sinew of the back” > “back.”⁴³

Given the evidence discussed so far, Held’s argument here is exceedingly odd. The Arabic example he cites has already been discussed above, and even according to his own statement the Sumerian word refers not just to any “sinew” but one specifically associated with the back. The examples from both Akkadian and Ugaritic covered thus far suggest there is nothing “secondary” about the association of “back” with *ksl*; to understand its “primary” meaning as “sinew/tendon”—with no further qualification—is therefore unwarranted.

The meaning “sinew, tendon” might, however, be feasible for the two examples of the term in an economic text (*KTU* 4.182 [RS 15.115]) containing a list of textiles and dyes. The plural occurs in the phrase *mītm kslm* in line 9, and the singular (partially restored, *ksl*) in line 26. Del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín translate the first of these as “200 sinews/(bow) strings,”⁴⁴ though it is unclear why “bow strings” might occur in such a list, given that the text involves the production of clothing, not weapons. It is of course possible that the sinews/tendons might have had some unspecified use in this context, since there is evidence that some ancient cultures used dried tendons in the production of garments. Here too, however, the meaning I have proposed—vertebrae—results in a viable reading. In the lines preceding the first occurrence of *kslm*, the list mentions items such as dyed cloaks (*āll iqni*), linen fabrics (*pītm*),⁴⁵ and valuable stones (*špšg*),⁴⁶ and in the line immediately following materials used for dyeing (*pwt, ābn šrp*). From prehistoric times, animal bones were used in the production of dyes, both for the pigment derived from burnt bones (“bone black”) and for mortar in the mixing of colorants. The use of vertebrae in such a manufacturing capacity would therefore be unremarkable.⁴⁷

The final example from Ugaritic⁴⁸ is an enigmatic occurrence found in a lunar omen text (*KTU* 1.163.4).⁴⁹ *KTU* restores the beginning of the line, so that it reads: [*hm . b t*]l . *ym . yh . yrh . kslm . mlkm . tšrn*. Del

40 *KTU* 1.19 ii 93–96.

41 In *KTU* 1.4 II 16–20, *ksl* is intact and *pnt kslh* is partially restored (*pnt[. ks]lh*); in *KTU* 1.19 II 44–47, *ksl* is intact and *pnt ksl* is fully restored.

42 Pardee 1997, 342.

43 Held 1965, 405–6.

44 del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2003, 462.

45 Also partially reconstructed—[p]t₁tm—in the line immediately preceding the second occurrence in line 26.

46 Partially restored: [š]pšg.

47 Also cf. the Akkadian glass text that mentions “crushing the bone of the sheep’s *kaslū*,” cited above.

48 The remaining instances occur either in a context too fragmentary to be useful (partially restored in *KTU* 7.50.9) or in personal names (*bn ksln* in *KTU* 4.12.3 and 4.122.5). For a full list of the extant occurrences of *ksl* in Ugaritic, see the concordance of Cunchillos, Vita, and Zamora 2003, 1928–29; note, however, that on page 1929 *KTU* 1.163 (RIH 78/14) is labeled 1.172. On page 1928, Cunchillos et al. also restore [*ksl*]h in another passage in Kirta (1.16 I 54), although *KTU* reads *kdh . l ’arš . tšbr* “her jar shattered on the ground.”

49 RIH 78/14; originally published in Bordreuil and Caquot 1980, 352–53. Also see Pardee 2002, 142–44, 147 n. 8. Note: Pardee’s (as well as Bordreuil and Caquot’s) *recto* is *KTU*’s *verso*, so in Pardee’s treatment the term occurs in line 11.

Olmo Lete and Sanmartín gloss *kslm* here as “Side, sector ([?]; said of both horns of the moon)” with the phrase containing *kslm* being translated, “if on the third day the moon wanes on both sides.”⁵⁰ Pardee’s restoration is more cautious ([]ym . ‘y’h . yrḥ . *kslm* . mlkm . tbsrn), and he leaves the phrase in question untranslated, while only rendering the last two words: “[If] YM YH YRḤ KSLM, the kings will keep an eye on each other.”⁵¹ In a note, he remarks: “It is tempting to take [YRḤ KSLM] as meaning ‘the month of Kislem’ (Akkadian *kislimu*),^[52] but the general rarity of Akkadian words in these texts and the possibility of a Ugaritic etymology prevent me from adopting that interpretation until further data become available.”⁵³

Pardee’s caution seems more reasonable than positing a previously unattested usage of *kslm* in this passage. In any case, Held’s proposed meaning “sinew/tendon” is clearly untenable. It would be tempting here to view *ksl* as “spine” or “stave,” used metaphorically to describe the narrow crescent of the waning moon. The presence of the final *m*, though, makes this view problematic. In all the other Ugaritic passages, however, interpreting *ksl* as “spine” (or “stave”) and *kslm* as “vertebrae” results in a viable reading.

CLASSICAL HEBREW EVIDENCE

As noted above, forms of the Hebrew segholate noun כָּסֶל occur thirteen times in the Bible. Seven of these have traditionally been interpreted as having the primary/physical meaning “loin,” and six others—along with the two occurrences of the byform כָּסֶלָה—are thought to have the derived meaning “confidence” or “foolishness.” Held begins his discussion of כָּסֶל with a sharp critique of Koehler-Baumgartner’s Hebrew lexicon and its analysis of this term. He goes on to write, “the rendering of כָּסֶל in the ancient translations and commentaries seems to be based on an erroneous transmission.”⁵⁴ From his perspective, this is indeed the case: with very few exceptions, the versions and rabbinic authorities are consistent in interpreting the physical meaning of כָּסֶל as “loin,” “flank,” or—in the LXX—“thigh.”⁵⁵

PRIMARY (PHYSICAL) USES OF כָּסֶל IN CLASSICAL HEBREW

With its primary (physical) meaning, כָּסֶל occurs five times in Leviticus (3:4, 10, 15; 4:9; 7:4), once in Psalm 38:8, and once in Job 15:27. The three examples in Leviticus 3 are concerned with the שְׁלָמִים (typically trans-

50 del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2003, 462.

51 Pardee 2002, 142–44.

52 As proposed in Bordreuil and Caquot 1980, 353: “yrḥ . *kslm* doit signifier <mois de kislew> (décembre), d’après l’accadien *kislimu*; c’est la première mention de ce nom en cunéiformes alphabétiques.”

53 Pardee 2002, 147 n. 8.

54 Held 1965, 401–2.

55 Some of the traditional readings of כָּסֶל with its derived meaning will be cited in the course of the discussions of the passages below, but for the sake of convenience I shall here provide an overview of the seven biblical occurrences in which forms of כָּסֶל are understood to have the primary or physical meaning. The Septuagint renders six of these occurrences—all but the example in Psalm 38:8—with the plural (genitive) τῶν μηρίων “thighs.” For the occurrence in Psalm 38, however, it uses αἱ ψύαι “muscles of the pelvis or loins.” In Targum Onqelos, the occurrences in Leviticus are glossed with גִּיסְסִיָּא, which Held translates “sides” (Jastrow 1903, “loins”), while Targum Pseudo-Jonathan translates them as כְּפָלִי “loins.” The Targum of Psalm 38:8 simply renders כָּסֶלִי as כְּסִלִּי, and for Job 15:27 כְּפָלִא “groin, loin” is used.

The Vulgate uses *ilia* “abdomen below the ribs, groin, flanks” for all the examples in Leviticus, *lumbi* “loins” in Psalm 38, and *lateribus* “sides, flanks” in Job 15:27. Similarly, the Peshitta uses ܟܣܠܐ “side” for four of the occurrences in Leviticus (omitted entirely in Lev. 7:4), though it glosses כָּסֶלִי in Psalm 38:8 as ܟܣܠܝܐ “ankles, ankle bones, wrists” and takes the second colon of Job 15:27 as an astronomical reference: “makes the Pleiades higher than Orion” (ܟܣܠܝܐ ܠܕܐ ܡܚܝܬ ܟܣܠܝܐ). This interpretation appears to read the *hapax legomenon* פִּיקָה as בִּיקָה, and כָּסֶל as כְּסִל.

Among the traditional Jewish exegetes, Ibn Ezra in his commentary on Leviticus 3:4 cites the use of כְּסִילִים “constellations, Orions” in Isaiah 13:10, though he does not offer any further comment about the meaning. Rashi glosses כָּסֶלִים in the Leviticus passages with the Old French *flancs* (פִּלְנֹק) “flanks,” though he reads the term as “loins” in Job 15:27—explicitly comparing them to חֲלָצִים—and offers a rather amusing interpretation of the colon (see n. 66 below). Like Rashi, Qimḥi uses the Old French *flancs*. As Held notes, Saadia views כְּסִילִים as “intestines,” while Ibn Janāḥ prefers “loins” (although he does not rule out “flanks” or “intestines”).

lated “well-being offering” or “peace offering”), the single occurrence in Leviticus 4:9 with the *חטאת* “sin offering,” and that in Leviticus 7:4 with the *אשם* “guilt offering.” All five of the passages in Leviticus use a nearly identical formula (although there is a difference in the verse preceding the example in 3:10 that may be significant for my proposal); as such, I will reproduce only the first occurrence in its entirety and discuss the others more generally. The example, in Leviticus 3:4, occurs in a context describing a bovine sacrifice; beginning in verse 3, the instructions (with the NRSV translation) read:

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 3:3 | You shall offer from the sacrifice of well-being, as an offering by fire to the LORD, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is around the entrails; | והקריב מזבח השלמים אשה ליהוה את־החלב
המכסה את־הקרב ואת כֹּל־החלב אשר על־הקרב : |
| 3:4 | the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the two kidneys, and the appendage of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys. | ואת שְׁתֵּי הַכְּלָיִם ואת־החלב אשר על־הן אשר על־
הכסלים ואת־היתרת על־הכבד על־הכליות יסירנה : |

The only significant variation in this formula is found in the next example, which describes the sacrifice of a sheep. In this case, the preceding verse (3:9) also calls for the removal of the “whole broad tail, close to the backbone” (*האליה תמימה לעמת העצה*).

It is unfortunate that in his only remark on the Leviticus passages Held does not discuss the terminology surrounding the term; instead, as noted in the introduction above, he simply asserts that *כסלים* cannot be understood as “loins” because “it is never used in the dual.”⁵⁶ The context—in all five passages—is crucial: the *כסלים* are always associated with the kidneys, the organs that are located at the rearmost portion of the abdomen, one on each side of the spine. It is curious that there is no commonly accepted Classical Hebrew word for “spine” or “vertebra”; the only term for which a similar meaning has been suggested is the *hapax legomenon* *עצה*, which the NRSV translates “backbone” in Leviticus 3:9.⁵⁷ Since the only biblical example of this term is found in the instruction to remove the “broad tail” from it, however, it is probable that this term means “backbone” in the sense of the os sacrum, the fused vertebrae at the base of the spine that form part of the pelvis.⁵⁸

Given the comparative evidence from Akkadian and Ugaritic, it therefore seems reasonable to interpret the plural *כסלים* as “vertebrae” and translate the five verses in Leviticus containing the term as “the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the vertebrae, and the appendage of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys.”⁵⁹

The occurrence in Psalm 38:8 refers to the *כסלים* of a human, specifically one who is undergoing the suffering associated with divine punishment (38:1–2). The passage reads:

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 38:6 | My wounds grow foul and fester because of my foolishness; | הבאשו נמקו הבורתי מפני אולתי |
| 38:7 | I am utterly bowed down and prostrate; all day long I go around mourning. | נעויתי שחתי עד־מאד כֹּל־היום קִדַּר הִלַּכְתִּי |
| 38:8 | For my <i>כסלים</i> are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. | בִּי־כסלי מלאו נקלה ואין מתם בבשרי |

56 Held 1965, 402 with n. 107.

57 In Modern Hebrew, *עמוד השדרה* is used for the spinal column and *חוליה* for an individual vertebra.

58 DCH translates the term “sacrum, coccyx, (rear end of) spine”; BDB, “either spine or os sacrum, bone close to fat tail”; HALOT, “coccyx”; JPS, “rump-bone.” Jastrow (1903) translates a later midrashic occurrence of *עצה* (in Sifra Vayikra N’dab. Par. 14, ch. XIX) as “backbone, spine.” Since, however, this text comments on Leviticus 4:9 and contains an instruction to “go inside” the *עצה*, os sacrum seems a more likely meaning here, as well. Also see Hussey’s proposal that the Akkadian *kunuk ešemšerim* refers to the os sacrum, discussed in n. 25 above.

59 Because of the relative rarity of the term—and the odd syntax of the Hebrew—the traditional authorities might have assumed the nearby *muscles* of the lower back—which are considered to be part of the “loins”—were intended, and Held’s “erroneous transmission” was accomplished.

Held cites the parallelism of כָּסַל with בָּשָׂר here as evidence that the former means “sinews.” He writes:

Thus, כָּסַל || בָּשָׂר is a perfect pair in parallelism, while ‘loins’ can hardly be considered a suitable parallel to בָּשָׂר. In other words, the sequence כָּסַל/בָּשָׂר is in no way different from the sequence בָּשָׂר/גִּידִים, on the one hand, and from the Akkadian sequence *širū* (= בָּשָׂר = שָׂאֵר) // *šir’ānū*, on the other. Moreover, our biblical passage, “my sinews are filled with misery,” can by no means be separated from the following passage in the Gilgāmeš epic: *šir’āniya nissati umtalli*, “I filled my sinews with misery.”⁶⁰

There are several difficulties with this paragraph, one of which is his unusual rendering of the Hebrew נִקְלָה—literally, “roasted” or “parched”—as “misery” to create a more direct parallel with *nissati* in the Gilgamesh passage. While “burning” or “parching” might *create* “misery” or “grief” in the sufferer, this understanding is not as close a parallel as his translation would suggest. In addition, the example in Psalm 38 is the lone passage in which בָּשָׂר and כָּסַל occur together; thus, if they are a “perfect pair in parallelism,” this example is the only one in which they are used as such. Finally, the only evidence for a “sequence בָּשָׂר/גִּידִים” is in Job 10:11, where the terms are also in parallelism with עוֹר “skin” and עֲצָמוֹת “bones.”⁶¹ Indeed, a more frequent pairing is that of בָּשָׂר and עֶצֶם;⁶² if כָּסַל means “my vertebrae” here, then the bicolon would be a variation on this “flesh and bone” parallelism. Also, a spine “filled with burning”⁶³ would explain why the sufferer is, as the previous verse indicates, “utterly bowed down and prostrate.”

The seventh and final example of כָּסַל that is generally understood to have its physical meaning is found in Job 15:27 in a passage where Eliphaz is describing those who have rebelled against God:

15:25	Because they ⁶⁴ stretched out their hands against God, and bid defiance to the Almighty,	כִּי־נָטָה אֶל־אֵל יָדוֹ וְאֶל־שֵׁדֵי יִתְגַּבֵּר
15:26	Running stubbornly against him with a thick-bosSED shield;	יָרוּץ אֵלָיו בְּצוֹנָאֵר בְּעֵבִי גְבִי מְגִנּוֹ
15:27	Because they have covered their faces with their fat, and gathered fat upon their כָּסַל . . .	כִּי־כָסָה פָּנָיו בְּחֶלְבּוֹ וַיַּעַשׂ פִּימָה עַל־כָּסָל

Though Held does not discuss this passage, and the NRSV’s translation does not convey the fact, verses 26–27 contain a number of terms for body parts that might be illuminating with respect to the meaning of כָּסַל. While the exact sense of these verses is obscure, the general idea seems to be that since the rebellious man has stubbornly “thickened” himself and refused to submit to God, he will be punished. The first colon of verse 26 could be translated literally as “he runs at him with the neck,” and the term גְּבִי—which here (and only here) is interpreted as the “bosses” or “umbos” of a shield—is also used to refer to the “back” (i.e., because of its convex/curved shape).⁶⁵

In verse 27, כָּסַל is used in parallelism with פָּנָיו. It is therefore tempting to compare this verse to the Ugaritic of the Kirta passage cited above (*KTU* 1.16 VI 48–50), in which Kirta is reproved for not caring for the orphan “before you” (*l pnk*) and the widow “behind your back” (*b’d kslk*). The terms in Job 15:27 would thus be antonymic parallels, “face” and “back.” The word for the “fat” said to cover the face, חֶלֶב, is of course quite common; its parallel on the כָּסַל, however, is the *hapax legomenon* פִּימָה.⁶⁶ BDB renders this term as “su-

⁶⁰ Held 1965, 402.

⁶¹ Though Held does not cite the passage, all four of these terms also occur together in Ezekiel’s vision of the valley of dry bones (cf. Ezek. 37:5–8).

⁶² Cf., e.g., Gen. 2:23; 29:14; Judg. 9:2; 2 Sam. 5:1; 19:13.

⁶³ Similar to the symptoms exhibited by sufferers of radiculopathy or herniated disks.

⁶⁴ The NRSV translates all the references to the “wicked man” (cf. v. 20) as plurals.

⁶⁵ Cf. גְּבִי in Ps. 129:3 and perhaps Ezek. 10:12.

⁶⁶ Rashi interprets פִּימָה as “mouth” and writes, “he made a mouth on his loins” (עָשָׂה פִּה עַל חִלְצִים), because the fat has thickened and folded to such a degree as to look like a mouth.

perabundance (of fat)” and compares it to the Arabic *F’M* “fill,” II. “make wide,” IV. “become full.” While it is not impossible that the colon is intended to convey the idea of “sinews” being covered with “fat,” given the parallelism with פָּנִי and the terms used in the previous verse, once again “spine” seems more appropriate to the context than “sinews” (or “loins”), particularly since the term is used here in the singular.

DERIVED (FIGURATIVE) USES OF כָּסֶל/כְּסֵלָה IN CLASSICAL HEBREW

As noted in the introduction, the six remaining biblical examples of כָּסֶל are typically interpreted as having one of two proposed abstract/figurative meanings: “trust, confidence”⁶⁷ or “folly, stupidity.”⁶⁸ Similarly, most translations render the assumed byform כְּסֵלָה, which occurs twice, as “folly” in Psalm 85:9 and “confidence” in Job 4:6, though in the latter case some of the ancient versions and commentators—and some modern exegetes—interpret it as “folly” here as well (see below).

Held, unfortunately, does not discuss the passages in which כָּסֶל and כְּסֵלָה are widely understood to mean “folly.” Instead, he simply cites the verses in which the terms appear to mean “confidence” and uses them to support his overall argument that כָּסֶל means “sinews/tendons”:

The primary meaning of Hebrew כָּסֶל, “sinew/tendon,” is clearly indicated by its derived connotation “(inner) strength,” “confidence.” I need only mention the parallelism || כָּסֶל || מְבִטָּח in Job 8:14 and 31:24.⁶⁹

Held also cites the occurrences in Psalm 78:7 and Proverbs 3:26 in a footnote⁷⁰ but offers no further comment or discussion of the context for any of these four passages. Nor does he mention the examples in Psalm 49:13 or Ecclesiastes 7:25 (where “folly” is the traditionally accepted meaning). And while he does discuss the occurrence of כְּסֵלָה in Job 4:6 later in his essay (see below), he ignores the use of this term in Psalm 85:9, where a positive meaning such as “confidence” is clearly precluded by the context. Nor does he anywhere address the potential relationship to the much more common כָּסִיל “fool” before simply categorically denying any connection in his conclusion (cited in the introduction above).

It is therefore worthwhile to examine all eight of these passages in their contexts to evaluate the merits of his claim that the derived meaning supports his proposed primary meaning of כָּסֶל, as well as to determine whether in fact the term might be etymologically related to כָּסִיל. I shall begin with the two examples of כָּסֶל traditionally interpreted as “folly” that Held ignores in his essay. The first of these examples is in Psalm 49:14, which describes the fate of the “foolish.”

49:13	But man in his pomp will not endure; He is like the beasts that perish. ⁷¹	וְאָדָם בִּיקָר בַּלְיָלִין נִמְשָׁל בְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוֹ
49:14	This is the way of those who are כָּסֶל, And of those after them who approve their words Selah	זֶה דֶּרֶכָם כָּסֶל לָמוֹ וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּפִיהֶם יֵרְצוּ סֵלָה
49:15	As sheep they are appointed for Sheol; Death shall be their shepherd; And the upright shall rule over them in the morning, And their form shall be for Sheol to consume So that they have no habitation.	כַּעֲצֵן לְשְׂאוֹל שְׂתוּ מָוֶת יִרְעֵם וְיִרְדּוּ בָם יֹשְׁרִים לְבָקֶר וְצִירָם לְבִלּוֹת שְׂאוֹל מִזָּבֵל לוֹ

67 Prov. 3:26; Ps. 78:7; Job 8:14; 31:24.

68 Ps. 49:13; Eccl. 7:25.

69 Held 1965, 403.

70 Held 1965, 403 n. 116.

71 NASB.

The ancient versions,⁷² along with commentators both medieval⁷³ and modern, interpret כָּסַל negatively in this verse and typically translate it, “those who are foolish,” “the foolhardy,” or similarly. It is interesting, though, that the context suggests a particular type of foolishness: that of an unjustified or false confidence.⁷⁴ Verse 7, for example, makes it clear that this psalm critiques those who trust in their wealth, and verse 12 remarks that they (wrongly) believe their houses will last forever.

“Folly” is also the accepted meaning in Ecclesiastes 7:25.

7:25	I turned my mind to know and to search out and to seek wisdom and the sum of things and to know that wickedness is כָּסַל and that סְכָלוּת is madness.	סְבוּתִי אֲנִי וְלִבִּי לְדַעַת וּלְתוֹרָה וּבְקִשׁ חֲכָמָה וְחִשְׁבוֹן וְלְדַעַת רָשָׁע כָּסַל וְהַסְכָּלוּת הוֹלִלּוֹת
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Held’s interpretation of כָּסַל as “(inner) strength, confidence” is clearly implausible for this verse, and here too the traditional authorities understood the term to mean “folly.”⁷⁵ The same is true for the occurrence of כָּסַל in Psalm 85:9:

85:9	I will hear what God the LORD will say; For He will speak peace to his people, to his godly ones; But let them not turn back to כָּסַל ⁷⁶	אֲשָׁמְעָה מִה־יְדִבֵּר הָאֵל יְהוָה כִּי יְדַבֵּר שְׁלוֹם אֶל-עַמּוֹ וְאֶל-חֲסִידָיו וְאֶל-יֹשׁוּבוֹ לְכָסַל
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The remaining five occurrences—four of כָּסַל and one of כָּסִיל—have generally (though not always—see below) been understood to have a “positive” meaning similar to Held’s proposed “inner strength, confidence.” Here too, however, the situation is more complicated than his categorical assertion would indicate. The other example of כָּסִיל is found in Job 4:6, near the beginning of Eliphaz’s response to Job’s lament in Job 3. With the NRSV’s translation, the MT reads:

4:6	Is not your fear of God your כָּסִיל, and the integrity of your ways your hope?	הֲלֹא יִרְאָתְךָ כָּסִילְךָ תְּקוּנָתְךָ וְתָם דְּרָכֶיךָ
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Many modern interpreters view Eliphaz in this verse as affirming Job’s moral excellence and urging him to be hopeful because of it. Held shares this opinion and cites this verse as evidence for his argument that the derived meaning of כָּסַל should be understood as “inner strength, confidence”:

It may be remarked at this point that here belongs also Hebrew תְּקוּהָה in parallelism with כָּסִיל in Job 4:6. This verse, contrary to the accepted translations, can safely be rendered: “Is not your piety

72 The Targum renders כָּסַל here as שְׁטוּתָא “madness, folly,” and the Vulgate’s translation is similar (*insipientiae* “foolishness”). The LXX, however, glosses the term as σκάνδαλον “stumbling block, offense” (“their way is a stumbling block to them”), and the Peshitta also follows this interpretation (ܣܬܝܠܬܐ “stumbling block, offense, scandal”).

73 E.g., Rashi’s שְׁטוּת “madness, folly”).

74 The NJPS renders the verse, “Such is the fate of those who are self-confident, the end of those pleased with their own talk,” though the second colon has a marginal note that the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. With the parallelism, the idea expressed here seems to be an unwarranted self-satisfaction; this understanding fits well with the meaning I propose for the derived/secondary uses of the term.

75 The LXX renders כָּסַל as ἄφροσύνη “folly,” and the Vulgate *stulti* “fool.” The Targum again uses a form of שְׁטִי (שְׁטִיָּא) “foolish,” and the Peshitta ܣܬܝܠܬܐ “stupidity.”

76 NASB. The Septuagint’s reading differs by rendering the last phrase as καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐπιστρέφοντας “and to those that turn their heart toward him”; a few modern translations (such as the RSV and NRSV) follow the Greek here, and some commentators emend לְכָסִילָהּ to לִבָּם לָהּ. Most English versions and the standard lexica, however, interpret the term here as “folly.” The Vulgate’s *stultitiam* “folly, stupidity” reflects this reading as well. The Targum also interprets the term as a pejorative, though with a different sense: it glosses the term as סִיאור, lit., “fermentation, leaven,” which when used metaphorically means an “immoral condition” (e.g., heathenism). The Peshitta paraphrases the colon as a warning to the people not to turn back to their (sinful) ways (ܠܥܬܪܥܘܬܗܘܢ).

your confidence, (is not) your uprightness your strength?” In other words, תְּקוּה is here a synonym of כְּסֵלָה, and the parallelism ||תְּקוּה||כְּסֵלָה is in no way different in meaning from ||כְּסֵל||מְבִטָּה.⁷⁷

In a footnote to these comments, Held writes: “It should be observed that our chapter [i.e., Job 4] is characterized by synonymous parallelism throughout, and that the Septuagint, Syriac, and Saadia clearly read ותְּקוּתָךְ תָּם דְּרִכְךָ”⁷⁸ (i.e., transfer the *waw* to the front of the colon to balance the parallelism of the two cola). Unfortunately, in addition to the long-recognized problem presented by the position of the *waw* in the MT,⁷⁹ there are difficulties with both parts of Held’s statement. First, his claim that Job 4 is “characterized by synonymous parallelism throughout” is unfounded; in fact, many of the verses in Eliphaz’s first speech exhibit “synthetic” or “sequential” parallelism.⁸⁰ Second, neither the LXX nor the Peshitta interprets תָּם דְּרִכְךָ as the predicate of תְּקוּתָךְ; nor does either one translate כְּסֵלָה with a positive term such as “inner strength” or “trust.”⁸¹ The LXX, for example, renders כְּסֵלָה as ἀφοροσύνη “folly, thoughtlessness, senselessness” and the verse as follows:

4:6	πότερον οὐχ ὁ φόβος σου ἐστὶν ἐν ἀφοροσύνῃ καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς σου καὶ ἡ κακία ⁸² τῆς ὁδοῦ σου	Is your fear not founded in folly, your hope also, and the wickedness of your way?
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The Peshitta also interprets כְּסֵלָה negatively, albeit with a different sense: it translates it as ܠܬܝܒܝܬ “your blame, censure.”⁸³ In addition, several of the traditional medieval commentators understand Eliphaz’s words in this verse as criticism rather than encouragement.⁸⁴ Rashi, for example, connects כְּסֵלָה with “foolishness” (כְּסִילוּת) and takes the verse to be a sharp condemnation of Job’s piety (“fear”), hope, and ways.⁸⁵

Several modern exegetes have also noted the multiple possible interpretations for this verse, particularly given the additional ambiguity of the word immediately preceding כְּסֵלָה (יִרְאַתְךָ): it could mean either “piety” (i.e., “fear of God”) or more literally, simply “fear.” As Beuken writes:

The ambiguity of this question has been rightly identified: Eliphaz is either reprimanding Job or encouraging him. The question’s ambiguous character, set precisely in the context in which Eliphaz professes his own attitude towards Job (4,2–7), creates a tension which cries out for continuation.⁸⁶

The considerable uncertainty regarding the meaning of כְּסֵלָה here makes Held’s assertion that it “can safely be rendered” as “confidence” (and therefore supports his overall claim that כְּסֵל means “sinew/tendon”)

⁷⁷ Held 1965, 404.

⁷⁸ Ibid., n. 126.

⁷⁹ Like Held, some commentators emend the text and move the *waw* to the head of the colon (e.g., Budde, Ball), while others move תְּקוּתָךְ to the end (Duhm, Battenwieser). It has also been suggested that it is a *waw* of apodosis (e.g., Gesenius) or an “emphatic” *waw* (e.g., Habel, Hartley). Also see Pope 1953, 95–98.

⁸⁰ See Job 4:2, 8, 10, 13, 16, 19, 20, 21; 5:3, 15, 16, 26, 27.

⁸¹ The Vulgate and Targum do gloss כְּסֵלָה with “positive” terms (*fortitudo tua* “your fortitude,” and סְבוּיִךְ “your prospects”), though like the LXX and Peshitta, neither one interprets the two cola as being in synonymous parallelism. The Vulgate renders the entire verse as a question that rebukes Job: *timor tuus fortitudo tua patientia tua et perfectio viarum tuarum* “(Where is) your fear, your fortitude, your patience, and the perfection of your ways?” Only the Targum reads the verse as an affirmation of Job’s moral character: לֹא דַחֲלַתְךָ סְבוּיִךְ סְבוּיִךְ וְשִׁלְמוֹת אֹרַחְךָ.

⁸² One Greek manuscript reads ἀκακία “guilelessness,” which would be a more suitable match to the MT’s תָּם. In either case, Eliphaz’s words—at least as interpreted by the LXX—are hardly meant to be comforting.

⁸³ The verse in full reads: מִן הַיָּמִים הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים מִן הַיָּמִים הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים מִן הַיָּמִים הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים.

⁸⁴ Cf., e.g., John Chrysostom, Gersonides, R. Joseph Kara.

⁸⁵ Hoffman (1996, 117 n. 2) translates Rashi’s commentary on this verse as follows: “Now your end proves your initial intention, that the fear with which you were God-fearing was in fact foolishness, for it comes from foolishness and not from fullness of knowledge, and similarly your hope and your ways are all foolishness.”

⁸⁶ Beuken 1994, 58–59. For an excellent summary of the possible interpretations of this verse, and indeed of many of the terms and verses in Job 4–5, see Hoffman 1980, 114–19.

unjustified, particularly since כֶּסֶל clearly has a pejorative meaning in its only other biblical occurrence, in Psalm 85:9.⁸⁷

In fact, given that Eliphaz's overarching message to Job in this speech is that he has no standing to question his maker,⁸⁸ and that he should "not despise the discipline of the Almighty,"⁸⁹ it makes more sense to assume that he is questioning Job's integrity here rather than affirming it. The idea of Job 4:6 would then be that Eliphaz is rebuking Job for implying that God is punishing him unjustly, and, instead of turning to God (as Eliphaz himself would do⁹⁰), he is stubbornly maintaining a false confidence in his piety and integrity and hoping for death to end his suffering: "Is not your fear your folly? Your hope, and the integrity of your ways?"⁹¹ This reading accounts for the otherwise peculiar placement of the *waw* in that כֶּסֶלְתֶּךָ is the predicate of all three expressions (תְּקוּתֶךָ, יִרְאַתֶּךָ, and תַּם דְּרָכֶיךָ), as indeed the LXX, Peshiṭta, Vulgate, and Rashi interpret it.

This sense of *false* confidence/hope would also be appropriate for the other two occurrences of כֶּסֶל in Job (8:14; 31:24). In Job 8:13–14, Bildad tells Job that the paths of those who forget God will "wither" (cf. v. 12):

8:13	Such are the paths of those who forget God; the hope of the godless shall perish	כִּן אֲרָחוֹת כָּל־שֹׁכְחֵי אֱל וְתִקְוֹת חַנּוּף תֵּאָבֵד
8:14	Their כֶּסֶל is gossamer, a spider's house their trust.	אֲשֶׁר־יִקְוֶה כֶּסֶלּוֹ וּבֵית עֲבָדֵי־מִבְטָחַ

In Job 31:24, Job recites a list of actions that would have been sins if he had done them (so, by implication, he did not):

31:24	If I have made gold my כֶּסֶל, or called fine gold my confidence . . .	אִם־שִׁמְתִּי זָהָב כֶּסֶלִי וּלְבָתֶּם אָמַרְתִּי מִבְטָחִי
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It is true that in both passages, as Held notes, כֶּסֶל is in parallel with מִבְטָח. But the context of each passage clearly indicates this confidence is misplaced,⁹² as signified by the difficult יִקְוֶה (perhaps "fragile") in 8:14 and "gold" in 31:24.⁹³ If the derived/secondary meanings of כֶּסֶל (and כֶּסֶלָה) share a common meaning across their biblical occurrences, then the three examples in Job might help to bridge the apparent semantic distance between the traditional interpretations "confidence" and "folly."

There are two more biblical occurrences of כֶּסֶל—in Proverbs 3:26 and Psalm 78:7—both of which are also cited by Held as examples of his proposed derived meaning "inner strength, confidence."⁹⁴ Even here, however, the situation is more complicated than it may at first appear: neither of these verses provides

87 It is ironic that many Joban scholars cite Held's essay to support the interpretation of כֶּסֶלָה as "confidence" in Job 4:6, although—as the quotations above indicate—Held's primary purpose is to demonstrate the correctness of the physical meaning ("sinew/tendon") *from* what he understands to be the derived meaning, "confidence."

88 Job 4:17.

89 Job 5:17.

90 See Job 5:9.

91 For a more detailed treatment of this section of Eliphaz's speech, and for the relevant discussion on כֶּסֶל and כֶּסֶלָה, see Burnight 2014, esp. 353–63. This article focuses on the derived/secondary uses of the term; though I continue to agree with his argument that the term does not mean "loin," I have obviously reconsidered my earlier opinion that "Held's proposal that the physical meaning of כֶּסֶל is 'sinew, tendon' is convincing" (ibid., 355).

92 מִבְטָח is also used elsewhere in the Bible to describe a false object of trust (e.g., Jer. 2:37; 48:13; Ezek. 29:16; Job 31:24; Prov. 25:19).

93 The ancient versions show a range of opinions for Job 8:14 and 31:24. The LXX, for example, renders 8:14 as ἀοίκητος γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἔσται ὁ οἶκος ἀράχνη δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀποβήσεται ἡ σκηνή "For his house will be without inhabitants, and his tent will turn out to be a spider's web." However, it glosses כֶּסֶלִי as ἰσχύς μου "my power, might" in 31:24. The Targum uses סְבִירָה "hope" in 8:14 and סְכִיר "prospect" for 31:24. The Vulgate, though, interprets כֶּסֶלּוֹ in 8:14 as vecordia sua "his folly" and renders the colon as non ei placebit vecordia sua "his folly will not please him." In 31:24, it uses robur meum "my strength." The Peshiṭta also interprets both occurrences as "trust, confidence" (כֶּסֶלָה).

94 Held 1965, 403 with n. 116.

a definitive parallel for the “positive” meaning—related to “inner strength”—that he proposes. Proverbs 3:25–26 reads:

3:25	Do not be afraid of sudden panic, or of the storm that strikes the wicked;	אַל־תִּירָא מִפֶּתָאד וּמִשְׁאַת רָשָׁעִים כִּי תָבֹא
3:26	For the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.	כִּי־יְהוָה יִהְיֶה בְּכִסְלְךָ וְשָׁמַר רִגְלְךָ מִלָּכָד

Though a translation such as the NRSV’s “your confidence” is typical, in Hebrew the expression is a prepositional phrase: בְּכִסְלְךָ, literally, “in your confidence.” Held offers the following explanation:

[O]ur בְּכִסְלְךָ is in no way different from יהוה יהיה בעזרך* (Exod. 18:4, Deut. 33:26, Ps. 146:5; cf. also Jer. 17:7, Ps 40:5 and 71:5). Thus, not only is כסל a synonym of עזר, but the former also requires the *beth essentiae* in full agreement with the latter.⁹⁵

This is in fact how the translators of the Targum appeared to understand the colon; they gloss בְּכִסְלְךָ as בסעךד “your support, assistance.”⁹⁶ The other passages Held mentions,⁹⁷ however, though they contain the preposition ב and a word indicating “trust,” use these words together in a verbal idiom rather than using the ב to serve as a *beth essentiae*. Still, although כסל does not occur anywhere else in such a usage, and his labeling of כסל as a “synonym” of עזר might be questionable, Held’s proposal that the preposition is a *beth essentiae* is plausible.

It is also possible, however, that in this passage כסל is being used with its primary/physical meaning.⁹⁸ In the Psalm 38:8 occurrence of כסל (discussed above), where the term has traditionally been understood to have its physical meaning, the sufferer is “bowed down and prostrate” (v. 7) because his כסלים “are filled with burning.” The parallelism with רגלך in Proverbs 3:26 might suggest that כסלך is being used with its primary/physical meaning here, as well, particularly since the assertion is that the presence of LORD in the addressee’s כסל will keep his רגל “from being caught.”

The Vulgate does in fact interpret the term here with a physical sense (*latere* “side, flank”; see n. 96). It is also worth noting that the context, as 3:25 indicates, is an admonition not to “fear.” This wording calls to mind the Ugaritic text discussed above in which the approach of two deities causes ‘Anatu to exhibit physical manifestations of fear (KTU 1.3 III 32–35), including her *ksl* “breaking” (*tṭbr*) and her *pnt ksl* “rattling” (*tṭs*). The sense of Proverbs 3:25–26 might then be paraphrased, “you need not fear sudden calamity, such as that which befalls the wicked, for the LORD is in your backbone, and will guard your steps.” The overall metaphor would still mean that God is providing “strength”; it would simply be a more physical way to convey the idea.

The final biblical example of כסל to be considered occurs in Psalm 78:7, where the Israelites are commanded to teach their children the law so they do not repeat the mistakes of their ancestors:

78:7	So that they should set their כסל in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep his commandments;	וְשִׁימוּ בְּאֱלֹהִים כִּסְלָם וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּחוּ מַעֲלֵלֵי־אֵל וּמִצְוֹתָיו יִנְצְרוּ
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95 Ibid.

96 The other ancient versions and traditional commentators, though, interpret it differently. The LXX, for example, translates the colon as ὁ γὰρ κύριος ἔσται ἐπὶ πασῶν ὁδῶν σου “For the LORD shall be over all your ways”; BHS notes this translation may be derived from Hebrew בְּמִסְלִיךְ. The Peshitta simply paraphrases as ܠܐ ܕܢܝܚܐ ܢܝܚܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ ܥܝܢܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ “For the LORD will be with you.” The Vulgate, however, interprets כסל here in its primary/physical sense by translating the colon as *dominus enim erit in latere tuo* “For the LORD will be in your side/flank.” Held (1965, 403 n. 116) mentions—but quickly dismisses—this interpretation.

97 Jer. 17:5; Pss. 40:5; 71:5.

98 As suggested in DCH 4: 444.

78:8 And that they should not be like their ancestors,
A stubborn and rebellious generation,
A generation whose heart was not steadfast,
Whose spirit was not faithful to God.

וְלֹא יִהְיוּ כְּאֲבוֹתָם
דֹּר סוֹרֵר וּמָרָה
דֹּר לֹא־הָכִין לְבוֹ
וְלֹא־נִאֲמָנָה אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי רוּחוֹ

Unlike the occurrence in Proverbs 3:26, where the ב preposition governed כָּסַל, in this passage it is prefixed to אֱלֹהִים; a translation such as “put their trust in God” or “make God their confidence” would therefore be appropriate. This occurrence seems to be the most clearly “positive” biblical usage of כָּסַל in its derived sense; “trust” or “confidence” is a perfectly suitable meaning here, and indeed the versions and traditional authorities are nearly unanimous in understanding the term in this way.⁹⁹ Given the instruction that the younger generation not be like the “stubborn and rebellious generation” which preceded them, however, it is possible there could be nuances that are not captured by the translations “trust” or “confidence” and that might still result in a meaning compatible with the one I have proposed for the other occurrences of כָּסַל and כָּסְלָה in the biblical corpus. Note that the passage does not say God is כָּסְלָם but, rather, describes the idea that the younger generation should *make* him so. An English translation such as “make God their boast” (i.e., instead of continuing in the false ways of the previous generation) might capture the connotation.

THE (SOLE) VERBAL OCCURRENCE OF כָּסַל; כָּסִיל AND כְּסִילוֹת

There is also one verbal occurrence of כָּסַל in the Bible—that found in Jeremiah 10:8 in a passage condemning idolators:

10:8 They are both stupid and foolish (כָּסַל),
instructed by worthless idols made of wood.

וּבְאַחַת יָבִיעֵרוּ וַיִּכְסְלוּ
מוֹסֵר הַבָּלִים עֵץ הוּא

The standard lexica and traditional authorities interpret the verb וַיִּכְסְלוּ as “they are foolish” or similarly. Presumably, this verbal root is the one Held means when he writes the following in his concluding paragraph: “There is but one verbal root כָּסַל in Hebrew, and it denotes stupidity, bad habits, lack of manners and education, and the like. Thus, Hebrew כָּסַל is in no way different in meaning from Akkadian *saklu*.”¹⁰⁰ Held’s conclusion indicates—albeit indirectly—that he views the more common Hebrew noun כָּסִיל “fool,” along with the *hapax legomenon* כְּסִילוֹת “stupidity,” as related to this verb and not to the primary noun כָּסַל, which, in his view, means “sinew/tendon” and “confidence, inner strength” in its derived meaning.

As discussed above, however, he ignores the examples of כָּסַל and כָּסְלָה where a negative meaning such as “folly” is clearly indicated by the context. It is also worth noting that in the Jeremiah passage the verb וַיִּכְסְלוּ is paired with the denominative verb יָבִיעֵרוּ “to be brutish” (i.e., “strong and stupid”).¹⁰¹ Given that this occurrence is the only attested verbal usage of a form of *ksl* in Classical Hebrew, Akkadian, or Ugaritic, it seems more reasonable to assume that this verb, too, might be denominative rather than to posit—as Held does—two entirely separate semantic developments: one from a verbal root כָּסַל to כָּסִיל (and כְּסִילוֹת) and another from a nominal root כָּסַל “sinew/tendon” to כָּסַל and כָּסְלָה.¹⁰²

A connection between כָּסִיל and the derived meanings of כָּסַל/כָּסְלָה that I have proposed is also supported by its biblical usage. Although some interpreters¹⁰³ suggest the term is etymologically related to

99 The LXX reads ἵνα ὁῶνται ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν τὴν ἐλπίδα αὐτῶν “That they might set their hope on God”; Targum, וַיִּשְׁוֹן בְּאַלְהָא, סוֹבְרָהוֹן; Vulgate, *ut ponant in Deo spem suam*; Peshitta, כְּאַלְהָא סְבָרְהוֹן. Rashi glosses the term as תוֹחֵלָתָם “their hope, expectation” and cites the usage in Job 31 as a comparison. Kimḥi and Ibn Ezra both use מַבְטָחָם.

100 Held 1965, 406. In writing that this verbal root is “in no way different from Akkadian *saklu*,” he does not mention the fact that there is already an attested verbal Classical Hebrew cognate to *saklu*: סָכַל “be foolish” (cf. Gen. 31:28; 1 Sam. 13:13; 26:21; 2 Sam. 15:31; 24:10 [= 1 Chron. 21:8]; Isa. 44:25; 2 Chron. 16:9).

101 The noun כָּסִיל is also used in parallelism with בָּעֵר “brutish” in Psalm 49:10 and אִישׁ־בָּעֵר in Psalm 92:6, and כְּסִילוֹת is used with בָּעֵרִים in Psalm 94:8.

102 That Held puts forward this proposal is particularly ironic, given that he begins his essay with a caustic critique of what he views as Koehler’s overreliance on homonymy.

103 See, e.g., Gesenius 1949, 407–8; HALOT, 489; Klein 1987, 281–82.

the Arabic *kasil* “heavy, sluggish, lazy, indolent, torpid,”¹⁰⁴ such connotations are not indicated by *any* of the seventy biblical occurrences of כָּסִיל. The biblical authors are clearly critical of those who are lazy (see especially Proverbs), but they never use כָּסִיל in these critiques; nor does the term ever occur in parallelism with עָצֵל “sluggard” or indeed with any term meaning “laziness” or “torpor.” In fact, in the cases where the level of energy or action can be determined, the type of “foolishness” indicated is that associated with being *overly* active or energetic: e.g., in speech (the “multitude of words,”¹⁰⁵ the “clamorousness” of the “foolish woman”¹⁰⁶), agitation (“a fool always loses his temper”¹⁰⁷), or celebration (the “mirth,” “song,” and “laughter” of fools¹⁰⁸).

There are also examples of כָּסִיל in which the context indicates a meaning compatible with the “hybrid” of confidence and folly (i.e., “false confidence”) I have proposed for כָּסֵל and כָּסֵלָה above. Proverbs 14:16, for example, reads:

14:16	A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But כָּסִיל is arrogant and careless.	חָכָם יָרָא וְסָר מִרָע וְכָסִיל מִתְעַבֵּר וּבֹטֵחַ
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The use of בֹּטֵחַ in this verse is of particular interest, given the parallelism of כָּסֵל and מְבֹטָח in the two Job passages discussed previously.¹⁰⁹ Proverbs 28:26 also notes the overconfidence of the fool:

28:26	He who trusts in his own heart is כָּסִיל, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.	בֹּטֵחַ בְּלִבּוֹ הוּא כָּסִיל וְהוֹלֵךְ בְּחָכְמָה הוּא יִמְלֹט
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The biblical usages of כָּסִיל are all at the very least compatible with “fool” as one who is cocksure, unjustly proud, blustery, etc., and in some cases the context strongly suggests such a meaning; the same cannot be said for כָּסִיל as one who is “sluggish, lazy, or indolent,” as might be expected if the term were cognate to the Arabic *kasil*. Held has thus based a key element of his conclusion on the idea that the nouns כָּסִיל (with seventy biblical examples) and כָּסִילוֹת are derived from a verbal root that occurs in the biblical corpus only once (paired with a denominative verb, both of which words have nominal forms used in parallelism elsewhere), is not attested in rabbinic Hebrew, and does not occur in any known Akkadian or Ugaritic text.¹¹⁰

CONCLUSIONS

Given the long and varied history of interpretation and the relatively limited number of extant occurrences of *ksl* (many of which are in broken or unclear contexts), any conclusions must be tempered with an element of caution. It is to be hoped that the discovery of further evidence will allow a more certain and precise definition. Nevertheless, based on its extant occurrences in Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Hebrew, the following conclusions best fit the existing data:

(1) Held’s study is valuable for highlighting the difficulties associated with the traditional understanding of Hebrew כָּסֵל as “loin(s).” His own proposal that the term means “sinew/tendon,” however, is problematic. The primary physical meaning of *ksl* in Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Hebrew is almost certainly related to the anatomic back. In every case—across all three languages—where the part of the body can be determined, the *ksl* (singular or plural) is always located in the region of the spine: e.g., its association with *kunuk eṣeṣēri* in Akkadian, with *zr* in the description of ‘Anatu’s “rattling” *pnt ksl*, and with the kidneys—the organs at

104 Lane (1893, 3000) associates the Arabic root *ksl* with satiety. See also Wehr 1994, 969. While it may seem natural to conflate laziness and folly (cf., e.g., Gesenius 1949, 408), not all “fools” are “idlers,” and not all “idlers” are “fools.”

105 Eccl. 5:3.

106 Prov. 9:13.

107 Prov. 29:11.

108 Eccl. 7:4–6.

109 Job 8:14; 31:24.

110 Fox (2003, 194) writes, “[a] synonym pair, ʾwīl ‘fool’ and *kasil* ‘fool,’ are from roots that have no verb, although they do have other nouns,” and mentions *késel* and *kislā* in this connection (ibid., n. 56).

the back of the abdomen, on each side of the spine—of a sacrificial animal in Leviticus.¹¹¹ Never do we see a reference to the *ksl* of an arm, leg, chest, etc. This observation is also true for Held's key evidence from Akkadian, the medical text where the baby's "*kaslū* are *puṭṭurū* from the neck to the backbone."¹¹² Held's assertion that "the meaning of *ksl*, 'back,' in II K vi 48–50^[113] must be considered secondary, the development being 'sinew' > 'sinew of the back' > 'back'" is therefore unwarranted. If "sinews" or "tendons" are intended, then the term must refer specifically to the sinews of the back—perhaps the *erector spinae*, the group of muscles and tendons that run in the grooves to each side of the spinal column.

(2) Given the meaning proposed by CAD, "transverse process of the vertebra," it is more probable that *ksl* in Ugaritic and Hebrew refers to the spine itself: typically as a singular collective (when covered by flesh) in a living creature, but as a plural—the parts being visibly separate—in sacrificial, medical, and economic contexts. The infant with the *kaslū puṭṭurū* referred to in the Akkadian medical text would then be suffering from the incomplete closing of the vertebrae that characterizes spina bifida instead of Held's diagnostically suspect "loose sinews." As noted above, it is a curious fact that there is no word commonly understood to mean the "spine" or "vertebra(e)" in the biblical corpus; the *hapax legomenon* עֲצָה—sometimes translated "backbone"—more properly refers to either the os sacrum or the coccyx (hence its presence only in the Leviticus text involving the "fat tail" of the sheep). The Leviticus usages in which כָּסֶלִים occurs, because of the rarity of the word and the ambiguity of the peculiar syntax, may have resulted in subsequent exegetes' analyzing the term as "loins." As part of a bow in Ugaritic, *ksl* does not mean the sinews/tendons used in its construction—for which *gdm* and *mtm* are used in the famous passage describing the compound bow—but rather its stave or "spine" once it is completed (as de Moor interpreted the term). The items used in crafting the stave—wood and tendons—could easily be understood metaphorically as the "backbone" of a bow. The Ugaritic text involving textiles (KTU 4.182) would not then refer to two hundred sinews but rather two hundred vertebrae, used in the manufacture of dyes and mortars (so connecting the term to the other dye-making terms immediately following).

(3) Held's proposal that the derived meaning in Hebrew is "inner strength, confidence" is plausible for some of the examples, but his failure to address the cases in which a more negative term, such as "folly," is clearly required by the context is a significant omission. If the secondary meaning is understood as related to "spine, vertebra(e)" (instead of "tendon"), we might posit the semantic development as "spine" > "erect, haughty posture" > "overconfidence, bluster."¹¹⁴ In effect, this meaning would be a more pejorative version than the English metaphorical usage, in which someone with "backbone" or "spine" possesses self-assurance and a resolute character. This meaning is suitable for all the figurative uses of כָּסֶל (and כָּסֶלָה) in the Hebrew Bible—where the confidence is typically a false one—with the possible exception of the occurrence in Psalm 78:7.¹¹⁵ Even there, however, this sense might be appropriate; given that it does not refer to an existing "confidence" or "strength" but, rather, is an exhortation to "make God כָּסֶלִים," the idea may be similar to that expressed in English as "make God their boast."

(4) Finally, Held's (implicit) argument that כָּסֶל is derived from a verbal root unrelated to the noun כָּסֶל is unwarranted, as is the association with Arabic *kasil* proposed by some interpreters. The כָּסֶל in biblical usage is not characterized by laziness but rather by foolhardiness.

111 Also see the parallelism of גִּיתִיד with כָּסֶלִיד in Ben Sira 47:19.

112 Labat 1951, 222–23.

113 KTU 1.16 VI 48–50, *l pnk l tšlhm . ytm . b'd kslk . 'almnt*.

114 Cf., e.g., Micah 2:3, in which God tells sinners they will not "walk haughtily" (תִּלְכּוּ רוֹמָה); Isaiah 3:16, where the daughters of Zion are "haughty" (גִּבְהוֹ), thus walking with "necks extended" (וַתִּלְכְּנָה גִּטּוֹת גִּרְזוֹן). Note also the use of the metaphor קֶשֶׁת-עֵרֶף "stiff-necked" to indicate stubbornness, rebelliousness.

115 It is possible, of course, that in figurative usage כָּסֶל might have developed both positive and negative connotations: "spine," metaphorically, could also convey the idea of being "resolute" or "determined," as "backbone" does in English. If the meaning is consistent across the biblical examples, however, it must be a *false* confidence and not, as Held asserts, an "inner strength."

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22

THE UGARITIC COMPOUND ADJECTIVE *ʾIB ʾIQNʾI*
 “LAPIS-LAZULI-PURE” AND THE THREE SPECIAL TYPES
 OF CONSTRUCTION IN AKKADIAN, BIBLICAL HEBREW,
 AND UGARITIC, IN WHICH THE NONPREDICATE
 ADJECTIVE PRECEDES THE NOUN*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In his excellent comprehensive study of the Ugaritic letter *KTU*³ 2.39, my former student J. N. Ford definitively established both the meaning of Ugaritic *spr* “lapis lazuli” (the prosaic A-word) and its semantic identification with Ugaritic *ʾiqnʾu* (the poetic semantically equivalent B-word).¹ An important part of the internal semantic evidence for this analysis must surely be the semantic comparison between the prosaic phrase *sprn ṭhrm* “lustrous (lit., pure) lapis lazuli” (*KTU*³ 2.39.33) and the semantically related poetic phrase *ʾib ʾiqnʾi* (*KTU*³ 1.14 iii 43; vi 29). While the meaning of Ugaritic *ʾiqnʾi* “lapis lazuli” is undisputed (especially in the light of the comparison with the Akkadian interdialectal equivalent and cognate term *uqnû*),² the following philological evidence (both internal and comparative) clearly demonstrates that, despite other scholarly opinions,³ the only acceptable analysis of the Ugaritic term *ʾib* here is as an adjective (in the quasi-construct form) meaning “lustrous (lit., pure)”.⁴

* It is a great pleasure for me to contribute this article to my friend and colleague professor Dennis Pardee, whom I consider the unrivaled master of Ugaritic studies in the world today. Much of professor Pardee’s philological research deals with Ugaritic grammar, syntax, and lexical meaning, often in comparison with other Semitic languages, and that is the nature of the present study as well. Somewhat abbreviated versions of this study were presented as lectures on the following three occasions: The Fifteenth World Conference of Jewish Studies (Jerusalem, August 6, 2009); 2009 NAPH International Conference (London, July 7, 2009); Departmental Seminar of the Hebrew Language Department of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Beer-Sheva, July 2, 2009 [Hebrew]).

1 Ford 2008. Note that Ford (*ibid.*, 304 n. 98) already refers there to my present article as “forthcoming.” For prosaic A-words and their poetic semantically equivalent (PSE) B-words, see Cohen 2008b, 458–64. In fact, the usage of the etymologically equivalent Biblical Hebrew (BH) ספיר “lapis lazuli” as a rare term attested only eleven times in poetic and technical contexts (Exod. 24:10; 28:18; 39:11; Isa. 54:11; Ezek. 1:26; 10:1; 28:13; Job 28:6, 16; Song 5:14; Lam. 4:7), with the Ugaritic (Ug.) poetic term *ʾiqnʾu* meaning “lapis-lazuli” (*DULAT*, 90, meaning 1 only [see Ford 2008, 322–24]) being nonexistent in Biblical Hebrew, is precisely what is expected. When there is an A-word and a PSE B-word expressing the same concept in Ugaritic, the A-word may surely occur in Biblical Hebrew as a rare poetic term, while the B-word is not expected to occur there at all (cf., e.g., the terms BH חרוץ / Ug. *hrṣ* “gold”; BH קיטור / Ug. *qṭr* “smoke”; BH אלה / Ug. *ʾalp* “large cattle”; BH יפיה / Ug. *yph* “witness”; BH לחם / Ug. *lhm* “to eat”; BH מוחץ / Ug. *mḥṣ* “to strike”; BH מרץ / Ug. *mrṣ* “to be sick, severe”; BH ערש / Ug. *ʾrṣ* “bed”; BH פעם / Ug. *pʾn* “foot”; BH צור / Ug. *ṣr* “mountain,” all listed and annotated in the chart in Cohen 2008b, 458–459).

2 CAD U/W, 195–202; CDA, 424–25.

3 See, e.g., *DULAT*, 6 (“gem”; note that the reference to Ford in this entry should be corrected to “Ford *UF* 40 (2008): 304”). Pardee (1997, 335) translates *ʾib ʾiqnʾi* “pure lapis-lazuli” without any explanatory note; both Greenstein (1997, 17) and Wyatt (2002, 196) translate this phrase “lapis lazuli,” without any apparent translation for the term *ʾib* (once again without any explanatory notes).

4 Some of this evidence is already discussed in Ford’s aforementioned paper (see Ford 2008, esp. 303–6 n. 98 and the bibliography referred to there. The term “quasi-construct form” is being used in this study in a practical (and nontheoretical)

- a) Contextually, the form *'iqn'i* can be syntactically understood only as the genitive singular (collective) form of *'iqn'u* and should most probably be vocalized [*'iqni'i*].
- b) Internally, the compound adjective *'ib 'iqn'i* “lapis-lazuli-pure” (construction I and section 5 below) must be compared semantically (though not grammatically) with the phrases *ṭhrm / ṣhrm 'iqn'im* [*ṭuhurīma / ṣuhurīma 'iqni'īma*] “lustrous (lit., pure) lapis-lazuli stones” or “most lustrous (lit., purest) of lapis-lazuli stones”⁵ (constructions II or III below; see also sections 8 and 11 below), while, externally, *'ib 'iqn'i* may be semantically compared with the common Akkadian (collective) phrase *uqnû ebbu* “lustrous (lit., pure) lapis lazuli.”⁶
- c) Since the *e-* vowel in the Akkadian adjective *ebbu* “pure” is an almost certain indication of an original pharyngeal (*ḥ*, *ʕ*, or *g*), which would normally have been preserved according to regular Ugaritic phonology, one must assume that Ugaritic *'ib* [*'ibbu*] is an Akkadian poetic loanword in Ugaritic, the native Ugaritic semantic equivalent of which is *ṭhr / ṣhr* [*ṭuhuru / ṣuhuru*] “pure, lustrous” (see also the previous section). This suggestion was already made by J. Blau more than forty years ago.⁷
- d) The two main philological problems with understanding Ugaritic *'ib* [*'ibbu*] as an Akkadian loanword based on the Akkadian adjective *ebbu* “pure, lustrous” are as follows:
 1. The adjective precedes the noun in the Ugaritic phrase *'ib 'iqn'i*, as opposed to the regular Akkadian phrase *uqnû ebbu* “lustrous (lit., pure) lapis lazuli.”
 2. The word *'iqn'i* [*'iqni'i*] occurs in the singular genitive case, which in the present context would normally require *'ib* [*'ibbu*] to be a noun in the construct state. There is no evidence in any ancient Semitic language for such a nominal form meaning “gem” or the like.
- e) The solution to both of these problems⁸ requires a review of the three special types of construction in Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew, and Ugaritic, in which the nonpredicate adjective precedes the noun:
 - Type I: The special compound adjective construction;
 - Type II: The simple reverse-order construction; and
 - Type III: The special superlative construction.

Table 22.1 summarizes these three special constructions in each of the aforementioned ancient Semitic languages, while the following sections provide more details and numerous examples.⁹

way to describe apparent construct forms that cannot be considered true construct forms because of their adjectival origin and extant usage. See the detailed discussion below, at the end of section 3B below.

5 *KTU*³ 1.4 v 19, 34–35; 1.24.21–22.

6 CAD E, 2; U/W, 195–96, 198–99. See also Ford 2008, 304–5 and n. 98. Ford (*ibid.*, 305–6) also rightly cites examples of *uqnû ellu* with the same meaning, since Akkadian *ebbu* and *ellu* are semantic equivalents. In fact, as already noted by Blau (1972, 77), it is Akkadian *el-lu* (partly reconstructed) that occurs as the equivalent of Ugaritic *ṭu-ú-ru* (= *ṭhr*) in the polyglot vocabulary Ugaritica V, 137 ii 1' (// 133 r. 13'), for which see most recently Huehnergard 2008, 38–39, 131 (see also Ford 2008, 301–2 n. 92).

7 See Blau 1972, 74–75; also n. 117 below.

8 In fact, both Ginsberg and Blau came close to solving these problems. Their lack of knowledge of the crucial Akkadian evidence (see especially sections 3A and 3B below) was the main hindrance that prevented them from arriving at the complete solution presented here. See Ginsberg 1946, 39 (comment to line 147); Blau 1972, 75–76. See also Sivan 2001, 208; Tropper 2000, 842.

9 All examples have been selected only after a detailed analysis of the contexts involved (at times discussed in the notes to the examples). Examples that are unclear or are based solely on unclear contexts (or PN's that are independent of their contexts) have not been included. Only those examples that precisely fit the definitions and conditions listed in the table have been chosen for each of the three constructions. The definition of adjective as used here is “as a distinct grammatical category” in accordance with the research of Gai 1995, esp. 5 (§3.2).

Table 22.1 Three special types of adjectival construction in Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew, and Ugaritic in which the nonpredicate adjective precedes the noun

Construction type	Akkadian	Biblical Hebrew	Ugaritic
I. Compound adjective	Adj. in accus. (or alter. quasi-constr.) + noun in genitive, relating to previous (pro)noun (or PN), or as general epithet	Quasi-constr. adj. + noun, relating to previous (pro) noun (or PN), or as general epithet	Quasi-constr. adj. + noun in genitive, relating to previous noun or as general epithet
II. Reverse order	Adj. in any case, gender, and number + modified noun (or PN) in same case, gender, and number	Adj. in any gender and number + modified noun (or PN) in same gender and number	Adj. in any case, gender, and number + modified noun (or PN) in same case, gender, and number
III. Superlative	Quasi-constr. adj. + plural noun in genitive (or PN)	Quasi-constr. adj. + plural noun (or PN)	Quasi-constr. adj. + plural noun in genitive (or PN)

2. PRELIMINARY EXAMPLE DEMONSTRATING THE CONFUSION IN ALL BIBLICAL HEBREW DICTIONARIES

All modern Biblical Hebrew dictionaries list the following three (among other) derivatives from the verbal root מתק "to be sweet" (each including a separate article for an assumed lexeme מתק or מתק*) with the following meanings and attestations in each case:¹⁰

a) מתוק "sweet"—Judg. 14:14, 18; Isa. 5:20 (2×); Ezek. 3:3; Ps. 19:11; Prov. 16:24; 24:13; 27:7; Song 2:3; Qoh. 5:11; 11:7

b) מתק* "sweetness"—Judg. 9:11

ותאמר להם התאנה החדלתי את מתקי ואת תגובתי הטובה והלכתי לנוע על העצים

But the fig tree replied: "Have I stopped yielding my sweetness, my delicious fruit, that I should go and wave above the trees?"

c) מתק (or מתק*) "sweetness"—Prov. 16:21; 27:9

The following correct translations demonstrate that in Proverbs 16:21 מתק must be taken as the adjectival quasi-construct form of מתוק "sweet," while in Proverbs 27:9 מתק must be taken as the construct byform of מתק* "sweetness" (see the discussion below).¹¹ Therefore, the term מתק (or מתק*) "sweetness" as a separate lexeme must be deleted from all Biblical Hebrew dictionaries:¹²

לחכם לב יקרא נבון ומתק שפתים יסוף לקח

Prov. 16:21: One who is wise-hearted is called discerning;

One who is of sweet [i.e., pleasing] speech gains wisdom.

(cf. esp. Prov. 16:23–24)

¹⁰ See, e.g., BDB, 608–9; *DCH* 5: 569, 573–74; *HALOT*, 654–56; Ges¹⁸, 763, 766; *MHH*, 682, 685.

¹¹ This grammatical and syntactical analysis for these two verses has apparently not been suggested previously. Contrast, e.g., McKane 1970, 489, 612–13; Fox 2009, 619–20, 807; Hurowitz 2012, 369, 523–24. Only Fox (2009, 619–20) in his commentary to Proverbs 16:21 at least translates and understands the verse correctly, but he does not provide any grammatical and syntactical analysis of the phrase ומתק שפתים.

¹² In fact, the single additional attestation listed in *DCH* 5: 574, from the Dead Sea Scrolls (4QBéat 5:9 = 4Q525 5:9) may also be eliminated in the light of the more likely reading and restoration of E. Qimron in lines 8–9, viz., כי חכמי לב י' שכילו, instead of the reading by Puech במתק בשכילי. See Qimron 2014, 113, 115 and the bibliography listed there.

שֶׁמֶן וְקִטְרֶת יִשְׂמַח לֵב וּמִתֶּק רֵעֵהוּ מַעֲצַת נָפֶשׁ

Prov. 27:9: Oil and incense gladden the heart,

And the sweetness of one's friend is better than one's own counsel.

In conjunction with the compound adjective לֵב חָכָם “(one who is) wise-hearted”¹³ in the first clause, the phrase מִתֶּק שְׂפָתַיִם “of sweet [i.e., pleasing] speech” in Proverbs 16:21b should be understood as a corresponding compound adjective with the first component מִתֶּק as the adjectival quasi-construct form of מתוק “sweet,” just as אָרֶךְ is the adjectival quasi-construct form of אָרוּךְ “long” in the well-attested compound adjective אָרֶךְ אַפַּיִם “slow to anger” (see table 22.1 and section 4). On the other hand, in the *hapax* phrase in Proverbs 27:9, מִתֶּק רֵעֵהוּ “the sweetness of one's friend,” the term מִתֶּק is simply the construct byform of מתק “sweetness,” just as אָרֶךְ is the construct byform of אָרוּךְ “length” (in just three verses: Jer. 15:15; Prov. 14:29; Qoh. 7:8; the regular construct form of אָרֶךְ is, of course, אֶרֶךְ, as in, e.g., Gen. 6:15). For example, see the usage in אַל לְאַרְךְ אַפְּךָ תִּקְחֵנִי “Do not cause me to perish because of Your patience (lit., the length of Your anger)” (Jer. 15:15). As astutely noted by E. Qimron, the use of a pronominal suffix at the end of the second component is a clear marker that the phrase is *not* a compound adjective.¹⁴ Such is the case in Jeremiah 15:15 (לְאַרְךְ אַפְּךָ), in Proverbs 27:9 above (מִתֶּק רֵעֵהוּ), and in Exodus 15:16: בְּגִדְלִי זְרוּעֶךָ “at the greatness of Your arm” (cf. Ps. 79:11: בְּגִדְלִי זְרוּעֶךָ).¹⁵

3A. AKKADIAN COMPOUND ADJECTIVE—BONA FIDE EXAMPLES¹⁶

b/palša ini(m) ‘with staring eye’ (vS, M, R; CAD B, 65; CDA, 37); *barma(m) inin* “rainbow-eyed” (vS, R, W; CAD B, 112);¹⁷ *damqa(m) ini(m)* ‘keen-sighted’ (vS, M, R; CAD D, 67; CDA, 55); *eddam qarnin* / *edid qarnim* “sharp-horned” (vS, R, W; CAD E, 23–24);¹⁸ *ellam mê* “pure of rites” (vS, R, W; CAD E, 100–101; CDA, 70); *ellam qāti* “pure-handed” (vS, R; CAD E, 105);¹⁹ *emqam birkim* “able-kneed” (vS, R, W; CAD E, 151);²⁰ *hesir*

13 See section 4 below.

14 See Qimron 2003, 327–28.

15 See also n. 31 below.

16 All the bona fide examples for this Akkadian construction have been taken from the following four studies (a basic bibliography has thus been provided after each example according to the following abbreviations): vS = von Soden 1960; M = Marcus 1980; R = Reiner 1984; W = Wasserman 2003, 45–60. In addition, reference has been made to the treatment of the phrase in the Akkadian dictionaries CAD and CDA. In general, see also von Soden 1995, 101 (§64a). Here it should be noted that all four examples listed in Marcus 1980 are accepted here as antiphrastic euphemisms for the blind (as Marcus suggests), and their translations are therefore placed within single quotes (‘with staring eye’; ‘keen-sighted’; ‘bright-eyed’; ‘open-eyed’).

17 For the single Old Babylonian context (referring to a snake), see Wasserman 2003, 48.

18 For the sole context of the phrase *edda<ta>m qarnin* “sharp-horned,” see especially Westenholz 1997, 181, line 5. There, in a note to this line, Westenholz mentions the emendation in the first component of this phrase as suggested by von Soden (1960, 164; in fact, this emendation appears first in CAD E, 23–24 in 1958 contra von Soden’s claim there that this phrase “fehlt in CAD, E”). Westenholz further compares the “broken context in reference to the chariot of Marduk *e-di-id qar-[ni]* ‘with sharp horns’ (Lambert, *Symbolae Böhl*, 279:8).” Thus the emended form *eddam* should be analyzed as the masculine singular form of the first component of the special compound adjective *damqa(m) ini(m)* construction, while the form *edid* is apparently the quasi-construct form of the masculine singular adjective *eddum*.

19 Note that the phrase *ellam qāti* “pure-handed” seems to be attested only in Adapa, Fragment A, I:9’ (cf. the explanatory expansion in line 13’), for which see Izre’el 2001, 9–10, 13 with note (cf. also CAD E, 105). As indicated both by CAD and Izre’el, this compound adjective is an epithet referring to Adapa himself and not to the flood-hero Atra-ḥasis as understood by von Soden (1960, 164). In fact, as correctly understood by Izre’el (2001, 12–13, note to line 8’), *atra ḥasisa* “exceedingly wise” in the previous line 8’ is also best understood here as a compound adjective serving as an epithet of Adapa. Izre’el’s understanding of these two lines has now been accepted also in Foster 2005, 526. Note, finally, that *atra(m) ḥasīs(a)* “exceedingly wise” has not been included among the above bona fide examples of Akkadian compound adjectives because the second component is never in the genitive case (see n. 9 above and section 3B below).

20 For the correct reading *birkim* in the singular (best understood here as a collective epithet referring to the previously mentioned warriors, rather than *birkīn* in the dual as read by von Soden 1960, 164, and followed by Reiner 1984, 179), see already CAD E, 151; Westenholz 1997, 68, 69 n. 53; Wasserman 2003, 49. See also Westenholz 1996, 186.

šinnī “with chipped teeth” (vS, R, W; CAD H, 127; Š/3, 49);²¹ *namra(t) īni* “bright-eyed” (vS, M, R; CAD N/1, 243);²² *našiʾam rēši* “with raised head” (vS, R, W; CAD N/2, 80; CDA, 246);²³ *palḥam zimī* “of fearsome countenance” (vS, R, W; CAD P, 65; CDA, 262);²⁴ *palkâ(t) uzni* “of vast understanding” (R; CAD P, 67; CDA, 262);²⁵ *patiʾa inīm* “open-eyed” (vS, M, R; CAD P, 339); *pēt / petâ(t) uzni* “open-eared [i.e., very wise]” (vS, R; CAD P, 339);²⁶ *rabītam libbi* “of great courage” (R, W; CAD R, 37 [section 7c, last reference]);²⁷ *rapāš / rapša(t) uzni* “broad-minded” (vS, R; CAD R, 165–66);²⁸ *rapša(m) irti(m)* “broad-chested” (vS, R, W; CAD I/J, 184);²⁹ *rapšam pīm* “wide-mouthed” (W; CAD R, 163; U/W, 365);³⁰ *šadla karši* “broad-minded” (vS, R; CAD Š/1, 49);³¹

21 Note that this expression conclusively demonstrates the adjectival component of the compound adjective (in this case the quasi-construct masculine singular form *ḥesir*) must agree both in gender and number not with the following noun (in this case the feminine plural *šinnī*), but rather with the previous modified (pro)noun or PN (in this case the masculine singular *lā šuklulu* “the imperfect [i.e., one who has a bodily defect or a physical deformity]”). See BBR 24:31 as quoted in CAD H, 127, and Š/3, 49 (see also p. 48). For this context, see Leviticus 21:17–23. When it is the noun *šinnu* that is being modified, the attested phrase is *šinnu ḥasirtum* “chipped tooth” (Kagal D Section 6:7 as quoted in CAD H, 127, and Š/3, 48).

22 For the grammatical significance of the lexical attestation of *namrat ēni* (MSL 12, 216, line 17'; cf. CAD N/1, 240) alongside the regular *namra īni*, see the discussion in section 3B below.

23 See most recently Klein 2008, 164, line 7, 165 with comment. The translation of line 7 should be changed to “with raised head.”

24 For the most recent edition of the two copies of the snake incantation including the sole context in which this compound adjective occurs, see Finkel 1999, 226–28. Note the initial component was at first incorrectly read by von Soden (1960, 165) as *dalḥam* (later corrected in *AHw*, 816, with credit to Reiner).

25 This example has been incorrectly analyzed in both Reiner 1984, 178, and CAD P, 67. The former understands *palkât uzni* as “the feminine correspondence” to the special compound adjective form *palkâ uzni*, while the latter lists the two relevant contexts under the heading “in predicative use” (i.e., *not* as a compound adjective). In truth, the form *palkât* must be analyzed as the quasi-construct feminine singular form of the adjective *palkû* (see the discussion in section 3B below).

26 Note that in this case, the quasi-construct forms of both the regular masculine and feminine singular forms of the adjective (*pēt / petât*) are attested in addition to the special compound adjective form *petâ*. See the discussion in section 3B below.

27 For the single known reference for the compound adjective *rabītam libbi* “with great courage,” note especially the analysis of the context in Wasserman 2003, 47–48 (where this phrase is translated “boldhearted”). For *libbu* meaning “courage,” see, e.g., the references in CAD L, 170. This is the only case of such a compound adjective in a singular feminine accusative (not quasi-construct) form (referring to the goddess Irninna [i.e., Ištar]; see the discussion in section 3B below); and compare the many examples of the feminine quasi-construct form *rabīṭ / rabât* (cf. CAD R, 37), all used in the special Akkadian superlative construction discussed above (see the examples in section 9 below).

28 Note that the three attested forms of the adjectival component of this phrase are to be analyzed grammatically as follows: (a) *rapāš*—quasi-construct form of the masculine singular adjective *rapšu*; (b) *rapša*—masculine singular form according to the special compound adjective *damqa(m) īni(m)* construction; (c) *rapšat*—quasi-construct form of the feminine singular adjective *rapāštu*. See the discussion in section 3B below.

29 Cf. the usage of the same two terms as an example of the reverse-order construction (see the examples in section 6 below).

30 For the single context in which this compound adjective is extant, see Wasserman 2003, 48. Note that the parallel compound adjective in this context (also occurring only here—see, e.g., Wasserman), *lawiʾam uznīn* “. . . -eared,” has not been included here because of the difficulty in understanding the usage of the first component (apparently derived from the verb *lawû* “to encircle, surround” but never used elsewhere with respect to the ear; see, e.g., CAD L, 69–77). Wasserman’s translation of the latter compound adjective as “bat-eared (lit., curled-ears)” seems no more than an educated guess. See Wasserman 2003, 48. Most recently, CAD U/W, 365, has translated “wrapped-around ears,” but this too seems without precedent.

31 The sole occurrence of this compound adjective is as an epithet to Sargon: *[šarru] rabû šadla karši* “the great king, the broad-minded” (Rm. 2, 92:4; Tadmor 1958, 97–98). See already Seux 1967, 268. Here it should be noted that a similar phrase occurs also with respect to Sargon in TCL 3:23: *ina pīt ḥasīsi u šadal karše ša Ea u Bēlet-ilī iṣimmūnīma ana sapān māt ayyābi iptû puriddi* “with the intelligence and broadmindedness which Ea and Bēlet-ilī allotted me, I hastened to devastate the enemy’s land.” The latter usage of *šadal karše* “broadmindedness” (i.e., lit., “broadness of mind”), however, is *not* as a compound adjective (with *šadal* as a quasi-construct form), but rather as a regular nominal construct phrase within a regular adverbial clause beginning with *ina* “with, by means of” placed at the beginning of the sentence. Just as the term *pīt* in the above context must be analyzed as the regular construct form of the substantive *pītu* A “opening” (the “opening of the ear” being an idiom meaning “intelligence”), as has indeed been done in CAD P, 446 (cf. *AHw*, 871 and Reiner 1984, 178), so the term *šadal* in that context can only be the construct of a reconstructed substantive **šadlu* “broadness” derived from *šadālu*

šaġât rēši “with raised head” (R; CAD R, 282);³² *šalmāt qaqqadi(m)* “black-headed” (vS; R, W; CAD Š, 75–76; CDA, 332);³³ *ulluḥam šārātim* “adorned with (tufts of) hair” (vS, R, W; CAD Š/2, 128; U/W, 84; CDA, 421).³⁴

3B. AKKADIAN COMPOUND ADJECTIVE—DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON WITH BIBLICAL HEBREW AND UGARITIC

While the specific construction known as *damqa(m) īni(m)* is unique to Akkadian, four of its five main characteristics are identical with those of the “compound adjective” constructions in Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic: (1) the adjectival component precedes the noun;³⁵ (2) the noun is in the genitive case; (3) the compound adjective is in reference to a previous (pro)noun or PN or is used as a general epithet; (4) semantically, the majority of cases refer literally to the body or to parts of the body either as regards the components of the phrase or with respect to the referent, or both. The only major difference is the predominant form of the Akkadian adjectival component with the *-a(m)* suffix (equivalent to the accusative singular case)³⁶ rather than the use of the quasi-construct form of the adjective. In five of the twenty-two examples, however, the Akkadian compound adjectives occurring in the *damqa(m) īni(m)* form also occur in one or

“to be broad” (contrast both CAD Š/1, 49, and *AHw*, 1122). Compare the substantive *rupšu* “width” derived from *rapāšu* “to be wide.” Note that the aforementioned context from TCL 3:23 is in fact a key semantic and syntactic precedent for the proper analysis of Exodus 15:16b: *בְּגֹדְלִי זְרוּעַךְ יִדְמוּ כָאֶבֶן* “at the greatness of Your arm, they (the enemies) are still as stone.” Here, too, the term *בְּגֹדְלִי* “at the greatness of” with prefixed *בְּ* (= Akkadian *ina* in TCL 3:23 above) must be taken as a rare construct byform of *גִּדְלִי* “greatness” (cf. GKC §93h and especially *גִּדְלִי כְּזֵרַע* / *כְּזֵרַע גִּדְלִי* “like coriander seed” in Exod. 16:31 and Num. 11:7 and the two cases *גִּבְהַי* / *גִּבְהֵי* “the height of” and *רְחֹבִי* / *רְחֹב* “the width of” as discussed at the end of this note) of the attested noun *גִּדְלִי* “greatness,” for which compare especially Psalm 79:11b (with the regular construct form): *כְּגֹדְלִי זְרוּעַךְ הוֹתֵר בְּנֵי תִמּוֹתָהּ* “as befits the greatness of Your arm, reprieve those condemned to death.” This is precisely the analysis suggested in the Exodus commentary of Propp (1999, 536). Its correctness is now absolutely verified by the above Akkadian precedent. Finally, note this same distinction in Akkadian between the compound adjective *šadla karši* “broad-minded” and the nominal construct phrase *šadal karše* “broadmindedness” also occurs in Biblical Hebrew between the compound adjective *גִּבְהַי קוֹמָה* “of lofty stature” (Ezek. 31:3) and the nominal construct phrase *גִּבְהַי קוֹמָתוֹ* “the loftiness of his stature” (1 Sam. 16:7) and between the compound adjective *רְחֹב לֵבָב* “arrogant (one)” (Ps. 101:5) and the nominal construct phrase *לֵב רְחֹב* “arrogance” (Prov. 21:4, where *גִּבְהַי* and the first *רְחֹב* are quasi-construct forms of the respective adjectives *גִּבּוֹהַּ* “tall” and *רָחֹב* “wide,” while *גִּבְהֵי* and the second *רְחֹב* are rare alternative construct forms of the respective nouns *גִּבְהַי* “height” and *רְחֹב* “width”; cf. the term *בְּגֹדְלִי* discussed in this note above). This distinction was already clearly noted by E. Qimron with respect to *qutl* form nouns in Biblical Hebrew (and later dialects of Hebrew as well). Qimron also noted the important distinction that when these forms were used as part of the compound adjectival construction, they could never occur with pronominal suffixes, while such suffixes were common in nominal construct phrases (such as in Exod. 15:16 and 1 Sam. 16:7, cited above). See Qimron 2003, esp. 327–28. See also the end of section 2 above.

32 This compound adjective is the feminine singular semantic counterpart (but with first component in quasi-construct form of the feminine singular adjective *šaġītu*) of *naši'am rēši* (see in the list of examples in the above text). It occurs only in TCL 3:18, for which see CAD R, 282 (cf. Reiner 1984, 178). This passage has been both misinterpreted and mistranslated in CAD Š/2, 16.

33 This expression is the only example of the quasi-construct feminine plural form as the adjectival component (see the discussion in section 3B below). As long known, the rationale behind this feminine plural form is the common usage in apposition with the feminine plural form *nišū* “people, mankind, humanity” (see, e.g., the discussion section in CAD Š, 76). Contrast Reiner 1984, 178–79.

34 For a recent edition of the two copies of the snake incantation containing the sole context in which this compound adjective occurs, see Finkel 1999, 226–28.

35 Here it should be noted that the adjectival component of a compound adjective is usually a relatively long-term attribute (most often referring naturally and physically, sometimes metaphorically, to parts of the body) and does not refer to relatively short-term results of a specific action, as in passive participle construct expressions such as *קְרוּעֵי בְּגָדִים* “with rent clothes” and *מְגֻלְחֵי זָקָן* “with beards shaven” (both in, e.g., Jer. 41:5 and both occurring contextually there as temporary signs of mourning). On the other hand, passive constructions referring to relatively long-term attributes have indeed been included, such as *שְׁבוּרֵי לֵב* “brokenhearted” (see in section 4 below).

36 The *-am* suffix occurs in one case appended to the feminine singular adjectival form *rabītam* in the compound adjective *rabītam libbi* “with great courage” (see n. 27 above). For the various theoretical attempts of explaining the nature of what appears to be an accusative suffix appended to the adjectival component in this construction in Akkadian and a thorough general comparison with the *Tamyiz* construction in Arabic, see especially Wasserman 2003, 45–47, 50–60 (esp. 56–58) and

more variant forms in which the adjectival component does indeed occur in the quasi-construct form—*edid qarnim*; *namrat īni*; *palkât uzni*; *pēt / petât uzni*; *rapaš / rapšat uzni*—thus making these latter variant forms completely identical with the parallel “compound adjective” constructions in Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic. Furthermore, in three of the twenty-two examples—*hesir šinni*; *šaḡât rēši*; *šalmāt qaqqadi(m)*—only these latter variant forms are extant. It should further be noted that the quasi-construct form of the adjective in all three languages has two unique qualities that are highlighted in all the above expressions: (1) not only is the form apparently morphologically identical with the construct, but also, in both the compound adjective construction and the superlative construction (see table 22.1 and the examples in sections 9–11 below), the following noun is always in the genitive case, thereby making both of these constructions appear syntactically identical with the construct; (2) the quasi-construct form of the adjective, however, is not a true construct form (hence its name),³⁷ both because of the fact that an adjectival form by definition cannot have a true construct and because for each compound adjective, every one of the four forms of the adjectival component (ms, mp, fs, and fp) can potentially occur in their own separate quasi-construct form in accord with the modified referent in each specific context. Thus, as regards the quasi-construct adjectival component in the above ten expressions, four are extant in the masculine singular—*edid*, *hesir*, *pēt*, *rapaš*—five are extant in the feminine singular—*namrat*, *palkât*, *petât*, *rapšat*, *šaḡât*—and one occurs only in the feminine plural—*šalmāt*.

4. BIBLICAL HEBREW COMPOUND ADJECTIVE—MOST EXAMPLES³⁸

אָגְמִי נָפֶשׁ “despondent (// מְדַכְּאִים)” (Isa. 19:10); אָמִיץ כֹּחַ “of mighty power” (Job 9:4); אָרַךְ אַפִּים “slow to anger” (Exod. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Nah. 1:3; Pss. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Prov. 15:18; 16:32; Neh. 9:17);³⁹ אָרַךְ הָאָבֶר “long-pinioned” (Ezek. 17:3);⁴⁰ בָּרִי לֵבָב / בָּרִי “pure-hearted” (Pss. 24:4; 73:1); בָּרִיאָי / בְּרִיאֹת בֶּשֶׁר “robust, sturdy, healthy” (Gen. 41:2, 18; Dan. 1:15); גְּבוּהָ לֵב “haughty (lit., of haughty heart)” (Prov. 16:5);⁴¹

all the bibliography cited there. The present study deals specifically only with these constructions in the three languages Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew, and Ugaritic.

37 In fact, in my opinion, the only purpose of the construct form in this adjectival construction is to bind the two components together much like the modern hyphen does (as opposed to the Masoretic מקף). This binding is crucial because of the incongruence in number and gender that often occurs between these two components (e.g., יָפָה עֵינַיִם “with beautiful eyes”; יָפוֹת תֹּאֵר “handsome, beautiful, well formed”; *šalmāt qaqqadi(m)* “black-headed”), since the first construct term must always be in agreement with the referent, while the second term remains constant.

38 No attempt has been made here to present an exhaustive list of examples of Biblical Hebrew compound adjectives (although I do believe I have here compiled the most comprehensive list presently available). All valid compound adjectives (according to the definition in the above chart and in section 3B above) noted in the following bibliography, as well as semantic equivalents to the Akkadian examples in section 3A above, have been included, as well as many others. See especially GKC, 419; Muraoka 1977, 375–80; Ahlström 1979, 254; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 151; Muraoka 1996, 98–99; Joüon and Muraoka 2006, 438–39.

39 This is the most frequently attested compound adjective in Biblical Hebrew. In nine of its eleven occurrences it is used as an epithet of God, for which see Ditchi-Barak 2007, 233, 235. Only in its two attestations, in Proverbs 15:18 and 16:32, is it used as a general human epithet (in the former verse in antithetic parallelism with אִישׁ חֲמָה “a hot-tempered man,” and in the latter verse in synonymous parallelism with מְשֹׁל בְּרוּחוֹ “one who has self-control”).

40 Note that this compound adjective in Ezekiel 17:3 occurs together with the semantically similar compound adjective גְּדוֹל הַכְּנָפִים “with enormous wings [or wing-span].” The latter compound adjective also occurs alone in Ezekiel 17:7. Finally, it is significant that the eleven attestations of the compound adjective אָרַךְ אַפִּים and the single occurrence of the compound adjective אָרַךְ הָאָבֶר account for all twelve occurrences of the quasi-construct form of the adjective אָרוּךְ “long.” The form אָרוּךְ does occur another three times (Jer. 15:15; Prov. 14:29; Qoh. 7:8), but as a variant construct form of the substantive אָרוּךְ “length.” (The regular construct form is of course the unchanged substantive form אָרוּךְ, e.g., Gen. 6:15.) See section 2 and n. 31 above.

41 This compound adjective is used here as a general epithet.

גְּדֹל־חֲמָה “haughty (lit., of haughty eyes)” (Ps. 101:5);⁴² גְּבֵה קוֹמָה “of lofty stature” (Ezek. 31:3);⁴³ גְּדֹל־חֶסֶד “hot-tempered” (Prov. 19:19);⁴⁴ גְּדֹל־כֹּחַ “of abounding kindness” (Ps. 145:8);⁴⁵ גְּדֹל־הַעֲצָה “of great power” (Nah. 1:3; *Qere*);⁴⁶ גְּדוֹל (הַ)כְּנָפִים “with enormous wings [or wing-span]” (Ezek. 17:3, 7);⁴⁷ גְּדוֹל הָעֵצָה “of wondrous purpose” (Jer. 32:19);⁴⁸ גְּלוֹי עֵינָיִם “with perspicacious vision” (Num. 24:4, 16); דְּכָאֵי רוּחַ “those of crushed spirit” (Ps. 34:19); חֲזָקִי לֵב “tough-hearted” (Ezek. 2:4);⁴⁹ חֲזָקִי מִצַּח “tough-browed” (Ezek. 3:7);⁵⁰ חֲכָלִי עֵינָיִם “dark-eyed” (Gen. 49:12);⁵¹ חָכָם / חֲכָמָת / חֲכָמִי לֵב “skillful or intelligent (lit., wise-hearted) (person)” (Exod. 28:3; 31:6; 35:10, 25; 36:1, 2, 8; Prov. 10:8; 11:29; 16:21; Job 37:24); חָכָם לֵב “of wise heart” (Job 9:4); חָסֵר לֵב “(one) devoid of sense” (Prov. 6:32; 7:7; 9:4, 16; 10:13; 11:12; 12:11; 15:21; 17:18; 24:30); חָסֵר תְּבוּנוֹת “devoid of understanding” (Prov. 28:16); טָהוֹר יָדַיִם “pure-handed” (Job 17:9);⁵² טָהוֹר לֵב “pure-hearted” (Prov. 22:11); טָהוֹר

42 This compound adjective is used here together with a second compound adjective רָחֵב לֵב “arrogant,” both as general epithets.

43 On the context of this verse and the usage of the two compound adjectives therein, see n. 63 below. Note also the nominal construct phrase גְּבֵה קוֹמָתוֹ “the loftiness of his stature” (1 Sam. 16:7), for which see n. 31 above. Finally, note the two nominal construct phrases in Qoh. 7:8: אָרֶךְ רוּחַ “patience” and גְּבֵה רוּחַ “haughtiness.” Both forms גְּבֵה and גְּבוּהָ should be seen as variant construct forms of the noun גְּבוּהָ “height” (together with the regular unchanged construct form גְּבוּהָ, for which see, e.g., Amos 2:9). See also section 2 and n. 31 above.

44 This compound adjective occurs only here as a general epithet. Surely גָּדֹל is the preferred reading rather than the *Ketiv* גָּר. See, e.g., Waltke 2005, 91 n. 34, 112–13 and n. 91; Fox 2009, 657.

45 This compound adjective occurs only in this verse as referring to God, together with the semantically similar compound adjective אֶרֶךְ אָפַיִם “slow to anger.” For גְּדֹל־חֶסֶד as a divine epithet, see Ditchi-Barak 2007, 232–33, 235.

46 For the sole usage of this compound adjective as a variant divine epithet (replacing the compound adjectives רַב חֶסֶד “of great kindness” and גְּדֹל־חֶסֶד “of abounding kindness” within the usual confessional formulae), emphasizing God’s power as a God of retribution (in keeping with the general tenor of the prophecies in the Book of Nahum), see especially Roberts 1991, 50. Roberts then correctly adds, “and the shift is completed by the following statement that Nahum shares with Ex. 34:7 and Num. 14:18: ‘And Yahweh will certainly not acquit the guilty.’” See also Ditchi-Barak 2007, 187 n. 505; contra BHS, 1044 n. 3b.

47 See n. 40 above.

48 This compound adjective occurs only here together with the compound adjective רַב הָעֲלִילָה “of mighty deed(s),” both as divine epithets. For both, see Ditchi-Barak 2007, 291–92. Note finally that of the eight listed occurrences of the construct form among the 526 total occurrences of the adjective גְּדוֹל (see Even-Shoshan 1977, 222–25), six represent quasi-construct components in the five compound adjectives in the list above. The plural construct form גְּדוֹלֵי הָעִיר “the notables of the town” (2 Kgs. 10:6) is the nominal construct of a substantivized adjective. For the form בְּגָדֹל “the greatness of” in the phrase בְּגָדֹל זְרוּעֶךָ “at the greatness of Your arm” (Exod. 15:16) as a rare alternative nominal construct form of the substantive גְּדֹל “greatness,” see n. 31 above.

49 The derisive compound adjective חֲזָקִי לֵב “tough-hearted” occurs here together with the semantically similar compound adjective קָשִׁי פָנִים “brazen-faced,” while the two related compound adjectives in Ezekiel 3:7 are חֲזָקִי מִצַּח “tough-browed” and קָשִׁי לֵב “hard-hearted,” all referring to the rebellious house of Israel. For the similar usage of these four compound adjectives, see especially Greenberg 1983, 60–61, 63–64, 69. The above translations of these four related compound adjectives have been taken from that work as well.

50 See the previous note.

51 The root חָלַל = Akkadian *ekēlu* “to be dark” occurs once more in Biblical Hebrew in Proverbs 23:29. For both of these verses and the aforementioned Akkadian cognate, see Cohen 1989, 15–16; 1996, 296–97 (the translation there should be replaced by the translation below) and the bibliography cited therein. While the two parallel compound adjectives חֲכָלִי עֵינָיִם “dark-eyed” // לָבָן שִׁנָּיִם “white of teeth” in Genesis 49:12 have not usually been analyzed as such, the usage of the quasi-construct form לָבָן (only in this verse—see Joüon and Muraoka 2006, 279 §96Bb) leaves little doubt as regards the latter phrase, while the form חֲכָלִי in the former phrase is also best understood as a quasi-construct form of the adjective with *yod-compaginis* suffix (cf. the regular construct form בָּנִי in Gen. 49:11 [the previous verse; cf. אָבִי / אָב and אִמִּי / אִמָּה] and the quasi-construct forms in the two compound adjectives רַבְתֵּי עָם “numerous of people” [Lam. 1:1] and מְלֵאֲתֵי מִשְׁפָּט “full of justice” [Isa. 1:21] as noted in Joüon and Muraoka 2006, 260 §93m). Contrast, e.g., de Hoop 1999, 142, 150, 246. Genesis 49:12 is best translated: “Dark-eyed more than wine, White of teeth more than milk.” Finally, note that the occurrence of these two compound adjectives in Genesis 49 as part of the Early Israelite Poetry corpus attests to the usage of compound adjectives throughout the entire period of Biblical Hebrew, from Early Israelite Poetry through the late biblical books of Esther and Daniel, e.g., טוֹבוֹת מְרָאָה / טוֹבִי / טוֹבוֹת “good-looking” (Esth. 1:11; 2:2, 3, 7; Dan. 1:4). See also n. 71 below.

52 In Job 17:9, this compound adjective is parallel to צַדִּיק “righteous,” both of which serve as general epithets in this context. The semantically equivalent Akkadian compound adjective is *ellam qāti*, for which see the examples in section 3A above.

“of pure eyes” (Hab. 1:13);⁵³ *טוב לֵב* / *טובי לֵב* “of content heart” (1 Kgs. 8:66 = 2 Chron. 7:10; Prov. 15:15; Esth. 5:9);⁵⁴ *טוב עֵין* “generous, benevolent” (Prov. 22:9);⁵⁵ *טוב רֹאי* “good-looking” (1 Sam. 16:12);⁵⁶ *טוב תֹּאֵר* “handsome” (1 Kgs. 1:6); *טובת חֵן* “charming, attractive” (Nah. 3:4); *טובת מְרֹאֶה* / *טובי מְרֹאֶה* “good-looking” (Gen. 24:16; 26:7; 2 Sam. 11:2; Esth. 1:11; 2:2, 3, 7; Dan. 1:4); *טובת שִׁכְלָה* “intelligent” (1 Sam. 25:3);⁵⁷ *טִמְאָה שְׁפָתַיִם* “of impure lips” (Isa. 6:5 [2×]);⁵⁸ *טִמְאָה הָשֵׁם* “of defiled name” (Ezek. 22:5);⁵⁹ *יָפֶה* / *יָפֶת* / *יָפֹת מְרֹאֶה* “handsome, beautiful” (Gen. 12:11; 29:17; 39:6; 41:2, 4; 1 Sam. 17:42; 2 Sam. 14:27);⁶⁰ *יָפֶה נוֹף* “fair-crested” (Ps. 48:3);⁶¹ *יָפֶה עֵנַיִם* “with beautiful eyes” (1 Sam. 16:12);⁶² *יָפֶה עֲנָף* “of beautiful branches” (Ezek. 31:3);⁶³ *יָפֶה פְּרִי תֹאֵר* “with beautiful form and fruit” (Jer. 11:16);⁶⁴ *יָפֶה קוֹל* “of sweet voice” (Ezek. 33:32);⁶⁵ *יָפֶה תֹּאֵר* / *יָפֶת* / *יָפֹת תֹּאֵר* “handsome, beautiful, well-formed” (Gen. 29:17; 39:6; 41:18; Deut. 21:11; 1 Sam. 25:3; Esth. 2:7);⁶⁶ *כְּבֹדִי לְשׁוֹן* / *כְּבֹד*

53 This compound adjective serves here as an epithet of God (in continuation of the previous verse). It should be added to the list of epithets in the comprehensive study of my former student, Talia Ditchi-Barak. See Ditchi-Barak 2007.

54 Note that in three of the four occurrences this compound adjective is preceded immediately by the adjective *שִׂמְחָה* “happy.” In Proverbs 15:15, read with BHS, 1295 n. 15a: *וְלֵטוֹב לֵב* for MT *וְלֵטוֹב לֵב*. The latter occurrence is as a general epithet.

55 The meaning of this compound adjective, “generous, benevolent” (lit., “good of eye”), is determined both by the immediate context of the verse and by the usage of the compound adjective antonym *רַע עֵין* “stingy, miserly (lit., evil of eye)” (Prov. 23:6; 28:22). See, e.g., Waltke 2005, 209 n. 81; Fox 2009, 699–700; Hurowitz 2012, 438. Both of these compound adjectives occur only as general epithets.

56 Note that the last two of the three adjectives referring to David in 1 Samuel 16:12 are compound adjectives: *עֵם יָפֶה עֵנַיִם* “with beautiful eyes and good-looking.”

57 Here it should be noted that there are no additional occurrences of the specific quasi-construct forms *טובת* and *טובי*. All eight occurrences of *טובת* and three occurrences of *טובי* appear as the adjectival components of the compound adjectives listed in the examples above.

58 This compound adjective refers in this verse both to the prophet (*איש טמא שפתים*) and to the people (*עם טמא שפתים*). For the various suggestions through the ages for understanding the contextual usage of this compound adjective and the significance of the Mesopotamian parallels, see especially Hurowitz 1989, 39–89.

59 The compound adjective *טִמְאָה הָשֵׁם* serves in this verse as a derisive epithet of the city Jerusalem together with the compound adjective *רֵבַת הַמְּהוּמָה* “of great tumult.” On both these epithets, see especially Greenberg 1997, 453. Note that besides the two compound adjectives discussed here, *טִמְאָה שְׁפָתַיִם* and *טִמְאָה הָשֵׁם*, the other three cases of the construct *טִמְאָה* are *not* quasi-construct forms but, rather, attestations of the regular nominal construct form of the substantivized adjectives *טִמְאָה* “ritually impure person (or object),” namely *טִמְאָה נָפֶשׁ* “ritually impure person or object as a result of (contact with) a corpse” (Lev. 22:4; Hag. 2:13; = *טִמְאָה לְנֶפֶשׁ* in Num. 5:2; 9:10) and *טִמְאָה הַנְּדָה* “ritually impure woman as a result of menstruation” (Ezek. 22:10).

60 Note that the compound adjective *יָפֶת מְרֹאֶה* / *יָפֶה* occurs twice (Gen. 29:17; 39:6) together with the semantically similar compound adjective *יָפֶה תֹּאֵר* / *יָפֶה* “handsome, beautiful, well-formed” and in one case *יָפֹת תֹּאֵר* replaces *יָפֶה מְרֹאֶה* when the narrative is retold (Gen. 41:2, 18). The two compound adjective antonyms are *רָעוּת מְרֹאֶה* “ugly” (Gen. 41:3, 4) and *רָעוּת תֹּאֵר* “ill-formed” (Gen. 41:19).

61 The translation is taken from the NJPS. The reference is to God’s holy mountain, Mount Zion.

62 For the referent and context, see n. 56 above.

63 It is clear from the immediate context that the reference here is to the cedar tree symbolizing Assyria. A second compound adjective, *גִּבְהַ קוֹמָה* “of lofty stature,” occurs in this verse as well with the same referent.

64 This is the first of only three Biblical Hebrew double compound adjectives included in the present list. For the other two, see nn. 70 and 94 below. This double compound adjective should be analyzed as follows: *יָפֶה פְּרִי + יָפֶה תֹּאֵר* = *יָפֶה פְּרִי תֹאֵר*. According to the immediate context, the referent is the verdant olive tree, here symbolizing Israel as planted by God and tended to with loving care (cf. Isa. 5:1–7).

65 This compound adjective occurs together with the participial expression *מְטִב נִגֵּן* “one who is very good at playing an instrument” (= *מְטִב לִנְגֵן*; see 1 Sam. 16:17; Isa. 23:16; Ps. 33:3). Note also in the same participial construction *יָדַע נִגֵּן* “one who is expert at playing an instrument” (1 Sam. 16:16).

66 Note that of the forty-two occurrences of the adjective *יָפֶה*, eighteen are in the quasi-construct forms: *יָפֶה* (7) / *יָפֶה* (1) / *יָפֶת* (5) / *יָפֶת* (2) / *יָפֹת* (2) / and *יָפֹת* (1). In all eighteen cases, the quasi-construct form is the first component of a compound adjective.

“of impeded or unintelligible speech” (Exod. 4:10; Ezek. 3:5, 6);⁶⁷ כָּבֵד עוֹן “laden with iniquity” (Isa. 1:4);⁶⁸ כָּבֵד פֶּה “of impeded speech” (Exod. 4:10);⁶⁹ כָּבִיר בָּח לֵב “of great strength and mind” (Job 36:5);⁷⁰ לִבָּן שִׁנַּיִם “of white teeth” (Gen. 49:12);⁷¹ מָלֵא יָמִים “of advanced years” (Jer. 6:11);⁷² מְלֵאֲתִי מִשְׁפָּט “(once) filled with justice” (Isa. 1:21);⁷³ מְתֻק שְׁפָתַיִם “with sweet (i.e., pleasing) speech” (Prov. 16:21);⁷⁴ נֶגְהָ רַגְלָיִם “with crippled feet” (2 Sam. 4:4; 9:3); נֶגְהָ רוּחַ “of crippled spirit (i.e., brokenhearted)” (Isa. 66:2); נָקִי כַפַּיִם “pure-handed” (Ps. 24:4); נִשְׁבָּרִי לֵב “those who are brokenhearted” (Isa. 61:1; Ps. 34:19); עוֹ פָּנִים “ruthless, impudent” (Deut. 28:50; Dan. 8:23); עָרֵל / עָרְלִי בָשָׂר “greedy” (Isa. 56:11); עֲמֻקֵּי שִׁפְהָ “with obscure speech” (Isa. 33:19; Ezek. 3:5, 6);⁷⁵ עָרֵל / עָרְלִי לֵב “with ‘uncircumcised’ flesh (i.e., physically uncircumcised)” (Ezek. 44:7, 9);⁷⁶ עָרֵל / עָרְלִי לֵב “with ‘uncircumcised’ heart (i.e., spiritually ‘uncircumcised’)” (Jer. 9:25; Ezek. 44:7, 9);⁷⁷ עָרֵל שְׁפָתַיִם “with ‘uncircumcised’ lips (i.e., with impeded speech)” (Exod. 6:12, 30);⁷⁸ קָצֵר אַפִּים “impatient” (Prov. 14:17); קָצֵר יָד “helpless” (2 Kgs. 19:26 = Isa. 37:27); קָצֵר יָמִים “short-lived” (Job 14:1); קָצֵר רוּחַ “impatient” (Prov. 14:29); קָשָׁה יוֹם “unfortunate (lit., of hard times)” (Job 30:25);⁷⁹ קָשָׁה עֹרֶךְ “stiff-necked (i.e., stubborn, obstinate)” (Exod. 32:9; 33:3, 5; 34:9;

67 For this translation based on both the immediate and wider contexts (esp. Exod. 4:11), internal biblical medical usage of the root כָּבֵד as referring to an impediment of the eyes and ears (Gen. 48:10; Isa. 6:10; 59:1; Zach. 7:11), important comparative evidence from Akkadian and other ancient languages, and the semantic development from speech impediment to unintelligible foreign languages, see Tigay 1978, 57–67. See also nn. 69 and 75 below.

68 For the two alternative quasi-construct forms כָּבֵד / כָּבֵד, see the discussion including several precedents in n. 31 above. See also n. 75 below. The syntactical structure of the phrase עוֹן עִם כָּבֵד “people laden with iniquity” (// גֹּי חַטָּא “sinful nation”) is identical with that of the well-attested עָרֵךְ עִם קָשָׁה “stiff-necked people” (see n. 80 below). Here, too, the quasi-construct form כָּבֵד of the adjective כָּבֵד is clearly modifying the substantive עוֹן “iniquity” (cf. Ps. 38:5; also Gen. 18:20; Isa. 24:20), while the compound adjective כָּבֵד עוֹן “laden with iniquity” is clearly referring to עָם “people.” See Muraoka 1977, 376.

69 This compound adjective occurs in hendiadys with the compound adjective כָּבֵד לָשׁוֹן with virtually the same meaning, for which see n. 67 above. Both are semantically similar to the compound adjective עָרֵל שְׁפָתַיִם “of ‘uncircumcised’ lips” (i.e., of impeded speech), for which see nn. 75 and 76 below.

70 This general epithet of the God of Israel is one of only three Biblical Hebrew double compound adjectives included in the present list. For the other two, see nn. 64 above and 94 below. For the context and parallelism in Job 36:5, see Ditchi-Barak 2007, 225–26 and the bibliography cited there.

71 On this verse see n. 51 above. This is the only occurrence of the quasi-construct form לִבָּן. For the translation “white of teeth” and presumably the understanding of this phrase as a compound adjective, see already Joüon and Muraoka (2006, 279 §96Bb).

72 This compound adjective occurs here as a general epithet together with זָקֵן “elder(s).” The masculine singular quasi-construct form מָלֵא “full” occurs only here, while the feminine singular quasi-construct form מְלֵאֲתִי (with *yod-compaginis* suffix—see n. 51 above) occurs once as part of the compound adjective מְלֵאֲתִי מִשְׁפָּט (see the next note).

73 This compound adjective referring to the city Jerusalem occurs in parallel to the phrase צֶדֶק יֵלֵן בָּהּ “where righteousness dwelt.”

74 See section 2 above.

75 Note that in both verses Ezekiel 3:5, 6, both compound adjectives עֲמֻקֵּי שִׁפְהָ וְכָבֵד לָשׁוֹן “of obscure language and difficult speech” occur as a hendiadys. In the latter verse, this is immediately followed by an explanatory gloss, אֲשֶׁר לֹא תִשְׁמַע דְּבָרֵיהֶם, “whose words you cannot understand.” Note also the parallelism in Isaiah 33:19.

76 For the two alternative quasi-construct forms עָרֵל / עָרְלִי, compare the quasi-construct forms כָּבֵד / כָּבֵד discussed in n. 68 above and the additional examples in n. 31 above. For the three different usages of the root עָרַל in the three compound adjectives listed here, referring to the physically uncircumcised (עָרֵל בָּשָׂר), the spiritually “uncircumcised” who do not obey God’s commandments (עָרֵל / עָרְלִי לֵב), and the description of Moses’ speech impediment as his being of “uncircumcised” lips, i.e., of impeded speech (עָרֵל שְׁפָתַיִם), see the detailed discussion in Cohen 2005, 687–94, esp. 688–89 n. 12. For the spiritually “uncircumcised,” note especially Deuteronomy 10:16, which parallels this metaphoric usage with that of the stiffening of the neck (see n. 80 below). For Moses’ speech impediment, see nn. 67 and 69 above.

77 See the previous note.

78 This compound adjective is surely semantically similar to the two compound adjectives in the hendiadys כָּבֵד פֶּה וְכָבֵד לָשׁוֹן (Exod. 4:10), for which see the discussion in nn. 67 and 69 above. See also the discussion in n. 68 above.

79 This compound adjective is parallel to אֲבִיּוֹן “the needy.” It must be understood literally as a general epithet referring to those unfortunate individuals whose lives have fallen onto “hard times” (from a socioeconomic point of view).

Deut. 9:6, 13);⁸⁰ קָשִׁי לֵב "hard-hearted" (Ezek. 3:7);⁸¹ קָשִׁי פָּנִים "brazen-faced" (Ezek. 2:4);⁸² קָשֶׁת רוּחַ "sorely troubled" (1 Sam. 1:15);⁸³ רַב בְּרָכוֹת "abundantly blessed" (Prov. 28:20); רַב חֶסֶד "abundant in kindness" (Exod. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Pss. 86:5, 15; 103:8; Neh. 9:17 [*Qere*]); רַב כֹּחַ "of abundant power" (Ps. 147:5); רַב מְאֹרוֹת "abundantly cursed" (Prov. 28:27); רַב מַעֲשָׂקוֹת "abundantly oppressive" (Prov. 28:16); רַב נֹצֶה "with full plumage" (Ezek. 17:7); רַב הַעֲלִילָהּ "of abundant deeds" (Jer. 32:19); רַב פְּעָלִים "of abundant achievements" (2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 11:22); רַב פְּשָׁע "abundant in criminal offenses" (Prov. 29:22); רַב! צִדְקָה "abundant in righteousness" (Job 37:23); רַבַּת אוֹצְרוֹת "abundant in storehouses" (Jer. 51:13); רַבַּת בָּנִים "the one [i.e., mother] of abundant children" (1 Sam. 2:5); רַבַּת הַמְּהוּמָה "rife with tumult" (Ezek. 22:5); רַבָּתִי "abundant in population" (Lam. 1:1); רַחֲבֵי יָדַי / רַחֲבֵי / רַחֲב "of broad dimensions" (Gen. 34:21; Judg. 18:10; Isa. 22:18; 33:21; Ps. 104:25; Neh. 7:4; 1 Chron. 4:40);⁸⁴ רַחֲב לֵבָב "arrogant (one)" (Ps. 101:5);⁸⁵ רַחֲב נֶפֶשׁ

80 The phrase עַרְף קָשֶׁה "stiff-necked people" appears in all six occurrences of this compound adjective, thus making it perhaps the clearest and most consistent example. The quasi-construct form קָשֶׁה of the adjective קָשֶׁה is clearly modifying the substantive עַרְף "neck" (cf. Deut. 31:27), while the compound adjective עַרְף קָשֶׁה "stiff-necked" is clearly referring to עַם "people."

