



EPIGRAPHY,  
PHILOLOGY, & THE  
HEBREW BIBLE

*Methodological Perspectives  
on Philological &  
Comparative Study of the  
Hebrew Bible in Honor of  
Jo Ann Hackett*

Edited by  
Jeremy M. Hutton and Aaron D. Rubin

# EPIGRAPHY, PHILOLOGY, AND THE HEBREW BIBLE

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Jeremy M. Hutton and Aaron D. Rubin

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## ABBREVIATIONS

1.	first person
2.	second person
3.	third person
AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
AB	Anchor Bible
<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
<i>AbrN</i>	<i>Abr-Nahrain</i>
ABS	Archaeology and Biblical Studies
AcBib	Academia Biblica
AIL	Ancient Israel and Its Literature
<i>AJSL</i>	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>
AKM	Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
ALASP	Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOS	American Oriental Studies
<i>AS</i>	<i>Aramaic Studies</i>
ASORMS	American Schools of Oriental Research Monograph Series
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>AUSS</i>	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BDB	Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibEnc	Biblical Encyclopedia
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
<i>BJPES</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
BTS	Biblical Tools and Studies
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft



- c. common
- CahRB Cahiers de Revue biblique
- CBET Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
- CBQ *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
- CBQMS Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
- CHANE Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
- CHI Cultural Heritage Imaging
- CAI *A Corpus of Ammonite Inscriptions*. Walter E. Aufrecht. Lewiston: Edwin Mellon, 1989
- CIIP *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, vol. I: *Jerusalem*, part 1. Edited by Hannah M. Cotton et al. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010
- CIL *Corpus inscriptionum latinarum*
- CIS *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*
- CM Cuneiform Monographs
- ConBOT Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series
- COS *The Context of Scripture*. Edited by William W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002
- CRAI *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*
- DCH *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Edited by David J. A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993–2014
- DTS Descriptive Translation Studies
- DNWSI *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions*. Jacob Hoftijzer and Karel Jongeling. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1995
- DTTML *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature*. Marcus Jastrow. New York: Judaica Press, 1971. Repr., 1996
- DUL *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition*. Gregorio del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín. 2nd revised ed. 2 vols. Handbook of Oriental Studies, section 1, vol. 67. Leiden: Brill, 2004
- EA El-Amarna tablets. According to the edition of J. A. Knudtzon. *Die el-Amarna-Tafeln*. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908–1915. Reprint, Aalen: Zeller, 1964. Continued in A. F. Rainey, *El-Amarna Tablets, 359–379*. 2nd revised ed. AOAT 8. Kevelaer: Butzon und Bercker, 1978
- EE *Ephemeris Epigraphica: Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum Supplementum*. 9 vols. Rome: Institutum and Berlin: G. Reimer, 1872–1913
- EHLL *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*
- EncJud<sup>2</sup> *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Edited by Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum. 2nd ed. 22 vols. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007
- f. feminine

- FAT                   Forschungen zum Alten Testament  
 FRLANT             Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments  
*HALOT*             *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999  
 HB                   Hebrew Bible  
*HBAI*               *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*  
*HNE*               *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*. Mark Lidzbarski. Weimar: Emil Felber, 1898  
*HS*                 *Hebrew Studies*  
 HSM               Harvard Semitic Monographs  
 HSS               Harvard Semitic Studies  
*HTR*               *Harvard Theological Review*  
*IBHS*             *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990  
*IEJ*                *Israel Exploration Journal*  
*IGLS*             *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*, vol. XVII.1: *Palmyre*. Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 195. Jean-Baptiste Yon. Beirut: Institut Français du Proche-Orient, 2012  
*ILS*               *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. Edited by Hermann Dessau. 5 vols. Berlin: Weidmann, 1892–1916.  
*Int*                *Interpretation*  
*IOS*               *Israel Oriental Studies*  
*IPT*               *Iscrizioni puniche della Tripolitania (1927–1967)*. Giorgio Levi Della Vida and Maria Giulia Amadasi Guzzo. Monographie di Archeologia Libica 22. Rome: Bretschneider, 1987  
*IRT*               *The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania*. Joyce Maire Reynolds and John Bryan Ward-Perkins. Rome: British School at Rome, 1952  
*JA*                 *Journal Asiatique*  
*JAAR*             *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*  
*JANESCU*         *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University*  
*JAOS*             *Journal of the American Oriental Society*  
*JBL*               *Journal of Biblical Literature*  
*JCS*               *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*  
*JHebS*            *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*  
*JJS*               *Journal of Jewish Studies*  
*JNES*             *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*  
*JNSL*             *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*  
*JQR*              *Jewish Quarterly Review*  
 JSJSup            Journal for the Study of Judaism: Supplement Series  
*JSOT*             *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*

JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JSSR</i>	<i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</i>
<i>KAI</i>	<i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften</i> . Herbert Donner and Wolfgang Rölling. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1962–2002
<i>KUSATU</i>	<i>Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt</i>
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
<i>LSAWS</i>	<i>Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic</i>
LXX	Septuagint
m.	masculine
MT	Masoretic Text
<i>NEA</i>	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
NWS	Northwest Semitic
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OeO	Oriens et Occidens
OLA	Orientalia Iovaniensia Analecta
<i>Or</i>	<i>Orientalia</i>
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studiën
<i>PAT</i>	<i>Palmyrene Aramaic Texts</i> . Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonora Cussini. Publications of The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996
<i>PEFQS</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement</i>
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
pl.	plural
Plaut.	Plautus
PN	personal name
<i>Poen.</i>	<i>Poenulus</i>
<i>Proof</i>	<i>Prooftexts</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RBS	Resources for Biblical Study
<i>RIB</i>	Collingwood, R. G., and R. P. Wright, eds. <i>The Roman Inscriptions of Britain</i> , 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1965–1995
<i>RSO</i>	<i>Revista degli studi orientali</i>
RTI	Reflectance Transformation Imaging
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
ScrHier	Scripta Hierosolymitana
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
sg.	singular
SSSL	Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics
ST	source text
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature

STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SubBi	Subsidia Biblica
TA	<i>Tel Aviv</i>
TDOT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 8 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
TL	target language
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TRu	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
TT	target text
UF	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
VOK	Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WO	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
WSRP	West Semitic Research Project
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YCS	Yale Classical Studies
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
ZAH	<i>Zeitschrift für Althebräistik</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>





*Jo Ann Hackett with Darwin  
Photo by Walter E. Aufrecht  
Used with Permission*



Introduction:  
Honoring the Pedagogical Legacy of  
Professor Jo Ann Hackett

*Jeremy M. Hutton*  
*University of Wisconsin–Madison*

*and*

*Aaron D. Rubin*  
*Pennsylvania State University*

The present volume comprises a set of contradictions. It is simultaneously a *Festschrift*—usually conceived as a collection of essays honoring a colleague, teacher, and friend—and a volume designed with the graduate classroom in mind and organized around a few common themes. And whereas a few of the essays are typical exemplars of the genre of “introductory” or “overview” essay and reflecting engagement with the wider approaches to the disciplines at hand, many of the articles herein are specialized papers featuring a theoretical or methodological orientation appropriate to specific modes of study. This format, then, does not fit easily within any of the genres that are common within the fields of Biblical Studies and Northwest Semitic Philology. Yet, the constituent essays of this volume have been composed with two purposes: First, despite their eclectic and broadly-interested diversity of topics, these papers all attempt to grapple with specific problems associated with one of three topics that Professor Jo Ann Hackett has devoted her career to understanding: philological study of the Northwest Semitic languages; the study of epigraphic exemplars of those same languages; and the religious traditions of Israel and its neighbors in the Southern Levant, as reconstructed from the perspective(s) offered in the Hebrew Bible. Secondly, these articles are all oriented towards the educational context of graduate-level students of these same fields of study. These complementary goals are modeled on both the research and pedagogical work of Professor Hackett.

