“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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“LIKE ’ILU ARE YOU WISE”
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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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Last but not least, we would like to extend our wholehearted indebtedness to Nancy Pardee (University of Chicago) for helping at every stage of the process, including providing background information about Dennis and assisting with some of the logistics of this celebratory volume.
INTRODUCTION

"k il ḫkmt"
"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 hippiairiques* (1985d); *Les textes para-mythologiques de la 24e 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 Advises”). 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 Samʾal) 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 24e 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 Ugaritishe 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 hippiastriques [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; 2010c–d; 2013k), and to the comparison of Ugaritic texts with other ancient literatures (“ṣph ‘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 (McAffee 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 ʾIlu 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 marzeaḥ” [1990a, with P. Bordreuil]; “Les documents d’Arsal 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 insessional 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 wʿt 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] [1988]) and numerous articles (notably Pardee 1988f; 1990b; 1993c). Multiple supervised dissertations connect with this theme (Long 1993; Owens 1997; Reymond 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 bicolon 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 (2012), 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 Reymond’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 ’iqnʾi “lapis-lazuli-pure.”
Several of the essays also address historical and religious themes. Brian Schmidt’s essay explores the exact nuance of ‘ʾĕlōhîm’ in 1 Samuel 28:13, especially as it relates to the context of mantic ritual. Matthew McAffee 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 wʾqɔtal 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 Ba’laam 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 *-s’a (based on Akkadian -iš, Hebrew -ך, and Ugaritic -h) and arguing also for a reflex of this particle in the Aramaic adverbial ending *-a. 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 ǧ) and proposes a sound rule for the conditioned change from (front-articulated) *θ to (back-articulated) ǧ.

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.
**PUBLICATIONS OF DENNIS G. PARDEE**

1973


1974


1975


1976


1977


1978


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1983–84


1984


1985

1986

1986a  “Epigraphic Notes to Articles in UF 16.” *UF* 18: 454.


1987


1988


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1992


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<td>Review of “Working with No Data”: Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin, edited by D. M. Golomb. JNES 52</td>
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<td>&quot;The Phoenician Inscriptions,&quot; edited, with D. O. Vance. BA 57</td>
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<td>Review of Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit, by T. J. Lewis. JNES 53</td>
<td>153–54</td>
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<td>1994d</td>
<td>Review of Weltreich und &quot;eine Rede&quot;: Eine neue Deutung der sogenannten Turmbauerverzäh lung (Gen 11, 1–9), by C. Uehlinger. JNES 53</td>
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<td>1995b</td>
<td>“Eloah Yahweh” DDD, 543–49.</td>
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<td>“Gephen 꽄𐤍” DDD, 646–67.</td>
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1997e  "Gezer Calendar." OEANE 2: 400–401.

1997f  "Ilu on a Toot (RS 24.258)." COS 1: 302–5.


1997s  "Ugaritic." OEANE 5: 262–64.
1997u  "Ugaritic Dream Omens (RS 18.041)." COS 1: 293–94.
1997x  "Ugaritic Liturgy against Venomous Reptiles (RS 24.244)." COS 1: 295–98.
1997z  "Ugaritic Prayer for a City under Siege (RS 24.266)." COS 1: 283–85.


1999


1999–2000


2000


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| 2004f | “Exemple de texte rituel.” In *Le royaume d’Ougarit: Aux origines de l’alphabet; le royaume


2004p “Stèle avec dédicace au dieu Dagan,” with M. Yon and P. Bordreuil. In Le royaume d’Oug-


2007h  “RS 18.028 et le palais royal d’Ougarit comme acheteur de biens.” *Syria* 84: 57–68.


2011a  Grammatical Case in the Languages of the Middle East and Europe: Acts of the Interna-


Review of Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Per-
publications of dennis g. pardee

2013


2014


2014b “The Katumuwa Inscription.” In In Remembrance of Me: Feasting with the Dead in the Ancient Middle East, edited by V. Rimmer Herrmann and J. D. Schloen, 45–48. OIMP 37. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.


2017c "The el-Kerak/Kemoshyat Inscription (4.19)." *COS* 4: 89.

2017d "The New Moabite Royal Inscription (4.20)." *COS* 4: 89–90.


"RS 1.[083]: Texte fragmentaire et énigmatique de la première campagne de fouilles à Ras Shamra–Ougarit (1929).” *Syria* 97: 207–16.

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Dissertation Advisees

ABBREVIATIONS

AfO Archiv fur Orientforschung
AfOSup Archiv für Orientforschung Supplement
AION Annali Istituto orientale di Napoli
AJSL American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures
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
AnOr Analecta Orientalia
AnSt Anatolian Studies
AO Accession number in the Département des Antiquités orientales of the Louvre
AOAT Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOS American Oriental Society
ArOr Archiv Orientální
ASV American Standard Version, 1901
AuOr Aula Orientalis
AYB Anchor Yale Bible
AYBRL Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library
BA Biblical Archaeologist
BASOR Bulletin of the American Society of Overseas Research (Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research)
BASORSS BASOR Supplement Series
BBR Bulletin for Biblical Research
BHS Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BiOr Bibliotheca Orientalis
BNJ Brill’s New Jacoby
BO Biblica et Orientalia
BSOAS Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BWANT Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CEB Common English Bible, 2011
CHANE Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
xliv  ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
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<td>Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum. Paris: e Republicae Typographeo, 1881-</td>
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<td>CRAIBL</td>
<td>Comptes rendus des séances de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres</td>
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<td>CSCO</td>
<td>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</td>
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<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets</td>
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<td>Di</td>
<td>Diyala</td>
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<tr>
<td>DJD</td>
<td>Discoveries in the Judean Desert</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Dead Sea Discoveries</td>
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<td>DS-NELL</td>
<td>Dutch Studies on Near Eastern Languages and Literatures</td>
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<td>EAJT</td>
<td>East African Journal of Theology</td>
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<td>ESV</td>
<td>English Standard Version, 2001</td>
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<td>FAT</td>
<td>Forschungen zum Alten Testament</td>
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<td>FRLANT</td>
<td>Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments</td>
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<td>GLECS</td>
<td>Comptes rendus du Groupe linguistique d’études chamito-sémitique (Paris)</td>
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<td>HCSB</td>
<td>Holman Christian Standard Bible, 1999</td>
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<td>HDO</td>
<td>Handbuch der Orientalistik</td>
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<td>HS</td>
<td>Hebrew Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSK</td>
<td>Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft / Handbooks of Linguistics and Communication Science</td>
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<td>HSM</td>
<td>Harvard Semitic Monographs</td>
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<td>HSS</td>
<td>Harvard Semitic Studies</td>
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<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
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<td>HUCA</td>
<td>Hebrew Union College Annual</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Critical Commentary</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEJ</td>
<td>Israel Exploration Journal</td>
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<td>IOKU</td>
<td>Helzter, Michael. The Internal Organization of the Kingdom of Ugarit: Royal Service-System, Taxes, Royal Economy, Army, and Administration. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1982</td>
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<td>JANER</td>
<td>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</td>
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<td>JAOS</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society</td>
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<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
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<td>JCS</td>
<td>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</td>
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<td>JEOL</td>
<td>Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux</td>
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<td>JNES</td>
<td>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</td>
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<td>JNSL</td>
<td>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</td>
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<td>JPOS</td>
<td>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</td>
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<td>JPS</td>
<td>Jewish Publication Society of America Version, 1918</td>
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<td>JQR</td>
<td>Jewish Quarterly Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSOT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</td>
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<td>JSOTSUP</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement</td>
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<td>JSQ</td>
<td>Jewish Studies Quarterly</td>
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<td>JSS</td>
<td>Journal of Semitic Studies</td>
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<td>KAR</td>
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<td>KJV</td>
<td>King James Version, 1611</td>
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<td>KUSATU</td>
<td>Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt</td>
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<td>LSAWS</td>
<td>Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic</td>
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<td>Septuagint</td>
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<td>MARI</td>
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<td>MDOG</td>
<td>Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin</td>
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<td>MT</td>
<td>Masoretic Text</td>
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<td>Na</td>
<td>Narām-Sin</td>
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<td>NAB</td>
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<td>NABU</td>
<td>Nouvelles assyrologiques brèves et utilitaires</td>
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<td>NEA</td>
<td>Near Eastern Archaeology</td>
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<td>OBO</td>
<td>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis</td>
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<td>Oriental Institute Museum Publications</td>
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<td>OIS</td>
<td>Oriental Institute Seminars</td>
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<td>OLA</td>
<td>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</td>
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<td>OLZ</td>
<td>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</td>
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<td>Or</td>
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<td>OTL</td>
<td>Old Testament Library</td>
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<td>PEQ</td>
<td>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</td>
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<td>POLO</td>
<td>Proche-Orient et Littérature Ougaritique</td>
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<td>RA</td>
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<td>RII</td>
<td>Field number of tablets excavated at Ras Ibn Hani</td>
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<td>Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods</td>
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UGARITIC ALPHABETIC TEXT CROSS-REFERENCES


RIH = field number of tablets excavated at Ras Ibn Hani

RS = field number of tablets excavated at Ras Shamra

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oi.uchicago.edu
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PART 1 — UGARITIC STUDIES
When I came to Chicago in 1972 to study historical and Semitic linguistics, and probably Aramaic, it was soon made clear, by my Biblical Aramaic teacher, that I would first have to be exposed to Biblical Hebrew (so different from my undergraduate Modern Hebrew). And so began my acquaintance with Dennis Pardee, whose class met five days a week—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for basic grammar, and Tuesday and Thursday for historical linguistics. (Though he always insisted he didn’t know any linguistics—or Aramaic—he was wrong.) Ugaritic classes were scheduled for the convenience of the Divinity School rather than the Division of the Humanities, so I was never able to take that course, but Dennis bestowed on me one of the rare offprints of his dissertation publication1 on condition that I actually read it. In early September 2011, I asked whether he knew of any summary of the decipherments of the Ugaritic letters that had not been clarified by the original achievements of 1931. He did not—and suggested that I prepare one. This essay is the result.2

When Ugarit was discovered, Ras Shamra was not in Syria. In the complicated situation of mandates drawn up by the League of Nations after World War I, the provinces of the former Ottoman Empire were allocated among the victors, and the territory of the Alawites was accorded separate status within the French mandate, as were the districts of Aleppo and Damascus. The Stamp Atlas3 summarizes the developments as follows (fig. 1.1):

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1 Pardee 1975–76.
2 This paper was presented at the fortieth annual meeting of the North American Conference on Afroasiatic Linguistics, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, February 19, 2012. In its expansion, I am pleased to acknowledge the assistance of John Huenenberg, Joseph Lam, M. C. A. Macdonald, and Mark S. Smith. I am especially indebted to Foy Scalf, research archivist at the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, who made available the exceptionally rare early numbers of GLECS. The editors Joseph Lam and Chip Hardy have made various welcome improvements and bear no responsibility for any remaining infelicities.
3 This atlas is a valuable source for geopolitical history of the previous century and a half.
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.

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.

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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 1929, 295 fig. 5) 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.
13 Virolleaud 1931a.
(divided into two words; the word divider was easy to recognize), preceded by the letter 𐎍 (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 research 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. Without publication, no decipherment or interpretation could have happened.

The first scholar to announce results was Hans Bauer (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, meanwhile, looking for words containing “to” (the *ana* equivalent), found *b l* and *mlk* and *šlš* and others, but he got some letters wrong—
by guessing that a two-letter word was bn “son” instead of bt “daughter” or “house.” Bauer’s grzn set him straight on that score, and the two in effect collaborated (table 1.1, line 3).

If Day is correct, Virolleaud incorporated their results in his first decipherment publications. That is where things stood by 1931. Twenty-three letters had been securely identified. The etymological “doublets” such as ḫ and ḫ had not been problematic, but the less common letters were—gimel, zain, ǧain, ẓāʾ, and especially ḏāl. As early as 1932, Jean Cantineau noted the absence of those expected letters from the decipherment. The last three took some time to finalize. But before they were settled came the alephs.

Virolleaud (table 1.1, line 4) was the first to recognize that there were three letters for aleph, and he also suggested that they represented different vowels. This seems to have been another key insight, and a shared one. None of the three initial decipherers expresses any particular surprise at finding two or three alephs—but none of them, apparently, found the correct explanation.

W. F. Albright might have come close. He liked to remind readers that he had been the first to suggest that the name of the site the tablets came from was not something like “Ṣaphon” but instead the Ugarit known from Amarna tablets and from Egyptian inscriptions. That first suggestion was in a footnote in an Archiv für Orientforschung article dealing with something quite different; it promised the evidence would

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18 Dhorme 1931.
19 Bauer 1930b.
20 The initial charts of the three pioneers and W. F. Albright are reproduced in Daniels 2020, 17 fig. 1.5. Only the online version of this chapter is to be consulted. The initial printing of the book has the illustrations garbled.
21 Virolleaud 1931a.
22 See Knudtzon (1915, 1581) index s.v. (five occurrences) and the astute discussion (ibid., 1016f.).
23 Albright 1932a, 20 n. 19, for example.
be published later. Unfortunately for Albright, Virolleaud in the meantime came up with tablets identifying the site.\textsuperscript{25} But astonishingly, Albright in his first(?) publication on Ugaritic texts\textsuperscript{26} essentially adopted Virolleaud’s values (as can be seen from the mistaken \(p\) or \(f\) for \(𐎑\); table 1.1, line 5). In the first footnote he gives the equation—and insists that the name of the place is spelled ‘Ikrt!\textsuperscript{27} He could have been the one to correctly interpret the alephs. (In his next article, he admitted he had been wrong.\textsuperscript{28})

Johannes Friedrich was the first to set out the evidence for \(â\), \(ỉ\), and \(ủ\) in detail. However, both in his Zeitschrift für Assyriologie article\textsuperscript{29} and in his review\textsuperscript{30} of Bauer’s Das Alphabet von Ras Shamra\textsuperscript{31} (a book I have not been able to consult), Friedrich says that Bauer had expressed this insight on page 32—though hesitantly (\textit{wenn auch noch zweifelnd}). In view of that reported doubt, I prefer to assign credit to Friedrich’s predecessors. Medial aleph-letters occur in \(malʾaku\) “messenger,” \(šaʾila\) “he asked,” and \(ruʾumina\), which should correspond to Akkadian \(rēmu\), Hebrew \(רְאֵם\) “wild cattle.”

But by far the clearest evidence is from the case-endings of \(kussiʾu\) “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 Harris\textsuperscript{32} noted a few anomalies between Friedrich’s aleph-identifications and forms expected from etymology or morphology, such as \(rỉš\) instead of \(rաš\) “head” and \(tỉkl\) for \(*takulu\) “you [pl.] eat,” and accounted for them by postulating a conditioned sound change \(ắ > ĕ / _\text{C}\) (short stressed \(a\) becomes \(e\) before glottal stop, medially).\textsuperscript{33} The change is registered by Gordon;\textsuperscript{34} but such spellings are now generally interpreted as /a/, with [l] employed to spell a vowelless aleph.\textsuperscript{35}

In a few etymological observations on consonants, Friedrich\textsuperscript{36} notes that “\(d\) has become \(d\) even though \(f\) does not merge with \(š\). A footnote refers to the confusion surrounding \( GridView\), with Virolleaud’s \(ḣ\),\textsuperscript{37} Albright’s

\textsuperscript{25} Schaeffer 1932.
\textsuperscript{26} Albright 1932b.
\textsuperscript{27} Why \(k\) and not \(g\)? John Huehnergard (personal communication, April 1, 2016) suggests that Albright relied on the Egyptian spelling with \(k\) (Gardiner sign D28 \(𓊕\)); the attestations are gathered by Giveon (1981).
\textsuperscript{28} Albright 1934, 109.
\textsuperscript{29} Friedrich 1933b.
\textsuperscript{30} Friedrich 1933a.
\textsuperscript{31} Bauer 1932.
\textsuperscript{32} Harris 1937.
\textsuperscript{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.)
\textsuperscript{34} Gordon 1965, 31, §5.16.
\textsuperscript{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.
\textsuperscript{36} Friedrich 1933b.
\textsuperscript{37} On January 25, 1933, however, Virolleaud discussed “une consonne \(ġ\) (gayn), variante graphique du ‘(\(ʿ\)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 \(ġ\) was an independent phoneme in Akkadian.
z, and the ḡ of David Hartwig Baneth (otherwise not known to Ugaritology, he became professor of Arabic at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). Baneth\(^\text{38}\) offers several Arabic etymologies in support of ḡain, against Albright’s arguments for zā‘, and his argument, endorsed immediately by H. L. Ginsberg,\(^\text{39}\) has proved to be correct. In the same one-page article, though, he suggests that \(\text{chester}=z\) simply be read not as \(p\)’ or \(f\) but as \(\text{chester}\) followed by \(\text{chester}\), or \(\text{chester}\).

Some seeming etymological aberrancies in words spelled with \(\text{chester}\) that “ought to” show \(\text{chester}\) have occasioned discussion over the years; Huehnergard\(^\text{40}\) reviews the literature and suggests a conditioned sound change \(\text{chester}>\text{chester}/\_\text{chester}\), i.e., partial contact regressive assimilation before a back vowel.

\(\text{chester}\)

Credit for the correct identification of \(\text{chester}\) as \(z\) is not entirely clear. In his first “Notes on the Mythological Epic Text,” James Montgomery\(^\text{41}\) 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 ḡain. Sure enough, in “Ras Shamra Notes. II,”\(^\text{42}\) Montgomery refers to “the enigmatic character which has been largely read as \(f\)” (as I see now erroneously), and which may represent an emphatic -ẓ\(\text{chester}\f\)ly read as \(\text{chester}\) but also the curious suggestion that because “samech\(\text{chester}\)” (presumably \(f\)), though it does not occur in the then-known literary texts, is now found in \(kse\) “throne” and \(s\text{sw}horse\), it “représente un dédoublement du phonème \(z\)”.

Two years later, on April 30, 1935, Février\(^\text{1937}\) 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 \(\text{chester}\) as “\(z=\text{chester}\)” and \(\text{cherester}\) as “\(s\text{cherester}r\text{cherester}\)” (Février 1948, 175). A decade later, in his second edition, Février (1959, 176) lists \(\text{chester}\) as \(z\) and \(\text{cherester}\) as \(s\), “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 ǧain and ẓāʿ.46

The last letter to fall into place was ⼝. At first it was considered simply a graphic variant of ⱥ s, or as representing ʾṣ (as late as 1950, this was Virolleaud’s transliteration for ⱥ, 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 ƿ, with omission of the upright wedge leaving only the two sloping lateral wedges”;49 but he seems to want to connect this sign with ʾt rather than ʾṣ. Cantineau50 records that Dhorme had suggested51 “que le signe ⼝ pouvait peut-être équivaloir soit à arabe Ժ soit à arabe _VIRTUAL怎麼 (but omits the comment “ce qui permettrait d’expliquer les confusions apparentes avec ś, 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 ⱪ, identified as “une occlusive dentale sourde t dont le point d’articulation serait un peu différent de r” for the letter  السنوات, while retaining the description “spirante interdentale” for the Proto-Semitic sound 𐤅 that he agrees is its ancestor. By 1940, in an article (dated April 1939) provoked by Guérinot,53 Cantineau was describing a series _CHAINEDaptcha *t vücud *d ג ’d ג ’dentартalus 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 ś in Hebrew and Akkadian and 𐤋 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

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46 It is not clear why Bordreuil and Pardee 1995 and 2001 and Pardee 2007 transliterates الة with 𐤋, whereas Pardee 2004 and Bordreuil and Pardee 2009 use ژ, cf. n. 90 on assumptions regarding the language represented by an anomalous script.
47 Cf. n. 45. See n. 73 on potential confusion with ƿ.
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  and *s (1940, 48–53; cf. 1952, 84–87, where they are reconstructed as *t  and *s).
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).\footnote{I explored this question in Daniels 2012, offered a few weeks after the present paper.} Friedrich\footnote{Friedrich 1933a, 740 n. 2.} refers casually to “die subaräischen Texte von Ras Schamra,” as if their identification was well known.\footnote{The identity, or nonidentity, of “Hurrian” and “Subarian” was a disputed point in the 1930s–1950s.} Theodore Gaster\footnote{Gaster 1936.} 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 \( \bar{\text{s}} \) and \( \text{z} \) (table 1.1, line 8).

Gaster appears not to be aware of H. L. Ginsberg and B. Maisler’s “Semitized Hurrians.”\footnote{Ginsberg and Maisler 1934, 244.} 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 \( \\text{s}harr \), they suggest \( \text{ž} \) for this letter.

It fell to Zellig Harris\footnote{Harris 1935.} (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 \( ь \) 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.\footnote{Ibid., 96.}

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.\footnote{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 \( ь \) and \( \text{ž} \)” concludes that “it is best to regard \( ь \) as a sound patterned between [t] and [s], and \( \text{ž} \) as the corresponding voiced sound” (Speiser 1941, 35, §46).} For there is evidence that the sound could be represented in writing either as a dental or as a sibilant.\footnote{Harris 1935, pp. 98f.}

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...
Shamra), offered as the value of the letter Ḫ, each letter with a question mark, and transliterated it ⟨ś⟩; 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 suggested\(^\text{71}\) that the sequence could be restored as:

\[
' A B G \dot{H} D H W Z H \text{T} Y K (L) M \text{Ś} N Z \text{Ś} , ' P \text{Ś} Q R S (T) \text{ġ} T I ' U \text{Ś} .
\]

He takes this evidence as confirming his long-held opinion (long predating his decipherment of Proto-Sinaitic\(^\text{72}\)) that the earliest linear alphabet comprised something like 27 rather than 22 letters.\(^\text{73}\)

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

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

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 Virolleaud\(^\text{75}\) in handcopy and the rather odd transliteration

\[
a, b, g, (h), d, h, w, z, h, t, y, k, (ś), l / m, (ź), n, (ś), s ' , p, s, q, r, ś / (ġ), t, (i, u, s²)
\]

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

\[
' A B G \dot{H} D H W Z H \text{T} Y K (Ś) L M \text{Ś} N Z \text{Ś} , ' P \text{Ś} Q R \text{ġ} T I ' U \text{Ś} .
\]

So Albright has ś, Virolleaud has ź, and Gordon has ž.

But then Speiser approaches the abecedary from both the Hurrian and the Common Semitic point of view\(^\text{78}\) (table 1.1, line 9). Hurrian tells him that the sound was voiced (hence not Albright’s ś); Semitic suggests that, in its few secure occurrences, it was the relative pronoun corresponding with Arabic and Proto-Semitic ḫ. Historical arguments and parallels with ḫ > ī further support the case. At his next opportunity,
Gordon both transcribes and transliterates the letter as ḏ. (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 “abecedary” giving the Ugaritic letters in the South Semitic order (ḥ l ḥ m . . .) rather than the familiar West Semitic order (ʔ b g d . . .), 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 text and the editio princeps, and, three pages later, after the two discussions:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{h l ḥ m q ? ŧ r} & \quad \text{h l ḥ m q w ŧ r} \\
\text{b t ? k n ḥ ?} & \quad \text{b t ḏ š k n ḥ š} \\
\text{z p ? (+ ?) n ġ} & \quad \text{s p ‘ d g d ġ} \\
\text{? a y} & \quad \text{ṭ z y}
\end{align*}
\]

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.
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 \( \text{g} \) slot: it is a reproduction with two wedges of the familiar \( \text{g} \) 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: 𐩥 \( w \), 𐩳 \( d \), 𐩷 \( ṭ \), 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 \( z \), \( s \), \( š \), \( ṣ \) (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), \( i \), \( u \), \( ū \), 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 \( ū \) 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 \( ū \) 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 \( ū \) 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 \([\text{ts}]\); 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] (\( ʾ \), \( g \), \( w \), \( ṭ \)) 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, lettershapes are considered, so that only "deux de ces formes pourraient éventuellement s’expliquer par la forme linéaire correspondante: les trois clous du \[\text{ʾ}\] représenteraient le museau et les deux oreilles/corner de la tête de boeuf stylisée linéaire, et les deux clous de \[\text{g}\] seraient les deux traits du \[\text{g}\]" (2001, 343). Would a novice scribe even suspect that the shape of the Canaanite \( \text{ʾ} \) letter represents an ox-head without the name of the letter? But we cannot be sure what the Ugaritic letter names were, despite the biscaliptal abecedy in Cross and Lambdin 1960 (Daniels 1991), and the description of the letter applies equally to the South Arabian shape \( h \). 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 \([\text{a}]\).
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 \(a b g h d\) 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 tablet\(^{89}\) 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 Viroilleaud 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 (\(y, \acute{g}, \acute{z}, \acute{t}\)).\(^{95}\) Comparison with table 1.1 above, however, shows that Cohen was commenting on a table provided by Viroilleaud that did not take into account the generally accepted results of the decipherment and evidently clung to Viroilleaud’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 \(업체\) as \(z\) (\(\acute{z}\)) to Cohen. It is not found in the annotated table (their fig. 5), but it is found in the last page of Viroilleaud’s letter of December 29, 1933 (their fig. 7); I cannot decipher Viroilleaud’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 \(업체\) on p. 8f. above to mention Viroilleaud’s early, albeit unpublished, suggestion.
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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 qatala—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., tšt (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...

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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.
3 Gordon 1965, 72; Segert 1984.
4 Mallon 1982, esp. 128; cf., e.g., Hackett 2012, 112.
7 Rainey 1977, 41.
8 See, e.g., Greenstein 1989; more generally, Gadamer 1982, esp. 235–74.
represent the *yaqtul* preterite; e.g., *yʿny* (*yaʾniyu*) “he speaks up” (*CAT* 1.16 i 24) versus *yʿn* (*yaʾnī*) “[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 *ḥdy* “look” occurs only in apocopated form;20 the verb *phy* “see” occurs only in apocopated form;20 the verb *ḥdy* “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 *ʿny* “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 *shafʿel* verb *yššq* “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*...  

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9 Or *yaʾnī* (< *yaʾniyu*); see Pardee 2012, 169–70.
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.
16 So also Verreet 1988, 95–97; Zewi 1999, 185; Tropper 2000, 434.
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,” ṣp “sighting.” Accordingly, the absence of final y on a III-ʾaleph 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 apocope 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-ʾaleph verb stem.\(^{22}\) There are forty-five proper attestations of III-ʾaleph-u forms (with ʾaleph-u in the third radical position) and none of what would appear to be III-ʾ yqatuλ (with ʾaleph-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-ʾ 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 Ganto,\(^{24}\) 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 Ganto 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 Aramaic\(^{31}\) 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.\(^{33}\)


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


\(^{24}\) Ganto 2012, 39–51.


\(^{27}\) Greenstein 1998, cols. 369–70.


\(^{29}\) 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 yaqṭul 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 apocopeation is at best ambiguous. Hackett would invert the order of the argument: it is not the short forms, which she presupposes are yaqṭul 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 yaqṭul but yaqṭulu.37 Moreover, there is no doubt that yaqṭulu exists. The sure existence of yaqṭulu in Ugaritic is established by the writings of final ā in III-ʾaleph verbs. The only unambiguous evidence we have rests on the final-ʾaleph verb forms.

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

HOW MANY III-ʾ YAQṬUL PRETERITES ARE THERE?

Hackett adduces two “certain examples” of the III-ʾ yaqṭul 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 wysū = wayaṣaʿu “(the army) goes forth” was carelessly reconstructed (by me as well as Herdner) as wysi, 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 ʾaleph-u.41

Verreet also cites an alleged instance of yaqṭul preterite using the evidence of a III-ʾ verb in CAT 1.40.19, 22, 23, a text Pardee names a “ritual for national unity.”42 The form tḥṭỉn, which is indeed a yaqṭul 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 yaqṭul form. It does not instantiate the yaqṭul preterite.

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

\[ˈnn hlkt wšnwt / tp āḥh k! n′m / āḥh / k ysmsm\]

The eye roves and darts.
It sees its brother so fair,
Its brother so handsome.

---

34 Greenstein 2006, 81, 91; cf. Notarius 2013, 86.
35 Hackett 2012, 112.
36 Ibid., 114, 115.
38 So also Hackett 2012, 113.
42 Verreet 1988, 73–74; Pardee 2002.
44 Hackett 2012, 113; so also, e.g., Huehnergard 2012, 56–57; Pardee 2012, 170 n. 6.
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." It is not a canonical source but the flipside of a scribal exercise in syllabic cuneiform (tu ti etc.). 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. If, on the other hand, it is read k, as some scholars do, there is no error in this writing.

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." The demonic eye sees before it otherwise acts. The problem is that one expects at 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. The spelling tp occurs in line 5 with the energetic and pronominal suffixes -nn, again without h. 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. 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.' 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, 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. I maintain that the only sound solution to the quandary of 'nn is to regard the second nun as a scribal error of ditography. 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-yaqtul preterite in the qal conjugation—tispāt "she ate"—appears at first blush clear. This verb follows two verbs that look like qatala (past tense) forms: hlkt and šnwt (line

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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.
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.
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 aduces 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.
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. 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—muttaliktu. 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 hikt and šnwt need not be parsed as qatala forms; they may very well be participles: hālikatu and šāniwatu, respectively. In that case, the contextual support for taking tspỉ in line 3 as a yaqtul preterite is weakened.

Now, if the form tspỉ is not a yaqtul preterite, what else could it be? It could be another scribal error—a writing of tspû instead of tspù, 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. 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tbrk ilm tišy} & \quad \text{The gods offer blessing, they go;} \\
\text{tišy ilm lāḥılm} & \quad \text{The gods go home to their tents,} \\
\text{dr ū lmsē̄n̄thm} & \quad \text{The circle of El to their dwellings.}
\end{align*}
\]

Hackett parses the verbs, which lack so-called energetic nun, as past indicative (preterites). However, this tricolon belongs to a pattern that I have called “general : particular” and Fenton has called “forked parallelism.” 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tlḥmn ilm wtštn} & \quad \text{The gods eat and drink,} \\
\text{tštn y< } & \text{'d šb'} \quad \text{Drink wine till sated,} \\
\text{tr} & \text{‘d [škr]} \quad \text{Vintage till inebriated.}
\end{align*}
\]

---

58 Hackett (2012, 115–16) makes a similar argument concerning the form yṣḥk (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 [yṣḥk], and moreover ‘it’ has foamed/frothed [zb].” However, Bordreuil and Pardee, as well as del Olmo Lete (2014, 173), evidently parse yṣḥ(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 āšḥk “then I will say to you” (line 2).

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

60 See n. 54 above.


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 energic nun and are understood by virtually all scholars as \textit{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 \textit{-n}. That the difference in form has no impact on the tense or aspect of the verbs should be clear from \textit{CAT} 1.22 i 21–22: \textit{tlhm rpùm tšyn} “The Shades eat, they drink.” In this line, a short prefixed form and a long prefixed form are side by side.\footnote{See already Greenstein 1998, 409; cf. Sivan 1997, 212. Lewis (1997b, 204–5) unnecessarily emends the form \textit{tlhm} to \textit{tlhmn} in conformity with the later occurrence.} Although in the line’s recurrence in \textit{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”—\textit{yšǔ/tšǔ/tš(ā)n} \textit{gh(m) wyṣḥ/wtṣḥ/wtṣḥ(n)}.\footnote{See already Greenstein 2006, 83. For the evidence, see Whitaker 1972, 458–59.} The line has an invariable formulaic structure with many parallels in the Hebrew Bible.\footnote{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.} The verb \textit{nšʾ} “raise” is always found (except in the dual) with \textit{aleph-u}, indicating that the form is \textit{yaqtulu} and not \textit{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 (\textit{wayyiqtol}).\footnote{Polak 2006, 291.} 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” (\textit{tšǔ 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.”\footnote{Gzella 2010, col. 370.} 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.\footnote{Gzella 2010, cols. 370–71; Gianto 2012, 41–51.} 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 \textit{wyṣḥ/wtṣḥ/wtṣḥ(n)} “he/she/they called out” is short or preterite, while the initial, or inceptive, verb \textit{yšǔ/tšǔ/tš(ā)n} “he/she/they raised (their voice)” is transparently \textit{yaqtulu}. It is only as a result of presupposing that the latter verb is \textit{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.\footnote{Hackett 2012, 116.} However, the established means of indicating circumstance is not by splitting the formula between different verb forms but rather by preceding the main verb with an adverbial phrase.\footnote{Cf. Sivan 1997, 125.} One can precede the verb of “seeing,” for example, with the phrase “upon raising his eyes”: \textit{bnšỉ (preposition + infinitive) ’nh wyphn} (\textit{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 \textit{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 \textit{m}—for example, \textit{bkm tmdl n ’r // bkm tsmd pḥl} “Weeping, she saddles the donkey, // Weeping, she harnesses the ass” (\textit{CAT} 1.19 ii 8–9).\footnote{Greenstein 2006, 89. For similar examples, with preposition (\textit{bm bkyh} “as he cries,” \textit{bdm’h} “as he weeps”), see below.} There is no need to suppose that for the sake of a circumstantial clause, one must presuppose a \textit{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
well-attested uses of *yaqtulu* and *qatala* in Ugaritic epic. 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. The former relates on-line action and the latter off-line action. Gzella and Giano replace my analysis of *yaqtulu* versus *qatala* as foreground versus background (and more subtle uses) with *yaqta* preterite (foreground) versus *yaqtulu* (background). Giano claims it is *yaqta* that relates “a series of events building the backbone of a story,” while *yaqtulu*, lacking a specific definition in time, provides circumstantial information.