81 See n. 49 above.

82 See n. 49 above.

83 For this translation, see, e.g., Muraoka 1977, 379. Muraoka's more recent translation "determined" is based on Ahlström 1979, 254 (see Muraoka 1996, 98–99). In the new edition of his grammar, Muraoka leaves this compound adjective untranslated and refers to both of his aforementioned articles (Joüon and Muraoka 2006, 439 and n. 2). The translation "sorely troubled" has been preferred here for the following two reasons. First, throughout the wider context (1 Sam. 1:1–18), there is an emphasis on Chana's vexation and frustration, because "God had closed her womb" (1:5). This takes the form of her bearing the brunt of the taunting of her rival Peninna, who already had children (1:6), her weeping and fasting whenever she went up to the House of the Lord (1:7), and her general feeling of misery and wretchedness (1:8, 10, 11, 16, 18). The main Hebrew terms describing her condition are וְחַבְבָּהּ וְלֹא תֹאכַל (1:7) and יָרַע לִבָּבָהּ (1:8); עָנִי אִמְתָּךְ (1:11), הָיָה לִפְנֵי ה' (1:15), and וְאִשְׁפָּךְ אֶת נַפְשִׁי לִפְנֵי ה' (1:16), and especially the semantically similar compound adjective מֵרַת נֶפֶשׁ (1:10) the basic meaning of which is clearly "wretched, embittered" (cf. Judg. 18:25; 1 Sam. 22:2; 2 Sam. 17:8; Prov. 31:6; Job 3:20). Cf. also the usage of the construct phrase מֵרַת נֶפֶשׁ "its (the heart's) bitterness, wretchedness" (Prov. 14:10). While it is true that such a wretched state sometimes leads to determined, even desperate actions (as in the first three aforementioned attestations of מֵרַת נֶפֶשׁ), this nuance is not present in the basic meaning of either מֵרַת נֶפֶשׁ or קָשֶׁת רוּחַ (which in the present context are closest in usage to Proverbs 14:10, 31:6, and Job 3:20) and can only be added when appropriate from the wider context. Second, the evidence suggested by Muraoka (1996, 98) from the usage of the causative phrase ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת רוּחוֹ "the Lord your God has stiffened his [i.e., Sichon's] will" (Deut. 2:30) by analogy with the relationship between the compound adjective קָשֶׁה עַרְף "stiff-necked" and the causative phrase וַיִּקְשְׁוּ אֶת עַרְפָּם "they stiffened their necks" is unacceptable, for in both causative phrases the clear contextual implication is not mere determination but outright rebellion against God and His authority. This fits the meaning of the compound adjective קָשֶׁה עַרְף "stiff-necked" (cf. also the regular adjectival usage in Deut. 31:27), but surely *not* the meaning of the compound adjective קָשֶׁת רוּחַ. The divine action in Deuteronomy 2:30 of stiffening Sichon's will to go against God's plan for His people (Deut. 2:29–30) should be understood as another instance of God's "hardening the heart" of Israel's enemies for his own purposes, as occurs so often in Exodus 7–11 (הַקְבִּיד / הַקְשָׁה / חִזַּק אֶת לֵב פַּרְעֹה) (cf., e.g., Exod. 7:3). Thus Deuteronomy 2:30 has nothing to do with the usage of the compound adjective קָשֶׁת רוּחַ. The usage of the feminine singular quasi-construct form קָשֶׁת in this compound adjective is in accordance with the usage of the compound adjective קָשֶׁה יוֹם "unfortunate" (Job 30:25), while the usage of קָשֶׁת רוּחַ is similar to its usage in the construct phrase מֵרַת רוּחַ "(source of) bitterness" (Gen. 26:35). Thus the tendency among some modern scholars to emend קָשֶׁת רוּחַ in 1 Samuel 1:15 to קָשֶׁת יוֹם "unfortunate" (based on Job 30:25 and the LXX's rendering) is both completely unnecessary and shows a lack of appreciation for the very different contexts involved (see n. 79 above and the parallelism discussed there). Contrast, e.g., BDB, 904; HALOT, 1152 (with additional bibliography); Driver 1913, 14; McCarter 1980, 54.

84 In all its seven attestations, this compound adjective refers metaphorically (thorough the personified use of יָדַי "hands" as presumably referring to the span between the two extremities—cf. the semantically similar compound adjective הַכְּנָפִים "with enormous wings [or wing-span]" in Ezek. 17:3, 7) to the broad dimensions of the land (Gen. 34:21; Judg. 18:10; Isa. 22:18; 1 Chron. 4:40), the sea, rivers, and streams (Isa. 33:21; Ps. 104:25), and the city Jerusalem (Neh. 7:4). On this personification, see also Cohen 1989, 17 and the literature cited there.

85 This compound adjective is used here as a general epithet together with the similarly used compound adjective גְּבוּהַ עֵינַיִם "haughty (lit., haughty of eyes)." Note that a distinction must be made between the compound adjective רַחֲב לֵבָב "arrogant (one)" and the similar-sounding nominal construct phrase לֵב רַחֲב "arrogance" (Prov. 21:4). For this distinction, see n. 31 above.

“greedy (one)” (Prov. 28:25);⁸⁶ רָךְ לֵב “fainthearted” (Deut. 20:8; 2 Chron. 13:7); רָמֵי הַקּוֹמָה “of lofty stature” (Isa. 10:33);⁸⁷ רַע עֵין “stingy, miserly” (Prov. 23:6; 28:22);⁸⁸ מְרָאָה “ugly” (Gen. 41:3, 4);⁸⁹ רַעוּת תֹּאֵר “ill-formed” (Gen. 41:19);⁹⁰ רַפָּה יָדִים “of weak resolve (lit., weak-handed)” (2 Sam. 17:2); רַקוּת בָּשָׂר “emaciated” (Gen. 41:3, 4, 19);⁹¹ שְׁבוּרֵי לֵב “brokenhearted” (Ps. 147:3);⁹² שְׂבַע יָמִים “of ripe old age” (Gen. 35:29; Job 42:17; 1 Chron. 29:28);⁹³ שְׂבַע קִלּוֹן “sated with shame” (Job 10:15); שְׂבַע רָגַז “sated with trouble” (Job 14:1); שְׂבַע רָצוֹן “sated with favor” (Deut. 33:23); שְׂגִיָּא כַח וּמִשְׁפָּט “of great power and justice” (Job 37:23);⁹⁴ שָׁח עֵינָיִם “humble (lit., of lowered eyes)” (Job 22:29); שִׂמְחֵי לֵב “the merry-hearted” (Isa. 24:7);⁹⁵ שְׂפַל רוּחַ “the low-spirited” (Isa. 57:15; Prov. 16:19; 29:23);⁹⁶ שְׂפַלֹּת קוֹמָה “of low stature” (Ezek. 17:6); הָעֵין שְׂתָם “with perspicacious vision” (Num. 24:3, 15);⁹⁷ תְּמִים דְּעוֹת / דְּעִים “one of wholesome knowledge” (Job 36:4; 37:16);⁹⁸ תְּמִימֵי דֶרֶךְ “those of wholesome ways” (Ps. 119:1; Prov. 11:20).

5. THE COMPOUND ADJECTIVE IN UGARITIC—ONE CERTAIN EXAMPLE

Regarding *ib 'iqn'i* “lapis-lazuli-pure” (*KTU*³ 1.14 iii 43; VI 29),⁹⁹ the wider context reading is as follows (*KTU*³ 1.14 iii 41–44; vi 26–30):¹⁰⁰

86 This compound adjective is used here as a general epithet. For the image of insatiable greed, which includes the usage of both of these components, see especially Isaiah 5:14; Habakkuk 2:5. Cf. also Isaiah 56:11 and the usage there of the semantically similar compound adjective עֵין נָפֵשׁ (listed above).

87 This compound adjective refers here to the tree-crowns and is parallel to הַגְּבֵהִים “the tall ones.”

88 For the usage of both this compound adjective and its compound adjective antonym טוֹב עֵין “generous, benevolent,” see n. 55 above.

89 See n. 60 above.

90 See n. 60 above.

91 *רַקוּת בָּשָׂר* is to be read in both verses 3 and 4 (as in the MT of v. 19; cf. also vv. 20 and 27) in accordance with 4QGen^e and the Samaritan version. See DJD 12, 49–50 and the summary reconstruction on 41–42.

92 See n. 35 above.

93 Note that all six occurrences of the form שְׂבַע (listed above as part of four different compound adjectives) are to be analyzed as the quasi-construct form of the adjective שְׂבִיעַ “sated.”

94 This general epithet of the God of Israel is the third of only three Biblical Hebrew double compound adjectives included in the present list. For the two others, see nn. 64 and 70 above. As suggested by many modern commentators, the term וּמִשְׁפָּט “and justice” must be moved to the end of the first clause and thus be understood as the final component of this double compound adjective (as opposed to the MT accents). See the discussion and bibliography in Ditchi-Barak 2007, 238 n. 861. The parallel compound adjective in the second clause is רַב! צִדְקָה “abundant in righteousness,” also referring to God (see in the list above).

95 Note the two different plural construct forms, each occurring once: the present quasi-construct plural masculine form שִׂמְחֵי (Isa. 24:7) of the adjective שִׂמְחַ “happy” vs. the regular plural construct form שְׂמִיחַ of the participle שִׂמַּח “one who rejoices” in the phrase רַעְתִּי רְעִיתִי שִׂמְחֵי “those who rejoice at my misfortune” (Ps. 35:26).

96 Note these are all four occurrences of the two forms שְׂפַלֹּת / שְׂפַל (listed above as part of two different compound adjectives) and are to be analyzed as two quasi-construct forms of the adjective שְׂפַל “low” in the masculine singular and feminine singular forms, respectively.

97 For this epithet of Balaam as an antiphrastic euphemism (שְׂתָם = שָׂתָם) in parallelism with the compound adjective גְּלוֹי עֵינָיִם (see in the above list), see especially Marcus 1980, 310. The contextual meaning of both these compound adjectives is in complete accord with Balaam’s function as a professional seer (e.g., Num. 24:4, 16, and esp. 22:31).

98 Note these are all four occurrences of the two forms תְּמִימֵי / תְּמִים (listed above as part of three different compound adjectives) and are to be analyzed as two quasi-construct forms of the adjective תְּמִים “wholesome” in the masculine singular and masculine plural forms, respectively. For the correct analysis of the term דְּעוֹת “knowledge” as a singular noun with abstract suffix ית- and the usage of the compound adjective תְּמִים דְּעִים as a general epithet of the God of Israel, see Ditchi-Barak 2007, 222 n. 757, 223 n. 768.

99 See above, section 1.

100 For this context, besides the three modern translations in Pardee 1997, 335; Greenstein 1997, 17; and Wyatt 2002, 196, and the understanding of various parts of this wider context in the respective word entries in *DULAT*, note especially the detailed treatment of Ford with respect to the meaning of *q* “pupil / iris” and *sp trml* “bowls of alabaster” and my own discussion of *p* “pupil” and its Biblical Hebrew cognate עֵפְעָפִים (found six times in parallelism with its A-word עֵינָיִם “eyes”

dk nʾm ʾnt nʾmh // km tsm ʾttrt ts[mh]

dʾqh ʾib ʾiqnʾi // ʾpʾph sp ʾrml

Who's as fair as the goddess Anath, // Who's as beautiful as Astarte;

Whose irises are lapis-lazuli-pure // Whose pupils are bowls of alabaster.

6. THE REVERSE-ORDER ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN AKKADIAN— A FEW CASES AMONG MANY

muttallu piya . . . šapûtum šagimmatî . . . šaqâtum rēšāya . . . rapaštu iratî . . . šaddihā aḥāya . . . ana rapši kimatî “My eloquent speech, . . . my resounding cries, . . . my proud (lit., held high) head (in dual form), . . . my broad chest, . . . my two extended arms, . . . to my extensive family . . .” (Ludlul I:70–79);¹⁰¹ *Ea ina emqi libbišu* “the god Ea in his wise heart . . .” (Descent of Ishtar: 91);¹⁰² *kabittu biltu* “heavy tribute”;¹⁰³ *kabtu nîr bēlūtiya* “the heavy yoke of my rule”;¹⁰⁴ *mupparša Anzâ* “the winged Anzû”;¹⁰⁵ *ellūti ebbūti sirqīšina tamtaḥḥar* “you (the god Shamash) always accept their holy and pure offerings”;¹⁰⁶ *ali ebbu zagindurū* “where is the pure lapis lazuli?”;¹⁰⁷ *šennu erebu* “evil locust” // *lemnu zirziru* “wicked dwarf-locust” (SAA 3, #4, 16: 24–28);¹⁰⁸ *ebba sāma ḥurāša* “pure red gold” (AfO 18, 44: r. 21);¹⁰⁹ *ruššâ ḥurāša* “ruddy gold”;¹¹⁰ *limḥaški Ea ina dannati rittišu* “May the god Ea strike you (the worm) with his strong hand!” (CT 17 50:23).¹¹¹

in Jer. 9:17; Ps. 11:4; 132:4; Prov. 4:25; 6:4; 30:13) and the bibliography cited in these two studies. See Ford 2008, 304 n. 98; Cohen 2008a, 182–87.

101 *BWL*, 34–35, lines 70–79; see most recently Annus and Lenzi 2010, 17, 32–33, lines 70–79. Note that these ten lines seem to contain the greatest concentration of examples of the reverse-order adjectival construction in Akkadian literature. Yet the regular noun-preceding-adjective order is also occasionally present in this wider context (e.g., line 74: *libbī kabbara* “my stout heart”; line 88: *rūʾa ṭābi* “my intimate friend”).

102 See now the new edition of this text in Lapinkivi 2010, 19, 27, 31 (with incorrect translation, “Ea, in the wisdom of his heart, . . .”).

103 See, e.g., OIP 2, 24:31. This stereotypic phrase of the NA Annals usually occurs in the regular noun-preceding-adjective order *biltu kabittu*. For several examples, see CAD B, 235.

104 See, e.g., Borger 1967, 51 III:55. This phrase usually occurs in the regular-noun-preceding adjective order *nîr bēlūtiya kabtu*. See CAD K, 26; N/2, 263.

105 See Annus 2001, 19 (I:11), 23 (II:5), and 28 (III:119). According to the glossary (p. 46), these are all the occurrences of the adjective *mupparšu* “winged” in the Epic of Anzû. For other occurrences of this adjective in both the regular noun-preceding-adjective order and the reverse order, see CAD M/2, 211.

106 See *BWL*, 136:60 (the Shamash Hymn). This is the first of three examples (see the other two cases in this section below) in which the Akkadian adjective *ebbu* “pure” precedes the noun it modifies, just as the cognate Ugaritic adjective *ʾib* precedes the noun in the Ugaritic composite adjective *ʾib ʾiqnʾi* “lapis-lazuli-pure.”

107 See Cagni 1969, 74 line 154 = SANE 1/3, 32:154; cf. at least once *zagindurū ebbu* “pure lapis lazuli” (UM 15, 79, II:24), cited in *AHw*, 1502. The Sumerian loanword *zagindurū* is equated in the lexical texts with *uqnū ellu* / *ebbu* / *namru* “holy, pure, and lustrous lapis lazuli.” See Landsberger 1967, 165–66; CAD Z, 11; *AHw*, 1502. For the semantic equivalence of Akkadian *ellu* = *ebbu*, see n. 6 above.

108 See Hurowitz 1993, 598–99.

109 See CAD S, 127; Foster 2005, 316. This phrase usually occurs in the regular noun-preceding-adjective order *ḥurāšu sāmu* “red gold.” For several examples, see CAD S, 127–28.

110 See Gurney 1956, 154 line 107. This phrase usually occurs in the regular noun-preceding-adjective order *ḥurāšu ruššû*. For several examples, see CAD R, 428.

111 See CAD R, 385. My thanks to Dr. Ford for calling this example to my attention. Some other cases of both *dannatu rittu* and the regular noun-preceding-adjective order *rittu dannatu* may also be found in CAD R, 385.

7. THE REVERSE-ORDER ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN BIBLICAL HEBREW— A FEW ISOLATED CASES¹¹²

יִרְקָקָה חֶרוֹץ “yellow gold” (Ps 68:14: בִּירְקָקָה חֶרוֹץ // בְּכֶסֶף;¹¹³ רַבִּים צִידִים “many hunters” (Jer 16:16; next to רַבִּים דִּיגִים “many fishermen” in the same verse); רַבּוֹת בָּנוֹת “many women” (Prov 31:29).

8. THE REVERSE-ORDER ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN UGARITIC— A FEW ISOLATED CASES

ksp wyrq hrš “silver and yellow gold” (*KTU*³ 1.14 i 52–ii 1 [restored]; iii 22, 34; v 34–35 [restored]; vi 4–5 [restored], 17–18);¹¹⁴ *l ymt špš w yrḥ w n‘mt šnt ‘il* “for (all) the days of Šapšu and Yariḥu and the beneficial years of ‘Ilu” (*KTU*³ 1.108.26–27).¹¹⁵ The Ugaritic phrase *ṭhrm / ṣhrm ‘iqn’im* [*tuhurima / zuhurima ‘iqni’ima*] in its two forms may be translated either “pure lapis-lazuli stones” or “the purest of lapis-lazuli stones” (adjectival constructions II or III respectively in table 22.1 above).¹¹⁶ The two contexts are as follows: *w’atn mhrh l’abh ‘alp ksp wrbt hrš ‘išlh ṣhrm ‘iqn’im* “Then I will give the marriage price for her to her father: one thousand sheqels of silver and ten thousand sheqels of gold. I will (also) send pure lapis-lazuli stones / the purest of lapis-lazuli stones” (*KTU*³ 1.24.19–22); *wbn bht ksp whrš bht ṭhrm ‘iqn’im* “And build the house out of silver and gold, the house out of pure lapis-lazuli stones / the purest of lapis-lazuli stones” (*KTU*³ 1.4 v 18–19, 33–35).¹¹⁷

9. THE SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN AKKADIAN— A FEW ISOLATED CASES¹¹⁸

bēlet nišī rabīt Igigī “(the goddess Ishtar), mistress of humanity, the greatest of the Igigi-gods” (*RA* 22, 172:2, 4);¹¹⁹ *emuqti emqēti ammarat niši* “the wisest among the wise women, the supervisor of humanity” (*KAR* 158 r. iii:7).¹²⁰

112 For some additional cases, see Joüon and Muraoka 2006, 488 (§141b).

113 Cf. Ugaritic *ksp wyrq hrš* “silver and yellow gold” (cited in section 8 below). In Akkadian, this phrase usually occurs in the regular noun-preceding-adjective order *ḥurāšu arqu* “yellow gold.” For a few examples, see CAD A/2, 300. Note, however, the last two Akkadian examples in section 6 above.

114 For the parallel phrase in Biblical Hebrew and the comparison to similar phrases in Akkadian, see section 7 and n. 113 above.

115 Reading here according to the generally accepted transliteration of line 26 (e.g., *KTU*², 126; *RCU*, 195) contra the new transliteration in *KTU*³, 129 (which is contextually unfeasible). My thanks to Dr. Ford for calling this example to my attention.

116 If *ṭhrm / ṣhrm* is understood in accordance with adjectival construction II, then the suffix *-m* must be taken as the regular masculine plural suffix; if this form is understood in accordance with adjectival construction III, then the suffix *-m* must be taken as the enclitic *mem*.

117 Here it should again be emphasized that there is no difference in meaning whatsoever between Ugaritic *‘ib / ‘ibbu/* and Ugaritic *ṭhrm / ṣhrm* [*tuhurima / zuhurima*]. The former is an Akkadian loanword occurring in one poetic context (see sections 1 and 5 above), while the third attestation of the latter (after the noun) is in a nonpoetic text *KTU*³ 2.39.33 (for which see Ford 2008 and section 1 above). It is highly significant that both of these synonymous terms in all their three poetic attestations are nonpredicate adjectives that precede the noun. See also section 1, paragraph c above.

118 Note that the two examples cited here are the same ones used to exemplify the usage of the Akkadian adjectival superlative in *GAG*³, 112 (§68b).

119 See CAD R, 37 for this text and a few other similar examples.

120 See CAD A/2, 70.

10. THE SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN BIBLICAL HEBREW— A FEW ISOLATED CASES

The following examples are all three occurrences of the two adjectival quasi-construct forms קטני / קטני in Biblical Hebrew: *הָלוֹא בֶן־יְמִינִי אֶזְכִּי מִקְטָנֵי שְׁבִטַי יִשְׂרָאֵל* "But I am only a Benjaminite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel" (1 Sam. 9:21); *אַרְבַּעָה הֵם קְטָנֵי אָרֶץ* "Four (creatures) are among the tiniest on earth" (Prov. 30:24); *וְלֹא נֶשֶׁאֶר לוֹ בֶּן כִּי אִם יְהוֹאָחָז קָטָן בָּנָיו* "No son was left except for Yeho'achaz, the youngest of his sons" (2 Chron. 21:17).

11. THE SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN UGARITIC— SOME ISOLATED CASES

The best example of the superlative adjectival construction in Ugaritic¹²¹ is undoubtedly the following divine epithet of the goddess *'nt*: *n'mt 'aht b[l]* "the loveliest of the sisters of Ba'lu" (*KTU*³ 1.10 iii 10). Compare the other (nonadjectival) form of this divine epithet in the same text referring to the same goddess: *n'mt bn 'aht b'l* "the lovely one [i.e., loveliest one] among the sisters of Ba'lu" (*KTU*³ 1.10 ii 16).¹²² Somewhat less certain is the case of the human epithet *n'mn 'mq nšm* (*KTU*³ 1.17 vi 45), which is perhaps best translated "O handsome one ('Aqht), cleverest of men." The translation "cleverest" (see already *UNP*, 62) must be based on the precedent of this same usage in the Akkadian superlative adjectival construction of *emqu* "wise, clever" (see section 9 above). The more common translation "strongest, toughest" for *'mq* in this phrase (e.g., *DULAT*, 162) is based on comparison with the regular Akkadian primary noun *emūqu* "strength, power" from which, however, no adjectival form is extant.

12. CONCLUSION

On the basis of all the evidence presented here, it should now be accepted that the Ugaritic phrase *'ib 'iqn'i* is a compound adjective meaning "lapis-lazuli-pure" and that the three ancient Semitic languages Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew, and Ugaritic each made use of three special adjectival constructions in which the non-predicate adjective preceded the noun: the compound adjective construction, the reverse-order adjectival construction, and the superlative adjectival construction.

121 The possibility that in both its contexts the Ugaritic phrase *ṭhrm / zhrm'iqn'im* (*KTU*³ 1.4 v 18–19, 33–35; 1.24.19–22) could be understood as the superlative construction (i.e., "the purest of lapis-lazuli stones") was already discussed in section 8 above. In fact, Ginsberg (1969, 133) had already translated this phrase "most pure lapis lazuli" long ago.

122 On the relationship between the two forms of this Ugaritic divine epithet, see especially the philological discussion in the work of my former student, Aicha Rahmouni. See Rahmouni 2008, 248–51.

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23

THE BIBLICAL HEBREW ROOT *bhl* IN LIGHT OF NEW UGARITIC EVIDENCE

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THE 1994 SEASON OF EXCAVATIONS at the site of Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit) on the Mediterranean coast of Syria was exceptional in terms of the evidence it furnished for textual scholars, with more than three hundred cuneiform texts or fragments unearthed in the area known as the “House of Urtenu” in the south-central part of the ancient city.¹ Among the fifty or so texts in this group written in alphabetic cuneiform was a legal text in Ugaritic, RS 94.2168, containing a royal decree (from King Ammistamru²) granting a certain man named Abdimilku the right to apportion his estate to whichever of his sons he chooses. This text was first published in preliminary form in Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee’s *Manuel d’Ougaritique*,³ with more complete treatments of the text appearing in the form of a subsequent article by Pardee⁴ and the official *editio princeps* in volume 18 of the series Ras Shamra–Ougarit.⁵ The present paper explores the implications of one particular legal term occurring in this text—the verb *bhl*, previously unattested in Ugaritic—for our understanding of Biblical Hebrew. Indeed, the discovery of any new Ugaritic lexeme with nontrivial implications for Hebrew (and Semitic) lexicography so many decades after the birth of Ugaritic studies can be seen as a fortuitous event. Given the important contribution made by Dennis Pardee to the elucidation of the Ugaritic term in question, it is my great pleasure to submit this essay in his honor.

A brief review of the structure and contents of RS 94.2168 is in order. The text reads as follows (with both transliteration and translation reproduced from Pardee,⁶ and with occurrences of the term *bhl* and its translation indicated in bold):

RS 94.2168

TEXT

(1) *l . ym . hnd* (2) *l . ’ pn . ’mṭtmr* (3) *bn . nqmp* (4) *mlk . úgrt*

(5) *bhtm . šdm . d . ytn* (6) *mlk l . ’bdmlk* (7) *w . l . bnh . ú . l* (8) *bn . bt . mlk* (9) *ú . l . bn . šrdth*
(10) *ú . l . bn . ámhth*

(11) *d . ihb . ’bdmlk* (12) *b . bnh . l . bnh . hwt* (13) *ytn . ’bdmlk* (14) *bhth . šdh* (15) *’m’r’h*

1 Bordreuil and Pardee 2012, 8; Yon 1995.

2 That is, the king named Ammistamru of the mid-thirteenth century BCE (see the foldout chart in Singer 1999).

3 Bordreuil and Pardee 2004, I: 159.

4 Pardee 2010.

5 Bordreuil and Pardee 2012, 135–41.

6 Pardee 2010, 98–99.

(16) 'w' . 'bdmlk (17) bnh . km (18) lbh . yškn . l'h'm (19) hm . lb . 'bdmlk (20) **bhl** . bnh . w . km
(21) lbh . **ybhl** . hm

(22) hm . lbh . **bhl** (23) bnh bn . bt . mlk (24) w . km . lbh (25) **ybhl** . hm . w . hm (26) lbh . **bhl** .
bn . šrdth (27) ũ . bn . āmhth (28) w . km . lbh (29) **ybhl** . hm

TRANSLATION (PARDEE)

(1) On this day, (2) in the presence of 'Ammitamru, (3) son of Niqmêpa', (4) king of Ugarit (the following decision was handed down):

(5) (As regards) the houses (and) the fields that the king (6) has given to 'Abdimilku (7) and to his sons, whether to (8) sons by the daughter of the king, (9) or to sons by his freeborn wives, (10) or to sons by his female servants, (11) the one whom 'Abdimilku will prefer (12) among his sons, to that son (13) 'Abdimilku may give (14) his houses, his fields, (15) and his pasture lands.

(16) Moreover 'Abdimilku, (as regards) (17) his sons, as (18) he wishes he may dispose (of his property) to them. (19) If 'Abdimilku wishes (20) to dismiss his sons, as he wishes (21) **he may dismiss** them.

(22) If he wishes to dismiss (23) his sons by the daughter of the king, (24) as he wishes (25) **he may dismiss** them. If (26) **he wishes to dismiss** his sons by his freeborn wives (27) or his sons by his female servants, (28) as he wishes (29) **he may dismiss** them.

The body of this royal decree can be divided into two nearly equal parts. Lines 5–15 grant authority to the man in question, Abdimilku (no doubt a wealthy and well-connected individual in light of his possessions and his marriage to the daughter of the king), to distribute his property according to his wishes: “the one whom Abdimilku will prefer among his sons, to that son Abdimilku may give his houses, his fields, and his pasture lands” (lines 11–15). Lines 16–29 articulate the concomitant result of this situation using the term that is the focus of the present paper: whichever of his sons he (implicitly) does not prefer, he may “dismiss”—that is, exclude from a share in the estate. The verb translated by Pardee as “dismiss” is from a verbal root *bhl*, previously unattested in Ugaritic literature. The interpretation of the verb as “to dismiss” is inferred from the structure and context of the text itself, as well as from functional parallels in the Akkadian legal texts from Ugarit.⁷ It appears to be a technical legal term denoting the dismissal or disinheritance of a biological heir by the father from a share in his estate.

This Ugaritic usage, though distinct from the meanings of its cognates in the other Semitic languages, can be understood as a specialized development of a more general semantic sense. In Akkadian and Ge'ez, the G-stem verb is attested as a verb of speaking: *ba'ālu/bālu* “to pray to, beseech” in Akkadian (CAD, B, 2; AHw, 101) and *behla* “to say, speak, call” in Ge'ez.⁸ In the Central Semitic languages, the verb develops more specific meanings associated with the results of an act of speaking. For instance, in Classical Arabic the transitive G-stem *bahala* has either the sense of “to leave to oneself/one's own judgment” or “to curse”⁹—representing two possible results of an act of declarative dismissal. A similar development is observable in the various Aramaic dialects, although here the G-stem meanings (as well as those of the tG and tD stems) tend to construe the verb *intransitively*, with only the D stem consistently showing transitive syntax. Thus in Syriac the G stem has the intransitive sense of “to leave off, become quiet, be stayed, rest,” while the D stem expresses the notion of “to make to leave off, set at ease, pacify.”¹⁰ In the Jewish Aramaic dialects (Babylonian, Palestinian, Biblical), the G stem expresses the intransitive notions of “to hurry” or

⁷ For details, see Pardee 2010.

⁸ Lambdin 1978, 392; Dillmann 1865, 482–84; Leslau 1987, 89.

⁹ Lane 1863–93, 267.

¹⁰ Payne Smith 1903, 36; Sokoloff 2009, 122.

“to be frightened,” while the D stem (when attested) means “to frighten” (BDB, 1084; *HALOT*, 1832).¹¹ In Biblical Hebrew, the verb is found in the N, D, Dp, and C stems, with similar senses relating to the notions of “terrifying” and “hurrying,” though it is notable that both the D- and C-stem usages related to “hurrying” show a mix of transitive and intransitive syntax (BDB, 96; *HALOT*, 111). In view of this array of cognate evidence, I would make two proposals about the Ugaritic usage: (1) that the forms in RS 94.2168 be understood as D stems, in keeping with the tendency throughout the other Northwest Semitic languages for an intransitive–transitive distinction between the G and D stems for this particular root, and (2) that the verb represents a lexicalized sense derived from the more archaic notion of speech-declaration,¹² applied to the legal context of inheritance: “to declare [someone] to be excluded,” “to declare [s.o.] to be free,” “to dismiss [s.o.],” or the like.¹³

This understanding raises the question whether the usage attested in Ugaritic is unique to that language or is reflective of a technical legal sense that was more widely known in Northwest Semitic. The rest of my paper will explore this question with respect to three specific contexts in the Hebrew Bible: Psalm 2:5, Proverbs 20:21, and Isaiah 65:23.

PSALM 2:5

The first and, in my view, clearest example of the retention of this technical legal sense in Biblical Hebrew occurs in the poetic context of Psalm 2:5. A detailed defense of the following interpretation has already been published in the journal *Vetus Testamentum*,¹⁴ so I will present the thesis only briefly here. Psalm 2:5 reads:

אֵן יִדְבֵּר אֱלִימוֹ בְּאַפוֹ וּבְחִרוֹנוֹ יִבְהֵלֵמוּ:

Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and **terrify them** [בהל *piel*] in his fury, saying . . . (NRSV)

Under the traditional interpretation, the term יִבְהֵלֵמוּ has the sense of “terrifying” the rulers of the earth first mentioned in verse 2 of the psalm. However, in light of the morphosyntactic correspondences between this Hebrew usage and that of the Ugaritic cognate in RS 94.2168—particularly the fact that both Hebrew and Ugaritic *bhl* in these instances are transitive¹⁵ and take a personal direct object—I would argue instead that יִבְהֵלֵמוּ denotes Yahweh’s metaphorical dismissal of them from having a share in the inheritance. For one reason, this interpretation strengthens the poetic parallelism of the verse by offering a verb of declaration (“to dismiss” < “to declare [s.o.] to be excluded”) in connection with the phrase אֵן יִדְבֵּר אֱלִימוֹ (“he speaks to them”).¹⁶ Furthermore, the interpretation is bolstered by the presence of legal motifs throughout the psalm—motifs such as the apparent imaginative setting of the psalm as a legal court in which Yahweh, the judge, interacts with the Judean king and the foreign rulers, as well as the specific mention of inheritance in verse 8: שְׁאַל מִמֶּנִּי וְאֶתְּנָה גּוֹיִם נַחֲלָתְךָ וְאַחֲזִיחֶךָ אֶפְסֵי-אֲרֶץ. “Ask of me, and I will give the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your portion.”¹⁷

In other words, what we have in the form יִבְהֵלֵמוּ in Psalm 2:5 is a metaphorical extension of a technical legal (literal) usage. Yahweh is here “dismissing” the other rulers of the earth (imagined poetically as “sons”)

11 Sokoloff 2002a, 189; 2002b, 86.

12 This proposal follows the suggestion of Pardee (2010, 96), who notes, “we may be dealing with a *verbum dicendi* rather than a *verbum facendi*.”

13 Note also Blau’s (1955, 339) suggestion of a connection with Palestinian Arabic *inbahar* “to be amazed,” in which case the *l-r* interchange would require further explanation. For other overviews of the comparative Semitic evidence, see Tropper 2004, 517; Gzella 2007, 538; Pardee 2010, 95 n. 3. For a discussion of the D stem (in Akkadian, but with relevance for wider Semitic) and its association with transitivity, see Kouwenberg 1997, 89–113.

14 Lam 2014.

15 This fact would reinforce my contention earlier that the instances of Ugaritic *bhl* in RS 94.2168 represent D-stem forms.

16 In fact, the NRSV tries to capture this sense by inserting the word “saying” at the end of its translation of the verse: “Then he will speak to them his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying . . .” (Ps. 2:5 NRSV).

17 For a more detailed discussion, see Lam 2014, 35–38.

from having a share in his inheritance and favoring the one whom he will install in Zion (v. 6). Consequently, Yahweh grants to this preferred heir the right to possess all the land associated with the other disinherited rulers (v. 8). Yahweh is being described in terms of a father who holds the legal right to apportion his inheritance as he wishes, and this idea serves as a governing motif throughout the psalm.

PROVERBS 20:21

A second instance in which the sense in question might be applicable is Proverbs 20:21, which reads as follows in the MT (note the *Ketiv*–*Qere* alternation in the text):

נְחִלָּה [K מבחלת] [Q מְבַהֶלֶת] בְּרֹאשָׁנָה וְאַחֲרִיתָהּ לֹא תִבְרָךְ:

An estate **quickly acquired** [Q: בָּהֵל *pual ptc.*] in the beginning will not be blessed in the end. (NRSV)

The majority of modern commentators prefer the *Qere* over the *Ketiv* because of the difficulty of the latter for interpretation.¹⁸ In this case, the word מְבַהֶלֶת would refer to an inheritance that is “hastened”—that is, “hastily” gotten.¹⁹ This reading is also in keeping with that of the Septuagint,²⁰ which translates the form with the present passive participle ἐπισπουδαζομένη (from the verb ἐπισπουδάζω)²¹ and would be consistent with the idea of hastiness resulting from undue overzealousness. Thus the situation envisioned would be that of a son’s prematurely taking possession of the family property.²² Yet this scenario prompts the question how such an appropriation would have been achieved in ancient Israelite society. In the admittedly scant references in the Hebrew Bible itself to explicit rules governing inheritance in ancient Israel, there is no hint of the possibility of a son’s taking possession of that portion before the father dies.²³ The fact that some commentators appeal to the New Testament example of Luke 15:12 (the beginning of the Parable of the Prodigal Son)²⁴ implicitly illustrates how exceptional this practice would have been in the ancient Israelite context. At least one would have to say that the precise legal mechanism behind such a “hastening” of an inheritance remains an open question. Alternatively, a more sinister reading would take the hastening to imply an attempt to “facilitat[e] the death of [the] father.”²⁵ However, the mere “lack of blessing” (לֹא תִבְרָךְ) mentioned in the second half of the line hardly seems commensurate with a notion of patricide.

18 E.g., Fox 2009, 672–73; Steinmann 2009, 414, 418, 422–23; Waltke 2005, 148; McKane 1970, 539; Toy 1977, 392. With regard to the *Ketiv*, a *qal* verb בָּהֵל is attested once in the Hebrew Bible (Zech. 11:8) with the meaning of something like “despise” or “loathe.” (There it also takes the preposition *b.*) But the lack of an attested *piel* form makes the proposal of a *pual* participle difficult. Other suggestions based on a root בָּהֵל construe the meaning of the participle as either “obtained by greed” (based on an Arabic cognate) or “coming early” (based on a usage attested in Rabbinic Hebrew), but neither of these suggestions is entirely convincing, certainly no more convincing than the hypothesis that the *Ketiv* is a graphic error based on the *Qere*. For a defense of the *Ketiv*, see Clifford (1999, 181–82, 185), whose strongest argument (in my view) concerns the “alliteration of the consonants *hl* in *naḥālā*, ‘inheritance,’ and *mēbōhelet*” (ibid., 182).

19 E.g., NRSV: “quickly acquired”; NJPS: “acquired in haste”; ESV: “gained hastily”; NASB: “gained hurriedly.”

20 LXX Prov. 20:9[b].

21 The use of the same Greek verb in LXX Proverbs 13:11 probably there indicates a Hebrew *Vorlage* (מְבַהֶלֶת) that is different from the MT (מְבַהֵל), thus further bolstering the plausibility of the *Qere* in Proverbs 20:21. The more common Greek translation of the root *bhl* in contexts perceived to be related to “hastiness” is with derivatives of σπεύδω (e.g., Prov. 28:22; Eccl. 5:1, 7:9; Esth. 2:9, 8:14; 2 Chron. 35:21 [κατασπεύδω]).

22 As Fox (2009, 672) argues, “the proverb is about premature appropriation of the family property” (similarly McKane 1970, 539). Though Fox is right to observe that “hastiness” is a theme which appears in Proverbs, all the examples he cites are from the root *ws* (Prov. 19:2; 21:5; 28:20; 29:20). The root *bhl* does occur in a *niphal* form in Proverbs 28:22 (with the meaning “hasten”), and possibly in the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX Proverbs 13:11 (see previous footnote) where מְבַהֶלֶת is glossed as ἐπισπουδαζομένη μετὰ ἀνομίας “[wealth/possessions] gotten hastily with lawlessness.”

23 E.g., Deut. 21:15–17; Num. 27:8–11.

24 E.g., Waltke 2005, 152.

25 Steinmann 2009, 422.

A further difficulty with the interpretation of מְהֵלֶת as “hastened,” and one that is not often noted, is that the *piel* of *bhl* is *not* attested in Biblical Hebrew with the transitive sense of “to hasten.” It either means “to terrify” (transitive) or “to make haste” (intransitive), with the latter usage being restricted to four instances from so-called “Late” Biblical Hebrew texts.²⁶ This circumstance renders the hypothesis of a *pual* participle with the sense of “being hastened” or “obtained hastily” more problematic.

However, the newly attested usage of Ugaritic *bhl* in RS 94.2168 offers another avenue for interpretation. I would suggest that Proverbs 20:21 envisions not an act of hasty greed on the part of the heir but an act of dismissal or exclusion on the part of the father. In other words, נִחְלָה מְהֵלֶת would be referring to a property that was the focus of an act of “exclusion” on the part of the father, before the property’s subsequently being assigned to a different heir—i.e., a “disinherited portion (of land).” The resulting lack of blessedness of the inheritance expressed in the second half of the poetic line would hint at the kinds of relational ruptures that can arise over issues of inheritance. One could imagine, for instance, a father’s favoritism leading to the exclusion of one of his sons from a share in the inheritance, which exclusion would, in turn, cause lingering animosity between that son and the preferred heir even after the father’s death.

As intriguing as this possibility is, its most significant problem is also syntactic in nature. To adopt this hypothesis would imply the use of the *pual* passive participle to modify the *portion*, not the heir due to receive the portion. As we have seen, the Ugaritic usage in RS 94.2168 and the proposed reclassified sense of the Hebrew *piel* in Psalm 2:5 clearly take personal direct objects. However, in Proverbs 20:21 it is a נִחְלָה “portion” that is being described as מְהֵלֶת. Thus, for my interpretation to work, one would also have to posit an as-yet unattested *piel* usage of this verb meaning “to dismiss/exclude/disinherit someone from [a portion],” with the *pual* in Proverbs 20:21 being the “passivization” of that hypothetical extension of usage.

Unfortunately, the limited attestations of the verb in the *piel* and *pual* in the Hebrew Bible preclude a definitive answer to this question. However, as a partial amelioration of this problem, I would offer the analogy of the Biblical Hebrew term יָרַשׁ, a term that also relates to the realm of inheritance rights. The most common usage of יָרַשׁ is to denote the idea “to take possession of” or “to inherit,” with the land or property to be inherited functioning as the direct object. Yet it is also attested with two other syntactic patterns: it can denote the action of “dispossessing” someone, with the direct object identifying the person/persons being ousted from their possessions; and it can also mean “to inherit from” a person—notably in Genesis 15:3, 4, where Abram talks with God about who would be his heir. The point of this example is simply to illustrate a principle that has emerged in the field of cognitive linguistics, viz., that it is possible for a term to express more than one aspect of a prototypical real-world situation, whether semantically or syntactically.²⁷ While this principle by no means represents firm evidence of a usage parallel to what I am suggesting for Proverbs 20:21, it at least illustrates the *possibility* of the kind of variation of usage that would be needed to support my proposal.²⁸

ISAIAH 65:23

The third context I want to explore is Isaiah 65:23, and here I must admit to venturing more into the realm of lexicographical speculation. Nonetheless, I offer my thoughts for the sake of completeness. The relevant passage reads as follows:

²⁶ Eccl. 5:1; 7:9; Esth. 2:9; and 2 Chron. 35:21.

²⁷ For a general discussion of cognitive linguistic approaches to polysemy, see Croft and Cruse (2004, 109–40) and Lakoff (1987).

²⁸ Unfortunately, the passive-stem usages of יָרַשׁ in BH do not shed much light on the semantic issue at hand; no *pual* or *hophal* forms are attested, and the *niphal* form (attested four times in BH) has only the sense “to become impoverished” (< “to be dispossessed”), corresponding to the second of the three *qal* usages discussed.

Isaiah 65:20–23

²⁰ No more shall there be in it [a renewed Jerusalem]
an infant that lives but a few days,
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;

לֹא־יִהְיֶה מִשָּׁם עוֹד עוֹלָם יָמִים
וְזָקֵן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָמֵלֵא אֶת־יָמָיו

for one who dies at a hundred years will be
considered a youth,
and one who falls short of a hundred will be
considered accursed.

כִּי הַנֶּעַר בְּן־מֵאָה שָׁנָה יָמוּת
וְהַחוּטָא בְּן־מֵאָה שָׁנָה יִקְלָל:

²¹ They shall build houses and inhabit them;

וּבְנוּ בָתִּים וַיֵּשְׁבוּ

they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

וְנָטְעוּ כִרְמִים וְאָכְלוּ פְרִיָם:

²² They shall not build and another inhabit;

לֹא יִבְנוּ וְאַחֵר יֵשֵׁב

they shall not plant and another eat;

לֹא יִטְעוּ וְאַחֵר יֹאכֵל

for like the days of a tree shall the days of my
people be,

כִּי־כִימֵי הָעֵץ יָמֵי עַמִּי

and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their
hands.

וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם יִבְלוּ בַּחִירָי:

²³ They shall not labor in vain, or bear children
for calamity [לְבִהָלָה];

לֹא יִיָּגְעוּ לָרִיק וְלֹא יֵלְדוּ לְבִהָלָה

for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD—
and their descendants as well. (NRSV)

כִּי זֶרַע בְּרוּכִי יִהְיֶה הֵמָּה וְצִאֲצֵאֵיהֶם אִתָּם:

The verse in question is at the end of the passage—verse 23, which contains not a verbal form but a noun derived from the root *bhl*:

לֹא יִיָּגְעוּ לָרִיק וְלֹא יֵלְדוּ לְבִהָלָה

They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for [לְבִהָלָה]. (NRSV)

The nominal form *בִּהָלָה* is either a **qattalat* or an Aramaizing **qattālat* formation from the root *bhl* (that is, with an historically geminated second root consonant). If it is the latter, then its semantics would be closely tied to the D stem, since the form would be, in fact, the Aramaic D-stem infinitive.²⁹ The generally adopted interpretation is to take the noun to mean “terror” (based on the D-stem sense of “terrify”—hence the NRSV’s translation “calamity”), ostensibly denoting the idea of children’s avoiding the ravages of disease or war. Some commentators have even suggested here an echo of the so-called “curse” on bearing children in Genesis 3:16,³⁰ though it is important to emphasize that no terms derived from the root *bhl* occur in that context.

Here, my tentative suggestion of a connection to the idea of inheritance (in particular, of disinheritance) is based on the broader literary context of the passage. The larger passage, Isaiah 65:17–25, represents an oracle concerning a new heaven and a new earth, with a focus on (a new) Jerusalem starting in verse 18. The portion of the passage I have highlighted above describes the kinds of blessings envisioned as characterizing this new world. Particularly relevant to the present lexicographical question are the themes of per-

²⁹ Bauer and Leander 1922, 479.

³⁰ Smith 2009, 823; following Seitz 2001, 544.

petuity and of the endurance of work: “They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit” (v. 21). In the immediate context of verse 23, the accompanying poetic image in the first half is that of “not laboring in vain” (לֹא יִגְעוּ לָרִיק). Thus, in light of the emphasis in these verses on having one’s work endure, the question is whether the phrase in question (וְלֹא יִלְדוּ לְבָהֳלָה) would be best rendered as “bearing children for terror,” implying death and destruction, or as “bearing children for disinheritance,” that is, bringing forth children only to have to “dismiss” them, as a metaphor for toiling in vain. In my opinion, both renderings of בְּהֶלָה have their merits and lead to sensible interpretations of the broader passage. In fact, unlike the previous two examples, the hypothesis in this context may not entail an interpretation to be preferred over and against the idea of “terror” but may instead suggest a kind of *double entendre* as an intentional effort on the part of the poet to introduce multiple layers of meaning into the text via a word that had a more common meaning (“terror”), as well as a more archaic technical one (“disinheritance”). But I will admit that the lack of evidence for the noun בְּהֶלָה as denoting “disinheritance” in other contexts (keep in mind—the noun occurs only four times in the Hebrew Bible) here renders the suggestion speculative.

In sum, I believe a strong case can be made for the retention of the technical legal usage in question in Psalm 2:5; that a less certain but still plausible case can be made for a variation of this usage in Proverbs 20:21; and that the case for Isaiah 65:23 is more speculative but could represent a *double entendre*. In these suggestions, I hope I have at least demonstrated the need for a careful reevaluation of the semantics of Biblical Hebrew *bhl* in light of this new Ugaritic datum.

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FROM KOTHAR TO KYTHEREIA

EXPLORING THE NORTHWEST SEMITIC PAST OF APHRODITE*

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AMONG THE GREEK GODS, APHRODITE is probably the one most consistently associated with the Near East since antiquity. Her kinship with other love/sex goddesses, mainly Mesopotamian Ishtar, Egyptian Isis, and Phoenician Ashtart, is widely recognized in scholarship, given the ample intersections of their mythologies, iconographies, and cults. From Hesiod to the poets of the *Homeric Hymns* and Herodotus, the Greeks themselves oriented her toward Cyprus and the Near East. Herodotus, in fact, explicitly states the goddess was the same as Syro-Phoenician Ashtart (Greek Astarte) and imported by Phoenicians to the Greek world. This essay will focus on one of the epithets used since the earliest Greek epics for Aphrodite: Kythereia, which in Greek linked her to the island of Kythera. As we shall see, the name is likely derived from the Northwest Semitic craftsman god Kothar (Kothar-wa-Hasis in Ugaritic), who, in the first millennium, was connected with the love goddess in the Cypro-Phoenician context. The transmission, if this connection is correct, happened before the mid- to late-eighth century BCE, since her Greek epithet appears in Homer and Hesiod. Although the link has been timidly suggested in the past, this essay will offer a full analysis of the linguistic and mythological aspects of this intersection, including an overview of the Near Eastern associations of Aphrodite, which contextualizes and supports the proposed Northwest Semitic link.

APHRODITE AND THE LEVANT: AN INTRODUCTION THROUGH HESIOD

Aphrodite has long been associated with the Levant and especially with Cyprus since the earliest testimonies about her origins.¹ Her two most common epithets in Greek epic are Kypris (Latinized as Cypris), Kyprogeneia (“Cyprus-born”), and Kythereia (Cythereia). The Cypriot connection is well rooted in the cultic importance of a prehistoric fertility goddess on Cyprus and the Cypro-Phoenician versions of her cult (see below). But the Kythereia epithet was believed to point west, to the island of Kythera, south of the Peloponnese. The Greeks themselves conciliated these apparently contradictory features by alleging the Phoenicians brought the goddess to Kythera. This belief stemmed from the generally accepted and conscious identification of Phoenician Ashtart with Aphrodite. The most explicit statement of this correlation is by Herodotus, whose awareness of the deep connections between Near Eastern and Greek religion is well

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1 For the early history of Aphrodite and her connection with earlier local fertility deities and Cyprus, see Budin 2003, chs. 5–6 for Cyprus; Cassio 2012, 414; Burkert 1985, 153; López-Ruiz 2015, 378–80. Other general studies are Pirenne-Delforge 1994; Cyrino 2010.

known.² Remarking on the great antiquity of the temple of Aphrodite Ourania (“Heavenly Aphrodite”) in Askalon, he stated it was

... the oldest of all the temples of the goddess, for even the temple in Cyprus originated from there. As for the one on Kythera, it was Phoenicians who founded it, who came from this same land of Syria.³

This “heavenly” mistress is Phoenician Ashtart.

The oldest account of Aphrodite’s origins, however, is in Hesiod’s *Theogony*. As a cosmogonic poem, we should not be surprised at the absence of historical commentary. Nonetheless, the passage is extremely indicative of the complex undercurrents at work when the love goddess was invoked. In *Theogony* 185–206, Hesiod narrates the famous episode in which Aphrodite emerges from the foam produced by Ouranos’s genitalia after his son Kronos had thrown them into the sea:

As for the *genitals* [*mēdea*], as soon as he had cut them off with the adamant
and had thrown them down to the agitated sea, far from dry land,
(190) the waters carried them for a long time, and around them a white
foam (*aphrós*) rose up from the immortal flesh; and inside this grew
a girl. First she approached divine *Kythera*,
and from there she arrived later to *Cyprus* (*Kypros*), surrounded by currents.
And out came the beautiful revered goddess, and all around grass
(195) grew from under her delicate feet. *Aphrodite*
the foam-born goddess and well-garlanded *Kythereia*—
that is how gods and men call her; (*Aphrodite*) because she grew
in the foam (*aphrós*); and then *Kythereia*, because she reached *Kythera*;
and *Kyprogeneia*, because she was born in *Cyprus* of many waves,
(200) and also *congenial* (*philo-meidéa*), because she appeared from *genitalia* (*mēdéōn*).

The birth of Aphrodite is framed by what is probably the most striking Near Eastern motif in the *Theogony*, viz., the castration of the Sky (attested in Hurro-Hittite mythology), a bloody act that separated Heaven and Earth and began the succession of gods.⁴ This specific passage is a feast of etymologies and puns. Hesiod interweaves geographical and cultic coordinates as well as the goddess’s association with sex (genitals) and with the sea by using poetic techniques that are indebted to the Near Eastern cosmogonic tradition, especially attested in Mesopotamian texts.⁵ Hesiod’s passage, therefore, represents the kind of creative process by which the ancient poets “made sense” of coexisting stories and names for this one goddess, a process integrating exotic and familiar elements within their own heritage. It is worth highlighting here the following points about the Greek perception of Aphrodite by the late eighth century BCE.⁶

First, it seems clear the “original” etymology of the name “Aphrodite” was unknown to the Greeks, and the popular etymology from “foam” (*aphros*) had either become mainstream or could be proposed without

2 Throughout Book 2.43–64, Herodotus draws connections between Greek and Near Eastern gods.

3 Herodotus 1.105.3 (translations are mine unless noted). He also proposes a Phoenician presence at Thebes, Thera, and Thasos. Cf. Pausanias 1.14.7 and 3.22.1 on the cult of Aphrodite in Kythera. At 8.5.2 Pausanias follows a different tradition in attributing the sanctuary at Paphos to the Arcadian Agapenor on his return from Troy. In *de Dea Syria* 4–6, Lucian distinguishes between the cult of Astarte/Ashtart in Sidon and that of Aphrodite of Byblos (on the “The Lady of Byblos,” see below).

4 López-Ruiz 2010.

5 Myerston 2013.

6 Even if we conventionally dated Hesiod later than Homer, he would fall around 700 BCE or slightly thereafter, although West (2011, 17) reverses this relative chronology.

contravening established wisdom. From the modern point of view, the confusion is not small. Attempts are often made to see in her an offshoot of the Indo-European dawn goddess, and the Greek etymology from *aphros* “foam” is often taken at face value.⁷ A post-Mycenaean adoption of the goddess in Greece, however, seems more likely, not least because her name is not attested in Mycenaean texts. The Semitic-linguistics avenue of research, on the other hand, has not produced a widely accepted solution. Martin West postulated the origin of the name “Aphrodite” in a Cypro-Phoenician cultic title *prazit* “or the like,” from a hypothetical Canaanite word akin to Hebrew *perazah* “village,” meaning “Lady of the Villages” or the like.⁸ Others, invoking the telephone effect,⁹ resort to the vague similarity of the names Aphrodite–Ashtart, which conveniently liberates everyone from the arduous search for the linguistic mechanics behind the adaptation. The epithet “Kythéria,” however, might bear a clearer Northwest Semitic etymology, as we shall see, even if for Hesiod her name was already associated with the island of Kythera, which association provided a plausible explanation for an otherwise alien name. After the popular etymology sank in during the archaic period, it was not questioned thereafter.

Hesiod’s excursus also stressed Aphrodite’s association with Cyprus. In this large island situated between the Aegean and the Levant, there was a widespread prehistoric cult of a fertility goddess, whose attributes were absorbed by the Phoenician and Greek figures. The cult of Ashtart at Kition (modern Larnaka) had merged seamlessly with the Bronze Age cult of the previous great goddess by the ninth century, and the worship of Aphrodite at Paphos (also continuing a prehistoric cult) was internationally famous throughout antiquity.¹⁰ Most interesting for our argument below is the evidence that this “Cypriot” or “Paphian” lady (as she was called)¹¹ was, since the Late Bronze Age, associated with the industry of copper smithing—there is broad agreement that Cyprus and the word “copper” are etymologically related. In fact, archaeological evidence suggests the main cult sites of these fertility goddesses, including Ashtart and Aphrodite, were associated with a male deity (the so-called “ingot god”) and with copper workshops.¹² The link between the love goddess and bronze-smithing has obvious bearings on the mythological association between Aphrodite and Hephaistos in archaic times, to which I return below.

Finally, other motifs surrounding Hesiod’s Aphrodite reveal Levantine aspects. Her birth from Ouranos, the sky, absent from the Homeric tradition,¹³ seems to be a narrative explanation of the “heavenly” attribute that Ashtart and Aphrodite shared. The Phoenician goddess had heavenly and starry connotations (as did her counterparts Ishtar and Isis) and was invoked as “Queen of Heaven” in the Levant.¹⁴ Aphrodite, as Herodotus emphasizes, was known as Ourania (“heavenly”) and Asteria in the Greek world (Urania in Latin), particularly in contexts where she is associated with the Phoenician origins of her cult.¹⁵ Hesiod’s verses also play with the goddess’s relationship with the sea, as reflected in her epithets “Limenia,” “Euploia,”

7 The name would be formed from the older Indo-European root for “foam” or “cloud” (cf. Indic **abrha*) and the suffix *dj-* (cf. Greek *dios/dia*), related to both “brightness” and the name of Zeus. Cyrino 2010, 23–26.

8 West 2000, 138. West hypothesizes a Canaanite root *prđ*, with a feminine adjective **prādit*, so (counting with the use of the article in the archaic period and the Phoenician shift from /ā/ > /ō/, on which see discussion below) we could have something like *ha-prōdit*.

9 Dowden 2007, 48; Cyrino 2010, 26. Cf. West’s (2000, 135–36) dismissal of the possible equation.

10 E.g., Homer, *Odyssey* 8.362–63; *H.H. Aphrodite* 58–67; Diodorus Siculus 5.75.5; Pausanias 1.14.7.

11 She appears as “Wanassa” (Mycenaean for “Lady”), “Paphian,” “Cypriot” (*Kyprian*), and *Golgía* in epigraphical sources, and not as “Aphrodite” until the fourth century.

12 For Ashtart on Cyprus, cf. *DCPP*, s.v. “Astarté”; for her cult on Cyprus, see Young 2005. The aniconic worship of the goddess at Paphos as a betyl also marks the Semitic traits of her cult.

13 In Homer and the *Homeric Hymn* she is assumed to be the daughter of Zeus, but her mother is Dione in one passage (Homer, *Iliad* 5.170–71). Cf. Apollodorus’s *Library* 1.3.1.

14 Probably also behind Jer. 7:18, 44:17–25. Dever 2005, 186, 233–36.

15 E.g., Herodotus 1.105.3 (quoted above). Cf. Pausanias 1.14.7 on a sanctuary of Ourania in Athens and the early cult of this goddess on Cyprus and the Levant (probably drawing on Herodotus). In Plato’s *Symposium* (180d), Phaedrus distinguishes between the elevated and the carnal/popular love through the figures of Aphrodite “Ourania” and Aphrodite “Pandemos.” For the cult of Aphrodite in Athens, see Rosenzweig 2004. See essays in Sugimoto 2014.

“Pontia” (“of the harbor,” “of the good navigation,” “of the sea”), but this feature was also prominent in Ashtart’s Northwest Semitic prerogatives and imagery¹⁶ (Hesiod also plays on the words for genitals, *mêdos*, and “smile-loving,” *philommeidéa*). In other words, Hesiod may or may not have been aware of the Ashtarte-like aspects he was working into his account, but his origins myth accounted for the goddess’s popular associations with Sky, Cyprus and Kythera, the sea, and sexuality.

Beyond Hesiod, the overlap between cultic and mythological aspects of the Greek and Near Eastern love goddesses are abundantly attested and cannot be treated here. Let us only mention, in broad strokes, the instances in which Aphrodite acts as a “Mistress of Beasts” (*potnia therôn*),¹⁷ a quality well represented for Ashtart but in the Greek world usually attributed to Artemis; the awkward incursions of Aphrodite into the battlefield, as though echoing the warlike powers of Mesopotamian Ishtar;¹⁸ and Aphrodite’s above-mentioned association with the sea and seafarers and with birds in general, especially doves and sparrows (see fig. 24.1)¹⁹—all prominent attributes of Ashtart. Aphrodite’s associations with a “dying and rising” lover, Adonis, situates her squarely in the Syro-Palestinian realm, as both the figure (Adonis even has a Semitic name) and the story-pattern mirror the Babylonian traditions regarding Inanna/Ishtar and Dumuzi/Tammuz (see also below).²⁰

THE ISLAND AND THE GODDESS: POETRY, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND MYTH

Skepticism about the etymological derivation of Kythereia (Κυθήρεια) from the name of the island of Kythera (Κύθηρα) is not new. The main objection has been linguistic, viz., that the island’s name has a long /ē/, whereas the goddess’s epithet has a short /e/.²¹ Chantraine suggested this difference could have been the product of poetic license, with a vowel shortening to fit the metrics of the verse.²² The alternative suggestion of a Semitic etymology of “Kythereia” has some history. West already floated the idea that the name could be related to the Northwest Semitic god Kothar. At Ugarit, Kothar-wa-Hasis was the god of technology, especially smithing and building, and also of magic. This equivalence would explain the odd marriage of



Figure 24.1. Terracotta figure of sitting Aphrodite with a dove. Sixth century BCE. Eastern Greek origin, found at the Roman docks of Marseilles. (Musée des Docks Romains; photograph by Rama, Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-SA-2.0-FR.)

16 Christian 2013.

17 Homer, *H.H. to Aphrodite* 68–74.

18 Homer, *Iliad* 5.352–430. The passage features Zeus and Dione and the quarrel between Aphrodite and Diomedes, and it shares in Near Eastern motifs, especially with *Gilgamesh* (West 1997, 361ff.; Burkert 1992, 97; Cassio 2012, 418–23).

19 See West 1997, 56–57; Budin 2003.

20 Adonis’s cult flourished at Byblos and Cyprus and spread to the Greek world, especially Athens and Alexandria (Burkert 1985, 177; Parker 1996, 160; cf. Brown 1995, 245; West 1997, 57). Lucian, *de Dea Syria* 6, links the “Aphrodite of Byblos” with the rites of Adonis. Sacred prostitution, well known for Ishtar’s and Ashtarte’s cult, is not attested for the Greek world, excepting one allusion in Strabo 8.6.21 about the temple of Aphrodite at Corinth.

21 E.g., Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 224.

22 Chantraine 1990; Frisk 1954–73. LSJ accepts the connection with the island and also mentions an ancient city-name in Crete.

the love goddess to the Greek smithing god Hephaistos, known only from the *Odyssey*.²³ The tale narrates how Hephaistos discovers the affair between Aphrodite and Ares. He “forged bonds” with his great anvil, which he set up as a trap for the lovers when they next lay at his house-workshop. Ares goes “to the house of the famous Hephaistos, eager for the love of fair-crowned Kythereia.” After Hephaistos has caught and humiliated the lovers, the other Olympians convince him to release the offenders, at which point:

... the one [Ares] went off to Thrace,
but she, the smile-loving Aphrodite, arrived at Cyprus,
at Paphos, for her sanctuary and her fragrant altar are here.
There the Graces bathed her and anointed her
with immortal oil, such as falls upon the eternal gods.
And they set on her a lovely garment, a wonder to behold. (Homer, *Odyssey* 8.361–66)

This vignette brings together important elements for our discussion. While the episode (and Hephaistos’s home) are situated in Olympus, Homer juxtaposes the Aphrodite–Hephaistos marriage with Aphrodite’s home on Cyprus, thus highlighting her cult in Paphos and suggesting an original Cypriot context for the story. The odd marriage and this anecdote are otherwise unattested. Elsewhere, Ares is often Aphrodite’s partner and the father of many of her offspring, although she has children by other gods and has really no “set husband” in Greek mythology. It might not be irrelevant that Odysseus hears about the odd couple in a strange setting, too—on the (imaginary) island of Scheria, where the Phaiakian bard sings it to the lost traveler. Was the story intended to sound exotic, even “oriental” or Cypriot?²⁴ It is also striking how the cultic flavor of the final scene, marked by the anointing and dressing of the goddess, turns the lover-goddess almost into a cult statue, much like in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, where the goddess undresses for her lover Anchises. The scene has triggered comparisons with the similar statue-like quality of Inanna/Ishtar in the *Descent of Ishtar*.²⁵ Building on these suggestions, this paper will argue that Kythereia was a local version of the love goddess worshipped in Cyprus and imagined as a feminine counterpart to the Northwest Semitic equivalent of Hephaistos, Kothar. Insights from different angles and disciplines, philological and archaeological, lend support for this connection; none of them have previously entered the discussion. But first, a brief comparison between the interrelated figures of Hephaistos and Kothar is in order.

HEPHAISTOS AND KOTHAR

As the Greek craftsman-god, Hephaistos appears in multiple stories with a character not lacking in contradictions (he is handicapped and marginalized, but also threatening and resilient).²⁶ Hephaistos is also involved in the creation of the first woman, Pandora.²⁷ He most famously fashions the superhuman armour for Achilles at the request of the hero’s mother, Thetis,²⁸ much as Kothar fashions the bow of Aqhat.²⁹ Kothar, on the other hand, is also in charge of the gods’ adornment, weapons, and monumental palaces, as is most evident throughout the Ugaritic *Baal Cycle*. Perhaps the most detailed *ekphrasis* of his metalwork comes in this poem when he fashions gifts for Athirat: “Please, see to a gift for Lady Athirat of the Sea, a

23 West 1997, 57. Already proposed by Gruppe 1906, ii, 1353; cf. Burkert 1985, 153. Burkert (1992, 190) proposed another Northwest Semitic etymology from the root *qtr* and “incense” (cf. Hebrew *mequtteret* “fragrant”). A recent study by John C. Franklin ties Kothar with Kinyras (Ugaritic Kinnaru) in a Cypro-Byblian context from various angles and independently discusses many of the connections this essay proposes, albeit more briefly since the focus there is Kinyras and not Kythereia or Aphrodite (Franklin 2015, 445–87).

24 Cf. the brief imaginary Tyrian cosmogony in Virgil’s *Aeneid* 1.740–47.

25 Dalley 2000, 154 and n. 9; Eisenfeld 2015.

26 Bremmer 2010.

27 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 60–63.

28 Homer, *Iliad* 18.462–82.

29 CAT 1.17.1.

present for the Creatress of the Gods,” after which, “the Skilled one goes up to the bellows, with tongs in the hands of Hasis. He casts silver, he pours gold . . . ,” thus creating luxurious couches, tables, and bowls for the matriarch (spouse of El).³⁰

In the elusive trail of later Northwest Semitic traditions, the separate goddesses Athirat and Athtart tend to merge into one feminine deity, as reflected in the persistent cult to Asherah in Israel and the prominent figure of Phoenician Ashtart (Ashtoret in biblical texts). Kothar is, as far as we know, not a lover of El’s wife, of course, but definitely a faithful servant. Finally, the Ugaritic tradition places the home and workshop of Kothar in Egypt (Memphis) and in Kaphtor, which is generally identified as Crete or perhaps Cyprus, two nodal points of Aegean–Semitic interaction and hubs of fine metalwork production in the Bronze Age.³¹ Greek and Northwest-Semitic speakers coexisted for centuries in the Memphis area, which offers an interesting context for the merging of traditions about Kothar–Khousor, Hephaistos, and the Memphite demiurge Ptah (see below).³²

KY THEREIA AND KYPRIS AS POETIC NAMES

The poetic framework in which “Kythéria” appears is important for my argument. As shall become evident, “Kypris” and “Kythéria” are late additions to the epic repertoire. These epithets were among the innovations introduced by the poets of the Homeric and the Hesiodic epics around the time of their composition in the form we know them, not before the eighth century BCE, as opposed to being elements inherited among the epic formulae of old stock (which could go back to the Late Bronze Age).³³

The name *Kythéria* appears first in the *Odyssey*, twice, and in Hesiod, but not once in the *Iliad*. Often accompanied by the epithets “fairly-crowned” (εὐστεφανὸς Κυθήρεια) and “Cyprus-born” (Κυπρογενὴς Κυθήρεια), it stands as an alternative proper name for the goddess, not an epithet (never “Aphrodite Kythéria”). In archaic times it also appears in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* and in a verse by the elegiac poet Theognis of Megara.³⁴ The name is otherwise rarely used in archaic and classical times outside hexametric poetry and elegy. As a search in the TLG shows, the name appears often in later sources, from Hellenistic to late antiquity and Byzantine texts, which allude back to the epic tradition.³⁵ The adjectival form *Kythéria*, on the other hand, seems artificial in Greek in following the type of form primarily used to fit the metrical demands of epic hexameters.³⁶ “Kythéria,” moreover, appears almost invariably in the formula “well-crowned Kythéria” (some times *iostéphanos* “violet-crowned”), which provides a useful new formula to fill the last part of the hexameter, as Cassio notes. The phrase reminds us again of the goddess’s identification with cult statues.³⁷ The appearance of “Kythéria” in the more “eastern-oriented” *Odyssey*, where it is used for the goddess worshipped at Paphos, is also telling.

30 CAT 1.4.1 (translation by Smith and Pitard 2009 [see commentary at 399–426]).

31 E.g., CAT 1.3.6.12–16. See discussion in Smith 1994, 167; Smith and Pitard 2009, 379–80.

32 A Greek community known as Hellenomemphites thrived in Memphis in the sixth century, after Greeks from different origins had settled at Naukratis in the Delta in the seventh century by initiative of Psammetichos I. Herodotus 2.153–54, 163; cf. Diodorus Siculus 1.66.12. See Moyer 2011, 51–63.

33 Cassio 2012.

34 Homer, *Odyssey* 18.194; 8.291; Hesiod, *Theogony* 196; 1008; 198. Cf. Apollodorus, *Library* 2.1.3 [= Hesiod, *Aegimios* 3]; Homer, *H.H. Aphrodite* 6, 175, 287; Theognis 2.1386. Only twice in extant tragedy: Sophocles, fr. 847 (Radt); Aeschylus, *Suppliants* 1032.

35 E.g., Apollonios of Rhodes, *Argonautika* 1.742; 3.108; Nonnus’s *Dionysiaka* (*passim*); Oppianos of Apameia’s *Kynegetika* 1.392; 3.146; used for the planet (i.e., Venus) in Manetho’s *Apotelesmatika* 2.319, and many others.

36 Cassio 2012, 416–17. See also n. 75 below for other examples.

37 Cassio 2012, 415–16; cf. the *Odyssey* passage above. Cult statues are not found in Greek sanctuaries before the seventh century, when monumental sculpture develops in the Aegean (Osborne 2009, 195–98). Other cultic figures made of wood existed (the *xoana* mentioned in texts), and familiarity with Near Eastern sculpture cannot be discarded.

The name “Kypris,” in turn, is also poetic—and rare even within epic at that; the name appears once in the *Homeric Hymns* (*H.H. Aphrodite* 2) and in Homer especially in Book 5 of the *Iliad*, mentioned above.³⁸ “Kypris” behaves as a cult name of the goddess in its own right. It appears without epithets and is metrically less useful in hexameters, although it also has its own etymological problems.³⁹ In other words, both “Kypris” and “Kythéria” are, in Greek epic tradition, rare names for Aphrodite acquired within the context of the orientalizing period and oriented toward the Cyprio-Phoenician milieu.

KYTHERA AND KYTHEREIA: ARCHAEOLOGY AND MYTH

Let us now turn to archaeology. Unlike in the case of Cyprus, there are no solid traces of a historical link between Aphrodite’s archaic cult and the island of Kythera, south of the Peloponnese. In Roman times there was a temple of Aphrodite on the island believed to be early,⁴⁰ but the cult of Aphrodite there is not attested before the sixth century, as established through Greek dedications and architectonic elements of uncertain origin. The Phoenician presence implied by the alleged import of Aphrodite by Phoenicians does not find archaeological corroboration either.⁴¹ The literary trail of this idea, however, is longer than what we encounter in Herodotus and Pausanias. The current choronym Phoinikies and the harbor of Phoinikous mentioned by Xenophon⁴² have raised suspicions of a possible Phoenician presence. The word *phōinix*, however, has multiple meanings, including “palm tree” and “red,” and appears in Greek toponyms elsewhere. The adjective *porphyroûsa* “purple,” used for the island since archaic times, is also intriguing, especially since there was an old association of the island with purple dye production (from murex shells), already attested in Aristotle.⁴³ The trade in it was a mark of the Phoenicians throughout the Mediterranean, and this marine resource is still found today in its waters. Although evidence of murex industry comes only from prehistoric contexts, its existence in later periods and its connection with Phoenicians should not be discarded.⁴⁴

A different tradition explains the name of the island through an eponymous character *Kythēros*, called either “Kytheros the Phoenician” or “the son of Phoinix,” depending on how the genitive (Φοίνικος) is understood. If we take the second reading, this Phoinix is presumably the son of Agenor (king of Tyre) and the brother of Kadmos and Europa.⁴⁵ In either case, it is clear there is a tradition that created a Phoenician eponymous hero to explain the perceived connections between Kythera and Phoenicia in which Aphrodite (Kythéria) seems to have played a key role. Whether the title “Kythéria” really came from the island or was attached to the goddess independently by etymological inference, there was a projection of “Phoenicianness” on the island inseparable from Aphrodite-Kythéria.

The island of Kythera is also associated with the romance of Helen and Paris. One of its offshore islands (Kranai, across Gytheion) is imagined as the location of the couple’s first stop after they eloped from

38 Cf. n. 16 above. West (2011, 18, 24) sees Cypro-Phoenician connections in other sections of the *Iliad*. For other Near Eastern motifs in the *Iliad*, see Loudon 2006, chs. 5–7.

39 E.g., *Kýpris* does not fully fit the accent pattern of ethnonyms in *-is* (e.g., *Hellenís*, *Lokrís*). Homer rarely uses divine epithets derived from place names, and Kypris may refer to a cult place instead (e.g., *Idaía*). See Cassio 2012, 417. The less ambiguous *Kyprogenēs*/*Kyprogeneía* (e.g., Hesiod, *Theogony* 199; Homer, *H.H. Aphrodite* [h. 10] 1) also appears with *Kythéria*.

40 Pausanias 3.22.1, referring to Aphrodite Megonitis (cf. n. 44 below).

41 See Coldstream and Huxley 1972; Cartledge 2002, 122–23; and the recent study in Gregory and Tzortzopoulou-Gregory 2015. For a defense of the Phoenician connection, see Astour (1967, 142–43), who relies on Herodotus and mentions an eighteenth-century BCE cuneiform dedication found in the island as proof of early Near Eastern contacts.

42 Xenophon, *Hellenika* 4.8.7.

43 Cited by Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnika*, s.v. Κύθηρα (K 255 = p. 142 [Billerbeck ed.]; cf. Aristotle fr. 521 Rose). Cf. the notes there to other mentions of the same, including the adjective “Porphyrousa.”

44 Cartledge 2002, 182.

45 Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnika*, “Κυθήρου τοῦ Φοίνικος,” s.v. Κύθηρα (K 255 = p. 142 [Billerbeck ed.]). Not the same referent as Κύθηρος, an Athenian deme, which occupies the following entry in Stephanos.

Sparta—a tradition alluded to in the *Iliad*.⁴⁶ It is intriguing that Paris's visit (or attack) on Sidon is precisely set in this context as following their departure from Lakonia or Kythera.⁴⁷ The island is, of course, a logical choice, as it lies just south of Lakonia. Still, situating the episode there for which the mischievous love goddess was responsible may not be a coincidence. At any rate, we can see that the island's name, stories, and cults (real or imagined) were associated with Aphrodite since archaic times—an association to which a Phoenician link was added, at least since classical times. In the end, it is impossible to know for certain whether the island lent its name to the goddess or, as I suggest, the goddess' name, reinterpreted as derived from the island, introduced her cultic presence and her Levantine elements (expressed as Phoenician connections) into the island's folkloric tradition.

KOTHAR AND KHOUSOR: GREEK AND NORTHWEST SEMITIC SOURCES

So far, the relationship between Ugaritic Kothar and Greek Kythereia has remained a passing suggestion, based on the superficial similarity of the names and the rare pairing of Aphrodite–Hephaistos. A more detailed analysis of the trail of Kothar in later literature, and of the relationship between the names, reveals a closer connection.

First, the Canaanite god Kothar was known in the Phoenician world (Canaanite *ktr*, most familiar as the Ugaritic figure Kothar-wa-Hasis). The sources that tell us so are late and written in Greek, as is often the case of the *very little* that has come to us by way of Phoenician literature. While the craftsman god does not seem to be attested epigraphically or among the main Phoenician-Punic deities whose cults we know, he lived on as a cosmogonic “culture figure” in the Roman east. Our first source is second-century CE Philon of Byblos, a broadly learned writer, whose only partially preserved work, the *Phoenician History*, is quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea (via the Neoplatonist writer Porphyry). The opening sections of Philon's work contained a Phoenician cosmogony in Euhemeristic mode. Let us only point out that, despite its date and Greco-Roman intellectual framework, scholarship in Ugaritic literature and other Near Eastern comparison has shown that Philon's text extensively engages with the Northwest Semitic religious and mythological legacy.⁴⁸ In Philon's account, Khousor is Greek Hephaistos and one of the two children of the inventors of hunting and fishing:

(11) (. . .) From them were born two brothers, the discoverers of iron and its working. One of them, Khousor (Χουσώρ), devised formulae and spells and prophecies. This was Hephaistos, who also invented the hook, bait, line and raft, and was the first among men to set sail. Hence they honored him even as a god after his death. (12) He was also called Zeus Meilichios. Some say that his brothers invented walls made of bricks. After these things, two young men were born to this family, of whom one was called Craftsman, the other Earthly Native. They invented the method of mixing straw and clay to make bricks, hardening them in the sun. But they also invented roofs.⁴⁹

Our second mention of Khousor is in a cosmogony attributed to the legendary Phoenician wise man Mochos (reported by the Neoplatonist Damaskios). In this account, Khousoros is also called “the opener” and has a primordial role in the universe's configuration:

46 Homer, *Iliad* 3.436–46 (not mentioning Kythera); cf. Pausanias (3.22.1), who situates there the cult to Aphrodite Meganitis (“of the union”).

47 Apollodorus, *Epitome* 3.3–4 (and notes; Loeb ed.); Homer, *Iliad* 6.289–92 (cf. scholiast on *Iliad* 6.291). According to Proklos, in the *Kypria* (one of the lost poems of the *Epic Cycle*), Paris captured the city (*Epicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, ed. G. Kinkel, 18), though Herodotus (2.117) seems to ignore this version.

48 See Baumgarten 1981; Attridge and Oden 1981; Kaldellis and López-Ruiz 2009. For the Northwest Semitic background of Philo's cosmogony, see López-Ruiz 2010, 94–101.

49 BNJ 790 [= FGrH] F2 (Kaldellis and López-Ruiz 2009) = Eusebius *P.E.* 1.10.11–12. Philo's Khousarthis in *P.E.* 1.10.43 (BNJ 790 F10) is probably another variant of the same name and character.

(. . .) I found the mythology of the Phoenicians, according to Mochos, to be as such: at the beginning there was Aither and Air, two principles themselves, from whom Oulomos was born, the intelligible god, himself, I think, the peak of the intelligible. From him, they say, mating with himself, was born first Khousoros (ac. Χουσώρον), the opener, then an egg; the latter, I think, they call the intelligible intellect, and the opener Khousoron they call the intelligible force, as it was the first to differentiate undifferentiated nature.⁵⁰

In both cases, it is unquestionable that the figure has roots in Canaanite Kothar.⁵¹ His identification with Hephaistos is explicit in Philon's elaboration, as is his role as a culture hero, a *prótos heuretés* ("first inventor") in the Euhemeristic fashion. While his association with metal smithing is the straightforward *interpretatio* of Greek Hephaistos, his invention of sailing technology and equipment (not the realm of Hephaistos) reflects the meandering paths of these adaptations, and his invention of iron (not bronze) is another sign of historical adaptation. His equation with Zeus Meilichios in the first passage (Philon) is interesting. Meilichios was a hypostasis of Zeus particularly attested in Athens and Selinunte (southwest Sicily), and he might have been a Greek reinterpretation of a Semitic deity linked to navigation.⁵² In turn, the identification of Khousor/Hephaistos with Egyptian Ptah (the demiurge in the Memphite cosmogony), may explain why he is called "the opener," through a false etymology from the Northwest Semitic root *pth* "to open," thus again betraying a Canaanite or Phoenician mediation.⁵³

A third source transmitted in Syriac corroborates the reception of Kothar in the Roman Levant. The Syriac text is preserved in a single manuscript in Hebrew script. It is attributed to the second-century CE bishop and apologist Melito of Sardis, and, although some scholars believe the text is based on a Greek source, it ultimately draws on Aramaic tradition.⁵⁴ In John P. Brown's translation, it reads:

The people of Phoenicia worshipped Balthi, queen of Cyprus, because she fell in love with Tamuz, son of Kuthar (Hebr. spelling *kwtr*), king of the Phoenicians. She left her own kingdom, and came to dwell in Gebal [i.e., Byblos], a fortress of the Phoenicians, and at that time she made all the Cypriots subject to the king Kuthar. For before Tamuz she was in love with Ares, and had committed adultery with him, and Hephaistos her husband caught her, and was jealous over her. But he [Hephaistos] came and slew Tamuz in Mount Lebanon, while he was hunting the wild boar, and from that time Balthi remained in Gebal, and died in the city Aphaka where Tamuz is buried.⁵⁵

Most striking and relevant for our purposes is that Kothar is here a kingly figure connected both with Cyprus and with Phoenicians and also with an old great goddess. Balthi of Byblos must be a reflection of Baalat Gubal, "Lady of Byblos," the principal feminine deity of that Phoenician metropolis.⁵⁶ She appears in Philon's Euhemerized cosmogony (surprisingly, still as a goddess) under the name Baaltis.⁵⁷ For Philon she is the same as Dione and a sister of Ashtart and Rhea, all of whom become wives of Kronos/El (much like Athirat/Asherah and 'Ilu/El in the older Canaanite tradition).⁵⁸

50 BNJ [= FGh] 784 F4 = Damaskios, *De principiis* 125 c (I p. 323 Ruelle; III 166 Westerink; Eudemos in Wherly fr. 150). See Kaldellis and López-Ruiz 2009 for full text and commentary.

51 The two sets of "two brothers" mentioned in Philon's passage above, as the discoverers of iron and responsible for construction techniques, might indicate the splitting traditions generated by the double name Kothar-wa-Hasis, who is also a builder of divine palaces (Baumgarten 1981, 170; Kaldellis and López-Ruiz 2009, commentary on *P.E.* 1.10.11–12).

52 Kaldellis and López-Ruiz 2009, commentary on *P.E.* 1.10.11–12. For the cult at Selinunte, see Grotta 2010.

53 Smith 1994, 167.

54 See Van Rompay 2011 for more details.

55 Brown 1995, 245, modified.

56 For the "Lady of Byblos" as a proper name, not a mere title of Ashtart, see Zernecke 2013.

57 *P.E.* 1.10.35.

58 *P.E.* 1.10.22. See Attridge and Oden 1981, 88 nn. 100–101, 91–92 n. 132. Kronos/El conceives Love and Desire with Ashtart, but the two female deities conceived by Kronos/El with Dione are not mentioned (or have been omitted). It is unclear whether this Dione is the same as the mother (by Zeus) of Aphrodite in the *Iliad*.

Balthi's attachment to Tammuz leaves little doubt she stands for the fertility/love goddess, as the story of the dead lover is normally applied to Ishtar/Inanna and Dumuzi, or, in its Greek version, to Aphrodite and Adonis. The passage evidently is an amalgam of Semitic and Hellenic motifs arranged and rearranged in dislocated combinations. For instance, it recalls the love affair between Aphrodite (here Balthi) and Ares and Aphrodite's marriage to Hephaistos, but then it twists the story to make it go back in a circle to Tammuz, who falls victim to Hephaistos' jealousy (where Ares is the lover in the regular version).⁵⁹ It also at first sight disassociates Kothar from Hephaistos, though the storyline is clearer if the two characters are the same (more below). I suggest we understand this late text in the same Euhemeristic mode as Philon's, viz., as a partly Hellenized mythological account stemming from Northwest Semitic mythological or ritual sources. This story is, therefore, a Levantine one in which Kothar/Hephaistos appears as a partner of the fertility goddess (Balthi, in lieu of Ashtart and/or Aphrodite) in an explicitly Cypro-Phoenician context.⁶⁰ It has it all, even if in a hopelessly mangled mythological account inflected by Greek-Aramaean *interpretatio*.

A version of Kothar, it follows, existed throughout the Iron Age in the Levant; but we can probably discount the scenario of direct adaptations in Roman times from Late Bronze Age sources. It is likely, therefore, it was in that milieu that a feminine goddess could have borne a name or title such as Kuthariya, or the like, associated with this Northwest Semitic god. It is also most likely that Greco-Phoenician Cyprus, where a prehistoric fertility goddess and later Ashtart are associated with smithing and where the cult of Aphrodite was strong since at least archaic times, formed the backdrop for the addition of a hypothetical Phoenician name or title to Aphrodite's repertoire, perhaps in tandem with her other epic name, *Kýpris*.

CONNECTING THE GREEK AND NORTHWEST SEMITIC NAMES

I shall now explore in more detail the names Kothar and Kythereia to see what historical linguistics contributes to this hypothesis. Our point of departure is the Ugaritic name *ktr*, generally vocalized *kōtaru*. This vocalization is facilitated by the transcription of the Ugaritic name in syllabic (Akkadian) script as *ku-šar-ru*, transcribing /kōtaru/.⁶¹ His double name (*ktr-w-hss*) literally means "Skillful and Wise," and a common noun from the same root also means "vigor, good health."⁶² The Ugaritic materials indeed provide the only narratives about the figure in a Northwest Semitic language prior to Phoenician, although the god is also attested in the earlier Bronze Age, in Ebla.⁶³ Even working with this limited data, it is uncontroversial to say that the late Phoenician name, rendered in Greek Χουσῶρ (*Khousōr*), reflects a Phoenician version *kušor* (though vocalization is often uncertain in Phoenician). This form complies with phonetic changes that characterize the evolution of Phoenician within the Northwest Semitic linguistic group, as well as the general patterns of transcription in Greek.

The first syllable in Greek *Khousōr* reflects the closing of the old long /ō/ into Phoenician /u/, whatever the origin of that /ō/ was, whether produced by the so-called Canaanite shift or by contraction of a diphthong /aw/.⁶⁴ This /u/ is transcribed as *ou* in our Greek sources. If we look at the name *Kythéria* (Κυθήρεια), however, there is an *ypsilon* representing that first vowel. These spellings contain important clues for the Kythereia case. In Attic-Ionic and in later *koiné* Greek (including our sources for Khousor

59 A *scholion* to *Iliad* 5.385 explains the imprisonment of Ares as a reference to a story in which Aphrodite had Ares chained to avoid the consequences of his jealousy when she fell in love with Adonis (Cassio 2012, 420–21).

60 Cf. Franklin 2015, 468–73, for more discussion. He adds a late-eighth century CE (independent?) Syriac version of the same story in a commentary on Ezekiel (Theodore Bar Koni, *Liber scholiorum*, *Mimrā* 4.38, cf. 11.4). Cf. in general Franklin 2015, 479–86, for Cypro-Byblian interfaces especially in relation to Kothar and Kinyras.

61 Huehnergard 1987, 141, 210 (/kōtaru/).

62 *DULAT*, s.v. "*ktr*" (I, II, III), 471–72.

63 Smith 1994, 167 and references there.

64 The shift from /ā/ > /ō/ was effective across the Canaanite languages in the Late Bronze Age (attested in the fourteenth-century Amarna letters); Fox 1996, 40–41. Alternatively, the /ō/ could be the result of a contraction from *aw > Ugaritic ō (*kawtar > Ugaritic kōtaru). Cf. discussion of the names in Franklin 2015, 476–78, 443, n. 2, and 445, n. 12 (although phonetic changes within Greek are not discussed).

above), the digraph *ou* did not represent only the old diphthongs but was also deployed to represent the new (closed) /ō/ resulting from a series of contractions and lengthenings in the early first millennium BCE.⁶⁵ This new, closed /ō/ (written *ou*) gradually approached /u/, thus explaining the (Greek) spelling *Khou-* for (Phoenician) *Ku-*. Why, then, do we have the spelling *Ky-* in *Kythéria*? In Attic-Ionic (only) and hence the later *koiné* Greek derived from it, the archaic /u/ (written *υ*) moved toward a more frontal articulation /ü/ and eventually (probably not before Medieval Greek) to /i/. This change to /ü/, however, was not complete in archaic Greek,⁶⁶ so it is safe to assume that the *κυ* in *Kythéria* reflects the same Phoenician *ku-* in our reconstructed base-word **kušor*. In other words, the spelling we have is what we would expect from a hypothetical archaic borrowing (not *Kouthéria*).

In fact, Phoenician underwent a similar phonetic process: while the Canaanite /ō/ moved farther back to /u/, the old /u/ fronted its point of articulation toward /ü/ and possibly to /i/.⁶⁷ Again, the (later) *ou* versus (earlier) *υ* spellings are both possible forms for rendering Phoenician /u/ in different stages of Greek, corresponding to our sources' timeframe. This difference, in turn, would suggest (or confirm) that the shift /ō/ > /u/ in Phoenician had occurred by Homeric times. To offer a parallel, the name of Tyre shows the same evolution in Phoenician through the Greek adaptation: Greek Tyros (τύρος) reflects Phoenician *šur*, thus showing that the shift /o/ > /u/ had taken place already by the time of the Greek borrowing (contrast Hebrew *šor*). Similarly, the name Byblos was adapted as βύβλος in earlier Greek from Canaanite *Gubal*/*Gubla* (in later Phoenician *Geba*), while the later word βιβλίον, also derived from the city's name (once /u/ had moved to /ü/ or /i/ in Phoenician), was used for "book" (cf. Northwest Semitic *šidon* > Greek Sidon, not Sydon).

Turning to the second vowel in *kušor* (or *kušōr*), here the Greek *Khousōr*/*Khousōros* reflects another well-attested vocalic change in Phoenician from /á/ to /o/.⁶⁸ This change is the so-called "Phoenician shift" to distinguish it from the above-mentioned "Canaanite shift."⁶⁹ This shift is attested securely only after there are transcriptions from Phoenician words into Latin and Greek, from the third century BCE onward, although some have argued it can be traced to the seventh century BCE.⁷⁰ At any rate, this change occurred *after* the shift from Canaanite /ō/ to /u/ was effective (otherwise, this "secondary" /o/ would have turned into /u/).⁷¹ The Greek transcription of *Khousōr*, therefore, reflects a Phoenician pronunciation *kušor* (unattested in Phoenician script) and serves as a perfect example of those two vocalic changes. A parallel example for this pattern is the name *Oulōmós* (Οὐλωμός) ("the eternal one"), which happens to appear also in cosmogonic contexts associated with Khousor. The Greek spelling transcribes Phoenician *'ulom* (/ 'ulōm).⁷² In this parallel case, the first /u/ is the product of the first shift mentioned, from the inherited Canaanite /ō/ (from Canaanite shift or contraction) to /u/, while the second syllable (-ōm) shows the later shift in Phoenician from /á/ to /o/ (contrast Hebrew *'olam*).

So much for Greek *Khousōr* and the *Ky-* in *Kythéria*. How, then, do we obtain *Kyther(-eia)* from Phoenician *kušor*? In what follows I propose some possible answers. I shall focus on the Phoenician form recon-

65 The compensatory lengthenings occurred at different stages, in contexts involving nasals and liquids in contact with /s/ and with /w/. Not all dialects were affected (only the first lengthening was universal in Greek) or differentiated the long vowels resulting from the lengthenings from the original long vowels (represented in Attic by ω and η).

66 Ruipérez (1956) provides archaic epigraphical evidence.

67 See Fox (1996, 46–47) for similar sequences in other languages. Franklin (2015, 477) notes the *short ypsylon* in Kinyras and Myrrha (vs. long vowel in their Semitic versions) supports the equivalence of Kythereia/Kothar/Khousor.

68 Fox 1996, 37 n. 2. Like Tiberian Masoretic Hebrew, Phoenician probably developed a qualitative vocalic system out of the quantitative one. Since Phoenician is not vocalized, we follow Fox in using the vowels without marking length unless to make a particular point.

69 Our case reflects both, if we have /ā/ > /ō/ in **kawtar* > Ugaritic *kōtaru*.

70 E.g., Segert 1976, 472 §36; Fox 1996, 38.

71 See Fox (1996, 40–41) for the relative chronology.

72 Cf. the cosmogony attributed to Mochos quoted above. Oulomos is mentioned later in the text, again in the company of Khousoros. In the Hebrew Bible the title *'olam* is attached to El, and it appears as a divine title in Punic inscriptions. See Cross 1998, 77; West 1994, 292.

structed from the above Greek sources, while leaving the *kthr* in the Syriac aside for the time being since there is no vocalic transliteration of it.

The “Phoenician shift” implies a lengthening of Canaanite /a/ in an accented syllable (e.g., after the word lost the old case-ending: *kōtaru* > **kōtár*). Once we have **kušār* in Phoenician (perhaps through **kōšār*), the Phoenician shift /ā/ > /o/ is set in motion. This second “Phoenician shift” of the first millennium probably transitioned through an intermediate stage between /ā/ and the new /ō/, which can be represented as *kušōr* (open long /o/). What matters for our case is that until the seventh century, if not later, the pronunciation *kušār* or *kušōr* would have circulated in Phoenician-speaking areas where Greek speakers could have heard it.

Here is where our hypothetical crossing with Greek enters the scene. The Attic-Ionic Greek dialect (dominant in epic language) underwent a similar rising and fronting of /ā/ toward /æ/, thereby resulting ultimately in a new open long /ē/ (represented eventually by η). This Attic-Ionic shift happened sometime in the post-Mycenaean period, in the early first millennium, as it is attested in the oldest layers of Greek epic.⁷³ Although not identical, these intermediate long vowels /æ/ and /ɔ/ in Greek and Phoenician respectively coincided for a considerable amount of time.⁷⁴ One plausible hypothesis is that in this period, while the Greek shift was still ongoing, Greek speakers in the eastern Mediterranean heard of a fertility goddess called *Kušār-iy(y)a/Kušōriy(y)a* and adopted her name *with the closest sounds* to their ears, as *Kythār-eia/Kythæreia*, resulting in Attic-Ionic *Kythēr-eia*. As the Greeks usually did when borrowing foreign names, they immediately applied Greek morphology, here by adding a Greek adjectival ending (-*eia*, perhaps following other poetic adjectives; see above).⁷⁵ This proposed intersection would situate the borrowing before or during the Attic-Ionic shift /ā/ > /ē/, sometime in the early first millennium—the very period proposed by our analysis of the literary texts above. Below is an outline of these changes (emphasizing in bold the stages at which the names would have overlapped):

Ugaritic *kōtaru* (< **kawtar*) > **kōtár*

> Phoenician (*kōšār*? >) **kušār* > **kušōr* > *kušōr*; (f) **kušār-iy(y)a* / **kušōriy(y)a*

Greek (archaic) **kysōr* / (later) *khousōr*; (f) (archaic) **kythār-eia* / **kythæreia* > **kythēr-eia*

One inconsistency remains, viz., the vowel length attested in Greek poetry. The name *Kythereia* in Greek appears with a short /e/ (Greek ε), while the borrowing suggested here would have resulted in a long vowel /ē/ (η in standardized Greek). The island’s name, on the other hand, is *Kýthēra* (Κύθηρα), with a long vowel. We do not know what the etymology of the toponym is, or whether the name is Greek at all and not pre-Greek. The toponym (with /ē/) may appear already in the Linear B tablets,⁷⁶ and in a Doric-speaking area the /ē/ would, in any case, not be the result of the Attic-Ionic shift but an “original” /ē/.

The discrepancy between the vowel length in the island’s and goddess’s names, however, did not bother Hesiod or Herodotus (or modern linguists, for that matter) when they adopted the popular connection between the two. If our reconstruction from the Phoenician is correct, the name they heard sounded like that of the island, with a long /e/. But how it was written in hexametric poetry need not necessarily restrict how it was originally said orally. How so? As already suggested,⁷⁷ we may be looking at an ad hoc shortening of the original long vowel, a license not uncommon in hexametric poetry. While the island’s name, *Kythēra*, presents no metrical problems to the dactylic hexameters, the hypothetical adjectival form **Kythēreia*

73 A more precise date is not possible, since the change happened gradually and was completed at different paces in the Attic-Ionic realm (see Colvin 2007, 10, 36; Rodríguez Adrados 2005, 76).

74 See Fox (1996, 47 with table 3), although Fox uses ɔ for both Phoenician and Greek long open vowels.

75 Feminine formations from masculine divine names include cities, e.g., Herakleia, and divine names, e.g., Posydaeia, Diwija, and Areja, in Mycenaean (Linear B) counterparts of Poseidon, Zeus, and Ares. Some divine names in Mycenaean documents become epithets in historical times, e.g., Enyalios (Ares), Potnia (various goddesses), Paion (Apollo).

76 *ku-te-ra* (Κύθηρα?), *ku-te-re-u-pi* (Κυθηρεῦπι?) (Palmer 1963, 128). Kythera may be attested in a fourteenth-century monument by Amenhotep III (*ktir*) (West 1997, 6, 57; see also Franklin 2015, 478).

77 See n. 22 above.

(with long vowel) does. But with the shortened /e/, especially in the formula εὐστέφανος Κυθήρεια (“well-crowned Kythereia”), it conveniently fills the end of the verse (— u u | — u u | — x).⁷⁸

The few variants of the divine name support this interpretation, as they present a suspicious oscillation between long and short /e/: e.g., *Kythērē* (Κυθήρη), *Kytheirē* (Κυθείρη), and *Kythēriās* (Κυθηριάς), and, conversely, forms with short /e/ applied to the island’s name when needed, as in *Kythērēthen* (Κυθήρηθεν, “from Kythera”).⁷⁹ Let us not forget that archaic poetry was composed in an environment where writing conventions were not as constricting (e.g., *H/éta* was not used for long /ē/ until the fifth century!) and that poets played with artificial vocalic patterns (e.g., uncontracted forms, dissolution of diphthongs), dialectal forms, and alternative spellings of names when convenient or for particular effects.⁸⁰ Whatever the exact origin of the root, *Kythēreia* was the version of the name that “stuck” from Homer and Hesiod on, after which point it acts as a fossilized name in later Greek poetic or scholarly allusions.

This being said, other possible linguistic mechanisms and models may have been at work for the proposed borrowing, thereby making the issue of vowel length irrelevant. For instance, the Greek name may have been modeled on an adjectival form such as Ugaritic *kōtariy(y)a* or Phoenician *kušariy(y)a*, in which the /a/ would have remained short, even in later Phoenician. The short /e/ in *Kythēreia* could, in that scenario, simply be the reflex of the short /a/ (or another short vowel in the hypothetical Phoenician form), in the rather idiosyncratic way in which short vowels are adapted or rendered among these languages,⁸¹ especially when the analogy with the sounds in the islands’ names cannot be discarded.

Finally, the different consonants in the names deserve attention. The Greek *kh* in *Khousor* is not a problematic transcription of Northwest Semitic *k* and occurs elsewhere, since in Greek *χ* (*khi*) was a stop and Northwest Semitic *kaf* could be pronounced /kh/ or /k/, depending on its position, by the second half of the first millennium BCE. A good example is the Semitic word *ktn* “linen, tunic” (Akkadian *kitû/kitinnu*; Ugaritic/Phoenician *ktn*; Hebrew *ktnt*), adapted in Greek as *khiton* (already in Mycenaean *ki-to*). More problematic is the Ugaritic /th/ (*t̤*) we see in *kōtaru*; it turns into /sh/ (*š*) in Hebrew and Phoenician, although not in Aramaic.⁸² As shown above, the Phoenician name had a *shin*, which Greek regularly transliterates as *sigma*. The consonant /th/ in the archaic Greek name, *Kythēreia*, therefore, is not expected. The Greek name here (if the correspondence stands) captured a dental sound closer to the Ugaritic form, not to the *shin* used in Phoenician.⁸³ Did variant forms of the name coexist, some of which forms preserved a sound closer to Greek *theta*? Indeed, the Syriac text presented above proves that was the case. Unlike the late Phoenician exemplars of *Khousor*, at least, the Aramaic tradition preserved a form with the Canaanite dental consonant (*kwtr*), as expected in that Northwest Semitic language. In a sense, the vocalic pattern in *Khousor* conforms to Phoenician phonetic phenomena in all respects (with the /th/ > /sh/, /ō/ > /u/, and the /a/ > /o/ changes), while the epic *Kythēreia* may conform to Phoenician or Aramaic variants of the name, depending on different possible vocalic and consonantal correspondences in early Greek–Semitic linguistic contacts—an area in which our knowledge is still quite lacking.

78 The epithet could replace the frequent *philommeidēs Aphrodītē* (“smile-loving Aphrodite”). Cf. other “artificial” epithets, such as *eupatéreia* instead of the “real” but metrically less convenient *eupáteira* (< **pater-ja*). Both *Kythēreia* and *eupatéreia* used a “ready-made” *-eia* ending (< **-esja*) (Cassio 2012, 416–17).

79 *LSJ*, s.v. Κυθήρεια and Κύθηρα.

80 E.g., the name Polydamas in Homer artificially lengthened to avoid the metrically unviable Polydamas.

81 E.g., *Kádmōs* < *kedem?*; *khitōn* < *kuttonet*; *Zydýk* < *šadik?* (Philon in *P.E.* 1.10.13); *Zophasēmin* < *shophê-shamayim* (Philon in *P.E.* 1.10.2), all likely Greek adaptations from Northwest Semitic, although we do not know from which forms within the dialectal or chronological spectrum. Cf. Masson 2007.

82 Cf. Ugaritic *Aṭirat* = Phoenician/Hebrew Asherah; Ugaritic *tlt*; Hebrew/Phoenician *šlš*; Aramaic *tl̥t* (“three”).

83 Cf. Franklin (2015, 478), for whom this equivalence (Ugaritic *t̤*/Greek *θ*) suggests a pre-1300 BCE contact. The relationship between these consonants and their representation is, however, complicated and understudied. Note that Greek *θ* is a dental stop /th/ (aspirated) and not a fricative as in other languages (e.g., Spanish /z/). Phoenician, Punic, and Aramaic inscriptions transliterated it with a plain *taw* (/t/). E.g., Phoenician **gt̤n* = Ἀγαθων (*CIS* I 4439.4). Conversely, the LXX transliterates Semitic *taw* as *theta*, while there is no clear evidence for the use of *theta* to transliterate Semitic *ṭet̤* (other than the evident derivation of the Greek letter’s name and shape). Earlier Greek does not follow the *theta* = *taw* correspondence (e.g., again, *kuttonet* > *khitōn*; *bēt-’el* > *baitylos*). Cf. Astour 1967, 140 n. 2.

BACK TO MYTHOLOGY: KYTHEREIA AND THE KOTHARAT

THE KOTHARAT

West already suggested that “Kythéria is in origin a female partner of Kothar” and that “Kothar does have feminine counterparts in the *Kōtarātu*, goddesses of conception and birth,”⁸⁴ although the comparison has never been pursued. These mistresses of female reproduction, as they have been labeled, are especially well known for their role in Ugaritic literature. In the *Aqhat* epic, king Danilu makes lavish sacrifices and libations to them in the hope for offspring, which they grant him after visiting his house for seven days and propitiating “the joy of the bed,” “the delight of the bed of childbirth.”⁸⁵ These collectives of goddesses are also invoked as “the (new) moon’s radiant daughters” and bear exactly the same name as Kothar, only in feminine form, so they are the “skillful ones” or perhaps “vigorous/healthy ones.”

Their capacity to bestow fertility (as well as presumably vigor and health) is also central to the wedding poem celebrating the “Betrothal of Yariḫ and Nikkal-Ib.” The bride and groom are two moon deities, namely, the male West Semitic moon-god Yariḫ and the female Hurrian moon-goddess Nikkal.⁸⁶ The Kotharat are invoked several times, especially in a final ode that closes the poem, which starts with the invocation to “the resplendent ones,” “daughters of *Hullēlu*, lord of the crescent (moon).” The reading and meaning of the next lines are not uncontested, but they seem to involve the Kotharat’s descent to a garden, where they meet their beloved, called “Perspicacious, the god of Intelligence.”⁸⁷ Dennis Pardee reads the motif as an allusion to their encounter with El (*ʾilu*) in a trope that resonates later in Hebrew poetry, such as in the *Song of Songs*. The ode ends with the listing of the seven Kotharat, who are given artificial (i.e., poetic) names appropriately evoking the gifts and consequences of weddings, dowries, abrupt separation, noise and crowd-gathering, and, lastly, beauty. I reproduce Pardee’s French translation:

Que je chante les *Kōtarātu*!
 filles de *Hullēlu*, les resplendissantes,
 filles de *Hullēlu*, seigneur de la (lune) croissante,
 Celles qui descendent aux noyers,
 aux plantes-ḪBZ de LL’AY,
 auprès du Perspicace, dieu de l’intelligence.
 Voici dans ma bouche leur compte,
 sur mes lèvres leur enumeration:
 Sa-Dot aussi bien que Son-Cadeau-de-Mariage,
 Celle-qui-Sépare, avec elle Celle-qui-Fend,
 Celle-qui-Bruit avec Elle-Rassemble-la-Foule,
 La-Belle, la cadette des *Kōtarātu*.⁸⁸

The Kotharat also appear in the Ugaritic ritual texts. They are listed after El/*ʾilu*, but these nonnarrative texts do not reveal the assumed relation among the entities, whether they are El’s daughters or sexual partners (see below). They are, in any case, high in the divine order if these ritual lists follow, as it seems, cosmogonic and theogonic ideas.⁸⁹ There is reason to believe these feminine deities were not unknown to the later Phoenician tradition either, although their trail is elusive. In Philon’s *Phoenician History*, they probably explain

84 West 1997, 57 n. 238.

85 CAT 1.17, Tablet I, col. II (39–42); translation from Parker 1997, 57.

86 CTA 24 (= CAT 1.24 = RS 5.194). See Parker (ibid., text 24) and Pardee 2010.

87 I.e., *lṣpn* (= *lṣpn*), an epithet of El, and *ʾil d pʾid*, often translated “benign” and “god of benevolence.”

88 Pardee 2010, 26, translation of lines 47–50.

89 RS 24.643. Pardee 2002, 17 (text 3A, line 4 [syllabic] = 3B, line 25; text 12, line 5, 25; cf. text 1B and C, line 13; restored in other lists). For the cosmogonic aspect of the lists and a comparison with other traditions, see López-Ruiz 2010, esp. 101–4.

the seven daughters of Kronos (= El), called “Titanids” or “Artemids,” begotten by Ashtart.⁹⁰ Not only is their number identical, but they are also identified here with Artemis, the Greek divine *kourotrophos* or protector of children and childbirth, which similarities reinforce the functional equivalence between these daughters of Kronos/El and the Kotharat.

AN ARAMAEAN KYTHEREIA?

It is difficult to put our finger on how, when, and where these fertility goddesses overlapped. We are, moreover, dealing with a more complex network of goddesses. In the Syriac text and our other testimonies, for instance, the narratives and family relations of Dione, Ashtart, and Baalti/Balthi are interwoven at different levels, whether as sisters or possibly hypostases of Asherah or Ashtart, and as wives or daughters of Kronos/El. The Balthi of the Syrian text and Philo’s Baaltis, who stand for the local Byblian fertility goddess, also meet Aphrodite in her love interest for Tammuz/Dumuzi (in the Syrian text) and Ashtart in her role as consort of Kronos/El (in Philon). The Syriac/Aramaic tradition, moreover, makes the relationship with Hephaistos explicit. In fact, the passage seems to be calling the same god by his two names, the Northwest Semitic and the Greek. If they refer to the same “king,” the sequence of events would be as follows: Balthi leaves Cyprus (where Kothar, her husband, is king) because of her love for the king’s son Tamuz; at his death in Lebanon she stays in Byblos forevermore; before that, the narrative interjects, she had already transgressed her marital loyalty by having an affair with Ares (alluding to the famous Homeric episode). If Kothar and Hephaistos are one and the same king—and her husband—the wrath of Hephaistos directed toward Tamuz (his son) in the Syriac passage makes sense. The intriguing Syriac text not only testifies to Kothar’s association with a Mistress akin to Aphrodite/Ashtart but also situates it in a Cypro-Phoenician context, where it makes the most sense, given the above-mentioned centrality of metalwork in Cypro-Phoenician cultic life.⁹¹

In the end, we need to also factor in the contact with variants of Aramaean culture and the Aramaic language, which around 700 BCE was widespread in the Levant, being the *lingua franca* of the Assyrian empire. Aramaeans, in fact, most likely fall within Herodotus’s broad “Syria” category in his statement about Aphrodite’s “homeland.” For his part, Pausanias lists Assyrians, Paphians from Cyprus, and Phoenicians from Askalon as the worshipers of Aphrodite Ourania.⁹² Yet another consideration is whether it is a coincidence that “Kythereia” is a preferred choice for naming the love goddess by poets writing in the Greek-speaking Near East. To give the most striking examples, Nonnus of Pannopolis (Egypt, fifth century CE), calls the goddess “Kythereia” in multiple passages, in some of which she appears in the company of Cadmos, the city of Byblos, and Adonis. There is surely more than a metric convenience to the name’s choice, especially when Nonnus writes that Byblos is “where the Graces have their home, where Assyrian Kythereia dances” (3.111) and uses the term “Assyrian” also for Adonis (also in connection with Kythereia) (41.157). In an early third-century CE poem about hunting attributed to one Oppianos from Apamea (in Syria), dubiously attributed to Oppianos of Cilicia, the label “Assyrian Kythereia” pops up again.⁹³ The possible Aramaic or Phoenician background of these and other references deserves further exploration, but for now they add plausibility to the existence of a locally rooted tradition about Kythereia in the Cypro-

90 P.E. 1.10. 24: “Kronos had seven daughters, Titanids or Artemids, by Astarte.” Cf. Hesiod, *Theogony* 132–35, where the six female Titans along with their brothers are instead daughters of Ouranos and Ge (Heaven and Earth), although Dione is for Hesiod one of the daughters of Tethys and Ocean (*Theogony* 353). Cf. Attridge and Oden 1981, 88 n. 100. Apollodorus (*Library* 1.1.3) follows the same tradition as Hesiod except that he includes Dione among the Titanids, thus making them seven, as does Philon.

91 Cf. Franklin (2015, 473–79), who stresses that the relationship between the metal god/goddess and Ashtart would have resonated in the Greek-Cypriot epithet “Kythereia.”

92 Pausanias 1.14.7. Cf. n. 14 above. For Herodotus’s familiarity with Aramaic, see Mandell 1990. The Greek historian uses “Syrian” for other Northwest Semitic groups distinct from the Phoenicians, groups such as the “Syrians from Palestine,” referring to the Judaeans (2.104.3).

93 Oppianos, *Kyneygetika* 1.7.

Phoenician and Aramaic (“Assyrian”) realms. Even stories such as the one about Cypriot king Pygmalion (who has a Phoenician name, *Pumayyaton*) and his passion for a statue he had himself fashioned (and which Venus brought to life) are also witnesses of the survival of this set of connections in the region’s traditions.⁹⁴

APHRODITE AND HER “GROUPIES”

The idea of a collective of feminine goddesses is not alien to Aphrodite’s repertoire. The listing of the Kotharat in the above-mentioned Ugaritic wedding poem resonates in Greek hexametric poetry with various tropes. For instance, Hesiod lists the nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (Memory) by their names, which signal their association with poetry and other relevant qualities for the success of a party:

She Who Glorifies, She Who Delights, The Blooming One, She Who Sings,
She Who Delights in Dance, The Lovely One, She of Many Hymns, The Heavenly One,
and She of the Beautiful Voice.⁹⁵

The last Muse here, like the last of the Kotharat, bears the only epithet relating to beauty, and this last Muse is also deserving of further comment: “she is the principal among them all, for she accompanies revered kings as well.”⁹⁶ The intimate relationship between the Muses and kings is also stressed in the immediately following verses:

Whomever they honor, the daughters of great Zeus,
and behold at the moment he is born among the Zeus-bred kings,
they pour a sweet dew upon his tongue,
and gentle words flow from his mouth;
and from that moment all the people look up to him as he resolves disputes
(. . .) And as he goes up to the gathering, they appease him [the king] as a god,
with gentle reverence, and he stands out among the gathered ones.
Such is the sacred gift of the Muses to men.⁹⁷

The Hesiodic passage presents the Muses as a feminine divine group of sisters who protect (and promote) kings since birth; the Kotharat, likewise, ensure the reproduction of the royal house and oversee the marriages and wedding parties of kingly figures, including gods. But perhaps even closer to the Kotharat than the Muses are the Graces (Charites), who are servants of Aphrodite and directly involved in her beautification. The Graces were three maids, all with festive and “radiant” names: Aglaia, Euphrosyne or Euthymia, and Thalia, conveying such notions as “Splendor,” “Happiness or Cheer,” and “Celebration.” The best account of their relationship with Aphrodite is in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* in a passage that, moreover, raises the goddess’s link with Cyprus, not to mention her “heavenly” and “mistress of animals” inflections:

When she saw him [Anchises], smile-loving Aphrodite fell in love, and violent desire got hold of her senses. Off she went to Cyprus and entered her fragrant temple, at Paphos; there she has a sanctuary and a fragrant altar; there she entered and shut the gleaming doors; and there the Graces washed her and anointed her with immortal olive oil, such as is poured onto the ever-lasting gods, aromatic, divine, for this one was perfumed for her. Dressing herself well with all her beautiful clothes around her skin, adorning herself with gold, smile-loving Aphrodite rushed towards Troy, leaving behind fragrant Cyprus, making her way swiftly high up with the clouds. She reached Ida, rich in springs, mother of beasts, and she marched straight to the stable through the mountain.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10.243–97.