When we first began to conceptualize the most fitting way to honor Professor Hackett’s professional legacy, we were certain that some standard features of *Festschriften* remained relevant: we wanted to present in Professor Hackett’s honor a collection of high-level essays that allowed a distinguished group of scholars to present their most recent work on themes that were generally conso-



nant with those that Professor Hackett has written upon so eloquently in her own distinguished career. For this reason, we chose the three-fold rubric of epigraphy, philology, and Israelite religion as the touchstones of the essays. At the same time, we attempted to avoid several of the commonly-voiced criticisms of *Festschriften*: they are too scattered, with essays departing far afield from the central interests of the honoree; they lack a cohesive sense of pushing the boundaries of the field, with contributors often retreating into their comfort zones, outlining or restating previous works; and, relatedly and most distasteful to potential publishers, they have no single utilitarian value—their academic scatteredness and typically massive size (and, correspondingly, their often painful cost) make them virtually unsellable except to the small coterie of colleagues and students wishing to honor the legacy of the celebrated scholar. In order to combat these oft-cited deficiencies of *Festschriften*, we decided on a model that we hope will prove useful for a wider range of scholars.

Two useful innovations move this book from a straightforward categorization as a *Festschrift* into a less-well-defined rubric that possesses benefits for use in the classroom. First, we invited contributions from selected individuals with an eye towards compiling a book that presents a variety of topics—both more general and more advanced, more traditional and more cutting edge—comprising a cross-section of the studies currently being undertaken in Northwest Semitic philology. Secondly (and relatedly), we departed from the standard model of *Festschriften* in which it is mostly established colleagues—and only a few of the honoree’s students—who are invited to contribute. Although a book full of essays by all of Professor Hackett’s friends and colleagues could easily have filled many more pages than encompassed in the current volume, we opted for a more streamlined, more innovative format. In this book, Professor Hackett’s former students and *Doktorkinder* (Bembry, Callender, Ellison, G. J. Hamilton, M. Hamilton, Hutton, Pat-El, and Wilson-Wright)—and even future *Doktorgrosskinder* (Bonesho and Greene)—have authored a relatively large proportion of the essays. Two of the invitees—Parker and Vayntrub—were invited on the strength and innovation of their scholarship rather than on the basis of any personal connection to Professor Hackett (although the latter has served on an SBL steering committee with the honoree). This divergence from common *Festschrift* practice allowed us to introduce readers to pioneering fields of study that might otherwise have gone un- or underrepresented.

In addition to these structural innovations, we consciously designed this book to honor the *pedagogical* legacy that Professor Hackett has established in her decades of service as assistant professor in the Department of Religion at Occidental College (1979–1984); visiting lecturer at Weston School of Theology and Harvard University (1984–1985); Mellon Scholar in the Dept. of Near Eastern Studies at Johns Hopkins University (1985–1986); assistant professor in the Dept. of Religious Studies at Indiana University (1986–1990); Professor of the Practice of Biblical Hebrew and Northwest Semitic Epigraphy in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University (1990–2009); and, now, Professor in the Departments of Middle Eastern Studies

and Religious Studies at the University of Texas, Austin (2009–present). Professor Hackett’s work in the classroom has positioned her as a consummate *teacher*, and it is this aspect of her work that we most wish to honor by assembling a group of essays that both exemplify traditional approaches and employ new theoretical frameworks in researching the Northwest Semitic languages and their associated texts and religious traditions. Moreover, our selection of the Society of Biblical Literature’s Ancient Near Eastern Monograph series, of which a substantial benefit is its distribution in the form of open access PDF files, permits a wider readership, both in the graduate classroom and by researchers at large, than is typically the case for sparsely disseminated specialist volumes. We believe that this volume’s suitability to the graduate classroom—due to both its content and the medium in which it appears—will facilitate its wider acceptance and application in the field as a whole. If cost-effectiveness and breadth of dissemination benefit pedagogical methodology, this unconventional medium will add further value to the book’s contents.

Professor Hackett is well trained to investigate a variety of subjects, having earned her PhD from Harvard University under the luminaries Frank Moore Cross and Thomas O. Lambdin. The breadth of her capabilities spans from the early history of Biblical Hebrew and the other Northwest Semitic languages to the religious rituals associated with child sacrifice. These two interests were combined in her doctoral dissertation, subsequently published as *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā*.<sup>1</sup> In that study, Professor Hackett argued that the dialect found in the Deir ‘Allā inscription should be regarded as closer in type to Canaanite than to Aramaic,<sup>2</sup> although she has more recently expressed some reticence to continue this identification in light of the discovery of the Tel Dan Inscription (and its attestation of the *yaqtul*-preterit in Aramaic) and other arguments for Tel Dan as a dialect of Northwest Semitic that did not share in many of the specific innovations distinguishing Canaanite and Aramaic from their mother language, Proto-Northwest Semitic.<sup>3</sup> Na‘ama Pat-El and Aren Wilson-Wright challenge the general consensus, arguing here in favor of Professor Hackett’s original categorization in their chapter, “Deir ‘Allā as a Canaanite Dialect: A Vindication of Hackett” (ch. 1). They do so on the basis of two linguistic isoglosses that the Deir ‘Allā inscriptions share with the (other) Canaan-

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1. Jo Ann Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā*, HSM 31 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984); see also eadem, “The Dialect of the Plaster Text from Tell Deir ‘Allā,” *Or* 53 (1984): 57–65.

2. Eadem, *Balaam Text*, 124.

3. Personal communication with J. M. Hutton. For the view of the dialect as an otherwise undifferentiated form of NWS, see John Huehnergard, “Remarks on the Classification of the Northwest Semitic Languages”; P. Kyle McCarter, “The Dialect of the Deir ‘Alla Texts”; and Dennis Pardee, “The Linguistic Classification of the Deir ‘Alla Text Written on Plaster,” all in *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Alla Re-Evaluated: Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden 21–24 August 1989*, ed. Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij (Leiden: Brill, 1991), respectively, 282–93, 87–99, esp. 97; and 104–5.

ite dialects: “a relative pronoun derived from a grammaticalized form of \*’*aθar*-‘place’” and “a systematic morphological and syntactic distinction between the infinitive absolute and the infinitive construct in the G stem” (p. 19).