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):

```
yʿrb bḥdrh ybk / He enters his chamber, he cries;
btn ’gmm wydm’ / An inner alcove (?), and weeps.
tnkn ūdm’t’h / His tears are poured forth
km ṭgltm ār̄s / Like shekels on the ground,
km ḥmšt mṯh / Like five-weights on the couch.
bn bkyh wyšn / As he cries, he falls asleep;
būmh nhmmt / As he weeps, there’s slumber.
št tlbān / wyškb Sleep overwhelsms him, he lies down.
nhmmt / wyqmṣ Slumber, and he crumples.
wḥlmh / il yrd Now in his dream, El comes down;
bqhrth / ab ādm The Father of Man, in his vision.
wqrb / bšál krt Now El approaches, asking Kirta:
māt / krt kybk / “What ails Kirta, that he cries?
ydm’ n’mn ġlm / il “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.

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 *ybk* (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 *yaqta*. 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), *bdm’h “in his weeping” (line 32). The same form is used in relating what El does as he approaches (wyqb, a *yaqtulu* form in line 37) Kirta with a question: *bšál “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: *tlbān* (line 33).

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76 For Gzella and Giano, 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.
80 See, e.g., Parker 1989, 148–49.
Gzella and Gianto analyze the verb sequence differently. They parse the prefixed forms that show no explicit signs of length as *yaqtul* preterites. Only explicitly long forms (ybky, tlǔān) do they acknowledge as *yaqtulu*. Recall that for Gzella and Gianto, it is the preterite that carries the main narrative. Accordingly, the line *yʿrb bḥdrh 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 tlǔān 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 Orientální* 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.

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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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Zewi, Tamar
GOD ['ILU] AND KING IN KTU 1.23*

Theodore J. Lewis
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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 Burkert

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. 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 ('ILU) 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

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.”

* 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).
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 Parker\(^3\) argues that the intention of ʾIlmalku
(the author whose name could be rendered Ilumalku, “ʾIlu is king”) is to underscore “the virtues of ʾIlu as
the incomparable savior” of the king.

ʾIlu’s benevolence includes providing the king with a wife and children as recorded in the divine bless-
ing in \textit{KTU} 1.15.II.16–28:

\begin{quote}
\textit{ks yỉḥd [i]l b} [y]d [ʾIlu] holds a cup [in] his hand,  
\textit{krpn bm [y]m}n A chalice in his [right han]d.  
\textit{b}rk\textit{m ybrk} [‘bdh] He indeed blesses [his servant],  
\textit{ybrk il} \textit{k}rt [t’] ʾIlu blesses [noble] Kirta,  
\textit{[y]m}rm n’m[n] ʾglm \textit{il} [Favors] the goodly lad of ʾIlu:  
\textit{āṭṭ [tq]b} y krt “The woman you take, O Kirta,  
\textit{āṭṭ tqḥ bt} k The woman you take into your house,  
\textit{ʾglm t’srb b}zrk ʾIlu blesses [noble] Kirta,  
\textit{tld šb’ b}nm lk She shall bear you seven sons,  
\textit{wṭm}m tṭmnm lk Eight shall she produce for you.  
\textit{tld yṣb ʾglm} She shall bear the lad Yaṣṣubu,  
\textit{yqḥ lb} b [nt’] [. . .] Who will suck the milk of the Luminary . . . ,  
\textit{msṣ td} dt [−−][. . .] Suckle at the breasts of [. . .],  
\textit{mṣnq [. . .]}.  
\end{quote}

Echoing the familial language we see in \textit{KTU} 1.23, Kirta is portrayed as ʾIlu’s son (ʾglm \textit{il}; \textit{bn} \textit{il}) who is “good-
ly” (n’m) as are ʾIlu’s “goodly” sons (ʾilm n’m\textit{m}; \textit{bn}) in \textit{KTU} 1.23.1, 23, 58, 65, 67.\(^6\)

In addition, as king (and thus as ʾIlu’s representative on the earthly plane), Kirta is also a royal husband
and father like ʾIlu in \textit{KTU} 1.23. Kirta takes a woman who becomes his wife into his house (ʾāṭṭ tqḥ bt),
whereupon she conceives and bears him multiple children (\textit{KTU} 1.15.III.20–25) in echo of ʾIlu, who takes
women (ʾattm\textit{n}) into his house (yqḥ \textit{b}b\textit{t})—women who become his wives, who then conceive and bear him
multiple children (\textit{KTU} 1.23.36, 48b–49, 51b–53, 57b–58). Kirta’s heir suckles at the breast of a goddess
(\textit{KTU} 1.15.II.26–28), as do ʾIlu’s children in \textit{KTU} 1.23 (\textit{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.\(^8\)

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[5] The readings of this section follow Pardee (2012, 184–88).
\item[6] Elsewhere in the narrative, Kirta is called n’mn ʾglm \textit{il} “the goodly lad of ʾIlu (\textit{KTU} 1.14.1.39; 1.14.1.8–9; 1.14.1.41]; 1.15.
I.15–[16]; 1.15.II.20]; \textit{bn} \textit{il}; \textit{bn-m} \textit{il} “the son of ʾIlu” (\textit{KTU} 1.16.1.10, 20; 1.16.II.48); \textit{ṣpḥ} “offspring (of ʾIlu)” (\textit{KTU} 1.16.1.10, 21,
23; 1.16.II.43, 49); and “bd \textit{il} “the servant of ʾIlu” (\textit{KTU} 1.14.3.49, 51; 1.14.34–35; 1.14.II.19]). ʾIlu is called Kirta’s father (ʾāb)
\item[7] On the plurality of ʾIlu’s wives, see below.
\item[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
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
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 Xella 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 “Ba’lu of Ugarit,” it includes mention of the king’s sacrifice at the Temple of ‘Ilū (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 ‘Ilū as a šlmm-offering” (š♠tr úṭkl l ỉl šlmm) in the month of “the first wine” (rašu-yēnî).10 Once again the central focus is on the king as the primary cultic actor11 who ritually washes himself clean (yṛṭḥṣ 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 yṭṭ[b] [mlk] brr and [mlk] brr rgm yṭṭb 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 ’Ilū (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 ‘Ilū. “Indeed a large proportion of the rites are either stated explicitly to have taken place (lines 38–54) in the temple of ’Ilū 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 ṣṭṭ “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
degree that Pardee\textsuperscript{14} 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),\textsuperscript{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 (*ʿrbm*, *ṭnnm*) 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 ‘d, a term used to designate a “throne room” in the Kirta epic (occurring in parallel to Kirta’s *ksʾ mlk* “royal throne” and to *kḥṯ drkt* “the seat of his dominion” (*KTU* 1.16.VI.22–24) as well as a room in the temple of Baʿlu-ʿUgarita where royal cult takes place (*KTU* 1.119.9; cf. *KTU* 1.123.13); (b) *KTU* 1.23.19–20 mentions eight “divine dwellings” (*mṯbt ʾlm*), 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 ’Il) and where there are eight “dwellings of cut branches” (*mṯbt ʾṣmr*; cf. the ritual pruning in *KTU* 1.23.9–10).\textsuperscript{16}

‘ILU AS KING: ḤṬ AS ROYAL SCEPTER

The god ’Il is often referred to as king (*mlk*) elsewhere at Ugarit,\textsuperscript{17} and this paper argues that there are also reasons to view ’Il as king in *KTU* 1.23—reasons that have gone unnoticed, though admittedly ’Il 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 ’Il’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 ʾSaʾtiqatu narrative in *KTU* 1.16.VI.8, where ’Il’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 ’Il and Môtu in Ugaritic myth is found in *KTU* 1.6.VI.27–29, where ’Il is described as crushing the scepter (ḥṭ) of Môtu’s rule as he (ʾIl) overtops his (Môtu’s) kingship!\textsuperscript{18}

\begin{verbatim}
 l ysʾ ʾált ṭbk
 l yḥpk ksʾ mlk
 l yṯbr ḥṭ mṯpṭk
\end{verbatim}

Surely he (ʾIlu) will remove the support of your throne,
Surely he will overturn the throne of your kingship,
Surely he will break the scepter of your rule. (*KTU* 1.6.VI.27–29)

\textsuperscript{14} Pardee 2002, 239.
\textsuperscript{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.
\textsuperscript{17} See *il mlk* “ʾIlu, the King” in *KTU* 1.4.IV.38, *il/mlk ʾb šn* “ʾIlu/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 dyknḥ* “ʾIlu, the King, who established/created (?) him” in *KTU* 1.3.V.35–36; 1.4.IV.48.
\textsuperscript{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 ʾIlu. Cf. a parallel passage in *KTU* 1.2.III.17–18, where Šapšu informs ’Athtar that his bid for kingship will also fail due to ’Ilu’s overturning his throne and breaking his scepter (yṯbr ḥṭ mṯpṭk).
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."

mt wîr yṯb Môtu-the-Ruler sits enthroned,
bdh ḫṭ ṯkl A scepter of bereavement in one hand,
bdh ḫṭ ŭlmn A scepter of widowhood in the other.
yzbrnn zbrm gpn May the vine-pruner prune him,
yṣmdnn šmdm gpn May the vine-binder bind him,
yṣql šdmth km gpn May he trim his tendrils like a vine. (KTU 1.23.8–11)

In addition to the royal aspect (šr) of his binomial name, Môtu is portrayed as sitting enthroned (yṯb), especially if the occurrence of ḫṭ 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 (ṱkl) and widowhood (ǔlmn). 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 (ẖṭ) 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).

il ḫṭh nḥt il ymnn mṭ ydh [KTU 1.23.37]

Scholars are mostly in agreement that we have a double entendre with the words ḫṭ 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.”

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 Szynecer, Coogan and Smith, Gibson, Lewis, Pardee, Pope, Smith, van Zijl) who see šr (sarru) 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., šarru). For bibliography and discussion, see Pardee 1997, 276–77 n. 13; Smith 2006, 40.

21 ṣḥb by itself can designate royal enthronement. See, for example, KTU 1.16.VI.37–38, where Yassibu’s proclamation ʾamlk “I will reign” is paralleled by ṣḥb “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.
Outside KTU 1.23, in Ugaritic the verb occurs in KTU 1.2.IV.11, 18 to describe Kōtaru-wa-Ḥasīsu’s handing down a weapon to Baʿlu. Though it does not use the cognate to ʾht that appears in our passage, the account of the battle in Isaiah 30:30–33 depicts “the descent of [Yahweh’s] arm” (nḥat zērōʾō) as he smites Assyria with a rod/scepter (sēbet) and a staff (mṭṭeh).

Scholars have notoriously seen the descent of ʾIlu’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. The former position is difficult to maintain in light of the immediate context, which celebrates the length of ʾIlu’s “hand” yd (KTU 1.23.33b–35a)—yet another euphemism for his phallic—and the overall context, in which ʾIlu 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 ʾIlu as king is lowering his scepter (ḥṭ) 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. . .”

Yet can such a meaning of ʾIlu’s graciously lowering his scepter to potential wives (il ḥṭh nḥṭ) in the A-line square with the parallel B-line (il ymn mṭ yḍḥ), which has had its own share of notorious solutions? The various proposals for understanding the verb ymn 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 ʾIlu); and (c) interpreting ymn as a qatāl denominative verb stem from the root ymn (cf. Hebrew) and thus indicating ʾIlu’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 ymn 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, Fīrūzabādī, Zābīdī) to modern (e.g., Wehr) Arabic lexica, the verb ṭanūn means “to be benevolent, gracious, kind” as well as “to bestow, confer, or grant benevolence or benefits.” Related nouns and adjectives include ṭanūn (“gift, favor, blessing, gracious bestowal”), minna (“benevolence, kindness, benignity”), mnnān (“beneign, generous”), mmnūn (“indebted, grant benevolence or benefits.”

The root nḥṭ 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 ṭḥ in the causative sense (to bring down) seems to occur in the D stem in KTU 1.2.IV.11, 18 (yunḥḥit) and in the D (nḥḥita) and Dp (nḥḥuta) stems KTU 1.23.37, 40, 43 (so too DULAT, 620; cf. Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 161). Alternately, this passage has been translated with Kothar’s fashioning a weapon, for which one could look to the Arabic nḥḥa, 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.

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

Ugaritologists 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 midst 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-ʿArab and the Taj al-ʿArus.

24 The root nḥṭ 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 nḥṭ in the causative sense (to bring down) seems to occur in the D stem in KTU 1.2.IV.11, 18 (yunḥḥit) and in the D (nḥḥita) and Dp (nḥḥuta) stems KTU 1.23.37, 40, 43 (so too DULAT, 620; cf. Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 161).

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27 Esth. 8:3–5; cf. 5: 1–3.

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

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<tr>
<td><em>il ḫth nḥt</em></td>
<td>'Ilu lowers his scepter,</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>il ymn mṯ ydh</em></td>
<td>'Ilu is generous with the staff in his hand. (<em>KTU 1.23.37</em>)</td>
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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 ‘Ilu’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 (*mannā*) words for manna (i.e., a *qall* pattern noun used of geminate roots). As noted by Maibeger,\(^32\) 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 ‘Ilu who is the guardian (*nqr*) 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

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29 My vocalization of this bicolon would be:

‘ili ḫṭṭahu nahḥita (D suffixal form 3ms)

‘ili yumānin maṭṭā yadihu (L prefixal form 3ms)

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

naḥḥuta-ma/nuḥata-mi/naḥūtu-ma ḫṭṭuka “lowered is your staff”

(D suffixal form 3ms + enclitic m/Gp suffixal form 3ms + enclitic m/G pss ptc ms + enclitic m)

mumānin-ma/mumnannu-ma maṭṭā yadihu “generous is the staff of your hand”

(L ptc ms + enclitic m/G pss 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.”


33 See Maibeger 1983, 280–308, for the long list of other proposals for the etymology of Hebrew *mān, mann*– and Aramaic *mannā*’. 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” (*mamṭīr*) the manna resonates with how the verb *nḥt* is often used of gods’ sending down rain.
name \textit{mnn}. That a single text includes three individuals with the name \textit{mnn} may attest to the popularity of the name, marking one who has received benevolence from a deity. Also of note is that all these names occur in economic texts, and one wonders whether any individuals were so named because of their “indebt-ed” 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 \textit{KTU} 3.10, 4.783, 4.791, 4.792; 4.401).

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

\textbf{ʾILU AS KING: ROYAL WIVES, ROYAL MOTHERS}

Turning to the recipients of ʾIlu’s benevolence brings us to the social and ideological ways in which women (royal wives, multiple wives, and royal mothers) enhanced prestige. In \textit{KTU} 1.23 ʾIlu is associated with at least three (possibly four\textsuperscript{39}) women, two of whom become the focus of sexual relations and childbirth. In the first half of the text, we read of ṢAthiratu, ʾIlu’s consort, elsewhere referred to as \textit{rabītu}, a queen mother in her own right.\textsuperscript{40} In \textit{KTU} 1.23, attention is given to her association with agriculture (i.e., mention of her \textit{šd} “fields” in \textit{KTU} 1.23.13, 28) and her suckling of the gracious gods (\textit{KTU} 1.23.23–24), whose birth is the focus of the second half of the text. Depending on how one translates \textit{KTU} 1.23.13, the text could explicitly make the connection between ṢAthiratu’s field and that of ʾIlu.\textsuperscript{41}

Though the other two women are not named, our text gives considerable attention to them in \textit{KTU} 1.23, where they are called \textit{mštʿltm} “offerers/servers”\textsuperscript{42} and \textit{ṭṭm} “women.” Indeed, they are central to an extended narrative, which includes (a) their initial interaction with ʾIlu (lines 31–33); (b) ʾIlu’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 \textit{ṭṭ ỉl} “ʾIlu’s wives” (lines 39b–49a), whom ʾIlu weds and to whom he gives bridal gifts (\textit{ỉtrḥ},\textsuperscript{43} line 64); (d) their amorous adventures with ʾIlu, which result in their pregnancy and the birth of the divine pair Šaḥru-wa-Šalimu; (e) an announcement of

\textsuperscript{35} The names are variously vocalized in the Akkadian syllabic spellings. See Watson 1995, 224–25; 1996, 101.
\textsuperscript{36} The three people are \textit{mnn bn krmn}, \textit{mnn bn qqln}, and \textit{mnn bn ṣnr} in \textit{KTU} 4.35.5, 13, 16 (RS 8.183 + 201). See McGeough 2011, 501–3.
\textsuperscript{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.
\textsuperscript{38} Cf. Gen. 38:15–18 with its completely different (though sex-related) context, which has Judah pleading “the staff in (his) hand” (\textit{matṭeh bĕyād}) to ensure payment for procured sex.
\textsuperscript{39} Scholars are divided about whether Rahmayyu in \textit{KTU} 1.23.13, 16, 28 is to be identified with ṢAthiratu or whether she constitutes another (fourth) woman in our text, with ṢAnatu offered as a candidate due to her being called \textit{rḥmy} in \textit{KTU} 1.6.II.27. Here we lean toward seeing \textit{rḥmy} as designating ṢAthiratu. In addition, in light of the double occurrence of \textit{rḥmy} in the very same text, it seems best to see \textit{rḥm} in line 13 as a simple scribal mistake (so too Pardee 1997, 278 n. 22). Finally, filling ṢAthiratu into the broken section of 1.23.16 as a parallel to \textit{rḥmy} 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.
\textsuperscript{40} Wiggins 1993, 65–71.
\textsuperscript{41} This connection would involve analyzing \textit{šd ỉlm} as \textit{sadū ‘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 \textit{sadū ‘ilīma} “the field of the gods.”
\textsuperscript{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.
\textsuperscript{43} Cf. Akkadian \textit{ṭṛḥṭu}, the dowry or bridal gift given to the groom’s family; \textit{CAD T}, 353–54; Vita 1999, 475–76; Smith 2006, 116. For a mythological bridal gift elsewhere, see the use of \textit{ṭṛḥṭt} in \textit{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 ’Ilu, 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 ’Ilu (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 (mḥr) and certainly of royalty.47 The adjective ḏrdtm (“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.49 That mlkt, the queen mother (or the queen),49 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 ’Ilu’s relations with two women who become his wives and the mothers of his children.

’ILU 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 “’Ilu’s daughters” (bt ʾỉl) or are to become “’Ilu’s wives” (ʾṯt ʾỉl). 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 ’Ilu’s seductive meal—a
discernment that, as Smith vividly notes, culminates in their seeing ʾIlu 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 ʾIlu’s “hand” (yd), “staff” (mf ydh), and “scepter” (ḥḥ), the virility of ʾIlu the sovereign is certainly being underscored. This virility is boldly stated when the poet proclaims the size of ʾIlu’s “hand” (yd) to be “as long as the sea” (ʾark yd īl kym). It is not surprising that the ʾIlu we meet in KTU 1.23 elsewhere boldly boasts to ʾAthiratu:

Does the “hand”/love (yd) of ʾIlu the King excite you?
The love (ʾahḥ ḫḥ) of the Bull arouse you? (KTU 1.4.IV.38–39)

As in KTU 1.23.33b–35, the word “hand” (yd) is used here in the Baʾlu Cycle euphemistically and, moreover, with a word play in which the homonym yd (“love” from ṣyd) nicely parallels ʾahḥ “love” in the following line. What is not to be missed is that the virility of ʾIlu is that of ʾIlu “the King.” Also not to be overlooked is ʾIlu’s other well-known epithet, Bull ʾIlu (ṭḥ īl), another designation of his power and virility. All three of ʾIlu’s major epithets (Father, Bull, King) reinforce a unified picture of potency and vigor.

ʾIlu’s virility is also on full display in another lengthy section (KTU 1.23.49b–61)—one that celebrates how ʾIlu’s amorous activities successfully impregnated the two women who then bear him sons. The doubling of the sections on ʾIlu’s kissing to ʾIlu’s impregnation to pregnancy to birth to birth announcement (KTU 1.23.49–53 // 1.23.55–61) is as much about ʾIlu’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 ʾIlu” have given birth. The second announcement (1.23.55–61) serves rhetorically to redirect attention back to ʾIlu 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, ʾIlu’s consort (šīṭṭū = the lady = ʾAthiratu; 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 ʾIlu, 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 ʾIlu’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 ʾIlu in our text is called father and mother (KTU 1.23.32b–33a). Scholars view ʾIlu’s being called “father, father” and “mother, mother” in one of two ways: either as looking to ʾIlu as an androgynous deity, or as a request asking for parental advice with childlike “daddy, mommy” language. 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 (ʾUTU) and to the male storm/vegetation god Telepinu refer

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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 ʾIlu as a bull.
56 For examples of these interpretations, see Smith 2006, 78–79. The thesis of ʾIlu as androgynous seems most unlikely. As shown below, that male gods such as ʾIlu, 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 androgyney. Where we do have anthropomorphic iconography attested (e.g., ʾIlu, 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”:

\[
\text{Womb that gives birth to everything,} \\
\text{which dwells in a holy habitation with living creatures,} \\
\text{Begetter, merciful in his disposing,} \\
\text{who holds in his hand the life of the whole land} \ldots \\
\text{O progenitor of the land} \ldots \text{O father begetter of gods and men} \ldots \\
\text{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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I am Ishtar of [Arbela] . . .} \\
\text{I am your great midwife;} \\
\text{I am your excellent wet nurse.} \\
\text{I am your father and mother.} \\
\text{I raised you between my wings.}\(^{61}\)
\end{align*}
\]

In biblical tradition, El is described as a father who sires his human children\(^{62}\) as well as a mother who writhed with labor pains in giving them birth (\(\sqrt{\text{hw}l}\)).\(^{63}\) 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” (ʾēlî malkî), 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 child\(^{66}\) 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-


\(^{59}\) 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.


\(^{67}\) Ps. 27:10.

\(^{68}\) lmy kt ʾb wlmy kt ʾm wlmy kt ʾḥ (KAI 24, lines 10–11).

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 Môtu, 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 (ḥrṭ), and roasts (ḥrr). 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 yrḥ, 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

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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 yr ḥ occurs in KTU 1.82.3, where it is used of archery with a specific mention of arrows (ḥz). For the use of yr ḥ 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 yr ḥ 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 (mṭ) 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 ‘Atatu and ‘Attharta’s hunting in KTU 1.114.23, ‘Attharta’s hunting in KTU 1.92.3, Shaddayyu’s hunting in KTU 1.108.12, and Ba’lu’s hunting in KTU 1.121.34. Although broken, see also the quiver and bow in RIIH 98/02.30 that may be associated with ‘Attharta, the main deity in the text that elsewhere describes her as a mighty, pouncing panther (RIIH 98/02.4–5). On ‘Attharta’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 unrivalled 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
Here ’Ilu’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. In addition, the cultic actors who accompany the king and queen in KTU 1.23.7, 26–27 include tnnm archers. Iconography depicting royal bird hunting is readily at hand from Egypt and Assyria (e.g., figs. 3.2, 3.3, 3.4). 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. 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. Feldman 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”

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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.
(cf. RS 16.146+16.161) or, one might add, perhaps even decorated the bed of the queen (mlkt) who was men-
tioned 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 ex-
tending to the end with the sojourn (tggr) 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” (ngṛ mdṛ), who graciously provides them with the agrarian sustenance of bread and wine (ḥm, 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 (ngṛ).

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, pảt mdbr) are used in KTU 1.23.65b, 68 to designate semi-arid regions (suitable for hunting and grazing) in contrast to sown land (mdṛ) (KTU 1.23.68b–70, 73). 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, ’ṣm), emphasizes seasonal deprivation (KTU 1.23.65b–66). Fittingly, the gracious gods and their mothers raise an offering (šuʿ ḏb) in the mdbr, which functions as sacred space (mdbr qaḍš). Such language of sacred offering points to a religious hope whereby those in desperate need (here for a sustained food source) desire divine provision. And such divine benevolence (according to the interpretation of ngṛ below) is exactly what they receive.

81 Here archaeological studies (e.g., van Zeist and Bakker-Heeres 1985; Akkermans and Schwartz 2003) and studies of ancient diet (e.g., Altma 2003) 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 feeding. The word šd (“field”), which occurs parallel to pảt mdbr 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 lḥm n’mm “gracious gods” are destructive in nature. See below, n. 108.

83 Scholars are divided about whether mdbr qaḍš 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 (ḏ) in the midst of the holy steppeland (reading šuʿ ḏb ṭb kḥ rather than šuʿ ḏb tk). Cf. the use of ḏ 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 (šuʿ ḏb) in line 54 argues against it.

84 Cf. earlier in our text (line 54), where (šuʿ ḏb) expresses a sentiment of thankfulness to the goddess Šapšu, along with star deities (kbkbm; cf. KTU 1.179.8–12), for their assistance in bringing about the healthy birth of the gods Šahr-va-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 midbāʾ traditions. (The word midbāʾ 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 'Ilu’s wives and sons are residing in the steppeland. Suggested descriptors include “banishment,” “displacement,” “inheritance,” “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 'Ilu’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 'Ilu to show, once again, his benevolence. If the core motif is one of 'Ilu’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 (†hm) and wine (yn), which echo the festive banquet at the outset of the text (†hm, hmr 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 (hmr 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’, lines 68–69), one wonders whether the agrarian emphasis is especially focused on viticulture (see below on nǵr krm). Should this emphasis be the case, it would be relevant to underscore 'Ilu’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 mrzh texts) as well as that of Ug-

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86 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 mdr qds 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 (vpth; cf. vpty 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” (’ereṣ lōʾ zĕrûʿâ midbār). 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).

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 ‘Ilu (whom we will argue is the “Guardian of the sown land”), one could imagine they are “foreign” in the nonarable mdr; 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 mdr 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 ’Ilu 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” (nkrä) and the “Guardian of the sown land” (nkrä mdrt), 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 after-thought, 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.” Other scholars conclude that “the identity of the Guardian is unknown” or “enigmatic,” or they offer irrelevant parallels to the guardian cherub in Genesis 3:24 or the gatekeeper in the Descent of Ishtar.

“Guarding/protecting” (nkrä) 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” (ỉlm tגר tšlmk). Though the language is stereotypical, 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 ’Ilu, 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). As for father ’Ilu’s here guarding/protecting his sons, the gracious gods, note how elsewhere ’Anatu assures Šapšu that wherever she goes, Bull ’Ilu her father and beneficent begetter (tr ǎbh ḡtpp ḥtkk) will certainly guard/protect (nkrä) 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 (nṣr) his child in the wilderness (middār) as he nurses (ynq) him with honey and feeds him with the produce of the field (śādāy), where he drinks fine wine (tišteh ḥāmer) made of grapes (ʿēnāb). 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.

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

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89 Trujillo 1973, 195.
90 Smith 2006, 122.
91 Gibson 1977, 127 n. 3.
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 ỉlm l šlm tḡrkm tšlmkm) in KTU 2.85.6–8.
95 Cf. Caquot, Szncyer, and Herdner 1974, 363–65. There is no problem in KTU 1.23.65b–66a with ’Ilu’s being the speaker who commands his wives and sons to raise an offering to ’Ilu. In another context in the Kirta epic, ’Ilu issues to King Kirta a similar command to raise his hands to the heavens as he sacrifices to Bull ’Ilu, his father (KTU 1.14.II.6–24).
96 Deut. 32:6, 10, 13–14.
97 See too the middār traditions noted above in n. 85.
98 On KTU 1.92, see Pardee 2008, 14, 19, 27, who reconstructs “[. . . Ill]u, son père la vigne,” and Smith 2014, 188–90. We agree with Smith 2014, 190, who wonders whether the “guardian of the vineyard” (nkrä 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 ’Ilu, as in KTU 1.23.
pleasant vineyard (kerem ḥemed), which he constantly waters and protects (nṣr) 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 nǵr mdrʿ “guardians of the sown land” followed by nǵr krm “guardians of the vineyard.” Compare too nǵr mdrʿ 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 nǵr, does mention “the sacrifice of the queen/queen mother/royalty in the sown land” (dbḥ mlkt bmdrʿ) in a text that also mentions wine (yn), the dwelling of the king (yṯb mlk), and the Temple of ʾIlu (bt ỉl).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 Palace) 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 (qrʾ)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” (mdrʿ). 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 nǵr mdrʿ rather than nǵr krm.


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” (mdrʿ), 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 qrʾ in Ugaritic and Hebrew is multivalent, designating proclamation, invitation, and invocation. See DULAT, 697–98 and HALOT, 1128–31.
(d) how they were birthed as “sons of ’Ilu” (and of radiant divine status);(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 ’Ilu, who sustained them as their Guardian; and (h) how they reaped the fruits of ’Ilu’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 (ʾilm) 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 Môtu (whose scepter can kill newborns) is dealt with ritually using viticultural symbolism (lines 8–11a). The importance of Môtu’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 (ḍlt, ʾgnbm, lines 25–26a), and divine dwellings (mḥbt ʾilm; cf. KTU 1.41.51) underscores an agrarian festival,110 and the mention of a sacrificial procession (ḥlkm ʾbdḥḥ) by the entourage (ʾrbm ʾtnnm, 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 ’Ilu-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 ’Ilu—not bereavement-dealing Môtu—who is the rightful king whose sovereignty is pictured at every turn. ’Ilu (who bears the epithet mlk elsewhere) is proclaimed as father and mother—imagery signifying procreation and benevolent parenting. ’Ilu 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 ’Ilu”—with multiple wives (along with rabitu ’Athiratu) affirming ’Ilu’s prestige. They fulfill every monarch’s desire for...
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 'Ilu 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 (-widgets).

Clearly, the portrayal of 'Ilu 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 'Ilu’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 dbh mlkt bmdr’ 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 'Ilu’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 'Ilu’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.
agriculture (including viticulture) would certainly not have been a new concept for the readers/listeners of our Late Bronze Age tale.\textsuperscript{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 ʾIlu, and of royal patronage.

\textsuperscript{114} For Neolithic farming in Syria, see Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 68–79. For soundings at Ras Shamra, see de Contenson 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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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 Ugaritan 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. However, in other cases the principles of feudalism were applied more strictly,
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 Ugaritan 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.

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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 (RCAU21), 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. 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.

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 Schloen \(^7\) 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 Ugaritan 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 Ugaritan 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 whereascriptive 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 Ugaritan 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-

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\(^{7}\) 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.”

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.” 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, twentieth-century Latin America, and rural pre-Communist China. 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.

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.
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. 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. 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.

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.

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 Urtnu 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.
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 ādnʿm, 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 ṭḥ 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 (nšk), 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 ḫdr, were organized into groups under a supervisor who was also a member of the group.²⁸ RS 94.2050+ calls these supervisors ṛb ’šrt, “a leader of a ṣrt-group.” Each entry consists of a proper name, an heir, or a ḫdr 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 ṛb ’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 Raṣu 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 ḥnm “priests” organized according to the same strategies as Ṉsk ṯlṯ “coppersmiths” or ḫy “horse grooms”?²⁹ If a specific vocation is organized under the authority or leadership of a ṛb “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 ḫdr, 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 ḫy 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 痍 in Ugaritic shows that the consonant was a part of the word in Ugaritic. Because most loan-words 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. 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.” 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 Pardee 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 ḫzr “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” (bʾl šd). The title “field owner” and the partially preserved indications of quantities of rations (dd) suggests that these persons are providing rations (ḥpr 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 {[. . .] šʾm . bʾl [. . .]}. It may be possible to reconstruct this title to read bnšm bʾl 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 lqḥ ḥpr, 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 Maḫadu, 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.

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 Abdiḫagab 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).

**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.

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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 ’ayin 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 עהנ, its relationship with ilku, pilku, and ʾant, and the occurrence of the term ubadinnum in a sale contract from the Assyrian trade colony Kültepe Kanesh. 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 *ḥzr* 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 *ḥzr* 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

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<th>Brief description</th>
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<tr>
<td>RS [Varia 14]</td>
<td>KTU 3.9</td>
<td>An agreement between members of a mrzḥ club</td>
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<td>RS 1.018</td>
<td>KTU 2.4</td>
<td>A letter to the chief of priests</td>
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<td>RS 3.320</td>
<td>KTU 4.29</td>
<td>A short list of men and donkeys</td>
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<td>RS 8.279</td>
<td>KTU 4.40</td>
<td>Three ships’ rosters</td>
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<td>RS 15.005</td>
<td>KTU 4.133</td>
<td>Men listed possibly as subordinates</td>
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<td>RS 15.015+</td>
<td>KTU 4.137</td>
<td>More than 350 men working at the palace</td>
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<td>RS 15.022+</td>
<td>KTU 4.141</td>
<td>Men from Rašu in the service of the king</td>
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<td>Men of the king under the authority of PRṬ</td>
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<td>PRU III 53</td>
<td>A land transfer in which the umuššu tax is required</td>
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<td>KTU 3.2</td>
<td>A bnš mlk as a householder</td>
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<td>PRU III, 134</td>
<td>Royal land grant with social promotion</td>
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<td>PRU III, 66</td>
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<td>Men returning to Ugarit and Mulukku</td>
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<td>The purchase of a wide variety of items</td>
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<td>RS 19.016</td>
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35 Lackenbacher 2002.
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<td><em>KTU 4.636</em></td>
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<td><em>KTU 4.752</em></td>
<td>A mobilization of men through a broker</td>
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<td><em>KTU 4.807</em></td>
<td>A list of men in groups</td>
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<td>RS 94.2064</td>
<td><em>KTU 4.841</em></td>
<td>A list of men in groups</td>
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<td>RS 94.2275</td>
<td><em>KTU 4.859</em></td>
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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. 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, 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: Dānîʾîlû, the story’s hero, has no son. As one study has already observed, 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. 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. 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. 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.” 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.” 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.

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 texts. 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 Dānî’îlu’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 Aqhat . . . 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 gnomic 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 the advice is present, 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 Dānî’îlu, 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, 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 (nṣb skn ilỉb), as “the first, if not also principal, duty of the son.”18 Further, he connected the activity of the nāṣibu, “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).
Husser 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." Avishtur identified the first two lines as "cultic" in theme and the remaining lines as "duties to society and family." Boda disagreed with such a distinction; he argued, "We can never separate cultic activity from societal/familial activity in these ancient cultures." 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."

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. 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. 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  nṣb . skn . ỉlỉbh . One who raises up the stela of his father’s god,
1B  bqdš ztr . ʿmh in the sanctuary the votive emblem of his clan;
2A  lảrṣ . mšṣủ . qṭrh one who sends up from the earth his incense,

22 Wright 2001, 68.
23 Avishtur 1986, 57.
24 Boda 1993, 23.
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 nṣb, mšṣủ, tḥq, grš, ḥḏ, mʿmsh, spū, ṭḥ, and rḥṣ are all masculine singular active participles (mʿmsh with a 3ms pronominal suffix), as reflected in my translation of these forms: "One who participates in X activity."
29 The identification of ỉlỉb 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 ỉlỉb is the father’s ancestor," citing van der Toorn (1996, 160), who understood the activity to be in service of the ancestral cult.
from the dust the song of his place;
one who shuts up the jaws of his detractors,
one who drives out anyone who would do him in;
one who takes his hand when (he is) drunk,
one who bears him up when he is full of wine;
one who supplies his grain(-offering) in the Temple of Ba’lu,
his portion in the Temple of ’Ilu;
one who rolls his roof when rain softens it up.

POETIC STRUCTURE 31

I. 1A a
nsb
One who raises up

1B c
bqdsš
in the sanctuary

2A a
lārs
from the earth

2B a’
l’pr
from the dust

3A a
ṭbq
one who shuts up

3B a’
grš
one who drives out

4A a
ṭḥ . ggh . bsm . bʿl
from the earth the song of his place;

4B a’
bq . ḏmr . āṭrḥ
one who drives out anyone who would do him in;

5A spū . kṣmḥ . bt . b’l
one who supplies his grain(-offering) in the Temple of Ba’lu,

5B ṭḥ . ggh . bsm . b’l
his portion in the Temple of ’Ilu;

6A a
rḥs . npš . bsm . rṯ
one who rolls his roof when rain softens it up.

II. 4A a
āḥd
one who takes

4B a’
m’ms
one who bears

5A a
spū
one who supplies

5B
ksmḥ
his grain offering

6A a
tḥ
one who rolls

6B a’
rḥs
one who washes

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, nṣb skn ilibh / bqdš ztr ‘mh //); in the second half (couplets 4–6), the suffix comes before the final term of each half-line (for example, āhd yḏh bškrn / m’msḥ 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 tḥ 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 (mṣṣū qṭrh), 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 qṭr 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 NSB 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, Yaṣṣubu, usurpation). In the publication of his Schweich Lectures, Pardee (2012, 90) notes that Yaṣṣubu’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 קסר; 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 Yaṣṣubu’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: האברואס חל ובע-ל זיו אתא-מצבת אתו-בממק-LookAndFeel, א-ראס א- ]]; מברוכי-ברוכי י-ים, א-סף א-ויל ל-ב-ברך-מלך בר-א כלמ-ברך-מלך. “[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 (lārṣ “from the earth” and lʾpr “from the dust”).36 A number of possible translations have been proposed for the activity in parallel with mšṣū qṭrh “one who sends up (the father’s) smoke,” viz., the phrase ḏmr ṣṭrh.37 The various possibilities will not be reviewed here. Instead, I will briefly examine how ḏmr ṣṭrh, 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 ṣṭrh is understood to designate an actual cultic location.38 Here I propose a different possibility for (mšṣū) ḏmr ṣṭrh “(one who sends up) the song of his place”: ḏmr ṣṭrh would refer to the son’s performance of a funerary song, specifically a song known by its incipit, ṣṭrh, 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 ḏmr ṣṭrh 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 ṣṭrh 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 ṣṭrh is to be construed as a noun ‘place’ . . . in this case, ḏmr ṣṭrh 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 Lorez 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 ṣṭrh bʾlk, “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 ṣṭrh 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 ṣṭeph “descend and lower yourself”). If the phrase ḏmr ṣṭrh means “the song of ṣṭrh,” either reading of ṣṭrh in KTU 1.161 is possible, since ṣṭrh 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.
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!” 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 Baʿlu in counsel with ʾIlu, then by ʾIlu in response to Baʿlu’s performance, then by an undetermined messenger (either ʾIlu or some other character) in the form of a birth announcement to Dānīʾilu, and finally, by Dānīʾilu himself. At least twice these performances are given as a response to the immediately preceding performance of the same poem: ʾIlu repeats the poem back to Baʿlu and Dānīʾilu repeats the poem back to the messenger.

The poem remains unchanged from performance to performance, save the shifting pronominal suffixes. Whereas Baʿlu and ʾIlu refer to the benefits “he,” that is, Dānīʾilu, gains from a son, the messenger addresses these benefits to Dānīʾilu in the second person, and Dānīʾilu in the first person:

Baʿlu to ʾIlu (1.17 I)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{ṭ} \cdot \text{gg} \cdot \text{bym} & \quad \text{one who rolls his roof on a muddy day} \\
\text{rḥṣ} \cdot \text{npṣ} \cdot \text{bym} \cdot \text{ṛ} & \quad \text{one who washes his outfit on a day of dirt}
\end{align*}\]

ʾIlu (1.17 I)

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

Unnamed messenger to Dānīʾilu (1.17 II)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{ṭ} \cdot \text{gg} \cdot \text{bym} & \quad \text{one who rolls your roof on a muddy day} \\
\text{rḥṣ} \cdot \text{npṣk} \cdot \text{bym} \cdot \text{ṛ} & \quad \text{one who washes your outfit on a day of dirt}
\end{align*}\]

Dānīʾilu (1.17 II)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{ṭ} \cdot \text{gg} \cdot \text{bym} & \quad \text{one who rolls my roof on a muddy day} \\
\text{rḥṣ} \cdot \text{npṣy} \cdot \text{bym} \cdot \text{ṛ} & \quad \text{one who washes my outfit on a day of dirt}
\end{align*}\]

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, Dānīʾilu, 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 Dānʾīlū can and should expect as a result of his social position and piety. These words come from on high, set in the mouth of Baʿlu, who, motivated by his compassion for the mortal protagonist, confers with ʾIlu on his specifically sonless condition. 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. Baʿlu argues in favor of Dānʾīlū to ʾIlu that the mortal’s cries for a son (which may have been the subject of the missing opening lines) deserve to be answered:

23ltbrknn lṯr . ỉl ảby
24tmrnn l bny . bnwet
25wykn . bnh . bbt .
šrš . bqr b̄hk̄l .
Bless him, O Bull ʾIlu, my father,
make him succeed, O Creator of creatures;
so that he may have a son in his house,
a descendant within his palace.

Baʿlu’s request that ʾIlu bless (BRK) Dānʾīlū and make him succeed (MR[R]) is repeated in the narrator’s description of ʾIlu’s fulfillment of the request. In Kirta, as here, a request by Baʿlu to ʾIlu, with these specific verbs—“to bless” and “to make succeed”—refers explicitly to the blessing of progeny.

34ltbrk [krt . ] t’.
l tmr . n’m[n ] 个多月
Bless Noble Kirta!
Make the pleasant [lad] of ʾIlu succeed.

The narrator tells of ʾIlu’s fulfillment of Baʿlu’s request in the same words, viz., that Kirta will indeed have a son:

38brkm . ybrk [bdh] .
ybrk . il . krt [t’ .
ymr]m . n’ m[n] . 个多月 . il
Blessings he blesses [his servant],
ʾIlu blesses Kirta [the Noble],
makes the pleasant lad of ʾIlu 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 Puǵatu to her father Dānʾīlū. At the beginning of the story the request for blessing and life comes through Baʿlu on Dānʾīlū’s behalf; later, this request comes directly from daughter Puǵatu’s lips, on her own initiative, to avenge her brother’s death and restore justice to the household:

32ltbrkn . ʾâlk brktn
33tmrnn . ʾâlk . nmrrt
34imḥṣ . mḥṣ . ʾâby .
ākl [m] ḫl [y’] l . ữumt
Bless me, I will go blessed,
make me succeed, I will go with success,
I will slay my brother’s slayer,
I will finish [the one who] finished my mother’s child.
The request for Dānîʾilu’s success, in his case in producing an heir, is issued through conventional means: pious devotion, mediated by Baʿlu to ʾIlu. When Dānîʾilu’s daughter makes the same request at the end of the story, to Dānîʾilu, it is unmediated and without ritual context. The daughter’s petition directly to Dānîʾilu, 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 Baʿlu’s request that ʾIlu bless Dānîʾilu with an heir) that the poem of filial duties is first uttered by a character. ʾIlu responds to Baʿlu’s performance of the poem by blessing Dānîʾilu52 and promising the successful outcome of intercourse with his wife,53 repeating and confirming, word-for-word, Baʿlu’s request, which frames his reiteration of the poem of filial duties:

\[\text{\textit{wykn . bnh \{bbt .}}\]
\[\text{\textit{srš} . bqrb hklh}}\]

May he have his son [in (his) house, a descendant] in the midst of his palace.

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, Dānîʾilu is the audience of this performance. The speaker, presumably a messenger announcing the birth of a son, remains unidentified. Dānîʾilu 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 ṬAqhatu. 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 Kōṭaru-va-Ḫasīsu, is given to Dānîʾilu, who then passes the object to his son. As the story goes, it is in fact ṬAqhatu’s rigid fidelity to retaining the object passed to him by his father that results in his death. ṬAqhatu 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, ṬAqhatu 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 Dānîʾilu 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 Dānîʾilu’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 Dānîʾilu moves from ystack’s mouth in third-person reference to Dānîʾilu (KTU 1.18 IV 12–13) to ’Anatu’s own words, directed to the now dead Dānîʾilu 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 MAJ: ’l ḫṭh . ỉmḫṣh // ”On account of his bow I killed him.” Similarly, the verb MAJ describes ’Anatu’s activities in her battle scene in the Baal cycle; see KTU 1.3 II 5–8: wln . ’nt . tmḫṣ b’mq . . . tmḫṣ . ḫpy // ’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 Dānîʾilu will succeed in his attempts to have a son.

53 KTU 1.17 I 39–43.


55 KTU 1.17 VI 26–28; Ashley 1977, 372.
could realize his desires.” 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 ʿAnatu:

\[
\begin{align*}
25 & \text{wtʾn . bttl} \quad 26 & \text{ʾnt} \\
irš . \, hym . \, lāqht . \, ġzr & \quad \text{ʾAnatu the girl replied:} \\
27 & \text{irš . hym . wātnk .} \\
blmt & \text{wāštḥk} \\
\end{align*}
\]

 request life, and I will give (it) to you, deathlessness I will bestow upon you.”

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

\[
\begin{align*}
33 & \text{w . yʾn . āqht . ġzr} \\
34 & \text{āl . tš[ṛ]gn . ybltm .} \\
dm . \, ġzr \quad 35 & \text{ṣrgk . ḫḫm.} \\
36 & \text{mt . kl . āmt} \\
\end{align*}
\]

The death of all I will die, I will also surely die.

\[
\begin{align*}
37 & \text{wān . mtm . āmt} \\
38 & \text{[āp m]tn . rgmm . ārgm .} \\
qštm & \text{[ ] mhrm .} \\
hť . \, tšdn . \, tinṭṭ. \\
\end{align*}
\]

Bows are of warriors, 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, ʾAqhatu, the dutiful son, against the other-worldly, unconventionally behaved (for human women) goddess, ʿAnatu. While the brazen behavior of the goddess ʿAnatu can be assimilated into the reader’s understanding that gods do not play by the same rules as humans, daughter Puʿguṭu’s cannot. The appearance of Dānʾīʾlu’s daughter—her aspirations as blood avenger—comes as a surprise to the reader: Dānʾīʾlu sought a continuation through conventional means, through a son, when all the while he had a daughter who had the wisdom 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, or to read the story as an argument for feminine power in liminality, as Parker does, to observe the effectiveness

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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 Dānʾīʾlu’s three epithets for Puʿguṭu is ydʾ tḥlk ḫkbhm “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 [YDʾ] is predicated in Aqht is the proverbially wise El (1.18:1:16).”
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
WHERE IS THE DEVOURER?
A REAPPRAISAL OF THE ARSLAN TASH II PLAQUE IN ITS ANE CONTEXT

Dan Belnap
Brigham Young University

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. 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. 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).

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>lḥš.tlmzh.b’l</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>ʾsr mrkbty</em> w rb <em>ʿn</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>ʾty.ʾl šyy [y]š</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 mrkbty* 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>š.bšdh. w gl 'n</td>
<td>(like) fire in the field and round eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>b šdh. 'y. l</td>
<td>was [also] in the field. Where is 'y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>šyy.qrš.</td>
<td>šyy, the devourer/crusher?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 2 / Reverse (Preventative Measures of Incantation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>n'lt. mn 'l</td>
<td>I bolted the bolt!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>brḥ 'yn</td>
<td>Depart, looker/Eye!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>bdd b r's mgmr.</td>
<td>Retreat from the head of the one who accomplishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>bnt.b r's.hlm ky</td>
<td>understanding, from the head of the dreamer! For</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>hlm ṭ n b tm.'n yt</td>
<td>whenever I strike the eye, in the destruction of the eye, destroyed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>m.[ ]+ nm</td>
<td>are the (two) eyes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>mnty.k mglt</td>
<td>My incantations are according to the scroll.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that by the late eighth century BCE the distinction between the accusative (ō) and genitival suffixes (iyū/ī) 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.
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.” A similar introduction is found in the larger text found at Arslan Tash, perhaps thereby suggesting the forms represented common incantatory formulas. 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 *bʿl*. 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 *bʿl* and begins the next sentence, 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 *bʿl* be un-

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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 *bʿl* as referring to the deity *bʿl*. 
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 bʿl 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 bʿl as a deity begin in the next sentence: “ʾl šyy went out (like) fire in the field and Open Eye [if the root is gll] / 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 ṣ 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 qds, 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-qds-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: ʿnn.hlkt.wšnwt “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

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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; Röllig 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.

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 ʾš, which some scholars have assumed to be a relative pronoun, thereby rendering the reading as ”ʾšyy goes out [line 3], who is in the field” and thus emphasizing the hunting grounds of ʾšyy. Alternatively, Gibson suggests it be read as “fire,” thus providing a reading of ”ʾšyy sends forth fire in the field” or ”ʾšyy goes out [line 3], [like] fire in the field,” depending on whether one wishes to make the verb a yiphil or a simple qal. 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 yiphil), 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. 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, Lamashnu is described as follows: “You relentlessly consume the . . . go[re (?) of hum[ans]. Flesh which is not to be [eaten], bones [which are not to be . . .].” 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 Maqlû 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 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 yiphil 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 Š] a-m[ ili?]-lu-ti [ ] niš-b[u?-ti | UZU ša la [a-ka-li ] | UZU.GÌR.PAD. DU [ša la še-be-r]ji(??)
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 ‘yn 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 šātû ušlāti.” Similar anthropophagy is a characteristic of Ptolemaic Egyptian demons as well (see Ford 1998, 231). Though much later, an eighteenth century CE Ethiopian 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 isātu (“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).

26 KTU 1.100, lines 70b–71a: b’dh . bhtm . sgrt | b’dh . ‘dbt . tlt “Behind her the house she has shut | Behind her she has set the bronze bolt.”
among the infants; it passed through the doorway of women in labor and strangled their babies. It entered the bit ge and broke the sealing.” The 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.

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 word seems to be a plene spelling of “eye” that many take to be a qal active participle, 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 ‘yn 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.

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 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”).

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 Lamasshu 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.” Similarly, many of the Lamasshu plaques include an image of the demon surround by zi-pa/d DN (“be cursed by the life of DN”) formulas incorporating a pattern familiar to that found in the Arslan Tash plaques.

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 BARA-sign (i.e., the shape of the magic square).” 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.”

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.

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 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.”

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 \textit{bdd b rʾš}, 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 \textit{bdd} is understood as a participle, then the last word of line 9, \textit{mgmr}, would parallel \textit{bdd}.

Based on the root \textit{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 \textit{[bnt]} in the head of the dreamer \textit{[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 \textit{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 \textit{bdd} now being parallel in form and function to \textit{brḥ}. 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 \textit{b rʾš mgmr} | \textit{bnt} (lines 9 and 10 respectively). In this case, \textit{mgmr} would now be part of a construct phrase paralleling \textit{rʾš 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 \textit{ʿyn} 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 \textit{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, \textit{ʿny}, the supposed \textit{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 \textit{ayin} rather than a \textit{bet} begins line 10 and therefore have translated the first word as “eyes”; but Pardee’s collation has demonstrated the presence of the \textit{bet}, thus rendering a reading of \textit{bnt} “intelligence, understanding,” which provides a parallel with the next clause, “the head of the dreamer.”

38 Though \textit{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.
been understood to be caused by envy or the ill-will of others. Other incantations note the threat of demonbut instead a threat caused by the activity of another being. In fact, the experience of the evil eye has often
latter possibility would reflect an understanding that the presence of the evil eye was not a random event
analogue to it. Cross, who read the first
tmm
, therefore reflecting a belief that an evil eye is vanquished by a perfect
of the Unblemished Eye” (from
Ugaritic) and thus a reflection of the malevolent entity, while Gaster translated the same clause, “by virtue
of the Unblemished Eye” (from
tmr
), therefore reflecting a belief that an evil eye is vanquished by a perfect analogue to it. 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
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
tmr
, which can carry the meaning of annihilation as well as perfection/completion—thus, ”in the annihilation or destruction of the eye.” 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
tmr
 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-
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.”5 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 ḥālim kiy halamti of lines 10–11 and finally the ṭen bi tamu yutamū ṭënêm, 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-

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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 *gll*, 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. 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.

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 Arlsan Tash plaques as local variations on greater general incantation forms.
Abusch, Tzvi

Avishur, Y.

Caquot, André, and R. du Mesnil du Buisson

Conklin, Blane W.

Cross, Frank Moore

Ford, J. N.

Frankfurter, David

Garr, W. Randall

Gaster, Theodor H.

Gellar, M. J.

Gibson, John C.

Häberl, Charles G.

Kitz, Anne Marie

Lipinski, E.

Merkelbach, Reinhold

Naveh, Joseph, and Shaul Shaked


Pardee, Dennis


Reiner, E.

Ritner, Robert Kriech

Röllig, Wolfgang

Rudolph, Kurt

Talmon, Shemaryahu

Thomson, Maria-Louise
van Dijk, Jacobus  

Wyatt, N.  
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). 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). 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 Gūsh. 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 Melqart, 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-
tion, but no one has offered a conclusive interpretation. W. F. Albright, for example, read “Bir-Hadad, son of Ţāb-Rammān, son of Ḥazyān,” matching the “Ben-Hadad, son of Tabrimmōn, son of Ḥezyōn” known from 1 Kings 15:18. Frank Moore Cross, on the other hand, read “Bir-Hadad, son of ˤEzer,” who, he suggests, is the same as Hadad’ezar, king of Damascus. Assyrian sources indicate that Bir-Hadad, son of Hadadʾezar, 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, while William Shea proposed Ezer of Damascus. Pierre Bordreuil and Javier Teixidor, after a firsthand study of the stele, read Ezrā and connect him with Beth-Rehob. André Lemaire has supplied the most unusual suggestion by reading “Bir-Hadad, son of Ḥezion/Ḥazyān, son of” and supplying Hazael in the lacuna. 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 ˤAttar-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.

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.

3 Albright 1942.
4 Cross 1972.
5 Lipiński 1974, 15–19.
7 Bordreuil and Teixidor 1983, 271–76.
8 Lemaire 1984.
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 ’-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-sumki, 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-sumki 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 šīn (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,

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¹⁰ Pitard noted this fact in his article.
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 šīn is the same object that Puech interpreted as the head of a mēm when he read the end of line 2 as <BR.HDRM>. 
'Attar-sumki, the king of Arpad, is called Bir-Gūš, after the eponymous founder of the dynasty (see below). Arpad is referred to as Bit-Agūši “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 šīn 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 $ki$ “because” before the verb šm. When written as a separate word, this conjunction is usually written ky. In this case, the final phrase matches the common Phoenician votive formula: kšm’ 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 šm, so ka-šama’, understood as “when he heard.” Figure 7.11 is a drawing of our reading of the letters in the inscription.

Transliteration:
1.  nṣbʔ . zy . šm br h {d} 
2.  dd . br ʾtrsmk . br gš 
3.  mlk ʾrmr’h lmlqr 
4.  t . zy nzr lh kšm’ lql 
5.  h

Vocalization:
1.  naṣība dī šām bir ha[d] 
2.  dad bir ʾattarsumki bir gūš 
3.  malk ʾaram li-marīh lī-milqar 
4.  t dī nādar līh kīšamā’ li-qāli 
5.  h

Translation:
1.  The statue which Bir-Hadad’s
dad, son of ʾAttar-sumki, 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] voic 
5.  e (i.e., answered his prayer)

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 šAttar-sumki of Arpad and can add several inferences. šAttar-sumki 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. The tribe itself is first mentioned in the annals of Asshur-dan II, who ruled in the second half of the tenth century and extracted tribute from the tribe of Yaḥan. (At that time, they were settled farther east than was the later tribe.) This group is the same one known as Bit-Agūsī in Assyrian inscriptions.

By the time of Asshur-naṣir-pal II, the tribe of Yaḥan had moved farther west; he mentions them ca. 870. Šattar-sumki’s son, Hadrame, was ruling from the city of Arū by 858, when Shalmaneser III expanded westward and defeated him, and was on the throne of Arpad in 834, when he lost to Shalmaneser III again. By this time, the Assyrian army had sacked Arū, 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, šAttar-sumki, succeeded him and was ruling Arpad during Shamshi-Adad V’s reign and perhaps earlier, for he is named as an enemy of Shamsi-Adad V, who ruled from 824 to 811, in a fragmentary inscription in private hands published by Hayim Tadmor. Unfortunately, we have no other evidence for Shamshi-Adad V’s campaign against Arpad, so we cannot date it more closely. If šAttar-sumki began his rule around 825 or 820, his father must have had a thirty- or forty-year reign—quite a long one. šAttar-sumki is also known to have been the king of Arpad when Adad-nirari III (811–783) defeated it around 805. Finally, Pierre Bordreuil published a seal bearing the name šAttar-sumki that he dates to the first half of the eighth century, but that dating could suggest any time between 800 and 750. Puech goes so far as to suggest that the line of Gūš contained both an šAttar-sumki I and an šAttar-sumki II in order to account for the gap in time between Shamshi-Adad V’s campaign and the seal published by Bordreuil.

We now know from the Melqart stele that šAttar-sumki’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:

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17 Lipiński 2000, 195; Younger 2016, 516.
19 Lipiński 2000, 212, 214. Lipiński suggests it was Hadrame’s loss to Shalmaneser 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.
22 Bordreuil 1986, no. 86.
Bir-Hadad, son of Hazael, king of Aram, united against me some of the 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 ʾAttar-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, ʾAttar-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 ʾayins in the Melqart stele inscription (see line 2) still has an interior dot, unlike the ʾayins 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 ʾAttar-sumkī would already be dead, and since the Bir-Hadad/Melqart inscription predates the Zakkur inscription, ʾAttar-sumkī would have been dead when the Zakkur inscription was written. So the man called Bir-Gūš in the Zakkur inscription cannot be ʾAttar-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.

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 ʾAttar-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. 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 ʾAttar-sumkī. Whether this self-designation means he was the physical son of a king ʾAttar-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, ʾAttar-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 ʾAttar-sumkī’s: ʾAttar-sumkī I, the father of Bir-Hadad and enemy of Adad-nirari III, and ʾAttar-sumkī II, the father of Mati-El and author of the seal inscription. This theory would allow us to see Bir-Hadad assuming the throne sometime soon after 805, when ʾAttar-sumkī I was defeated by Adad-nirari III; making his vow and erecting the statue of Melqart thereafter; and surrendering the throne to ʾAttar-sumkī II, for whom we have no independent evidence but who would be the ʾAttar-sumkī from the seal and the physical father of Mati-El.

24 Lipiński 2000, 216.
25 Ibid., 216–19; Younger 2016, 537.
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 'Attar-sumkī—a solution that would solve the problem of having evidence for only one 'Attar-sumkī and that might also solve the problem of the long reigns. 'Attar-sumkī was a king, after all, and kings are known to have had several wives and many children. If Mati-El was born to 'Attar-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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hadrame</td>
<td>860–825 BCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attar-sumkī</td>
<td>825–790 BCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bir-Hadad</td>
<td>790–760 BCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mati-El</td>
<td>760–??? BCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. 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. In fact, the Bir-Hadad of the Melqart stele was not from Damascus but was in the line of 'Attar-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.

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

Sader, H.

Strawn, B. A.

Younger, K. L.
The incised "Išbaʿl" inscription from Khirbet Qeiyafa
Paleographic, Onomastic, and Historical Notes*

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The editio princeps of the 'Išbaʿl Inscription (fig. 8.1; note that the noun baʿl is a qatl segholate, so this noun was monosyllabic in the Iron Age, not bisyllabic) 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 ostracon (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 'Išbaʿal 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 sinistrograde (i.e., right to left).

Discussion

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

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* 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, Goluh, 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, Goluh, 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.
el-Hol of around the eighteenth century BCE. The script of the 'Iṣba'āl 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).

As for the stance in the 'Iṣba'āl Inscription of those fully preserved letters capable (in Early Alphabetic) of variable stances (e.g., 'ʾalep, 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., 'Azarb‘l, 'Āhiram, 'Abība‘l, 'Elība‘l, Šipiṭba‘l, 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 'Iṣba'āl 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 Alphabetic script, that is, sinistrograde, dextrograde, boustrophedon, or columnar), and (as mentioned above), the stance of bet is rotated ninety degrees counterclockwise from the stance of the Early Phoenician. In the case of nun, based on the traces present, it also seems to be written in mirror image. 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). Of course,

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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 'Iṣba'āl Inscription use the Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostracon (an Early Alphabetic Ostracon) as their benchmark. But since there is so much variation in the stance and direction of Early Alphabetic inscriptions (including the Qeiyafa Ostracon), 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 Fakharīyeh 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, Fakharīyeh’s rotation of lamed is also attested in additional Linear Early Alphabetic inscriptions (e.g., in the corpus of el-Ḥāḍr Arrowheads) and in some early Greek inscriptions. See Cross 1980, 16.
'ayin 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 ‘ayin 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 ‘ayin 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 ‘ayin with a pupil (dot in the center) is not surprising in the ‘Išba’l Inscription.\footnote{The Tell Fakhariyeh Bilingual Inscription is, of course, a \textit{locus classicus} for the continued presence of the pupil of the eye (i.e., the dot inside the letter ‘ayin) 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 ‘ayin 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.}

Regarding the quality of the script of the ‘Išba’l 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.\footnote{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.}

It should be emphasized, however, that this inscription does \textit{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.\footnote{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.} 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 ‘Išba’l 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 ‘Išba’l 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).\footnote{On this name in the Hebrew Bible, including the pejorative version of the name (‘šbšt), see the discussion in Rollston 2013, 377–82, and the primary and secondary literature cited there.} In any case, regarding the meaning of this personal name, the authors of the \textit{editio princeps} note that the “commonly...
accepted interpretation” of it is “man of Baʿal.”15 The second element of this personal name is, of course, the uncontestable baʿal 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 ‘wš, 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 ‘wš. For Pardee has noted that “the element ‘iš ‘man’ is not attested in any Hebrew personal names other than ‘išbōšet—which appears in the form ‘ešbāʿal (pausal) in 1 Chron. 8:33 and 9:39. On the other hand, the verbal element ‘wš ‘give’ is attested in Hebrew personal names both Biblical (yehôʾāš/yôʾāš—six persons) and epigraphic (Lachish yʾwš).” Pardee concludes that the original meaning of the name ‘Išbaʿl, 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. In this case, the form Bdʿ in the ‘Išbaʿl Inscription would be one in which the initial bet was used to represent the theophoric bʿl 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 ‘Išbaʿl 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 kprt. 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 ‘Išbaʿl 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).
(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 Ostracon.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

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23 Ibid., 220, 222.
24 Ibid., 217.
25 Naveh 1987, 42.
26 On dialectology and the Qeiyafa Ostracon, see Rollston 2011, 68–76.
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 Bdʾ 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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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. 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.1

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.2 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.

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. He enters the narrative quite subtly as animator. The first-person pronominal suffix of the word pḥty “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 ṣnw r[wryks mlk z bt mpš “I am Wraykas, king of the house of Mopl[sos].” 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]-sâ (Çineköy §1) or wa/i-ri/i-ka-sâ (Çineköy §2). The Phoenician copy of the name in the Çineköy inscription is broken, but reconstructed w[r(y)k] largely in consideration of the form wryk that occurs twice in the mid-seventh-century Phoenician inscription from Çebelires Daği (KAI 287 A+B 3.8). This name is the likely equivalent of the Assyrian forms Û-ri-ik, Û-ri-ik-ki, and Û-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. The Hieroglyphic Luwian and Akkadian forms of the name may imply that in the alphabetic spelling wryks the yod is a vowel letter. It is generally held that the name written in Hieroglyphic Luwian as à/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 Hasanbeylı inscription (KAI 23.5), designates the same person, but this view is not certain.

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: 

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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.”
8 Tekoğlu and Lemaire 2000, 994, 996.
9 Note that the final sibilant in contemporary Phoenician krntryš (κορντρησις, 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 Ostracon 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, שׁאריאס and שׁאריאסיא 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 Fekhereye inscription (KAI 309.23). Although “exceptional” in this period (Lipiński 1994, 33), this spelling persists in later Aramaic.
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. hgbľ z mtn (or: mtt) tkltʾplsr pʾl mlk ʾšr  
   This territory is a gift of Tiglath-Pileser—Puʾul (or: Pûl), king of Assur,
2. lmlk wšłph mlk dnnym hgbľ gbl  
   to the king and to the issue of the king of the Danunians. This territory has been a border
3. pḥt (or: ῶṣ) ʿbr nhr wgbl kmḥ lmym swṣd šr  
   of the province (or: land) of (?) Beyond the River and the border of Kummuh from the days of Shamshi-Adad, ruler
4. ʾšr wʾd kl ym tkltʾplsr pʾl ml[k]  
   of Assur, until all the days of Tiglath-Pileser—Puʾul (or: Pûl),
5. ʾšr rb | hgbľ [z] gbl hr [g]rgm wpḥty  
   the great king[g] of Assur. [This] territory is the border of the mountains of [Gu]rgum and my province.
6. zʾ (or: ʾḥ) ḥdšt ʿd bʾ pḥt ʾšr l hgbľ z  
   It is new up to (where) the province of Assur reaches it. This border is
7. lmʾbr lbʾ trtn kbʾ nhr snš ʿd  
   from opposite the Estate of the Turtanu as the River Sinis goes, as far as
8. [h]rʾ[ʾ]rrṭ ...  
   the mountains of [U]rartu.

COMMENTARY

Line 1

pʾl It is possible that the Phoenician spelling of this name discloses its derivation from pʾl, as in Arabic faʾl, plural fuʾul “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. The spelling \textit{Pu’ul} (or: \textit{Pûl}) in this translation assumes the etymology from \textit{p’l}. About a century after the Incirli inscription, the Phoenician inscription from Çebelires Dağı (\textit{KAI} 287) employs the letter \textit{’alep} to write the vowel /ā/ in two of the three instances of the name \textit{msn’zmš}, vocalized Masanázamis (\textit{KAI} 287 A+B 8, C 2). There is no evidence from this period for the use of \textit{’alep} to write the vowel /ū/, although such orthography does occur in Neo-Punic. \footnote{Note the Hieroglyphic Luwian text KARATEPE 4: IDEUS –na-(OCULIS)á-za-mi-sá-há, normalized as \textit{Masanázamis} (Hawkins and Çambel 1999, 69).}

\textit{Line 2}

\textit{špḥ} This word is a kinship term designating a descent group or family,\footnote{DNWSI 1181; Krahmalkov 2000, 476–77; Schmitz 2012, 92.} possibly comparable to Latin \textit{gens}.\footnote{DNWSI 904 s.v. \textit{pḥh}. See also Stolper 1989.} 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.

\textit{Line 3}

\textit{pḥt} (or: \textit{ʾrṣ}) 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: פַּחֲוֹת עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר “governors of Beyond the River” (Neh. 2:7, 9; 3:7).\footnote{For epigraphic Hebrew and Aramaic occurrences of the title \textit{pḥt}, see DNWSI 904 s.v. \textit{pḥh}. See also Stolper 1989.} In Akkadian the general designation \textit{mātum} (= KUR) “land, territory” occurs, as in Neo-Assyrian \textit{ana KUR eber nārı} “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.

\textit{ʿbr nhr} The anarthrous adverbial phrase is morphologically consistent with other Phoenician examples of this type (\textit{PPG} 211 §297.2). Note the comparable phrase \textit{ḥt šmš} “under (the) sun” (\textit{KAI} 13.7–8; 14.12).\footnote{The three-member phrase \textit{ḥt pn šmš} (\textit{KAI} 302.5) is likewise anarthrous. The complex preposition \textit{ḥt pn} (preposition + noun) functions adverbially.} Biblical Hebrew, by contrast, employs either the unique plural phrase \textit{bcnr nhr pn} (Isa. 7:20) or the more common singular construction \textit{bcnr nhr} (Isa. 24:2 and eleven other occurrences).\footnote{See Rainey 1983.} The Aramaic form of the phrase occurs in the coin legends of the satrap Mazday: \textit{Mzdy zy l’br nhr} (\textit{whlk}) “Mazday, who is over Beyond (the) River (and Cilicia)”\footnote{See also Lemaire 2009, 407, with literature.} In all its Northwest Semitic occurrences, the phrase is a loan translation representing Akkadian \textit{eber nārı}.\footnote{On the relativity of this term’s frame of reference, see O’Connor 1991, 1142 n. 8.}

\textit{kmḥ} 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-Pilesr III in 743; pardoned, he was still ruling in 732.\footnote{See the detailed account of Kummuh under Assyrian domination by Hawkins (Hawkins and Çambel 1999, 331–32).} The border between Kummuh and Gurgum had been established by Adad-Nirari III after Assyrian intervention in 805 BCE and was reestablished in 773.\footnote{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: מְלֹאכָּה מַעֲרַית אֲשֵׁר “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 bʾ . . . l- and mʿbr . . . 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 ṭurṭānu Shamshi-ili.31 Later (ca. 743–740 BCE), Tiglath-pileser III granted towns from the territory of Gurgum to Samʾal (KAI 215.14–15 [Panamuwa II]).

Line 6

zʾ (or: hʾ)  The feminine personal pronoun hʾ is the more likely reading, for the sequence pḥty hʾ, with an independent personal pronoun copying the antecedent noun after the pronominal suffix, is the more typical kind of subject resumption in Phoenician.32 ḫdšt  Kaufman’s translation “new one”33 represents an analysis of ḫdšt as an adjective. Understood as a clause, hʾ ḫdšt can be rendered “It is new.” The syntax favors interpretation of this clause as a verbless sentence with an adjectival predicate.

bʾ . . . l-  In Biblical Hebrew, the verb bwʾ 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: ואָם לְבֵית בְּבָּלֻד (Ezra 2:68 “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 annexation (GAG3, 189–90 §135). Note the different Phoenician expression mlk gbr ʾl yʾdy “powerful king over Yʾdy” (KAI 24.2).
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).
mʿbr . . . 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 bit 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., pihat bit LŪ 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 LŪ] turtāni “[. . . to the] commander-in-chief” (CTN 5 t37c, line 1),40 continues “[Day and] night during my reign, you shall be my magistrate (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-dâ’înanni, 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 דֹ 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.
38 Parpola 1970, 361.
39 Luukko 2012, II.
40 Ibid., 5.
41 Ibid., II, 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).
descriptions of the book of Joshua. These metaphors disclose the homunculus whose location or trajectory underlies core cardinal terms of direction and is vaguely personified in tour-language itineraries.

The expressions of the metaphor of movement in the Incirli inscription involve cosmological agents. As I read the clause ‘d bʾ ṣḥ ṣr l “up to (where) the province of Assur reaches it,” the Assyrian province itself is the entity in (metaphoric) motion. In the clause kbʾ 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 Matiʾēl, 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] wzbḥ mlk ’rp
And there was a rebellion in all the land of Ha[tti]. And the king of Arpad sacrificed
12. lyʾn hdd mlk wgzrm kpr k ’rp
 to cause Hadad to aid the king. And diviners also made atonement, because Arpad
13. pḥd mlk ṣr ṭb wʾs hkm lʾnr
 feared the great king of Assur. And a sage advised, saying,
14. kʾḥ ḥʾ mlkʾ ṭp ʾl tgzʾ ʾd[n]
 Like my lap is the king of Arpad! But Aleppo you must not canton (or: divide) Ada[na],
15. [wqw] l tpʾḥd kʾʾmʾ rpʾʾṣʾ pḥʾʾʾʾʾʾʾʾʾʾʾʾʾ ʾl yḥb
 [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

mrd nm “rebellion” Biblical Hebrew דֹּמֶר “rebellion” (Josh. 22:22).
**Line 12**

lyʿn 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).” This translation reflects his analysis of the assumed bound form lyʿn as corresponding to “Hebrew יʔן and ולמען and Old Aramaic ולמען, but the reading is particularly uncertain.” Against this analysis stands the observation that Biblical Hebrew יʔן is never preceded by the preposition ב. There is thus little reason to anticipate such syntax in Phoenician.

The segment lyʿn cannot be an infinitive derived from ʿny “to answer,” for the III-y form would require a t suffix. The verb yʿn is best derived from the root ‘wn “help, assist, save, aid,” attested in Classical Arabic and OSA and probably attested in the noun יʔן “help, assistance” (Ps. 90:1 [HALOT 610]).

**hdd mlk** The divine name Adad-milki is not clearly attested in cuneiform sources, 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, and, on the other, his consideration of the possibility that mlk is a sacrificial term. Preferable syntax arises if yʿn is recognized as the causative stem; then hdd is the agent.

**gzrm nmp /gōzarīm/ “diviners”** Note these Jewish Aramaic examples: יָכְלִיןָזְרִין גּומָנָזְרִין יָחַרְטֻנָיָהוֹה חַכִִּים אָשְְׁפִין “neither sages, exorcists, magicians, nor diviners are able to tell it” (Dan. 2:27); יֵהָדְיר “a diviner, [??] being a Judean o[f the exiles]” (4Q242 A.4). 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 bārē 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.” 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**

This restoration is conjectural; it simply repeats the phrase ml[k] ʾšr rb from lines 4–5. Kaufman’s tentative restoration (ḥy)/(ʿl) is also conjectural; it supports the interpretation of mlk as designating a variety of human sacrifice. The hypothesis underlying Kaufman’s restoration is not confirmed by the interpretation offered here.

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50 Kaufman 2007, 15.
51 Ibid., 23.
52 Attested in Late Punic lʿnt “to respond” (Hr. Maktar N 76, line 9; DNWSI 875 s.v.ʿny.).
53 Biella 1982, 358.
54 Deller (1965, 144) and Weinfeld (1972) favored the binominal interpretation of names having the form Adad-milki/iški-.
55 See also the discussion by Younger (2002, 308; 2004, 274).
56 Kaufman 2007, 23.
57 Cited from CAL s.v. gzr, gzrˀ. See further comments on this word by Lipiński (1999–2000, 497).
58 Lenzi 2014, 70.
59 Kaufman 2007, 8.
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 (ןֵּבֶּרֶךְ חֲרָּחִים) 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.

G perf. ʿṣ /ʾāṣ/ “he advised” The morphology is instructive here. The Biblical Hebrew noun עֵצָה and cognates are feminine, and in Phoenician would be written št. Hence this form must be verbal, from the root ʿws. Kaufman’s translation “gave advice” shows the same interpretation of ʿṣ.

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 (ḥkm) mentioned previously in line 13.

Lines 14–15

The segment ʾ̊r̊pd wḥlb̊ 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 Matiʿēl held both cities. This view gains weak support from the Aramaic treaty imposed by Barqaya, king of Ktk,64 on Matiʿēl, 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 Barqaya to seek asylum in Aleppo (KAI 224.4–7).65 The implication is that Matiʿēl 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, Matiʿēl is addressed as mlk ʾr̊pd “king of Arpad” (KAI 222 A 1 [restored], 3, 13–14 [restored], 14, and repeated reference is made to future mlky ʾr̊pd “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 ʾr̊pd “king of Arpad” designates Matiʿēl four times in the Incirli inscription: wzbḥ mlk ʾr̊pd “and the king of Arpad sacrificed” (front, line 11), mtʿl mlk ʾr̊pd “Matiʿēl, king of Arpad” (left side, line 7),66 mlk ʾr̊pd (left side, line 14), and mtʿʾl mlk ʾr̊pd (back, line 6). In other words, both inscriptions employ the same royal titulature. The title דֹּרֶפֶּל מֶלֶךְ א “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 ʾr̊pd 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 (ḥkm, 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.

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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 Kik, 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 Matiʿēl himself.
The following comments continue the philological analysis.

Line 14a

Kaufman translates the passage *km hq mlk īrp* ḡlb “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 181 §252b). Biblical Hebrew poetry often depends on comparison also: יִכְּלָֽם "like a stone" (Exod. 15: 5b); כְּמֹֽפֶרֶּר "like a dyke" (Exod. 15: 8b); הָרָה "like a woman with child" (Isa. 26:17).

*ḥq* This word is to be read /ḥêqī/ “my lap,” implying the lap of the god Hadad, whose words are being conveyed, as the antecedent. The word is cognate to Biblical Hebrew ḫeq, 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, *ʾd[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...

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68 Kaufman 2007, 15.
69 Using images from Egyptian sources, Steymans (2014, 255 fig. 2; 263 fig. 3) delimits the scope of Biblical Hebrew ḫeq more clearly: "cff 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 inā terētim Addu bēl Kallassu
14 [izz]az ummāmi ul anākū
15 Addu bēl Kallassu ša ina birit
16 paḫallīya urabbūšuma

ana kussem bīt abīšu
uterrūšu (Mari letters A. 1121 + A. 2731, Nur-Sīn 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” (xlvii 49–52). Also relevant is the Akkadian idiom *ana sānī sakānu* “to place in the lap,” meaning to place under protection (AHw 1059 s.v. *sūna[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 ʾl 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 Matiʾēl with Bargaya. The grounds of comparison are limited: wʾdyʾ ʾln zy gzr br g[yh] “this treaty, which Bargaya has concluded” (KAI 222 A 7); [wʾyk z] / ygzr ʿglʾ znh “[Just as] this calf is cut up” (KAI 222 A 39–40);74 rʾk kn tzgr ʿplʾ (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 גְּזֵרָה 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” (nirs). The word גִּזְרָה 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 wḥlb̊ ʾl tgzr makes sense. One city (Aleppo) is forbidden to appropriate part of the territory of the other (Adana). The translation of ʾl 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 Matiʾēl, the oracle also subtly authorizes a divine curtailment of the king of Arpad’s military and political power.

The restoration ʾd[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 ʾd[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 brtḥ, representing “brt ʾḥ “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 Matiʾilu (SAA 02, 002, lines 10–35) makes these consequences gruesomely explicit.
77 See TDOT 2: 460 (Görg).
78 The phrase ’mq ʾdn “the plain of Adana” (KAI 24 A I 4; II 2, 7) establishes the spelling. In the Çineköy inscription the phrase can be restored ’mq [ʾdn] (Tekoğlu and Lemaire 2000, 994 line 4). Kaufman’s (2007, 12) restoration ʾd[n] 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): “indeed, if he cries out to me.”

kp rʾs In Biblical Hebrew the verb kpp describes the declining motion of the head: “is it to bow down his head like a bulrush?” (Isa. 58:5).79

pḥtk The second-person pronoun undoubtedly refers to Matiʿēl.80

yḥrb 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:

\[\text{whlb} \ 'l \ tgzr \ 'd[n] \]
\[\text{[wqw]} \ 'l \ tphd \]

In addition to manifesting syntactic symmetry, the line division shown above highlights the word-level trope of \textit{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 Matiʿēl (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:

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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 tmrd “because you would rebel” [Kaufman 2007, 16]) is excluded by new word divisions proposed below.
81 Kaufman 2007, 12.
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.
GRAMMATICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE INCIRLI INSCRIPTION

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. 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 Matiʿēl by the forces of the King of the Danunians. The text gives no significant attention to the cause or motivation of Arpad’s revolt. Matiʿēl 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) ḳ̱ṉḵt mṟḏ p̱ ʾḥṟ by wrʿm b (2) brth mlk dṉy [m] (4) šqr ḇgd ḇgd ʾrp̱ḏ (5) ṛhm bn wʾm bt (6) pn y̱mt w ḻ y̱h [rg] (7) mṯʾ mlk ʾrḏp̱ (8) lḇny w̱bn bn[y] (9) ḇšry w̱bt [by] (10) kl mlk ẖmy q̱b (11) ʾm mrḏ šqr ẖ (12) . . . m̱gd p̱ ʾrp̱ḏ (13) lm ṭḵḏ sr [mṯʾ] (14) ʾmḻk ʾrḏp̱ . . . (15) ḇgd mṯʾ l ʾd (16) ḇšry wʾp phty (17) ʾmḻk dṉyn k (18) ḇʾrp̱ḏ . . . (19) ḡsp̱ ḡ̱bḻm (20) sp ṣ̱ḥ̱ṯ ʾrp̱ḏ (21) kʾšr ʾm bn ʾm (22) bn ḇny ʾm ʾry (23) ḇšry ʾm bt ’ (24) ry ḇšry k bnk . . . (25) ʾmḻk dṉyn z (26) m̱rd bmḻk ʾš (27) ʾl ḇny [ . . . ]

(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 (8) Matiʿēl king of Arpad was not killed (9) by his son(s) or by the son(s) of his son(s) of (10) his flesh or by the house of his father. (11) Every king that his people cursed, if he is a deceitful rebel (12) . . . speaking a message (lit., mouth) of Arpad, (13) “Why would you conceal an (or: my) enemy, [Matiʿ]” (14) ʾel king of Arpad?” (15) (Should) Matiʿēl 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

88 The deity bʾl šmn is the source of the oracle to Zakurr (KAI 202 A 11–12) and is invoked in other Aramaic inscriptions (KAI 259.3; 266.2). The name bʾl šmn appears (without oracle) in Phoenician texts also: KAI 4.3 (Byblos); 18.1, 7 (Umm el-ʿAmed); 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: k̊n̊ k̊ kmr̊d̊ p̊ ʾḥd̊ /r̊. The translation, italicized to indicate uncertainty, is “thus/there was, because you would rebel at the command of a foreigner.” The translation offered here follows a different word division: k̊nk̊t is a temporal adverbial clause whose main verb is from the root nky “to smite, defeat.” A generally accepted example of this clause type is kšth “when they placed him” (KAI 1.1; PPG 186 §257.4). The clause k̊nk̊t 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 mrd̊ p̊ ʾḥr, parsed as the preposition /min-/, the infinitive rd̊ “to pursue,” and the preposition ʾḥr “after.” The preposition /min-/ probably expresses the means by which the verbal action was completed, as in Biblical Hebrew מֵרֹב “by the magnitude (of your guilt).” The translation “by pursuit” reflects this analysis. Line 2 then introduces the objects of this pursuit.

Line 2

bgd /bōgê̄d/ G part. bgd “traitor”

rʿm G part. pl. rʿʿ “smash, shatter, break” Note the complement b- following this verb, as in Biblical Hebrew. The Biblical Hebrew verb rʿʿ (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

brtḥ (*brt ʾḥ) lit., “covenant of a brother,” or “parity covenant.” The aphaeresis of initial ʾalep is regular in Phoenician (PPG 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 bʿdyʾ ʾln “you have violated these treaty stipulations” (KAI 222 B 38; DNWSI 1189; TDOT 15: 471).

Line 5

rḥm 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 rd̊ frequently governs a prepositional complement introduced by ʾāḥēr.
93 Ezek. 28:18; GKC §119.4; HALOT 598 s.v. min 4.
94 Itbh mtn “do not harm My prophets” (1 Chron. 16:22).
95 Compare Biblical Hebrew בְּרִית אֱחִים (Amos 1:9).
Grammatical and Historical Notes on the Incirli Inscription

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 \( 'l yh[rg] \) “and (Matiʿʾēl) was not killed” follows the verb and is marked with the preposition \( l- \) (\( lbny wlbn bny \) “by his son or by his son’s son . . .”), typical syntax in Phoenician (\( PPG^3 \) 196 §273).

Line 10

The word division of the first publication, \( kl mlk hʾm yqb \) “Every king, whether he curse,”\(^96\) is unconvincing in its interpretation of the proposed form \( hʾm \). The division of words \( kl mlk hʾmy qb \) is more likely. Here is the proposed analysis:

\[ h- \text{ def. art.} \]
\[ 'my nm + 3ms suffix /ʾummiyyū/ “his people.” \]

This masculine variant of the stem occurs also in Biblical Hebrew: יְהוָהֵּים כָּל “all peoples” (Ps. 117:1).
\[ qb \text{ G perf. qbb “to curse” (\( DNWSI \) 977–78) } \]

The sentence \( kl mlk hʾmy qb \) 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 ‘my is assumed to refer to Matiʿʾēl 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

\[ mgd \text{ D part. ngd “speaking”} \]

Line 13

\[ lm \text{ /lam(m)ā/ interrog. “how? why?”} \]
\[ khd “hide, conceal, efface” (\( HALOT \) 469) \]
\[ šr “enemy” \]

Possibly attested in Samalian (\( KAI \) 214.30; see \( DNWSI \) 974 s.v. )

Lines 13–14

\[ [mtʾ]l \]

This restoration is partly conjectural; it preserves the letter \( taw \) read by Kaufman near the end of line 13.\(^98\) Restoring \([mtʾ]\) 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

ʿd (ʿwd) adv. “still, yet, again” (DNWSI 831–32)

Line 17

ʿl G perf. ʿly 3ms “he went up” or inf. “to go up” (see note on ṣpt in line 20 below). In Phoenician as in Hebrew, the verb is used in military contexts: k ʿl . ḥgbr . zʾ [. ʿl]šy “For this warrior went up (against) [Al]ashiya” (KAI 30.2–3); š ʿl šd kš dl hms “that went up (to) the steppes of Kush with Amasis” (CIS I 112 b1; var. in 112 a, b5, c).

Line 19

ḥsp (ḥśp) “to strip away.” Compare Phoenician thṭsp “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 špt “to issue a verdict.” Kaufman’s translation “to the end” supplies the preposition, thus assuming continuity with the previous clause.

“špt 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

ʾry Ug. ʾry 1 “kin” (DUL 111–12)

The back panel of the stele is inscribed with twenty-six lines that continue the narrative, and another six lines can be read on the right panel. 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 Kaufman 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 panel 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
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 Matiʿēl 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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“AND NOW” WʿT(H) 
A TRANSITION PARTICLE IN ANCIENT HEBREW

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A transitional particle wʿt found in Epigraphic Hebrew (Biblical Hebrew wʿth) was identified by Dennis Pardee in an article on the Arad Letters as well as in his coauthored *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters.* 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 wʿt as part of rudimentary scribal training might inform its use in biblical literature.

Pardee notes that although he translates wʿt literally, “it corresponds more nearly to a paragraph division in English usage.” His description of wʿt 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 wʿt—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. 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. 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.

Text 21 (RS 4.475; KTU 2.10)

(1) thm . iverdr (2) l . plsy (3) rgm

(4) yšlm . lk

(5) l . trgd (6) w . l . klby (7) šmʿt . ḫt (8) nḥtū. ht . . .

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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.
Message of Iwriṭari: To Pilsiya, say:/ May it be well with you. / Regarding Tarǵudassi and Kalbiya, I have heard that they have suffered defeat . . .

Text 23 (RS 11.872; KTU 2.13)

l . mlkt (2) ūmy . rgm (3) tḥm . mlk (4) bnk .

Reverse

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 . ’tm[y]’n (2) l ṯryl . ūmy (3) rgm

Message of Talminyāni: To Ṯarriyelli, 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 wʿt that is employed regularly.

Likewise, the Amarna Letters frequently employ a single or double horizontal line to divide the praescriptio 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-iṣ-ri Š[E]Š-ia (2) qī-bī-ma (3) um-ma LUGAL KUR A-la-ši-ia ŠEŠ-ka-ma (4) a-na ia-ši šuł-mu (5) a-na UGU-ka lu-ū šuł-mu (6) a-na ŠEŠ-ka DUMU-ka (7) DAM,MEŠ-ka GİŞ.GİGİR,MEŠ-ka ma-du ANŠE.KUR.RA,MEŠ-ka (8) i-na KUR Mi-iṣ-ri KUR-ka (9) ma-gal lu-ū šuł-mu (10) ŠEŠ-ia LÚ.DUMU.KIN-ri-ia (11) ḫa-mu-ut-ia na-aṣ-ri-iš (12) uš-še-ra-šu-ia ū 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.
“AND NOW” \(W^\text{t}(H)\)

(14) LÚ an-nu-ú DAM.GÁR-ia ŠEŠ-ia (15) na-as-rí-iš ḥa-mu-[ut-t]a (16) uš-še-ra-šu-nu
(17) LÚ.DAM.GÁR-ia GIŠ.MÁ-ia (18) LÚ’ pa-qá-ri-ka ul (19) ia-qá-ar-ri-ib (20) it-tí-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[ly]. As for my merchant(s) (and) my ship, may your customs’ inspector not draw near to them.

EA 276

(1) [a-na LUGAL ENia] (2) [DINGIR.MEŠ-ia [\(d\)UTU-ia] (3) qi-bi-ma]

(4) um-ma [\[f\]a-a[h]-zi-ba-da] (5) IR-ka ep-ri [ṣa] (6) GÍR.MEŠ-ka a-na GÉR.M[EŠ LUGAL ENia]
(7) DINGIR.MEŠ-ia [\(d\)UTU-ia] (8) 7-šu 7-tá-a-an’ am-qut’ (9) a-wa-at ıš-tap-pár (10) LUGAL ENia
DINGIR.MEŠ-ia (11) [\(d\)UTU-ia a-na ia-ši (12) [a-nu]-ma i-šu-ši’-ru-šu (13) [a-n]a LUGAL ENia
(14) [\(d\)] ÚTU’ ıš-tu (15) AN sa-mi

[Speak to the king, my lord, my deity, my sun god:] / Message of [Y]a’[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 \textit{praescriptio} from the body. Indeed, it is sometimes used to separate the parts of the \textit{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 \(w^\text{th}\) 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., \textit{anumma}, \textit{inanna}, \textit{enúma}, \textit{amur}, \textit{šanitam}), yet none of these terms are etymologically related to \(w^\text{th(h)}\). Any similarities, however, seem to be strictly functional. The best functional equivalent to \(w^\text{th}\) in the Amarna Letters is \textit{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 \textit{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 \(w^\text{t}\) in Epigraphic Hebrew has been the subject of some discussion.\(^\text{10}\) Biblical Hebrew spells it with a \textit{mater lectionis}—\(w^\text{th}\)—with just one exception—in Psalm 74:6, where the \textit{Qere} corrects the \textit{Ketiv} to the Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) \textit{plene} spelling.\(^\text{11}\) It is difficult to make definitive conclusions about the orthographic choices of the ancient scribes given the often tenuous relationship between orthography and phonology.\(^\text{12}\) Pardee correctly rejected David Noel Freedman’s suggestion that the defective spelling in the inscriptions “indicates a pronunciation of ‘at or ‘ēt.”\(^\text{13}\) Pardee favors Aharoni’s vocalization, ‘\textit{attā}, which was based on the variation in the spelling of 2ms verb forms (e.g., \textit{yd’t}, Arad 40:9\textsuperscript{14}). Indeed, Freedman’s suggestion makes it is 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. Aḥituv (2008, 199–202). I suspect this unprovenanced ostracon 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 \textit{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 ‘th 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. 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 ‘ēt "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 Murabba’at ostracon, and once in a Moussaieff Ostracon. 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 ‘Uza and an Ammonite letter from Tell El-Mazār. 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. A few examples will illustrate both the variety and consistency of its usage:

(1) Arad

1:1 ʾl.ʾlyšb.w
1:2 ʾt.ntn. lktym
To Elyashib: And now, give to the Kittim .

(2) Arad

16:1 ḥk.ḥnnyhw.šlḥ lšl
16:2 m.ʾlyšb.wlšlm bytk br
16:3 ktk ṿyhhw.wʿt ksʿty
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 ʾmr.[---]yhw.lk
1:2 wʿt.ʾl.tšmʿ lk [l] dbr. ʿšr ydbr.ʾlyk
Message of [XXX]yahu to you: And now, do not listen to every word that he says to you .

(4) Lachish

3:1 ʾbdk.ḥwėʾyhw šlḥ.l
3:2 ḫgd lʾdny yʾwš.ʾyšm
3:3 ṿyhhw ʿt Ṿdny šmʾt šlm
3:4 wšmʾt ṭb[.]wʿt.hpqḥ
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 .

Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985, 97–98.
Yassine and Teixidor 1986, 47.
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 'mr.imlk.'mr.lbbl
1:2 hšlm.'t.xwbhrктк
1:3 lwšs.w'т.tn.'т.k'kl
(Thus) said Lumalak, say to Balbal: Are you well? I bless you by Qaus. And now, give the food . . .

The use of wʿt is so consistent in Iron Age inscriptions that one must assume it was a device scribes learned to use in writing letters. Herein, wʿt 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 lĕʾmōr, 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 wkʿnt, wkʿt, and wkʿn as opening transitional particles in its letters.20 The Hermopolis Papyri frequently employ wkʿt (e.g., 1:3; 2:4; 4:4; 5:2; 6:3; 10:2); and we also find wkʿn, kʿn, kʿnt, and wkʿt in the Hermopolis and Elephantine papyri.21 These words all seem to be close functional parallels to wʿt 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 [wkʿnt], may it be known . . .”

(2) Herm. 1:1 šłm byt nbw 'l ḫty r'yx mn ḥk y mkbknt
1:2 brktky lṭḥ zy ṣḥzy 'pyk bšlm šl slmr slmr w'rl
1:3 w'srst wšrd ḥrwš s'l šlmḥn wkʿt 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 [ ] l 'my qwylyh brk[y --- šlm]
17A:2 šlt klk k'nts hly hw[d'tk]y
“To my mother Qawwileyah from your son: I send you [peace]. Now, this is to make kno[w to you] . . .”

(4) Eleph. 19:1 l hwš'yh
19:2 šlmk k'n ḥzy
“To Hoshayah: Peace/greetings! Now, watch over . . .”

There is some orthographic variation in the transitional particle (wkʿt, wkʿn, kʿnt, and kʿn), 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 wʿt and semantic cognates continued in the scribal chancellery from the Iron Age until the demise of the Persian Empire.