⁹⁵ Hesiod, *Theogony* 77–79.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 79–80.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 81–93.

⁹⁸ Homer, *H.H. Aphrodite* 56–69.

Muses and Graces are, moreover, frequently named together in passages related to Aphrodite and sometimes with other feminine groups such as the Hours (Horai). Both groups are, in some versions, daughters of Aphrodite, not only her maids.⁹⁹ The Graces and Desire (Himeros) are also said by Hesiod to live by the Muses in Olympus,¹⁰⁰ and they all appear in Aphrodite's (or Venus's) company in later literature.¹⁰¹ The Graces even participate in the creation of the first woman in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, where they team up with Hephaistos, Athena, Aphrodite, the Hours, Hermes, and "lady Persuasion" to bestow different gifts on the "all-gifted" Pandora.¹⁰²

One last feature stands out in the imagery of the Kotharat and Aphrodite: their celestial and radiant quality. The Kotharat are daughters of the crescent moon and are called "resplendent, shiny" ones. Already in the *Sumerian Hymn to Inanna* (e.g., 209–18), the sex-goddess is praised repeatedly for her celestial habitation and her brightness; she can light up the sky and "the corners of heaven." So too Aphrodite, like Ashtart, is a "heavenly" goddess and her brightness is captured in early Greek poetry. Turning again to the *Homeric Hymn*, her description adds radiance to her "statue-like" quality, thus resonating with much older traditions:

And Anchises, as he saw her, observed her and marveled at her looks and her stature and her gleaming clothes. For she was dressed in a robe more radiant than the flame of fire, and had spiral bracelets and shiny brooches, and the most beautiful necklaces were around her soft neck, very fine works of gold, and a marvel to see; and she was shining like the moon around her soft breasts, a marvel to see.¹⁰³

CONCLUSIONS

The possible connection between Kythereia and Kothar or a feminine deity (or deities) associated with him gains strength when we bring together the few but telling written sources that show the persistence of the figure of Kothar in the Greco-Roman Levant, the strange set of Phoenician associations surrounding the island of Kythera, and the Levantine network surrounding Aphrodite more generally.

If the name "Kythereia" derives from a Northwest Semitic name or epithet, the borrowing most likely happened on Cyprus, given the importance of Aphrodite's cult there and her entanglement with the prehistoric and Phoenician goddesses of love. Archaic Greek literature already situates Aphrodite in the Cypriot realm (Hesiod, the *Odyssey*, the *Homeric Hymn*), and the mysterious Syriac text presented above indicates the survival of a tradition about Kothar and the fertility goddess in the Cypro-Phoenician realm. Not surprisingly, the hypothetical feminine name, on which Greek "Kythereia" would have been modeled, is not attested in Phoenician or Aramaic. In a bicultural, even bilingual context, it is not impossible that Greek speakers who were familiar with the figure of Kothar/Kushor and with the Cypriot goddess's relationship with a smithing god came up with such a title. But it is also possible that such a feminine companion existed in some Phoenician and Aramaic version (such as Baaltis). While such a *Kuthariy(y)a* title is not attested in Semitic script, the Greek version would be precisely that "lost" Semitic name. The Iron Age version of the

99 The Graces are traditionally the daughters of Zeus and Eurynome but are occasionally of other parents, including Aphrodite and Dionysos.

100 Hesiod, *Theogony* 64.

101 Cf. the almost identical *Odyssey* passage quoted above. In the *Homeric Hymn*, Anchises asks Aphrodite whether she is a goddess or one of the Graces (Homer, *H.H. Aphrodite* 95–96); in the story of Eros and Psyche by Apuleius (the *Golden Ass* or *Metamorphoses*), Venus wonders who has captured the heart of her son Eros/Cupid, whether "one of that crowd of nymphs, or one of the Hours, or one of the band of Muses, or one of my servant-Graces?" (*Metamorphoses* 5.28). Graces and Muses preside at the final wedding party, together with Venus and (the "cook") Hephaistos (*Metamorphoses* 6.24). In Virgil's *Aeneid* (1.720), Venus is called (by her son Amor, i.e., Eros) "Acidalian mother," identifying her with the Graces through the allusion to their sacred fountain in Akidaios, Boiotia.

102 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 60–79.

103 Homer, *H.H. Aphrodite* 84–90.

god Kushor, after all, would also have been lost completely were it not for the late recycling of this figure among a few Neoplatonists, Philon of Byblos, and the author of our Syriac text, none of them writing in Phoenician.

Although it is difficult to pin down with full certainty the transfer from one language to another (in part due to the difficulty of reconstructing Northwest Semitic vocalization), the clues I have offered above point to an early transmission and to several interesting possibilities, which may be useful for future research. I must leave open the possibility that several versions of the name circulated and that archaic “Kythereia” and the later Greek rendering of “Khousor” may reflect different forms (perhaps Aramaic in the first place, clearly Phoenician in the second). Either way, *Kythéria* seems in epic poetry to be a neologism first appearing in the eighth century BCE and pointing to the so-called “orientalizing period” as her moment of entry in the Greek literary radar. From that point on, the most important (and sole surviving) Greek poets associated the name with the Greek island of Kythera (by the mere similarity of the name), thereby detaching the obscure name from its Levantine cultic context. On the mythological level, however, that Levantine background persisted: the relationship with the smithing god surfaced in Homer, her association with Cyprus is broadly incorporated in the narratives, and several writers projected onto the island of Kythera the Phoenician elements the goddess carried in her Levantine baggage.

This essay shows, moreover, the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in comparative studies. In this case, linguistic, historical-archaeological, mythological, and literary analyses converge to illuminate a subject that was obscure already for the poet of the *Theogony*.

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25

THE ROOT GMR AND A SHARED DIVINE EPITHET
IN UGARITIC AND CLASSICAL HEBREW*

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STANDARD LEXICOGRAPHICAL PROCEDURE DICTATES THAT a word be defined principally by its usage. When usage data are insufficient—as is too often the case in the study of ancient languages—one may turn to etymology and cognate languages. The cultural and linguistic proximity of Ugaritic and Hebrew has proved particularly fruitful in this regard. This paper will investigate the root GMR, which is attested—though rarely—in both languages. The use of verb formations of this root with a divine subject in literary texts in Ugaritic and Hebrew sheds light on the meaning of the verb in both languages and reveals a previously unidentified divine epithet shared by Ugarit’s Ba’lu/Haddu and ancient Israel’s Yahweh.

The verb from this root appears in Biblical Hebrew only in the Psalms. In Psalms 7:10; 12:2; and 77:9, גמר is intransitive and denotes “coming to an end”:

Psalms 7:10

יגמר נא רע רשעים	Let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
ותכון צדיק	and establish the righteous.

Psalms 12:2

הושיעה יהוה כי גמר חסיד	Save, O Yahweh, for the faithful have come to an end,
כי פסו אמונים מבני אדם	for the trustworthy have disappeared from humanity.

Psalms 77:9

האפס לנצח חסדו	Has his faithfulness ceased forever;
גמר אמר לדר ודר	has (his) speech come to an end for the generations?

In Psalms 57:3 and 138:8, as well as in the personal name גמריהו,¹ the subject of this verb is the Israelite deity. The meaning “come to an end” in these cases is impossible.

* It is an honor to present this paper to my advisor, Dennis Pardee. As an advisor and teacher, he was equal parts challenging and supportive. I remain bewildered as to how he found the hours in the day to pursue his own extensive scholarship while also prioritizing his students. I cannot imagine a more supportive advisor and am extremely grateful to him. Though my research has focused on the Hebrew Bible, I am pleased to contribute to this volume a paper that draws on Ugaritic and Classical Hebrew in equal measure.

1 Jer. 36:10–12, 25; Lachish 1:1.

Psalm 57:3

אקרא לאלהים עליון
לא אל גמר עלי I will call to God 'Elyōn,
to 'El, *gōmēr* for my sake.

Psalm 138:8a

יהוה יגמר בעדי Yahweh *yigmōr* on my behalf.
יהוה חסדך לעולם O Yahweh, your faithfulness lasts forever.

Erich Zenger and Frank-Lothar Hossfeld reflect the usual understanding of this usage, with the deity as the subject in their translation of גמר עלי in Psalm 57:3 (“der es zu meinen Gunsten vollendet”) and of יהוה יגמר בעדי in Psalm 138:8 (“JHWH wird meine Sache führen”).² This understanding of גמר as “to bring about a good end” or “to establish the cause” is found already in Hermann Gunkel’s treatment of Psalm 57:3 and is also reflected in Marvin Tate’s understanding of Psalm 57:3 and Hans-Joachim Kraus’s understanding of Psalms 57:3 and 138:8.³

Against this interpretation, Mitchell Dahood hypothesized a semantic development from “to come to end” to “to avenge” on the basis of a similar development of the word גמל from “to complete, accomplish” to “to repay, requite.”⁴ On the basis of this theory, Dahood proposed understanding *gmr hd* in *KTU* 1.2 i 46 as “Vindicator Hadd,”⁵ and he translated גמר in Psalm 57:3 as an epithet: “Avenger.”⁶ As Aicha Rahmouni shows, however, Dahood’s analysis, which is based on a contextual reading of the psalms in question, is unconvincing.⁷ Dahood derives the sense of “vengeance” primarily from the context of Psalm 7:10 but resorts to emendation despite the contextual appropriateness there of the sense “to come to end.”⁸ Removing this example reduces the plausibility of Dahood’s thesis, since Psalms 57:3 and 138:8 call on the deity for protection rather than vengeance.⁹ Since the Akkadian cognate *gamāru*, which shows the development from “to complete” to “to annihilate,” provides a sufficient explanation for the semantics of גמר in Psalms 57:3 and 138:8, recourse to the etymology of גמל is unnecessary.¹⁰

Though Dahood’s explanation is ultimately unsatisfying, his identification of the Ugaritic parallel and interpretation of גמר as an epithet in Psalm 57:3 remain pertinent. Since גמר is attested only five times in Biblical Hebrew, and since two of those cases have a meaning obviously different from the other three, lexical data from the linguistically and culturally related Ugaritic literature could prove helpful. These data appear particularly relevant since, as will be shown, the contexts in which *gmr* appears in Ugaritic share several features with the uses of גמר in Psalms 57:3 and 138:8. This root appears in two literary passages. In both cases, a deity is the subject of the verbal action and is contextually depicted as a combatant (*KTU*

2 Hossfeld and Zenger 2000, 118, 127; 2008, 704.

3 Gunkel 1986, 246; Tate 1990, 72; Kraus 1988, 530; 1993, 505.

4 Dahood 1953, 595–97; 1965–70, 2:51, 3:275, 281–82; 1960, 400. Dahood’s suggestion is followed by Allen (1983, 243–45); Good (1994, 151); and van Zijl (1972, 346–47).

5 Dahood 1953, 596 n. 3.

6 Dahood 1965–70, 2:51.

7 Rahmouni 2008, 148 n. 10.

8 Dahood (1953, 595) recommended emending יהגמר to גמר, an imperative, on the basis of a possible dittography of the י. This emendation allowed Dahood to register this verb as another instance of גמר with a divine subject. Later, Dahood (1965, 45) opted instead to take this verb without emendation as a jussive with divine subject. Without emendation, however, the line יהגמר נא רע רשעים is more simply interpreted as “let the evil of the wicked come to an end.”

9 Rahmouni 2008, 148 n. 10.

10 So also Loretz 1961, 261–63. Note that the verb *gamāru* in Akkadian is both transitive, “to bring X to an end, annihilate,” and intransitive, “to come to an end” (*gamāru*, CAD G, 25–29). The distribution of Hebrew גמר between the transitive and intransitive sense thus mirrors the Akkadian cognate.

1.2 i 46; 1.6 vi 16).¹¹ In addition to these literary parallels, syllabic evidence from Ugaritic personal names suggests that גמר in Psalm 57:3 and KTU 1.2 i 46 may represent the same form (*mutatis mutandis*). This evidence corroborates the plausibility that the two epithets reflect a shared tradition.

GMR IN UGARITIC

In drawing these lines together, it is both useful and necessary to survey the uses of the root in each language. In addition to its literary uses, the root GMR appears in personal names from Ugarit with *Haddu* as the divine element. These names are spelled alphabetically both as *gmr*d and *gmr*hd and syllabically as ¹*ga-mi-rad-du/di* (PRU 3, 116, lines 8', 11'), and ¹*gi-im-ra-du* (PRU 3, 203, line 10). Several hypocoristic forms occur as well. The syllabically spelled names represent two distinct formations. The name ¹*gi-im-ra-du* represents a *qitl* nominal form of the root GMR in construct to the divine name *Haddu*,¹² the /h/ of which has been lost by elision.¹³ This name, which is based on an abstract nominal formation, can be compared to the Hebrew name גמר,¹⁴ a hypocoristic of the same root from a *qutl* base. ¹*Gi-im-ra-du* means something like "completion of Haddu," or, given the Akkadian evidence for this root's development from "to complete, come to an end" to "to be strong, effective," the name could mean "strength of Haddu" or "annihilation of Haddu."¹⁵

The verbal element in ¹*ga-mi-rad-du* presents three possibilities. It could be a substantivized stative adjective of the *qatil* base, a participle of the *qātil* base, or a suffix conjugation verb of the *qatila* type. The *qatila* option is made plausible by the syllabic spelling of the name *ygm*r (KTU 4.134.5; 4.635.42) as *ig-mar/ma-ra*-^dIM (PRU 3, 48, lines 4, 7), which indicates that the prefix conjugation form follows the *yiqṭalu* pattern to which the expected corresponding suffix conjugation pattern is *qatila*.¹⁶ Comparison with Biblical Hebrew renders the *qatil* stative adjective the least likely possibility; verbs appearing as G active participles¹⁷ are unlikely to attest *qatil* stative adjectives.¹⁸ Brent Knutson opts for the third possibility and takes this name as an epithet formed from the participle *gāmiru*.¹⁹

The variation in the alphabetic spellings *gmr*d and *gmr*hd is not as easy to explain. This occasional retention of the /h/ appears only in alphabetic spellings; syllabic spellings of all names containing *Haddu* show consistent elision of the /h/.²⁰ Gröndahl lists a total of twenty-four names in Ugaritic that have the divine element *-(h)d*.²¹ Nineteen of these twenty-four lack the /h/. Interestingly, in each case, the retained /h/ immediately follows a liquid consonant: *ilhd*, *hlhd*, *gmrhd*, *ytrhd*, *ḏmrhd*. *ḏmrhd* is particularly significant because it shows the same variation as *gmr*d/*gmr*hd; it appears as both *ḏmrhd* (KTU 4.75 vi 7) and *ḏmrd* (KTU 4.682.10, 4.775.3). Its syllabic spellings are *zi-im-[rad-d]i* (PRU 3, 39, line 3), *ši-im-rad-du* (PRU 4,

11 Though noting the parallel to KTU 1.6 vi 16, Dahood (1953, 596 n. 3) dismisses it as an unrelated reference to some kind of animal. Though polysemy is, of course, a well-attested phenomenon, the appearance of two uses of *gmr* in Ugaritic literature in reference to Ba'lu suggests looking for a meaning that explains both uses.

12 Gröndahl 1967, 68. Since Ugaritic retains the case vowel in construct, this form represents an old Amorite name comparable to the form of Niqmaddu (*niqm + haddu*).

13 This elision is described by Huehnergard (2008, 248 n. 154) as "aphaeresis and crasis."

14 Hos. 1:3.

15 See the substantive *gamīru*, "strength," *gamīrūtu*, "overpowering strength," *gāmiru*, "effective," and the D stem of the verb *gamāru*, "to exert one's full strength" (CAD G, 30, 33, 34).

16 This interpretation is preferred by Sivan (1984, 142, 152), whereas Gröndahl (1967, 57, 70) points out the plausibility of all three possibilities. It is worth noting, however, that examples of *qatila* verbs in Amorite personal names are remarkably rare. Herbert Huffmon (1965, 91–93, 187) found only two examples, both formed from *zkr* (*za-ki-ra-ḥa-lum/za-ki-ra-ḥa-am-ū*), and expresses uncertainty that these are suffix conjugation verbs.

17 Ps. 57:3.

18 Fox 2003, 293.

19 Knutson 1981, 494.

20 See Gröndahl 1967, 132–33.

21 Ibid., 133. This list contains *gmr*d but is missing *gmr*hd.

234, line 16), and *ši-im-rad-dú* (RS 25.423:5).²² While the phonetic condition is suggestive, there are no other apparent cases in Ugaritic where a liquid consonant causes the occasional retention of an otherwise assimilated phoneme. The Akkadian transcriptional evidence suggests the variation in spelling is an orthographic rather than a phonetic phenomenon. The alphabetic tradition, as Huehnergard points out, is susceptible to more conservatism than the syllabic, so the spellings of these names with /h/ may simply be examples of historical spellings of names that had come to be pronounced without the /h/.²³ This evidence suggests the existence of a name that employs a divine epithet consisting of a *qātil* participle of *gmr* plus the divine name Haddu. In other words, the Ugaritic onomastic evidence suggests the possibility that the participial *𐎧𐎢𐎵* of Psalm 57:3 has a form that corresponds to an old epithet for Haddu, here used of the Israelite deity.

It is interesting to note that, while Haddu is frequently found in personal names at Ugarit, the name Baʿlu is otherwise overwhelmingly preferred. Haddu is completely absent from ritual texts and pantheon lists and is rare in mythological texts.²⁴ This near nonexistence of the divine name Haddu outside personal names suggests these personal names reflect ancient Amorite names. Indeed, an Amorite name formed with a prefix conjugation of GMR is attested at Mari (*ia-ag-mu-ur-DINGIR*), as is the participle plus divine name formation (e.g., *ḥa-bi-IM*, *Hābiʾ-haddu*).²⁵

The two literary attestations of GMR both appear with reference to Baʿlu in the Baʿlu cycle.²⁶ The first attestation appears as an epithet of Baʿlu in a broken passage of tablet 2 (*KTU* 1.2 i 46):

[.] . ʿan . rgmt . l ym . bʿlkm .	I hereby say to Yammu your lord
ʿad[nkm tpt nhr . . .	to [your] lo[rd, Ruler Naharu . . .]
. . . h]wt . gmr hd . lkny[. . .]	[... w]ord of <i>gmr</i> Haddu to . . .

Though the passage is broken, the context is fairly clear. The messengers of Yammu have arrived at a feast and demanded that Baʿlu be handed over (*KTU* 1.2 i 30–35). ʿIlu agrees (lines 36–38), thus angering Baʿlu, who apparently then attacks the messengers (lines 38–39). After being subdued by ʿAnatu and ʿAtthartu, Baʿlu prepares a reply to the Yammu—a reply he begins delivering to Yammu’s messengers in line 45. As part of the introduction to his message, Baʿlu uses an epithet for himself known elsewhere only in personal names: *gmr hd*. Since the message itself is not extant, the contextual hints for the invocation of this epithet are important. Baʿlu is extremely angry and, judging from his assault on the messengers, in a violent mood. The context thus suggests that the epithet has reference to Baʿlu’s warrior aspect. While the vocalization of an essentially unvocalized text always carries an element of the hypothetical, in this case personal names provide important evidence. Since the phrase *gmr hd* in *KTU* 1.2 i 46 appears identical to the name *gmrhd/gmrd*, it is possible to vocalize this phrase with reference to the syllabically spelled name *ga-mi-rad-du*. If, as argued above, this form of the name consists of a participle followed by the divine name, the phrase in *KTU* 1.2 i 46 is plausibly vocalized as *gāmiri haddi*. Several interpretations of this name have been suggested, but it is necessary first to examine the other attestation of this noun.²⁷

22 See Huehnergard (2008, 223–25) for the vacillation between Z-signs and Š-signs in the representation of the phoneme.

23 Ibid., 248 n. 154. See, however, n. 27. Old Babylonian Amorite names with Haddu, though overwhelmingly lacking the /h/ in syllabic spelling, are in some cases written with *ḥ*-representing /h/. It is not out of the question that some West Semitic dialects preserved the /h/ in pronunciation.

24 Pardee 1988, 140.

25 Huffmon 1965, 101, 180; Streck 2000, 198, 329. Though syllabically spelled Amorite names almost always either elide the /h/ or substitute a vocalic glide, Streck (ibid., 240–43) cites a few examples where /h/ appears to be retained and spelled with *ḥ*-. In other cases, the /h/ is either completely lost, with resulting vowel contraction (only at Alalah), or lost and replaced with a vocalic glide. Thus Old Babylonian Amorite names attest to dialectal variation in the fate of Haddu’s /h/ ranging from retention to complete elision. It is at least possible, therefore, that the variant spellings in Ugaritic names represent dialectal variants rather than historical spellings as suggested by Huehnergard (see n. 23).

26 The noun *tgmr*, “total,” is also from this root. It is used in administrative documents to indicate the total quantity of a list of items.

27 See Cooper (1981, 444–45) for a summary of proposals.

In tablet VI of the Baʿlu cycle, the substantive *gmr*m appears in a simile describing the combat of Baʿlu and Môtu (KTU 1.6 vi 16–22):

... <i>ytʿn . k gmr</i> m	They attacked (?) each other like <i>gmr</i> m.
<i>mt . ʿz . bʿl . ʿz .</i>	Môtu was strong, Baʿlu was strong.
<i>ynghn k rûmm .</i>	They butted each other like wild bulls.
<i>mt . ʿz . bʿl . ʿz .</i>	Môtu was strong, Baʿlu was strong.
<i>ynṭkn . k bṭnm</i>	They bit each other like serpents.
<i>mt . ʿz . bʿl . ʿz .</i>	Môtu was strong, Baʿlu was strong.
<i>ymṣḥn k lsmm .</i>	They pushed (?) each other like runners.
<i>mt . ql bʿl . ql</i>	Môtu fell, Baʿlu fell.

The interpretation of this passage is complicated by difficulties regarding the words *ytʿn*, *gmr*m, *ymṣḥn*, and *lsmm*. The root of the first verb, *ytʿn*, is uncertain. Formally, it could be a tD of the verb ʿYN “to eye,” but since the parallel verbs (*ynghn*, *ynṭkn*, *ymṣḥn*) each end in the so-called indicative *nun*, it is likely that the *nun* on this verb also represents the indicative *nun* rather than the final letter of the verbal root.²⁸ On the other hand, the middle weak verb *Tʿ* is not well attested in Semitic languages. The closest cognate is Arabic *taʿtaʿa* “to hit one another, shake violently,” but, as Fred Renfroe points out, the violent connotation of this verb is due to its morphology rather than the semantics of the verb itself. The root TYʿ in Arabic has no violent connotation whatsoever and means simply “to accept, to receive, to pick up.” Renfroe is thus skeptical of comparison between this Ugaritic word and this proposed Arabic cognate.²⁹ Given these two considerations, Dietrich and Loretz’s proposal to take it as a Gt of the root NWʿ, attested in Hebrew as “to shake,” commends itself.³⁰ The Gt would here express reciprocal action: “they shake each other.” In any case, given that the parallel verbs in this passage denote violent action, it is likely that this verb does as well hence the provisional interpretation as “attack” given above.

Lsmm, although nowhere else attested as a substantive, appears to be from the root LSM “to run.” This verb appears in Ugaritic in KTU 1.3 iii 19 (and parallels) and is common in Akkadian.³¹ Given the lack of other substantives, this word is likely a participle from the verb and can be understood as “runners.” Given the preceding two parallel terms, *rûmm* “wild bulls” and *bṭnm* “serpents,” however, most commentators see this word as a depiction of a running animal of some sort.³² Against this view, Dietrich and Loretz argue it is just as likely that it refers to human runners engaged in some kind of athletic competition.³³ Compounding this problem is the uncertainty about the meaning of the governing verb *ymṣḥn*. As Renfroe points out, the proposed Arabic etymology from a root meaning “to pull” is unlikely, since that verb is denominative in Arabic.³⁴ In the absence of other etymological proposals, the word can only be defined by its context. The contexts in which it appears in Ugaritic are all violent (KTU 1.3 v 1; 1.6 v 4; 1.6 vi 20), and it should be noted that in KTU 1.3 v 1 and 1.6 v 4 the verb is modified by *l ʿarṣ*, “to the ground.” This verb also appears exclusively with divine subjects. It is not clear, therefore, either that *mṣḥ* can be predicated of animals or that *lsmm* denotes a type of animal. Despite the fact that “runners are not generally combatants,”³⁵ Dietrich and Loretz’s proposal remains plausible. One can imagine either that the rules of athletic competition in ancient Ugarit allowed for fighting among runners of a race or that *lsmm* “runners” referred to another kind

28 Watson 1977, 275.

29 Renfroe 1992, 151–52.

30 Dietrich and Loretz 1987, 21.

31 On this point, at least, most scholars agree. See “The Baʿlu Myth,” translated by Dennis Pardee (1997, 272 n. 275) and Good (1994, 151–52).

32 Dietrich and Loretz 1987, 21.

33 Ibid., 20.

34 Renfroe 1992, 131–32.

35 Ibid., 131.

of athlete or fighter who engaged in some kind of combat. In any case, nothing requires this line to refer to the activity of animals.³⁶

Turning finally to *gmr*, many commentators understand this word as a kind of animal based on the parallelism to *rūmm* and *bṭnm*. On the basis of an Ethiopic cognate, Cyrus Gordon suggests “hippopotamus.”³⁷ Pointing to the parallel terms, Johannes de Moore translates it as “fighting cocks.”³⁸ Watson and del Olmo Lete understand it as a dangerous “beast” without attempting to specify the species.³⁹ These suggestions, however, are based almost exclusively on parallelism, and, as de Moor himself points out, it is entirely possible that the first term in a parallelistic sequence could be different from subsequent terms.⁴⁰ This difference would be possible even if the final term, *lsmm*, denoted an animal. If, as suggested above, this word does not denote an animal, the argument from parallelism is even weaker. It is entirely possible that in this four-colon sequence, the terms in the outer two cola are parallel; they denote nonanimal combatants and enclose the parallel inner cola, denoting animal combatants, thus producing a mirror ABBA pattern.⁴¹

The proposal of André Caquot, Maurice Sznycer, and Andrée Herdner to take *gmr* as “champions” based on the Akkadian word *gamīru*, “accompli,” which they claim can be used of warriors,⁴² is more promising. It might be better, however, to compare to the Akkadian word *gāmīru*, the participle of *gamāru*, meaning “complete, making final, effective.” The sense “effective” is often used of kings in descriptions of their military prowess, and this sense appears appropriate to the uses in Ugaritic.⁴³ Citing this Akkadian cognate, Dietrich and Loretz similarly propose that *gmr* should be taken as having the basic meaning “strong man” and should be interpreted here as “wrestler” or “fighter.”⁴⁴ These proposals are preferable to the proposed animal interpretation for several reasons. The Akkadian cognate shows the participial form of this word has the sense “strength” and “effectiveness.” The verb also carries the connotation “to annihilate,”⁴⁵ and referring to the two combatants as “annihilators” makes contextual sense.⁴⁶ The likelihood that the final simile in this passage, *lsmm*, is a participle lends credibility to interpreting the first simile, *gmr*, as representing the same form. The sequence of similes would then follow the pattern: participle, animal noun, animal noun, participle.

Rather than positing essentially different forms in *KTU* 1.2 i 46 and 1.6 vi 16, it is plausible both semantically and structurally to understand both as G participles. The senses “champion,” “fighter,” or “annihilator” make contextual sense in both passages as well as in the personal names. “Annihilator” is appropriate as an epithet for Baʿlu, who is often depicted iconographically as a warrior and bears other warrior epithets such as *ʾalʾiyn bʾl* “mightiest Baʿlu” and *ʾalʾiy qrdm*, “mightiest of the heroes.”⁴⁷ Such an epithet would be particularly appropriate in *KTU* 1.2 i 46, where Baʿlu announces his name in the context of a message to his enemy Yammu and where the epithet works equally well for a description of the combatants in *KTU* 1.6 vi 16: “they attacked each other like champions.”

In sum, Ugaritic attests a word *gmr* with the meaning “annihilator,” “fighter,” or the like that is used to describe both Baʿlu and Môtu and appears as an epithet of Baʿlu/Haddu in personal names and a literary text. Based on syllabic writings of the name, this epithet is plausibly analyzed as a participle.

36 So also Smith (1994, 314 n. 176).

37 Gordon (1965, 380), followed by Rin and Rin (1967, 176).

38 de Moor 1971, 234–35; 1987, 97.

39 Watson 1977, 275; del Olmo Lete 1981, 533.

40 de Moor 1971, 235.

41 See Smith (1994, 314 n. 176), who similarly suggests *gmr* refers to human warriors.

42 Caquot, Sznycer, and Herdner 1974, 268 n. b.

43 CAD G, 34.

44 Dietrich and Loretz 1987, 21.

45 CAD G, 25.

46 Smith 1994, 313, and Rahmouni 2008, 147–49, similarly translate *gmr* as “Annihilator.”

47 Korpel 1990, 497–98.

GMR IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

Verb forms of the root GMR appear in the Hebrew Bible exclusively in the Psalms and in the personal names גמר and גמריהו/גמריה.⁴⁸ As noted above, the verb in three cases is intransitive and means “to come to an end.”⁴⁹ In Psalms 57:3 and 138:8, however, the subject of the verb is the Israelite deity, so the meaning “come to an end” is contextually excluded.

Psalm 138:7–8 concludes a short psalm of thanksgiving⁵⁰ with a reflection on the protection Yahweh has provided from the speaker’s enemies:

Psalm 138:7–8

אם אלך בקרב צרה תחניני	Though I walk in the midst of distress, you will preserve my life.
על אף איבי תשלח ידך	Against the anger of my enemies you will send your hand,
ותושיעני ימינך	and your right hand will save me.
יהוה יגמר בעדי	Yahweh <i>ygm̄r</i> on my behalf.
יהוה חסדך לעולם	O Yahweh, your faithfulness lasts forever;
מעשי ידיך אל תרף	do not forsake the works of your hands.

The central interest of this passage is the deliverance of the speaker from אִיבִים “enemies.” Given the references to Yahweh’s arm and hand, the reference to the threatening gesture of raising the hand, and the martial contexts of the word *gm̄r* in *KTU* 1.2 i 46 and 1.6 vi 16, it is plausible that the verb here also has a martial connotation and that the enemies are the unstated objects of the verb. If, as has been suggested, the substantive *gm̄r* in Ugaritic is to be understood as the active G participle, the proposed relationship between that substantive and the verb is clear. The participle describes the agent who engages in the action denoted by the verb. In the light of the Akkadian cognate,⁵¹ the verb can mean “to annihilate,” and the substantivized participle would in that case literally mean “the annihilator.” According to this suggestion, verse 8a would read: “Yahweh will annihilate (the enemies) on my behalf.”

The threat of enemies is also present in Psalm 57, where the supplicant calls out to Yahweh for deliverance. In verse 3, the supplicant names the god to whom he cries for help:

Psalm 57:3

אקרא לאלהים עליון	I will call to God ‘Elyōn,
לאל גמר עלי	to ‘El, <i>gōmēr</i> for my sake.

The parallelistic structure of this bicolon is significant. The first colon contains the verb followed by the preposition ל followed by a divine name or title plus epithet. In the second colon, the verb is gapped, but the pattern of ל followed by a divine name or title is repeated. While many commentators understand גמר as meaning “who establishes my cause,”⁵² the ל+ divine name/title + epithet pattern of the A colon and its apparent continuation in the B colon suggest that גמר is an epithet. The use of *gm̄r* as an epithet for Ba‘lu/Haddu in *KTU* 1.2 i 46 provides significant corroboration for this theory.⁵³ There are several possibilities for the עלי that concludes verse 3. Without emendation or revocalization, it could indicate the benefactor

48 The personal name גמריהו also appears in Lachish 1.1 and is attested in Punic as *gm̄r* and in Elephantine Aramaic as *gm̄ryh* (Benz 1972, 103, 297).

49 Pss. 7:10; 12:2; 77:9.

50 Gerstenberger 2001, 399–400.

51 See nn. 10, 15, and 45 above.

52 See nn. 2–3 above.

53 Dahood (1965–70, 2:51) acknowledged this epithet pattern with his translation “Avenger El.”

of Yahweh's activity as "annihilator" ("to 'i, [who is] the Annihilator on my behalf/for my sake") or to the location of the deity invoked ("to Annihilator 'El, [who is] above me").⁵⁴

Understanding גמר as a martial epithet is further supported by the context. As in Psalm 138, so also in Psalm 57 the psalmist invokes the deity for protection from surrounding enemies, who are presented in martial terms as savage lions with teeth like spears, arrows, and swords (vv. 5, 7). Further, immediately after invoking אל גמר (v. 3), the psalmist voices a petition: ישלח משמים ויושיעני חרף שאפי סלה ישלח אלהים חסדו "let him send from the heavens and save me; let him taunt⁵⁵ the one who would crush me; let God send his faithfulness and his trustworthiness" (v. 4). The request that Yahweh "taunt" (חרף) the enemy is particularly informative, as this verb has a clear martial and combative connotation in 1 Samuel 17, where Goliath repeatedly taunts the Israelites to send out a warrior to fight him.⁵⁶ The martial context appears also in 2 Samuel 23:9, where David and his warriors taunt their Philistine enemies, and in Sennacherib's threats against Jerusalem.⁵⁷ This word, therefore, appears to have a specifically martial connotation in certain passages; it refers to the taunts of a challenger preceding a fight.

This martial sense of חרף points to a conceptual progression and structural symmetry between the epithets of verse 3 and the petitions of verse 4a. The first epithet, 'Elyon, literally "high one," invokes the deity in terms of his spatial elevation. The deity's loftiness is then invoked again in the first petition: "send *from heaven* and save me." The second epithet, as argued here, refers to the deity in his warrior/martial aspect. The second petition, in turn, petitions the deity to act in accordance with this aspect by engaging in the martial taunting of the enemy: "taunt the one who would crush me." The structural parallel between the epithets and the immediately following petitions can be schematized as follows:

Verse 4a	Verse 3	
ישלח משמים ויושיעני	אלהים עליון	loftiness
Send from heaven and save me	God 'Elyon	
חרף שאפי	אל גמר	warrior aspect
taunt the one who would crush me	'El Gōmēr	

To a greater extent than Psalm 138:7–8, this passage provides substantial support for seeing a parallel between *gmr* of the Ugaritic literary texts and גמר with a divine subject in Biblical Hebrew. The parallelism of Psalm 57:3 supports seeing גמר as a divine epithet, a usage that would parallel *KTU* 1.2 i 46. The explicit reference to violent enemies and the request for the Israelite deity to engage in combative taunting of these enemies demonstrates a martial context in this psalm that depicts Yahweh as a warrior god who fights on behalf of his worshipers. Both uses of *gmr* in literary Ugaritic likewise depict Ba'lu acting as a warrior.

Another potential use of a different nominal formation of this root appears in Ezekiel 27:11. The word גמדים there has puzzled interpreters, who have generally understood it as a gentilic for an otherwise un-

54 Dahood's (ibid., 2:49, 51) revocalization as עֲלִי—understood as the divine name Eli, "Most High"—is also plausible. The existence of this divine name seems to be confirmed by the personal names עֲלִי (1 Samuel 1–5) and יחועלי (Samaria Ostrakon no. 55; cf. also the occurrence of 'ly parallel to b'l in *KTU* 1.16 iii 5–8). Dahood (1953, 452–57; 1965–70, 1:45) lists a number of other contexts where this divine name, often in parallel with יהוה, may have been misunderstood and pointed as the preposition with a suffix (Pss. 7:9; 13:6; 16:5–6; 32:5; 86:13; 1 Sam. 2:10; Lam. 3:61). If that divine name is present in Psalm 57:3b, the verse could be translated, "I call to God 'Elyōn, to Annihilator 'El, Most High."

55 The SC form חרף in verse 4b is often thought to be either corrupt (Gunkel 1986, 247) or a precativ or some other rare or dubious use of the SC (Tate 1990, 74), or both (Kraus 1988, 529). A volitive sense is achieved with minimal emendation by revocalizing the verb as an imperative. (Psalm 7:9 shows a similarly abrupt transition between third-person reference to the deity and second-person imperative address.) Restoring either a *waw* or *yod*, hypothetically lost by haplography with the preceding *yod*, would provide imperfective forms that would match the surrounding verbs. It is possible, however, to maintain the text as it is and see this colon as a statement about past action of Yahweh the psalmist hopes to see repeated.

56 1 Sam. 17:10, 26, 36, 45.

57 2 Kgs. 19:4, 16, 22.

known people group.⁵⁸ The LXX and Peshitta, however, both translate this word as “guardians” (φυλακες/*ntrym*). While it is customary to see these readings as reflecting שמרים,⁵⁹ a less drastic emendation could be achieved by positing only the well attested ר/ד interchange to produce גמרים—a *nomen professionis* from the root GMR denoting a warrior or guardian, or, with revocalization, a participle as in Psalm 57:3. Such an understanding is rendered plausible by the parallel structures of verses 10 and 11:

Ezekiel 27:10

פרס ולוד ופוט היו בהילך	Persia and Lud and Put were in your army,	a
אנשי מלחמתך	your men of war.	b
מגן וכובע תלו בדך	Shield and helmet they hung in you.	c
המה נתנו הדרך	They gave you honor.	d

Ezekiel 27:11

בני ארוד וחילך על חומותיך סביב	The sons of Arwad and your army were upon your walls all around,	a'
וגמרים במגדלותיך היו	and <i>gmr/dm</i> were in your towers.	b'
שלטיהם תלו על חומותיך סביב	Their shields they hung upon your walls all around.	c'
המה כללו יפידך	They perfected your beauty	d'

Each verse begins with a reference to the peoples that populated Tyre’s army (1a/a’) followed by a reference to warriors (2b/b’). These warriors hang their armor (3c/c’) and contribute to Tyre’s prestige (4d/d’). Within this scheme גמרים (or גמדים) stands semantically parallel to אנשי מלחמתך, “your men of war.” This parallelism, the lack of attestation of גמרים as a gentilic, and the readings of the LXX and Peshitta suggest that here we have another use of the nominal formation of the root GMR that falls within the general semantic domain of “warrior.”

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, it appears plausible to relate both occurrences of GMR with a divine subject in Hebrew, the two occurrences of *gmr* in the Baal cycle, and the use of the root in NWS names. The verb in each case denotes a violent or combative activity of a god. In nominal forms, it depicts either the deity himself as the agent of such action in the participle or the abstract idea of this action with the deity as the subjective genitive in personal names (names formed with the abstract nominals *gi-im-rad-du* and *gomer*, in which the theophoric element is absent). In *KTU* 1.6 vi 16–22 we find this action is a descriptor of two adversaries in combat: they attack like *gmrm*. In *KTU* 1.2 i 46, it is an epithet of Baal in a context where he presents a response to Yammu’s threat. From the Psalms, we learn that this activity can be done for the benefit of a worshiper in distress. Rather than Dahood’s suggested “to avenge,” the verb is plausibly understood as “to annihilate,” a sense common for Akkadian *gamāru* and attested with the following subjects: deities, insects, pestilence, and kings.⁶⁰ This sense appears to have been used in Ugaritic and Hebrew only in personal names and poetic texts.

Scholars have long noted the similarities of imagery and language used for Ba’lu and Yahweh—particularly with regard to their roles as warrior and storm deities.⁶¹ The discovery of a common epithet for the Ugaritic Ba’lu (*KTU* 1.2 i 46) and the Hebrew Yahweh (Ps. 57:3) fits this well-known pattern and provides further evidence for the convergence of divine attributes in the Israelite Yahweh.⁶² To the other shared attributes of these deities can now be added a shared epithet: *gāmīru*/גמר “the Annihilator.”

58 See Zimmerli (1983, 46) for an overview of proposals.

59 Ibid.

60 CAD G 1956, 23–24.

61 See the survey of evidence in Smith 1990, 49–55.

62 Ibid., 22–24, 161–62.

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26

BIBLICAL KING OG AND THE UGARITIC DEITY RĀPI'U
 SORTING OUT TWO FIGURES IN LIGHT OF THE REPHAIM
 AND THE TOPONYMS ASHTAROTH AND EDREI

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THE OLD TESTAMENT TELLS US about an ancient Amorite king, Og of Bashan, whose territory spanned the northern region of the Transjordan. One of the curious features we learn about this king is that he is identified as a survivor from the remnant of the Rephaim (*rp'ym*).¹ The Ugaritic texts have proven to be an important source of information on the ancient traditions related to the Rephaim by potentially illuminating our understanding of them in the Bible. More specifically, an interesting correlation between these two traditions can be found in the mention of two place names: Ashtaroth (*'štrt*)² and Edrei (*'rd'y*).³ The two locations are not only central to the rule of king Og (*'wg*) but are also tied to the rule of a Ugaritic deity known as Rāpi'u, who apparently shares some relation to the Rephaim and whose name is cognate with the Hebrew term *rp'ym*. How then are we to explain this correspondence between the two independent traditions?

The aim of this study is to identify the biblical King Og and to assess his relationship, if any, to the Ugaritic deity Rāpi'u. My analysis shall consider Og and Rāpi'u's ties with the Rephaim in light of their associations with the toponyms Ashtaroth and Edrei. To accomplish this task I shall first examine the occurrences of King Og in the Old Testament, then survey the relevant materials regarding Rāpi'u and the Rapa'ūma in Ugaritic. At the end of this study I shall entertain possible connections between the biblical and Ugaritic traditions regarding Og and the Rephaim.

IDENTIFYING OG, KING OF BASHAN

There are a total of twenty-two references to King Og in the Old Testament, with most of them appearing in Deuteronomy and Joshua.⁴ The name occurs in the following formulae:

Og, king of Bashan	(Num. 21:33; 32:33; Deut. 1:4; 3:1, 3, 11; 4:47; 29:6; Josh. 9:10; 12:4; 13:30; 1 Kgs. 4:19; Neh. 9:22; Pss. 135:11; 136:20)
Og in Bashan	(Deut. 3:4, 10; Josh. 13:12, 31)
Bashan, kingdom of Og	(Deut. 3:13)

1 E.g., Deut. 3:11; Josh. 12:4.

2 E.g., Deut. 1:4.

3 E.g., Num. 21:33.

4 Num. 21:33; 32:33; Deut. 1:4; 3:1, 3, 4, 10, 11, 13; 4:47; 29:6; 31:4; Josh. 2:10; 9:10; 12:4; 13:2, 12, 30, 31; 1 Kgs. 4:19; Neh. 9:22; Pss. 135:11; 136:20.

The geographic area called Bashan was a fertile region of the Transjordan located east of the Sea of Galilee and north of the Yarmuk river and was known in the biblical period for its cattle⁵ and timbers.⁶ Joshua 13:29–30 indicates that the territory of Bashan included as many as sixty cities and that they were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh following the Israelite defeat of King Og. Two additional geographic designations are attested for Og identifying his kingdom in Bashan with the toponyms Ashtaroth and Edrei.⁷ These two cities were apparently central to the operations of the kingdom where Og was said to have resided. The use of the root *yšb* + *b-* (perhaps “rule in”) in these references may designate his two seats of royal power. The distribution of these two place names may suggest that Ashtaroth functioned as the political capital of Bashan. The toponym’s single occurrence in Joshua 9:10 simply refers to Og, king of Bashan, “who is in Ashtaroth” (*ʾšr bʿštrt*) and may denote the location of the royal residence proper. Edrei, on the other hand, may have been the central hub of military operations. In the two occurrences where the name appears independently of Ashtaroth, it is the location where Og comes out to meet Israel in battle,⁸ thus highlighting its function as a place of military mobilization.⁹ It is therefore not the location of the royal residence but is the place where the king “comes out” to mobilize his army for battle.

Og is identified as an Amorite, along with his southern, transjordanian counterpart Sihon, king of the Amorites.¹⁰ Although this designation more commonly occurs in the narrative’s references to Sihon, it is also used of both Sihon and Og in several places.¹¹ This factor becomes more important as we consider the Ugaritic understanding of the Rapa’ūma where the royal dynasty is envisioned as having Amorite origins.¹² Furthermore, the term Rapa’ūma is used in the Ugaritic texts to denote dead kings.¹³ We shall discuss this use further from the Ugaritic perspective below, but at this juncture we simply emphasize that Og’s association with the Rephaim in the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua is one of the king’s most notable features. It is rather significant that he is portrayed as the only surviving member of the remnant of the Rephaim.¹⁴ But Og is not the only link between the Rephaim and this region, for in Genesis 14:5 a Mesopotamian king and his band of allies carry out a military campaign against the Rephaim (among others) in Ashteroth-Karnaim. It is most probable that we are dealing with roughly the same region as the Ashtaroth of King Og.¹⁵

5 Ps. 22:12; Amos 4:1.

6 Isa. 2:13; Ezek. 27:6. See Slayton 1992, 624.

7 Deut. 1:4; Josh. 12:4; 13:12, 31; 9:10 (only Ashtaroth). On the identification of Ashtaroth, see Albright 1941, 33.

8 Num. 21:33; Deut. 3:1.

9 See also Pardee 1988b, 87.

10 The term “Amorite” in Hebrew is *ʾmōrî* and likely relates to Akkadian *amurru*. The Sumerian designation is MAR.TU, meaning “west” as one of the four cardinal points, thus originally indicating “westerner” in a general sense (Gelb 1956, 2:92). The term MAR.TU comes to designate a particular individual (ca. 2600–2500) and eventually an entire territory (ca. 2400–2350; Whiting 1995, 1234). In Ugaritic we find the place name *ʾamr* (DULAT, 72), rendered syllabically KUR *a-mur-ri* (Nougayrol 1968, 335), for the kingdom of Amurru located in a small region between Byblos and Ugarit, though the names of its inhabitants do not show obvious connections with later Amorite names (Whiting 1995, 1236). The distribution of these terms for “Amorite” suggest the following qualifications: (1) Sumerian MAR.TU and Ugaritic *ʾamr*/KUR *a-mur-ri* were geographical designations, and (2) Akkadian *amurru* and Hebrew *ʾmōrî* were ethnic designations (Whiting 1995, 1232). In Hebrew *ʾmōrî* signifies the earlier Levantine populations displaced by the Israelites. It is in this latter sense (i.e., West Semitic people groups of the early second millennium) that the Ugaritic dynasty envisioned its Amorite origins.

11 Deut. 3:8; 4:47; 31:4; Josh. 2:10.

12 These observations render Bartlett’s attempt to relegate Og’s association with the Amorites to a later combination of the Og and Sihon traditions unnecessary (Bartlett 1970, 268–72).

13 I reconstruct my Ugaritic vocalization Rapa’ūma on the basis of the plural form *rʿpāʾim* attested in Biblical Hebrew. This form suggests a *qatal* base in the singular, which I reconstruct as **rāpā* (the singular form is not attested in Biblical Hebrew). However, the Amorite onomastic *ra-bi-uʾ-um* slightly complicates matters in attesting an *a/i* vowel pattern. For a fuller discussion and defense of my choice of vocalization, see McAfee 2019, 195–200.

14 Deut. 3:11; cf. Josh. 12:4; 13:12. See the comments on this expression in Doak 2012, 90–91.

15 Astour (1992, 491) believes the double-place name does not suggest another city besides Ashtaroth but rather “indicates that it was located near Karnaim, now Tell Ṣaʿd, 4 km NE of Tell ʿAštara.”

How else are we to identify biblical King Og? The scholarly literature on Og shows three ways of understanding this ancient Amorite king: (1) he was a divine personage; (2) he was simply a human king; or (3) he was both, a human king later transformed into a divine being. Marvin H. Pope, for example, called him the “mythical Og of Bashan” in light of his association with the Rephaim and his having the same place of residence as the Ugaritic deity Rāpi'u from *KTU* 1.108.1.¹⁶ Karel van der Toorn likewise assumes the divine nature of the biblical King Og for much the same reasons outlined by Pope.¹⁷ Timo Veijola calls him “no normal human being but a superhuman mythological giant who cannot be regarded as a figure of real history.”¹⁸ More specifically, Scott Noegel is fairly confident that Og's ties to the netherworld solidify his status as a mythical figure.¹⁹ He offers a rather ambitious proposal to interpret King Og in light of the Aegean myth of the hero Ogygos of Boeotia by arguing that both characters are “legendary first rulers with similar names and histories, and are connected traditionally with primal floods and the underworld.”²⁰

Most scholars who argue for Og's mythical status do so on the basis of two areas of textual evidence: (1) the Ugaritic deity Rāpi'u (residing in ʿAttartu and Hadraʿyi) and his association with the Rephaim/Rapa'ūma, and (2) the purported Phoenician deity Og in Byblos 13. We will consider the Ugaritic evidence in more detail below, but it is first necessary to consider the validity of the god Og in Byblos 13. The reason for its importance is that it would be the only extrabiblical reference to such a god in the known textual record. Furthermore, the relevance of this parallel for our understanding of the biblical Og of Bashan is apparently assumed in most discussions about him and therefore requires further attention here.²¹

In his edition of the Phoenician text Byblos 13, Wolfgang Röllig surmises the Og of the biblical tradition may yield the trace of an underworld deity, supposedly attested at Byblos, which gave rise to the legendary figure Og, king of Bashan in the Old Testament. The principal phrase of interest in Byblos 13 is found in line 2: *h'g ytbqšn h'dr*, which Röllig translates “der mächtige Og wird mich rächen.”²² An immediate difficulty with this reading is the attachment of the article on a proper name, thus *h'g* “the Og.” Röllig sees no solution to the syntactical problem of having a proper name with the article and therefore defers to J. Starcky, who interprets it this way despite the absence of any such construction in Phoenician or Hebrew.²³ Starcky rendered the phrase in question, “Og me cherchera, le Puissant,”²⁴ while pointing out we might have expected the adjective *h'dr* “the mighty” immediately to follow the proper noun (thus “mighty Og”).²⁵ Klaas Spronk offered a historical explanation for this syntactical anomaly: the fact it is “the Og” in this text indicates that, after a long period of time, the word was no longer recognized as the proper name of an ancestor but had become the title of a god.²⁶ But one wonders what the function of such a title would have been if the original setting out of which it had developed was by this time lost. Another possible solution might be to compare the use of the article with Baal and Asherah in Hebrew when it says the Israelites “served the Baals and

16 Pope 1977, 171; 1983, 68.

17 van der Toorn 1991, 58.

18 Veijola 2006, 62.

19 Noegel 1998, 416–17.

20 Ibid., 423. Noegel believes there were multiple traditions about Og that came to be conflated with other Aegean myths. He cites the following three pieces of evidence for an East-to-West transmission of the mythical Og traditions: (1) the Rephaim cult at Ugarit; (2) the Phoenician tomb inscription bearing Og's name; and (3) the influence of Syrian art on Greek grave scenes (ibid., 425). Thus Noegel concludes “the numerous connections between the two figures suggest that Ogygos of Boeotia and Og of Bashan derived from a single myth or stem from similar mythic ideas in circulation in the ancient Mediterranean world” (ibid., 426).

21 E.g., Pope 1977, 171; Spronk 1968, 210–11; Weinfeld 1991, 183–84; van der Toorn 1991, 58; Hübner 1993, 89; de Moor 1994, 245–46; Noegel 1998, 416; Ron 2012, 32–33. Note that Gregorio del Olmo Lete (1999b, 1205) accepts the reference to the god Og in Byblos 13 but considers it a late Phoenician development of an earlier Amorite/Canaanite tradition.

22 Röllig 1974, 2.

23 Ibid., 6.

24 Starcky 1969, 262.

25 Teixidor 1972, 431.

26 Spronk 1986, 211.

the Asheroth” (*wayyaʿabēdū ʿet-habbēālīm wēʿet-hāšērôt*) in Judges 3:7. But this parallel is imperfect since the terms Baal and Asherah are in the plural, “the Baals and the Ashtaroth,” whereas *hʿg* is singular, “the Og.” Furthermore, these plurals are probably referring to the cultic objects associated with the deities being identified—in other words, the symbols of the god or goddess.²⁷ The reference to Og in Byblos 13, rather, invokes the god himself, not his cultic symbol.

The context of Byblos 13 concerns the protection of the sarcophagus of the individual whose name is now lost from the broken portion of the inscription’s first line. According to Starcky and Rölliġ’s interpretation, the first two lines would read:

- (1) [. *bʿ*] *rʿn ʿnk lḥdy wkn hn ʿnk škb bʿrn zn ʿsp bmr wbbdl*[*h* . .]
 (2) [. *ʿ*] *lt ʿrn zn wlgz ʿšmy hʿg ytbqšn hʿdr wbkl dʿrʿ*[. . .]
- (1) [. in the sar]cophagus, I myself alone. Now look, I am lying in this sarcophagus, gathered with myrrh and bdellium[*m* . .]
 (2) [. the co]ver of this sarcophagus and indeed disturb my bones, O Og pursue him, O Mighty One, and in all the assembly [. . .]²⁸

Frank Moore Cross reads this text differently. He notes that *ytbqš* does not occur anywhere else in Canaanite and that, even if it did, the form would constitute a reflexive, making the *-n* suffix highly problematic. Furthermore, the {*y*} of Rölliġ and Starcky’s {*ytbqš*} must be read as {*z*}, thus {*hʿgzt*}, which Cross believes to be a certain reading.²⁹ He therefore interprets *hʿgzyt* as a participle of the root *ʿgz* attested in Arabic meaning (1) “to be feeble, weary, infirm, old” and (2) “that which is left behind,”³⁰ and he suggests translating *ʿšmy hʿgzyt* “my decrepit/mouldering bones.”³¹ We render Cross’s transcription and translation of the first two lines as follows:

- (1) [*ʿnk* (PN and titular) *škb bʿrn*] *ʿzʿn ʿnk lḥdy wkn hn ʿnk škb bʿrn zn ʿsp bmr wbdl*[*h*
 (2) *wʿm kl ʿdm ybqš lphṯ*] *lt ʿrn zn wlgz ʿšmy hʿgzt bqšn hʿdr wbkl dr* [*bn ʿlm*
 (3) *mlk prs*] *ʿwʿmdy ʿdn mlkm wdrkm {wdrkm} ylkt brʿbmʿ*[
- (1) [I (PN and titular) lie in] this [sarcophagus], I alone, and here, behold I lie prepared for burial in myrrh and bdellium . . .
 (2) . . . and if anyone seeks to open] this sarcophagus or to disturb my mouldering bones, seek him out O (Baʿl) Addir and with all the assembly [of the gods . . .
 (3) . . . king of the Persians] and Medes, lord of kingdoms and dominions [and dominions]. I walked among the great [. . .]³²

As Cross correctly observes, the form proposed earlier by Starcky and Rölliġ would be rather “bizarre”³³ and therefore must now be abandoned in favor of a more likely alternative.³⁴

27 See Emerton 2015, 421. Emerton further observes that a parallel expression in 2 Chronicles 24:18 clarifies the people of Judah “served the Asherim and the idols [*hāšabbîm*].”

28 Translation mine.

29 See the photograph of this text in Starcky 1969, 1. Starcky and Cross (1979) both read {*z*}, which the photograph accompanying Rölliġ’s (1974, pl. 1) edition seems to confirm. Even though the lower left-hand portion of the letter is chipped, its orientation more closely resembles the {*z*} earlier in line 2, as Cross has cogently argued.

30 See Lane 1863, 1959–60.

31 Cross (1979, 42) is followed by Garr (1985, 122). Cf. van den Branden 1974, 142f.: *ʿpyt* from the root *ʿpy* II “to envelop”; Garbini 1980, 58 n. 4: *hʿdyt* from the root *ʿdy* I “to rob.”

32 Cross 1979, 41.

33 Ibid., 42.

34 A similar conclusion is reached by Veijola (2006, 68) and Quick (2017, 170–71).

Our overview of the purported Og of Byblos 13 demonstrates the need for caution in appealing to this text in support of interpreting biblical Og as a deity. It therefore follows that van der Toorn's appeal to this text as proof that Og was a "known deity who would punish violators of tombs" must be discounted.³⁵ His claim that the biblical tradition presents King Og as a "deity in disguise" cannot rest on his divine status elsewhere, since he is only known from the Old Testament. At the very least, the repeated references to Byblos 13 in scholarship as evidence for the mythic nature of Og in the extrabiblical sources must be qualified as uncertain, if not highly suspect. The reason for this uncertainty is twofold: (1) no satisfactory explanation for the syntactical oddity of *h'g* "the Og" has been offered, and (2) a plausible alternative reading that avoids the syntactical oddity exists. As later Jewish sources would tell us, the mythic understanding of Og appears to be a late, and thus secondary, development in the Jewish tradition and is not necessarily the original *Sitz im Leben* of the story of Og from the Old Testament.³⁶

So what can be said for Og as a historical figure? Martin Noth believed the biblical tradition about Og to be highly vague and asserted it is "no longer clear how much historical reality it contains."³⁷ Gerhard von Rad was a bit more optimistic regarding the reference to Og in Deuteronomy and concluded that "here too, there has no doubt been preserved a reliable early memory of a comparatively large region ruled by a king named Og."³⁸ Pardee has correctly emphasized that the biblical tradition places King Og after the heroic age, since he is said to be *miyyeter hār-pāim* "from the remnant of the Rephaim."³⁹ At face value, this comment distances Og from the ancient past and places him firmly within a historical framework.⁴⁰ J. R. Bartlett reconstructed how these earlier traditions could have made their way into the Deuteronomistic History. He was even more confident than von Rad that they harkened back to an historical figure and thus considered the account of Israel's battle with Og to reflect "a tradition which there is no need to doubt."⁴¹ The problem for Bartlett, however, is the wedding of two seemingly unrelated traditions, "one giving him a definite historical and geographical setting in the Yarmuk valley, the other giving him a legendary setting at Ammon."⁴² The legendary setting Bartlett speaks about in this case is the tradition of the Rephaim, who, according to Genesis 15:19–21, were associated with the early inhabitants of the southern hill country of Judah and Philistia. Bartlett suggests some later redactor "linked Og of Bashan with the Rephaim of Judah and Philistia" to explain this perceived historical incongruity.⁴³ But the Ugaritic evidence, as we shall see below, already links the Rephaim tradition to the two northern transjordanian cities of Ashtaroth and Edrei where Og is said to rule, thus making Bartlett's more complicated historical reconstruction unnecessary. Og's identity as an Amorite in Deuteronomy 3:8 does not have to be explained as the Deuteronomist's artificial linkage of Og with the Amorite Sihon; the connection is fully intact via the deity Rāpi'u in 'Aṭṭartu and Hadra'yi and his association with the Rapa'ūma, all of which apparently harkens back to an Old Amorite tradition. We shall return to this issue below.

The historical qualities of the Og tradition have led scholars to devote significant attention to Og's bed, described in Deuteronomy 3:11 as an *'eres barzel* "bed of iron."⁴⁴ Several scholars interpret King Og's bed of

35 van der Toorn 1991, 58.

36 For more on this development, see Kosman 2002, 157–90.

37 Noth 1968, 166. Noth understood the report of Og's defeat in Numbers 21:33–35 was dependent upon the Deuteronomist's report in Deuteronomy 3:1–17.

38 Von Rad 1966, 44.

39 Josh. 12:4.

40 Pardee 1988b, 87.

41 Bartlett 1970, 266. See also Doak 2012, 93–94.

42 Ibid., 268.

43 Ibid., 270.

44 Nelson (2002, 53) interestingly observes regarding the bed's measurements that the "down-to-earth note that this is the 'ordinary cubit,' as opposed to the longer royal one, has the literary effect of emphasizing the concrete reality of this relic."

iron as a reference to his sarcophagus,⁴⁵ or similarly, a dolmen.⁴⁶ Support for the sarcophagus interpretation comes from Phoenician sources, in which a sarcophagus is routinely called a *mškb* “bed, couch,” that is, the resting place of dead kings.⁴⁷ Veijola, for instance, believes that, since Og would have been presumed dead at this point in the narrative, his bed would have represented “his last visible remnant, namely his tomb.”⁴⁸ But sarcophagi in the ancient Near Eastern world were not made from iron, rather, basalt, thus creating a rather obvious problem for this interpretation. S. R. Driver got around this problem by maintaining it was more probably “the black basalt of the country which actually contains a proportion of iron” and also by citing Pliny, who remarked that such material had the color and hardness of iron.⁴⁹ In support of the dolmen theory, Veijola explains the reference to iron could have been applied to “iron-bearing stones,” an observation which “continues to affirm that it must have been basalt.”⁵⁰

Alan Millard remains doubtful of these interpretations and defends taking the object in question as an actual bed.⁵¹ On a practical level, he wonders whether ancient readers would have understood *‘erš barzel* as a sarcophagus, especially given the problems modern interpreters have had in supporting this view.⁵² Instead, Millard cites numerous references in both the Old Testament and cuneiform texts to ivory furniture—essentially, wooden pieces of furniture overlaid with ivory, or in some cases silver. He concludes, “an ‘iron bed’ in an ancient Near Eastern context, therefore, is surely to be understood as a bed adorned with iron.”⁵³

Unfortunately, Millard never fully addresses the function of this bed in the narrative of Deuteronomy.⁵⁴ Maria Lindquist proposes it was a “battle trophy signaling the utter defeat of this colossal king at the hands of the Israelite warrior god.”⁵⁵ She further entertains the possibility of an intentional comparison on the part of the author with the bed of Marduk, known from cuneiform texts of the Neo-Assyrian period.⁵⁶ Such a comparison would have essentially inflated Og’s status to that of a divine being and would have highlighted the extraordinary nature of YHWH’s conquest of Israel’s enemies.⁵⁷ Lindquist’s narrative justification for the historical quality of this note regarding Og’s bed in Deuteronomy 3:11 has much in common with those who emphasize Og’s mythic associations, even though the origins of such embellishment are rooted in the tradition of an earlier historical king. Similarly, Ulrich Hübner accepts that the *‘erš barzel* of Og was indeed

45 See Driver (1902, 53), citing the opinion of Michaelis. More recently, see Craigie 1976, 120; Weinfeld 1991, 184. Von Rad (1966, 44–45) believed its dimensions made it too big for a sarcophagus (e.g., more than double the length of the famous sarcophagus of Aḫiram) and simply called it a coffin.

46 Veijola 2006, 60–76.

47 E.g., Tabnit (*KAI* 13:8); Eshmunazar (*KAI* 14:5, 6, 7, 8, 21). See also 2 Chron. 16:14.

48 Veijola 2006, 63.

49 Driver 1902, 54.

50 Veijola 2006, 72.

51 Millard 1988, 481–92; 1990, 16–21, 44.

52 Millard 1988, 484–85.

53 Ibid., 485. Of particular importance is the famous Hittite text known as the Anitta Text, which documents the earlier use of iron (as early as the sixteenth century BCE) in mentioning “a throne of iron.” Millard (ibid., 488–89) argues it is the closest extrabiblical parallel for the record of a piece of iron furniture.

54 Millard (ibid., 486) raises the question but never comes back to answer it adequately.

55 Lindquist 2011, 480.

56 The Esagil Tablet describes the bed of Marduk as follows: “The bed, nine cubits (its long) side, four cubits (its) front, the bed; the throne in front of the bed” (English translation by Veijola 2006, 63; see Akkadian text in Unger 1931, 239). Veijola doubts this connection since the Esagil Tablet is a late copy dating from 229 BCE. Earlier sources indicate the bed was actually six and two-thirds cubits long and three and two-thirds cubits wide. He wonders how an author from Judah would have been able to know the exact measurements of Marduk’s bed located in the ziggurat of Babylon. He further questions how these measurements could have signaled to the readers the bed’s cultic function (Veijola 2006, 64–65). Lindquist, on the other hand, notes that the original bed was destroyed when the Assyrians destroyed Babylon in 648 BCE and that a second bed replaced the original in 639 BCE. She admits the measurements of the second bed are not mentioned in Assyrian sources but surmises they could have been the same as those for the one described in the Esagil Tablet (Lindquist 2011, 480 n. 12). The parallel is therefore not without difficulty.

57 Ibid., 484–87, 491.

a bed, but he tries to argue for its cultic function in a love ritual comparable to that of Marduk and Zarpanitu in Neo-Assyrian sources. Hübner supposes the mythology of King Og in the Old Testament served as a polemic against his cult and the idolatrous practices associated with it.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, Veijola's criticisms of Hübner on this point are valid, perhaps the most debilitating of those criticisms being the complete lack of any trace of such a polemical overtone in the narrative of Deuteronomy 3.⁵⁹

The Old Testament materials regarding Og, king of Bashan, serve the broader narrative purpose in demonstrating the Israelite incursion in the Transjordan prior to their entrance into Canaan proper. The interest in King Og no doubt relates to his identification as the only survivor of the remnant of the Rephaim and thus highlights the significance of his defeat. Furthermore, additional elements such as the note about his bed of iron only authenticate the historical qualities of the tradition to the reader who, as Doak observes, "would have no choice but to acknowledge that the author was passing down information that he thought was reliable."⁶⁰

RĀPI'U AND THE RAPA'ŪMA IN UGARITIC

The Ugaritic texts discovered at Ras Shamra have clarified our understanding of the Rephaim in the Old Testament. Furthermore, our interest in Og, king of Bashan, described as a surviving member of the remnant of the Rephaim, makes the Ugaritic Rapa'ūma the next logical step in this discussion. The Ugaritic Rapa'ūma⁶¹ appear in numerous passages throughout mythological and epic literature, including the well-known Rapa'ūma texts, as well as in a few ritual texts.⁶² A survey of all these occurrences is beyond the confines of our discussion here, so we shall limit our observations primarily to two areas particularly important for our study of Og: (1) the Amorite origins of the Rapa'ūma, and (2) the relationship between the deity Rāpi'u and the Rapa'ūma in *KTU* 1.108.

There are two major areas of textual evidence that demonstrate the Ugaritians saw themselves as inheritors of an Old Amorite tradition. The first one is the commonly attested Ugaritic royal name 'Ammurāpi' (*'mrp'i*).⁶³ The name means "the divine uncle is a healer" or "the divine uncle is Rāpi'u," taking *rp'i* as an active participial form of the root *rp'* "to heal."⁶⁴ Support for this interpretation is found in the Ugaritic syllabic spelling ^mAm-mu-ra-bi,⁶⁵ or the Akkadian vocalization *ḥammurabi*. W. H. van Soldt regarded the Akkadian form to be of West Semitic origin. As he reasoned, the first element '*m*' "people, clan" was a commonly attested component of Amorite, Ugaritic, and Hebrew names but was altogether foreign in Babylonian.⁶⁶ Furthermore, the attempt to explain the second element, *rabi*, as originating from the Akkadian verb *rabû* "to be great" is not compelling either, since there are a few cases in which the name is written with syllabogram PI instead of BI. So why is the name Ḥammurapi sometimes written with the BI sign? Van Soldt explained it must have arisen from a Babylonian popular etymology, whereby the incomprehensible *-rāpi'* (West Semitic "healer") was changed to the comprehensible *-rabi* (Babylonian "to be great").⁶⁷ In contrast

58 Hübner 1993, 90–92.

59 Veijola 2006, 64–65.

60 Doak 2012, 94.

61 For a defense of vocalizing this form as a plural substantive meaning "healthy ones," see McAfee 2019, 195–200.

62 The Ba'lu cycle (*KTU* 1.6 vi 46), the Kirta epic (*KTU* 1.15 iii 3, 14), the 'Aqhatu epic (in the epithet *dn'il mt rp'i* "Dānī'ilu man of Rāpi'u"), the Rapa'ūma texts (*KTU* 1.20–22), a snake incantation against snake bite (*KTU* 1.82.32), and two other ritual texts (*KTU* 1.108 and the royal funerary ritual *KTU* 1.161).

63 *KTU* 1.113.20; 1.161.31; 2.39.2; 2.76.2, 11; 2.78.2; 4.707.22; 4.775.19; 5.22.21; 9.530.2.

64 I remain unconvinced by attempts to avoid the meaning "to heal" for the root *rp'* (see Brown 1985, 115–48). For a defense of the traditional understanding of this root, see McAfee 2019, 192–95.

65 See Schaeffer and Nougayrol 1968, 463, 486.

66 van Soldt 1991, 316 n. 125.

67 Ibid.

to the Babylonian situation, every attested form of this name in Ugaritic alphabetic texts is spelled with {p}, therefore seeming to confirm its West Semitic origins.

The portrayal of an Old Amorite origin for the Ugaritic royal dynasty can also be established from the recurring parallel pair *rp'i 'arš* “Rapa’ūma of the earth/underworld” // *qbš dtn* “assembly of Ditānu.” *KTU* 1.15 iii 13–15 of the Kirta epic reads:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| (13) <i>m'id rm [krt]</i> | [Kirta] is greatly lifted up |
| (14) <i>b tk rp'i 'ar[š]</i> | amidst the Rapa’ūma of the earth, |
| (15) <i>b pḥr qbš dtn</i> | in the gathering of the assembly of Ditānu. |

We follow earlier interpreters who suggested the *rp'i 'arš* refer to the divinized dead of the Ugaritic royal dynasty.⁶⁸ Simon B. Parker took the *rp'i 'arš* in this passage to be the eponymous ancestors of King Kirta, among whom he would be held in high regard through his progeny.⁶⁹ The same pair occurs twice in the funerary ritual *KTU* 1.161, as for instance in lines 9–10:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| (9) <i>qr'itm rp'i 'arš</i> | You have been called, O Rapa’ūma of the earth, |
| (10) <i>qb'itm qbš dd' n'</i> | You have been summoned, O assembly of Didānu. |

Here the *rp'i 'arš* // *qbš dtn* both introduce (lines 2–3) and conclude (lines 9–10) a listing of the former or ancient Rapa’ūma (*rp'im qdmym*) who are summoned to the ritual by name. Because the names listed in this summons do not correspond to any of the known kings from the Ugaritic king lists (RS 24.257 and RS 94.2518), it is reasonable to conclude they are portrayed as coming from ancient mythic times,⁷⁰ thus situating the roots of the Ugaritic monarchy in the divine realm.

But who are those gathered in the assembly of Ditānu? Because they are always in parallel with *rp'i 'arš*, we should expect a common referent. Eduard Lipiński defines these gathered ones as “the dead members of this celebrated tribe” and thus the assembly of the living king’s kin in death.⁷¹ He takes the deity Ditānu/Didānu to be the eponymous ancestor of the Ugaritic monarchs going back to the earliest Amorite clan of origin. This theonym is also attested in Assyrian king lists as *di-da-a-an-u*⁷² and in the Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty (BM 80328) as *di-ta-nu*, the latter having been identified by J. J. Finkelstein as one of the earliest West Semitic tribal names known from Mesopotamian sources.⁷³

What these features tell us about the Ugaritic Rapa’ūma and the related monarchy is that they were rooted deeply in Old Amorite origins. Furthermore, they show a penchant for locating these Amorite entities in the ancient mythic past, while at the same time providing an unbroken genealogical chain to the present. This connection is important because it provides a means of understanding the dual nature of the Rapa’ūma at Ugarit—they offer a metanarrative bridging the divine and the natural realms. Especially noteworthy in this regard is the funerary ritual *KTU* 1.161, where the living king stands before both the ancient and recent dead who are summoned from below the grave to receive the ghost of their newest inductee.

It remains for us to consider how the divine personage Rāpi’u was believed to relate to the Rapa’ūma in Ugaritic thought. Their relationship appears to be on full display in *KTU* 1.108, where Rāpi’u is introduced in the first line:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| (1) <i>[hl]n yšt rp'u mlk 'lm</i> | Look, may Rāpi’u, king of eternity, drink, |
| <i>w yšt (2) ['il] 'g'ṭr w yqr</i> | may the powerful and honorable god drink, |
| <i>'il yṭb b 'ttrt</i> | the god dwelling in ‘Aṭtartu, |
| (3) <i>'il ṭpṭ b hdr'yi</i> | the god dwelling in Hadra’yi, |

68 For a defense of this view, as well as a discussion of alternative opinions, see McAfee 2019, 205–8.

69 Parker 1976, 28.

70 Pardee 2002, 113 n. 124.

71 Lipiński 1978, 95.

72 Gelb 1954, 209–30.

73 Finkelstein 1966, 101.

<i>d yšr w ydmr</i>	who sings and makes music,
(4) <i>b knr w tlb</i>	with the lyre and flute,
<i>b tp w mšltm</i>	with the drum and cymbals,
<i>b m(5)rqdm d šn</i>	with castanets of ivory,
<i>b ḥbr ktr t̄bm</i>	with the goodly companions of Kôtaru.

The divine nature of Rāpi'u is confirmed by the parallel expressions calling him an 'ilu (lines 2–3). Beyond this generalization, however, there has been much disagreement among scholars regarding the specific identification of this deity.

Following Charles Virolleaud, Samuel E. Loewenstamm advanced the evidence for equating this deity with the patron deity 'Ilū.⁷⁴ In his view, the protective aspects of the deity on display in this text correspond to 'Ilū's care for mortal men depicted elsewhere.⁷⁵ For instance, Loewenstamm cautions that 'Ilū is the only deity in Ugaritic depicted as having the power to heal an ill person. Since the theonym Rāpi'u essentially means "healer," it would seem reasonable to conclude it must in fact be 'Ilū. But limiting the power of healing to the patron god is not entirely justifiable, for other gods are said to heal as well. A case in point is the incantation against snake bite recorded in *KTU* 1.82, where it is Šapšu and the Rapa'ūma who are invoked to reverse its poisonous effects. Comparison is also made to the scene of 'Ilū's feast in *KTU* 1.114.1–4, which is thought to resemble the presentation of Rāpi'u in *KTU* 1.108. The correspondence, however, is not exact. In *KTU* 1.114 'Ilū prepares the feast and invites the gods to eat and drink with him in his palace. The setting of *KTU* 1.108, on the other hand, seems to offer an invitation for the god Rāpi'u to drink, if indeed we are justified in reading *yšt* as a jussive, "let him drink."⁷⁶ Rather, the imagery associated with Rāpi'u better comports with that of the feasting Rapa'ūma of *KTU* 1.22 i who are feasting in the company of 'Ilū. Unlike Rāpi'u or the Rapa'ūma, 'Ilū is never invited or summoned to feast. The equation of 'Ilū with Rāpi'u in this text is therefore unlikely.

Rāpi'u has also been identified with Ba'lu, as has been proposed by Johannes C. de Moor and followed by others.⁷⁷ He believes *rp'u mlk 'lm* functioned as an epithet for Ba'lu, thus indicating a chthonic manifestation of the storm god.⁷⁸ De Moor corroborates this feature with Ba'lu's journey to the Netherworld found in the Ba'lu cycle, but his attempt to find chthonic manifestations for Ba'lu in this context is unconvincing. It is true that Ba'lu is said to be dead (*mt*) when the lads find him after his contest with Môtū (*KTU* 1.5 vi 9; 1.6 i 41), but afterwards he is described as once again being alive (*ḥy*) (*KTU* 1.6 iii 20). Such a description defies a chthonic identity. Neither can one easily appeal to Ba'lu's supposed healing powers as they are thought to be found in the 'Aqhatu epic. In that story, the goddess 'Anatu promises to give the hero 'Aqhatu the power to count years *k b'l k yḥwy* "like Ba'lu when he is revived" (*KTU* 1.16 vi 30). The necessity of reading *yḥwy* as a passive form in this context rather suggests he is the revived, not the reviver.⁷⁹

Yet another candidate for Rāpi'u has been offered by Alan Cooper. He believes there are three characteristics associated with this deity that link him to Rašap: (1) his healing powers, (2) his association with the Netherworld, and (3) his role as patron of the king.⁸⁰ Indeed, Rašap garnered a rather mixed reputation as being both benevolent and malevolent at the same time, which feature is why Cooper considers him to be an appropriate candidate for Rāpi'u's identification.⁸¹ Be that as it may, Rašap's candidacy as a healer is not entirely convincing in light of the fact that the one text Cooper cites in support merely indicates general

74 See also Lipiński 1970, 12; Fisher 1970, 489; Cross 1974, 246; L'Heureux 1979, 214–15.

75 Loewenstamm 1980, 320–21 n. 1a.

76 The overall context is an invitation to a divine feast.

77 E.g., Spronk 1986, 188.

78 de Moor 1969, 176; 1972, 25; 1976, 325–30. A similar position is defended in Dietrich and Loretz 1980, 179.

79 See McAfee 2019, 41–42, where I argue 'Anatu is claiming to possess the power of Ba'lu's revivification.

80 Cooper 1987, 4–7.

81 For a discussion of Rašap's benevolent and malevolent qualities, see Xella 1979–80, 145–62; 1999, 701; Lipiński 2009, 81–89.

well-being rather than healing.⁸² Neither does Rašap's consignment to the underworld automatically equate him with Rāpi'u given the number and assortment of such deities known in the ancient world.⁸³

So how should we identify this deity? This question leads us to consider once again the toponyms associated with King Og in the Bible. As translated above, Rāpi'u is said to reside in 'Aṭtartu and Hadra'yi (*KTU* 1.108.2–3). Baruch Margulis was the first scholar to identify the connection between these two Ugaritic toponyms and the biblical cities Ashtaroḥ and Edrei, both of which are associated with the reign of King Og as outlined above.⁸⁴ The fact that Rāpi'u dwells in 'Aṭtartu led Pope to consider equating him with the deity Milku, also said to reside in 'Aṭtartu in *KTU* 1.100.40–41.⁸⁵ The god Milku is widely attested throughout Phoenician-Punic texts as Milkashtart (*mlk'šrt*), which, when taken in light of the Ugaritic evidence, may indicate the divine name developed from the combination of the divine name (Milku) and the place name (Ashtartu).⁸⁶ Pardee concludes the triple link between the deity Milku (*KTU* 1.100.40–41), the epithet *mlk 'lm* (*KTU* 1.108.1), and the place name 'Aṭtartu indicates the following: Rāpi'u "the healer" functioned as the title of the god Milku, whose residence was 'Aṭtartu and who was also known by the epithet *mlk 'lm* "king of eternity."⁸⁷

The epithet *mlk 'lm* "king of eternity" has been the subject of much discussion. The term 'lm "eternity" has been shown to be associated with netherworld imagery. We find in the Phoenician inscription of Aḥiram reference to the king's setting up his stele *b 'lm* "in eternity" (*KAI* 1:1), as well as Panamuwa from Zincirli's raising up a stele for Hadad *b 'lmy* "in my eternity" (*KAI* 214:1). We might also mention the more recently discovered inscription of Kutumuwa from Zincirli, who also set up a monument in the chamber 'lmy "of my eternity" (line 2).⁸⁸ These three inscriptions from the first-millennium context all associate this term with the locale of the dead or, at least, the dead's enduring representation postmortem.

Rāpi'u appears in *KTU* 1.108 as a ruler in this realm, though we should caution he is not necessarily its supreme ruler. He is, however, a netherworld ruler who is closely tied to the Rapa'ūma. Such a connection is found toward the end of this same text where Rāpi'u's powers are essentially transferred to them:

<i>rp'u mlk</i> (20) [<i>'lm ymgy</i>]k	Rāpi'u, king of [eternity brings] you,
<i>l tštk l 'iršt</i> (21)[k]	to your success, to (what) [you] are requesting,
[<i>b yd</i>] <i>rp'i mlk 'lm</i>	[by the hand of] Rāpi'u, king of eternity,
<i>b 'z</i> (22) [<i>rp'i</i>] ' <i>m'lk 'lm</i>	by the strength of [Rāpi'u], king of eternity,
<i>b ḏmrh b l</i> (23)[<i>'anh</i>]	by his power, by [his] mi[ght],
<i>b ḥtkh b nmrth</i>	by his (paternal) rule, by his splendor;
<i>l r</i> (24)[<i>p</i>] 'i ' <i>arš 'zk</i>	your strength is that of the <i>r[p]'um</i> of the earth,
<i>ḏmrk l'a</i> (25) <i>nk</i>	your power, your might,
<i>ḥtkk nmrth</i>	your (paternal) rule, your splendor,
<i>b tk</i> (26) ' <i>ugrt</i>	in the midst of Ugarit,
<i>l ymt špš w yrḥ</i>	for the days of Šapšu and Yariḥu,
(27) <i>w n'mt šnt 'il</i>	and the pleasant years of 'Ilu.

82 He cites a stele from the Oriental Institute in Chicago: *ršpw k3b.fntr '3 dy.f.n.k 'nhnsnb r' nb* "Resheph . ? . great god; may he bring you all life and health every day" (Cooper 1987, 4–5; see Simpson 1952, 184).

83 For additional references, see Cooper 1987, 3–7.

84 Margulis 1970, 293–94. Quick (2017, 168) disputes reading these names as toponyms, instead following de Moore's (1976, 226–27) proposal to read them as the divine names Aṭtartu and Haddu. I find this proposal unconvincing.

85 Pope 1977, 170–71.

86 Pardee 1988a, 64. For a listing of attestations in Phoenician-Punic, see *ibid.*, 55–59.

87 *Ibid.*, 64.

88 For the *editio princeps* of this inscription, see Pardee 2009, 51–71.

This passage portrays Rāpi'u as the chief ranking member of the company known as the Rapa'ūma, and as such his healing power belongs to them and is to be distributed "in the midst of Ugarit." They are the channels through which the blessings of the healer are transferred to the addressee of these lines, who would likely have been the living (and newly appointed) king of Ugarit.⁸⁹ Etymologically speaking, Rāpi'u is the healer, while the Rapa'ūma are the healthy ones.⁹⁰ Again, this aspect of Ugaritic royal ideology is especially seen in the royal name 'Ammurāpi' where the divine head of the clan is called Rāpi'u, or "The Healer." The theology associated with Rāpi'u and the related Rapa'ūma is therefore a central aspect to Ugaritic royal ideology, and it is furthermore rooted in an Old Amorite tradition.

CONCLUSIONS

It is against this Ugaritic background that King Og of Bashan from the Old Testament must be understood. Some scholars understand him to be a mythic figure utilized in an idealized history. Others believe his appearance in the Bible harkens back to an earlier Amorite tradition. The truth is probably a little bit of both. Indeed, the mythical conceptions related to the Rephaim of the Bible and the Rapa'ūma at Ugarit are front and center in the textual history that has come down to us, but we should also remember these same qualities are arguably a projection of historical circumstances. The Bible therefore portrays Og as a historical king from the second millennium Levant whose royal lineage was tied to the mythic past. At Ugarit, at least, the ritual context of the royal funeral (*KTU* 1.161) demonstrates that myth and historical reality had become enmeshed as the dead king was symbolically lowered into his grave, where his shadowy existence was gathered into the company of the Rapa'ūma of old. It is this context that needs to be considered in our assessment of Og, king of Bashan.

Og's identification as one of the remnant of the Rephaim may in fact resemble the status acquired by Dānî'ilu as "man of Rāpi'u" in the 'Aqhatu epic. This epithet identifies Dānî'ilu as a protégé of Rāpi'u, the chief ranking member of the Rapa'ūma, and therefore signals a higher status than that acquired by Og, king of Bashan.⁹¹ Perhaps King Kirta's reputation as being exalted among the Rapa'ūma of the earth/underworld is a more suitable parallel, wherein the living king has acquired an honorable position in the ranks of this divine guild. These two examples from Ugarit provide the kind of situation that must have been true of Og—he was left over from the remnant of the Rephaim. The fact that he was *niš'ar miyyeter hār'pā'im* "left over from the remnant of the Rephaim"⁹² qualifies him with regard to the Rephaim in much the same way Kirta and Dānî'ilu are qualified while still alive—the biblical text specifically states he is one of the survivors of their remnant, not of the Rephaim themselves.⁹³ In other words, the biblical tradition understands Og as a leftover representative of the Rephaim theology of Amorite kings. One might correctly assume that, at least from the Amorite perspective, Og became a full-fledged member of the Rephaim ranks at death.

The Old Testament has therefore preserved the Old Amorite tradition of the Rephaim in its mention of Og, king of Bashan, who ruled from Ashtaroth and Edrei. But this historical notice did more than simply preserve the name of an ancient king from the Transjordan; it likewise preserved the royal ideology of which he was a part.⁹⁴ The textual witness to Rāpi'u in *Aṭṭartu* and *Hadra'yi* from Ugarit confirms the authenticity of the tradition and therefore situates the historical memory of Deuteronomy and Joshua firmly

89 del Olmo Lete 1999a, 191; Pardee 2002, 193.

90 We should note the significance of the use of the root *rp'* for healing in the sense of "preparing for burial." The form *rōp'e'im* is used in Genesis 50:2 of those who prepare Jacob's body for burial. See also Good 1980, 41.

91 This higher status stems from the fact that he is explicitly associated with the head of the Rapa'ūma by name (i.e., Rāpi'u), not simply the Rapa'ūma in general.

92 Deut. 3:11.

93 With Pardee (1988b, 21), who argues this expression places Og outside the heroic age.

94 Quick (2017, 172) similarly rejects identifying King Og as a chthonic deity and instead argues that Deuteronomy 3 "recalls the tradition of Og in order to underscore the military power of the Israelite army." She does, however, locate this tradition in the mythic past, rather than the Amorite royal ideology attested at Ugarit, as I have argued above.

within the second millennium BCE. The summary statement of del Olmo Lete explains this development well:

In this way, Og, now turned into *mlk(m)/rpu(m)*, can be assumed a historical . . . Amorite/Canaanite king of the region which, according to the Ugaritic tradition, was the place where its dead deified kings dwelled. Thus he was himself “a survivor of the Rephaim,” a *rpu*, like any other king in this ideology.⁹⁵

The specificity with which the Old Testament has preserved this tradition regarding the ideology of the Amorite King Og is noteworthy. At the very least it resists the claim that Og’s association with the Amorites is a late, editorial invention. Though the biblical record of Og does not appear to offer a full-fledged polemic against this royal ideology, it does suggest an awareness of it.

It is a privilege to dedicate this essay to Dennis G. Pardee, whose personal mentorship and scholarly contribution to the study of Northwest Semitics have both made an immense impact on me.

⁹⁵ del Olmo Lete 1999b, 1206.

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27

“FROM THE BURROWS OF THEIR LAIRS . . .”

THE IMAGERY OF A PROPHETIC UTTERANCE IN A MARI LETTER*

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WHEN REEDITING AND OFFERING AN expanded commentary on ARM 26.199 (= A.925+A.2050), J.-M. Durand observed how “les textes de prophéties retrouvés à Mari sont des oeuvres difficiles qui demandent sans cesse des relectures qui en précisent le sens.”¹ In this spirit, the present essay revisits a difficult passage from a Mari letter, ARM 26.199:36–37, and proposes a new interpretation of the prophecy recounted in these lines. I will begin with an introduction to the historical context for the letter as well as an overview of the missive’s main argument and rhetorical strategies. Then I will briefly review previous treatments of ARM 26.199:36 before offering a new interpretation of these difficult lines. In particular, I will propose a new solution for the difficult phrase *i-na* 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵 𐎶𐎵 in line 36 and suggest that the prophetic imagery in lines 36–37 is that of the Euphrates’ floodwaters overtaking the burrows of fauna found along the banks of the River.

Sammetar, a royal functionary, sent ARM 26.199 to Zimri-Lim, the last king of Mari.² Sammetar wrote this missive to convince Zimri-Lim that the peace proposed by the man of Eshnunna was a trick and, therefore, to encourage the king to be resolute in pursuit of the war. Peace with Eshnunna was a contentious issue at the time of Sammetar’s writing. There were mixed responses within Zimri-Lim’s kingdom to the ongoing war:³ some were weary of the war and approved of its conclusion, while others resisted peace. Regarding the latter group, as Durand has noted, “Il n’est pas indifférent que donnent également des conseils bellicistes des gens qui, à proximité des *Mâr yamîna*, ont dû se servir sur leurs biens: peut-être des notables autour du temple de Dagan à Tuttul, certainement ceux autour de Dagan de Terqa, villes cernées par des terroirs *mâr yamîna*.”⁴ In other words, there were those who stood to gain from the war’s continuance—those such as Sammetar, who was a direct beneficiary of the nearby Yamina lands that were recurrently robbed in the course of the war.⁵ And in ARM 26.199, Sammetar enlisted prophetic voices that could speak with authority in favor of continuing the war efforts and in opposition to the peace proposed by Eshnunna.⁶

* It is an honor to dedicate this study to Dennis Pardee, who has significantly contributed to the understanding of ancient letters—especially in Classical Hebrew and Ugaritic—and has produced many new understandings of ancient texts through his epigraphic, philological, and morpho-syntactic insights.

1 Durand 2012, 268.

2 A translation of ARM 26.199 may be found in the appendix, below.

3 Durand 2012, 269 n. 53.

4 Ibid., 269.

5 See *ibid.*, 261 and n. 29, which cites M.11777, an administrative tablet that documents the proximity of the Yamina lands to Sammetar at Mari.

6 For the practice of embellishing prophecies in the Mari letters, see Sasson 2001; 1995; 2009.

ARM 26.199 begins by recounting how the king had asked Lupahum, the *āpilum*-prophet, to inquire after the god Dagan regarding the war with Eshnunna: “Entrust me to Dagan.”⁷ The occasion for Sammetar’s writing, then, was that Lupahum had arrived from Tuttul with a response for the king.⁸ Lupahum had returned with the remarkably confident message that Zimri-Lim would have every success in his war with Eshnunna: “Everywhere you go, well-being will gr[e]et you. Battering ram and (siege)-tower will be given to you. They will go at your side and be your support.” Yet this optimistic message relayed by the prophet required confirmation, especially since Zimri-Lim had seemingly few tactical reasons to be confident about his conflict with Eshnunna.⁹

In anticipation of the need to buttress Lupahum’s message, Sammetar marshaled evidence to support the prophet’s credibility. Sammetar’s most salient evidence in support of Lupahum’s message regarding the war with Eshnunna is found in lines 29–40¹⁰ and particularly hinges on the prophecy given by Lupahum against the Yamina in lines 35–37. In these lines, Sammetar reported his conversation with Lupahum about his prophetic insight into the victory over Yamina populations just months earlier. Sammetar relayed this conversation to the king to buttress Lupahum’s trustworthiness and, in turn, his argument that the war against Eshnunna should continue. Lupahum’s previous forecast against the Yamina presented a rationale for trusting the *āpilum*’s support for the ongoing war with Eshnunna: Sammetar invoked the past as a precedent for guiding present circumstances.¹¹

Sammetar further stylized¹² Lupahum’s prophecy against the Yamina (lines 35–37) to advance his argument that the king should continue the war against Eshnunna. A significant stylistic element used by Sammetar in his letter was the image of flowing water in association with the theme of calamity. This motif

7 Syntactically, the turn of phrase may denote a general sense of Zimri-Lim’s pious trust in the political patronage of Dagan (Heimpel 2003, 252–53 n. 238), but the clause at least implies the idea that the prophet was to conduct an extispicy (Durand 2012, 258).

8 Sammetar dispatched his letter roughly two years into the war with Eshnunna. The date of Lupahum’s prophetic activities documented in ARM 26.199 is chronologically secured to the eighth day of the seventh month in ZL 5 by an administrative tablet that records the disbursement of silver for the prophet on this occasion (M.11436). See Durand (1988, 396; 2012, 253).

9 ARM 26.199, to the contrary, hints that Eshnunna was menacing the central Euphrates region (see esp. lines 17–28). The events that transpired shortly after the dispatch of ARM 26.199 stand in stark contrast to the self-assured statements made by Lupahum about the war in lines 5–16. Moreover, not long after Sammetar sent this missive to convince Zimri-Lim, the king concluded peace with Eshnunna, and he did so without commemorating the war in his year names (Durand 2003). The selective “forgetting” the war with Eshnunna adds to the perception that the outcome of this conflict was anything but a decisive victory for Zimri-Lim.

10 Lines 16–28 present the interpretive challenge of determining who is speaking to Sammetar. Morphologically, the form *iq-bé-e-em* (line 29) can be understood as a 3fs, thus making the goddess Deritum or her priestess the subject of the verb, or as a 3ms, in which case Lupahum would be the subject. Unfortunately, a solution to this challenge does not result from one’s interpretation of the verbal sequence in lines 17–22 (*ú-še-er-di-ma . . . ú-bi-il . . . ú-bi-il*), since the conjunction *ù* in line 29 may be used with sufficient disjunction to announce a change of scenery or a paragraph-level shift in thought (cf. the use of *ù* in line 58, below; also the comment on the interpretation of *ù* at Mari in general by Durand 1998, 150 n. c). That said, it seems preferable to me to take the form *iq-bé-e-em* (line 29) as a 3ms and conclude that lines 29–40 recount the interactions between Lupahum and Sammetar—and not a prophetic utterance of the goddess Deritum to Sammetar—if for no other reason than that the recap by Sammetar in line 40 most naturally seems to indicate that the immediately preceding lines were spoken by Lupahum ([*te₄-ma-am a[n-n]é-‘e-em’* “*Lu-pa-hu-um id-bu-ba-am*]). See also Sasson 1995; Nissinen 2003; Durand 1988; cf. Durand (2012, 264), who seems to understand this summary in line 40 as referring back to Lupahum’s prophecy in lines 11–14 by translating “Ce message (c’est ce que précédemment) Lupahum m’a(vait) dit.”

11 Appealing to the past is a tactic in political and diplomatic reasoning in Old Babylonian letters that is discussed, for example, by Charpin 1998; Sasson 2001, 314–16, esp. 316; and Sallaberger 1999. The latter scholar identifies this rhetorical strategy in other Old Babylonian letters as “Vergleichsschemata” that “vergleicht eine frühere und die jetzige Situation” (Sallaberger, 1999 234–35).

12 By the word “stylized” I mean the various features often associated with the classical tradition that were intended to clarify and enhance the ideas being communicated. These features included a seemingly endless array of linguistic tactics that sought effectively and persuasively to communicate or argue (see, e.g., the thorough catalog in Lausberg 1998). Durand has suggested that Sammetar was, himself, responsible for the composition of the letter (see Durand 2012, 257–58), though it may be that he wrote it not so much to keep his message from public knowledge but to conceal his idiosyncratic presentation of the material.

is first encountered in the narrative aside of lines 19–21, which recount a previous trip by the prophet Lupahum. In these lines, the dire importance of the *āpilum*-prophet's message was conveyed by the imagery of flowing water. Sammetar recalled the prophet's vivid warning that water was flowing (*mû izubbû*) and that the royal standard (*šernum*)¹³ was “not firmly fixed” (*ûl saniq*) in place. The royal standard had been a pointed object lesson about the contemporary political threat posed by Eshnunna, and Sammetar's mention of this previous message was intended to foreground the seriousness of the prophet's more recent journey, in which he brought a *sikkûrum*¹⁴ to Der with political counsel inscribed upon it: “I hope you do not trust in the peace of Eshnunna and grow weary; strengthen your guard even more than before!”¹⁵

The image of flowing water was also coupled with the theme of calamity in Sammetar's final report on prophetic activities in lines 41–57, especially in line 44. In this instance, Sammetar reported on the message of a *qammātum*-prophetess and her use of the image of flowing water to portend imminent disaster: “water flows under chaff.” This vivid image conveyed the sense that the man of Eshnunna was not to be trusted; his proposal for peace was not what it seemed. Durand, however, has captured the stylistic similarities and innovations in the message of the *qammātum*-prophetess vis-à-vis Lupahum's message in lines 19–21 by observing: “‘l'eau continue d'aller, sous la paille’ ne fait que reprendre l'expression de la l. 21 : *mû izubbû* = ‘l'eau continue à couler’, indiquant que, malgré les apparences, la situation reste inchangée.”¹⁶ The message of the *qammātum*-prophetess, then, was included by Sammetar and edited to fit with the previous image of flowing water (lines 19–21) in order to advance the claim that peace with Eshnunna would spell certain disaster.¹⁷

Yet it was the prophecy in lines 35–37 that served as a linchpin to Sammetar's argument that the war with Eshnunna must continue. First, this prophecy against the Yamina was integrated into the missive in part by the fact that it, too, utilized the motif of flowing water, along with the prophecy in the preceding lines (19–21) and the one in the following lines (41–57, esp. 44). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the prophecy in lines 36–37 contains the sole positive use of this motif. That is, the prophecy in lines 36–37 is, in Sammetar's letter, the only instance of the motif of flowing water to portend disaster for Zimri-Lim's enemies rather than catastrophe for Zimri-Lim. The positive valence of the prophetic utterance in lines 35–37 thus calls attention to another way in which this prophecy was crucial to Sammetar's rhetorical strategy and argument in his letter. Lines 35–37 were linked to the prophet's opening, bellicose message that the war with Eshnunna would continue with great success. While Lupahum's opening prediction that Zimri-Lim would have every success in battle against Eshnunna is the only prophetic utterance in the letter that does not utilize the motif of flowing water, its optimistic message and tenor are most closely echoed in Lupahum's previous predictions about the conflict with the Yamina (lines 35–37). Thus, both logically and stylistically, Lupahum's prophecy against the Yamina was crucial to Sammetar's case to continue the war with Eshnunna.

This overview demonstrates the significance of this prophecy in lines 35–37 to the letter's rhetorical aim yet does not suggest this prophetic utterance is without difficulties. The opening statement in line 35 is straightforward enough and clarifies the overall sense of the prophet's message, viz., that the Simalite king, Zimri-Lim, should not relent in his war against the Yamina: “Do not conclude a treaty with the Yamina!”

13 See Durand (2012, 263–64).

14 The prophetic message seems to have been inscribed on the *sikkûrum*. Durand (2012, 260) notes analogous uses of prophetic symbols in ARM 10.4, to which one might add the instance of the *muḥḥûm* prophet's eating a lamb at the city gate in ARM 26.206.

15 Lupahum's message that Eshnunna's overtures toward peace should be rejected may have invoked the practice of using *sikkûrû* to barricade doors or gates and turn back an enemy (cf. CAD S 257–58 *sikkûrû* mng. 1c).

16 Durand (2012, 266) also cleverly observes an additional stylistic flourish in this report, namely, “il y a dans ce proverbe un jeu de mots entre *pûm*, ‘paille,’ et *pûm*, ‘bouche,’ propos.” Sasson (1995, 605) also makes other stylistic observations.

17 This well-known prophetic statement from Mari is attested in three separate sources: ARM 26.197, ARM 26.199, and ARM 26.202. Yet what is striking about the fortuitous preservation of three independent testimonies to the utterance of the *qammātum*-prophetess is that this statement was the only commonality among these separate reports; each letter took liberties with or selectively included portions of the *qammātum*-prophetess's message (Sasson 1995, 605–8).

26 He observes that this spelling is reserved for the well-known canal that ran from the Wadi es Souab along the western bank of the Euphrates River (Durand 1997b, 278).

River Valley—from Tuttul (line 6) to Der (line 18).²⁷ Lastly, the turn of phase *rê qinnātišunu* seems awkward. In the context, it could literally denote the Yamina “shepherds” or “pastoralists,” but a synecdochic use of *rē’ûm* might be somewhat unexpected given Sammetar’s descriptions of the Yamina elsewhere.²⁸ That is, in another letter (A.981) in which Sammetar wrote to the king about the conclusion of the peace between the Yamina and the Simal, he indicated the Yamina clans in question did not have mobile pastoralist populations or a leader among these populations to arrange a treaty with portions of the Simal.²⁹ Thus *rê qinnātišunu* might seem a less-than-fitting way to portray a collective of Yamina populations.

Given the challenges to the above interpretations, I wish to offer an alternative solution to the difficulties of lines 36–37. I propose that the signs 𒄩 𒄩 𒄩 𒄩 𒄩 𒄩 preserve a *purussûm*-noun form (cf. *rugummûm*) related to the Akkadian verb *ḥepêrum* “to dig.” Semantically, *purussûm*-nouns from verbal roots often function as *nomina actionis* for typical or planned behaviors.³⁰ The morphology of a form *ḥupurrûm* derived from *ḥepêrum*, therefore, would convey an activity such as “tunneling” or “burrowing.”³¹ And while the noun *ḥupurrûm* is, to my knowledge, otherwise unattested, it should be mentioned that another noun related to the verb *ḥepêrum* might be used elsewhere in the sources from Mari to designate digging implements.³²

If this assessment is correct, then the noun *ḥupurrûm* should be analyzed as a plural form in construct with the following noun *qinnātišunu* and the entire construct chain (*ḥupurrê qinnātišunu*) may be translated “burrows of their lairs.” The resulting image of this interpretation, then, would be that of an animal’s domicile.³³ And, while the precise fauna of ARM 26.199 is not identified, since the term *qinnum* does not necessarily connote the domicile of birds, there is no shortage of possible candidates among the fauna that inhabited the river valley.³⁴ Moreover, it is noteworthy that a similar use of the word *qinnum* that likens one’s political and military opponents to animals may also be found in Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, where the Assyrian’s opponents are compared to birds that dwelt in “nests” (*qinnû*) perched on cliffs.³⁵

At the same time, the image in ARM 26.199:35–37 should be noted for its distinct use of faunal imagery to portray the king’s enemies. That is, while the later Neo-Assyrian sources conjure the topography

27 Additionally, while the use of *ṭarādum* + *ina* to mean “to drive into” is not impossible, judging from the attestation listed in CAD 𐎶 50–60 *ṭarādum*, there are not many similar occurrences; rather, most uses of *ṭarādum* with *ina* seem to be temporal or to denote a type of action other than a dative sense that indicates a destination to which one is “driven.”

28 Alternatively, if *rē’ûm* is understood metaphorically to mean “leaders,” then the phrase is a strange, seemingly mixed metaphor of “shepherds” (*rē’û*) and “nests” (*qinnātu*).

29 A.981:32–41 reads: “Moreover, Uranum and the elders from Dabish came to me and said, ‘By birth we belong among the Yahurreans, not to the Yar(r)adum; we do not have a *ḥibrum*-(community) or *kadûm* in the pasture-land. We are native to the Yahrur, but we want to enter into (an/oath or treaty of) the Simal (tribe) with the Nihadeans. Let us kill the donkey!’” (32) *ša-ni-tam* ^m*û-ra-nu-um* ^ù LÚ.ŠU.GI.MEŠ(?) (33) *ša da-bi-iš* ^{KI}*il-li-ku-nim-ma* (34) *um-[m]a-mi iš-tu* {*ši-t<im>*} *ši-tim* (35) *i-na ia-hu-ur-ra* ^ù*ul ia-ra-du-um* (36) *ni-nu* ^ù *i-na na-we-e-em hi-ib-ra-am* (37) ^ù *ka-di* ^ù*ul ni-šu* (38) *zu-ru-ha-tum a-na ia-ah-ru-ur ni-nu* (39) *a-na li-ib-bi DUMU si-i[m-a]-al* (40) *i-na ni-ha-di-i* ⁿ*[i-r]u-ub-ma* ANŠE *ha-a-ri* (41) *i ni-iq-ṭu-ul*). For *ḥibrum*, a Yamina term that approximates but is more specific than the general term for mobile pastoralists (*ḥanûm*), see Fleming 2004, 97–100; cf. Durand 2004, 161–62). For the more difficult term *kadûm*, which seems to designate some form of political authority in the pasture (*ina nawûm*), see Charpin and Durand 2004, 112–13. See the further discussion in Miglio (2014, 146–56).

30 GAG³ §560 notes the *purussûm* may “Übergang zu konkreter Bedeutung wie bei *pîrs*.”

31 Cf. other uses of this root in Semitic that designate “holes, burrows” or related concepts, e.g., Arabic *ḥufra* “hole, burrow” (cf. *ḥafara* “to dig”); modern Hebrew *ḥafīṣṣāh* “excavation, burrow” and Classical Hebrew *ḥ^aparpārāḥ* “mole” (cf. *ḥāpar* “to dig”); Syriac *hepra* “pit, hole” or *ḥ^epara* “excavation” (cf. the verb *ḥ^epar* “to dig, burrow”); and Old South Arabic (Sabeian dialect) *ḥfr* “pit, well.”

32 See Durand 2005, 12, on the form *ka-pa-ar-ra-tim*. On the realization of *ḥ* as *k* at Mari, see the comment by Durand 1998, 153 n. x.

33 See further CAD Q 257–58 *qinnu* mng. 1.

34 For example, the burrowing fowl mentioned in the Mari letters (e.g., MUŠEN.ḪÁ *ḥu-ri-im* in ARM 26.229; see Durand 1997b, 273).

35 E.g., Assurnasirpal (RIMA 2: A.01.101.1) or Sennacherib (RIMA 3.1:17; 22); cf. biblical imagery in Obad. 3–4; Num. 24:21; Jer. 49:16; Hab. 2:9.

of the “hilly flanks” of the Zagros to which Assyrian kings recurrently campaigned,³⁶ the phrase *huppurê qinnim* in ARM 26.199 evokes the geography and fauna of the Euphrates River Valley.³⁷ And the imagery in ARM 26.199:36–37 is not unique among the sources from Mari in its use of faunal imagery to describe military situations. For example, riverine and faunal imagery similar to that found in ARM 26.199:36–37 is also contained in the Mari-letter A.3080. This missive preserved a quotation of a letter sent by Zimri-Lim in which the king likened the populations along the Euphrates to fauna that would be swept away by a flood. The king vividly described an impending military advance of the Elamites against the inhabitants of the *aḥ Purattim* and likened these inhabitants to insects living along the banks (*rimmātum ša kišādīm*) that would be indiscriminately overwhelmed by the floodwaters of the river (*mīlum ša nārim*).³⁸ Likewise, perhaps even more closely connected to ARM 26.199:36–37 is the cluster of ideas and words found in the *Epic of Zimri-Lim*—those of floodwaters, the presentation of the king’s enemy as an animal, and attention to the enemy’s *qinnum*.

In the [wo]mb, the gods gave (him) his name,
 May the pronouncement of Anum, the wild bull of his land, be holy!
 The gods gave him the name Zimri-Lim,
¹⁵ May the pronouncement of Anum, the wild bull of his land, be holy!
 ‘He’ exulted the resplendent king and,
 he has made Enlil’s enemy his adversary!
 Amidst the Habur and the Euphrates,
 In the place where Addu rendered his judgment,
²⁰ He raised his voice (and) he scattered his lair,
 He frustrated his intentions to the four corners of the earth.³⁹
 . . .
 “He raised his voice, shattered the lance of the enemy,
 He poured out his rage⁴⁰ on the land[s]!”

In this composition, Zimri-Lim is portrayed as having been elected by the gods for kingship. Thereafter the king enjoyed divine support on the battlefield, especially that of the storm god Addu, who overwhelmed the enemy⁴¹ of the king. In particular, the ferocity of Addu in the storm is paired with an allusion to floodwa-

36 That is, Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions envision remote and difficult to conquer foes as birds that inhabit *qinnū*, such as “an eagle’s nest . . . at the summit of Mount Nipur” (TI₈.MUŠEN . . . *še-er zuq-ti KUR ni-pur*). Durand (1988, 428 n. d) noted in the *editio princeps* of ARM 26.199 that the use of *qinnum* anticipates the descriptions of enemies in the Neo-Assyrian annals.

37 While the precise fauna of ARM 26.199 is not identified and the term *qinnum* does not necessarily connote the domicile of birds, it is worth noting that a burrowing fowl is mentioned in the Mari letters (e.g., MUŠEN.ḪÁ *ḫu-ri-im* in ARM 26.229; see Durand 1997b, 273).

38 See Durand (1990, 106–8); cf. also Durand (2012, 262), and see further the discussion in Miglio (2014, 197–227). As it concerns the image in A.3080, the description of the carnage from the flood as “dragonflies” (*kulilum*) in *Atra-ḫasis* (III:iv:5–7) is also noteworthy (cf. also Chen 2013, 51–53).

39 Lines: (12) [i]-ša₃ ‘šū’-qú-ri ib-bu-ú DINGIR.MEŠ šum-šu (13) zi-ik-ru ^da-nim ‘li’-ṭe₉(TI)-li-il ri-im ma-ti-šu (14) zi-im-ri-li-im ib-bu-ú DINGIR.MEŠ šum-šu (15) zi-ik-ru ^da-nim li-ṭe₉-li-il ‘ri’-im ma-ti-šu (16) LUGAL ša-pé-e-em ‘lu’² -ša-‘ar’-bi-ma (17) na-ak-ri ^den-líl iṣ-ta-ka-an za-ri-šu (18) ib-bi-ri-it ḫa-bu-ur ù pu-ra-an-tim (19) i-na aš-ri ^dIŠKUR i-di-nu di-na-aš-šu (20) id-di ri-ig-ma-aš-šu qí-in-na-šu ú-pa-ar-ri-ir (21) a-na ki-ib-ra-at er-be-e-im ṭe₄-em-šu is-pu-uḫ (published in Guichard 2014a; see the translation in Miglio 2016, text 6).

40 In this context, the Akkadian word *imtu* refers to the destructive effects of the storm, which Addu pours out on Zimri-Lim’s enemies. Cf. the cognate Hebrew form *ḥēmā^h* and its use with storm-god imagery in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Isa. 66:15; 42:25; Jer. 23:19; 30).

41 The singular nouns in line 17 (*na-ak-ri* and *za-ri-šu*) are best understood as the antecedents for the masculine singular suffixes in lines 20–21.

ters⁴² that will scatter (*ú-pa-ar-ri-ir*) the enemy, who is envisioned as wildlife residing in *qinnum* along the riverbanks. Thus the constellation of the ideas and images in this text, too, seems to evoke imagery of an animal’s domicile, as in ARM 26.199:36–37.⁴³ Lupahum, therefore, was not alone in his use of imagery from the central Euphrates to underscore a political or religious point.