Professor Jo Ann Hackett served for eighteen years as Director of the Biblical Hebrew program in the Department of Near Eastern Languages at Harvard University, and has authored a textbook designed to guide students through the basic grammar of Biblical Hebrew in a single semester.<sup>4</sup> As a result of the rigor and precision with which she executed these duties, Professor Hackett is well regarded in Biblical Hebrew pedagogical circles. But not only is she regarded by her colleagues and former students (of which group both Rubin and Hutton are members) as an excellent instructor; her students have typically achieved excellence in the classroom as well—a fact measured in part by the widespread distribution of her students in academic stations. As director of the Biblical Hebrew program at Harvard University, Jo Ann oversaw countless hours of translation from Hebrew to English (not to mention English to Biblical Hebrew), and mentored scores of teaching assistants and teaching fellows in courses such as Introductory Biblical Hebrew, Intermediate Biblical Hebrew, the ominously titled “Rapid Reading,” and the downright terrifying “Turbo-Hebrew”. The curriculum that Professor Hackett was beginning to implement at Harvard with “Turbo-Hebrew” along with Professor John Huehnergard, her husband and sometime co-author, continues to be followed at the University of Texas, Austin, where doctoral students read the entire Hebrew Bible during their time in coursework. In each one of these classroom settings, Professor Hackett is patient but stern; she demands grammatical precision combined with a fluid translation. Hutton recalls that once, after a particularly offensive butchering of a passage in 1 Sam 14, in which he translated the defeat (*makkā*) with the modifier ‘great’ (assuming *gādōlā*), Professor Hackett forced him to concede that, “well, the battle wasn’t *that* great.” Jo Ann’s sharp eye and blistering wit provides her students an exceptional model and exacting instructor throughout the several required semesters of Biblical Hebrew, Ugaritic, and Northwest Semitic Epigraphy.

Professor Hackett’s rigorous research in the philological study of Biblical Hebrew and her longstanding tradition of excellence in Northwest Semitic language instruction is honored in several essays in this volume.

John Huehnergard provides a summary of Hebrew nominal morphology, tracing Hebrew lexemes to their underlying Proto-Northwest Semitic forms and consolidating the semantic patterns resulting from this study (ch. 2). This chapter comprises a thorough reworking of the section on nominal morphology in the unpublished, and long-anticipated (and often surreptitiously photocopied) “Outline of Historical Hebrew Grammar” that Huehnergard co-authored with his and Professor Hackett’s mentor at Harvard, Thomas O. Lambdin.

Gary A. Rendsburg surveys biblical uses of dialect shifting in order to capture and render more realistically geographic or social details (ch. 3). The inves-

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4. Jo Ann Hackett, *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010).

tigated texts therefore comprise literary exemplars of the phenomenon known as “style-switching” in modern socio-linguistic studies.

Jason A. Bemby investigates the epigraphic and biblical occurrences of the Aramaic verbs apparently derived from the roots  $\sqrt{HWK}$  and  $\sqrt{HLK}$ , attempting to determine the historical origination of the former. Bemby argues that the latter root served as the source of the former, which underwent a process whereby the medial *\*l* was lost, on analogy with the semantically related and phonologically similar  $\sqrt{SLQ}$  in Aramaic (ch. 4).

F. W. “Chip” Dobbs-Allsopp takes an unconventional approach to the issue of ancient written Hebrew poetry. He analyzes written poetry as “emergent,” in that the technology of writing was first employed only imperfectly, inchoatively to capture Hebrew poetry. Dobbs-Allsopp problematizes this interface of the graphic nature of writing and the auditory modes of poetic recitation; without an appreciation of the unique matrix of poetic orality that underlies and informs the written biblical text, our understanding of biblical poetry remains incomplete (ch. 6).

Jo Ann’s tough but forgiving guidance also served as a model for many of her students through several semesters of teaching under her supervision. Before neophyte language instructors embarked on each of their teaching posts, Jo Ann (and Professor Beverly Kinzele of the Harvard Divinity School) engaged them in several sessions on second language acquisition. It was in these sessions that most students were first introduced to the problems associated with translation as objects worthy of consideration in their own right. Jo Ann never pursued the problems raised at these sessions at the theoretical level, preferring instead to deal with them as pragmatic matters related to second language instruction in a modern institutional setting. However, two of the essays in the present volume deal explicitly with issues associated with the phenomenon of translation.

Steven E. Fassberg investigates the lexical correspondences in evidence between the (Hebrew) Masoretic Text and the (Aramaic) Targum Onqelos, specifically as regards the verbs meaning ‘to walk.’ In contrast to Bemby (see above), Fassberg concludes that  $\sqrt{HWK}$  comprised a root separate from  $\sqrt{HLK}$ , and that the two demonstrate a complicated and overlapping pattern of distribution along with  $\sqrt{ZL}$  (ch. 5). Although the essays by Bemby and Fassberg arrive at almost diametrically opposed conclusions, we regard this as an homage to the kind of debate that Professor Hackett encourages in her own graduate classes.

As Jeremy Hutton and Catherine Bonesho have demonstrated in their paper, the pragmatic issues of translation extend far back in time. One task with which Semitic Philology has not sufficiently grappled is the formulation of theoretical approaches through which modern researchers can understand how translators in antiquity conceived of and practiced their craft—including the material considerations governing what counts as a “translation” (ch. 12).

Another component of Professor Hackett’s research and teaching duties comprised the study of Northwest Semitic epigraphy. This focus of Professor Hackett’s career is honored in several essays dealing directly with epigraphic texts in Proto-Canaanite, Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Hebrew.

Gordon J. Hamilton explores two methodological principles governing the validity of epigraphic studies. First, Hamilton espouses a “temporally-forward” analysis of typology, in which researchers utilize the growing corpus of early linear inscriptions as a basis of comparison.<sup>5</sup> Second, he cautions against an over-hasty move from the palaeographic analysis of an inscription to its linguistic analysis. Hamilton views this tendency among modern epigraphers as being fueled by advances in communicative technology as well (ch. 7).

A similarly meticulous analysis of palaeography is carried out by John L. Ellison, who studies “The Scribal Art at Ugarit.” Employing a process that can only be described as “experiential epigraphy” (following the terminology of John Edmondson),<sup>6</sup> Ellison demonstrates that the implements and procedures of Ugaritic scribal culture are recoverable. Fittingly, this essay condenses much of Ellison’s expansive dissertation, which he completed under Professor Hackett’s tutelage, and we are pleased to present this study here (ch. 8).<sup>7</sup>

In her study of the Gezer Inscription (now commonly recognized as exemplifying Phoenician language and scribal character), Jacqueline Vayntrub demonstrates how vital it is that epigraphic study be tempered with and complemented by an anthropologically informed investigation. In so doing, she re-analyzes the “calendar’s” genre, assigning it instead to the wider rubric of “Wisdom Literature,” since it serves to “transmit and transform experiential and technical knowledge through a written medium” (p. 202; ch. 9).

One significant hurdle habitually encountered in the study of epigraphic media is access to high-quality photographs of the inscriptions under scrutiny. In the last several decades, improved photographic quality and the increasingly electronically-based character of research have rendered possible wider, faster, and more useful distribution of epigraphic images. One of the most important and useful innovations of the last decade or so has been the application of Reflectance Transformation Imaging to Northwest Semitic Epigraphy. In their chapter describing the benefits and pitfalls of the practice, Nathaniel E. Greene and Heather Dana Davis Parker reflect on the future of this imaging technique (ch. 10).

Christopher A. Rollston presents evidence leading to the conclusion that the so-called “Ivory Pomegranate Inscription” is a forgery. Although previous studies have given detailed palaeographic and material arguments in support of the same position, Rollston’s approach here is more circumstantial: he approaches the epigraph from the perspective of someone who has long been paying attention to the motivations for and the techniques of forgery. In this essay, Rollston

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5. A recent addition to the Northwest Semitic epigraphic corpus is an inscribed pithos from Khirbet Qeiyafeh, published recently by Yosef Garfinkel et al., “The ’Išba‘al Inscription from Khirbet Qeiyafa,” *BASOR* 373 (2015): 217–33.

6. Jonathan Edmondson, “Inscribing Roman Texts: *Officinae*, Layout, and Carving Techniques,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 121.