The history of wʿt(h) in early Hebrew literature is also worth surveying. To begin, wʿth is quite common in Biblical Hebrew—it appears 273 times. Indeed, more than half the 435 occurrences of ʿth 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.
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 w’th 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 ‘th is replaced in later Hebrew by ‘kšw “now,” but the expression w’kšw “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. w’th continued to be used in Qumranic Hebrew, although some of its uses seem curious. For example, w’th 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 w’attāh 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 w’th would have served as a transitional particle from the prologue into the body of the Damascus Document. In general, Qumran usage is biblicizing; for example, w’th 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 w’th has been considered a marker in oral discourse. Pardee writes, “Such a usage arose from standard speech wherein w’r 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 w’th in Genesis appear within direct speech, and this example represents well its use in SBH. However, w’th 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, w’th is not a regular feature of Rabbinic Hebrew. If a primary role of w’(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 w’t 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 w’t(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 [w’th], listen to the words of the LORD.” Here the function of w’th is both transitional and metapragmatic, as in Epigraphic Hebrew. Likewise, the common use of w’th 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 [w’th šmʿ-nʾ] to your maidservant: let me set a morsel of bread before you.’” The role of w’th in letters is most explicit in 2 Kings 5:6: “He brought the letter [hspr] to the king of Israel, which read [lʾmr]: ‘And now [w’th], when this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant Na’amān, 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., CD 1:1; 2:2; 2:14; 4Q185; 4Q525.
29 Examples of the expression w’th 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’th 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 (Kuntillet ’Ajrud inscriptions 3.1 and 3.6).32 We may suppose that w’th 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’th 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.
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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- 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) 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.
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 rec-
tion.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 מָלֵךְ לְ (‘to reign over’) vs. מְשָׁל ב (‘to rule over’) (no. 1) or קָנָה לְ vs. קָנָה 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.”

In his important study on the inscriptions from Zincirli, Josef Tropper lists only the meaning for the
Sam’alian preposition ב: “in, an, mit, aufgrund.”9 In an earlier study of the language, Paul Dion listed simply
the passages where ב occurs, while offering no discussion.10 Now, with the recent discovery and publica-
tion of the Katumuwa Inscription,11 as well as with the publication of a modern critical edition of the Ördek-
burnu Inscription,12 there is a real need for addressing the usage of the preposition ב in the inscriptions
from ancient Sam’al. Hence a study such as the one offered here is desirable.

Although the kingdom of Sam’al,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, Lu-
wian, and two dialects of Aramaic: Sam’alian 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 Sam’alian Aramaic.15 They include, in chronological order:

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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.
13 For the history of the kingdom, see Younger 2016, 373–424.
15 This is not the place to discuss at length the controversy about the classification of the earlier known texts from Zincir-
li, the Panamurwa and Hadad inscriptions. See Friedrich 1951, 152–53; Greenfield 1968; 1978, 94; Dion 1974; Tropper 1993,
283–311; Huehnergard 1995; Gianso 2008, 12; Noorlander 2012; Fales 2013; and Gzella 2014, 74–75; 2015, 72–77. In his pub-
lication 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 Sam’alian
(in particular {ʾnk} and {wːt}), provides a new argument in favor of the identification of Sam’alian 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.” However, he admits:

This inscription would immediately be classified as Sam’alian were it not for the m.pl.abs. forms ending in {-n} ([ywmmn] twice in line 10, probably [krmmn] 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.

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. 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. 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.

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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 ʾš “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 ʾš 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 ʾšyn “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.
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. 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). From this primary sense, “sense extensions” are conceptually developed. 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.

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. 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.

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. By demarcating the primary sense (the protoscene) from which the semantic network has sprouted, a rigorous

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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 explanation 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 entre 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.
A study of the preposition **b-** in Samʿalian Aramaic

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 Samʿalian preposition **b-**. In Samʿalian Aramaic, the preposition **b-** occurs sixty-seven times. Based on predominance within its semantic network, it becomes clear that this spatial particle connotes a spatial-geometric configuration of “containment.” 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. 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.” Some examples of this in Samʿalian can be seen in H 1, H 19, K 2, and K 5 (below).

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 Samʿalian. 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. Some Samʿalian examples of this usage can be clearly seen in P 2, P 2–3, P 4–5, P 5 (2×), etc. **

(H 1) *zy . ḫgmt . nṣb . zn . lhdd . bʿlmy*  
who erected this statue for Hadad in my eternal abode (i.e., burial chamber).  

(H 2–3) *wnīn . ḫydy . hdd . wʾl . (3)wrkbʾl . wšmš . wṛšp . ḥṭr . ḥlbbh*  
And Hadad—and El and Rākib-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 (OB = 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 Samʿalian, 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 **bʿlmy** “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 Samʿalian Aramaic conceptualizing the nuance “from.”
(H 3–4) pmz . ḫz . (k)byd[y]
So whatever I grasped in my hand,

(H 8–9) wtn . hdd . bydy [ . ] (k)ḥū ḫū[b]bh
And Hadad gave in[to] my hands a scepter of dominion.

(H 19) wḥwšbt . bḥ . ʾḥḥy
And I caused the gods to dwell in it (i.e., the temple, lit., byt "house")

(H 28) ṭyqm . wth . bmṣʿh
and may he stand him in the middle.

(H 29–30) ḫ[i(?)n][ . ] . ʾn . šmt . ḫmrt . ʾl . bpm . (30) zr . ʾmr
Look, I have put these words in the mouth of a stranger! saying:

(H 30) ʾw . [ʾn . šmt . ḫmrt] y . bpm . ʾnšy . šry
or [I have put] my commands in the mouth of the enemies’ men!

(P 2) ʿzh . hwṭ . bbyt . ʾbh
which was in the house(hold) of his father.

(P 2–3) ṭkšḥi [---] (3) bbyt . ʾbh
And he destroyed(?) [ ] in the house(hold) of his father.

(P 4–5) ṭkḥw . tu[ . ] bpm . bbyty
And if you cause bloodshed in my house(hold),

(P 5) wʾgī . hwṭ . hrb . bʾrq . ʾyʿdy
then I also will make bloodshed in the land of Yāʾdiya.35

(P 5) ʾby . pʾn . bʾ . brš ᵃ . bʾ[ʾrq]
my father Panam<ua>, son of Barṣūr(?), [he?] destroyed(?) in the la[nd].

(P 8) whrpy . nšy . bs[-------]
and released the women in [ ].

(P 8) wqbr [ . ] ʾln(?) . b(?)------
and he buried(?) them(?) in . . .

(P 18) ṭhqm . lh . mšky . bʾrh
And he set up for him a memorial in the way.

(ÖB 2) [---]bny . blógica[---]wbḥlbhb
. . . [my] sons in [ ] and in the dominion (2×)

(K 2) ṭwmt . wth . bsyr/d . ʾlmny
and I placed it in the eternal chamber;

(K 5) ṭybl . lnbs . zy . bnsb . 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) $\text{wn}/\text{ḥšb} . \ by . \ \text{pnmw} . \ bm’t . \ mlk’y [ ] kbry [ ] m[n] . \ mwq’. \ šms . \ w’d . \ m’rb$

And my father Panamuwa was esteemed in the midst of mighty kings [from the east to the west].

The second $b$- ($bk[. \ . \ ’r]qy$) in the following sentence also conceptualizes a containment nuance (“in, in the midst of, throughout”):

(H 10) $\text{wbymy} . \ \text{yt}mr . \ bk[. \ . \ ’r]qy . \ \text{l}nšb . \ \text{ty}rt . \ \text{wln}šb . \ \text{zrry} . \ \text{wlbny} . \ \text{kpyry} . \ \text{hlbbh}$

And in my days it was commanded in/throughout all my land to erect TYRT and to erect ZERRY 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. In Sam’alian, 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) $\text{wrṣ} . \ [13] \ \text{bggl} . \ \text{mr’h} . \ \text{tgltplsr} . \ \text{mlk} . \ ‘\text{šwr} . \ \text{mḥnt} (?) . \ ‘\text{w} . \ \text{mn} . \ \text{mwq’} . \ šmš . \ w’d . \ m’rb$

[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) $\text{wgm} . \ \text{mt} . \ ‘\text{by} . \ \text{pnmw} . \ \text{blgry}$37. $\text{mr’h} . \ \text{tgltplsr} . \ \text{mlk} . \ ‘\text{šwr} . \ \text{bmḥnt}$

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) $\text{wbymy} . \ \text{yt}mr . \ bk[. \ . \ ’r]qy . \ \text{l}nšb . \ \text{ty}rt . \ \text{wln}šb . \ \text{zrry} . \ \text{wlbny} . \ \text{kpyry} . \ \text{hlbbh}$

And in my days it was commanded in/throughout all my land to erect TYRT and to erect ZERRY and to build the villages of the dominion.

(H 12) $\text{wbymy} . \ \text{hlbb}[y.] \ \text{xt}n\‘i . \ \text{ýhb} . \ \text{l’hy}$

And in the days of my dominion, an offering (?) was given to the gods;

(H 13–14) $\text{wḥlbbty}. \ [14] \ \text{tn}n . \ \text{mt} . \ \text{ḥd[. \ . \ . \ . \ . \ . \ . \ . \ . \ .] \ lbn’}$

and during my dominion Hadad has indeed given me [a commission] to build.

(H 19–20) $\text{wḥlbbty}/\text{ḥn’t} . \ [20] [\text{l’hy}]$

And during my dominion, I allotted [the gods] a resting place.

36 Tyler and Evans 2003, 186.

37 Understanding a metathesis of the noun $\text{rgl}$ (see Friedrich 1951, 162).
(H 24) wšnh . lmn¹ . mnh . bļy²l¹
and may he withhold sleep from him in the night;
(P 1) bni - . . šnt . [m]w[i[h]
in [. . ] the year [of his death(?)].
(P 10) wbywmy . 'by . pnmw . šm . mt . b'ly . kpyry . wb'ly . rkb
And in the days of my father Panamuwa, he truly appointed lords of villages and lords of
carriots.
(P 18) bywmy . (-)šr . [ca. 21 signs]
In my days [. . . .]
(K 1–2) ż'ý . qnt lý . nšb . b(ž)hy
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 emo-
tional 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 Samʾalian.

(H 25–26) [']l . yšl . ydh . bhrb. b[------]l/íy . i²w . (ž) [bhm¹ . 'w. b]hniš
[May he not] stretch his hand with the sword against [ ] of my [hou]se [either in anger or
in] violence
(H 26) 'l . yhr . 'w . brrž . i²w . l . i(?)--
may he not commit murder, either in wrath or out of [ ]
(H 33) [']w . thrgh . bhnis . 'w . ] bhm¹
or you slay him in violenc[e or] in anger
(P 21) w'mr . bmšwt
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 instru-
ment or a particular human agent. Older grammars designate this the beth instrumenti. In English, it is
typically rendered “with” or “by.” In Samʾalian, 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) [ʾl. ʾyš]ḥ. ʾydh. ḏhrb. b[----]ḥm. ḏnh. ṣ[---]l/ʾny. ḏn. ḏn. ḏm. ṣ[---]hūn

[May he not] stretch his hand with the sword against [ ] of my [hou]se [either in anger or in] violence.

(H 31) plktšh. ʾbny
and may they pound him with stones.

(H 31) plktšnh. ʾbny
and may they pound her with stones.

(Ŷb 3–4) lyh[---]ny. ḏm[---]i[---]ḥūn
Let him make pleasing the na[me] . . . with the sword.

B- Conceptualizing Relationship

Quite akin to agency is the usage of ʾb- to conceptualize a containment of a specific relationship with one and not another. Older grammars designated this *beth comitantiae*.

(H 11–12) ʾwʾmn. ḏkrt. ʾb
And a sure covenant was concluded with me.

B- Conceptualizing Adversarial Relationship

This restrictive, functional usage of ʾb- 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., ʾb-). The single example from the Samʾalian corpus is seen in the second ʾb- in this sentence:

(H 25–26) [ʾl. ʾyš]ḥ. ʾydh. ḏhrb. b[----]ḥm. ṣ[---]l/ʾny. ḏn. ḏn. ḏm. ṣ[---]hūn

[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” (ʾb-). This usage is the older grammatical *beth pretiti*, often rendered in English by “for, in exchange for,” “at [the cost of].” Examples in Samʾalian are:

(P 6) ʾwtm. prs. ṣšql
And a parus stood (in exchange) for/at (the cost of) a shekel;

(P 6) ʾwtṛḥ. ṣmnʾ ṣšql
and ŠRB [of wine?] (in exchange) for/at (the cost of) a shekel;

(P 6) ʾwšnb. ṣnv ṣšql
and SNB of oil (in exchange) for/at (the cost of) a shekel.

Fales (1986, 84) claims this nuance of the Aramaic preposition ʾb- 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[ṣ]dq . (2) *bh* . ṭl̊wθh . ḫl̊ . y’d[y] . mn . ṣḥth
Because of/on account of the loyalty of his father, the gods of Yā’diya delivered him from the destruction.

(P 11) ḥkmth . wḥsdqḥ . p’ . ḫz . bkn̊p . 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) [b]sdq . bh . ḫwšbhny . mr’y . rkb’l . wmr’y . tgltplsr . ‘l . ml̊b . ] (20) by . pnμw . br . brsr
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’alian contexts the presentation of offerings is “to be restricted to specified designees.”

(ÖB 7–8) bkkb’l . š’yn . lym
for Rākib-El: two ewes for the day;

(ÖB 8) wbbkb . š’y[n] . lym
and for Kubaba: two ewes for the day;

(ÖB 9–10) wbnqm . 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[9]šl’ mḥ[6] “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*.
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 (designated by them as “Pre-position 1”) the area is effaced, there is room for a *mem*, which would make eminent sense in the context.
In the editio princeps, Pardee understood the last word in line 9 /šʾ/ as a byform of šʾy, “gift, offering,” or more probably, in his estimation, a noun derived from NŠʾ, meaning “(presentation?)-offering.” But such a noun from NŠʾ 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.” Yet it seems equally odd that in the next sentence there is no direct object for the verb wyhrg. 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 šʾyn must mean “two ewes.” Concerning šʾyn, Lemaire and Sass state: “This is evidently the masculine of šʾ, ‘ewe,’ known from Panamuwa 6 and 9, and it provides a parallel to ybl in Katumuwa 3–5.” However, since šʾt/šʾh has no known masculine counterparts from which to derive, and due instead to the broad attestation of the explicitly feminine forms, this analysis is doubtful. The already attested plural forms of the feminine noun šʾt/šʾh are šʾwn and šʾn. The Aramaic feminine noun šʾt/šʾh “ewe,” with the plural forms šʾwn/šʾn “ewes,” comprises a wonderful analogy to ybl “ram,” with the plural forms nšyn/nšwn “rams.” Therefore, as with nšyn, it is very likely that šʾyn is a plural (or dual) form of šʾt/šʾh. In the context of the Ördekburnu stele, šʾyn must be a dual, not a plural. Hence it would appear to me that šʾ is the Samʾalian word for “ewe,” it being either a defective spelling or an orthographic variant for šʾh. This explanation solves the problem of what animal is to be slaughtered. Thus the slaying of a ewe (šʾ) 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.

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. In Samʾalian, b- appears to conceptualize such a notion (both positively and negatively) in reference to sacrifices.
May he (Hadad) look in (favor of) it;

And may he (Hadad) not look in (favor of) it.

Uncertain Usages: bʾšr

There are five occurrences of bʾšr (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 (ʾšr “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 bʾšr in the Sefire inscriptions (e.g., KAI 222A, line 5) regarding Matiʾel’s sons, who will come in his place (i.e., “after him”): bnwh zy ysqn bʾšr[h]. However, in the Hadad Inscription this nuance does not appear to be the intended one.

But may [his kins]man plot the destruction of/in the place of one of his kinsmen or one of his relatives or of one of his kinswomen

But if indeed ruin (has struck) him (lit., in his place)58

your eyes should be weary of him.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to apply a cognitive-linguistic approach to the study of the Samʾalian 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 Samʾalian dialect works.

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56 DNWSI 127, s.v. ʾšr, 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
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, 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. 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

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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?

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 ʾ, 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. 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 texts are taken as a sample of Ugaritic poetry: Baʿlu, Kirta, ʾAqhatu, Šahrū-ṣa-limu, Hōrānu and the Serpents, and The Drunkenness of ʾIlu. 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

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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 ʾIlīmilku, 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 Hōrānu 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.
line lengths in poetic units in Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew poetry

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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 ($\rho$) of 0.49, indicating that the tendency toward well-balanced lines was intentional.\footnote{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.}

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...
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—indeed, 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, 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.

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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).
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 bicolon and the somewhat surprising way in which the poet balanced the lines of a tricolon. Further, the hypothesis 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 ($\rho = 0.19$), 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

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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. Fokkelman’s (1998–2004) work on line lengths in the Psalms is in many ways a fine study, but Fokkelman 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). 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-
certain terms that there is no straight-forward, 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.
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 Ugaritan 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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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. 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. In some cases, the second two complete the first syntactically or grammatical.

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 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, מתחלפת (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 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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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).\textsuperscript{5} From Ehrlich one can trace a direct line to a narrow circle of twentieth (and twenty-first) century scholars, including Ezra Zion Melamed,\textsuperscript{6} Isac Leo Seeligmann,\textsuperscript{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 laff 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
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. 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. 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.

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 bêt and ‘ayîn (♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭), internal semantic and grammatical parallelism (♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭), and -ō- rhyme (♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭้

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 . . . !"

"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!"

8 See Wansbrough 1968 (sincere thanks to Andras Hamori for the reference); Brogan and Mignani 1993.
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 ḥakrem 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 (שָׁם נֹאכָל), and lines 4–5 refer back to these crops through pronominal suffixes. However, instead of using the masculine plural pronominal suffix, “them,” 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 (שָׁם נֹאכָל), whereas line 4 (v. 9a), which refers obliquely to an antecedent food, depicts eating it (אֲכָלֻהוּ). In the Hebrew Bible the only liquid referred to as “eaten” (אֲכָלֻהוּ) is blood; other fluids consumed or otherwise absorbed are either drunk (יֹאכְלֻהוּ) or rubbed (שָׁם נֹאכָל). If, as שָׁם נֹאכָל “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 שָׁם נֹאכָל 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.

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):

And those who collect the wine shall drink it

For those who gather the grain shall eat 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” (אֶתֵּן אֶת־דְּגָנֵךְ) and “they shall drink” (וְיִשְתֻּהוּ שָׁם נֹאכָל). It addresses Judea in the second feminine singular, “your enemies” (אֲכָלֻהוּ) and “your wine that you toiled for” (שָׁם נֹאכָל). 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 אִם, 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

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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 אֲכָלֻהוּ וְיִשְתֻּהוּ 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 שָׁם נֹאכָל—the land (i.e., don’t sow it)—and נֶבֶט—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:

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; 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 lämed and vowels -u- in אֶל הַיָּהּ and הַיָּהּ, 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, הַיָּהּ (v. 9ab) creates a segue to line 5, about drinking wine (v. 9ba), through sound-play, for it reverberates with הִלּוּלִים, the grape harvest and wine inauguration festival (וַיִּשְׁתֶּהוּ... הִלּוּלִים). The end of line 5 (v. 9bβ) amplifies the strain in similar fashion: although אָמַסְפָיו יֹאכְלֻהוּ means “in my holy courts,” the term קֹדֶֹש הִלּוּלִים means “in my holy courts,” the term קֹדֶֹש הִלּוּלִים carries over the association of the “first-fruits” evoked by the term הִלּוּלִים (v. 9aβ), as in the text: “all its fruit will be holy, hillālim to/of Yahweh.”

Moreover, as in so many other cases of corresponding clauses, juxtaposing the two declarations about the effect of mutual illumination and signification. Just as the heads of the two lines (vv. 9ac and 9ba),AMERAEI, and מְעַבְּדֵי יְהוָה, directly correlate with each other to suggest an identical relationship of work and enjoyment, so too in the two tails (vv. 9aβ and 9bβ)—דרש הִלּוּלִים bears an intimate relationship with כְּפָרִי הַלְּיִלָּה, that of action defined by space: they shall praise Yahweh in his holy courts.

those who gather it shall eat it
and they shall praise Yahweh
those who collect it shall drink it
in my holy courts

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15 Grain and wine occur frequently (9+*) as a representative pair of edible crops, but more frequently (17+) together with olive oil (יִשָך); 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; Nch. 5:11; 10:40; 13:5, 12; 2 Chron. 32:28 (twice with a fourth element, honey or preserves [שבָד]); 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 (שבָד) 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 הִלּוּלִים stands in apposition with מִלָּהּ rather than in a construct phrase with it (Rashi [Katsenenbogen 2005, 5.187]; Ehrlich 1968, 2.67; Milgrom 1991–2001, 1.1683). It serves as the name of the crops or products themselves, i.e., the hillālim of Yahweh or the hillālim 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 הִלּוּלִים in Judges 9:27 and resists enforcing a distinction between Canaanite and Israelite referents for the same single Hebrew word שְׁבָד (compare Licht 1954; Kena’anî 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: “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. 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):

אֲשֶׁר יָבֹא וְתֶאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר מַחְלָל וְחַרְבִּי תֹאכַל בָּשָׂר מִדַּם חָל

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” (ךֵמָס מַחְלָל וְחַרְבִּי תֹאכַל בָּשָׂר מִדַּם) followed by “from the wild heads of the enemy” (רָסָיֶת פָּרָעֹוִים רָבַת)—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 ד-ח-ש “drench” of the first clause (v. 42aa) requires liquids, while the sword consuming flesh in the second clause (v. 42ab) seeks a body part. Together, the three phenomena point to the presence of alternation:

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 מַחְלָל of line a and line d qualifies מַשָּׂק 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).
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 מִדָּם “with (the) blood” in the first and third clauses (vv. 42αα and 42βα). Recognizing the continuity indicated by this repetition helps illuminate the consecutive use of the preposition מִן in the two clauses that make up the second line, viz., in clauses three and four (v. 42β). In the first instance (v. 42βα), when repeating מִדָּם 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. 42ββ) מִן 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:

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 וָא, 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 וָעָ.

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), 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 יִכְוָה אַלְחַנְן הָמוֹנֵינוּ לְשָׁבַע הַמַּגְבִּכְכּוּ לְרֹאָה בְּשָׁמַיִם 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

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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 וָעָ used intransitively (or inwardly transitively) see Job 5:7 (debatably also Obad. 4; Job 39:27) and for וָעָ see Jeremiah 13:18 (possibly also Ezek. 21:31). On intransitive or inwardly transitive or internal ו see GKC, 145–46 §53d, f; Joulon 1996, 151 §54d; and esp. Walke-O’Connor 1990, 439–41 §27.2f–g in the context of their broader discussion distinguishing ו (causing an event) from ד (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.); Hizgeuni (Katsenelenbogen 2005, 4.86); Ba’alei Hatosafot (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.
Who can compare to Yahweh our god, who ascends to sit in the heavens (and) on the earth? Who descends to see (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 bēṯ. 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 solid—a surface for the heavenly realm just as the crust of the earth serves as the surface for the human realm—and place Yahweh’s throne on top of it. 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

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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.
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.\footnote{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-v-b 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. Obviously, the attribute “Hebrew” refers back to the male “slave” and “Hebrewess” to the female “maidservant.”

The literary staging of Jeremiah 34:8–22 has the prophet Jeremiah voicing Yahweh, who cites the royal edict of general manumission (Heb. הָעִבְרִי) 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: }

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 “Hebrew” modifies masculine רעֲבָה “his slave,” and feminine הָעִבְרִיָּה “Hebrewess” qualifies feminine “his maidservant” מַלְאָכֶה. 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 alteration:

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Other examples of sequential asyndetic dependent clauses following two clauses and indicating an alternating cast: (a) Song of Songs 1:5 שֶׁהָבֶרֶךְ הָעִבְרִי / יָשֶׁר הַלֵּאָה the charged vocative phrase בְּדָרְכֵּי הַמִּלְתָּה לָתֵא / מָכָא הָעִבְרִיָּה in which the charged vocative phrase לָתֵא / מָכָא הָעִבְרִיָּה and the climactic שֶׁהָבֶרֶךְ הָעִבְרִי / יָשֶׁר הַלֵּאָה at the two line-endings create a deft echo in sound and association. This widely recognized case (Targ. Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Qara, Joseph Kimhi, 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

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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:

| to set each his slave and each his maidservant free. |
| 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 (ו), “Hebrew and Hebrewess” (הָעִבְרִי וְהָעִבְרִיָּה). 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. 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. 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 ל-כ-ח 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

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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 נ-כ-כ, e.g., Exod. 10:1, “Go to Pharaoh,” and Jer. 36:5–6, “I can’t go . . . you go” (instead of “come”); נ-כ-כ, e.g., Song 5:4, “My beloved pulled his hand from the hole” (instead of “sent”); נ-כ-כ, e.g., Song 8:14, “Run hither, beloved” (rather than “run away”); also נ-כ-כ, e.g., Isa. 5:2, “and he removed its stones” (lit., “threw its stones...
Tell the Israelites to bring me a contribution;
From every person whose heart (so) moves him accept my contribution.

Yahweh introduces the list of materials to contribute with the heading, "These are the donations that you should accept from them" (v. 3a), then he itemizes: precious metals, fabrics, wood, ointments and powders, and gems (vv. 3b–7). Whereas for the first items in the list Yahweh specifies no function (vv. 3b–5), in the last part of the list he mentions the items together with their purpose (vv. 6–7). The oil will serve for light, the spices will go into an anointing ointment and be part of incense; the wood will be used for the construction of the tabernacle. Further on, being items worn by the priest (28:1–5).

By simply looking at this list of stones, one has no way to decide whether both sets of gems will be used in both kinds of priestly vestment. The formulation contains no grammatical or semantic indications one way or the other. Further on in his instructions, though, Yahweh clarifies the configuration of objects he has in mind. The carnelians will be part of the ephod; there will be only two of them, each of which will be engraved with the names of six of the twelve tribes of Israel and set upon a different shoulder (28:6–12). The setting stones, by contrast, are twelve in number and they will fill the breastplate (vv. 15–21). Many ancient commentators have noted that this later specification guides the way one should understand the phrasing around the items in Yahweh’s original list of recommended contributions (25:7):33

אַבְנֵי־סִמְמֵרָה

and the breastplate of justice:

ְכוּרֶת וְלִקְטֹרֶת

for the ephod and for the breastplate

Though not obviously intricate or significant, the alternation here creates a pattern, and the pattern, in turn, serves a specific purpose. Listing first the two kinds of stones, then the two functions, generates an intensified perception of repetition through correlations in sound and form, syntax and sense: first לְרָאֶל followed by a noun ending in mem, then preposition l with an -a- vowel followed by a disyllabic word. An additional level of sound-play binds the two elements within the concluding phrase יִקְחֵנָם וְיִקְחֻהוּ—the first nominal vowel pattern, -a- followed by long ō, repeats in reverse: long ō followed by -a-. In other words, the “horizontal” correlations in sound, viz., as heard, compound the “vertical” alignments in sense “vertically,” viz., as considered. Moreover, Yahweh later explains that in fact the two items, the ephod and the breastplate, shall be tied together to make a single accoutrement (28:13–14, 22–28).34

33 Rashi, Ibn Ezra (the short commentary) and HizQueuni (Katsenelenbogen 2005, 4.86); Moses b. Jacob Ibn Ezra (cited by Abraham Ibn Ezra in Cohen 2003, 147); Ba’alei Hatosafot (Chavel 1981, 287 in the note there).

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, 29:29–30; 28:30; 30:32–33; 31:30–31—in which the verb of each relative clause activates the same root as the noun it modifies (יִקְחוּן וְיִקְחִינוּ and יִקְחֵנָם וְיִקְחֻהוּ). The consistent distinction between two roots, בָּאֶל and בָּאֶל, 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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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 ṭuḥšum-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.

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 tahash-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):

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 qôhelet." Among the many claims and counterclaims in the long lecture is one about the relative value of shrewd intelligence, age, and circumstances:

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
for the thought to begin by comparing the poor and shrewd lad to the silly old king, then focus exclusively on the king’s failings, without delineating the merits of the preferred lad, who fades into oblivion.

Note that the passage has two syntactical idiosyncrasies: the lack of a conjunction between the two motive clauses, and the confusing string of personal pronouns with no clear referents or coordination. Such flat, uncoordinated formulations can signal the presence of alternation, in which each motive links up with a different part of the preceding comparison. In illustrative translation:

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.

The Hebrew does not mark it as such, but the comparative framework ( . . . נ ו . . . ) requires translating as a direct opposition, “because the one can emerge from jail to rule, whereas the other even in his rule can become impoverished.” Note how the comparative framework subordinates and redefines the motive structure ( . . . כ . . . כ ) from an emphatic repetition or modification, “because . . . namely . . . ,” to a contrast, “because . . . whereas . . . ,” the very repetition of the particle כ reinvigorates the motive impulse, which has the effect of heightening the force of the contrast.37

GENESIS 27:27–28

Prose narrative discourse, which is defined primarily by chronological sequence (and causality),38 poses a particular challenge for an author aiming to give to speech, especially that of the narrator, an alternating cast, and yet instances of it do exist. After having overheard Isaac’s readiness to impart his deathbed blessing, Rebecca sets about ensuring that Jacob receive it by dressing him in the clothes of the outdoorsman.
and handing him a tray full of fresh meat. Jacob approaches Isaac, leans in to kiss him, and Isaac speaks (Gen. 27:27–28).

When he (Jacob) approached to kiss him, he (Isaac) smelled the scent of his clothes, and he blessed him, saying: “Ah, the scent of my son is like the scent of the Yahweh-blessed field.”

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, אמר - קברות - ישב - נשף - וחס, “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, אמר, “he said,” follows upon קברות, “he blessed him,” a verb of speech, readily suggests that אמר functions adverbially, like אמר: “he blessed him, saying.” As a result, it subordinates all of Isaac’s following speech to the main clause קברות, “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 waw that, following the remark about the clothing, begins what reads naturally as the contents of the blessing, ידיעת האל omn. “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:

When he (Jacob) approached to kiss him, he (Isaac) smelled the scent of his clothes and he blessed him, saying:

“Ah, the scent of my son is like the scent of the Yahweh-blessed field.

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, אמר, modifies adverbially both the smelling and the blessing; it introduces the utterance that attends both. Note that Isaac’s first word, אמר, does not begin a discourse but marks the stimulation of a sense, expresses the senser’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 니יע 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 קָרָץ (and related אֲרָץ) 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 (יִּשָּׁח - יִּכְרֶה - יִּאֶר) and Deuteronomy 28:7–9, 12 (יָשַׁר - יִכְרֶה - וּנְזָר); and Psalm 20:2–6 (יָשַׁר - כַּפַּרְתֶּךָ - יִכְרֶה - יִשָּׁשָּׁכָה). 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): . . . לְכַלּוֹתּוּ שַׂבְעוֹת! אֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִפְרֵנִי תֵּשׁ, יִהְיֶה שְׂכָנָה בְּפֶרְעָה. And in response to Boaz’s call to affirm his purchase (4:9–10), the townsfolk affirm, then follow immediately with a blessing for him (v. 11): . . . וַיִּשָּׁעֵר יָוהֵה. 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

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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, יִּשָּׁע יִּרְאֶה. "And then he said": יִּשָּׁע יִּרְאֶה וְיָרַץ אֵלֶּה יִּשָּׁע יִּרְאֶה. 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 (Babken 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 inverts 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:

אֶת בַּאֲרוֹת בֵּיתָן וָאֵל בֵּית שֶם מָזוֹן שָבֵעָה אֶל שֶה מִשְׁמָי אֵל

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.66 Second, two clauses in a row begin with the same action-verb, וַיַּעַל “he struck,” but have different objects, נִבְאָשָׁה וַיָּשָׁם “the people of Beth Shemesh” and נִבְאָשָׁה “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 בֵּית means differently in the two clauses. In the first it seems to mark the direct object, and in the second, the indirect:

סְמַה בֵּית שֶם מָזוֹן וָאֵל בֵּית שֶם מָזוֹן

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):

וַיַּעַל בֵּית שֶם מָזוֹן וָאֵל בֵּית שֶם מָזוֹן וָאֵל אֶל מַעַר אָשֶׁר בַּדִּישׁ הָעָם

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: פַּסְמָל בֶּן נְבֶן בְּעַר בֵּית שֶם מָזוֹן שָבֵעָה אֶל שֶה מִשְׁמָי אֵל פַּסְמָל בֶּן נְבֶן בְּעַר בֵּית שֶם מָזוֹן שָבֵעָה אֶל שֶה מִשְׁמָי אֵל “He struck among the elders of the people seventy men and among the community fifty thousand men.”67 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:

66 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, ἐξέπληκτον καὶ πεντήκοντα ἥλιδας ἄνδρων, 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., 4QSama at 1 Sam. 1:22; LXX and 4QSama at 1 Sam. 2:9–10; 4QSama at 1 Sam. 2:13–17; MT at 1 Sam. 2:22b; 4QSama at 1 Sam. 10:27; and compare Rofé 1989.
He struck among the people of Bet-Shemesh . . . He struck among the nation seventy 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.

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**

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**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 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: וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ יְהוָה אֶת בֵּית שַׁמַּשׁ וָעָם וַיִּשְׂמְחוּוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ עָם שבעים איש חמשים אלף איש. 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”. As so this might be read: Καὶ εἶδον κυβοτόν Κυρίου καὶ ἐπάταξαν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐβδομήκοντα ἄνδρας καὶ πεντήκοντα χιλιάδας ἄνδρῶν “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 discourseikk וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ יְהוָה אֶת בֵּית שַׁמַּשׁ וָעָם וַיִּשְׂמְחוּוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ עָם שבעים איש חמשים אלף איש וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ יְהוָה אָרֵא אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׂמְחוּוּ עָם שבעים איש חמשים אלף איש (וך), 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: τάξασθαι ἄνω τῶν κυβότων τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ ἐπάταξαν τούτοις ἐβδομήκοντα ἄνδρας καὶ πεντήκοντα χιλιάδας ἄνδρον “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,51 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

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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”: יִשְׂמַח יְהוָה - כהן.
52 On the social poetics of looking at the deity in the Hebrew Bible, see Chavel 2012.
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. Along the way it noted another eleven and two additional candidates. The list is hardly exhaustive; more instances occur throughout the Hebrew Bible. 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. 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: dokładność אלוהים תפשיש (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 ארבעים, and the directional הבננה qualifies the partitive ממצר; (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 המים ממים qualifies the collective ירים; and (j) Joshua 22:10, in which the locale המים נם מים, qualifies the deictic particle שם, and the clause about the altar of great size, המים גזרל הירדן, qualifies the earlier nondescript reference, המים.
60 Gen. 27:27–28.
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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:

šĕlōšâ hēmmâ niplĕʾû mimmennî  
Three things are too wonderful for me;

wĕ’arbaʿ lō’ yēda’tîm  
four I do not understand:

derek hannešer baššāmayim  
the way of an eagle in the sky,

derek nāḥāš ‘ālé-šûr  
the way of a snake on a rock,

derek-‘onîyyû bēlèb-yām  
the way of a ship on the high seas,

wĕderek geber bē’almâ  
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:

ʾaššûr ki-yābôʾ bē’arsēnû  
As for Assyria, when he comes into our land

wĕkî yidrōk bē’admûtēnû  
and when he treads upon our ground,

wahāqēmûnû ʿālāyw šibʾā rūʾîm  
then we will raise against him seven rulers

ūšēmûnû nēṣîkē ʿārām  
and eight Aramaean chiefs.

wĕrēʾā’ ʿet-’ereṣ ʾaššûr bāḥereb  
And they will rule the land of Assyria with the sword,

wĕ’et-’ereṣ nimrōd bappēṭîhâ  
and the land of Nimrud with a dagger.

wĕhiṣṣîlû mēʾaššûr  
And they will rescue (us) from Assyria

ki-yābôʾ bē’arsēnû  
when he comes into our land

wĕkî yidrōk bigbûlēnû  
and when he treads upon our borders.

1 Cf. LXX ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν χῶραν. 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 biptāḥeyhā, 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 (wĕhassēl) 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. Since R. Lowth, 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.” 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. Rather, as W. M. W. Roth notices, the presence of parallelism, and of what kind, is determined by “the parallelism of the verse in question.” 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.” The tendency for modern scholars to privilege synonymity (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 synonymity has become the chief category scrutinized in analyzing these number sequences. But, of course, parallelistic play can turn on other standards of coordination, such as the sequence of the alphabet or merism. 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 synonymity but instead on a range of mathematical knowledge, including most especially that of counting, numeration, and elementary arithmetic. 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 nonsynonymity 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 synonymity 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. 52:1).

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.” 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. 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 synonymity of numbers is nowhere in view.

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:

\[ \text{hikkâ šā’al ba’âlâpâw} \quad \text{Saul has slain his thousands,} \\
\text{wêdâwid bêribêbôtâyw} \quad \text{but David his ten thousands!} \]

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, without any antithesis:

\[ \text{yippôl miṣṣiddékâ ʾelep} \quad \text{A thousand may fall at your side,} \\
\text{ûrêbabâ mîmînekâ} \quad \text{ten thousand at your right,} \\
\text{ʾēleykâ lôʾ yiggâš} \quad \text{but to you it will not come near.} \]

The difference in uptake—in the Samuel couplet “the two numbers are contrasted with each other,” 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:

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{N (šēlōšâ) + PN (hēmmâ) + VP (niplēʾû mimmennî)} \\
\text{N (wĕʾarbaʿ) + VP (lôʾ yēdaʿtim)}
\end{align*} \]

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
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.”

Counting, as it turns out, is “a rather intricate mental process.” 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, 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), 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. 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. 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.” 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.
24 Fox 2009, 870–73.
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 . . . formulary expressions, in . . . 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).
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 (ʾarbāʿâ) 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:

lk. ym. wtn.  March a day, and a second.
ḥl. ṛb’. ym  A third, a fourth day.
ḥmš. ḫḏ. ym  A fifth, a sixth day.
mk. ṣpšm bššt’  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 šēlōšâ) berries
in the top of the highest bough,
four or five (ʾarbāʿâ ḥāmiššâ)
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-

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 [ahr] at sunrise on the fourth.”
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:

\[
yĕḥayyēnû miyyōmāyim \quad \text{He will revive us after two days,}
\]
\[
bayyôm haššēlīši yĕqīmēnû \quad \text{on the third day he will raise us up,}
\]
\[
wĕniḥyeh lĕpānāy \quad \text{and we will live before him.}
\]

Interestingly, there are several instances of short, holistic numerical sequences, viz., those involving the sequence “one // two.” 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{‘ahat dibber ēlōhim} & \quad \text{One (thing)}\footnote{The implied reference is to the divine speech that follows (see Hossfeld and Zenger 2005, 111 n. g.), i.e., words, and even words shaped specifically, as they are here, into poetic lines.} \\
\text{štayim-zû šāmā‘ti} & \quad \text{two which I have heard:}\footnote{E.g., Prov. 30:11–14.}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ki ʿōz lēʾlōhim} & \quad \text{that strength belongs to God}\footnote{Dantzig 2007, 4–5; Ifrah 2000, 5–8.}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ālēkā-ʿādōnāy ḥāse} & \quad \text{and to you, O Lord, steadfast love.}\footnote{Contra Haran 1972, 254–56, who argues in a convoluted manner such that the emphasis is to be placed on the first number alone, i.e., what is itemized is only one matter—"the word ‘twice’ . . . only being intended to round off the parallelism." In fact, all the examples Haran treats in this manner (Ps. 62:12–13; Job 33:14; 40:5; Mic. 5:4 [against his own interpretation]) are, as he admits (ibid., 253), debated at best or uncertain.}
\end{align*}
\]

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, 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. 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 (?) ostracon 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. 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), 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 For details, see the treatment in Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 251–60.
so-called “number parallelism” in biblical poetry

Therefore, the explanation of those graded numerical sequences with subsequent specification of \(x + 1\) items\(^{40}\) 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 synonymity (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

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\(^{39}\) 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.


\(^{48}\) 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.\footnote{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”\footnote{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 (eser, meʾā, ’elep, rēbābā), with intermediate sequences in the higher powers (above one hundred) formed on a multiplicative principle.\footnote{52} The number 6,000, for example, is written out as šēset ’ālāpim, lit., ”six one thousands,”\footnote{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:\footnote{54}

\[\text{53,400} = šēlōš waḥāmiššim ’elep wĕ’arba mēʾôt (Num. 1:43)\]

= lit., ”three and fifty thousands and four hundreds”

= \((3 + 50) \times 1,000 + (4 \times 100)\)

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 ḥawif 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,\footnote{55} whereas number sequences, with the exception of one/two sequences, always appear in abbreviation.\footnote{56} But the basic logic of sequentiality (aleph, bet, gimel . . . ; . . . šālōš, ’arba’) holds in both and may be exploited to literary ends.\footnote{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,\footnote{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.”\footnote{59}
However, his equation is wrong. It should be $x / (x + 10)$, 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.

Even more telling is the common sequential pairing of “one thousand” (ʾelep) // “ten thousand” (rĕbābā). This time the logic expressed algebraically would be $10^x / 10^{x+1}$. 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, that are critical. Deuteronomy 32:30 is especially revealing:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ʾēkā yidrōp ʾeḥād ʾelep} & \quad \text{How can one route a thousand,} \\
\text{āšēnayim yānisū rĕbābā} & \quad \text{and two put to flight ten thousand?}
\end{align*}
\]

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.” 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.”

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 (ʾelep)
shall have a hundred (mēʾā) left,
and that which marched out a hundred (mēʾā)
shall have ten (ʾāšārâ) 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,” viz., that in each case the troop count is reduced by one order of magnitude, by a power of ten ($10^x // 10^{x-1}$). The next step

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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 former)

For ten (‘ăšeret) acres of vineyard shall yield but one (ʾeḥāt) 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.

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:

šiššîm hēmmâ mĕlākôt There are sixty queens,
āšĕmôt im pîlagšîm eighty concubines,
wāʾalāmôt ’ēn mispār 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 treeted 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, 10x // 10x + 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 (ki), a man I have killed for my wound,
a boy for my bruise.
Yeah (ki), sevenfold (šibʿātayim) is Cain avenged,
and Lamech seventy-seven (šibʿim wĕšibʿâ)!

The special multiplicative šibʿātayim—which otherwise may be expressed through the phrase šebaʿ pĕʿāmîm “seven times”—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 šibʿātayim yuqqām). In effect, Lamech boasts that his own murder of a man avenges Cain in the same way that Yah-

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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. 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. With eleven as a multiplier, both the number punning and increased magnitude required for the hyperbole are eloquently achieved. The same multiplier appears in Ugaritic:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ṭṭ. lṭṭm. ʾḥd. } & \text{Six and sixty cities he seizes,} \\
\text{šbʾm. šbʾ. } & \text{seventy-seven towns. (CAT 1.4.VII.9–10; cf. 1.5.V.19–22; 1.12.II.48–49)}
\end{align*}
\]

The figured nature of the couplet is cued above all by the chiastic rendering of the number words themselves. 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.” 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.

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 (ʾaḥat [v. 9]) explicitly contrasted with these countless (ʾên mispār, lit., “without number” [v. 8]) other women. 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.

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.” 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.
75 Squares of high numbers (like one thousand/ten thousand in Dan 7:10; (10^y)^2 // (10^+(x+1)) 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.” As Hillers notes of Micah 5:4, the numbers are “indefinite . . . but fairly large (not ‘two or three’).” 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.” The large magnitude is implicated in this sequence—“a standard way of expressing a very large number in parallel lines of poetry”—was readily appreciated, as is made clear in Kirta, where the mass of Kirta’s “very large host” (šbûk . . . màd), arranged in ranks of “thousands” (ālpm) 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 rhetorically or as a gesture of fabulousness. 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” (bĕʾalpêʾêlîm) and “tens of thousands of rivers of oil” (bĕribbôt naḥălê 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.

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-

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83 Hillers 1984, 68 n. d.
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!” 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 [rēḇāḇōt], but to me they give (only) thousands [hāʾălāpîm]—what more is there for him to have but the kingdom!’” 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 seize 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, 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 text (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 acclaim and even the imputation of kingship—“Is this not David, the king of the land?” 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 valuate 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.
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 literally 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., ṭl “three” in ṭlṭ (“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, ḫṣ “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 ḫṣ (not *ṯl[n]ṭ 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

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 . . . x–1/x, is characterized.”
I want to look at one last example of the graded number sequence before closing, viz., the refrain in Amos 1:3–2:16:

\[ 'al-šēlōšâ piš'ê dammeseq \quad \text{For three transgressions of Damascus} \]
\[ wēl-ʾarbâʾ lōʾ ĕšibennū \quad \text{and for four, I will not revoke it. (Amos 1:3; cf. 1: 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6)} \]

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 four\(^{102}\) or seven\(^{103}\) 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” usage\(^{104}\) 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.”\(^{109}\)

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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 idiom 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 idiom of 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. 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.” 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 sequence—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. 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. 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. 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.” 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

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10 So Weiss (1967, 419), for example, “Bound by this compositional rule of poetry, Amos was forced to express himself in this manner.”
11 Haran 1972, 257.
12 See Cassuto’s observation that “only one sin alone is connected to the word ‘al in the numerical saying,” as cited in Weiss 1967, 420 n. 17.
13 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.
14 E.g., much like Isa. 5:1–7.
15 E.g., Prov. 30:18–19.
16 Weiss 1967, 419.
of the break-up of stereotyped word pairs. The logic has been found wanting, compounded by the fact that no close parallels exist, as Weiss himself readily acknowledges. 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. We may assuredly presume the capacity for adding to have been widespread in ancient Israel, especially in concrete situations. 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., šĕmōnat ʾălāpi ̂m waḥâmēš mēʾōt ûšĕmōnîm, lit., “eight thousands and five hundreds and eighty” 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 . . .” 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, 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.
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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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 ḫprt “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).

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” // at “you” [§55]) with a small inventory of Biblical Hebrew data, but do not address the gender alternation of forms discussed here.
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. 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. Each speech community must be studied independently to understand properly its referential categories, but broader, culturally determined patterns may be grouped together using like characteristics of gender marking. 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.

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. The stratification is further correlated with gender polarity wherein the marked gender is feminine and the unmarked masculine. This correlation holds for most linguistic elements in Biblical Hebrew: the grammatically marked form is feminine, and the unmarked form is masculine. The situation for plural entities is more complex. Generally speaking, marked singular nouns when pluralized take the ending *ot* and unmarked nouns *im*. 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 “colas,” 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 chiastic 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.

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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.
10 Hellinger and Bußmann 2001–3.
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 רָאָם “fathers” and בָּשֶׁן “women” (compared to the paired terms רָאָם “mothers” and בָּשֶׁן “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, two examples of third-person pronominal suffixes, and one instance of alternating third-person independent pronouns. 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.

Those saying to the tree (m): "You [ms] are my father," And to the stone (f): "You [fs] have begotten [fs] me." (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) is entreated: אֹמְרִים לָעֵץ אָבִי "You [ms] are my father." Addressing the matching feminine referent, אֶבֶן "stone," as mother, the second colon avows, לְתִּנִי דֹּיְלִ "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 (לְתִּנִי דֹּיְלִ אַּ . . . אָבִי אַ . . . אָבִי) provides a chiastic 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. 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.
20 This reading follows the Ketiv and is vocalized according to the identical form in Jeremiah 15:10 (see also דִּכְלַתי "you [fs] betrayed me" at 1 Samuel 19:17 and דִּכְלַתי "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; Nódeke 1884, 414–15; for a recent treatment of the feminine *ī, see Butts 2010a and 2010b, 83) is attested quite frequently in the book of Jeremiah (2:27; 3:4; 4:19 [addressing the שְׁנֵפֶת?]; 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 (אָב יְיֵלִילוֹמֶה . . . קִיר־מָה) and masculine with Moab in v. 2 (אָב יְיֵלִילוֹמֶה "Moab wails").
In its [m] streets, they gird themselves with sackcloth;
On its [f] rooftops and its [f] open squares,
All[^22] are wailing—weeping bitterly. (Isa. 15:3)

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 לִילִים פֻלִילֵים "punishable offense [m]." The independent pronouns (or demonstratives), הוּא "he" and היא "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 אש "fire." The gender situation may be understood as resulting from various nouns being used to highlight the multidimensional assessment of these activities.

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 לבי "my heart/mind" and the feminine אשת "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:
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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. 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." This alternation accounts for the pronominal gender matching in example (5). The masculine noun נְפָשִים "the day" is referred to by the masculine demonstrative pronoun (אֵת־נְפָשִים) and the masculine pronominal suffix (וּלַיְּבַבֶּךָ) in the first half of the verse. In the second half, the feminine pronoun (אֵל־כִּתֵיכֶנָה) and suffix (וְהִנְנִי אֶל־כִּתֵיכֶנָ) are connected to the feminine temporal element "time, occasion."

(5) זָהָּב יִבְּרַד הָוָּה מֵאֵין כָּמֹה תִּשְֹאֶה יֵשׁ לְפֹרְחֹת

Because great is that [m] day [m], there is none 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." Some scholars have tried, with little success, to understand the text by appealing to inexact linguistic correspondences, while others have resorted to emendation following 1QIsaa in an attempt to flatten the gender of the pronominal suffixes in the first two cola. "The gender difference of the pronouns need not be eliminated to understand this crux properly; instead the alternation may be read as an integral part of the parallelism of the cola and the entire poetic unit (vv. 10–20).
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 עַעֲלָהֶן "in them [f]." The parallel structure is unmistakable, but the referents are less clear. The nearest and most obvious referent is the feminine plural entity יָמִי "my years" in the preceding line. A plausible masculine plural referent is more distant and problematic. Neither עֵינַי "my eyes" in verse 14 nor יִצְא "my life" in verse 12 provides a sensible reference. 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 יָמִי "my years" is יָמַי "my days," which also appears in the final cola of the poetic unit. 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, 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.

(7) יָשִׁים צְרֵקִים עַל עִיוֹרִים
שַׁפְּטֵן לִפְנֵי פְּרִיִּים שַׁפָּכֵוּ דָּרְבִּים
כִּי מִשְׁתַּכֵּל וְאֲנָשִׁים צַּפַּהוּ
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) והָלַעֲלֵיהֶם עַל קָבָז
וְנָתֹן אֶתְהֶן לְזַעֲוָה וְלֶאָסֵפָה
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. The first instance juxtaposes two different referents: יָשִׁים צְרֵקִים עַל עִיוֹרִים

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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 Airoldi (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 עַעֲלָהֶן "my eyes [m]" (v. 14) and יָמִי "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 (הַגִּדְעֶנָּ֔ים) and “adulterous women” with the feminine pronoun (גָּדוֹלָה). Second, the masculine and feminine plural suffixes of בְּגֵדֹּלָה (v. 45) designate those on whom judgment is augured, that is, גָּדוֹלָה "men" (vv. 40, 42) and גָּדוֹלָה "fornicating women" (v. 44). 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 (אֶתְהֶן). 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 bicolon with a masculine suffix (עֲלֵיהֶם, אֶתְהֶן) followed by a feminine (לָהֶן, אֶתְּהֶן). The first and final suffixes are attached to prepositions (לָהֶן, עֲלֵיהֶם), while the second and third are with the object marker (אֶתְּהֶן, אֹתָם). 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) הָקִיםְתִי עֲלֵיהֶם רֹעֶה אֶחָד וְרָעָה אֶתְּהֶן אֶתְּהֶן
I will set over them [m] one shepherd,
And he will shepherd them [f], my servant David.
(9b) הוּא יִרְעֶה אָדוֹן וְהוּא־יִהְיֶה לָהֵן לְרַעֶה אֶתְּהֶן
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 (יִשָּׁמֶשׁ לְצֹאנִי תִּשׁעֶה וְהוּא־יִהְיֶה לְרַעֶה אֶתְּהֶן (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, so feminine or masculine concord may be used. 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. The suggestion that שֶׂה "sheep” (v. 22) and צֹאן "my flock” (v. 22) are the masculine and feminine referents is unlikely. First, שֶׂה "sheep” is consistently used for a single member of a flock; only once is it used as a potential collective. 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, לְצֹאָן, in this context as the deliberate avoidance of the standard masculine-sounding form, לְצֹאָן (construct בַּלְמַד), 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.”

In the direct speech of example (10), the parallelism consists of alternating-gender second-person independent pronouns. These feminine and masculine pronouns (ֵן, אֶַם) serve as the clause subjects arranged in a chiastic structure with the predicates. In this instance, the referent is unambiguously נֵן “sheep,” for it is present within each colon. The metaphorical reference to people is also clear from the use of אֹתָם “man, human” in the second colon.

(10) בֵּית אָבֵית
אַ לאֶם אַדְמָה אַדָה
You [fp] are my sheep,
You [mp], O man, are the sheep of my pasture! (Ezek. 34:31)

In Jeremiah 23:3–4, נֵן “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, יָדִיעֶהוּ “they will be fruitful and multiply,” and the repeated use of the first-person verbal forms in all three lines. 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 נְווֵה “the lands” in the same line. The subsequent clause in example (11b), however, switches to the feminine pronominal suffix as the verbal object (אתן) and with the prepositional phrase (עַל־נְוֵה). Both pronominal referents clearly designate the flock. Following יָדִיעֶהוּ “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) יָזָה אָבַרְבַּע תְאִרְבִּי הָאָרָץ
כַּל תְאִירֵה שְׁפָרָה שָרֵף
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: בּוֹז “owl” (v. 15) and פָּרָעְד “hawks” (v. 16). Both terms

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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, תְאִירֵה) evil [wild?] beasts”; v. 28, נָאֹר אָדָה “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, קָבֵשׁ וְהַרְעֻתָּהּ “her with her companion,” and a feminine plural suffix at the end of verse 17, דְּבָרֶם “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 חַגָּר “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)

וַיְכִסְו לָהֶן גֹּפֶן
וֹאֲרָא יָדְּהָה לָהֶם בֹּקֶע
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 בַּשָּׂנָה בּות הַיּוֹנֵי “the cows of Bashan” and בַּשָּׂנָה אִדְמֵי נֹשָׂא “their [m!] husbands.” Example (13) designates the resulting judgment proclamation, לִבְּדֹע אֱלֵכֶם בּוֹנֵי יְהוּדָה “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." The gender alternation of second-person masculine plural suffix (אתכֵּם) with a matching second-person feminine plural suffix (אֶחָרִיתְכֶן) 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)

וַֽנִּשָּׁב אֵלֵ֥י הַיָּוֵ֥ה בְּלִקֶּשׁ
כִּי יָהִ֖ו בְּיִמּוֹ לִלְכֶ֣ם
וְנָשָׁ֧א אֶחָֽצַּב בּוֹנֶ֤תָה
אַחֲרִיתְכֶּן בּוֹדֶ֣י נַבּ֔ית
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.

For discussion of this verse, including the differences between men and women as oppressed individuals in Biblical Hebrew, see Bird 1996.

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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ON PSALM 1
STRUCTURE AND MEANING

Koowon Kim
Dankook University

One of Dennis Pardee’s original contributions to Ugaritic and biblical studies is his elucidation of parallelism. Though the centrality of parallelism in biblical poetry is beyond question, its definition has been a subject of much controversy. While not denying James Kugel’s insight on parallelism as a rhetorical device, whose function is to “second” or “heighten” a statement, Pardee aligns himself with Roman Jacobson’s linguistic model of “pervasive parallelism that inevitably activates all the levels of language” —namely, that the phonetic, grammatical, and semantic equivalences interact with one another across lines throughout an entire poem. 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.

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.” 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, and, further, that parallelism constitutes the very core of biblical poetry; in other words, parallelism is the constructive device the

2 For a survey of this topic, see Berlin 1985, 1–17; O’Connor 1997, 29–54.
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.
biblical poets employed to craft a poem in order to communicate a message.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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 predicators/constituents/units.\textsuperscript{15}

Table 16.1: Consonants, Syllables, Words, and O’Connor’s Constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Con.</th>
<th>Syl.</th>
<th>Wo.</th>
<th>O’Connor</th>
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<td>1a</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0/2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c</td>
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<td>3b</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>3c</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/3/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{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.

\textsuperscript{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.

\textsuperscript{12} Reymond 2004, 16.

\textsuperscript{13} Pardee 1981, 127.

\textsuperscript{14} Reymond 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.”

\textsuperscript{15} For their definitions and constraints, see O’Connor 1997, 86–87; Holladay 1999, 19–32.

\textsuperscript{16} The vertical bar \textipa{pāsēq} after ‘šr 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.
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 ʾšr, w, l’, ky) from this count except for compound particles (ky ʾm, ʾl 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 (ʾšr, h, ky ʾm, ʾl 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: | 2, 6, 1, 4, 5, 6, 1, 6, 2<sup>th</sup>, 5, 6, | distant, near, distant, regular, distant, regular, near, internal |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| YHWH             | 2, 6                                          | distant                                      |
| RŠYM             | 1, 4, 5, 6                                    | near, distant                                |
| DRK              | 1, 6<sup>th</sup>                             | regular, distant                            |
| HŢYM             | 1, 6<sup>th</sup>                             | distant                                     |
| TWRH             | 2<sup>th</sup>                                | regular                                     |
| ŞDYQYM           | 5, 6<sup>th</sup>                             | near                                        |
| YŠB              | 1<sup>th</sup>                                | internal                                    |

17 It appears like a monocolon. But Kraus (1993, 114) takes it as a secondary addition, not part of the original poem.
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particle</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>lʾ</td>
<td>1tris, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>1bis, 2, 3tris, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ky</td>
<td>2, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʾim</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḫʾ</td>
<td>3, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kn</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>1tris, 2bis, 3, 5bis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

near, distant
regular, near, distant
regular, near, distant
distant

distant
near
regular, near, distant

distant

Repetitive parallelism in Psalm 1 occurs prominently in distant distribution. Especially noteworthy are the three words (RŠʿYM, DRK, HTʾYM) 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 ʾšr, verse 4 to verse 5 by the repetition of RŠʿYM and kn, and verse 5 to verse 6 by the repetition of SDYQYM, RŠʿYM, 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 II” 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 HTʾ “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

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>ʾšry hʾyš ʾšr</td>
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<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>lʾ hlk b ʾšt ršʿym</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c</td>
<td>w b drk ḥʾyym lʾ ʿmd</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td>w b mwšb lṣym lʾ yšb</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>kyʾm b twrt ṣyw ḥpsrw</td>
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<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>2b</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>c</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>a</td>
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<td>I</td>
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<td>3b</td>
<td>štwlʾ ṭplg ṣym</td>
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<td>c</td>
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<td>3c</td>
<td>ʾšr ṭyw ṭtn b ʿtw</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>f</td>
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<td>3d</td>
<td>w ṭlw ʾ ṭywl</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>g</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3e</td>
<td>w kl ʾšr yʾšḥ ṭṣḥyḥ</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>lʾ kn h ršʿym</td>
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<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
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<td>5a</td>
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<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>5b</td>
<td>w ḥʾym bʾdt ṣdyqym</td>
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<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
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<td>6a</td>
<td>kyʾw ṭwlw yḥḥ drk ṭdyqym</td>
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<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
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<td>6b</td>
<td>w drk ršʿym ṭbd</td>
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<td>a</td>
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### Table 16.4: All the Words of Psalm 1 with Their Semantic Equivalences

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<td>I</td>
<td>ʾŠR</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>distant</td>
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<td>ʾŠDYQ</td>
<td>5b, 6a</td>
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<td>3. Man</td>
<td>ʾYŠ</td>
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<td>ʾšr</td>
<td>1, 3c, 3e, 4c</td>
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<td>5. Prep.</td>
<td>lʾ</td>
<td>1b, 1c, 1d, 3d, 4a, 5a</td>
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<td>6. Motion Verbs</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>HLK</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>regular, distant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>ʾMD</td>
<td>1c</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Prep.</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>1b, 1c, 1d, 2a, 2b, 3c, 4a, 5a</td>
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<td>8. Way of Life</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>ʾŠḤ</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>regular, distant</td>
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<td>IV</td>
<td>MSPT</td>
<td>5a</td>
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<td>V</td>
<td>ʾDH</td>
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<td>9. Wicked</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>RŠʾ</td>
<td>1b, 4a, 5a, 6b</td>
<td>regular, distant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>HTʾ</td>
<td>1c, 5b</td>
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<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>LŠ</td>
<td>1d</td>
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<td>10. Conj.</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>1c, 1d, 2bšm, 3a, 3d, 3e, 5b, 6b</td>
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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 // d č // d č, see table 16.3). It even appears that an escalating relation obtains among the three cola (1b, 1c, and 1d). For instance, RŠʿYM (number 9 I in 1b), ḤṬʾYM (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.  

---


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 YDʿ (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), RŠʿYM (number 9 I: 1b, 4a, 5a, 6b), YHWH (number 14: 2a, 6a), and HTʾYM (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 ʿT in line 3c, RŠʿYM 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. 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 ʿṣr (vv. 3bis and 4), ʿṣ (vv. 3.4), w (vv. 3.3), and k (vv. 3 and 4). Two objects of simile, ʿṢ (number 20 I) and MṢ (number 30), are semantically distant from each other, but the similarity in sound—monosyllabic words ending in /ṣ/—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. 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.

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.

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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 ʿṢ, PRY, ʿLY (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 ‘yš is contrasted with the indefiniteness of the other plural nomina recta (ršʿym, ḥṭʾym, lṣym). As Seow aptly puts it, “one perceives a tension between the singularity of the commendable one and the plurality of the pernicious others.”

2a  twrt / yhw / ḫpsw  fs.cstr. / DN / ms.cstr+3ms.pron.suff
2b  twrtw / ygh  fs.cstr+3ms.pron.suff / 3ms.imf.Qal

It is noteworthy that we have what Berlin calls “a noun/pronoun pair” (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  ḥyw / ‘ṣ  3ms.perf.Qal / ms.abs.
3b  ṣtwl / plgy / mym  ptc.ms.abs.Qal.pass. / mp.cstr. / mp.abs
3c  pryw / ytn / ‘tw  ms.cstr+3ms.pron.suff. / 3ms.imf.Qal[A] / fs.cstr+3ms.pron.suff.[B]
3d  ‘lw / ybwl  ms.cstr+3ms.pron.suff.[B] / 3ms.imf.Qal[A]
3e  kl / yʾšh / yṣlyḥ  ms.abs. / 3ms.imf.Qal[A] / 3ms.imf.Hif

Prefix conjugation verbs of 3ms qal (ytn, ybwl, yʾšh) form regular parallelism. A slight change transpires at both ends of the verse. Instead of imperfect, we have a waw consecutive perfect (ḥyw) at the beginning of the verse and hiphil instead of qal at the end (yṣlyḥ). It is also interesting to note the two cola subsumed under ‘ṣr (3c, 3d) are connected through two abutting nouns with 3ms pronominal suffix [B–B].

4a  hḥṣʾym  mp.abs.def.
4bc  mṣ / tdpnw / rwḥ  ms.abs.(def.) / 3fs.imf.Qal+3ms.pron.suff. / fs.abs.

5a  yqmw / ršʿym / mšpṭ  3mp.imf.Qal / mp.abs.[A] / ms.abs.(def.)
5b  ḥṭʾym / ṣdt / ṣdyqym  mp.abs.[A] / fs.cstr. / mp.abs.[B]

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 (ršʿym) / singular (mšpṭ) // plural (ḥṭʾym) / singular (ḥṭʾym) // plural (ṣdyqym).

6a  ywdʿ/yhwh/drk/ṣdyqym  ptc.ms.abs.Qal / DN / fs.cstr.[A] / mp.abs.[B]

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 ywdʿ and tʾbd.

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 (ʿyš and ršʿym) 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, 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 (ḥālak, ʿāmad, 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 ḫwāyah 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 1

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>ʾšry hʾyš ʾšr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>lʾ hlk b ʿst ršʾym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c</td>
<td>w b drk ḥʾym lʾʾmd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td>w b mwšb lsym lʾʾybš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>kyʾm b twrt yhwʾ hpsw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>w b twrtw yhgʾ ywmw m lyʾl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>w hyʾh kʾš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>štwʾ lʾ plgy myʾm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c</td>
<td>ʾšr pryʾw ytn bʾtw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d</td>
<td>wʾlwʾ lʾ ybwʾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3e</td>
<td>w klʾšr yʾšʾh yʾšlyʾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>lʾ kn h ršʾym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>kyʾm k mš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c</td>
<td>ʾšrʾdpnw rʾwʾ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>lʾ kn lʾʾyqʾm wʾʾršʾym bʾmšʾpt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b</td>
<td>w ḥʾym bʾʾdt sdyʾqym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>kyʾwʾdʾ yhwʾ drk sdyʾqym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b</td>
<td>w drk ršʾym tʾbd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16.5: The Syntactic Parallelism of Psalm 135

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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 (\(~viP \ M \parallel M \sim viP\) in 1bc) and parallel symmetry (\(M \sim viP \parallel M \sim viP\) in 1cd), with line 1c (\(M \sim viP\)) nested in both symmetries. The presence of the negative particle \(lʾ\) binds together three cola as one unit. The syntagm \(~viP,\) which figures prominently in verse 1, appears to form distant parallelism with the same \(~viP\) 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 (\(hʾyš\) in 1a vs. \(ršʿym\) in 5a). A positive verb in 2b (\(viP\)), however, seems to stand in a contrast to the negative verbs in 1bcd (\(~viP\)). 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 (\(ḥpsw\) 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 chiastic 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 (\(yṣlyḥ\)). Four transitive verbs occur in Psalm 1, none of which has \(ršʿym\) as subject. Lack makes a rhetorical point out of it: “the wicked realize nothing, their life outlets nothing.”\(^{37}\)

The syntactical structure of verse 4 is concise. It has a minimum modifier—one relative clause. The function of \(ʾšr\) in line 4c recalls that of \(ʾšr\) in line 3c in leading a clause modifying a word of simile (\(ʿṣ\) and \(mṣ\)). It is no coincidence that \(ʿṣ\) “tree” and \(mṣ\) “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 \(ʾšr\) in verse 3acd, only one clause follows \(ʾšr\) 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 \(tiddpennū\) (4c).

Except for the gapped verb \(lʾ yqwm\) (\(~viP\)), 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 \(~viP\) 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 chiastic 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 \(yṣlyḥ\) 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Phonetic Parallelism</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1ab</td>
<td>אַשְּרַי ... אֵשָׁר ... רַשְׁעִים</td>
<td>/šr/. . . /šr/. . . /šr/. . . /šr/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2ab</td>
<td>יהוה ... יהוה</td>
<td>/ywh/. . . /ygh/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2ab, 3a</td>
<td>יהוה ... יהוה</td>
<td>/ywh/. . . /ygh/. . . /whwh/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b−</td>
<td>יהוה ... יהוה</td>
<td>/l/. . . /m/. . . /l/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>שַׁתְלוּ פֶּלֶת</td>
<td>/ʃ/. . . /ʃ/. . . /ʃ/. . . /ʃ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3e</td>
<td>אָשָׁר יִעשֶה הַיָּהֹוָה</td>
<td>/š/. . . /š/. . . /š/. . . /š/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3e−</td>
<td>כי אשר קשחה</td>
<td>/kl/. . . /šr/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>אל שר יושב</td>
<td>/lk/. . . /šr/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a, 4a</td>
<td>אַשְּרַי ... רַשְׁעִים</td>
<td>/šr/. . . /šr/.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6ab</td>
<td>זָכָר ... זָכָר</td>
<td>/š/. . . /š/. . . /š/.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 'tyghy with three /l/s in line 3b harks 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 ygh (2b) anticipates the similar sound in pgy (3b), not to mention the /t/ of twrtw (2b) and štwl (3b). 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: šr in line 1a and šr’yym in line 4a. Auffret observes that the consonants of šr in 4a present “an inverse succession of consonants” in relation to šr in 1a. 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 chiastic inversion of consonants in šr and šr’yym may have been intended as the structuring device of Psalm 1.

Finally, the phonetic similarity between the word šr “blessed” and the relative pronoun šr should be mentioned. Although one may refute the idea that some particles (h, t, šr) are prosaic by definition, the frequent use of the relative pronoun (1a, 3c, 3e, 4c) warrants some explanation. The high frequency of šr may be intended by the poet to echo šr “the blessed” to permeate the poem with the idea of šr. 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 šr and šr. The relative pronoun in line 3c and line 4c serves to connect the two major similes in Psalm 1, š and mš, to their modifying clauses, while šr in a monocolon (3e) summarizes the fate of šr “the blessed.”

40 Especially interesting to note is the phonetic parallelism created by the two chiastic 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I: The way of the blessed/righteous (vv. 1–3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I–1: Who he is (1a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I–2: The negative relation to the wicked (1bcd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I–3: The positive relation to Yahweh (2ab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I–4–a: Simile (3abcd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I–4–b: Interpretation of simile (3e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II: The way of the wicked (vv. 4–5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II–1: Who he is (4a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II–4–a: Simile (4bc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II–2: The negative relation to the righteous (5ab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III (I+II): The contrastive fates of the righteous and the wicked (v. 6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III–1: The fate of the righteous (6a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III–2: The fate of the wicked (6b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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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 croisée” (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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content (I–II–II′–I′)</th>
<th>Length (A–B–A–B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I: Confrontation and resistance of the just to the wicked</td>
<td>3 clauses A (v. 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II: Conduct and fate of the just</td>
<td>3+3 clauses B (vv. 2–3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF: Conduct and fate of the wicked</td>
<td>2 clauses A (v. 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Í: Confrontation of the wicked to just and respective outcome</td>
<td>2+2 clauses B (vv. 5–6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 ṣršʿym and ṣdyqym occur in a chiastic arrangement in verses 5–6. Further, verses 5–6 are introduced by ḫkn 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 (1b), 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 ḫkn 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

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 (1αγ et 1b)” (Auffret 1978, 36–37).
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 yṣlyḥ 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 yṣlyḥ, 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 ṣlḥ. One is transitive/causative, “make prosperous,” and the other intransitive, “experience prosperity.” When used as intransitive, ḫṣlyḥ 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 ḫṣlyḥ when the verb is used transitively. One is thus hard pressed to argue, based on this one case, that the nominal phrase kl ʾšr yʿśh functions as the subject of an intransitive yṣlyḥ. 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. A better and less complicated solution would be to take yṣlyḥ 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 ʾšr yʿśh 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 yṣlyḥ is Yahweh and the object is the nominal phrase composed of ʾšr and ʿśh. 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 expository 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 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. 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. 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 kʿs. 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.” 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 II) 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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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 bicola 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

> He has broken my teeth on gravel, he has ground me into the dust.

(1b) Lamentations 3:17

> You have rejected my soul from peace; I have forgotten happiness.

(1c) Lamentations 3:18

> 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, whereas other forms of the conjunction appear in other acrostic poems.

Interrogatives must also occur in sentence-initial position (though they may be preceded by a conjunction, such as the conjunction *waw*). 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

> Who has spoken and it came to pass, if the Lord has not commanded?

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6 The translation maintains the pointing of the verb in the MT נזח (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. נזח; Renkema 1998, 375).


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., *למִי־אַתָּה* "to whom do you belong" [1 Sam. 30:13], *בַּמָּה אֵדַע כִּי אִירָשֶׁנָּה* "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., *וְאֶת־מִי עָשַׁקְתִּי אֶת־מִי רַצּוֹתִי* "And whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed?" [1 Sam. 12:3]).
Interrogatives beginning with mem thus frame the beginning and end of the mem lines in this acrostic.\textsuperscript{11}

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 כי 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
   For the Lord does not reject forever.\textsuperscript{14}

(3b) Lamentations 3:33
   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
   For if he afflicts, then he has compassion according to the greatness of his steadfast love.

In verse 8, the conjunction כי occurs in combination with גם:

(5) Lamentations 3:8
   Even when I cry and plead, he shuts out my prayer;

\begin{enumerate}
\item The interrogative ordinarily means “what” and not “why” (see BDB, 552), although the compound ממהז 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.).
\item In the translations, square brackets indicate elliptical constituents; parentheses indicate words added to clarify the meaning or to produce a smooth translation.
\item The singular noun of the Ketiv (וֹחֶטְא) in the sense of “guilt” is followed (see also the LXX’s τῆς ἁμαρτίας αὐτοῦ) rather than the plural noun חטיו of the Qere.
\item See also the interrogative at the beginning of the mem line in Lam. 2:13.
\item The subject (טֶבֶר) 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.
\item Qere חטיו.
\end{enumerate}
Although כנalone does not necessarily occur in sentence-initial position,\textsuperscript{16} the combination כנ כנalways does occur in sentence-initial position in the Hebrew Bible.\textsuperscript{17} In other words, when כנ precedes כנ, its scope is the entire sentence rather than a phrasal constituent.

When כנ “until” is used as a subordinating conjunction, it occurs in the dependent sentence in sentence-initial position.\textsuperscript{18} In prose, this subordinating conjunction is often followed by כנ; the relative marker makes the clausal nature of the conjunction explicit.\textsuperscript{19} In poetry, the compound כנ כנ is almost never used,\textsuperscript{20} but כנ occurs more frequently.\textsuperscript{21}

In Lamentations 3, the conjunction כנ is found at the beginning of the bicolon in verse 50 (with verse 49 provided for context):

(6) Lamentations 3:49–50

My eye(s) will flow and will not stop, without respite,

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

For he does not willfully afflict or bring grief to humans,

to crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth,

to deny a man justice in the presence of the Most High,

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-
ble. 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. Other interpreters, however, such as Renkema, understand verse 33 as ending a canto and verse 34 as beginning a new canto. He interprets all the sentences with *lamed* followed by infinitives construct as dependent upon אֲדֹנָי לֹא רָאָה *in verse 36*. 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, does not willfully afflict or bring grief to humans by crushing under his 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. 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 bicola 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). An instance of two consecutive verses with *qatal* verbs is given in example (8):

(8) Lamentations 3:4–5

בְּשָׂרִי וְעוֹרִי שִׁבַּר עַצְמוֹתָי בֵּלָּה

*He has worn away my flesh and skin; he has shattered my bones.*

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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.”


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.
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

Let him sit alone and be silent, because he has laid (it) upon him.

Let him put his mouth into the dust—there may yet be hope.

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)

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:

(11) Lamentations 3:1

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

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 *טֹב* in verse 25 and verse 27.

(13) Lamentations 3:25 (see also v. 27)

The LORD is good to those who trust in him, to the one who seeks him;

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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 *טוֹב*; 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 *טוֹב* 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

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

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:

(16) Lamentations 3:56

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

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

(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.

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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.


33 See also 3:11, 63.
A prepositional phrase is topicalized in three verses, as illustrated in verse 6:34

(19) Lamentations 3:6

In darkness he made me dwell like those long dead.

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

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

According to the MT, the verb וּכִּי לֹא־תָּמְנ חַסְדֵי יְהוָה 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 וּנְמֹוּתּ.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 וּכִּי לֹא־תָּמְנ “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.
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

חֶלְקִי יְהוָה אָמְרָה נַפְשִׁי עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל ל

“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

ךָ לַבְּקָרִים רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתֶךָ חֲדָשִׁים

[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

שִׂפְתֵי קָמַי וְהֶגְיוֹנָם 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 קָמַי rather than תָּפָר. 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

شعשת חרפתם יהוה לכלמהشبهם עלי

You have heard, O LORD, their taunts, all their designs against me,

שפת קיימיהם עלי לכליהם

[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 from the beginning of verse 61.47

The fourth bicolon is in many respects the most difficult:

(26) Lamentations 3:26

טוֹב וְיָחִיל וְדוּמָם לִתְשׁוּעַת 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 וְדוּמָם—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, דוּמָם, occurs two other times in the Hebrew Bible. In one instance it is an adverb; in the other instance it is clearly a noun, since it is within a construct phrase.50 The first word, טוב, 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: דוּמָם יָחִיל וְטוֹב “that they should wait quietly”; יָחִיל דוּמָם וְטוֹב “to tarry and be still” (based on Aquila and the Targum, which both use infinitival forms); or דוּמָם יָחִיל וְטוֹב “and waits and is quiet” (based on Old Greek).51 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.”52

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 דוּמָם 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.”
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

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55 Talstra 1999.
56 On the analysis of the linguistic system of Biblical Hebrew as a docuclect and the interplay of linguistics and philology, see Miller-Naudé and Naudé 2020.
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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. 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. It seems that at the present stage of scholarship Lowth’s third category, “synthetic” parallelism, either no longer exists as an independent category or has been broadened to include such phenomena as the so-called “expanded colon,” Clines’ “parallelism of greater precision,” etc., and the term “synthetic parallelism” has become almost meaningless.

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. 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.
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.
7 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 ymn “right hand,” as “a term // subordinate, that is, yd is the more general term and ymn 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.
8 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, as exemplified in

**PSALM 18:42**

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.

It should be noted that this is not the same as verbal ellipsis (VE), which we see for example in Psalm 18:15, 10

**HABAKKUK 3:16A**

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:

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.

---

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 \(a \rightarrow x \parallel b \rightarrow x'\), where the element בקול “to the sound” \((b)\) in the second line is rather \textit{vertically} the object of השמיע “I listened” \((a)\) in the first line, while the other elements תרגז בטני “my body trembled” \((x)\) and פתי שצללו “my lips quivered” \((x')\) are a merismatic pair. In other words, the element \(a\) has a grammatical dependence \textit{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 \((x')\).

\textbf{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

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{a} & &\text{b} & &\text{c} \\
&\text{b}'\text{n} & &\text{im-tiqqah} & &\text{ʾāmārāy} \\
&\text{âmiśwō} & &\text{tispōn} & &\text{ʾittāk} \\
&\text{c'} & &\text{d} & &\text{a'}
\end{align*}
\]

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 \textit{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:

\textbf{HABAKKUK 2:8A}

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{c} & &\text{b} & &\text{a} \\
&\text{yōi} & &\text{ḇōt} & &\text{ṭīḇēm} \\
&\text{b}'\text{ni} & &\text{yēḏō} & &\text{ṭīḇēm} \\
&\text{C'} & &\text{b'} & &\text{B}
\end{align*}
\]

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: ב “Because” \((a)\) אַחַת שָׁלֹת “you have plundered” \((b)\) נָמֵג רַבִּים “many nations” \((c)\) // שָׁלֹת “they shall plunder you”

\(^{11}\) See also Andersen 2001, 341.

\(^{12}\) Pardee 1988, 94.

\(^{13}\) Lunn 2006, 22. See my review in Tsumura 2009a.
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 ā – ā – ī – ī in the first line and of -îm 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**

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
  a & x \\
  \text{The prince (x) asks (a).} \\
  \text{and the judge (x'), for a bribe (b).} \\
  b & x'
\end{array}
\]

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 \(b\) is vertically dependent on \(a\).

- 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**

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
  c & b & a \\
  \text{I have installed my king} \\
  \text{on Zion, my holy mountain.} \\
  D' & d
\end{array}
\]

While some may consider these two lines nonparallel, I consider them to constitute a parallelism with a rhyme \(דָּרָשׁ // מְלֹּךְ\) (\(-i // -i\)), i.e., a phonetic parallelism. In fact, the repetitive use (alliteration) of \(i:\) in the bicolon as well as that of \(/\text{al}/ - /\text{har}/\) (assonance) is intentional.\(^{15}\) In this parallelistic structure, the first line

\[^{14}\text{For forward and backward ellipsis, see Miller 2003, 263.}\]

\[^{15}\text{For similar examples of a phonetic parallelism, see Song 5:1, 2, etc., discussed in Tsumura (forthcoming).}\]
(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**

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, "the words of my mouth" (x) and "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 יהיו in the first line. The prepositional phrases, "acceptable" and "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**

He enters (a) his room (b), he weeps (x),
while speaking forth (c) (his) grief (d),
and he sheds tears (x').

According to Wyatt, the waw in the second line occurs because of "an erroneous transposition." 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 לְרָצֹון (c–d) in the second line is grammatically dependent on the verb יִֽהְי֥וּ לְרָצ֨וֹן in the first line and thus means, "He enters his room, while speaking forth (his) grief." On the other hand, the verbal phrases יִֽהְי֥וּ לְרָצ֨וֹן in asyndeton, and לְפָנֶ֑יךָ (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:

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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

\[\text{šnt} \cdot \text{tlūn} \cdot \text{(tlūnn)} \cdot \text{w yškb} . \quad \text{Sleep (a) overcomes him (b) and he lies down (c),} \]

\[\text{nhmmt} \cdot \text{w yqmš} . \quad \text{slumber (A'), and he curls up (c').} \]

The structure of this parallelism is \(a-b-c // A'-c'\). Here the verbal phrase *tlūn* “overcomes him” (b) is ellipticized in the second line, as in Psalm 18:15 above:

Sleep overcomes him and he lies down;

slumber (overcomes him) and he curls up.

\(\text{nhmmt} (A')\) is a ballast variant for \(\text{šnt} (a)\) 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, 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. For example, in

*KTU* 1.3 I 20–21 (V–S // M–M)

\[\text{yšr} \cdot \text{ğzr} \cdot \text{ṭb} \cdot \text{ql} \quad \text{The good-voiced youth sings} \]

\[\text{ʿl} \cdot \text{bʿl} \cdot \text{bṣrt} \quad \text{For Baal in the heights of Ṣapan.} \]

the two lines constitute a phonetic parallelism with the assonance of [r], [l], [b], [ʿ], and [g] while grammatically comprising a simple sentence.

The next example also displays *vertical grammar*, since the nucleus of a sentence (S[V$_1$–V$_2$–V$_3$] 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

\[\text{qm} \cdot \text{ybd} \cdot \text{yšr} \quad \text{He arises, chants, and sings,} \]

\[\text{mṣltm} \cdot \text{bd} \cdot \text{nʿm} \quad \text{Cymbals (being) in the hands of the goodly one.} \]

The structure of this bicolon (SV$_1$–V$_2$–V$_3$ // M) is \(a-b-c // d-e-f\). None of the words in the first line correspond semantically to any in the second line; so one might consider the lines nonparallel. However, phonetically, the assonance of [m] suggests a parallelistic structure. The entire bicolon constitutes a complex sentence. 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).
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.23

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

\textit{KTU 1.18 IV 24–26, 36–37}

\begin{align*}
tṣî . \ km / \ rh . \ npśh . & \quad \text{Let his soul go out like wind} \\
\ km . \ ìūl . \ brîbh . & \quad \text{Like a gust his spirit} \\
\ km / \ qṭr . \ b \ ṣph & \quad \text{Like smoke out of his nose!}^{25}
\end{align*}

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.
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 tetracolon in which the first line is a sentence nucleus (S–V–O), and the next three lines are the modifiers.

\textit{KTU 1.3 III 28–31}

\begin{align*}
\text{ātm} & : \text{w ānk} / \text{ibghy} & \text{Come and I will explain it (to you)} \\
\text{b} & \text{tk} : \text{gry} : \text{il} : \text{sn} & \text{in my mountain, Divine Šapunu,} \\
\text{b} & \text{qdš} : \text{b} \text{gr} : \text{nhrty} & \text{in the holy place, in the mountain that is my personal possession,} \\
\text{b} & \text{n} \text{m} : \text{b gb} & \text{tly} & \text{in the goodly place, the hill of my victory.}^{28}
\end{align*}

Here we can see a vertical grammatical relationship between the first and second lines,

\begin{align*}
\text{Come and I will explain it (to you)} \\
\text{in my mountain, Divine Šapunu,}
\end{align*}

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.

\textit{KTU 1.3 III 45–IV 3}

\begin{align*}
\text{mḥšt} & : \text{k} : \text{lbt} : \text{ilm} : \text{iṣṭ} & \text{I have smitten ʾIlu’s bitch ʾIšatu (Fire)}, \\
\text{klt} & : \text{bt} : \text{il} : \text{dbb} & \text{have finished off ʾIlu’s daughter Đabibu (Flame)}, \\
\text{imtḥṣ} & : \text{ksp} / \text{itrṭ} : \text{ḥṛṣ} & \text{proceeding to smite for silver,} \\
& & \text{to take possession of the gold of}^{29} \\
\text{ṭrd} & : \text{b’l} / \text{b mrym} : \text{sn} & \text{him who would have driven Ba’lu} \\
& & \text{from the height of Šapānu,} \\
\text{mṣṣ} & : \text{k} : \text{ṣr} / \text{ʿudnh} & \text{him who would have caused (him) to flee} \\
& & \text{like a bird (from) (the seat of) his power,} \\
\text{grḥṣ} & : \text{l ksi} : \text{mlkh} & \text{him who would have banished him} \\
& & \text{from his royal throne,} \\
\text{lnḥṭ} & : \text{l khṭ} : \text{drkth} & \text{from (his) resting-place,} \\
& & \text{from the seat of his dominion.}^{30}
\end{align*}

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:

\begin{align*}
\text{mḥšt} & : \text{k} : \text{lbt} : \text{ilm} : \text{iṣṭ} & \text{I have smitten ʾIlu’s bitch ʾIšatu (Fire)}, \\
\text{klt} & : \text{bt} : \text{il} : \text{dbb} & \text{have finished off ʾIlu’s daughter Đabibu (Flame)},
\end{align*}