CONCLUSION

ARM 26.199 is a complex missive that begs several additional questions that have not been treated above and that certainly require further attention. My proposal in this essay, however, has focused on the imagery in ARM 26.199:36–37 and specifically on the difficult phrase *i-na* 𒂗𒍪 𒀭𒀭𒀭 𒀭𒀭 𒀭𒀭 𒀭 in line 36. I have argued that this prophetic utterance envisioned the Euphrates’ floodwaters as overtaking the burrows of fauna found along the banks of the River. I have treated the morpho-syntax of the form *huburrûm* and cited a few instances that use similar imagery and word choices to those found in ARM 26.199:36–37. I have suggested it was quite fitting that this prophecy declared to the king at Mari—a city Jean-Cl. Margueron has dubbed “la fille de l’Euphrate”⁴⁴—used imagery drawn from the familiar landscape of the river valley in a prophecy against the Yamina.⁴⁵

APPENDIX: TRANSLATION OF ARM 26.199

Lines 1–4	Speak to my lord: thus says Sammetar, your servant.	1 <i>a-na be-lí-ia</i> 2 <i>qí-bí-ma</i> 3 <i>um-ma sa-am-me-e-tar</i> 4 <i>İR-ka-a-ma</i>
Lines 5–16	Lupahum, the <i>āpilum</i> -prophet of Dagan, arrived here from Tuttul. He conveyed the message that my lord charged him with (while he was) at Saggaratum, (saying): “Entrust me to Dagan.” He conveyed that message and they answered him: “Everywhere you go, well-being will gr[e]et you. Battering ram and (siege)-tower will be given to you. They ⁴⁶ will go at your side and be your support.” This is the response they gave him at Tuttul.	5 ^m <i>lu-pa-ḥu-um</i> LÚ <i>a-pí-lum ša</i> ^d <i>da-gan</i> 6 <i>iš-tu tu-ut-tu-ul</i> ^{ki} <i>ik-šu-dam</i> 7 <i>ṭe₄-ma-am ša be-lí i-na sa-ga-ra-tim</i> ^{ki} 8 <i>ú-wa-e-ru-šu um-ma-mi a-na</i> ^d <i>da-gan</i> { <i>ša te[r-q]</i> <i>a</i> ^{ki} } 9 <i>pí-iq-da-an-ni ṭe₄-ma-am ša-a-ti</i> 10 <i>ú-bi-il-ma ki-a-am i-pu-lu-šu um-ma-mi</i> 11 <i>e-ma ta-al-la-ku tú-ú-ub li-ib-bi</i> 12 <i>im-ta-na-a[ḥ-ḥ] a-ar-[k]a</i> ^{GIS} <i>ia-ši-bu-um</i> 13 <i>ú</i> ^{GIS} [<i>d</i>] <i>i-im-tum [n]a-ad-nu-ni-kum</i> 14 <i>i-na i-di-ka i-il-[l]a-ku tap-pu-ut-ka i-il-la-ku</i> 15 <i>ṭe₄-ma-am an-né-e-em i-na tu-ut-tu-ul</i> ^{ki}

42 Cf. *Atra-ḥasis* III:ii:48–51, in which it is the storm-Addu’s voice (*rigmum*) that signals the impending flood and thus motivates Atra-ḥasis to close the door to his vessel.

43 In fact, one must wonder whether the image in ARM 26.199 might have been an allusion to the *Epic of Zimri-Lim*. The latter composition refers to an unnamed *āpilum* of Dagan, who saw the sign (*ittum*) of the god on behalf of the king (see further Guichard 2014b). Moreover, as Durand (2012, 259) has suggested, there may be another allusion, or at least common verbal imagery, between the letter and the *Epic of Zimri-Lim*.

44 Margueron 2004, 31.

45 The imagery in ARM 26.199 is not only geographically appropriate, as discussed in the section above, but it is also congruent with the well-established theological connection between Dagan and the Euphrates River. Dagan was the patrimonial head of the gods and, therefore, the kingmaker along the central Euphrates River (see Durand 2008, 174–75, 194–95; Feliu 2003, 162–67, 170–73). In the *Epic of Zimri-Lim*, therefore, it was the *āpilum* of Dagan who reported the auspicious sign of Dagan for Zimri-Lim, the king (A.3152+M.5665+ III:30–36), and it was before Dagan at Ekisiqqa in Terqa that the king requested life, prosperity, and strength. And several Late Bronze Age texts from Emar may possibly ascribe to Dagan the title “Lord of the Riverbank,” although these texts are fragmentary (Feliu 2003, 241).

46 It is not certain, to me at least, who or what are the subjects of the verb *i-il-la-ku*. Most interpreters have understood the subjects to be the “Battering ram and (siege)-tower” that accompany Zimri-Lim into battle. Alternatively, it may be the gods who supported Zimri-Lim in battle, as Durand (2012, 259) has suggested on the basis of his comparison with the *Epic of Zimri-Lim*.

Lines 16–28	When he arrived from Tuttul, I conducted ⁴⁷ (him) to Der and he brought my bolt to the goddess Deritum. Previously he had brought the royal standard and said: “The royal standard is not fastened; water is flowing. Strengthen the royal standard!” Now he has brought my bolt (and) thus it was written (on the bolt): “I hope you, (Deritum), do not trust in the peace of Eshnunna and let your guard down; be even more vigilant than before!”	16 <i>i-pu-lu-šu ù iš-tu tu-ut-tu-ul^{ki}</i> 17 <i>ki-ma ka-ša-di-šu-ma a-na de-er^{ki} ú-še-er-di-ma</i> 18 <i>GIŠ⁵ sí-ik-ku-ri a-na^d de-ri-tim ú-bi-il</i> 19 <i>pa-na-nu-um še-er-nam ú-bi-il um-ma-mi</i> 20 <i>še-er-nu-um {ZA} ú-ul sà-ni-iq-ma mu-ú {Ú}</i> 21 <i>i-zu-ub-bu še-er-nam du-un-ni-ni₅</i> 22 <i>i-na-an-na sí-ik-ku-ri ú-bi-il</i> 23 <i>ù ki-a-am ša-pí-{IR}ir</i> 24 <i>um-ma-mi as-sú-ur-ri a-na sa-li-mi-im</i> 25 <i>ša LÚ èš-nun-na^{ki} ta-ta-ka-li-/ma</i> 26 <i>a-aḥ-ki ta-na-ad-di-i</i> 27 <i>ma-aš-ša-ra-tu-ki e-li ša pa-na-nu-um</i> 28 <i>‘lu-ú’ du-un-nu-na</i>
Lines 29–40	Moreover, he spoke to me: “I hope he will not swear a solemn oath with the man of [Esh]nunna without asking the god. (Rather, the king should do) just as (he did) previously when the Yamina came down to Saggartum and dwelt (there), at which time I said to the king: ‘Do not conclude a treaty with the Yamina! I, (Dagan), will drive them from the burrows of their lairs and the River will finish them off for you.’ [N]ow he should not swear a sol[em]n oath with the man of [Esh]nunna without asking the god.” This is the message that Lupahum spoke to me.	29 <i>‘ù a’-ia-ši-im ki-a-am iq-bé-e-em um-ma-mi</i> 30 <i>as-[sú]-ur-ri LUGAL ba-lum AN-lim ša-li-im</i> 31 <i>a-na LÚ[èš]-nun-na^{ki} na-pí-iš₇-ta-šu</i> 32 <i>i-la-ap-pa-at ki-ma ša i-na pa-ni-tim</i> 33 <i>i-nu-ma DU[MU.M]EŠ [i]a-[m]i-na^{ki} ur-du-nim-ma</i> 34 <i>i-na sa-ga-ra-tim^{ki}</i> 35 <i>úš-bu ù a-na LUGAL aq-bu-ú um-ma a-na-ku-ma</i> 36 <i>ANŠE⁵ ḥa-a-ri ša DUMU.MEŠ ia-mi-na la ta-qa-ṭá-al</i> 37 <i>i-na {B[U]}⁴⁸ ḥu-pu-ur-re-e qí-na-ti-šu-nu</i> 38 <i>a-ṭà-ra-as-sú-nu-ti ù ÍD.DA ú-ga-am-ma-ra-kum</i> 39 <i>[i-n]a-an-na ba-lum AN-[la]m i-š[a-a]l-lu</i> 40 <i>n[a-pí-iš₇]-ta-šu la i-la-ap-pa-at</i> 41 <i>ṭe₄-ma-am a[n-n]é^c-e-emtm lu-pa-ḥu-um id-bu-ba-am</i>
Lines 41–57	Two [d]ays later a qammātum-prophetess of Dagan at Ter[qa] came and spoke [to me, say]ing: “Beneath chaff water flo[ws]! They are continually writi[ng to you] (and) they are sending their gods [to you], but they are planning an act of deception in their hearts. The king should not swear a solemn oath without consulting the god!” She requested a laḥarum-garment and a nose-ring, so I g[a]ve (them) to her. She delivered her instructions in the temple of Belet-Ekallim before the h[igh priestess, Ini]b-shina. I have sent to my lord a repor[t on the matter] which she spoke to me. Let my lord consider (it) so that he can act as the great sovereign (that he is).	41 <i>wa-ar-ki-šu-ma i-na ša-ni-i-im [u₄-m]i-im</i> 42 <i>1^{MUNUS} qa-ma-tum ša^d da-gan ša t[er-qa]^{rki}</i> 43 <i>il-li-kam-ma ki-a-am iq-bé-e-[em um-ma]-mi</i> 44 <i>ša-pa-al in-nu-da mu-ú i-il-[la-ku]</i> 45 <i>a-na sa-li-mi-im iš₇-ta-na-ap-p[a-ru-ni-kum]</i> 46 <i>AN.MEŠ-šu-nu i-ṭà-ar-ra-du-[ni-kum]</i> 47 <i>ù ša-ra-am ša-né-e-em-ma</i> 48 <i>i-na li-ib-bi-šu-nu i-ka-ap-pu-du</i> 49 <i>LUGAL ba-lum AN-lam i-ša-al-lu</i> 50 <i>na-pí-iš₇-ta-šu la i-la-ap-pa-at</i> 51 <i>1 TÚG.SI.SÁ la-ḥa-r[e-e]-em ù sé-er-re-tam</i> 52 <i>[i]-ri-iš-ma ad-[di-in-š]i-im ù wu-ú-ur-ta-ša</i> 53 <i>i-na É^d NIN.É.GAL ‘a’-[n]a D[AM.DINGIR.RA^f i-ni]-</i> 54 <i>ib-ši-na</i> 55 <i>id-di-in ṭe₄-e[m a-wa-at]</i> 56 <i>id-bu-bu-nim-ma a-na še-er be-lí-ia</i> 57 <i>aš-pu-ra-am be-lí li-iš₇-ta-al-ma</i> 58 <i>ša šar-ru-ti-šu GAL li-pu-úš</i>

47 The subject of the verbs in lines 17–22 has been understood in two ways. I have followed most translators by interpreting the initial form as a first-person singular verb: “I conducted (him)” (*ú-še-er-di-ma*, line 17). The subsequent forms, then, are treated as third-person forms: “he brought” (*ú-bi-il*, lines 18, 19, 22; ARM(T) 26/1: 427; Heimpel 2003, 252–54; Nissinen 2003, 30–32). According to this interpretation, an overarching interest of the letter is to establish Lupahum’s consistency and credibility as an advisor in the war against Eshnunna. In this case, the missive seems to introduce the *āpilum*-prophet’s message from Tuttul (lines 5–16) only to show his consistency by recounting the messages he gave at Der (lines 16–28). Thereafter, Sammetar reminded the king of Lupahum’s track record in dealing with the conflict with the Yamina (lines 29–40) and provided confirmation of Lupahum’s message by appealing to an outside source, a *qammātum*-prophetess (lines 41–57). More recently, however, Durand has suggested that all these verbs should be understood as first-person singular forms in which Sammetar is the subject of the verb forms (Durand 2012, 260–61).

48 The erasure seems to be best understood as the scribe’s efforts to avoid an error of omission, namely the *ḪU* sign.

Lines	Lastly, I immediately sent Abi-Epuh (to	58 <i>ù aš-šum ia-an-ši-ib^d da-gan pì-iḫ-ri-im</i>
58–63	find) Yanšib-Dagan, the regular conscript	59 <i>LÚ da-aš-ra-an^{ki} ša a-na qa-qa-di-šu na-ka-si-im be-lí</i>
	from Dashran, (about) whom my lord wrote	<i>iš-pu-ra-am qa-tam</i>
	(with instructions) to cut off his head. That	60 <i>a-na qa-tim a-bi-e-pu-uḫ aš-pu-ur lú ša-a-ti ú-ul i-mu-</i>
	man was not found, so he put his household	<i>ru-ma É-sú ù ni-[š]_{e20}/š[u]</i>
	and his people in[to] slavery. The next day a	61 <i>‘a’-[na ḫ]R-du-ti [m i]d-di-in i-na ša-ni-i-im u₄-mi-im</i>
	tablet from Yasim-Dagan reached [me], say-	<i>ṭup-pí ia-si-im^d da-gan ik-š[u-dam</i>
	ing: “That man has arrived here with me!”	62 <i>[u]m-ma-mi lú šu-ú ik-ta-áš-dam i-na-an-na an-ni-</i>
	Let my lord write [to me] whether or not I	<i>tam la an-ni-tam be-lí li-iš-pu-ra-[am]</i>
	should release his family.	63 <i>ni-še₂₀-šu lu-wa-aš-še-er</i>

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THE THIRD MASCULINE SINGULAR SUFFIX ON NOUNS
WRITTEN WITH *HEH MATER*

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THE FOLLOWING STUDY REPRESENTS AN expansion of some of the research I conducted on the third masculine singular (hereafter, 3ms) suffix with *heh mater* found in the Wisdom of Ben Sira.¹ The present paper offers more evidence concerning the suffix in the Masoretic Text (MT) and Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) than I was able to offer in that previous work. I am thrilled to be able to offer this study to my doctor-father in honor of his birthday, as well as in recognition of the overwhelming amount of assistance and advice he provided during the writing of my dissertation and during my course work.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The most recent work, to my knowledge, dealing exclusively with the 3ms suffix spelled with a *heh mater* is that by Ian Young.² In his paper, Young lists the examples of the suffix in the MT and the instances found in the DSS that are connected specifically with the biblical text, in biblical Qumran scrolls, and in the Peshar to Nahum (4Q169). Young concludes correctly that the distribution of the suffix in the MT suggests the suffix was a recognized marker for the 3ms suffix throughout the Bible for scribes from different eras, even scribes from relatively late times.³ Furthermore, he notes the suffix occurs in certain concentrations and seems dominant on particular words. He suggests that among the possible reasons a scribe might use the *heh* instead of the more common *waw* is to add variety to the text (as an archaism)⁴ or it might occur as a mistake (i.e., as an Aramaism).⁵

The present study attempts to improve on Young's findings by providing further evidence for the suffix marked by *heh* among the DSS, as well as providing other possible factors influencing the spelling of the suffix with a *heh mater* instead of a *waw*. The use of the same *heh mater* to mark final -ō vowels (e.g., פֶּרַעַה "Pharaoh") in a variety of texts (both biblical and nonbiblical) is the first important thing to note. Such spellings imply that the use of *heh* to mark the 3ms suffix (when this suffix had already developed into -ō [*< -ahū*]) was a natural component of the orthographic system used by scribes. It seems that graphic and phonetic similarity between words with final -ō spelled with *heh* likely played a key role in encouraging the use of the *heh mater* to mark the suffix.⁶ These findings, demonstrated in the MT, the Wisdom of Ben Sira (Sir), and the DSS, suggest Young's suspicion that the *heh mater* for the suffix emerged during the trans-

1 Reymond 2018.

2 Young 2001.

3 Ibid., 240.

4 Ibid., 229, 240.

5 In relation to variety, Young refers to Barr 1989, 194.

6 Note the occasional variation of לִי and לָא, perhaps in some cases intentional. See Shepherd 2014. Thanks to H. Hardy for this reference.

mission of the text is correct.⁷ This implies, furthermore, that although the use of the *heh mater* to mark the 3ms pronominal suffix may be archaic (since it is common in preexilic texts, but rare afterward), it does not seem to be used in an archaistic manner, that is, as a linguistic anachronism.

HEH MATER TO MARK WORD-FINAL - \bar{o} IN THE MT

Before considering the use of the *heh mater* to mark the 3ms pronominal suffix, it bears considering how this same vowel is marked with *heh* in other words. Through this exercise, it will be seen that such indication of final - \bar{o} is part of the orthographic system used by ancient Hebrew scribes. In the MT, final - \bar{o} is sometimes marked with a *heh mater*, especially with particular names and/or titles, including יְרִיחוֹ “Jericho,” נֶחֱ “Necho,” פַּרְעֹה “Pharaoh,” שִׁילֹה “Shiloh,” שׁוֹכֶה/שָׁכָה “Socoh,” שְׁלֹמֹה “Solomon,” as well as in certain common short words, specifically אֵיכָה “where,” אֵיפֶה “where,” זֶה “this,” כֹּה “thus,” and פֹּה “here.”⁸ In addition, *qal* infinitives absolute of etymological III-*waw/yodh* roots usually mark their final - \bar{o} with a *heh mater*.⁹

It should be noted, however, that at least for the Leningrad Codex B19^A (LC) the spelling of some of these words was not uniform and admitted of variations, such that we find יְרִיחוֹ and יֶרֶחוֹ (fifty-six times vs. once with *heh*), נֶחֱ (four times vs. four times with *heh*), שׁוֹכֶה in the Judean hills (twice vs. twice with *heh*), שׁוֹכֶה near Hebron (once vs. once with *heh*), שִׁילֹה and שָׁלוֹ (eleven times vs. twenty-two times with *heh*), זֶה (twice vs. eleven times with *heh*), פֹּה (twenty-four times vs. fifty-seven times with *heh*). In addition, *qal* infinitives absolute without *heh*¹⁰ occur in about a third of the total number of examples (thirty times in all vs. sixty-one with *heh*).¹¹ Moreover, it is helpful to notice that sometimes the two spellings can occur in the same verse.¹²

While the variation in the spelling of certain words seems to defy systematic explanation (as with פֹּה vs. פֹּה in Ezekiel), in other cases one can perceive some patterns. For example, for certain words, such as נֶחֱ/נֶחֱ and the shared place name שׁוֹכֶה/שָׁכָה, the distribution suggests the spelling with *heh* was common in earlier periods,¹³ while the spelling with *waw* was more common in later periods.¹⁴

More interesting and relevant for our topic is the tendency for the spelling of final - \bar{o} to be informed, in part, by the spelling of neighboring words.¹⁵ This tendency is especially clear in the spelling of the *qal* infinitives absolute. These examples are important because they form a good parallel with the variation in spelling of the 3ms suffix. That is, in both cases the ending - \bar{o} is part of the morphology of the word/suffix and, as such, can occur on or as part of a variety of words and roots.

As mentioned above, roughly two-thirds (sixty-one examples) of these particular verb forms are spelled with final *heh*, while one-third (thirty examples) are spelled with final *waw*. The spelling of the *qal* infin-

7 I do not believe, however, that this possibility eliminates the usefulness of so-called archaic linguistic features in helping to isolate possibly early texts in the Bible. Such factors are some among a number of others that can be evaluated in order to infer the possible date of a text.

8 For most of the examples, see Joüon and Muraoka (1991, §7b) and Andersen and Forbes (1986, 183–85).

9 E.g., רָאָה in Exod. 3:7. While infinitives absolute (and construct) from etymological III-*waw/yodh* roots occur in other stems with final - \bar{o} , these forms are very rare and often marked with *heh* (e.g., the *niphal* נִדְמָה [Hos. 10:15]; 1] לְהִרְאֹה Sam. 3:21] vs. the only examples of the *poel* הִרְוּ וְהִגּוּ “conceiving and muttering” [Isa. 59:11]).

10 E.g., רָאָה in Gen. 26:28.

11 In some cases, very common words such as פַּרְעֹה “Pharaoh,” שְׁלֹמֹה “Solomon,” as well as כֹּה “thus” are spelled uniformly in the LC with *heh*. The search for examples was performed through Accordance software. There are three cases in which the infinitive absolute bears the ending of the infinitive construct, -ת, according to this search: שָׁתוֹת (Isa. 22:13); רָאוֹת as a *Qere* to MT רִאִית (Isa. 42:20); אָלוֹת (Hos. 10:4). These examples were not included in the tabulations below.

12 שִׁילֹה and שָׁלוֹ in 1 Sam. 3:21; מָפָה וּמָפוֹ in Ezek. 40:10; שָׁתוֹ and שָׁתָה in Jer. 49:12. Note, too, at least one alternative spelling with an *aleph* appears פָּאָה in Job 38:11; cf. זֹאת, *passim*.

13 נֶחֱ in 2 Kgs. 23:29, 33, 34, 35 and שׁוֹכֶה/שָׁכָה in Josh. 15:35, 38; 1 Sam. 15:1 (2×).

14 נֶחֱ in Jer. 46:2; 2 Chron. 35:20, 22; 36:4 and שׁוֹכֶה in 1 Chron. 4:18; 2 Chron. 11:7; 28:18.

15 We cannot, of course, hope for total consistency in spelling (see Barr 1989, 194).

itives absolute of etymological III-*waw/yodh* roots with *heh* seems to follow the tendency to spell all etymological III-*waw/yodh* verb forms ending in a vowel with a *heh mater* (e.g., the 3ms perfect בָּנָה, the 3ms imperfect and related forms יִבְנֶה; the ms imperative בִּנֵּה; the ms active participle בּוֹנֶה).¹⁶ Given this tendency, it is the spelling of the infinitive absolute with *waw* that seems particularly unusual. One might initially suspect the cases with *waw* are concentrated in the latest books of the Bible based on the distributions of the names “Necho” and “Socoh” described above, but this conclusion is not correct. The infinitives absolute marked with *waw* appear in the Pentateuch (in the earliest sources), 1 and 2 Samuel, First Isaiah,¹⁷ and Micah, as well as in later books, such as Jeremiah, Lamentations, and Ezekiel. Instead, I believe two interrelated factors influence the spelling with *waw*: (1) proximity to other words, especially verb forms that end with a *waw mater*, and (2) the graphic similarity with the masculine plural imperative.

Of the sixty-one spellings with final *heh mater*, forty-two (69%) are directly preceded and/or followed by a word (not including particles) with a final *heh mater* (usually indicating -e or -ā of an etymologically related finite verb form, as in the phrase דָּלָה דָּלָה “he even drew water”¹⁸), but not by a word with a final *waw mater*.¹⁹ Of the thirty examples of the *qal* infinitives absolute with final *waw mater*, only fourteen (47%) are preceded and/or followed by a word with a *heh mater* but not by a word with a *waw mater*.²⁰ All things being equal, one would expect the two spellings of the infinitive absolute to be equally distributed. The incongruity suggests a preference for infinitives absolute with *heh* to accompany finite verbs with similar graphic endings.

Comparison of the spellings with final *waw mater* is even more striking: There are only five cases (8% of the total of sixty-one examples) in which the *qal* infinitive absolute with *heh mater* is directly preceded and/or followed by a word with a final *waw mater* but not by a word with a final *heh mater*.²¹ On the other hand, there are eleven cases (37% of the total of thirty examples) in which the *qal* infinitive absolute with *waw mater* is directly preceded and/or followed by a word with a final *waw mater* but not by a word with a *heh mater*.²²

The tendency seems to be well represented by Jeremiah 49:12, where we find the phrases שָׁתוּ יִשְׁתּוּ “they will still drink” but then נָקָה תִּנָּקָה “(you who) should be entirely free of punishment” and שָׁתָה תִּשְׁתָּה “you must certainly drink.”²³ In most cases, where the infinitive absolute ends with *waw* and a neighboring word ends with a *waw mater* too, the verb accompanying the infinitive absolute is a verb form ending in -ū. In

16 The masculine singular passive participle בָּנוּי is not an exception, since it ends in a consonantal *yodh*. The fact that the masculine singular imperative is spelled with a final *heh mater* instead of a *yodh* suggests the spelling of the imperative is at least partially influenced by the spelling of the imperfect.

17 E.g., 1 Isa. 6:9.

18 Exod. 2:19.

19 In Exodus 19:13 the finite verb and infinitive absolute appear with *heh*, though the infinitive absolute is preceded by וְ. In 2 Kings 3:16, one finds the tetragrammaton directly preceding the infinitive absolute with *heh*. These occurrences were not included in the count of forty-two.

20 In four cases, the construction consisted of the infinitive absolute הָיָה followed by a finite form of the same verb (Gen. 18:18; Num. 30:7; Jer. 15:18; Ezek. 20:32); in another four cases we find הָיָה followed by a finite form of the same verb (Ezek. 3:21; 18:28; 33:15, 16).

21 Lev. 25:14; 2 Sam. 15:30; Isa. 21:5; Esth. 9:17, 18. The infinitive absolute with final *heh mater* also appears in three places where one of the surrounding words ends with a *waw* and another ends with *heh* (אֲזַיְרָה יִיָּרָה [Exod. 19:13]; וְעָלוּ עָלָה וּבָכָה [2 Sam. 15:30]; וְעֵין יָמִינוּ בָּהָה תִּבְכֶּה [Zech. 11: 17]). A still different exception is אֶמְרִלֹּא חִיָּה for אֶמְרִלֹּא חִיָּה [2 Kgs. 8:10]. These occurrences were not counted in the above tabulation.

22 E.g., וַיֹּאמְרוּ רָאוּ רָאִינוּ “they said we see clearly” (Gen. 26:28). Other examples of the *qal* infinitive absolute with final *waw mater* are in Exodus 32:6; 1 Samuel 6:12; Isaiah 6:9; Jeremiah 7:5; 22:4; 22:10; 25:28; 49:12; 50:4; and Micah 1:10. In other cases, the appearance of the final *waw mater* on a *qal* infinitive absolute may be connected with the absence of a neighboring word with final *heh mater* combined with an immediately preceding or following *waw* conjunction (as in וְשָׁתוּ [Isa. 22:13]) or final *waw* consonant (as in וְשָׁאָהָרָו [Isa. 59:4]).

23 The examples are largely paralleled in the biblical DSS, though occasionally there is variation, as with הִיָּה תִּהְיֶה in 4Q27 (4QNum^b) at Numbers 30:7 for MT הִרָו; הָיָה תִּהְיֶה in 1QIsa^a at Isaiah 59:4 for MT הָרָו. The word וּבָכּוּ 11Q5 (11QPs^a) at Psalm 126:6 for MT וּבָכָה is probably better understood as “they will weep,” given the plural participle that follows. For the unexpected שָׁתוּ of Isaiah 22:13 in the MT, 1QIsa^a has שָׁתוּת, while 4Q55 (4QIsa^a) has שָׁתָה and 4Q57 (4QIsa^a) has שָׁתוּ.

contrast, there are only two passages where an infinitive absolute marked with *heh* is close to a verb form that ends in *-ū*.²⁴ The first of these passages, 2 Samuel 15:30 (וַעֲלֵי עֲלָה וּבֹכָה), contains a preceding participial phrase (עֲלָה וּבֹכָה) that could have influenced the spelling of the following paralleled infinitives absolute with *heh*.²⁵ The second of these occurrences, in Isaiah 21:5 (שָׁתָה קוֹמוֹ), is preceded by another verbal phrase with infinitive absolute (צָפָה הַצִּפִּית).

These distributions suggest that, although spelling of the *qal* infinitive absolute of etymological III-*waw/yodh* roots could vary (based probably on numerous factors, including the whim of the scribe), the use of one *mater* instead of the other correlates with the spelling of nearby words in a significant number of examples. In essence, the use of a final *waw mater* on infinitives absolute seems to be discouraged by the presence of neighboring words (especially the etymologically related finite forms) that carry a final *heh mater*; and the use of a final *waw mater* on infinitives absolute seems to be encouraged by the presence of neighboring words (especially verb forms) bearing a final *waw mater*.²⁶ In addition to the examples cited above, note וְשָׁתוּ וַיִּקְמוּ “and drink, and they arose” (Exod. 32:6) and וַיִּגְעוּ וְלֹא־סָרוּ “and lowing, and they did not turn.”²⁷

In addition, it is my suspicion that the spelling of the infinitive absolute with *waw* (e.g., בָּבוּ) was also influenced by the spelling of the *waw* of the masculine plural imperative (e.g., בָּבוּ).²⁸ This suspicion is based on the fact that where one finds the infinitive absolute with final *waw mater*, the neighboring (and syntactically associated) verb form is often a *qal* masculine plural imperative²⁹ or a masculine plural imperfect or jussive.³⁰ It is easy, I think, to imagine how the spelling of the masculine plural imperative form of a verb (e.g., בָּבוּ)—or even the third common plural perfect form בָּבוּ—would suggest to a scribe the possible spelling of the infinitive absolute in a similar manner (i.e., בָּבוּ), especially if the spelling of the infinitive absolute (with *waw* or *heh*) were simply a matter of the scribe’s choice. The link between the masculine plural imperative and the plural imperfect forms is less transparent. Still, since, from an orthographic and morphological perspective, imperatival forms seem to be closely linked with imperfect forms (note, e.g., תִּשָּׁב/תִּשְׁב, תִּבְנֶה/תִּבְנֶה, and תִּסָּב/תִּסָּב), it seems likely to me that a scribe would associate the imperfect and imperative forms with each other. By extension, it seems this association could have influenced a scribe to write the infinitive absolute with a *waw* instead of a *heh*.

Moreover, it seems likely that in certain places phonetically similar words from the same verse may have affected the spelling of the infinitive absolute with *waw*, as with מְרִימָרְוּ . . . מְרִימָרְוּ “my innards churn . . . I was severely rebellious.”³¹ And certain commonly occurring forms may have had a similar effect, as with הָיוּ “they were”³² and הָיוּ לֹא תִהְיֶה “it will certainly not be.”³³ Such influence of neighboring words on

24 2 Sam. 15:30; Isa. 21:5.

25 In Isaiah 21:5, the infinitive absolute with *heh* (שָׁתָה) is followed by the masculine plural imperative, which however is part of the following clause.

26 Influence of neighboring words on spelling is also found in other ways. E.g., the word מְבֹא is spelled and pronounced as מְבֹא due to proximity to מוֹצֵא (see 2 Sam. 3:25; Ezek. 43:11).

27 1 Sam. 6:12.

28 Perhaps also by the third common plural perfect (e.g., בָּבוּ).

29 Isa. 6:9; Jer. 22:10.

30 Jer. 7:5; 22:4; 25:28; 49:12; 50:4; Mic. 1:10. By imperfect and perfect, I mean both the prefix and suffix conjugations, with or without the *waw*-consecutive forms. In most cases, the finite form is part of the same clause as the infinitive absolute. In all but one case (הָלֹךְ וּבָבוּ יִלְכוּ “they went along, weeping” [Jer. 50:4]), the infinitive absolute is etymologically related to the finite forms with which it is associated.

31 Lam. 1:20.

32 Ezek. 20:20, 24.

33 Ezek. 20:32. Note too יִהְיֶה “they will be” (Gen. 17:16) vs. הָיוּ יִהְיֶה (Gen. 18:18); יִהְיֶה “they will be” (Num. 29:13; 31:3) vs. הָיוּ תִהְיֶה (Num. 30:7); and עָשׂוּ “they did” (Ezek. 29:20) vs. עָשׂוּ יַעֲשֶׂה “he will certainly do” (Ezek. 31:11). In Jeremiah 15:18 one also finds עָשׂוּ, though without a finite form ending in *waw* in the same or neighboring chapter, and in Jeremiah 4:18 one finds עָשׂוּ without a finite form in the same or neighboring chapter. Overall, the infinitive absolute of הִיָּה is spelled with *waw* four times and with *heh* twice; by contrast, the infinitive absolute of עָשָׂה is spelled with *waw* four times and with *heh* ten times.

each other is also reflected in other cases of abnormal or unexpected spellings; note, for example, how the second feminine singular suffix is spelled in its Aramaic form (i.e., *־כי*) in close proximity to the feminine singular imperative of *הלך* (i.e., *לְכִי*), especially where it can be construed as the prepositional phrase “for yourself” as in Song 2:13, which reads: “arise for yourself [*קוּמִי לְכִי*], my darling, my beauty, and come for yourself [*וּלְכִי־לְךָ*].”³⁴

The relevance of this digression on the spelling of infinitives absolute will become clear as we try to explain the spelling of the 3ms suffix. As will be detailed below, the more unusual spelling of the 3ms suffix with *heh* seems also to be related to its proximity to other words spelled with final *heh mater*, as well as to the graphic similarity between the word with 3ms *heh* suffix and other words ending in a final *heh mater*. Finally, it seems important to note the concentration in Jeremiah and Ezekiel of infinitives absolute that vary their spelling. A similar variation appears in these books with the 3ms suffix.³⁵

THIRD MASCULINE SINGULAR SUFFIX WITH *HEH MATER* IN THE PREEXILIC INSCRIPTIONS

In preexilic Hebrew inscriptions, the 3ms suffix is marked with *heh* on nouns and perfect verbs almost exclusively.³⁶ Curiously, however, in the Ketef Hinnom silver scrolls (containing a text something like Num. 6:24–26), the text of plaque/amulet 1, line 11, appears to attest a *waw* in *בו* “in it,” though the letters are difficult to read.³⁷ Furthermore, it bears remarking that where the 3ms *heh* suffix was thought to occur in these inscriptions (in *משכבה* “his bed” [lines 8–9] and *גאלה* “his redeemer” or “he redeemed him” [lines 11–12]³⁸), recent editions provide different readings: *ברכה* “blessing” in lines 8–9 and the word “redemption” in lines 11–12.³⁹ The other example of the simple *waw* may occur in the Siloam Tunnel inscription in *רעו* “his friend” (in lines 2, 3, and 4), whose single *mater* has inspired much comment.⁴⁰

Blau (1970, 121) notes the Proto-Hebrew /s/ phoneme of *ספק* “to clap” is spelled with *sin* (at Job 27:23; Isa. 2:6) due to the similarly spelled root *שפק* “to be enough.”

34 Cf. *קוּמִי לְךָ* in 4Q107 (4QCant^b) at Song 2:13. The same trigger for the spelling of the second feminine singular suffix in its Aramaic-like form appears in 2 Kings 4:3 (*שָׁכְנִי . . . לְכִי*; *Ketiv*); 4:7 (*נָשִׁי . . . בְּנִי . . . לְכִי*; *Ketiv*).

35 It bears mentioning that the same kinds of variation in spelling observed above in the LC can be found between other manuscripts of the MT. For example, what is *שלה* in the LC is spelled with a final *waw* in two manuscripts (Kennicott’s nos. 288, 601) at Joshua 18:9; in one manuscript (no. 602) at Joshua 19:51; in one manuscript (no. 112) at Joshua 22:9. *פה* in the LC is spelled with *waw* in four manuscripts in its first attestation at Ezekiel 40:10, in two manuscripts in its second attestation, and in ten manuscripts in its third, while *פו* is spelled with *heh* in at least eighteen manuscripts at the same verse in Ezekiel. Such examples are easily multiplied. In the case of the infinitives absolute discussed above, other manuscripts often attest a *heh mater* where the LC has a *waw*, due no doubt to the frequency and dominance of this spelling. There are very few cases where an infinitive absolute marked with a final *heh mater* in the LC is attested in other manuscripts with a *waw* (e.g., *שְׁתֵּה* in Jer. 49:12 appears as *שתו* in eight manuscripts). In other cases, especially where the accompanying finite verb is an imperfect form, the infinitive absolute is consistently spelled with a *heh mater*.

36 See Gogel 1998, 159, 164; Renz 2003, 7, 9.

37 Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2004, 268.

38 See, e.g., Tov 2013, 111 n. 194.

39 See Ahituv 2008, 51; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2004, 267.

40 Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2004, 502; Ahituv 2008, 37; Gogel 1998, 156–57 n. 181. Although the letters may in fact represent *re’ew* “his friends,” as many have suggested, it bears considering whether the word “friend, companion” really had two forms in ancient Hebrew, *רעהו* which with suffix was realized in the MT as *רעהו* (see Zevitt 1980, 19), and *רע* which was realized in the MT—albeit only once—as *רעו*. Such a distribution would loosely follow the pattern of *קצהו* (from *קצה*) at Genesis 47:21 (and elsewhere) and *קצו* (from *קץ*) at Isaiah 37:24 (and elsewhere). See Rendsburg and Schniedewind 2010, 192–93. Such an understanding of *רעו* might be supported by the spelling of *רע* with 3ms *heh* suffix among the DSS, as described below.

AMBIGUITIES INVOLVING THE THIRD MASCULINE SINGULAR SUFFIX WITH *HEH MATER* IN THE MT

In the MT (specifically in the LC), the 3ms suffix with *heh mater* occurs only fifty-five times, according to Young⁴¹ and Driver.⁴² Additional possible cases of confusion involving a *heh mater* marking the 3ms suffix are also listed by Driver.⁴³ The problem with some of these cases is that a possible feminine antecedent can be found.⁴⁴ Thus one cannot conclude easily that all these passages contain a confusion between the third feminine singular (hereafter, 3fs) and 3ms suffixes. In addition, it is not the case that pronouns and pronominal elements retain the same gender in the Bible. Sometimes the gender of verbs and suffixes alter with little apparent reason, as in Deuteronomy 17:19, where the initial verb is 3fs “it (i.e., Torah) will be with him,” but the suffix in the next clause is 3ms, “he will read in it” (בּוֹ). Here the shift in gender is either because the antecedent is the word “copy” (מִשְׁנָה) from the preceding verse or because the masculine grammatical gender is the default gender.⁴⁵ Pronouns sometimes switch, however, in the opposite direction; for example, in Isaiah 15:3 the pronouns begin as masculine, then switch to feminine before switching back to masculine: “in its (masculine—i.e., Moab’s [?]) streets they gird in sack and over its (feminine—i.e., the city of Dibon’s [?]) corners and over its (feminine) plazas all of it (masculine = כָּלָה) wails . . .”

As in this last example, since the *heh* suffix is ambiguous in the consonantal text, it might be asked whether or not this (and other 3ms *heh* suffixes) was originally (or in some earlier version of the text), in fact, a feminine pronoun. Other similar cases are not difficult to find. For example, given the ambiguous gender of the word “ark” (אֲרוֹן), one wonders whether in the phrase בָּנְחָה “when it (i.e., the ark) rested . . .”⁴⁶ the *heh* could be construed as 3fs. Note similarly נִסְכָּה “its libation” in Leviticus 23:13, which seems to take as antecedent כֶּבֶשׂ “lamb” from the preceding verse, though מִנְחָה “offering” at the beginning of the same verse may also be the antecedent. In another case, the parallelism of Jeremiah 22:18 might suggest the 3ms *heh* suffix be interpreted as 3fs. The verse reads in part: “They will not lament for him (i.e., Jehoiakim): ‘Alas, my brother; alas, sister’; they will not lament for him: ‘Alas, lord; alas, his majesty [הֹדָה].” Given the preceding feminine reference (“sister”) in parallel with “majesty,” it seems at least possible that הֹדָה should be construed instead as *הֹדָה “her majesty,” though admittedly parallelism does not demand exact correspondences between the positionally parallel words.

In other cases, the context of the passage suggests the relevant suffix should be 3ms, though the immediately preceding words might have confused a scribe at some point during the text’s early transmission. That is, the Masoretic vocalization implies the correct sense, though the consonantal spelling might suggest an early scribe mistakenly thought the suffix should be feminine. For example, in Ezekiel 48:8 and 10, one finds the phrase בְּתוֹכֹה “in its midst,” though the antecedent to the suffix would seem to be feminine (תְּרוֹמַת־הַקֹּדֶשׁ). The reason for the switch in gender is presumably encouraged by the immediately preceding noun

41 Young 2001, 228.

42 Driver 1913, xxxii–xxxiii. The search through Accordance software misses the example of 2 Kings 9:25, while also noting some irrelevant examples (e.g., שָׁמְנָה in Num. 4:9; וַיִּתְּנָה in 2 Kgs. 22:5 [a defective form of the suffix whose pronunciation is made explicit in the marginal *Qere* spelling]; עֲגֻבָּתָה in Ezek. 23:11). In other medieval and Renaissance manuscripts the distribution is different, with some manuscripts showing more examples, some fewer. Andersen and Forbes (1986, 183) count fifty-five examples, though they list only fifty-four (ibid., 184), including one case where the LC has a *waw* but rabbinic tradition has a *heh* (אֶהְיֶה in Gen. 26:25, but אֶהְיֶה in at least twenty-five medieval/Renaissance manuscripts, according to Kennicott 1776–80, 1: 47) and one example where the LC has a *heh* with preceding *qamets* (מִנְחָה in Gen. 49:15), in this case the following adjective טוֹב implying that the *heh* ending is the 3ms suffix. Andersen and Forbes do not list the example of עָזָה in Habakkuk 3:4.

43 At Gen. 49:10 (שִׁילוֹה “Shiloh” in the MT vs. שָׁלוֹה “what is his” implied by the versions); 1 Sam. 14:27; 2 Sam. 21:1 (בֵּית הַדְּמִים “house of blood” in the MT for an earlier בֵּיתָה “his house”); Isa. 30:33; Ezek. 43:13.

44 As in “hand” in 1 Sam. 14:27.

45 GKC (§135o) remark on a “weakening in the distinction of gender,” which results in the use of masculine pronouns, though the antecedents are feminine. Similar preferences for masculine forms are found with verbs where a disparity appears between verb and subject (GKC, §145p, t, u). For more on this topic, see Hardy 2022.

46 Num. 10:36.

and verb, which are both masculine (וְהָיָה מְקֻדָּשׁ [v. 8]; וְהָיָה מְקֻדָּשׁ-יְהוָה [v. 10]). The reverse situation occurs with similar words in Ezekiel. At the end of Ezekiel 48:15 we find וְהָיְתָה הָעִיר בְּתוֹכָהּ “and the city will be in its midst,” where the antecedent to the suffix is הַנּוֹתָר “the remainder” from the beginning of the verse. The same thing happens in Ezekiel 48:21, where one reads the phrase וְהָיְתָה תְּרוּמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּתוֹכָהּ “and the sacred contribution will be in its midst.” Here it is conceivable that an earlier scribe indicated the suffix as 3fs due to attraction of the preceding feminine noun and verb and that this form remained in the written tradition, though the oral Masoretic tradition indicated the suffix as 3ms.⁴⁷ The *heh mater* allowed for either vocalization. On the other hand, it might be the case that the *heh mater* for the 3ms suffix is due to the frequency of this orthography in Ezekiel.

In still another case, the peculiar construction of a phrase might have contributed to confusion. The 3ms suffix is marked with *heh* in Deuteronomy 34:7: “. . . his (i.e., Moses’s) eye was not dimmed and his vigor [לְחָה] had not departed [נָס].” The word “vigor” is more commonly associated with moisture, and, as such, the *heh* suffix might be construed as 3fs, with the antecedent being “eye.” In fact, it has been argued elsewhere by Menahem Kister, and independently by me, that in Ben Sira⁴⁸ the same sequence of letters (נס לחה) should be construed as referring to the eye’s liquid: “God did not create something more wicked than the eye, thus, due to anything its fluid escapes.”⁴⁹

In still other cases, one wonders whether confusion has emerged between the *heh mater* of the feminine ending -ā and the 3ms suffix. For example, the one occurrence of the noun שֹׁדֶךְ “branch” appears with the 3ms suffix marked with *heh mater*—שֹׁדְכָה (Judg. 9:49)—and thus resembles the feminine noun שֹׁדֶכֶת “branch,” also attested just once in the preceding verse (v. 48). Similarly, note שִׁירָה “his song” (Ps. 42:9) versus שִׁירָה “song” (passim). Such possible confusions may, on the other hand, reflect the tendency to spell the 3ms suffix with *heh* when a similar-looking or similar-sounding word is spelled elsewhere with a final *heh mater*, as explained below.

WHERE THE THIRD MASCULINE SINGULAR SUFFIX WITH *HEH MATER* OCCURS

As I have mentioned in a paper that treats the 3ms *heh* suffix in Ben Sira,⁵⁰ the occurrences in the MT seem to appear within certain parameters. The suffix with *heh* seems concentrated in certain texts, as Young⁵¹ has already noted. Roughly half the examples (i.e., twenty-five) occur in the three books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and an additional five occur in Hosea, Nahum, and Habakkuk. And even certain portions of texts see a particularly high incidence of this orthography. Consider, for example, the three occurrences in Ezekiel 48 (תְּבוּאָתָהּ [v. 18]; בְּתוֹכָהּ [vv. 15, 21]), or how the suffix occurs twice in Exodus 22 (בְּעִירָהּ “his beast” [v. 4]; כְּסוּתָהּ “his covering” [v. 26]), in each case corresponding graphically, phonetically, and semantically to words in a single verse, Genesis 49:11 (עִירָהּ “his donkey”; סוּתָהּ “his robe”). Furthermore, the *heh mater* for the suffix occurs repeatedly on certain words: אֹהֶלָהּ “his tent” occurs four times in Genesis (vs. אֹהֶל three times); כֻּלָּהּ “all of it” eight times in Jeremiah (vs. כָּל twice in one verse); הַמִּזְוָהּ “his multitude” four times in Ezekiel (vs. הַמִּזְוָה once).⁵²

As demonstrated in the correspondences between Genesis 49:11 and Exodus 22 just mentioned, the *heh mater* marking the 3ms suffix occurs on graphically and phonetically similar words; thus אֹהֶלָהּ “his tent” (e.g., Gen. 13:3) corresponds to הָאֹהֶל “to the tent” (Gen. 18:6 and seven other times); פָּרַעָה “he neglected it” (Exod. 32:25) corresponds to פֶּרַעָה “Pharaoh” (passim); בִּרְעָה “in its shouting” (Exod. 32:17) to בְּעִירָהּ “his

47 Cf. וְהָיְתָה תְּבוּאָתָהּ in Ezek. 48:18.

48 Sir 31:13, Ms B.

49 On הֶלֶק and the verse in general, see Kister 1999, 161; also Reymond 2018.

50 Reymond 2018.

51 Young 2001, 240.

52 See *ibid.*, 230–31. כֻּלָּהּ also occurs in Isa. 15:3, 16:7; Ezek. 11:15; 20:40; 36:10; Hos. 13:2; Nah. 2:1; Hab. 1:9, 15; תְּבוּאָתָהּ occurs in Jer. 2:3; Ezek. 48:18; בְּתוֹכָהּ occurs in Ezek. 48:15, 21. On אֹהֶלָהּ, see Baden 2022.

beast" (Exod. 22:4),⁵³ קָבַהּ "he cursed him" (Num. 23:8) to קָבַהּ "curse!" (Num. 22:11, 17) as well as קָבַהּ "large tent" (Num. 25:8) and קָבַהּ "stomach" (Deut. 18:3 and with suffix קָבַתָּה in Num. 25:8); שׁוֹכָה "its branch" (Judg. 9:49) and the similar-sounding (though not identical) סִכָּה "its lair" (Pss. 10:9; 27:5) to שׁוֹכָה "Sokoh" (passim); שְׁלֵשָׁה "his aide" (2 Kings 9:25, with *Qere* שְׁלֹשָׁה) to שְׁלֵשָׁה "three" (passim); עֲזָרָה ". . . his help" (Ezek. 12:14, with *Qere* עֲזָרוּ) to אֲזָרָה "I will scatter" in that same verse; מְעֻזָּה "his refuge" (Dan. 11:10) to עֲזָה "his strength" (Hab. 3:4); the last word also corresponds in its consonants to עֲזָה "Gaza" (passim).⁵⁴

Sometimes the word with 3ms *heh* suffix has a byform with a final *heh mater*, thus שׁוֹכָה "its branch" (Judg. 9:49) and שׁוֹכָה "branch" (Judg. 9:48); קֶצֶה "his end" (2 Kings 19:23 = קֶצֶו in Isa. 37:24) and קֶצֶה, קֶצֶה, קֶצֶה "end"; עֲזָרָה "his help" (Ezek. 12:14) and עֲזָרָה "help" (passim; and cf. עֲזָרָה "enclosure" Ezek. 43:14); סִכָּה "its lair" (Pss. 10:9; 27:5) and סִכָּה "booth" (passim); שִׁירָה "his song" (Ps. 42:9) and שִׁירָה "song" (passim).

In some cases, the 3ms *heh* suffix may have been encouraged by proximity to other words ending in a *heh mater*: הָיָה שָׁם אֹהֶלָה בְּתֵּהֶלָה "(where) his tent had been in the beginning" (Gen. 13:3); אֹהֶלָה מְהֵלָה "his tent beyond . . ." (Gen. 35:21); עִירָה וְלִעֲרָקָה ". . . his ass, and to a vine . . ." (Gen. 49:11); בְּעִירָה "his beast" (Exod. 22:4) appears before בְּעִירָה "burning" in the next verse; בָּהּ כָּל־מְלָאכָה "in it all work" (Jer. 17:24); פֶּרְעֵה וְכָל־הַמִּזְנֶה "Pharaoh and all his multitude" (Ezek. 31:18; 32:32); וְהָיְתָה הָעִיר בְּכֹתֶהּ "and the city will be in its midst" (Ezek. 48:15); וְהָיְתָה תְּבוּאָתָהּ "its produce will be" (Ezek. 48:18); וּבִלְיָלָה שִׁירָה "at night his song" (Ps. 42:9); וְיִתְגַּדְּרוּ עַד־מְעֻזָּה (for וְיִתְגַּדְּרוּ) "it (i.e., the multitude) will wage war up to his fortress" (Dan. 11:10).⁵⁵

In almost all cases there seems to be good reason to believe the orthography of Hebrew in the era of the exile and afterward allowed for certain variation in the spelling of the final *-ō* vowel. This view accords with the flexible nature of indicating the final *-ō* in the Masoretic tradition in general, even in words where it was conventional to spell the vowel with a *heh mater*. It is not surprising, therefore, that the 3ms suffix, *-ō*, could also be indicated with either *waw* or *heh mater*.

This flexibility apparently continued into the medieval period and later, as suggested by the fact that other witnesses to the MT listed by Kennicott often show a distribution of the writing of the 3ms suffix that is different from that which is found in the LC. This seems frequently to pertain to words that are repeatedly spelled with a 3ms *heh* suffix. In some cases the more frequent spelling of a word plus suffix in a book influences the less frequent spelling. The fact that אֹהֶלָו at Genesis 26:25 appears as אֹהֶלָה in at least twenty-five manuscripts has already been noted by Andersen and Forbes⁵⁶ and mentioned in a preceding footnote. This relationship is also found in other passages, where אֹהֶלָו in the LC corresponds to אֹהֶלָה in other medieval/Renaissance manuscripts (e.g., at Gen. 33:19 in eighteen manuscripts). Some manuscripts, like Kennicott's no. 9 (from ca. 1200–1300 CE), attest the spelling אֹהֶלָה in every occurrence in Genesis and sometimes outside it (as at Exod. 35:11). Similarly, the spelling כָּלוּ is found only twice in Jeremiah, both in the same verse (Jer. 6:13); its first attestation is found as כָּלָה in eight manuscripts and its second in eighteen manuscripts.⁵⁷

Note, in addition, that the spelling of תְּבוּאָתוֹ in LC at Leviticus 19:25 is found in at least four manuscripts with a final *heh mater*, thus paralleling the form תְּבוּאָתָהּ, which appears in Jeremiah 2:3 and Ezekiel 48:18. Similarly, בְּתוֹכּוֹ in LC at Ezekiel 48:8 is found twice in other manuscripts as בְּתוֹכָהּ, as in LC at Ezekiel 48:15 and 21. Another manuscript has בְּתוֹכָהּ at Ezekiel 48:10 for LC בְּתוֹכּוֹ. The opposite tendency is also ob-

53 On the phrase from Exodus 32:17 and its alliterative play, see Rendsburg 2008, 96.

54 In some cases, the Masoretes may have been concerned over the spelling of the final *-ō* vowel with a *heh mater* and so added a marginal note giving the spelling of the word with *waw mater*.

55 One example not explained above is שְׁפִלְתָּהּ "its lowland" (Josh. 11:16). Is it possible that this *heh* might be construed as a locative *heh* (cf. the similar presence of final *-ā* in עֲזָרְתָּהּ [Ps. 44:27] and אֶפְרַתָּהּ in Ruth 4:11)? The form נִכְתָּהּ "his treasure" (2 Kgs. 20:13 and Isa. 39:2) is difficult to explain.

56 Andersen and Forbes 1986, 183.

57 Similarly, כָּלוּ is spelled כָּלָה in the following distributions: at Genesis 25:25 in one manuscript (no. 9); at Exodus 14:7 in one manuscript (no. 300); at Isaiah 1:23 in eight manuscripts; at Isaiah 9:8 in two manuscripts (nos. 1, 96); at Isaiah 9:16 in four manuscripts (nos. 1, 17, 158, 175); at Malachi 3:9 in seventeen manuscripts; and at Proverbs 24:31 in three manuscripts (see Young 2001, 231 n. 26 for similar figures). The date of the various manuscripts varies, from quite early (ca. 900–1000, as in the case of manuscript no. 1) to rather late (ca. 1700s).

served, such that what is אהלה in the LC is אהלו in other manuscripts (as at Gen. 9:21 in eleven manuscripts; at 13:3 in four manuscripts; 35:21 in five manuscripts).

A correlative assumption of these spelling variations is that the *heh* suffix could be interpreted in different ways. That is, although an ancient reader of the biblical text would have followed a memorized oral tradition, the written text would have helped the reader recall certain details. When the ancient reader could not remember a particular suffix or word and the spelling allowed for two or more interpretations/pronunciations, the reader would have to choose one over another. Thus it is at least possible that in certain instances a single spelling could elicit two different readings (e.g., note the spelling לַחַה “his vitality” in Deuteronomy 34:7 and its apparent interpretation as “its [i.e., the eye’s] fluid” [לַחַה] in Sir 31:13 Ms B, as described above). This possibility might help explain the fact that in certain cases the 3ms *heh* suffix appears in the MT where the gender of the antecedent noun is ambiguous or where the writing of *heh* might be due to influence from and/or confusion with neighboring words. In a limited number of cases, such variation in interpretation is implied by allusions to these passages in later literature (cf. Deut. 34:7 and Sir 31:13, Ms B).

THIRD MASCULINE SINGULAR SUFFIX WITH *HEH MATER* IN OTHER MANUSCRIPTS AND LATER TEXTS

In the early manuscripts of biblical texts, as well as in other ancient Hebrew literature, the 3ms suffix is marked with *heh* in contexts similar to where it occurs in the MT.

In Ben Sira, the 3ms *heh* suffix occurs on perhaps as many as seven words. It is found (assuming the identification is correct) in both the Masada scroll and in the Genizah manuscripts.⁵⁸ In general, its distribution matches the distribution in the MT that has been demonstrated above. Thus it occurs in certain concentrations (e.g., twice in Sir 10:13 [Ms A], vocalized with Tiberian vowels; three times [potentially] in chapters 43–44). It seems to occur on words with byforms containing a final *heh mater* or words that are graphically similar: גדלה *godlō* “his greatness” (Sir 44:2 Mas [cf. גדלו in Ms B]) versus גדלה “greatness”; נהרה *nōhrō* “its shining” (Sir 43:1 Ms Bm [cf. נהרו in Mas]) versus נהרה “light”; and לבנה *lobnō* “its whiteness” (Sir 43:18 Ms B [cf. לבנו in Mas]) versus לבנה “white thing, moon”; כאכפה *kā’okpō* “as he pressed” (Sir 46:5 Ms B) versus אכפה “it presses” (in Aramaic and Rabbinic Hebrew). In addition, the words with the 3ms *heh* suffix occur in proximity to other words with *heh maters*: מקורה in Sir 10:13 parallels מקוה in the preceding colon; נגעה (*sic*) in 10:13 follows מקורה in the preceding bicolon; לבנה in 43:18 immediately precedes יגה.⁵⁹

It bears mentioning that this evidence (where sometimes the Masada scroll has a word with *waw* and the later Genizah texts bear a *heh*) seems to support Young’s thesis that the 3ms suffix could have been initially written with *waw*, then changed by later scribes into a *heh*.⁶⁰ In the Nash Papyrus, dated to the time close to the DSS (ca. first or second century BCE), the 3ms suffix also may be marked with a *heh*.⁶¹ However, the suffix is also marked with a final *waw* in שו[ו] “his ox” and חמרו “his donkey” (both words occurring in NP 21 at Exod. 20:17/Deut. 5:21).⁶²

58 The explanation of the individual examples I have offered elsewhere (see Reymond forthcoming).

59 The only other example not mentioned is כשמה “like its name” (Sir 6:22 Ms A), where the *heh* may be explained as marking a 3ms suffix, with מוסר as antecedent in its sense “instruction,” or as 3fs with מוסר as antecedent but interpreted as a veiled reference to lady wisdom. The nearby words offer conflicting evidence: both הוא and היא are used. The suffix of לחה in Sir 31:13 (Ms B) is likely 3fs.

60 Young 2001, 240.

61 See *ibid.*, 239: שמה [שמה] “his [name]” NP 9 for MT שמו (Exod. 20:7/Deut. 5:11) and בה “in it” NP 11, where the MT (at Exod. 20:10/Deut. 5:14) does not have a prepositional phrase, though the SP does (בו), as does 4Q31 (4QDeut^d) at Deuteronomy 5:11 (בו), 4Q137 (4QPhyl J) at Deuteronomy 5:11 (בוה); cf. Jeremiah 17:24 in the MT (also in 4Q70 [4QJer^a]), where a similar ambiguity pertains to בה, which might refer back to “day,” in which case the suffix is 3ms, or might refer back to “Sabbath,” in which case the suffix might be 3fs and pointed incorrectly (note, e.g., Exod. 31:14, where בה refers back explicitly to “Sabbath”).

62 See Cook 1903, 39.

As in Ben Sira and the MT, the use of the *heh* as a marker of the 3ms pronominal suffix in the DSS seems to be part of the orthographic system in which final *-ō* was occasionally marked with a *heh mater* (as, e.g., in the traditional spelling of פֶּרַעַה “Pharaoh” and שְׁלֹמֹה “Solomon”; see below for more on this digraph). Such spellings are found especially in the biblical DSS scrolls, both those that exhibit what Tov describes as the “Qumran Scribal Practice” (QSP)⁶³ (e.g., פֶּה in 4Q135 [4QPhyl H] at Deut. 5:31 and 1QIsa^a at Isa. 22:16; פֶּרַעַה in 4Q13 [4QExod^b] at Exod. 2:5), and those that do not (e.g., פֶּה in 4Q41 [4QDeutⁿ] at Deut. 5:3 and פֶּרַעַה in 4Q1 [4QGen-Exod^a] at Exod. 3:10). Among the nonbiblical scrolls, the writing of *heh* to mark *-ō* is primarily found in texts that do not exhibit QSP (e.g., פֶּרַעַה in 4Q374 2 ii, 6; שְׁלֹמֹה in 4Q385a 1a-b ii, 5 and 1, 2), more rarely in those that do exhibit QSP (e.g., שְׁלֹמֹה in 11Q11 II, 2; פֶּה “here” 4Q382 9, 6).

Those scrolls that do exhibit QSP often use a digraph *waw-heh* to mark the final *-ō* vowel (e.g., כֹּוֹה “thus” in 4Q163 4–7 ii, 21; פֹּוֹה “here” 4Q137 [4QPhyl] at Deut. 5:3; פֶּרַעַוֹה “Pharaoh” 1QIsa^a at Isa. 19:11, *passim*; 1QM XI, 9, *passim*; שְׁלֹמֹוֹה “Solomon” in 4Q398 11–13, 1; and etymological III-*waw/yodh* infinitives absolute, such as הָרוֹוֹה “conceiving” in 1QIsa^a at Isa. 59:4 for MT הָרָו [also reflected in 1Q8]).⁶⁴ It is not surprising, therefore, that the 3ms suffix is also represented with the digraph *waw-heh* in 1QIsa^a and the phylactery texts in places where the MT attests a *waw* or no suffix at all: בֹּוֹה (4Q128 [4QPhyl A] at Exod. 12:43, 44, both for MT בָּו; 4Q140 [4QPhyl M] at Exod. 13:3, corresponding to Samaritan Pentateuch [SP] בּוּ, but nothing in the MT; 4Q137 [4QPhyl J] at Deut. 5:14, corresponding to SP בּוּ, Nash Papyrus [line 11] בַּה, but nothing in the MT; 1QIsa^a at Isa. 59:19; 62:8, both for MT בָּו; לֹוֹה (4Q138 [4QPhyl K] at Deut. 10:18 for MT לוֹ); אוֹתוֹוֹה (1QIsa^a at Isa. 36:21 for MT אוֹתוֹ); וּבְחִיקוֹוֹה (at Isa. 40:11 for MT וּבְחִיקוֹ); כֹּוֹחֹוֹה (at Isa. 44:12; 63:1, both for MT כֹּחַ); נִפְשֹׁוֹה (at Isa. 53:11 for MT נִפְשׁוֹ).⁶⁵ The digraph *waw-heh* also marks the 3ms suffix in two nonbiblical texts: 4Q219, מְשִׁמְרוֹוֹה “his offering and his libation” (4Q219 I, 37); מְשִׁמְרוֹוֹה “his watch” (II, 21); רְצוֹנוֹוֹה “his will” (II, 29 and 32); מֵאֵתוֹוֹה “from him” (II, 34) and in a calendrical text דּוֹקוֹוֹה “its moon phase” (4Q321a V, 5).

The suffix with *heh* and with the digraph *waw-heh* appears repeatedly on certain words in certain texts (e.g., דּוֹקוֹה “first moonset after full moon” at least eighteen times in 4Q321).⁶⁶ Note too the concentration of the suffix in certain passages, as in the case of בְּדֶרְשׁוֹה *bō b³ doršō* “by him, when he examines” (4Q266 8 i, 2, = בּוּ בְּדֶרְשׁוֹ in CD A XV, 11) and in the phrase מְרִאֲתָהּ בְּנִצָּתָהּ “its crop and its feathers” 4Q24 (4QLev^b) at Leviticus 1:16 (for MT מְאֲרָתוֹ בְּנִצָּתָהּ).⁶⁷

The suffix occurs on words that are graphically and phonetically similar to other words with the suffix. For example, the spelling of רַעַה “his friend” in the DSS (4Q258 [4QS^d] II, 2; 4Q266, 13, 4) corresponds to the spelling of the noun and suffix in the phrase בְּרִעָה “in its shouting” in Exodus 32:17 (attested ברַעַה in 4Q22 [4QpaleoExodus^m]).⁶⁸ Similarly, the spelling with digraph in וְנִסְכּוֹוֹה “his libation” (4Q219 I, 37) corresponds

63 Tov 2004.

64 These figures are from Accordance. I assume the *heh* was not reanalyzed as a true consonant in these forms. The two spellings seem more or less equally distributed in the biblical scrolls. E.g., פֶּרַעַה appears twice in 1QIsa^a and פֶּרַעַוֹה three times.

65 In a few cases, the digraph appears as a mistake, as it corresponds with the 3fs suffix in the MT: לְמוֹעֲדוֹה in 4Q140 and לְמוֹעֲדוֹה in 4Q145, both at Exodus 13:10 for MT לְמוֹעֲדָהּ, in the former case where the word יְמִימָה “to days” is spelled with the same ending יוֹמִימוֹה. The same spelling of “to days” is also found in 4Q129 at Exodus 13:10.

66 Ben-Dov (2008, 237) defines the term as the “first moonset after sunrise, on the day following the full moon,” though it is defined by others as either “full moon” or “new moon.” See the summary of scholarship on the interpretation of the word in Ben-Dov 2008, 222–27. The initial definition of Ben-Dov is similar to that of Talmon 2001, Talmon and Knohl 1995, and Wise 1994b, 224–31; 1994a. For a more recent summary, see Popović 2011, cols. 659–65.

67 For this last example, see Young 2001, 234–35. Less convincing are the other examples he cites. He suggests אֵתָה “it” 4Q25 (4QLev^c) at Leviticus 4:14 for MT אֵתוֹ and SP אֵתוֹ. In this case, the antecedent is either a bull, שׂוֹר, or a sin-offering, חַטָּאת, the latter of which is obviously feminine. Young cites another possibility of כָּלָה in 1QIsa^a at Isaiah 30:5 for MT כָּל, though here the consonants could just as easily be construed as the noun “destruction” and the whole clause translated: “destruction by fire (will be) on account of a people . . .” Young (2001, 237–38) notes that the *heh* of וּבְחִתָּהּ in 4Q67 (4QIsa^a) at Isaiah 58:13 for MT וּבְחִתָּתוֹ could be construed as another example, though it is also possible to read it as a 3fs suffix.

68 Note that רַעַה is not followed by a *waw* in 4Q258 or 4Q266 13, 4. Thus the form of the word cannot be explained as due to the incorrect division of words, as seems to be the case in רַעַהוּ 4Q266 8 ii, 6 (= רַעַהוּ in 4Q270 [4QD^c] 6 iii, 14).

with the spelling נִסְכָּה “its libation” in Leviticus 23:13. בַּה (passim) and בּוּה (passim) perhaps correspond with בַּה (Jer. 17:24), a spelling also found in the DSS version of this same Jeremiah passage (4Q70 [4QJer^a]).

Related to these examples, the 3ms *heh* suffix occurs on nouns that have byforms or homographs with a final *heh mater*. This circumstance might provide another explanation for רַעָה “his friend” in the DSS, since in the MT one finds רֵעֵה “friend or advisor” and *רַעָה “friend.” Note also עֲלֹמָה ‘*almō* “his young man” in 4Q52 (4QSam^b) at 1 Samuel 20:38 (for MT הַנַּעֲרָה) is similar to עֲלֹמָה “young woman” (found frequently in the MT, though only once in the DSS [1QIsa^a at Isa. 7:14]).⁶⁹

The 3ms suffix with *heh mater* seems to occur in places where neighboring words also bear a final *heh mater*. For example, the phrase בַּה בְּדַרְשָׁה from 4Q266 8 i, 2 occurs just before the phrase לְמָה [יְתַפֿ] תֵּה “lest he prove to be a fool.” Similarly, אַפָּה ‘*appō* “his anger” (4Q266 2 ii, 21, = אַפּוּ in CD A II, 21) is likely immediately preceded by חָרָה *hārā* “it raged” (based on the parallel in CD); and דַּעְתָּה *da’tō* “his knowledge” (4Q266 8 i, 6, = דַּעְתָּה in CD A XV, 15) is preceded by the phrase עַד שָׁנָה תְּמִימָה וּלְפִי ‘*ad šānā t^o mīmā ūlⁱ pī* “until a full year, according to . . .” In the Peshet to Nahum, the word חֵלָה [ח] *[h]ēlō* “his (i.e., Manasseh’s) army” (4Q169 3–4 iii, 11) repeats the form of חֵלָה *hēlāh* “her rampart” from the preceding line of the text (which, in turn corresponds with חֵיל in Nah. 3:8).⁷⁰ The word לַחֲמָתָה [מ] “his war” occurs in the same line (4Q169 3–4 iii, 11).⁷¹ The word דּוּקָה is almost always found in the context of numbers carrying the feminine ending -ā, marked with a *heh mater*.

Another possible contributing factor for the use of *heh* for spelling the 3ms suffix, particularly for the occurrences of דּוּקָה (4Q321, 4Q321a) and בַּה (4Q322, 4Q324), also presents itself. These calendrical texts are presumably connected with eastern, i.e., Babylonian, traditions.⁷² One, therefore, wonders whether the Aramaic spelling of the pronoun (resulting in forms such as *דּוּקָה and בַּה) has informed the spelling of the Hebrew words. This result would be similar (though certainly not identical) to the use of the 3ms *heh* suffix on words like כְּתָב and נַפֶּשׁ in Hebrew letters from the second century CE (e.g., כְּתָבָה “its writer” and נַפֶּשָׁה “himself [lit., his soul]” Mur 42, 8–10), which are commonly understood to be due to Aramaic influence (note the same expressions in Aramaic 5/6 Hev 1 R54).⁷³ Possibly corroborating the suggestion of Aramaic influence on דּוּקָה is the occurrence of עַל in one text (4Q325 1, 2, 4), which, according to Talmon,⁷⁴ represents the verb “to enter,” of Aramaic origin, though other scholars offer different interpretations for this word.⁷⁵

THIRD MASCULINE SINGULAR SUFFIX WITH DIGRAPH *WAW-HEH* IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

The spelling of the 3ms suffix with the digraph *waw-heh*, וּוֹה-, like the simple ה is concentrated in certain texts and passages and occurs, in particular, on certain words. There is at least one example where a pre-

69 חִירָה *hīrō* “its hole” (4Q169 3–4 i, 6) is unlikely to be another example. It occurs in a quotation of Nahum 2:13 and corresponds to the word חִרְיוֹ “his holes” in the MT. As Doudna (2001, 134) remarks, this word may, alternatively, be interpreted as a feminine noun (without suffix).

70 For the reading, see Qimron 2013, 285. Interpretation of the *heh* as a marker for the 3ms suffix is based, in short, on the context. See Doudna (2001, 525) for a complete explanation.

71 Nevertheless, others, such as Berrin (2004, 279), Horgan (2002, 153), Martínez and Tigchelaar (1997–98), Parry and Tov (2004–5), and Lohse (1964, 266) see the suffixes on חֵלָה [ח] and לַחֲמָתָה [מ] as 3fs.

72 Ben-Dov 2008, *passim*, esp. 243.

73 For the suggestion of Aramaic influence here, see Pardee (1982, 125) and Yadin (2002, 17).

74 Talmon 2001, 9, 105, 126–27.

75 Confusing matters is that Talmon seems to equate this verb with the partially similar Hebrew root עָלָה “to go up,” as when he refers to עַל in 4Q325 as part of an “Aramaic expression” (2001, 105) then in a footnote (*ibid.*, n. 4) remarks on the “equivalence of בּוֹא and עָלָה,” and then cites Joel 2:9. Similar confusion pertains to remarks on page 9. Furthermore, some (such as Martínez and Tigchelaar 1997–98) read the word עַל in 4Q325 as the preposition, not the verb (for which cf. 4Q394 ii, 6). Other features of these texts do not seem especially Aramaic. That is, the occasional use of an *aleph* as a *mater* (e.g., חוּפָּא 4Q329 1, 2) has parallels elsewhere in the Hebrew scrolls, as does the occasional defective spelling of words (e.g., הַרְאִישָׁה 4Q328 1, 2). Furthermore, the noun תְּשׁוּבוּחָה has plenty of parallels in Hebrew scrolls (see the discussion in Glessner 2001, 181–84).

ceding spelling of the 3ms suffix with *heh* has possibly influenced the spelling of the suffix with the digraph *waw-heh* (i.e., נִסְכָּה [Lev. 23:13] > נִסְכָּוה [4Q219 I, 37]; note also בֹּוה [passim] and בָּה [Jer. 17:24]). It is interesting to note, however, that the spellings of the suffix with the digraph do not occur on words that have byforms or homographs with a final *heh mater*.⁷⁶

Where the digraph *waw-heh* appears, it seems likeliest the scribes were attempting to create a more explicit *plene* writing parallel in some ways to the addition of an extraneous *aleph* in the digraph *waw-aleph* (וא-) to mark the 3ms suffix. The spelling *waw-aleph* occurs more than fifty times in the nonbiblical scrolls, many in the calendrical texts 4Q321 and 4Q321a, and more than twenty times in the biblical scrolls, many in 1QIsa^a.⁷⁷ In addition, one may note spellings such as כְּמוֹא “like” (1QH^a XIV, 24) and הִגּוֹא “cooing” (1QIsa^a at Isa. 59:11, 13 for MT הִגָּה and הִגּוּ respectively).⁷⁸ This kind of orthography is, in turn, presumably related to the more frequent digraph *yodh-aleph* in words such as כִּי־א “because” (which occurs more than four hundred times in the nonbiblical DSS and more than two hundred times in the biblical scrolls); מִי־א “who” (fifteen times in the nonbiblical scrolls and more than twenty times in the biblical scrolls); and the first common singular suffix י־א (about ten times in nonbiblical scrolls and more than thirty times in biblical scrolls).⁷⁹ And these spellings may, in turn, be related to similar Aramaic spellings of word-final -ō and -ī with an extraneous (i.e., nonetymological) *aleph* in the DSS.⁸⁰

Qimron suggests the spellings with *waw-aleph* and *yodh-aleph* in the Hebrew scrolls may be due to a wish to extend the graphic length of short words (since usually the spelling occurs on prepositions with a suffix).⁸¹ Muraoka, on the other hand, suggests the writing (at least for the Aramaic of the scrolls) may be due to the use of the *aleph* as marker of the definite state and the indiscriminate alternation between III-*aleph* and etymological III-*waw/yodh* roots (if not also due to the lack of *aleph*’s pronunciation as a third root consonant). Kutscher, for his part, suggested that writings such as כִּי־א emerged from “a vogue for archaisms.”⁸² If such *plene* spellings are construed as archaistic, then the spellings of וֹה- may also be so considered. However, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the digraphs are simply reflective of a generally more explicit orthography.⁸³ It is worth noting that Kutscher theorized that the spelling of כָּה with

76 There are not feminine-marked counterparts to the nouns חֵיק, בֹּוה, רִצּוֹן, נֶפֶשׁ, נֶסֶךְ in Hebrew. The feminine counterpart of *משמר* does not end with a *heh mater*: מִשְׁמֶרֶת. Note that the relevant words occur about half the time in the near vicinity of other words with *heh maters*: The phrase בֹּוה “in it” is not directly preceded or followed by a word with a *heh mater* in 4Q128 (4QPhyl A) at Exodus 12:43, 44 or in 1QIsa^a at Isaiah 59:19; 62:8; nor is לֹוה “to him” (4Q138 [4QPhyl K] at Deut. 10:18); אוֹתוֹה “him” (1QIsa^a at Isa. 36:21); חֵיקוֹה “his breast” (at Isa. 40:11); כּוֹחוֹה “his strength” (at Isa. 44:12; 63:1); רִצּוֹנוֹה “his will” (4Q219 II, 32); מִאוֹתוֹה “from him” (4Q219 II, 34). On the other hand, the following words are preceded or followed by a word with a *heh mater*: בֹּוה “in it” (4Q137 [4QPhyl J] at Deut. 5:14); (4Q140 [4QPhyl M] at Exod. 13:3); נֶפְשׁוֹה “his soul” (1QIsa^a at Isa. 53:11); נִסְכָּוה “his offering” (4Q219 I, 37); מִשְׁמֶרוֹה “his watch” (4Q219 II, 21); רִצּוֹנוֹה “his will” (4Q219 II, 29).

77 Accordance lists the following examples, from texts exhibiting QSP and those that do not (such as 4Q381): לֹוֹא “to him” 1QS VI, 27; 4Q174 1–2 i, 6 (2×), 11; 4Q176 14, 6; 4Q223–224 2 iii, 12; 4Q365 12b iii, 5 at Exod. 39:4; 4Q381 69, 7 and 76–77, 14; 11Q19 LVI, 19; 4Q140 (4Q Phyl M) at Exod. 12:48; 4Q53 (4QSam^c) at 1 Sam. 25:31; 2 Sam. 14:30, 33; 2 Sam. 15:4, 9; 1QIsa^a at Isa. 3:11; 5:26; 36:22; 40:10; 44:14 (2×); 57:18 (2×); 59:16; בֹּוֹא “in it” 4Q174 1–2 i, 6; more than thirty times in 4Q321; seven times in 4Q321a; 4Q324a 1 ii, 2 and 4; 4Q326 1, 5; 1QIsa^a at Isa. 37:7, 10; 40:7; 44:1, 2; 65:8; אַפּוֹא “his anger” 1QIsa^a at Isa. 42:25; עַמּוֹא “his people” 1QIsa^a at Isa. 51:22; 63:11; עֲנוּ ānō (so Kutscher 1974, 175) or ānū “they answered” 1QIsa^a at Isa. 59:12 for MT עֲנִתָהּ. Note the similar forms found both in the DSS and MT: לֹוֹא “if” in 1QIsa^a at Isa. 48:18 (= לֹוֹא); רְבּוּא “ten thousand” in 1QM III, 16 (= רְבּוּא) and אַפּוֹא “then” in 4Q163 11 ii, 4 and 4Q423 6, 3 (= אַפּוֹא) (see Joüon and Muraoka 1991, §7b).

78 See other examples in Qimron and Strugnell 1976, 70–71.

79 Note also the use of the digraph *heh-aleph* in some texts to mark final /-ā/, as in דְּעִהֶא “knowledge” (1QS VII, 4, = MT דְּעָה); חוֹפֵהֶא “canopy” (4Q321a V, 7 = MT חֹפֶה); הִיֶּהֶא (1QIsa^a at Isa. 5:1, 12:2) for MT הִיָּה (see Raymond 2014, 59).

80 See Muraoka 2011, 25.

81 Qimron 1986, 21.

82 Kutscher 1974, 21.

83 Kutscher (ibid., 22) also suggested the emergence of such digraphs with final *aleph* ultimately derives from Aramaic influence. He notes that although it may stem from a desire to use archaic-looking forms, it aids the reader in reminding him or her of the Hebrew (vs. the Aramaic) pronunciation of the words.

a digraph (כֹּה) helped distinguish this particle from Aramaic כֹּה and that from this word it spread to others, such as “Pharaoh” and the 3ms suffix.⁸⁴

CONCLUSION

The spelling of the 3ms suffix with a *heh mater* instead of *waw* in the MT and elsewhere in ancient Hebrew is likely due to a variety of causes, including the whim of the scribe. In certain cases, it may be due to confusion (where the *heh* suffix is best construed as a 3fs suffix in the original text or where the *heh* suffix is vocalized correctly as 3ms, though the writing with *heh* might reflect an earlier mistake for 3fs).

It is particularly interesting that the spelling of the 3ms suffix with *heh* seems to be triggered in many cases by the use of the *heh mater* in neighboring words or because of graphic and/or phonetic similarity to other words. These kinds of influences are also found in *qal* infinitives absolute from III-*waw/yodh* roots. In essence, this demonstrates a flexibility in ancient Hebrew spelling, one that is related to specific contexts and to the lexicon in general.

Furthermore, for both the 3ms *heh* suffix and the infinitives absolute, one sees numerous cases of variation in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, thus suggesting perhaps that at the time when these works were written down and stabilized the orthographic convention for writing the pronoun and verbal form was in flux.

Due to the considerations described above, it is assumed that most scribes were not using the 3ms *heh* suffix as a means of artificially mimicking Archaic Biblical Hebrew. Rather, certain scribes simply used it when the occasion arose as one of the possible markers for a final *-ō* vowel.

While it is conceivable that the use of digraphs in the DSS was intended as a means of mimicking what was perceived to be antique spelling traditions (as Kutscher seems to imply), it appears more likely that such spellings were simply perceived to be clearer, less ambiguous, and thus preferred. I assume the scribes who could read and comprehend כֹּה in 1QIsa^a (at Isa. 16:7) would not attempt to mimic archaic spelling with כֹּחַ “his strength” (as at Isa. 44:12) but would rather have spelled the word with a simple *heh* suffix *כֹּה, which they did not do.⁸⁵

Lastly, although the above analysis indicates the 3ms suffix marked with *heh mater* cannot be used by itself as an indication of the antiquity of a given piece of writing, the analysis does offer examples where the suffix with *heh mater* occurs on words that closely resemble other words with the 3ms *heh* suffix, the latter of which are found in chronologically later texts. Based on the strong graphic and semantic similarity, it would seem the earlier spelling influenced the later spelling. For example, it would seem the spellings of עִירָה “his donkey” and סוּתָה “his robe” from Genesis 49:11 have influenced the spelling of בְּעִירָה “his beast” in Exodus 22:4 and כְּסוּתָה “his covering” in Exodus 22:26. Similarly, note the similarity of מְעִזָּה “his refuge”⁸⁶ and עִזָּה “his strength.”⁸⁷ The retention of the same spelling of a word with 3ms *heh* suffix in a chronologically later text is also attested in the Samaritan Pentateuch at Exodus 22:4, where we find in an addition תְּבוּאָתָה “his (or its, i.e., the field’s or the vineyard’s) produce.”⁸⁸ This spelling seems likely informed by the spelling of the same word in the MT with 3ms *heh* suffix in Jeremiah 2:3 and Ezekiel 48:18.⁸⁹ Finally, note נֹס לַחַה in Deuteronomy 34:7 versus נֹס לַחַה in Sir 31:13, Ms B, where in the later text the suffix is probably 3fs. Such distributions would seem to imply that sometimes the specific spelling of the 3ms suffix was preserved in

⁸⁴ Ibid., 184.

⁸⁵ Kutscher (ibid., 183–84) suggested the digraph *waw-heh* for the 3ms suffix emerged in 1QIsa^a not from the presence of a 3ms *heh* suffix in the text from which the scribe copied, but rather from the scribe himself (based on the distribution of the suffix, e.g., כֹּה in the scroll = כֹּה in the MT, whereas כֹּה in the scroll = כֹּה in the MT).

⁸⁶ Dan. 11:10.

⁸⁷ Hab. 3:4.

⁸⁸ Young 2001, 231–32.

⁸⁹ The gender of the suffix is not only implied by the context but also by the parallel expression in 4Q158 10–12, 7, as noted by Young (ibid., 232 n. 32). Note also נֹס לַחַה “its libation” in 4Q219 I, 37 vs. נֹס לַחַה in Leviticus 23:13.

the course of a text's transmission. Therefore, it is not inconceivable that the spelling of the 3ms suffix with a *heh mater* reflects an antique component of a text.⁹⁰ Needless to repeat, however, this single orthographic detail is not enough to determine the age of a text.

90 In some cases the evidence is ambiguous. For example, it is unclear whether the spelling בַּה "in it" of Jeremiah 17:24 was influenced by the spelling of the same prepositional phrase in an earlier version of the relevant texts of Exodus and Deuteronomy—something made at least conceivable by the spelling בַּה in the Nash Papyrus, line 11, at Exodus 20:10/Deuteronomy 5:14, or whether the spelling in the Nash Papyrus was influenced by the Jeremiah passage. Note that the relevant texts of Exodus and Deuteronomy in the MT do not attest a similar prepositional phrase, though the comparable versions of these same verses in the SP and DSS attest בו (SP at Exod. 20:10/Deut. 5:14 and 4Q41 [4QDeutⁿ] at Deut. 5:14) and בוה (4Q137 [4QPhyl J] at Deut. 5:14). Such is also suggested by the LXX at Exodus 20:10/Deuteronomy 5:14. Alternatively, the *heh mater* on בַּה might be due to confusion over the antecedent, since "day" is masculine and "Sabbath" can be construed as feminine, as in Exodus 31:4: "You will guard the Sabbath . . . all who do work in it [בָּהּ] . . ." All the same, where the expressions "day of the Sabbath" (יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת [Exod. 20:8, 11; Deut. 5:12]) and "the seventh day, Sabbath" (הַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת [Exod. 16:26]) occur, the 3ms suffix is used to refer to the word "day," not "Sabbath."

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29

PONDERING PANDEMONIUM

REIMAGINING ʾĒLŌHÎM IN 1 SAMUEL 28:13*

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SCHOLARS HAVE LONG SUSPECTED THAT the reduced pantheon of gods that reigned in ancient Israel's early cosmology (well before an Israelite version of monotheism emerged) was complemented by a pandemonium populating the netherly regions. Yet, until very recently, positive evidence for an early pandemonium external to the Hebrew Bible has not been forthcoming. That state of affairs has irreversibly changed with the recovery of the inscriptional data presented below. With that in mind, a text such as 1 Samuel 28:13 presents one intriguing passage among several in the Hebrew Bible that calls for reexploration when it comes to early Israel's world of daimons (intermediary beings) and demons (evil spirits). This ritualized narrative account of necromancy—thus far, the only surviving exemplar of its kind from ancient Israel—may presume the kind of pandemonium also attested in Job 1–2 and Deuteronomy 32. As the Qumran manuscripts and the LXX clearly attest, and which are widely accepted as the more ancient readings of Deuteronomy 32:8–9, 17, 24, and 43, “the divine sons” of verses 8–9 and 43 presuppose an early Yahwistic daimonic realm comprised of various deities and intermediary beings. Furthermore, in 32:17, the *šēdîm* or *Shedu*-gods, or more precisely, “the *deified* protective spirits,” receive cult, and in verse 24, the demoted gods *Rēšef* and *Qēteb* wreak havoc on the people and do so as the instruments of Yahweh's wrath. As proposed here, the same or similar entities may have played a role in 1 Samuel 28's story of king Saul's desperate flight to Endor wherein the female Canaanite necromancer conjured up for him the dead Samuel in verse 14a (or, more precisely, brought up his *ʾōb*—i.e., his “revenant” or “ghost” [see v. 8]), but whose conjuration resulted in the prior ascension of the *ʾēlōhîm* in verse 13.¹ As to whom the *ʾēlōhîm* exactly refer(s) constitutes a crux. While a number of recent English translations have adopted the proposal that the phrase *ʾēlōhîm* ʾōlîm in verse 13 of the MT refers to the deified (or “preternaturalized”) dead—“I see a divine being/god coming up . . .”—they unanimously translate *ʾēlōhîm* as a numerical singular and as a reference to the dead Samuel (JPS, NRSV: “a divine being”; RSV, CEB: “a god”; NKJV: “a spirit”; NIV: “a ghostly figure”). Yet the major ancient translations and their Hebrew *Vorlagen* suggest otherwise.

THE MT, LXX, AND VULGATE TEXTS OF 1 SAMUEL 28:8–14

The MT and LXX of 1 Samuel 28 generally preserve a shared textual tradition in verses 8–11, although there are perhaps some acculturating differences between them when it comes to individual terms.² For example, the LXX offers a very different interpretation of verse 8's two categories of the dead in its ancient Hebrew

* I warmly offer this contribution in appreciation of Dennis Pardee's indelible impact on the disciplines of Northwest Semitics and ancient Levantine studies.

1 See my treatment of Deuteronomy 32's “daimonology” (Schmidt 2016, 163–86).

2 The relationship of the MT and LXX texts of 1 Samuel (or 1 Reigns) remains complicated. Years ago, the Qumran manuscripts established the antiquity and reliability—and, at points, the priority—of the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX in 1 Samuel; see now Tov 2012, 189, 264–56, 373; 2015, 211–12, 218–21. Except when noted by (*), the English translation of the LXX used

Vorlage. It renders the MT's "revenants" (*'ôbôt*) and ghostly "knowers" (*yiddē'ônîm*) as "ventriloquists" and as "those in the know," i.e., as mantic ritualists:

"Divine for me a revenant [*'ôb*], and bring up for me the one whom I say to you." But the woman answered him, "You know what Saul has done, how he has banned revenants [*'ôbôt*] and ghostly knowers [*yidde'ônîm*] from the land. So why are you trying to ensnare me; to have me put to death?" Saul swore by Yahweh to her, "As Yahweh lives, you will not suffer punishment over this." At that, the woman said, "whom shall I bring up for you?" So he said, "Samuel bring up for me." (MT)

"Do seek divinations for me by a ventriloquist, and bring up for me whomever I say to you." And the woman said to him, "Behold, indeed you know what Saoul did, how he cut off the ventriloquists and those in the know from the land, and why are you laying a snare for my life to put it to death?" And Saoul swore to her saying, "The Lord lives, if injustice shall befall you in this matter." And the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samouel for me." (LXX)

From verse 12 onward, the MT, LXX, and Vulgate preserve some telling variant readings:

(MT): Then the woman saw *Samuel* and she shrieked loudly (v. 12a)

(LXX): Then the woman saw *Saoul** and she cried out with a loud voice (v. 12a)

(VUL): And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice (v. 12a)

(MT): The king said to her, "Don't be afraid. What do you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I see divine beings [*'êlôhîm*] coming up from the netherworld." (v. 13)

(LXX): And the king said to her, "Have no fear; tell whom have you seen." And she said to him, "I have seen *gods* [*theoùs*] coming up out of the ground" (v. 13)

(VUL): And the king said to her: Fear not: what hast thou seen? and the woman said to Saul: I saw gods [*deos*] ascending out of the earth (v. 13)

(MT): And he said to her, "What is its (the scene's) appearance?" Then she said, "An old man coming up and he is wrapped in a robe." (v. 14)

(LXX): And he said to her, "What did you perceive?" And she said to him, "A man standing, coming up out of the ground and he is wrapped in a double cloak" (v. 14)

(VUL): And he said to her: What form is he/it of? And she said: An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle (v. 14)

SAMUEL'S GHOST, DAIMONS, AND DEMONS AT ENDOR

Beginning with verse 13, Saul posed two questions to the necromancer regarding what or whom she could make out once she initiated the requisite mantic rites. In the MT, the first question is "What do you see?" in verse 13, while in verse 14 he asks, "What is his/its appearance?" From the outset, such questioning infuses the exchange with a heightened ambiguity regarding the anticipated outcome. In the LXX, the questions are constructed rather differently. The question posed in verse 13, "Tell, whom have you seen?" is followed in verse 14 by "What did you perceive?" The necromancer describes precisely what she saw in response to her mantic provocations. In the MT, and in answer to Saul's first question, she states in verse 13b that she sees "gods ascending" (*'êlôhîm 'ôlîm*). In the LXX, her answer comprises the Greek semantic equivalent to the Hebrew construction as an unambiguous numerical plural, i.e., the woman sees "gods ascending . . ." (*theoùs ánibáinontas*). Yet, prior to this viewing, she had already seen the *'ôb* or revenant of Samuel in the MT's verse 12a, whom she then later describes in verse 14 as an "ascending old man." If both questions and their answers in the MT's verses 13 and 14 all refer to Samuel, as recent interpreters have rendered them,

here is that of the New English Translation of the Septuagint (or NETS) edited by A. Pietersma and B. G. Wright (ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/), and for the Latin Vulgate, see <https://vulgate.org>.

and the woman had already seen Samuel in verse 12a, the threefold referencing of the dead creates a rather cumbersome narrative tautology that decelerates the story's progression.

This situation is quite differently represented in the LXX by the minority reading (a sub-Hexaplaric group?) attested in an important uncial (M) and in a number of minuscules that may also disclose possible associations with the Lucianic recension (e.g., minuscule b). In 1 Samuel, or 1 Reigns, such a reading may well reflect the Old Greek and an earlier stage of the text than the MT.³ At the outset of the story, when she first encounters Saul, the necromancer, rather than seeing the *ʾôb* or revenant of Samuel in verse 12a, shockingly recognizes Saul as her inquisitor incognito.⁴ As noted already, the MT mentions at least two distinct moments in verses 12 and 14 where Samuel appears to the woman along with a third moment, that is, if “the gods” of verse 13 indeed refer to Samuel in the singular (“a god”) as recent translators would have it. But in the minority LXX reading, Samuel is not explicitly mentioned again after verse 11 until verse 14b. In verse 14b, Saul is not only described as ascending for the first time but is also identified for the first time by the necromancer as “a man standing, coming up . . .” Subsequent to the second question posed by Saul in verse 14a, and only then, in 14b, and for the very first time, Saul is able to confirm Samuel's arrival according to all the major manuscript witnesses: the MT, LXX, and Vulgate, “. . . then Saul knew it was Samuel. . .” In sum, in the minority LXX reading, Samuel's appearance in verse 14 is viewed as a second event, stage, or phenomenon distinct from that of the ascent of the gods in verse 13 (*theoûs ánibaínontas*). The same applies in this regard to the LXX in general and to the Latin Vulgate's unambiguous plural (*deos ascendentes*) and, for that matter, to the MT's *ʾēlōhīm ʾōlīm* (assuming it also is to be read as a numerical plural). Samuel's appearance is mentioned only once, viz., in the final or second stage of the ritual and separate from the *ʾēlōhīm* (see further below).

While the major LXX uncials (A, B, N) read “. . . the woman saw Samouel” in verse 12, they very likely do so as a revision or correction in support of the (proto-)MT. The minority LXX manuscripts, on the other hand, read “Saoul” in verse 12, not “Samuel,” and may well reflect the reading of its more ancient underlying Hebrew *Vorlage* and, in this writer's opinion, the earlier stage of the text, for the following reasons. The reading “. . . the woman saw Saoul” in verse 12 continues the immediate plot progression of verse 11, where Saul, still disguised, is in dialogue with the woman. As the immediate outcome of their interactions, the woman recognizes Saul whom she had just referred to in the third person, whereas the appearance of “Samuel” in the MT's verse 12 abruptly, even incoherently, intrudes on and preempts the initiation of the ritual producing the ascent of the gods from the netherworld, which takes place only subsequently in verse 13. As such, reading “Samuel” in verse 12a presumes the prior, although entirely unstated, initiation of the ritual that is otherwise lost to the reader somewhere “between the lines” of verses 11 and 12. But as a matter of fact, both the MT and LXX indicate that the ritual begins in verse 13a, concomitant to Saul's initial inquiry in that verse. So, the MT's “Samuel” in verse 12 (and following it, the majority LXX reading) further compounds the tautology described above.

In the MT, the LXX's majority reading, and the Vulgate, the necromancer sees Samuel in verse 12a, although she initiates the ritual designed to bring up Samuel only in verse 13b in response to Saul's first question in 13a. Then in verse 13b, the woman sees Samuel a second time, only in this instance as “a god”—that is, if one accepts such an interpretation of *ʾēlōhīm*—and finally, in verse 14 following Saul's second question, she sees Samuel a third time as the “old/standing man coming up. . .” Yet, ironically, in neither account in which Samuel had already appeared twice does Saul recognize Samuel prior to verse 14b: “then Saul knew it was Samuel.” So, while one might be inclined initially to view Samuel as the more difficult reading in verse 12a, the MT should be viewed instead as an attempt to obfuscate any possibility of interpreting *ʾēlōhīm* as the plural “gods” by contributing to the tautology in which verse 12a's “Saul” is replaced by “Samuel.” Verse 12a's Samuel would then provide translators a singular antecedent for interpreting *ʾēlōhīm* in verse 13 also as a singular. Yet, recent translators identify references to Samuel in verses 13 (i.e., *ʾēlōhīm*) and 14a (e.g., “his appearance”) despite the fact that neither the woman's quite audible supposed

3 Tov 2015, 209, 223 and n. 46; and see Hugo 2015, 136, 138.

4 See Brooke et al. 1927, 96. The cursives include adebjlnp*qtzw, 44 (Zittau) and 71 (Paris), for which see *ibid.*, v–vi.

sighting of Samuel in verse 12 nor her description of the *’ēlōhîm* results in Saul’s immediate recognition of Samuel. Only her subsequent description of the old man or upright man in verse 14b prompts Saul’s identification of Samuel.

In response, interpreters have explained the MT’s mention of the necromancer’s sighting of Samuel in verse 12 and Saul’s apparent obliviousness as reflective of the necromancer’s privileged access to the otherworld. This view in turn is offered as an explanation for the disruptive insertion at this point in the MT, the text’s inelegance, and the lack of an underlying ritual progression. But there is far more to the story’s integrity. The minority LXX reading refers to the necromancer’s recognition of Saoul, not Samouel, in verse 12, her unequivocal viewing of the *’ēlōhîm* as a multitude of “divine beings coming up” in verse 13, and only in verse 14 does Samouel finally appear and is recognized by Saoul. In other words, the minority LXX reading’s plot constitutes a distinctly ritualizing forward-moving progression, whereas that of the MT (and to a lesser extent the majority LXX and the Vulgate) redundantly circles back to the necromancer’s displaced and therefore incoherent sighting of Samuel in verse 12 prior to the initiation of the necromantic ritual’s progression in verse 13.

From here, the Vulgate and its Hebrew *Vorlage* may provide a more productive way forward. As noted above, it similarly reads “Samuel” (“Samuhel”) in verse 12 in agreement with the MT and the majority LXX, but following the entire LXX tradition the Vulgate’s *deos* retains the unambiguous numerical plural “gods” in verse 13. The Vulgate also preserves a third-person singular pronoun qualifying the term “appearance” or “form” in verse 14a that, like the MT’s corresponding singular Hebrew form, can refer to alternative antecedents (“his” or “its”). When viewed in the light of the plural “gods” of verse 13, the Vulgate’s suffix in verse 14a, like that of the MT, may collectively refer back to those gods as its antecedent, or it may refer back to the entire scene. In other words, the Vulgate indicates even more clearly than its Hebrew analogue that the morphological singular suffix on the term for “appearance” or “form” in verse 14 does not require a grammatical singular antecedent such as “a god.” The unequivocal Latin plural *deos* or “gods” preserved in verse 13 of the Vulgate, which comprises an identical morphological-grammatical construction to its LXX and MT analogues, could serve as the collective antecedent of the singular pronoun in verse 14, “what form is it of,” which would then refer to the entire ritual scene, “what appearance does it (the scene) take?”

To reiterate, the LXX, the Vulgate, and for that matter the MT all preserve the morphological plural “gods,” and clearly in the two former cases their two corresponding numerical plurals. Thus, we more likely have a case in which the earlier story preserved an ancient Canaanite-Israelite ritual tradition broadly reflective of an internal religious pluralism in which henotheistic elements were present.⁵ In other words, the LXX and Vulgate preserve numerical plural forms in *theoûs* and *deos*, so the otherwise unsubstantiated singular rendering of *’ēlōhîm* in MT’s verse 13 originates with recent translators, not with the ancient textual witnesses, whether the LXX, Vulgate, or the MT is in view.⁶ The “gods” in verse 13 point to a supranaturally populated netherworld that included various deities, daimons or intermediary beings, demons, and the dead (see further below on the status of the dead as a distinct category).

While various supranatural beings in verse 13 were invoked to participate in some manner in the conjuring of Samuel’s revenant as unintended outcomes, other such beings may have arrived at the event as “uninvited guests” or even as antagonists such as demons or haunting ghosts. Whereas the dead are clearly identified as the revenants and knowing spirits in the MT’s verses 3, 7–9, which serve as the immediate

5 YHWH’s active participation in the initiation of the necromantic rite goes unstated unless YHWH was among verse 13’s *’ēlōhîm*. All the textual witnesses repeat in verse 16 Saul’s admission in verse 15 that YHWH had turned away from him. This factor and verse 16’s comment that YHWH had become Saul’s enemy or nemesis favors YHWH’s nonparticipation in the ritual in verses 12–14. As proposed forthwith, YHWH, beginning with verse 16, unexpectedly intervenes to deliver His doom oracle through Samuel’s ghost. Admittedly, the meaning of the MT’s *’-w-r** is problematic (“adversary”?) while the LXX witnesses read here either “(YHWH) has become your rival” (followed by the Vulgate and the Targums) or “. . . is with your neighbor” (followed by the Syriac) or “. . . is against you.”

6 To be sure, the chapter’s reception history preserves a variety of interpretive strategies seeking to account for the passage’s theological complexities surrounding the foreign, female necromancer, the efficacy of the ritual, and the *multitude* of gods, intermediary beings, and even demons clearly preserved in the LXX’s *theoûs* and the Vulgate’s *python* and *deos* (see too Koenen 2016).

context for the two-stage ritual in verses 12–14, the LXX distinctly preserves an isolated reference to supernatural beings in verse 13 while failing to mention any revenants or knowing spirits in the wider context. In their stead, the LXX offers ventriloquists and knowers or ritualists. The MT includes various apparitions here that were previously condemned by Saul, making Saul's nocturnal escapade all the more egregious since he violated his own prohibition by consulting them (vv. 3, 8 and note the Vulgate's *python* or "divining spirit" in vv. 7–8). It should be noted that the deaths of many elites and kings are recorded in the Deuteronomistic History, but not a single one attained the status of *'ēlōhîm* as has been proposed for Samuel in verse 13. Even the ascendant Elijah is nowhere described as such. As typically interpreted, neither the Hebrew Bible nor the Deuteronomistic History per se derides or endorses the belief in the deification of Israelite kings, judges, prophets, or commoners, whether living or deceased. While such may have constituted a viable ideology embraced in the preexilic period by neighboring peoples and some "wayward" kings of Israel and Judah, the deification of such individuals as kings, prophets, or judges apparently failed to draw the attention of the Deuteronomistic historian.

BIBLICAL *'ĒLŌHÎM*: REMNANTS OF A LEVANTINE DAIMONIC REALM

The study of ancient Levantine henotheistic traditions, intermediary beings, and demonology has enjoyed a recent resurgence, due in large part to the ongoing recovery of new material cultural and epigraphic data; the recent availability of superior photographic images, editions, and translations of previously known data; and the recent publication of long-known but largely inaccessible data. The latter development has also resulted in a recent flurry of publications and renewed exploration of several aspects of ancient Levantine religion. Recent work on the Ugaritic rituals and incantations, the drawings and inscriptions from Kuntillet Ajrud, the inscribed amulets from Jerusalem's Ketef Hinnom, and the reauthenticated Arslan Tash inscribed amulets has invigorated research on the daimonic and demonic worlds of the early pre-Hellenistic Levant.

From neighboring first-millennium West Semitic contexts, the reference to the *šaddayin* in the Balaam inscription from Deir 'Alla in Jordan and the red and black paint-on-plaster sphinx-like figure near the top border of the Balaam inscription are both highly suggestive of a regional contemporary daimonic world populated by, among others, the *Shaddai*-beings. The two "reauthenticated" inscribed incantation amulets from Arslan Tash (ancient Hadatu) in ancient northwest Syria, which depict and make mention of such demons as the Flyers and the Stranglers, likewise confirm a demonic world in the north Levantine tradition of the late Iron Age.⁷ Both amuletic texts are set in a contest against the sons of gods, the holy ones, and against such deities as Ashur, Baal, Hawran and his wives, and perhaps Shamash. It is worth noting here that complementary daimonic and demonic worlds had been well established in the region at the end of the second millennium, as the Ugaritic incantations demonstrate.⁸ Not only do these texts mention a Canaanite divine council comprising multiple gods and daimons, but they also reference a number of demons, as well as the active dead. It is against the backdrop of just such a world of Levantine daimons and demons that a biblical text such as Deuteronomy 32:17, 24 must be reread—not as a new datum, obviously, but as a long-known, well-worked biblical tradition that calls for reevaluation in light of these discoveries and developments.

7 For the defense of their authenticity and for what has become the standard collation of the texts, see Pardee 1998, and note Berlejung 2010.

8 For demons at Ugarit, cf. de Moor 1980; de Moor and Spronk 1984; Spronk 1999; and note the goddess (or better, "daimoness") Ḥaniqatu mentioned at Ugarit in an incantation text, *KTU*³ 1.39.18. This same female malevolent "Strangler" demoness is mentioned in the Arslan Tash amulets as *ḥnqt*. Lewis (2011, 227 n. 112) notes the spell spoken against Ḥaniqatu at Arslan Tash, "the house I enter, you must not enter," *bt 'b' bl tb'n* and its parallel reflex in Ugaritic, *bt ūbū āl tbi* (*KTU*³ 1.169.18). Cho (2007, 7) explicitly eliminates prospective Ugaritic "demons." For Cho, these entities equate with "evil spirits" at Ugarit, though they remain for him "lesser deities" in some genuine sense; but then he treats messenger and servant "deities" separately, the distinguishing criterion being membership in the divine council.

The renewed interest in unraveling biblical references, fragments, allusions, and relics of daimons and demons has been promoted by four specific developments: (1) the recent publication of the new readings in the Ketef Hinnom amulets (from pre-600 BCE): “The Evil (One)” of amulet #1 (*hā-rā^cā[h]*) and amulet #2’s “The Exorciser of The Evil (One)” (*haggō^cār bā-rā^cā[h]*);⁹ (2) the recent reassessment of the archaeological context of these amulets and the clarification of the related cultic assemblage of which the two silver-sheeted amulets were a part, an assemblage that also included one or more *udjat*-eye amulets designed to counter the Evil eye;¹⁰ (3) ongoing attempts to articulate an Israelite religion “from the ground up,” i.e., to reconstruct an ancient Israelite religious milieu utilizing the material cultural and epigraphic data that would, in turn, also ideally provide the social setting against which to interpret the data preserved in biblical traditions; and (4) the growing body of data indicative of a pervasive apotropaism in preexilic Israel including amulets, inscribed blessings, and cultic decorated jars. These data and exploratory projects have confirmed the potential for interfacing material cultural, epigraphic, and biblical data for reconstructing a viable account of early Israel’s religious, ritual, magical, and demonic traditions.

When the Ketef Hinnom amulets and their inscriptions are viewed within their functional archaeological contexts, i.e., in tombs, their role as apotropaic devices comes into clearer focus. They were found, and were undoubtedly employed, in a mortuary ritual context and were most likely employed against “the Evil (One)” mentioned in Ketef Hinnom amulet #1. Yet, they were probably designed to protect the deceased both during their life on earth and then during their journey to and residence in the netherworld by invoking “The Exorciser of The Evil (One)”—i.e., YHWH, as he is the most likely referent in amulet #2. That “The Evil (One)” in both constructions refers to a personified being finds support in the presence of the definite article and the Ugaritic incantations where both the subject (Athtartu) and the object (Yam) of the hex is a divine being. This factor suggests in turn that at Ketef Hinnom, YHWH exorcises another divine being or demon.¹¹ More to the point, they presuppose an extant pandemonium in early to mid-first-millennium Israelite society that reopens possibilities vis-à-vis additional corresponding demonic realities that may be identified in the available sources. For example, the same Hebrew term, “(The) Evil (One)” < *rā^cā[h]*, appears in a terribly fragmented segment of a once-larger plaster text formerly mounted on one of the walls at Kuntillet Ajrud (4.6.3). The concern for apotropaism was pervasive at this northern Sinai multipurpose site, as indicated by the evidence from numerous wall decorations, inscriptions, and a cultic locus in the bench room that included two decorated pithoi serving as its central material foci, all for the purpose of providing divine protection.¹² Ugarit’s multiple deities, daimons, demons, and dead find their descendant reflex in the first-millennium Levant, as we can see from the incantation amulets from Arslan Tash, the protective amulets from Ketef Hinnom, the apotropaic art and inscriptions from Deir ‘Alla and Kuntillet Ajrud, a biblical text such as Deut. 32:17, 24, and, as we aim to explore, 1 Samuel 28:13.

RECONSIDERING THE PARTICIPANTS IN 1 SAMUEL 28:12–15

It is tempting to entertain an alternative or third way of viewing *’ēlōhîm* in verse 13. Rather than referring to a singular referent, viz., the dead Samuel, or to a plurality of gods but excluding Samuel, *’ēlōhîm* may designate a veritable host of beings that also included the accessible dead among them. In this view, the *’ôb* or revenant of Samuel referenced in verse 8 (and implied in 14b) would constitute a member of a subgroup within the larger group designated the “gods” or *’ēlōhîm* and could therefore also be considered a supernatural being in some meaningful sense that preternaturalism alone fails to convey. While allowing

9 See Caquot (1978, 52) for an earlier proposal along these lines. For *gā’ar* in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in Ugaritic as “hex” or “exorcise,” see Lewis (2011, esp. 210–18 and n. 63; 2012) and now Joosten (2014, 347–55). The term *gā’ar* conveys more than mere verbal rebuke—rather, “efficacious utterance” (see Zech. 3:2, where YHWH “exorcises *haš-šāṭān*”).

10 Schmidt 2013.

11 See too Nah. 1:4, where YHWH exorcises Yam.

12 Cf. inscription 4.6.3 line 1: *|r’t|*. As the editors note, the form is probably a plural, a construct form, or a suffixed form of the noun *r’h* “evil”; cf. Ahituv, Eshel, and Meshel 2012, 120. For the numinous character of the site, cf. Schmidt 2015.

for the notion that the dead could be “gods,” this view does so without neglecting conventional Hebrew morphology, syntax, and context that is in turn supported by the LXX and Vulgate. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out here that, had the narrator sought to refer to the dead Samuel exclusively as a single “god” in verse 13, the frequently occurring singular form *’el* could have been pressed into service rather than the plural form *’ēlōhîm*. The singular *’el* would more accurately and unambiguously designate Samuel as a lone divine entity.

As in the case of the inclusive view of verse 13’s *’ēlōhîm*, in which the plural form would convey a plurality of gods, the respective subgroups of the dead in verse 9 referred to as “the revenants” and “the knowers” (*hā’ōbōt* and *hayyidde’ōnîm*) might have constituted some level of membership within the larger group of “gods” or a separate class of supranatural beings. The same would apply in the reference to Samuel’s individual *’ōb* in verse 8. Such a subgrouping would give expression to a more inclusive henotheistic cosmology. The problem here is the level of abstraction needed to render *’ēlōhîm* with inclusive parameters sufficient to incorporate the dead. In any event, the construction *’ēlōhîm ’ōlîm* in verse 13 would retain its numerically plural translation “gods ascending. . .,” while Samuel, or his ghost or *’ōb*, would represent a subcategory of beings—the dead—encompassed within that larger, more varied group. This approach resolves the grammatical issues in a straightforward manner, but like the “exclusivist” interpretation in which *’ēlōhîm* would refer singularly and solely to Samuel’s ghost, this interpretation is susceptible to similar criticism, namely, that the dead in some meaningful sense could also be gods. This interpretation is rejected not because such a belief was unattested in the wider world of the ancient author, but precisely because it *was* attested. Whatever its specific character, had Samuel’s ghost indeed become an *’ēlōhîm*, one would have expected the author to reject such a deification tradition in verse 13, not extol it.