7. John L. Ellison, “A Paleographic Study of the Alphabetic Cuneiform Texts from Ras Shamra-Ugarit” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2002).

cautions against the over-quick acceptance of unprovenanced epigraphic finds and the reactionary dismissal of suspicions of forgery because of any assumptions predicated on the lack of skill on the forgers' part (ch. 11).

As noted above, Professor Hackett's study of the Deir 'Allā inscription combined philological rigor with acute attentiveness to issues of religious traditions. She continued to perform research on these same themes in subsequent works, especially in her own contribution to a volume in honor of her teacher, Frank Moore Cross.<sup>8</sup> Professor Hackett's engagement with the religious milieu of Iron Age Israel is reflected in the three essays in the final section of this volume.

Mark W. Hamilton offers a new theoretical framework through which to investigate early Israelite and Judahite religion. Following recent theoretical approaches to Religious Studies, he proposes that we should conceptualize Israelite religion as a form of communication. This reconfiguration of our investigatory matrices—along with the concomitant adoption of a “storytracking” approach—permits a historicizing method that allows us to reconstruct the religious history of Israel while at the same time doing justice to the literary nature of our sources (ch. 13).

Although we have not explicitly centered this volume on a fourth major theme of Professor Hackett's research—the study of women in ancient Israel<sup>9</sup>—Susan Niditch picks up on this theme with her investigation of women's vowing practices as related by the Hebrew Bible. She finds that the institution of women's vows is frequently “an arena for tension within families,” through which women could exert independence and self-determination, and against which a husband or father might attempt to impose his will (p. 334). In this essay, Niditch incorporates much recent theoretical work in religious studies, particu-

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8. Jo Ann Hackett, “Religious Traditions in Israelite Transjordan,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, ed. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 125–36; see also eadem, “Some Observations on the Balaam Tradition at Deir 'Allā,” *BA* 49 (1986): 216–22; and eadem, “Response to Baruch Levine and André Lemaire,” in *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Alla Re-evaluated: Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden, 21–24 August 1989*, ed. Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 73–84.

9. See, e.g., Jo Ann Hackett, “In the Days of Jael: Reclaiming the History of Women in Ancient Israel,” in *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality*, ed. Clarissa Atkinson, Constance Buchanan, and Margaret Miles (Boston: Beacon, 1985), 15–38; eadem, “Women's Studies and the Hebrew Bible,” in *The Future of Biblical Studies: The Hebrew Scriptures*, ed. Richard E. Friedman and H. G. M. Williamson, SemeiaSt (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 141–64; eadem, “Rehabilitating Hagar: Fragments of an Epic Pattern,” in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, ed. Peggy Day (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989), 12–27; eadem, “Can a Sexist Model Liberate Us? Ancient Near Eastern ‘Fertility’ Goddesses,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 5 (1989): 65–76; eadem, “Violence and Women's Lives in the Book of Judges,” *Int* 58 (2004): 356–64; and eadem, “1 and 2 Samuel,” *Women's Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon Ringe (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 85–95 (and revisions thereof in 1998 and 2012).

larly centered on the rubric of “personal” (as opposed to “public”) religious expression (ch. 14).

Finally, Dexter E. Callender utilizes cognitive theory to investigate and harmonize two themes held in common between the Mesopotamian Adapa myth and the creation account. Because the ingestion of food is an activity fraught with danger, the social aspects of eating and drinking become a site of singular importance with respect to the interaction of language, cognition, and human interaction. Likewise, the donning of clothing communicates important social messages. Callender leverages these observations of cognitive analysts in order to provide an innovative reflection on the “Primal Human” envisioned in both Genesis 1–3 and the Adapa Myth (ch. 14).

Collecting and editing these essays has proved to be a labor of love. Like Professor Jo Ann Hackett’s simultaneously collegial encouragement and stern admonishment, this task has forced us to think more broadly, challenged us to go beyond our everyday comfort zones, and persuaded us to engage a wider world of scholarship than we typically inhabit. That is simply par for the course when studying under and alongside Jo Ann.

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## PART 1: PHILOLOGY



## Deir 'Allā as a Canaanite Dialect: A Vindication of Hackett

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For almost fifty years, epigraphers, biblical scholars, and Semitists have debated the linguistic identity of the plaster texts from Deir 'Allā, Jordan. Jo Ann Hackett—this volume's honoree—played a crucial role in this debate. In her 1980 Harvard dissertation, Hackett went a long way toward establishing the correct text of these inscriptions and interpreting their language. She also provided cogent arguments for identifying the language of the inscriptions as Canaanite. Since 1980, her initial identification has received both support and criticism. In this paper, we adduce new data in support of her identification as a tribute to her legacy of research and teaching. Along the way, we will review some principles that will be useful in the classification of the Northwest Semitic languages.

Scholars have classified the Deir 'Allā texts in essentially four ways: (1) as Aramaic; (2) as Canaanite; (3) as a mixed language; and (4) as a separate branch of Northwest Semitic. In the interest of conserving space, we will review only a few examples of each proposal. In the *editio princeps*, Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij classified the Deir 'Allā texts as Aramaic, based on the mistaken identification of the Aramaic definite article *-ʔ*.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, a few proponents of an Aramaic identification introduced temporal distinctions into the equation. Ernst Axel Knauf, for example, calls the texts “Proto-Aramaic,” while Manfred Weippert argues that they represent “a peripheral language which is not yet Aramaic, but is about to become Aramaic.”<sup>2</sup> Jo Ann Hackett, by contrast, classified the texts as Canaanite, based on a refined reading of the inscriptions, which unearthed several features that either cannot be Aramaic (such as the N stem, which is not found in Aramaic), or are attested in Canaanite (I-weak infinitives

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1. Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij, *Aramaic texts from Deir 'Alla* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 301–2.

2. Ernst Axel Knauf, review of *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Allā*, by Jo Ann Hackett, *ZDPV* 101 (1985): 189–91; Manfred Weippert, “The Balaam Text from Deir 'Allā and the Study of the Old Testament,” in *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Alla Re-Evaluated: Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden 21–24 August 1989*, ed. Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 163.

with *-t* and consecutive *waw*).<sup>3</sup> Later, Baruch Halpern offered further support for her classification.<sup>4</sup> Others have treated the Deir ‘Allā texts as a mixed language. Klaus Beyer regards the texts as Aramaic with Canaanite features, while Stephen Kaufmann places them near the Aramaic end of a dialect continuum stretching from the Transjordan to Syria.<sup>5</sup> Finally, John Huehnergard classifies the language of the Deir ‘Allā texts as a separate branch of Northwest Semitic independent of Canaanite and Aramaic, based on the fact that none of the features found in the inscriptions is conclusively Aramaic or Canaanite.<sup>6</sup>

Overall the debate has hinged on the distinction between Aramaic and Canaanite. But what linguistic features characterize these languages? In a 1991 article, Huehnergard identified three innovative features that the Canaanite languages share:<sup>7</sup> (1) the shift of the 1.c.sg. independent pronoun from *\*ʔanākū* to *ʔanōkī* and the subsequent shift of *\*ʔanā* to *ʔanī* and *\*qataltū* to *qatalṭī*,<sup>8</sup> (2) the shift of the D- and C-stem perfect bases from *\*qattil* and *\*haqtīl* to *qittil* and *hiqtīl*, respectively;<sup>9</sup> and (3) the generalization of *-nū* as the 1.c.pl. possessive

3. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā*, HSM 31 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), 123–24.

4. Baruch Halpern, “Dialect Distribution in Canaan and the Deir Alla Inscriptions,” in *Working with No Data: Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin*, ed. David M. Golomb (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 133.