\footnote{27} Tsumura 2019a; 2019b.\footnotetext{28} Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 165.\footnotetext{29} Cf. “I have smitten for silver, have (re)possessed the gold of” in Pardee 1997, 252.\footnotetext{30} Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 166.
These lines are followed by a monolon with a *yiqtol* verb, which constitutes an internal parallelism: $a - b$
\[// a' - b'\]

\[
\text{imt} \text{ḥṣ} . \text{kṣp} / \text{ỉṛt} \text{ḥṣ} . \\
\text{to smite for the silver of,} \\
\text{to take possession of the gold of.}
\]

Then follows a tetracolon, the modifier of the “silver” // “gold” of the preceding monolon, 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 monolon and the tetracolon is grammatically *vertical*, just as the relation between the monolon and the preceding bicolon is. Thus the monolon 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
“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 אֵהל “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 כָּלָה (eighteen times, almost entirely in the prophetic corpus) and matched only by רָמַה (four times, exclusively in Ezekiel). As a pentateuchal scholar and source critic, I was immediately struck by the fact that the form אֵהל “his tent” occurs only in texts attributed (traditionally and by me) to the J source, while the form אֵהל 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 אֵהל “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:

אֵהל: Gen. 9:21; 12:8; 13:3; 35:21
אֵהל: 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 ההנה and המנה “his multitude” even in the same chapter (Ezek. 31:18 and 31:2, respectively), or, likewise, הבנה and הבנה “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-וaw or final-הָהִי forms in the immediate context of the word. It is indeed the case that in some of the examples with אלה, 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 הָהִי, there is Genesis 13:3 (הָהִי תוכנה), and 35:21 (וַיֶּלֶדֶת אֶלָּלוֹ יְהֹוָה; with the וָאֵלֶדֶת, Genesis 26:25 (וַיִּלְדוּ אֶלָּלוֹ יְהֹוָה; Exodus 16:16; 33:8 (וְאָבִיאֵלֶדֶת); 33:10–11 (וִיַּלְדוּ אֶלָּלוֹ יְהֹוָה); Numbers 11:10 (וְאָבִיאֵלֶדֶת תֶּהָה). Yet it is clear that context cannot account for all of the examples. Indeed, in Genesis 9:21–22 we find אלה, 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 וָאֵלֶדֶת in the first word of Genesis 9:22 seems not to have resulted in the form אלה; rather, the final-הָהִי form אלה 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 הָהִי 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. Suffice it to say that the source attribution of these four verses is, among documentary scholars past and present, not in dispute. Were these the only attestations of אלה 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 מֶנִּית for the 3fs independent pronoun. Yet, as is often the case, it is the presence of a regularly attested byform, in this case אלהו, that militates against such a conclusion. And the equally striking source assignments of אלה elsewhere in the Pentateuch strongly suggest that this is no random pattern.

The three examples of אלה in Genesis—Genesis 26:25; 31:25; and 33:19—all belong to the E document. 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). Only one attestation of אלה in the Pentateuch belongs to J; that in Numbers 11:10. It would thus appear that there is a marked tendency for the 3ms suffix on אלה to be a הָהִי in J (four out of five examples), while in the E and P sources it is always a וָאֵלֶדֶת.

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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, not if 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 אלה—e.g., 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 הָהִי to וָאֵלֶדֶת.
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 הַהַל. 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 inscriptionsal evidence is taken as a guide, it would appear likely that any preexilic bibli-cal writings would have originally employed the heh mater for virtually all 3ms suffixes, both nominal and verbal. 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. 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; two in First Isaiah; one in Nahum; eight in Jeremiah; three in Habakkuk; ten in Ezekiel; 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. Indeed, the biblical writings from Qumran show a remarkable consistency with the MT in regard to the form of the 3ms suffix. 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. In short: while the heh does seem to have been productive to a degree in the Qumran era, it was

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.
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 (הַהַלְבָּם, e.g.), the calendrical text 4Q321 (multiple times with the form הַכֹּל), and perhaps once in the pesher to Nahum 4Q169 (רַקֵּן).
17 The Qumran biblical manuscripts are generally quite close to the MT, obvious examples such as 1Qlsa’s 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 הַלְבָּם, which appears to be the noun הַלָּם 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 4QSam², 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.\(^\text{19}\) 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.\(^\text{20}\)

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.\(^\text{21}\) And this, in turn, is revealing when it comes to our particular case of אהל. For with the exception of Job, in which הלה appears four times,\(^\text{22}\) every other corpus in which הלה appears—the E source,\(^\text{23}\) the P source,\(^\text{24}\) Joshua,\(^\text{25}\) Judges,\(^\text{26}\) Samuel,\(^\text{27}\) Jeremiah,\(^\text{28}\) and the early Psalms\(^\text{29}\)—also employs the heh suffix (on nouns other than לם) at least once.\(^\text{30}\) That is, the majority of cases in which הלה 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 ללה 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.\(^\text{31}\) That is, there was no J document once the Pentateuch was compiled—there was only the Pentateuch. It is thus

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19 For the second-century dating of Daniel 11, see, e.g., Collins 1993, 38.
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 unsupported: 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).
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.\textsuperscript{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 מַלְאָך, the shift to מַלְאָך 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, מַלְאָך should have preserved the heh suffix.\textsuperscript{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 מַלְאָך falls into the corpus traditionally identified as J cannot be chalked up to circular logic.\textsuperscript{34} There is, moreover, no unifying or distinctive feature among the four מַלְאָך passages other than their attribution to J. It is not their presence in Genesis, for there are also examples of מַלְאָך in Genesis—but not from J. It is not their proximity to other final-heh words, for two examples of מַלְאָך have no such words nearby. It is not their specific content, for at least one מַלְאָך passage\textsuperscript{35} is nearly identical in content to an מַלְאָך verse.\textsuperscript{36} As far as I am aware, there are no alternative theories of pentateuchal composition that would link these four מַלְאָך passages (to the exclusion of the מַלְאָך 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.\textsuperscript{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 מַלְאָך to מַלְאָך exclusively in E, particularly as that shift almost certainly took place in the postexilic period.\textsuperscript{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 מַלְאָך passages to a relatively early layer of the text—again, most likely preexilic.\textsuperscript{39} In both cases, the problem is that the independent identity of J (or its equivalent) is immediately erased once

\textsuperscript{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 מַלְאָך—*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 מַלְאָך מַלְאָך מַלְאָך מַלְאָך. On the SP data, see Young 2001, 231–32.

\textsuperscript{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 (וּלָתַך, והלך); Numbers 10:36 (וַלָתַך); 23:8 (וַלָתַך).

\textsuperscript{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 יהוה 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.

\textsuperscript{35} Gen. 12:8.

\textsuperscript{36} Gen. 26:25.

\textsuperscript{37} The uniquely J orthography of מַלְאָך 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).

\textsuperscript{38} On “JE,” see Baden 2009.

\textsuperscript{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 נָּכַל in originally J texts, on one hand, and shift to נָּכַל 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 הֵה mater to the וַו mater but not, for whatever reason, when it came to the word נָּכַל. It is also required that this scribal adjustment of the preexilic/exilic הֵה 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 הֵה suffix). 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. 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.

Though not directly related to the form נָּכַל, we can also make some strong suggestions regarding the timing of the widespread disappearance and recrudescence of the 3ms suffix הֵה mater in Hebrew. Again, Ezekiel marks our latest productive occurrence of the הֵה 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 הֵה suffix being used productively also in Ben Sira and, perhaps, in some of the earlier nonbiblical Qumran texts. We can thus produce a tentative, rough timeline of the הֵה suffix: (1) used commonly, perhaps indeed universally, in the preexilic/exilic period; (2) falling entirely out of use in the LBH period, during which the vast majority of preexilic/exilic examples were also scribally altered to וַו; and (3) experiencing

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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 נָּכַל rather than (the equally preexilic [Judg. 4:7; Isa. 5:13]) מנָּכַל.
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, ꞊, best known to most Americans from early documents such as the Bill of Rights, with its prominent “Congress.” 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 נָּכַל with no final mater but is decidedly נָּכַל or נָּכַלפ 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 הֵה to וַו 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 וַו suffix in the Ketef Hinnom inscription (Amulet 1, line 11: 12). 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 וַו suffix in place of the הֵה, 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 *אהלה* 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. 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, *אהלה* 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.

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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-ri*, “king over/among kings,” in Akkadian), many of which were used alongside “king of kings.” Instead, the following discussion specifies in a preliminary manner the modes of expressing the phrase “king of kings” that will simplify

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* 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-ri*, 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, such as Ugaritic (which only explicitly marks case in III-2 nouns) and Palmyrene, nonetheless follow the same pattern, as evident from the consistent comparative linguistic data.

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” connecting the two related nouns. 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, though the indirect genitive, ny-sw.t-n-ny:w-sw.t, also occurs. 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. The phrase ny-sw.t-ny:w-sw.t 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 aqīla 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 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 eighty 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 swt (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.”
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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 Karnak 12 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 Ostracon CG 25653 in Černý 1930, 50, 70*.
15 See Gödicke and Wente 1962, 82; see also ostracon 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-Peeters 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 lord. 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).
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, 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. 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. 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.” In line 4, the phrase “Sun, great king, my lord” appears—in the same order as the introduction, though without “king of kings.” 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.”

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.” The latter option is

25 See Shaw 2000, 481.
26 Because šps 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)]mr[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. šps’ . ml]k . rb . mlk . [[mlk]]mṛ[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. šps . ml]k . rb . mlk . mlk[m]. Line 2: [b’ly].
29 The word hṭ appears in line 5 after these titles. The function of hṭ 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: [šps .] mlk . rb . b’ly.
32 The third edition of KTU has line 8: [šps . mlk . rb . b’ly . n’m’]; line 9: [l. šps’ . ml]k . rb . mlk . [[mlk]]mṛ[m . b’l]; line 10: [kl . hṭ w’t <mṣrm> . mlk . mlk[m . b’l’]. Cf. with the second edition of KTU: line 8: [šps’ . mlk . rb . b’ly [. . .]; line 9: [l.ml]k . rb . mlk . mlk[m . b’ly]; line 10: [kl . hṭ’ w’t. m’lk . mlk[m . b’ly].
more likely, since the phrase l. šps . 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. šps . 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)] mṣr[m]. The surer reading of the grapheme š and the erasure of [(mlk)] before mṣr 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 . mṣrm. 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.” 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.” 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. 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.” 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. Then the text becomes increasingly difficult to read and restore; however, precision of lines may be difficult to establish, thus leading to the different readings and counting of line numbers. 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.”

33 Line 1: [l. šps . ]mlk . rb . mlk . mṣrm. Line 2: [mlk . n′]m . mlk . šdq. Line 3: [mlk . m]km . ṣl . ḫwt. Line 4: [mṣr]m. Line 10: [l. šps . mlk . rb . mlk . mṣrm(m)]. Line 11: [mlk . n′.mlk . šdq . mlk]. Line 16: [mlkm]. Line 18 of the verso lines up differently in KTU compared to Hawley’s reading, where the phrase beginning line 16 in the verso is [. . .] “thm ḫy . ḫlm . dr′ 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.
34 Lines 18′–19′ according to Hawley’s counting, but lines 19′ and 20′ in the third edition of KTU: ‘m . šps . mlk . rb . mlk . mṣrm(mlk . n′.mlk . šdq . mlk . mlkm.
36 Dietrich, Loretz, and Sammartin indicate a break at the beginning of line 31 (line 30′ in my handcopy) with enough space for “land” and part of “Egypt” ([ḥwt . mṣrm]mlkn′.mlk . mlk . mṣrm. 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.”

38 Dietrich, Loretz, and Sammartin indicate a break at the beginning of line 31 (line 30′ in my handcopy) with enough space for “land” and part of “Egypt” ([ḥwt . mṣrm]mlk . n′.mlk . mlk . mṣrm. 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.”

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 elative 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 Sanmartin (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 ḫaššu-, 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 ḫ.

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 (1114–1056), 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, Shalmanezzar 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, ša-ar-ri ša-ar-ri.MEŠ, ša-ar-ri ša-ar-ra-a-nu, LUGAL ša LUGAL.LUGAL.MEŠ, and LUGAL ša LUGAL.MEŠ. As an example, an inscription from Xerxes reads: anāku RN LUGAL rabū LUGAL ša LUGAL.MEŠ LUGAL mātāte LUGAL napḫari lišānu gabbi LUGAL qaqqari rabītu rapāštu “I am Xerxes,

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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” different from the Neo-Assyrian kings; Itti-Marduk Balatu spelled the phrase šar-r[ij].

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 Königse] 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.”

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, while the latter also shows syllabic forms of the phrase. In Neo-Babylonian, however, the title was used only for Marduk.

**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. 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: xšāyatiya: xšāyatiyānām). 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 -išta- in the case of comparatives to adverbs and adjectives respectively, and -tama- (to adverbs) or -tama- (to adjectives) in the case of superlatives. 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. 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: xšāyatiya: vazraka: xšāyatiyānām: xšāyatiyānām: Pārsa: Ariyrànma: xšāyatiyāhyā: 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.

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: xšāyatiya: vazraka: xšāyatiyā: xšāyatiyānām: xšāyatiyānām: Pārsa: Ariyāramna: xšāyatiyāh yā: puça: Haxāmanišiya “I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King in Persia, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, grandson

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53 Weissbach 1911, 119.
54 In Akkadian letters of the Neo-Assyrian period, the word šarra was not spelled syllabically but instead was rendered logographically as LUGAL or MAN. See the entry for šarra 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 šarra, 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 ‘dn mlkm wrkm “lord of kingdoms and dominions” reflects roughly the Persian titulary xšāyatiya xšāyatiyānām xšāyatiya dahyānām, “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 ‘dn mlkm in Canaanite languages, see Ginsberg 1940, 71–74.
58 Skjaervø 2002, 84.
59 Kent 1953, 116.
of Arsames, an Achaemenian." 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: xšāyaθiyānā(3)m: xšāyaθiya: dahiynām: tyai(4)sām: parānām: Vištāspahyā: (5)puça: Haxāmanišiya "I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of many countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian." Likewise, the Persepolis H inscription begins: (1)Dārayavauš: XŠ: vazraka: XŠ: Xšyanām: XŠ(2): dahiynām: Vištāspahyā: puça(3): Haxāmanišiya "Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, and Achaemenian." 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)raka: xšāyaθiya: xšāyaθiyānām(10): xšāyaθiya: dahiynām: 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." 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. 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. 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.” 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 texts and one in an exilic Hebrew text. 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, מלכֵּי מלכיים (melek malkayyay), instead of the expected Aramaic מלכֵי מלכֵי (mleḵ malḵayyā). 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. 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.

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. Since non-Ptolemaic (or non-Egyptian) Hellenistic rulers evidently did not use the title, 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.

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 מלכִי מלכים (meleḵ melāḵîm), a construct phrase that can denote a superlative (“the greatest king,” much like שיר השירים means “the song of songs” or “the greatest song”). 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

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67 CIS 2: 3971, lines 2 and 6.
68 Ezra 7:12; Dan. 2:37.
69 Ezek. 26:7.
70 Williamson 1985, 100.
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 Litré 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

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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 Manchot 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. 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 לומר 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 Ethiopian, the phrase “king of kings” became productive in both theological and political contexts. For example, the king Menelik II referred to himself as יְהֹוָה יָנָה (nagusa 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 n’gusa 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 እግዚአብሔር (ʾǝgziʾabḥer), the Ethiopian designation for Yahweh, such as scroll 31 in the Duke Ethiopian Manuscript Collection. (My thanks to Aaron M. Butts for pointing out this specific example.)
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PHRASE "KING OF KINGS"

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Löfgren, Oscar

Luukko, Mikko, and Greta van Buylaere

Mackie, Timothy P.

Manchot, Carl Hermann

Millar, Fergus

Murphy, Roland

Pardee, Dennis

Parpola, Simo


Paul, Shalom

Pongratz-Leisten, Beate

Pope, Marvin

Posener, Georges

Puhvel, Jaan

Rammant-Peeters, Agnès

Reynolds, Frances

Sartre, Maurice

Sauneron, Serge

Schrader, Eberhard, and H. Zimmern

Sethe, Kurt


Seux, M. J.

Shaw, Ian

Skjaervø, Oktor
Ungnad, Arthur

Waltke, Bruce, and M. O’Connor

Weissbach, F. H.

Williamson, H. G. M.

Zandee, Jan

Ziegler, K.

Zimmerli, Walther
AKKADIAN KASLU, UGARITIC KSL, AND HEBREWWカテゴリー
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 כָּסָלִים, 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 כְּסִיל (“stupid fellow, fool”).4 The eight occurrences of כֶּסֶל and כָּסָלִים 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 כִּסְלָה, a semantic relationship exhibited also by כְּסִיל “grow fat” (Ps. 119:70) and mishnaic Hebrew כְּסִיל “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 כָּסָלִים “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 כָּסָלִים in Leviticus but also of כֶּסֶל in Ps. 38:8. For in the latter verse כֶּסֶל 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 כָּסָלִים) 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 כָּסָלִים; see Lev. 3:4, 10; 15; 4:9; 7:4.
3 It is the singular כֶּסֶל in Job 15:27 and the suffixed form כָּסָלִים in Psalm 38:7.
4 Also cf. the hapax legomenon כָּסָלִים “stupidity” in antithetic parallelism with חָכְמוֹת in Proverbs 9:3.
7 Ibid., 402.
To summarize: (1) There is but one verbal root כְּסִיל in Hebrew, and it denotes stupidity, bad habits, lack of manners and education, and the like. Thus, Hebrew כְּסִיל is in no way different in meaning from Akkadian saklu. (2) Hebrew כְּסִיל, like Akkadian kaslu and Ugaritic ksl, is a primary noun meaning “sinew/tendon” and cannot be derived from any verb כְּסִיל. (3) The primary noun כְּסִיל, “sinew,” “tendon,” comes to denote, in a derived meaning, “inner strength,” “confidence.”

Held’s study offers a convincing refutation of the traditional view that כְּסִיל 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 כְּסִיל “fool” and כְּסִילוּת “foolishness” are derived from a verb entirely unrelated to the primary noun כְּסִיל 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. In addition, Held does not address the biblical examples of כֶּסֶל and כִּסְלָה 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 Hebrew 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 כֶּסֶל and כִּסְלָה 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 כְּסִיל and כְּסִילוּת.

AKKADIAN EVIDENCE

Held notes that several Akkadian words, matnu, širʾānu, 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. Indeed, in its entry “kislu (kaslu),” CAD gives the primary definition as “transverse process of the vertebra.” 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, which he transcribes as follows: š. lâʾû š ap-pu ul-tu kišâdi-šú adi eṣenṣêri-šú GAZ-LU-šú paṭrû 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.” Held, however, translates it as “if a . . . baby’s sinews [kasli] (extending) from its neck to its backbone are loosened the baby will die.” He then asserts that the expression kasli piṭṭurū is “in no way different from puṭṭurū riksūa, ‘my sinews are loosened,’ in Ludlul II 104.”

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

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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 כָּפָל כָּפָל 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.\footnote{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).\footnote{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: eṣemta [...] ša kasli immēri taḫaššal.\footnote{18} He translates this instruction as “you crush the bone [...] of a sheep’s tendons” and directs the reader to CAD IV 342d.\footnote{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.” 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 eṣesēri (lit., “the seal of the backbone”). 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.\footnote{22} The first of these passages is YOS 10 48:35, which Held transcribes as šumma kunuk eṣesērim 2 kislī immittim šumēlām itiq: \footnote{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 eṣesērim kiṣīšina immittum eli šumēlim li[ter] “as to the vertebra (connected with) two kislus, may the right one ‘[exceed]’ the left one,”\footnote{24} and the third (Harvard Semitic Museum 7498:28) kunuk eṣesērim kiṣri šina imi[t]tum šumēlām ītiq “as to the vertebra (connected with) two kiṣru’s, may the right one go beyond the [left one]’.”\footnote{25}

Held acknowledges that CAD seems “to have good reason for identifying the two kislus’ 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 eṣesērim šina kaslū-ša- ša immittam ša šumēlām itiq.” The immediate relevance of his grammatical critique
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 qšth).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 . qšth . 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 qšth 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. ʾaqht. ʿgwr. ṭqbm b lbnm. ṣdr. gdm. b rúmm ṣdr. qrt. b yʾlm. mtnm b ṣqbt. ṣhr. ṣdr. b ʿqbt. ṭq. 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. ūlm. bh. pʾnm ttī. bʾdn. ksl. ṭbr ļn. pnh. td. ’tgs. pnt kslh. āns. dt. ṣrh. 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 bʾdn, should mean, lit., ’the sinews (of the back)’; ksl also appears in pnt kslh, ’vertebrae,’ lit., ’the points of the sinews (of the back).’”37 If, however, ksl itself means “spine”—with ṣr simply retaining its more commonly understood meaning, “back”—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 ’Aṯiratu’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—to 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.


36 Pardee 1997, 252. Also see Bordreuil and Pardee 2009, 165–68.


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, also partially restored) when Dānīʾilu learns of ’Aqhatu’s death. Including the restorations, 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 Yaṣṣubu chastises his father Kirta for not performing his duties: l pnk l tšlh . ytm . bʿd kssl . ālmnt (Pardee translates, “Before you, you do not feed the orphan; behind your back the widow”). 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.”

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 mim klsm 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,” 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 (pštm), and valuable stones (spšg), and in the line immediately following materials used for dyeing (pwt, ābn srp). 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.

The final example from Ugaritic is an enigmatic occurrence found in a lunar omen text (KTU 1.163.4). KTU restores the beginning of the line, so that it reads: [hm . b t][t] . ym . yh . yrḥ . kslm . mlkm . tbrn . Del

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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]tšlm—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 kasla,” 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 kslm 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 [ks]lḥ in another passage in Kirta (1.16 I 54), although KTU reads kdh . l ʾarṣ . tbr “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 ([\(\text{ym} \cdot \text{yrh} \cdot \text{kslm} \cdot \text{mlkm} \cdot \text{tbṣrn}\) ], and he leaves the phrase in question untranslated, while only rendering the last two words: “[\(\text{if} \) \(\text{ym} \text{Yh} \text{yrh} \text{kslm}\), the kings will keep an eye on each other.”\(^51\) In a note, he remarks: “It is tempting to take [\(\text{yrh} \text{kslm}\)] 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 כסלו כֶּסֶל 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 כסלכין כֶּסֶלכַּין—are thought to have the derived meaning “confidence” or “foolishness.” Held begins his discussion of כסלו כֶּסֶל ל with a sharp critique of Koehler-Baumgartner’s Hebrew lexicon and its analysis of this term. He goes on to write, “the rendering of כסלא כֶּסֶל 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 כסלו כֶּסֶל as “loin,” “flank,” or—in the LXX—“thigh.”\(^55\)

#### PRIMARY (PHYSICAL) USES OF כסלו כֶּסֶל IN CLASSICAL HEBREW

With its primary (physical) meaning, כסלו כֶּסֶל 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 אָסֲטַרָא אָסֲטַרָא (typically trans-
lated “well-being offering” or “peace offering”), the single occurrence in Leviticus 4:9 with the חֲטָּאת “sin offering,” and that in Leviticus 7:4 with the אָשָׁם “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;

3:4 the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the kidneys, and the appendage of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys.

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” (הָאַלְיָה תְמִימָה לְעֻמַַּת הֶעָצֶה).

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 כְּסָלִים cannot be understood as “loins” because “it is never used in the dual.”56 The context—in all five passages—is crucial: the כָּלְפָּלְפָלָם 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 עָצֶה, 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 כָּלְפָּלָם 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 כָּלְפָּלָם 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;

38:7 I am utterly bowed down and prostrate; all day long I go around mourning.

38:8 For my כָּלְפָּלָם are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh.

56 Held 1965, 402 with n. 107.
57 In Modern Hebrew, שְׁמוֹר הַשִּׁדְרָה is used for the spinal column and קֵעה לְעֵינָיָה 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 עָצֶה (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 עָצֶה, os sacrum seems a more likely meaning here, as well. Also see Hussey’s proposal that the Akkadian kunuk esemsérim 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 כְּסָלַי with בְּשָׂר here as evidence that the former means "sinews." He writes:

Thus, כְּסָלַי is a perfect pair in parallelism, while 'loins' can hardly be considered a suitable parallel to בְּשָׂר. In other words, the sequence כְּסָלַי/בשר is in no way different from the sequence בְּשָׂר/גידים, on the one hand, and from the Akkadian sequence šīrū (="שאר" 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 Gilgâmeš epic: šīrānīya 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 נִקְלֶה—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 כְּסָלַי 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/גידים" is in Job 10:11, where the terms are also in parallelism with עוֹר/עֲצָמוֹת. Indeed, a more frequent pairing is that of בָּשָׂר and עֶצֶם;62 if כְּסָלַי 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 כְּסָלַי 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:

Because they64 stretched out their hands against God, and bid defiance to the Almighty,

Running stubbornly against him with a thick-bossed shield;

Because they have covered their faces with their fat, and gathered fat upon their כְּסָלַי.

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 כְּסָלַי. 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 בּ—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, כְּסָלַי 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" (bʿd 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, חֵלֶב, is of course quite common; its parallel on the כְּסָלַי, 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. בּ in Ps. 129:3 and perhaps Ezek. 10:12.
66 Rashi interprets פִּימָה as "mouth" and writes, "he made a mouth on his loins" (עשתה פה על חלצים), 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 ُفُم “fill,” ُفُم “make wide,” ُفُم “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 ُفُم 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 כֶּסֶל/כִּסְלָה IN CLASSICAL HEBREW**

As noted in the introduction, the six remaining biblical examples of כֶּסֶל are typically interpreted as having one of two proposed abstract/figurative meanings: “trust, confidence” or “folly, stupidity.” Similarly, most translations render the assumed byform כִּסְלָה, 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 כֶּסֶל and כִּסְלָה 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 כֶּסֶל means “sinews/tendons”:

> The primary meaning of Hebrew כֶּסֶל, "sinew/tendon," is clearly indicated by its derived connotation "(inner) strength," "confidence." I need only mention the parallelism מֶסֶל in Job 8:14 and 31:24."

Held also cites the occurrences in Psalm 78:7 and Proverbs 3:26 in a footnote 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 כִּסְלָה 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 כְּסִיל “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 כֶּסֶל, as well as to determine whether in fact the term might be etymologically related to כְּסִיל. I shall begin with the two examples of כֶּסֶל 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. |
|       | קָנָה בְּרָחָן בְּלֵוַי |
| 49:14 | This is the way of those who are כֶּסֶל, And of those after them who approve their words Selah |
|       | זוּ דַרְכָּם כֵּסֶל לָמ |
| 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. |

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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, along with commentators both medieval and modern, interpret כֶּסֶל 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.

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 כֶּסֶל, and that כִּסְלָה is madness.

Held’s interpretation of כֶּסֶל as "(inner) strength, confidence" is clearly implausible for this verse, and here too the traditional authorities understood the term to mean "folly." The same is true for the occurrence of כִּסְלָה 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 כִּסְלָה.

The remaining five occurrences—four of כֶּסֶל and one of כִּסְלָה—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 כִּסְלָה 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 כִּסְלָה, and the integrity of your ways your hope?

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 כֶּסֶל should be understood as “inner strength, confidence”;

It may be remarked at this point that here belongs also Hebrew תַּכּוֹה in parallelism with כִּסְלָה in Job 4:6. This verse, contrary to the accepted translations, can safely be rendered: "Is not your piety "

72 The Targum renders כֶּסֶל here as שׁטוֹתא "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 (ܬܘܩܠܬܐ "stumbling block, offense, scandal").

73 E.g., Rashi’s שׁטוֹת "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 כִּסְלָה as ἀφροσύνη “folly,” and the Vulgate 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 שׁטה, 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 (זאא) ילבשם לה תבש).
your confidence, (is not) your uprightness your strength?” In other words, תוקה is here a synonym of כסלה, and the parallelism כסלה תוקה is in no way different in meaning from כסלה המסנה.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 כסלה וה다가 תוקה in the MT⁷⁸ (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 כסלה as the predicate of תוקה; nor does either one translate כסלה כמותח with a positive term such as “inner strength” or “trust.”⁸¹ The LXX, for example, renders כסלה כמותח as ἀφροσύνη “folly, thoughtlessness, senselessness” and the verse as follows:

4:6 πότερον οὖν ὁ φόβος σου ἐστὶν ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς σου καὶ ἡ κακία καὶ ἡ ὁδοία σου Is your fear not founded in folly, your hope also, and the wickedness of your way?

The Peshitta also interprets כסלה כמותח negatively, albeit with a different sense: it translates it as גחליך “your blame, censure.”⁸² In addition, several of the traditional medieval commentators understand Eliphaz’s words in this verse as criticism rather than encouragement.⁸³ Rashi, for example, connects כסלה כמותח with “foolishness” (תאוליך) and takes the verse to be a sharp condemnation of Job’s piety (“fear”), hope, and ways.⁸⁴ Several modern exegetes have also noted the multiple possible interpretations for this verse, particularly given the additional ambiguity of the word immediately preceding כסלה כמותח (אתיך): 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 כסלה כמותח here makes Held’s assertion that it “can safely be rendered” as “confidence” (and therefore supports his overall claim that כסלה 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 אתיך to the end (Duhm, Bennewieser). 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 כסלה כמותח with “positive” terms (fortitudo tua “your fortitude,” and scilicet “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: אשר דחתך מסתיך ושארך כמותח א הפועל וחסד גרא וברך.⁸²
⁸² One Greek manuscript reads ἀκακία “guilelessness,” which would be a more suitable match to the MT’s כסלה כמותח. 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: הקstuホテルו תוקאתך וכסלך כמותח אש לך וברך וברך א高等学校.
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 כִּסְלָה 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 כָּסְלִי is the predicate of all three expressions (ךָּקְוָתְתֵּך, תְךָיִרְאָ, and דְּרָכֶיךָ), as indeed the LXX, Peshitta, 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
8:14 Their כֶּסֶל is gossamer, a spider’s house their trust.

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 . . .

It is true that in both passages, as Held notes, כֶּסֶל is in parallel with מִבְטַח. But the context of each passage clearly indicates this confidence is misplaced,92 as signified by the difficult ויָקֹט (perhaps “fragile”) in 8:14 and “gold” in 31:24.93 If the derived/secondary meanings of כֶּסֶל (and כִּסְלָה) 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: none of these verses provides

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87 It is ironic that many Joban scholars cite Held’s essay to support the interpretation of כִּסְלָה 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 כִּסְלָה, 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 כֶּסֶל 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 σοφικτός γὺς αὐτοῦ ἔσται ὁ οἶκος ἀράχνη δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀποβήσεται ή σκηνή “For his house will be without inhabitants, and his tent will turn out to be a spider’s web.” However, it glosses כָּסְלִי as ἰσχύν μου “my power, might” in 31:24. The Targum uses כֶּסֶל “hope” in 8:14 and כֶּסֶל “prospect” for 31:24. The Vulgate, though, interprets כֶּסֶל in 8:14 as veordia sua “his folly” and renders the colon as non ei placebit veordia sua “his folly will not please him.” In 31:24, it uses robur meum “my strength.” The Peshitta also interprets both occurrences as “trust, confidence” (חֲסֵּדִי).
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;
3:26 For the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.

Though a translation such as the NRSV’s “your confidence” is typical, in Hebrew the expression is a prepositional phrase: בכסלך, literally, “in your confidence.” Held offers the following explanation:

This is in fact how the translators of the Targum appeared to understand the colon; they gloss בכסלך as בכסעדך, “your support, assistance.” The other passages Held mentions, 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 beṭ haʾessētie. Still, although בכסל does not occur anywhere else in such a usage, and his labeling of בכסל as a “synonym” of עזר might be questionable, Held’s proposal that the preposition is a beṭ haʾessētie is plausible.

It is also possible, however, that in this passage בכסל is being used with its primary/physical meaning. In the Psalm 38:8 occurrence of בכסל (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 ככסילים are filled with burning. The parallelism with רגל in Proverbs 3:26 might suggest that בכסל 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 ככסל 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” (t&tbr) and her pnt ksl “rattling” (t&g). 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 בכסל 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 ככסל in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep his commandments;
THE (SOLE) VERBAL OCCURRENCE OF כֶּסֶל; כָּסִיל and כָּסִילוּת

There is also one verbal occurrence of כָּסִיל in the Bible—that found in Jeremiah 10:8 in a passage condemning idolators:

10:8 They are both stupid and foolish (כָּסִיל), instructed by worthless idols made of wood.

The standard lexica and traditional authorities interpret the verb כָּסִיל 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 כָּסִיל in Hebrew, and it denotes stupidity, bad habits, lack of manners and education, and the like. Thus, Hebrew כָּסִיל is in no way different in meaning from Akkadian saklu.” Held’s conclusion indicates—albeit indirectly—that he views the more common Hebrew noun כָּסִיל “fool,” along with the hapax legomenon כָּסִילוּת “stupidity,” as related to this verb and not to the primary noun כָּסִיל, which, in his view, means “sinew/tendon” and “confidence, inner strength” in its derived meaning.

As discussed above, however, he ignores the examples of כָּסִיל and כָּסִילוּת 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 כָּסִיל is paired with the denominative verb יבּעֲר “to be brutish” (i.e., “strong and stupid”). Given that this occurrence is the only attested verbal usage of a form of ksI 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 כָּסִיל to כָּסִיל and another from a nominal root כָּסִיל כָּסִילוּת “sinew/tendon” to כָּסִיל and כָּסִילוּת.

A connection between the derived meanings of כָּסִיל/כָּסִילוּת that I have proposed is also supported by its biblical usage. Although some interpreters suggest the term is etymologically related to

99 The LXX reads ἵνα θῶνται ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν τὴν ἐλπίδα αὐτῶν “That they might set their hope on God”; Targum, psalm 6 307  כי אמרו לו בבייוו “That they might have a hope on God”. Rashi glosses the term as Ṣיון תוחמש “their hope, expectation,” similar to the sense “set their hope on God” and cites the usage in Job 31:1 as a comparison. Kimhi and Ibn Ezra both use Ṣיון תוחמש as well.

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: כֶּסֶל “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 בָּר “brutish” in Psalm 49:10 and אֶשֶׁר בִּנְבָשׁ in Psalm 92:6, and כָּסִילוּת is used with כָּסִיל in Psalm 49:8.

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,” such connotations are not indicated by any of the seventy biblical occurrences of כְּסִיל כְּסִיל. The biblical authors are clearly critical of those who are lazy (see especially Proverbs), but they never use כְּסִיל כְּסִיל in these critiques; nor does the term ever occur in parallelism with כְּסִיל כְּסִיל “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,” the “clamorousness” of the “foolish woman”), agitation (“a fool always loses his temper”), or celebration (the “mirth,” “song,” and “laughter” of fools).

There are also examples of כְּסִיל כְּסִיל in which the context indicates a meaning compatible with the “hybrid” of confidence and folly (i.e., “false confidence”) I have proposed for כֶּסֶל כֶּסֶל and כִּסְלָה כִּסְלָה above. Proverbs 14:16, for example, reads:

14:16 A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but כְּסִיל כְּסִיל is arrogant and careless.

The biblical usages of כְּסִיל כְּסִיל 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 כְּסִיל כְּסִיל 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 כְּסִיל כְּסִיל (with seventy biblical examples) and כְּסִילוּת כְּסִילוּת 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.

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 כְּסִיל כְּסִיל 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 esensēri in Akkadian, with הָלָל הָלָל in the description of ʿAnatu’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, ‘wil’ fool and kasil ‘fool,’ are from roots that have no verb, although they do have other nouns,” and mentions kăsel and kîslă in this connection (ibid., n. 56).
the back of the abdomen, on each side of the spine—of a sacrificial animal in Leviticus.\textsuperscript{111} Never do we see a reference to the \textit{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 “kaslu are putturū from the neck to the backbone.”\textsuperscript{112} Held’s assertion that “the meaning of \textit{ksl}, ‘back,’ in II K vi 48–50\textsuperscript{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 \textit{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 \textit{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 \textit{kaslu putturū} 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 \textit{hapax legomenon} \textit{ḥaṣṣōg}—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 \textit{kāgil} 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, \textit{ksl} does not mean the sinews/tendons used in its construction—for which \textit{gdm} and \textit{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 (\textit{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 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

\[\text{two hundred vertebrae, used in the manufacture of dyes and mortars (so connecting the term to the other dye-making terms immediately following).}\]

(4) Finally, Held’s (implicit) argument that \textit{kāgil} is derived from a verbal root unrelated to the noun \textit{kāgil} is unwarranted, as is the association with Arabic \textit{kāsil} proposed by some interpreters. The \textit{kāgil} in biblical usage is not characterized by laziness but rather by foolishness.

\textsuperscript{111} Also see the parallelism of לֹא דָעֵבִּיםֵי חָסֵל with לִכְסֵלִים in Ben Sira 47:19.
\textsuperscript{112} Labat 1951, 222–23.
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{KTU} 1.16 VI 48–50, \textit{l pnk l tšlḥm . ytm . b’d kslk . ‘almnt.}
\textsuperscript{114} Cf., e.g., Micah 2:3, in which God tells sinners they will not “walk haughtily” (ַלָפְלָא חָרָם , Isaiah 3:16, where the daughters of Zion are “haughty” (ברָבָה), thus walking with “necks extended” (חָלָקָה נְנוֹת רַע). Note also the use of the metaphor קְשֵׁה־עֹרף “stiff-necked” to indicate stubbornness, rebelliousness.
\textsuperscript{115} It is possible, of course, that in figurative usage \textit{kāgil} 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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THE UGARITIC COMPOUND ADJECTIVE ‘ĪB ‘IQN’Ī “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 KTU³ 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 spr ʾthr “lustrous (lit., pure) lapis lazuli” (KTU 3.39.33) and the semantically related poetic phrase ʾib ʾiqnʾī (KTU 1.14 iii 43; vi 29). While the meaning of Ugaritic ʾiqnʾī “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 ʾalp / Ug. hrm “gold”; BH ʾalp / Ug. qṭr “smoke”; BH ʾalp / Ug. ʾalp “large cattle”; BH ʾalp / Ug. yrḥ “witness”; BH ʾalp / Ug. ʾalp “to eat”; BH ʾalp / Ug. ʾalp “to strike”; BH ʾalp / Ug. mḥṣ “to be sick, severe”; BH ʾalp / Ug. ʾrs “bed”; BH ʾalp / Ug. ʾrs “mountain,” all listed and annotated in the chart in Cohen 2008b, 458–459).


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 ʾiqnʾi can be syntactically understood only as the genitive singular (collective) form of ʾiqnʾu and should most probably be vocalized [ʾiqniʾ].

b) Internally, the compound adjective ʾib ʾiqnʾi “lapis-lazuli-pure” (construction I and section 5 below) must be compared semantically (though not grammatically) with the phrases ʾthrn / ʾzhrm ʾiqnʾm [ʾtuḥurima / ʾẓuhurima ʾiqniʾima] “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, ʾib ʾiqnʾi may be semantically compared with the common Akkadian (collective) phrase ʾuqnʾ ʾebbu “lustrous (lit., pure) lapis lazuli.”

c) Since the e- vowel in the Akkadian adjective ʾebbu “pure” is an almost certain indication of an original pharyngeal (h, ʾ, or ḡ), which would normally have been preserved according to regular Ugaritic phonology, one must assume that Ugaritic ʾib [ʾibbu] is an Akkadian poetic loanword in Ugaritic, the native Ugaritic semantic equivalent of which is ʾthr / ʾzhr [ʾtuḥuru / ʾẓuhuru] “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 ʾib [ʾibbu] as an Akkadian loanword based on the Akkadian adjective ʾebbu “pure, lustrous” are as follows:
1. The adjective precedes the noun in the Ugaritic phrase ʾib ʾiqnʾi, as opposed to the regular Akkadian phrase ʾuqnʾ ʾebbu “lustrous (lit., pure) lapis lazuli."
2. The word ʾiqnʾi [ʾiqniʾ] occurs in the singular genitive case, which in the present context would normally require ʾib [ʾibbu] 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

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5 KTU 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 ʾuqnʾ ʾellu “lustrous lapis lazuli” with the same meaning, since Akkadian ʾebbu and ʾellu 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 ʾtu-ú-ru (= ṣhr) in the polyglot vocabulary Ugaritic 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).
The Ugaritic Compound Adjective ʾibʾiqnʾi “Lapis-lazuli-pure” 329

Table 22.1  Three special types of adjectival construction in Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew, and Ugaritic in which the nonpredicate adjective precedes the noun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction type</th>
<th>Akkadian</th>
<th>Biblical Hebrew</th>
<th>Ugaritic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Compound adjective</td>
<td>Adj. in accus. (or alter., quasi-constr.) + noun in genitive, relating to previous (pro)noun (or PN), or as general epithet</td>
<td>Quasi-constr. adj. + noun, relating to previous (pro) noun (or PN), or as general epithet</td>
<td>Quasi-constr. adj. + noun in genitive, relating to previous noun or as general epithet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Reverse order</td>
<td>Adj. in any case, gender, and number + modified noun (or PN) in same case, gender, and number</td>
<td>Adj. in any gender and number + modified noun (or PN) in same gender and number</td>
<td>Adj. in any case, gender, and number + modified noun (or PN) in same case, gender, and number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Superlative</td>
<td>Quasi-constr. adj. + plural noun in genitive (or PN)</td>
<td>Quasi-constr. adj. + plural noun (or PN)</td>
<td>Quasi-constr. adj. + plural noun in genitive (or PN)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 מָתק “to be sweet” (each including a separate article for an assumed lexeme מֶתֶק or מָתֵק*) with the following meanings and attestations in each case:10

a) מָתוֹק “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) מֹתֶק* “sweetness”—Judg. 9:11

But the fig tree replied: “Have I stopped yielding my sweetness, my delicious fruit, that I should go and wave above the trees?”

c) מֶתֶק (or מָתֵק) “sweetness”—Prov. 16:21; 27:9

The following correct translations demonstrate that in Proverbs 16:21 מֶתֶק must be taken as the adjectival quasi-construct form of מָתוֹק “sweet,” while in Proverbs 27:9 מָתק must be taken as the construct byform of מָתק* “sweetness” (see the discussion below).11 Therefore, the term מֶתֶק (or מָתֵק) “sweetness” as a separate lexeme must be deleted from all Biblical Hebrew dictionaries:12

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; Ges11, 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 מֶתֶק שְׂפָתַיִם.

12 In fact, the single additional attestation listed in DCH 5: 574, from the Dead Sea Scrolls (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., שְׁילָלָה יִהְיֶה מִנָּה מֶתֶק שְׁפָתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. See Qimron 2014, 113, 115 and the bibliography listed there.
In conjunction with the compound adjective ***lā mēkā'“one who is) wise-hearted”***\(^{13}\) in the first clause, the phrase ***mēkā' tarējām “of sweet [i.e., pleasing] speech”*** in Proverbs 16:21b should be understood as a corresponding compound adjective with the first component ***mēkā'*** as the adjectival quasi-construct form of ***mēkā’*** “sweet,” just as ***mēkā’*** is the adjectival quasi-construct form of  ***mēkā’*** “long” in the well-attested compound adjective ***mēkā’*** ***lērējām “slow to anger”*** (see table 22.1 and section 4). On the other hand, in the ***hapax*** phrase in Proverbs 27:9, ***mēkā’ rēvēm “the sweetness of one’s friend,”*** the term ***mēkā’*** is simply the construct byform of ***mēkā’*** “sweetness,” just as ***mēkā’*** is the construct byform of ***mēkā’*** “length” (in just three verses: Jer. 15:15; Prov. 14:29; Qoh. 7:8); the regular construct form of ***mēkā’*** is, of course, ***mēkā’***, as in, e.g., Gen. 6:15. For example, see the usage in ***ārā tēwēm “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 (אָרְךְ לְאֶרֶךְ), in Proverbs 27:9 above (מהתֵּק), and in Exodus 15:16: **“at the greatness of Your arm”*** (cf. Ps. 79:11: **“בִּגְדֹל הָרְתָּם”***).

**3A. AKKADIAN COMPOUND ADJECTIVE—BONA FIDE EXAMPLES\(^{16}\)**

\(b/palša \text{-} \text{init}(m) \) ‘with staring eye’ (vS, M, R; CAD B, 65; CDA, 37); **barma(m) inīn “rainbow-eyed”** (vS, R, W; CAD B, 112);\(^{17}\) **damqa(m) ini(m) “keen-sighted”** (vS, M, R; CAD D, 67; CDA, 55); **eddam qarnīn / edid qarnim “sharp-horned”** (vS, R, W; CAD E, 23–24);\(^{18}\) **ellam mē “pure of rites”** (vS, R, W; CAD E, 100–101; CDA, 70); **ellam qātī “pure-handed”** (vS, R; CAD E, 105);\(^{19}\) **emqam birkīm “able-kneed”** (vS, R, W; CAD E, 151);\(^{20}\) **ḥesir

13 See section 4 below.
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 **eddam <<ta>>m qarnīn “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 gar-[ni] ‘with sharp horns’ (Lambert, Symbologia 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 qātī “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-šassu as understood by von Soden (1960, 164). In fact, as correctly understood by Izre’el (2001, 12–13, note to line 8), **atra šassu “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) šassi(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 **birkīm** in the singular (best understood here as a collective epithet referring to the previously mentioned warriors, rather than **birkīm** 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.
ũmi “with chipped teeth” (vS, R, W; CAD Ḥ, 127; S/3, 49);\(^{21}\) namra(i) ini ‘bright-eyed’ (vS, M, R; CAD N/1, 243);\(^{22}\) naši’am ŭši “with raised head” (vS, R, W; CAD N/2, 80; CDA, 246);\(^{23}\) palkû uzni “of vast understanding” (R; CAD P, 67; CDA, 262);\(^{24}\) palkâ uzni “of vast understanding” (R; CAD P, 67; CDA, 262);\(^{25}\) pati’a ŭši “open-eyed” (vS, M, R; CAD P, 339);\(^{26}\) pet / petât uzni “open-eared [i.e., very wise]” (vS, R; CAD P, 339);\(^{27}\) rapša / rapša(t) uzni “broad-minded” (vS, R; CAD R, 165–66);\(^{28}\) rapša(m) iti(m) “broad-chested” (vS, R, W; CAD I/1, 184);\(^{29}\) rapšam ŭnî “wide-mouthed” (W; CAD R, 163; U/W, 365);\(^{30}\) šadla karši “broad-minded” (vS, R; CAD S/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 ŭši) must agree both in gender and number not with the following noun (in this case the feminine plural ŭnî), but rather with the previous modified (pro)noun or PN (in this case the masculine singular ťû šadîlu “the imperfect [i.e., one who has a bodily defect or a physical deformity!]”). See BBR 24:31 as quoted in CAD Ḥ, 127, and S/3, 49 (see also p. 48). For this context, see Leviticus 21:17–23. When it is the noun ŭnî that is being modified, the attested phrase is ŭnî ūšatûm “chipped tooth” (Kagal D Section 6:7 as quoted in CAD Ḥ, 127, and S/3, 48).

\(^{22}\) For the grammatical significance of the lexical attestation of namra ŭnî (MSL 12, 216, line 17; cf. CAD N/1, 240) alongside the regular namra ŭnî; 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 dalhâm (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 palkû uzni as “the feminine correspondence” to the special compound adjective form palkû 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 palkû 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 (pet / petât) are attested in addition to the special compound adjective form petât. See the discussion in section 3B below.

\(^{27}\) For the single known reference for the compound adjective rabita(m) libbi “with great courage,” note especially the analysis of the context in Wasserman 2003, 47–48 (where this phrase is translated “boldhearted”). For libbi 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-construction) 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-construction form rabî / 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) rapâ–quasi-construct forms of the masculine singular adjective rapî; (b) rapâ–masculine singular form according to the special compound adjective damqa(m) ini(m) construction; (c) rapîat–quasi-construct form of the feminine singular adjective rapasîtu. 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), lâwu ŭnîn “... 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: [sarrû 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: ini pî basîsi u šadla karši ša Ea u Bêlet-illî ištimmûna anâ sapîn màt ayyâbi iptû puriddi “with the intelligence and broadmindedness which Ea and Bêlet-illî allotted me, I hastened to devastate the enemy’s land.” The latter usage of šadla karši “broadmindedness” (i.e., lit., “broadness of mind”), however, is not as a compound adjective (with šadâl as a quasi-construct form), but rather as a regular nominal construct phrase within a regular adverbial clause beginning with ini “with, by means of” placed at the beginning of the sentence. Just as the term pit in the above context must be analyzed as the regular construct form of the substantive pîtu 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 šadâl in that context can only be the construct of a reconstructed substantive “šadlu “broadness” derived from šadâlū
“to be broad” (contrast both CAD S/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: “with the greatness of Your arm, they (the enemies) are still as stone.” Here, too, the term לְגַהֲנֵי (at the greatness of) with prefixed בְּ (Akkadian *ina* in TCL 3:23 above) must be taken as a rare construct byform of לְגַהְנֵי “greatness” (cf. GKC §93h and especially קְרֶנֶת “like coriander seed” in Exod. 16:31 and Num. 11:7 and the two cases לְגַהֲנֵי וְלְגַהָנָה “the height of” and לְגַהֲנֵי “the width of” as discussed at the end of this note) of the attested noun לְגַהֲנֵי “greatness,” for which compare especially Psalm 79:11b (with the regular construct form): לְגַהֲנֵי דִּקְנֵי יִרְאֵה בְּרֵמוֹת as befits the greatness of your arm, reprove 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 *sadāla karši* “broad-minded” and the nominal construct phrase *šadal karše* “broad-mindedness” also occurs in Biblical Hebrew between the compound adjective *šalë haqāmsa* “of lofty stature” (Ezek. 31:3) and the nominal construct phrase *šalë haqāmsa* “the loftiness of his stature” (1 Sam. 16:7) and between the compound adjective *šalē ḫāskir* “arrogant (one)” (Ps. 101:5) and the nominal construct phrase *šalē ḫāskir* “arrogance” (Prov. 21:4, where the first *šalē* and the first *ḥāskir* are quasi-construct forms of the respective adjectives לֶהָרֵב “tall” and לָרָחָב “wide,” while לֶהָרֵב and the second *ḥāskir* are rare alternative construct forms of the respective nouns לֶנָה “height” and לָרָחֶב “width”; cf. the term לְגַהֲנֵי 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 *ṣaqītu* of *niśšam ṛēšī* (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 S/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 known long ago, the rationale behind this feminine plural form is the common usage in apposition with the feminine plural form *niššu* “people, mankind, humanity” (see, e.g., the discussion section in CAD S, 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 adjectival 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 *nrāṣum ṛāḇīm* “with rent clothes” and *ḥašām šārātim* “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 לְבַר מִשְׁרֵי “brokenhearted” (see section 4 below).

36 The *-am suffix occurs in one case appended to the feminine singular adjectival form *rabītam libhi* “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—edad qarnim; namrat inu; palkat uzni; pet / petat uzni; rapas / rapsat 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 sinni; saqat resi; salmat gaqqadi(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), 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—edad, hesir, pet, rapas—five are extant in the feminine singular—namrat, palkat, petat, rapsat, saqat—and one occurs only in the feminine plural—salmat.

4. BIBLICAL HEBREW COMPOUND ADJECTIVE—MOST EXAMPLES

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 יָפֵה עִינָדים). This binding is crucial because of the incongruence in number and gender that often occurs between these two components (e.g.,.Gen. 6:15). See section 2 and e.g., Gen. 6:15.) See section 2 and n. 31 above.

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; Walke 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 אָדָם חֲמוֹר “a hot-tempered man,” and in the latter verse in synonymous parallelism with מְדֻכֶּא “one who has self-control”).

40 Note that this compound adjective in Ezekiel 17:3 occurs together with the semantically similar compound adjective אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם “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 אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם and the single occurrence of the compound adjective אַפַּיִם אָרֶךְ account for all twelve occurrences of the quasi-construct form of the adjective אָרֶךְ “long.” The form אָרֶךְ does occur another three times (Jer. 15:15; Prov. 14:29; Qoh. 7:8), but as a variant construct form of the substantive אָרֶךְ “length.” (The regular construct form is of course the unchanged substantive form אָרֶךְ, e.g., Gen. 6:15.) See section 2 and n. 31 above.

41 This compound adjective is used here as a general epithet.
42 This compound adjective is used here together with a second compound adjective לְבֶן הָעֵיר "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 "חַכְלִילִי ... of his stature" (1 Sam. 16:7), for which see n. 31 above. Finally, note the two nominal construct phrases in Qoh. 7:8; "yod-compaginis suffix (cf. the regular construct form יִבְנֵי) "to be dark" occurs once more in Biblical Hebrew in Proverbs 23:29. For both of these forms see, e.g., Waltke 2005, 91 n. 34, 112–13 and n. 91; Fox 2009, 657.

44 This compound adjective occurs only here as a general epithet. Surely נֹאֵל is the preferred reading rather than the Ketiv לְבֵית הָעֵיר. See, e.g., Waltke 2005, 91 n. 34, 112–13 and n. 91; Fox 2009, 657.

45 This compound adjective occurs only here in this verse as referring to God, together with the semantically similar compound adjective נֹאֵל "slow to anger." For יִבְנֵי לְבֶן כָּלִיל "of great power" (see Even-Shoshan 1977, 222–25), six represent quasi-construct components in the five compound adjectives in the list above. The plural construct form יִבְנֵי לְבֶן כָּלִיל "the notables of the town" (2 Kgs. 10:6) is the nominal construct of a substantivized adjective. For the form יִבְנֵי לְבֶן "at the greatness of Your arm" (Exod. 15:16) as a rare alternative nominal construct form of the substantive נֹאֵל "greatness," see n. 31 above.

46 For the sole usage of this compound adjective as a variant divine epithet (replacing the compound adjectives יִבְנֵי לְבֶן כָּלִיל "of great kindness" and יִבְנֵי לְבֶן כָּלִיל "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 לְבֶן הָעֵיר כָּלִיל "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 רַב חָסֶד as divine epithets. For both, see Ditchi-Barak 2007, 232–33, 235.

49 The derisive compound adjective לְבֶן כָּלִיל "tough-hearted" occurs here together with the semantically similar compound adjective לְבֶן כָּלִיל כָּלִיל "brazen-faced," while the two related compound adjectives in Ezekiel 3:7 are לְבֶן כָּלִיל כָּלִיל "tough-browed" and לְבֶן כָּלִיל כָּלִיל "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 הַדָּר = Akkadian ekšu "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 הַדָּר כָּלִיל כָּלִיל "dark-eyed" // יִבְנֵי לְבֵית כָּלִיל כָּלִיל "white of teeth" in Genesis 49:12 have not usually been analyzed as such, the usage of the quasi-construct form יִבְנֵי (only in this verse—see Joüon and Muraoka 2006, 279 §96Bb) leaves little doubt as regards the latter phrase, while the form יִבְנֵי קְשֵׁי כָּלִיל כָּלִיל 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 יִבְנֵי in Gen. 49:11 [the previous verse; cf. יִבְנֵי / יִבְנֵי and יִבְנֵי / יִבְנֵי] and the quasi-construct forms in the two compound adjectives יִבְנֵי כְּלָל "of numerous people" [Lam. 1:1] and יִבְנֵי כְּלָל כְּלָל "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., אַחֲרֵי קְרַאת מְלֵאֲתִי נֹאֵל / עֲרוֹצֵי / עֲרוֹצֵי / עֲרוֹצֵי “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 יִבְנֵי "righteous," both of which serve as general epithets in this context. The semantically equivalent Akkadian compound adjective is ellen gätä, for which see the examples in section 3A above.

42 This compound adjective is used here together with a second compound adjective לְבֶן כָּלִיל כָּלִיל "arrogant," both as general epithets.
"of pure eyes" (Hab. 1:13); 53 beau / "handsome, beautiful" (Gen. 29:17; 39:6; 41:18; Deut. 21:11; 1 Sam. 25:3; Esth. 2:7); 66 beau / "handsome, beautiful, well-formed" and in one case beau / "handsome, beautiful, well-formed" (Jer. 11:16); 64 beau / "ill-formed" (Gen. 41:19).

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 עַיִן / "handsome." In Proverbs 15:15, read with BHS, 1295 n. 15a:Ýעַיִן לְמַעַבֵּד לְנַגֵּן for MTלְנַגֵּן לְעַיִן. 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 עֶנֶס / "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: טוֹב עַיִן / "with beautiful eyes and good-looking."

57 Here it should be noted that there are no additional occurrences of the specific quasi-construct forms טוֹב עַיִן, טוֹבֵי לֵב, and טוֹבֵי לֵב לְנַגֵּן. All eight occurrences of עַיִן and three occurrences of טוֹב are 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 יְהוּדָה / "Judah" and to the people (יִשְׂרָאֵל / "Israel"). 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 יְפֵה נוֹף serves in this verse as a derisive epithet of the city Jerusalem together with the compound adjective יְפֵן נוֹף, "of great tumult." On both these epithets, see especially Greenberg 1997, 453. Note that besides the two compound adjectives discussed here, יְפֵה נוֹף and יְפֵן נוֹף, the other three cases of the construct יְפֵה נוֹף and יְפֵן נוֹף are not quasi-construct forms but, rather, attestations of the regular nominal construct form of the substantivized adjectives יְפַת / יְפַת נוֹף "ritually impure person (or object)," namely יְפֵה נוֹף / יְפַת נוֹף "ritually impure person or object as a result of (contact with) a corpse" (Lev. 22:4; Hag. 2:13; = יְפַת נוֹף in Num. 5:2; 9:10) and יְפָת נוֹף / יְפֵה נוֹף "ritually impure woman as a result of menstruation" (Ezek. 22:10).

60 Note that the compound adjective יְפַת נוֹף / יְפֵה נוֹף occurs twice (Gen. 29:17; 39:6) together with the semantically similar compound adjective יְפֵת נוֹף / יְפֵת נוֹף "handsome, beautiful, well-formed" and in one case יְפַת נוֹף replaces יְפֵת נוֹף when the narrative is retold (Gen. 41:2; 18). The two compound adjective antonyms are יְפֵת נוֹף / יְפַת נוֹף "ugly" (Gen. 41:3, 4) and יְפֵט נוֹף / יְפָת נוֹף "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 יְפַת שֶׂכֶל / יְפֵת שֶׂכֶל "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: יְפַה / יְפֵת נוֹף / יְפַח / יְפֵח נוֹף / יְפַצ / יְפֵצ נוֹף / יְפַח נוֹף / יְפֵח נוֹף / יְפַח נוֹף / יְפֵח נוֹף / יְפַח נוֹף / יְפֵח נוֹף / יְפַח נוֹף / יְפֵח נוֹף. 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 יְפַת / יְפֵת נוֹף "one who is very good at playing an instrument" (= יִנַּעַב לְנַגֵּן; see 1 Sam. 16:17; Isa. 23:16; Ps. 33:3). Note also in the same participial construction יִנַּעַב לְנַגֵּן "one who is expert at playing an instrument" (1 Sam. 16:16).

66 Note that of the forty-two occurrences of the adjective יְפַת, eighteen are in the quasi-construct forms: יְפַת / יְפֵת נוֹף (1) / יְפַח נוֹף (5) / יְפֵח נוֹף (2) / יְפַח נוֹף (2) / יְפֵח נוֹף (2). 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 מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל פֶּה “laden with iniquity” (Isa. 1:4);68 כֶּבֶד פֶּה “of impeded speech” (Exod. 4:10);69 יָד ה רִי פֶּה “of great strength and mind” (Job 36:5);70 קְצַר יָמִים “of advanced years” (Jer. 9:25; Ezek. 44:7, 9);71 עִמְקֵי שָׂפָה וְכִבְדֵי לָשׁוֹן “pure-handed” (Ps. 24:4);72 נְכֵה רוּחַ “impediment of the eyes and ears” (Gen. 48:10; Isa. 6:10; 59:1; Zach. 7:11), מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל פֶּה 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 מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת, see the discussion including several precedents in n. 31 above. See also n. 75 below. The syntactical structure of the phrase מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת is identical with that of the well-attested מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל (see n. 80 below). Here, too, the quasi-construct form מְלוּקָם of the adjective מַעֲרָל is clearly modifying the substantive מַעֲרָל “iniquity” (cf. Ps. 38:5; also Gen. 18:20; Isa. 24:20), while the compound adjective מְלוּקָם מַעֲרָל “laden with iniquity” is clearly referring to מַעֲרָל “people.” See Muraoka 1977, 376.

69 This compound adjective occurs in hendiads with the compound adjective מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל מַעֲרָל with virtually the same meaning, for which see nn. 67 and 69 above. Both are semantically similar to the compound adjective מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל 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 Dittrich-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 מְלוּקָם. For the translation “white of teeth” and presumably the understanding of this phrase as a compound adjective, see already Jobit and Muraoka (2006, 279 §96Bb).

72 This compound adjective occurs here as a general epithet together with מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת “elder(s).” The masculine singular quasi-construct form מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל “full” occurs only here, while the feminine singular quasi-construct form מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל (with yod-compaginis suffix—see n. 51 above) occurs once as part of the compound adjective מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל see the next note).

73 This compound adjective referring to the city Jerusalem occurs in parallel to the phrase מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל יָאוֹרֶן מַעֲרָל “where righteousness dwelt.”

74 See section 2 above.

75 Note that in both verses Ezekiel 3:5, 6, both compound adjectives מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל מַעֲרָל “of obscure language and difficult speech” occur as a hendiadys. In the latter verse, this is immediately followed by an explanatory gloss, מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל מַעֲרָל whose words you cannot understand. See also the parallelism in Isaiah 33:19.

76 For the two alternative quasi-construct forms מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל מַעֲרָל, compare the quasi-construct forms מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל discussed in n. 68 above and the additional examples in n. 31 above. For the three different usages of the root מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל in the three compound adjectives listed here, referring to the physically uncircumcised מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל מַעֲרָל, the spirituality “uncircumcised” who do not obey God’s commandments מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל מַעֲרָל, and the description of Moses’ speech impediment as his being of “uncircumcised” מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל, see the detailed discussion in Cohen 2005, 687–94, esp. 688–89 n. 12. For the spirituality “uncircumcised,” note especially Deuteronomy 10:16, which parallels this metaphorical 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 מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל מַעֲרָל (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 מְלוּקָם מַצְּרֶת מַעֲרָל “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 לָבָן וְלָשׁוֹן הָעַדָּר “hard-hearted” (Ezek. 3:7);81 לָשׁוֹן בַּלּוֹן “brazen-faced” (Ezek. 2:4);82 לָשׁוֹן קְשַׁת רוּחַ “sorely troubled” (1 Sam. 1:15);83 מַרְאֹת נָפֶשׁ “abundantly blessed” (Prov. 28:20); רֶבֶן מַרְאֹת קְשֵׁה “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]); רֶבֶן רֶבֶן “of abundant power” (Ps. 147:5); רֶבֶן פָּרַד “abundantly cursed” (Prov. 28:27); רביֹת “with full plumage” (Ezek. 17:7); רביֹת רֶבֶן הַמְּהוּמָה “of abundant deeds” (Jer. 32:19); רביֹת רֶבֶן “of abundant achievements” (2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 11:22); רביֹת רֶבֶן “abundant in criminal offenses” (Prov. 29:22); רביֹת רֶבֶן “abundant in righteousness” (Job 37:23); רביֹת רֶבֶן “abundant in storehouses” (Jer. 51:13); רביֹת רֶבֶן “the one [i.e., mother] of abundant children” (1 Sam. 2:5); רביֹת רֶבֶן “abundant in population” (Lam. 1:1); רביֹת רֶבֶן / רביֹת רֶבֶן “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 רביֹת רֶבֶן “arrogant (one)” (Ps. 101:5);85 רביֹת רֶבֶן “hands” (one)” and the similar-sounding nominal construct phrase לָוָן וְלָשׁוֹן בַּלּוֹן "arrogance" (Prov. 21:4). For this distinction, see n. 31 above.

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80 The phrase רֶבֶן קְשֵׁה קְשַׁת רוּחַ “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 קְשַׁת רוּחַ of the adjective קְשַׁת קְשַׁת is clearly modifying the substantive קְשַׁת "neck" (cf. Deut. 31:27), while the compound adjective קְשַׁת קְשַׁת "stiff-necked" is clearly referring to קְשַׁת “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 עַמִּי, עֹרֶף, עָפָה, עַמּוֹת, עֵינַיִם (1:7), בר כֹּחַ (1:11), רָחַב לֵב (1:16), and especially the semantically similar compound adjective קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ (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 רֶבֶן קְשַׁת רוּחַ “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 קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ, this nuance is not present in the basic meaning of either קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ or קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת 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 פָּרַד חָרָם פָּרַד פָּרַד: “the Lord your God has stiffened his [i.e., Sichon’s] will” (Deut. 2:30) by analogy with the relationship between the compound adjective קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ and the causative phrase קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ “they stiffened their necks” is unacceptable, for in both causative phrases the clear contextual implication is not mere determinism but outright rebellion against God and His authority. This fits the meaning of the compound adjective קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ “stiff-necked” (cf. also the regular adjectival usage in Deut. 31:27), but surely not the meaning of the compound adjective קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת 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 (Deut. 7:24 / קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ) / קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ. Cf. e.g., Exod. 7:3). Thus Deuteronomy 2:30 has nothing to do with the usage of the compound adjective קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ. The usage of the feminine singular quasi-construct form קְשַׁת רוּחַ in this compound adjective is in accordance with the usage of the compound adjective יְחָרָם יְחָרָם “unfortunate” (Job 30:25), while the usage of קְשַׁת רוּחַ is similar to its usage in the construct phrase קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ “source of bitterness” (Gen. 26:35). Thus the tendency among some modern scholars to emend קְשַׁת רוּחַ in 1 Samuel 1:15 to קְשַׁת רוּחַ “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 (though the personified use of יְחָרָם “hands” as presumably referring to the span between the two extremities—cf. the semantically similar compound adjective יְחָרָם יְחָרָם “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 קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ as “haughty (lit., haughty of eyes).” Note that a distinction must be made between the compound adjective קְשַׁת רוּחַ קְשַׁת רוּחַ “arrogant (one)” and the similar-sounding nominal construct phrase לָוָן וְלָשׁוֹן בַּלּוֹן “arrogance” (Prov. 21:4). For this distinction, see n. 31 above.
5. THE COMPOUND ADJECTIVE IN UGARITIC—ONE CERTAIN EXAMPLE

Regarding ḫib ḫiqnʾi “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):\(^100\)

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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 נִקְשֵׁב (listed above).

87 This compound adjective refers here to the tree-crowns and is parallel to נָבִיבִים “the tall ones.”

88 For the usage of both this compound adjective and its compound adjective antonym נֶקֶשׁ נָבִיבִים “generous, benevolent,” see n. 55 above.

89 See n. 60 above.

90 See n. 60 above.

91 נָבִיבִים 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 4QGenʾ 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 נִקְשׁ (listed above as part of four different compound adjectives) are to be analyzed as the quasi-construct form of the adjective נְקֵשׁ “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 נְקֵשׁ “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 נְקֵשׁ נָבִיבִים! תְּכַנֵּס “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 נִקְשֵׁב (Isa. 24:7) of the adjective נִקְשׁ “happy” vs. the regular plural construct form נִקְשֵׁב נִקְשֵׁב of the participle נִקְשׁ “one who rejoices” in the phrase נִקְשׁ נִקְשֵׁב נִקְשׁ “those who rejoice at my misfortune” (Ps. 35:26).

96 Note these are all four occurrences of the two forms נִקְשַׁב / נִקְשֵׁב (listed above as part of two different compound adjectives) and are to be analyzed as two quasi-construct forms of the adjective נִקְשׁ “low” in the masculine singular and feminine singular forms, respectively.

97 For this epithet of Balaam as an antiphral euphemism (חֵסֶף = חָסֶף) in parallelism with the compound adjective נִקְשׁ נִקְשׁ 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 נִקְשַׁב = נִקְשֵׁב (listed above as part of three different compound adjectives) and are to be analyzed as two quasi-construct forms of the adjective נִקְשׁ “knowledge” as a singular noun with abstract suffix -ָו and the usage of the compound adjective נִקְשׁ נִקְשׁ 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 p “pupil” and its Biblical Hebrew cognate נִקְשַׁב (found six times in parallelism with its A-word נִקְשׁ “eyes”
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 pīya . . . šapātum šagimmati . . . šaqātum rešāya . . . rapaštu iratī . . . šaddiḥa aḥāya . . . ana rapšī kimati “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 enqi tibbišu “the god Ea in his wise heart . . .” (Descent of Ishtar: 91);102 kabittu bititu “heavy tribute”;103 kabtu nir bēlūtiya “the heavy yoke of my rule”;104 mupparša Anzā “the winged Anzū”;105 ellūti ebbūti sirqīšina tamtaḥḫar “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” // lemmu zirziru “wicked dwarf-locust” (SAA 3, #4, 16: 24–28);108 ebba sāma ḫurāṣa “pure red gold” (AfO 18, 44: r. 21);109 ruššā ḫurāṣa “ruddy gold”;110 limḫaṣki Ea ina dannati rittišu “May the god Ea strike you (the worm) with his strong hand!” (CT 17 50:23).111
7. THE REVERSE-ORDER ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN BIBLICAL HEBREW—A FEW ISOLATED CASES

“yellow gold” (Ps 68:14; "many hunters" (Jer 16:16; next to "many fishermen" in the same verse); "many women" (Prov 31:29).

8. THE REVERSE-ORDER ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN UGARITIC—A FEW ISOLATED CASES

ksp wyrq hrṣ “silver and yellow gold” (KTU 1.14 i 52–ii 1 [restored]; iii 22, 34; v 34–35 [restored]; vi 4–5 [restored], 17–18); l ymt śps y rh w n’t šnt t’l “for (all) the days of Šapšu and Yariḫu and the beneficial years of ‘Ilu” (KTU 1.108.26–27). The Ugaritic phrase thrm / zhrm ‘iqn’im [țiḫurima / zhuhrima ‘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). The two contexts are as follows: wʾatn mhrh lʾabh ṣp ksp wrbt hrṣ ‘išh zhrm ‘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 1.24.19–22); wbn bḥt ksp ṣhrṣ bḥt thrm ‘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 1.4 v 18–19, 33–35).

9. THE SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION IN AKKADIAN—A FEW ISOLATED CASES

bēlet nišī rabīt Igigī “(the goddess Ishtar), mistress of humanity, the greatest of the Igigi-gods” (RA 22, 172:2, 4); emqīti emqēti ammarat nišī “the wisest among the wise women, the supervisor of humanity” (KAR 158 r. iii:7).

112 For some additional cases, see Joüon and Muraoka 2006, 488 (§141b).
113 Cf. Ugaritic ksp wyrq hrṣ “silver and yellow gold” (cited in section 8 below). In Akkadian, this phrase usually occurs in the regular noun-preceding-adjective order ḫurāṣu 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, 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 thrm / zhrm 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 ṣb / ᵐb and Ugaritic thrm / zhrm [țiḫurima / zhuhrima]. 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, 129 (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, 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 קְטַנֵּי־ and קְטֹן־ in Biblical Hebrew:

1. "But I am only a Benjaminite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel" (1 Sam. 9:21);
2. "Four (creatures) are among the tiniest on earth" (Prov. 30:24);
3. "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 Ugaritic is undoubtedly the following divine epithet of the goddess ʿnt: n ʿmt aḥt b[1] "the loveliest of the sisters of Ba’lu" (KTU 1.10 iii 10). Compare the other (nonadjectival) form of this divine epithet in the same text referring to the same goddess: n ʿmt bn ʾaḥt b[1] "the lovely one [i.e., loveliest one] among the sisters of Ba’lu" (KTU 1.10 ii 16).

Somewhat less certain is the case of the human epithet n ʿmn ʾmq nšm (KTU 1.17 vi 45), which is perhaps best translated "O handsome one (ʿAqht), 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 ʾmq 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 ʾib ʾiqnʾi 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.

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121 The possibility that in both its contexts the Ugaritic phrase ṣhrm / ẓhrmʾiqnʾim (KTU 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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**THE UGARITIC COMPOUND ADJECTIVE '.fb 'iqnʾi “LAPIS-LAZULI-PURE”**

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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–Ugarit.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**

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(1) l . ym . hnd (2) l ‘ pn . ‘mṭmr (3) bn . nqmp‘ (4) mlk . ṭgr
(5) bhtm . ṣdm . d . ytn (6) mlk l . ‘bdmlk (7) w . l . bnh . ū . l (8) bn . bt . mlk (9) ū . l . bn . šrdth
(10) ū . l . bn . āmhth
(11) d . iḥb . ‘bdmlk (12) b . bnh . l . bnh . hwt (13) ytn . ‘bdmlk (14) bhth . ṣdh (15) ‘m‘rḥ
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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.  
On this day, (2) in the presence of ʿAmmiṯtamru, (3) son of Niqmêpaʿ, (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 ʿAbdimilku (7) and to (8) his sons, whether to (9) sons by the daughter of the king, (10) or to sons by his freeborn wives, (11) or to sons by his female servants, (12) the one whom ʿAbdimilku will prefer (13) among his sons, to that son (14) ʿAbdimilku may give (15) his houses, his fields, (16) and his pasture lands.

(16) Moreover ʿAbdimilku, (as regards) (17) his sons, as (18) he wishes he may dispose (of his property) to them. (19) If ʿAbdimilku 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 (27) his sons by his freeborn wives (28) or his sons (29) 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. 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 Geʿez, the G-stem verb is attested as a verb of speaking: baʾālu/bâlu “to pray to, beseech” in Akkadian (CAD, B, 2; AHw, 101) and behla “to say, speak, call” in Geʿez. 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”—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.” In the Jewish Aramaic dialects (Babylonian, Palestinian, Biblical), the G stem expresses the intransitive notions of “to hurry” or

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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). 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, 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.

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, so I will present the thesis only briefly here. Psalm 2:5 reads:

אָז יְדַבֵּר אֵלֵימוֹ בְאַפּוֹ וּבַחֲרוֹנוֹ יְבַהֲלֵמוֹ׃

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 יְבַהֲלֵם 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 transitive and take a personal direct object—I would argue instead that יְבַהֲלֵם 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 יְדַבֵּר אֵלֵימוֹ (“he speaks to them”). 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 גוֹיִם נַחֲלָתֶךָ וַאֲחֻזָּתְךָ אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ

“Ask of me, and I will give the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your portion.”

In other words, what we have in the form יְבַהֲלֵם 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”)
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):

An estate quickly acquired [Q: בֵּהְלָה 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 מְבֹהֶלֶת 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 ἐπισπουδαζόμενη (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 "facilitate[e] the death of [the] father. "25 However, the mere "lack of blessing" (ךְ לֹא תְבֹרָךְ׃) mentioned in the second half of the line hardly seems commensurate with a notion of patricide.

18 E.g., Fox 2009, 672–73; Steimann 2009, 414, 418, 422–23; Walke 2005, 148; McKane 1970, 539; Toy 1977, 392. With regard to the Ketiv, a qal verb בַּחַל 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 ב.) But the lack of an attested piel form makes the proposal of a pual participle difficult. Other suggestions based on a root בלח would 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 b in nabālā, ‘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 (ᵊבבל) that is different from the MT (בבל), 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; 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 "בבל is glossed as ἐπισπουδαζόμενη μετὰ ἀνομίας [wealth/possessions] gotten hastily with lawlessness."
23 E.g., Deut. 21:15–17; Num. 27:8–11.
24 E.g., Walke 2005, 152.
25 Steimann 2009, 422.
A further difficulty with the interpretation of מְבֹהֶלֶת 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. 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, מְבֹהֶלֶת נַחֲלָה 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 נַחֲלָה “portion” that is being described as מְבֹהֶלֶת. 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 שׁיָר, a term that also relates to the realm of inheritance rights. The most common usage of שׁיָר 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. 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.

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:

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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 שׁיָר 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” (akin “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; 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.

21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

22 They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD—and their descendants as well. (NRSV)

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*:

They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for [כִּבְשַׁלָּה]. (NRSV)

The nominal form כִּבְשַׁלָּה 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.
petuit 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 יֵלְדוּ לַבֶּהָלָה) 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 בֶּהָלָה 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 בֶּהָלָה 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. 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.

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 

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 

e 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 

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, 

and also congenial (philo-meidéa), because she appeared from genitalia (médén).

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. 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. 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.

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

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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. 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. Others, invoking the telephone effect, 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 “Kytherea,” 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. Most interesting for our argument below is the evidence that this “Cypriot” or “Paphian” lady (as she was called) 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. 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, 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. 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. Hesiod’s verses also play with the goddess’s relationship with the sea, as reflected in her epithets “Limenia,” “Euploia,”

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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 *prḏ*, with a feminine adjective *prāḏit*, 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*.


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.


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 imagery (Hesiod also plays on the words for genitals, mēdos, 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), 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; and Aphrodite’s above-mentioned association with the sea and seafarers and with birds in general, especially doves and sparrows (see fig. 24.1)—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).

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/. Chantraine suggested this difference could have been the product of poetic license, with a vowel shortening to fit the metrics of the verse. 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.
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., Pierrone-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*. 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? 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 *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*. 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). Hephaistos is also involved in the creation of the first woman, Pandora. He most famously fashions the superhuman armour for Achilles at the request of the hero’s mother, Thetis, much as Kothar fashions the bow of Aqhat. 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: “Please, see to a gift for Lady Athirat of the Sea, a

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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 *qṭr* and “incense” (cf. Hebrew *mequṭṭeret* “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.
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 prom-
inent figure of Phoenician Ashtrt (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 “Kythereia” appears is important for my argument. As shall become evi-
dent, “Kypris” and “Kythereia” are late additions to the epic repertoire. These epithets were among the inno-
vations 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 Kythereia appears first in the Odyssey, twice, and in Hesiod, but not once in the Iliad. Often
accompanied by the epithets ”fairly-crowned” (εὐστεφανὸς Κυθέρεια) and “Cyprus-born” (Κυπρογενὴς
Κυθέρεια), it stands as an alternative proper name for the goddess, not an epithet (never “Aphrodite
Kythereia”). In archaic times it also appears in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite and in a verse by the ele-
giac 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 adjective
form Kythereia, 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 “Kythereia,” moreover, appears almost invariably in the
formula “well-crowned Kythereia” (some times ἱστέφανος “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 “Kythereia” 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]).
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;
33 Cassio 2012.
34 Homer, Odyssey 18.194; 8.291; Hesiod, Theogony 196; 1008; 198. Cf. Apollodoros, Library 2.1.3 (= Hesiod, Aegimios 3);
Homer, II.H. Aphrodite 6, 175, 287; Theognis 2.1386. Only twice in extant tragedy: Sophocles, fr. 847 (Radt); Aeschylus, Sup-
pliants 1032.
35 E.g., Apollonios of Rhodes, Argonautika 1.742; 3.108; Nonnus’s Dionysiaka (passim); Oppianos of Apameia’s Kyngetika
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 *Homer 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 “Kythereia” 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 *phoînix*, 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 *Kythêros*, 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 (Kythereia) seems to have played a key role. Whether the title “Kythereia” really came from the island or was attached to the goddess independently by etymological inference, there was a projection of “Phoenician-anness” on the island inseparable from Aphrodite-Kythereia.

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

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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 Louden 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 *Kyprogenés/Kyprogenēia* (e.g., Hesiod, *Theogony* 199; Homer, *H.H. Aphrodite* [h. 10] 1) also appears with Kythereia.
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 Tsartzopoulou-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. Κόθηρος (K 255 = p. 142 [Billerbeck ed.]; cf. Aristotle fr. 521 Rose). Cf. the notes there to other mentions of the same, including the adjective “Porphyrous.”
44 Cartledge 2002, 182.
45 Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnika*, “Κοθήρου τοῦ Φοίνικος,” s.v. Κόθηρος (K 255 = p. 142 [Billerbeck ed.]). Not the same referent as Κόθηρος, an Athenian deme, which occupies the following entry in Stephanos.
Sparta—a tradition alluded to in the *Iliad*. 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. 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 KOUSOR: 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 *kṯr*, 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. In Philon’s account, Khouros 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, Khouros (Χοῦσώρ), devised formulae and spells and prophesies. 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 Melilichios. 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.

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:

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46 Homer, *Iliad* 3.436–46 (not mentioning Kythera); cf. Pausanias (3.22.1), who situates there the cult to Aphrodite Megonitis (“of the union”).


49 BNJ 790 [= FGrH F2 (Kaldellis and López-Ruiz 2009)] = Eusebius *P.E.* 1.10.11–12. Philo’s Khouartthis in *P.E.* 1.10.43 (BNJ 790 F10) is probably another variant of the same name and character.
In both cases, it is unquestionable that the figure has roots in Canaanite Kothar. 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 interpretation 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. In turn, the identification of Khouso/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 *ptḥ “to open,” thus again betraying a Canaanite or Phoenician mediation.

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. 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.

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. She appears in Philon’s Euhemerized cosmogony (surprisingly, still as a goddess) under the name Baaltis. For Philon she is the same as Dione and a sister of Ashart and Rhea, all of whom become wives of Kronos/El (much like Athirat/Asherah and ʾIlu/El in the older Canaanite tradition).}

50 BNJ [= FGrH] 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 adaptations 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.
54 See Van Rompay 2011 for more details.
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 Ashart, 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 kṯr, generally vocalized kōṯaru. This vocalization is facilitated by the transcription of the Ugaritic name in syllabic (Akkadian) script as ku-šaru, transcribing /kōṯaru/.61 His double name (kṯr-w-ḥss) 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 Χουσώρ (Khousōr), reflects a Phoenician 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 ου in our Greek sources. If we look at the name Kythereia (Κυθέρεια), 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

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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).
61 Huehnergard 1987, 141, 210 (/kōṯaru/).
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 ó (*kawṯar > Ugaritic kōṯaru). 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).
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).

Ruipérez (1956) provides archaic epigraphical evidence. See Fox (1996, 46–47) for similar sequences in other languages. Franklin (2015, 477) notes the shortypsylon in Kinyras and Myrrha (vs. long vowel in their Semitic versions) supports the equivalence of Kythereia/Kothar/Khousor.

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.

Our case reflects both, if we have /ā/ > /ō/ in *kawṯar > Ugaritic kōṯaru.

E.g., Segert 1976, 472 §36; Fox 1996, 38.

See Fox (1996, 40–41) for the relative chronology.

Cf. the cosmogony attributed to Mochos quoted above. Oulomos is mentioned later in the text, again in the company of Khousos. 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.
structured 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: kōṭaru > *kōṭār). 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 kušɔr (open long /o/). What matters for our case is that until the seventh century, if not later, the pronunciation kušār or kušɔr 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 /ē/ 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/Kušɔriy(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 kōṭaru (< *kawṯar) > *kōṭār
> Phoenician (kōšār? >) *kušār > kušɔr; (f) *kušār-iy(y)a / *kušɔriy(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 /ē/. 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, Kýthēra, 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., Heraklea, and divine names, e.g., Posydaeja, 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., Ἐνυαλίς (Ares), Πότνια (various goddesses), Παίον (Apollo).
76 ku-te-ra (Κοθνατα?), ku-te-re-u-pi (Κοθνευπα?) (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 Κυθέρεια ("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., Kythēre (Κυθήρη), Kytheirē (Κυθειρή), and Kythēriās (Κυθηρίας), and, conversely, forms with short /e/ applied to the island’s name when needed, as in Kythērēthen (Κυθηρέθην, "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/ēta 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 kōṭarī(y)a or Phoenician kuṣarī(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 kitū/kitinnu; Ugaritic/Phoenician ktn; Hebrew ktn), adapted in Greek as khiton (already in Mycenaean ki-to). More problematic is the Ugaritic /th/ (t) we see in kōṭaru; 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 Aphroditē ("smile-loving Aphrodite"). Cf. other "artificial" epithets, such as eusaptēreia instead of the "real" but metrically less convenient eupaptēreia (= "pater-ja). Both Kythēreia and eusaptēreia used a "ready-made" -eia ending (< *-esja) (Cassio 2012, 416–17).
79 LSJ, s.v. Kōṭērea and Koṭērea.
80 E.g., the name Poulydamas in Homer artificially lengthened to avoid the metrically unviable Polydamas.
81 E.g., Kādmos < kedem?; khitone < kuttonet; Zydýk < sadik? (Philon in P.E. 1.10.13); Zophasēmín < shophē-shamayim (Philon in P.E. 1.10.2), all likely Greek adaptations from Northwest Semitic. The different possible transcriptions do not know from which forms within the dialectal or chronological spectrum. Cf. Masson 2007.
82 Cf. Ugaritic Aṭirat = Phoenician/Hebrew Asherah; Ugaritic šl; Hebrew/Phoenician šl; Aramaic šl ("three").
83 Cf. Franklin (2015, 478), for whom this equivalence (Ugaritic t/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 /θ/). Phoenician, Punic, and Aramaic inscriptions transliterated it with a plain taw (t/). E.g., Phoenician gtn = Ayyāθaw (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 tēt (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 > khitone; bēt-’el > baitylos). Cf. Astour 1967, 140 n. 2.
BACK TO MYTHOLOGY: KYTHEREIA AND THE KOTHARAT

THE KOTHARAT

West already suggested that "Kythereia is in origin a female partner of Kothar" and that "Kothar does have feminine counterparts in the Kōṯarātu, 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 Yarikh and Nikkal-Ib." The bride and groom are two moon deities, namely, the male West Semitic moon-god Yarih 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 Kōṯarātu!
    filles de Hullēlu, les resplensissantes,
    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 Kōṯarātu.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., lṭpn (=ltpn), an epithet of El, and ʾil ʾd 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. 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 ARAMAEOAN KY THEREIA?**

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.

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. 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. 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-

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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 Judeans (2.104.3).

93 Oppianos, *Kynegetika* 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

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 Kuthari(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) “Acydalian mother,” identifying her with the Graces through the allusion to their sacred fountain in Akidalios, 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, Kythéreia 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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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

יָגוֹמַר נָא רֵעַ רְשֻׁעִים
ton קָדֹּן צְרָכוּ

Let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
and establish the righteous.

Psalms 12:2

וַגוֹמַר שֶׁהָיוֹתָה כִּי גָּמוּר חֵסֵי
cי מִסְפּוֹר אָמְנוֹת מַכִּין אֲדָם

Save, O Yahweh, for the faithful have come to an end,
for the trustworthy have disappeared from humanity.

Psalms 77:9

וַגוֹמַר לְצִהל חָסְר
gמַר אֵמוֹר לְדָר וֹר

Has his faithfulness ceased forever;
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, 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
I will call to God ʿElyōn, to ṢEl, gōmēr for my sake.

Psalm 138:8a
Yahweh yigmōr on my behalf. 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 gēmār עלי in Psalm 57:3 (“der es zu meinen Gunsten vollendet”) and of ייהוה יגמר בעלי in Psalm 138:8 (“JHWH wird meine Sache führen”). This understanding of gēmār 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.

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.” On the basis of this theory, Dahood proposed understanding gmr hd in KTU 1.2 i 46 as “Vindicator Hadd,” and he translated gēmār עלי in Psalm 57:3 as an epithet: “Avenger.” As Aicha Rahmouni shows, however, Dahood’s analysis, which is based on a contextual reading of the psalms in question, is unconvincing. 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.” 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. Since the Akkadian cognate gamāru, which shows the development from “to complete” to “to annihilate,” provides a sufficient explanation for the semantics of gēmār in Psalms 57:3 and 138:8, recourse to the etymology of גמל is unnecessary.

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...
1.2 i 46; 1.6 vi 16). 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 gmrd and gmrhd and syllabically as 'ga-mi-rad-du/di (PRU 3, 116, lines 8', 11'), and '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 'gi-im-ra-du represents a qitl nominal form of the root GMR in construct to the divine name Haddu, the /h/ of which has been lost by elision. This name, which is based on an abstract nominal formation, can be compared to the Hebrew name גומיר, a hypocoristic of the same root from a qutl base. '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.”

The verbal element in 'ga-mi-rad-du presents three possibilities. It could be a substantivized stative adjective of the qatil base, a participle of the qāṭil base, or a suffix conjugation verb of the qatila type. The qatila option is made plausible by the syllabic spelling of the name ygmr (KTU 4.134.5; 4.635.42) as ig-mar/ma-ra-im (PRU 3, 48, lines 4, 7), which indicates that the prefix conjugation form follows the yiqtalu pattern to which the expected corresponding suffix conjugation pattern is qatila. Comparison with Biblical Hebrew renders the qatil stative adjective the least likely possibility; verbs appearing as G active participles are unlikely to attest qatil stative adjectives. Brent Knutson opts for the third possibility and takes this name as an epithet formed from the participle gamiru.

The variation in the alphabetic spellings gmrd and gmrhd 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/. Gröndahl lists a total of twenty-four names in Ugaritic that have the divine element - (h)d. Nineteen of these twenty-four lack the /h/. Interestingly, in each case, the retained /h/ immediately follows a liquid consonant: ilhd, hlhd, gmrd, ytrhd, dmrhd. Dmrhd is particularly significant because it shows the same variation as gmrd/gmrhd; it appears as both dmrhd (KTU 4.75 vi 7) and dmrda (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 crisis.” 14 Hos. 1:3. 15 See the substantive gamiru, “strength,” gamirušu, “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-ḫa-lum/za-ki-ra-ḫa-am-û), and expresses uncertainty that these are suffix conjugation verbs. 17 See Gröndahl 1967, 132–33. 18 Ibid., 133. This list contains gmrd but is missing gmrhd.
234, line 16), and ši-im-rad-du (RS 25.423:5). 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/. This evidence suggests the existence of a name that employs a divine epithet consisting of a qātatīl participle of gmr plus the divine name Haddu. In other words, the Ugaritic onomastic evidence suggests the possibility that the participial form 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. 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., ḫa-bi-IMM, ḫābi'-haddu).

The two literary attestations of GMR both appear with reference to Baʿlu in the Baʿlu cycle. The first attestation appears as an epithet of Baʿlu in a broken passage of tablet 2 (KTU 1.2 i 46):