Lastly, narrative congruency and text-critical considerations favor the view that the MT’s *’ēlōhîm*—and the LXX’s *theoûs*, as well as the Vulgate’s *deos*—all connote numerical plurals—as do their respective Hebrew *Vorlagen*—indicative of a host of anonymous supranatural beings, “(the ascending) gods.” They were all activated by the necromancer’s ritual, with some perhaps participating in the event. The very mention of these divine beings constitutes a revealing reference to a Canaanite-Israelite cosmic world inhabited by a host of gods, daimons or beneficent intermediary beings, along with an opposing pandemonium comprised of a variety of demons, some associated with the underworld, and the dead (but as a group distinct from the gods or *’ēlōhîm*). While verse 13 mentions only those that ascended from below—the *’ēlōhîm ’ōlîm*—perhaps to assist in retrieving Samuel’s ghost or *’ōb*, such an inclusive category as the “gods” could have also accommodated those supranatural beings that were first sent below to retrieve and bring up Samuel’s ghost. These “gods” could have included as well any demon that might have sought to impede those daimons seeking to assist with Samuel’s ascent. From within their combined apotropaic and mortuary contexts, the Ketef Hinnom tomb amulets and the Khirbet el-Qom tomb inscriptions make mention of “The Evil (Ones)” and “The Enemies.” These are most likely demons that required the exercise of apotropaic rites (exorcistic and expulsatory) in the mortuary context of the tomb in order to keep them at bay and from harming the dead during the deceased’s journey to their netherworld abode or on those special occasions when the dead were conjured up and summoned back to the land of the living, as in 1 Samuel 28. The same or similar apotropaic rites might have been activated when the anonymous or unburied dead engaged in haunts of the living.¹³

Furthermore, if the notion *preternatural* is to be applied to dead royalty as an ancient Near Eastern convention of expressing their “other-ness” without regard to any enhanced or changed status and power, such would hardly convey congruence with its context in 1 Samuel 28. The story exudes a kaleidoscope of power relations—those involving YHWH, Saul, Samuel’s ghost, the people, foreign enemies such as the Philistines, the mantic arts and ritual, the institution of kingship, religious beliefs concerning kings and gods, intermediary beings, demons, the dead, and the living. Likewise, the terms for “god,” such as *’ilu* and

13 In the parallel lines that comprise 1 Samuel 2:6a and 6b, “YHWH deals death and gives life [v. 6a], Casts down into Sheol and raises up [v. 6b],” verse 6b’s two antithetical elements might refer to YHWH’s sending the dead down to the netherworld, and His bringing up the ghosts from the netherworld in necromantic and mortuary rituals.

ʿēlōhîm or ʿēl, connoted a wide range of divine entities in Canaanite-Israelite tradition, from the major gods to various daimons and demons that were never deemed solely “other-ed.” In a handful of instances, but millennia removed, DINGIR or ʿilu as at Ebla and Ugarit served to classify a deceased Levantine king as deified but beyond mere preternaturalism or otherness. Whether the underlying Eblaite and Ugaritic rituals were necromantic in nature or reflective of veneration rites (or constituted some convergence of the two), surely exceptional aspects of the power that the royal dead had acquired were given expression by their having been singled out for deification, making them worthy recipients of the royal sponsored cult. It must be underscored, however, that the story in 1 Samuel 28 is not in any way concerned with the divine powers possessed by a dead king. Likewise, while various levels of supranatural empowerment vested in the gods, daimons, and the demons undoubtedly lie behind the Hebrew *Vorlagen* of the MT, the LXX, and the Vulgate, with verse 13’s “gods” the narrative nowhere attributes such status or power to the dead. As noted above, the ascent of the gods in verse 13 and the ascent of the dead Samuel in verse 14 are presented in two distinct ritual stages of the necromantic ritual. Such staging gives expression to an underlying ontological distinction between the anonymous gods on the one hand, and the dead on the other.¹⁴ The MT employs a variety of terms to designate various subgroups within the broader category of the Israelite dead: the ʿōbôt, yiddēʿōnî, mētim, ʾābôt, rēphāʾim, and so on. These terms convey various roles, special abilities, and distinct character traits of the dead, but none of the terms attributes to the dead the inherent possession of powers otherwise attributable to the gods. 1 Samuel 28:15 may be informative in this regard. Upon his arrival, and without any exchange of greetings, Samuel, i.e., his ghost or ʿōb, abruptly announces that Saul had “disturbed” him. Does this allude to the dead’s characteristic restful sleep or weakened state?

AN EARLY ISRAELITE DAIMONIC REALM AND ITS PANDEMONIUM

Apropos the necromantic rite in 1 Samuel 28, the nature of the questions posed in the MT and LXX at verses 13 (“what/whom do you see?”) and 14 (“what is his/its appearance/what did you perceive?”) gives expression to anticipated but unknowable outcomes once the ritual mechanics were enacted with regard to who might appear from among these gods and ghosts. Such unpredictability was due to the nature of mantic investigation. It required extreme precision in the management of such entities as daimons, demons, and the dead. Should a ritualist commit an error in performing the requisite rites, a random, uninvited, or otherwise provoked apparition might unexpectedly be activated, haunt, or simply appear. In such instances, one can readily imagine that expert skills in such apotropaic practices as ghost expulsion or exorcistic rites would be invoked to counter such unanticipated and undesirable outcomes. So, in addition to the revenant or ʿōb of the dead that was specifically sought, invoked, and queried in a given necromantic performance (as in v. 8), verse 13 indicates that other delegated and/or invited supranatural beings might participate in, attempt to intervene in, or become activated by such a ritual in one capacity or another. Furthermore, other apparitions that had not been invited to participate might show up should the necromancer fail to follow the requisite ritual details precisely, or haunting ghosts might appear in search of would-be living victims after having been unintentionally energized by the ritual. For the various reasons cited above, and perhaps in direct opposition to the inclusion of the dead among the gods as in some neighboring traditions, the narrator maintained the distinct status of the dead—the *hāʾōbôt* and *hayyiddēʿōnîm*, or “the revenants” and “the (dead) knowers”—as an independent category vis-à-vis that of the “gods.” While the latter constituted a range of divine beings from the major gods to various levels of intermediary beings, such as daimons and demons, for the MT’s author the dead represented a distinct category. All of this immediately follows upon Saul’s request in verse 8 that the woman, “a controller of a revenant (ʿōb),” should divine (*qāsam*) for him an ʿōb—one that Saul would in fact name. Saul nowhere requests that she bring up Samuel’s ʿēlōhîm (or, more fittingly, ʿēl) per se for questioning, adding further

14 A similar dichotomy between the dead and demons has been tentatively entertained for Egyptian cosmology (see Lucarelli 2010). On the basis of their distinct origins, the former become the dead following their transformation at death through ritual, whereas demons, as such, are the creation of the gods. Yet, such a distinction may be obscured somewhat by the functions they may have shared on occasion; e.g., both were known to do harm to the living.

confirmation to the narrator's presumed distinction between those two categories: gods versus ghosts. This distinction is further underscored by the central role Samuel's ghost plays in the ritual scene as he delivers YHWH's protracted doom oracle against Saul and his sons, extending over several lengthy verses (vv. 15–19), over against the lone verse mentioning the gods, some as participants while others appear only as unintended outcomes of the ritual (v. 13).

A CASE OF A "PRETERNATURAL PROPHET" OR GHOST-ASSISTING DAIMONS?

This essay began by citing a number of recent English translations that have rendered the phrase *'ēlōhîm* *'ōlîm* in 1 Samuel 28:13 of the MT in the singular and as a reference to the so-called preternatural state or deification of the dead prophet-judge Samuel, "I see a divine being/god coming up . . ." (JPS, NRSV: "a divine being"; RSV, CEB: "a god"; NKJV: "a spirit"; NIV: "a ghostly figure"). These translations were found to be problematic for several reasons. While the Hebrew construction itself *'ēlōhîm* *'ōlîm* can feasibly render the plural "gods" or a single "god," as a stand-alone absent of any context and usage, it is ambiguous. Yet, the LXX traditions unanimously render their Hebrew *Vorlagen* as the Greek plural, "gods ascending" (*theoûs . . . ânibaínontas*), as does the Vulgate on this specific point. As mentioned previously, in those LXX traditions where Saul, not Samuel, is mentioned in verse 12a and where, in verse 14, the Greek does not preserve the equivalent to the MT's possessive pronoun on the Hebrew *tô'ar* "(his/its) appearance" (*to'ôrô*), the LXX evinces an independent and more ancient Hebrew *Vorlage* that preserves a distinct, forward-moving plot progression in which multiple stages of a necromantic rite are evident. In the MT, however, such a multistaged ritual development is all but absent as a result of the MT scribe's obfuscation of the number of entities reflected in the morphological plural *'ēlōhîm*, thereby leaving the immediate narrative more or less redundant, static, and ambiguous as to the number of sentient beings implied by *'ēlōhîm*.

The Latin Vulgate reflects an apparent conflation of the MT and LXX. It reads "Samuel" (*Samuhel*) in verse 12b with the MT (and the majority LXX reading), but preserves the unequivocal plural, "gods ascending" (*deos ascendentes*), in verse 13 with the LXX and plausibly the MT, while in verse 14a the reading "what is his/its form?" (*qualis est forma eius*) clearly follows the MT. Moreover, the Hebrew third masculine singular pronominal suffix on the MT's *to'ôrô* in verse 14 and its semantic equal in the Vulgate may well have as their antecedent a plural with a collective force. As such, the intended antecedent(s) would comprise the corporate *'ēlōhîm* as well as Samuel's *'ôb*, who had all just arrived in two stages, "its (= the scene's) appearance."¹⁵ This is in essence the force of the broader question preserved in the LXX of 1 Samuel 28:14, "What did you perceive?," which lacks the qualifying pronoun and clearly refers to the whole of the necromantic happening.

CONCLUSION

By way of summary, the view of recent translations that 1 Samuel 28:13's *'ēlōhîm* conveys the supposed deification (or preternatural status) of the deceased Samuel is based on several questionable strategies and assumptions that together render such an interpretation and translation unconvincing:

(1) Although the Hebrew construction *'ēlōhîm* *'ōlîm* can be rendered as either "gods ascending" or "a divine being/god ascending . . ." and on its own is therefore grammatically ambiguous, the term *'ēlōhîm* nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible unequivocally refers to a dead person, whether a prophet or commoner, let alone a king.¹⁶ Neither David nor Solomon nor Josiah, for example, is deified in the Deuteronomistic History. Such a reference would constitute a truly exceptional case in 1 Samuel 28:13.

15 On the use of the singular suffix to refer collectively to its antecedent, see Waltke and O'Connor (1990, 303 §16.4b, nos. 3 and 4, and note Jer. 36:23).

16 Hays (2010, 271), following others, interprets *'ēlōhîm* in Isaiah 8:19 as the deified, dead ancestors based on Samuel's supposed status as an *'ēlōhîm* here in 1 Samuel 28:13 (but see verse 19 in the LXX and Vulgate and note that *ancestors* per se are nowhere explicitly in view in either text). While the syntactic and semantic relationships between verse 19a and verse 19b are complex, given the immediate context the *'ēlōhîm* of verse 19a most likely allude(s) either to YHWH, mentioned

(2) When the plural form does refer to an *individual* divine being in the Hebrew Bible, it typically refers to Yahweh as “God”—i.e., to an altogether different class of supranatural being, a high god, not a ghost, and in any case, the commonly occurring singular *’el* would have much more clearly and irrefutably rendered such an entity as the dead Samuel as “a divine being/god.”

(3) In preferring the singular rendition of MT’s *’ēlōhîm*, recent translators demonstrate a total disregard for the unequivocal, numerical plural, “gods ascending,” preserved in the ancient textual witnesses, the LXX (*theoûs*) and Vulgate (*deos*), and the widely recognized superiority of the underlying Hebrew *Vorlagen* of both the LXX and Vulgate at verse 13. That plurality of gods clearly represents a range of supranatural beings who ascended, participated in, or responded in some manner to the necromantic rite.

(4) The revenant or ghost in verse 8 (*’ôb*) is identified as Samuel by Saul only at the very final stage of the necromantic ritual, and there it appears in verse 14a merely as an “old man” (MT) or “upright man” (LXX), not as a divine being or *’ēlōhîm* (or as an *’el*).

(5) The recent translations unnecessarily create an incoherent tautology and a muddled plot development within the confines of two verses by their threefold repetitive referral to Samuel’s appearing or ascent: first by name in verse 12 (and thereby awkwardly preempting the actual initiation of the necromantic ritual in the following verse 13), then as “a divine being ascending” in verse 13, and finally by means of “his appearance” as an “old man . . .” or “an upright man ascending” in verse 14.

(6) Although comparative evidence for both the living and the dead as deified beings may support various versions of conventional ancient Near Eastern kingship, not a single king or other elite individual such as a judge or prophet was portrayed as deified, attributed a preternatural status, or labeled an *’ēlōhîm* (“a god”) in the Hebrew Bible or in the Hebrew epigraphic corpus. And while such may have comprised a major component of the form of kingship in 1 Samuel 8 that the people and Samuel sought for themselves—but that also resulted in YHWH’s rejection as divine king—neither David nor Solomon nor Josiah—nor even Elijah, the heavenly *ascendant* prophet—whether dead or alive, was deified, attributed a preternatural status, or labeled an *’ēlōhîm* (“god”) in the Deuteronomistic History.

(7) The minority reading of the LXX and the other major witnesses—the majority LXX reading, the Vulgate, as well as the MT—all agree (minimally) on a two-stage ritual progression and on the presence of two distinct categories of participants: the gods or *’ēlōhîm* in verse 13, and in verse 14 Samuel, i.e., his *’ôb* (see v. 8).

(8) The gods mentioned in the LXX and Vulgate manuscript traditions are in no way diminished in status so as to equate them with or include ghosts. The gods and the dead Samuel are referred to separately in the narrative while also appearing in two distinct ritual stages in verses 13 and 14, mirroring what may well have constituted their ontologically distinct functions and categories as *’ēlōhîm* and as an *’ôb*.

(9) Although recent translations render *’ēlōhîm* in verse 13 as a single “divine being” or “a god” referring to the dead Samuel, the consensus continues to gain followers that the LXX’s Hebrew *Vorlage* in 1 Reigns or 1 Samuel is an early witness to the Hebrew text and, as the manuscript evidence from Qumran demonstrates, in many cases it is preferred over the MT. The various indicators preserved in the LXX’s Hebrew *Vorlage* and in the Vulgate regarding the text’s transmission history in 1 Samuel 28 and what they convey vis-à-vis the phases or procedural steps and phenomenological aspects of what ritually, and/or rhetorically, constituted for the author an ancient form of necromancy have been entirely ignored in the recent translations. That the LXX in verse 13 might preserve a more ancient reading, and therefore offer an ancient precedent for clearly viewing the MT’s *’ēlōhîm* as a numerical plural, “gods,” finds support in the ritualizing progression preserved in LXX, the MT, and in the Vulgate over against the incoherence embedded in the tautology created by recent translations of the MT’s *’ēlōhîm* as a numerical singular.¹⁷ To be sure, the MT,

in verses 17–18 as “its God” (with the LXX and Vulgate) or to “its gods” (including YHWH?) as a distinct *complement* to the “dead ones” in verse 19b, i.e., the gods and the dead ones represent two polarities, *not* equivalents. As such, the two components form a merism (i.e., all nonliving human beings, both the gods and the dead) in the question posed by Isaiah’s opponents: “. . . should not a people inquire of its gods on behalf of the living, (should not a people [also] inquire), of the dead (on behalf of the living)?” See also my earlier treatise (Schmidt 1996, 147–54, 201–20).

17 On resorting to the rule of *lectio difficilior praeferenda* as a last recourse, see Tov 2012, 275–77.

the majority LXX reading, and the Vulgate all replace the reference to Saul with “Samuel” in verse 12b, thus providing the recent translations a prospective singular antecedent to the *’ēlōhîm* in verse 13. Likewise, the third masculine singular suffix on *to’ôrô* in verse 14 has been rendered by those same translations as “his appearance” rather than “its appearance” (wherein the antecedent would comprise the entire necromantic event). Yet, the translation “his appearance” would create a fourth redundant reference to Samuel’s ascent. These recent renderings have been prompted by the convergence of two factors.

The first factor is the prospect that the story might well preserve a henotheistic cosmos encompassing multiple gods and intermediary beings, not to mention a sentient ghost. This factor has directly impacted the second factor, viz., how key terms throughout the story have been translated. These include the ambiguity inherent in the Hebrew forms in play; *’ēlōhîm* in verse 13 with regard to its context-determined, numerical significance can denote either a singularity (“a god”) or a plurality (“gods”). As recent translators would have it, *’ēlōhîm* refers to a single “god.” As such, it would eliminate the two-phase ritual progression in verses 13–14, wherein Samuel’s appearance (v. 14) follows that of the numerous gods (v. 13). In its stead, recent translators would identify only one entity referenced throughout verses 12–14, viz., the deified, or so-called “preternatural,” ghost of Samuel. Although his one-time appearance is thrice repeated (vv. 12, 13, 14) and the underlying ritual obfuscated, Saul is nevertheless able to identify him only at the very tail end of the ritual in verse 14b. This points to an added clue to the incongruence created by recent translators. According to them, the revenant of Samuel serves as the lone actor in a single-stage ascent that is redundantly rehearsed three times, while Saul’s participation is largely marginalized and the multiple gods are altogether elided in verse 13, as is Saul’s query in verse 14 regarding the goings-on on the part of the entire entourage of gods and ghosts.¹⁸

So the question arises whether a supposed dead, deified Samuel as the story’s stand-alone apparition represents an “unholy” compromise for recent translators in which an assumed cosmic world inhabited by divinized ghosts could somehow substitute for a more extensive, henotheistic one inhabited by various gods including intermediary beings, daimons, and demons and by ghosts, which when viewed together reflect the narrator’s embrace of some form of internal Yahwistic pluralism comprised of older Canaanite and newer Israelite supranatural beings. The majority LXX reading and, following it, the Vulgate provide us with our most ancient precedents for clarifying the MT’s otherwise ambiguous form *’ēlōhîm* as a stand-alone.¹⁹ In spite of having replaced the minority LXX reading of “Saul” with “Samuel” in verse 12, the entire LXX tradition nevertheless retained the numerical plural *theōus* of the Old Greek and, by implication, the numerical plural of the *’ēlōhîm* preserved in its underlying Hebrew *Vorlage*. At the same time, it retained the more generalized question in verse 14 of the Old Greek (and again, of its Hebrew *Vorlage*) “What did you perceive?” As a “third way,” the Vulgate, based on various LXX and Hebrew manuscripts, reads “Samuel” in verse 12 following the MT and the LXX’s majority reading. Yet, the Vulgate follows all its precursors in retaining the unequivocal numerical plural, “gods,” in verse 13 with the Latin reading *deos . . . ascendentes*. Over against the LXX’s more generalized question, the Vulgate has preserved a pronoun functioning much like the MT’s suffixed pronoun in verse 14, “What is his/its appearance?” The Vulgate reads, “What form is he/it of?” Yet, regardless of whether the ancient witnesses read in verse 12 Samuel or Saul, they are unanimous in their testimony to a minimal two-phase ritual: the appearance of the “gods” in verse 13 (via the morphological form marked for numerical plurality) followed by the emergence in verse 14 of Samuel (i.e., his ghost; note MT’s *’ōb* in v. 8 and the Vulgate’s *python*).

18 For an overview of Mesopotamian necromancy and the prospective participation of various gods such as Humuṭ-tabal, the netherworld boatman, who ferried the dead across the river Ḫubur; Namtar, vizier of the netherworld; Nedu, chief netherworld gatekeeper; Ningishzida, netherworld chamberlain; the Anunnaki, the great gods; Allatu, the great chamberlain of the netherworld; and, of course, Shamash the sun god, see Schmidt 1996, 202–20; 2002; and now Koch 2015, 138–39, and Finkel 2021, 266–67, 269. On possible Egyptian mantic and ritual parallels to 1 Samuel 28, see Ritner 2002.

19 See Tov (2012, 131–37, 144–47; 2015, 201–23) and Joosten 2012 for critical assessments of the Old Greek, its various revisions, the Vulgate, and their interrelationships and intrarelationships with the MT. For 1–4 Reigns in particular, see Brill’s *Textual History of the Bible Online* (<http://referenceworks.brillonline.com>).

Two considerations confirm the coherence characterizing the minority reading of the LXX. The ritual progression underlying the plot is quite clear: Saul approaches in disguise and makes his request of the necromancer, whereupon she is able to recognize Saul for the first time (v. 12b). Saul then prompts her to initiate the ritual, and the anonymous gods, daimons, and demons ascend (v. 13). The necromancer next brings up the dead Samuel, whom Saul is able to recognize for the very first time (v. 14b), and finally with YHWH's intervention near the start of Samuel's oral delivery (vv. 15–19), the ghost or *'ôb* of Samuel surprisingly delivers to Saul YHWH's divinely inspired doom oracle (vv. 16ff.)²⁰. Now, one should not miss the importance of YHWH's rather unanticipated role in the deliverance of Samuel's doom oracle aimed at Saul beginning with verse 16. Surely, the narrative indicators suggest that Saul is seeking to conjure Samuel's revenant by means of a Canaanite ritual involving the Canaanite gods of the female Canaanite necromancer. In other words, Saul is not anticipating Samuel's revenant to deliver YHWH's fatal doom oracle. Saul is seeking the complete opposite. Having already been rejected by YHWH (see v. 6 and 1 Samuel 15: 26–29; 16:1), Saul cannot expect a favorable answer from YHWH, so he makes his appeal for assistance and a prediction regarding the next day's battle to the Canaanite gods of the Endorian necromancer. It is the view of this author that just such a set of developments are underway in the narrativized ritual when, in verse 16, YHWH intervenes, co-opting the ritual and oracle, reiterating YHWH's previous rejection of Saul, while also adding the fatal curse on Saul and his sons (vv. 16–19). Likewise, in the minority reading of the LXX, the congruence of the narrative is well maintained as all parties participate in what transpires; the necromancer immediately identifies king Saul (vv. 12a and b), and in turn, Saul is privy to her conjuring up of the anonymous gods or *'êlôhîm* (v. 13); then, following on Samuel's emergence, Saul is for the first time able to confirm Samuel's arrival, which compels Saul to prostrate himself (v. 14). As for the oath that Saul swears to the Canaanite necromancer in verse 10, it is disingenuous and only serves Saul's purpose of persuading the necromancer to commence with the ritual of invoking the gods—hers, his, or both—and performing the requisite rites that would bring up Samuel's ghost or *'ôb*. After all, YHWH had long before rejected Saul as king (15:26–29; 16:1), and in the present episode YHWH remained “dead” silent in verse 6 despite Saul's repeated attempts to entreat Him by means of dreams, the Urim, or the prophets.

Had Samuel become an *'êlôhîm*, it would have constituted an entirely unprecedented phenomenon serving as the backdrop to the ritualizing incident in 1 Samuel 28. As proposed here, Samuel's prescient knowledge was made accessible to Saul as the direct outcome of YHWH's intervention rather than from any supposed prior transformation to the status of a “god” that Samuel had supposedly come to acquire postmortem (v. 13). YHWH shockingly co-opted Samuel's oracle in what had initially constituted the Canaanite necromancer's Canaanite-oriented ritual. The convergence of factors points to the following: in dying, Samuel had become ritually accessible to the living through the performance of necromantic ritual. In verses 7 and 8, the narrator makes this clear: the Endorian necromancer possessed the expertise to control or conjure a ghost or *'ôb*. It is worth noting here that Saul did not seek a “god” (or *'êlôhîm*) to consult, nor is the necromancer described as an expert in controlling or consulting such “a god.” Rather, Saul sought an expert in ghost conjuring and the woman was renowned for her skills in just that area of mantic expertise. She was not described as a controller of “a god.” As verse 7 records, she instead held the title “controller of a ghost” or *ba'alat 'ôb*. Finally, verse 16 underscores YHWH's unexpected intervention in the necromantic event. There, YHWH conveyed divinely revealed knowledge about the future through the oracular speech of his prophet's ghost. 1 Samuel 28 constitutes a genuinely exceptional descriptive reference to YHWH's conveyance of revealed knowledge via the dead on matters of royal significance. Within the larger narrative surroundings of 1 Samuel 28, the convergence of Samuel's death with his serving as a vessel to convey divine knowledge could hardly go unnoticed, remain unrelated, or constitute mere coincidence. But it required

20 See Schmidt (2020, 332–40) for more on YHWH's unexpected intervention and co-option of the oracle delivered by Samuel's ghost.

YHWH's unanticipated intervention to empower Samuel's prophetic doom oracle, which he proclaimed from the other side of the grave.²¹

21 See Carlson 2022, 46–59, for the intriguing proposal that Samuel's dead "spirit" (Carlson's term) took possession of the female necromancer from Endor, that is, she hosted Samuel's spirit within her body and spoke all of Samuel's words. Carlson cites no ancient Near Eastern parallels for his proposed spirit possession of the necromancer in 1 Samuel 28, and yet, a form of ghost possession necromancy is attested in a sixth-century BCE Mesopotamian text from Babylonia in which the ghost takes up residence in a human skull and speaks. Mesopotamian alternatives to skull possession include the ghost possessing an *eṭemmu* figurine (i.e., a clay ghost figurine) or a *namtaru* figurine (a clay messenger figurine) and the use of a hallucinatory drug, *anamīru*, to facilitate seeing a ghost (see Finkel 2021, 218, 234–39).

While Carlson's proposal fascinates, there is no mention of Samuel's "ghost" (or *'ôb*; see vv. 7–9) taking possession of the necromancer, and Carlson's "spirit" (Hebrew *rûah?*) is nowhere attested in 1 Samuel 28. Furthermore, the narrator employed the Hebrew verb "to see" (*r-ʾ-h*) to vividly describe the necromancer's ability to visually perceive the various ascending apparitions in vv. 13–14, both the broadly inclusive *'ēlōhîm* "gods" or "supernatural beings" and a specific member of the *'ôbôt*, the ghost of Samuel (vv. 7–9). In any case, Saul's inability to see those goings-on simply indicates that he lacked the necromancer's special capabilities—which is, after all, why he sought her out.

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**PART 5 — HEBREW LINGUISTICS
AND VERBAL SYSTEM**

30

THE HEBREW VERBAL SYSTEM IN AN OYSTER SHELL
EGYPTO-SEMITIC NOTES

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Donald Redford, in his chapter on “Egyptian” in a volume devoted to the languages of Israel’s neighbors and their relevance to the Bible, has the following to say:

In the realm of language and literature, as in other spheres of cultural expression, the Israelites found themselves both geographically and spiritually within the *Kulturgebiet* of Mesopotamia. There is no clear, fundamental debt to northeast Africa in intellectual heritage or material culture. Those cultural elements from Egypt that have been demonstrated were borrowed only sporadically and made but superficial impact on the Israelites. This has meant that, in terms of cognate languages and cultures to be selected by the student of the Hebrew Bible to “round out” his or her approach, those from the Tigris-Euphrates and Syria have been preferred to their counterparts in Egypt. Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Aramaic have long since proven of far greater help than Egyptian in elucidating the minutiae of the Hebrew text.¹

It is, of course, true that Aramaic, Ugaritic, and Akkadian are linguistically closer to Biblical Hebrew (BH) than is Ancient Egyptian (AE).² The degree of insight provided by comparative study among these languages is immense. Nevertheless, to assume that the AE language contains no pearls of fundamental importance to BH, as Redford does, is a *non sequitur*.³ In fact, there are features of BH that are closer to AE than to Akkadian. In the lexical domains of costume, mineralogy, botany, and especially record keeping, the number of terms shared between BH and AE but different from Akkadian is high and matches the degree of commonality of the corresponding natural resources and technologies among the three civilizations. The shared vocabulary includes both genetic cognates and loanwords.⁴ Biblical Hebrew and AE also share v-s-o word order, while the usual word order in Akkadian prose is s-o-v. While this fact alone may not help in “elucidating the minutiae of the Hebrew text,” it suggests that Egyptian data could be mined for yet-undisclosed treasures pertaining to the finer points of syntax. Extensive similarities should not, after all, be surprising in view of the longstanding cultural contact between ancient Israel and its close neighbor to the south that has been abundantly documented in books by Redford and others. Such close contact over millennia might be expected to give rise to linguistic similarities, as speakers of the two closely interacting language communities would optimize the use both of mutually borrowed features and of noticeably similar inherited features.

1 Redford 2002, 118.

2 In addition to BH and AE, the following abbreviations are used herein: SC = suffix conjugation; PC = prefix conjugation; SPC = short prefix conjugation; LPC = long prefix conjugation.

3 Redford focuses here on borrowings and tacitly sets aside the similarities to BH that are mutually inherited, such as those he mentions in his survey of AE grammar preceding the quoted paragraph. Further, he seems to assume that if students of the Hebrew Bible usually turn to genetically closer languages for comparanda, then such students must do so because these languages are more illuminating—rather than, for instance, because they are easier to learn than AE.

4 Lambdin 1953; Muchiki 1999, 236–58; Calabro 2008, 71–72.

In this essay, I shall discuss some contributions of Egypto-Semitic linguistic comparison to the understanding of the Hebrew verbal system.⁵ I shall focus on three features of the BH verb that have parallels in AE: (1) the iterative and deontic functions of the BH *wʾqatal* form, which are also found in the AE “Stative/Old Perfective” form; (2) the opposition between fientivity and stativity; and (3) the overall opposition between the suffix conjugation (SC) and the prefix conjugation (PC), which parallels the opposition between the AE “Stative/Old Perfective” and *sdm=f*, particularly in terms of these forms’ syntactic functions. I shall argue that these features of the BH verb are best explained as retentions from Proto-Afroasiatic. This study may be considered yet another protracted footnote to the honoree’s essay “The Hebrew Verbal System in a Nutshell.”⁶ I offer it in gratitude to Dennis, who opened up to me the wonders of historical grammar and also encouraged me to explore the deep waters of Egyptian.

THE PROBLEM OF THE HEBREW *wʾqatal* FORM⁷

One of the persistent mysteries of the Hebrew verbal system is the form *wʾqatal* (an SC form following the conjunction *wʾ*), used as an equivalent of the imperfective *yiqtol* (**yaqtulu*) and the volitive *yiqtol* (**yaqtul*). The use of the *wʾqatal* form as an equivalent of *yiqtol* is parallel to the use of the form *wayyiqtol* as an equivalent of the perfective *qatal*, thus constituting a virtually symmetrical paradigm in BH from a synchronic standpoint:⁸

	Bare form:	<i>Waw</i> form:
Perfective:	<i>qatal</i>	<i>wayyiqtol</i>
Imperfective:	<i>yiqtol</i>	<i>wʾqatal</i>

On the surface, it seems as though the addition of the conjunction *wʾ* “and” somehow reverses the aspect of the clause, thus giving rise to the old name for the *wʾqatal* and *wayyiqtol* forms, “*waw* conversive” (corresponding to the Hebrew term *waw hippuk*, lit., “*waw* of reversal”). Thanks to internal and comparative evidence, it is now abundantly clear that the verb form *wayyiqtol* comes from a preterite form *yaqtul*, while *yiqtol* comes from a morphologically distinct imperfective form *yaqtulu*, which derivation explains their functional difference. However, there is no such formal difference between *wʾqatal* and *qatal*. Instead, the two appear morphologically identical, except for the presence or absence of the conjunction and a (most likely secondary) difference in the placement of stress. The origin of the *wʾqatal* form remains a problematic area for the understanding of the BH verbal system. This area, I believe, holds pearls that can be brought to light through comparative Egypto-Semitic study.

According to Pardee’s explanation of the historical origins of the BH system, “the four forms consist of two that came into use when the proto-West Semitic system began to express perfectivity by QTL (‘SC’ = suffix conjugation) and imperfectivity by YQTL (‘PC’ = prefix conjugation) and two that constitute frozen

5 I use the term “Egypto-Semitic” herein to refer to the Afroasiatic languages for which ancient documents are attested. The distinction between “Egypto-Semitic” and “Afroasiatic” is primarily methodological, as the former involves philological methods, including paleography and textual criticism, as part of the process of teasing out linguistic information. The distinction also arises from the recognition that languages with a long history of written documentation are in some ways more reliable for historical reconstruction than languages for which the only sources are modern.

6 Pardee 2012.

7 For the sake of overall consistency, in the abstract terms *qatal*, *wʾqatal*, etc., I ignore the fact that the BH reflex of the root **qtl* has an emphatic middle radical: *qtl*. (The middle radical is not, however, emphatic in the Arabic cognate.)

8 In his comprehensive overview of the BH verbal system, Joosten (2012) argues for a tense-based approach. Joosten’s book appeared in the same year as Pardee’s (2012) “Nutshell” article and thus was not dealt with directly in that article. However, criticisms of an earlier article by Joosten (2002) appear in the “Nutshell” article (Pardee 2012, 289–90 n. 23), and the book is subject to the same criticisms, namely that it is weak with regard to the diachronic developments it suggests, and it fails to demonstrate that the aspect-based approach is inadequate. The criticisms given by Cook (2006) are along similar lines. As for *wʾqatal*, which Joosten (2012, 261) variously describes as an *irrealis* form, a modal form (ibid., 288), and a future-tense form (ibid.), Pardee’s analysis of it as an imperfective accords with the data and is more straightforward.

usages retained from a previous stage of the language when the perfective and/or preterit was expressed by *yaqtul* while *qatala* (and its variants) expressed stativity.”⁹ Beneath this statement, at the bottom of a deep footnote, we find the following elaboration on the origin of the *w³qatal* form:

One must either admit, it appears to me, that *w³qatal* arose secondarily in Biblical Hebrew as a counterpart to *wayyiqtol* (a notion that I no longer accept, as will be indicated below) or that it had a proto-Hebrew origin similar to that of *wayyiqtol*. That origin can only have been in the proto-West Semitic form corresponding to Akkadian *paris*, which was basically adjectival and hence unmarked for aspect. It appears plausible to explain the origin of the Hebrew *w³qatal* form as a frozen form, like *wayyiqtol*, consisting of *wa-* + this form, which was aspectually neutral but took on the function of expressing non-perfectivity in contrast with *wayyiqtol*. What might be termed the reigning hypothesis regarding the origin of the *w³qatal* imperfective is that it began life in the apodosis of conditional clauses, an explanation whose origin can only be understood as an attempt to explain the form as part of a tensed system, and a rather desperate one at that.¹⁰

What Pardee calls the “reigning hypothesis” did indeed begin as an attempt to explain *w³qatal* from the standpoint of a tensed system. Key studies in the early development of this hypothesis focused on uses of unconjoined *qatal* with future-tense meaning in searching for a syntactic environment from which the general “future-tense” form *w³qatal* could have evolved. “The story of how the consecutive *waw* with the perfect came to denote real futurity,” wrote Israel Eitan, “can now be traced with almost complete certainty.”¹¹ For Eitan, the story began not with the use of the SC in conditional clauses but with the Arabic optative SC and the BH “precativ perfect.” The Arabic form occurs in expressions such as *ṣallā allāhu ‘alayhi wasallama* “God bless and preserve him” (said after the name of the prophet Muhammad), *raḥimahu allāhu* “God have mercy on him,” and *la’anahu allāhu* “God curse him.”¹² Aside from these formulaic contexts, the form occurs in several other contexts in the Qur’ān and other Classical Arabic literature, such as the following passage from the Qur’ān, indicating that it was productive in Classical Arabic.

tabbat yadā ‘abī lahabin watabba / mā ‘aḡnā ‘anhu māluhu wamā kasaba

May Abu Lahab’s hands perish, and may he perish; / may his wealth and what he has acquired
avail him not! (Qur’ān 111:1–2)

The BH “precativ perfect” is somewhat more controversial due to the uncertainty of interpretation in the relevant passages, most of which are found in the Psalms.¹³ One such passage is Psalm 4:2, where the textually invariant SC form comes between two imperatives:

b’qar’iṣ ‘aneniṣ ṣidqiṣ baṣṣor hirḥabto liṣ ḥanneniṣ uṣṣama‘ t’pillotiṣ

When I cry, answer me, my righteous God! May you enlarge my place in my distress. Favor
me and hear my prayer!

The NIV translates the SC form as an imperative (“give me relief”), while most other translations render it in the past tense (e.g., NRSV, “you gave me room”). The use of the *w³qatal* form following an imperative was, according to Eitan, the “missing link or transitional stage between the mere optative perfect and the future perfect with *waw*.” For the transition from an optative form to a general future tense, Eitan cites the use of “will” and “shall” for the future in English.¹⁴

9 Pardee 2012, 287.

10 Ibid., n. 11.

11 Eitan 1929, 25.

12 Cf. Wright 1896, 2:2–3.

13 Ewald 1863, 573–74; Böttcher 1868, 149, 159–60; Driver 1892, 25–26; Bittenwieser 1938, 21–25, passim; Dahood 1965–70, 1:xxxix, 3:414–17, passim; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 494–95; Provan 1991.

14 Eitan 1929, 25–27.

Similarly to Eitan, H. L. Ginsberg focused on SC forms in Ugaritic narrative poetry that seem to function as optatives, which he compared with the Arabic optative perfect. According to Ginsberg, “the development of the perfect consecutive was not purely a polar consequence of the development of the imperfect consecutive, but was favoured by the fact that one of the original functions of the perfect was that of an optative and precative.”¹⁵ It was this formulation of the development by Ginsberg that was picked up by William L. Moran in his comparison of verbs in Amarna Canaanite and in BH.¹⁶ Moran found thirty-three cases in which the SC “is used with reference to the future” (note again the tense-oriented approach) in the Amarna tablets from Byblos. These instances appear in protases as well as apodoses of conditional sentences. Moran explicitly cited these findings as a corroboration of Ginsberg’s hypothesis of the origin of the *wʾqatal* form as an optative or precative. Moran’s notion seems to be that the West Semitic SC had, in addition to a past-tense meaning, other functions that referred to the hypothetical future, including deontic (optative and precative) and conditional (protasis and apodosis) functions. These non-past-tense functions, according to Moran’s understanding, developed into the BH *wʾqatal*.

Setting aside the assumption of a tensed system, the hypothesis developed by Eitan, Ginsberg, and Moran is actually quite effective in explaining the development of Hebrew *wʾqatal* within Central Semitic. Indeed, the hypothesis gains greater force from Arabic examples that mix the functions of apodosis of a conditional clause and optative form—examples that did not enter into the discussion, such as the following:¹⁷

ʾin kunta ibna hammāmin fa-ḥuyyīta bi-ʾikrāmin

If you are Ibn Hammam, may you be saluted with honor!

However, Moran’s formulation fails to account for the existence of “future-tense” SC forms in Central Semitic itself. Tracing the BH *wʾqatal* to these forms begs the question of how they came about, given that the SC is supposed to express primarily complete action in the past (according to this understanding of the system). Ultimately, this hypothesis must include a redefinition of the original nature of the SC in order to make sense from a historical standpoint.

The answer to this dilemma, resulting in the current formulation of the “reigning hypothesis,” was eventually to be found in studies by Hetzron and Huehnergard. According to these studies, an ancient reanalysis of the SC defined the split between Proto-West Semitic and its East Semitic sister tongue.¹⁸ In this reanalysis, what was originally a predicate adjectival form with predominantly stative meaning (e.g., *paris* “he was/is/will be separated”) became a perfective finite verb form (e.g., *qatala* “he killed”). It was this innovative perfective form that was the origin of the BH *wʾqatal*. The notion of perfectivity, an aspectual rather than a tensed category, had already been applied to Semitic verbal systems, beginning with the treatises of Johann Jahn,¹⁹ Carl Paul Caspari,²⁰ Heinrich Ewald,²¹ and Samuel R. Driver.²² The appeal to this notion in the work of Hetzron and Huehnergard marked a shift away from the focus on “future-tense” uses of the SC. In Waltke and O’Connor’s presentation of the development of *wʾqatal*, which reflects the “reigning hypothesis,” Moran’s data are explicitly cited as the point of departure, but there is no mention of the use of this form in the protases of conditional sentences, nor of the optative or precative perfect. Instead, the focus is on the use in apodoses, which widened in BH to a range of uses that fall under the rubric of

15 Ginsberg 1936, 177.

16 Moran 1961, 64–65.

17 Wright 1896, 2:3.

18 Hetzron 1976, 104–5; Huehnergard 1995, 2130–31.

19 Jahn 1809, 197–214.

20 Wright 1896, 1:51, 2:1–24.

21 Ewald 1863, 348–58.

22 Driver 1892, 1–6. Cook (2002, 79–93) recounts the development of the aspectual theory in these nineteenth-century works.

“(con)sequentiality.”²³ The hypothesis in its current formulation thus explains the *w³qatal* form not as part of a tensed system but as a syntactically motivated development of the perfective.

The main problem with the “reigning hypothesis” is that it is quite speculative (or, to use Pardee’s term, “desperate”). The method of picking out a single syntactic context as the cradle from which a verb form with a wide range of usage developed is inherently subject to doubt. Further, as Pardee has pointed out, many instances of *w³-SC* are not “(con)sequential.”²⁴ In fact, uses of this form that are not tied to sequence or result are among the most frequent uses. In addition to the examples in Pardee’s sample texts, one could mention the use of *w³qatal* in a parallelistic restatement or explanation of what precedes it, as well as in contrast to what precedes it. These types are illustrated in the following examples:

ʿoru^wr haggeber ʿašer yibṭah bəʿadom w³šom bəšor zʾroʿo^w

Cursed is the man who **trusts** in man, who **makes** flesh his arm. (Jer. 17:5)

loʾ-yomu^wš seper hatto^wr^h hazze^h mippi^yko w³hagi^yto bo^w yo^wmom wlayl^h

This book of the law **shall not depart** from your mouth, **but you shall meditate** on it day and night. (Josh. 1:8)

Making flesh one’s arm is a restatement and not a consequence of trusting in man, and meditating on the law is in a contrasting rather than a subsequent relation to (not) letting the law depart from one’s mouth.

Pardee’s reconstruction of the origins of *w³qatal*—a reconstruction that does not rely on a notion of “(con)sequentiality” but instead traces the form to a simple adjectival construction—potentially explains all instances of the form.²⁵ But his reconstruction also clashes with the dominant view of the development of the Semitic verbal system, as set forward by Hetzron and Huehnergard. The crux of the problem lies precisely in the placement of *w³qatal*’s origin, for the form thus vocalized (*w³qatal* < **wa-qatala*) is the innovative West Semitic perfective according to the dominant view; both the vocalization and the meaning give it away as such. The form thus means “he killed,” not “he is slain.”²⁶ By positing the existence of an “adjectival” **qatala* form in Proto-West Semitic, Pardee is essentially suggesting that the development of verb forms in West Semitic (and perhaps even in Proto-Semitic) should be reconceptualized. As we shall see, Egypto-Semitic comparison supports Pardee’s assumption that a form *(*wa-*)*qatala*, the ancestor of the BH *w³qatal*, existed with similar functions in Proto-West Semitic (and likely goes back to even earlier stages) rather than being an inner-Hebrew innovation based on a specific clause type.

In the example texts of his article, Pardee illustrates three characteristic uses of the *w³qatal* form: (1) as an iterative/frequentative in reportorial discourse;²⁷ (2) in the protasis and apodosis clauses of a conditional sentence, often continuing a PC form;²⁸ and (3) as a directive continuing a PC form.²⁹ These three types may be taken as a starting point for any analysis of the *w³qatal* form, historical or synchronic. As already mentioned, the “reigning hypothesis” traces all three types to a special subset of the second type, which is traced in turn to a uniquely West Semitic perfective form. I shall focus on the first and third types in endeavoring to show that they are best understood as retained usages of an archaic predicative **qatala* form.

23 Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 521–39.

24 Pardee 2012, 290–91.

25 As Pardee (2012, 290) explains that “the ‘frozen’ forms [*w³qatal* and *wayyiqtol*] exist as composites with th[e] conjunction [*w³*] and only appear where this conjunction can properly be used in a Hebrew sentence,” the apparent predominance of “(con)sequential” constructions with these forms may be a natural result of their composition rather than being their defining and originating function.

26 This form exists alongside the stative forms *w³qtel* and *w³qtol* in Biblical Hebrew. Of these three, the form *w³qatal* is the most common. For more on the morphological variation between stative and fientive, see below.

27 Pardee 2012, 290–91, 297–98.

28 Ibid., 299–300.

29 Ibid., 293, 306, 309.

ITERATIVE FUNCTION

In AE, the formal counterpart of the Semitic SC (referred to in current Egyptological scholarship as the “Stative”³⁰) was typically passive with transitive verbs and stative with intransitive verbs, exactly as in Akkadian. In Old Egyptian, and rarely in Middle Egyptian, this conjugation could also denote perfective, fientive action (hence the older term for this conjugation, “Old Perfective”), although this usage was restricted to the first and second persons.³¹ Together, these functions match those of the BH *qatal* form (including the stative variants *qotel* and *qtol*), as seen in the following examples.

wd.ki rn=i r bw hry ntr

I set my name at the place where the god was.³²

wʰhɔʰεben hazzoʰt ʰašer-šamtiʰ maššebɔʰ yihyeʰ beʰt ʰεlohɨʰm

And this stone, which I have set up as a stela, shall be the house of God. (Gen. 28:22)

špss.kw ʿʒ.kw

I was wealthy and I was great.³³

wʰgɔdaltiʰ wʰhoʰsaptiʰ mikkol šehɔyɔʰ lʰpɔnay biʰruʰšɔlɔ(y)im

I was great; I was wealthy more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. (Eccl. 2:9)

The AE SC was also used to express iterativity and durativity.³⁴ The following examples (two from AE and one from BH) illustrate this use.

irr.kwi m ʿk nn dd=f

I used to act as one who entered without being announced.³⁵

rs.kwi hr=s grh mi hrw

I was watchful concerning it night and day alike.³⁶

wəʰɔlɔʰ hɔʰiʰš hahuʰw meʰiʰroʰw miyyɔmiʰm yɔmiʰmɔʰ

This man would go up from his town regularly. (1 Sam. 1:3)

Unless we posit the rather complicated scenario that BH and AE independently developed an iterative use of the SC, which scenario is unlikely given that both languages have other means of expressing the iterative,³⁷ it would seem that this usage was inherited from the Proto-Afroasiatic ancestor of both languages, as with the other uses of the SC noted above. Thus the BH iterative use of *wʰqatal* can be seen as an archaic, retained usage.

There is some evidence that AE had a geminating SC that was marked for imperfective aspect and was used for the iterative, as in the first example above. According to Gardiner, geminating forms of the SC such

30 There is potential for confusion of terms, since the other major AE verb conjugation, the *sdm=f*, is typically referred to in the literature as the “suffix conjugation,” although it is completely unrelated to the form called the SC in Semitic studies. In this essay, I shall use the term SC exclusively to refer to the Semitic/Afroasiatic conjugation whose first-person singular form has the suffix **-ku* (BH *-ti*), and I shall refer to the AE conjugation that employs the oblique pronominal suffixes (*=i*, *=k*, *=f*, etc.) as the *sdm=f*.

31 Edel 1955, 280–85.

32 Gardiner 1996, 238.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid., 237.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., 238.

37 Ancient Egyptian also uses the “pseudoverbal” construction for iterativity, as in the following example (Papyrus Westcar, in De Buck 1963, 79:7–9): *iw=f hr wnm t 500 rmn n kʒ m iwʰf hna swri hnkt ds 100 r mn m hrw pn* “He eats 500 loaves of bread, and a side of beef as meat, and drinks 100 jugs of beer daily until now.”

as *s33*, *gnn*, and *irr*, which most likely represent forms of the type $C_1VC_2C_2VC_2$ (as opposed to the forms *s3*, *gn*, and *ir*, which probably represent forms of the type $C_1VC_2C_2$ or C_1VC_2V), are in many cases clearly associated with “repetition or continuity.”³⁸ The gemination corresponding to durative/iterative action in AE, reflected also in the *s_{dm}=f* form (for which see below), has a parallel in the Akkadian durative form *iparras*. This form in Akkadian is used to express “durative/circumstantial” and “habitual (or customary)” aspectual nuances.³⁹ Ethiopic also has an imperfective form parallel to the Akkadian *iparras*. In accordance with the principle of archaic heterogeneity,⁴⁰ it is likely that Proto-Afroasiatic also included an opposition between a marked imperfective **qattala* and an unmarked **qatala*, parallel to the opposition between **yaqattal* and **yaqtul*. Further research is necessary to determine whether iterative uses of the SC in AE uniformly geminate, or whether the nongeminating form, as the unmarked or default form, could in fact be used in iterative contexts. In any case, the Semitic languages in general seem to have lost the imperfective geminating SC, and there is no evidence that BH *w³qatal* arose from a geminating form. Thus, if the Proto-Afroasiatic form corresponding functionally to BH *w³qatal* was necessarily a geminating form, then the function must have been absorbed at some early stage by the nongeminating form **(wa-)qatala*.

DEONTIC FUNCTIONS

One of the functions of the AE SC was as an optative.⁴¹ The very common AE optative formula *‘nh w³d3 snb* “may he live, prosper, and be healthy,” used after references to royalty, employs three SC verbs. This formula has often been rendered erroneously as “life, prosperity, health” (abbreviated “l.p.h.” in translations); the correct analysis as a series of SC verbs is evident from the suffixes added when the person referred to is female: *‘nh.ti w³d3.ti snb.ti* “may she live, prosper, and be healthy.”⁴² Other examples of this optative usage are found in greetings and exhortations, such as the following:⁴³

‘hr.tiwny r wnm ‘dw

Beware of (lit., may you be far from) eating the ‘adu-fish.

s33.ti ‘hr sp n mht-ib

Beware of any occasion of neglectfulness.

snb.ti snb.ti

Farewell (lit., may you be healthy, may you be healthy).

‘hs.ti n rh=i tnw iry

May you be praised! I do not know the number thereof.

This usage is precisely analogous to the optative SC in Arabic and the (possible) BH “precativ perfect,” and it can also be linked with the directive use of the *w³qatal* form in BH. An analogous form with an optative or precativ nuance also exists in Phoenician: *wbrk* “and may he bless.”⁴⁴

Directive, optative, and precativ functions can all be grouped together as subtypes of deontic modality, the function of expressing a wish for a future state that is not currently realized. As Pardee has pointed out, the modal nuance in these cases is not necessarily a marked morphological feature; it is more economical to view it as a simple predicative construction that conveys the various deontic nuances by contextual

38 Gardiner 1996, 236–37 §310. Note that some of the examples (especially the 3fs forms) would have a vowel after the third root consonant, so the matter is not just one of syllable allocation (as with *ganna-ta* vs. *ganan-ta*).

39 Huehnergard 2000, 98–99 §12.2.

40 Hetzron 1976.

41 Edel 1955, 286–87; Gardiner 1996, 239.

42 Gardiner 1996, 239.

43 All taken from *ibid.*

44 Pardee 1983, 66.

means. Simple nonverbal clauses consisting of a (usually clause-initial) predicate adjective juxtaposed with a noun frequently occur in a precative sense in BH, particularly with the adjectives *bʾru*^w*k* “blessed” and *ʾru*^w*r* “cursed.”⁴⁵

Unlike the early proponents of the “reigning hypothesis,” I would not adduce these examples as evidence of a generalization of usage from a simple optative form to a future-tense form. Instead, the comparative data for deontic usage, together with the evidence for the early iterative use of the SC discussed above, contribute to an overall view of the BH *wʾqatal* as an archaic form. The *wʾqatal* form and analogous realizations of **(wa-)qatala* in Arabic and Phoenician can be seen to continue functions of the SC that must have been present in Proto-Afroasiatic.

The second AE example cited above, with the form *sʾʾ* shows the gemination that appears to be associated with imperfectivity. Again, it is not known to what extent this gemination was obligatory in SC forms with various deontic functions. The form *ḥs.ti* in the fourth example, by contrast, is a potentially geminating verb but does not show the gemination. It could be that these two forms reveal an aspectual contrast corresponding to the difference between directive modality (as with *sʾʾ.ti*) and precative modality (as with *ḥs.ti*). Cross-linguistically, deontic modality tends to align with perfective aspect.⁴⁶ However, deontic modality can also align with imperfectivity by virtue of the overlapping notions of incompleteness and irrealis, as in BH, in which the jussive is a form of the PC.⁴⁷ In any case, variation between unmarked and imperfective forms of the SC became leveled long before BH, most likely in Proto-Semitic.

FIENTIVITY AND STATIVITY

Another way in which the AE and BH verbal systems are mutually informative is in the nature of the category of situation aspect—that is, fientivity (or dynamicity) versus stativity. In BH, fientivity is typically reflected in the *a-o* alternation in the SC *qatal* and the PC *yiqtol*, while stativity is reflected in the *e/o-a* alternation in the SC *kʾbed/qʾdoš* and the PC *yikbad/yiqdaš*. The idea that an opposition between fientivity and stativity existed generally in the Egypto-Semitic languages is uncontroversial. However, the nature of this opposition in BH and its progenitor languages still needs to be clarified: could any verb theoretically be inflected for both aspects, or was the opposition fixed in the lexicon? Traditionally, situational aspect has been understood as a lexical category; verbs are considered to be either always fientive or always stative. Thus Hendel, in his discussion of situation aspect in BH, speaks of “stative verbs” and “dynamic verbs.”⁴⁸ Dobbs-Allsopp states that situation aspect in BH, in contrast to viewpoint aspect (perfective vs. imperfective), is “grammaticalized lexically and/or derivationally.”⁴⁹ Throughout his extensive study of the “stative verbs,” which can sometimes express fientive aspect, Dobbs-Allsopp does not discuss whether this statement should be qualified, nor does he explore the extent of its application in the historical development of the Hebrew verbal system.

It is true that most BH verbs seem easily classifiable as either lexically fientive or lexically stative. For example, *kʾtab* (PC *yiktob*) “to write” is plainly fientive in all its forms and occurrences, while *kʾbed* (PC *yikbad*) “be heavy” is plainly stative. Yet there are some more complicated cases. Some verbs, such as *gʾdal*

45 Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 134.

46 Hyams 2005, 306–8; Divjak 2010; Durst-Andersen 2011, 219; Mauri and Sansò 2012, 160–61.

47 Pardee 2012, 289. The challenge to the cross-linguistic perfective-deontic affinity that is usually cited in the literature is the alignment of imperfective aspect and deontic modality in Russian. A number of factors contribute to the selection of interfaces between aspect and modality. Hyams (2005, 306–8) posits that the apparent affinity between perfective aspect and deontic modality may be due to a shared “transition feature.” Mauri and Sansò (2012, 160–61) cite van der Auwera et al.'s (2009, 100) notion of a “pragmatic perfectivity bias” in the use of directives: one tends to appeal to others “to perform the action as a whole and not merely to be engaged in the activity or part of it.” Another possibility is that the extension may be made on the basis of formal features, with the simplest verb form (whether perfect or imperfect) being selected as the directive form (ibid. 2009, 100–101; Mauri and Sansò 2012, 160–61).

48 Hendel 1996, 154–58.

49 Dobbs-Allsopp 2000, 24–25.

“be(come) great” and *ḥʕzaq* “be(come) strong, strengthen,” show a mixed morphology, with an SC form that would normally indicate fientivity and a PC form that would normally indicate stativity. These forms also show mixed semantics in their usage. Dobbs-Allsopp discusses some examples of this usage and considers it to be a synchronic phenomenon, the cancelling of stative function.⁵⁰ However, this synchronic explanation does not solve the problem of the history of these forms. One way to explain the data would be to posit that these verbs originally had both fientive and stative forms and that these forms have fallen together to form a suppletive paradigm for these mixed verbs.

In Arabic, as in BH, most verbs are either fientive or stative, their morphological patterns consistently conforming to just one category (*qatala-yaqtul* and *qatala-yaqtīl* for fientive,⁵¹ *qatila-yaqtal* and *qatula-yaqtul* for stative). There are a great many exceptions, however, in which the verb can be inflected for either fientivity or stativity. Unlike BH, the morphology of these mixed verbs is complete for both situational aspects, and the semantic usage systematically corresponds to the morphology. The following is a brief sampling:

ḥadaṭa yaḥduṭ “to happen, occur” // *ḥaduṭa yaḥduṭ* “to be new”
ḥazana yaḥzun “to sadden” // *ḥazina yaḥzan* “to feel bad, feel sorry”
ḥaraba yaḥrib “to destroy” // *ḥariba yaḥrab* “to be in ruins, be waste”
faḍala yaḍḍul “to excel, surpass” // *faḍila yaḍḍal* “to be in excess”
našafa yaṣṣuf “to suck up, absorb” // *našifa yaṣṣaf* “to be dry”

Similar formal variation occurs in classical Ethiopic (Geʿez) in verbs such as *masala* (variant *masla* < **masila*) “resemble” and *sakaba* (variant *sakba* < **sakiba*) “lie down,” verbs that can be construed as either fientive or stative. Unlike Arabic, there does not seem to be a systematic semantic difference in these variant forms.⁵² This limited variation in Arabic and Ethiopic may represent a transitional point from a fully inflected system of situational aspect to one in which the opposition is lexicalized. However, it may also be interpreted as a secondary development of what was originally a lexical category.

Rainer Voigt has contributed significantly to this issue through his article “Die beiden Suffixkonjugationen des Semitischen (und Ägyptischen).”⁵³ According to Voigt, both the Proto-Semitic and the AE verbal systems included fientive and stative inflections, evidence of which is found in retentions in BH and Middle Egyptian, thus suggesting that the original Proto-Afroasiatic system included both. The complete paradigm survives intact only in AE, while the East and West Semitic paradigms lost, for the most part, one or the other inflection:

Damit kann auch im Semitischen nicht mehr, wie es bislang üblich war, von einer einheitlichen Suffixkonjugation gesprochen werden. Dem westsemitischen (z.B. arabischen) Perfekt entspricht jetzt das [ägyptische] perfektische Pseudopartizip und dem ostsemitischen Permansiv das [ägyptische] stativische Pseudopartizip.⁵⁴

Unfortunately, most of the evidence Voigt cites is problematic. For example, he cites Hebrew final-*n* verbs in which the *n* does not assimilate when a suffix starting with a consonant appears (e.g., *zʕqen* “to be old,” 2ms form *zʕqantʕ*, which is unlike *notan* “to give,” 2ms form *notattʕ*). The data set in this case is very small, and the patterns of assimilation do not always correspond to the fientive/stative opposition.⁵⁵ He also dwells on patterns observed among derived-stem verbs,⁵⁶ but these patterns do not readily lend themselves to an

50 Ibid., 34.

51 Some fientive verbs have an /a/ theme vowel in the imperfect, but there is usually a phonetic conditioning factor in these cases, namely the presence of a laryngeal or pharyngeal consonant (ʕ, h, ʕ, or h) adjoining the theme vowel.

52 Dillmann 1907, 143; Tropper 2002, 88.

53 Voigt 2002.

54 Ibid., 160.

55 Ibid., 143–45.

56 Ibid., 148–54.

explanation having to do with situational aspect; such an explanation is unexpected in any case, since the variation between fientive and stative forms is usually visible only in the G-stem, the derived stems being secondary and having a fixed situation-related *Aktionsart*.⁵⁷ As for AE evidence, Voigt relies heavily on Schenkel.⁵⁸ Schenkel's study, however, is less than convincing, for it focuses on a nonintuitive relationship between the situational opposition and the form of suffix used with SC verbs in Middle Egyptian: *sdm.ti* (3fs) for stative and *sdm.t* for "perfektisch" (I would substitute "fientive"). If the situational opposition was originally expressed by the stem vowel, then the distinction in the form of the suffix, if it does correspond to situational aspect, must have been either a secondary linguistic development or a scribal convention for keeping the forms distinct.⁵⁹ Moreover, the statistics of distribution presented by Schenkel are far from absolute; at best, then, we are dealing with a mere tendency rather than a consistent rule.⁶⁰

Voigt's strongest evidence is that of BH geminate verbs, and it is here that his argument has the most far-reaching impact.⁶¹ Voigt recounts the fact, already well known, that the inflection of fientive geminate verbs is different from their stative counterparts:

Fientive:

bʷzaz (< **bazaza*) "he plundered"
bʷzʷzu (< **bazazū*) "they plundered"

Stative:

tam (< **tamima*) "he was complete"
tammu (< **tamimū*) "they were complete"

The distinction arises from the vocalic opposition in the stem, with the short pretonic /i/ of the stative forms reducing, as regularly happens in BH. When a suffix starting with a consonant is added, the stative form includes a historical long *a*-vowel between the stem and the suffix: *bazzonu* (< **bazzānū*) "we plundered." However, Voigt draws attention to the fact that some of these verbs show both types of inflection. Thus the forms *bazzonu* and *bʷzaznu* appear, both in the same part of Deuteronomy.⁶² Even more striking, in Psalm 118:11, contrasting forms occur side by side in the same verse:

sabbuʷniʷ gam-sʷbʷbuʷniʷ bʷšem YHWH kiʷ ʷamʷiʷlam

They are all around me, even hemming me in,⁶³ (but) in the name of Yahweh I will destroy them.

Here the two verbs, while plainly (at least in the vocalized received text) G-stem verbs from the same root, cannot have the same meaning. Aside from the unlikelihood of such a blatant redundancy, the particle *gam* indicates a differentiation between the two forms.⁶⁴

57 Pardee 2012, 288 n. 15; cf. Hendel 1996, 157–58.

58 See Schenkel 1994.

59 Schenkel (ibid., 165–66, 169–72) chooses the first option, showing how different syllabification of the "perfektisch" and stative forms could trigger different processes of elision, as well as interchange between vowels and their homorganic consonants, in the pronominal endings. His reconstruction is quite speculative overall, and there is insufficient allowance for possible differences in syllabification and/or vocalization between the various forms ending in *.ti* (2ms, 2fs, 3fs, and 3fp).

60 Some of these doubts regarding Schenkel's hypothesis are echoed in the review by Depuydt (1995). In that review, however, Depuydt wrongly calls into question the underlying assumption of Schenkel's study, namely that there was in AE a morphological distinction between the "perfective" and "stative" SC. The latter should not be in doubt, as it has been easily accessible since the classic expositions of the verbal system by Sethe, Edel, and Gardiner (see further below).

61 See Voigt 2002, 146–47.

62 Deut. 2:35; 3:7.

63 Voigt (2002, 147 n. 18) translates: "sie waren um mich herum, ja sie umringten mich (drohend)." Cf. NJB: "They swarmed around me, pressing upon me."

64 Cf. Voigt 2002, 146–47 n. 18.

The co-occurrence of these variant forms implies that there was a morphological difference between them at the time when the relevant passages were composed, even though such an opposition between different forms of the same verb was no longer productive in the lexicon at large. Taken together with the evidence from Arabic, these examples may suggest that fientive *qatala* and stative *qatila* were originally inflectional categories potentially available for all verbs rather than being lexical categories.

Other evidence not mentioned by Voigt strengthens the case for retentions of an old inflectional opposition in BH. A case similar to Psalm 118:11 occurs in Genesis 43:14. Here Jacob is speaking to his sons as he sends them to Egypt with Benjamin in the hope of releasing Simeon from Joseph's custody:

*wʔʔel šadday yitten ləkem raḥʾmīʾm lipneʾ hōʾvʾš wʔšillaḥ ləkem ʾet-ʾhīʾkəm ʾaḥer wʔʔet-binyāmīʾn
waʾānīʾ kaʾāšer šəkoltīʾ šəkoltīʾ*

And may El Shadday grant you mercy before that man, and may he release your other brother to you, and (also) Benjamin; as for me, just as I am bereaved, I will lose loved ones (again).

Here the situational contrast is marked in the verbs through the vocalic alternation of /o/ < */u/ (stative) versus /ɔ/ (pause) < */a/ (fientive). We see here that the alternation is not restricted to geminate verbs.

Assuming that the explanation of the BH and Arabic data as retentions of an older pattern is correct, how ancient is the inflectional pattern? Do we find evidence of a single verb's occurring in both situational aspects in AE? Since AE writing systems did not represent the vowels, such a distinction is hard to come by (unless Schenkel is correct in seeing an overt distinction in the suffixes used). In fact, there is some limited evidence, which comes from the semantics of the verbs in specific instances. The verb *iri* "to make, do, act," for example, occurs in one Middle Egyptian text with a fientive sense, while in another text it has a stative sense: *ir.kwi* "I acted," *ir.w* "they being made."⁶⁵ It is likely that the fientive form of third-weak verbs such as *iri* has fallen together with the stative: *ʾaray-āku, *ʾariy-āku > ʾarāku. Strong verbs, however, would likely retain the vocalic distinction. The merged forms of *iri* contrast formally with the imperfective SC, *irr.kwi*.⁶⁶ Given this evidence from AE, with the principle of archaic heterogeneity, it seems likely that the inflectional opposition between fientivity and stativity was part of Proto-Afroasiatic, at least for those verbs in which such an opposition would be useful (cf. Arabic). This opposition could easily have leveled to a lexical opposition in the daughter languages, given the cross-linguistic tendency for this opposition "to be grammaticalized lexically and/or derivationally."⁶⁷

The idea that the opposition between fientivity and stativity was originally an inflectional opposition within the SC could entail a major "paradigm shift" from how the Semitic verbal system has been viewed in the past. It would mean that the stative was originally neither a type of root nor identical with the SC, both of these assumptions having become entrenched in the literature.⁶⁸

THE SEMITIC PC AND THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN *SDM=F*

The PC's claim to antiquity, based on Afroasiatic comparanda, is approximately equal to that of the SC. For example, in Somali (a Cushitic language), a limited set of very common verbs retains a PC in which the pattern of prefixes and suffixes is practically identical to that which may be reconstructed for Proto-Semitic.⁶⁹ The Semitic languages, including BH, show a basic opposition between the two major inflections,

65 Gardiner 1996, 236–38.

66 Ibid., 236–37. Third-weak verbs such as *iri* regularly undergo gemination in some forms like the geminate verbs.

67 Dobbs-Allsopp 2000, 25.

68 For an example of a study that takes the SC as "stative" and the PC as "fientive," see Rössler 1981.

69 Saeed 2007, 564, 576. The schema proposed by Thacker (1954, 226–41, 317–35), in which the PC is seen as a secondary development within Semitic (chronologically parallel to the development of the *sdm=f* in AE), is thus fundamentally incorrect. Nevertheless, Thacker's (ibid., 226–27) observation that the Semitic PC and the Egyptian *sdm=f* are precisely alike in the number of forms and in "the proportionate allocation of functions to them" anticipates the argument I make below.

the PC and the SC. The nature of this opposition is another matter about which comparisons with AE are instructive.

The Proto-Central Semitic forms of the PC, which can be reconstructed on the basis of Arabic, Ugaritic, Aramaic, and BH, included inflections for situational aspect, mood, and preterite tense.⁷⁰ Situational aspect was signaled by variation in the “theme vowel” in the second syllable of the G-stem verb: fientive **yaqtul/yaqtil* versus stative **yaqtal*. Mood was signaled by suffixes, which, in the absence of another suffix, took the form of short vowels: *-u* for imperfective indicative, *-a* for subjunctive, and *-Ø* for jussive. For forms that included a long vowel suffix for gender and number (such as *-ū* for 2mp and 3mp, or *-ī* for 2fs), the mood suffix took the form *-na*. The zero-suffix form employed for the jussive mood was also used for the preterite form of the PC. This jussive/preterite form is called the “short prefix conjugation” (SPC); it contrasts with the imperfective “long prefix conjugation” (LPC).

While the *u*-suffix and *a*-suffix forms of the PC vary in function across the Semitic branches, the zero-suffix jussive/preterite form (the SPC) can be reconstructed for Proto-Semitic and was likely present in Proto-Afroasiatic. The jussive function is evident in the Akkadian precative *liprus* and in the Arabic *yaqtul* form, while the preterite function is evident in the Akkadian *iprus* and in the Arabic negated perfective *lam yaqtul*. It is this primitive zero-suffix form that lies behind the BH jussive *yiqtol* and the perfective *wayyiqtol*.⁷¹

The original functions of the SC and SPC in Semitic are strikingly similar. Both conjugations could be used to describe perfective action in narrative. Both could be used for deontic expressions. Both could also be inflected for situational aspect, at least in Proto-Central Semitic. (That situational aspect was expressed in the PC prior to Proto-Central Semitic seems likely but cannot yet be proven.) Further, as discussed above, both may have had a special geminated form that was used to express durativity and iterativity.

Just as a similarity exists between the SC and SPC in Semitic, the same is true of the SC and two forms of the *sḏm=f* in AE: the “indicative *sḏm=f*” and the “subjunctive *sḏm=f*.” These two forms of the *sḏm=f* in Egyptian are morphologically identical for most verbs, i.e., they are of the ungeminating type, and the verb *m33* “to see” takes an *-n-* stem augment in these two forms only. There are only a few verbs that differ morphologically between the “indicative” and the “subjunctive” *sḏm=f*, including *rdi* “to give” (indicative *rdi=f*, subjunctive *di=f*) and *ii* “to come” (indicative *ii=f* or *iw=f*, subjunctive *iwt=f*).⁷² In terms of semantic function, the SC (“Old Perfective” or “Stative”) has the same range of functions as the indicative and subjunctive *sḏm=f* combined. The indicative *sḏm=f* serves as an initial perfective form in main clauses, and in this usage in Old Egyptian the form is in complementary distribution with the SC (the latter being only for the first and second persons, while the “indicative” *sḏm=f* is used for the third person). The subjunctive *sḏm=f* is used for optative expressions, just like the optative use of the SC.

Given the functional and distributional similarities between the SPC in Semitic and the “indicative” and “subjunctive” *sḏm=f* in AE, it seems very likely that the *sḏm=f* is an AE innovation that came to occupy the same paradigmatic space as the old SPC. The use of an innovative morphological form to fill an old morpho-syntactic function is common both in Semitic and in AE. To cite just one Semitic example that is especially appropriate for the present study, the forms of the active participle with enclitic pronouns in Syriac, which take on verbal functions, parallel the much earlier development of the predicative SC. In AE, one example is the later Egyptian causative prefix *ti-* (from earlier *dī-* “to give, cause”), which comes to fill the same paradigmatic space as the earlier Egyptian (and common Afroasiatic) causative prefix *s-*.

70 Here I tentatively assume that the nonjussive use of the *yaqtul* form was preterite in Proto-Central Semitic, as in Akkadian. This assumption presupposes a development from preterite to perfective at a later stage. Alternatively, the function in Proto-Central Semitic may have been perfective. Pardee (2012, 287) refers to the Proto-Semitic *yaqtul* as “perfective and/or preterit.”

71 Joosten (2012, 161–92) describes the BH *wayyiqtol* as a preterite form. However, this view requires some acrobatics to account for uses that are plainly gnomic, present, or future with regard to real-world time (ibid., 185–89). On the gnomic usage, he compares the ancient Greek aorist (ibid., 191–92), perhaps unaware that the comparison actually supports the interpretation of *wayyiqtol* as a perfective.

72 Allen 2010, 300.

There are, however, other forms of the Semitic PC and the AE *sḏm=f* that I have not yet accounted for. The similarity just discussed raises the question of the similarity of the remaining forms, and here is where the comparison becomes potentially informative for the analysis of the BH verbal system. I shall suggest one such similarity here, namely the functional similarity between the Semitic LPC and the geminating form of *sḏm=f* that corresponds functionally to the Coptic “second tenses.”

This AE form has been a topic of controversy in Egyptology. Following studies by Hans Jakob Polotsky,⁷³ this form of *sḏm=f* has been considered a nominal form of the verb (hence it is called the “nominal *sḏm=f*”). In a typical sentence consisting of a verb, subject, and following adverbial, this form casts the verb and its subject in the role of the subject of the sentence, thereby deferring the predicate role to the following adverbial. This usage can be expressed in translation using a cleft sentence, although it is often preferable to do away with the cleft construction for the sake of elegance: *gmm=s sw m pr* “That-she-found-him was in the house” > “It was in the house that she found him” > “She found him in the house.” The nominal verb form is said to “emphasize” the following adverbial. The nominal *sḏm=f* can also emphasize a nonverbal or verbal clause, which then denotes a prior circumstance or action that is logically connected to the main clause, as in the hypothetical examples *gmm=s sw iw=f m pr* “She found him as he was in the house”; *gmm=s sw iw=f iw m pr* “She found him, he having come into the house.”⁷⁴ A new trend, of which James P. Allen is the foremost proponent, views this *sḏm=f* form as a special form of the relative *sḏm=f* with aspectual marking (perfective vs. imperfective). In this trend, the form is referred to by different names according to the aspect in a given case: “perfective relative,” etc.⁷⁵

The differences between these two approaches range from the very significant to the very subtle. The most important point regarding this AE form is agreed upon by both camps, namely that it is a kind of nominal form and can thus function in ways similar to a noun. In general, I regard the new trend as still in question and remain convinced by the “standard theory” developed by Polotsky and others; hence my analysis will follow the standard theory.

The idea that the Semitic verbal mood endings *-u* (West Semitic indicative, Akkadian subordinating form) and *-a* (subjunctive) are derived from the nominal case endings *-u* (nominative) and *-a* (accusative) has already been reviewed in detail by Rebecca Hasselbach.⁷⁶ She argues that both case endings were grammaticalized as subordinate markers in Proto-Semitic (in which function they are attested in East Semitic), after which the *-u* ending was further grammaticalized as the marker of the imperfective indicative in Central Semitic, while the *-a* ending became the marker of the subjunctive mood. I accept Hasselbach’s analysis insofar as it illuminates the developments from this early stage to the true modal functions of the PC that are observable in the extant Semitic languages. However, her reconstruction of the nominal origin of the PC itself is not elaborated in detail and will bear refinement, as explained in the next paragraph. Further, I believe that the proposed original nominal functioning of the PC may suggest new ways of analyzing some forms in the Semitic textual corpora, especially in archaic or archaizing contexts such as poetic discourse. A limited demonstration of this approach will be found in the analysis of Exodus 15 below.

The notion that the PC was originally derived from a nominal form was developed in studies by A. H. Sayce, Bernhard Stade, and William Wright in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. From the beginning, the derivation of the PC was considered in relation to the similar derivation of the SC. According to Sayce, the third-person masculine form *yaqtulu* (nominative) was originally a *nomen agentis*, and the other forms were derived from prefixing personal pronouns to the nominal base.⁷⁷ The formulation by Stade⁷⁸ was the same as that of Sayce in many respects, including the notion that the third-person masculine form was an unprefixing noun form. The main difference between these two formulations was in the characterization

73 E.g., Polotsky 1944, 21–98; 1964, 275–84.

74 Cf. Johnson 2000, 73, 75.

75 Allen 2010, 419–20; 2013, 105–8, 111–19.

76 Hasselbach 2012.

77 Sayce 1877, 48–55.

78 Stade 1879, 266–67.

of the PC before it became reanalyzed as a verb. For Sayce, the third-person *yaqtulu* and the corresponding second- and first-person composite forms were essentially nominal. “The two primary tenses of the Semitic verb,” wrote Sayce, “were at the outset nothing but nouns, with which the first two pronouns came to be closely united, and so caused them gradually to assume a verbal signification.”⁷⁹ For Stade, however, the PC (as well as the SC) originated as a “Nominalsatz” of which the prefixed pronouns were the subject;⁸⁰ in the case of the third-person masculine form, the verbal meaning was carried over by analogy from the other persons. It was Stade’s view of the matter that was picked up by Wright,⁸¹ although with the modification that the third-person masculine prefix *ya-* was a pronominal form like the prefixes of the other persons: “Each person of the verb is, so to say, a sentence, consisting of a noun and a pronoun, which has gradually been contracted or shrivelled up into a single word.” It is this formulation by Wright, based on Stade, that Hasselbach quotes with regard to the nominal derivation of the PC.⁸²

The notion that the SC originated as a clause consisting of an adjectival predicate and a pronominal subject is well established.⁸³ However, in the case of the PC, this analysis is less felicitous, at least if the vocalic suffixes *-u* and *-a* are to be related to the nominal case endings. It would be odd for these vocalic suffixes to have any kind of functional variation within the larger clause (such as we see in their use as modal suffixes) if the nominal form with which they are associated is only the base of the form, which is fixed in a noun clause with a pronominal subject. Sayce’s formulation, which sees the composite form itself as a nominal form, makes better sense in terms of the development of these vocalic suffixes.

The previous discussions of the case/mood endings have focused on the nominative and accusative, with their endings *-u* and *-a*. However, the parallel between nominal inflection and the mood vowels of the LPC may also include the genitive, which in the Semitic languages includes both the true genitive relation and the object of a preposition. In languages for which final vowels are attested, the genitive case is most often expressed by a suffix *-i*, which does not have a formal analogue in the verbal system. Yet there are also Semitic nouns that do not inflect with the *-i* for the genitive case. In Arabic, and to a more limited extent in Ugaritic, some nouns are diptotic, having an oblique case in *-a* that covers the functions of the accusative and the genitive.⁸⁴ Just as these diptotic nouns use the oblique *-a* suffix when they function as the object of a preposition, so Arabic verb forms use the subjunctive *-a* ending in the construction *li-yaqtula* “in order that he kill,” in which *li-* is identical with the preposition meaning “to, for.”⁸⁵ One can compare, for example, the subjunctive forms in the first passage below with the oblique personal name in the second passage:

79 Sayce 1877, 52–53.

80 Stade 1879, 226–27, 266–67.

81 Wright 1890, 164; cf. 179–80.

82 Hasselbach 2012, 119–20.

83 Cf. Huehnergard 1987.

84 Wright 1896, 1:238–46; Hasselbach 2013, 44–45.

85 Wright 1896, 1:291, 2:28. Some might suggest, with the classical grammarians, that the use of the subjunctive in this construction is due to an elided particle *ʿan*. Wright (1896, 2:28–29) notes that *li-* may be replaced by *liʿan* in some but not all environments, thus indicating that the two are overlapping but not interchangeable in function. The explanation offered here is therefore to be preferred to the notion of elision. A parallel to this usage with *li-* may be found in the dialectal Arabic construction *bi-yaqtul* “he is killing,” although the identity of this *bi-* with the preposition is not entirely certain, and the loss of vocalic endings in these languages prevents any certain link to the *-a* subjunctive. The derivation of the *bi-* morpheme has been discussed by Rubin (2005, 145–51). According to him, the Yemeni Arabic present-tense marker *bi-*, which is in complementary distribution with *bayn-* (the latter being prefixed to the first-person singular PC), derives from the circumstantial conjunction *baynā*, while the Egyptian and Levantine Arabic *bi-*, which has the same function as in Yemeni Arabic but does not co-occur with *bayn-*, may be the same as the preposition *bi-* or may derive from *baynā*. There are many elements of uncertainty here. On the one hand, it does not seem certain to me that the complementary distribution in Yemeni between *bi-* and *bayn-* means that the two prefixes come from the same source. It would be just as easy to view these two particles as forming a suppletive paradigm, with the *bi-* prefix being identical to the preposition *bi-*. On the other hand, *bayn-* may be just as easily derived from the preposition *bayna* “between, amidst” (often used with reference to time) as from the circumstantial conjunction *baynā*. The former case would present yet another example of a verb’s functioning as the object of a preposition.

la'in basatta 'ilayya yadaka litaqtulanī mā 'anā bibāsiṭin yadiya 'ilayka li'aqtulaka

Even if you stretch forth your hand toward me **to kill me**, I am not one to stretch forth my hand toward you **to kill you**. (Qur'ān 5:28)

wa'id qulnā lilmalā'ikati usjudū li'ādama fasajadū 'illā 'iblis qāla 'a'asjudu liman ḥalaqta ṭinan

And when we said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves **to Adam**," they prostrated themselves, except for Iblis. He said, "Shall I prostrate myself to one whom you created from clay?" (Qur'ān 17:61)

Thus prepositional phrases with diptotic nouns are formally parallel to the preposition-verb combination in Arabic, thereby suggesting that verbs may be treated morphologically as diptotic nouns. Biblical Hebrew also has instances in which PC verbs follow prepositions (see below), but it is impossible to tell which vowel was attached to the verb forms in the proto-language, since the final short vowels are not fully represented in the attested stages of Hebrew.⁸⁶

A contrast between nominative *-u* and oblique *-a*, as seen in some Arabic forms, may have been close to the regular pattern in Proto-Semitic. Hasselbach argues, based on a careful review of the functional distribution of cases in the attested Semitic languages, that "Archaic Proto-Semitic" (i.e., Proto-Semitic at its earliest reconstructible stage) was a marked-nominative language,⁸⁷ in which the accusative with *-a* ending was the unmarked or default case, and the nominative with *u* ending was the marked case for the subject of an active or passive verb. The accusative, as the default case, had a wide range of functions, including the direct object and genitive functions. Hasselbach explicitly links this reconstruction with the diptotic nouns that appear sporadically in Arabic and other languages and considers the Archaic Proto-Semitic system to be the origin of the attested diptotic pattern. Thus the parallel between the nominal oblique case in *-a* and the verbal subordinated form in *-a* may have been a feature of Proto-Semitic. This idea would accord with the assumption that the PC is essentially a nominal form of the verb.

In addition to the correspondences in case vowels already mentioned, Proto-Semitic may have had an absolute state marked by a zero vowel, which would correspond to the zero vowel of the SPC. Hasselbach discusses the evidence for this state in Akkadian and elsewhere,⁸⁸ although she considers this state to be a later development of the *-a* accusative. In the context of the comparison with verb forms, it is significant that the absolute state with zero vowel ending in Akkadian is formally similar to nouns that take a predicative form with zero vowel ending.

86 Some volitive forms in BH, especially the cohortative, have a suffix *-ʔ*^h; these forms likely derive from a primitive *yaqtula* volitive form, reflexes of which are also found in Ugaritic and Amarna Canaanite (see Moran 1960 and Rainey 1991–93). Rainey shows that the evidence from the Amarna letters is complicated by the existence of Akkadian ventive forms; the texts nevertheless indirectly support, in his opinion, the existence of a volitive *yaqtula* form in the native language. Hasselbach (2012, 125–32) defends the notion, frequently asserted in the literature, that this form is cognate with the Arabic subjunctive *yaqtula*. The Proto-Semitic *yaqtula* form, she argues, covered the range of functions seen in the subjunctive of Indo-European languages, including use in main clauses as a volitive (as in Northwest Semitic) and use in relative clauses (as in Arabic). My approach assumes that BH also had *yiqtol* forms derived from **yaqtula*, but with the final **-a* dropped rather than lengthened to *-ʔ*^h, and occurring in syntactic environments that correspond more closely to the Arabic subjunctive. The final **-a* was retained (by lengthening to *-ʔ*^h) precisely in those environments in which the semantic function of *yaqtula* could not be determined solely on the basis of syntax. The English subjunctive may furnish a parallel: it is retained in clauses such as "God bless us," thereby contrasting with the syntactically similar clause "God blesses us"; but it levels with the indicative in clauses such as "until God blesses us," in which the function is syntactically determined. Another parallel is the indefinite accusative suffix *-an* in colloquial Arabic, which is retained in adverbial usages (e.g., *yōmiyyan* "daily") but dropped from nouns functioning as direct objects. Biblical Hebrew PC verbs with pronominal suffixes show what appear to be reflexes of a short **i* vowel between the verb stem and the pronominal suffix, e.g., *waybār^hkehu^u* "he blessed him" < **way-yabbarrik-i-hu* (Gen. 14:19). As this example shows, even SPC forms show this pattern, thus suggesting that the **i* vowel is anaptyctic and not a remnant of a mood vowel.

87 Hasselbach 2013, 322–26.

88 Ibid., 313–22.

From the preceding discussion, I would suggest the following reconstruction of the Proto-Semitic inflectional vowels for nouns and verbs:⁸⁹

Nouns:	PC Verbs:
-Ø (ABS)	-Ø (> VOL/PRET/PFV)
-u (NOM)	-u (> INDIC/SUBJ)
-a (ACC/GEN)	-a (> SUBJ)

In BH, the LPC can also occur in syntactic environments that are identical to nouns. This distribution matches that of the nominal *sḏm=f* in Egyptian. Examples include the following types.

Subject of adverbial clause (nominative function)

AE examples:

sḳdd t3 ḥft wḏ=k

The land **sails** in accordance with your command.⁹⁰

wnn t3 m sny-mnt

The land **was** in distress.⁹¹

irr ḥm=k m mrr=f

Your Majesty **does** as he wills.⁹²

ḥnwt=i irr=t p3 ib ḥr m

My mistress, on account of what **are you** in this mood (lit., heart)?⁹³

BH examples:

badderek ʿašer-bʿ bʿh yʿšub

By the same way that he came, by it **shall he return**. (Isa. 37:34)

kiʿ im bʿtoʿrat YHWH ḥepsoʿ uʿbʿtoʿrtoʿ yehgeʿ yoʿmʿm wʿlʿylʿh

But in the law of Yahweh is his delight; on his law **he meditates** day and night.⁹⁴ (Ps. 1:2)

kiʿ ʿel-ʿašer telʿkiʿ ʿelek uʿbaʿšer toliʿniʿ ʿliʿn

To (the place) where you go **I will go**; at (the place) where you lodge **I will lodge**. (Ruth 1:16)

89 The modal functions of the PC as they developed in the various Semitic languages are noted in the table, but here they are not considered in detail (for a detailed description and analysis, see Hasselbach 2012). Abbreviations used in the table are as follows: ABS = absolute; NOM = nominative; ACC = accusative; GEN = genitive; VOL = volitive; PRET = preterite; PFV = perfective; INDIC = indicative; SUBJ = subjunctive.

90 Gardiner 1996, 352.

91 Ibid., 353.

92 Ibid., 354.

93 Ibid.

94 This verse nicely illustrates the parallel between the noun as subject of the adverbial predicate (in the first colon) and the PC verb in the same role (in the second colon).

*Equational relation with another nominal verb form (nominative function)*⁹⁵

AE examples:

ibb (PN) **ibb** *nḥbt*

If (PN) **thirsts**, so **thirsts** Nekhbet.⁹⁶

mrr=f irr=f

(Whenever) **he likes**, **he acts**.⁹⁷

pr̄r=tn *r pt m nr.wt* **pr̄r=i** *ḥr-tp̄t dnḥ.wi=tn*

If **you go up** to the sky as vultures, **I go up** on the tips of your wings.⁹⁸

BH example:⁹⁹

me^cmal napšo^w yir²ε^h yišbō^c

From his soul's labor, when **he sees**, **he shall be satisfied**.¹⁰⁰ (Isa. 53:11)

Subject of adjectival predicate (nominative function)

AE example:

ksn mss=s

Her giving birth was painful.¹⁰¹

BH example:

w^ahinne^h m^aherō^h qal yōbo^w

Behold, swiftly, speedily **they come**.¹⁰² (Isa. 5:26)

95 In the Egyptological literature, this kind of construction is known by the German term *Wechselsatz*. Gesenius (1946, 387 §120h) treats this phenomenon under the heading “asyndeton.”

96 Polotsky 1964, 281.

97 Gardiner 1996, 356. This is a divine epithet.

98 De Buck 1935–61, 3:100f–g; cf. Niccacci 2009, 456.

99 Niccacci's (2009, 457 no. 2.2.2) BH examples of the *Wechselsatz* must be excluded since they are simply conjoined (syndetic) clauses. The latter type of clause seems to have virtually superseded the true *Wechselsatz* in BH. Some examples may have been incorrectly interpreted as independent clauses in poetic parallelism. One such example is Hosea 9:9: “when he remembers their iniquity, he will punish their sins” (in a larger passage that is not tightly structured in parallel bicola). Clearer examples of the true *Wechselsatz* are found in the archaic poetry of Exodus 15 (see below).

100 The passage is grammatically and textually complicated. It is possible to render the first word, *me^cmal*, as a preposed complement to one or both PC verbs: “When he sees some of (the fruits of) his soul's labor, he shall be satisfied (with it).” Some supply a direct object “light” after *yir²ε^h*, which is supported by the LXX and the DSS.

101 Gardiner 1996, 356.

102 The word *qal* is an adjective, although *m^aherō^h* is an adverbial form. Aside from cases in which the predicate is an SC clause denoting prior action (which may be viewed as an adjectival predicate since the SC is an adjectival form), this type is relatively rare in BH—perhaps because the construction in BH has been superseded by other constructions. For example, Genesis 3:16, which mentions the pain of childbirth, is semantically very similar to the AE example above, yet it employs an adverbial instead of an adjectival predicate. Much more common are adjectival predicates with infinitive forms (Gen. 2:18; Pss. 73:28; 92:1; 133:1; 147:1; Prov. 18:5; 24:23; 25:27) and with PC clauses nominalized by the particle *ki^v* (Ruth 2:22; Job 10:3; 13:9; Lam. 3:27; cf. Ps. 119:71, which employs an SC clause nominalized by *ki^v*).

Direct object of verb (accusative function)

AE examples:

m mrr=tn wnn imʒh=tn hr wsir

as you wish that your honor **should be** before Osiris¹⁰³

iw grt wd.n hm=f prr(=i) r hʒst tn

His Majesty commanded that **I come forth** to this desert.¹⁰⁴

mʒ.n hm=f knn=i

His Majesty saw how **valiant I was**.¹⁰⁵

BH examples:

ʿal-tarbuʷ tʰdabbʰruʷ gʰbohʒʰ gʰbohʒʰ

Do not multiply **your speaking** ever so arrogantly. (1 Sam. 2:3)

miʷ-yitten tʰboʷ ʃεʷlʷtiʷ

O that (lit., who will grant) my request **might come to pass**!¹⁰⁶ (Job 6:8)

kiʷ loʷ yoʷsiʷp yʒboʷ-bʒk ʿoʷd ʿʒrel wʰtʰmeʷ

For the uncircumcised and the unclean shall not continue **to enter you**. (Isa. 52:1)

kiʷ loʷ ʿoʷsiʷp ʿoʷd ʰrahem ʿet-beʷt yiʃrʷʒʷel

For I will not continue any more **to pity** the house of Israel. (Hos. 1:6)

*Object of preposition (genitive function)*¹⁰⁷

AE examples:

mi mʒʒ sw idhy m ʒbw

as if a man of the marshes found (lit., saw) himself in Elephantine¹⁰⁸

hʒ m ht nb nfrt m dd wsir

a thousand of all good things by the **gift** of Osiris¹⁰⁹

r dd ib=f

to his heart's **content**¹¹⁰

103 Gardiner 1996, 355.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

106 The idiom *miʷ yitten* “O that . . .” is relatively common in BH. In addition to one other use with the PC in Job 14:13, there are two attested uses with the SC: Deuteronomy 5:29 and Job 23:3. In the latter instance, if the two SC verbs are understood parenthetically, the verb that serves as object of *miʷ yitten* could be a PC: “O that, having known that I might find him, I could come to his dwelling!” It could also be that the use of *miʷ yitten* with a following verb is simply idiomatic and not to be construed as a verbal usage of *yitten*, although this possibility is not likely in my opinion.

107 Verbs acting as genitives annexed to nouns do not enter into this discussion, since this use does not seem to have been a function of the PC in Semitic nor of the *sdm=f* in AE. Presumably, the function this kind of syntactic structure would have was taken up by relative clauses. In BH, some asyndetic relative clauses follow an antecedent in the construct state, such as in Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 29:1, and Hosea 1:2. The verb in each of these instances is SC. This development might be an inner-Hebrew one. By contrast, the noun antecedent of an asyndetic relative clause in Arabic takes nunation, thus indicating that it is not in construct.

108 Gardiner 1996, 357.

109 Ibid., 358.

110 Ibid.

BH examples:

yimmō^ʔsu^w k^ʔmo^w-mayim yithall^ʔku^w-lōmo^w yidrok ḥiṣṣōw k^ʔmo^w yitmōlōlu^w

Let them vanish like water that flows away; when he treads (the bow), let his arrows be as if **they were blunted**.¹¹¹ (Ps. 58:8)

ʔzi^ʔn ʿad-t^ʔbu^wnote^ʔkem ʿad-taḥq^ʔru^wn milli^ʔn

I waited until (you reached) understanding, until **you searched out** the words.¹¹² (Job 32:11)

šeb li^ʔmi^ʔni^ʔ ʿad-ʔšī^ʔt ʔoy^ʔbe^ʔkō h^adom l^ʔragle^ʔkō

Sit at my right hand until **I make** your enemies your footstool. (Ps. 110:1)

The examples from BH given above, along with others that are omitted for the sake of space, tend to cluster in the more poetic and archaic (or archaizing) parts of the Hebrew Bible. In cases in which the same syntactic structures employ other forms, such as the SC or the infinitive, the distribution tends more toward prose.¹¹³ It may be noted that the syntactic approach used here avoids the pitfalls of interpretation that inevitably ensnare those who seek to evaluate poetic passages from the standpoint of a tense-based theory of the verb.

In accordance with the data discussed in the foregoing paragraphs, I would suggest that the Proto-Semitic forms of the PC, like the AE *sḏm=f*, may be reconstructed as essentially nominal renderings of a verbal clause. By being rendered in the PC, the clause is reified in order to be manipulated as a noun in a larger clause. The SPC, which has a zero vowel ending corresponding to the absolute case of nouns, may have been a sort of “predication of the predication,” an assertion that the action represented in the reified clause took place or should take place. This possibility would explain the functions as a jussive and as a preterite form, as well as the tendency to overlap in function with the simple predicative SC. This new analysis of the forms may suggest that new terms should be used to describe the original functions of the SC and PC for the purposes of Egypto-Semitic comparison. The former could be called the predicative or referential conjugation, since its function is to make a predication about a state of affairs. The latter could be called the nominal or metareferential conjugation, since its function is to represent the predication as a state of affairs about which a predication can be made, or as a “thing” to be commented on or manipulated in any of the various ways that characterize the use of nouns in phrases and clauses.

This proposal regarding the functions of the PC in BH is primarily historical and not descriptive. It is thus not necessarily applicable willy-nilly to BH texts, especially prose. A systematic study would of course be necessary to determine the extent of these functions’ retention in BH. Pending such a study, Pardee’s conclusions about the synchronic functions of the verbal system hold,¹¹⁴ and the present proposal may be regarded simply as a way of explaining some peculiarities of the system in terms of historical origins. However, it is reasonable to expect that remnants of the original system would survive in poetic discourse, and this assumption informs my analysis of the archaic poetry of the “Song at the Sea” (Exodus 15) below.

ANALYSIS OF EXODUS 15

The following analysis is based on the MT of Exodus 15. It combines the descriptive categories of Pardee¹¹⁵ with the historical categories proposed in the present study. Just as Pardee’s analysis of 1 Samuel 1 and Numbers 19 serves to summarize his exposition of the BH verbal system, so an analysis of Exodus 15 is a

111 We can see here the parallel between the noun *mayim* following *k^ʔmo^w* and the PC verb *yitmōlōlu^w* following the same preposition.

112 Again, the parallel between the noun in the first colon and the PC verb in the second, both following the preposition *ʿad*, is evident.

113 Illustrative of this tendency is the distribution of finite verbs following the preposition *ʿad*. The verb is a PC (uniformly LPC when the morphological distinction is overt) in twenty-six instances, of which the clear majority (eighteen instances) are in poetic contexts. There are fifteen total instances with the SC, of which only one (Isa. 47:7) is poetic.

114 Pardee 2012.

115 Ibid.

fitting summary for the features discussed here. This poetic text includes examples of the SC with deontic function, here without the prefixed *wʔ*- (vv. 13, 15). It also includes many of the syntactic environments of the PC discussed above. In verses 1b, 6, and 7 the PC functions as subject of an adverbial clause, deferring the predicate role to (or “emphasizing”) the adverbial. In verses 12 and 14, it is an SC clause, denoting a prior action or circumstance, that receives the predicate role (or “emphasis”). In verses 7 and 9, pairs of LPC verbs are juxtaposed in an equational construction, indicating a close logical relationship between the clauses. Thus, in this archaic context, my analysis yields some semantic impact. I have employed the traditional Hebrew divisions of cola in preference to those of *BHS* simply because the former tend more often to correspond to clauses.

1b	<i>ʔšširʔh laYHWH kiʔ-gʔoʔh gʔʔh</i>	I shall sing to the Lord, for he is most exalted.	(L)PC with <i>*-a</i> suffix, acting as subject of adverbial clause; infinitive absolute in “emphatic” construction with SC, which functions as narrative form
	<i>suʔs wʔrokʔboʔ romʔh bayyʔm</i>	The horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea.	SC functioning as narrative form
2	<i>ʔzzirʔ wʔzimrʔt yʔh wayhiʔ-liʔ liʔšʔuʔʔh</i>	Yahweh is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.	<i>waw</i> -retentive SPC narrative form
	<i>zeʔh ʔeliʔ wʔʔanwehuʔ</i>	I will give glory to him who is my God	Relative equational clause in casus pendens, followed by LPC acting as subject, with <i>zeʔh</i> (as resumed in the suffix pronoun) as predicate; LPC verb is coordinated with next clause by <i>waw</i> in a “both X and Y” construction
	<i>ʔloheʔ ʔabiʔ waʔromʔmenhuʔ</i>	And exalt the God of my father!	(L)PC with energetic suffix, acting as subject, with <i>ʔloheʔ ʔabiʔ</i> (as resumed in suffix pronoun) as predicate; coordinated with preceding clause by <i>waw</i> (see preceding)
3	<i>YHWH ʔpʔ milḥʔmʔh YHWH šʔmoʔ</i>	The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name.	
4	<i>markʔbot parʔoʔh wʔḥeʔloʔ yʔrʔh bayyʔm</i>	Pharaoh’s chariots and his army he has thrown into the sea.	SC functioning as narrative form
	<i>uʔmibḥar šʔlišʔʔw tubbʔʔuʔ bʔyam-suʔp</i>	His (Pharaoh’s) choice officers are drowned in the Sea of Reeds.	SC functioning as narrative form
5	<i>tʔhomot yʔkasyumuʔ yʔrʔduʔ bimʔʔlot kʔmoʔ-ʔʔben</i>	The deep sea covered them, they sank through the depths like a stone.	SPC narrative form SC functioning as narrative form
6	<i>yʔmiʔnʔkʔ YHWH neʔdʔriʔ bakkoʔh</i>	With your right hand, O LORD glorious in strength—	
	<i>yʔmiʔnʔkʔ YHWH tirʔaš ʔoʔyeb</i>	With your right hand, O LORD, you shattered the enemy;	(L)PC acting as subject of adverbial clause (with preceding adverbial as predicate)
7	<i>uʔbʔrob gʔʔoʔnʔkʔ tahʔros qʔmeʔkʔ</i>	With the greatness of your majesty you took down your assailants.	(L)PC acting as subject of adverbial clause (with preceding adverbial as predicate)

	<i>tʰšallah</i> ḥ ^a ronʰkə yəʰk ^l emo ^w kaqqaš	When you unleashed your anger, it burned them like stubble.	Two (L)PC forms juxtaposed in equational construction
8	<i>u^wb^ru^{wa}ḥ</i> ʾappe ^y kə nε ^ε rmu ^w mayim <i>nišš^abu^w</i> k ^a mo ^w -ned noz ^a li ^y m <i>qəp^au^w</i> t ^a homot b ^a leb-yəm	By the breath of your nostrils the water formed a pile, It stood like a heap, flowing, The deeps condensed in the heart of the sea.	SC functioning as narrative form SC functioning as narrative form SC functioning as narrative form
9	ʾomar ʾo ^w yeb ʾerdop ʾaššiyg <i>ʾaḥalleq</i> šələl timl ^a emo ^w napšiy <i>ʾəri^yq</i> ḥarbi ^y to ^w ri ^y šemo ^w yədi ^y	The enemy said, “When I pursue, I will overtake; When I divide the spoil, my desire will be satisfied with them; When I draw my sword, my hand will bring them to ruin.”	SC functioning as narrative form Two (L)PC forms (the second marked) juxtaposed in equational construction Two (L)PC forms juxtaposed in equational construction
10	<i>nəšaptə</i> b ^r u ^w ḥ ^a kə kissəmo ^w yəm <i>šəl^alu^w</i> kaʾo ^w pəret b ^a mayim ʾaddiyri ^y m	(But) you blew with your breath, the sea covered them, They sank like lead in the mighty water.	Two SC verbs functioning as narrative forms SC functioning as narrative form
11	<i>miy</i> kəmokəḥ bəʾelim YHWH <i>miy</i> kəmokəḥ nε ^d ər baqqodeš <i>no^wrə</i> t ^a hillot ʾoše ^h pələ ^ʾ	Who is like you among the gods, O Yahweh? Who is like you, O one who is glorious in the sanctuary? Revered with praises, doer of wonders,	
12	<i>nəṭiy^tə</i> y ^a m ⁱ n ^a kə tiblə ^ʾ emo ^w ʾərəš	You having extended your right hand, the earth swallowed them up.	SC denoting action prior to following verb; (L)PC “emphasizing” preceding SC clause
13	<i>nəḥiy^tə</i> b ^a ḥasd ^a kə ʾam-zu ^w gəʾəltə <i>nehaltə</i> b ^a ʾəzz ^a kə ʾəl-n ^a we ^h qəḏšekə	May you guide with your love the people whom you have redeemed! May you lead (them) with your strength to your holy dwelling!	SC functioning as optative; SC functioning as narrative form SC functioning as optative
14	<i>šəm^au^w</i> ʾammiy ^m yirgəzu ^w n <i>ḥiy^l</i> ʾəḥaz yəšəbe ^y p ^a ləšet	The peoples, having heard, tremble, Pangs seize the inhabitants of Philistia.	SC denoting action prior to following verb; (L)PC “emphasizing” preceding SC clause ¹¹⁶ SC describing a current state

116 For the chain of references to inhabitants of different locales in Palestine in verses 14–17, the KJV and NIV take the verbs as future, while other translations prefer the past tense. The former seems most appropriate in terms of the larger narrative, since the Israelites have not yet entered the Promised Land at this point. The past-tense translations assume that Exodus 15 had a background as a victory hymn before its inclusion in the exodus narrative. I have opted for a third possibility by taking ʾəz in verse 15 as a point of transition from description about Yahweh’s past deeds to deontic discourse expressing the singer’s wishes for the future. I have thus ascribed a deontic function to both the SC and the PC verbs in verses 15–17 with the exception of the two forms following prepositions in verse 16. None of the PC verbs in these verses is a marked long form.

- | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|
| 15 | <p>ʿʕz <i>nibh^alu^w ʿallu^wpe^y ʿdo^wm</i></p> <p>ʿe^yle^y mo^wʿʕb yo^hʿzemo^w rʕʿad</p> <p><i>nʕmogu^w kol yʕʕbe^y kʕno^ʿan</i></p> | <p>So may the chiefs of Edom be dismayed;</p> <p>As for the leaders of Moab, may trembling take hold of them;</p> <p>May all the inhabitants of Canaan melt away;</p> | <p>SC following ʿʕz, marking transition from descriptive to deontic discourse</p> <p>(S)PC functioning as volitive form</p> <p>SC functioning as optative form</p> |
| 16 | <p><i>tippol^{ʿa}le^yhem ʿe^ymʕtʕ^h wʕpahad</i></p> <p><i>bigdol zʕro^wʿa^kʕ yidd^ʕmu^w kʕʕben</i></p> <p><i>ʿad-ya^abor ʿamm^ʕkʕ YHWH</i></p> <p><i>ʿad-ya^abor ʿam-zu^w qʕn^yʕtʕ</i></p> | <p>May fear and terror fall upon them!</p> <p>With the greatness of your arm they will be still as a stone</p> <p>Until your people pass through,</p> <p>Until the people whom you purchased pass through.</p> | <p>(S)PC functioning as volitive form</p> <p>(S)PC functioning as volitive form</p> <p>(L)PC functioning as object of preposition</p> <p>(L)PC functioning as object of preposition</p> |
| 17 | <p><i>tʕbi^ʿemo^w wʕtiʕtʕ^ʿemo^w bʕhar nah^{ʿa}lʕt^ʕkʕ</i></p> <p><i>mʕko^wn lʕʕibt^ʕkʕ pʕʿaltʕ YHWH</i></p> <p><i>miqdoʕʕ ʕa^{don}ʕy ko^wnʕnu^w yʕde^ykʕ</i></p> | <p>May you bring them and plant them on the mountain you inherited,</p> <p>The place of your dwelling which you made, O Yahweh,</p> <p>The sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands established.</p> | <p>Two (S)PC verbs functioning as volitive forms, or perhaps (L)PC verbs acting as conjoined subjects of adverbial clause</p> <p>SC functioning as narrative form</p> <p>SC functioning as narrative form</p> |
| 18 | <p><i>YHWH yimlok lʕʕolʕm wʕʿed</i></p> | <p>May Yahweh reign forever and ever!</p> | <p>(S)PC functioning as volitive form, or perhaps (L)PC acting as subject of adverbial clause¹¹⁷</p> |

117 Cf. the same expression in Ps. 146:10; also cf. *mʕlak YHWH* “may Yahweh reign!” or “Yahweh reigns!” in Pss. 47:9; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; Isa. 52:7.

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31

ON SOME SYNTACTIC ALTERNATIONS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

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SYNTACTIC ALTERNATIONS IN LINGUISTIC THEORY

Over the past forty years or so, Hebrew grammarians have increasingly turned their attention to contemporary linguistic theory to better understand particular Hebrew grammatical phenomena. These efforts include general works of grammar as well as more specifically focused studies.¹ Despite these various studies, however, one area of modern linguistic theory that has received little or no attention by Hebrew grammarians is the work concerned with the phenomena of syntactic alternations, i.e., the ability of a verb to appear with two or more sets of formally distinct verbal complements.

Of the numerous kinds of syntactic alternations attested in English, one of the best known and most widely studied in the linguistic literature is the one that occurs with the verb *load* and that is illustrated by the following pair of sentences.²

1.1a The man loaded the hay on the wagon.

1.1b The man loaded the wagon with the hay.

Each of these sentences contains three noun phrases, *the man*, *the wagon*, and *the hay*, and these three noun phrases function within each sentence as the subject, as the direct object, and as the object of a preposition that, together with the noun phrase, forms a prepositional phrase that serves as an oblique complement of the verb. However, these sentences differ from each other with respect to which noun phrase occurs as the direct object and which occurs as the object of the preposition. In sentence 1.1a, the noun phrase *the hay* occurs as the direct object of the verb and the noun phrase *the wagon* occurs as the object of the preposition *on*. In sentence 1.1b, the noun phrase *the wagon* occurs as the direct object and the noun phrase *the hay* occurs as the object of the preposition *with*. Hence, the verb *load* shows a syntactic alternation. It occurs with two sets of formally distinct verbal complements.

The reason the verb *load* shows this syntactic alternation has been vigorously debated by linguists,³ though nearly all of them would argue it has something to do with the meaning of this verb—in particular, the properties of the participants in the set of real-world situations this verb denotes. In that set of situations, there are three participants. One of these participants (denoted by the noun phrase *the man*) performs some action, and the other two participants (denoted by the noun phrases *the hay* and *the wagon*) are in some way affected by that action (i.e., each one changes in some way). The hay is affected in that it under-

1 These efforts include, but are not limited to, the grammars of Joüon and Muraoka 2006, Waltke and O'Connor 1990, van der Merwe et al. 1999, and individual monographs and articles such as Creason 1995; 2007 and Jenni 2012.

2 One of the earliest works to examine syntactic alternations is Fillmore 1968, though he does not analyze the alternation with *load*. Levin 1993 attempts to classify syntactic alternations based on a corpus of several thousand English verbs. Beavers 2010 provides a nice overview of work on syntactic alternations up to that date.

3 Beavers 2010 has a nice summary of this debate.

goes a change in its location. Prior to the action, the hay is somewhere other than the wagon, and after the action, the hay is on the wagon. The wagon is affected in that it undergoes a change in its state. Prior to the action, the wagon is relatively empty (i.e., not loaded), and after the action, the wagon is relatively full (i.e., loaded). Since there are two participants in this situation that undergo some sort of change, either one of the noun phrases that denote these participants may be the direct object of the verb. The other noun phrase is the object of a preposition, thus forming an oblique complement, and, of course, the noun phrase denoting the participant that causes these changes to take place is the subject.

The distinct syntax of each of these two sentences reflects the two changes that take place in this set of situations. When the direct object of the verb is *the hay* (sentence 1.1a), the syntax is that of a caused change of location where the direct object is the thing that is moved and the prepositional phrase indicates the final location of that object. When the direct object is *the wagon* (sentence 1.1b), the syntax is that of a caused change of state where the direct object is the thing that changes and the prepositional phrase indicates the means by which that change is caused.

Now, there is a very subtle difference in the meaning of these two sentences that is worth noting, more specifically, a difference in the set of possible situations that each sentence denotes. Suppose, for example, that the real-world object denoted by *the hay* consists of a single bale and that the real-world object denoted by *the wagon* can hold twenty bales of hay. If the person denoted by *the man* places this single bale of hay on the wagon, then that situation would occur within the set of situations denoted by the sentence *The man loaded the hay on the wagon*, because all of the hay is now on the wagon and none of it is at its original location. This situation does not, however, occur within the set of situations denoted by the sentence *The man loaded the wagon with the hay*, because there is an insufficient amount of hay on the wagon for the wagon to be considered to be loaded.⁴

Similarly, if there are thirty bales of hay and the man places twenty of them on the wagon, then that situation would occur within the set of situations denoted by the sentence *The man loaded the wagon with the hay*, because there is a sufficient amount of hay on the wagon for the wagon to be considered to be loaded; but that situation would not occur within the set of situations denoted by the sentence *The man loaded the hay on the wagon*, because not all of the hay is on the wagon. Some of it is still at its original location.⁵

This difference in the meaning of these two sentences is explained by the fact that the direct object of the verb *load* is what Dowty has called an Incremental Theme.⁶ An Incremental Theme is a verbal complement that denotes a participant in a situation whose part-whole relationships homomorphically determine the part-whole relationships of the situation. In other words, the various parts of an action take place as the various parts of a particular participant are affected by that action, and the action comes to its endpoint at precisely the moment the final part of the participant is affected by the action. In the situation denoted by the sentence *The man loaded the hay on the wagon*, when half of the hay is on the wagon, the action is half finished, and when the final bale of hay has been placed on the wagon, the action has come to its endpoint. That is the reason this sentence does not denote a situation in which there are thirty bales of hay but only twenty of them are loaded on the wagon. Not all of the hay has been affected by the action, so the action has not come to its endpoint.

The same considerations apply to the situation denoted by the sentence *The man loaded the wagon with the hay*, but in this case it is *the wagon* that is the direct object, so it is the participant denoted by *the wagon* that is the participant whose part-whole relationships homomorphically determine the part-whole

4 It is also possible to characterize this difference in terms of truth conditions rather than sets of situations. In the situation where there is a single bale of hay and a wagon that can hold twenty bales, the sentence *The man loaded the hay on the wagon* is true of that situation, whereas the sentence *The man loaded the wagon with the hay* is not true of that situation. Hence the two sentences have different truth conditions.

5 This difference in the set of situations that each sentence denotes disappears when either the direct object of the verb or the object of the preposition is an indefinite plural noun. These complications shall not be considered in this study. (For a discussion, see Jackendoff 1996, 345–48.) Furthermore, there are other syntactic alternations that do not show these sorts of differences in meaning regardless of the kind of noun that occurs as a verbal complement.

6 See Dowty 1991, 567–71, and the discussion in Creason 1995, 117–18, 143–48.

relationships of the situation. The various parts of the action take place as the various parts of the wagon become loaded, and the action comes to its endpoint when the wagon is completely loaded. If the wagon is not fully affected by the action, as is the case when a wagon with a capacity of twenty bales has only a single bale of hay on it, then the action has not come to its endpoint and therefore this situation is not contained within the set of situations this sentence denotes.