5. Klaus Beyer, “The Languages of Transjordan,” in *Languages from the World of the Bible*, ed. Holger Gzella (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 125. Stephen Kaufman, “The Classification of North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof,” in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies (Panel Sessions: Hebrew and Aramaic languages)* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1998), 53.

6. John Huehnergard, “Remarks on the Classification of the Northwest Semitic Languages,” in *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā Re-Evaluated: Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden 21–24 August 1989*, ed. Jacob Hoftijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 285–86.

7. *Ibid.*, 285–86. See also Jo Ann Hackett and Na‘ama Pat-El, “On Canaanite and Historical Linguistics: A Rejoinder to Anson Rainey,” *Maarav* 17 (2010): 177–78, for a recent discussion of these features.

8. Compare, inter alia, Hebrew *kātab-tī* ‘I wrote’, Punic *cora-thi* ‘I called’ (Plaut., *Poen.* 940a/930), Moabite *mlk-ty* ‘I ruled’ (*KAI* 181:2), and Amarna Canaanite *na-ad-na-ti* ‘I gave’ (EA 73:38).

9. Compare Hebrew D *dibber* ‘he spoke’ (Gen 12:4) and C *himṭir* ‘he made it rain’ (Gen 2:5) and Amarna Canaanite C *ḥi-iḥ-bé-e /hiḥbiʔel* (EA 256:7). The form of the Phoenician D-stem can be inferred from Greek and Latin transcriptions such as *sillēch* and *sillec* ‘he sent’, and Punic forms such as *hydš* ‘he renewed’. The palatalization *\*h > y* of the causative prefix in the Phoenician C perfect may provide evidence for the vocalization *hiqtīl* as noted by W. Randall Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 B.C.E.* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 58–59. For a detailed account of this change, see John Huehnergard, “Historical Phonology and the Hebrew Piel,” in *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*, ed. W. R. Bodine (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 209–29.

and objective suffix.<sup>10</sup> None of these features appears in the Deir 'Allā inscriptions.

In a separate article, Huehnergard identified three innovative features that characterize Aramaic: (1) a definite article in *-ʔ*; (2) the loss of the N-stem; and (3) the feminine plural morpheme *-ān*.<sup>11</sup> Some of these features are stronger evidence of an Aramaic provenance than others, however. The definite article is an areal phenomenon that cut across most branches of Central Semitic and took different forms in different subgroups. Areal features cannot be considered shared innovations unless they affected a proto-language before it split into different daughter languages. We do not know *a priori* that the definite article had already spread to Proto-Aramaic, so the definite article is not a good diagnostic feature. The loss of the N-stem is also not a strong diagnostic feature. Shared loss is not a good indicator of genetic relatedness, because even closely related languages can lose features at different times. Both Phoenician and Hebrew, for example, lost the inherited Semitic case system, but at different rates.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, languages that are more distantly related may be prone to lose the same feature based on their shared typological poise.<sup>13</sup> Put differently, the shared loss of the N-stem in the various Aramaic dialects could be an illusion caused by multiple instances of loss in the prehistory of these dialects. Only shared innovations, therefore, should be used for subgrouping.<sup>14</sup>

The Deir 'Allā inscriptions do not qualify as Aramaic according to Huehnergard's criteria. They lack a definite article; have a feminine plural marker which ends in *-t*, not *-n* (assuming *p<sup>h</sup>lt* in I, 5 is plural); and contain at least two N-Stem verbs (*nšbw* 'they took their place' in I, 6 and *n'nh* 'he sighed' in II, 12).<sup>15</sup> But this has not prevented other scholars, such as Stephen Kaufmann, Joshua Blau, and Josef Tropper, from identifying additional Aramaic-like features in the Deir 'Allā inscriptions.<sup>16</sup> Such features include the representation

10. Compare Hebrew *šalm-ē-nū* 'our image' (Gen 1:26) and *yšalləh-ē-nū* 'he sent us' (Gen 19:13), Amarna Canaanite *ru-šu-nu* 'our head' (EA 264:18) and *ti-mi-tu-na-nu* 'you kill us' (EA 238:33), and perhaps Phoenician *ρβθαθων* < *\*rabbatVnū* 'our lady' (*KAI* 175:2). The situation in Phoenician can only be hypothesized since we have no direct evidence for the quality of this vowel or even its existence. See Jo Ann Hackett, "Phoenician and Punic," in *Cambridge Encyclopedia of the World's Ancient Languages*, ed. Roger D. Woodard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 375.

11. John Huehnergard, "What is Aramaic?" *Aram* 7 (1995): 282.

12. For the survival of the genitive in Phoenician see Rebecca Hasselbach, "Phoenician Case in Typological Context," in *Linguistic Studies in Phoenician*, ed. Robert D. Holmstedt and Aaron Schade (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 199–225.

13. For the notion of typological poise see N. J. Enfield, "On Genetic and Areal Linguistics in Mainland South-East Asia: Parallel Polyfunctionality of 'acquire,'" in *Areal Diffusion and Genetic Inheritance: Problems in Comparative Linguistics*, ed. A. Y. Aikhenvald and R. M. Dixon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 284–85.

14. Robert Hetzron, "Two Principles of Genetic Reconstruction," *Lingua* 38 (1976): 95.

15. Hackett, *Balaam Text*, 111–14, 117.

16. Kaufmann, "Classification of North West Semitic Dialects," 48–49, 51–52;

of the Proto-Semitic emphatic lateral *\*lʷ* by *qôp*, the realization of the 3.m.sg. possessive suffix as <WH> on plural nouns, and the lexemes *br* ‘son’ and *ħd* ‘one’. None of these features, however, prove useful for conclusively classifying the Deir ‘Allā inscriptions as Aramaic, as we will show below.

In several words, *qôp* represents the etymological *\*lʷ* (i.e., the emphatic lateral fricative), as in most Aramaic inscriptions (but cf. Sefire I A 28), but contrary to known Canaanite inscriptions.<sup>17</sup> This feature only shows that Deir ‘Allā is written in Aramaic orthography. It does not prove that the language of the Deir ‘Allā inscriptions underwent the presumed sound change that underlies Aramaic orthography and, even if it did, a single sound change does not reliably indicate genetic relatedness.<sup>18</sup> Typologically, there are only a small number of possible sound changes that can occur and thus distantly related or even unrelated languages may undergo the same change. Both English and ancient Egyptian, for example, underwent a change of *ā* to *ō*, the same change that took place in Canaanite and is known to Semitists as the “Canaanite Shift.”

In the Deir ‘Allā inscriptions, the 3.m.sg. suffix pronoun assumes the consonantal form <WH> on a preposition with a plural base *ʔl* ‘to’ (I, 1, 4) as in Aramaic, but in contrast to the known Canaanite languages. At first glance, this feature appears to speak strongly for an Aramaic identification. But in his study of Syro-Palestinian dialect geography, Randall Garr argued that this ending is the result of a generally accepted Northwest Semitic sound change: *\*ay-ħū* <YH> became *\*aw-ħū* <WH> by regressive assimilation.<sup>19</sup>

Like Aramaic, the Deir ‘Allā inscriptions use the words *br* ‘son’ and *ħd* ‘one’, while the known Canaanite languages use *bn* and *ʔħd*. This is not a reason to consider the Deir ‘Allā inscriptions Aramaic, however. These forms resulted from sound changes—aphaesis of the initial *ʔaleph* in the case of *ħd*, and a shift of *\*ŋ* (i.e., a vocalic dental nasal) to *r* in *br*<sup>20</sup>—and, as mentioned above, sound changes are poor indicators of genetic relatedness. Lexical items are not good indices of genetic relatedness either since they are the first items to be borrowed

Joshua Blau, “Reflections of the Linguistic Status of Two Ancient Languages with Cultural Ties to Hebrew,” *Leshonenu* 69 (2007): 218 [Hebrew]; Josef Tropper, *Die Inschriften von Zincirli: Neue Edition und vergleichende Grammatik des phönizischen, samaritanischen, und aramäischen Textkorpus*, ALASP 6 (Münster: Ugarit-Vorlag, 1993), 311.