```
[ ][ ] ʾan . rgmt . l ym . bʾlk . ṣad[ ]
 ʾad[ ] nkm ʾpt ʾhr . .
 ḥ[ ] wt . gmr hd . lkny[ ] ...
[... w]ord of gmr 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). ʾIlu agrees (lines 36–38), thus angering Baʿlu, who apparently then attacks the messengers (lines 38–39). After being subdued by ʿAnatu and ʿAthtartu, 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 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.

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23 Ibid., 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 ḫ- 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 ḫ-. In other cases, the /h/ is either completely lost, with resulting vowel contraction (only at Alalakh), or lost and replaced with a vocalic glide. Thus Old Babylonian Amorite names attest to dialectical 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 dialectical 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 Ba’lu cycle, the substantive *gmrm* appears in a simile describing the combat of Ba’lu and Môtu (KTU 1.6 vi 16–22):

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... yt’n . k gmrm     They attacked (?) each other like gmrm.
mt . ‘z . b’l . ‘z .    Môtu was strong, Ba’lu was strong.
yngḥn k rūmm .       They butted each other like wild bulls.
   mt . ‘z . b’l . ‘z .  Môtu was strong, Ba’lu was strong.
yntkn . k bṯnm       They bit each other like serpents.
   mt . ‘z . b’l . ‘z .  Môtu was strong, Ba’lu was strong.
ymsḥn k lsmm .       They pushed (?) each other like runners.
   mt . ql b’l . ql     Môtu fell, Ba’lu fell.
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The interpretation of this passage is complicated by difficulties regarding the words *yt’n*, *gmrm*, *ymṣḥn*, and *lsmm*. The root of the first verb, *yt’n*, is uncertain. Formally, it could be a tD of the verb *‘YN* “to eye,” but since the parallel verbs (*ynḡṅn, yntkn, ymsḥn*) 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. 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. 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. 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. 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, *rūmm* “wild bulls” and *bṯnm* “serpents,” however, most commentators see this word as a depiction of a running animal of some sort. 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. 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. 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 *lʾarṣ*, “to the ground.” This verb also appears exclusively with divine subjects. It is not clear, therefore, either that *msḥ* can be predicated of animals or that *lsmm* denotes a type of animal. Despite the fact that “runners are not generally combatants,” 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

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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 gmrm, many commentators understand this word as a kind of animal based on the parallelism to rūmm and bṯnm. 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 Sznyzer, and Andrée Herdner to take gmrm 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 gāmiru, 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, gmrm, 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 bʿl “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 gmrm 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).
38 de Moor 1971, 234–35; 1987, 97.
40 de Moor 1971, 235.
41 See Smith (1994, 314 n. 176), who similarly suggests gmrm refers to human warriors.
42 Caquot, Sznyzer, and Herdner 1974, 268 n. b.
43 CAD G, 34.
44 Dietrich and Loretz 1987, 21.
45 CAD G, 25.
47 Korpel 1990, 497–98.
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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 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

אָמַר אֶל-כָּבוֹד הָרָעַת
עַל אֲחֵר שֹׁלֵה יָדָך
וְהוָשַׁעֲנֵי יִנָּךְ
יְהוָה יָנָר בּוֹדָך
יְהוָה חָסֵךְ לְעֹלָם
מַעְשֶׁה יְדִי אֲלֵי תְרֹח

Thou wilt preserve my life.
Against the anger of my enemies, you will send your hand,
and your right hand will save me.
Yahweh ygmrr on my behalf.
O Yahweh, your faithfulness lasts forever;
do not forsake the works of your hands.