Linguists have attempted to represent the slightly different meanings of these two sentences in a bewildering variety of ways, though nearly all of them share a number of important characteristics. Debating these various proposals is well beyond the scope of this study, but one characteristic of most of these representations is a more complex structure than is obvious from the syntax of the English sentences. An example of a pair of such representations, based on those proposed by Rappaport and Levin, is the following.⁷

1.1a The man loaded the hay on the wagon.

[the man cause [the hay come to be on the wagon]/LOAD]

1.1b The man loaded the wagon with hay.

[the man cause [the wagon come to be in STATE]]

BY MEANS OF [the man cause [the hay come to be on the wagon]/LOAD]]

Perhaps the most important characteristic of these two representations is that each of the situations being represented consists of two parts, an activity and a change that is brought about by this activity—either a change of location or a change of state. The change of location or state is represented by the phrase *come to be*, and the activity that brings about this change is represented by the word *cause*, neither of which should be considered equivalent to the actual English words, but rather a representation of an abstract concept.

The concept represented by the words *come to be* is simply the concept of change (either of state or location). The concept represented by the word *cause* is more varied and includes a wide range of possible relationships between participants in a situation⁸ but it does not specify the precise activity that is performed by one of the participants. This lack of specificity is crucially important, because it represents the fact that the verb *load*, as part of its meaning, does *not* specify the precise action the man performs. The man could pick up each bale of hay and toss it onto the wagon, or the man could use some sort of machine to grasp the hay and move it, or the hay could be loose rather than in bales and the man could use a pitchfork to load the hay. It does not matter. Regardless of the specific activity, as long as the hay gets on the wagon, then that situation is within the set of situations denoted by the sentence *The man loaded the hay on the wagon*.

The analysis of this particular syntactic alternation appears justified by the data that has been considered to this point, but there are at least two additional pieces of data that demonstrate that it is insufficient. First, there are English verbs similar in meaning to *load* that have an Incremental Theme as their direct object but that do not show the alternation. *Cover* and *fill* are two such verbs.

1.2a *The man covered the lid on the pot.

1.2b The man covered the pot with the lid.

1.3a *The man filled the water into the bottle.

1.3b The man filled the bottle with the water.

These sentences all denote a set of situations in which one real-world object undergoes a change of location and a second real-world object undergoes a change of state, precisely like the sentences with the verb *load*; but unlike the verb *load*, the verbs *cover* and *fill* do not attest the syntactic alternation. Second, there are verbs in languages other than English that have a meaning similar to the English verbs *cover* and *fill* but differ with respect to their ability to show syntactic alternations. For example, Beavers notes that “*fill* does

⁷ Rappaport and Levin 1988, 26. The representations found there actually contain the variables *x*, *y*, and *z* rather than the specific nouns *the man*, *the hay*, and *the wagon*, because Rappaport and Levin are attempting to represent the meaning of the verb *load* in and of itself, not the specific sentences considered in this study.

⁸ Talmy calls these relationships “force dynamic patterns,” and these patterns include a range of possible relationships, such as direct physical contact of one participant with another or refraining from action by one participant, thereby permitting the other participant to perform an action (Talmy 1985, 308–10). See also the discussion in Creason 1995, 270–72.

not undergo a locative alternation in English but does in many other languages, including the cognate in Danish . . . The verb meaning *put* does not alternate in most languages, but does in Sesotho.”⁹ Precisely why verbs with similar meanings, both within English and across other languages, do not show similar syntactic alternations remains an open question in linguistic theory.

It is not the purpose of this study to resolve these remaining theoretical issues but rather to use the theory as it currently stands to better understand the syntax of Hebrew verbs. It is important, however, to be aware of these issues and to let them serve as a caution against too quickly analyzing a Hebrew verb based on the syntax of the English verbs used to translate it. One cannot assume the syntax of a particular Hebrew verb will match the syntax of the English verb that “means the same thing.” Simply because a Hebrew verb is translated with an English verb that does not show an alternation does not mean the Hebrew verb cannot show that alternation.

Finally, Rappaport Hovav and Levin¹⁰ argue that in those cases in which a syntactic alternation does not produce a difference in meaning, the choice of one syntactic construction rather than another may reflect information-structure contrasts, i.e., the difference between an entity that is present in the preceding context and so is considered to be “given information” and an entity that is absent from the preceding context and so is considered to be “new information,” or, more broadly speaking, the participant in a situation that is more prominent in the preceding discourse, with the more prominent participant occurring as the direct object rather than an oblique complement. The precise details of that analysis are also beyond the scope of this study, but, at a minimum, it is worth noting that it is certainly possible that in cases in which a particular situation occurs within the set of situations denoted by either possible syntax, the choice of a particular syntax might be governed by the larger discourse in which the sentence denoting that situation is found. In other words, in a situation where there is just enough hay to fill the wagon, the use of either sentence 1.1a or 1.1b to denote that situation might be determined by which participant is more prominent in the larger discourse of which 1.1a or 1.1b is a part. With this basic framework in place and all these caveats noted, it is now time to consider some Biblical Hebrew data.

TWO REASONABLY STRAIGHTFORWARD EXAMPLES: נָטַע AND זָרַע

Two English verbs that show the same syntactic alternation as *load* are the verbs *plant* and *sow*; therefore, it is not surprising that נָטַע and זָרַע, the two Hebrew verbs generally translated “plant” and “sow,” also display this alternation, as the following four examples show.

2.1a וַיִּטַּע אַבְרָהָם שֵׁבַע

He [Abraham] planted a tamarisk in Beersheba. (Gen. 21:33)

2.1b וַיִּטְעֵהוּ שָׂרָק

He [My beloved] planted it [the vineyard] (with) a choice vine. (Isa. 5:2)

2.2a וְאֶזְרָעֵם בְּעַמִּים

I [The Lord] will sow them [the Israelites] among the nations. (Zech. 10:9)

2.2b וַיִּזְרְעֵהָ קָלַח

He [Abimelech] sowed it [Shechem] (with) salt. (Judg. 9:45)

Sentences 2.1a and 2.2a are both examples of the change-of-location syntax, and the syntax of the Hebrew sentences is identical in all relevant respects to the syntax of the corresponding English sentences. In each case, the thing that is moved is the direct object of the verb, an indefinite noun in example 2.1a, and an object suffix on the verb in example 2.2a. The location to which that thing is moved is an oblique complement of the verb, a prepositional phrase consisting of the preposition כּ “in” and its object noun in each case.

⁹ Beavers 2010, 844.

¹⁰ Rappaport Hovav and Levin 2008, 156–60.

Sentences 2.1b and 2.2b are both examples of the change-of-state syntax, but the syntax of these Hebrew sentences is identical in only some of the relevant respects to that of the corresponding English sentences. As in English, the thing that undergoes a change of state is the direct object of the verb, an object suffix in both of these examples, but the means by which the state of this thing is changed is not expressed by a prepositional phrase as in English, but by an indefinite noun.

In traditional grammatical terms, this noun would be described as an “adverbial accusative” (on the assumption that if Hebrew still had a case system at this point in its history, the noun would have been in the accusative case), and in traditional grammar an adverbial accusative functions like an oblique complement in a sentence—even though it is neither preceded by a preposition (as other oblique complements are) nor is it historically in the oblique case. So, from a purely formal standpoint, it is impossible to distinguish an adverbial accusative from one form of a direct object.¹¹ In fact, the direct object in example 2.1a (אֶשֶׁל) has precisely this same form, an indefinite noun. The only way one can distinguish this form of a direct object from an adverbial accusative is by the apparent *function* of the noun in the sentence, not by its form. But when analyzing a foreign language for which there are no living native speakers, it is quite easy for judgments about the functions of a noun in a particular sentence to be influenced by the syntax of the translation of that sentence into another language, such as English, where the preposition *with* is required. So, taking into account only the forms of the nouns that appear in these two sentences, it is possible to analyze this syntax as consisting of two direct objects rather than a direct object and an adverbial accusative.¹²

Turning now to the meaning of these four sentences, it would appear that the same general observations about the meaning of the sentences containing the verb *load* also apply to נָטַע and זָרַע. For instance, both נָטַע and זָרַע appear to denote a situation in which there are two participants that may be an Incremental Theme, and whichever participant is denoted by the direct object of the verb is interpreted as the participant whose part-whole relationships homomorphically determine the part-whole relationships of the situation. This case is quite clear in 2.1a, 2.2a, and 2.2b, but perhaps less so in 2.1b.

In sentence 2.1a, when a tamarisk is planted, the action has reached its endpoint, even though very little of Beersheba has been planted with tamarisk trees, so it is *a tamarisk*, not *Beersheba*, that is the Incremental Theme in this sentence. Similarly in 2.2a, once the Israelites (*them* in this sentence) have been exiled among the nations, the action has been completed, even if not every nation has an exiled Israelite in it. Also in sentence 2.2b, it is the city, not the salt, that is the Incremental Theme, so the action reaches its endpoint *not* when all the salt has been used up but instead when salt has been applied to enough of the city of Shechem for it to be considered sown. Sentence 2.1b is difficult, but for an idiosyncratic reason, viz., that it seems odd that an entire vineyard could be planted with a single vine. In this context, however, the vine is not a literal plant but a metaphor for the people of Israel whom the Lord (my beloved) has planted in the land (the vineyard) with the intent that they inhabit the whole land.

Finally, it might be asked how prominent each of the participants is in the larger discourse in which these sentences occur. In 2.1b, 2.2a, and 2.2b, the direct object of the verb is, without question, more prominent in the discourse than the oblique complement. Sentence 2.1b occurs in a lengthy discourse about the actions of my beloved (the Lord) with the vineyard (the Israelites). Sentence 2.2a also occurs in a lengthy discourse about the actions of the Lord with the Israelites. Sentence 2.2b occurs at the end of a story detailing Abimelech’s taking of the city of Shechem.

In 2.1a, however, the tamarisk is the new information since it is first mentioned in this sentence and much of this chapter is concerned instead with the interactions of Abraham and Abimelech that lead to the giving of the name Beersheba to this particular place. So Beersheba is clearly more prominent in this discourse and on that basis might be expected to be the direct object of the verb; but, of course, the noun

11 This impossibility can cause significant problems in the analysis of the syntax of Hebrew sentences (see especially the discussions in the next section). These problems suggest that the way in which one defines the functions of the various nouns that occur in a sentence needs to be completely rethought, but that task is well beyond the scope of this study.

12 If the two-direct-object analysis is adopted, then the syntactic alternation with these two verbs would resemble the so-called “dative alternation” that occurs with the verb *give* in English: *He gave the book to me* as compared with *He gave me the book*.

Beersheba cannot be the direct object of the verb in this sentence, because it is not the Incremental Theme. It is not the participant whose part-whole relationships homomorphically determine the part-whole relationships of the situation. It is the tamarisk that is the Incremental Theme, so it is *a tamarisk* that must be the direct object even though it is less prominent in this context than Beersheba.

THE THREE VERBS *הָגַר*, *לָבַשׁ*, AND *הִלְבִּישׁ*

The verb *הָגַר*, traditionally translated “gird,” shows the same syntactic alternation as the verbs *נָטַע* and *זָרַע*, but it also presents two additional complications as compared with those two verbs. These complications are illustrated by the following sentences.¹³

- 3.1a *וַיַּחְגְּרוּ שָׂקִים בְּמַתְנֵיהֶם וַחֲבָלִים בְּרֹאשֵׁיהֶם*
They [The servants] girded sackcloth on their loins and cords on their heads. (1 Kgs. 20:32)
- 3.1b *וַיַּחְגֵּר אֹתָהּ מִתַּחַת לְמָדִיו עַל יָרֵךְ יְמִינוֹ*
He [Ehud] girded it [the sword] under his clothing upon his right thigh. (Judg. 3:16)
- 3.2a *וַיַּחְגֵּר אֹתוֹ בְּאַבְגָּט*
He [Moses] girded him [Aaron] with the girdle. (Lev. 8:7)
- 3.2b *וַיַּחְגֵּרְתָּ אֹתָם אֲבָגֵט אֶהֱרֹן וּבָנָיו*
You [Moses] shall gird them, Aaron and his sons, (with) a girdle. (Exod. 29:9)
- 3.2c *חָגְרָה בְּעֹז מַתְנֶיהָ*
She [The woman] girds her loins with strength. (Prov. 31:17)

The first complication is the greater variety of forms the oblique complement of this verb attests as compared with the oblique complement of the verbs *נָטַע* and *זָרַע*. Sentences 3.1a and 3.1b both attest the change-of-location syntax, but they differ from each other with respect to the preposition that is used in the oblique complement to designate the location to which the participant denoted by the direct object is moved. In sentence 3.1a, the preposition *ב* “in, on” is used, and in sentence 3.1b the preposition *עַל* “upon” is used. Sentences 3.2a, 3.2b, and 3.2c attest the change-of-state syntax but also differ with respect to the form of the oblique complement. In sentence 3.2b, the oblique complement is an indefinite noun, which could be considered either a second direct object or an adverbial accusative, as is the case with the verbs *נָטַע* and *זָרַע*. However, in 3.2a and 3.2c the oblique complement is a prepositional phrase consisting of the preposition *ב* “with” (the preposition commonly used to express means or instrument in Hebrew in addition to its use to express a location “in, on”) and its object noun in each case. These last two sentences suggest the function of the indefinite noun in sentences such as 3.2b (and the comparable sentences with the verbs *נָטַע* and *זָרַע*) is probably best analyzed as an adverbial accusative rather than a direct object.¹⁴

The second complication is the possibility that two of the participants in the situation denoted by *הָגַר* may be a person and a part of that person’s body rather than two different persons. This possibility is illustrated by sentence 3.2c. In this particular example, the direct object of the verb (*her loins*), which denotes the thing that is undergoing a change of state, is a part of the body of the person (*she*) who is bringing about that change of state. In fact, the number of times this verb is used in the Hebrew Bible to denote a situation in which these two participants are a person and a part of that person’s body is far greater than the number

13 The verb will be translated “gird” in the following sentences despite the fact that the word “gird” is rarely used in modern English apart from the increasingly rare expression “gird one’s loins.”

14 If, however, sentence 3.2b is analyzed as an example of a two-direct-object construction and sentences 3.2a and 3.2c as examples of a direct-object and oblique-complement construction, then these sentences would be examples of another syntactic alternation between a direct object and an oblique complement.

of times these two participants are two different persons, though this disparity in number may simply be a result of the fact that it is far more common to dress oneself than it is to dress someone else.¹⁵

Given that the verb *ḥḡr* can be used to denote a situation in which one participant is a body part of another participant, it is hardly surprising that the body part may be omitted from the sentence, as in the following.

3.3a *וַיַּחְגֵּר גַּם־דָּוִד אֶת־חַרְבּוֹ*

David also girded his sword. (1 Sam. 25:13)

3.3b *וּבְאַבְנֵט בֶּד יַחְגֵּר*

With a linen girdle he [Aaron] shall gird. (Lev. 16:4)

Sentence 3.3a is an example of the change-of-location syntax, in which the oblique complement is omitted, and sentence 3.3b is an example of the change-of-state syntax, in which the direct object is omitted. In each case, the omitted complement is understood to be a body part of the person denoted by the subject of the verb.

Sentences in which one of the expected complements of the verb does not appear (i.e., sentences that contain a “null complement”), are actually quite common in Hebrew, and in these sentences the identity of the missing complement is determined either by its presence in the immediately preceding context or by the general meaning of the verb. Sentences 3.4a and 3.4b, both of which contain the verb *zrʿ*, illustrate each of these possibilities.

3.4a *הֵאֱלָכֶם זֶרַע וּזְרַעְתֶּם אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה*

Here is seed for you [the Egyptians]. You shall sow the soil. (Gen. 47:23)

3.4b *וַיִּזְרַע יִצְחָק בְּאֶרֶץ הַהוּא*

Isaac sowed in that land. (Gen. 26:12)

Both of these sentences lack the complement denoting the thing that is sown, yet it is quite clear this thing is to be understood, in some sense, as “seed.” In sentence 3.4a, this seed is the specific seed mentioned in the immediately preceding sentence. In sentence 3.4b, it is understood as seed of some sort or other simply because that understanding is required by the meaning of the verb.¹⁶ In each of these sentences with a null complement, there are still three participants, even if one of them is missing in the sentence and has to be understood by reference to the preceding context or to a general understanding of the meaning of the verb.

The *qal* verb *lḇš*, generally translated “put on” or “wear,” might initially appear to be a near synonym of *ḥḡr* but differing from it primarily in that *lḇš* is a more general term than *ḥḡr* since it lacks the idea of fastening or tying that appears to be a part of the meaning of *ḥḡr*. This initial impression is supported by examples such as the following.

3.5a *וְלִבֵּשׁ אֶת־בְּגָדָיו*

He [Aaron] will put on his garments. (Lev. 16:24)

3.5b *וּמְכַסִּי־בָד יִלְבֹּשׁ עַל־בָּשָׂרוֹ*

He [The priest] will put undergarments of linen on his flesh. (Lev. 6:3)

¹⁵ Excluding the active and passive participles, twenty-eight examples of the verb *ḥḡr* denote a situation in which the two participants are a person and a part of that person’s body, and only three (Exod. 29:9; Lev. 8:7 [2×]) denote a situation in which they are two different persons. All three of the latter examples occur in a ceremonial context where one person is dressing another in clothing appropriate for the ceremony. As it happens, these three examples all show the change-of-state syntax; there are no examples of the change-of-location syntax when the two participants are two different persons. This gap may be due to the small number of attested examples, or it could reflect the fact that the person being dressed is likely to be more prominent in the discourse (and therefore more likely to be the direct object of the verb) than the item of clothing with which that person is dressed.

¹⁶ The particular type of seed need not be left unspecified but can be explicitly indicated, as it is, for example, in Jeremiah 12:13: *זָרְעוּ חֲטִיִּים* “They sowed wheat-seeds.”

In the situations denoted by each of these sentences, the participant denoted by the subject will put items of clothing on his own body—items denoted by the direct object. In sentence 3.5a the direct object is a definite noun preceded by the particle *אֵת*, which is the standard way in Hebrew to indicate that a definite noun is the direct object of the verb; in sentence 3.5b, however, the direct object is simply an indefinite noun.¹⁷ There is also an oblique complement in sentence 3.5b, the prepositional phrase *עַל־בָּשָׂרוֹ* “on his flesh.” It denotes the location where the items of clothing will be put by the subject. In sentence 3.5a there is no oblique complement, and the location is simply understood to be the subject’s body without any further specification.

These two examples with the verb *לָבַשׁ* would appear to be analogous to examples 3.3a and 3.1b with the verb *הָגִיר*, here reproduced as 3.6a and 3.6b.

3.6a *וַיַּחְגֵּר דָּוִד אֶת־חַרְבּוֹ*

David also girded his sword. (1 Sam. 25:13)

3.6b *וַיַּחְגֵּר אֹתָהּ מִתַּחַת לְמָדָיו עַל יָרֵךְ יְמִינוֹ*

He [Ehud] girded it [the sword] under his clothing upon his right thigh. (Judg. 3:16)

In each of these examples, the participant denoted by the subject is putting a sword on part of his body. In 3.6b, the location where the subject puts the sword is indicated by the pair of oblique complements, and in sentence 3.6a there is no oblique complement—the location is simply understood as some part of the subject’s body. Despite the similarity of these sentences, however, the verb *לָבַשׁ* differs from the verb *הָגִיר* in three very important respects.

First, the verb *לָבַשׁ* never denotes a situation in which one person is putting an item of clothing on another person. It always denotes a situation in which a person is putting an item of clothing on his or her own body. There are no sentences with *לָבַשׁ* that are analogous to sentences 3.2a and 3.2b with *הָגִיר*, sentences in which the participant denoted by the subject is putting something on someone else’s body. So it could be argued that *לָבַשׁ* is a verb that denotes a situation with only two participants, a person and an item of clothing, whereas *הָגִיר* is a verb that denotes a situation with three participants, one of which may be, but is not necessarily, a part of another participant’s body.

Second, the presence of an oblique complement in a sentence with *לָבַשׁ* is exceedingly rare. In fact, the only such sentence attested in the Hebrew Bible is the one in Leviticus 6:3 cited above as 3.5b. If one were to propose that *לָבַשׁ* denoted a situation with three participants rather than two, then one would have to analyze *לָבַשׁ* as denoting a situation in which one participant is always a part of another participant’s body and that this third participant is never represented in any sentence except one. It seems far more likely that *לָבַשׁ* denotes a situation having only two participants and that in one attested example there is a prepositional phrase specifying more exactly the location where one of the participants puts the item of clothing.¹⁸

17 This analysis reflects the traditional approach to Hebrew grammar in which *אֵת* is considered to be a particle that occurs with a definite noun when that noun functions as the direct object of the verb, and its presence prior to that noun simply indicates that function and nothing more. It is, however, also possible to analyze *אֵת* as a preposition that forms a prepositional phrase with the following noun, in which case two alternative analyses present themselves. This prepositional phrase could be considered an oblique complement, in which case every transitive verb in Hebrew would attest a kind of syntactic alternation, one in which a direct object alternates with an oblique complement, with the direct-object syntax occurring whenever a noun is indefinite and the oblique-complement syntax occurring whenever a noun is definite. Alternatively, this prepositional phrase could still be considered a direct object and not an oblique complement. This analysis would be the inverse of the “adverbial accusative” analysis considered above. In that analysis, something with the form of a direct object (an indefinite noun) was analyzed as an oblique complement. Here, something with the form of an oblique complement (a prepositional phrase consisting of *אֵת* and a definite noun) is analyzed as a direct object. As noted in n. 11 above, analyses such as these may be an indication that the way in which one defines the functions of the various nouns that occur in a Hebrew sentence needs to be completely rethought, but that task is well beyond the scope of this study.

18 Another example of a prepositional phrase that further specifies a location, but that occurs with an intransitive verb, is 1 Kings 15:23: *חָלָה אֶת־רַגְלָיו* “He became sick (in) his feet.”

Third, and most importantly, *לָבַשׁ* shows a different syntactic alternation than *הָגַר* does—one in which there is an alternation between the subject and the direct object,¹⁹ as is illustrated by sentence 3.7.

3.7 וְרוּחַ יְהוָה לָבַשָּׁה אֶת-גִּדְעוֹן

The Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon. (Judg. 6:34)

In this sentence, the Spirit of the Lord is pictured as an item of clothing Gideon wears, yet it is the noun phrase, *the Spirit of the Lord*, not the noun, *Gideon*, that is the subject of the sentence.²⁰ The reason it is possible for the noun denoting the item of clothing, rather than the noun denoting the person wearing it, to be the subject of this sentence is that, in the situation denoted by this sentence, the item of clothing is volitional relative to the one wearing it. That is to say, the item of clothing exerts a greater degree of control over the situation than its wearer does, and volitionality is one of the properties of participants in a situation Dowty identified as making it more likely that that participant, rather than another, will be the subject of the sentence.²¹

Based on these differences between *לָבַשׁ* and *הָגַר*, it seems reasonable to propose that the meanings of these two verbs differ with respect to the complexity of the distinct situations they each denote. Because *הָגַר* shows the same alternation as the English verb *load*, its meaning can be represented with the same two representations as *load*.²²

[x cause [y come to be in/upon z]/*הָגַר*]

[[x cause [z come to be in STATE]]]

BY MEANS OF [x cause [y come to be in/upon z]/*הָגַר*]

הָגַר is a verb that denotes a set of situations with three participants, one of which (represented by the variable *z*) may be a part of another participant's body (represented by the variable *x*). In contrast, *לָבַשׁ* could be represented with something like the following.

[y, z (come to) be in STATE/*לָבַשׁ*]

This representation illustrates the fact that *לָבַשׁ* denotes a situation in which there are only two participants, an item of clothing (represented by the variable *z*) and the person who wears that item of clothing (represented by the variable *y*), and these two participants are, or come to be, in a state relative to each other.

Furthermore, the distinct syntactic alternations that occur with each of these verbs only involve the two nouns that denote the two variables (*y* and *z*) that appear in the change of location or state represented by the phrase *come to be*, not the noun denoting the variable (*x*) that causes that change to occur. With *הָגַר*, these two nouns are the ones that occur as the direct object and an oblique complement (or adverbial accusative), and with *לָבַשׁ*, these two nouns are the ones that occur as the subject and the direct object.

There is, of course, another verb in Hebrew that has the same root as the *qal* verb *לָבַשׁ*—the *hiphil* verb *הִלְבִּישׁ*. It is the causative of *לָבַשׁ* and is generally translated “put on” or “clothe.”²³ Like many *hiphil* verbs that correspond to a transitive *qal* verb from the same root, the most common syntactic construction attested by the *hiphil* verb is the double-direct-object construction, as is illustrated in sentence 3.8.

19 This alternation does not take place in English. Perhaps the nearest analogue is the alternation between *John kissed Mary* and *John and Mary kissed*.

20 It is, of course, possible that in this context it is *Gideon* who is the item of clothing the Spirit of the Lord is pictured as wearing, but no commentator has ever interpreted this sentence in this way, and this interpretation is inconsistent with the other ways the Spirit of the Lord is pictured as interacting with human beings. This interpretation would also require that righteousness be pictured as wearing Job in Job 29:14, *צִדֵּק לְבַשְׁתִּי וַיִּלְבָּשֵׁנִי* “I put on righteousness and it put on me,” which seems highly unlikely as well.

21 Dowty 1991, 572–76. See also the discussion in Creason 1995, 125–36.

22 A variable is used for each of the three participants as in Rappaport and Levin 1988, 26.

23 The translation of this verb as “put on” or “clothe” is primarily determined by which of the two direct objects in Hebrew is rendered as the direct object in English.

3.8 וְהִלְבַּשְׁתָּ אֶת־אֶהֱרֹן אֶת־הַכֹּהֶנֶת

You [Moses] shall clothe Aaron (with) the tunic.

or You [Moses] shall put the tunic (on) Aaron. (Exod. 29:5)

In this sentence, the noun that denotes the item of clothing (*the tunic*) and the noun that denotes the person (*Aaron*) who will wear that item of clothing are each preceded by the particle אֶת and so are each a direct object of the verb.

In addition to the double-direct-object construction, there is one, but only one, example of the change-of-location syntax attested with הִלְבִּישׁ, cited here as sentence 3.9.

3.9 וְאֵת עֶרְת גִּדְיֵי הָעִזִּים הִלְבִּישָׁה עַל־יָדָיו וְעַל חֻלְקֶת צִוְּאָרָיו

And she [Rebekah] put the goatskins on his [Jacob's] hands and on the smooth part of his [Jacob's] neck. (Gen. 27:16)

In this sentence, the item of clothing (*the goatskins*) is denoted by the direct object, and the location where that item of clothing is placed is denoted by two prepositional phrases, each consisting of the preposition עַל “on, upon” and a noun denoting the part of Jacob's body which will “wear” that item.²⁴

The change-of-location syntax is, of course, also attested by חָגַר and therefore the syntax of sentence 3.9 is identical, in all relevant respects, to the syntax of sentence 3.6b, reproduced here as 3.10.

3.10 וַיַּחְגֵּר אֹתָהּ מִתַּחַת לְמָדָיו עַל יָרֵךְ יְמִינוֹ

He [Ehud] girded it [the sword] under his clothing upon his right thigh. (Judg. 3:16)

In this sentence, as in sentence 3.9, the thing that is girded is denoted by the direct object, and the location where that thing is girded is denoted by a prepositional phrase.

In the example of the double-direct-object construction cited above (sentence 3.8), the noun that denotes the item of clothing was preceded by the particle אֶת, but it is also possible for the item of clothing to be denoted by an indefinite noun, and in these cases the noun could be interpreted as an adverbial accusative, as is illustrated by sentence 3.11a.

3.11a וְהִלְבַּשְׁתֶּם בְּתֻנֹת

You [Moses] shall clothe them [Aaron and his sons] (with) tunics. (Exod. 29:8)

This sentence could be analyzed as attesting the change-of-state syntax just as sentence 3.2b with חָגַר was analyzed above, reproduced here as 3.11b.

3.11b וַיַּחְגֵּרְתֶּם אֹתָם אֶבְגִּיט אֶהֱרֹן וּבָנָיו

You [Moses] shall gird them, Aaron and his sons, (with) a girdle. (Exod. 29:9)

However, there is a critical difference in the attested forms of the noun denoting the item of clothing that occur with הִלְבִּישׁ as compared with those that occur with חָגַר. With הִלְבִּישׁ, the item of clothing is always denoted either by an indefinite noun or by a noun preceded by the particle אֶת but never by a noun that is the object of a preposition. In contrast, with חָגַר, the item that is girded is never denoted by a noun preceded by the particle אֶת but always by an indefinite noun or by a noun that is the object of the preposition ב “with,” as in sentence 3.2c, reproduced here as 3.11c.

3.11c חָגְרָה בְּעֹז מְתֻנָּהּ

She [The woman] girds her loins with strength. (Prov. 31:17)

²⁴ The fact that only two parts of Jacob's body will be “wearing” goatskins no doubt accounts for the use of the change-of-location syntax in this example, but this use simply illustrates the fact that different syntactic constructions with a single verb may have slightly different denotations, as was the case with the English verb *load* above.

This difference strongly suggests that an indefinite noun with הִלְבִּישׁ is always a direct object and never an adverbial accusative, whereas with הָגַר an indefinite noun is always an adverbial accusative and never a direct object.

Finally, unlike הָגַר, in every attested example of the verb הִלְבִּישׁ, the participant denoted by the subject is distinct from the participant who wears the item of clothing. So there are always, without question, three participants in the situation denoted by הִלְבִּישׁ, and this fact, as well as the fact that the *hiphil* is a causative form in Hebrew, indicates that appropriate representations for the meaning of הִלְבִּישׁ would be something like the following.

[x cause [y, z (come to) be in STATE/לְבַשׁ]]

[x cause [z come to be upon y]/לְבַשׁ]

The first of these two representations would be a representation of the meaning of the verb when it attests the double-direct-object construction, and it consists simply of the representation of the meaning of the *qal* verb לְבַשׁ with the addition of a participant (x) and the activity represented by the word *cause*. The second of these representations would be a representation of the meaning of the verb when it attests the change-of-location syntax, and it is essentially identical to the representation of the English verb *load* or the Hebrew verb הָגַר when either of those verbs attests the change-of-location syntax.

In sum, the Hebrew verb לְבַשׁ denotes a situation in which there are two participants, an item of clothing and the person who wears it, and these participants are, or come to be, in a state relative to each other. This verb attests a syntactic alternation between the subject and the direct object, with the subject of the verb denoting the participant exerting a greater degree of control over the situation relative to the other participant. The verb הִלְבִּישׁ is the causative of לְבַשׁ, and it denotes a situation in which there are three participants, the same two participants as לְבַשׁ and a third participant, always distinct from the wearer of the item of clothing, who performs some activity that brings the other two participants into a state relative to each other. This verb nearly always attests the double-direct-object construction, but in one example the person who wears an item of clothing is denoted by a noun that is part of an oblique complement, which makes it an example of the change-of-location syntax. The verb הָגַר denotes a situation in which there are three participants that are analogous to the three participants in the situation denoted by הִלְבִּישׁ, i.e., an item that is girded, a participant who wears the girded item, and the person who performs the activity that puts the girded item on that participant. However, unlike in the situation denoted by הִלְבִּישׁ, in the situation denoted by הָגַר the participant who wears the girded item may be a part of the body of the person who performs the activity that puts the girded item on that participant.²⁵ This verb attests both the change-of-location syntax and the change-of-state syntax, but not the double-direct-object construction.

VERBS OF REMOVAL: הֵצִיז AND הֵצִיחַ

The English verb *load* and the Hebrew verbs that show the same syntactic alternation have all, broadly speaking, denoted a set of situations in which one of the participants is moved to the location of another participant. Verbs that denote a situation in which a participant is moved in the opposite direction, i.e., away from the location of another participant, also show a syntactic alternation. The English verb *clear* is one such verb.²⁶

4.1a He cleared the dishes from the table.

4.1b He cleared the table of the dishes.

The syntactic alternation attested by this verb is similar in many respects to that attested by *load*. With each verb there is an alternation between a direct object and an oblique complement, and the two syntactic

²⁵ It is tempting to propose that this difference between הִלְבִּישׁ and הָגַר reflects a difference in the *hiphil binyan* of הִלְבִּישׁ and the *qal binyan* of הָגַר, but much more research would need to be done either to prove or to disprove this proposal.

²⁶ The examples are based on those found in Levin 1993, 51–53.

constructions attested with *clear* can also be characterized as a change-of-location syntax (sentence 4.1a) and a change-of-state syntax (sentence 4.1b). The direct object of this verb is an Incremental Theme, as it is with *load*, and since this verb denotes a set of situations in which there are potentially two participants whose part-whole relationships homomorphically determine the part-whole relationships of the situation, the noun that denotes either of these participants may be the direct object of the verb.²⁷

The primary difference between *clear* and *load* is the preposition used with the oblique complement in the change-of-state syntax. In this alternation, that preposition is *of*, whereas in the alternation with *load*, it is *with*.

Two Hebrew verbs showing the same alternation as *clear* are the *qal* verb בָּזָז, generally translated “plunder,” and the *piel* verb גָּלָה, generally translated “uncover.” Neither of these verbs is frequently attested in the Hebrew Bible, yet all the examples of each verb clearly represent either the change-of-location syntax or the change-of-state syntax.

The best examples of both the change-of-location syntax and the change-of-state syntax occur with the verb בָּזָז.

4.2a וְגַם־שָׁלַל רַב בָּזְזוּ מֵהֶם

And also much spoil they [the men of Israel] plundered from them [their kinsmen]
(2 Chron. 28:8)

4.2b וַיִּבְזּוּ אֶת מַחֲנֵה אֲרָם

And they [the people] plundered the camp of Aram. (2 Kgs. 7:16)

In example 4.2a, there are three participants: the one doing the plundering, denoted by the subject of the verb (*they*), the thing that is plundered, denoted by the direct object of the verb (*much spoil*), and the ones from whom the plunder is taken, denoted by the pronoun (*them*) that is a suffix on the preposition מִן “from,” with which it forms an oblique complement. In example 4.2b, only one of these last two participants occurs in the sentence, viz., the ones from whom the plunder is taken, and this participant is denoted by the direct object of the verb (*the camp of Aram*) rather than by a pronoun that is part of an oblique complement as in sentence 4.2a. So the syntactic alternation is clear. Sentence 4.2a is an example of the change-of-location syntax, and sentence 4.2b is an example of the change-of-state syntax, even though sentence 4.2b does not contain an oblique complement that would denote the thing plundered.

The verb גָּלָה is like the verb בָּזָז in two important ways. First, it denotes a situation in which there are three participants. In the case of גָּלָה, these participants are the ones doing the uncovering, the cover itself (i.e., the thing that is moved), and the thing that is uncovered (i.e., the location away from which the cover is moved). Second, in the examples of גָּלָה that attest the change-of-state syntax, there is never an oblique complement, only a direct object, like in sentence 4.2b with בָּזָז.

The verb גָּלָה also presents two additional complications as compared with בָּזָז. The first is that there are very few examples of the change-of-location syntax, and in none of them is an oblique complement attested, only a direct object. So in neither syntactic construction attested with גָּלָה is there an oblique complement. The second complication is that the English verb *uncover* does *not* show a syntactic alternation. It does not attest the change-of-location syntax, only the change-of-state syntax, so the few examples of גָּלָה that attest the change-of-location syntax cannot be translated “uncover” without misrepresenting the meaning of the sentence. These examples must be translated with a verb such as *remove* instead.

Remarkably enough, both syntactic constructions occur in a single verse in Isaiah.

4.3a גָּלִי צַמְתְּךָ

Remove your veil. (Isa. 47:2a)

²⁷ Also like the verb *load*, the verb *clear* shows the same difference in the set of situations it denotes in the two distinct syntactic constructions, and this difference disappears, just as it does with the verb *load*, when either the direct object of the verb or the object of the preposition is an indefinite plural noun.

4.3b גִּלִּי־שׁוֹק

Uncover a leg. (Isa. 47:2b)

Sentence 4.3b is an example of the change-of-state syntax since the direct object denotes the thing that is uncovered, i.e., the location from which the (unmentioned) cover is moved. Sentence 4.3a is an example of the change-of-location syntax since the direct object denotes the cover, i.e., the thing that is moved away from an (unmentioned) location. Because sentence 4.3a is an example of the change-of-location syntax, the verb cannot be translated “uncover,” as it is translated in sentence 4.3b, but must be translated “remove.” If it were translated “uncover,” then the direct object would be interpreted *not* as the cover (the thing that is moved), which is what the veil clearly is, but as the thing that is uncovered (the location away from which the cover is moved).

Furthermore, despite the fact that there is no oblique complement in either sentence, the third participant in the situation denoted by each sentence is clearly understood. In sentence 4.3a, the third participant is understood as “your face,” because that is what *your veil* covers. In sentence 4.3b the third participant is understood as something like “your skirt,” because that is what covers *a leg*.

As it happens, the thing that is uncovered in both sentence 4.3a and 4.3b is a part of the body of the one doing the uncovering, but that need not be the case with the verb גִּלָּה, as the following sentences indicate.

4.4a כִּי גִלָּה כְּנָף אָבִיו

... because he [a man] has removed the wing [the protective arm] of his father. (Deut. 27:20)

4.4b וַיִּגַּל יְהוָה אֶת־עֵינָיו בִּלְעָם

The Lord uncovered the eyes of Balaam. (Num. 22:31)

Sentence 4.4a is an example of the change-of-location syntax, and, based on the immediately preceding context of this sentence, the thing that is uncovered is understood to be “his father’s wife.” Sentence 4.4b is an example of the change-of-state syntax, and the thing that is uncovered is simply the direct object, *the eyes of Balaam*.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study represents just an initial foray into the area of syntactic alternations. There are a number of other syntactic alternations attested by Hebrew verbs, such as the alternations involving direct objects and oblique complements attested with the verb יָרָה, generally translated “shoot,” and with the verb בָּנָה, generally translated “build.” However, it should be clear from the small amount of data that has been examined here that an awareness of the possibility of syntactic alternations can greatly assist in the analysis of the syntax of Hebrew verbs and in the analysis of the interaction of syntax and semantics, i.e., of form and meaning, in Hebrew.

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32

THE COORDINATED PERFECT*

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THE TOPIC UNDER DISCUSSION in this chapter is decidedly minor. In fact,

it will appear to the reader almost ludicrous to devote a[n article] to the consideration of what will seem to be such an elementary phenomenon of language as the union of . . . the perfect . . . with the simple conjunction ו. Yet, common and constant as this union is in the case of most other Semitic languages, in Hebrew . . . it is such a rare and isolated occurrence as both to invite and demand a somewhat minute investigation.¹

Indeed, the phenomenon seems rare or “at best exceedingly uncommon.”² In the great majority of cases (~96%), *w³q³tal* is an irrealis and/or imperfective form conventionally known as the perfect consecutive. In a minority of cases (~4%), it has the semantic characteristics of the perfect. Usually, context determines the grammatical analysis.³ Sometimes, a morphophonological feature may differentiate the two forms;⁴ yet this feature can be neutralized, too.⁵ Often, examples are simply ambiguous. The honoree has correctly characterized this minor grammatical phenomenon as “problematic.”⁶

It is understandable that scholars have difficulty with the perfect *w³q³tal* construction.⁷ For Gropp, it is “extrasystemic.”⁸ For Joüon, it is “anomalous.”⁹ Bombeck appeals to code: perfect *w³q³tal* reflects popular speech, whereas *wayyiq³tol* reflects a literary register.¹⁰ Bartelmus deems it schizophrenic for a single author to use *w³q³tal*—perfect and perfect consecutive—in two contrary ways.¹¹ Others suggest that a diachronic factor is at work: perfect *w³q³tal* reflects an intrusion or later phase of Biblical Hebrew¹² often attributable

* I thank Moshe Florentin, Jan Joosten, Simcha Kogut, and Sandra Thompson for helpful advice. The biblical text and versification follow Dotan 2001.

1 Driver 1874, 170 = 1892, 158.

2 Huesman 1956, 434.

3 See Pietsch 2004–7, 162.

4 Revell 1984, 440; in conjunction with Revell 1985, 278–80.

5 Revell 1984, 440. See also Cook 2012, 209–10.

6 Pardee 2012, 294.

7 For an example, see Moomo 2005.

8 Gropp 1991, 48.

9 Joüon 1923, §119z. See also Rubinstein 1963, 62, 68.

10 Bombeck 2001, 33. See also Kawashima 2004, 65–66; and, differently, van Peursen 2004, 156–57 with n. 11. Cf. Meyer 1959, 119 = 1993, 109.

11 Bartelmus 1985, 371. See also Spieckermann 1982, 128; Hoffmann 2006, 83; Pietsch 2004–7, 161.

12 E.g., Hoffmann 2006, 88, and Gropp 1991, 48, respectively. See also Joosten 2012, 225. Cf. Revell 1985, 280 n. 8.

to Aramaic.¹³ Stade, however, gives the most colorful descriptions: in 2 Kings 21:4 (= 2 Chron. 33:4), perfect *w³q³tal* is an “Unform”;¹⁴ in 2 Kings 19:18, it is “grammatisch falsch”; in 2 Kings 18:36, it is “eine barbarische Construction”;¹⁵ and in texts such as 1 Kings 21:12 and Lamentations 2:9, “haben die Abschreiber aus Mangel an Sprachgefühl in der Ueberlieferung des ו mit Verb nicht wenig Unheil angerichtet.”¹⁶ None of these interpretations, however, is persuasive. Some are unverifiable and conjectural, while others are likely based on a false premise. Although *w³q³tal* can be analyzed as a perfect in approximately 4 percent of its attestations, those attestations number more than two hundred and fifty.¹⁷ There should be a satisfying explanation for such a large number of examples.

A brief comparison of texts puts the issue in sharper focus. On the one hand, perfect *w³q³tal* can alternate with *wayyiqtol*.

והחרישו העם ולא ענו אתו דבר כי מצות המלך היא לאמר לא תענהו

But the people kept quiet and did not answer him [the Rabshakeh] at all, for it was the king's order, “You shouldn't answer him” (2 Kgs. 18:36).

וַיַּחֲרִישׁוּ וְלֹא עָנוּ אֶת־דְּבַר כִּי־מִצְוַת הַמֶּלֶךְ הִיא לֵאמֹר לֹא תַעֲנֶהוּ

But they kept quiet and did not answer him at all, for it was the king's order, “You shouldn't answer him” (Isa. 36:21).

וַאֲבִיכֶן הִתֵּל בִּי וְהִחֲלַף אֶת־מִשְׁכְּרָתִי עֶשְׂרֵת מָנִים וְלֹא נָתַנּוּ יְהוָה לְהָרַע עִמָּדִי

But your father cheated me and changed my pay many (lit., ten) times. Still, YHWH didn't let him harm me (Gen. 31:7).

וַאֲבִיכֶן הִתֵּל בִּי וַיַּחֲלַף אֶת־מִשְׁכְּרָתִי עֶשְׂרֵת מָנִים וְלֹא נָתַנּוּ יְהוָה לְהָרַע עִמָּדִי

But your father cheated me and changed my pay many times. Still, YHWH didn't let him harm me (Gen. 31:7 [SP]); see also

וְהָאֱמֵן בִּיהוָה וַיַּחֲשֶׁבֶּה לּוֹ צְדָקָה

He [Abram] believed in YHWH, and he [YHWH] considered it to his credit (Gen. 15:6; see also SP).¹⁸

וַיֵּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם בְּאֵלֹהֵי הָעֵלְיוֹן וַתַּחֲשֶׁב לּוֹ צְדָקָה

[Abraham] bel[ieve]d [in] G[o]d, and it was considered to his credit (4QpsJub^a [225] 2 i 7–8).

In these and similar instances, *w³q³tal* and *wayyiqtol* “occur . . . apparently without semantic difference”; as Joosten notes, there “seems to be no reason” for the selection of *w³q³tal* over *wayyiqtol*.¹⁹ On the other hand, perfect *w³q³tal* can alternate with *q³tal*.

חַטָּאנוּ וְהָעֵוִינוּ רָשָׁעִינוּ

We have sinned and purposely done wrong. We are wicked (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ).

חַטָּאנוּ הָעֵוִינוּ וְרָשָׁעִינוּ

We have sinned. We have purposely done wrong and are wicked (2 Chron. 6:37bβ).

13 Spieckermann 1982, 128; and, similarly, Bartelmus 1985, 374–75. See also Gesenius 1910, §112pp. Cf. Loretz 1961, 295; Koch 1988, 104 n. 27.

14 Stade 1886, 188 = 1907, 226.

15 Stade 1886, 183 = 1907, 222. For sympathetic analyses, see, e.g., Gesenius 1910, §112tt; and, especially, Bergsträsser 1929, §§9b–k.

16 Stade 1907, 199 n. 8.

17 For a list, see the Appendix.

18 According to Moshe Florentin (personal communication), the variant Samaritan reading וַיֵּאמֶן mentioned in older Genesis commentaries (e.g., Ball 1896, 64) cannot be confirmed in any known sources. For discussion, see Mosis 1989, 233 n. 31 = 1999, 65 n. 31.

19 Joosten 2012, 226 (citing Isa. 37:27 vs. 2 Kgs. 19:26; see also 1QIsa^a 37:27), 224 (citing Judg. 3:23), respectively. See also Spieckermann 1982, 120.

חטאנו עם אבותינו העוינו הרשענו

We have sinned along with our ancestors. We have purposely done wrong; we have acted wickedly (Ps. 106:6; see also Dan. 9:15b).

אנכי הגדתי והושעתי והשמעתי ואין בכם זר ואתם עדי נאם יהוה ואני אל

“I told (it) and brought triumph; and I proclaimed (it), without a foreign (god) among you. You are my witnesses,” oracle of YHWH, “and I am God” (Isa. 43:12).

[אנכי הגדתי והושעתי והשמעתי ואין בכם זר ואתם] עדי נאם יהוה ואני אל

“[I told (it) and brought triumph]; I proclaimed (it), without [a foreign (god)] among [you]. Yo[u] are [my] wit[nesses],” oracle of YHWH, “and I am God” (1QIsa^b 43:12); see also

למואב כה אמר יהוה צבאות אלהי ישראל הוי אל נבו כי שדדה הבישה נלכדה קריתים הבישה המשגב וחתה

Concerning Moab. Thus said YHWH of Hosts, the God of Israel, “Too bad for Nebo, that it’s devastated. Kiriathaim is greatly shamed (and) captured. The fortress (alt., Misgab) is greatly shamed and broken” (Jer. 48:1).

In this latter case, *w³qatal* and *qatal* seem semantically identical, too;²⁰ for the most part, each form “expresses single events as having really happened.”²¹ Thus all three verb forms—perfect *w³qatal*, *wayyiqtol*, and *qatal*—share semantic content. To a certain degree, they also share syntactic behavior; each form can head its clause. From this perspective, perfect *w³qatal*, *wayyiqtol*, and, to a lesser extent, *qatal* seem equivalent.

The following discussion attempts to find patterns underlying perfect *w³qatal* in Biblical Hebrew.²² It begins by contextualizing this species of *w³qatal* within several arenas: syntax (§1) and semantics, pragmatics, and discourse structure (§2). Then, it will turn to the bulk of attestations—where perfect *w³qatal* is part of a serial construction, especially following a semantically similar verb, as in Genesis 31:7 (§3). Thereafter, a section will be devoted to perfect *והיה* and kindred forms of “be” (§4). It will then address the infrequent attestations of perfect *w³qatal* in nonserial constructions, as in Genesis 15:6 (§5). It will conclude with a summary of findings (§6), principally from a functional perspective. This study does not attempt to be exhaustive; for example, because of its many idiosyncrasies, the book of Qohelet is not examined.²³ The study does, however, attempt to isolate patterns that may distinguish perfect *w³qatal* from its alternants.²⁴

1. COORDINATION

Coordination is a syntactic phenomenon “in which two or more units of the same type are combined into a larger unit and still have the same semantic relations with other surrounding elements.”²⁵ In Biblical Hebrew, a coordinator may be absent or, more likely, present. “Zero coordination,” or asyndetic combination, is somewhat restricted. It may occur when conjuncts regularly appear together and/or form a single conceptual unit.²⁶

ואת מתכנת הלבנים אשר הם עשים תמול שלשם תשימו עליהם

But you must place on them [the Israelites] the (same) quota of bricks that they have been making before (Exod. 5:8aα).

20 See Pardee 2012, 294.

21 Joosten 2012, 223.

22 The interpretation of *w³qatal* perfect forms in epigraphic Hebrew texts is disputed. For relevant discussions, see Pietsch 2004–7, 164, on Yavneh Yam 1:5–7; Smith 1991, 20, on Arad 3:2–3; and van Peursen 2004, 162 n. 40, on Arad 16:3–4. Cf. Rogland 2000, 197–98, on Arad 3, 16.

23 See Spieckermann 1982, 120–21; and Revell 1985, 279–80, for some justification.

24 See Koch 1988, 104 with n. 27; and, tentatively, Joosten 2012, 225.

25 Haspelmath 2007, 1.

26 Ibid., 23, drawing on Mithun 1988, 332–34.

כי הלל רשע על תאות נפשו ובצע ברך נאץ יהוה

For the wicked man boasts of his own desires; the cheat “blesses” (and) scorns YHWH! (Ps.10:3); see also

וישמן ישרון ויבעט שמנת עבית כשית

Jeshurun grew fat and kicked—you grew fat, thick, (and) obese (Deut. 32:15a); and

וישלח ישראל את ימינו וישת על ראש אפרים והוא הצעיר ואת שמאלו על ראש מנשה שכל את ידיו כי מנשה הבכור

Israel stretched out his right hand and placed (it) on Ephraim’s head (albeit the younger) and his left hand on Manasseh’s head; he crossed his hands, since Manasseh was the firstborn (Gen. 48:14).

Together, the asyndetic combination forms a synthetic whole.²⁷ In contrast, “overt coordination” uses a conjunctive coordinator. Here too, the conjuncts may be conceptually indistinct.

אל האשה אמר הרבה ארבה עצבונך והרנך בעצב תלדי בנים

To the woman he [YHWH God] said, “I will proliferate your birth pangs to the extreme; in pain shall you bear children” (Gen. 3:16a).

ויעש להם משתה ויאכלו וישתו

He [Isaac] made a feast for them [Abimelech et al.], and they ate and drank (Gen. 26:30; see also Judg. 9:27, 19:6; 1 Kgs. 1:25, etc.).²⁸

Usually, though, the conjuncts are distinct.

ויהי לו צאן ובקר וחמרים ועבדים ושפחת ואתנת וגמלים

He [Abram] had small livestock, large livestock, asses, male slaves, female slaves, she-asses, and camels (Gen. 12:16b).

וירץ דוד ויעמד אל הפלשתי ויקח את חרבו וישלפה מתערה וימתתהו ויכרת בה את ראשו ויראו הפלשתים כי מת גבורם וינסו

David ran and stood over the Philistine. He took his sword, pulled it out of its sheath, finished him off, and cut off his head with it. The Philistines saw that their champion was dead and fled (1 Sam. 17:51).

The two types of coordination, then, denote more than the presence or absence of a coordinator. Zero coordination tends to have conjuncts that are semantically, and perhaps habitually, related and form a conceptual unit transcending its atomic parts.²⁹ Overt coordination, however, is more heterogeneous. The relation between conjuncts may be identical to that of zero coordination. Or, the conjuncts may be separate yet linked units. For practical purposes, overt coordination in Biblical Hebrew is a fuzzy category whose disambiguation is context driven.

This fuzzy category also extends to perfect *w³q³tal*. The alternations presented above in the introduction—העוינו (Ps. 106:6; 2 Chron. 6:37bβ) ~ והעוינו (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ), רשענו (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ) ~ ורשענו (2 Chron. 6:37bβ), and השמעתני (1QIsa^b 43:12) ~ והשמעתני (Isa. 43:12 [MT])—show the semantic equivalence of *q³tal* and *w³q³tal*; both are perfect forms. By implication, the overt coordinator in *w³q³tal* is nonobligatory.³⁰ Further, the context surrounding these *w³q³tal* forms is significant.

חטאנו והעוינו רשענו

We have sinned and purposely done wrong. We are wicked (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ; see also Dan. 9:15b).

27 E.g., König 1897, §§370g–h; Brockelmann 1956, §§133a–b; Müller 2013, 62–63.

28 See Cook 2012, 291.

29 See Haspelmath 2007, 8.

30 See Lambert 1893, 58. See also Bergsträsser 1929, §§9b–k, where he proposes deleting *w³*- in a number of poetic passages.

חטאנו העוינו ורשענו

We have sinned. We have purposely done wrong and are wicked (2 Chron. 6:37bβ).

אנכי הגדתי והושעתי והשמעתי ואין בכם זר ואתם עדי נאם יהוה ואני אל

“I told (it) and brought triumph; and I proclaimed (it), without a foreign (god) among you. You are my witnesses,” oracle of YHWH, “and I am God” (Isa. 43:12).

[אנכי הגדתי והושעתי והשמעתי ואין בכם זר ואתם] ע[די נאם יהוה ואני אל]

“[I told (it) and brought triumph]; I proclaimed (it), without [a foreign (god)] among [you]. Yo[u] are [my] wit[nesses],” oracle of YHWH, “and I am God”] (1QIsa^b 43:12).

Each time, *w^oq^otal* does not express a situation separate, discrete, or distinct from that of the previous clause. *W^oq^otal* and its antecedent are synonymous (see also §3 below). In other words, these examples of *w^oq^otal* appear in contexts where its asyndetic equivalent, *q^otal*, is possible or even likely. The overt, non-obligatory coordinator marks a special form of the perfect: the *coordinated perfect*.³¹

The nonobligatory nature of the coordinator raises a final issue: What role, if any, does *w^o* serve in the coordinated perfect? Steiner suggests an answer. In some cases, *w^o* “has no lexical meaning”; instead, “the meaning attributed to *-ו* really resides in the syntactic construction.”³² Stated more broadly, *w^o* lacks a semantic core that appears in all attestations. Its (translational) interpretation is derived from context. Functionally, however, it is a ubiquitous syntactic link that coordinates “two or more units of the same type.” For instance, it may signal that a set, sentence, or thought is not yet complete.³³ More importantly for the present purposes, it may signal the converse—“that [a] set is closed or complete.”³⁴

ויהי נח בן חמש מאות שנה ויולד נח את שם את חם ואת יפת

Noah was five hundred years old. Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 5:32).

והשבית את הכמרים אשר נתנו מלכי יהודה ויקטר בבמות בערי יהודה ומסבי ירושלם ואת המקטרים לבעל לשמש ולירח ולמזלות ולכל צבא השמים

He [Josiah] put an end to the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had put in place, resulting in rampant offerings at the shrines in the towns of Judah and the environs of Jerusalem—those making rampant offerings to Baal, the sun, as well as the moon and constellations; i.e., all the host of heaven (2 Kgs. 23:5).

The clausal coordinator follows suit (see Jer. 48:1a; see also Isa. 37:27a and, more distantly, Jer. 46:6), except that it co-occurs with, and marks, a clausal boundary, whatever the interclausal relationship may be.

2. THE PERFECT

The coordinated perfect, of course, is a species of the perfect. Cross-linguistically, the latter is grammatically subtle and functionally complex,³⁵ and Biblical Hebrew *q^otal* is no different. Fortunately, much of that detail need not be rehearsed here. For only three roles of the perfect are germane: semantic, pragmatic, and discourse.

31 See already Pietsch 2004–7, 172, with similar reasoning. Cf. Spieckermann (1982, 124–25, 126 n. 211), who introduces an unnecessary distinction between the coordinated perfect (as in 2 Sam. 23:20) and copulative perfect (as in 1 Sam. 17:38).

32 Steiner 2000, 265.

33 Mithun 1988, 345. For an application of this principle, see Miller 2003, 262–68.

34 Mithun 1988, 338. See also Miller 2007, 54.

35 Givón 2001, 293.

SEMANTICS

Semantically, *qatal* is not controversial. The form expresses the perfect. For Gesenius, it “represent[s] actions, events, or states, which, although completed in the past, nevertheless extend their influence into the present.”³⁶ For linguists,

perfects describe a past situation with current relevance at speech time, or a situation beginning in the past that continues into the present. . . . Perfects relate past situations to a reference point such as the current moment, in contrast to simple pasts or perfectives, whose goal is to locate a situation at some definite point in the past.³⁷

Some Hebrew grammarians adopt the latter definition, too.³⁸

Inasmuch as the perfect “is used for events . . . that occurred earlier but are relevant to the events located in the discourse ‘now,’”³⁹ the form usually expresses temporal anteriority. A clear example is the epistolary perfect.⁴⁰

ויבא הספר אל מלך ישראל לאמר ועתה כבוא הספר הזה אליך הנה שלחתי אליך את נעמן עבדי ואספתו מצרעתו

He [Naaman] brought the letter to the king of Israel. “Now, when this letter reaches you, I’ve herewith sent my servant Naaman to you, so you might cure him of his leprosy” (2 Kgs. 5:6).

ויאמר חורם מלך צר בכתב וישלח אל שלמה . . . ועתה שלחתי איש חכם יודע בינה לחורם אבי

Huram, king of Tyre, responded (lit., said) by letter and sent (it) to Solomon, “. . . Now, I’ve sent a skilled, knowledgeable man, my guild master Huram” (2 Chron. 2:10a, 12); see also

מהרו ועלו אל אבי ואמרתם אליו כה אמר בנך יוסף שמני אלהים לאדון לכל מצרים רדה אלי אל תעמד

Go quickly to my father and say to him, “Thus said your son Joseph, ‘God’s made me lord of all Egypt. Come to me. Don’t wait’” (Gen. 45:9).

But anteriority has wider application, too. “With respect to whatever reference point, the perfect codes an event that either occurred, or at the very least was initiated, prior to the temporal reference point.”⁴¹

ויטע יהוה אלהים גן בעדן מקדם וישם שם את האדם אשר יצר

YHWH God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and he placed there the man he had formed (Gen. 2:8).

ויאמר יהוה אמהה את האדם אשר בראתי מעל פני האדמה . . . כי נחמתי כי עשיתם

YHWH said, “I will wipe out the humans I’ve created from the earth’s surface . . . for I regret I’ve made them” (Gen. 6:7).

והשיבו אל לבם בארץ אשר נשבו שם ושבּו והתחננו אליך בארץ שביהם

and (when) they (re)consider (what they’ve done) in the land where they (will) have been captured, repent, and petition you in the land of their captors . . . (1 Kgs. 8:47a–bα; see also 2 Chron. 6:37a–bα).

The perfect expresses anteriority in the past, present, and future.

36 Gesenius 1910, §106g. See already Driver 1874, 9 = 1892, 13–14; Davidson 1894, §39b = 1901, §39b.

37 Schwenter 1994, 998, with earlier literature. Cf. Ritz 2012, 883.

38 E.g., Garr 1998, xliii; Joosten 2012, 194.

39 Bybee et al. 1994, 62. See also Li et al. 1982, 22.

40 Waltke and O’Connor 1990, §30.5.1d, with earlier literature. See also Kouwenberg 2010, 147, on Akkadian. Cf. Andrason 2012, 19, 35.

41 Givón 2001, 293.

Whereas most scholars prefer to view the perfect as retrospective,⁴² another perspective is also possible. Givón calls it “lingering.” “The ‘lingering’ aspect implies an action performed during whatever time-division the tense-marking indicates, but whose *consequences* are relevant to the *time-of-speech*, in other words, they linger.”⁴³ Schwenter would agree: “Perfects mark situations that still obtain in the ‘extended now.’”⁴⁴

גור אריה יהודה מטרף בני עליה כרע רבץ כאריה וכלביא מי יקימנו

Judah is a lion's cub. You have grown on prey, my son. He crouches (and) lies down like a lion; like a lion, who would provoke him? (Gen. 49:9).

ידע שור קנהו וחמור אבוס בעליו ישראל לא ידע עמי לא התבונן

An ox knows its owner; an ass, its master's crib. Israel does not know; my people are incompetent (Isa. 1:3).

נחלו פתאים אולת וערומים יכתרו דעת

The unsophisticated inherit folly, but the clever have crowns of knowledge (Prov. 14:18).

Whether based on experience, inference, or common knowledge, the situation expressed by the perfect may persist.⁴⁵

PRAGMATICS

More than a generation ago, McCawley made a case for an unrecognized, subjective use of the perfect to “report hot news.”⁴⁶ By definition,⁴⁷ it expresses information that the speaker/author believes to be new to the addressee/audience. In fact, its information is unexpected; since the addressee/audience is unprepared to learn of the event or situation, there may even be an element of surprise (mirativity).⁴⁸ Further, its contents are believed to be immediately relevant as well as significant to the situation at hand. McCawley gives an iconic example: *Kennedy has been assassinated*.

The hot-news perfect appears in Biblical Hebrew (see Gen. 45:9, above).⁴⁹ It may be consistent with McCawley's prototype.

ויבאו שני האנשים בני בליעל וישבו נגדו ויעדהו אנשי הבליעל את נבות נגד העם לאמר ברוך נבות אלהים ומלך ויצאהו מחוץ לעיר ויסקלהו באבנים וימת

The two scoundrels came and sat opposite him [Naboth]. The scoundrels testified against him, Naboth, right before the people, “Naboth has ‘blessed’ God and king.” They took him outside the town, stoned him, and he died (1 Kgs. 21:13).

צאו מבבל ברחו מכשדים בקול רנה הגידו השמיעו זאת הוציאוה עד קצה הארץ אמרו גאל יהוה עבדו יעקב Leave Babylon. Flee the Chaldeans. With a shout declare (and) announce this. Bring it out to the ends of the earth. Say, “YHWH's redeemed his servant Jacob” (Isa. 48:20).

ארור האיש אשר בשר את אבי לאמר ילד לך בן זכר שמח שמחהו

Cursed be the man who brought my father the news, “A son's been born to you, a male” (and) made him very happy (Jer. 20:15).⁵⁰

42 Comrie 1976, 64.

43 Givón 1982, 137 (emphasis original). See also Gesenius 1910, §106k.

44 Schwenter 1994, 1003.

45 Comrie 1976, 60. Cf. Webster 2014.

46 McCawley 1971, 104. For its traits, see *ibid.*, 109.

47 For the best discussion of the hot-news perfect, see Schwenter 1994.

48 Anderson 1982, 233.

49 See, explicitly, Andersen 2000, 43. See also Kouwenberg 2010, 141, 142.

50 In a similar context, וקרא may have mirative force in 1QIsa^a 9:5b. Cf., however, 4QIsa^c and MT.

It may accommodate excited utterances of different kinds.⁵¹

ויאמרו בני ישראל אל משה לאמר הן גוענו אבדנו כלנו אבדנו

The Israelites said to Moses, “Fact is, we’re dead. We’re done for; we’re all done for” (Num. 17:27; see also Isa. 6:5; Jer. 4:13; Ezek. 37:11; Ps. 31:23; Lam. 3:54).

ותתפלל חנה ותאמר עלץ לבי ביהוה רמה קרני ביהוה רחב פי על אויבי כי שמחתי בישועתך

Hannah prayed, “My heart exults in YHWH; my strength soars through YHWH. My mouth extends over my enemies, for I am happy in your deliverance” (1 Sam. 2:1); see also

ותצחק שרה בקרבה לאמר אחרי בלתי היתה לי עדנה ואדני זקן

Sarah laughed inside, “After I’ve dried out, I find pleasure? My husband’s old, too” (Gen. 18:12; see also 21:7).

Or, the perfect may describe God’s theophany.⁵²

המו גוים מטו ממלכות נתן בקולו תמוג ארץ

Nations are a-tumult; kingdoms teeter. He transformed with his voice; the earth melts (Ps. 46:7).

כי בנה יהוה ציון נראה בכבודו

For YHWH has built Zion; he has appeared in his glory (Ps. 102:17).

האירו ברקיו תבל ראתה ותחל הארץ: הרים כדונג נמסו מלפני יהוה מלפני אדון כל הארץ: הגידו השמים צדקו וראו כל העמים כבודו

His lightning bolts light up the world; the earth, witnessing, convulses. Mountains melt like wax in face of YHWH, in face of the Lord of the entire earth. The sky declares his righteousness, and all peoples see his glory (Ps. 97:4–6); see also

מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל גּוֹיִם אֱלֹהִים יָשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא קִדְשׁוֹ

God’s king over the nations; God’s seated on his holy throne (Ps. 47:9).

In Biblical Hebrew, then, the hot-news perfect has the same pragmatic character as its correlates in other languages.

DISCOURSE

The perfect also has an important discourse feature: nonsequentiality. Givón traces this feature to “the function of the anterior, observing that it marks out-of-sequence clauses in the narrative, specifically those which ‘look-back’ and relate events that occurred earlier than the preceding clause in the narrative.”⁵³ Bybee et al. combine it with another perfect trait. “The anterior is used for events that are out-of-sequence, that is, events that occurred earlier but are *relevant* to the events located in the discourse ‘now.’”⁵⁴ The perfect, then, has—or can have—a nonsequential function.

The perfect in Biblical Hebrew performs the same function. In its nonsequential capacity, though, the verb is generally associated with a particular syntactic structure: verb postponement in a coordinated clause.⁵⁵ But that condition is both unnecessary and overly restrictive. An asyndetic, clause-initial perfect can have a nonsequential function.⁵⁶

51 Joosten 2012, 206; in conjunction with Driver 1892, 24–25. For the present-tense translation of these “expressive” perfect forms, see Schwenter 1994, 1020–21.

52 Rogland 2003, 31.

53 Givón 1982, 121 (emphasis deleted). See also Givón 2001, 295–96.

54 Bybee et al. 1994, 62 (emphasis added).

55 E.g., Jenni 1981, §6.3.1.6.

56 E.g., Isaksson 2015, 261. See also Michel 1960, 99.

Among its nonsequential functions, such a perfect may be (roughly) contemporary with its antecedent. For example, it may be identical or synonymous with its antecedent.

ביום השני הקריב נתנאל בן צוער נשיא ישישכר: הקרב את קרבנו . . .

On the second day, Nethanel ben Zuar, chief of Issachar, presented an offering. He presented his offering . . . (Num. 7:18–19).

וילכו שלשת בני ישי הגדלים הלכו אחרי שאול למלחמה

Jesse's three oldest sons went; they followed Saul to war (1 Sam. 17:13a).

ויעלו את הארון ואת אהל מועד ואת כל כלי הקדש אשר באהל העלו אתם הכהנים הלויים

They brought up the ark, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels in the tent. The Levitical priests brought them up (2 Chron. 5:5).

ויהושע זקן בא בימים ויאמר יהוה אליו אתה זקנתה באת בימים והארץ נשארה הרבה מאד לרשתה

Joshua was old (and) advanced in years. YHWH said to him, "You've gotten old (and) advanced in years, yet there remains very much of the land to possess" (Josh. 13:1; see also Gen. 24:1; Josh. 23:1; 1 Sam. 17:12; 1 Kgs. 1:1).

אלכה לי אל הגדלים ואדברה אותם כי המה ידעו דרך יהוה משפט אלהיהם אך המה יחדו שברו על נתקו מוסרות

"I should go to the wealthy and speak to them. They know the way of YHWH, the protocol of their God." Only they too (lit., together [with the poor]) have broken (their) yoke (and) snapped (their) bonds (Jer. 5:5).

ותרא כי נוחלה אבדה תקותה ותקח אחד מגריה כפיר שמתהו

She [the lion] saw that she waited (and) lost her hope; she took another (lit., one) of her cubs (and) made him a young lion (Ezek. 19:5).

The perfect may be coreferential with another verb.

העמיקו שחתו כימי הגבעה יזכור עונם יפקוד חטאותם

They [Israel] have been deeply corrupt, as in the time of Gibeah. He [YHWH] will remember their wrong; he will take care of their sins (Hos. 9:9).

וישכם אברהם בבקר ויקח לחם וחמת מים ויתן אל הגר שם על שכמה ואת הילד וישלחה

Early in the morning, Abraham took bread and a container of water, gave (them) to Hagar (and) put (them) over her shoulder, together with the child. Then he sent her off (Gen. 21:14a).

ויצאו בני בנימן לקראת העם הנתקו מן העיר ויחלו להכות מהעם חללים כפעם בפעם במסלות אשר אחת עלה בית אל ואחת גבעתה בשדה כשלשים איש בישראל

The Benjaminites went out to meet the troops; they were drawn away from the town. As before, they began to strike some of the troops dead on the roads—one of which goes to Bethel and the other to Gibeah—in the open, (killing) around thirty Israelite men (Judg. 20:31a).

ויעלו חמשת האנשים ההלכים לרגל את הארץ באו שמה לקחו את הפסל ואת האפוד ואת התרפים ואת המסכה

The five men who had gone to survey the land went up: They entered (and) took the idol, ephod, teraphim, and molten image (Judg. 18:17a).

In this latter case, the asyndetic perfect may specify the activity unnamed in the antecedent (Hos. 9:9; see also Exod. 7:14);⁵⁷ may explain the manner by which its antecedent is accomplished (Gen. 21:14a);⁵⁸ may

57 Müller 2013, 71. See, congruently, Isaksson 2015, 250–51 (on Gen. 18:11). Cf. Joüon 1923, §177g.

58 Michel 1960, 95. See also Gibson 1994, §58b.

represent an activity or situation from a different perspective or with a different voice (Judg. 20:31); or may be associated with a verb of motion that both introduces and is part and parcel of its main event (Judg. 18:17a).⁵⁹ Further, the asyndetic perfect may follow a pattern set by its parent category of zero coordination; it may signal collateral situations that, while not coreferential, are roughly contemporary and constitute details of a broader conceptual unit.

ותשלם כל המלאכה אשר עשה המלך שלמה בית יהוה ויבא שלמה את קדשי דוד אביו את הכסף ואת הזהב ואת הכלים נתן באצרות בית יהוה

All the work that King Solomon did on the house of YHWH was finished. Solomon brought the sacred items of David his father—the silver, gold, and vessels—(and) placed (them) in the treasury of the house of YHWH (1 Kgs. 7:51).

וזה הדבר אשר הרים יד במלך שלמה בנה את המלוא סגר את פרץ עיר דוד אביו

This is the account why he [Jeroboam] raised (his) hand against the king: Solomon built the Millo (and) fixed the breach of the city of David his father (1 Kgs. 11:27).

וידעו הגוים אשר ישארו סביבותיכם כי אני יהוה בניתי הנהרסות נטעתי הנשמה אני יהוה דברתי ועשיתי

The nations left around you will know that I, YHWH, have rebuilt the ruins (and) replanted the desolate (land). I, YHWH, have spoken and will act (Ezek. 36:36).

In this instance, the asyndetic perfect is the closing detail within a single, overarching verbal notion.

The nonsequential perfect can also present summary information.⁶⁰ It may introduce a sweeping retrospective comment.

קצף יהוה על אבותיכם קצף

YHWH was awfully furious with your ancestors (Zech. 1:2).

It may begin a heading of sorts.

היתה עלי יד יהוה ויוצאני ברוח יהוה ויניחני בתוך הבקעה

YHWH's hand came upon me. By YHWH's spirit, he took me out and placed me in the valley (Ezek. 37:1a).

ראיתי הלילה והנה איש רכב על סוס אדם והוא עמד בין ההדסים אשר במצלה ואחריו סוסים אדמים שרקים ולבנים

I had a vision in the night. There was a man riding on a bay horse. He was standing among the myrtles in the deep. Behind him were bay, sorrel, and white horses (Zech. 1:8); see also

יהוה מלך תגל הארץ ישמחו איים רבים

YHWH is king. The earth should rejoice, and the many islands be happy (Ps. 97:1; see also 93:1; 99:1).

It may also mark a closing summary.

בעת ההיא אביא אתכם ובעת קבצי אתכם כי אתן אתכם לשם ולתהלה בכל עמי הארץ בשובי את שבותיכם לעיניכם אמר יהוה

At that time, I will bring you (home); at that time, I will gather you up. For I will give you fame and acclaim among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your eyes. YHWH's spoken (Zeph. 3:20; see also Isa. 22:14; Amos 1:5, 8, etc.); see also

59 Brockelmann 1956, §133a. Cf. Rendsburg 1999, 10–11.

60 E.g., Schwenter 1994, 1004.

וילכדה מקצה שלש שנים בשנת שש לחזקיה היא שנת תשע להושע מלך ישראל **נלכדה** שמרון
 They [Shalmaneser and his army] captured it at the end of three years, in the sixth year of
 Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel. Samaria was captured (2 Kgs.
 18:10), and differently

ובני ישראל אכלו את המן ארבעים שנה עד באם אל ארץ נושבת את המן **אכלו** עד באם אל קצה ארץ
 כנען
 The Israelites ate manna for forty years until they came to a habitable land. They ate manna
 until they came to the border of the land of Canaan (Exod. 16:35).

This use of the perfect, though, is uncommon.

Joosten identifies a final use of the perfect—to express an authorial aside, comment, or evaluation.⁶¹ A rare example involves authorial omniscience.

ויאמר לו גם אני נביא כמוד ומלאך דבר אלי בדבר יהוה לאמר השבהו אתך אל ביתך ויאכל לחם וישת מים
כחש לו
 He [the Bethel prophet] said to him [the man of God], “I too am a prophet like you; an angel
 spoke to me with YHWH’s word, ‘Bring him [the man of God] back with you to your house.
 Let him eat bread and drink water.’” He lied to him (1 Kgs. 13:18).

More often, the comment expresses an embedded editorial insert (see Zeph. 3:20) or a theological interpretation.

אין שלום **אמר** אלהי לרשעים
 “There is no peace,” said my God, “for the wicked” (Isa. 57:21).

לכן שמעו דבר יהוה כל יהודה הישבים בארץ מצרים הנני נשבעתי בשמי הגדול **אמר** יהוה אם יהיה עוד
 שמי נקרא בפי כל איש יהודה אמר חי אדני יהוה בכל ארץ מצרים
 “So, all Judeans living in the land of Egypt, hear YHWH’s word. ‘I hereby swear by my great
 name,’ YHWH said. ‘My name shall no longer be invoked by any Judean saying, “As my Lord
 YHWH lives,” in all the land of Egypt’” (Jer. 44:26).

אהבתי אתכם **אמר** יהוה ואמרתם במה אהבתנו הלוא אח עשו ליעקב נאם יהוה ואהב את יעקב
 “I have loved you,” YHWH said. But you say, “How have you loved us?” “Esau is Jacob’s brother,
 no?” oracle of YHWH, “Yet I’ve loved Jacob” (Mal. 1:2).

וגם אל שפטיהם לא שמעו כי זנו אחרי אלהים אחרים וישתחוו להם **סרו** מהר מן הדרך אשר הלכו אבותם
 לשמע מצות יהוה לא עשו כן
 Further, they [the Israelites] did not listen to their leaders; they whored after other gods and
 bowed down to them. They quickly deviated from the way their ancestors went, who had
 obeyed (lit., by obeying) YHWH’s commandments. They didn’t behave correctly (Judg. 2:17).

הוא העביר את בניו באש בגי בן הנם ועונן ונחש וכשף ועשה אוב וידעוני **הרבה לעשות** הרע בעיני יהוה
 להכעיסו
 He [Manasseh] committed his children to fire in the Valley of Ben-hinnom, practiced sooth-
 saying, divination, and sorcery, and worked with ghosts and spirits. He did much that was
 wrong to YHWH to get him angry (2 Chron. 33:6; see also 2 Kgs. 21:6).

ואת כל ערי המלכים האלה ואת כל מלכיהם **לכד** יהושע ויכם לפי חרב החרים אותם כאשר צוה משה עבד
 יהוה
 Joshua captured all these royal cities and all their kings. He struck them by the sword; he ex-
 terminated them just as YHWH’s servant Moses had ordered (Josh. 11:12).

61 Joosten 2012, 221–23.

The asyndetic, nonsequential perfect allows a writer to insert material, subjectively, believed relevant to the immediate context but which stands outside the narrative or continued discourse flow.⁶²

3. THE COORDINATED PERFECT IN SERIAL CONSTRUCTIONS

With characteristic brilliance, Driver formulated today's basic understanding of the coordinated perfect.

We find it used . . . upon occasions when a writer wishes to place two facts in *co-ordination* with one another, to exhibit the second as simultaneous with the first rather than as succeeding it; for instance, in the conjunction of two synonymous or similar ideas.⁶³

To elaborate, (1) the most recognizable cases of the coordinated perfect involve a serial construction in which the second, coordinated verb is either synonymous with or semantically similar to its antecedent;⁶⁴ according to Davidson, the coordinated perfect “merely repeats the idea of the first, being synonymous, or in some way parallel with it.”⁶⁵ (2) The coordinated perfect marks its clause as nonsequential.⁶⁶ (3) A serial construction that includes a coordinated perfect “act[s] as a semantic unit, that is, representing different aspects of the same event.”⁶⁷ Its parts are coreferential. *En ensemble*, then, this serial construction “differs little from the asyndetous construction” described in §2.⁶⁸

The evidence confirms Driver's analysis. One text, for example, coordinates two forms of the same verb.

שפך חמתך על הגוים אשר לא ידעוך ועל משפחות אשר בשמך לא קראו כי אכלו את יעקב ואכלהו ויכלהו
ואת נוהו השמו

Pour your anger on the nations that haven't experienced you, upon the clans that haven't invoked your name. For they've consumed Jacob; they've consumed him completely and have made his habitat desolate (Jer. 10:25).

Here, the second conjunct is specified by a verb expressing the extent of the host activity (see also Exod. 36:7 [SP]). Many other cases, however, consist of synonymous—or nearly synonymous—conjuncts.⁶⁹

ולא אבה סיחון מלך חשבון העברנו בו כי הקשה יהוה אלהיך את רוחו ואמץ את לבבו למען תתו בידך כיום
הזה

But King Sihon of Heshbon was unwilling to let us pass through, for YHWH your God had hardened him (lit., his spirit) and emboldened him (lit., his mind)—in order to place him in your hand, as things are now (Deut. 2:30).

ועתה הנה המלך מתהלך לפניכם ואני זקנתי ושבתי ובני הנם אתכם ואני התהלכתי לפניכם מנערי עד היום
הזה

Now, the king is to lead you. For my part, I've gotten old and grey, yet my sons are with you at your service; for my part, I've led you from my youth up to this day (1 Sam. 12:2).

62 See also Kouwenberg 2010, 141, 142, on Akkadian.

63 Driver 1874, 171 = 1892, 159 (emphasis original).

64 E.g., König 1897, §§370i–k. Although the verbal components in this construction are usually inflected alike, (the predicate of) the head clause can vary (see Bombeck 2001, 26–29).

65 Davidson 1894, §58a = 1901, §58a.

66 See Waltke and O'Connor 1990, §32.3e; Bombeck 2001, 33; Pietsch 2004–7, 162, 170. In the same vein, scholars occasionally note that the coordinated perfect marks discourse discontinuity (e.g., König 1897, §370n; and, in part, Niccacci 1990, 185).

67 Revell 1985, 279 with n. 7; followed by Waltke and O'Connor 1990, §32.3b. See also Rundgren 1959, 111, 112 (on 1 Sam. 17:38 and Judg. 3:23, respectively); and, on ויהי, Ogden 1971, 454.

68 Davidson 1894, §58a = 1901, §58a. See also Revell 1985, 280.

69 For a possible rhetorical interpretation of this construction, see König 1897, §370f; and, on 2 Kgs. 21:6 (= 2 Chron. 33:6), Rubinstein 1963, 67 n. 2 (one option).

מי **פעל ועשה** קרא הדרות מראש אני יהוה ראשון ואת אחרנים אני הוא

Who's done (this) and made it happen? The one who summoned the generations from the start.
I, YHWH, am first and I'm the one with the last (Isa. 41:4).

ענה דודי ואמר לי קומי לך רעיתי יפתי ולכי לך

My beloved spoke to me, "Get up, my dear, my pretty. Come away" (Song 2:10).

This latter category illustrates the best-known and most widespread use of the coordinated perfect. For Driver, these "are the only instances which seem capable of being reduced to a definite rule."⁷⁰

But just as the coordinated perfect in serial constructions expresses (near) synonymy with its antecedent, it also expresses a more general coreferentiality. The serial construction may portray different aspects of a single event or situation.⁷¹

ידה ליתד תשלחנה וימינה להלמות עמלים והלמה סיסרא **מחקה ראשו ומחצה וחלפה** רקתו

She [Jael] extended her hand for the tent peg, her right hand for the workers' hammer. She hammered Sisera, whacked his head, and smashed and pierced his temple (Judg. 5:26).⁷²

וילך דוד ואנשיו בדרך ושמעי הלך בצלע ההר לעמתו הלוך ויקלל **ויסקל באבנים לעמתו ועפר בעפר**

David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went close by on the hill slope. As he went, he cursed, threw stones right at him, and soiled him with dirt (2 Sam. 16:13).

כפירים רשו ורעבו ודרשי יהוה לא יחסרו כל טוב

Lions became needy and starved, but those who seek YHWH will not lack any good (Ps. 34:11).

Here, each conjunct represents a coequal component of the whole. In other contexts, the coordinated perfect is introduced by a verb of motion that overlaps with the main verb and therefore does not constitute a separate, discrete event.

ובניהו בן יהוידע בן איש חי (ק' חיל) רב פעלים מקבצאל הוא הכה את שני אראל מואב והוא **ירד והכה** את האריה (ק' הארי) בתוך הבאר ביום השלג

Benaiah ben Jehoiada, from Kabzeel, was a mighty warrior of great deeds. He struck down both sons of Ariel of Moab. That same (man) went down and struck down a lion in a pit on a snowy day (2 Sam. 23:20; see also 1 Chron. 11:22).⁷³

ואת המזבחות אשר על הגג עלית אחז אשר עשו מלכי יהודה ואת המזבחות אשר עשה מנשה בשתי חצרות בית יהוה נתן המלך **וירץ משם והשליך** את עפרם אל נחל קדרון

The altars on the roof by Ahaz's second story that the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of YHWH, the king tore down. He rushed (them) out of there and threw their debris into the Wadi Kidron (2 Kgs. 23:12);⁷⁴ see also

ויאמר יהוה מסיני **בא וזרח** משעיר למו **הופיע** מהר פארן ואתה מרבבת קדש מימינו אשדת (ק' אש דת) למו

He [Moses] said, "YHWH came from Sinai and shone upon them from Seir; he appeared from Mount Paran and arrived from Ribebboth-Kodesh. From his right hand fire flew at them" (Deut. 33:2), and perhaps

70 Driver 1874, 172 = 1892, 160.

71 See 2 Kgs. 19:17–18.

72 See Spieckermann 1982, 124 n. 204.

73 Cf. Huesman 1956, 426.

74 Cf. Pietsch 2004–7, 174.

ויבקש דוד את האלהים בעד הנער ויצם דוד צום ובא ולן ושכב ארצה

David inquired of God for the boy. David did a fast, entered, and spent the night lying on the ground (2 Sam. 12:16; cf. 4QSam^a).⁷⁵

Occasionally, the clause headed by a coordinated perfect may express elaborative information specifying the manner by which the antecedent was achieved or expressed.⁷⁶

ואביכם התל בי והחלף את משכרתי עשרת מנים ולא נתנו יהוה להרע עמדי

But your father cheated me and changed my pay many times. Still, YHWH didn't let him harm me (Gen. 31:7).

ויעשו חג מצות שבעת ימים בשמחה כי שמחם יהוה והסב לב מלך אשור עליהם לחזק ידיהם במלאכת בית האלהים אלהי ישראל

They happily performed the feast of unleavened bread for seven days, for YHWH delighted them and turned the Assyrian king (lit., mind of the Assyrian king) to them—to support them in the work on the house of God, Israel's God (Ezra 6:22); see also

וישראל אהב את יוסף מכל בניו כי בן זקנים הוא לו ועשה לו כתנת פסים

Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the child of his old age; he made an ornamented tunic for him (Gen. 37:3; cf. SP).⁷⁷

The coordinated perfect, then, is a nondiscrete part of a single verbal notion or situation.⁷⁸

As some texts already suggest, part of the serial construction may convey subjective information. For instance, the coordinated perfect may contribute a different, antithetical, or alternative perspective to an anteceding clause.⁷⁹

לא עזבתם את אחיכם זה ימים רבים עד היום הזה ושמרתם את משמרת מצות יהוה אלהיכם

You haven't abandoned your kinsmen this long time down to this day; you've dutifully kept the commandment of YHWH your God (Josh. 22:3).

וידעו כל עצי השדה כי אני יהוה השפילתי עץ גבה הגבהתי עץ שפל הובשתי עץ לח והפרחתי עץ יבש

All the trees of the field will know that I, YHWH, have brought down the high tree (and) elevated the low tree; I've dried up the sappy tree and made the dry tree bud (Ezek. 17:24a); see also

ויאמר אלהים אליו יען אשר שאלת את הדבר הזה ולא שאלת לך ימים רבים ולא שאלת לך עשר ולא שאלת נפש איביך ושאלת לך הבין לשמע משפט: הנה עשיתי כדברך

God said to him [Solomon], "Since you've asked this—you didn't ask for a long life, you didn't ask for riches, you didn't ask for the throat of your enemies, but you asked for an understanding to dispense justice—I hereby make it happen as you've spoken (1 Kgs. 3:11–12a; cf. 2 Chron. 1:11).⁸⁰

The coordinated perfect also appears when an evaluative clause is associated with a specifying event or situation.⁸¹ In this latter case, the coordinated perfect may express an opinion, either preceding or following the principal discourse situation.

⁷⁵ Joshua 6:8, 13[?] (uncertain) may also be included in this category. For the latter passage, compare the MT and Samaritan versions of Genesis 8:3, 5, 7, and perhaps 26:13.

⁷⁶ See König 1897, §370l, despite his examples.

⁷⁷ For the illustrative nature of verse 3b, see, among others, Dillmann 1897, 334; Seebass 2000, 20; and, from a different perspective, Longacre 1994, 83–84.

⁷⁸ See also Lam. 2:9.

⁷⁹ E.g., Davidson 1894, §58b = 1901, §58b; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, §32.3c.

⁸⁰ In this context, see Traugott 1999, 178–79, on counter-expectation; or, in the same vein, Haspelmath 2007, 28.

⁸¹ See Isaksson 1998, 16.

והמה מרו ועצבו את רוח קדשו ויהפך להם לאויב הוא נלחם במ

But they [Israel] revolted and grieved his holy spirit. So he turned into their enemy; he personally fought against them (Isa. 63:10); see also

כה אמר יהוה על שלשה פשעי אדום ועל ארבעה לא אשיבנו על רדפו בחרב אחיו ושחת רחמיו ויטרף לעד אפו ועברתו שמרה נצח

Thus said YHWH, “For Edom’s three—no, four—transgressions, I will not turn it back. Because he chased his brother with a sword and destroyed the compassion he (once) had. His anger ripped on and on; his fury kept on forever” (Amos 1:11).

Alternatively, the coordinated perfect heads or expresses the nonevaluative conjunct.

ואת הבמות אשר על פני ירושלם אשר מימין להר המשחית אשר בנה שלמה מלך ישראל לעשתרת שקץ צידנים ולכמוש שקץ מואב ולמלכם תועבת בני עמון טמא המלך: ושבר את המצבות ויכרת את האשרים וימלא את מקומם עצמות אדם

The king defiled the shrines facing Jerusalem, to the south of the Mount of the Destroyer, that King Solomon of Israel had built for Ashtoreth, disgust of the Sidonians, for Chemosh, disgust of Moab, and for Milcom, revulsion of the Ammonites: He smashed their pillars, cut down their asherim, and filled their sites with human bones (2 Kgs. 23:13–14).

ובצלעי שמחו ונאספו נאספו עלי נכים ולא ידעתי קרעו ולא דמו

When I stumble, they happily gather. Wretches gather against me for no reason (lit., I do not know); they tear (at me) without end (lit., they are not quiet) (Ps. 35:15; see also Ezra 6:22, above); see also

ויקצפו השרים על ירמיהו והכו אותו ונתנו אותו בית האסיר בית יהונתן הספר כי אתו עשו לבית הכלא

The officers were furious with Jeremiah. They beat him and put him in prison, in the house of Jonathan the scribe, for they made it into a jail (Jer. 37:15; see also 1QIsa^a 47:6).

Stated differently, in these constructions one of the conjuncts specifies and concretizes the content of the coreferential other.

In a similar vein, a serial construction containing the coordinated perfect may express collateral activities (subevents) that are subsumed under a higher rubric. The eventive rubric may be explicit (see 2 Kgs. 23:13–14), and the constituent subevents introduced with either a zero or overt coordinator.⁸²

ויעשו אנשי עירו הזקנים והחרים אשר הישבים בעירו כאשר שלחה אליהם איזבל כתוב בספרים אשר שלחה אליהם: קראו צום והשיבו את נבות בראש העם

The men of his town—elders and nobles living in his town—did as Jezebel had communicated to them, as was written in the letters she sent to them: They announced a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the group (1 Kgs. 21:11–12).

כי עשו בני יהודה הרע בעיני נאום יהוה שמו שקוציהם בבית אשר נקרא שמי עליו לטמאו: ובנו במות התפת אשר בגיא בן הנם לשרף את בניהם ואת בנותיהם באש אשר לא צויתי ולא עלתה על לבי

“For the people of Judah have done something heinous to me,” oracle of YHWH. “They’ve put their disgusting things in the house where my name is invoked, to defile it. They’ve built the shrines of Topheth, in the Valley of Ben-hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters in fire—something I didn’t command and never came to my mind (Jer. 7:30–31); see also

ויעש הישר בעיני יהוה ככל אשר עשה דוד אביו: הוא הסיר את הבמות ושבר את המצבת וכתת את האשרה וכתת נחש הנחשת אשר עשה משה כי עד הימים ההמה היו בני ישראל מקטרים לו ויקרא לו נחשתן

He [Hezekiah] did what YHWH considers right, just as his father David had done: He removed the shrines, smashed the pillars, cut down the asherah, crushed up the bronze serpent that

⁸² See Cook 2012, 281–82 (on 2 Kgs. 18:3–4).

Moses had made (for until then the Israelites habitually made offerings to it; it was called Nehushtan) (2 Kgs. 18:3–4).

וילבש שאול את דוד מדיו ונתן קובע נחשת על ראשו וילבש אתו שריון

Saul helped David put on his gear: He put a bronze helmet on his head and put a breastplate on him (1 Sam. 17:38).

ואת פתח הדביר עשה דלתות עצי שמן האיל מזוזות חמשית: ושתי דלתות עצי שמן וקלע עליהם מקלעות כרובים ותמרות ופטורי צצים וצפה זהב וירד על כרובים ועל התמרות את הזהב

For the entrance to the sanctum he [Solomon] made pine doors, the colonnade, (and) five-sided doorposts: On both pine doors he made carvings of cherubim, palmettes, and calyxes; he coated (them) with gold and hammered the gold over the cherubim and palmettes (1 Kgs. 6:31–32).

When, however, a generic, superordinate verb is missing, the relationship between parts of the serial construction must be inferred. In this case, the coordinated perfect denotes a co-event collateral with its antecedent.

ועליה כתנת פסים כי כן תלבשן בנות המלך הבתולות מעילים ויצא אותה משרתו החוץ ונעל הדלת אחריה

She [Tamar] had on an ornamented tunic, for young princesses used to dress that way (in robes). His attendant brought her outside and locked the door behind her (2 Sam. 13:18; see also Judg. 3:23).

ויקרא על המזבח בדבר יהוה ויאמר מזבח מבזח כה אמר יהוה הנה בן נולד לבית דוד יאשיהו שמו זובח עליך את כהני הבמות המקטרים עליך ועצמות אדם ישרפו עליך: ונתן ביום ההוא מופת לאמר זה המופת אשר דבר יהוה הנה המזבח נקרע ונשפך הדשן אשר עליו

He [the man of God] proclaimed against the altar with the word of YHWH, “Altar, altar. Thus said YHWH, ‘A son is to be born to the house of David; his name will be Josiah. He’ll slaughter on you the priests of the shrines who make offerings on you; human bones will be burned on you.’” He gave an omen on that day, “This is the omen that YHWH’s spoken: ‘This altar is right about to split, and the ashes on it will pour out’” (1 Kgs. 13:2–3).

כה הראני אדני יהוה והנה קרא לרב באש אדני יהוה ותאכל את תהום רבה ואכלה את החלק

My Lord YHWH showed me the following: My Lord YHWH was issuing a call to adjudicate by fire. It consumed the great deep and consumed the fields (Amos 7:4).⁸³

The collateral events are quasi-discrete at best (see also Gen. 41:43 [SP]).

Some scholars, however, adduce several texts showing the coordinated perfect “is also used for consecutive situations.”⁸⁴

וירא עשו כי ברך יצחק את יעקב ושלח אתו פדנה ארם לקחת לו משם אשה בברכו אתו ויצו עליו לאמר לא תקח אשה מבנות כנען

Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him off to Paddan-Aram, to get himself a wife from there; blessing him, he placed a demand on him, “You mustn’t take a wife from Canaanite women” (Gen. 28:6).

ויצא אהוד המסדרונה ויסגר דלדו העליה בעדו ונעל

Ehud went out to the portico, closed the doors of the second story on him, and locked (them) (Judg. 3:23; see also 2 Sam. 13:18, above).

אליך זעקו ונמלטו בד בטחו ולא בושו

To you they [Israel’s ancestors] cried and escaped; in you they trusted and were not humiliated (Ps. 22:6).

⁸³ With, e.g., Gibson 1994, §84a. Cf. Driver 1892, 144–45 n. 1.

⁸⁴ van Peursen 2004, 160. For more recent advocates, see also Rogland 2008, 240; Cohen 2013, 84–85; Notarius 2013, 134, 192–93.

The evidence, though, is hardly compelling. Genesis 28:6 is perhaps the weakest example. Its serial construction appears in a complement clause; the governing matrix verb of observation strongly implies that Esau processed the two events together.⁸⁵ Psalm 22:6 is different. Its serial construction does not express discrete events; since the cry provokes a divine response (v. 5), the two events are causally related (see also, e.g., Gen. 34:5; Jer. 50:43; Job 29:8).⁸⁶ Finally, Judges 3:23 is at best ambiguous. True, its first and second events are different, but the first is a necessary prelude to the second; this interrelationship suggests a synoptic package.⁸⁷ Rather than suggesting an alternative interpretation, then, these texts confirm the (roughly) nonsequential and/or nondiscrete nature of the coordinated perfect in serial constructions.

Two items remain to be mentioned: the occasional discourse function and occasional summarizing role of the coordinated perfect. The two are obviously related. The first capitalizes on its overt coordinator to “specify that [a] set is closed or complete” (see §1).⁸⁸

ויבא גדעון והנה איש מספר לרעהו חלום ויאמר הנה חלום חלמתי והנה צלול (ק' צליל) לחם שערים
מתהפך במחנה מדין ויבא עד האהל ויכהו ויפל ויהפכו למעלה ונפל האהל

Gideon arrived; and there, a man was telling a dream to his friend. He said, “Here’s a dream I had. A loaf of barley bread was turning round and round through the Midianite camp. It came to a tent and struck it. It fell; it turned it upside down. The tent fell” (Judg. 7:13).

ואף כי תשלחנה לאנשים באים ממרחק אשר מלאך שלוח אליהם והנה באו לאשר רחצת כחלת עיניך
ועדיית עדי

Further, they [Oholah and Oholibah] sent for men coming from afar, to whom a messenger was sent. And come they did. For those (men) you bathed, made up your eyes, and put on jewelry (Ezek. 23:40).

The other capitalizes on semantic and discourse features of the perfect, too. In this capacity, the coordinated perfect may provide summary information. Although it is unusual to find such a structure in serial constructions, Hurowitz has argued for one in 1 Kgs. 9:25.

והעלה שלמה שלש פעמים בשנה עלות ושלמים עליהמזבח אשר בנה ליהוה והקטיר אתו אשר לפני יהוה
ושלם את הבית

Solomon would offer burnt and well-being offerings three times a year on the altar that he had built for YHWH, making offerings on it facing Yhwh. He completed the house (1 Kgs. 9:25).⁸⁹

The coordinated perfect, then, can provide summary information and, more often, closure.

4. THE COORDINATED PERFECT OF “BE”

The coordinated perfect of “be” deserves special treatment. Only rarely does it seem to conform to Driver’s description (§3). Further, because its temporal sphere includes the past, scholars often emend it to the corresponding *wayyiqtol* form.⁹⁰ It is a strategy that may have historical precedent, too.

והיה ארון יהוה בא עיר דוד ומיכל בת שאול נשקפה בעד החלון ותרא את המלך דוד מפזז ומכרכר לפני
יהוה ותבז לו בלבה

(As) the ark of YHWH entered the City of David, Saul’s daughter Michal looked through the window and saw King David . . . (2 Sam. 6:16).

85 Cf. Spieckermann 1982, 124 n. 203.

86 So Delitzsch 1887, 383.

87 See Johnson 1979, 44; and, compatibly, Isaksson 2015, 239 with n. 125.

88 See Zevit 1998, 60–61.

89 Hurowitz 1992, 238.

90 E.g. Gesenius 1910, §112uu. See also Joüon 1923, §119z. Cf. Gibson 1994, §84d.

וַיְהִי אֲרוֹן בְּרִית יְהוָה בָּא עַד עִיר דָּוִד וּמִיכָל בַּת שָׁאוּל נִשְׁקָפָה בְּעַד הַחֲלוֹן וַתֵּרָא אֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד מֵרֶקֶד
וּמִשְׁחָק וַתְּבֹז לוֹ בִּלְבָבָהּ

(As) the ark of YHWH's covenant arrived at the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked through the window and saw King David . . . (1 Chron. 15:29; see also 4QSam^a, ad 2 Sam. 6:16).

וַתִּסַּף עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ שֶׁלֵּה וַהֲיָה בְּכִזִּיב בְּלִדְתָּהּ אֹתוֹ

Yet again, she had a son and named him Shelah. It was in Chezib when she had him (Gen. 38:5).

וַתִּסַּף עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ שֶׁלֵּה וַהֲיָה בְּכִזְבָּה בְּלִדְתָּהּ אֹתוֹ

Yet again, she had a son and named him Shilah. It was in Kazzibah when she had him (Gen. 38:5 [SP]).

הוּא מַעֲמִיקִים מִיְהוָה לִסְתֵּר עֲצָה וַהֲיָה בְּמַחֲשָׁךְ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי רֹאֵנוּ וּמִי יוֹדְעֵנוּ

Woe to those who've deeply hidden (their) plan from YHWH; their activities have been in the dark. They thought, "Who sees us; who knows of us?" (Isa. 29:15).

הוּא מַעֲמִיקִים מִיְהוָה לִסְתֵּר עֲצָה וַהֲיָה בְּמַחֲשָׁךְ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי רֹאֵינוּ וּמִי יֵדְעֵנוּ

Woe to those who've deeply hidden (their) plan from YHWH; their activities have been in the dark. They thought, "Who sees us; who knows of us?" (1QIsa^a 29:15).

In addition, the relation between the coordinated perfect of "be" and its immediate context can be varied; for instance, this verb form may, or may not, be part of a serial construction. In a word, these forms and their clauses can be awkward.

Although rarely stated, scholars seem to agree that the coordinated perfect of "be" has a common discourse feature: nonsequentiality.⁹¹ Moreover, as in Isaiah 29:15, this verb form can be the second "of two synonymous or similar ideas" (§3).

הִנֵּה בָּאָה וְנִהְיָתָה נֹאם יְהוָה הוּא הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי

"It's come! It's happened," oracle of YHWH. "It's the day I spoke of" (Ezek. 39:8).

זֶה לַחֲמֵנוּ חֶם הַצֵּטִידָנוּ אֹתוֹ מִבֵּיתֵנוּ בַּיּוֹם צִאֲתָנוּ לִלְכֹת אֵלֵיכֶם וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה יָבֵשׁ וַהֲיָה נֹקְדִים

This bread of ours was hot. We supplied ourselves with it from our houses when we left to come to you. Now, as you can see, it's dry and gotten crumbly (Josh. 9:12; cf. v. 5).

But synonymy is not an essential feature.

וַתִּסַּף עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ שֶׁלֵּה וַהֲיָה בְּכִזִּיב בְּלִדְתָּהּ אֹתוֹ

Yet again, she had a son and named him Shelah. It was in Chezib when she had him (Gen. 38:5; cf. LXX).

Here the final clause provides peripheral, geographical information surrounding the event of Shelah's birth. The final clause is also integrated with the rest of the verse by two anaphoric pronouns and the repeated verb יָלַד. The clause headed by וַהֲיָה is therefore part of the larger concurrent situation describing Shua and Shelah.

Coordinated perfect וַהֲיָה also appears when two co-events are aligned with one another.⁹²

וַהֲיָה הִיא רֹכֶבֶת עַל הַחֲמֹר וַיֵּרֶד בְּסִתֵּר הָהָר וְהִנֵּה דָּוִד וְאִנְשָׁיו יֹרְדִים לִקְרָאתָהּ וַתִּפְגַּשׁ אֹתָם

She [Abigail] was riding on the ass and was coming down an obscure part of the mountain when, right there, David and his men were coming down toward her. So she met them (1 Sam. 25:20).

91 See Endo 1996, 184–85; Pietsch 2004–7, 177.

92 Spieckermann 1982, 125.

והיה ארון יהוה בא עיר דוד ומיכל בת שאול נשקפה בעד החלון ותרא את המלך דוד מפזז ומכרכר לפני
יהוה ותבז לו בלבה

(As) the ark of YHWH entered the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked through the window and saw King David . . . (2 Sam. 6:16); see also

והיה כהפנתו שכמו ללכת מעם שמואל ויהפך לו אלהים לב אחר ויבאו כל האתות האלה ביום ההוא

Just as he [Saul] turned to leave Samuel, God gave him another mind (lit., heart). All these omens came about on that day (1 Sam. 10:9).

Each time, the event expressed by the clause introduced by *והיה* is contemporary with the subsequent stretch of discourse; its event, then, is collateral to another. It has a discourse function, too. Coordinated perfect *והיה* seems not to mark a new episode or scene but, as in Genesis 38:5, incorporates its clause to the larger context. For example, in 1 Samuel 25:20a α it links Abigail's trip (vv. 18–19) to her encounter with David en route (vv. 20b–22). In 2 Samuel 6:16, the clause introduced by *והיה* is anaphoric, retrieving and repeating information from verses 12 and 15.⁹³ 1 Samuel 10:9, though, is more difficult. Its initial clause may be understood to begin a new paragraph that describes the realization of Samuel's predictions (including v. 9a β < v. 6); in this case, the alternative wording of 4QSam^a, ad 2 Samuel 6:16 and 1 Chronicles 15:29—with *ויהי*—is appropriate.⁹⁴ Isaksson takes a different tack consistent with the use of the coordinated perfect elsewhere in Biblical Hebrew: “*w^hāyā* that introduces verse 9 is a macro-syntactic sign that marks out the following text as an anticipating commentary, both to the preceding prophecy and to the following events. Thus, verse 9 is not part of the main narrative chain.”⁹⁵ Verse 9a α is a co-event contemporary with the following clause.

Like other coordinated perfects, nonsequential *והיה* and its inflected forms can introduce a comment, aside, or evaluative remark.

והיתה הפצירה פים למחרשת לאתים ולשלש קלשון ולהקרדמים ולהציב הדרבן: והיה ביום מלחמת ולא
נמצא חרב וחנית ביד כל העם אשר את שאול ואת יונתן ותמצא לשאול וליונתן בנו

The charge was a *pim* for plowshares, mattocks, tridents, axes, and for setting ox goads. On the battle day, there was no sword or spear to be found in the possession of any of the troops with Saul and Jonathan. But Saul and his son Jonathan had one (1 Sam. 13:21–22).

איש היה בארץ עוץ איוב שמו והיה האיש ההוא תם וישר וירא אלהים וסר מרע

There was a man in the land of Uz named Job. That man was perfect and upright, as well as fearful of God and dodging evil (Job 1:1).

The comments are of different kinds. In Job 1:1, the comment is a positive, theological assessment of Job. In 1 Samuel 13:22, it retrieves and elaborates on verse 19 as it applies to the battle at hand.⁹⁶ In 1 Samuel 13:21, the comment is historical and explanatory. It is grammatically ambivalent, too. *והיתה* may be a perfect consecutive, denoting the customary fee for sharpening tools. Alternatively, it may be a coordinated perfect that launches a historical detour relevant to the topic of verse 20.⁹⁷

93 For this function, see de Boer 1974, 48; van der Merwe 1994, 29; Longacre 1994, 91. For other examples, see 1 Samuel 17:48 (< vv. 41 and 45) and Jeremiah 37:11 (< v. 5).

94 See Driver 1913, 82.

95 Isaksson 1998, 20. See also Longacre 1994, 86.

96 Cf. Stipp 1991, 536.

97 Another difficult text is 1 Samuel 1:12a:

והיה כי הרבתה להתפלל לפני יהוה ועלי שמר את פיה . . . ויחשבה עלי לשכרה

Inasmuch as she [Hannah] was praying a lot before YHWH—Eli all the while watching her mouth . . .—Eli considered her a drunk (1 Sam. 1:12, 13b).

According to one interpretation, *והיה* has an imperfective sense commensurate, *inter alia*, with the semantically imperfective auxiliary *הרבתה* (see Pardee 2012, 300 with n. 74). According to another interpretation, “a frequentative sense is here out of

Finally, the coordinated perfect of “be” can mark summary information. That information may be retrospective and form a conclusion of sorts.⁹⁸

ויקח רב טבחים לירמיהו ויאמר אליו יהוה אלהיך דבר את הרעה הזאת אל המקום הזה: ויבא ויעש יהוה
כאשר דבר כי חטאתם ליהוה ולא שמעתם בקולו והיה לכם דבר (ק' הדבר) הזה

The chief guard took charge of Jeremiah and said to him, “YHWH your God communicated this disaster to this place, and YHWH actively brought it about just as he communicated because you’ve sinned against YHWH and did not obey him. That’s why this thing’s happened to you” (Jer. 40:2–3); see also

והיה בכל יחם הצאן המקשרים ושם יעקב את המקלות לעיני הצאן ברהטים ליחמנה במקלות: ובהעטיף
הצאן לא ישים והיה העטפים ללבן והקשרים ליעקב

Whenever the stronger ones of the flock were breeding, Jacob would put the rods in the troughs, right in front of the flock, to breed (alt., let them breed) by the rods. But with the more feeble of the flock, he wouldn’t. The feeble ones became Laban’s, and the stronger ones became Jacob’s (Gen. 30:41–42).

Or, the information may constitute a heading.

והיה כאשר נלכדה ירושלם

When Jerusalem was captured (Jer. 38:28b).⁹⁹

In the latter case, if this interpretation is correct, this sentence fragment summarizes the following chapter or, at least, its first three verses.¹⁰⁰ All told, then, והיה and related forms behave like other instances of the coordinated perfect.

5. THE COORDINATED PERFECT IN NONSERIAL CONSTRUCTIONS

The final context in which the coordinated perfect occurs is perhaps the most problematic of all. Here, the coordinated perfect is not embedded within a stretch of homogenous discourse but, like some examples in §4, may lie at the head. As a category, “this use of the pf. with ׀ is undeniably anomalous, as it is also an in-elegancy.” This category includes “instances . . . of which no entirely adequate explanation can be offered.”¹⁰¹

Its first occurrence coincides with the first canonical token of the coordinated perfect in the Hebrew Bible. It also appears in a verse that has assumed outsized exegetical significance in the Hebrew Bible and beyond.¹⁰²

והאמן ביהוה ויחשבה לו צדקה

He [Abram] believed in YHWH, and he [YHWH] considered it to his credit (Gen. 15:6).

But because grammatical analyses have tended to be convoluted, tortured, and counterintuitive,¹⁰³ a simple interpretation of this (half) verse is difficult, to say the least. The immediate context, however, provides guidance.

ויאמר אברם אדני יהוה מה תתן לי ואנכי הולך ערירי ובן משק ביתי הוא דמשק אליעזר: ויאמר אברם הן
לי לא נתתה זרע והנה בן ביתי יורש אתי: והנה דבר יהוה אליו לאמר לא יירשך זה כי אם אשר יצא
ממעיןך הוא יירשך: ויוצא אתו החוצה ויאמר הבט נא השמימה וספר הכוכבים אם תוכל לספר אתם
ויאמר לו כה יהיה זרעך

place”; hence, “this must be the perf. with simple *waw*” (Driver 1913, 13). In that case, verse 12a is a pivot, reestablishing and elaborating the scene depicted in verse 10 while introducing Eli’s clueless perspective (see Longacre 1994, 86).

98 See Isaksson 1998, 20; and, tentatively, Longacre 1994, 89.

99 Longacre 1994, 90. Cf. Stipp 1991, 525.

100 See Volz 1928, 346; or Weiser 1955, 354.

101 Driver 1892, 161 with n. 1.

102 For the some of the following, see Garr 2013.

103 See Krüger 2014. For a synopsis, see Joosten 2012, 227.

Abram said, “My Lord YHWH. What’ll you give me, inasmuch as I’m going (to die) in disgrace¹⁰⁴ (trad., childless) and Ben-Meshek’s my family (that is, Damascus Eliezer)?” Abram went on (lit., said), “Fact of the matter, you’ve given me no descendants, so I am prepared (that) my steward be my heir.” But the word of YHWH came to him, “That one will not be your heir; rather, your own issue will be your heir.” Then he brought him outside and said, “Please look up to the sky and count the stars, if you can.” He went on (lit., said to him), “So shall your descendants be” (Gen. 15:2–5).

This context has driven several important comments. Westermann focuses on grammar and discourse. “והאמן (sic) is in the perfect because the sentence does not continue the narrative.” Further, the verse itself “has an important function . . . and is the conclusion of the unit.”¹⁰⁵ Von Rad speaks more to the content and perspective of verse 6: “The narrator . . . turns to the reader, to whom he communicates theological opinions.”¹⁰⁶ Wenham would agree with both commentators. Verse 6 is an “editorial comment with which the first scene closes.”¹⁰⁷ Eichrodt adds another element.