17. Examples include *qbʿn* I, 10; *yqhk* I, 11; and *hqrt* I, 15. Hackett, *Balaam Text*, 91. To account for this orthographic convention, Richard Steiner suggests a change of *\*lʷ* to *\*qʷ* with several intermediate steps. Richard C. Steiner, *The Case for Fricative Laterals in Proto-Semitic*, AOS 59 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1977), 39–41.

18. Hebrew reflects a similar case, where its Phoenician orthography hides the fact that it did not undergo the same sound changes that Phoenician did. See Richard Steiner, “On the Dating of Hebrew Sound Changes (*\*ħ > ħ* and *\*g > ʕ*) and Greek Translations (2 Esdras and Judith)” *JBL* 124 (2005): 229–67.

19. Garr, *Dialect Geography*, 107.

20. For the shift of *\*ŋ* to *r* in the Aramaic and Modern South Arabian words for ‘son’ see David Testen, “The Significance of Aramaic *r < \*ŋ*,” *JNES* 44 (1985): 143–46.

in situations of language contact.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the forms *br* 'son' and *hd* 'one' are not exclusive to Aramaic. Forms with *r* appear in the Modern South Arabian languages, and *hd* occurs in several Modern Arabic dialects. Furthermore, the noun *br* does not occur as an independent noun (e.g. 'he is my son'), but only as part of Balaam's name. Names and their components do not provide a good source of linguistic features, because they often stand outside of the prevailing linguistic system. The Kilamuwa Inscription (*KAI* 24:1), for example, identifies its patron as *klmw br hy*[?], but is written in Phoenician, a Canaanite language. The use of *br* only shows that Balaam had or was thought to have had an Aramaic name by the original authors of the text.

The Deir 'Allā inscriptions do not seem to exhibit any of the known, innovative features of Aramaic or Canaanite. Because of this under-determination, Huehnergard argued that the Deir 'Allā inscriptions must represent an independent branch of Northwest Semitic; indeed, given the features discussed above, no other conclusion is possible.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, we suggest that Huehnergard's arguments require revision. Since the known Canaanite features are all vocalic, and often affect short vowels or interior long vowels, they cannot be detected in most Iron Age Inscriptions. Short vowels are almost never indicated in Iron Age alphabetic inscriptions, and vowel letters for medial long vowels only become common at the end of the Iron Age.<sup>23</sup> In fact, the only Canaanite feature that *can* be detected in Iron inscriptions is the shift of *qatalū* to *qatalī*, provided this form is written with a final *yod*, as in the Mesha Stele (e.g., *mlkty* in line 2).

To remedy this problem, we have recently proposed two additional features of Canaanite that can be detected in primarily consonantal texts: (1) a relative pronoun derived from a grammaticalized form of \**ʿaθar-* 'place'; and (2) a systematic morphological and syntactic distinction between the infinitive absolute and the infinitive construct, at least in the G stem.<sup>24</sup> These features, we contend,

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21. Sarah G. Thomason, *Language Contact: An Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001), 70–71.

22. Huehnergard, "Remarks on the Classification," 282–93. Identifying the Deir 'Allā inscription as Northwest Semitic *tout court* carries its own risks. The two features that Huehnergard attributes to Northwest Semitic also prove difficult to detect in primarily consonantal inscriptions. The systematic double pluralization of *qVl* nouns as *qVtalūma* does not show up in any Iron Age alphabetic orthography. The shift of initial *w-* to *y-* does, but sound changes are not particularly useful features for classification. Na'ama Pat-El has proposed another Northwest Semitic feature: the use of *ʿal* to negate non-indicative verbs. Using this criterion, the Deir 'Allā inscriptions do qualify as Northwest Semitic because the divine council instructs the goddess Š[amaš?] *ʿl thgy* 'do not remove it!' (I, 7). See Na'ama Pat-El, "On Verbal Negation in Semitic," *ZDMG* 162 (2012): 36–38.

23. Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Early Hebrew Orthography: A Study of the Epigraphic Evidence*, AOS 36 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1952), 19–20, 31, 43, 57.

24. Na'ama Pat-El and Aren Wilson-Wright, "The Features of Canaanite: A Reevaluation," *ZDMG*, forthcoming.



are both shared and innovative within the known Canaanite languages and also occur in the Deir ‘Allā inscriptions. We will briefly reiterate our proposal below.

#### RELATIVE PRONOUN

With the exception of some Arabic dialects, most of the Semitic languages retain the Proto-Semitic relative pronoun \*zV in some form or another. Most of the known Canaanite languages, however, have largely replaced this form with an innovative relative pronoun.<sup>25</sup> Hebrew uses *’āšer* and *šeC*; Moabite (*KAI* 181:29) and Edomite (Ḥorvat ‘Uza, line 4)<sup>26</sup> use *’šr*,<sup>27</sup> and Standard Phoenician, Ammonite, and the language of the Khirbet el-Mudeiyneh incense altar use *’š*.<sup>28</sup> Huehnergard has argued persuasively that *’šr*, *’š*, and *š-* are all reflexes of the common Semitic noun \**’aθar-* ‘place’, and do not derive from the inherited Semitic relative.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the use of these relatives constitutes a shared innovation of the Canaanite branch, as Hackett recognized already in 2004.<sup>30</sup> This feature is particularly useful for classifying epigraphic texts, since relative pronouns are a common grammatical feature and occur frequently in votive texts.<sup>31</sup>

25. The Akkadian relative *ša* masks the native relative pronoun in Amarna Canaanite. The Proto-Semitic relative does not disappear completely from the Canaanite languages. Byblian Phoenician still uses a derivative of *zV* as the relative pronoun (e.g. *KAI* 1:1), while Biblical Hebrew preserves a few vestiges of *zV* in poetic texts (e.g., Exod 15:13).

26. See the readings suggested in David Vanderhooft, “The Edomite Dialect and Script: A Review of the Evidence,” in *You Shall Not Abhor an Edomite for He Is Your Brother: Edom and Seir in History and Tradition*, ed. Diana V. Edelman (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1995), 142.

27. Scholars have long suspected that Ammonite and Edomite were Canaanite languages, based on their geographic proximity to known Canaanite languages and forms like Ammonite *’Ammōn* (cf. Arabic *’Ammān*) and Edomite *’Akbōr* (personal name; Gen 36:38; cf. Hebrew *’akbār* ‘mouse’; Hans Bauer “Die hebräischen Eigennamen als sprachliche Erkenntnisquelle,” *ZAW* 48 [1930]: 74), which apparently reflect the Canaanite shift. They were not able to prove this identification due to the paucity of sound evidence and the nature of Iron Age orthography.

28. The *editio princeps* of this inscription appears in Paul E. Dion and P. M. Michèle Daviau, “An Inscribed Incense Altar of Iron Age II at *Ḥirbet el-Mudēyine* (Jordan),” *ZDPV* 116 (2000): 1–13.