The central interest of this passage is the deliverance of the speaker from איבים “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 gmr 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 gmr 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 suppliant names the god to whom he cries for help:

Psalm 57:3

אֲקָרָא לָאלָהֵיָא עַלְיוֹן
לְאָלִי גָּמַר נְעֵי

I will call to God ʿElyōn,
to ʾEl, gōmēr 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 understandmsgmr 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 gmr as an epithet for Baʿlu/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 גמריה also appears in Lachish 1.1 and is attested in Punic as gmr and in Elephantine Aramaic as gmryh (Benz 1972, 103, 297).
49 Pss. 7:10; 12:2; 77:9.
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 ʾi, [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 אלהים עליון (v. 3), the psalmist voices a petition: "let him send from the heavens and save me; let him taunt 55 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 חֵרֵף points to a conceptual progression and structural symmetry between the epithets of verse 3 and the petitions of verse 4a. The first epithet, ʿElyon, 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse 4a</th>
<th>Verse 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ישהל משמשי ויהשוני</td>
<td>אלהים עליון</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send from heaven and save me</td>
<td>God ‘Elyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>חרף שארפי</td>
<td>אל גomer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taunt the one who would crush me</td>
<td>‘El Gomer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To a greater extent than Psalm 138:7–8, this passage provides substantial support for seeing a parallel between גמר 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 גמר in literary Ugaritic likewise depict Baʿlu acting as a warrior.

Another potential use of a different nominal formation of this root appears in Ezekiel 27:11. The word יִמְרָא there has puzzled interpreters, who have generally understood it as a gentilic for an otherwise un-

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54 Dahood’s (ibid., 2:49, 51) revocalization as עלי—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 עלי (1 Samuel 1–5) and גומר (Samaria Ostracon 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 ‘Elyon, to Annihilator ‘El, Most High.”

55 The SC form יִמְרָא in verse 4b is often thought to be either corrupt (Gunkel 1986, 247) or a precative 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.\textsuperscript{58} The LXX and Peshitta, however, both translate this word as “guardians” (φυλάκες/ɲtrym). While it is customary to see these readings as reflecting שמרים,\textsuperscript{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

| a | פְּרַס לוד וּלְדֵי הוֹרֵל | Persia and Lud and Put were in your army, |
| b | אָנַּשׁ מַלְחֹמִךְ | your men of war. |
| c | מַגְּנֵי וּבֶלַּכְּ | Shield and helmet they hung in you. |
| d | הָמָה נַעֲנֵה הָרַדְרַד | They gave you honor. |

Ezekiel 27:11

| a' | בֵנֵי אָרוֹד וּהוֹרֵל עֹלֶה הַמָּכָּה | The sons of Arwad and your army were upon your walls all around, |
| b' | נְגָרִים מִבּוֹנֵלָדוּלָד | and gmr/dm were in your towers. |
| c' | שְׁלָחוּנָה וּלָכְּ הַמָּכָּה | Their shields they hung upon your walls all around. |
| d' | הָמָה כַּלַּלְלַי פִּי | They perfected your beauty |

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 נגרים) 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 gr-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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{62} To the other shared attributes of these deities can now be added a shared epithet: gāmiru/גֹּמֵר “the Annihilator.”

\textsuperscript{58} See Zimmerli (1983, 46) for an overview of proposals.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} CAD G 1956, 23–24.
\textsuperscript{61} See the survey of evidence in Smith 1990, 49–55.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 22–24, 161–62.
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THE ROOT GMR AND A SHARED DIVINE EPITHET


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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 (rpʿym). 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 (ʿštrt) and Edrei (ʾrdʿy). The two locations are not only central to the rule of king Og (ʿwg) but are also tied to the rule of a Ugaritic deity known as Rāpiʿu, who apparently shares some relation to the Rephaim and whose name is cognate with the Hebrew term rpʿym. 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 Rāpiʿu. My analysis shall consider Og and Rāpiʿu’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 Rāpiʿu and the Rapaʿūma 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. 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

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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 cattle and timbers. 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. These two cities were apparently central to the operations of the kingdom where Og is said to have resided. The use of the root יֵשׁ + ב (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” (אר בחרות) 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, thus highlighting its function as a place of military mobilization. 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. 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. This factor becomes more important as we consider the Ugaritic understanding of the Rapaʿūma where the royal dynasty is envisioned as having Amorite origins. Furthermore, the term Rapaʿūma is used in the Ugaritic texts to denote dead kings. 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. 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.

5 Ps. 22:12; Amos 4:1.  
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 “מורי and likely relates to Akkadian amurr[u. The Sumerian designation is MAR.TU, meaning “west” as one of the four cardinal points, thus originally indicating “western” 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 ‘amr (DULAT, 72), rendered syllabically KUR a-mur-ri (Nougayrol 1968, 335), for the kingdom of Amurr[u 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 ‘amr/KUR a-mur-ri were geographical designations, and (2) Akkadian amurr[u and Hebrew “מורי were ethnic designations (Whiting 1995, 1232). In Hebrew “מורי signifies the earlier Levantine populations displaced by the Israelites. It is in this latter sense (i.e., West Semitic people 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 Rapaʿūma on the basis of the plural form r’pāʾūm 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-ʾāʾum slightly complicates matters in attesting an a/i vowel pattern. For a fuller discussion and defense of my choice of vocalization, see McAffe 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 Šaʿd, 4 km NE of Tell ʿAṣṭara.”
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 Ṛāpīʾu 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 Ogygios 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 Ṛāpīʾu (residing in ‘Aṭtartu and Hadraʿyi) and his association with the Rephaim/ Rapaʿūma, 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: hʾg ytbqšn hʾdr, which Röllig translates “der machtige Og wird mich rächen.”22 An immediate difficulty with this reading is the attachment of the article on a proper name, thus hʾg "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 hʾdr “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.
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 Ogygios 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).
22 Röllig 1974, 2.
23 Ibid., 6.
24 Starcky 1969, 262.
25 Teixidor 1972, 431.
26 Spronk 1986, 211.
the Asheroth” (wayya’ab’dû ‘et-habb’ālim w’et-hâ’āšerôt) 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 h’g 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 Röllig’s interpretation, the first two lines would read:

(1) [ . . . . . . b’] r’n ’nk lhdy wkn hn ’nk škb b’ren zn ’sp bmr wbbdl[ h . . ]
(2) [ . . . . . . ] lt ’rn zn wlrzg ‘šmy h’g’zt bqšn h’dr wblk dr [b . . ]
(1) [ . . . . . . in the sarcophagus, I myself alone. Now look, I am lying in this sarcophagus, gathered with myrrh and bdellium[m . . ]
(2) [ . . . . . . the cover 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 Röllig and Starcky’s {ytbqš} must be read as {z}, thus {h’gzət}, which Cross believes to be a certain reading.29 He therefore interprets h’gzət as a participle of the root ‘gzət attested in Aramaic meaning (1) “to be feeble, weary, infirm, old” and (2) “that which is left behind,”30 and he suggests translating ‘šmy h’gzət “my decrepit/mouldering bones.”31 We render Cross’s transcription and translation of the first two lines as follows:

(1) [’nk (PN and titular) škb b’ren ] z’n ’nk lhdy wkn hn ’nk škb b’ren zn ’sp bmr wbbdl[ h]
(2) [ w’m kl ’dm ybgq lpt’h ] lt ’rn zn wlrzg ‘šmy h’gzət bqšn h’dr wblk dr [bn ’lm]
(3) [ mk prs ] w’mdy ’dn mkm wrkm {wdrkm} ylkt br’bm’ [ ]

(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 Röllig 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 [hā’šabbim].”
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 Röllig’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.
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. 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 ḫʾg “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.

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.” 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.” Pardee has correctly emphasized that the biblical tradition places King Og after the heroic age, since he is said to be mīyyeter hāʾrāʾīm “from the remnant of the Rephaim.” At face value, this comment distances Og from the ancient past and places him firmly within a historical framework. 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.” 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.”

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. 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 Rāʾiʾū in ‘Aṭṭartu and Hadraʾyi and his association with the Rapaʾūma, 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 ‘ereš barzel “bed of iron.” Several scholars interpret King Og’s bed of
iron as a reference to his sarcophagus, or similarly, a dolmen. Support for the sarcophagus interpretation comes from Phoenician sources, in which a sarcophagus is routinely called a *msk* "bed, couch," that is, the resting place of dead kings. 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." 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. 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.

Alan Millard remains doubtful of these interpretations and defends taking the object in question as an actual bed. On a practical level, he wonders whether ancient readers would have understood *ʿer*š *barzel* as a sarcophagus, especially given the problems modern interpreters have had in supporting this view. 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." Unfortunately, Millard never fully addresses the function of this bed in the narrative of Deuteronomy. Maria Lindquist proposes it was a "battle trophy signaling the utter defeat of this colossal king at the hands of the Israelite warrior god." 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. 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. 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 *ʿereš barzel* of Og was indeed

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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 Ahiram) 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 Zarpaniti 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. 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.

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.”

**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’ūma appear in numerous passages throughout mythological and epic literature, including the well-known Rapa’ūma texts, as well as in a few ritual texts. 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 ʿAmmurāpi (‘mrpʾ). The name means “the divine uncle is a healer” or “the divine uncle is Rāpi’u,” taking rpʾ as an active participial form of the root rpʾ “to heal.” Support for this interpretation is found in the Ugaritic syllabic spelling “Am-nu-ra-bi,” or the Akkadian vocalization ḫammurabi. W. H. van Soldt regarded the Akkadian form to be of West Semitic origin. As he reasoned, the first element ʿm “people, clan” was a commonly attested component of Amorite, Ugaritic, and Hebrew names but was altogether foreign in Babylonian. 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 ḫ hammurapi sometimes written with the BI sign? Van Soldt explained it must have arisen from a Babylonian popular etymology, whereby the incomprehensible -rāpiʾ (West Semitic “healer”) was changed to the comprehensible -rabi (Babylonian “to be great”). In contrast.

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58 Hübner 1993, 90–92.
60 Doak 2012, 94.
61 For a defense of vocalizing this form as a plural substantive meaning “healthy ones,” see McAffee 2019, 195–200.
62 The Baʿlu cycle (KTU 1.6 vi 46), the Kirta epic (KTU 1.15 iii 3, 14), the ʾAqhatu epic (in the epithet dnʾil mt rpʾ “Dānʾīlu man of Rāpiʾu”), the Rapaʾūma 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 rpʾ (see Brown 1985, 115–48). For a defense of the traditional understanding of this root, see McAffee 2019, 192–95.
65 See Schaeffer and Nougayrol 1968, 463, 486.
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 rpʾiʾars “Rapaʾūma of the earth/underworld” // qbs dtn “assembly of Ditānu.” KTU 1.15 iii 13–15 of the Kirta epic reads:

(13) mʾid rm [ krt] [Kirta] is greatly lifted up
(14) b tk rpʾiʾar[s] amidst the Rapaʾūma of the earth,
(15) b ṣhr qbs dtn in the gathering of the assembly of Ditānu.

We follow earlier interpreters who suggested the rpʾiʾars refer to the divinized dead of the Ugaritic royal dynasty.68 Simon B. Parker took the rpʾiʾars 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 ) qrʾitm rpʾiʾars You have been called, O Rapaʾūma of the earth,
(10) qbʾitm qbs ddʾn You have been summoned, O assembly of Didānu.

Here the rpʾiʾars // qbs ddʾn both introduce (lines 2–3) and conclude (lines 9–10) a listing of the former or ancient Rapaʾūma (rpʾim 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 rpʾiʾars, 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-an-u72 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 Rapaʾūma 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 Rapaʾūma 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 Rāpiʾu was believed to relate to the Rapaʾūma in Ugaritic thought. Their relationship appears to be on full display in KTU 1.108, where Rāpiʾu is introduced in the first line:

(1) [hl]n yšt rpʾu mlk ʿlm Look, may Rāpiʾu, king of eternity, drink,
w yšt (2) [ʾil] gṯr w yqr may the powerful and honorable god drink,
ʾil yṯb b ṣtrt the god dwelling in ʿAṭtar tu,
(3) ʾil tpt b ḥdrʾy the god dwelling in Hadāʾyī,

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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.
The divine nature of Rāpīʿu is confirmed by the parallel expressions calling him an ʿīlu (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 ʾIlu.74 In his view, the protective aspects of the deity on display in this text correspond to ʾIlu’s care for mortal men depicted elsewhere.75 For instance, Loewenstamm cautions that ʾIlu is the only deity in Ugaritic depicted as having the power to heal an ill person. Since the theonym Rāpīʿu essentially means “healer,” it would seem reasonable to conclude it must in fact be ʾIlu. 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 ʿṢāpušu and the Rapaʾʿūma who are invoked to reverse its poisonous effects. Comparison is also made to the scene of ʾIlu’s feast in KTU 1.114.1–4, which is thought to resemble the presentation of Rāpīʿu in KTU 1.108. The correspondence, however, is not exact. In KTU 1.114 ʾIlu 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 Rāpīʿu to drink, if indeed we are justified in reading ʾyṣṭ as a jussive, “let him drink.”76 Rather, the imagery associated with Rāpīʿu better comports with that of the feasting Rapaʾʿūma of KTU 1.22 i who are feasting in the company of ʾIlu. Unlike Rāpīʿu or the Rapaʾʿūma, ʾIlu is never invited or summoned to feast. The equation of ʾIlu with Rāpīʿu in this text is therefore unlikely.

Rāpīʿu has also been identified with Baʿlu, as has been proposed by Johannes C. de Moor and followed by others.77 He believes rpʿ u mlk ʾlm functioned as an epithet for Baʿlu, thus indicating a chthonic manifestation of the storm god.78 De Moor corroborates this feature with Baʿlu’s journey to the Netherworld found in the Baʿlu cycle, but his attempt to find chthonic manifestations for Baʿlu in this context is unconvincing. It is true that Baʿlu is said to be dead (mt) when the lads find him after his contest with Mōtu (KTU 1.5 vi 9; 1.6 i 41), but afterwards he is described as once again being alive (hy) (KTU 1.6 iii 20). Such a description defies a chthonic identity. Neither can one easily appeal to Baʿlu’s supposed healing powers as they are thought to be found in the ʾAḥqatu epic. In that story, the goddess ʾAnātu promises to give the hero ʾAḥqatu the power to count years k b ʾl k yhwʿ “like Baʿlu when he is revived” (KTU 1.16 vi 30). The necessity of reading yhwʿ as a passive form in this context rather suggests he is the revived, not the reviver.79

Yet another candidate for Rāpīʿu has been offered by Alan Cooper. He believes there are three characteristics associated with this deity that link him to Raṣap: (1) his healing powers, (2) his association with the Netherworld, and (3) his role as patron of the king.80 Indeed, Raṣap 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 Rāpīʿu’s identification.81 Be that as it may, Raṣap’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

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76 The overall context is an invitation to a divine feast.
77 E.g., Spronk 1986, 188.
79 See McAfee 2019, 41–42, where I argue ʾAnātu is claiming to possess the power of Baʿlu’s revivification.
80 Cooper 1987, 4–7.
81 For a discussion of Raṣap’s benevolent and malevolent qualities, see Xella 1979–80, 145–62; 1999, 701; Lipiński 2009, 81–89.
well-being rather than healing. 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.

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 ʿAṯtaru and Hadraʿyi (KTU 1.108.2–3). Baruch Margulis was the first scholar to identify the connection between these two Ugaritic toponyms and the biblical cities Ashhtaroth and Edrei, both of which are associated with the reign of King Og as outlined above. The fact that Rāpi’u dwells in ʿAṯtaru led Pope to consider equating him with the deity Milku, also said to reside in ʿAṯtaru in KTU 1.100.40–41. The god Milku is widely attested throughout Phoenician-Punic texts as Milkashtart (mlkʾštrt), 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). Pardee concludes the triple link between the deity Milku (KTU 1.100.40–41), the epithet mlk ʿlm (KTU 1.108.1), and the place name ʿAṯtaru indicates the following: Rāpiʿu “the healer” functioned as the title of the god Milku, whose residence was ʿAṯtaru and who was also known by the epithet mlk ʿlm “king of eternity.”

The epithet mlk ʿlm “king of eternity” has been the subject of much discussion. The term ʿlm “eternity” has been shown to be associated with netherworld imagery. We find in the Phoenician inscription of Ahiram reference to the king’s setting up his stele b ʿlm “in eternity” (KAI 1:1), as well as Panamuwa from Zincirili’s raising up a stele for Hadad b ʾlmy “in my eternity” (KAI 214:1). We might also mention the more recently discovered inscription of Kutumuwa from Zincirili, who also set up a monument in the chamber ʾlmy “of my eternity” (line 2). 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.

Rāpiʿu 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 Rapaʿuma. Such a connection is found toward the end of this same text where Rāpiʿu’s powers are essentially transferred to them:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{rpʾu mlk (20) [ʿlm ymży]k} & \quad \text{Rāpiʿu, king of [eternity brings] you,} \\
\text{l tšk l ʾrš(21)/kl[k]} & \quad \text{to your success, to (what) [you] are requesting,} \\
\text{[b yd ]rpʾ mlk ʿlm} & \quad \text{[by the hand of] Rāpiʿu, king of eternity,} \\
\text{bʾz (22) [rpʾi ]ʾmʾkʿ lm} & \quad \text{by the strength of [Rāpiʿu], king of eternity,} \\
\text{b ḏmrh b (23)ʾ[anḥ]} & \quad \text{by his power, by [his] mi[ght],} \\
\text{b htkh b nmṛṯ} & \quad \text{by his (paternal) rule, by his splendor;} \\
\text{l r(24)ʾ[pʾ]ʾrṣʾ zk} & \quad \text{your strength is that of the r[pʾ]ʿum of the earth,} \\
\text{ḏmrk lʾḥ(25)nk} & \quad \text{your power, your might,} \\
\text{ḥtkk nmṛtk} & \quad \text{your (paternal) rule, your splendor,} \\
\text{b ṭk (26)ʿugrt} & \quad \text{in the midst of Ugarit,} \\
\text{l ymt špš w yṛḥ} & \quad \text{for the days of Šapšu and Yariḫu,} \\
\text{(27) w nʾmt šntʾ il} & \quad \text{and the pleasant years of ʾIlũ.}
\end{align*}
\]

82 He cites a stele from the Oriental Institute in Chicago: ršpw k3b.f nṯr ʾ3 dyf n.k ʾnhnsnb rʾ 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 Atṭartu and Haddu. I find this proposal unconvincing.
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 Rāpiʿu as the chief ranking member of the company known as the Rapaʿūma, 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, Rāpiʿu is the healer, while the Rapaʿūma are the healthy ones.⁹⁰ Again, this aspect of Ugaritic royal ideology is especially seen in the royal name 'Ammurāpiʾ where the divine head of the clan is called Rāpiʿu, or "The Healer." The theology associated with Rāpiʿu and the related Rapaʿūma 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 Rapaʿūma 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 Rapaʿūma 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 Dānʾīlū as “man of Rāpiʿu” in the 'Aqhatu epic. This epithet identifies Dānʾīlū as a protégé of Rāpiʿu, the chief ranking member of the Rapaʿūma, 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 Rapaʿūma 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 nisʿar miyyeter hāʾārāʾīm “left over from the remnant of the Rephaim”⁹² qualifies him with regard to the Rephaim in much the same way Kirta and Dānʾīlū 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 Rāpiʿu in Aṯtarṭu and Hadraʾyi from Ugarit confirms the authenticity of the tradition and therefore situates the historical memory of Deuteronomy and Joshua firmly

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⁸⁹ del Olmo Lete 1999a, 191; Pardee 2002, 193.
⁹⁰ We should note the significance of the use of the root rpʾ for healing in the sense of "preparing for burial." The form rōʾpʾīm 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 Rapaʿūma by name (i.e., Rāpiʿu), not simply the Rapaʿūma 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.

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95 del Olmo Lete 1999b, 1206.
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“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.” 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* ḪU BU UR RE E 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. 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: 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 yamina, ont dû se servir sur leurs biens: peut-être des notables autour du temple de Dagan à Tuttu, certainement ceux autour de Dagan de Terqa, villes cernées par des terroirs mār yamina.” 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. 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.

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* 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.

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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.” The occasion for Sammetar’s writing, then, was that Lupahum had arrived from Tuttul with a response for the king. 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 greet 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.

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 29–40 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.

Sammetar further stylized 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 (ū-še-er-di-ma . . . ú-bi-il . . . ú-bi-il), since the conjunction ē 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 ē in line 58, below; also the comment on the interpretation of ē 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 recall by Sammetar in line 40 most naturally seems to indicate that the immediately preceding lines were spoken by Lupahum ([še-[ma-am a[n-n]ē-’em ]Lu-pa-hu-un 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) was “not firmly fixed” (ūl 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 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!”

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. 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.

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!”

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 muḫḫûm 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 sikkûru to barricade doors or gates and turn back an enemy (cf. CAD S 257–58 sikkûru 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).
According to this interpretation the signs ḪU BU UR RE E, are not to be understood as a single word but rather as two words: Ḫubur rê. A resulting translation of the lines in question, then, is “Je les (r)enverrai au milieu du dispersement de leurs nids et le fleuve leur portera le coup final pour toi.”24 According to Anbar, then, Lupahum’s prophetic message alluded to the poem of Atra-hasis II:4, where humanity is described as upsettingly noisy to the gods: “The gods were disturbed by their clamor [ḥu-bu-ri-ši-na].”25 In addition to the fact that an allusion to Atra-hasis that construes the lemma Ḫubûrum in construct with qinnum would be surprising, the orthography indicating a reduplication of the final root consonant in this Old Babylonian letter would also be unusual.26 Thus, though Anbar’s proposal cannot be entirely ruled out, it does seem unlikely, and most subsequent efforts to deal with the signs ḪU BU UR RE E have not judged it to be convincing.27

A second option, credited to Michael Guichard, has increasingly found favor in treatments of this text.28 According to this interpretation the signs ḪU BU UR RE E are not to be understood as a single word but rather as two words: Ḫubur rê. A resulting translation of the lines in question, then, is “Je les (r)enverrai au milieu du dispersement de leurs nids et le fleuve leur portera le coup final pour toi.”24 The morpho-syntactic analysis behind this interpretation involves taking the first word, Ḫubur, as a designation for the underworld river and as joined to the preceding ina as a prepositional phrase. The second word, then, is rê, a construct or genitive form of the lemma rêʾûm, which in context would denote families, or clans, of the Yamina (rê qinnātišunu).25 The division of these five signs into two lemmata produces a very different image from that envisioned by Anbar. The rê qinnātišunu are understood to be the shepherds/leaders of the Yamina clans who are envisioned as being swept away (implicitly by the Habur River) to the underworld (Hubur), the word Ḫubur being taken as a pun for the Habur River.

Like Anbar’s proposal, this solution cannot be discounted; in fact, it has much more to commend itself than the proposed connection to the CAD’s lemma Ḫubûru B. At the same time, a few reasons for hesitation may be raised. First, as Charpin observes, the Habur River is not spelled anywhere else with two u-vowels than the proposed connection to the CAD’s lemma Ḫubûru B. In Kuyunjik texts are from Kuyunjik.

18 In the editio princeps, Durand understood the form to be related to the root behind the Ḫa-pārum, “a type of vagrant,” and thus translated “Je les (r)enverrai au milieu du dispersement de leurs nids et le fleuve leur portera le coup final pour toi” (Durand 1988, 427, 428 n. 4; followed by Charpin 1992, 24). This initial proposal, however, was abandoned in many subsequent treatments of this letter (e.g., Charpin 2002) as well as in Durand’s most recent treatment of this text (Durand 2012). It should also be noted that Heimpel has suggested, merely in passing in a translation note, that the signs might be connected to the root Ḫa-pārum “to encompass,” though he left the word untranslated (Heimpel 2003, 253 n. 240). Similarly, it is left untranslated by Sasson (1995, 601 and n. 7; 2015, 284).

19 Anbar 2007, 59. The translation of the Hebrew into English is mine.


21 Cf. CAD Ḫ 221 Ḫubûru B, which cites a single instance with the doubled final consonant (ḥu-bur-ri-ši-na in SAA III no. 32: r21), and AHw Ḫubûru(m)-II 352, which indicates another (ḥa-ba-šu, Ḫa-sā-šu = Ḫu-bur-ru) in CT 18 22: ii, 41–43. Both texts are from Kuyunjik.

22 Charpin 2002.


24 Charpin 2002, 25; followed by Nissinen 2003, 31; Durand 2012, 264. Notably, however, Durand’s translation retains the more literal meaning of qinnum as an animal’s domicile or nest: “Je les expédierai (d’abord) au Hubur faire paître leurs ‘nids’ et je te donnerai (alors) la totalité du fleuve!”

25 For the meaning of qinnum “family,” cf. Durand 1997b, 162 n. e.

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). Lastly, the turn of phase ṭe qinnātišunu seems awkward. In the context, it could literally denote the Yamina “shepherds” or “pastoralists,” but a synecdochic use of ṭe ūm might be somewhat unexpected given Sammetar’s descriptions of the Yamina elsewhere. 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. Thus ṭe 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 ḤU BU UR RE E preserve a purussûm-noun form (cf. rugûmmûm) related to the Akkadian verb ḫeperûm “to dig.” Semantically, purussûm-nouns from verbal roots often function as nomina actionis for typical or planned behaviors. The morphology of a form ḫupurrûm derived from ḫeperûm, therefore, would convey an activity such as “tunneling” or “burrowing.” And while the noun ḫupurrûm is, to my knowledge, otherwise unattested, it should be mentioned that another noun related to the verb ḫeperûm might be used elsewhere in the sources from Mari to designate digging implements.

If this assessment is correct, then the noun ḫupurrûm should be analyzed as a plural form in construct with the following noun qinnātišunu and the entire construct chain (ḫuppurû ṭe qinnātišunu) may be translated “burrows of their lairs.” The resulting image of this interpretation, then, would be that of an animal’s domicile. 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. 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.

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 of the region from the burrows of their lairs . . .  

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27 Additionally, while the use of ṭarâdûm + ina to mean “to drive into” is not impossible, judging from the attestation listed in CAD T 50-60 ṭarâdûm, there are not many similar occurrences; rather, most uses of ṭarâdûm 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 ṭe ūm is understood metaphorically to mean “leaders,” then the phrase is a strange, seemingly mixed metaphor of “shepherds” (ḳûnû) 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 Yahurrans, not to the Yahurrans. Let us kill the donkey! ‘” (32) ṣa-ni-tam “u-ra-nu-um ù LÜ.SU.GLÊŠ(?) (33) ṣa da-bi-iš (34) il-li-ku-nim-ma (34) um-[m]a-mi iš-tu [ši-t-i}m-ša] (35) si-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-u-ha-tu a-na ia-ah-ra-ur ni-nu (39) a-na li-ib-bi DUMU si-[ši-m]-a-al (40) i-na ni-ha-dii i n-[ši] ub-ma ANŠE ha-a-ri (41) i ni-iq-tu-ul). For ḫbrum, a Yamina term that approximates but is more specific than the general term for mobile pastoralists (ḫanûm), 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 GAG§560 notes the purussûm may “Übergang zu konkreter Bedeutung wie bei pirs.”

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 ḥafaṭ “excavation, burrow” and Classical Hebrew ḥapar “‘mole’ (cf. ḥapar “to dig”); Syriac ḥepra “pit, hole” or ḥp̄ara “excavation” (cf. the verb ḥ̄para “to dig, burrow”); and Old South Arabic (Sabean dialect) ḥfr “pit, well.”

32 See Durand 2005, 12, on the form ka-pa-ar-ra-tim. On the realization of ḫ as k at Mari, see the comment by Durand 1998, 133 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., MÚŠEN,ḤA 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,\(^\text{36}\) the phrase ḫuppurē qinnim in ARM 26.199 evokes the geography and fauna of the Euphrates River Valley.\(^\text{37}\) 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 aḫ Purattim and likened these inhabitants to insects living along the banks (rimmātum ša kišādim) that would be indiscriminately overwhelmed by the floodwaters of the river (milum ša nārim).\(^\text{38}\) 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,
\(^\text{35}\) 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,
\(^\text{30}\) He raised his voice (and) he scattered his lair,
He frustrated his intentions to the four corners of the earth.\(^\text{39}\)

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 enemy\(^\text{41}\) of the king. In particular, the ferocity of Addu in the storm is paired with an allusion to floodwa-

\(^\text{36}\) 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” (TI, MUSEN . . . se-er zuq-ti KUR nipi-pu). 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.

\(^\text{37}\) 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., MUSEN.HA ḫu-ri-im in ARM 26.229; see Durand 1997b, 273).

\(^\text{38}\) 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” is also noteworthy (cf. also Chen 2013, 51–53).


\(^\text{40}\) 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 hēmā and its use with storm-god imagery in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Isa. 66:15; 42:25; Jer. 23:19; 30).

\(^\text{41}\) 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.
“FROM THE BURROWS OF THEIR LAIRS . . .”  411
ters that will scatter (ā-pa-ar-ri-i) 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. 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 ḪU BU UR RE E 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 Ḫuburrûm 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”—used imagery drawn from the familiar landscape of the river valley in a prophecy against the Yamina.

APPENDIX: TRANSLATION OF ARM 26.199

1 a-na be-lī-ia
2 qī-bī-ma
3 um-ma sa-am-me-e-tar
4 ḪR-ka-a-ma
5 “lu-pa-ḫu-um LŪ a-pi-lum ša Ḫ-da-gan
6 iš-tu tu-ut-tu-ulšt ik-sù-dam
7 še₄-ma-am ša be-li i-na sa-ga-ra-timši
8 u-va-e-ru-šu um-ma-mi a-na Ḫ-da-gan [ša te[r-q ]d₃]
9 pi-iq-da-an-ni še₄-ma-am ša-a-ti
10 u-bi-il-ma ki-a-am i-pu-la-šu um-ma-mi
11 e-ma ta-al-la-ku ū-u-ub li-ib-bi
12 im-ta-na-[ḥ-h ]a-ar-[k]a₂₃-i₃-bi-si-bu-um
13 a₂₃ [d]i-im-tum [n]a-ad-nú-ni-kum
14 i-na i-di-ka i-il-Š[a]k u-tu-ut-ka i-il-la-ku
15 še₄-ma-am an-né-e-em i-na tu-ut-tu-ulši

42 Cf. Atra-šasis III:ii:48–51, in which it is the storm-Addu’s voice (rigrum) that signals the impending flood and thus motivates Atra-hasis 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 apilum 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.


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 apilum 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.
When he arrived from Tuttol, I conducted (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!”

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 Saggara-tum 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 their burrows of their lairs and the River will finish them off for you.’ [N]ow he should not swear a solemn oath without asking God.” This is the message that Lupahum spoke to me.

Two [days] later a qammātum-prophetess of Dagan at Ter[qa] came and spoke [to me, saying]: “Beneath chaff water flows! They are continually writing 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 laḫarum-garment and a nose-ring, so I gave them to her. She delivered her instructions in the temple of Belet-Ekallium before the high priestess, Ini[i]b-shina. I have sent to my lord a report [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).

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)” (ù-ša-er-di-ma, line 17). The subsequent forms, then, are treated as third-person forms: “he brought” (ù-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 apilum-prophet’s message from Tuttol (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).

The erasure seems to be best understood as the scribe’s efforts to avoid an error of omission, namely the ḪU sign.
Lastly, I immediately sent Abi-Epuh (to find) Yanšib-Dagan, the regular conscript from Dashran, (about) whom my lord wrote (with instructions) to cut off his head. That man was not found, so he put his household and his people into slavery. The next day a tablet from Yasim-Dagan reached me, saying: "That man has arrived here with me!" Let my lord write [to me] whether or not I should release his family.

58 ṣum ia-an-ṣî-ib-da-gan pi-ihr-im
59 LÚ da-aš-ra-an ša a-na qa-di-su na-ka-si-im be-li ṣiš-pu-ra-am qa-tam
60 a-na qa-tim a-bi-e-pu-û ṣa a-na qa-di-su na-ka-si-im be-li ṣiš-pu-ra-am qa-tam
61 'a-[na l]R-du-ti [m i]d-di-in i-na ša-ni-i-im uč-mi-im ṭup-pi ia-si-im-da-gan ik-š[u]-dam
62 [u]m-ma-mi lû šu-û ik-ta-ás-dam i-na-na-an-an-ni-tam la an-ni-tam be-li šu-pu-ra-[am]
63 ni-še₂ ᵃ-e lu-wa-aš-še-er
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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. 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 *heh mater* is that by Ian Young. 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 Pesher 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. 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) or it might occur as a mistake (i.e., as an Aramaism).

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., פֶרוֹעַ “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 -ā spelled with *heh* likely played a key role in encouraging the use of the *heh mater* to mark the suffix. 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-
mission of the text is correct. 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 -ō 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 -ō is part of the orthographic system used by ancient Hebrew scribes. In the MT, final -ō is sometimes marked with a *heh mater*, especially with particular names and/or titles, including *Pharaoh*, "Jericho," *Necho,* "Pharaoh," *Shiloh,* "Solomon," and as well as in certain common short words, specifically "where," thus "this," and "thus," and "here." In addition, *qal* infinitives absolute of etymological III-*waw/yodh* roots usually mark their final -ō with a *heh mater*.

It should be noted, however, that at least for the Leningrad Codex B19a (LC) the spelling of some of these words was not uniform and admitted of variations, such that we find יְרִיחֹּת and יְרֵיחֹּת (fifty-six times vs. once with *heh*), יְרִיחֹּת (four times vs. four times with *heh*), יְרֵיחֹּת near Hebron (once vs. once with *heh*), יְרִיחֹּת and יְרֵיחֹּת (eleven times vs. twenty-two times with *heh*), יְרִיחֹּת (twice vs. eleven times with *heh*), יְרִיחֹּת (twenty-four times vs. fifty-seven times with *heh*). In addition, *qal* infinitives absolute without *heh* occur in about a third of the total number of examples (thirty times in all vs. sixty-one with *heh*). Moreover, it is helpful to notice that sometimes the two spellings can occur in the same verse.

While the variation in the spelling of certain words seems to defy systematic explanation (as with יְרִיחֹּת vs. יְרֵיחֹּת in Ezekiel), in other cases one can perceive some patterns. For example, for certain words, such as יְרֵיחֹּת and יְרִיחֹּת (where, *“thus*" are spelled uniformly in the LC with *heh*), the spelling with *waw* was more common in later periods.

More interesting and relevant for our topic is the tendency for the spelling of final -ō to be informed, in part, by the spelling of neighboring words. 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 -ō 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* infini-

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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., יְרִיחֹּת in Exod. 3:17. While infinitives absolute (and construct) from etymological III-*waw/yodh* roots occur in other stems with final -ō, these forms are very rare and often marked with *heh* (e.g., the *niphal* in Hos. 10:15; 1 Sam. 3:21) vs. the only examples of the *poel* in Jer. 49:12. Note, too, at least one alternative spelling *כֹּה* (e.g., in Job 28:11; cf. Hos. 10:4). These examples were not included in the tabulations below.

10. E.g., יִרְמָא in Gen. 26:28.

11. In some cases, very common words such as *Pharaoh,* "Shiloh," "Solomon," as well as יִרְמָא "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, יְרִיחֹּת, according to this search: יְרִיחֹּת (Isa. 22:13); יְרִיחֹּת as a Qere to MT יְרִיחֹּת (Isa. 42:20); יְרִיחֹּת (Hos. 10:4). These examples were not included in the tabulations below.

12. E.g., יְרִיחֹּת and יְרֵיחֹּת in 1 Sam. 3:21; cf. יְרֵיחֹּת in Ezek. 40:10; יְרִיחֹּת and יְרֵיחֹּת in Jer. 49:12. Note, too, at least one alternative spelling with an *aleph* appears יְרִיחֹּת in Job 38:11; cf. יְרִיחֹּת, passim.

13. In 2 Kgs. 23:29, 33, 34, 35 and יְרִיחֹּת in Josh. 15:35, 38; 1 Sam. 15:1.2

14. E.g., יְרֵיחֹּת in Jer. 46:2; 2 Chron. 35:20, 22; 26:4 and יְרִיחֹּת 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-\textit{waw/yodh} roots with \textit{heh} seems to follow the tendency to spell all etymological III-\textit{waw/yodh} verb forms ending in a vowel with a \textit{heh mater} (e.g., the 3ms perfect \textit{הָיָּה}, the 3ms imperfect and related forms \textit{הָיָּה}; the ms imperative \textit{הָיָּה}; the ms active participle \textit{הָיָּה}).\footnote{The masculine singular passive participle \textit{יִיָּרֶה} is not an exception, since it ends in a consonantal \textit{yodh}. The fact that the masculine singular imperative is spelled with a final \textit{heh mater} instead of a \textit{yodh} suggests the spelling of the imperative is at least partially influenced by the spelling of the imperfect.} Given this tendency, it is the spelling of the infinitive absolute with \textit{waw} that seems particularly unusual. One might initially suspect the cases with \textit{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 \textit{waw} appear in the Pentateuch (in the earliest sources), 1 and 2 Samuel, First Isaiah,\footnote{E.g., 1 Isa. 6:9.} and Micah, as well as in later books, such as Jeremiah, Lamentations, and Ezekiel. Instead, I believe two interrelated factors influence the spelling with \textit{waw}: (1) proximity to other words, especially verb forms that end with a \textit{waw mater}, and (2) the graphic similarity with the masculine plural imperative.

Of the sixty-one spellings with final \textit{heh mater}, forty-two (69\%) are directly preceded and/or followed by a word (not including particles) with a final \textit{heh mater} (usually indicating -ט or -ד of an etymologically related finite verb form, as in the phrase \textit{יָּרֶה} \textit{יִיָּרֶה} “he even drew water”\footnote{In Exodus 19:13 the finite verb and infinitive absolute appear with \textit{heh}, though the infinitive absolute is preceded by ו. In 2 Kings 3:16, one finds the tetragrammaton directly preceding the infinitive absolute with \textit{heh}. These occurrences were not included in the count of forty-two.} ), but not by a word with a final \textit{waw mater}.\footnote{In four cases, the construction consisted of the infinitive absolute \textit{יִיָּרֶה} 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 \textit{יִיָּרֶה} followed by a finite form of the same verb (Ezek. 3:21; 18:28; 33:15, 16).} Of the thirty examples of the \textit{qal} infinitives absolute with final \textit{waw mater}, only fourteen (47\%) are preceded and/or followed by a word with a \textit{heh mater} but not by a word with a \textit{waw mater}.\footnote{16 Given this tendency, the appearance of the final \textit{waw mater} on a \textit{qal} infinitive absolute may be connected with the absence of a neighboring word with final \textit{heh mater} combined with an immediately preceding or following \textit{waw} conjunction (as in לָתֵי [Isa. 22:13]) or final \textit{waw} consonant (as in הָלָה לָתֵי [Isa. 59:4]).} 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 \textit{heh} to accompany finite verbs with similar graphic endings.

Comparison of the spellings with final \textit{waw mater} is even more striking: There are only five cases (8\% of the total of sixty-one examples) in which the \textit{qal} infinitive absolute with \textit{heh mater} is directly preceded and/or followed by a word with a final \textit{waw mater} but not by a word with a final \textit{heh mater}.\footnote{The examples are largely paralleled in the biblical DSS, though occasionally there is variation, as with הָיָּה הָיָּה in 4Q77 (4QNum) at Numbers 30:7 for MT הָיָּה הָיָּה in 1Qlsa at Isaiah 59:4 for MT הָיָּה. The word הָיָּה הָיָּה is probably better understood as “they will weep,” given the plural participle that follows. For the unexpected לָתֵי of Isaiah 22:13 in the MT, 1Qlsa has לָתֵי, while 4Q55 (11QPs) has לָתֵי and 4Q57 (4Qlsa) has לָתֵי.} On the other hand, there are eleven cases (37\% of the total of thirty examples) in which the \textit{qal} infinitive absolute with \textit{waw mater} is directly preceded and/or followed by a word with a final \textit{waw mater} but not by a word with a \textit{heh mater}.\footnote{22 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 \textit{heh} to accompany finite verbs with similar graphic endings.} The tendency seems to be well represented by Jeremiah 49:12, where we find the phrases יִשְׁה יִשְׁה “they will still drink” but then יִשְׁה יִשְׁה “(you who) should be entirely free of punishment” and יִשְׁה יִשְׁה “you must certainly drink.”\footnote{E.g., נַоֹֽאָה אַרְבַּע [Gen. 26:28]. Other examples of the \textit{qal} infinitive absolute with final \textit{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 \textit{waw mater} on a \textit{qal} infinitive absolute may be connected with the absence of a neighboring word with final \textit{heh mater} combined with an immediately preceding or following \textit{waw} conjunction (as in לָתֵי [Isa. 22:13]) or final \textit{waw} consonant (as in הָלָה לָתֵי [Isa. 59:4]).} In most cases, where the infinitive absolute ends with \textit{waw} and a neighboring word ends with a \textit{waw mater} too, the verb accompanying the infinitive absolute is a verb form ending in -ט. In
contrast, there are only two passages where an infinitive absolute marked with heh is close to a verb form that ends in -ū.\textsuperscript{24} The first of these passages, 2 Samuel 15:30 (עָשׂ וָלָלְכַבְּנַ), contains a preceding participial phrase (כְּלָלְכַבְּנַ) that could have influenced the spelling of the following paralleled infinitives absolute with heh.\textsuperscript{25} The second of these occurrences, in Isaiah 21:5 ( shalt be), is preceded by another verbal phrase with infinitive absolute (וּכְּלָלְכַבְּנַ).

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.\textsuperscript{26} In addition to the examples cited above, note that 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.

In addition, it is my suspicion that the spelling of the infinitive absolute with waw (e.g., בָּכָה) was also influenced by the spelling of the waw of the masculine plural imperative (e.g., בָּכָה).\textsuperscript{27} 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 imperative\textsuperscript{28} or a masculine plural imperfect or jussive.\textsuperscript{30} It is easy, I think, to imagine how the spelling of the masculine plural imperative form of a verb (e.g., בָּכָה)–or even the third common plural perfect form בָּכָה—would suggest to a scribe the possible spelling of the infinitive absolute in a similar manner (i.e., בָּכָה), 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., בָּכָה/בָּכָה and בָּכָה/בָּכָה), 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 וה�单ך וֹּכֶה... my inwards churn... I was severely rebellious.”\textsuperscript{31} And certain commonly occurring forms may have had a similar effect, as with וֹּכֶה “they were”\textsuperscript{32} and וההיִּנֶּה “it will certainly not be.”\textsuperscript{33} Such influence of neighboring words on

\textsuperscript{24} 2 Sam. 15:30; Isa. 21:5.

\textsuperscript{25} In Isaiah 21:5, the infinitive absolute with heh ( shalt be) is followed by the masculine plural imperative, which however is part of the following clause.

\textsuperscript{26} Influence of neighboring words on spelling is also found in other ways. E.g., the word מָרוֹא is spelled and pronounced as מָרוֹא due to proximity to מָרוֹא (see 2 Sam. 3:25; Ezek. 43:11).

\textsuperscript{27} 1 Sam. 6:12.

\textsuperscript{28} Perhaps also by the third common plural perfect (e.g., בָּכָה).

\textsuperscript{29} Isa. 6:9; Jer. 22:10.

\textsuperscript{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 (וּכְּלָלְכַבְּנַ) “they went along, weeping” [Jer. 50:4]), the infinitive absolute is etymologically related to the finite forms with which it is associated.

\textsuperscript{31} Lam. 1:20.

\textsuperscript{32} Ezek. 20:20, 24.

\textsuperscript{33} Ezek. 20:32. Note too וההיִּנֶּה “they will be” (Gen. 17:16) vs. וההיִּנֶּה (Gen. 18:18); וההיִּנֶּה “they will be” (Num. 29:13; 31:3) vs. וההיִּנֶּה (Num. 30:7); and וההיִּנֶּה they did” (Ezek. 29:20) vs. וההיִּנֶּה “he will certainly do” (Ezek. 31:11). In Jeremiah 15:18 one also finds וההיִּנֶּה, though without a finite form ending in waw in the same or neighboring chapter, and in Jeremiah 4:18 one finds וההיִּנֶּה without a finite form in the same or neighboring chapter. Overall, the infinitive absolute of וההיִּנֶּה is spelled with waw four times and with heh twice; by contrast, the infinitive absolute of וההיִּנֶּה 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., כִּי) in close proximity to the feminine singular imperative of כִּי (i.e., כִּי), especially where it can be construed as the prepositional phrase “for yourself,” as in Song 2:13, which reads: “arise for yourself [קָצֶה], my darling, my beauty, and come for yourself [קֵץ]”.

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.

**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. 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 ב “in it,” though the letters are difficult to read.

Furthermore, it bears remarking that where the 3ms heh suffix was thought to occur in these inscriptions (in אֲמָלִים “his bed” [lines 8–9] and אֲמָלִים “his redeemer” or “he redeemed him” [lines 11–12]), recent editions provide different readings: אִמְלָה “blessing” in lines 8–9 and the word “redemption” in lines 11–12. The other example of the simple waw may occur in the Siloam Tunnel inscription in וֹפּ “his friend” (in lines 2, 3, and 4), whose single mater has inspired much comment.

Blau (1970, 121) notes the Proto-Hebrew /s/ phoneme of פֶּסֶכ “to clap” is spelled with šin (at Job 27:23; Isa. 2:6) due to the similarly spelled root פֶּסֶכ פֶּסֶכ “to be enough.”

 Cf. כִּי in 4Q107 (4QCanT) 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 (Ketiv; Kets), 4:7 (Ketiv; Ketiv).

 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 הָלַע in the LC is spelled with a final waw in two manuscripts (Kernicott’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. הָלַע 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 הָלַע 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., הָלַע in Jer. 49:12 appears as הָלַע 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.


See, e.g., Tov 2013, 111 n. 194.


Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2004, 502; Ahituv 2008, 37; Gogel 1998, 156–57 n. 181. Although the letters may in fact represent re’ēw “his friends,” as many have suggested, it bears considering whether the word “friend, companion” really had two forms in ancient Hebrew. דֶּרֶךְ which with suffix was realized in the MT as דֶּרֶךְ (see Zevitt 1980, 19), and דֶּרֶךְ which was realized in the MT—albeit only once—as דֶּרֶךְ. Such a distribution would loosely follow the pattern of דֶּרֶךְ (from דֶּרֶךְ) at Genesis 47:21 (and elsewhere) and דֶּרֶךְ (from דֶּרֶךְ) at Isaiah 37:24 (and elsewhere). See Rendsburg and Schniedewind 2010, 192–93. Such an understanding of דֶּרֶךְ might be supported by the spelling of דֶּרֶךְ 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 Young and Driver. Additional possible cases of confusion involving a heh mater marking the 3ms suffix are also listed by Driver. The problem with some of these cases is that a possible feminine antecedent can be found. 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” (בֹּ). Here the shift in gender is either because the antecedent is the word “copy” (משנה) from the preceding verse or because the masculine grammatical gender is the default gender. 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 = חלות) 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” (ʼאלה), one wonders whether in the phrase (בְּבֶן) “when it (i.e., the ark) rested . . .” the heh could be construed as 3fs. Note similarly (싼ל) “its libation” in Leviticus 23:13, which seems to take as antecedent (בָּשָׂם) “lamb” from the preceding verse, though (מְנַחֵה) “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 [הִודֹה].’” Given the preceding feminine reference (“sister”) in parallel with “majesty,” it seems at least possible that (מודיה) should be construed instead as (הִודֹה) “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 (בְּנַחְלָה) “in its midst,” though the antecedent to the suffix would seem to be feminine (מִשְׁנֶה). 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., בֵּית in Num. 4:9; בֵּית in 2 Kgs. 22:5 [a defective form of the suffix whose pronunciation is made explicit in the marginal Qere spelling]; בֵּית 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 ḫā‘ but rabbinic tradition has a heh (லונ) in Gen. 26:25 but ḫā‘ 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 qames (🥶 in Gen. 49:15), in this case the following adjective also implying that the heh ending is the 3ms suffix. Andersen and Forbes do not list the example of (יה) in Habakkuk 3:4.
43 At Gen. 49:10 (مشاكل) “Shiloh” in the MT vs. (שִׂמְלע) “what is his” implied by the versions); 1 Sam. 14:27; 2 Sam. 21:1 (לב) “house of blood” in the MT for an earlier (בֵּית) “his house”); Isa. 30:33; Ezek. 43:13.
44 As in “hand” in 1 Sam. 14:27.
45 GKC (§135b) 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 (שִׁירֹה [v. 8]; וָאָהֵל [v. 10]). The reverse situation occurs with similar words in Ezekiel. At the end of Ezekiel 48:15 we find וֹתָר תְּבוּאָתֹה הבְּתוֹכֹה and the city will be in its midst; "where the antecedent to the suffix is וּבְתוֹכֹה "the remainder" from the beginning of the verse. The same thing happens in Ezekiel 48:21, where one reads the phrase וְהָיְתָה תְּרוּמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּתוֹכֹה "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. 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 [וָאָהֵל] had not departed [וֹלּ]." 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 Sira the same sequence of letters (比べ) 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 -א and the 3ms suffix. For example, the one occurrence of the noun שׁוֹכֹה (v. 8) has not departed [וֹלּ]." 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 Sira the same sequence of letters (比べ) 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]

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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, the occurrences in the MT seem to appear within certain parameters. The suffix with heh seems concentrated in certain texts, as Young 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 (הלא והלאו [v. 18]; והלאו [v. 15, 21]), or how the suffix occurs twice in Exodus 22 (ср. "his beast" [v. 4]; also attested just once in the preceding verse (v. 48). Similarly, note שִׁירָה "his song" (Ps. 42:9) versus שִׁיר "the song" (Pss. 42:9) versus שִׁיר "the 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.

[48] Sir 31:13, Ms B.
[49] On וָאָהֵל and the verse in general, see Kister 1999, 161; also Reymond 2018.
[52] See ibid., 230–31; 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; הבְּתָר in Jer. 4:23; Ezek. 48:18; הבְּתוֹכֹה in Ezk. 48:15, 21. On והלאו, see Baden 2022.
beast” (Exod. 22:4).53 הַבָּבֶה “he cursed him” (Num. 23:8) to הַבָּבֶה “curse!” (Num. 22:11, 17) as well as הַבָּבֶה “large tent” (Num. 25:8) and הַבָּבֶה “stomach” (Deut. 18:3 and with suffix הָבַּה in Num. 25:8); שָׁלֵּשׁ “its branch” (Judg. 9:49) and the similar-sounding (though not identical) suffix הָלֶּשׁ “its branch” (Pss. 10:9, 27:5) to שָׁלֵּשׁ “Sokoh” (passim); שֶׁלֹּשׁ “his aide” (2 Kings 9:25, with Qere שֶׁלֹּשׁ) to שֶׁלֹּשׁ “three” (passim); חַדָּה “. . . help” (Ezek. 12:14, with Qere חַדָּה to חַדָּה “I will scatter” in that same verse; קֻנָּה “his refuge” (Dan. 11:10) to חַדָּה “his strength” (Hab. 3:4); the last word also corresponds in its consonants to חַדָּה “Gaza” (passim).54

Sometimes the word with 3ms heh suffix has a byform with a final heh mater; thus שָׁלֵּשׁ “its branch” (Judg. 9:49) and שָׁלֵּשׁ “branch” (Judg. 9:48); שָׁלֵּשׁ “his end” (2 Kings 19:23 = יָשָׁלְשֹׁה in Isa. 37:24) and שָׁלֵּשׁ; שָׁלֵּשׁ “end”; שָׁלֵּשׁ “his help” (Ezek. 12:14) and שָׁלֵּשׁ “help” (passim; and cf. רָפָּבֶה “enclosure” Ezek. 43:14); שְׁבָּה “its lair” (Pss. 10:9; 27:5) and שְׁבָּה “booth” (passim); רְבִּישָׁה “his song” (Ps. 42:9) and רְבִּישָׁה “song” (passim).

In some cases, the 3ms heh suffix may have been encouraged by proximity to other words ending in a heh mater לְבָתָהוּ “where” his tent had been in the beginning” (Gen. 13:3): לְבָתָהוּ “his tent beyond . . .” (Gen. 35:21); לְבָתָהוּ “. . . his ass, and to a vine . . .” (Gen. 49:11); בְּעֵרָה “his beast” (Exod. 22:4) appears before בְּעֵרָה “burning” in the next verse; בּוֹרָה “in it all work” (Jer. 17:24); בּוֹרָה “in it all work” (Ezek. 31:18; 32:32); בּוֹרָה “and the city will be in its midst” (Ezek. 48:15); בּוֹרָה “all in it at night his song” (Ps. 42:9); בּוֹרָה “at night his song” (Ps. 42:9; 43:31) for (for “הַּהְוֶרֶת”) “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 הַלְדָּה at Genesis 26:25 appears as הַלְדָּה 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 הַלְדָּה in the LC corresponds to הַלְדָּה 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 הַלְדָּה in every occurrence in Genesis and sometimes outside it (as at Exod. 35:11). Similarly, the spelling הַלְדָּה is found only twice in Jeremiah, both in the same verse (Jer. 6:13); its first attestation is found as הַלְדָּה in eight manuscripts and its second in eighteen manuscripts.57

Note, in addition, that the spelling הַלְדָּה in LC at Leviticus 19:25 is found in at least four manuscripts with a final heh mater, thus paralleling the form הַלְדָּה, which appears in Jeremiah 2:3 and Ezekiel 48:18. Similarly, הַלְדָּה in LC at Ezekiel 48:8 is found twice in other manuscripts as הַלְדָּה, as in LC at Ezekiel 48:15 and 21. Another manuscript has הַלְדָּה at Ezekiel 48:10 for LC הַלְדָּה. 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 with the waw mater.
55 One example not explained above is לְבָתָהוּ “its lowland” (Josh. 11:16). Is it possible that this heh might be construed as a locative heh (cf. the similar presence of final -ō in הַלְדָּה [Ps. 44:27] and הַלְדָּה in Ruth 4:11)? The form לְבָתָהוּ “his treasure” (2 Kgs. 20:13 and Isa. 39:2) is difficult to explain.
56 Andersen and Forbes 1986, 183.
57 Similarly, הַלְדָּה is spelled הַלְדָּה 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 לְבָנָה in the LC is לְבָנָו 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 לְבָנָו “his vitality” in Deuteronomy 34:7 and its apparent interpretation as “its [i.e., the eye’s] fluid” [לֵחָה] 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 by forms containing a final heh mater or words that are graphically similar: לְבָנָו godlō “his greatness” (Sir 44:2 Mas [cf. לְבָנָו in Ms B]) versus לְבָנָו “greatness”; הרֹא יֶרֶך (Sir 43:1 Ms Bm [cf. וֹ הְרֹא in Mas]) versus וֹ הְרֶך “light”; and לְבָנָו lobno “its whiteness” (Sir 43:18 Ms B [cf. לְבָנָו in Mas]) versus לְבָנָו “white thing, moon”; הנָבָה ka’okpō “as he pressed” (Sir 46:5 Ms B) versus הנָבָה “it presses” (in Aramaic and Rabbinic Hebrew). In addition, the words with the 3ms heh suffix occur in proximity to other words with heh mater: קְמָא in Sir 10:13 parallels מְכוֹק in the preceding colon; הָה (sic) in 10:13 follows הָה in the preceding bicolon; לְבָנָו in 43:18 immediately precedes הָה.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 וֹ הְרֶך “his ox” and וֹ הְרֶך “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 vetšahmas “like its name” (Sir 6:22 Ms A), where the heh may be explained as marking a 3ms suffix, with וטָש as antecedent in its sense “instruction,” or as 3fs with וטר as antecedent but interpreted as a veiled reference to lady wisdom. The nearby words offer conflicting evidence: both וט and וטר are used. The suffix of וט in Sir 31:13 (Ms B) is likely 3fs.
60 Young 2001, 240.
61 See ibid., 239: וֹ הְרֶך “his [name]” NP 9 for MT וֹ תָר in it” NP 11, where the MT (at Exod. 20:10/Deut. 5:14) does not have a prepositional phrase, though the SP does (תָר), as does 4Q31 (4QDeut2) at Deuteronomy 5:11 (תָר), 4Q137 (4QPhyl J) at Deuteronomy 5:11 (תָר), cf. Jeremiah 17:24 in the MT (also in 4Q70 [4Qler1]), where a similar ambiguity pertains to הַב, 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 הַב 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 *-ו* was occasionally marked with a *heh mater* (as, e.g., in the traditional spelling of רעהו “Pharaoh” and שלמהו “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., read in 4Q135 [4QPhyl H] at Deut. 5:31 and 1Qlsa at Isa. 22:16; רעהו in 4Q13 [4QEzd] at Exod. 2:5), and those that do not (e.g., read in 4Q41 [4QDeut] at Deut. 5:3 and רעהו in 4Q1 [4QGen-Ezod] at Exod. 3:10). Among the nonbiblical scrolls, the writing of *heh* to mark *-ו* is primarily found in texts that do not exhibit QSP (e.g., רעהו in 4Q374 2 ii, 6; שלמהו in 4Q385a 1a-b ii, 5 and 1, 2), more rarely in those that do exhibit QSP (e.g., רעהו in 11Q11 ii, 2; read “here” 4Q382 9, 6).

Those scrolls that do exhibit QSP often use a digraph *waw-heh* to mark the final *-ו* vowel (e.g., read “thus” in 4Q163 4–7 ii, 21; read “here” 4Q137 [4QPhyl] at Deut. 5:3; רעהו in 1Qlsa at Isa. 9:11, passim; 1QM XI, 9, passim; רעהו “Solomon” in 4Q398 11–13, 1; and etymological III-*waw/yodh* infinitives absolute, such as בדרשה “conceiving” in 1Qlsa at Isa. 59:4 for MT רעהו [also reflected in 1Q8]).64 It is not surprising, therefore, that the 3ms suffix is also represented with the digraph *waw-heh* in 1Qlsa and the philology texts in places where the MT attests a *waw* or no suffix at all: רעהו (4Q128 [4QPhyl A] at Exod. 12:43, 44, both for MT רעהו; 4Q140 [4QPhyl M] at Exod. 13:3, corresponding to Samaritan Pentateuch [SP] רעהו, but nothing in the MT; 4Q137 [4QPhyl J] at Deut. 5:14, corresponding to SP רעהו, Nash Papyrus [line 11] רעהו, but nothing in the MT; 1Qlsa at Isa. 59:19; 62:8, both for MT רעהו; רעהו (4Q138 [4QPhyl K] at Deut. 10:18 for MT רעהו).65 The term appears twice in 1QIsaa (1Qlsa at Isa. 36:21 for MT רעהו; רעהו (at Isa. 40:11 for MT רעהו; רעהו (at Isa. 44:12; 63:1, both for MT רעהו; רעהו at Isa. 53:11 for MT רעהו).66 The digraph *waw-heh* also marks the 3ms suffix in two nonbiblical texts: 4Q219, II, 21; רעותהו his offering and his libation” (4Q219 I, 37); רעותהו “his watch” (II, 21); רעותהו “his will” (II, 29 and 32); רעותהו “from him” (II, 34) and in a calendrical text “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., read “first moonset after full moon” at least eighteen times in 4Q321).67 Note too the concentration of the suffix in certain passages, as in the case of בְּדֶרֶשׁ “by him, when he examines” (4Q266 8 i, 2 = read in CD A XV, 11) and in the phrase מַעְרָתָהו “its crop and its feathers” 4Q24 (4QLev) at Leviticus 1:16 (for MT מַעְרָתָהו).68

The suffix occurs on words that are graphically and phonetically similar to other words with the suffix. For example, the spelling of רעותהו “his friend” in the DSS (4Q258 [4QS] II, 2; 4Q266, 13, 4) corresponds to the spelling of the noun and suffix in the phrase רעותהו in its shouting” in Exodus 32:17 (attested in רעתהו in 4Q22 [4QpaleoExodus]).69 Similarly, the spelling with digraph in רעותהו “his libation” (4Q219 I, 37) corresponds

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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., read appears twice in 1Qlsa and מַעְרָתָהו three times.
65 In a few cases, the digraph appears as a mistake, as it corresponds with the 3fs suffix in the MT: רָעָהו in 4Q140 and מַעְרָתָהו in 4Q145, both at Exodus 13:10 for MT מַעְרָתָהו, in the former case where the word מַעְרָתָהו, “to days” is spelled with the same ending רָעָהו. 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 read “it” 4Q25 (4QLev) at Leviticus 4:14 for MT מַעְרָתָהו and SP מַעְרָתָהו. In this case, the antecedent is either a bull, רָעָהו, or a sin-offering, מַעְרָתָהו, the latter of which is obviously feminine. Young cites another possibility of מַעְרָתָהו at Isaiah 30:5 for MT מַעְרָתָהו, 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 הַרְעָהו in 4Q67 (4Qlsa) at Isaiah 58:13 for MT הַרְעָהו could be construed as another example, though it is also possible to read it as a 3fs suffix.
68 Note that רעותהו 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 read רעותהו 4Q266 8 ii, 6 (= read רעותהו in 4Q270 [4QD] 6 iii, 14).
with the spelling הַר “its libation” in Leviticus 23:13. ה (passim) and ה (passim) perhaps correspond with ה (Jer. 17:24), a spelling also found in the DSS version of this same Jeremiah passage (4Q70 [4Qfer]).