The very use of the distinctive perfect with *waw copulativum* to introduce the movement of faith draws attention to the fact that here a new element is emerging for the first time, one which cannot be incorporated into a continuum; and the clear connection of faith with God’s word of promise . . . gives the conduct of the patriarch still more the character of a decisive turning-point in his story.¹⁰⁸

Together, these statements make a strong argument consistent with the semantics, discourse structure, and pragmatics of the coordinated perfect. At its core, והאמן is a nonsequential verb form. Semantically, it has a retrospective viewpoint that applies to the current moment. Since its contents are never canceled or reversed, the situation expressed by the coordinated perfect lingers and persists, too. Its discourse role couples semantics with syntax—specifically, the presence of an overt coordinator. In Genesis 15:6, the coordinated perfect both marks the closure of the preceding narrative and opens a nonnarrative segment that comments on or assesses that narrative from the author’s theological viewpoint.¹⁰⁹ והאמן therefore marks a break. Pragmatically, if Eichrodt is correct, then והאמן satisfies the hallmarks of a mirative verb form: unexpected information believed to be immediately relevant as well as significant to the situation at hand.¹¹⁰ In this case, והאמן opens an entirely new evaluative criterion.¹¹¹ In sum, והאמן in Genesis 15:6 is a model example of the coordinated perfect.¹¹²

The second canonical attestation of the coordinated perfect also occurs in a nonserial construction and, like Genesis 15:6, follows reported speech.

והוכח אברהם את אבימלך על אדות באר המים אשר גזלו עבדי אבימלך

Then Abraham scolded Abimelech about a (alt., the) water well that Abimelech’s servants had seized (Gen. 21:25).

Again, context is crucial. This verse lies within a patchwork story about Abraham and Abimelech (vv. 22–34). One part, starting in verses 22–24, describes a pact between the patriarch and the Philistine king. The next part, starting in verses 25–26, involves the disputed ownership of a well and its resolution. Stated differently, והוכח appears at a boundary between subsections. Further, there is no narrative preparation for

104 Following Greenstein 2003, 655.

105 Westermann 1985, 223 (citing Holzinger), 222, respectively. Cf., e.g., Niccacci 2014, 183.

106 von Rad 1972, 184. See also, among others, Moberly 1990, 103–4, 127.

107 Wenham 1987, 329.

108 Eichrodt 1967, 278.

109 See Gibson 1994, §84c. Cf. Johnson 1979, 42–43.

110 For a coordinated perfect with a very different mirative force, see 2 Kgs. 21:4 = 2 Chron. 33:4.

111 See, in part, van der Merwe 1994, 28.

112 For explanations of 4QpsJub^a (225) 2 i 7–8, see Mosis 1999, 111–12; and, briefly, Joosten 2012, 226 n. 63.

Abraham's accusation in verse 25; in verse 26, Abimelech claims not to know of the issue, either. והוכח, then, initiates a *non sequitur* or, at least, a digression or unexpected detour.¹¹³

To a certain extent, features of the coordinated perfect in Genesis 15:6 and 21:25 recur elsewhere in nonserial constructions. In a couple of texts, for example, the coordinated perfect marks a counterintuitive response.

וישכם בבקר ביום החמישי ללכת ויאמר אבי הנערה סעד נא לבבך והתמהמהו עד נטות היום ויאכלו שניהם
On the morning of the fifth day, he [the concubine's husband] was about to leave. The girl's father said, "Please, have something to eat." But they dawdled till past noon, then the two of them ate (Judg. 19:8).¹¹⁴

והחרישו העם ולא ענו אתו דבר כי מצות המלך היא לאמר לא תענהו
But the people kept quiet and did not answer him at all, for it was the king's order, "You shouldn't answer him" (2 Kgs. 18:36).¹¹⁵

In other texts, the coordinated perfect introduces a nonsequential aside, comment, or evaluation.

וילך חזאל לקראתו ויקח מנחה בידו וכל טוב דמשק משא ארבעים גמל ויבא ויעמד לפניו ויאמר בנך בן הדד מלך ארם שלחני אליך לאמר האחיה מחלי זה: ויאמר אליו אלישע לך אמר לא (ק' לו) חיה תחיה והראני יהוה כי מות ימות

Hazael went to meet him [Elisha] and took a gift in his hand: all the goods of Damascus (measuring) forty camel loads. He came, stood in front of him, and said, "Your son, King Ben-hadad of Aram, has sent me to you (with the following message), 'Will I survive this illness?'" Elisha said to him, "Go say to him, 'Yes, completely.' But YHWH's shown me that he will undoubtedly die" (2 Kgs. 8:9–10).

ואשא עיני ואראה והנה איל אחד עמד לפני האבל ולו קרנים והקרנים גבהות והאחת גבהה מן השנית והגבהה עלה באחרונה: ראיתי את האיל מנגח ימה וצפונה ונגבה וכל חיות לא יעמדו לפניו ואין מציל מידו ועשה כרצונו והגדיל

I looked up and saw a certain ram standing beside the canal. It had two horns. The horns were tall, one was taller than the other, and the taller was coming up later. I saw the ram butting west, north, and south. None of the beasts could stand up to it; there was none to save from its clutch. It did as it pleased and grew greater (Dan. 8:3–4).

ובעתים ההם אין שלום ליוצא ולבא כי מהומת רבות על כל יושבי הארצות: וכתתו גוי בגוי ועיר בעיר כי אלהים הממם בכל צרה

At those times, a traveler had no safety, for a great panic affected all the inhabitants of the lands. They were crushed, nation by nation and city by city, for God panicked them with every kind of trouble (2 Chron. 15:5–6).

One time at least, a clause headed by the coordinated perfect gives a personal example of a speaker's general affirmation.

כי חסדך גדול עלי והצלת נפשי משאול תחתיה
For your loyalty toward me is great; you have saved my neck (lit., soul) from Sheol below (Ps. 86:13).

Another text combines mirativity and comment with discourse closure.

ויקרא אדני יהוה צבאות ביום ההוא לבכי ולמספד ולקרחה ולחגר שק: והנה ששון ושמחה הרג בקר ושחט צאן אכל בשר ושתות יין אכול ושתו כי מחר נמות: ונגלה באזני יהוה צבאות אם יכפר העון הזה לכם עד תמתון אמר אדני יהוה צבאות

113 König 1897, §370l. See also Davidson 1894, §58b = 1901, §58b. Cf. Hoffmann 2006, 84.

114 Cf. Isaksson 2009, 77.

115 With Blenkinsopp 2000, 473.

My Lord YHWH of Hosts called on that day for weeping, lamenting, head-shaving, and strapping on sackcloth. Yet instead, there was joy, happiness, killing cattle, slaughtering sheep, eating meat, and drinking wine. “(Let’s have) eating and drinking, for tomorrow we’ll die.” YHWH of Hosts was revealed to me, “This wrong of yours shall not be forgiven until you die,” said my Lord YHWH of Hosts (Isa. 22:12–14).¹¹⁶

These interpretive subtypes of the coordinated perfect are already familiar.

Although the number of subtypes can be expanded, it is more appropriate at this juncture to conclude with the summarizing coordinated perfect. One example heads a list.

ומדד אילו ואילמו (ק' איליו ואילמיו) כדמות האלה

He [the man] measured its pillars and vestibule corresponding to the aforementioned measurements (Ezek. 40:24b; see also v. 35b).

The other examples are apparently retrospective.¹¹⁷

וטהרתים מכל נכר ואעמידה משמרות לכהנים וללויים איש במלאכתו: ולקרבן העצים בעתים מזמנות ולבכורים זכרה לי אלהי לטובה

I purged them of everything alien and arranged duties for the priests and Levites individually, (arranged) for the wood offering at fixed times, and for the first fruits. My God, remember me favorably (Neh. 13:30–31).

Here the coordinated perfect heads a summary account that closes a book. Elsewhere, it closes an episode.

ויכו איש אישו וינסו ארם וירדפם ישראל וימלט בן הדד מלך ארם על סוס ופרשים: ויצא מלך ישראל ויד את הסוס ואת הרכב והכה בארם מכה גדולה

They each struck their man. The Arameans fled, and Israel chased them. King Ben-hadad of Aram escaped by horse and (other) horsemen. The king of Israel came out and struck the horses and chariots. He decisively struck down the Arameans (1 Kgs. 20:20–21).

In yet other instances the coordinated perfect seems to have a more sequential sense.

ולאלה אמר באזני . . . : זקן בחור ובתולה וטף ונשים תהרגו למשחית . . . : ויאמר אליהם טמאו את הבית ומלאו את החצרות חללים צאו ויצאו והכו בעיר

To the others he [YHWH] said in my hearing, “. . . You should kill old men, boys and girls, as well as children and women.” . . . He continued (lit., said to them), “Defile the house and fill the courts with corpses. Go.” They went and struck throughout the city (Ezek. 9:5aα, 6aα, 7).

ויאמר אלי הנבא אל הרוח הנבא בן אדם ואמרת אל הרוח כה אמר אדני יהוה מארבע רוחות באי הרוח ופחי בהגורים האלה ויחיו: והנבאתי כאשר צוני ותבוא בהם הרוח ויחיו ויעמדו על רגליהם חיל גדול מאד מאד

He [YHWH] said to me, “Prophecy to the breath. Prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath, ‘Thus said my Lord YHWH, “Breath, come from the four winds and breathe into these killed. They should live!’” I prophesied just as he had commanded me. The breath entered them, and they came to life and stood up on their feet—a very, very large army (Ezek. 37:9–10).

ואמרה אלהם . . . : שקדו ושמרו עד תשקלו לפני שרי הכהנים והלויים ושרי האבות לישראל בירושלם הלשכות בית יהוה: וקבלו הכהנים והלויים משקל הכסף והזהב והכלים להביא לירושלם לבית אלהינו

I said to them [the twelve priests], “. . . Guard (them) [the Temple items] watchfully until you weigh (them) out in front of the officers of the priests, and Levites, and officers of the Israelite families in Jerusalem, (in) the chambers (within) the house of YHWH.” The priests and Levites accepted the weighed silver and gold vessels, to bring (them) to Jerusalem to the house of our God (Ezra 8:28aα, 29–30; see also Esth. 9:23, with a different sense).

116 See Wildberger 1997, 375–76.

117 Gibson 1994, §84c. See also, among others, Johnson 1979, 44 (on 1 Kgs. 20:21).

That sequential sense, however, is deceiving. It is not an obligatory reading of the coordinated perfect but inherent in the directive-execution chain. For example, in Ezekiel 9:7b both execution clauses are skeletal echoes of their directives. The following verses, headed by a contextualizing reference to verse 7b, change topic and focus in an interchange between Ezekiel and YHWH. Verse 7b closes the preceding episode. Ezra 8:30 is similar, except that the execution clause is more elaborate; likewise, the verses immediately following constitute a new scene. But Ezekiel 37:10 is somewhat different. There, verse 10a begins with a coordinated perfect whose clause, once more, succinctly executes part of the earlier directives and acts as a contextualizing rubric. The main events that follow are marked by *wayyiqtol* forms, after which a new scene begins. In none of these cases, then, does the clause headed by the coordinated perfect *mark* sequentiality. It marks closure.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to isolate distinctive patterns surrounding the coordinated perfect in Biblical Hebrew. It found that such patterns exist. Rather than finding an extrasystemic, anomalous, schizophrenic, or textually corrupt phenomenon, this study uncovered an inner logic to the more than two hundred and fifty cases of this verb form.

That logic is traceable to the composite form of the coordinated perfect. It has an overt yet nonobligatory coordinator. Its verbal foundation is the perfect. Accordingly, the coordinated perfect is a type of perfect that should, and does, function like a simple perfect.

The coordinator supplies limited semantic information. More often, it contributes syntactic and/or structural information. It combines “two or more units of the same type . . . into a larger unit”; in this specific case, it combines relatively nondiscrete verbal units. It can also provide structure to its broader context. Frequently, it marks the closure of a unit or set.

As a perfect, the coordinated perfect has a bundle of underlying features. It denotes anteriority and the current relevance of “an event that either occurred, or at the very least was initiated, prior to the temporal reference point.” Its effects may persist or “linger,” too. In the area of discourse, the perfect marks nonsequentiality in various applications. It may express a synonymous, contrastive, coreferential, overlapping, or collateral situation. It may express an aside, comment, or summary considered—subjectively, by the author or speaker—to be immediately relevant.¹¹⁸ A pragmatic feature of the perfect was also discussed: mirativity, or the expression of information that an audience does not anticipate and for which that audience is unprepared. Further, in keeping with the complex character of the coordinated perfect, its various analytical categories are rarely discrete; various examples can satisfy multiple categories at once.

The resulting compound, $w^3 + q\text{tal}$,¹¹⁹ is a marked form.¹²⁰ It is statistically marked and represents approximately 4 percent of all occurrences of $w^3q\text{tal}$. It is also functionally marked, as the evidence above has demonstrated. Further, its functionally marked character is consistent throughout its attestations, whether in serial or nonserial constructions. In fact, from a functional perspective, the coordinated perfect is quite similar to its commonplace analogue: $w^3\text{-X } q\text{tal}$, where the perfect form is postponed to clause-internal position.¹²¹ Finally, the function of the coordinated perfect seems not to have changed over time. The form is attested in all historical phases of Biblical Hebrew, though there is an uptick of attestations starting in Transitional Biblical Hebrew.¹²² But as long as the coordinated perfect alternates with, especially, *wayyiqtol*, its functional role persists with remarkable consistency.

118 For another discourse feature not discussed above, see Li et al. 1982, 21; Givón 1982, 122; or Schwenter 1994, 1004.

119 So Joosten 2012, 223–28.

120 Longacre 1994, 72. See also Pardee 2012, 292.

121 Gibson 1994, §84. Cf. Driver 1874, 173 n. 1; or Hoffmann 2006, 85.

122 See Rubinstein 1963, 68 n. 2; in conjunction with Driver 1892, 162; or Joosten 2012, 224–25.

APPENDIX

The following tally presents those passages where *w³qatal* functions as a perfect in the MT.¹²³ As stated earlier, the book of Qohelet is not included. In those cases where *w³qatal* is a possible though uncertain interpretation, the passage is glossed by a raised question mark. Where the question mark is absent, the attestation is deemed a relatively secure example of perfect *w³qatal*.

Gen.	15:6; 21:25; 28:6; 30:42 [?] ; 31:7; 34:5; 37:3; 38:5; 49:23	Ezek.	9:7, 7; 11:6; 13:8; 16:19; 17:18, 24a ^β , 24b; 18:10a [?] ; 19:12; 20:22; 22:29; 23:40, 41a; 25:12; 28:14; 31:10; 35:13; 37:2, 7, 8, 10, 11; 39:8; 40:24, 35; 41:3, 8, 13, 15; 42:15, 15, 15
Exod.	36:30, 38; 38:28, 28; 39:3	Joel	1:7
Lev.	10:19 [?]	Amos	1:11; 7:2, 4
Num.	23:19, 20 [?] ; 24:17, 17	Mic.	3:3; 5:7b, 7b
Deut.	2:30; 33:2, 2	Nah.	1:12a [?] , 12b, 14
Josh.	6:8, 13 [?] ; 9:12; 18:21; 22:3	Hab.	1:11; 2:12
Judg.	3:23; 5:26, 26, 26; 7:13; 16:18; 19:8	Hag.	1:9 [?] , 9 [?]
1 Sam.	1:12 [?] ; 3:13; 4:19; 5:7 [?] ; 10:9; 12:2; 13:21 [?] , 22; 17:20 [?] , 38, 48; 24:10; 25:20	Mal.	2:11
2 Sam.	6:16; 7:11; 12:16, 16, 16, 31; 13:18, 19 [?] ; 15:30; 16:5 [?] , 13; 19:18, 19; 20:12 [?] ; 23:20	Pss.	20:9 [?] ; 22:6, 15; 27:2 [?] ; 28:7; 34:5, 11; 35:15; 38:9, 20; 50:21; 53:2; 66:14, 17; 76:9; 86:13, 17b; 97:6 [?] ; 131:2; 135:10, 12; 136:14, 15, 21; 148:5
1 Kgs.	3:11; 6:32, 32, 35, 35; 8:47b ^β (= 2 Chron. 6:37b ^β); 9:25b; 11:10; 12:32; 13:3a; 14:27 (= 2 Chron. 12:10); 20:21, 27; 21:12	Prov.	7:13 [?] , 13 [?] ; 9:12; 30:20a; 20b [?]
2 Kgs.	3:15 [?] ; 8:10; 11:1 (<i>ktiv</i>); 12:10 [?] ; 14:7, 10a (= 2 Chron. 25:19a), 14; 17:21; 18:4, 4, 4, 7 [?] ; 36; 19:18, 22 (= Isa. 37:23), 24 (= Isa. 37:25), 25 (= Isa. 37:26); 21:4 (= 2 Chron. 33:4), 6, 6, 6, 6 (= 2 Chron. 33:6, 6, 6, 6); 22:17 [?] ; 23:4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15; 24:14; 25:29, 29 (= Jer. 52:33, 33)	Job	1:1, 5a ^α [?] , 5a ^α [?] , 5a ^β ; 9:30 [?] ; 16:12, 15; 17:6 [?] ; 28:21; 29:8, 21 [?] ; 32:16 [?]
Isa.	1:2, 8; 2:11a [?] ; 5:14a [?] ; 9:7 [?] , 8 [?] , 19; 19:14 [?] ; 22:14; 29:15; 37:23 (= 2 Kgs. 19:22), 25 (= 2 Kgs. 19:24), 26 (= 2 Kgs. 19:25), 27; 38:12, 15; 40:6 [?] , 12; 41:4; 43:12, 12; 44:8; 55:10, 10, 10, 11; 63:10; 66:7	Song	2:10
Jer.	3:9; 6:17 [?] ; 7:28b, 31; 10:25; 14:3, 3; 15:9; 18:4, 4; 19:4, 5; 22:15, 15, 28; 23:14 [?] ; 25:4; 31:10; 32:29b; 37:10a, 11, 15, 15; 38:22, 28; 40:3; 46:6; 48:1, 33; 49:30; 50:43; 51:9; 52:33, 33 (= 2 Kgs. 25:29, 29)	Lam.	2:9, 22; 3:42
		Esth.	8:5 [?] , 15; 9:23, 25, 27
		Dan.	8:4, 4, 7, 11, 12 [?] , 12 [?] , 27; 9:5, 5 (<i>ktiv</i>), 5; 10:1 [?] , 7, 14, 15; 12:5
		Ezra	3:10; 6:22; 8:30, 36; 9:2, 6, 13
		Neh.	9:7, 7, 8; 10:33 [?] ; 12:39; 13:1, 30
		1 Chron.	7:21; 8:7 [?] ; 9:26 [?] ; 11:22; 17:17; 22:18b; 23:1; 28:2
		2 Chron.	1:8; 3:7; 6:37b ^β (= 1 Kgs. 8:47b ^β); 7:12, 16; 12:10 (= 1 Kgs. 14:27), 11 [?] , 11 [?] ; 15:6; 19:3; 25:19a (= 2 Kgs. 14:10a); 29:6, 19; 31:21; 33:4 (= 2 Kgs. 21:4), 6, 6, 6, 6 (= 2 Kgs. 21:6, 6, 6, 6), 14, 19; 34:4

123 For an earlier list, see Spieckermann 1982, 124–28. Cf. Hornkohl 2014, 289–93.

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33

DATING THE EARLIEST HEBREW VERBAL SYSTEM

THE ROLE OF DIALECT VARIATION IN ANCIENT LINGUISTIC CHANGE*

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THE SHEER LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY FOUND within the Hebrew Bible has long raised questions in the minds of scholars but also often seemed to impede their answers. Songs describing ancient victories in language echoing the poetry of Late Bronze Age Canaan share space with books from the Persian and Hellenistic periods whose language anticipates that of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the early Rabbis. This diversity gives the impression that Hebrew literature preserved its most ancient artifacts in song. But the Bible is not stratified like an archaeological tell, with the early layers buried out of sight by later layers that sealed them off from change. Instead, the different elements coexist simultaneously, together in a single collection. Formally, archaic poetry follows more recent-looking language describing the same ancient events, and in the end every word comes to us only by means of its latest editors.

To whom, then—and to when—does the Bible’s archaic language belong? The Bible’s simultaneous presentation of different styles and time periods has provoked two opposing approaches to the relationship between its linguistic diversity and the history of ancient Hebrew: the chronological and the dialectological.¹ Do the most archaic forms come from early Hebrew literature, and are the more typologically developed ones later? Or are the differences instead the result of style, genre, and dialect, to the extent that we cannot line up the texts in historical order neatly, or at all?

The basic problem has long been known: it is the fact that “Biblical Hebrew” is not a language in the sense of a single linguistic system belonging to a single time, place, or text.² It is a linguistic construct retroactively based on a diverse collection of texts we only know in Hellenistic and later forms. Our basis is a literary corpus, not a historically documented language. If this fact makes the question more complex, it only adds to its importance: what do the sharp linguistic differences between the different texts mean?³

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1 This binarism continues in the two approaches to Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew, as Jan Joosten (2013, 117) summarizes: “Although in both approaches it is recognized that languages evolve, different conclusions are drawn from this observation. While diachronic research on Hebrew seeks to relate changes in the language to specific periods in history, the study of dialectal variety leads one to realize that earlier and later forms of expression may continue side by side.” It is important for me to emphasize that scholars’ ethics are a key part of creating a basic sense of security for teaching and learning to flourish, and Joosten’s work is marked by a significant violation here (Stiebert 2020).

2 For an overview that attempts to integrate its diverse linguistic features with the history of its production and mediation, see Sanders 2020. For very different senses in which it could be claimed that Biblical Hebrew is not a “language,” compare the shrewd Ullendorff (1971) with the sweeping Knauf (1990) in identically titled English and German articles and the implausible thesis of North (1999).

3 A heuristically crucial first phase of scholarship, already laid out lucidly by Gesenius, divided the language into two basic phases without expecting purity in either one (1815, esp. 26). This research agenda reached its pinnacle in the work of

Recent scholarship has demonstrated the interdependence of linguistic, literary, and historical questions,⁴ often without explaining how the relationships would work. It is clear the linguistic issues of understanding Biblical Hebrew historically are inseparable from the historical and literary processes by which the Hebrew Bible achieved its unique form. Scribes unified and interwove earlier texts through collection and transmission, meaning that later writers carefully read, copied, and to an uncertain extent modified the earlier texts in their tradition.⁵ They also imitated it: whatever the historical sources of Hebrew linguistic archaism, it is also a literary style. The result is that the Bible contains significant linguistic variety not only between genres, such as poetry and prose, but also within genres: different poems suggest different verbal systems, and different narrative books have different syntax. Further progress on placing Hebrew linguistic productivity in historical perspective must take linguistic variation into consideration but go beyond merely acknowledging the fact of variation.

This study argues that synchronic diversity, properly understood, is not a roadblock to historical analysis but is, instead, one of its foundations. The study first summarizes recent research showing how the most typologically archaic verbal systems in Biblical Hebrew—found in the poetry of 2 Samuel 22, Deuteronomy 32, Judges 5 and Exodus 15—already vary significantly from each other. It then points out a previously unrecognized fact, viz., that the variation between these poems' verbal systems is the same *type* of variation also attested within Northwest Semitic narrative inscriptions of the late ninth and early eighth centuries BCE. This variation suggests a framework for dating the linguistic phenomena represented in the texts. We can move away from an unrealistic expectation of verbs as functionally uniform and linguistic diversity as a kind of radiocarbon dating and toward a more plausible focus on the distinctive *distribution* of verbal functions as an indicator of typological development.⁶

The type of variation we see in both Hebrew poetry and Aramaic narrative is rooted in, but typologically developed from, a type of variation already documented centuries earlier in the Southern Levant, thus indicating that different Northwest Semitic dialects changed in similar ways but at different rates. This fact

Avi Hurvitz (1997, 308), who also showed certain limits to this approach by depicting preexilic Hebrew as a “well-defined linguistic stratum.”

4 E.g., Carr 2011; Rezetko 2003; Young 2013. To take the most sustained example of this type of argument, Ian Young's work presents a lucid critique of a linguistically naïve assumption: that the majority of Biblical Hebrew vocabulary and morphology (these studies do not systematically address more complex features such as syntax or verbal systems) directly correlate with dating. To choose three focused examples of Young's work out of a large corpus that develops the same fundamental argument in various ways, 1998 and 2003 address specific textual corpora, 2013 presents an overview. Scribes who treasured and learned a “classic” style from older heirloom texts may produce new texts in this older style, or update inherited texts with newer forms, whether consciously or unconsciously. From comparing vocabulary and spelling in several passages of archaic Pentateuchal poetry, Young (1998, 75) concludes that Archaic Biblical Hebrew is a matter of “stylistic choice rather than chronological necessity.”

But this conclusion depends on two false assumptions: that word choice and spelling are the most important features of language, and that all patterns of linguistic difference are driven by either conscious choice or period of historical origin. The first is a modern European myth about language that tends to see it as a “bag of words,” as Michael Silverstein (1996) puts it, without syntax, pragmatics, or subtler and larger-scale discursive features. The second is a false dichotomy that ignores fundamental features that drive many differences within Biblical Hebrew: discourse type, relative archaism, and inconsistent, irregular updating or harmonization. And in fact, in the rare cases when Young ventures into comparison of even simple contrasts in verbal systems, he describes them as fitting a simple Late-versus-Standard Biblical Hebrew typology, as where he states that in Iron Age Hebrew inscriptions “it is hard to find examples [of the typically Late Biblical Hebrew syntax] where simple *waw* with a verb is found where *waw*-consecutive might be expected” (Young 2003, 294–95). As we shall see, such coarse-grained differences are not enough to account for the history and variety in even one Northwest Semitic verbal system—yet account for it we must.

5 No matter how *historically* early or late the different varieties of language in the Hebrew Bible may be, they were in principle subject to an unknown amount of homogenization, for the data all passed through a closely related set of scribal groups.

6 Note that this typological dating of a text's verbal system does not necessarily provide any absolute date for the text itself. While a number of passages of the Hebrew Bible preserve verbal syntax not found in later Hebrew, their content may have been subject to subtle shift because in a conservative performance or scribal tradition, compositions could retain core syntactic features while transforming in other ways over centuries.

suggests we revise the heuristically powerful but artificially unilinear picture of the development of the Northwest Semitic verbal system argued for by scholars such as Rainey⁷ and Smith.⁸ In this respect, it builds on the discoveries of scholars from Tania Notarius⁹ to Takamitsu Muraoka¹⁰ and Shlomo Izre'el¹¹ about verbal syntax and dialect variation in archaic Hebrew and ancient Northwest Semitic texts. But it suggests a new framework for integrating them into a historical picture by emphasizing the role of dialect variation as a complex but coherent factor in linguistic change.

The Hebrew verbal system provides a particularly promising vantage point for addressing the divide between chronological and dialectological approaches for at least three reasons. First, we have independent epigraphic documentation—often fragmentary but also often useful—of both historical and dialectal differences over a period from before Hebrew was first written to after the last biblical text was completed. More than a century of archaeological discovery and linguistic analysis has given us secure anchor points for the overall arc of the Northwest Semitic verbal system's development from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman period. We have some detailed evidence of syntactic variety within the Northwest Semitic dialect spectrum from which it emerged in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries;¹² evidence of when key distinctive features found in the Hebrew verbal system began to emerge in other Northwest Semitic varieties in the ninth and eighth centuries (see below); and evidence for the verbal systems of several typologically later Hebrew dialects by the second century BCE.¹³

Second, unlike relatively superficial features such as spelling (which, particularly subject to convention, can mask or falsify phonology) or relatively malleable features such as vocabulary, the verbal system is intertwined with the most subtle and essential features of a language, from syntax and pragmatics to discourse structure. Especially in the West Semitic languages, verbal systems often acquire tense reference pragmatically, through the implications and structure of a piece of discourse.¹⁴ The organization of the verbal system is inextricable from the organization of discourse more broadly and is thus a better barometer of change in language structure than vocabulary or morphology in isolation.

Finally, as recent philologists have emphasized,¹⁵ verbal syntax contains some of the most useful clues to a language's deeper changing patterns because speakers and writers tend to be only partly conscious of it.¹⁶ While verb forms are easily recognized and adopted, verbal syntax across a stretch of discourse is less easily segmentable. It therefore tends to be harder to describe and thus less salient to native speakers and writers, a phenomenon described by the linguistic anthropologist Michael Silverstein as one of "the limits of awareness."¹⁷ This circumstance suggests that verbal syntax can be expected to be both chronologically *and* dialectally distinctive as an aspect of language.

7 E.g., 1986; 1990; 2003.

8 Smith 1991.

9 Notarius 2013.

10 Muraoka 1995.

11 Izre'el 2003.

12 E.g., Moran 1950; Izre'el 2003.

13 E.g., Fassberg et al. 2013.

14 Izre'el 1998, 36–37.

15 Joosten 2013; Eskhult 2000; 2005; 2008.

16 For a complementary sociolinguistic line of argument about features in ancient Hebrew that would be less subject to conscious manipulation's developing through the influence of more innovative speakers, Labov's "change from below," see Kim 2013. Kim's framework is, however, based on social stratification rather than linguistic patterns—data more difficult to recover from heavily edited traditional texts—and does not treat the issue of salience.

17 Silverstein 1981. While the phenomenon will reward further study, it can be pointed out here that, as a pattern encompassing verb morphology, word order within the clause, and relationships with other verb forms, verbal syntaxes lack all three of Silverstein's criteria for salience—the property of linguistic phenomena that makes them easier for speakers to characterize and therefore to teach to nonspeakers. These criteria are: (1) Unavoidable reference—when identifying the linguistic phenomenon requires naming the thing to which it refers (e.g., nouns, pronouns); (2) Continuous segmentability—when the linguistic phenomenon appears in an unbroken stretch of speech, whether a single word, a phrase, or a sentence; and

DIVERSITY IN THE ARCHAIC VERBAL SYSTEM: RECENT RESEARCH

As we shall see, the most typologically archaic verbal systems in Hebrew already show significant dialect variation. But it is of a type rooted in the variations already documented in Northwest Semitic varieties of the Late Bronze and Iron Age Southern Levant. Specifically, each of the two tense systems found in the four most archaic Hebrew poems appears in one of the two earliest known Old Aramaic royal narratives, and each plays out differently in Northwest Semitic more broadly. Placing this evidence in the wider history of Hebrew and the Northwest Semitic verbal system will suggest that, first, attention to diversity does not come at the expense of historicity, and second, the Hebrew and Aramaic tense systems did not develop unilinearly from an older Northwest Semitic ancestor.

The preterite use of prefixed (**yaqtul*) verb forms has long been seen as an archaic survival in Biblical Hebrew poetry. For example, in describing the ancient origins of the tribe(s) of Israel, the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32) lines 12–13 reads:

יְהוָה בְּדָד יִנְחֵנוּ וְאֵין עִמּוֹ אֵל נֹכַר:
יִרְכְּבֵהוּ עַל-בְּמוֹתַי אֶרֶץ וַיֹּאכֵל תְּנוּבַת שְׂדֵי וַיִּנְקֵהוּ דָּבַשׁ מִסִּלֶּעַ וְשֶׁמֶן מִחֶלְמִישׁ צוּר:

“The LORD alone did guide him (*ynhnw*) (Israel/Jacob), No alien god at His side.
He set him (*yrbhw*) atop the highlands, and he feasted (*wy’kl*) on the yield of the earth;
He fed him (*wynqhw*) honey from the crag, and oil from the flinty rock.” (JPS 1985)

Similarly in describing the speaker’s deliverance from a crisis in a poem of thanksgiving, the Song of David (2 Samuel 22, variant in Psalm 18) lines 7–8:

בְּצַר־לִי אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וְאֶל־אֱלֹהֵי אֶקְרָא וַיִּשְׁמַע מֵהִיכָלוֹ קוֹלִי וְשׁוֹנְעֵתִי בְּאָזְנוֹ:
וַתִּגַּעַשׁ וַתִּרְעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ מוֹסְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְגְּזוּ וַיִּתְגַּעְשׁוּ בִּי־חֲרָה לֹו:

“In my anguish I called (*’qr*) on the LORD, called (*’qr*) out to my God; In His abode He heard (*wyšm*) my voice, my cry in His ears.
Then the earth rocked and quaked (*wtgš wtrš*), The foundations of heaven shook (*yrgzw*) —
Rocked (*wytgšw*) by His fury.” (JPS 1985)

The key feature here is the *consistent* use of prefix forms (morphologically short, when indicators are available)¹⁸ in main clauses to denote single, complete events in the past. These two texts use (short) prefixed preterite forms to narrate the main actions throughout the poems in both main and subordinate clauses. This preterite use of prefixed verb forms is similar to what has been found in many of the Canaano-Akkadian prose letters from the Levant found at Amarna (ca. fourteenth century BCE), as well as poetic narratives from Ugarit (ca. thirteenth century BCE).

But in addition to being a narrowly defined linguistic system, archaism is also a broader stylistic phenomenon. The preterite use of the (short) prefix form is also part of a literary style that is widespread in Biblical Hebrew poetry. Thus the pattern appears in other poetic contexts where it is used inconsistently; e.g., Isaiah 41:2, describing an event accomplished in the recent past, reads:

מִי הָעִיר מִמִּזְרַח צֶדֶק יִקְרָאֵהוּ לְרִגְלוֹ יִתֵּן לִפְנָיו גּוֹיִם וּמַלְכִּים יִרְדּוּ יִתֵּן בְּעַפְרָר חֲרָבוֹ בָּקַשׁ נִדָּף קִשְׁתּוֹ:

“Who has roused (*h’yr*) a victor from the East, called him (*yqr’hw*) to His service? Given (*ytn*) nations to him, trod (*yrd*) sovereigns down? Given (*ytn*) their swords to be like dust, their bows like wind-blown straw?” (JPS 1985)

(3) Relatively presupposing—referring to a thing in the world, rather than markers of politeness, class, or region (Silverstein 1981, 5–7).

18 These indicators are typically only found in *hiphil* forms that appear as *yaktēb* rather than the expected *yaktib*, with similarly shortened final vowels in II-weak verbs, and in a variety of apocopated forms with III-h verbs, for which see, e.g., Joüon and Muraoka 2006 §79i.

This text from the second half of Isaiah, which contains clear references to the Persian period, includes three uses of the same prefix preterite verb form as in the Songs of Moses and David, often considered much more archaic. But as in the second structurally parallel line of this passage¹⁹ the sequence begins with a suffix form in the main clause.

Yigal Bloch has collected examples of the apparently archaic prefix preterite form and argued they represent a style freely distributed across biblical poetic texts:²⁰ not only the Songs of Moses and David but also this passage from Second Isaiah and Psalm 44. Bloch's study focuses more on individual words than on how they work together in the text; he emphasizes morphology and translation value rather than syntax, pragmatics, or discourse. But viewed on the level of discourse structure, the passages are dissimilar: each line of the Isaiah 41 passage whose tense reference is clear²¹ begins with a common suffix-form verb that typically marks the past in later texts. This feature suggests they are part of a typologically later verbal system than the one that appears in Deuteronomy 32 and 2 Samuel 22.

Given that the Hebrew Bible presents no strata, and later Hebrew writers must logically have been aware of and able to draw on earlier Hebrew styles, how do we connect linguistic variety to history? Tania Notarius establishes a set of logical principles; she accepts forms as archaic if they fit three criteria:

- (1) They cannot be explained as purely discourse-conditioned;
- (2) "they are archaic in terms of historical-linguistic analysis, since they represent isoglosses shared by other ancient NWS [North-West Semitic] languages" such as Canaano-Akkadian and Ugaritic and "represent an initial stage of the linguistic development further attested in CBH and LBH, and illuminate certain typological tendencies of linguistic change"; and
- (3) "they reveal distinct systemic relations between each other and resist interpretation as separate archaisms."²²

Using these criteria, she identifies a core set of features as archaic. (1) Most narrowly attested and clearly archaic is the consistent use of the preterite *yqtl*, prominent in Deuteronomy 32 (e.g., "He found him in a desert land, in a howling wilderness waste: he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him as the apple of his eye" [v. 10]) and the first archaic portion of the Song of David, 2 Samuel 22:5–20.²³ (2) More broadly attested is the imperfective *yqtl*, with archaic uses such as the historical present in Judges 5 (e.g., "she puts her hand to the tent peg and her right hand to the workmen's mallet" [v. 26]) as well as more familiar functions, such as the habitual and future known from Classical Biblical Hebrew.²⁴

Crucial to the identification of a truly archaic usage of the imperfective *yqtl* is its coherent role in a text's verbal system.²⁵ Rather than just counting appearances or English translation values, a key test is the

¹⁹ Isa. 41:4.

²⁰ Bloch 2009; 2013.

²¹ Isaiah 41:3 has received widely varying translations over time, with the Septuagint rendering the verbs in the future and Onkelos rendering them in the past, with suffixed Aramaic perfect forms. The KJV gives the "He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet," while the NJPS and NRSV agree in rendering the verbs as nonarchaic imperfects, with present progressive sense: "He pursues them, he goes on unscathed; No shackle is placed on his feet" and "He pursues them and passes on safely, scarcely touching the path with his feet."

²² Notarius 2013, 296.

²³ Ibid., 280–81.

²⁴ Ibid., 284.

²⁵ Joosten's (2002) arguments, based on the theory of Kurylowicz (1973) that tense is the first axis of opposition in all verbal systems, would imply that archaic Hebrew could not have had a preterite-imperfective-anterior system. But this claim is based on the extremely powerful assumption that no system lacking morphological tense-marking can have morphological aspect-marking. There are at least two serious objections to this assumption. The first is that it does not consider widely known counterevidence, such as the best-documented early stage of an ancient Semitic language, Old Babylonian, in which a preterite *iprus* ~ durative *iparras* ~ perfect *iptaras* opposition is widely recognized (e.g., Huehnergard and Woods 2004). Second, it proposes to confirm Kurylowicz's (2002, 52) theory with an examination of the very system under dispute, thus running the risk of an *obscurum per obscurius* explanation, since two centuries of scholarly debate have not brought agreement on this pattern. (For an important example of the continuing debate, see Pardee 2012 with n. 23.) At the risk of attempting to

distribution of syntactic roles for each form across a coherent stretch of discourse. Thus for the imperfective *yqtl*, it is the corresponding *lack* of the active predicative participle²⁶ for the progressive aspect and other imperfective uses that is decisive in seeing it as part of an archaic configuration. “The texts that do not meet this criterion should not be considered representative of the archaic verbal system.”²⁷

By contrast, the active participle in predicative use is a mark of the typologically later Classical Biblical Hebrew. “Its use is enlarged in LBH, but it is consistently absent from ancient NWS languages and dialects.”²⁸ Where we find this form, we are dealing with usage that is not consistently archaic. This is true of several poems often considered archaic,²⁹ such as the Oracles of Balaam, the Song of Hanna, and the Blessing of Moses.³⁰

Finally, (3) Notarius notes a very specific use of the perfect *qtl* in narrative: in Deuteronomy 32 it is used only for anteriority in relative clauses, while in 2 Samuel 22:5–20 it is also “sporadically attested for past simultaneous circumstantial events or even to denote a new stage in storytelling.”³¹ Wider uses of *qtl* are virtually absent from texts of this type, where we find an “almost complete lack of the conditional, purposive, or future sequential use of וקטל.”³² Again, this absence is part of a broader typological pattern that shifts in Classical Biblical Hebrew and is further developed in independently attested Hellenistic Hebrew texts.³³

This emerging systematic view promises to forestall some of the confusion between historical layers that has previously resulted from counting rather than weighing forms. Entirely absent from the archaic usage is the system of sequential tenses (the alternation of *wayyiqtol* and *weqatal* forms) typical of Classical Biblical Hebrew narrative. This sequential system is also infrequent and inconsistent in Late Biblical Hebrew but does not constitute an “isogloss” between Archaic Biblical Hebrew and Late Biblical Hebrew; rather, it results from the transformation of the Tense-Mood-Aspect system:³⁴ “in the archaic verbal system the system of sequential tenses has not yet taken shape at all . . . in LBH the system of sequential tenses is formally preserved, but challenged semantically,” e.g., with the use of *wayyiqtol* for the nonpast sequential meaning.³⁵

cut a large and old Gordian knot with a single quick blow, I would question how scholars as careful as Joosten and Pardee, with precisely the same data set and the benefit of two hundred years of scholarship from Gesenius to Driver, can continue to come to flatly opposite conclusions about the entire Classical Biblical Hebrew prose verbal system. And I would suggest the solution lies in the fact that ancient Semitic deixis, both spatial (cf. the frequent lack of a morphological distal-proximal [“this” vs. “that”] distinction, e.g., in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Akkadian demonstrative pronouns) and verbal, tends to rely more heavily on implicature than the Indo-European languages from which all these scholars, from Gesenius and Driver to Joosten and Pardee, derive their categories. The knot would then lie in the unavoidable pragmatics of implicature: precisely because of their linguistic and analytical competence, these scholars will *necessarily* produce comprehensive and consistent readings of the (from an Indo-European viewpoint) always morphologically underdetermined tense and aspect of Classical Biblical Hebrew.

26 N.b. that Butts’s (2010) important analysis of *ne’dārî* in Exodus 15:6 as a feminine singular participle in predicative position does not contradict this observation, since it takes no object and is not functioning otherwise in any progressive or imperfective role designating an activity.

27 Notarius 2013, 284.

28 Ibid., 285.

29 Albright 1968.

30 Notarius 2013, 285.

31 Ibid., 286–87.

32 Which fact is especially interesting because we do find this usage in Canaano-Akkadian (Notarius 2013, 288). We do find clause-initial perfect (*w)qtl*, but only for the simple past in reports, combined with almost total absence of *wayyiqtol* (ibid., 289–90, and 291 for her useful summary of the system).

33 “The other important conclusion drawn by Kutscher (1974, 351–52) is that the scribe of 1QIsa^a preferred the conjunctive Waw to the inersive Waw and tended to use the sc. (suffix conjugation) as a preterital tense and the [prefix conjugation] as a future tense. The preference for the Waw conjunctive is indeed evident in a large number of examples in our corpus outside of 1QIsa^a” (Muraoka 2000, 208).

34 Notarius 2013, 292.

35 Ibid., 301.

Using these criteria, Notarius³⁶ finds consistently archaic usage in the Song of Moses, the Song of Deborah, the Song of the Sea, and in both main parts of the Song of David³⁷ (though not in the framework or insertions). On the other hand, the Blessing of Jacob and the Blessing of Moses mix types, and the Oracles of Balaam combine archaic features with innovative ones, thus suggesting it is transitional from the Archaic Biblical Hebrew to the Classical Biblical Hebrew verbal system.

The significance of this analysis for the problem of dialectal versus historical approaches is that it does not deny evidence of discursive and dialectal diversity but instead integrates it by proposing there is a *coherent* pattern of diversity within the most typologically archaic Hebrew. “The storytelling passages (represented by both the narrative and report discourse modes) in the archaic type of verb system in BH are arranged using different tenses: perfective *יקטל*, imperfective *יקטל*, and perfect *קטל*.”³⁸

Notarius concludes that the choice of main verb within the Archaic Biblical Hebrew system is conditioned by the basic type of discourse. Deuteronomy 32 and 2 Samuel 22:5–20, which give priority to preterite *yqtl*, are relatively detached “narrative” discourse, not directly anchored in the speaker’s temporal viewpoint. But Judges 5 and Exodus 15 prioritize perfect *qtl*, correlated with “reporting” discourse, which makes constant reference to the speaker’s own time. Finally, 2 Samuel 22:33–46, which employs both modes, gives priority to imperfective *yqtl*.³⁹ She explains these as discursive variations within one set of archaic systems.⁴⁰

DIVERSITY IN THE VERBAL SYSTEMS OF OLD ARAMAIC NARRATIVE

By itself, the coherent variation and archaism of the verbal system in this set of Hebrew poems is purely *typological*, without reference to historical context. In principle, texts showing such diversity could have been produced by writers in a long-lived linguistic tradition at any point in ancient times, from the Old Babylonian to Hellenistic periods. What is needed to provide context for the specific type of variation in this system is not only diachronic parallels but synchronic ones: historically contextualized texts showing this sort of variation, as well as evidence of transition—a direction of development suggesting a specific relationship to later forms.

The earliest first-millennium Northwest Semitic texts for which significant variation in the verbal system is attested are the three Aramaic inscriptions of Tel Fekheriye (= KAI 309, ninth century BCE), Tel Dan (= KAI 310, late ninth century), and Zakkur (= KAI 202, early eighth century).

The Tel Fekheriye inscription is less helpful because it is of a different genre from the other two, with different modes of discourse: a dedicatory inscription with elements of the hymn and curse genres. It contains no narrative per se, but its past events are all expressed as *qtl* perfects, while its future and jussive events are all *yqtl*. There is no trace of the *yqtl* preterite, but because the inscription contains no connected narrative this absence may be determined by genre.

By contrast, when the late ninth-century Tel Dan inscription was published, Takamitsu Muraoka immediately recognized that it contained prefixed preterite verbs.⁴¹ Indeed, a list of the finite verbs in the inscription shows they dominate the main line of the narrative. The first comprehensible section begins:

[---] מִרְעָל [---] וגור [---] ² [---] אֶל־אֲבִי־יִסְכָּן [. עלוה־בה] תלחמה־באב [ל]
³ וישכב־אֲבִי־הֶדֶד אֶל [. אבהו] הֶוִיעַל־מִלְכִּי [ש] ⁴ ראל־קדם־בארק־אֲבִי [. ו] הֶמֶלֶךְ־
הֶדֶד אֶל־יֵת־ ⁵ אנה־ויהֶדֶד־קדמי [. ו] אפק־מִן־שִׁבְעָת־ ⁶
יִמְלִכִּי־וְאֶקְתַּל־מִלְכִּי [כ] וְשִׁבְעָת־

³⁶ Ibid., 297.

³⁷ 2 Sam. 22:5–20, 33–46.

³⁸ Notarius 2013, 306.

³⁹ Ibid., 306–12.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 315–17.

⁴¹ Muraoka 1995.

“... My father went up (to battle) (*ysq*) ... And my father laid down to rest (*wyškb*); he went (*yhk*) to his [ancestors] ... Now the king of I[s]rael had already invaded (*wy'l...b*) my father's land. [But] Hadad made me king (*[w]yhmlk*), and Hadad went (*wyhk*) before me; [and] I departed (*w'pq*) from seven[...] of my kingdom. And I slew (*w'qtl*) seven[nty ki]ngs ...”

Finite verbs in Tel Dan, by line:

1. *wgZR* (background, *qtl* perfect + *w*)
2. *ysq* (*yqtl* preterite)
3. *wyškb* (*yqtl* preterite + *w*), *yhk* (*yqtl* preterite), *wy'l* (*yqtl* preterite + *w*)
4. *[w]yhmlk* (*yqtl* preterite [+*w*])
5. *wyhk*, *w'pq* (*yqtl* preterite + *w*)
6. *w'qtl* (*yqtl* preterite + *w*)
8. *wqtl[t(?)]* (background? *qtl* perfect(?) + *w*)
9. *w'sm* (*yqtl* preterite + *w*)

The main line of narrative in the Tel Dan inscription is dominated by prefixed forms, both with and without paratactic *waw*, which can only be plausibly interpreted as preterites.⁴² Morphologically, in the one place evidence is available, line 9's *w'sm*, the forms appear to be short prefix forms.⁴³ The only apparent exception to this pattern is a broken form in line 8, where, in contrast to nine uses of the prefix preterite in the main line of narrative, there appears a form that could plausibly be reconstructed as *wqtl[t]* “and I killed.”

The nearly contemporary Zakkur inscription, from the early eighth century, follows the same genre of royal victory monument. But it provides a useful contrast, for it represents a different verbal system, in which the main line of past narrative is conveyed by *qtl* perfects:

והמלכני בעלשמ[ין על ח] זרך והוחד עלי ברהדד בר חזאל מלך ארם . . .
כל מלכיא אל מצר על חזר[ך] והרמו שר מן שר חזרך

“Baalshama[yn] made me king (*whmlkny*) in Hadrach. Then Barhadad son of Hazael, king of Aram, organized (an alliance) (*whwhd*) against me . . .”

The two inscriptions have strikingly parallel contents: both are narrated by a king who tells how his career began when he was crowned (*mlk* in the *haphel*) by the dynastic storm-god. The king became the victim of aggression, and seventy kings (Tel Dan 6; Zakkur 8) allied against him, but the storm-god led him (Tel Dan 5; Zakkur 3, 13–16) to triumph over an overwhelming number of enemies. Simply comparing the syntax of parallel phrases in each inscription makes visible the difference in the dominant verb form for narrative (as well as the handling of pronominal objects):⁴⁴

Tel Dan: “[Then] Hadad made me king (*[w]yhmlk* . . . [*yt*] 'nh).”

Zakkur: “Baalshama[yn] made me king (*whmlkny*).”

But while the Tel Dan inscription is consistently narrated with prefix preterite forms, the Zakkur inscription switches from paratactic *w* + *qtl* (with the exception of the initial third-person dedicatory formula with simple *qtl* in line 1) to converted *yqtl* preterites at a dramatic turning point.

42 Contrast Muraoka (1998) and Rainey (2003) with the arguments of Emerton (1997) and Tropper (1994) that attempt to homogenize the uses of the prefix preterite in Old Aramaic and Hebrew. Doing so requires assimilating the glaringly different patterns of Zakkur and Dan, on the one hand, and the Songs of Moses and David versus the Song of the Sea and Song of Deborah, on the other, to the completely different verbal system found in Classical Biblical Hebrew prose narrative.

43 Muraoka (1995, 19) plausibly contrasts precative *lsm* versus indicative *wšym* in the Tel Fekheriye inscription.

44 The comparison with this single phrase is especially telling because we find here one feature that is typically considered more developed, the use of the definite direct object marker 'y)t, together with a feature considered more archaic, the prefix preterite.

ואשא ידי אל בעלשמי [מי]ן ויענני בעלשמי [ן ויד]
 [בר] בעלשמין אלי [ב] יד חזין וביד עדדן [. ויאמר א]
 [לי] בעלשמין אל תזחל כי אנה המל [כתך ואנה]
 [אק] ס עמד ואנה אחצלך מן כל [מלכיא אל זי]
 מחאו עליך מצר ויאמר לי בעלשמין

“But I raised (wʾš) my hands to Baalsha[may]n and Baalshamay[n] answered me (wyʾnny) [and] Baalshamyn [commanded] me through visionaries and messengers; and Baalshamayn [said to me], Fear not (ʾl tzh̄l), for it was I who made [you k]ing (hml[ktk]), [and I will sta]nd with you, and I will save you (ʾh̄slk) from all [these kings who] have forced a siege (mhʾw) upon you. Then [Baalshamayn] said (wyʾmr) to [me] . . .”

At the point on which the story hinges, the narrative switches to converted *yqtl* preterites, except for the quoted direct speech of Baalshamayn, which predictably is presented with jussive and future *yqtls* plus simple *qtl* perfects.

The language of Zakkur’s turning point is typologically more developed,⁴⁵ but it is also discursively conditioned. The switch in narrative forms corresponds to a pragmatic difference in the nature of the discourse: from setting up the narrative’s problem, the storytelling switches to the dramatic moment when the problem was solved, the solution that occasions the present dedication of the monument at which the king is depicted as speaking. Proof of this discursive conditioning lies in the remainder of the text: while the portion describing Zakkur’s victory is broken, when the narrative resumes it has returned to the main line of *qtl* perfects.

The two different scenes with their two different dominant verb forms correspond to a coherent distinction between forms of discourse. The *qtl* perfects of the main narrative mark anteriority—scene-setting prior to the main event—while the converted *yqtl* preterites appear only in the pragmatically marked turning point of the drama.

Is the difference between the two main verbal systems of Tel Dan and Zakkur arbitrary? The narrative of the Tel Dan inscription begins before the speaker’s lifetime and experience: ויעל מלכי[ש]ראל קדם בארץ אבי “The king of Israel had previously entered into my father’s land” (line 4). By contrast, the events of the Zakkur inscription begin within the speaker’s lifetime, with his experience of being made king. The distinction between the main narrative modes of the Tel Dan and Zakkur inscriptions may thus be the distinction between *yqtl* preterite-based narrative, anchored in the past outside the speaker’s time, versus *qtl* perfect-based report, anchored in the speaker’s own time.

The variation between the verbal systems of the two Old Aramaic victory inscriptions, close in both time and content, corresponds to the variation between the main modes of the Songs of Moses and David. If the above analysis of their speakers’ frameworks is correct, the distinctions may be driven by the same discursive pattern.

By contrast, other contemporary Northwest Semitic inscriptions show more typologically developed verbal systems. In the late ninth-century Moabite inscription of Mesha, all narrative is already dominated by converted *yqtl* preterites, though the initial scene is set with *qtl* perfects. Similarly, the preserved introductory narrative of the late eighth-century Deir ʿAlla inscription is entirely in converted *yqtl* preterites, with direct discourse in *yqtl* imperfects and futures.⁴⁶

45 While nothing like these converted forms is found in Late Bronze Age Northwest Semitic texts, they are common in late Iron Age inscriptions in Hebrew and the dialect of Deir ʿAlla, as well as of course in Classical Biblical Hebrew narrative.

46 1. wyʾtw, wyhz (converted *yqtl* preterite)
 2. wyʾmrw (converted *yqtl* preterite) in direct discourse ypʾl (*yqtl* future)
 3. wyqm (converted *yqtl* preterite)
 3–4. wbk̄h ybk̄h infinitive absolute modifying *yqtl* imperfect (or perhaps *yqtl* preterite preserved in grammaticalized form?)
 4. wyʾl (converted *yqtl* preterite) in direct discourse ysm wtbk̄h (*yqtl* present)

This situation means that the verbal systems found in Archaic Biblical Hebrew poetry represent a stage typologically *prior to* what we find in some late ninth- and eighth-century inscriptions—those of Mesha and Deir ‘Alla—but roughly the same typological stage as the Tel Dan inscription. By contrast, the transitional verbal system found in poetry such as the Oracles of Balaam is typologically parallel to the developmental stage found in the early eighth-century Zakkur inscription—a general context that meshes intriguingly with the later eighth-century dating of the Deir ‘Alla Balaam inscription itself.

This variation can be connected back to Canaano-Akkadian, where, as Moran noted in his dissertation, the *qtl* form had already become the dominant form for the past in the Byblos letters. Rainey has detailed a contrasting *yaqtul*-preterite *yaqtulu*-durative system in many more southerly Levantine letters, though he sometimes fails to distinguish them by location.⁴⁷

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE HISTORICAL STUDY OF LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCE IN NORTHWEST SEMITIC

Recognizing that the variation between the verbal systems of the two oldest Aramaic narrative inscriptions corresponds to the variation between the two most typologically archaic modes of Biblical Hebrew poetry allows us to restore dialectal and discursive variation to its rightful place at the center of historical change in the Northwest Semitic languages.⁴⁸ We find the typologically earliest documented form of first-millennium Northwest Semitic narrative in the late ninth-century Old Aramaic Tel Dan inscription, where all narrative is presented with *yqtl* preterites and background *qtl* perfects (with perhaps one marked *wqtl* form attested). The nearly contemporary Northwest Semitic narrative of the early eighth-century Old Aramaic Zakkur inscription seems to be based on a different type of Old Aramaic narrative verbal system in which narrative is all *qtl* perfects (foreground and background). The striking exception is a dramatic, pragmatically marked scene in converted *yqtl* preterites, which represents a typologically more developed stage similar to that found throughout the chronologically earlier but typologically more developed Moabite narrative of Mesha’s royal memorial inscription. This narrative system then appears fullblown in only two places: the late eighth-century variety of the Deir ‘Alla prophetic visions, and the narratives of Classical Biblical Hebrew.

This circumstance suggests a modification to the older picture of the development of the Northwest Semitic verbal system laid out, for example, by Smith.⁴⁹ In this picture, Late Bronze Age Northwest Semitic had two finite forms: a preterite *yaqtul* and a present-future *yaqtulu*, alongside a nonfinite stative *qatala*. A phonological change, the loss of final short vowels, led to a change in the verbal system as the two finite forms fell together. The role of *yaqtul* preterite was taken over by the formerly stative *qatala*, thus resulting in a new opposition exemplified in the Hebrew distinction between preterite *qātal* and present-future *yiqtol* (< **yaqtulu*). In prose, the syntactic role of **yaqtul* preterite was preserved in the grammaticalized form of “converted” and morphologically short *wayyiqtol* preterites, as well as in a few fixed phrases preceded by *ʿz* (e.g., Josh. 22:1), while in archaic poetry it was occasionally preserved intact.

Rather than this picture of a linear development from a Late Bronze Age Northwest Semitic verbal system, the system had variety from early on (cf. Moran’s analysis of the Byblos Canaano-Akkadian letters, where **qatala* forms already predominate for past narrative) and developed at different paces. The restricted presence of the converted *yqtl* preterites in Zakkur versus their wide use in Mesha and Deir ‘Alla suggests that (1) Zakkur is by far the more typologically developed text of the two oldest known Aramaic narratives (versus Tel Dan), but (2), while the rest of Aramaic did not develop in this direction, the Aramaic-related variety of Deir ‘Alla did, and that (3) the “converted” tense system of *wayyiqtol* preterites

47 E.g., Rainey 2003, 397. He points out that the Mesha inscription also has prefix forms with past reference but does not make sufficiently clear that they are never clause-initial in the main narrative (ibid., 403) and comprise part of a very different type of system from the Late Bronze Age set found in Ugaritic and many Canaano-Akkadian letters, on the one hand, or the typologically later one found in the Tel Dan inscription and some archaic Hebrew poems.

48 Labov 1994; 2001.

49 Smith 1991.

may be as much a southern areal feature as anything else, since its main attestations are in Jordan, Judah, and presumably Israel.

Two consequences are thus implied for the historical context of the most typologically archaic Hebrew texts: first, contrary to the strong form of Hurvitz's position, they do not represent a single, tightly defined stratum, for the nature and rate of change were different in different regions and even within a single language in different discourse types. Such typologically different contrasting verbal systems as the archaic prefix-preterite ~ suffix anterior (Aramaic, Tel Dan) and the somewhat more developed suffix-preterite and pragmatically marked converted prefix-preterite (Aramaic, Zakkur), within one language, as well as the significantly more developed converted-prefix preterite ~ suffix anterior (Moabite, Mesha), are all attested in different regions within the same fifty-year period.

But second, this shift in perspective gives us a more nuanced tool for connecting texts with linguistic history. What is historically meaningful is not just a set of forms but the set of *roles for* and *transitions in* their verbal usage, which we can correlate in the archaic Hebrew poems, and a set of changes attested in the Northwest Semitic inscriptions of the ninth to eighth centuries BCE. As much as their roots are documented in the Late Bronze Age, none of the actual archaic verbal systems we see in the Iron Age are attested previously. If the converted tense system is indeed a southern areal feature, with its most advanced, known, early representative in the Mesha inscription and a typologically earlier transitional combination in the Balaam Oracles, the more archaic features found in Deuteronomy 32, 2 Samuel 22, Exodus 15, and Judges 5, as well as the Old Aramaic narratives, stand in contrast. This suggests not a stratum but a spectrum for the most archaic Hebrew poetry: if the poems are placed closer to the more developed southern, Jordanian area of change, they would represent a stage prior to the late ninth century; if they are placed closer to the less developed northern, Syrian area of change, they would represent a stage spanning the late ninth and early eighth centuries.

A key goal of current and future research is to trace more precisely how Late Bronze Age verbal syntax changed into that of the first half of the first millennium.⁵⁰ Isolating the formally distinct verbal systems within the corpus of archaic Hebrew poems helps us look again at the Aramaic material and put it in the context of Late Bronze-to-Iron Age linguistic change. The primary stage of work, accomplished by Moran, Rainey, Smith, and others, required, at least for heuristic purposes, positing a single Northwest Semitic system with a single set of changes.⁵¹ But naturally we must move beyond this stage, for all human language is both cultural and historical artifact, where the fact of variety is not the end of analysis (as a trend in scholarship seems to argue) but the very thing we seek to understand. Indeed, this complex but *patterned and coherent* variety is not only a key way language use acquires social meaning, but also a way the *power* of language takes on a role in history.

50 Cf. Notarius 2013.

51 Though Rainey clearly acknowledged the more developed role of Byblian texts in this process, the most promising approach to Northwest Semitic variation in the Late Bronze Age is exemplified by Izre'el's (2003) careful attention to phonological differences implied in different local spellings in the Canaanite-Akkadian Amarna letters.

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PART 6 — COMPARATIVE SEMITICS

34

AN ARAMAIC COGNATE TO AKKADIAN *-iš*, HEBREW *-ʔ*,
AND UGARITIC *-h**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Already in 1954, E. A. Speiser argued for a connection between the Hebrew terminative ending *-ʔ* and its Ugaritic cognate *h*, on the one hand, and the Akkadian terminative ending *-iš*, on the other hand.¹ Ugaritic was an essential piece to this puzzle, because it showed that the Hebrew terminative ending *-ʔ* must have been originally consonantal and thus could not derive from the Semitic accusative ending **-a*, as it had previously been analyzed.² Speiser, however, did not see these forms as strictly cognate, since, for him, Akkadian *š* could not correspond to West Semitic *h*. Rather, Speiser argued that they derived from “the same set of morphemes,” viz., the third-person pronouns, which show the same distribution of *š* versus *h* in the respective languages, i.e., Akkadian *šû* versus Hebrew *hu* and Ugaritic *hw*. More recent research has, however, shown that the sound change **s > h* is typologically common and seems to have occurred in a number of West Semitic languages.³ Thus, many Semitists now accept that Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew *-ʔ*, and Ugaritic *-h* are cognate reflecting a common form in Proto-Semitic.⁴ An Aramaic cognate to these endings has, however, not yet been proposed in the secondary literature. In this study I argue that a cognate to Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew *-ʔ*, and Ugaritic *-h* is to be found in the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā*. I begin by looking at the relevant data in Akkadian (§2), Ugaritic (§3), and Hebrew (§4). I then discuss the Proto-Semitic reconstruction (§5). Only then do I turn to the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā* and its etymological connection with Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew *-ʔ*, and Ugaritic *-h* (§6).

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1 Throughout this paper, I use “terminative ending” as in Assyriology for what Hebraists will better know as, *inter alia*, “h-locale.” All references to Akkadian texts follow the abbreviation conventions of *CAD*.

2 See, e.g., Wright 1890, 141; Brockelmann 1908, 464; Kautzsch 1910, §90a.

3 As it turns out, a sound rule that Speiser (1954, 112) saw as “absolutely untenable” is well attested across languages (see Voigt 1987, 53–54). In fact, **s > h* is even used as an example of a cross-linguistically frequent sound change in an introductory textbook for historical linguistics (Campbell 2013, 113). This sound change is discussed in more detail in §5 below.

4 See, e.g., Al-Jallad 2015, 30; Diakonoff 1965, 58–59 with n. 8; Faber 1981, 254; Gensler 1997, 134–35; Hasselbach 2013, 21–22, 24, 33; Huehnergard 2004, 148; 2006, 11; Joüon and Muraoka 1991, §93c n. 1; Kogan 2011, 107; Rubin 2010a, 38; Tropper 2000, §54.311; *apud* Kienast 2001, 170; Voigt 1987, 61; 1995, 518 n. 4. The honoree of this Festschrift is among those who have expressed reservations about this connection (see Pardee 2003–4, 81, 189); his reservations are addressed in n. 38 below.

2. THE AKKADIAN TERMINATIVE ENDING *-iṣ*

In Akkadian, the terminative ending is usually realized as *-iṣ*.⁵ The terminative ending also seems to take the form *-aṣ* in the following words:⁶

- (1) *aḥrâtaṣ* “in the future” (CAD D 193) ← *aḥrâtu* “future” (CAD D 193–94)
dārûtaṣ “forever” (CAD D 118) ← *dārûtu* “eternity” (CAD D 118)
ṣîtaṣ “at the rising (of the sun), in the east” (CAD Ṣ 215) ← *ṣîtu* “rise, rising (of the sun), east” (CAD Ṣ 215–21)

These only seem to be attested in Standard Babylonian.

Akkadian *-iṣ* occurs most commonly with masculine singular nouns.⁷ It is, however, also found with feminine singular nouns, as in (2).

- (2) *šallatiṣ* “as booty” (CAD Š1 248)

In addition, it occasionally occurs with feminine plural nouns, as in (3).

- (3) *dāriātiṣ* “forever” (CAD D 112)

There are no attested cases of Akkadian *-iṣ* occurring with masculine plural nouns, in contrast to Ugaritic, as in (19), and Hebrew, as in (24).

The Akkadian terminative ending *-iṣ* is most often found on unbound forms of the noun. It can, however, also occur on the bound form of nouns, whether bound by another noun, as in (4), or by a pronominal suffix, as in (5).⁸

- (4) Old Akkadian
i-lî-iṣ URU^{KI}-*su-nu* /ʾilis ʾālīsunu/ “as god of their city” (Na 1 2: 24)
- (5) Old Akkadian
u-me-iṣ-sa /yūmissa/ “for her day” (MAD 5 8: 20)

Akkadian *-iṣ* can co-occur with the locative ending *-um*, in which case it is realized as *-šum*, as in the examples in (6):

- (6) Old Akkadian
*ki-ri-sum*₆ /kirīsum/ “into the garden” (MAD 5 8: 8)
*u-um-sum*₆ /yūmsu/ “daily” (Sa C2: 42; OB copy)

Akkadian *-iṣ* also co-occurs with the accusative ending *-am*, as in the examples in (7):

- (7) *ayyīṣam* “to where” (CAD A 234)
ullīṣam “to there” (CAD U/W 81)
ūmiṣam “daily” (CAD U/W 99–101)
warḥiṣam “monthly” (CAD A 258)

This ending *-iṣam* forms adverbs.⁹

5 In general, see Gelb 1969, 88–93; Gensler 1997; Groneberg 1978–79; Hasselbach 2005, 180–81; Kienast 2001, 170–71; Mayer 1995; von Soden 1995, §67.

6 Gelb 1969, 92–93; von Soden 1995, §67c.

7 Throughout this study, the category “noun” includes both substantives and adjectives.

8 Examples cited from Old Akkadian follow the system of Hasselbach 2005.

9 von Soden 1995, §67g; Huehnergard 2006, 11 n. 54.

The terminative ending *-iš* is found in Akkadian with nouns after prepositions, as in (8):

- (8) *ina labiriš* “for a long time” (CAD L 26)

This use is attested with the prepositions *ana* “to, for,” *ina* “in, on,” and *ištu* “from.”¹⁰

Akkadian *-iš* covers a semantic range similar to that of the preposition *ana* “to, for, toward.” Its most primitive function is marking direction toward, as illustrated in the example in (9):

- (9) Old Akkadian
a-ás-ḫi-id ki-rí-ís /ʾašḫiṭ kirīs/ “I jumped to the orchard” (MAD 5 8: 17)

The ending also occurs frequently with infinitives in Old Akkadian, as in (10), to express purpose:

- (10) Old Akkadian
gu-du-si-ís /quddusis/ “to consecrate” (Di 6: 11)

More rarely, the terminative ending *-iš* can have the semantics of a locative, as in (11):

- (11) *puḫriššun* “in their assembly”

This locative use is not attested in Old Akkadian.¹¹

The most common use of the terminative ending in Akkadian is to form qualitative adverbs from adjectives, and occasionally substantives, as in the examples in (12) from Old Akkadian:¹²

- (12) Old Akkadian
gi-ni-ís-ma /kēnisma/ “truly”
is-ti-ni-ís /ʾistēnis/ “together, jointly”
da-rí-ís /dāris/ “forever”
ar-ḫi-ís /ʾarḫis/ “quickly”
da-ni-ís /dannis/ “greatly”

From this adverbial use, the terminative ending *-iš* developed a comparative use, which is found in poetry after ca. 1300 BCE, as in the examples in (13):

- (13) *iliš* “like a God”
rīmāniš “like a wild bull”

The comparative use is a secondary development.¹³

Finally, a word needs to be said about the distribution of *-iš* in Akkadian. It is fully productive only in Old Akkadian. In later dialects, *-iš* continues to be productive only in forming adverbs. Its other uses, especially in the meaning “to,” are, however, restricted to a particular set of nouns after Old Akkadian.¹⁴

Forms related to the terminative ending *-iš* are found in the dative pronouns in Akkadian. Consider, for instance, the independent dative pronouns in Old Babylonian given in (14):

- | | | |
|------|---------------|----------------|
| (14) | SG | PL |
| 1C | <i>iyāšim</i> | <i>niāšim</i> |
| 2M | <i>kāšim</i> | <i>kunūšim</i> |
| 2F | <i>kāšim</i> | <i>kināšim</i> |

¹⁰ von Soden 1995, §67b.

¹¹ So Gensler 1997, 133; Hasselbach 2005, 181; contra von Soden 1995, §67a.

¹² See Hasselbach 2005, 181.

¹³ von Soden 1995, §67c; and esp. Hasselbach 2013, 21. This use seems to represent a grammaticalization of dative to comparative, a development that is well attested cross-linguistically (Heine and Kuteva 2002, 103, with additional references).

¹⁴ It should be noted that Akkadian *-iš* may also be productive with infinitives in early Old Babylonian (Whiting 1987, 11).

3M	<i>šuāšim</i>	<i>sunūšim</i>
3F	<i>šiāšim</i>	<i>šināšim</i>

Huehnergard argues that these forms represent an Akkadian inheritance from Proto-Semitic (and Afro-Asiatic).¹⁵ As per Huehnergard,¹⁶ these forms consist of the independent personal pronouns plus some form of the terminative ending (i.e., *š*) and a form related to the ventive (i.e., *m*). The exact derivation is discussed in further detail in §5 below.

Akkadian also has suffixed dative pronouns, the Old Babylonian forms of which are found in (15):

(15)	SG	PL
1C	<i>-am / -m / -im</i>	<i>-niāšim</i>
2M	<i>-kum</i>	<i>-kunūšim</i>
2F	<i>-kim</i>	<i>-kināšim</i>
3M	<i>-šum</i>	<i>-sunūšim</i>
3F	<i>-šim</i>	<i>-šināšim</i>

In contrast to the independent dative pronouns cited in (14), Huehnergard argues that these suffixed dative pronouns are East Semitic innovations. He proposes that this development began with the first common singular forms, which are the same as those of the ventive ending. Thus a ventive **yaṭrudū-nim* “they sent (+ allative)” was at some point reanalyzed as “they sent to me,”¹⁷ which would have led to the contrast in (16):

(16) **yaṭrudū-nī* “they sent me” : **yaṭrudū-nim* “they sent to me”

The singular dative forms could then be built analogically on this contrast:

(17) *-nī* : *-nim* :: *-šū* : *X* = *-šum*, etc.

The plural forms, in contrast, were created by suffixing the independent plural forms listed above in (14).

3. THE UGARITIC TERMINATIVE ENDING *-H*

In Ugaritic, the terminative ending is a final *-h*.¹⁸ This *h* cannot be a *mater lectionis*; it must be consonantal.¹⁹ Little else can be said about the phonology of the form in Ugaritic based on internal evidence.²⁰ It should, however, be noted that the terminative ending does occur in Ugaritic after the following nouns, which likely ended in a vowel:

(18) *bbth* “at Bibitta” (RS 24.244:31)
mrh “to Mari” (RS 24.244:78)

Pardee uses these forms as evidence for reconstructing the terminative ending without a vowel before the consonant, i.e., Ugaritic *-ha*.²¹ This proposal will be discussed in more detail in §5 and §7 below.

15 Huehnergard 2006, 11–12. This argument is against his earlier opinion in Huehnergard and Woods 2004, 249, where such forms are considered to be an East Semitic innovation.

16 Huehnergard 2006, 11 n. 53.

17 Ibid., 12. For the Akkadian ventive as marking the allative, or direction toward, see Kouwenberg 2002.

18 In general, see Aartun 1974, 40–43; Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 59; Pardee 2000b, 57–58; 2003–4, 80–82, 189; Tropper 2000, 320–25.

19 It should be noted that Tropper (2000, §54.315.2) claims the terminative ending can be written in Ugaritic without the consonantal *h*. Pardee (2003–4, 190) is, however, correct to criticize this argument.

20 Pardee (2003–4, 80) and Bordreuil and Pardee (2009, 59) assume there was a vocalic element after the *h*, which they give as *a*. Tropper, in contrast, vocalizes the Ugaritic as */āh/* (2000, 320). The long vowel is, however, impossible since it would give **ō* in Hebrew due to the Canaanite shift (so already Pardee 2003–4, 80).

21 Pardee 2003–4, 189; see also idem 2000b, 57–58, and Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 59.

The Ugaritic terminative ending *-h* occurs on singular forms, as in Akkadian, but unlike Akkadian it is also found on masculine plural nouns, where it is sequenced after mimation, as is illustrated in (19):

- (19) *šmmh* “to the heavens”

Unlike in Hebrew and Akkadian, the terminative ending is not attested in construct in Ugaritic.²² It does, however, seem to occur after a preposition, as is illustrated in (20):

- (20) *l ʿnt ʿh* “to ‘Anatu” (RS 1.005:13)²³

This construction can be compared with the Akkadian example in (8) and the Hebrew ones in (27) and (28).

The most common function of the Ugaritic terminative ending *-h* is direction toward. This occurs most often with locations, as in the example in (21):

- (21) Ugaritic Kirta

(28) *tntkn . ūdm ʿth* (29) *km . tqlm . ʾrṣh* (30) *km ḥmšt . mṯth*

“His tears pour forth // like shekels **to the ground** // like five (shekel weights) **to the bed**”

(CAT 1.14:I:28–30)

This function seems to be productive in Ugaritic. More rarely, the terminative ending in Ugaritic can indicate direction toward a time:

- (22) Ugaritic Šaḥru wa-Šalimu

(42) *ā[t] ʿt ʿm . ātt . il . ātt . il . w . ʾlmh . . .* (45) *. . . btm . bt . il . bt . il* (46) *w ʾlmh . . .*

“The two women will be the wives of ʾIlu // the wives of ʾIlu **forever** . . . the two daughters will be the daughters of ʾIlu // the daughters of ʾIlu **forever** . . .” (CAT 1.23:42, 45–46)

The temporal use of the terminative ending is, however, only attested with *ʾlmh* “forever” in Ugaritic.²⁴

In addition to the directional uses, the terminative ending *-h* occurs with an adverbial use in Ugaritic,²⁵ as in the example in (23).

- (23) Ugaritic Drunkenness of ʾIlu

(31ʿ) *yšt ʾāhdh . dm zt . ḥr ʿp ʾāt*

“One is to put (this) **together** with olive oil of Autumn (reading *ḥrpn*)” (CAT 1.114: 31ʿ)

This adverbial use of *-h* is attested only with *ʾāhdh* (CAT 1.71:10, 25; 1.49:5), as well as possibly with the related *hapax legomenon yḥdh* (CAT 1.175:12).

4. THE HEBREW TERMINATIVE ENDING -ֿ

In Biblical Hebrew, the terminative ending takes the form of a final unstressed *-ֿ*, which is written in the consonantal text with *h* as a *mater lectionis*.²⁶ As stated in the Introduction above (§1), this final *-ֿ* was traditionally analyzed as a remnant of the accusative ending **-a*.²⁷ The discovery and decipherment of Ugaritic, however, showed that the final *-h* in Hebrew must have been originally consonantal. That is, the terminative ending must have at one time been **-ah* in Hebrew. By the time of the Masoretes, however, **-ah* had developed into *-ֿ* with the *h* functioning as a *mater lectionis*.

²² Tropper 2000, §54.314.

²³ With comments in Pardee 1995; 2000a, 247–48.

²⁴ For other occurrences of *ʾlmh* “forever,” see CAT 1.19:III:48, 55; 1.19:IV:6.

²⁵ Tropper 2000, §§54.313, 54.323d.

²⁶ In general, see Hoftijzer 1981; Joüon and Muraoka 1991, 278–82; Kautzsch 1910, §90a–i; Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 185–86.

²⁷ See n. 2 above.

In Hebrew, the terminative ending *-k* is most common with singular forms.²⁸ It can, however, also occur on masculine plural nouns ending in *-im*,²⁹ as in (24), and on seemingly “dual” nouns ending in *-ayim*,³⁰ as in (25).

(24) כְּשַׁדִּימָה *kašdim* “to the Chaldeans” (Ezek. 11:24)

(25) מִצְרַיִם *miṣrayim* “to Egypt” (Gen. 12:10)

These forms can be compared with the Ugaritic example in (19).

Hebrew *-k* occurs most often on unbound forms of the noun. It can, however, also occur on nouns in construct,³¹ as in (26):

(26) בֵּיתָה יוֹסֵף *bet* *yosef* “into the house of Joseph” (Gen. 43:17)

This construction can be compared with the Akkadian examples in (4) and (5).

The Hebrew terminative ending can occur after a preposition,³² as in (27) and (28):

(27) הִנֵּה כָּלִי בֵּית־יְהוָה מוֹשְׁבִים מִבְּבֶלָה עֹתָה מִהֲרָה

hinne kle bet-YHWH mušḥim mibbēlā ‘attō mherō

“the vessels of the house of the LORD will be brought back from Babylon now quickly”

(Jer. 27:16)

(28) וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי אֶל־פֶּתַח שַׁעַר בֵּית־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר אֶל־הַצִּפּוֹנָה

wayyōbe’ ‘otī ‘el-peṭaḥ ša‘ar bet-YHWH ‘āšer ‘el-haššōpōnō

“He brought me to the opening of the door of the house of the LORD which was toward the north” (Ezek. 8:14)

These examples can be compared with the Akkadian example in (8) and the Ugaritic example in (20).

The Hebrew terminative ending most frequently expresses direction toward, as in (29):

(29) הָבֵא אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים הַבָּיְתָה

hōbe’ ‘et-hō‘ānāšim habbaytā

“Bring these men into the house” (Gen. 43:16)

Like Ugaritic, the Hebrew terminative ending can indicate direction toward a time, as in (30):

(30) וְשָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת־הַחֻקָּה הַזֹּאת לְמוֹעֵדָה מִיָּמִים יְמִימָה

wšmartō ‘et-haḥuqqō hazzot lmo‘ādōh miyyōmim yōmimō

“You should keep this commandment in its time from year to year” (Exod. 13:10)

Rarely, the Hebrew terminative ending has a locative function, as in (31):

(31) וְהִקְטַרְתָּ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ

whiqṭartō hammizbeḥō

“and you should make (it) smoke on the altar” (Exod. 29:13)

Even more rarely, the terminative ending seems to function adverbially in Hebrew, as in (32):

²⁸ Hoftijzer 1981, 19–59.

²⁹ Ibid., 99–104.

³⁰ Ibid., 95–98.

³¹ Ibid., 63–79.

³² Ibid., 60–62, 80–94, 99–104, 132–37.

(32) וְגַם-אֶמְנָה אָחִתִּי בַת-אָבִי הִוא
 wgam-’*amn* ’*ahoti bat-’abi hu*

“and truly she is my sister” (Gen. 20:12; see also Josh. 7:20)

In this example, ’*amn* “truly (< in truth)” approaches an adverbial function (and so it is glossed in BDB) similar to its more frequently occurring cognate ’*amn* “truly.”³³ The adverbial function of the terminative ending is, however, very rare in Hebrew.³⁴

5. THE PROTO-SEMITIC POSTPOSITION TERMINATIVE PARTICLE *-*S*¹A

Before proceeding to the Aramaic data, it is necessary to dwell for a moment on the reconstruction of the Proto-Semitic form. A good place to begin is with what exactly is being reconstructed. Citing Hebrew *mišraym* “to Egypt” in (25) and Ugaritic *šmmh* “to the heavens” in (19), Pardee has argued that the Hebrew and Ugaritic terminative endings cannot be case markers since they occur after mimation and therefore after the case and number marking in both languages.³⁵ Similarly, a number of scholars, including Goldenberg, Hasselbach, and Huehnergard,³⁶ prefer to see Akkadian *iš* as an adverbial marker, not a case marker.³⁷ One piece of evidence for this view is that Akkadian *-iš* can be combined with the case endings, albeit in a different order from that in Hebrew and Ugaritic, as is illustrated by the forms with *-išam* in (7). Thus the Proto-Semitic etymon of Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew -וְ, and Ugaritic *-h* should be reconstructed as a postposition particle, not as a case ending.³⁸

How, then, should this Proto-Semitic postposition particle be reconstructed? I begin with the consonant. As is well known, there are a number of places where *š* in Akkadian corresponds to *h* in West Semitic. These correspondences are outlined in the table in (33):

(33)	3.M.SG independent personal pronoun	3.F.SG independent personal pronoun	3.M.SG C-stem suffix conjugation	3.M.SG C-stem prefix conjugation	terminative ending	conditional particle
Akkadian	<i>šû</i>	<i>ši</i>	<i>šaprus</i>	<i>yušapris</i>	<i>-iš</i>	<i>šum</i>
Gəʿəz	<i>wəʾtu</i>	<i>yəʾti</i>	<i>ʾäfʾalä</i>	<i>yafʾäl</i>	<i>(-ha)</i>	<i>ʾəm</i>
Mehri	<i>hē</i>	<i>sē</i>	<i>harkūb</i>	<i>yəharkəb</i>		<i>hām</i>
Sabaic	<i>hʾ, hwʾ</i>	<i>hʾ</i>	<i>hfʾl</i>	<i>yhfʾl</i>		<i>hm</i>
Minaic	<i>sʾw</i>	<i>sʾyt</i>	<i>sʾpʾl</i>	<i>ysʾfʾl</i>		<i>hmw</i>
Arabic	<i>huwa</i>	<i>hiya</i>	<i>ʾafʾala</i>	<i>yufʾilu</i>		<i>ʾin</i>

33 See Joüon and Muraoka 1991, 281.

34 It should, however, be noted that the terminative ending also occurs in Hebrew with certain adverbial particles, such as *maʿl* “upward.”

35 Pardee 2003–4, 189; see also Pardee 2000b, 57–58; Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 59.

36 Goldenberg 2013, 146; Hasselbach 2013, 21–22; Huehnergard 2000, 311; see also Huehnergard 2006, 11 n. 54.

37 Cf. also the following statement concerning Akkadian by Huehnergard and Woods (2004, 243): “It is not clear whether the terminative and the locative represent vestigial case markers or adverbial formatives.”

38 Similarly Hasselbach 2013, 71; contra Gensler 1997, 135, 143. Pardee (2003–4, 81, 189) has expressed reservations about the etymological connection of Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew -וְ, and Ugaritic *-h* primarily on the basis that Gelb (1969, 91) saw the former as a case ending, whereas Pardee is convinced that the latter two cannot be such. As argued above, however, Akkadian *-iš* is likely a postposition particle just as Hebrew -וְ and Ugaritic *-h* are.

Ugaritic	<i>hw</i>	<i>hy</i>	<i>šp^l</i>	<i>yšp^l</i>	<i>-h</i>	<i>hm, im</i>
Hebrew	<i>hu</i>	<i>hi</i>	<i>hip^l</i>	<i>yṗ^l</i>	<i>-ḥ</i>	<i>im</i>
Aramaic	<i>*hū</i>	<i>*hī</i>	<i>*hap^l</i>	<i>*yVhap^l</i>	<i>*-ā</i>	<i>*in</i>

Various attempts have been made to explain this distribution.³⁹ There is, however, a growing consensus that the most economical solution is a sound rule of **s^l > h* in (some of) the West Semitic languages.⁴⁰ One of the problems with this rule is the conditioning environment. Voigt, for instance, proposed that **s^l* went to *h* in West Semitic except in roots and in the CT stems.⁴¹ This proposal (partly) explains the distribution of *š* and *h* in the Table in (33), but it is not a valid sound rule, at least not according to the neogrammarians, since it refers to conditioning factors outside phonology.⁴²

Huehnergard, in contrast, proposes that the **s^l > h* sound rule operates only in prevocalic position.⁴³ He, however, must appeal to “root integrity” to explain all the cases in which the rule does not operate—and these cases are in fact the majority. That is, with the root *√s^lm^c* “to hear,” this sound rule should have resulted in a third masculine singular suffix conjugation **hami^ca* (< **s^lami^ca*), whereas the third masculine singular prefix conjugation would have remained **yis^lma^c*, since **s^l* was not prevocalic.⁴⁴ According to Huehnergard, “paradigm pressure” blocked the operation of the sound rule, and thus **s^lami^ca* is found instead of expected ***hami^ca*.

Al-Jallad has criticized Huehnergard’s proposed prevocalic conditioning environment and especially his appeal to “paradigm pressure” on the basis that it cannot account for certain isolated nouns, such as **s^lamāy-* “sky,” **s^lidṭ-* “six,” and **s^lab-* “seven.”⁴⁵ According to Al-Jallad, if the conditioning environment was prevocalic, the sound rule would have obtained in all forms of such words, and there would not have been any forms by which **s^l* could be preserved/restored through “paradigm pressure” (in contrast to forms such as **yis^lma^c* discussed above). Nevertheless, as Fox has established, isolated nouns do not exist in a synchronic analysis of any Semitic language, since roots can be extracted from such nouns in all the daughter languages.⁴⁶ Thus, denominative roots—the existence of which Al-Jallad does not deny⁴⁷—could perhaps have motivated the preservation of **s^l* in isolated nouns in which the **s^l > h* rule would have otherwise operated. Al-Jallad also criticizes Huehnergard’s appeal to “paradigm pressure” on the basis that in the case of isolated nouns much more common forms would have been leveled to a marginal form. This observation is of course true. It should, however, be noted that the leveling of a common form to a marginal form is indisputably attested cross-linguistically.⁴⁸ Thus, despite Al-Jallad’s criticisms, Huehnergard’s proposed prevocalic conditioning environment for the **s^l > h* rule remains viable, at least for this author.

39 For brief histories of research, see Al-Jallad 2015, 27–29; Gensler 1997, 135; Kogan 2011, 107; Voigt 1987, 50–53.

40 Proto-Semitic **s^l/s/* in this paper corresponds to traditional **š* (for this reconstruction, see Cantineau 1951; Faber 1981; 1985; Steiner 1977; 1982; Voigt 1979; 1992).

41 Voigt 1987.

42 So also Al-Jallad 2015, 28.

43 Huehnergard 2006, 7–8.

44 This example derives from Rubin 2010a, 28.

45 Al-Jallad 2015, 28–29. For isolated nouns in Semitic (also called primary nouns), see Fox 1998; 2003, 61–87.

46 Fox 2003, 60, and with more detail Fox 1998.

47 Al-Jallad 2015, 28.

48 To take just one example, the third masculine plural is much more common in Semitic than the third feminine plural, since any group containing at least one male defaults to masculine. Nevertheless, the inherited *y-* prefix of the third masculine plural prefix conjugation was leveled to the *t-* prefix of the third feminine plural prefix conjugation in Ugaritic as well as in an Old Akkadian incantation from Kish (Westenholz 1978, 165 nn. 49, 50), in Mari documents from the *šakkanakku* period (for attestations, see Limet 1975, 48; 1976; Durand 1982, 81–86; for discussion, see Westenholz 1978, 165 with nn. 49 and 50; Edzard 1985; Rainey 1996, 26–28; Hasselbach 2004, 24 with n. 8), and in several dialects of Peripheral Akkadian, including the Akkadian of Ugarit (Huehnergard 1989, 160) and the canaanizing Amarna letters (Moran 1951 [= Moran 2003, 159–64]; Izre’el 1987; Rainey 1996, 43–45).

In response to Huehnergard, Al-Jallad proposes a different conditioning environment for the $*s' > h$ rule.⁴⁹ According to Al-Jallad, the $*s' > h$ rule operated at word boundaries, which would have resulted in asymmetry for many of the forms listed in the table in (33).⁵⁰ The third masculine singular C-stem suffix conjugation in West Semitic, for instance, would have undergone the $*s' > h$ sound change, thereby giving $*hap'ila$ ($< *s'ap'ila$), whereas the prefix conjugation would not have done so, thus leaving $*yus'ap'il$ unchanged. Many of the resulting asymmetries would, then, have been leveled in the individual languages. Aramaic, for instance, would have leveled the $*h$ -causative throughout, thereby giving $*hap'il \sim *yVhap'il$, whereas Ugaritic would have leveled the $*s'$ -causative, thus giving $\check{s}p'l \sim y\check{s}p'l$. To account for the many nouns and verbs where the $*s' > h$ rule did not operate even though at a word boundary, Al-Jallad refers to analogical “paradigm pressure.” A noun such as $*s'āmi$ - “the one who hears,” for instance, would have frequently been preceded by proclitic prepositions, so there would have been environments where s' was not in word-boundary position enabling its preservation analogically. The same would be true for nouns with a C_3 of $*s'$, where C_3 would not be in word-boundary position when the noun was bound, either by another noun or an enclitic personal pronoun. Similarly, verbs with a C_1 or C_3 of $*s'$ would occur in many forms in which C_1 or C_3 was not at a word boundary thereby enabling the retention of $*s'$. Thus Al-Jallad—like Huehnergard—appeals to a number of analogical developments to explain the attested data. In my view, both Huehnergard and Al-Jallad propose viable conditioning environments for the $*s' > h$ rule. Despite the uncertainties that remain over its exact conditioning environment, this sound rule of $*s' > h$ remains the best way to account for the distribution of \check{s} and h in the forms in (33).

Setting aside the reconstruction of the consonant, we can now turn to the reconstruction of the vowel(s). If Huehnergard's proposed conditioning environment of the $*s' > h$ rule as prevocalic is accepted,⁵¹ then a vowel must be reconstructed after the consonant. This vowel would have to be either $*a$ or $*u$ (but not $*i$), since the final vowel was lost already in Old Akkadian where final $*i$ remains. One potential datum of evidence in favor of $*a$ is $Gə'əz$ -*ha*, which is used as an accusative marker on proper nouns and may well be cognate with Akkadian -*iš*, Hebrew -ָ, and Ugaritic -*h*.⁵² The pivot for the development of a directional marker into a more general accusative case ending in $Gə'əz$ can be found with verbs of motion. Verbs of motion in $Gə'əz$ can govern an accusative, as in the example in (34).

(34) *ḥor bet-ā samnan*

“Go to the house of Samnan” (Isa. 22:15)⁵³

When used with verbs of motion, an original terminative ending could have been reanalyzed as an accusative. The following sentence illustrates this pivot:

(35) *wāḥorā xabā nāgušā fəlāsṭ'em gerare-ha xabā 'abemelek*

“He went to the king of the Philistines, to Gerar, to Abimelech” (Jub. 24:8)⁵⁴

Here an original terminative ending -*ha* in *gerare-ha* could have been reanalyzed as an accusative, given the use of the accusative with verbs of motion, as was illustrated in (34). Once reanalyzed as an accusative marker, the ending -*ha* could then be extended to contexts outside verbs of motion. If the connection between $Gə'əz$ -*ha* and Akkadian -*iš*, Hebrew -ָ, and Ugaritic -*h* is accepted, then a final short $*a$ should be

49 Al-Jallad actually proposes two different possible conditioning environments. The first one is discussed above in the main text. Al-Jallad's second proposed conditioning environment is $*s' > h$ when intervocalic. This proposal is more a refinement of Huehnergard's argument discussed above than an entirely new conditioning environment. In addition, since Al-Jallad (2015, 37) himself prefers his first proposal, the second proposal is not discussed further in this study.

50 Ibid., 29–35.

51 Or Al-Jallad's second proposed conditioning environment of intervocalic (see n. 49 above).

52 This etymological connection was already made by Aartun (1974, 40) and Huehnergard (*apud* Al-Jallad 2015, 36).

53 Ed. Bachmann 1893. The Greek *Vorlage* reads πορεύου εἰς τὸ παστοφόριον, πρὸς Σομνᾶν τὸν ταμίαν “Go to the small chamber, to Somnas the treasurer,” with the prepositions εἰς “into” and πρὸς “to, toward.”

54 VanderKam 1989.

reconstructed after **sʰ*.⁵⁵ The reconstruction of this final vowel should, however, remain tentative, since it is based on limited evidence: a disputed sound rule and a Gəʿəz form that may not ultimately be cognate.⁵⁶

Only the vowel before the consonant remains to be discussed. Tropper has argued for reconstructing the vowel as **a*, which would account for Hebrew -ʿ < **-ah*.⁵⁷ He explains the *i* in Akkadian -iš by a sound rule in Akkadian whereby **a* > *i* / _š citing the preposition *ištu* as another example of this rule. Many counterexamples can, however, be found to this proposed sound rule, such as *ilbaš* “he dressed,” *ilabbaš* “he is dressed,” etc. (CAD L 34). Huehnergard, in contrast, reconstructs the vowel before the consonant as **i*, as is attested in Akkadian -iš, and argues that this unaccented **i* was lowered in Hebrew to **a* due to the guttural *h* (< **sʰ*).⁵⁸ This sound rule is well established in Hebrew and attested in other forms, such as **mazbiḥ* > **maz-baḥ* > *mizbaḥ* “altar of” (construct).⁵⁹ So, Huehnergard’s reconstruction of **isa* presents a better alternative to Tropper’s. I return to Huehnergard’s proposal in the conclusion to this study (§7).

A different solution has been proposed by Pardee, who sees this problem as one of segmentation.⁶⁰ That is, whereas Tropper and Huehnergard understand the vowel to the left of **sʰ* to belong to the terminative particle, Pardee argues that it does not. In support of this argument, he cites Ugaritic forms that would have ended in a vowel such as *bbt-h* “to Bibitta” and *mrh* “to Mari” in (18), as well as *šmm-h* / *šamīma-ha* in (19). Pardee wonders how a terminative ending that begins with a vowel would be attached to such words that end in a vowel.

To frame the question in a slightly different way, in a Hebrew word such as **kašdīmah* > *kašdimā* “to the Chaldeans” in (24), it seems obvious that the right-most **a* could be the final vowel of the plural morpheme **-īma* and not part of the terminative ending. Why then are we so quick to assume that the same is not true of forms on singular nouns such as Hebrew **ʾaršah* > *ʾaršō* “to the earth”? Couldn’t the **a* before the **h* actually be the accusative case ending? It is not enough to say that a form such as *kašdimā*, where the terminative particle is added to a masculine plural noun, represents a secondary development in Hebrew, since similar examples are found in Ugaritic, as in (19). In addition, the terminative ending is found on feminine plural nouns in Akkadian, as in (3), even if it is not found on masculine plural nouns in that language. The use of the terminative ending with plural nouns is probably, then, a Proto-Semitic feature, and thus forms such as Hebrew *kašdimā* cannot be so easily dismissed.

Pardee’s argument can be further bolstered by looking at the independent dative pronouns in Akkadian, the paradigm of which is repeated here from (14) above:

55 Gəʿəz -*ha* can derive from **-ha* (and not **-hā*) given the rule **a* > *a* / G_, where G = {ʿ, ʾ, h, ḥ, x} (for this rule, see Lambdin 1978, 15–16; Tropper 2002, 37).

56 Al-Jallad (2015, 34–35) has proposed that the Mehri preposition *ha-* (his transcription), along with its presumed Hadramitic cognate *h-* as well as other cognates in the Modern South Arabian languages, is a reflex of the “unbound form” of the Proto-Semitic terminative ending. (What seems to be a preposition *iš* in the Akkadian of Mari [CAD I/J 222] could potentially be added as a cognate. For attestations of the Akkadian form with full discussion and literature, see Gensler 1997.) Al-Jallad’s proposed etymology is, however, not without difficulties: (1) How a postposition particle and a preposition could be related etymologically remains unexplained (so even Al-Jallad 2015, 34–35). It should be noted that Gensler (1997) has argued in detail that such a relationship is unlikely—if not impossible—in Semitic. (2) The Jibbali cognate to the Mehri preposition is *her* “to, for” (Rubin 2014, 243–46). The final *r* of Jibbali *her* would need to be secondary for Al-Jallad’s etymology to work; unfortunately, the historical phonology of the Modern South Arabian languages is not well enough understood to confirm that this is the case. Finally, even if Al-Jallad’s proposed etymology is accepted, a possibility I do not want to rule out, the Mehri preposition is not *ha-* as given by Al-Jallad, but it is *h-* either without a vowel or with *schwa* as given by Rubin (2010b, 184–87). Thus, even if it is ultimately cognate with the Proto-Semitic terminative ending, the Mehri preposition *h-* does not provide any evidence for the reconstruction of a final **a* after **sʰ*.

57 Tropper 2000, 320.

58 *Apud* Al-Jallad 2015, 31 n. 7.

59 It should be noted that the **i* must be unaccented; the accented form yields *mizbeaḥ* < **mizbiḥ* < **mazbiḥ-*.

60 Pardee 2003–4, 80–81, 189.

(36) = (14)

	SG	PL
1C	<i>iyâšim</i>	<i>niāšim</i>
2M	<i>kâšim</i>	<i>kunūšim</i>
2F	<i>kâšim</i>	<i>kināšim</i>
3M	<i>šūāšim</i>	<i>sunūšim</i>
3F	<i>šiāšim</i>	<i>šināšim</i>

As Huehnergard notes, these forms can be derived from the independent personal pronouns plus some form of the terminative ending (i.e., *š*) and a form related to the ventive (i.e., *m*). He suggests the following derivation:

- (37) “Thus, formally, a form such as *šūāšim* may be derived from **suʔā + isa + -m*, with loss of the *i* of **-isa* and dissimilation of the final *-a* of **isa* after the preceding *ā*; the final *-m* is presumably connected with the ventive marker in some way.”⁶¹

Particularly relevant for the point being made here is Huehnergard’s remark about the “loss of *i*” in the terminative ending: note this loss is entirely unexplained. A more straightforward derivation would suggest a reconstruction of the terminative ending without a vowel, as in (38):

- (38) **sʰuʔā + sʰa + m > *sʰuʔāsʰam > *sʰuʔāsʰim > šūāšim*

If the terminative ending is reconstructed without a vowel, then the vowel between the noun and the postposition particle can be explained as a case ending, following Pardee. In Hebrew, this vowel would reflect the accusative case followed by a postposition adverbial particle.⁶² Akkadian *-iš*, in contrast, would be the genitive case ending, perhaps because the terminative particle governed this case in this language. Also, the Akkadian examples with *-aš*, given in (1), could, like the Hebrew form, be explained as the accusative case plus the terminative ending. Thus it is proposed that the Proto-Semitic postposition particle be reconstructed as **-sʰa*.⁶³

Finally, a word needs to be said about the semantics of this particle. In Proto-Semitic, its primary function seems to have been to mark direction toward. This use is found in Akkadian, as in (9), in Ugaritic, as in (21), and in Hebrew, as in (29). This sense of direction could be used both with regard to location as well as time. In addition, already in Proto-Semitic the ending seems to have developed into a more general adverbial marker, since this use is found commonly in Old Akkadian, as in (12), as well as rarely in both Ugaritic, as in (23), and Hebrew, as in (32). It should be noted that the development of motion to manner adverbializers is common cross-linguistically.⁶⁴

6. THE ARAMAIC ADVERBIAL ENDING **-Ā*

With the broader Semitic situation now laid out, it is possible to turn to Aramaic. In Aramaic, adverbs can be formed in two basic ways. The first and by far more common is from the *status absolutus* form of nouns. Two examples from Achaemenid Aramaic, the first masculine and the second feminine, are given in (39) and (40):

- (39) Achaemenid Aramaic (late fifth century BCE)

šgyʰ hdyt

“I rejoiced **abundantly**” (*TAD* A3.5:2)

⁶¹ Huehnergard 2006, 11 n. 53.

⁶² Cf. the following statement by Pardee (2003–4, 82): “It appears necessary to posit that the accusative case functioned as the adverbial case in West Semitic; that the deictic morpheme /h(V)/ affixed to such forms in Ugaritic and Hebrew marked this function more explicitly.”

⁶³ It should be noted that Diakonoff (1965, 58) already reconstructed the ending without a vowel to the left of the sibilant.

⁶⁴ See Gensler 2000, 252–54.

- (40) Achaemenid Aramaic (459/460 BCE)

lhn byt' znk l' šlyt 'nt lzbñh wlmntn **rḥmt** l'ḥrnn

"But, as for that house, you do not have authority to sell (it) or to give (it) as a gift to others" (TAD B2.4:6–7)

The feminine singular form in (40) is especially marked since it *prima facie* looks like a feminine singular *status constructus*. It is, however, in fact an archaic feminine singular *status absolutus*. The adverbial use of the feminine singular *status absolutus* also occurs with nouns with the *nisba* suffix *-āy*, as in (41):⁶⁵

- (41) Achaemenid Aramaic (late fifth century BCE)

lhn **gnby**t 'bdn

"But, they act **like thieves**" (TAD A4.2:5)

These forms from Achaemenid Aramaic continue to be productive in many later dialects of Aramaic. In Syriac, for instance, all these forms are found. Syriac equivalents to (39) and (40) are given in (42) and (43), respectively:

- (42)
- Book of the Laws of the Countries*
- (ca. 220 CE)

hōlen d'emart **ṭḥ** šappirin

"These things that you have said are **very** proper" (14.19)⁶⁶

- (43) Ephrem (d. 373 CE),
- Hymns on Nisibis*

ʿnōk ḥzōt deḥe whō gō'gō **rabbāt**

"Your flock saw the wolves, and behold it cries out **greatly**" (4.6)⁶⁷

The Syriac equivalent of the form in (41), that is, the feminine singular *status absolutus* of nouns with the *nisba* suffix *-āy*, is the relatively common adverbial ending *-ō'it*.⁶⁸ So the most common way to derive adverbs in Aramaic is through the *status absolutus* form of nouns.

A second, rarer way in which adverbs are derived in Aramaic is with the ending **-ā*. It is this ending **-ā* that I propose should be connected with Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew *-ā*, and Ugaritic *-h*. In Biblical Aramaic, this ending **-ā* is realized as unaccented *-ā*, as in the following example:

- (44) Biblical Aramaic

וַתִּתְּנוּנָא אֶזְהָ יִתְּרָא

w'attunnō 'eze **yattirō**

"The furnace was made **exceedingly** hot" (Dan. 3:22; see also 7:7)

The word *yattirō* (< **yattirā*) here functions as a qualitative adverb meaning "greatly, exceedingly." Note that *yattirō* cannot easily be analyzed as a feminine singular *status absolutus* adjective or as a masculine singular *status emphaticus* adjective: in either case, for instance, what would it be modifying? It also cannot be analyzed as the adverbial use of the feminine singular *status absolutus* adjective, since this use preserves the archaic *-t*, as in (40), (41), and (43). Another example of the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā* is given in (45):

- (45) Biblical Aramaic

וַתִּמְרִין לְמַלְכָּא יַעֲיָבָא מְלָכָא

w'mrin lmalkō **yaṣṣibō** malkō

"They said to the king, '**Certainly**, king'" (Dan. 3:24)

65 Cf. also *mšryt* "in Egyptian" (TAD B3.7:5) and *rmyt* "in Aramaic" (TAD B2.11:4, 6).

66 Ed. Drijvers 1965.

67 Ed. Beck 1961.

68 Butts 2010.

The adverb here is *yaššib* (< **yaššibā*), and it is given in response to the question, “Did we not cast three men into the fire bound?” (הֲלֹא גִבְרִין תְּלִיתָהּ רָמִינָא לְגֹא־נֹרָא מְכַפְתִּין) ⁶⁹ Both *yattir* and *yaššib*, then, are qualitative adverbs derived with a final unaccented -ו from adjectives. ⁷⁰

This same adverbial ending *-ā occurs with a directional force in Biblical Aramaic, as in (46):

(46) Biblical Aramaic

וּבְתִרְךָ תְּקוּם מַלְכוּ אֲחֵרִי אֲרַעָא (אַרְע) מִנְךָ
ubṭrčk tqum malku ʾḥṣri ʾrʿ (ʾāraʿ) minnək

“After you, another kingdom **inferior** to you will arise” (Dan. 2:39)

There is a *Ketiv-Qere* issue here. The *Qere* is for ʾāraʿ (i.e., *status absolutus*), but the *Ketiv* is for ʾarʿ. Thus the word in the consonantal text has the ending *-ā to derive an adverb meaning “below” or “inferior” < “toward the earth.” The *Qere* of ʾāraʿ, in contrast, exchanges the adverbial ending *-ā for an adverbial formation with the *status absolutus*. The same directional semantics are found with the ending *-ā in Achaemenid Aramaic, as in the example in (47).

(47) Achaemenid Aramaic (420 BCE)

[wšlytʾ] ʾnty bhn lmnsq ʾlʾ wlmnht wlmnpq **brʾ**

“You [have the right] with them to go up, to go down, or to go **out**” (TAD B3.7:13–14)

Here the noun **barr*- “outside” occurs with a final *aleph*, which derives a directional form meaning “to the outside.”

In each of these cases, then, a final *-ā, which is marked with a *mater lectionis* of ʾ, is used to derive an adverb from a noun. Several of these adverbs are directional, as in **barrā* “to the outside” and *ʾarʿā “inferior” (< to the earth), whereas others are qualitative, as in **yattirā* “exceedingly” and **yaššibā* “certainly.”

Before locating this Aramaic adverbial ending *-ā within its broader Semitic context, it is necessary to look at a few more possible examples involving *koll*. The word *koll*, usually written *klʾ* (and possibly rarely as *klh*), occurs several times in Biblical Aramaic ⁷¹ as well as a number of times in Achaemenid Aramaic (ca. thirty-five times). ⁷² Fitzmyer has argued that all cases of *koll* should be analyzed as the substantive **kull*- “all, every” in the *status emphaticus*. ⁷³ This analysis indeed seems likely for some cases, as in the following example:

(48) *klʾ zy ʾbyd ln ʾršm lʾ ydʿ*

“Aršam did not know **all** that was done to us” (TAD A4.8:29)

In this example, *klʾ* is probably best analyzed as a noun “all” modified by the following relative clause. The interpretation of other cases of *koll* is not, however, as clear. Consider, for instance, the following example:

(49) Achaemenid Aramaic (late fifth century BCE)

wmndʿ[m] ʾḥrn zy lqht klʾ htb hb lmspt

“Any other thing that you took, **klʾ**, return and give to MSPT” (TAD A6.15:6–7)

69 Note that *yaššib* is translated with an adverb in Greek (ἀληθῶς). The Syriac Peshitta, however, has a prepositional phrase “in truth” (*bqušt*).

70 It should be noted that *yaššib* is accented by the Masoretes on the last syllable; it would, however, be a very minor emendation to move the accent to the penultimate syllable.

71 Dan. 2:40; 4:9, 18, 25; Ezra 5:7.

72 For attestations, see Porten and Lund 2002, 157.

73 Fitzmyer 1957 = 1979, 205–17.

According to Fitzmyer, *kl'* here should be analyzed as a status emphaticus noun (lit., “the all, entirety”) in apposition to the preceding phrase *mnd'[m] 'hrn zy lqht*, i.e., “any other thing that you took, all.” Another analysis is, however, possible: *kl'* could be an adverb meaning “entirely.” This analysis would result in the translation, “Return and give entirely to MSPT any other thing that you took.” Or, to take an example from Biblical Aramaic, consider the sentence in (50):

(50) Biblical Aramaic

לְדָרְיוֹשׁ מֶלֶכָּא שְׁלָמָא כִּלְא

ldrywəš malkə šləmə kollo

“To Darius the king, peace *kollo*” (Ezra 5:7)

Fitzmyer would again consider *kollo* to be a *status emphaticus* noun, this time in apposition to *šləmə* “peace.” Alternatively, however, *kollo* could again be analyzed as an adverb.

The crucial flaw in Fitzmyer’s argument is that he restricted his study to examples of *kollo* and did not take into account forms, such as those in (44) through (47), where an ending **-ā*, written -’ , occurs with nouns other than *kol* to derive adverbs.⁷⁴ When taken in isolation, it may be possible to analyze all the instances of *kollo* as *status emphaticus*, even if it requires some creativity, as in the examples in (49) and (50). Nevertheless, many examples of the ending **-ā*, such as those cited in (44) through (47), cannot easily, if at all, be analyzed as nouns in *status emphaticus*, but they must be adverbs. Once it is established that Aramaic has an adverbial ending **-ā*, which it should be noted is not in dispute with the forms in (44) through (47), it may well be better to analyze some cases of *kollo*, such as those in (49) and (50), as adverbs derived with this ending.⁷⁵

Regardless of one’s analysis of the examples of *kollo*, there are clearly cases in which a final **-ā*, marked with a *mater lectionis* of ’, is used in Aramaic to derive an adverb from a noun. Several of these adverbs are directional, as in **barrā* “to the outside” and **’ar’ā* “inferior (< to the earth),” whereas others are qualitative, as in **yattirā* “exceedingly” and **yaššibā* “certainly.” Traditionally, this Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā* has been analyzed as a remnant of the accusative case **-a* in adverbial use.⁷⁶ This analysis is of course similar to the traditional analysis of the Hebrew ending -ו. As argued above (§5), however, the Hebrew ending should be connected to Ugaritic *-h* and Akkadian *iš*, and they all represent reflexes of the Proto-Semitic postposition terminative particle that was reconstructed above as **-s’a*. Although many comparative Semitists agree with such a reconstruction (even if they disagree with the exact details),⁷⁷ the Aramaic data presented in this section continue to be overlooked. It is proposed here that the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā* derives from the Proto-Semitic postposition terminative particle **-s’a*. Phonologically, this derivation refers to the sound change of Proto-Semitic **s’* to **h*, regardless of whether the conditioning environment was prevocalic (as per Huehnergard) or at a word-boundary (as per Al-Jallad). The sequence **ah* developed into **-ā* by the time of Achaemenid Aramaic. This final **-ā* happened to be marked in the consonantal text by a *mater lectionis* of -’.⁷⁸ By the time of the Masoretes, Aramaic had lost phonemic vowel length, and

74 This same criticism is made in Muraoka and Porten 1998, 93–94.

75 Muraoka and Porten (ibid.) state this even more strongly: *kollo* “is a special adverbial form meaning ‘in every respect, altogether.’”

76 See, e.g., Brockelmann 1908, 465; Creason 2004, 415; Montgomery 1923; Rosenthal 1995, §88; Segert 1975, 193. A different etymology is proposed by Lipiński (1997, §32.19), who derives the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā* from a putative adverbial ending **-am*, which is supposedly also found in Hebrew forms such as *yomam* “by day” and *reqam* “empty-handed.”