29. John Huehnergard, “On the Etymology of the Hebrew Relative *še-*,” in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 124–25. Na‘ama Pat-El, “The Syntax of *’āšer* and *šeC* Yet Again,” in *Language and Nature: Papers Presented to John Huehnergard on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach and Na‘ama Pat-El (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2012), 319–27, *contra* Robert D. Holmstedt, “The Etymologies of Hebrew *’āšer* and *šeC*,” *JNES* 66 (2007): 177–92.

30. Hackett, “Phoenician and Punic,” 377.

31. One of the most common votive formulae has the form item dedicated followed

## THE MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX OF THE INFINITIVES

Several branches of Semitic use the form *\*qatāl* as the G stem infinitive, which led Joshua Fox to reconstruct it as the Proto-Semitic infinitive in his study of Semitic noun patterns.<sup>32</sup> Biblical Hebrew, by contrast, uses two infinitives, each with its own unique morphological pattern, in almost every verbal stem: the infinitive absolute and the infinitive construct.<sup>33</sup> Morphologically, the infinitive absolute reflects the Proto-Semitic *\*qatāl* form, while the infinitive construct comes from an otherwise uncommon *\*qutul* pattern. Syntactically, the infinitive absolute assumes adverbial functions (e.g., *bārēk ʾābārek-ākā* “I will surely bless you”; Gen 22:17) and may be governed by independent pronouns, while the infinitive construct takes on nominal functions, e.g., as a subject (e.g., *hā-lô(?) tōb lānū šūb mišrāymā* “Is it not better for us to return to Egypt?”; Num 14:3) and may take pronominal suffixes. These differences can also be seen in other known Canaanite languages, at least in the G stem.<sup>34</sup> And while the vocalization of these two infinitives in the non-Hebrew Canaanite languages is not perceptible in Iron Age orthography, morphological differences between the two infinitives become apparent for I-y and III-y verbs when compared with Hebrew.<sup>35</sup> For example, the infinitive construct of *yšb* in Ammonite is *l-šbt* (Tell el-Mazar Ostrakon III:3) matching Biblical Hebrew *lā-šebet*, and the infinitive construct of *hlk* in Phoenician is *l-lkt* (*KAI* 2:1), corresponding to Hebrew *lā-leket* (contrast the Phoenician infinitive absolute *hlk* [*KAI* 27:21], corresponding to Hebrew *hālōk*).<sup>36</sup> Differences in syntax are also apparent. The infinitive construct may take pronominal suffixes and be governed by a preposition: Moabite *b-hlthm-h* “when he was fighting (Dt inf.) me” (*KAI* 181:19) and Phoenician *l-mlk-y* ‘of my ruling’ (*KAI* 14:1). Conversely, the infinitive absolute can function adverbially (Ammonite *mt ymnt* ‘they will surely die’ Amman Citadel Inscript-

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by a relative and a verb of dedication. We would like to thank Jeremy Hutton for sharing a list of Northwest Semitic dedicatory formulae, which he compiled from *KAI*.

32. Joshua Fox, *Semitic Noun Patterns*, HSS 52 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 179.

33. The infinitive construct of the *pual/Dp*-stem is unattested. J. M. Solá-Solé, *L’infinitive sémitique* (Paris: Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1961), 69–104; and Steven E. Fassberg, “The Overlap in Use between the Infinitive Construct and the Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew,” in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language*, ed. Moshe Bar-Asher et al. (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007), 427–28 [Hebrew].

34. Again, Amarna Canaanite is the outlier. The Akkadian infinitive *qatāl*-camouflages native Amarna Canaanite infinitive morphology and is used in all syntactic positions. Not surprisingly, the Horvat Uza ostrakon—the only connected Edomite text—does not contain any infinitives.

35. Plautus’s *Poenulus* provides some evidence for the vocalization of the Phoenician infinitive construct. In this play, Plautus transcribes *l-pʿl* as *li-ful*, corresponding to Hebrew *li-pʿōl* < *\*la-puʿul* (*Poen.* 945).

36. For the Tell el-Mazar ostraca see Khair Yassine and Javier Teixidor, “Ammonite and Aramaic Inscriptions from Tell El-Mazār in Jordan,” *BASOR* 264 (1986): 45–50.

tion 2) and be governed by independent pronouns (Phoenician *w-qrʔ ʔnk* [*KAI* 10:2]). Such a distribution of infinitival patterns is unattested in other Semitic languages. We have therefore suggested that this feature is a shared innovation of the Canaanite branch.

#### DEIR ‘ALLĀ AS A CANAANITE LANGUAGE

The Deir ‘Allā inscriptions exhibit both of these features, and must therefore be considered Canaanite. Line one of combination I identifies the protagonist as [*bl<sup>c</sup>m brb<sup>c</sup>ʔr ʔš ḥzh ʔlhn hʔ*] ([*bil<sup>c</sup>am birub<sup>c</sup>uʔr ʔaš ḥōze(h) ʔilōhīn hūʔ*]) “Balaam, son of Beor who sees the gods.” Émile Puech and Helga and Manfred Weippert have argued that *ʔš* represents the common noun *ʔš* ‘man’ in construct with the following verbal clause,<sup>37</sup> but this is unlikely. Third person perfect verbs only rarely take an independent pronoun, so *ḥzh* is best interpreted as a participle here, which makes *ḥzh ʔlhn hʔ* a nominal clause. Construct relatives, however, almost never govern nominal clauses. Of all the Semitic languages that permit construct relatives, there are only five examples with a following nominal clause, all in Biblical Hebrew, and never with the noun *ʔš* (Lev 7:9; Isa 51:7; Ezek 22:24; Zeph 2:1; Job 3:15).<sup>38</sup>

Another possibility, raised by a reviewer of this paper, is that the syntagm *ʔš ḥzh ʔlhn hʔ* should be interpreted as *ʔš ḥōze(h) ʔilōhīn hūʔ*, namely, “he is a man, seer of god”. We find this unlikely. While the combination *ʔš* + participle is found in Hebrew, it is used as a nominal modifier, not a predicate. There are perhaps a handful of examples of the ‘he (is)’ + *ʔš* + participle syntagm in Hebrew (*ʔš šārūa<sup>c</sup> hūʔ*) “he is a leprous man”; Lev 13:44).<sup>39</sup> On the other hand there are several dozen examples of *ʔāšer* + participle.<sup>40</sup> This is not to say that the reviewer’s proposal is incorrect, but rather that it is less likely than the interpretation we are proposing. Therefore, *ʔš* most likely represents the relative particle *ʔaš*, as Hackett suggested in 1980.<sup>41</sup>

37. Émile Puech, “L’inscription de la statue d’Amman et la paléographie ammonite,” *RB* 92 (1985): 24. Helga Weippert and Manfred Weippert, “Die ‘Bileam’-Inschrift von Tell Dēr ‘Allā,” *ZDPV* 98 (1982): 84.

38. Felice Israel argues that the relative *ʔš* cannot come from the common noun *ʔš* ‘man’ because a lexicalized form of *ʔš* serves as an indefinite pronoun in Biblical Hebrew. See Felice Israel, “Il Pronome Relativo Nell’Area Cananaica,” in *Mélanges David Cohen: Études sur le langage, les langues, les dialectes, les littératures, offertes par ses élèves, ses collègues, ses amis*, ed. Jérôme Lentin and Antoine Lonnet (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2003), 340.