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 the heh suffix “his friend” and “his knowledge” in the DSS, since in the MT one finds הַדַּעַת “friend” and הַכֹּל “friend.” Note also הַלְה הַדוּמָּה “his young man” in 4Q52 (4QSam) at 1 Samuel 20:38 (for MT כֹּלֶהוּ is similar to כֹּלֶהוּ “young woman” (found frequently in the MT, though only once in the DSS [1Qsa at Isa. 7:14]).

The 3ms suffix with heh mater seems to occur in places where neighboring words also bear a final heh mater. For example, the phrase from 4Q266 8 i, 2 occurs just before the phrase הַלְה הַדוּמָּה “lest he prove to be a fool.” Similarly, מֹCompra his anger (4Q266 2 ii, 21, = מֹCompra in CD A II, 21) is likely immediately preceded by הַדַּע “it raged” (based on the parallel in CD); and הַדַּע הַדוּמָּה “his knowledge” (4Q266 8 i, 6, = הַדַּע הַדוּמָּה in CD A XV, 15) is preceded by the phrase הַדַּע הַדוּמָּה “until a full year, according to . . . .” In the Pesher to Nahum, the word הַדוּמָּה (hēlō “his (i.e., Manasseh’s) army” (4Q169 3–4 iii, 11) repeats the form of הַדַּע הַדוּמָּה “her rampart” from the preceding line of the text (which, in turn corresponds with הַדוּמָּה in Nah. 3:8). The word הַדוּמָּה “his war” occurs in the same line (4Q169 3–4 iii, 11). The word הַדוּמָּה is almost always found in the context of numbers carrying the feminine ending -ה, marked with a heh mater.

Another possible contributing factor for the use of heh for spelling the 3ms suffix, particularly for occurrences of הַדוּמָּה (4Q321, 4Q321a) and ה (4Q322, 4Q324), also presents itself. These calendrical texts are presumably connected with eastern, i.e., Babylonian, traditions. One, therefore, wonders whether the Aramaic spelling of the pronoun (resulting in forms such as הַדוּמָּה and ה) 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 הַדַּע הַדוּמָּה and הַדַּע הַדוּמָּה in Hebrew letters from the second century CE (e.g., רַכָּב הַדַּע הַדוּמָּה “his writer” and הַדוּמָּה הַדוּמָּה “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). Possibly corroborating the suggestion of Aramaic influence on הַדוּמָּה is the occurrence of הַדוּמָּה in one text (4Q325 1, 2, 4), which, according to Talmor, represents the verb “to enter,” of Aramaic origin, though other scholars offer different interpretations for this word.

### THIRD MASCUINE SINGULAR SUFFIX WITH DIGRAPH WAW-HEH IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

The spelling of the 3ms suffix with the digraph waw-heh, וה, like the simple וה is concentrated in certain texts and passages and occurs, in particular, on certain words. There is at least one example where a pre-
ceding spelling of the 3ms suffix with *heh* has possibly influenced the spelling of the suffix with the digraph *waw-heh* (i.e., *mēhe* [4Q219 I, 37]; note also בִּהְנָך [passim] and מֵהֵנָך [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* (8t-) 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 1Qlsa'. 77 In addition, one may note spellings such as מִמְשָׁכִיהוּ “like” (1QH IV 24) and מִנְשָׁמִיהוּ “cooing” (1QIsa’ at Isa. 59:11, 13 for MT בַּר and בַּר respectively).78 This kind of orthography is, in turn, presumably related to the more frequent digraph *yodh-aleph* in words such as אֶמֶם “because” (which occurs more than four hundred times in the nonbiblical DSS and more than two hundred times in the biblical scrolls); אֶמֶם “who” (fifteen times in the nonbiblical scrolls and more than twenty times in the biblical scrolls); and the first common singular suffix 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 -ו and -י 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 אֶמֶם emerged from “a vogue for archaisms.”82 If such *plene* spellings are construed as archaistic, then the spellings א- 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 א- with

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76 There are not feminine-marked counterparts to the nouns מִשְׁמְרָה, מִשְׁמֶרֶת in Hebrew. The feminine counterpart of מִשְׁמֶרֶת does not end with a *heh mater*. Note that the relevant words occur about half the time in the near vicinity of other words with *heh mater*: The phrase מִשְׁמֶרֶת "in it" is not directly preceded or followed by a word with a *heh mater* in 4Q128 (4Phyl A) at Exodus 12:43, 44 or in 1Qlsa’ at Isaiah 59:19; 62:8; nor is מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִשְׁמְרָה "his people" 1QIsa’ at Isaiah 59:11, 13 for MT בַּר and בַּר respectively.

77 Accordance lists the following examples, from texts exhibiting QSP and those that do not (such as 4Q381): אָנָף "to him" 1QS VI, 27; 4Q174 1–2 i, 6 (2×); 11; 4Q76 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 (4Phyl M) at Exod. 12:48; 4Q53 (4QSam’) at 1 Sam. 25:31; 2 Sam. 14:30, 33; 2 Sam. 15:4, 9; 1Qlsa’ at Isa. 3:11; 5:26; 36:22; 40:10; 44:14 (2×); 57:18 (2×); 59:16; מַעְרָא "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; 1Qlsa’ at Isa. 37:7, 10; 40:7; 44:1, 2; 65:8; מַעֲשָׂה "his anger" 1Qlsa’ at Isa. 42:25; מַעֲשָׂה "his people" 1Qlsa’ at Isa. 51:22, 63:11; מַעֲשָׂה "they answered" 1Qlsa’ at Isa. 59:12 for MT מַעְשָׂה. Note the similar forms found both in the DSS and MT. אַלָע "if" in 1Qlsa’ at Isa. 48:18 (= אַלָע); לְעֵד "ten thousand" in 1QM III, 16 (= נָפָה) and אָפָה "then" in 4Q163 11 ii, 4 and 4Q423 6, 3 (= אָפָה) (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 /-ו/, as in אֶמֶם "knowledge" (1QS VII, 4 = MT יָדָּו; מִשְׁמְרָה "canopy" (4Q321a V, 7 = MT מִשְׁמְרָה; מִשְׁמָה "knowledge" (1Qlsa’ at Isa. 5:1, 12:2) for MT מִשְׁמָה (see Reymond 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 (כוה) helped distinguish this particle from Aramaic כַּה 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 -o 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 כ.selectAll (at Isa. 16:7) would not attempt to mimic archaic spelling with כוהו “his strength” (as at Isa. 44:12) but would rather have spelled the word with a simple heh suffix כוהו, 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 עירוה “his donkey” and סוותה “his robe” from Genesis 49:11 have influenced the spelling of בעירוה “his beast” in Exodus 22:4 and כסוטה “his covering” in Exodus 22:26. Similarly, note the similarity of מעזוה “his refuge”86 and כזה “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 הבאה "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 לחה נס in Deuteronomy 34:7 versus 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

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84 Ibid., 184.
85 Kutscher (ibid., 183–84) suggested the digraph waw-heh for the 3ms suffix emerged in 1Qlsa’ 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., כולה in the scroll = כולה in the MT, whereas כולה in the scroll = כולה 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 שניאו “its libation” in 4Q219 I, 37 vs. ד ביום 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.\(^9^0\) Needless to repeat, however, this single orthographic detail is not enough to determine the age of a text.

\(^9^0\) In some cases the evidence is ambiguous. For example, it is unclear whether the spelling *בֹּה* “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 *בֹּה* in the 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 *בָּ* (SP at Exod. 20:10/Deut. 5:14 and 4Q41 [4QDeut+*] at Deut. 5:14) and *בֹּה* (4Q137 [4QPhyl] at Deut. 5:14). Such is also suggested by the LXX at Exodus 20:10/Deuteronomy 5:14. Alternatively, the *heh mater* on *בֹּה* 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 [הַיּוֹם בָּ]. . . .” All the same, where the expressions “day of the Sabbath” (Exod. 20:8, 11; Deut. 5:12)) and “the seventh day, Sabbath” (Exod. 16:26) occur, the 3ms suffix is used to refer to the word “day,” not “Sabbath.”
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Wise, Michael O.


Wright, R. H. P.

Yadin, Yigael, Hannah Cotton, and Andrew Gross

Young, Ian

Zevit, Ziony
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 inscriptive 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 Qēṭeb 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 ʾĕlōhîm in verse 13. As to whom the ʾĕlōhîm exactly refer(s) constitutes a crux. While a number of recent English translations have adopted the proposal that the phrase ʾĕlōhîm ʿōlîm in verse 13 of the MT refers to the deified (or “preternaturalized”) dead—“I see a divine being/god coming up . . .”—they unanimously translate ʾĕlōhîm 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. 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

* 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” (ʾôbôît) and ghostly “knowers” (yiddîônîm) as “ventriloquists” and as “those in the know,” i.e., as mantic ritualists:

“Divine for me a revenant [ʾôb], 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 [ʾôbôît] and ghostly knowers [yiddîônîm] 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 Saul 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 [ʾĕlōhîm] 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 [theoûs] coming up out of the ground” (v. 13)

(VUL): And he 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)

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**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” (ʾĕlōhîm ʿôlim). 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 . . .” (theoûs ánibaîontas). Yet, prior to this viewing, she had already seen theʾôb 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,
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. At the outset of the story, when she first encounters Saul, the necromancer, rather than seeing the ʾōb or revenant of Samuel in verse 12a, shockingly recognizes Saul as her inquisitor incognito. 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 ânibainontas).

The same applies in this regard to the LXX in general and to the Latin Vulgate’s unambiguous plural (deos ascendentas) and, for that matter, to the MT’s ʾĕlōhîm ʿōlîm (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 ʾĕlōhîm (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 ʾĕlōhîm—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 ʾĕlōhîm 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 ʾĕlōhîm in verse 13 also as a singular. Yet, recent translators identify references to Samuel in verses 13 (i.e., ʾĕlōhîm) and 14a (e.g., “his appearance”) despite the fact that neither the woman’s quite audible supposed

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3 Tov 2015, 209, 223 and n. 46; and see Hugo 2015, 136, 138.
4 See Brooke et al. 1927, 96. The cursive includes adebjlnp*qtzw, 44 (Zittau) and 71 (Paris), for which see ibid., v–vi.
sighting of Samuel in verse 12 nor her description of the ‘ĕlōhîm 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 ‘ĕlōhîm 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 theoùs and deos, so the otherwise unsubstantiated singular rendering of ‘ĕlōhîm 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

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5 YHWH’s active participation in the initiation of the necromantic rite goes unstated unless YHWH was among verse 13’s ‘ĕlōhîm. 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 theoùs 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 escape 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 ʾĕlōhîm 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 ʾĔLŌHĪM: 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 ʿAlla 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. 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. 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.

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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”) Ḫaniqatu mentioned at Ugarit in an incantation text, *KTU* 1.39.18. This same female malevolent “Strangler” demon-ness is mentioned in the Arslan Tash amulets as ḫnt. Lewis (2011, 227 n. 112) notes the spell spoken against Ḫaniqatu at Arslan Tash, “the house I enter, you must not enter,” *bt hī tī bīt* and its parallel reflex in Ugaritic, *bt ʾūbū al tī* (*KTU* 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 daemons 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 (ḥā-rāʾāḥ) and amulet #2’s “The Exorciser of The Evil (One)” (ḥaggōʾ ār bā-rāʾāḥ); (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; (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 (Ahtartu) 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. 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)” < rāʾāḥ, 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. Ugarit’s multiple deities, daemons, 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 ʿAlla 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 ʾēlōhîm in verse 13. Rather than referring to a singular referent, viz., the dead Samuel, or to a plurality of gods but excluding Samuel, ʾēlōhîm may designate a veritable host of beings that also included the accessible dead among them. In this view, the ʾôb 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 ʾēlōhîm and could therefore also be considered a supernatural being in some meaningful sense that preternaturalism alone fails to convey. While allowing

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9 See Caquot (1978, 52) for an earlier proposal along these lines. For gāʿar 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 gāʿar conveys more than mere verbal rebuke—rather, “efficacious utterance” (see Zech. 3:2, where YHWH “exorcises haṣ-ṣāṭān”).

10 Schmidt 2013.

11 See too Nah. 1:4, where YHWH exorcises Yam.

12 Cf. inscription 4.6.3 line 1: | ṛʿt|. As the editors note, the form is probably a plural, a construct form, or a suffixed form of the noun ṛʾḥ “evil”; cf. Ahituv, Eshel, and Meschel 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 ʾēl could have been pressed into service rather than the plural form ʾēlōhîm. The singular ʾēl would more accurately and unambiguously designate Samuel as a lone divine entity.

As in the case of the inclusive view of verse 13’s ʾēlōhîm, 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” (ḥāʾōbōt and hayyiddeʾōnîm) 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 ʾôb in verse 8. Such a sub grouping would give expression to a more inclusive henotheistic cosmology. The problem here is the level of abstraction needed to render ʾēlōhîm with inclusive parameters sufficient to incorporate the dead. In any event, the construction ʾēlōhîm ʿōlîm in verse 13 would retain its numerically plural translation “gods ascending . . .,” while Samuel, or his ghost or ʾôb, 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 ʾēlōhîm 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 ʾēlōhîm, 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 ʾēlōhîm—and the LXX’s theòs, 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 ʾēlōhîm). While verse 13 mentions only those that ascended from below—the ʾēlōhîm ʿōlîm—perhaps to assist in retrieving Samuel’s ghost or ʾôb, 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 ʾilu and

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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.
ʾĕlōhîm or ʾēl, 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 ʾilu 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. The MT employs a variety of terms to designate various subgroups within the broader category of the Israelite dead: the ʾôbôt, yiddĕōnî, mētîm, ʾâbôt, rĕphāʾîm, 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 ʾôb, 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 ʾôb 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 hāʾôbôt and hayyiddĕ’ônim, 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 (ʾôb),” should divine (qāsam) for him an ʾôb—one that Saul would in fact name. Saul nowhere requests that she bring up Samuel’s ʾĕlōhîm (or, more fittingly, ʾēl) 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 ʾĕlōhîm ʿōlîm 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 ʾĕlōhîm ʿōlîm 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” (theoi . . . anibainontas), 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 tōʾar “(his/its) appearance” (toʾŏrô), 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 ʾēlōhîm, thereby leaving the immediate narrative more or less redundant, static, and ambiguous as to the number of sentient beings implied by ʾēlōhîm.

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 toʾŏrô 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 ʾēlōhîm as well as Samuel”’s ʿôb, who had all just arrived in two stages, “its (= the scene’s) appearance.” 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 ʾēlōhîm 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 ʾēlōhîm ʿōlîm can be rendered as either “gods ascending” or “a divine being/god ascending . . .” and on its own is therefore grammatically ambiguous, the term ʾēlōhîm nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible unequivocally refers to a dead person, whether a prophet or commoner, let alone a king. 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 ʾēlōhîm in Isaiah 8:19 as the deified, dead ancestors based on Samuel’s supposed status as an ʾēlōhîm 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 ʾēlōhîm 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 ‘ēl 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 ʾĕlōhîm, recent translators demonstrate a total disregard for the unequivocal, numerical plural, “gods ascending,” preserved in the ancient textual witnesses, the LXX (theoùs) 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 (ʾōb) 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 ʾēlōhîm (or as an ʿēl).

(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 ʾēlōhîm (“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 ʾēlōhîm (“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 ʾēlōhîm in verse 13, and in verse 14 Samuel, i.e., his ʾōb (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 ʾēlōhîm and as an ʾōb.

(9) Although recent translations render ʾēlōhîm 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 ʾēlōhîm 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 ʾēlōhîm as a numerical singular. To be sure, the MT,
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 ‘ʾĕlōhîm in verse 13. Likewise, the third masculine singular suffix on toʾōrô 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; ‘ʾĕlōhîm 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, ‘ʾĕlōhîm 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 ‘ʾĕlōhîm 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 theoûs of the Old Greek and, by implication, the numerical plural of the ‘ʾĕlōhîm 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 ’ôb in v. 8 and the Vulgate’s python).

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18 For an overview of Mesopotamian necromancy and the prospective participation of various gods such as Humut-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 ʾôb 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 ʾĕlōhîm (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 ʾôb. 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 ʾĕlōhîm, 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 ʾôb. It is worth noting here that Saul did not seek a “god” (or ʾĕlōhîm) 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 baʿālat ʾôb. 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 etemmu figurine (i.e., a clay ghost figurine) or a namtaru figurine (a clay messenger figurine) and the use of a hallucinatory drug, anamiru, 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 rûaḥ?) 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 “supranatural beings” and a specific member of the ʾôbôt, 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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Pondering Pandemonium

Pardee, Dennis

Ritner, Robert K.

Schmidt, Brian B.


Spronk, K.

Tov, Emanuel

Tovar, Sofia Torallas, and A. Maravela-Solbak

von Lieven, Alexandra

Waltke, Bruce K., and Michael O’Connor
PART 5 — HEBREW LINGUISTICS
AND VERBAL SYSTEM
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.
In this essay, I shall discuss some contributions of Egypto-Semitic linguistic comparison to the understanding of the Hebrew verbal system. I shall focus on three features of the BH verb that have parallels in AE: (1) the iterative and deontic functions of the BH w'əqɔtal 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 sḏm=ƒ, 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.” 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 WƏQƆTAL FORM

One of the persistent mysteries of the Hebrew verbal system is the form wəqɔtal (an SC form following the conjunction wə), used as an equivalent of the imperfective yiqtol (*yaqtulu) and the volitive yiqtol (*yaqtul). The use of the wəqɔtal form as an equivalent of yiqtol is parallel to the use of the form wayyiqtol as an equivalent of the perfective qɔtal, thus constituting a virtually symmetrical paradigm in BH from a synchronic standpoint:

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<td>Perfective:</td>
<td>qɔtal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imperfective:</td>
<td>yiqtol</td>
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On the surface, it seems as though the addition of the conjunction wə “and” somehow reverses the aspect of the clause, thus giving rise to the old name for the wəqɔtal 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 wəqɔtal and qɔtal. 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 wəqɔtal 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

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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 qɔtal, wəqɔtal, etc., I ignore the fact that the BH reflex of the root *qtl has an emphatic middle radical: qṭl. (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 wəqɔtal, 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 *wọqatal* form:

One must either admit, it appears to me, that *wọqatal* arose secondarily in Biblical Hebrew as a counterpart to *wayyiqtōl* (a notion that I no longer accept, as will be indicated below) or that it had a proto-Hebrew origin similar to that of *wayyiqtōl*. 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 *wọqatal* form as a frozen form, like *wayyiqtōl*, consisting of *wa-* + this form, which was aspectually neutral but took on the function of expressing non-perfectivity in contrast with *wayyiqtōl*. What might be termed the reigning hypothesis regarding the origin of the *wọqatal* 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 *wọqatal* 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 *wọqatal* 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 “precative perfect.” The Arabic form occurs in expressions such as *sallā allāhu ʿalayhi wasallama* “God bless and preserve him” (said after the name of the prophet Muhammad), *raḥimahu allāhu* “God have mercy on him,” and *laʿanahu allāhu* “God curse him.”12 Aside from these formulaic contexts, the form occurs in several other contexts in the Qurʾān and other Classical Arabic literature, such as the following passage from the Qurʾān, indicating that it was productive in Classical Arabic.

*tabbat yadā ʿabī lahabin watabba / mā ʾaġnāʿanhu māluhu wamā kasaba*

May Abu Lahab’s hands perish, and may he perish; / may his wealth and what he has acquired avail him not! (Qurʾān 111:1–2)

The BH “precative 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:

*bəqɔrʾiy ʿaneniy ʾɛlohey ṣidqi y baṣṣɔr hirḥabtɔ / liy ḥɔnneni y uwš əpillɔti y*

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 *wọqatal* 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

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9 Pardee 2012, 287.
10 Ibid., n. 11.
11 Eitan 1929, 25.
12 Cf. Wright 1896, 2.2–3.
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.”

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. 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 corroborating of Ginsberg’s hypothesis of the origin of the w’qatal 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 w’qatal.

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 w’qatal 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:

‘in kunta ibna hammāmin fa-huyyita 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 w’qatal 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. 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 w’qatal. 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, Carl Paul Caspari, Heinrich Ewald, and Samuel R. Driver. 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 w’qatal, 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.
17 Wright 1896, 2:3.
19 Jahn 1809, 197–214.
20 Wright 1896, 1:51, 2:1–24.
21 Ewald 1863, 348–58.
“(con)sequentiality.”23 The hypothesis in its current formulation thus explains the w’qatal 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 w'-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 w’qatal 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:

ʾɔruwr haggɛbɛr ʾašɛr yibṭaḥ bɔʾɔdɔm wʾəśɔm bɔśɔr z əroʿow
Cursed is the man who trusts in man, who makes flesh his arm. (Jer. 17:5)

loʾ-ɔmuš seper hattoʾrs hazzɛ mippi ykɔ wʾəhɔgiytɔ bo yowmɔm wɔlaylsb
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 w’qatal—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 w’qatal’s origin, for the form thus vocalized (w’qatal < *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 w’qatal, 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 w’qatal 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 w’qatal 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.

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25 As Pardee (2012, 290) explains that “the ‘frozen’ forms [w’qatal and wayyiqtol] exist as composites with th[e] conjunction [w’] 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 w’qotel and w’qotol in Biblical Hebrew. Of these three, the form w’qotal is the most common. For more on the morphological variation between stative and fientive, see below.
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") 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. Together, these functions match those of the BH qɔtal form (including the stative variants qɔtel and qɔtol), as seen in the following examples.

\[
\begin{align*}
wd.ki & \text{ rn-} \text{i } r \ bw \ h\text{bry } n\text{tr} \\
& \text{I set my name at the place where the god was.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
w\text{ḥ3`eben } \text{hazzo`t } & \text{ṭ-śr-śamtī} \text{ māṣṣebḥ } \text{yiḥyēb } \text{be`t } \text{ṭ-loḥīm} \\
& \text{And this stone, which I have set up as a stela, shall be the house of God. (Gen. 28:22)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
śpss.kw & \text{ ṣ.kw} \\
& \text{I was wealthy and I was great.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
w\text{g"oldalti` } w\text{ho"asap\text{tī} } & \text{mikkol } \text{ṣḥwɔyɔb } \text{l"pɔnay } b\text{ī`ru"s}s\text{lɔ(y)im} \\
& \text{I was great; I was wealthy more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. (Eccl. 2:9)}
\end{align*}
\]

The AE SC was also used to express iterativity and durativity. The following examples (two from AE and one from BH) illustrate this use.

\[
\begin{align*}
irr.kwi & \text{ m } \text{ṭ k n n d`d-f} \\
& \text{I used to act as one who entered without being announced.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
rs.kwi & \text{ ḫr=s } \text{gṛḥ mī } \text{hrw} \\
& \text{I was watchful concerning it night and day alike.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
wa\text{ḥɔlɔ } & \text{ḥɔʾiš } \text{hahu wʾ } \text{me`i ṭro` } \text{miyyɔmɔ } \text{ymɔmɔme} \\
& \text{This man would go up from his town regularly. (1 Sam. 1:3)}
\end{align*}
\]

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, 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 wʿqɔtal 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

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30 There is potential for confusion of terms, since the other major AE verb conjugation, the sḏm=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 sḏm=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, 79:1–9): ḫəw=f ḫr ṭwmm t 500 rmn n kît m ḫw=f ḫnɔ swrî ḫnkt ds 100 r mn m ḫrw pn "He eats 500 loaves of bread, and a side of beef as meat, and drinks 100 jugs of beer daily until now."
as $s\beta$, $gn$, and $irr$, which most likely represent forms of the type $C_1V_C_2V_C_2$ (as opposed to the forms $s\beta$, $gn$, and $irr$, which probably represent forms of the type $C_1V_C_2C_2$ or $C_1V_C_2V$), are in many cases clearly associated with “repetition or continuity.” The gemination corresponding to durative/iterative action in AE, reflected also in the $sdm=\bar{f}$ 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 *yaqatal. 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 $w\overline{q}tal\overline{a}$ arose from a geminating form. Thus, if the Proto-Afroasiatic form corresponding functionally to BH $w\overline{q}tal\overline{a}$ 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 ‘$nh\ w\overline{d}li\ snb$ “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: ‘$nh\ ti\ w\overline{d}li\ ti\ snb\ ti$ “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

$hrt\ iwny\ r\ wnm\ ‘dw$
Beware of (lit., may you be far from) eating the ’adu-fish.

$s\beta\ ti\ hr\ sp\ n\ mht-ib$
Beware of any occasion of neglectfulness.

$snb\ ti\ snb\ ti$
Farewell (lit., may you be healthy, may you be healthy).

$hs\ ti\ n\ rh-\ i\ twn\ iry$
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 “precative perfect,” and it can also be linked with the directive use of the $w\overline{q}tal\ overline{a}$ form in BH. An analogous form with an optative or precative nuance also exists in Phoenician: $wbrk$ “and may he bless.”44

Directive, optative, and precative 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

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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. $ganan-ta$).
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 ṃor’uk “blessed” and ṃruwr “cursed.”

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 w‘qatal as an archaic form. The w‘qatal 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 sββ 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 hs.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 sββ.ti) and precative modality (as with hs.ti). Cross-linguistically, deontic modality tends to align with perfective aspect. 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. 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 kɔbed/qɔdoš 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.” Dobbs-Allsopp states that situation aspect in BH, in contrast to viewpoint aspect (perfective vs. imperfective), is “grammaticalized lexically and/or derivationally.” 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, kotab (PC yiktob) “to write” is plainly fientive in all its forms and occurrences, while kɔbed (PC yikbad) “be heavy” is plainly stative. Yet there are some more complicated cases. Some verbs, such as gɔdal...
“be(come) great” and ḥɔzaq “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. 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-yaqtal and qatala-yaqtil for fientive, 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:

hadata yaḥduṭ “to happen, occur” // ḥaduṭa yaḥduṭ “to be new”
ḥazana yaḥzun “to feel bad, feel sorry”
ḥaraba yaḥrib “to destroy” // ḥariba yaḥrab “to be in ruins, be waste”
fadula yaṣaf “to excel, surpass” // ḥadila yaṣaf “to be in excess”
nasafa yaṣaf “to suck up, absorb” // nasifa yaṣaf “to be dry”

Similar formal variation occurs in classical Ethiopic (Ge’ez) 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. 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).” 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:


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., ḥaqen “to be old,” 2ms form ḥaqantɔ, which is unlike nɔtan “to give,” 2ms form nɔtattɔ). The data set in this case is very small, and the patterns of assimilation do not always correspond to the fientive/stative opposition. He also dwells on patterns observed among derived-stem verbs, but these patterns do not readily lend themselves to an

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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 (ʾ, h, ʾ, or ḫ) 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.\textsuperscript{57} As for AE evidence, Voigt relies heavily on Schenkel.\textsuperscript{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: sḏm.tлежа (3fs) for stative and sḏm.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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{60}

Voigt’s strongest evidence is that of BH geminate verbs, and it is here that his argument has the most far-reaching impact.\textsuperscript{61} Voigt recounts the fact, already well known, that the inflection of fientive geminate verbs is different from their stative counterparts:

**Fientive:**
- $\text{bɔzaz}$ (\(< \ast \text{bazaza}\)) “he plundered”
- $\text{bɔzazu}$ (\(< \ast \text{bazazū}\)) “they plundered”

**Stative:**
- $\text{tam}$ (\(< \ast \text{tamima}\)) “he was complete”
- $\text{tammu}$ (\(< \ast \text{tamimū}\)) “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: $\text{bazzonu}$ (\(< \ast \text{bazzānū}\)) “we plundered.” However, Voigt draws attention to the fact that some of these verbs show both types of inflection. Thus the forms $\text{bazzonu}$ and $\text{bɔzaznu}$ appear, both in the same part of Deuteronomy.\textsuperscript{62} Even more striking, in Psalm 118:11, contrasting forms occur side by side in the same verse:

\begin{quote}
$sabbu\text{nu}$ gam-$\text{səbɔbu\text{nu}}$ bəšem YHWH ki y ʾamiylam

They are all around me, even hemming me in,\textsuperscript{63} (but) in the name of Yahweh I will destroy them.
\end{quote}

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 \textit{gam} indicates a differentiation between the two forms.\textsuperscript{64}


\textsuperscript{58} See Schenkel 1994.

\textsuperscript{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 $\text{ti}$ (2ms, 2fs, 3fs, and 3fp).

\textsuperscript{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).

\textsuperscript{61} See Voigt 2002, 146–47.

\textsuperscript{62} Deut. 2:35; 3:7.

\textsuperscript{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.”

\textsuperscript{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:

wəʾel šadday yitten lɔkɛm raḥəmîm lipneʾ hɔʾăšiʾs wəʾśillaḥ lɔkɛm ʾet-ʿăhər wəʾet-binyɔmi ʾn
waʾnî ʾ kaʾăšer šɔkɔlti ʾ šɔkɔlti ʾ

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 ʾirī “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: ʾirkwi “I acted,” ʾir.w “they being made.”65 It is likely that the fientive form of third-weak verbs such as ʾirī has fallen together with the stative: *ʾaray-āku, *ʾarīy-āku > ʾarâku. Strong verbs, however, would likely retain the vocalic distinction. The merged forms of ʾirī contrast formally with the imperfective SC, ʾir.ʁkwī.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 SḎM=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,
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.\(^\text{70}\) Situational aspect was signaled by variation in the “theme vowel” in the second syllable of the G-stem verb: fientive “yaqtul"/“yaqtal". Mood was signaled by suffixes, which, in the absence of another suffix, took the form of short vowels: -u for imperfactive indicative, -a for subjunctive, and -Ø for jussive. For forms that included a long vowel suffix for gender and number (such as -ú for 2mp and 3mp, or -i 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 imperfactive “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.\(^\text{71}\)

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 sdₘf in AE: the “indicative sdₘf” and the “subjunctive sdₘf.” These two forms of the sdₘf in Egyptian are morphologically identical for most verbs, i.e., they are of the ungeminating type, and the verb mₜ “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” sdₘf, including rdi “to give” (indicative rdi=f, subjunctive di=f) and ii “to come” (indicative ii=f or iw=f, subjunctive iwt=f).\(^\text{72}\) In terms of semantic function, the SC (“Old Perfective” or “Stative”) has the same range of functions as the indicative and subjunctive sdₘf combined. The indicative sdₘf 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” sdₘf is used for the third person). The subjunctive sdₘf 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” sdₘf in AE, it seems very likely that the sdₘf 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 morphosyntactic 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 di- “to give, cause”), which comes to fill the same paradigmatic space as the earlier Egyptian (and common Afroasiatic) causative prefix s-.

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\(^\text{70}\) 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.”

\(^\text{71}\) 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.

\(^\text{72}\) 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, 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 lw=f m pr “She found him as he was in the house”; gmm=s sw lw=f lw m pr “She found him, he having come into the house.” 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.

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. 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. The formulation by Stade was the same as that of Sayce in many respects, including the notion that the third-person masculine form was an unprefixed noun form. The main difference between these two formulations was in the characterization of the verbal system in an oyster shell.
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 -*a* and -*u* 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:

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79 Sayce 1877, 52–53.
81 Wright 1890, 164; cf. 179–80.
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 *ʾan*. Wright (1896, 2:28–29) notes that *li-* may be replaced by *liʾan* 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 basaṭṭa ‘ilayya yadaka litaqtulani mā ‘anā bībāsīṭin 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 qała ‘a’asjudu liman ḥalaṣta tīnan

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 -a; 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 *yqatula, but with the final -a dropped rather than lengthened to -a, and occurring in syntactic environments that correspond more closely to the Arabic subjunctive. The final -a was retained (by lengthening to -a) 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., yomiyyan “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., waybərkehuw “he blessed him” < *way-yabarrik-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.


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:

skdd t| Harbour wds-k
The land sails in accordance with your command.90

wnn t| M sny-mnt
The land was in distress.91

irr hm=k m mrr-f
Your Majesty does as he wills.92

hnwt=irr-t ps ib hr m
My mistress, on account of what are you in this mood (lit., heart)?93

BH examples:

badderek 'šer-bo bsh yšu'b
By the same way that he came, by it shall he return. (Isa. 37:34)

ki' im b'to'rat YHWH ḥpso u' b'to'ro' yehgeš yomon wölyslb
But in the law of Yahweh is his delight; on his law he meditates day and night.94 (Ps. 1:2)

ki' 'el-wšer teš ki' elek u'bašer tšlnv nšli'n
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)\textsuperscript{95}

AE examples:

\textit{ībb} (PN) \textit{ībb nḥbt}

If (PN) thirsts, so thirsts Nekhbet.\textsuperscript{96}

\textit{mrr=⟨f⟩ irr=⟨f⟩}

(Whenever) he likes, he acts.\textsuperscript{97}

\textit{prr=⟨t⟩n} \textit{r} \textit{pt m nr:w} \textit{prr=⟨i⟩ hr-tpt ḫnh. wi=⟨t⟩n}

If you go up to the sky as vultures, I go up on the tips of your wings.\textsuperscript{98}

BH example:\textsuperscript{99}

\textit{meʿamal} \textit{napšo w} \textit{yirʾɛh} \textit{yisbɔʿ}

From his soul’s labor, when he sees, he shall be satisfied.\textsuperscript{100} (Isa. 53:11)

Subject of adjectival predicate (nominative function)

AE example:

\textit{kṣn mss=s}

Her giving birth was painful.\textsuperscript{101}

BH example:

\textit{w} \textit{ḥinneh} \textit{mḥerɔh qal yɔbowʾ}

Behold, swiftly, speedily they come.\textsuperscript{102} (Isa. 5:26)

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\textsuperscript{95} In the Egyptological literature, this kind of construction is known by the German term \textit{Wechselsatz}. Gesenius (1946, 387 §120h) treats this phenomenon under the heading "asyneton."

\textsuperscript{96} Polotsky 1964, 281.

\textsuperscript{97} Gardiner 1996, 356. This is a divine epithet.


\textsuperscript{99} Niccacci’s (2009, 457 no. 2.2.2) BH examples of the \textit{Wechselsatz} must be excluded since they are simply conjoined (syndetic) clauses. The latter type of clause seems to have virtually superseded the true \textit{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 \textit{Wechselsatz} are found in the archaic poetry of Exodus 15 (see below).

\textsuperscript{100} The passage is grammatically and textually complicated. It is possible to render the first word, \textit{meʿamal}, 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 \textit{yirʾɛh}, which is supported by the LXX and the DSS.

\textsuperscript{101} Gardiner 1996, 356.

\textsuperscript{102} The word \textit{qal} is an adjective, although \textit{mḥerɔh} 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; 135:1; 147:1; Prov. 18:5; 24:23; 25:27) and with PC clauses nominalized by the particle \textit{ki} (Ruth 2:22; Job 10:3; 13:9; Lam. 3:27; cf. Ps. 119:71, which employs an SC clause nominalized by \textit{ki}).
Direct object of verb (accusative function)

AE examples:

- m mrr=tjn wnn im=h=tn ḫr wsir
  as you wish that your honor should be before Osiris

- iw grt ṣbd.n hm=f prr(=i) r ḫ=st tn
  His Majesty commanded that I come forth to this desert.

- mi.n hm=f knn=i
  His Majesty saw how valiant I was.

BH examples:

- ʾal-tarbuʾ tʿdabbʿruʾ gʾbḥ3 gʾbḥ3
  Do not multiply your speaking ever so arrogantly. (1 Sam. 2:3)

- miʾ-ʾyitten tḥboʾ ʿšeʿ-ʾlotiʾ
  O that (lit., who will grant) my request might come to pass! (Job 6:8)

- kiʾ loʾ yoʾsīʾp yḥboʾ ʿoʾd ʿsr ʾeṭwʾšmeʾ
  For the uncircumcised and the unclean shall not continue to enter you. (Isa. 52:1)

- kiʾ loʾ ʾoʾsīʾp ʿoʾd ʾrḥem ʾet-beʾt yiṣrʾel
  For I will not continue any more to pity the house of Israel. (Hos. 1:6)

Object of preposition (genitive function)

AE examples:

- mi mḥḥ sw ʾdḥy m ṣbw
  as if a man of the marshes found (lit., saw) himself in Elephantine

- ḫr m ṣb nb ṣfd m dd wsir
  a thousand of all good things by the gift of Osiris

- r dd ib=f
  to his heart’s content

104 Ibid.
105 Ibid.
106 The idiom miʾ 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 miʾ 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 miʾ 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 ṣdm=f in AE. Presumably, the function this kind of syntactic structure would have been 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:

\textit{yimmə' su' kəmø'-mayim yithall'ku'-lomo' yidrok hīṣəw kəmø' yitmolɔlu^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)

\textit{'ɔziyn 'ad-t'bu'note'kem 'ad-tahq'ru'n milli'n}

I waited until (you reached) understanding, until you searched out the words.\(^{112}\) (Job 32:11)

\textit{šeb li ymiyniy 'ad-ʾɔši yt oyəbekɔ hadom ləraglɛykɔ}

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 \textit{sḏm}=\textit{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 Pardee\(^{115}\)
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 \textit{mayim} following \textit{kəmø} and the PC verb \textit{yitmolɔlu} 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
\textit{ʿad}, is evident.

\(^{113}\) Illustrative of this tendency is the distribution of finite verbs following the preposition \textit{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 wə- (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 ʾكشفُу laYHWH kī-gə’āb gə’āb  I shall sing to the Lord, for he is most exalted.

   su’s wə’rokw bo’t mək bayyom  The horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea.

2 ʾאצחי wə’zimrot yəh wayhiy-li’ lî su’āb  Yahweh is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.

   ze’h ʾeli  w’ə’anwehu  I will give glory to him who is my God

   ʾlohe ʾbī wa’rom’menhu  And exalt the God of my father!

3 YHWH ʾiš milḥoməb YHWH ʾišmo’  The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name.

4 markəbot par’ōb wə’he’lo’ yartəm  Pharaoh’s chariots and his army he has thrown into the sea.

   u’mibḥar šlīsəm tubb’u’ b’yam-su’p  His (Pharaoh’s) choice officers are drowned in the Sea of Reeds.

5 t’homot y ’kasyumu’ yər’du’ bimso’lot k’mo’-ṣeben  The deep sea covered them, they sank through the depths like a stone.

6 y’mi’n’kə YHWH ne’dor’ bakkəḥ  With your right hand, O LORD glorious in strength—

   y’mi’n’kə YHWH tir’as ’o’yeb  With your right hand, O LORD, you shattered the enemy;

7 wə’bro g’ōn’kə tah’ros qome’kə  With the greatness of your majesty you took down your assailants.
When you unleashed your anger, it burned them like stubble.

SC functioning as narrative form

By the breath of your nostrils the water formed a pile,

SC functioning as narrative form

It stood like a heap, flowing,

SC functioning as narrative form

The deeps condensed in the heart of the sea.

SC functioning as narrative form

The enemy said, “When I pursue, I will overtake;”

SC functioning as narrative form

Two (L)PC forms juxtaposed in equational construction

When I divide the spoil, my desire will be satisfied with them;

Two (L)PC forms juxtaposed in equational construction

When I draw my sword, my hand will bring them to ruin.”

Two LPC forms juxtaposed in equational construction

(But) you blew with your breath, the sea covered them,

Two SC verbs functioning as narrative forms

They sank like lead in the mighty water.

SC functioning as narrative form

Who is like you among the gods, O Yahweh?

SC denoting action prior to following verb;

(L)PC "emphasizing" preceding SC clause

Who is like you, O one who is glorious in the sanctuary?

SC functioning as optative;

SC functioning as narrative form

Revered with praises, doer of wonders,

SC denoting action prior to following verb;

(L)PC "emphasizing" preceding SC clause

You having extended your right hand, the earth swallowed them up.

SC denoting action prior to following verb;

(L)PC "emphasizing" preceding SC clause

May you guide with your love the people whom you have redeemed!

SC functioning as optative;

SC functioning as narrative form

May you lead (them) with your strength to your holy dwelling!

SC denoting action prior to following verb;

(L)PC "emphasizing" preceding SC clause

The peoples, having heard, tremble,

SC describing a current state

Pangs seize the inhabitants of Philistia.

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 ’ez 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.
So may the chiefs of Edom be dismayed;
As for the leaders of Moab, may trembling take hold of them;
May all the inhabitants of Canaan melt away;
May fear and terror fall upon them!
With the greatness of your arm they will be still as a stone
Until your people pass through,
Until the people whom you purchased pass through.
May you bring them and plant them on the mountain you inherited,
The place of your dwelling which you made, O Yahweh,
The sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands established.
May Yahweh reign forever and ever!

117 Cf. the same expression in Ps. 146:10; also cf. msłak 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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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-

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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 lo-
cation. 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 load-
ed; 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.
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 comple-
ment 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

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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.

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 not show the alternation."

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 \textit{put} does not alternate in most languages, but does in Sesotho.\textsuperscript{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 Levin\textsuperscript{10} 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.

\textbf{TWO REASONABLY STRAIGHTFORWARD EXAMPLES: נטע AND זָרַע}

Two English verbs that show the same syntactic alternation as \textit{load} are the verbs \textit{plant} and \textit{sow}; therefore, it is not surprising that נטע and זָרַע, the two Hebrew verbs generally translated “plant” and “sow,” also display this alternation, as the following four examples show.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{2.1a} נטע אֶשֶׁל בִּבְאֵר שָׁבַע
  He [Abraham] planted a tamarisk in Beersheba. (Gen. 21:33)
  \item \textbf{2.1b} זָרַעְתִּי שָׂכָץ
  He [My beloved] planted it [the vineyard] (with) a choice vine. (Isa. 5:2)
  \item \textbf{2.2a} אָזְרָעִים בָּעַמִּים
  I [The Lord] will sow them [the Israelites] among the nations. (Zech. 10:9)
  \item \textbf{2.2b} זָרַעְתִּי כִּלְלָה
  He [Abimelech] sowed it [Shechem] (with) salt. (Judg. 9:45)
\end{itemize}

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 ב “in” and its object noun in each case.

\textsuperscript{9} Beavers 2010, 844.

\textsuperscript{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. In fact, the direct object in example 2.1a (טָעַה) 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.

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 save and give. For instance, both עָשַׂל and הֶעָרַב 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

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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 לָבַשׁ, חָגַר, AND הִלְבִּישׁ

The verb חָגַר, 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.  

3.1a וַיַּחְגְּרוּ שַׂקִּים בְּמָתְנֵיהֶם וַחֲבָלִים בְּרָאשֵׁיהֶם  
They [The servants] girded sackcloth on their loins and cords on their heads. (1 Kgs. 20:32)

3.1b וַיַּחְגֹּר אוֹתָהּ מִתַּחַת לְמַדָּיו עַל יֶרֶךְ יְמִינָו  
He [Ehud] girded it [the sword] under his clothing upon his right thigh. (Judg. 3:16)

3.2a וַיַּחְגֹּר אֹתוֹ בָּאַבְנֵט  
He [Moses] girded him [Aaron] with the girdle. (Lev. 8:7)

3.2b וְחָגַרְתָּ אֹתָם אַבְנֵט אַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו  
You [Moses] shall gird them, Aaron and his sons, (with) a girdle. (Exod. 29:9)

3.2c חָגְרָה בְעוֹז מָתְנֶיהָ  
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.

The second complication is the possibility that two of the participants in the situation denoted by חָגַר 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...
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 חָגַר 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 וֹבּוֹ וַיַּחְגֹּר גַּם־דָּוִד אֶת־חַר (1 Sam. 25:13)
David also girded his sword.

3.3b וּבְאַבְנֵט בַּד יַחְגֹּר (Lev. 16:4)
With a linen girdle he shall gird.

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 זָרַע, illustrate each of these possibilities.

3.4a הֵא־לָכֶם זֶרַע וּזְרַעְתֶּם אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה (Gen. 47:23)
Here is seed for you [the Egyptians]. You shall sow the soil.

3.4b וַיִּזְרַע יִצְחָק בָּאָרֶץ הָאָדָמָה (Gen. 26:12)
Isaac sowed in that land.

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 לָבַשׁ, generally translated “put on” or “wear,” might initially appear to be a near synonym of חָגַר but differing from it primarily in that לָבַשׁ is a more general term than חָגַר since it lacks the idea of fastening or tying that appears to be a part of the meaning of חָגַר. This initial impression is supported by examples such as the following.

3.5a וְלָבַשׁ אֶת־בְּגָדָיו (Lev. 16:24)
He [Aaron] will put on his garments.

3.5b וּמִכְנְסֵי־בַד יִלְבַּשׁ עַל־בְּשָׂר (Lev. 6:3)
The priest will put undergarments of linen on his flesh.

---

15 Excluding the active and passive participles, twenty-eight examples of the verb חָגַר 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: "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 אֶת, 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. There is also an oblique complement in sentence 3.5b, the prepositional phrase "וֹעַל־בְּשָׂר" "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 שִׁלָּב would appear to be analogous to examples 3.3a and 3.1b with the verb חָגַר, here reproduced as 3.6a and 3.6b.

3.6a

ויֹהֵר וּפְרָדָו אִית־חַר

David also girded his sword. (1 Sam. 25:13)

3.6b

ויֹהֵר אֲוֹתָהּ מִתַּחַת לְמַדָּיו עַל יֶרֶךְ יְמִין

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 שִׁלָּב differs from the verb חָגַר in three very important respects.

First, the verb שִׁלָּב 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 שִׁלָּב that are analogous to sentences 3.2a and 3.2b with חָגַר, sentences in which the participant denoted by the subject is putting something on someone else’s body. So it could be argued that שִׁלָּב is a verb that denotes a situation with only two participants, a person and an item of clothing, whereas חָגַר 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 שִׁלָּב 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 שִׁלָּב denoted a situation with three participants rather than two, then one would have to analyze שִׁלָּב 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 שִׁלָּב 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.

17 This analysis reflects the traditional approach to Hebrew grammar in which אֶת 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 אֶת 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 אֶת 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: "וֹחַלָּה אֶת־רַגְלָיו" "He became sick (in) his feet."
Third, and most importantly, לָבַשׁ shows a different syntactic alternation than חָגַר 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 רוחוֹ הָיוֹנָה לָבְשָׁה 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 חָגַר, 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 חָגַר shows the same alternation as the English verb load, its meaning can be represented with the same two representations as load.\(^{22}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{[x cause [y come to be in/upon z]/להַבְּשָׁה]} \\
&\text{[x cause [z come to be in STATE]]} \\
&\text{BY MEANS OF [x cause [y come to be in/upon z]/להַבְּשָׁה]}
\end{align*}
\]

חָגַר 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.

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{[y, z (come to) be in STATE/לָבַשׁ]}
\end{align*}
\]

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 חָגַר, 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 hiphal verb לָבַשׁ. It is the causative of לָבַשׁ and is generally translated “put on” or “clothe.”\(^{23}\) Like many hiphal verbs that correspond to a transitive qal verb from the same root, the most common syntactic construction attested by the hiphal verb is the double-direct-object construction, as is illustrated in sentence 3.8.

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\(^{19}\) 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, וַיִּלְבָּשֵׁנִי לָבַשְׁתִּי צֶדֶק “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.
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 שִׁלֹחַ, cited here as sentence 3.9.

3.9 וְאֵת עֹרֹת גְּדָיֵי הָעִזִּים הִלְבִּישָׁה עַל־יָדָיו וְעַל חֶלְקַת צַוָּארָיו
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 על “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 יִנָּר אֶתַּתָּתַתָּתְּ של מַדָּיו עַל רֶגֶן
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 is placed by denoted by two prepositional phrases, each consisting of the preposition על “on” and a noun denoting the part of Jacob’s body which will “wear” that item.

With שִׁלֹחַ, 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 בְּעוֹז מָתְנֶיהָ
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 שַלָּבַ is always a direct object and never an adverbial accusative, whereas with רָבַ, an indefinite noun is always an adverbial accusative and never a direct object.

Finally, unlike רָבַ, in every attested example of the verb שַלָּבַ, 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 שַלָּבַ, and this fact, as well as the fact that the היפִּלְבִּי is a causative form in Hebrew, indicates that appropriate representations for the meaning of שַלָּבַ would be something like the following.

\[
x \text{ cause } [y, z \text{ come to be in STATE/שַלָּבַ}]
\]
\[
x \text{ cause } [z \text{ come to be upon } y]/\text{שַלָּבַ}
\]

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 שַלָּבַ 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 רָבַ when either of those verbs attests the change-of-location syntax.

In sum, the Hebrew verb שַלָּבַ 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 שַלָּבַ is the causative of שַלָּבַ, and it denotes a situation in which there are three participants, the same two participants as שַלָּבַ 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 שַלָּבַ denotes a situation in which there are three participants that are analogous to the three participants in the situation denoted by שַלָּבַ, 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 שַלָּבַ, in the situation denoted by רָבַ 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. 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: רָבַ AND הַגִּלָּה

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.

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 שַלָּבַ and רָבַ reflects a difference in the היפִּלְבִּי of שַלָּבַ and the qal binyan of רָבַ, 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 בָּזַז, generally translated “plunder,” and the piel verb לִלָּה, 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 בָּזַז.

4.2a וְגַם־שָׁלָל רָב בָּזְזוּ מֵהֶם
And also much spoil they [the men of Israel] plundered from them [their kinsmen]
(2 Chron. 28:8)

4.2b וַיָּבֹזּוּ אֵת 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 לִלָּה is like the verb בָּזַז in two important ways. First, it denotes a situation in which there are three participants. In the case of לִלָּה, 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 לִלָּה that attest the change-of-state syntax, there is never an oblique complement, only a direct object, like in sentence 4.2b with מַחֲנֵה.

The verb לִלָּה also presents two additional complications as compared with בָּזַז. 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 לִלָּה 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 לִלָּה 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 יִלָּה נְפֶשֶׁן
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

גליל- showToast
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 הָלַךְ, as the following sentences indicate.

4.4a

כִּי הָלַךְ כְּנַף אָבִיו

... because he [a man] has removed the wing [the protective arm] of his father. (Deut. 27:20)

4.4b

יֵדֶעַ רֹאשׁ אֲחֲרֵיתָי בַּלעַשׁ
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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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 an 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. 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%), wəqɔtal 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 wəqɔtal construction.7 For Gropp, it is “extrasystemic.”8 For Joüon, it is “anomalous.”9 Bombeck appeals to code: perfect wəqɔtal reflects popular speech, whereas wayyiqtol reflects a literary register.10 Bartelmus deems it schizophrenic for a single author to use wəqɔtal—perfect and perfect consecutive—in two contrary ways.11 Others suggest that a diachronic factor is at work: perfect wəqɔtal reflects an intrusion or later phase of Biblical Hebrew12 often attributable

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* 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.
5 Revell 1984, 440. See also Cook 2012, 209–10.
6 Pardee 2012, 294.
7 For an example, see Moomo 2005.
9 Joüon 1923, §119z. See also Rubinstein 1963, 62, 68.
to Aramaic, Stade, however, gives the most colorful descriptions: in 2 Kings 21:4 (= 2 Chron. 33:4), perfect wəqɔtal is an "Unform"; in 2 Kings 19:18, it is "grammatisch falsch"; in 2 Kings 18:36, it is "eine barbarische Construction"; and in texts such as 1 Kings 21:12 and Lamentations 2:9, "haben die Abschreiber aus Mangel an Sprachgefühl in der Überlieferung des 1 mit Verb nicht wenig Unheil angereichert." None of these interpretations, however, is persuasive. Some are unverifiable and conjectural, while others are likely based on a false premise. Although wəqɔtal can be analyzed as a perfect in approximately 4 percent of its attestations, those attestations number more than two hundred and fifty. 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 wəqɔtal can alternate with wayyiqtol.

In these and similar instances, wəqɔtal and wayyiqtol “occur . . . apparently without semantic difference”; as Joosten notes, there “seems to be no reason” for the selection of wəqɔtal over wayyiqtol. On the other hand, perfect wəqɔtal can alternate with qɔtal.

We have sinned and purposely done wrong. We are wicked (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ).

We have sinned. We have purposely done wrong and are wicked (2 Chron. 6:37bβ).

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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 נַעֲשִׂית 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.
We have sinned along with our ancestors. We have purposely done wrong; we have acted wickedly (Ps. 106:6; see also Dan. 9:15b).

"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).

"[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' 43:12); see also

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, w’qɔtal and qɔtal seem semantically identical, too; for the most part, each form "expresses single events as having really happened." Thus all three verb forms—perfect w’qɔtal, wayyiqtol, and qɔtal—share semantic content. To a certain degree, they also share syntactic behavior; each form can head its clause. From this perspective, perfect w’qɔtal, wayyiqtol, and, to a lesser extent, qɔtal seem equivalent.

The following discussion attempts to find patterns underlying perfect w’qɔtal in Biblical Hebrew. It begins by contextualizing this species of w’qɔtal within several arenas: syntax (§1) and semantics, pragmatics, and discourse structure (§2). Then, it will turn to the bulk of attestations—where perfect w’qɔtal 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 ḥayyiqtol and kindred forms of "be" (§4). It will then address the infrequent attestations of perfect w’qɔtal 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. The study does, however, attempt to isolate patterns that may distinguish perfect w’qɔtal from its alternants.

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." 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.

But you must place on them [the Israelites] the (same) quota of bricks that they have been making before (Exod. 5:8αα).

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20 See Pardee 2012, 294.
21 Joosten 2012, 223.
24 See Koch 1988, 104 with n. 27; and, tentatively, Joosten 2012, 225.
Together, the asyndetic combination forms a synthetic whole. In contrast, “overt coordination” uses a conjunctive coordinator. Here too, the conjuncts may be conceptually indistinct.

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.).

Usually, though, the conjuncts are distinct.

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. 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 w’qatal. The alternations presented above in the introduction—(Ps. 106:6; 2 Chron. 6:37bβ) ~ (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ), (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ) ~ (2 Chron. 6:37bβ), and (1QIsab 43:12) ~ (Isa. 43:12 [MT])—show the semantic equivalence of qatal and w’qatal; both are perfect forms. By implication, the overt coordinator in w’qatal is nonobligatory. Further, the context surrounding these w’qatal forms is significant.

We have sinned and purposely done wrong. We are wicked (1 Kgs. 8:47bβ; see also Dan. 9:15b).

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27 E.g., König 1897, §§370g–h; Brockelmann 1956, §§133a–b; Müller 2013, 62–63.
29 See Haspelmath 2007, 8.
30 See Lambert 1893, 58. See also Bergsträßer 1929, §§9b–k, where he proposes deleting w- in a number of poetic passages.
The coordinated perfect

We have sinned. We have purposely done wrong and are wicked (2 Chron. 6:37β).

“[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 43:12).

Noah was five hundred years old. Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 5:32).

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, and Biblical Hebrew qɔtal 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

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

The perfect expresses anteriority in the past, present, and future.

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36 Gesenius 1910, §106g. See also Driver 1874, 9 = 1892, 13–14; Davidson 1894, §39b = 1901, §39b.
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, an alternative 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." Schwenter would agree: "Perfects mark situations that still obtain in the 'extended now.'"

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).

An ox knows its owner; an ass, its master's crib. Israel does not know; my people are incompetent (Isa. 1:3).

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.

More than a generation ago, McCawley made a case for an unrecognized, subjective use of the perfect to "report hot news." By definition, 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). Further, its contents are believed to be immediately relevant as well as significant to the situation at hand. McCawley gives an iconic example: \textit{Kennedy has been assassinated.}

The hot-news perfect appears in Biblical Hebrew (see Gen. 45:9, above). It may be consistent with McCawley's prototype.

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).

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).

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).}

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42 Comrie 1976, 64.
43 Givón 1982, 137 (emphasis original). See also Gesenius 1910, §106k.
44 Schwenter 1994, 1003.
46 McCawley 1971, 104. For its traits, see ibid., 109.
47 For the best discussion of the hot-news perfect, see Schwenter 1994.
49 See, explicitly, Andersen 2000, 43. See also Kouwenberg 2010, 141, 142.
50 In a similar context, מער עיר may have mirative force in 1QIsaa 9:5b. Cf., however, 4QIsaa and MT.
It may accommodate excited utterances of different kinds.\textsuperscript{51}

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).

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

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.\textsuperscript{52}

For Yhwh has built Zion; he has appeared in his glory (Ps. 102:17).

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

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.”\textsuperscript{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.’”\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{55} But that condition is both unnecessary and overly restrictive. An asyndetic, clause-initial perfect can have a nonsequential function.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{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.

\textsuperscript{52} Rogland 2003, 31.

\textsuperscript{53} Givón 1982, 121 (emphasis deleted). See also Givón 2001, 295–96.

\textsuperscript{54} Bybee et al. 1994, 62 (emphasis added).

\textsuperscript{55} E.g., Jenni 1981, §6.3.1.6.

\textsuperscript{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.

On the second day, Nethanel ben Zuwar, chief of Issachar, presented an offering. He presented his offering... (Num. 7:18–19).

Jesse’s three oldest sons went; they followed Saul to war (1 Sam. 17:13a).

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).

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).

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.

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).

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).

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).

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); may explain the manner by which its antecedent is accomplished (Gen. 21:14a); may clarify the manner by which its antecedent is accomplished (Gen. 21:14a); 56 may

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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).\textsuperscript{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.

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).

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).

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.\textsuperscript{60} It may introduce a sweeping retrospective comment.

Yhwh was awfully furious with your ancestors (Zech. 1:2).

It may begin a heading of sorts.

Yhwh’s hand came upon me. By Yhwh’s spirit, he took me out and placed me in the valley (Ezek. 37:1a).

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

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.

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


\textsuperscript{60} E.g., Schwenter 1994, 1004.
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.

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.

"There is no peace," said my God, "for the wicked" ( Isa. 57:21).

"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).

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).

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).

He [Joshua] captured all these royal cities and all their kings. He struck them by the sword; he exterminated them just as Yhwh’s servant Moses had ordered (Josh. 11:12).
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.

> 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

> 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).

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).

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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 והיה, 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).
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).

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

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.

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

He [Moses] said, “Yhwh came from Sinai and shone upon them from Seir; he appeared from Mount Paran and arrived from Ribeboth-Kodesh. From his right hand fire flew at them” (Deut. 33:2), and perhaps

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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.
Occasionally, the clause headed by a coordinated perfect may express elaborative information specifying the manner by which the antecedent was achieved or expressed.

The coordinated perfect, then, is a nondiscrete part of a single verbal notion or situation. 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.

The coordinated perfect also appears when an evaluative clause is associated with a specifying event or situation. In this latter case, the coordinated perfect may express an opinion, either preceding or following the principal discourse situation.
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

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.

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

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

Moses had made (for until then the Israelites habitually made offerings to it; it was called Nehushtan) (2 Kgs. 18:3–4).

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).

For the entrance to the sanctuary he [Solomon] made pine doors, the colonnade, (and) five-sided doorposts: On both pine doors he made carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and myriads; he coated (them) with gold and hammered the gold over the cherubim and palm trees (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.

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.”

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).

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).

To you they [Israel’s ancestors] cried and escaped; in you they trusted and were not humiliated (Ps. 22:6).
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

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.

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.89 It is a strategy that may have historical precedent, too.

(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).

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86 So Delitzsch 1887, 383.
87 See Johnson 1979, 44; and, compatibly, Isaksson 2015, 239 with n. 125.
89 Hurowitz 1992, 238.
90 E.g., Gesenius 1910, §112uu. See also Joüon 1923, §119z. Cf. Gibson 1994, §84d.
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. Moreover, as in Isaiah 29:15, this verb form can be the second “of two synonymous or similar ideas” (§3).

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).
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

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 ויהי is contemporary with the subsequent stretch of discourse; its event, then, is collateral to another. It has a discourse function, too. Coordinated perfect ויהי 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 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 ויהי 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. 9aβ < v. 6); in this case, the alternative wording of 4QSam¹, ad 2 Samuel 6:16 and 1 Chronicles 15:29—ויהי—is appropriate.94 Isaksson takes a different tack consistent with the use of the coordinated perfect elsewhere in Biblical Hebrew: “וְחָיָה 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 9aα is a co-event contemporary with the following clause.

Like other coordinated perfects, nonsequential ויהי and its inflected forms can introduce a comment, aside, or evaluative remark.

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).

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. יִדוֹחֵה 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

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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.
97 Another difficult text is 1 Samuel 1:12a: 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, ידווח has an imperfective sense commensurate, *inter alia*, with the semantically imperfective auxiliary ידווח (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

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

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, whether 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 ו is undeniably anomalous, as it is also an inelegancy.” 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

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.