77 See the references in n. 4 above.

78 This development can be compared with that of the feminine ending **(a)t*: by Old Aramaic, **(a)t* must have developed into **-ah* with consonantal *h*, otherwise it is difficult to explain its consistent spelling with final *-h* (or rarely *t*) but never with -’ in this time period (Degen 1969, §34). By Achaemenid Aramaic, **-ah* had developed into **-ā*, otherwise it is difficult to explain the use of -’ alongside the historic *-h* for the writing of the feminine singular *status absolutus* (Folmer 1995, 118–20, 122; Muraoka and Porten 1998, §5e–g, 18; Rosenthal 1995, §42).

historic **ā* was lowered to an open-mid-back *ɔ*. This *-ֿ* was still represented with a *mater lectionis* of *-ʾ*.⁷⁹ Semantically, Aramaic forms such as **barrā* “to the outside” and **ʾarʿā* “inferior (< to the earth)” correspond with the directional forms found in Akkadian, Hebrew, and Ugaritic. In addition, Aramaic forms such as **yattirā* “exceedingly” and **yaššibā* “certainly” can be compared with the adverbial forms that are common in Akkadian as well as found in Ugaritic with one or two lexical items.

7. CONCLUSION

In this study, it has been argued that based on Akkadian *iš*, Hebrew *-ֿ*, and Ugaritic *-h* a postposition terminative particle **-sʾa* should be reconstructed to Proto-Semitic. It was suggested that **-sʾa* should be reconstructed as a postposition particle, not as a case ending, since the reflexes of this form in Akkadian, Hebrew, and Ugaritic can co-occur in plural nouns with case endings. The reconstruction of the final **a* in **-sʾa* is tentative, since it is based on Gəʿəz *ha*, which may not ultimately be cognate, as well as on Huehnergard’s proposed conditioning environment for the sound rule **sʾ > h* in West Semitic as prevocalic. No vowel has been reconstructed before **sʾ* in **-sʾa*. Rather, it has been proposed, following Pardee, that the vowels in Akkadian *iš* and Hebrew **ah* (> *-ֿ*) are probably case vowels with singular nouns, the former genitive and the latter accusative, or part of mimation/nunation in the case of masculine plural nouns, such as Hebrew *kašdim* (< **kašdīmah*). In Hebrew and Ugaritic, Proto-Semitic **-sʾ* developed into **h* by a well-established sound rule; the exact conditioning environment of this rule (whether prevocalic as per Huehnergard or at word-boundaries as per Al-Jallad), however, remains unclear. The primary function of the Proto-Semitic postposition terminative particle **-sʾa* was to mark direction toward, originally spatially but secondarily with time. In addition, already in Proto-Semitic, the ending had developed into a more general adverbial marker following a well-established trajectory whereby motion adverbs become manner adverbs.

In this study I have also argued that another cognate to Akkadian *-iš*, Hebrew *-ֿ*, and Ugaritic *-h* is to be found in the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā*. Phonologically, this derivation follows a similar path to that attested in Hebrew, with **-sʾ* becoming *h* and **ah* then becoming *ֿ* in the Masoretic vocalization system. The latter development in Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic can be compared with that of the feminine ending **(a)t-*, which also became **-ah* at some stage of both languages and was ultimately realized as *-ֿ* in the Masoretic vocalization system. Semantically, Aramaic **-ā* can be used to mark direction toward as well as to form manner adverbs. Thus the Aramaic adverbial ending **ā* should have a place alongside Hebrew *-ֿ*, Ugaritic *-h*, and Akkadian *-iš* (as well as possibly Gəʿəz *-ha*) as a reflex of the Proto-Semitic postposition terminative particle **-sʾa*.

If this etymology of the Aramaic adverbial ending **ā* is accepted, then it has implications for the reconstruction of the form of the Proto-Semitic postposition terminative particle. As noted in §5 above, Huehnergard reconstructs a vowel **i* in front of **-sʾa* based on Akkadian *iš*. He, then, explains the Hebrew form *-ֿ* (< **ah*) by a sound rule whereby unaccented **i* is lowered to **a* before a syllable-closing guttural. This rule is well established for Hebrew. It is not, however, operative in Aramaic, where unstressed **i* is not lowered to **a* before a syllable-closing guttural.⁸⁰ In the Tiberian tradition of Biblical Aramaic, unstressed **i* is usually realized as *ε* (i.e., *seghol*) before a syllable-closing guttural, e.g., **tihwé > tēhēwe* “you are.”⁸¹ In the Babylonian tradition of Biblical Aramaic, it is realized as *i*, e.g., **tihwé > tihwe* “you are.”⁸² In Syriac, it is realized as *e*, e.g., **tihwé > tehwe* “you are.” None of these vocalization systems attest a lowering of unstressed **i* to **a*

79 This proposed phonological development is similar to that with the Hebrew terminative ending, where **-ah* is also ultimately realized as *-ֿ* and where the final *h* also serves as a *mater lectionis* and is not consonantal, even if it more accurately reflects the historical consonant.

80 In contrast, stressed **i* (usually) does become **a* before a syllable-closing guttural in Aramaic (Bauer and Leander 1927, §10d), e.g., **pālīh > pālāh > pōlāh* “(you) serve” (Dan. 6:17). Note, however, the regular exception of the 3.m.sg pronominal suffix **-ih*, which is realized as *-eh*, e.g., **ilāhīh > ʾēlōheh* “his God” (Bauer and Leander 1927, §12h).

81 Bauer and Leander 1927, §10i.

82 Ibid., §10j.

before a syllable-closing guttural.⁸³ Since unstressed **i* was not lowered to **a* before a syllable-closing guttural in Aramaic, the Aramaic adverbial ending **-ā* (< **-ah*) cannot derive ultimately from ***-iha* (< ***isʾa*). Thus it is difficult to reconcile the vowel attested before the consonant in Akkadian *-iš*, which can only derive from **i*, with that in Aramaic *-ɔ* (< **-ah*), which can only derive from **a*, whereas the vowel in Hebrew *-ɔ* (< **-ah*) could derive from either **i* (as in Akkadian) or **a* (as in Aramaic). This argument lends further support, even if circumstantial, to Pardee's suggestion that the vowel before *s'* in the postposition terminative particle is a case vowel (or part of mimation/nunation in the case of masculine plural nouns) and does not belong to the particle itself.

83 It should be noted that there are not, at least to my knowledge, any examples of unstressed **i* before a syllable-closing guttural in word final position in Aramaic (in contrast to Hebrew **mazbiḥ* > **mazbaḥ* > *mizbaḥ* "altar of" [construct]), since after the loss of final short vowels and the collapsing of triphthongs, final position was almost always stressed in Aramaic (so also Kaufman 1997, 121; Nöldeke 1904, §56), with the possible exception of imperatives, which were probably stressed on the theme vowel.

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35

THE ORIGIN OF THE THIRD-PERSON MARKERS ON THE SUFFIX CONJUGATION IN SEMITIC*

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THE ORIGIN OF THE THIRD-PERSON affixes marking person and number on the Semitic stative/suffix conjugation—i.e., the East Semitic stative (*paris*) and the West Semitic perfect (*qatala*)—is still a matter of debate.¹ Unlike the person markers of the first and second persons, which are clearly derived from forms of the corresponding independent pronouns (see “The Suffix Conjugation” below), the third-person markers do not exhibit any formal similarities with attested third-person pronouns. This discrepancy between second- and first- versus third-person markers has led to various approaches attempting to explain the origin of the third-person markers. The two main reconstructions that have been proposed are, first, that the third-person suffixes are not person markers originally but reflect nominal endings corresponding to nominal gender and number markers, and, second, that the suffixes are, despite the lack of a clear correspondence to attested pronouns, nevertheless derived from pronouns.

In this study, it will be argued that it is more likely the third-person suffixes are of nominal origin, since they can directly be derived from gender, number, and case markers of the nominal paradigm.² The following discussion first briefly reviews the reconstruction of the suffix conjugation and its affixes in general, then discusses previous scholarship on the derivation of the third-person markers, and subsequently argues in favor of a nominal derivation of these morphemes.

THE SUFFIX CONJUGATION

The Semitic stative/suffix conjugation (SC) is characterized by the fact that person markers are suffixed to the base, as in the following Akkadian and Classical Arabic paradigms:

* I am honored to dedicate this study to my esteemed colleague Dennis Pardee, who has inspired my work for many years. Abbreviations used in this article include: ACC = accusative; ADJ = adjective; c = comunis; f = feminine; FEM = feminine; GEN = genitive; m = masculine; MASC = masculine; NOM = nominative; OBL = oblique; p = plural; PC = prefix conjugation; PL = plural; PRED = predicate; PRO = pronoun; PTC = participle; s = singular; SC = suffix conjugation; SING = singular; SUBJ = subject; TOP = topic.

1 In this article, the form in question will be designated as stative/suffix conjugation (SC) to indicate its functional differences in East and West Semitic. The term “stative” has been chosen over “predicative adjective” or “predicative construction” because it is the most common term used to describe the East Semitic form. In addition, it designates the whole construction, i.e., the nominal base and person marker, while “predicative adjective” can also simply mean the nominal element (*paris*–). “Stative” as used in this article thus indicates the combination of nominal base plus person marker, while “predicative adjective” simply indicates an adjective in predicative use. In this sense, the East Semitic “stative” is, as Buccellati (1968, 6) suggests, viewed as a syntactic rather than morphological unit.

2 This statement seemingly contradicts what was claimed in Hasselbach (2007, 135), where it was proposed the external plural markers *-ū* and *-āt* can be derived from the verbal system, more specifically from the predicative verbal adjective. As will hopefully be shown in the following discussion, this statement does not truly contradict the reconstruction proposed in this article, since the base for the derivation, the predicative verbal adjective, is the same but is analyzed as part of the verbal system in Hasselbach (2007) and, more correctly, as part of the nominal system in this article.

Akkadian stative

1cs	<i>marṣ-āku</i>	1cp	<i>marṣ-ānu</i>
2ms	<i>marṣ-āta</i>	2mp	<i>marṣ-ātunu</i>
2fs	<i>marṣ-āti</i>	2fp	<i>marṣ-ātina</i>
3ms	<i>maruṣ-Ø</i>	3mp	<i>marṣ-ū</i>
3fs	<i>marṣ-at</i>	3fs	<i>marṣ-ā</i>

Classical Arabic perfect

1cs	<i>katab-tu</i>	1cp	<i>katab-nā</i>
2ms	<i>katab-ta</i>	2mp	<i>katab-tum</i>
2fs	<i>katab-ti</i>	2fp	<i>katab-tunna</i>
3ms	<i>katab-a</i>	3mp	<i>katab-ū</i>
3fs	<i>katab-at</i>	3fp	<i>katab-na</i>

In West Semitic languages, the consonant of the first- and second-person markers is either uniformly /t/, as in the Classical Arabic paradigm provided above, as well as in Canaanite, Aramaic, and Ugaritic, or /k/, as in Ethiopian Semitic, Old South Arabian, and Modern South Arabian (e.g., Ge'ez 1cs *gabar-ku*, 2ms *gabar-ka*, 2fs *gabar-ki*, etc.). It is generally agreed that the original distribution of the suffixal consonants was that exhibited by Akkadian, with /k/ in the 1cs and /t/ in the second-person forms.³ The West Semitic languages leveled one of these consonants, thereby resulting in the uniform paradigms found in these languages. The first- and second-person forms are thus commonly reconstructed as:⁴

1cs	<i>*qatVl-ku</i>	1cp	<i>*qatVl-nu</i>
2ms	<i>*qatVl-ta</i>	2mp	<i>*qatVl-tum(±ū)</i>
2fs	<i>*qatVl-ti</i>	2fp	<i>*qatVl-tin(±na/ā)</i>

For the third-person forms, the most commonly found reconstruction is as follows:⁵

3ms	<i>*qatVl-a</i>	3mp	<i>*qatVl-ū</i>
3fs	<i>*qatVl-at</i>	3fp	<i>*qatVl-ā</i>

The *-ā* of the 3fp is attested in Akkadian and Ge'ez. Since the marker *-ā* is attested in two chronologically and geographically distinct languages, it is commonly assumed it is original to the 3fp. The Classical Arabic FEM PL marker *-na* can be explained by leveling. The same FEM PL marker *-na* is attested on the prefix conjugation *yaktubna* “they (fp) write” and provides the base for leveling *-na* to the SC, thus resulting in the form *katabna* given above. Hebrew has lost the distinction of MASC and FEM in the SC and uses the original MASC PL marker *-ū* as third-person plural form, as in *kāṭṭū* “they wrote (MASC and FEM).” The fact that 3fp forms that have a different marker from *-ā* can be explained by leveling or loss strengthens the reconstruction of the 3fp as *-ā* for Proto Semitic.⁶

From a functional point of view, the West Semitic SC is a finite verbal form expressing past tense and perfective aspect, as in Classical Arabic *katabtu* “I wrote,” Hebrew *kāṭṭī* “I wrote,” Ge'ez *gabarka* “you (ms) did.”

3 For the reconstruction of the first and second persons with different suffixal consonants based on the principle of archaic heterogeneity, see Hetzron 1976, 92–95.

4 For this reconstruction, see, e.g., Huehnergard 2004, 150. For the assumption that the final vowels were short in these suffixes, see Hasselbach 2004. It is debated whether or not the stative/SC had a linking vowel between the nominal base and the pronominal element. For reconstructions that assume a linking vowel in certain environments, see Tropper 1999 and Voigt 2002/2003.

5 See, e.g., Huehnergard 2004, 150.

6 For this reconstruction see, e.g., Nöldeke 1884, 421; Brockelmann 1908, 571; Diem 1997, 61; Huehnergard 2004, 150.

In East Semitic, the stative expresses the state of the underlying verbal form, as in *maršāku* “I am sick” from the verbal root *marāšum* “to be sick.” The East Semitic form has no tense value in itself but describes a state that coincides with the point in time referenced by the main verb or context.⁷ The functions of the West Semitic SC and East Semitic stative are thus fundamentally different. It is commonly assumed the stative represents the more archaic stage of the two reflexes of the form and indicates its derivation from an original verbless clause. This verbless clause originally consisted of a nominal base—in the case of the stative/SC a verbal adjective of the form *qatVl*—that reflects the predicate of the verbless clause, and a pronominal element in the form of an independent pronoun indicating the subject.⁸ The derivation of a verbal form from an original verbless clause is a cross-linguistically common phenomenon. In an influential article, Givón argues that verb-agreement paradigms in fact always arise from anaphoric-pronoun paradigms.⁹ That means the person markers of conjugated finite verbs are always the product of a process in which an originally independent pronoun was grammaticalized into an enclitic person marker.

As mentioned above, the East Semitic stative has no tense value. Other characteristics in which the stative does not agree with the behavior of finite verbal forms in Akkadian are that morphemes such as the subordinate marker or ventive cannot be suffixed to the stative except in the third persons.¹⁰ These features show the Akkadian stative is still in the process of being grammaticalized into a verb.¹¹ The grammaticalization process is completed in West Semitic, where the SC is a finite verbal form and is fully integrated into the tense/aspect system.

The derivation of the stative/SC from an original verbless clause has long been recognized and is generally accepted.¹²

The pronominal origin of the first- and second-person forms is, as mentioned in the introduction, still noticeable:¹³

7 For a more detailed description of the function of the Akkadian stative, see Kouwenberg 2010, 163–65.

8 Buccellati 1968, 3; Huehnergard 1986, 228; 2004, 152; Kouwenberg 2000, 21, 23; Tropper 1995, 492.

9 Givón 1976, 180. Givón suggests the origin of for this type of verbalization process is in topicalized constructions of the type “the man (TOP), he (PRO) came,” in which the topicalized construction was reanalyzed as the neutral construction through overuse. The reanalysis into a neutral construction results in “the man (SUBJ), he (Agreement)-came” (Givón 1976, 155). Another derivation has been proposed by Cohen (1975, 88), who assumes that certain marked predicative constructions, such as Classical Arabic *zaydun huwa l-mu’allimu* “Zaid is the teacher,” in which a pronoun is obligatory between SUBJ and PRED to distinguish predicative from attributive constructions, can lead to the grammaticalization of new verb forms. He proposes three steps for the verbalization process: the first step is a nominal predicate that is often marked for being predicative as in the Arabic example just given. The second step is that this marked predicate can be a sentence in itself. Lastly, the form is integrated into the tense-aspect system (ibid., 89).

10 Buccellati (1968, 3) argues the ventive cannot be attached to a second- or first-person form because the second element of the stative of these persons is pronominal and the ventive cannot be attached to a pronoun. That also means the pronominal elements retain their pronominal nature and are no mere agreement markers. In the third persons there is no pronominal element, consequently, the ventive can be attached to the base. Kouwenberg (2000, 24 n. 5) disagrees with Buccellati’s analysis and states the ventive or subjunctive cannot be attached to first- and second-person statives due to morphosyntactic reasons, since they can only be attached to the stem plus number/gender marker. Although this argument sounds similar to Buccellati’s, Kouwenberg (ibid., 25 n. 5) stresses that this morphosyntactic feature does not indicate the stative is still nominal. He further claims statives in general do not take ventives for semantic reasons since the ventive is a directional morpheme primarily used for verbs of movement. The latter argument, however, does not explain the difference between first- and second- vs. third-person forms in terms of being able to take the ventive or subjunctive markers.

11 The degree to which the Akkadian stative is verbalized is highly debated. Buccellati (1968, 2; 1988, 164), followed by Huehnergard (1986, 221 n. 11; 1987, 215), considers the stative to be a nominal clause, while Kouwenberg (2000, 21) considers it to be a finite verbal form.

12 See, e.g., Cohen 1975, 89; Hodge 1975, 69–73; Tropper 1995, 492; Kouwenberg 2000, 21. Hodge (1975, 73) claims all verbs in Semitic and Egyptian are derived from original nominal sentences since the general pattern of replacement in these two language families that can be observed over the centuries is generally nominal.

13 For this reconstruction, see Huehnergard 2004, 150.

1cs	* ^ʔ <i>an-āku</i>	1cp	* <i>niḥ-nu</i>
2ms	* ^ʔ <i>an-ta</i>	2mp	* ^ʔ <i>an-tum(±ū)</i>
2fs	* ^ʔ <i>an-ti</i>	2fp	* ^ʔ <i>an-tin(±na/ā)</i>

However, no direct correspondence can be noticed in third-person forms, which are commonly reconstructed as follows:¹⁴

3ms	* <i>suʔa</i>	3mp	* <i>sum(±ū)</i>
3fs	* <i>siʔa</i>	3fp	* <i>sin(±na/ā)</i>

Although the 3ms SC marker *-a* could still theoretically be explained by the 3ms independent pronoun ending in *-(ʔ)a*, no such correlation is possible for the other third-person forms.¹⁵ The problem that there is no direct correspondence between the third-person markers of the stative/SC and the third-person independent pronouns attested in the descendant languages has led to two main hypotheses on how to derive the third-person markers; these hypotheses will be discussed in the following section.

PREVIOUS RECONSTRUCTIONS

One of the earliest reconstructions for the third-person suffixes of the stative/SC was proposed by Nöldeke, who reconstructs **-a* for the 3ms, **-at* for the 3fs, **-ū* for the 3mp, and **-ā* for the 3fp.¹⁶ Concerning the origin the person markers, Nöldeke assumes the first- and second-person suffixes are related to the corresponding independent pronouns, while no such relationship can be noticed in the third-person forms. Although he does not propose an origin for the third-person markers, he notes it is unlikely the third-person forms contain a pronominal element.¹⁷ Despite hesitating to suggest a derivation for the third-person markers, Nöldeke nevertheless points out parallels for some of them. The *-t* of the 3fp form **qatalat*, according to Nöldeke, is also found in the 3fs prefix of the prefix conjugation (**ta-qtul*). The MASC PL marker *-ū* is most likely simply a plural marker, based on plural forms such as Classical Arabic *yaqtul-ū-na* (3mp PC) and external masculine plurals on nouns such as Classical Arabic *qātil-ū-na*. Concerning the 3fp, Nöldeke states: “Völlig unklar bleibt *ā* als Endung des weiblichen Plurals.”¹⁸ Nöldeke thus refrains from suggesting an origin for the third-person markers but nevertheless distinguishes them from the second- and first-person forms that, as he claims, are related to corresponding independent pronouns.

Nöldeke’s reconstruction of the forms of the third-person markers has been followed by a majority of scholars.¹⁹ A first proposal regarding the etymological origin of the third-person markers that had a significant impact on the understanding of the forms was given by Zimmern, who follows the same morphological reconstruction given by Nöldeke. Zimmern proposes the third-person endings are nothing else than inflectional endings of nouns:

14 Ibid.

15 The longer forms that are indicated for the second- and third-person plural forms contain the same elements as corresponding forms of the stative/SC suffixes. However, these elements seem to be secondary additions in the third-person pronouns since they do not constitute obligatory elements and should probably not be reconstructed for Proto-Semitic (ibid.). They are provided here for the sake of completion. Even if one assumes the longer forms were original, the 3fs form of the stative/SC still remains unexplained. Furthermore, the elements marking the longer forms are present in both the second- and third-person forms and thus do not constitute person markers but simple plural markers. Consequently, they differ functionally from the pronominal elements found as person markers in the first and second persons on the stative/SC.

16 Nöldeke 1884, 421.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 See, e.g., Brockelmann 1908, 571, 574; Bauer and Leander 1922, 308; Bergsträsser 1928, 13; Diem 1997, 61; Lipiński 2001, 368–72; Huehnergard 2004, 150.

Die dritten Personen des Singulars und Plurals stellen im Grunde wohl nichts anderes dar, als flektierte Nomina (bzw. Adjektiva, Partizipia), so daß das Afformativ der 3. m. Sg., soweit ein solches überhaupt anzunehmen ist, den maskulinen singularischen nominalischen Auslaut (-a, -u), das Afformativ der 3. f. Sg. den entsprechenden femininen (-at) enthält.²⁰

Zimmern is commonly regarded as one of the first scholars to propose the nominal origin of the third-person markers.²¹ His reconstruction became the predominant theory for the derivation of the third-person markers of the stative/SC and has been followed by numerous scholars, including Bergsträsser, Bauer and Leander, and, in a slightly varied form, more recent scholars such as Tropper and Lipiński.²²

Despite its predominance, the nominal-origin theory faces several problems. First of all, it has been argued that the ending of the 3ms -a is not attested in predicative use in the normative nominal system as attested in Semitic languages, nor is the form of the 3fp -ā. Nouns in the MASC SING either end with a case ending or have zero-marking in Semitic, as in Classical Arabic *kitāb-u-n* “a book (NOM),” Geʿez *nəḡus-Ø* “king (NOM/GEN),” and Hebrew *melek-Ø* “king.” The FEM PL on nouns has the form -āt across Semitic and consequently does not correspond to any of the FEM PL endings attested on the stative/SC.²³

Another issue that has been cited as an argument against the nominal origin of the third-person markers is that the nominal base, i.e., the verbal adjective with first- and second-person pronominal elements, does not agree with its subject in gender and number but always reflects the same indeclinable base *qatVL. If the third-person forms indeed reflect the nominal endings of a presumed predicative state, then we face the question of why the base remains uninflected.²⁴

Problems such as these have led scholars to propose alternative derivations for the third-person markers. The most common alternative hypothesis is that the third-person markers are not of nominal but of pronominal origin and thus correspond to the derivation of the suffixes of the first and second persons. This reconstruction has in particular been advocated by Huehnergard²⁵ and Diem.²⁶

Huehnergard assumes that in early Proto-Semitic the identity of the endings of the independent pronouns and the stative/SC was complete, that is, even the third-person markers of the stative/SC are derived from independent pronouns, although this reconstruction faces the problem that the third-person markers do not correspond to any known third-person pronouns. Huehnergard therefore argues the attested third-person pronouns are actually demonstrative pronouns and not original to the pronominal paradigm. Instead, there existed another, unspecified set of third-person independent pronouns that corresponded to the endings of the stative/SC -a, -at, -ā, and -ū and from which these markers were derived. This original set of third-person pronouns was then lost and replaced by the attested set of anaphoric pronouns, a process that presumably already took place in Proto-Semitic.²⁷ Huehnergard thus assumes there originally existed

20 Zimmern, 1898, 99.

21 See Diem (1997, 42–46) for a detailed overview of the reception of Nöldeke’s and Zimmern’s reconstructions.

22 Bergsträsser 1928, 13; Bauer and Leander 1922, 308; Tropper 1999, 188; Lipiński 2001, 368.

23 Because of the discrepancy between the attested third-person markers of the stative/SC and the common nominal inflection, some scholars have suggested the nominal base of the stative/SC appears in a special state, the so-called “predicative state,” whose form differs from the common declination of nouns. According to scholars such as von Soden (1995, 96), this “predicative state” can be considered identical to the indeclinable absolute state attested in Akkadian. What exactly this predicative state represents and how it relates to the Akkadian “absolute state,” however, has not been clarified sufficiently. For the idea the stative reflects a predicative state of the nominal base see also Buccellati 1988, 168; 1996, 167. Buccellati (1998, 168) further assumes this “predicative state” is a bound form, i.e., it occurs with pronominal suffixes of the subject case.

24 See, e.g., Kraus 1984, 37, 40. A common example for a case where the nominal base of a similar construction as the stative/SC exhibits gender and number inflection is the predicative participial construction of Syriac. In Syriac, the participial base to which enclitic pronouns are attached to mark a predicative construction declines for gender, as in the 1fs *qāṭl-ā-nā*, compared to the 1ms *qāṭel-nā*, and number, as in the 2mp *qāṭl-īt-tōn* (< *qāṭl-in-tōn) (Diem 1997, 47).

25 Huehnergard 1987.

26 Diem 1997.

27 Huehnergard 1987, 222.

a more consistent paradigm of independent pronouns that was the base for all stative/SC person markers. This explanation still leaves the problem that the nominal base of the stative/SC does not show agreement. Huehnergard argues it is not the nominal base, i.e., the verbal adjective, that is the predicative element of the stative/SC, but rather the whole construction of verbal adjective plus enclitic subject pronoun constitutes the predication. Neither element is predicative in and of itself. The base can, according to Huehnergard, occur in two constructions: an attributive construction that consists of {base + gender/number markers + case endings} and a predicative construction that consists of {base + enclitic subject pronoun}.²⁸ In the predicative construction, the base thus lacks agreement while it exhibits agreement in the attributive constructions.²⁹ The key to explaining the lack of agreement in the base of the stative/SC is thus that the base or verbal adjective is not the predicative element but constitutes an element of a larger, two-partite, predicative construction.

Diem does not go as far as Huehnergard to assume a second set of independent third-person pronouns but tries to derive the third-person markers on the stative/SC from the attested set of anaphoric pronouns. Before proposing his own reconstruction, Diem presents arguments against the nominal theory. He claims that if the nominal origin hypothesis were correct, we would expect the 3ms to have a final *-u*, not *-a*, since nominal predicates usually appear in the nominative, which is marked by *-u* in Semitic languages with productive case systems.³⁰ According to Diem, the marker *-a* attested in West Semitic would thus have to be secondary. A secondary origin of this *-a*, however, is difficult to explain. Furthermore, he restates the argument that if the third-person forms are reflexes of nominal gender and number markers, it is difficult to explain why the nominal base is not declined for gender and number throughout the paradigm. He cites Syriac as an example of a language that underwent a similar development as the stative/SC but that shows agreement in the nominal base. Syriac developed a predicative construction based on the PTC to which enclitic pronouns derived from independent pronouns are attached, as in *qāṭel-nā* (1ms), *qāṭl-ā-nā* (1fs), *qāṭl-īt-tōn* (2mp), etc.³¹ According to Diem, the difference in the behavior of the Syriac participial construction and the Akkadian stative in terms of agreement clearly shows they underwent different developments. Furthermore, although bare nominal forms can be used as third-person forms in Syriac, according to Diem, this use is the endpoint of a long process of grammaticalization in which PTCs plus third-person pronouns were replaced by the bare stem. Since no such presumed grammaticalization process can be traced for the stative/SC, we cannot explain how pure nouns became verbal forms if the third-person forms are indeed derived from nominal inflection markers.³² Another problem, mentioned before, is that the 3fp *-ā* has no correspondence in the nominal system.³³ According to Diem, these issues make unlikely a nominal origin of the third-person markers.

Instead, he proposes a reconstruction of the attested third-person pronouns that allows for the derivation of the third-person markers of the stative/SC:

Diem's reconstruction³⁴

3ms	* <i>h/šū'</i> -a	3mp	* <i>h/šum-ū</i>
3fs	* <i>h/ši'</i> -at	3fp	* <i>h/šinn-ā</i>

Based on this reconstruction, Diem concludes all suffixes of the stative/SC have a pronominal origin.³⁵

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., 223. Indeclinable predicative forms are also found in other languages such as German and Egyptian (ibid.).

30 Diem 1997, 46.

31 Ibid., 47. See also n. 23 above.

32 Diem 1997, 47.

33 Ibid., 48.

34 Ibid., 69.

35 Ibid., 71.

There are some obvious problems with both Huehnergard's and Diem's reconstructions. The original set of third-person pronouns Huehnergard assumes to underlie the third-person markers of the stative/SC has left no other traces in Semitic and is thus purely hypothetical. That we have no possibility to prove (or disprove) such a set of pronouns existed weakens Huehnergard's reconstruction significantly. Diem's reconstruction is based on the stative/SC markers rather than on evidence from actual pronouns. Although longer forms of the third-person plural forms exist, as has been indicated in "The Suffix Conjugation" above, even if these forms are original, there is no evidence in Semitic that the 3fs independent pronoun ever ended in *-at*. The reconstruction of this form is solely based on the forms of the FEM SING in the nominal system and has no basis in the pronominal system.

Some of Diem's premises for discarding the nominal-origin hypothesis are equally problematic. His claim that the final vowel of the 3ms should be *-u* and not *-a* if the form were nominal originally has been shown to be incorrect. A nominal MASC SING ending *-a* is clearly attested in predicative use in Old Akkadian, Eblaite, and Amorite personal names, as has already been pointed out by Gelb, Diakonoff, Krebernik, and Streck among others.³⁶ Amorite names, for example, have forms such as /šūr-a ʿamm-u/ "the divine uncle is a rock," where the subject is marked by *-u* and the predicate by *-a*, although the marker *-a* can also mark the subject, vocative, and genitive besides marking nominal predicates in Amorite.³⁷ A similar type of functional range of *-a* is attested in Old Akkadian names, although in Old Akkadian names the marking of the predicate by *-a* is the most frequently encountered reflex of this morpheme.³⁸ The idea that the ending *-a* reflects a marker of nominal predicates in these early names is widely accepted.

A connection between this "predicative" *-a* and the 3ms *-a* of the stative/SC has, for example, been proposed by Tropper. He argues that since the stative/SC is derived from a construction that has a predicative verbal adjective as its base, the *-a* of the 3ms SC should be related to the predicative ending *-a* attested in early Semitic proper names³⁹—an assessment with which I fully agree.⁴⁰ Consequently, the 3ms marker of the SC *-a* has an equivalent in the nominal inflection, viz., in the early Semitic predicative marker *-a*. Diem's criticism that the 3ms *-a* cannot be original to the nominal system is thus invalid. The fact that there exists a predicative form of the noun ending in *-a* also indicates that the verbal adjective that forms the base of the stative/SC is indeed the predicative element of the construction, contrary to Huehnergard's analysis mentioned earlier in this section that claims neither of the two basic elements of the stative/SC are predicative in and of themselves, but the whole construction consisting of {base + enclitic subject pronoun} constitutes the predicative form.

The second point of criticism, which has been brought forth by Kraus, Huehnergard, and Diem, is that the nominal base of the stative/SC lacks agreement.⁴¹ This lack of agreement seems to contradict comparable grammaticalization instances that can be observed in Semitic languages such as the aforementioned participial construction in Syriac, in which the base shows agreement. The issue is, of course, that we are dealing with grammaticalization, as correctly observed by Diem.

From a grammaticalization point of view, the lack of agreement in the nominal base of the stative/SC does not pose any problem. The lack of agreement, as has already been pointed out by Kouwenberg, reflects a well-known grammaticalization process called "simplification,"⁴² a term first used by Heine and Reh to mean "the development of regularities for formerly irregular aspects of grammar."⁴³ Simplification can thus be considered a type of analogical leveling where a form is used in contexts in which it has not previously been used—although in the case of simplification this leveling happens within paradigms and thus consti-

36 Gelb 1965, 79; Diakonoff 1988, 59; Krebernik 1991, 138; Streck 2000, 288–90.

37 Streck 2000, 264–68; Hasselbach 2013, 38.

38 Hasselbach 2013, 41–43.

39 Tropper 1999, 181–82.

40 For a more detailed discussion of this "predicative" *-a*, see Hasselbach 2013, 48–50.

41 Kraus 1984, 37; Huehnergard 1987, 217, 222; Diem 1997, 47.

42 Kouwenberg 2000, 58.

43 Heine and Reh 1984, 41.

tutes a “paradigmatic analogy.”⁴⁴ Since the linguistic replacement in this case happens on the paradigmatic level, it can lead to the loss of relevant paradigmatic distinctions. The concept of simplification as an explanation for the loss of inflection has particularly been developed by Lehmann, who states that grammaticalization from periphrastic to morphological constructions can lead to increasingly small and homogeneous paradigms.⁴⁵ Simplification, and consequently the loss of paradigmatic distinctions, is a typical side effect of grammaticalization processes.⁴⁶

That means the lack of agreement in the base of the stative/SC can be explained by the fact that the form underwent grammaticalization. More specifically, the original markers for gender and number of the base were lost during this process of grammaticalization, and the base was fixed as simple **qatil*, instead of the possible four variants **qatil* (ms), ***qatilat* (fs), ***qatilū* (mp), and ***qatilā* (fp). That this assumption is correct is also obvious from the fact that we are not dealing with a periphrastic construction anymore but clearly with an already grammaticalized synthetic form with inseparable subject markers.⁴⁷ This reconstruction also indicates, as Kouwenberg states, that even the stative of adjectives cannot simply be a synchronic derivation or combination of adjective and pronoun in Akkadian. Instead, it is the result of a historical process and has already undergone a certain degree of grammaticalization.⁴⁸

It is thus not necessary to assume a pronominal origin of the third-person markers to explain the lack of agreement in the base of the stative/SC or to assume different agreement behaviors of predicative and attributive constructions in early Semitic. The nominal-origin hypothesis can account for the lack of agreement in the nominal base when it is viewed as the result of grammaticalization.

The points of criticism traditionally brought forth against the nominal-origin hypothesis of the third-person markers of the stative/SC thus do not really pose a problem for this derivation. The nominal theory, however, still faces a problem. While the forms of the 3ms, 3fs, and 3mp can be derived from forms attested in the nominal system, the form of the 3fp *-ā* still defies explanation. Many scholars following the nominal-origin hypothesis of the third-person markers simply do not address the issue that the FEM PL on nouns is regularly expressed by the morpheme *-āt* and not *-ā* in Semitic languages.⁴⁹ Other scholars, such as von Soden, consider the third-person markers of the stative/SC to be identical with the endings of the Akkadian absolute state.⁵⁰ The FEM PL of the absolute state is attested as both *-ā* and *-āt*, although *-ā* seems to be more common.⁵¹ Since determining the origin of the absolute state has been problematic, connecting the absolute state with the stative/SC does not solve the issue of the 3fp ending *-ā* but simply shifts it to a different context.

One of the few scholars who specifically addresses the origin of the 3fp *-ā* is Tropper. Tropper, who adheres to the nominal origin hypothesis, argues that *-ā* is actually derived from *-āt*. Evidence for such a derivation presumably comes from the Egyptian pseudo-participle that ends in *-t(j)*.⁵² Tropper further assumes the Akkadian FEM PL of the absolute state is likewise derived from *-āt*. In general, like von Soden he assumes the markers of the predicative construction from which the stative/SC is derived are the same as those of the absolute state, which he calls “absolute case” (“Absolutivkasus”). Tropper consequently

44 Ibid.

45 Lehmann 1985, 307.

46 See also Croft 2003, 264.

47 This assumption does not mean, however, that the stative in Akkadian has to be analyzed as a verb. It clearly still has nominal characteristics. Morphologically, it has grammaticalized from a periphrastic into a synthetic construction, but functionally it has not yet undergone the full grammaticalization from verbless clause to finite-verbal form.

48 Kouwenberg 2000, 58.

49 See, e.g., Zimmern (1898, 98); Bauer and Leander (1922, 308); Bergsträsser (1928, 13); Lipiński (2001, 372).

50 von Soden 1995, 96.

51 Most of these attestations come from cardinal numbers, such as *ešrā* “20,” *šalāšā* “30,” etc., that appear in the “absolute state” when they stand in apposition before the counted entity (von Soden 1995, 96; Huehnergard 1998, 236, 238).

52 Tropper 1999, 179.

reconstructs them as MASC SING *-a*, FEM SING *-at*, MASC PL *-ū*, and FEM PL *-āt*.⁵³ The reconstruction of the 3fp of the stative/SC as **-āt* has obvious problems: this form is not attested in any Semitic language as a marker on the stative/SC and thus seems rather unlikely. Other scholars have doubted Tropper's connection of the "absolute case" with the endings of the stative/SC. Weninger, for example, states:

Tropper regarded the ending of the 3SG.M *-a* as PS and identical with the ending of the alleged nominal absolute case. As the existence of the absolute case itself is problematic, this reconstruction is doubtful, although there is no plausible alternative suggestion.⁵⁴

Consequently, the origin of the 3fp *-ā* of the stative/SC is still unclear.

THE NOMINAL DERIVATION OF THE THIRD-PERSON MARKERS

As the preceding discussion has shown, neither the nominal- nor pronominal-origin hypothesis has yet been proven with any degree of certainty since both face problems that still need to be resolved. In the following discussion, I aim to show that the nominal-origin hypothesis regarding the derivation of the third-person markers of the stative/SC is the more viable and less problematic reconstruction. For this reconstruction, special attention must be given to the form of the 3fp *-ā*.

As has been described in the previous section, the pronominal theories face the problem that they assume reconstructed forms of third-person pronouns that cannot be justified by evidence from attested pronouns in the Semitic descendent languages, thus significantly weakening this approach. The nominal theory equally was thought to face several problems, although, as mentioned in the previous section, most of the main points of criticism against a nominal origin of the third-person markers of the stative/SC have been shown to be less problematic than initially assumed. The fact that the nominal base of the stative/SC does not show agreement, for example, can be explained as the result of grammaticalization, more specifically the result of simplification.

This explanation still leaves one more problem for the nominal-origin hypothesis, viz., the form of the 3fp *-ā*. To address the form of the 3fp, it is first necessary to look briefly at the form of the 3fs *-(a)t* and the appearance of an inflectional ending *-ā* marking the dual.

As has been argued above, the MASC SING originally ended in *-a*. This *-a* reflects an inflectional ending that marks predicative function.⁵⁵ For the FEM SING, the ending *-t* was added to the MASC SING base **qatala*, thereby resulting in **qatala-t*. The 3fs marker of the stative/SC was thus simply **-t*, not **-at* as often reconstructed.⁵⁶ It has been noted by a variety of scholars that the morpheme *-t* was not originally a FEM marker but marked abstracts and singulatives before it was reanalyzed as a general FEM marker.⁵⁷

A nonsingular marker *-ā* is attested in both the verbal system (Classical Arabic *yaqtul-ā-ni*) and on nouns, where it marks the dual. On nouns, the ending *-ā* marks the nominative dual, as in Classical Arabic *bint-ā-ni* "two girls (NOM)." The morpheme *-ā* is thus attested on nouns, but not as a FEM PL marker. There are, however, important arguments that suggest the dual marker *-ā* on nouns goes back to an original FEM

53 Ibid., 191; see also 1995, 494.

54 Weninger 2011, 162.

55 See "Previous Reconstructions" above. As argued in Hasselbach 2013, 325–27, the ending *-a* is in reality no mere "predicative" marker but reflects the vestige of an older marked nominative system, in which the accusative *-a* was the unmarked form and had multiple functions, including marking nominal predicates, marking of the genitive, the direct object, and the neutral or citation form of the noun. The "predicative" *-a* is thus not a separate inflectional form of the noun but simply the accusative marker *-a* that preserves functions of an older system. The idea that "predicative" *-a* is related to the accusative ending *-a* has also been proposed by Streck (2000, 288). The "absolute state" attested in Akkadian, Eblaite, Amorite, Old South Arabian, and perhaps Ugaritic, is directly related to this form. The "absolute state" covers the same functions as the ACC across Semitic, especially the marking of adverbial functions and the use as a neutral/citation form of the noun, and equally represents a vestige of the earlier Semitic marked-nominative system (Hasselbach 2013, 318–22). In Akkadian, the "absolute state," which is no state but a case, is unmarked in the MASC SING because Akkadian lost final short vowels.

56 For the reconstruction of the 3fs marker as **-at*, see, e.g., Huehnergard 2004, 150.

57 For a summary of scholarship on the function of *-t*, see Hasselbach 2014, 323–28.

PL marker and, consequently, the FEM PL was originally marked by *-ā* on all types of nouns. When the morpheme *-t* was reanalyzed from a morpheme marking abstracts and singulatives to a general feminine marker, it was subsequently added to all nominal feminine forms independently of number, including the original FEM PL marker *-ā*.⁵⁸ The reanalysis and extension of the new feminine marker *-t* resulted in the FEM PL marker *-āt* attested throughout Semitic. The original FEM PL markers *-ā* (and its OBL counterpart *-ay*) were subsequently reanalyzed as dual markers, i.e., they were attributed a secondary function, according to Kurylowicz's fourth law of analogy.⁵⁹ There are several reasons to assume *-āt* is secondary. First, it behaves differently from the corresponding MASC PL markers *-ū* and *-ī*. The latter two are monomorphemic, i.e., they cannot be split up into further morphemes despite the fact that they are multifunctional and mark gender, number, and case. The FEM PL marker *-āt*, on the other hand, only marks gender and number. Case is indicated by adding the case endings of MASC SING nouns to the plural marker, although with adjusting them to the diptotic system of the MASC PL, i.e., NOM *-āt-un* and OBL *-āt-in* (as in Classical Arabic *mu'allim-āt-un* "teachers [NOM PL]" and *mu'allim-āt-in* "teachers [OBL PL]"). This analysis means the FEM PL is only secondarily marked for case, unlike the MASC PL markers, and unlike the "DUAL" markers *-ā* and *-ay*, which, like the MASC PL markers, are monomorphemic. Furthermore, the "DUAL" ending *-ay* is still attested as the PL marker in various Semitic languages, as in the Old Akkadian and Assyrian OBL PL *-ē* (< **-ay*) and the construct ending *-ê* in Hebrew and Aramaic (e.g., Hebrew *malḵê* "kings of"). It is thus likely the DUAL markers attested in Semitic languages go back to original PL markers that were relegated to a secondary function, probably through the use of these endings for paired body parts, after the reanalysis of *-t* as the general FEM marker.⁶⁰

Another point that might strengthen the analysis of *-āt* as secondary consists in the observation that agreement marking for both gender and number most likely started on nominal targets, i.e., ADJs including PTCs, not controllers, i.e., substantives.⁶¹ This origin can be deduced from the following observations. It is clear that Semitic at an early stage did not mark gender by morphological affixes. For certain nouns denoting human beings and domesticated livestock, gender was indicated by stem alternation, i.e., by different words, such as Hebrew *'āb* "father" and *'ēm* "mother."⁶² Gender marking then developed on adjectival targets, as is suggested by evidence from so-called epicene nouns. Epicene nouns do not distinguish gender morphologically, but agreement targets, i.e., adjectives and verbs, distinguish gender, as in Hebrew *gəmallim mēnîqôṭ* "nursing (FEM PL) camels" and *gəmallim bā'im* "camels were approaching (MASC PL)," where the controller has a gender-neutral form, but the target, the ADJ in this case, is marked for gender.⁶³ Agreement morphology in Semitic thus originated on attributive and predicative ADJs (including PTCs), i.e., on nominal targets, and spread from there to nominal controllers. That this was indeed the case is also confirmed by the fact that strict gender and number marking is only found on ADJs and PTCs. Nominal controllers exhibit numerous exceptions to strict agreement marking.⁶⁴ The fact that gender and number marking is only "regular" on ADJs and PTCs in the nominal system suggests these nominal targets developed agreement morphology first and agreement never completely spread to nominal controllers, or, to say

58 For a more detailed discussion regarding the underlying process that led to the reanalysis of *-t*, see Hasselbach 2014, 337–38. That *-āt* is a combination of an original nominal and verbal plural marker *-ā* to which the SING ending *-t* was added secondarily has already been suggested by Bauer and Leander (1922, 514).

59 Hasselbach 2007, 132.

60 Ibid., 132–33. For the rise of *-t* as FEM and agreement marker, see also Hasselbach 2014.

61 For a more detailed discussion of the typological literature and terminology, see Hasselbach 2014, 35.

62 For a more detailed discussion, see *ibid.*, 43–44.

63 Epicene nouns are relatively frequent in Semitic for nouns denoting animals. Epicene nouns in other languages include, e.g., Classical Arabic *ta'labun* "fox," *farsun* "horse," Old South Arabian *frs*, "horse," Ge'ez *dəngal* "virgin," *dabb* "bear," and others. For a more detailed description of what role epicene nouns played in the development of gender marking in Semitic, see *ibid.*, esp. 45, 319–21.

64 In Akkadian, for example, many nouns that are MASC in the SING take a FEM PL marker, such as *dinum* "legal decision" with the PL *dinātum*. In Hebrew, a number of FEM nouns denoting female animates take a MASC PL marker, such as *nāšim* "women," and vice versa, as in *'ābôt* "fathers." For more examples, see *ibid.*, 46–49.

it differently, gender and number marking never reached the same degree of regularity on controllers as on targets.⁶⁵

If nominal agreement morphology indeed first developed on targets, the stative/SC would preserve an older system than the system attested on nouns. The 3fp *-ā* attested in the stative/SC should consequently be considered more original than the ending *-āt* attested on nouns.⁶⁶

The ending *-ā* thus reflects an original nominal FEM PL marker in Semitic that is still preserved on the stative/SC. Given this analysis, it is unnecessary to refer to the pronominal system to account for the form. All third-person markers of the stative/SC can be explained by original nominal endings, thus resulting in the following paradigm:

3ms (original ACC) ⁶⁷	<i>*qatal-a</i>	3mp	<i>*qatal-ū</i>
3fs	<i>*qatala-t</i>	3fp (original FEM PL marker)	<i>*qatal-ā</i>

The assumption that the third-person markers of the stative/SC are simply inflectional endings implies third persons were not marked for person in the original predicative construction. This phenomenon has parallels in numerous languages. As Kouwenberg states based on Benveniste, the absence of an explicit subject marker in the third person “is motivated by the nature of the third person as the ‘zero person.’”⁶⁸ The “zero person” indicates the person who is not present at the speech situation. The lack of explicit third-person marking in predicative constructions agrees with the fact that many languages, including Semitic, do not have third-person pronouns.⁶⁹ As is well known, anaphoric pronouns have taken over the function of third-person pronouns in Semitic. Given this cross-linguistic tendency, it is unnecessary to assume a set of original third-person independent pronouns as suggested by Huehnergard. Semitic most likely never had a separate set of third-person independent pronouns.

Based on the arguments provided above, it seems likely the third-person markers of the stative/SC are of nominal origin and reflect original gender, number, and case markers, not person markers.

CONCLUSION

This study has argued that the third-person markers of the stative/SC in Semitic are of nominal origin, not pronominal origin as claimed by a number of scholars. The 3ms *-a* can be explained as the original ACC case marker that represented the neutral form of the noun and marked nominal predicates, in addition to direct objects, in an early Semitic alignment system that was marked nominative. The predicative function of the form was preserved in various environments, such as early Semitic personal names and the stative/SC, where it marks the predicate status of the first element of the construction, consisting of a verbal adjective. The forms of the 3fs and 3mp do not pose any difficulty since they can be derived directly from the corresponding forms of the nominal system. The 3fp in *-ā* is the most problematic form regarding its derivation from the nominal system, since there is no direct correspondence of such a morpheme marking FEM PLs. As has been argued above, the form can, however, be reconstructed as an archaic FEM PL marker that was secondarily extended by the morpheme *-t* after the latter was reinterpreted as a general FEM marker. The stative/SC did not undergo the same extension, since it was already in the process of being grammaticalized from a periphrastic into a synthetic construction and functionally differed from other nominal constructions in being an overtly marked predicative construction.

65 Ibid., 323.

66 Attributive ADJs obviously followed the extension of *-ā* to *-āt*. The stative/SC, or at that point predicative ADJ, did not do so, however, since it had a different function and most likely was already in the process of being grammaticalized into a synthetic form, preventing the change from *-ā* > *-āt*.

67 See n. 55 above.

68 Kouwenberg 2000, 57–58.

69 Ibid., 58.

The fact that the nominal base of the stative/SC does not show agreement can be explained by the cross-linguistic tendency to simplify paradigms from more heterogeneous to more homogeneous paradigms as a result of grammaticalization. The lack of agreement in the stative/SC shows the degree of grammaticalization the form had undergone already at an early stage of Semitic. As has been shown above, it is equally common cross-linguistically not to mark the third person explicitly. That the third-person forms of the stative/SC have no overt person marker but simply constitute inflectional endings is thus not unprecedented but rather common. This assumption also ties well into the fact that Semitic has no original third-person independent pronouns but uses a paradigm of anaphoric pronouns as third-person pronouns instead. The latter point confirms that Semitic is a language family in which the third person can be left unmarked.

Given that the issues brought forth as arguments against the nominal origin of the third-person markers of the stative/SC can be explained by diachronic developments and, in particular, common grammaticalization processes, the nominal-origin hypothesis seems the more likely derivation for the third-person markers of the stative/SC. This analysis is confirmed by the fact that the problems faced by a pronominal derivation cannot be solved without having to reconstruct forms that have no basis in the attested Semitic languages.

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36

UGARITIC \acute{g} FROM PROTO-SEMITIC $^*\theta$

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THE PROTO-SEMITIC (PS) CONSONANT $^*\theta$ has two reflexes in Ugaritic: one reflex is a discrete consonant, transliterated z ; the other reflex appears as the consonant transliterated \acute{g} , which otherwise reflects PS $^*\acute{g}$.¹ This development is interesting both phonetically, in that an interdental or dental consonant has become uvular or velar,² and typologically, in that phonemic splits and partial mergers are uncommon in Semitic. In this paper these aspects are reexamined, and a conditioning factor is proposed to account for the sound change. The paper is offered in deep admiration to Dennis Pardee, the undisputed doyen of Ugaritic studies.

The phonetic realization of PS $^*\theta$ cannot of course be established with certainty. That it formed the emphatic member of the triad of consonants whose other members were voiced $^*\delta$ and voiceless $^*\theta$, however, suggests that it too was an interdental fricative. The reflexes of $^*\theta$ in the various Semitic languages support this assumption: its reflex is an interdental in the Modern South Arabian languages Mehri and Jibbāli, voiceless $[\theta']$ or voiced $[\delta']$,³ in Arabic, too, it is sometimes pronounced as an interdental, voiced $[\delta']$, though in other traditions it is a dental-alveolar, $[z']$,⁴ in Akkadian and Hebrew, PS $^*\theta$ has merged with *t and *š to s ,⁵ in Old Aramaic inscriptions, the reflex of $^*\theta$ was written with {S}, while in later Aramaic dialects it has merged with *t (in a general shift of PS interdentals to their dental-alveolar counterparts). It is now generally accepted that the PS emphatic consonants were glottalic (ejective),⁶ thus, the data indicate that PS $^*\theta$ was probably a glottalic interdental fricative, $[\theta']$.⁷

In Ugaritic, as already noted, PS $^*\theta$ had a double reflex. In some roots, the reflex of PS $^*\theta$ was a consonant, transliterated z ,⁸ that reflected *only* PS $^*\theta$; examples:

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1 We transliterate \acute{g} in conformance with the practice of our jubilarian; the Ugaritic and the Proto-Semitic consonants are also transliterated \acute{g} by others.

2 While the Semitic plosives k and g are usually velar ($[k]$ and $[g]$), their fricative counterparts h and \acute{g} are usually uvular (respectively $[\chi]$ and $[\var�]$) rather than velar ($[x]$ and $[y]$).

3 For Mehri, see Rubin 2010, 14; Watson 2012, 12. For Jibbāli, see Rubin 2014, 25. In Soqotri, as in Aramaic, $^*\theta$ has merged with t , as in *ṭimi* 'to be thirsty' < PS $^*\theta m?$; see Naumkin and Kogan 2015, 686; further, Johnstone 1975, 4; Simeone-Senelle 2011, 1076. As the Modern South Arabian reflexes indicate, and as can be determined from other evidence as well, the Proto-Semitic glottalic consonants were unmarked for the feature of voice.

4 See, e.g., Fischer 2002, 17; Holes 2004, 59; Ryding 2005, 15; Brown 2007.

5 In classical Ethiopic, too, PS $^*\theta$ merged with *t to s ; PS *š remained distinct for a time (usually transliterated d) but also ultimately merged to s .

6 See most recently Kogan 2011, 59–61.

7 Or $[\delta']$; see above, n. 3, on the voicing of the PS glottalic consonants.

8 The transliteration z was modeled on the usual transliteration of the corresponding Arabic consonant.

zby ‘gazelle’ < PS **ḥaby*;

ʕzm ‘strong’ < PS **ʕaḥvm*;

qz ‘summer’ < PS **kayḥ*.

The pronunciation of Ugaritic *z*, like that of PS **ḥ*, cannot be known with certainty. In the few transcriptions into syllabic cuneiform of Ugaritic words and names with *z*, it is represented by the *Z* series of signs:⁹

zrw ‘(aromatic) resin’: *ZU-ur-wu*;¹⁰

personal name *zl*: *ZA-al-la-a*;

place name *zrn*: ^{uru}*ZA-ra-ni*, ^{uru}*ZA-ri-nu*;

personal name *hrzn*: *ḥa-ra-ZI-na* or *ḥa-ru-ZI-en-ni*.

The *Z* series of syllabic signs, however, was used to represent nearly all of the Ugaritic dental-alveolar and interdental fricatives (i.e., *d*, *s/š*, *ṣ*, *t*, and *z*, in addition to *z*);¹¹ thus, while these examples do tell us that *z* was indeed a fricative, they indicate the place of articulation only generally. In a few texts, {*z*} is written for etymological **t*; since the letter {*t*} does not appear in those texts, this is clearly a graphic phenomenon, as shown by Freilich and Pardee.¹² The writings show, however, that *z* and *t* were phonetically similar.¹³ These sparse pieces of evidence suggest that *z* was emphatic, fricative, and either interdental or dental-alveolar.¹⁴

In other Ugaritic roots, the reflex of PS **ḥ* was a consonant, transliterated *ḡ*, that was also the reflex of another PS consonant, the voiced uvular/velar fricative **ḡ*. There are only a few examples of this development, the most certain of which are the following:

ḡr ‘mountain’, i.e., /*ḡūru*/ < **ḥūru*; cf. Hebrew *šūr*, Aramaic *ṭur*;¹⁵

nḡr ‘to guard’ < **nḥr*; cf. Arabic *nẓr*, Hebrew *nšr*, Aramaic *nṭr*;

ḡm? ‘to be(come) thirsty’ < **ḥm?*; cf. Arabic *ẓm?*, Hebrew *šm?*.¹⁶

That the writings of PS **ḥ* with *ḡ* reflect a sound change rather than merely a graphic phenomenon is shown by syllabic cuneiform transcriptions, in which the set of *H*-signs is used both for *ḡ* < PS **ḥ* and for *ḡ* < PS **ḡ*;¹⁷ for example:¹⁸

ḡ < PS **ḡ*:

[^l] *ḡa-ma-ru-ú* for /*ḡamaru-hū*/ ‘his apprentice’; cf. Arabic *ḡum(u)r* ‘inexperienced’;

(genitive) *ḡu-li* for /*ḡōli*/ ‘low ground(?)’; cf. Arabic *ḡawl* ‘extent of land, much earth’.

ḡ < PS **ḥ*:

^{lú}*na-ḡi-ru* for /*nāḡiru*/ ‘a guard’ < **nāḥiru*;

ni-iḡ-rù for /*niḡru*/ ‘to guard’ < **niḥru*;

9 For these examples, see Huehnergard 2008, 226; van Soldt 1991, 315 with n. 122; 2005, 24; Tropper 2012, 82, 115.

10 Since both Sabaic and Arabic have *ḡrw*, reflecting earlier **ṣvrw*, Ugaritic *ḡurwu* is presumably a loan, the word arriving with the substance (so also Tropper 1994, 23).

11 Huehnergard 2008, 199–200, 223–29.

12 Freilich and Pardee 1984. See also Pardee 2003–4, 67; Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 24–25; Tropper 2012, 113–14.

13 It has also been suggested that {*z*} may be written for etymological *ṣ* in one or two instances (Tropper 2012, 114); as Pardee (2003–4, 67) notes, however, there is no compelling reason to interpret the forms in question thus.

14 Tropper (2012, 113) likewise suggests that *z* “ist . . . als emphatischer Vertreter der Interdentalreihe ausgewiesen.” It is uncertain whether the Ugaritic emphatics remained glottalic as in PS or had become pharyngealized as in Arabic; see, e.g., Garr 1986, 48 with n. 25; Tropper 2012, 98. Like Pardee (2004, 292 = 2008, 9), I believe the evidence suggests that they were glottalic.

15 There may have been early byforms of this word, **ḥūr* and **ḥawr*, the latter suggested by Sabaic *ḡwr* ‘(bed)rock’ and a form *ṭawrā* in some Western Aramaic writings; see Steiner 2015, 134–35.

16 On this root see Militarev and Kogan 2000, lxxviii, 332–33.

17 Thus we would not agree with Dietrich and Loretz (1967, 300–15), who suggest that the letter {*ḡ*} was polyphonic.

18 Huehnergard 2008, 153.

Joshua Blau has suggested that the Ugaritic evidence is the result of “dialect mixture.”²³ But Blau is forced to propose several unlikely cognates to account for such mixture. Moreover, we might expect more variation in individual roots than we find.

In their recent *Manual of Ugaritic*, Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee suggest that the “words containing etymological /z/ [that] are regularly written with {ḡ}. . . [are] probably expressing a phonetic shift, itself reflective of a double articulation of /z/, i.e., dental and laryngeal.”²⁴ This does not, however, account for the fact that only some instances of PS *θ underwent the shift, while others remained a discrete consonant.

In a detailed review of prior scholarship on Ugaritic ḡ, Stanislav Segert noted the presence of a liquid or nasal in *nḡr* ‘to guard’, *ḡr* ‘mountain’, and *ḡmʔ* ‘to thirst’;²⁵ he did not, however, believe that these consonants could “be considered [a] clear and unequivocal conditioning factor for the change,” and he also suggested that “a search for possible factors prohibiting this change is also inconclusive.”²⁶ Nevertheless, Edward Greenstein²⁷ and Josef Tropper²⁸ likewise posit the presence of a sonorant elsewhere in the root as the conditioning factor that resulted in the shift of *θ to ḡ. But, like Segert, Leonid Kogan rejects this explanation of the data, because “in five (out of nine) regular examples one or two sonorants are also involved,”²⁹ i.e., there are counterexamples to the conditioning environment posited by Greenstein and Tropper. Indeed, Kogan states unequivocally, “There is no convincing explanation for the split of PS *ṯ into ṯ and ṯ in Ugaritic.”³⁰

Since, however, PS *θ sometimes remained a distinct consonant in Ugaritic, z, while sometimes merging with ḡ, Segert, Greenstein, and Tropper have been right to look for a conditioning factor, a phonetic environment in which some tokens of *θ changed to, and merged with, *ḡ, while other instances of *θ remained unaffected. And the factor posited, the presence of a sonorant as one of the other root consonants, may also be essentially correct (although a different conditioning factor will be suggested below). Above, it was noted that one effect of “root integrity,” the pervasive paradigmatic pressure or levelling in Semitic that results in the tendency for roots to exhibit the same consonants, is the countering or blocking of sound rules even when the conditioning environment is met. But that paradigmatic pressure can also have the opposite effect: it can cause derivatives that do *not* meet the conditions of a sound rule to undergo the change anyway, i.e., the change can spread by analogical levelling, so that all forms of the root will continue to exhibit the same set of radicals. An example is the PS root **plṯ* ‘to survive’, attested as such in Ugaritic, Hebrew, and (Old) Aramaic, but in Akkadian as *blṯ* ‘to live’. In Akkadian, evidently, the initial radical *p* was voiced to [b] when in contact with the voiced second radical [l], as in the preterite **yapluṯ*, pronounced [yabluṯ]; the pronunciation of the first radical in the latter form then contrasted with its pronunciation in a form such as the verbal adjective, [palīṯ]; since *p* and *b* are distinct phonemes in Akkadian, the contrast would have suggested two distinct roots, and so in all forms the initial radical shifted to *b*.³¹ In another root with the same two first radicals, *palāḥum* ‘to fear, respect’, however, the contrast between (it may be assumed) preterite [yablaḥ] and verbal adjective [palīḥ] was resolved in the opposite direction, all forms of the root retaining the original *p* as first radical.

Thus Greenstein and Tropper may indeed be right to point to the presence of a sonorant. But to overcome Kogan’s objection, it is likely that a more specific environment should be proposed, perhaps, for example, that *θ became ḡ immediately before a sonorant; *some* forms of a number of roots would then be

23 Blau 1977, 70–72 = 1998, 53–55. See also Blau 1968, 525 = 1998, 341–42. Similarly, Sivan 1997, 24.

24 Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 24.

25 Segert 1988, 295; see also 1991, 317.

26 Segert 1988, 296.

27 Greenstein 1998, 404.

28 Tropper 1994, 23–25; 2012, 96, 114–15.

29 Kogan 2011, 96.

30 Ibid.

31 Hebrew attests both *plṯ* and *mlṯ* ‘to escape’, the latter exhibiting still further assimilation of the first radical to the sonorant second radical (similarly in Jewish Aramaic and some Ethiopian Semitic languages); in this case, the resolution of conflicting forms was the rise of a separate byform root.

affected, such as the verbal noun **niθru* > /niǵru/, whereas other derivatives of a root would be unaffected by the sound rule, such as the preterite **yaθθur*. But the change of **θ* to *ġ* in some forms of the root, as the result of a sound rule, may have been sufficient to trigger paradigmatic pressure, thus prompting the change to occur in all forms of the root. In other roots in which some forms would have been affected by the sound rule, such as **mvθlālu* ‘shelter’ (which would have become ***mvǵlālu* by such a sound rule), the rule was instead blocked or overridden because of the forms that were unaffected, such as **θillu* ‘shade’, and the original consonant remained throughout all forms of the root, as in *mʒll* and *ʒl*.

A conditioning factor involving a sonorant might, therefore, underlie the change of **θ* to *ġ*, if the environment could be established with more precision. But another possibility exists. We observed above that the change of **θ* to *ġ* is phonetically interesting: a presumed glottalic interdental fricative, **θ*, became a uvular or velar fricative, *ġ*.³² This should be borne in mind when a conditioning factor for the change is sought: the place of articulation has moved from front to back, and the broad class of sonorants is not an obvious trigger for such a shift. I propose therefore to offer an alternative suggestion, one that provides a better phonetic basis for the change; specifically, I propose that the backing, from interdental to uvular/velar, is the result of assimilation to a following back vowel, *u*; i.e.,

$$*θ > ġ / ___ u .^{33}$$

One of the certain examples of the change of **θ* > *ġ* obviously conforms to this proposed environment:

$$*θūru > /ǵūru/ \text{ ‘mountain’}.$$

The change of **θ* > *ġ* in the root **nθr* ‘to protect’ probably began with the prefix-conjugation and imperative forms, which are especially common:

$$*yaθθur > /yaǵǵur/ \text{ ‘may he protect’}$$

$$*n(u)θur > /n(u)ǵur/ \text{ ‘protect!’}.$$

The change then spread throughout the root by paradigmatic pressure. In the root **θm?* ‘to thirst’, the change may have begun with a verbal noun, then spread throughout the root:

$$*θum?u > /ǵum?u/ \text{ ‘thirst’; cf. Akkadian } šūmu < *θum?-.^{34}$$

Another likely example of the change of **θ* > *ġ* before *u* is **θulmatu* > /ǵulmatu/ ‘darkness’, which is written syllabically *ḥu-ul-ma-tu*³⁵ and which may be compared with Akkadian *šulmu* and Gəʕəz *ʕəlmət* < **θulm(at)*-.³⁶ This word probably appears as *ǵlmt* in the Baʕlu myth.³⁷

32 We may note in passing a similar change in the history of Spanish, where, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, palatal [j] (usually written {x} as in {dixo} ‘he said’ or {j} as in {mejor} ‘better’) changed to velar [x] (eventually written {j} in most instances, {dijo}, {mejor}); this was an unconditioned change, however. See Lapesa 1968, 247–48; Lleal 1990, 309–10; Penny 2002, 99–101. We may also compare the development in Aramaic of the Proto-Semitic glottalic lateral fricative **š* to uvular or velar fricative **ḡ* (and then to *ʃ*); for details on this “journey,” as he calls it, see Steiner 2011, 71–72.

33 If the Ugaritic emphatics were glottalic (see above, n. 3), then the glottalic feature of **θ* was also presumably lost in this development. A glottalic uvular or velar fricative is not impossible; indeed, I have elsewhere proposed such a consonant for Proto-Semitic, **ḫ*, probably [xʰ] or [xʰ], as the emphatic counterpart to PS **h* and **ḡ* (Huehnergard 2003). But there is no reason to assume that the Ugaritic change under consideration here did not result in a merging with *ġ* in all its features rather than a glottalic counterpart of the latter that was merely represented with the same letter.

The result of the sound change, *ġ*, was presumably voiced. As was noted above (n. 3), the Semitic glottalic consonants are essentially unmarked for voice, and so this feature is probably not relevant to the operation of the sound change. Note, however, that Tropper (2012, 114–15) provides some evidence that Ugaritic *z* was voiced.

34 Perhaps also Gəʕəz *ʕəlm?*, but the latter may derive as well from **θim?*, like Arabic *ẓim?* and Hebrew *šim?ā*. Presumably **θim?* is the earlier form, becoming **θum?* in Akkadian and Ugaritic with assimilation of *i* to *u* before the labial *m*.

35 Huehnergard 2008, 99.

36 Cf., probably, Hebrew *ʕal-māwet*, to be read *ʕalmūt*.

37 The masculine form *ǵlm* may also mean ‘darkness’ (cf. Akkadian *šulmu*) in the phrase *ǵlm ym* in RS 2.[003]* i 19–20 (KTU³ 1.14), i.e., perhaps /ǵulmu yōmi/ ‘darkness of day’; see Loretz 2000, 275.

$\text{ʕn} . [\text{gpn}] . / \text{w } \text{ʔgr} .$
 $b . \text{ḡlmt} / [\text{ʕmm} .] \text{ym} .$
 $bn . \text{złmt} / r[\text{mt} . \text{prʕ}]t$

‘Look, [Gupanu-]wa-ʔUḡāru:

The sea [is enveloped] in darkness,
 in obscurity the [highest] peaks.’

RS 2.[008]⁺ vii 53–56 (*KTU*³ 1.4), with Pardee’s translation;³⁸ || RS 2.[014]⁺ vi 6–9 (*KTU*³ 1.3 vi, formerly *KTU*^{1/2} 1.8 ii).

These lines have generated a wide range of interpretations, which for the most part fall into two camps; one view takes *b(n) ḡlmt* and *bn złmt* to be epithets of *gpn wḡgr* (or alternatively of servants of Mot), with *ḡlmt* meaning ‘lass’ and *złmt* as a parallel word of uncertain meaning; the other view, which like our honorand we follow here, takes *ḡlmt* and *złmt* as terms for darkness.³⁹ If that is correct, the etymology of *ḡlmt* requires comment. Some scholars consider it to be unrelated to the parallel word *złmt*, but rather simply a poetic synonym, related to Hebrew *ʕlm* ‘to hide, conceal’.⁴⁰ This is unlikely, however; while “darkness” can of course “hide” things, the transitive verb *ʕlm* ‘to hide’ is not, in and of itself, semantically close to the PS stative verb **ʔlm* ‘to be(come) dark’. In Ugaritic the latter verb, from which *ḡlmt* is derived and which likewise exhibits *ḡ*, probably occurs in the Kirta epic, where it is, like PS **ʔlm*, stative:⁴¹

$[\text{ʔh}]r . \text{mḡyh} . \text{wḡlm}$
 ‘when he arrived it was getting dark’

RS 3.325⁺ i 50 (*KTU*³ 1.16), with Pardee’s translation.⁴²

Thus it is more likely that the verb *ḡlm* ‘to be(come) dark’ and the noun *ḡlmt* ‘darkness’ are reflexes of PS **ʔlm(t)* rather than cognate with Hebrew *ʕlm*. If so, it is particularly interesting that in RS 2.[008]⁺ vii 54–55 (*KTU*³ 1.4) and RS 2.[014]⁺ vi 7–8 (*KTU*³ 1.3), *ḡlmt* stands in parallel with *złmt*; they are the same word, the latter an archaic (pre-sound-change) form and the former a “modern” form that reflects the sound change. As Segert aptly put it, “Since the A-word is in principle more common, *ḡlmt* can be considered the usual form, while the B-word *złmt* is a less common word, a poetic archaism.”⁴³ We see the same phenomenon with the root **ʔm?* ‘to thirst’: the sound change is reflected in the phrase *ḡmū ḡmīt* ‘you (fs) were very thirsty’ (RS 2.[008]⁺ iv 34 [*KTU*³ 1.4]), but an archaic writing is preserved in the form *mzmā* ‘thirsty’ (acc.; RS 3.343⁺ i 2 [*KTU*³ 1.15]). (See further below on *mḡy* and *mz?*.)

Another possible example of **ʔ > ḡ* is the form *tqḡ* in the following:

$i\text{štm}ʕ . \text{wtqḡ} . \text{ʔdn}$
 ‘Listen (ms) and let (your) ear be alert.’⁴⁴

RS 3.325⁺ vi 42 (*KTU*³ 1.16) and parallels.

38 Pardee 1997a, 263.

39 So also Tropper (2012, 823): ‘In Dunkelheit ist das Meer / der Tag eingehüllt; in Finsternis (sind eingehüllt) die höchsten Berge.’ On these lines, see the review of scholarship and commentary in Smith and Pitard 2009, 371–74 (who, however, opt for the other interpretation).

40 E.g., del Olmo Lete (2005, 52–53 with n. 24; his identification of the Emar deity Ḥalma as ‘dark’ seems unlikely to me). Similarly, *DULAT*³ (316) glosses *ḡlmt* ‘concealment, darkness’. But the gloss ‘concealment’ is prompted by the alleged Hebrew cognate *ʕlm*; in the context of the Baʿlu passage, in fact, ‘darkness’ is preferable, while ‘concealment’ is tautological (‘The sea is enveloped in concealment’?). See also Gzella 2007, 542.

41 Others read *ḡlm* here as ‘lad’; see *DULAT*³, 315.

42 Pardee 1997b, 340.

43 Segert 1988, 296–97; *pace* Tropper (2012, 95), who believes the earlier and later forms should not co-occur. As Benjamin Kantor kindly reminds me, we may compare the appearance of both *ʔarqā* and *ʔarfā* ‘earth’ in the Aramaic of Jeremiah 10:11.

44 Pardee (1997b, 342) translates ‘listen closely and tend (your) ear’; I think it more likely, however, that the verb is intransitive, with ‘ear’ as its subject.

The form *tqġ* is most often derived from a root *yqġ*, cognate with Hebrew *yqš* and Arabic *yqz* ‘to be awake’.⁴⁵ If that is correct, it does not conform to the phonological environment for **θ* > *ġ* that was suggested above.⁴⁶ In Hebrew, however, a byform hollow root *qwš/qyš* occurs alongside *yqš*; if the same was true in Ugaritic, we may suggest that **taquθ* > /taquġ/, i.e., the assimilatory change of **θ* > *ġ* in this case taking place *after* the vowel *u*.⁴⁷

We turn finally to consider the problematic etymology of the common Ugaritic verb *mġy* ‘to come (to), arrive (at), reach’ and its relationship to the rare *mzʔ* ‘to meet, encounter’. The latter occurs in only one text, RS 2.[012] (*KTU*³ 1.12); in one of those occurrences it is in parallel with *mġy*:

wn . ymġy . āklm
wymzā . ṣqqm

‘That he might reach the Devourers,
That he might encounter the Destroyers.’
RS 2.[012] i 36–37 (*KTU*³ 1.12).

Otherwise, *mzʔ* occurs, twice, in the following couplet:

šr . āḥyh . mzāh
wmzāh . šr . ylyh

‘The prince of his brothers encountered him,
Did encounter him the prince of his comrades.’
RS 2.[012] ii 50–51 (*KTU*³ 1.12).

The verbs *mġy* and *mzʔ* belong to a bewildering set of roots with similar radicals and apparently similar meanings. In a painstaking review of the evidence and of previous scholarship, Joshua Blau concluded that there were originally five distinct roots (listed here with Blau’s glosses):⁴⁸

1. **mšy* > only Arabic *maḍā* ‘to go’;
2. **mġy* > only Ugaritic *mġy* ‘to reach, arrive, come’;
3. **mṭw* > Arabic *maṭā(w)* ‘to stretch, draw, pull; walk quickly’; Sabaic *mṭw* ‘to walk, march (or sim.)’; Gəʕəz *maṭṭawa* ‘to deliver’ (others include Arabic *ʔanṭā* ‘to give’, assuming an earlier form **ʔamṭawa*);
4. **mθʔ* (Blau’s *mzʔ*) > Sabaic *mzʔ* ‘to come, arrive’; Aramaic *məṭā* ‘to arrive’ (originally with consonantal ʔ, as shown by the Old Aramaic writing {*MṢʔ*}); Ugaritic *mzʔ* ‘to arrive, reach,

45 The root also occurs in Modern South Arabian languages, as *wkṣ* ‘to wake’, with initial radical *w* (Johnstone 1981, 290; 1987, 427). Note that Jibbāli and Mehri *ṭ* reflects PS **θ*; other examples include Jibbāli *ṭfēr* and Mehri *ṭfēr* ‘finger/toe-nail’, Jibbāli *ṭəll* and Mehri *aṭləl* ‘to give shade’, Jibbāli *eṭlim* and Mehri *həṭlāwm* ‘to become dark’, Jibbāli *ṭi* and Mehri *ṭáyma* ‘to be thirsty’, Mehri *nṭr* ‘to see’; see Johnstone 1981, 48, 49; 1987, 83, 84, 282.

46 One might suggest that **θ* > *ġ* before the final *u* of *yaqtulu* forms, e.g., *yīqaṭu* > /yīqaġu/ (although the form in question here is presumably *yaqtul* or *yaqtula*); but it is doubtful that an inflectional ending would trigger the change of a root consonant. It may be noted that if the root of the form *tqġ* is indeed *y-q-ġ* < **y-q-θ*, then it would also not conform to Greenstein and Tropper’s proposed conditioning factor, the presence of a sonorant elsewhere in the root (unless we are to include the glide *y* among the sonorants); thus Tropper (2012, 95) derives *tqġ* from a different root entirely, viz., *q-ġ-w/y*, comparing Arabic *ṣ-ġ-w* ‘(sich) neigen’, *ʔaṣṣāwa* ‘Ohr zuneigen; aufmerksam sein’; as he himself (ibid.) notes, however, the correspondence of Ugaritic *q* and Arabic *ṣ* is unexpected. Segert (1988, 295–96) suggested the change of **θ* > *ġ* in this root may have been triggered by “the assimilatory vicinity of the articulation place of the deep velar /*q*/ and the postvelar /*ġ*/.”

47 Or between *u*-vowels in *yaqtulu* forms: **taqūṭu* > /taqūġu/; but see the preceding note. It must be conceded that the Hebrew hollow root occurs only in the causative, and so we do not know whether it was medial *w*, as suggested here for the Ugaritic, or medial *y*.

48 Blau 1972, 67–72 = 1998, 231–36.

find'; Old Akkadian *maṣû* 'to reach'; and in part Gəṣəz *maṣʔa* 'to come'; Hebrew *māṣāʔ* 'to find; to reach, arrive'.

5. **mṣʔ* > Aramaic *mṣʔ* 'to be able, to be the match of' and marginally also 'to find' (from 'to arrive'); Akkadian *maṣû* 'to suffice'; and in part Hebrew *māṣāʔ* 'to find; to suffice'; Gəṣəz *maṣʔa* 'to come'.⁴⁹

It is, however, uneconomical to posit so many phonetically similar roots with similar meanings. In fact, Blau's fifth root, **mṣʔ*, is unnecessary, since, as shown by Steiner,⁵⁰ Aramaic *ṣ* may derive from PS **ṣ* when *m* or *r* immediately precedes or follows, as in *ṣmṣ* 'to shut (eyes)' and *ḥmṣ* 'to be sour', from PS **ḡmṣ* and **ḥmṣ*, respectively. Thus Aramaic *m(ə)ṣā* 'to be able' is the reflex of Blau's first root, **mṣy*, and the Hebrew, Gəṣəz, and Akkadian verbs listed under 5 should instead be listed under 4, **mθʔ* (with the meanings 'to find' and 'to suffice' as semantic extensions of 'come [to], arrive [at]').

Blau's second root, **mḡy*, is found only in Ugaritic, and yet it also has essentially the same meaning as his fourth root, **mθʔ*. The latter is obviously reflected in Ugaritic *mṣʔ*. I suggest that *mḡy* reflects a blending of the latter root, but now exhibiting the change of **θ* to *ḡ*, and a reflex of PS **mṣy*.⁵¹ It is likely that **mθʔ* was *u*-class in the prefix-conjugation and thus conformed to our proposed sound rule above, i.e., **yamθuʔ(u)* > **yamḡuʔ(u)*. It is also possible that the final glottal stop of that root dissimilated to a glide, either before the change of **θ* > *ḡ*—i.e., [*θ* . . . *ʔ*] > [*θ* . . . *w*]; thus **yamθuʔ(u)* > **yamθuw(u)* > **yamḡuw(u)*—or after the change (because of the incompatibility of *ḡ* and *ʔ*)—thus **yamθuʔ(u)* > **yamḡuʔ(u)* > **yamḡuw(u)*. The post-sound change root, **mḡw*, would have been close enough phonetically and semantically to **mṣy* for the blending to occur. The new root, *mḡy*, presumably coexisted for a time with the earlier *mṣʔ*, the latter an archaic form, as with *ṣlmt* and *ḡlmt* 'darkness'.

Thus we need posit only three PS roots, with fairly distinct semantic ranges:

1. **mθʔ* 'to come (to), arrive (at), reach':⁵² (Ancient South Arabian) Sabaic *mṣʔ* 'to go, proceed; to reach',⁵³ Minaic *mṣʔ* 'to be somewhere' and *s'tmṣʔ* 'to arrive',⁵⁴ and Qatabanic *mṣʔ* 'to come, enter',⁵⁵ Aramaic *m(ə)ṣā* (originally with *ʔ*) 'to come, arrive, reach'; Gəṣəz *maṣʔa* 'to come'; (Modern South Arabian) Soqotri *mīṭa* 'to touch, reach',⁵⁶ and Jibbāli *mīṭi* 'to reach (to)',⁵⁷ Hebrew *māṣāʔ* 'to find; to reach';⁵⁸ Akkadian *maṣû* 'to suffice'; Ugaritic *mṣʔ* 'to meet'; and Ugaritic *mḡy* 'to come, arrive', from a blend of **mḡw* (< **m-θ-ʔ*) and **m-ṣ-y*;

49 Blau also included here "Ugaritic *mṣʔ* D 'to fell,'" but a Ugaritic root *mṣʔ* no longer appears in recent dictionaries.

50 Steiner 1977, 149–51.

51 Cf. Hoch 1986, 189: "Blending consists in the development of a morphological 'compromise' between two forms with identical or similar meaning which are perceived as being in competition with each other." Cf. also Blake's (1920) "congeneric assimilation."

52 On this root see also Kogan 2015, 441.

53 Beeston et al. 1982, 89–90; Biella 1982, 273. *mṣʔ* appears as *mdʔ* in the minuscule texts, where *z* and *d* have merged; see Stein 2013, 43.

54 Arbach 1993, 1.63.

55 Ricks (1989, 96) glosses Qatabanic *mṣʔ* as 'to enter, go through; to replace, do away with'; the verb is clearly intransitive at times, however; for 'replace' in the text cited by Ricks, for example, we read *bymṣʔ ṣls'ww* '(which) comes upon/against it'. (For the reading *bymṣʔ* rather than *bymṣ* in this text, see the note in the online edition of the text in the *Corpus of South Arabian Inscriptions*, section "Corpus of Awsanite Inscriptions," at <http://dasi.humnet.unipi.it/index.php?id=79&prjId=1&coRId=4&colId=0&navId=674516597&recId=523> (accessed July 25, 2015).

56 Naumkin and Kogan 2015, 616; as mentioned above in n. 3, PS **θ* has merged with *ṭ* in Soqotri.

57 Johnstone 1981, 169; as mentioned above in n. 45, PS **θ* is reflected as *ḡ* in Jibbāli.

58 On the semantics of Biblical Hebrew *māṣāʔ*, see Ceresko 1982. We need not agree with Ceresko, however, that more than one root underlies Hebrew *māṣāʔ*; 'to find' is simply an extension of 'to reach'.

2. **mšy* ‘to move on, ahead’: Arabic *maḏā* ‘to pass, go (on)’;⁵⁹ Aramaic *m(ə)šā* ‘to be able’; Sabaic *mḏy* ‘to penetrate (of a wound)’;⁶⁰ and Ugaritic *mgy* ‘to come, arrive’ from a blend of **m-š-y* and **mḡw* (< **m-θ-ʔ*);⁶¹
3. **mṭw* ‘to extend, hand over’: Gəʕəz *maṭṭawa* ‘to hand over’; Arabic *maṭā(w)* ‘to hurry, pull’, and probably also *ʔanṭā* ‘to give’, from **ʔamṭawa*;⁶² Sabaic *mṭw* ‘to undertake an expedition’.⁶³

There may have been other Ugaritic roots in which the proposed sound change might have operated, i.e., in which **θ* occurred before *u* (other than *u* as case-ending or verbal affix), but in which the change was blocked by paradigmatic pressure. A survey of *DULAT*³, however, does not yield any obvious candidates.⁶⁴

59 According to Abdulrahim (2013, 138), *maḏā* in Modern Standard Arabic is {‘go’ of LOCOMOTION vs. GOAL}, ‘go on, go ahead; to pass (of time)’.

60 Beeston et al. 1982, 84; Biella 1982, 282.

61 Note also perhaps Gəʕəz *maḏaw* ‘spring (season)’ (from ‘to arrive, enter’?).

62 Also ‘to ride, mount’, perhaps denominal; Mehri *mṭw* ‘to mount (camel)’ may in turn be a loan from Arabic.

63 Beeston et al. 1982, 88; Biella 1982, 272–73.

64 Perhaps prefix-conjugation forms of *rwz* ‘to run’, such as */yaruz/* (or */yarūzu/*), parallel in form to */yaquḡ/*, which, it was suggested above, may derive from **yaquθ* (or */yaquḡu/* < **yaquṭu*). The form *ʕzm* ‘powerful’ may have been vocalized */ʕazūmu/* (cf. Hebrew *ʕāzūm*; but cf. also Arabic *ʕazīm*); if so, the change of *θ* to *ḡ* may have been blocked to prevent the otherwise unattested sequence *ʕ . . ḡ* (i.e., **/ʕaḡūmu/*). The noun *zr* ‘back’ was presumably a *qatl* form originally, i.e., */zāru/* < **θahr-*, as in Arabic *zahr* ‘back’; Akkadian *šēru* ‘back’ (for which see Huehnergard 2013, 458); and Mehri *ḏār*, Jibbālī *ḏer*, and Soqotri *ʔhar* ‘on, over’ (Kogan 2015, 575), rather than *qutl* as in Hebrew *šōhar* ‘roof(?)’, *šohōrayim* ‘noon’ and Amarna Canaanite */zuhru/* (*zú-uh-ru*; see *DULAT*³, 988). The noun *zú* ‘excrement’ is probably */zāʔu/*; for discussion, see Militarev and Kogan (2000, 256–67, no. 286); Kogan (2015, 575–76). For */zurwu/* ‘(aromatic) resin’, see n. 10 above.

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PART 7 — BEYOND

37

ON THE HUMAN MIND AND DEITIES

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ONE OF DENNIS PARDEE'S MANY notable achievements has been to acquaint the world to Ugaritians and their contact with their deities. For four years as his research assistant, I looked in on that world as well, and for nearly three decades I have been a student of the cultures and languages of the southern Levant. But in recent years I have been pursuing other interests—cognitive science, and the cognitive science of religion (CSR), in particular. Thus my contribution here is far afield, or at least farther afield than one might expect for a Festschrift honoring Dennis and what is well known about him. What isn't well known is that Dennis allowed me to write an interdisciplinary dissertation, drawing heavily on such fields as cognitive linguistics, cognitive psychology, cognitive philosophy, etc., to address simile and metaphor.

In that vein, I wish to offer here a brief primer, as it were, about the possible implications of the cognitive sciences for how humans understand their world, existence, and how and what we can know. All of us assembled for this Festschrift are linked with scholarship and the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. So better understanding our minds seems not an unimportant task.

Then further underpinned by Dennis's focus on Ugaritians and gods, I want to touch on CSR by commenting briefly on the human inclination, indeed, *preference* to "find" and believe in gods. Robert McCauley, a cognitive scientist of religion at Emory, has said it well in the title of one of his books: *Why Religion Is Natural and Science Is Not*.¹

"I'VE A FEELING WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE"

Several decades of increasing data and convergences within the many branches of the cognitive sciences appear to argue that we can no longer remain in the same-as-it-ever-was Kansas home.² My own modest placement within the cognitive sciences is primarily in cognitive linguistics. What's at stake are some of the very foundations of the ways the North Atlantic Corridor (Europe, Canada, the USA), and all those influenced by it, has approached how and what we can know. Longstanding foundations appear to be weakened, or at least up for serious reconsideration, in the light of certain data within the cognitive sciences.

Any question we ask and any answer we give is framed by human language and the human conceptual system. The journey in the years ahead must seek to understand—with as much *empirical* evidence as possible—how these spheres operate. Such a journey is a quirky one. The running joke—though not everyone laughs—is that work in the cognitive sciences, especially within the cognitive science of philosophy, is work proven by someone else to be absolutely wrong.³ Such passionate disparity is understandable. We're talking about the *mind*. Something we perceive as special—this thing that makes us *human*—is largely unknown.

1 McCauley 2011.

2 Some of what follows was first prosed out in Long 2010.

3 Anthony Chemero (2009, ix) humorously illustrates this point in a recent monograph: "Jerry Fodor is my favorite philosopher. I think that Jerry Fodor is wrong about nearly everything."

Methodologically, I defer to observable data. Though not unproblematic by any means, scientific empiricism, in general, trumps, for me, a self-cohering philosophical system detached from such empiricism. We should not enter into investigations by advancing *a priori* claims about what science can and cannot tell us about human experience and understanding.⁴ Only by pursuing the science can we ever really know its limitations. Doing the science, though, can never be free of philosophical suppositions, but philosophical (and theological) explorations should not involve sweeping insular appeals to intuition or commonsense devoid of a tethering to scientific data.⁵ Admittedly, we're on perilous ground here. The thinking and talking needed to understand the mind are carried out by the very mind doing the thinking and talking. Can any such system transcend itself completely to critique itself sufficiently?⁶ No inquiry is without a philosophical foundation. All science is situated, absolutely. Everyone knows the real challenge of investigation is not necessarily the data but their *interpretation*. Indeed, the devil lies precisely there. But we should all be interested, as investigators, in arriving at "scientifically stable" notions. The sun, all will affirm, does not orbit around the earth. Humanity, following its intuitions, perceptions, and theology, once thought differently. A "scientifically stable" corrective arrived a bit too late for Galileo's trial by the Church in 1633. What is stable in cognitive science? Very little. But this is where ever-increasing convergences from several disciplines shed light. We should strive to navigate our journey in the daylight of stable, responsible empiricism and self-critical cognitive science.

This is but the start of a voyage, and I think the distance to be traveled is far. But make no mistake, the anchor is lifted. Thanks in part to the cognitive sciences, we're all on a relatively new exploration with much to engage. Let's explore a few things the cognitive sciences appear to show us.

WHAT COGNITIVE SCIENCE IS SHOWING US: UNIVERSALS AND NONUNIVERSALS

- *The mind is embodied in an embedded body*
- *Thought is mostly nonconscious*
- *Humans understand the world conceptually and the abstract through conceptual integration and largely through metaphor*

These three statements—a triumvirate—increasingly appear to be fundamental universals across humanity, thanks to the cognitive sciences. We look at them in turn.⁷

THE EMBEDDED BODY'S EMBODIED MIND

The *mind* is embodied. The *brain*, of course, is embodied—no one denies that—but I'm not here talking about the *brain*. I'm talking about the *mind*. The brain produces the mind, and the "wiring" of the former is fused to human sensorimotor phenomena—what we sense and how we move.

The *body* is embedded. Our bodies are situated in a specific environment, influencing it and being influenced by it. This mutual contact defines our respective *econiche*—the role and position we have in our environment. Our human bodies, along with our brains, have evolved within a long sequence of such niches.⁸ Humans are humans because of their embodied minds in *econiche*-embedded bodies.

But all this, especially the *mind* as embodied, flies in the face of more than two millennia of common-sensical thinking, and the articulation of it, within the Corridor.

4 Feldman 2008; Haack 1993; Kornblith 1999.

5 Thompson 1995.

6 Rolston 2005, 21.

7 I am influenced here by Chemero (2009); Clark (2008); Edelman (2006); Fauconnier and Turner (2002); Hanna and Maiese (2009); Lakoff and Johnson (1999); and Verela, Thompson, and Rosch (1991).

8 Boyd and Richerson 2005.

Consider what you may see as commonsense about your mind. I see mine as something separate from me, something I access to think and understand. I'm not quite sure whether I see it as having a location. I sometimes envision it working within my head, but my mind also somehow transcends such localization. The mind is *just there*, and I think of it as something I *just have* that is not quite physically linked to me. My mind has a certain autonomy about it, or so it seems to me.

But growing evidence suggests that every human mind resides embodied within an embedded body, inescapably so. One means of conveying this idea is that our *perceptions* play a central role in our *conceptions*. We seem to understand correctly that *perception* is embodied, fused to senses and body movement and brains. But *concepts* have been seen as independent of embodiment. To be sure, *mind-independent* phenomena occur all around us, but to comprehend them, we use an *embodied* mind in an *embedded* body.

Our vista here looks selectively at but one of many concepts that demonstrate embodiment: *basic-level categorization*.

Functional neural beings categorize. They cannot avoid categorizing. My son, a few years back, carried out some research at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The lab was looking at the mechanism for how the Hawaiian bobtail squid screens for, that is, *categorizes*, particular symbiotic bacteria. Even amoebas distinguish between food and nonfood.

Take the human brain. They say we have 10^{12} neurons. Information passes from one neural circuit to another often through a numerically meager set of connections. The pattern of neural activation of one bundle often cannot map in a one-to-one correspondence to another. The meager set of connections thus groups certain input patterns to map them over to an output. Whenever a pattern of neural activity produces the same output from different inputs, neural categorization has occurred. For example, let's say you are in a room as you read this page. Look up at one wall. What you experience is registering or "firing" in your brain as a pattern of neural activity. Now turn to another wall. Is the input identical? No, you're looking at another wall and you're experiencing the room differently. But the output can be the same. You can process two different inputs and output them as a single conceptual category, 'room.' This is human categorization happening where it actually happens—at the level of neural activity.

It just seems natural, doesn't it, that the categories we have in our minds fit the categories out there in the world? The conceptual category of 'cat' simply fits the pet I have. 'Russian Blue' is a type of 'cat,' and 'cat' is a type of 'animal.' I see it there in the world. What could be clearer?

One reason we feel our categories fit the world is that humans have seemingly developed one important class of categories to understand the world's *physical* objects: *basic-level* categories.⁹ Again, we are here and, for the next several paragraphs, talking about *physical objects in the world*.

Take the following vertical category bundles:

SUPERORDINATE	<i>animal</i>	<i>fruit</i>
BASIC LEVEL	<i>cat</i>	<i>apple</i>
SUBORDINATE	<i>Russian Blue</i>	<i>Fuji</i>

Cat and *apple* are examples of the *basic-level* horizontal category (stratum) among their respective vertical category members. Empirical evidence suggests this level of categorization is *cognitively basic* and is rooted to aspects of our mind-embodied embeddedness.

This basic level, generated by humans themselves, seemingly is distinguished from others, in part, by such aspects as motor programming, holistic perception, mental images, and knowledge structure.¹⁰ (1) Humans apparently consider similar motor programming a hallmark for identifying basic-level categorization of physical objects. Such motor movement is not available at the superordinate level. We all have specific

9 Rosch et al. 1976; Rosch 1978; Mervis and Rosch 1981.

10 Rosch et al. 1976; Mervis and Rosch 1981, 92; Lakoff 1987; Lakoff and Johnson 1999.

motor programs for interacting with apples (polishing, holding in one hand, very open mouth, forceful teeth closure) and bananas (holding in one hand, peeling with a second hand, rounded mouth, soft teeth closure). *Apples* and *bananas* function as basic-level items. We do not have a motor program for interacting with *fruit*, a superordinate. (2) Holistic perception characterizes a basic level—a shape or material composition of the object—but not a superordinate. This trait and the next one (single image) seem to demonstrate that basic-level categories are *maximally contrastive* and *informative*. I say “apple,” and you can envision an overall apple shape. I say “banana,” and your mind likely has generated its profile. Apples and bananas have a high contrast between them. Each one’s overall shape is maximally informative of each object. I say “fruit,” though, and you have no overall shape you can assign to this generality. But for some cultures, material composition of the object seems to play a more important role than shape.¹¹ (3) We cannot produce a single *image* for all fruit, but we can do so for apples, bananas, and mangoes. Such a single *image* reveals a basic-level member. (4) Most of our knowledge of physical objects seems to be organized around the basic level. This level appears to be established first in language development.¹² When asked to name objects spontaneously, adults and young children commonly call out what we’re here identifying as the basic level. The words themselves tend to be linguistically unmarked, commonly used in normal, everyday conversations.¹³ In American Sign Language single signs generally denote this basic level, while super- and subordinate categories routinely have multiple sign sequences.¹⁴

What is universal and nonuniversal in such categorization? The particular *content* of a category is not universal. Arriving at categories is (1) an interaction of a human with real world objects and (2) the knowledge a human has of an object in relation to other objects. The relations and structures involved in such understanding differ among people groups.

So *content* is not universal, but the *principle* of category formation appears to be so, and with it the formation of a basic level. Though specific content differs, humans seem to have arrived upon a basic-level category for physical objects.¹⁵

The phenomenon of the basic level appears also to apply to things *nonphysical*, though likely not for the exact same reasons. Here more work is needed, but we can point to such phenomena as the linguistic phoneme—as a basic-level abstraction of its allophones—and linguistic unmarkedness vs. markedness as examples. Additionally, we seem to think in terms of basic-level motor programming for which we have holistic perception and images, such as running, walking, swimming; basic-level socialization, such as clubs, teams, families; even basic-level emotion—anger, happiness, sadness.¹⁶

So what? What are the implications of basic-level categorization? Lakoff and Johnson take us through some of them:

First, the division between basic-level and nonbasic-level categories is body-based Because of this, classical metaphysical realism [categories match the world as is] cannot be right, since the properties of categories are mediated by the body rather than determined directly by the mind-independent reality Second, the basic level is that level at which people interact optimally with their environments, given the kinds of bodies and brains they have and the kinds of environments they inhabit Third, basic-level categorization tells us why metaphysical realism makes sense for so many people . . . [it] seems to work primarily at the basic level.¹⁷

11 Lucy 2004.

12 Mervis and Rosch 1981, 93.

13 Cruse 1977.

14 Newport and Bellugi 1978.

15 Rosch et al. 1976.

16 Lakoff and Johnson 1999.

17 Ibid., 28–29.

If our excursion did not have to be so brief, we would also take the time to consider vision and bodily motion and orientation. Suffice it to say that there are *mind-independent* realia—reflectance, light waves, things located in relation to other things, and much more—but to comprehend them, all humans use an *embodied* mind in an *embedded* body. In short, the old adage “Seeing is believing” is more correctly, “Seeing is (what the brain is) believing (it is seeing).” We would also consider the linguistic phenomenon of aspect¹⁸ and a neurophysical experience that further suggest the mind’s embodiment: mirror neurons.¹⁹

THOUGHT IS MOSTLY NONCONSCIOUS

Thought is mostly nonconscious. This is the second statement of the triumvirate. *Cognitive nonconsciousness* refers to those cognitive processes that operate without our general awareness, that are often inaccessible to consciousness or happening far too quickly to comprehend.

A glass of wine strikes us as a singular item, but neurophysiology has forced us to recognize our error: the shape of the glass, its rim, its base; the glass’s thickness, quality, and opacity; its situatedness; the wine’s color; its aroma; its taste; the glass’s initial and ever-lessening weight; the hand’s reach; the fingers’ positions, and so on. Consciously to us, the glass of wine is singular, while nonconsciously to us it’s many things. Look at a picture of that special someone in your life. The two-dimensional arrangement of colors has little in common with the real person, but through a brain and its development you construct an identity between the picture and the person. Because the brain accounts for this instantly and nonconsciously—in that you’re not aware of the processes—you tend to think that the *picture* is giving off meaning, when actually meaning is being constructed by astoundingly complex cognitive processes in your brain.²⁰ Consider all the stuff that’s behind what you think about something, what you “instinctively” do. You’re conscious of many things, but there’s a driving force beneath it all. How we account for things as singular or identifiable or coherent, when they are in reality so many different processes at the nonconscious level, is one of the central challenges of cognitive neuroscience. It’s the *binding problem*. The nonconscious processes occur in different locations, and no single site in the brain seems to bring them all together. Yet, consciously, there is singularity, identity, and coherence.

That’s cognitive nonconsciousness, and it’s ballparked to make up roughly 90 to 95 percent of human thought. Think of a nicely packaged trinket at a retail store. The nonconscious is the very complex processes involved in producing and delivering that trinket there. All you really notice is the beautiful item—the conscious. An extremely involved nonconscious, though, has delivered it to you.

HUMANS UNDERSTAND THE WORLD CONCEPTUALLY AND THE ABSTRACT THROUGH CONCEPTUAL INTEGRATION AND LARGELY THROUGH METAPHOR

Out of the 1970s came an important and influential study, popularizing the growing discipline of cognitive linguistics: *Metaphors We Live By*.²¹ Lakoff and Johnson claimed, firstly, that metaphor permeates *ordinary, everyday* language (hence, metaphors *we live by*). Metaphor is not simply rhetorical flare. Secondly, metaphor in everyday language is not just a way of speaking but also a mode of *thought*. Metaphoric expressions trigger concepts that are themselves structured in terms of metaphor. Thirdly, metaphors of daily life display a highly coherent system of thinking about the concept the metaphor prompts.

18 Narayanan 1997.

19 Rizzolatti and Craighero 2004; Pelphrey, Morris, and McCarthy 2004; Iacoboni et al. 2005; Ramachandran 2008; Rizzolatti and Sinigaglia 2008. First discovered in monkeys and then in humans, mirror neurons fire when a subject (1) performs object-oriented movement or (2) observes another subject doing so. Mirror neurons are part of the neurophysiology seemingly involved in understanding another one’s actions, for *grasping intentions*, predicting what others will do. They are involved not only in the motion of an object but also with the motivation behind it.

20 Fauconnier and Turner 2002.

21 Lakoff and Johnson 1980.

Much Lakoff-influenced work talks of basic or primary *conceptual metaphors*, those at the heart of how a language group thinks and understands, and it argues that metaphor is essential to abstract thought. In short, metaphor reigns supreme.

Metaphor is extremely important, but it likely doesn't reign *supreme* in cognition, at least judging from the recent landscape of cognitive linguistics.²² Metaphor now seems to be but an instance (albeit an extremely common one!) of *conceptual integration/blending*, the highly imaginative integration of concepts crucial to even the simplest of thought processes.²³

We often say that *words* carry meaning, *words* convey what we mean, we put meaning into our *words*. Ever-more-known human cognitive processes, however, suggest that "language does not *carry* meaning, it *guides* it."²⁴ Language is code that accesses the riches of our mind's layers of conceptual processes, thus prompting us to construct meaning. The meaning we attain draws on our (physical, social, linguistic, cultural, etc.) embeddedness. The *minimal* code that is language prompts vast networks of mind-resident conceptions, and those mind-resident conceptions are largely the product of our embodied minds in our embedded bodies interacting with(in) our embeddedness.

Vast and deep mechanisms of nonconscious thought and conceptual blends universally drive human consciousness.²⁵ Equally universal is the human biology and cognitive embeddedness to understand abstract concepts and produce conceptual blends. The work of John Bargh and colleagues appears to affirm that humans "scaffold" new information onto already known and existing knowledge (as scaffolding onto an existing structure) and are doing so already as preverbal children.²⁶ Higher cognitive processes, which include conceptual blending, appear to be grounded on our embeddedness within our physical world and largely body-based (e.g., movement, orientation, space, etc.).

But many of the particular blends are not universal. The particularities of our embeddedness produce scores of nonuniversal conceptualizations, which, again, are driven primarily by *nonconscious* yet learned blends or integrations.

Understanding the world through this type of conceptualization, though, is not held by all. A *platonic* disposition views meaning as independent of the mind and the human, as disembodied. *Objectivist* inclinations, in part, identify meaning closely with a sentence and with a set of conditions that show the sentence to be true. Such *truth conditions* reflect the world as it objectively is, irrespective of how a human may conceptualize it. Much of the work in the cognitive sciences and especially cognitive linguistics stands in sharp contrast. Though we push the horizons continually, a firm understanding of how conceptions are neurologically implemented remains a horizon yet to be reached. But the path now seems to suggest, in the words of Langacker, that "conceptions evoked as linguistic meanings are *nontransparent*: they do not simply reflect or correspond to the world in a wholly straightforward manner, nor are they derivable in any direct or automatic way from objective circumstances."²⁷ As we continue to ponder how humans understand, we must finally recognize not only conceptualization but also the sheer pervasiveness of the imaginative mechanism of *conceptual blending* for meaning.

The cognitive sciences thus seem to constitute common ground for helping us all understand our universality and our cultural peculiarities, for confronting dispositions that uncritically privilege cultures and understandings, and for sorting through our humanity and, like the Ugaritians and their myriad rituals, connections with deities. The cognitive sciences are giving to a world without borders much to contemplate. Ahead lie those journeys.

22 Taylor (2002, 519–35) offers a brief review. Quite telling is how little attention Langacker (2008), a father figure in cognitive linguistics, gives to metaphor in his recent summative work.

23 Grady, Oakley, and Coulson 1999; Fauconnier and Turner 2002; Taylor 2002.

24 Fauconnier 1994.

25 Fauconnier and Turner 2002.

26 Williams, Huang, and Bargh 2009; Huang, Williams, and Bargh 2009.

27 Langacker 2008, 35.

HUMANS AND THEIR DEITIES

The Ugaritians represent only one locale and culture in a then-world that believed in and produced rituals associated with deities. From infancy, humans are amazing agency sensors. The work of Deborah Keleman, among others, suggests that humans come into this world as “intuitive theists.”²⁸ American four- and five-year olds have a purpose-based teleology. In fact, the bias of teleological explanations for objects and living things only begins to moderate in American and British children at around nine and ten years of age.²⁹ Expecting purpose along with intentional design increasingly appears to be part of an infant’s core. Evans’ work on human-origins beliefs is remarkable.³⁰ Eight- to ten-year olds from both fundamentalist and non-fundamentalist American homes favored “creationist” origins for a given species. Only among eleven- to thirteen-year-old nonfundamentalist children did such a bias toward a creationist account diverge.

Such work by Keleman, Evans, anthropologist Stewart Guthrie,³¹ and psychologist and CSR researcher Justin Barrett³² suggests that the catalyst for believing in deities does not come from ambient cultural beliefs in them. Rather, humans come into this world biologically and evolutionarily wired to believe. Pascal Boyer’s work has focused on the cognition of religious thought and behavior. Boyer states, “People do not generally have religious beliefs because they have pondered the evidence for or against the actual existence of particular supernatural agents. Rather, they grow into finding a culturally acquired description of such agents intuitively plausible,”³³ and his work attempts to underpin just why that is the case.³⁴

In today’s world, many have learned to suppress these *natural* biases—and it appears suppression is learned—but not so in the world of the Ugaritians, indeed in most all the world for most all time. More work needs to be carried out among myriad cultures to test the universality of all this evidence, but data increasingly seem to demonstrate that humans desire purpose and intentional agency. And with little encouragement, movement that appears self-propelled or directed toward a goal triggers thought processes that consider mere objects to become agents and to further infuse them with mental states, desires, beliefs, personality, and social roles.³⁵ In short, we are wired to look for purpose and agency, thus driving a belief “in beings that can account for the apparent purpose or design in the natural world. As humans and animals are rarely good candidates, conceptual space is open for gods to fill this role.”³⁶

Cross-culturally, many gods bear a relation to deceased humans, and Ugaritians robustly held to a belief in deified ancestors: the ubiquitous *rpûm*. Just why humans commonly deify their ancestors needs more study within CSR, but the penchant among the living to view within humanity an immaterial component—be it mind and/or soul and/or spirit—is a likely facilitating factor. Though Plato is among the first, in his discussion of his Forms, influentially to give voice to mind-independent phenomena, Paul Bloom has argued that humans enter the world as intuitive dualists.³⁷ Whether dualism is intuitive or an easily accepted notion, the Ugaritians had, for physical bodies that had ceased to function, no difficulty projecting emotions and thoughts onto an ongoing immaterial expression of that person.

Deities and religion were an almost all-consuming focus among the Ugaritians, and we are fortunate to have as much of their thought as we do. Their mythologies and almost illimitable number of ritual texts help to underpin what McCauley has stated. Religion is natural. Science is not.

28 Keleman 2004.

29 Ibid.

30 Evans 2001.

31 Guthrie 1993.

32 Barrett 2004; 2011; 2012.

33 Boyer 2003, 123.

34 Boyer 2001; 2003.

35 Barrett 2011, 100.

36 Ibid., 102.

37 Bloom 2004.

A PERSONAL EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO DENNIS

I sometimes think back to my days as a grad student walking in the rarefied air of the Oriental Institute (OI). Understanding my appreciation for Dennis must be seen under the spotlights of (1) the OI's reputation within the academy during the 1980s when I entered, (2) my experience with Dennis as an advisor, and (3) my subsequent years in the academy reflecting on those days with him.

"Do not, under any circumstances, go to the Oriental Institute for doctoral work!" This was not a single voice advising me on my career path in the early 1980s. This was a whole *chorus* of sound reverberating as though sung within a stone structure. Advice from all corners from my then-world was singular: avoid Chicago. The problem was *not* the OI's academic reputation; it was known for its demanding rigor—a good thing! It's always been among the elite and to this day remains likely the single finest institute dedicated to understanding Western Asia and the eastern Mediterranean regions *as a whole*. The problem was how the OI treated its students, at least by reputation. It was nasty. Simply, students seemed rarely ever to graduate, rarely *able* to graduate. The OI allegedly held students hostage to nearly allegedly unattainable goals and the whims of allegedly socially dysfunctional professors. If you had *at least* a decade of time and didn't mind walking in minefields, then perhaps the OI was okay. Or so was the advice. I'm glad, in retrospect, that my desire for an environment of rigor outweighed, in my mind, the OI's perils.

I spent eight and a half years in the halls. The reputation of peril was, let me softly say, not entirely undeserved, but not in my small corner. In that corner was Dennis. Dennis's insistence on excellence and rigor are channeled through a man of winsome demeanor. I remember well my first paper. I think I was able to see some of the original black ink of my words through his flood of red. I was devastated, of course. Talking through the details of that paper with him, though, allowed me to see for the first time what would lie ahead. In gentle, soft-spoken words and a ready burst of laughter, Dennis extracted my best—mediocre, to be sure, but it was my best. In years to follow, reading through some of Dennis's library, I discovered that Dennis often made comments in the margin, *blistering* comments with a soft explicative or two. Encountering such comments brought a smile. They reinforced for me that Dennis was passionate about his field, spared no critique, had no problem in principle expressing disagreement or affirmation, yet possessed the wisdom to express his passion, in person, in redemptive, enamoring ways. In my particular case, I had a lot to learn, and Dennis had an inexhaustible level of patience. I was acutely aware in those days of how fortunate I was.

In the years since, I have come to see how privileged I was in other aspects. My career, now into its third decade, has been spent primarily in teaching-college environments. On such campuses, though research is not unimportant, good teaching stands at the top of priorities. I look at Dennis now through that lens and stand in admiration. Feedback in courses with Dennis was, in a phrase, lightning fast. Homework for language courses was routinely returned within a day or two. Research papers were returned within a week. And what drops my jaw as I think about it these many years out, Dennis returned every chapter of my dissertation within two weeks' time! Let me say that again. He returned every chapter within two weeks. I didn't understand then how timely Dennis operated as a teacher. Also, at times when I now, in petty fashion, keep close tabs on how many courses I have to teach and how many students are enrolled in them, I think I remember several quarters when he was involved in what had to be at least four courses. Now, I never took the time to discover the teaching-load policies of the departmental professors at the OI—what student pays attention to that stuff?—but I knew at the time that most profs there handled maybe two per quarter, if that many. The OI is a *research* facility after all! But Dennis, in retrospect, seemed tireless as he played his important role as one of the world's preeminent Ugaritologists and Northwest Semiticists while at the same time "stooping" to carve out prolonged contact hours with us, his students—several courses, seminars, or readings per quarter. All this, of course, was in addition to his ever-open door for guidance and feedback. I was offered a great gift in life. That gift was Dennis as my Doktorvater.

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(inside back cover)

This volume honors Dennis G. Pardee, Henry Crown Professor of Hebrew Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago and one of the preeminent experts in Northwest Semitic languages and literatures, particularly Ugaritic studies. The thirty-seven essays by colleagues and former students reflect the wide range of Professor Pardee's research interests and include, among other topics, new readings of inscriptions, studies of poetic structure, and investigations of Late Bronze Age society.

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