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Abram said, “My Lord Yhwh. What’ll you give me, inasmuch as I’m going (to die) in disgrace\textsuperscript{104} (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.”\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{106} Wenham would agree with both commentators. Verse 6 is an “editorial comment with which the first scene closes.”\textsuperscript{107} Eichrodt adds another element.

The very use of the distinctive perfect with \textit{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.\textsuperscript{108}

Together, these statements make a strong argument consistent with the semantics, discourse structure, and pragmatics of the coordinated perfect. At its core, \textit{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.\textsuperscript{109} Therefore marks a break. Pragmatically, if Eichrodt is correct, then \textit{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.\textsuperscript{110} In this case, \textit{והאמן} opens an entirely new evaluative criterion.\textsuperscript{111} In sum, \textit{והאמן} in Genesis 15:6 is a model example of the coordinated perfect.\textsuperscript{112}

The second canonical attestation of the coordinated perfect also occurs in a nonserial construction and, like Genesis 15:6, follows reported speech.

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, \textit{והأمن} appears at a boundary between subsections. Further, there is no narrative preparation for

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{104} Following Greenstein 2003, 655.
\item \textsuperscript{105} Westermann 1985, 223 (citing Holzinger), 222, respectively. Cf., e.g., Niccacci 2014, 183.
\item \textsuperscript{106} von Rad 1972, 184. See also, among others, Moberly 1990, 103–4, 127.
\item \textsuperscript{107} Wenham 1987, 329.
\item \textsuperscript{108} Eichrodt 1967, 278.
\item \textsuperscript{109} See Gibson 1994, §84c. Cf. Johnson 1979, 42–43.
\item \textsuperscript{110} For a coordinated perfect with a very different mirative force, see 2 Kgs. 21:4 = 2 Chron. 33:4.
\item \textsuperscript{111} See, in part, van der Merwe 1994, 28.
\item \textsuperscript{112} For explanations of 4QpsJub\textsuperscript{a} (225) 2 i 7–8, see Mosis 1999, 111–12; and, briefly, Joosten 2012, 226 n. 63.
\end{itemize}
Abraham’s accusation in verse 25; in verse 26, Abimelech claims not to know of the issue, either. 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.

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).\(^{114}\)

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.

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).

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).

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.

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.

\(^{113}\) 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.

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

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.

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.

He [Yhwh] said to me, "Prophesy to the breath. Prophesy, 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).

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 8:28aca, 29–30; see also Esth. 9:23, with a different sense).

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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, \[ w^+qɔtal \],119 is a marked form.120 It is statistically marked and represents approximately 4 percent of all occurrences of \[ wqɔtal \]. 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: \[ w^X qɔtal \], 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.
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 \( w^\text{qatal} \) functions as a perfect in the MT.\textsuperscript{123} As stated earlier, the book of Qohelet is not included. In those cases where \( w^\text{qatal} \) 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 \( w^\text{qatal} \).

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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, 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. 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.

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 Rainey and Smith. In this respect, it builds on the discoveries of scholars from Tania Notarius to Takamitsu Muraoka and Shlomo Izreel 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; 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.

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. 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, 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. 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.” 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.
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:

יתוה הקבד זכאת יאש טוב אלו תכבר:
כרכבה שליכמות א potrà יאשה תנותך דך תינחה בבר מקסלפ שמשלופ משמל

"The LORD alone did guide him (ynḥnw) (Israel/Jacob), No alien god at His side. He set him (yrbhw) atop the highlands, and he feasted (wyʾkl) 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:

בצרלי אַסְқה יוה vem אָסְקַר וְיַקְסֶמ וְיַקְסֶמ קֶלֶל יֶשֶׁם יָעַבְרֵי בַּרְיָה:
יונשׁ התרעש לארף מקסלה השמע קרו ומקפעו דיינה הל

"In my anguish I called (ʾqrʾ) on the LORD, called (ʾqrʾ) out to my God; In His abode He heard (wyšmʿ) my voice, my cry in His ears. Then the earth rocked and quaked (wtgʿš wtrʿš), The foundations of heaven shook (yrgzw) — Rocked (wytgʿšw) by His fury." (JPS 1985)

The key feature here is the consistent use of prefix forms (morphologically short, when indicators are available) 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:

מי נאם ממון צדקיך וקרתהת ללבוב לא לך ויון מוכלס יר זיון קפפר חרב כמש דך קחשמל:

"Who has roused (hʿyr) a victor from the East, called him (yqʿhrhw) 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 yaktīb, 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 passage 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; 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 clear 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 Canaanite-Akkadian and Ugaritic and “represent an initial stage of the linguistic development further attested in CBH and LBH, and illustrate certain typological tendencies of linguistic change”; and
3. “they reveal distinct systemic relations between each other and resist interpretation as separate archaisms.”

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. (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.

Crucial to the identification of a truly archaic usage of the imperfective $yqtl$ is its coherent role in a text’s verbal system. Rather than just counting appearances or English translation values, a key test is the...
distribution of syntactic roles for each form across a coherent stretch of discourse. Thus for the imperfective yoqtl, 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 יָקֵ֣טָל."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 neʾdārî 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 Canaanite-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 preferred the conjunctive Waw to the inversive 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" (Muraoka 2000, 208).
34 Notarius 2013, 292.
35 Ibid., 301.
Using these criteria, Notarius\(^{36}\) 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 David\(^{37}\) (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 יַכְּלָל, imperfective יָכְּלָל, and perfect קָלָל.\(^{38}\)"

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 יָכְּלָל, are relatively detached “narrative” discourse, not directly anchored in the speaker’s temporal viewpoint. But Judges 5 and Exodus 15 prioritize perfect qָלָל, 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 יָכְּלָל.\(^{39}\) 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 qָלָל perfects, while its future and jussive events are all יָכְּלָל. There is no trace of the יָכְּלָל 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:


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36 Ibid., 297.
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 Israel had already invaded (wy'lk...b) my father's land. [But] Hadad made me king ([w]yhmnlk), and Hadad went (wyhk) before me; [and] I departed (w'pq) from seven[. . .] of my kingdom. And I slew (w'qtl) seven[ty kings]...

Finite verbs in Tel Dan, by line:

1. wgzr (background, qtl perfect + w)
2. ysq (yqtl preterite)
3. wšykb (yqtl preterite + w), yhk (yqtl preterite), wy'l (yqtl preterite + w)
4. [w]yhmnlk (yqtl preterite [+w])
5. wyhk, w'pq (yqtl preterite + w)
6. w'qtl (yqtl preterite + w)
7. wqtl[1(?)] (background? qtl perfect(?)+w)
8. wšm (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. Morphologically, in the one place evidence is available, line 9’s wšm, the forms appear to be short prefix forms. 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[1] “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:

אמרם מלך ופשאלו בחרו ברהדר צור ברהדרו על ח
.
.
.

"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]yhmnlk...[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.

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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 lšm versus indicative wyšym 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 (yt), together with a feature considered more archaic, the prefix preterite.
At the point on which the story hinges, the narrative switches to converted qvtls, 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, 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 narrator’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 qvtls 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. 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 qvtl 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 qvtls, though the initial scene is set with qtl perfects. Similarly, the preserved introductory narrative of the late eighth-century Deir ‘Alla inscription is entirely in converted qvtl preterites, with direct discourse in qtl imperfects and futures.

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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 ‘Alla, as well as of course in Classical Biblical Hebrew narrative.

46 1. wy’tw, wyhz (converted qvtl preterite)
   2. wy’mrw (converted qvtl preterite) in direct discourse yp’l (qvtl future)
   3. wyqm (converted qvtl preterite)
   3–4. wbkh ybhk infinitive absolute modifying qtll imperfect (or perhaps qvtl preterite preserved in grammaticalized form?)
   4. wy’l (converted qvtl preterite) in direct discourse ysm wbkh (qvtl 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 Zakkar 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 Canaan-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 qytl 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 Zakkar 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 dramatically pragmatically marked scene in converted qytl preterites, which represents a typologically more developed stage similar to that found throughout the chronologically earlier but typologically more developed Moabite narrative of Me- sha’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 qatal 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 ‘z (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 Canaan-Akkadian letters, where qatala forms already predominate for past narrative) and developed at different paces. The restricted presence of the converted qytl preterites in Zaakkur versus their wide use in Mesha and Deir ‘Alla suggests that (1) Zaakkur 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 Canaan-Akkadian letters, on the one hand, or the typologically later one found in the Tel Dan inscription and some archaic Hebrew poems.


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. 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. 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.


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 Canaano-Akkadian Amarna letters.
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PART 6 — COMPARATIVE SEMITICS
AN ARAMAIC COGNATE TO AKKADIAN -ʾIŠ, HEBREW -ɔ, AND UGARITIC -H*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Already in 1954, E. A. Speiser argued for a connection between the Hebrew terminative ending -ɔ 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 -ɔ 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 šu 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 -ɔ, 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 -ɔ, 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 -ɔ, and Ugaritic -h (§6).

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1 Throughout this paper, I use “terminative ending” as in Assyriology for what Hebraists will better known 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; Troppe 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 -IŠ

In Akkadian, the terminative ending is usually realized as -iš.5 The terminative ending also seems to take the form -aš in the following words:6

(1) aḫratāš “in the future” (CAD D 193) ← aḫratu “future” (CAD D 193–94)
darātuš “forever” (CAD D 118) ← darātu “eternity” (CAD D 118)
šīṭāš “at the rising (of the sun), in the east” (CAD S 215) ← šītu “rise, rising (of the sun), east” (CAD S 215–21)

These only seem to be attested in Standard Babylonian.

Akkadian -iš occurs most commonly with masculine singular nouns.7 It is, however, also found with feminine singular nouns, as in (2).

(2) šallatiš “as booty” (CAD Š1 248)

In addition, it occasionally occurs with feminine plural nouns, as in (3).

(3) dāriātiš “forever” (CAD D 112)

There are no attested cases of Akkadian -iš occurring with masculine plural nouns, in contrast to Ugaritic, as in (19), and Hebrew, as in (24).

The Akkadian terminative ending -iš 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-lī-š URU3-su-nu /’ilis ʾālisunu/ “as god of their city” (Na 1 2: 24)

(5) Old Akkadian
u-me-š-sa /yūmissa/ “for her day” (MAD 5 8: 20)

Akkadian -iš 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 /kirisum/ “into the garden” (MAD 5 8: 8)
u-um-sum /yūmsum/ “daily” (Sa C2: 42; OB copy)

Akkadian -iš also co-occurs with the accusative ending -am, as in the examples in (7):

(7) ayyišam “to where” (CAD A 234)
ullišam “to there” (CAD U/W 81)
āmišam “daily” (CAD U/W 99–101)
warhišam “monthly” (CAD A 258)

This ending -išam forms adverbs.9

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7 Throughout this study, the category “noun” includes both substantives and adjectives.
8 Examples cited from Old Akkadian follow the system of Hasselbach 2005.
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.”

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-ās-ḫi-id ki-ri-is /ʾaššît kiris/ “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-iš /quddusîs/ “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.

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) Old Akkadian
   gi-ni-is-ma /kēnisma/ “truly”
   ʾiš-ši-ni-is /ʾiššēnis/ “together, jointly”
   da-rī-is /dāris/ “forever”
   ar-ḫi-is /ʾaḫis/ “quickly”
   da-ni-is /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”
    rimāniš “like a wild bull”

The comparative use is a secondary development.

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.

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     iyāšim    niāšim
   2M     kāšim     kunūšim
   2F     kāšim     kināšim

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).
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 -am / -m / -im -nišīm
2M -kum -kunūšīm
2F -kim -kināšīm
3M -šum -sunūšīm
3F -šim -šīnāšīm

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-ni “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.

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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 ’nt’h "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

\(\text{šmmh . ūdm ’th . ūd } . \text{š . ūdm . ūd } . \text{š . ūdm . ūd } . \text{š} \)

"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 Šahru wa-Šalimu

\(\text{hrp . ūm } . \text{hrp . ūm } . \text{hrp . ūm } . \text{hrp} \)

"The two women will be the wives of 'Ilu // the wives of 'Ilu forever . . . the two daughters will be the daughters of 'Ilu // the daughters of 'Ilu forever . . . " (CAT 1.23:42, 45–46)

The temporal use of the terminative ending is, however, only attested with 'lmh "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 'Ilu

\(\text{hrp . ūm } . \text{hrp . ūm } . \text{hrp . ūm } . \text{hrp} \)

"One is to put (this) together with olive oil of Autumn (reading hrpn)" (CAT 1.114: 31’)

This adverbial use of -h is attested only with ūadh (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 -hread

In Biblical Hebrew, the terminative ending takes the form of a final unstressed -hread, which is written in the consonantal text with h as a mater lectionis.26 As stated in the Introduction above (§1), this final -hread 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 -hread with the h functioning as a mater lectionis.

22 Tropper 2000, §54.314.
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 -ɔ is most common with singular forms. It can, however, also occur on masculine plural nouns ending in -im, as in (24), and on seemingly “dual” nouns ending in -ayim, as in (25).

(24) כַשְּדִים "to the Chaldeans" (Ezek. 11:24)
(25) מִירְמוֹ "to Egypt" (Gen. 12:10)

These forms can be compared with the Ugaritic example in (19).

Hebrew -ɔ occurs most often on unbound forms of the noun. It can, however, also occur on nouns in construct, as in (26):

(26) יְמָה בֵּית ה יְהוָה "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, as in (27) and (28):

(27) הָבֵא אֶת־הָאָנָּ הַבָּיְתָה מִבָּבֶלָה שָהָה בֵּית־יְהוָה מֹ בֵּי־ם יִשְׂרָאֵל "the vessels of the house of the LORD will be brought back from Babylon now quickly" (Jer. 27:16)

(28) נָהֻ אֶל־הַצָּפְנוֹ "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) נָהֻ אֶל־הַצָּפְנוֹ "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) יָמִים יָמִים הָבֵא אֶת־הָאֲנָ הַבָּיְתָה לִפְתָח שָהָה בֵּית־יְהוָה אֲ שֶׁו ַּעַר בֵּית־יְהוָה אֲ שֶׁו יָבֵא אֹתִי אֶל־פֶּתַּ הָבֵי־ם מִבָּבֶלָה מֹ בֵּי־ם יִשְׂרָאֵל "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) שָהָה בֵּית־יְהוָה "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):

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29 Ibid., 99–104.
30 Ibid., 95–98.
31 Ibid., 63–79.
In this example, ‘'ɔmnɔ “truly (< in truth)” approaches an adverbial function (and so it is glossed in BDB) similar to its more frequently occurring cognate ‘'ɔmnɔm “truly.”33 The adverbial function of the terminative ending is, however, very rare in Hebrew.34

5. THE PROTO-SEMITIC POSTPOSITION TERMINATIVE PARTICLE *-S’A

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 miṣraymɔ “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 Huhnergard,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 -ɔ, 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):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(33)</th>
<th>3.m.sg independent personal pronoun</th>
<th>3.f.sg independent personal pronoun</th>
<th>3.m.sg C-stem suffix conjugation</th>
<th>3.m.sg C-stem prefix conjugation</th>
<th>terminative ending</th>
<th>conditional particle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akkadian</td>
<td>šì</td>
<td>šì</td>
<td>šāprus</td>
<td>yušapris</td>
<td>-iš</td>
<td>šum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ga‘az</td>
<td>wa’stu</td>
<td>ya’ti</td>
<td>‘af’alā</td>
<td>yaf’al</td>
<td>(-ha)</td>
<td>‘m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehri</td>
<td>hē</td>
<td>sē</td>
<td>harkūb</td>
<td>yaharkūb</td>
<td>hām</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabaic</td>
<td>h’, hw’</td>
<td>h’</td>
<td>hf’l</td>
<td>yhf’l</td>
<td>hm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minaic</td>
<td>s’w</td>
<td>s’yt</td>
<td>s’p’l</td>
<td>ysp’l</td>
<td>hmw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>huwa</td>
<td>hiya</td>
<td>‘af’ala</td>
<td>yaf’ila</td>
<td>‘in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 ma’ls “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; Huhnergard 2000, 311; see also Huhnergard 2006, 11 n. 54.
37 Cf. also the following statement concerning Akkadian by Huhnergard 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 -ɔ, 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 -ɔ and Ugaritic -h are.
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 \(\text{*s} \rightarrow \text{h}\) in (some of) the West Semitic languages.\(^40\) One of the problems with this rule is the conditioning environment. Voigt, for instance, proposed that \(\text{*s}\) went to \(\text{h}\) in West Semitic except in roots and in the CT stems.\(^41\) This proposal (partly) explains the distribution of \(\text{s}\) and \(\text{h}\) 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 \(\text{*s} \rightarrow \text{h}\) 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 \(\text{s}\) “to hear,” this sound rule should have resulted in a third masculine singular suffix conjugation \(\text{hami’a} (< \text{*s’amia’a})\), whereas the third masculine singular prefix conjugation would have remained \(\text{yis’ma’a}\), since \(\text{s}\) was not prevocalic.\(^44\) According to Huehnergard, “paradigm pressure” blocked the operation of the sound rule, and thus \(\text{*s’amia’a}\) is found instead of expected \(\text{**hami’a}\).

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 \(\text{*s’amay} “sky,” \text{*sid} “six,” and \(\text{*s’ab} “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 \(\text{s}\) could be preserved/restored through “paradigm pressure” (in contrast to forms such as \(\text{yis’ma’a}\) 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 deny—could perhaps have motivated the preservation of \(\text{s}\) in isolated nouns in which the \(\text{*s} \rightarrow \text{h}\) 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.\(^47\) Thus, despite Al-Jallad’s criticisms, Huehnergard’s proposed prevocalic conditioning environment for the \(\text{*s} \rightarrow \text{h}\) rule remains viable, at least for this author.

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\(^39\) For brief histories of research, see Al-Jallad 2015, 27–29; Gensler 1997, 135; Kogan 2011, 107; Voigt 1987, 50–53.

\(^40\) Proto-Semitic \(\text{*s}/\text{s}\) in this paper corresponds to traditional \(\text{*i}\) (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 \(\text{y}\)-prefix of the third masculine plural prefix conjugation was leveled to the \(\text{t}\)-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 \(\text{sakkanakku}\) 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’i > h rule.\(^{49}\) According to Al-Jallad, the *s’i > 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’i > h sound change, thereby giving *hāp’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 *hāp’il-*yVhap’il, whereas Ugaritic would have leveled the *s’i-causative, thus giving šp’l-šyšp’l. To account for the many nouns and verbs where the *s’i > h rule did not operate even though at a word boundary, Al-Jallad refers to analogical “paradigm pressure.” A noun such as *s’ămī– “the one who hears,” for instance, would have frequently been preceded by proclitic prepositions, so there would have been environments where s’i was not in word-boundary position enabling its preservation analogically. The same would be true for nouns with a C\(_3\) of *s’i, 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’i would occur in many forms in which C\(_1\) or C\(_3\) was not at a word boundary thereby enabling the retention of *s’i. 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’i > h rule. Despite the uncertainties that remain over its exact conditioning environment, this sound rule of *s’i > h remains the best way to account for the distribution of š 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’i > 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 Ga’az -ha, which is used as an accusative marker on proper nouns and may well be cognate with Akkadian -iš, Hebrew -š, and Ugaritic -h.\(^{52}\) The pivot for the development of a directional marker into a more general accusative case ending in Ga’az can be found with verbs of motion. Verbs of motion in Ga’az can govern an accusative, as in the example in (34).

(34)  hor 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)  wāhorā xabāʾ ngušā falṣ’em gerare-ha xabāʾ ‘abemēlek

“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 Ga’az -ha and Akkadian -iš, Hebrew -š, and Ugaritic -h is accepted, then a final short *a should be

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\(^{49}\)  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’i > 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 πορεύοντας τοῖς πασσοφόροις, πρὸς Σομνάν τὸν ταμίαν “Go to the small chamber, to Somnas the treasurer,” with the prepositions πρὸς “into” and πρὸς “to, toward.”

\(^{54}\)  VanderKam 1989.
reconstructed after *šį.55 The reconstruction of this final vowel should, however, remain tentative, since it is based on limited evidence: a disputed sound rule and a Gaʾaw form that may not ultimately be cognate.16

Only the vowel before the consonant remains to be discussed. Tropper has argued for reconstructing the vowel as "a, which would account for Hebrew -a < "-ah.57 He explains the i in Akkadian -iš by a sound rule in Akkadian whereby *a > i / š citing the preposition īstu 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). Huhnergurd, 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 (< *š).58 This sound rule is well established in Hebrew and attested in other forms, such as *mazbiḥ > *mazbaḥ "altar of" (construct).59 So, Huhnergard’s reconstruction of *isa presents a better alternative to Tropper’s. I return to Huhnergard’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 Huhnergard understand the vowel to the left of *šį 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 mnrh "to Mari" in (18), as well as šmm-h/samim-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 *kāsdīmah > kāsdīmā "to the Chaldeans" in (24), it seems obvious that the right-most *a could be the final vowel of the plural morpheme *-ima 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 *aršāh > *aršā "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 kāsdīmā, 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 kāsdīmā 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 Gaʾaw *-ha can derive from *-ha (and not *-hā) given the rule *a > u / G <, where G = {ʾ, ʿ, h, 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 schwā 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 *šį.
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 mizbeḥă < *mizbiḥ < *mazbiḥā.
60 Pardee 2003–4, 80–81, 189.
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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 šuāšim may be derived from *suʾā + 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.”

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) *sʿuʾā + sʿa + m > *sʿuʾāsʿam > *sʿuʾāsʿim > šuāšim

If the terminative ending is reconstructed without a vowel, then the vowel between the noun and the post-position 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. In 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 *-sʿa.

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 sense 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.

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)
ṣgyʾ ḥdyt
“I rejoiced abundantly” (TAD A3.5:2)
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)

lhɔn ɡnbyt ‘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)

hɔlen dʾemart ṭɔḇ ʾappirin

“These things that you have said are very proper” (14.19)66

(43) Ephrem (d. 373 CE), Hymns on Nisibis

ʾenɔk ḥzɔṯ ḏeḇe ḡɔ ḡɔʾya rabbat

“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 -āʾiṯ.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 -ɔ, and Ugaritic -h. In Biblical Aramaic, this ending *-ā is realized as unaccented -ɔ, as in the following example:

(44) Biblical Aramaic

wʾattunɔ ʾeze yattirɔ

“The furnace was made exceedingly hot” (Dan. 3:22; see also 7:7)

The word yattirɔ (<*yattīrā) here functions as a qualitative adverb meaning “greatly, exceedingly.” Note that yattirɔ 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

wʾɔmrin lmalkɔ yassibo malkɔ

“They said to the king, ‘Certainly, king’” (Dan. 3:24)

65 Cf. also mṣryt “in Egyptian” (TAD B3.7:5) and ʾrmyt “in Aramaic” (TAD B2.11:4, 6).
68 Butts 2010.
The adverb here is *yqṣṣibɔ* (< "yqṣṣibā"), and it is given in response to the question, “Did we not cast three men into the fire bound?” (<א־נוּרָא מְכַפְּתִין וְא לְגַעְלָא גֻבְרִין תְּלָתָה רְמֵינָא).69 Both *yattirɔ* and *yqṣṣibɔ*, then, are qualitative adverbs derived with a final unaccented -ɔ from adjectives.70

This same adverbial ending *-ā* occurs with a directional force in Biblical Aramaic, as in (46):

(46) Biblical Aramaic

 medio 흐IndexOf verbo 말 núiႜ혀 '-popup' (عوا) minnsk

“After you, another kingdom inferior to you will arise” (Dan. 2:39)

There is a Ketiv-Qere issue here. The Qere is for *ʿāra* (i.e., status absolutus), but the Keṭiv is for *ʿarʾā*. 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 *ʿāra*, 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)

[wīšlyt'] nth bhn lmsq 'l wlmnt wlmnpq br'

“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 *ʿarʾā* “inferior (< to the earth),” whereas others are qualitative, as in *yattīrā* “exceedingly” and *yqṣṣibā* “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 *kollɔ*. The word *kollɔ*, usually written *klʾ* (and possibly rarely as *klh*), occurs several times in Biblical Aramaic71 as well as a number of times in Achaemenid Aramaic (ca. thirty-five times).72 Fitzmyer has argued that all cases of *kollɔ* 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 byd ln ršm lʾ ydʾ

“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 *kollɔ* is not, however, as clear. Consider, for instance, the following example:

(49) Achaemenid Aramaic (late fifth century BCE)

wmndʾ[ml] bhr zy lqht klʾ htb hb lmspt

“Any other thing that you took, *klʾ*, return and give to MSPT” (TAD A6.15:6–7)

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69 Note that *yqṣṣibɔ* is translated with an adverb in Greek (*ἀλήθεια*). The Syriac Peshitta, however, has a prepositional phrase “in truth” (*bqūša*).

70 It should be noted that *yqṣṣibɔ* 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, *klʾ* here should be analyzed as a status emphatic noun (lit., “the all, entirety”) in apposition to the preceding phrase *mn[d]'m]* ʾhrn zy ʾlqḥt, i.e., “any other thing that you took, all.” Another analysis is, however, possible: *klʾ* 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

ָאָרְיָוֶ לְכֶלֶכָּא שֶלֶכָּא קוֹלֶלֶל

 ldɔryɔweš malkɔ ʾšlɔmɔ kɔllɔ

“To Darius the king, peace *kɔllɔ*” (Ezra 5:7)

Fitzmyer would again consider *kɔllɔ* to be a *status emphaticus* noun, this time in apposition to *ʾšlɔmɔ* “peace.” Alternatively, however, *kɔllɔ* could again be analyzed as an adverb.

The crucial flaw in Fitzmyer’s argument is that he restricted his study to examples of *kɔllɔ* and did not take into account forms, such as those in (44) through (47), where an ending *-*ā, written *-*, occurs with nouns other than *kɔl* to derive adverbs.⁷⁴ When taken in isolation, it may be possible to analyze all the instances of *kɔllɔ* 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 *kɔllɔ*, such as those in (49) and (50), as adverbs derived with this ending.⁷⁵

Regardless of one’s analysis of the examples of *kɔllɔ*, 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 *-*ʿarʾā “inferior (< to the earth),” whereas others are qualitative, as in *yattirā* “exceedingly” and *yasṣībā* “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 *-*ā. 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 *-*ʾsʾa. 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 *-*sʾa. Phonologically, this derivation refers to the sound change of Proto-Semitic *-*sʾ to *-*h, regardless of whether the conditioning environment was prevocalic (as per Huehnergard) or at a word-boundary (as per Al-Jallad). The sequence *-*h 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 *-*h.⁷⁸ By the time of the Masoretes, Aramaic had lost phonemic vowel length, and

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⁷⁴ This same criticism is made in Muraoka and Porten 1998, 93–94.

⁷⁵ Muraoka and Porten (ibid.) state this even more strongly: *kɔllɔ* “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 *yomɔm* “by day” and *reqɔm* “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 ʾh, 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 *-*ā 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).
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historic "ā was lowered to an open-mid-back a. This -ā was still represented with a mater lectionis of -ā.79 Semantically, Aramaic forms such as "barrā "to the outside" and "arā "inferior (< to the earth)" correspond with the directional forms found in Akkadian, Hebrew, and Ugaritic. In addition, Aramaic forms such as "yattīrā "exceedingly" and "yāsīsībā "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 -ĭš, Hebrew -ŏ, and Ugaritic -h a postposition terminative particle "-s’a should be reconstructed to Proto-Semitic. It was suggested that "-s’a 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 "-s’a is tentative, since it is based on Gaʾaz ha, which may not ultimately be cognate, as well as on Huehnergard’s proposed conditioning environment for the sound rule *s’> h in West Semitic as prevocalic. No vowel has been reconstructed before "s’ in "-s’a. Rather, it has been proposed, following Pardee, that the vowels in Akkadian -ĭš and Hebrew *ah (>- ē) are probably case vowels with singular nouns, the former genitive and the latter accusative, or part of mimimation/nation in the case of masculine plural nouns, such as Hebrew kašdim (⊂☆kāšdimah). In Hebrew and Ugaritic, Proto-Semitic "s’ 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 "-s’a 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 -ĭš, Hebrew -ŏ, 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 "-s’ becoming h and "ah then becoming ē 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 ē 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 -ŏ, Ugaritic -h, and Akkadian -ĭš (as well as possibly Gaʾaz -ha) as a reflex of the Proto-Semitic postposition terminative particle "-s’a.

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 §§ above, Huehnergard reconstructs a vowel "i in front of "-s’a based on Akkadian -ĭš. He, then, explains the Hebrew form -ō (⊂ ☆ "ah) by a sound rule whereby unaccented "i is lowered to ē 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 ē before a syllable-closing guttural.60 In the Tiberian tradition of Biblical Aramaic, unstressed "i is usually realized as ē (i.e., seghol) before a syllable-closing guttural, e.g., "tihwē > tehwe "you are."61 In the Babylonian tradition of Biblical Aramaic, it is realized as i, e.g., "tihwē > tihwe "you are."62 In Syriac, it is realized as e, e.g., "tihwē > tehwe "you are." None of these vocalization systems attest a lowering of unstressed "i to "a

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79 This proposed phonological development is similar to that with the Hebrew terminative ending, where "-ah is also ultimately realized as ē 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 ē before a syllable-closing guttural in Aramaic (Bauer and Leander 1927, §10d), e.g., "pālāh > "pālāh > pālāh (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., "īlāhīh > "īlsheh "his God" (Bauer and Leander 1927, §12h).
81 Bauer and Leander 1927, §10i.
82 Ibid., §10j.
before a syllable-closing guttural. 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 (< **-is’a). 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 > *mazbah > mizbah “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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THE ORIGIN OF THE THIRD-PERSON MARKERS ON THE SUFFIX CONJUGATION IN SEMITIC*

The origin of the third-person markers 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. 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. 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:

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* 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 = cominis; 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.
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 *qatVl-ku 1cp *qatVl-nu
2ms *qatVl-ta 2mp *qatVl-tum(±ū)
2fs *qatVl-ti 2fp *qatVl-tinn(±nā/ā)
3ms *qatVl-a 3mp *qatVl-ū
3fs *qatVl-at 3fp *qatVl-ā

For the third-person forms, the most commonly found reconstruction is as follows:5

3ms *qatVl-a 3mp *qatVl-ū
3fs *qatVl-at 3fp *qatVl-ā

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 kāṯūḇ “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 kāṯāḇti “I wrote,” Ge’ez gabarka “you (ms) did.”

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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 marṣāku “I am sick” from the verbal root marāṣum “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. 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. 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. 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. These features show the Akkadian stative is still in the process of being grammaticalized into a verb. 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.

The pronominal origin of the first- and second-person forms is, as mentioned in the introduction, still noticeable:

7 For a more detailed description of the function of the Akkadian stative, see Kouwenberg 2010, 163–65.
9 Givón 1976, 180. Givón suggests the origin of for this type of verbalization process is in topikalized constructions of the type “the man (TOP), he (PRO) came,” in which the topikalized 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 zayyān huwa l-muˁallimu “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.
However, no direct correspondence can be noticed in third-person forms, which are commonly reconstructed as follows:14

3ms *su’a
3mp *sum( zdjęć)
3fs *si’a
3fp *sin(闪过)

Although the 3ms SC marker -a could still theoretically be explained by the 3ms independent pronoun ending in -(‘)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.
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 \(kītāb\-u-n\) “a book (NOM),” Geˁez \(nəqūs-Ø\) “king (NOM/GEN),” and Hebrew \(mēlek\-Ø\) “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 *qat\(\text{VL}\). 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 uninflexed.\(^{24}\)

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 Huehnergard\(^{25}\) 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 \(-a\), \(-āt\), \(-ā\), 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

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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 qāṭl-ēl-nā, and number, as in the 2mp qāṭl-it-tōn (< *qāṭl-in-tōn) (Diem 1997, 47).
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>3ms</th>
<th>3mp</th>
<th>3fs</th>
<th>3fp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*h/šu-ā</td>
<td>*h/šum-ū</td>
<td>*h/ši-at</td>
<td>*h/šinn-ā</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. Amorite names, for example, have forms such as /ṣūr-a ‘amm-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. 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. 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 names—an assessment with which I fully agree. 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. 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,” a term first used by Heine and Reh to mean “the development of regularities for formerly irregular aspects of grammar.” 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-
tutes a “paradigmatic analogy.”\footnote{Ibid.} 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.\footnote{Lehmann 1985, 307.} Simplification, and consequently the loss of paradigmatic distinctions, is a typical side effect of grammaticalization processes.\footnote{See also Croft 2003, 264.}

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.\footnote{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.} 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.\footnote{Kouwenberg 2000, 58.}

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.\footnote{See, e.g., Zimmern (1898, 98); Bauer and Leander (1922, 308); Bergsträsser (1928, 13); Lipiński (2001, 372).} 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.\footnote{von Soden 1995, 96.} The FEM PL of the absolute state is attested as both -ā and -āt, although -ā seems to be more common.\footnote{Most of these attestations come from cardinal numbers, such as ešrā “20,” šalāšē “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).} 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).\footnote{Tropper 1999, 179.} 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 “absolutive case” (“Absolutivkasus”). Tropper consequently
reconstructs them as MASC SING -a, FEM SING -at, MASC PL -ū, and FEM PL -āt. 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 “absolutive 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 absolutive case. As the existence of the absolutive case itself is problematic, this reconstruction is doubtful, although there is no plausible alternative suggestion.

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 -at 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. For the FEM SING, the ending -t was added to the MASC SING base "qatala, thereby resulting in "qatala-āt. The 3fs marker of the stative/SC was thus simply "-t, not "-at as often reconstructed. 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.

A nonsingular marker -ā is attested in both the verbal system (Classical Arabic yaqtul-āni) and on nouns, where it marks the dual. On nouns, the ending -ā marks the nominative dual, as in Classical Arabic bint-āni “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. 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 Kuryłowicz’s fourth law of analogy. 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 MASCL 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 -ē in Hebrew and Aramaic (e.g., Hebrew malkē “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.

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. 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 ʿāb “father” and ʾem “mother.” 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 gǝmallîm mênîqôt “nursing (FEM Pl) camels” and gǝmallîm bāʾîm “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. 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. 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
it differently, gender and number marking never reached the same degree of regularity on controllers as on targets.  

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.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3ms (original ACC)</th>
<th>3mp</th>
<th>3fp (original FEM PL marker)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*qatal-a</td>
<td></td>
<td>*qatal-ū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*qatala-t</td>
<td></td>
<td>*qatal-ā</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.’" 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. 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. 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 -ā 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.

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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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The Proto-Semitic (PS) consonant *θ has two reflexes in Ugaritic: one reflex is a discrete consonant, transliterated ẓ; the other reflex appears as the consonant transliterated ǵ, which otherwise reflects PS *ḡ. This development is interesting both phonetically, in that an interdental or dental consonant has become uvular or velar, 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 *θ cannot of course be established with certainty. That it formed the emphatic member of the triad of consonants whose other members were voiced *ð and voiceless *θ, however, suggests that it too was an interdental fricative. The reflexes of *θ in the various Semitic languages support this assumption: its reflex is an interdental in the Modern South Arabian languages Mehri and Jibbali, voiceless [θ'] or voiced [ð'], though in other traditions it is a dental-alveolar, [z'] and in Akkadian and Hebrew, PS *θ has merged with *ṣ and *ṣ' to ṣ; in Old Aramaic inscriptions, the reflex of *θ was written with ס, while in later Aramaic dialects it has merged with τ 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); thus, the data indicate that PS "θ was probably a glottalic interdental fricative, [θ'].

In Ugaritic, as already noted, PS *θ had a double reflex. In some roots, the reflex of PS *θ was a consonant, transliterated ẓ, that reflected only PS *θ; examples:

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1 We transliterate ǵ in conformance with the practice of our jubilarian; the Ugaritic and the Proto-Semitic consonants are also transliterated ǵ by others.
2 While the Semitic plosives k and g are usually velar ([k] and [g]), their fricative counterparts h and ǵ are usually uvular (respectively [χ] and [ʁ]), rather than velar ([x] and [ɣ]).
3 For Mehri, see Rubin 2010, 14; Watson 2012, 12. For Jibbali, see Rubin 2014, 25. In Soqotri, as in Aramaic, *θ has merged with *š, as in timi ‘to be thirsty’ < PS *θmʔ; 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.
5 In classical Ethiopic, too, PS *θ has merged with *š to š; PS *š remained distinct for a time (usually transliterated d) but also ultimately merged to ş.
6 See most recently Kogan 2011, 59–61.
7 Or [ð']; see above, n. 3, on the voicing of the PS glottalic consonants.
8 The transliteration ź was modeled on the usual transliteration of the corresponding Arabic consonant.
$zby$ 'gazelle' < PS *$\theta$aby-;  
$\hat{z}m$ 'strong' < PS *$\theta$avm-;  
$q\check{z}$ 'summer' < PS *$\theta$ay$.  

The pronunciation of Ugaritic $z$, like that of PS *$\theta$, 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:

$\check{z}rw$ 'aromatic resin' : ZU-ur-wu;  
$\check{z}$l 'personal name';  
$\check{z}rn$ 'place name uru ZA-ra-ni, uru ZA-ri-nu';  
$\check{z}hzn$ 'personal name $ha-ra-Zl-na$ or $ha-ru-Zl-en-ni$.

The $Z$ series of syllabic signs, however, was used to represent nearly all of the Ugaritic dental-alveolar and interdental fricatives (i.e., $\check{d}$, $s/s'$, $\check{s}$, $\check{t}$, and $z$, in addition to $\hat{z}$); 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 $[\check{t}]$; since the letter $[\check{t}]$ does not appear in those texts, this is clearly a graphic phenomenon, as shown by Freilich and Pardee.

The writings show, however, that $z$ and $t$ were phonetically similar. These sparse pieces of evidence suggest that $z$ was emphatic, fricative, and either interdental or dental-alveolar.

In other Ugaritic roots, the reflex of PS *$\theta$* was a consonant, transliterated $g$, that was also the reflex of another PS consonant, the voiced uvular/velar fricative *$\acute{g}$*. There are only a few examples of this development, the most certain of which are the following:

$\acute{g}r$ 'mountain', i.e., /$\acute{g}ūru/ < *θ̣ūru; cf. Hebrew $\check{s}ur$, Aramaic $\check{t}ur$;

$n\check{g}r$ 'to guard' < *n$\check{θ}$r; cf. Arabic $n\acute{z}r$, Hebrew $\check{n}s$r, Aramaic $\check{n}tr$;

$\acute{g}mʔ$ 'to become thirsty' < *$\acute{θ}$mʔ; cf. Arabic $z\acute{m}ʔ$, Hebrew $smʔ$.

That the writings of PS *$\acute{g}$* with $g$ 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 $g < PS *\acute{g}$ and for $g < PS *\check{g}$; for example:

$g < PS *\acute{g}$:

$[l]\acute{u} / \check{h}a-ma-ru-ú$ for /$\check{g}$amaru-hū/ 'his apprentice'; cf. Arabic $\check{g}$um(u)r 'inexperienced';

(genitive) $\check{h}u-li$ for /$\acute{g}$öli/ 'low ground(?);' cf. Arabic $\acute{g}awl' extent of land, much earth'.

$g < PS *\check{g}$:

$[l]a-\acute{h}i-ru$ for /$n\acute{g}$iru/ 'a guard' < *$n\acute{θ}$biru;

$n\acute{i}-\acute{h}i-rù$ for /$n\acute{g}ru$ 'to guard' < *$n\acute{θ}$ru;  

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 $dw$, reflecting earlier *$\acute{s}$wr, Ugaritic /$\acute{z}$urwu/ is presumably a loan, the word arriving with the substance (so also Tropper 1994, 23).  
13 It has also been suggested that $[z]$ may be written for etymological $s$ 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, *$\check{θ}$ur and *$\acute{θ}$awr, the latter suggested by Sabaic $zwr$ 'bedrock' and a form $\acute{j}awr$ in some Western Aramaic writings; see Steiner 2015, 134–35.  
16 On this root see Militarev and Kogan 2000, lxviii, 332–33.  
17 Thus we would not agree with Dietrich and Loretz (1967, 300–15), who suggest that the letter $[g]$ was polyphonic.  
probably also ḫu-ul-ma-tu, for /ǵulmatu/ 'darkness' < *θ̣ulmatu, for which see further below.

The change of *θ to ǵ is typologically interesting because it represents a phonemic split and partial merger; schematically:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{PS } *\theta & \rightarrow \text{Ug. } z \\
\text{PS } *\acute{\theta} & \rightarrow \text{Ug. } ǵ
\end{align*}
\]

Phonemic splits of consonants are relatively rare in the histories of the Semitic languages. Examples include the split of PS velars into velar and labiovelar phonemes in Gaʕəz, as in "k > k and k′", and the split of earlier *s into s and š in Amharic. And partial phonemic mergers, such that only some instances of PS *θ merged with ǵ, are also uncommon. Interestingly, another example occurs in Ugaritic, viz., the reflexes of the PS voiced interdental *ð; the Ugaritic reflex of *ð is occasionally a distinct consonant, transliterated ḏ, which reflects only that PS consonant, but more often *ð has merged with the reflex of PS *d:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{PS } *\delta & \rightarrow \text{Ug. } ǳ \\
\text{PS } *d & \rightarrow \text{Ug. } d
\end{align*}
\]

The rarity in Semitic of splits and partial mergers is related to the nature of Semitic root structure, in that sound changes are commonly overridden or blocked when they affect only some derivatives of a root. To illustrate, we may consider an early West Semitic sound rule, *s > "h / __ V, i.e., a rule that changed prevocalic *s to *h, as in pronouns such as *suʔa > *huʔa ‘that, he’. That change was carried through only in grammatical morphemes, however, because it was blocked in most verbal roots, where it would only have applied to some, but not all, forms; e.g., in the root *smʕ ‘to hear’, the sound rule would have caused the adjective *samiʕ- ‘heard’ to become **hamiʕ- but would have left the preterite *yasmiʕ ‘he heard’ unchanged; thus, the rule was blocked and all forms of that root retained *s (as did, indeed, forms of verbal roots in general). This type of paradigm pressure or levelling, which we may term “root integrity,” is pervasive and very powerful in Semitic because of the triradical root structure.

But here, evidently, we do have the split of PS *θ into two reflexes in Ugaritic, one of which merged with the reflex of another PS consonant, *ǵ. There have been several previous proposals to account for this development, and we will review those briefly before turning to our own suggestion.

Cyrus Gordon suggested the Ugaritic situation must reflect the existence of a third PS consonant, which merged with ǵ in Ugaritic but with *θ in other Semitic languages; i.e.,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{PS } & \text{other Semitic} & \text{Ugaritic} \\
*\theta &  \theta &  z \\
*? &  \acute{\theta} &  ǵ \\
*\acute{\theta} &  \acute{\theta} &  ǵ
\end{align*}
\]

It is improbable, however, that, with the sole exception of Ugaritic, all of the other languages would undergo a change in common. Moreover, *ǵ and *θ are already two of the rarest PS consonants, and it is thus quite unlikely that they reflect in part a third, still rarer PS consonant.

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19 Huehnergard 2013.
20 See also Kogan 2011, 95–96. In a few older studies, the change of *θ to ǵ was attributed to substrate Hurrian influence; see, e.g., Brockelmann 1947, 61–63; Fronzaroli 1955, 33; von Soden 1967, 291–94 = 1985, 89–92. Substrate influence does not, however, account for the fact that the change is attested with some consistency in several roots, but never in other roots.
22 So also Rössler 1961, 161–62.
Joshua Blau has suggested that the Ugaritic evidence is the result of “dialect mixture.” 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 /ẓ/ [that] are regularly written with {ǵ}. . . [are] probably expressing a phonetic shift, itself reflective of a double articulation of /ẓ/, i.e., dental and laryngeal.” This does not, however, account for the fact that only some instances of PS *ṯ̣ into g. 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,” 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 *ṯ̣ into y and t in Ugaritic.”

Since, however, PS *ṯ̣ sometimes remained a distinct consonant in Ugaritic, z, while sometimes merging with ġ, Segert, Greenstein, and Tropper have been right to look for a conditioning factor, a phonetic environment in which some tokens of *ṯ̣ changed to, and merged with, *ġ, while other instances of *ṯ̣ 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 *plṭ ‘to survive’, attested as such in Ugaritic, Hebrew, and (Old) Aramaic, but in Akkadian as blṭ ‘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 yaplut, pronounced [yablut]; the pronunciation of the first radical in the latter form then contrasted with its pronunciation in a form such as the verbal adjective, [palit]; 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. In another root with the same two first radicals, palāḥum ‘to fear, respect’, however, the contrast between (it may be assumed) preterite [yablah] 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 *ṯ̣ became ġ immediately before a sonorant; some forms of a number of roots would then be

26 Segert 1988, 296.
29 Kogan 2011, 96.
30 Ibid.
31 Hebrew attests both plṭ and mlṭ ‘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 "niḏru > /niḏru/, whereas other derivatives of a root would be unaffected by the sound rule, such as the preterite "yaḏḥur. But the change of "ṯ > 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 "mvglâlu 'shelter' (which would have become "*mvglâlu by such a sound rule), the rule was instead blocked or overridden because of the forms that were unaffected, such as "ṭillu 'shade', and the original consonant remained throughout all forms of the root, as in mẓll and ẓl.

A conditioning factor involving a sonorant might, therefore, underlie the change of "ṯ > ġ, if the environment could be established with more precision. But another possibility exists. We observed above that the change of "ṯ > ġ is phonetically interesting: a presumed glottalic interdental fricative, "ṯ, 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.,

"ṯ > ġ/ ../u. 33

One of the certain examples of the change of "ṯ > ġ obviously conforms to this proposed environment:

"ṭūru > /ḡūru/ 'mountain'.

The change of "ṯ > ġ in the root "nṯr 'to protect' probably began with the prefix-conjugation and imperative forms, which are especially common:

"yaṯḥur > /yaḡgur/ 'may he protect'
"n(u)ṯḥur > /n(u)ḡur/ 'protect!'.

The change then spread throughout the root by paradigmatic pressure. In the root "ṯm? 'to thirst', the change may have begun with a verbal noun, then spread throughout the root:

"ṯumʔu > /ḡumʔu/ 'thirst'; cf. Akkadian šūmu < "ṯumʔ-.34

Another likely example of the change of "ṯ > ġ before u is "ṯulmatu > /ḡulmatu/ 'darkness', which is written syllabically ḫu-al-ma-tu,35 and which may be compared with Akkadian šulmu and Gǝʕǝz šalmat < "ṯulm(at)-.36 This word probably appears as ġlm in the Ba’lu myth:37

32 We may note in passing a similar change in the history of Spanish, where, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, palatal [ʃ] (usually written [x] as in [dir] 'he said' or [j] as in [mejor] 'better') changed to velar [x] (eventually written [j] in most instances, [diʃo], [meʃor]); 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 *ṣ to velar or velar fricative *x (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 "ṯ 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, *x, probably [χ'] or [x'], as the emphatic counterpart to PS *ḥ and ġ (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 ẓ was voiced.

34 Perhaps also Gǝʕǝz sâmì, but the latter may derive as well from "ṯimʔ-, like Arabic simʔ? and Hebrew simʔa. Presumably "ṯimʔ- is the earlier form, becoming "ṯumʔ- in Akkadian and Ugaritic with assimilation of i to u before the labial m.


36 Cf., probably, Hebrew sal-ма warranties, to be read ẓalmāt.

37 The masculine form ġlm may also mean ‘darkness’ (cf. Akkadian sulmu) in the phrase ġlm ym in RS 2.003 i 19–20 (KTU 3 1.14), i.e., perhaps /gulpum yōmī/ ‘darkness of day’; see Loretz 2000, 275.
"Look, [Gupanu]-wa-ʾUgāru:
The sea [is enveloped] in darkness,
in obscurity the [highest] peaks."

RS 2.[008] vii 53–56 (KTU 1.4), with Pardee’s translation;38 || RS 2.[014] vi 6–9 (KTU 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) ġlm and bn įlm as epithets of gpn wũgr (or alternatively of servants of Mot), with ġlm meaning ‘lass’ and įlm as a parallel word of uncertain meaning; the other view, which like our hon-ordar we follow here, takes ġlm and įlm as terms for darkness.39 If that is correct, the etymology of ġlm requires comment. Some scholars consider it to be unrelated to the parallel word įlm, but rather simply a poetic synonym, related to Hebrew ĭlm ‘to hide, conceal’.40 This is unlikely, however; while “darkness” can of course “hide” things, the transitive verb ĭlm ‘to hide’ is not, in and of itself, semantically close to the PS stative verb ‘ţlm ‘to be(come) dark’. In Ugaritic the latter verb, from which ġlm is derived and which likewise exhibits ğ, probably occurs in the Kirta epic, where it is, like PS ‘ţlm, stative:41

\[\text{āḫ} r . \text{mgy} h . \text{wgłm}\]

‘when he arrived it was getting dark’
RS 3.325 vi 50 (KTU 1.16), with Pardee’s translation.42

Thus it is more likely that the verb ġlm ‘to be(come) dark’ and the noun ġlm ‘darkness’ are reflexes of PS ‘ţlm(t) rather than cognate with Hebrew ĭlm. If so, it is particularly interesting that in RS 2.[008] vii 54–55 (KTU 1.4) and RS 2.[014] vi 7–8 (KTU 1.3), ġlm stands in parallel with įlm; 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, ġlm can be considered the usual form, while the B-word įlm is a less common word, a poetic archaism.”43 We see the same phenomenon with the root ‘ţm ‘to thirst’: the sound change is reflected in the phrase ġmū ġmît ‘you (fs) were very thirsty’ (RS 2.[008] iv 34 [KTU 1.4]), but an archaic writing is preserved in the form mẓmā ‘thirsty’ (acc.; RS 3.343 i 2 [KTU 1.15]). (See further below on mgy and mẓ.)

Another possible example of ‘ţ > ġ is the form tąg in the following:

\[\text{ištms} . \text{wtqg} . \text{udn}\]

‘Listen (ms) and let (your) ear be alert’.44
RS 3.325 vi 42 (KTU 1.16) and parallels.

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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 Emir deity Ḫalma as ‘dark’ seems unlikely to me). Similarly, DULAT (316) glosses ġlm ‘concealment, darkness’. But the gloss ‘concealment’ is prompted by the alleged Hebrew cognate ĭlm; in the context of the Ba’lu passage, in fact, ‘darkness’ is preferable, while ‘concealment’ is tautological (“The sea is enveloped in concealment?”). See also Gzella 2007, 542.
41 Others read ġlm here as ‘lad’; see DULAT, 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 ʾarqā and ʾarʕā ‘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 *tg is most often derived from a root *yqg, cognate with Hebrew yqs and Arabic yqz 'to be awake'.
If that is correct, it does not conform to the phonological environment for *θ > ǵ that was suggested above.
In Hebrew, however, a byform hollow root qws/yqs occurs alongside yqs; if the same was true in Ugaritic, we may suggest that *tqθ > /taqgu/, i.e., the assimilatory change of *θ > ǵ in this case taking place after the vowel u.

We turn finally to consider the problematic etymology of the common Ugaritic verb mg'y 'to come (to), arrive (at), reach' and its relationship to the rare mz' 'to meet, encounter'. The latter occurs in only one text, RS 2.[012] (KTU3 1.12); in one of those occurrences it is in parallel with mg'y:

\[\text{wn . ymgy . áklm} \]
\[\text{wymzå . tqqm} \]

'That he might reach the Devourers,
That he might encounter the Destroyers.'
RS 2.[012] i 36–37 (KTU3 1.12).

Otherwise, mz' occurs, twice, in the following couplet:

\[\text{šr . áhyh . mzåh} \]
\[\text{wmzåh . šr . ylyh} \]

'The prince of his brothers encountered him,
Did encounter him the prince of his comrades.'
RS 2.[012] ii 50–51 (KTU3 1.12).

The verbs mg'y and mz' 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. *mṣ́y > only Arabic maḍā 'to go';
2. *mǵy > only Ugaritic mg'y 'to reach, arrive, come';
3. *mṭw > Arabic maṭā(w) 'to stretch, draw, pull; walk quickly'; Sabaic mṭw 'to walk, march (or sim.)'; Gašā maṭtawa 'to deliver' (others include Arabic ʔantā 'to give', assuming an earlier form *ʔamṭawa);
4. *mθ̣ʔ (Blau's mz') > Sabaic mz' 'to come, arrive'; Aramaic mṭā 'to arrive' (originally with consonantal ʔ, as shown by the Old Aramaic writing {MŠ?}); Ugaritic mz' 'to arrive, reach,

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45 The root also occurs in Modern South Arabian languages, as wḳð̣ 'to wake', with initial radical w (Johnstone 1981, 290; 1987, 427). Note that Jibbali and Mehri ę reflects PS *θ̣; other examples include Jibbali ęfēr and Mehri ęfēr 'finger/toe-nail', Jibbali ęll and Mehri ędēl 'to give shade', Jibbali ęlim and Mehri ęšlāwem 'to become dark', Jibbali ę+d and Mehri ęyama 'to be thirsty', Mehri nę'r 'to see'; see Johnstone 1981, 48, 49; 1987, 83, 84, 282.
46 One might suggest that *θ > ǵ before the final u of yaqtulu forms, e.g., yiqątu > /yiqāgu/ (although the form in question here is presumably yaqtul or yaqtulu); but it is doubtful that an inelastic ending would trigger the change of a root consonant. It may be noted that if the root of the form taq is indeed y-q- q < *y-q-θ̣, 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 taq from a different root entirely, viz., q-g-w/y, comparing Arabic s-g-w (sich) neigen', 'asğawa 'Ohr zuneigen; aufmerksam sein'; as he himself (ibid.) notes, however, the correspondence of Ugaritic q and Arabic s is unexpected. Segert (1988, 295–96) suggested the change of *θ > ǵ in this root may have been triggered by "the assimilatory vicinity of the articulatory place of the deep velar /q/ and the postvelar /ǵ/.
47 Or between u-vowels in yaqtulu forms: *taqūθ̣u > /taqūǵu/; 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.
'mṣʔ > Aramaic mšʔ 'to be able, to be the match of' and marginally also 'to find' (from 'to arrive'); Akkadian mṣāʔ 'to suffice'; and in part Hebrew māṣāʔ 'to find; to suffice'; Gǝʕǝz mąṣʔa 'to come'.

It is, however, uneconomical to posit so many phonetically similar roots with similar meanings. In fact, Blau's fifth root, *mšʔ, is unnecessary, since, as shown by Steiner, Aramaic š may derive from PS *š when m or r immediately precedes or follows, as in *lmš 'to shut (eyes)' and *hmš 'to be sour', from PS *gš and *gmš, respectively. Thus Aramaic m(ǝ)sā 'to be able' is the reflex of Blau's first root, *mšy, and the Hebrew, Gǝʕǝz, and Akkadian verbs listed under 5 should instead be listed under 4, *mθ̣ʔ (with the meanings 'to find' and 'to suffice' as semantic extensions of 'come [to], arrive [at]').

Blau's second root, *mg̣y, is found only in Ugaritic, and yet it also has essentially the same meaning as his fourth root, *mθ̣ʔ. The latter is obviously reflected in Ugaritic mżʔ. I suggest that mg̣y reflects a blending of the latter root, but now exhibiting the change of *θ to g, and a reflex of PS *mšy. It is likely that *mθ̣ʔ was u-class in the prefix-conjugation and thus formed to our proposed sound rule above, i.e., *yamθ̣uʔ(u) > *ymg̣uʔ(u). It is also possible that the final glottal stop of that root dissimilated to a glide, either before the change of *θ to g—i.e., *[θ.' — i.e., *[θ. .?] > *[θ.' .w]; thus *yamθ̣uʔ(u) > *ymθ̣uʔ(u) > *ymg̣uʔ(u)—or after the change (because of the incompatibility of g and ?)—thus *yamθ̣uʔ(u) > *ymg̣uʔ(u) > *ymg̣uʔ(u).

The post–sound change root, *mg̣w, would have been close enough phonetically and semantically to *mšy for the blending to occur. The new root, mg̣y, presumably coexisted for a time with the earlier mżʔ, the latter an archaic form, as with zlṃ and g̣lṃt 'darkness'.

Thus we need posit only three PS roots, with fairly distinct semantic ranges:

1. *mθ̣ʔ 'to come (to), arrive (at), reach';52 (Ancient South Arabian) Sabaic mźʔ 'to go, proceed; to reach',53 Minaic mźʔ 'to be somewhere' and s’tmźʔ 'to arrive';54 and Qatabanic mźʔ 'to come, enter'.55 Aramaic m(ǝ)ṭā (originally with ?) 'to come, arrive, reach'; Gǝʕǝz masʔa 'to come'; (Modern South Arabian) Soqoṭri mīṭa 'to touch, reach',56 and Jibbāli mīḍi 'to reach (to)';57 Hebrew māṣāʔ 'to find; to reach';58 Akkadian masū 'to suffice'; Ugaritic mžʔ 'to meet'; and Ugaritic mg̣y 'to come, arrive', from a blend of *mg̣w (< *m-θ-ʔ?) and *m-š-y;
2. *mšy 'to move on, ahead': Arabic maḍā 'to pass, go (on)',\textsuperscript{59} Aramaic m(ʔ)šā 'to be able'; Sabaic mdy 'to penetrate (of a wound)',\textsuperscript{60} and Ugaritic mgy 'to come, arrive' from a blend of *m-š-y and *mgw (< *m-θ-ʔ),\textsuperscript{41}

3. *mtw 'to extend, hand over': Gǝʕǝz maṭṭawa 'to hand over'; Arabic maṭā(w) 'to hurry, pull', and probably also ṭantā 'to give', from *ṭamṭawa;\textsuperscript{62} Sabaic mṭw 'to undertake an expedition'.\textsuperscript{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\textsuperscript{3}, however, does not yield any obvious candidates.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{59} According to Abdulrahim (2013, 138), maḍā in Modern Standard Arabic is ['go' of Locomotion vs. Goal], 'go on, go ahead; to pass (of time).

\textsuperscript{60} Beeston et al. 1982, 84; Biella 1982, 282.

\textsuperscript{61} Note also perhaps Gaššā mdaw 'spring (season)' (from 'to arrive, enter?).

\textsuperscript{62} Also 'to ride, mount', perhaps denominal; Mehri mṭw 'to mount (camel)' may in turn be a loan from Arabic.

\textsuperscript{63} Beeston et al. 1982, 88; Biella 1982, 272–73.

\textsuperscript{64} Perhaps prefix-conjugation forms of rwz 'to run', such as /yaruz/ (or /yarūzu/), parallel in form to /yaquḏ/, which, it was suggested above, may derive from *yaqūḏ (or /yaqūţu/ < *yaqūţu). The form ẓẕm 'powerful' may have been vocalized /zaqm/ (cf. Hebrew ūzām; but cf. also Arabic ūzām); if so, the change of θ to ġ may have been blocked to prevent the otherwise unattested sequence f..g (i.e., /Ṣaḡām/). The noun žr 'back' was presumably a qatal form originally, i.e., /ẕ̌ru/ < *θ̱hr-, as in Arabic žhr 'back'; Akkadian ūru 'back' (for which see Huehnergard 2013, 458); and Mehri ḏr, Jibbali ḏr, and Soqotri ḏhr 'on, over' (Kogan 2015, 575), rather than qatal as in Hebrew ūḥar 'roof(?)', ūḥārayim 'noon' and Amarna Canaanite ūhrū (zū-ub-ru; see DULAT\textsuperscript{3}, 988). The noun ūz 'excrement' is probably /ūẕu/; for discussion, see Militarev and Kogan (2000, 256–67, no. 286); Kogan (2015, 575–76). For /ẓurw/ 'aromatic resin', see n. 10 above.
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PART 7 — BEYOND
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 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. 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. 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? 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.

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. 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 commonsensical thinking, and the articulation of it, within the Corridor.

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5 Thompson 1995.
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 concepts. 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPERORDINATE</th>
<th>animal</th>
<th>fruit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BASIC LEVEL</td>
<td>cat</td>
<td>apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBORDINATE</td>
<td>Russian Blue</td>
<td>Fuji</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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9 Rosch et al. 1976; Rosch 1978; Mervis and Rosch 1981.
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. (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. 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. In American Sign Language single signs generally denote this basic level, while super- and subordinate categories routinely have multiple sign sequences.

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.

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.

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.

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 aspect and a neurophysical experience that further suggest the mind’s embodiment: mirror neurons.

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. 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. 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; Iacobonhl 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. 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.

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.
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. 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. 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.” 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.

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22 Taylor (2002, 519–35) offers a brief review. Quite telling is how little attention Langacker (2008), a father figure in cog-
nitive linguistics, gives to metaphor in his recent summative work.
23 Grady, Oakley, and Coulson 1999; Fauconnier and Turner 2002; Taylor 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-origin 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.

29 Ibid.
31 Guthrie 1993.
33 Boyer 2003, 123.
34 Boyer 2001; 2003.
35 Barrett 2011, 100.
36 Ibid., 102.
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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