39. Other possible examples are found in Gen 25:27 and 39:2.

40. Furthermore, professional terms for prophets, like *ḥōzē*, *rōʔē* or *nābīʔ*, are not found in construct with *ʔēlōhīm* (or YHWH), with the exception of 1 Kgs 18 in the context of the Baal prophets. In other words, while *ʔš ʔēlōhīm* is a common term for a type of prophet, *ʔš ḥōzē ʔēlōhīm* and similar terms are not attested.

41. Hackett, *Balaam Text*, 31.

The Deir 'Allā inscriptions also exhibit two morphologically and syntactically distinct infinitives.<sup>42</sup> Although the inscriptions do not provide enough data to show a systematic distinction between the two—as is to be expected for such a short text—the two infinitives conform to the patterns we expect on the basis of Hebrew and other Canaanite languages. In I, 3–4, Balaam 'wept grievously (*bkh ybkh*)' at the portent of El's oracle. Here, the infinitive absolute *bkh*—matching Hebrew *bākō* (1 Sam 1:10; cf. the infinitive construct *bēkōt* in Gen 43:30)—is used adverbially with a finite verb.<sup>43</sup> The two infinitive constructs in combination II, by contrast, behave differently. Both infinitive constructs are governed by the preposition *l-*: *l-ḥlq* 'to destroy' in line 11 and *l-d'ṯ* 'to know' in line 17. More importantly, *l-d'ṯ* matches the Hebrew infinitive construct *lā-da'at* (Gen 3:22; cf. the infinitive absolute *yādōa'* in Gen 15:13) in terms of its consonantal structure, suggesting a morphological distinction between infinitive construct and the infinitive absolute, much like we see in other Canaanite languages.<sup>44</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

Building on Jo Ann Hackett's foundational work on the Deir 'Allā inscriptions, we have argued that the Deir 'Allā inscriptions record a Canaanite language. Our identification relies on two new innovative features that we claim characterize the Canaanite languages: 1) a relative pronoun derived from a grammaticalized form of \**ʔaθar-* 'place'; and 2) a systematic morphological and syntactic distinction between the infinitive absolute and the infinitive construct in the G stem. These features are particularly useful because they can be detected easily in primarily consonantal texts, unlike previous features. Hopefully, they will help in classifying other Iron Age texts that are unearthed in the future.

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42. *Ibid.*, 104.

43. An additional infinitive absolute, *šm*, continues a series of feminine singular imperatives in I, 6, but its morphological form is obscured by the orthography of the text. In Hebrew at least, the difference between the infinitive construct and the infinitive absolute of *šym* is vocalic (e.g., *šūm* vs. *šōm*).

44. The morphology of the infinitive of I-weak verbs has already been identified as Canaanite in Hackett, *Balaam Text*, 119.

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## Biblical Hebrew Nominal Patterns\*

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*for Jo, who “sees patterns, consistency,  
order, and finds the excitement in  
scholarship in discovering this order”<sup>1</sup>*

The present paper reviews Biblical Hebrew noun patterns, listed according to their Proto-(Northwest) Semitic ancestors.<sup>2</sup> An understanding of noun patterns

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\* This paper is dedicated with love to my life-partner and best critic, who knows Biblical Hebrew far better than I do. The paper is an extensive revision of part of an outline for a graduate seminar on the historical grammar of BH. I wish to thank Sarah Baker, Robert Holmstedt, Thomas O. Lambdin, Na‘ama Pat-El, Aren Wilson-Wright, Philip Zhakevich, and the many students who have, over the years, offered suggestions for improvement and clarification; I am especially grateful to the editors of this volume, Jeremy Hutton and Aaron Rubin, for their careful reading of an earlier draft. Naturally, responsibility for what follows rests with me.

Abbreviations: abs. = absolute (form); adj. = adjective; Akk. = Akkadian; Arab. = Arabic; Aram. = Aramaic; BabH = Babylonian Hebrew; BH = Biblical Hebrew; cst. = construct; Eth. = classical Ethiopic (Gəʿəz); f(em.) = feminine; G = guttural consonant or *r*; Hex. = Hexaplaric transcription; infin. = infinitive; Kt = Kethib; m(asc.) = masculine; obl. = oblique; PCS = Proto-Central Semitic; pl. = plural; PNWS = Proto-Northwest Semitic; PS = Proto-Semitic; ptcl. = participle; Qr = Qere; Sab. = Sabaic (Ancient South Arabian); sf. = pre-suffixal; sg. = singular; TH = Tiberian Hebrew; Ugar. = Ugaritic; \* = proto-form, reconstructed form; > = becomes, develops into; < = derives from.

Transliteration of Hebrew follows the academic style of *SBL Handbook of Style* (p. 26), except that (i) final ה is not represented when it serves as a vowel letter: תּוֹבָה *tōḇā*, סָדֵה *sāde*; and (ii) spirantization is always indicated, as in these two examples.

1. Jo Ann Hackett, “The Study of Partially Documented Languages,” in *Semitic Linguistics: The State of the Art at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Shlomo Izre’el, IOS 20 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 68.

2. Lists of noun patterns appear in standard reference grammars of Biblical Hebrew, such as GKC; Hans Bauer and Pontus Leander, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1922; repr., Hildesheim: Olms, 1962);



and their historical backgrounds allows the student to compare words that appear quite different but nevertheless reflect the same underlying structure, and thus deduce that those words may share similar morphological and semantic information.<sup>3</sup> Examples that are well-known even to beginning students are the patterns קָטַל *qōṭēl* for the Qal active participle and קָטוּל *qāṭūl* for the Qal passive participle. But other examples are less obvious. The following substantives<sup>4</sup> all

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H. S. Nyberg, *Hebreisk Grammatik* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, Hugo Gebers, 1952); and Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2nd ed., SubBi 27 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2007), as well as, e.g., in Paul de Lagarde, *Uebersicht über die im Aramäischen, Arabischen und Hebräischen übliche Bildung der Nomina* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1889); Jacob Barth, *Die Nominalbildung in den semitischen Sprachen*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1894); Eduard König, *Historisch-kritisches Lehrgebäude der hebräischen Sprache mit comparativer Berücksichtigung des semitischen überhaupt*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1881–1897); Carl Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*, 2 vols. (Berlin: von Reuther, 1908–13); David Yellin, *Toldot hitpatxut ha-dikduk ha-ivri, 'im miškele ha-šemot ba-lašon ha-ivrit* (Jerusalem: Kohelet, 1944–45); Rudolf Meyer, *Hebräische Grammatik*, 3rd ed., 4 vols. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1969); and J. P. Lettinga, *Grammatica van het Bijbels Hebreeuws*, 12th ed. by M. F. J. Baasten and W. Th. van Peursen (Leiden: Brill, 2012). Note also the following works, which are however descriptive rather than historical in orientation: I. Avinery, *Heical Hammishqalim: A Thesaurus of the Hebrew Radical Nouns* (Tel-Aviv: Izre'el, 1976); Ša'ul Barkali, *Luax ha-šemot ha-šalem*, 3rd ed. (Jerusalem: Re'uven Mas, 1973); James L. Sagarin, *Hebrew Noun Patterns (Mishqalim): Morphology, Semantics, and Lexicon* (N.p.: Scholars, 1987). The presentation of the noun patterns in the present paper takes into account more recent comparative and historical work on Semitic nouns, particularly that of my former student Joshua Fox, *Semitic Noun Patterns*, HSS 52 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), and of course my own studies. While there are also references to other recent works, there has been no attempt to be complete in that regard, and other relevant articles have undoubtedly been overlooked.

3. An insightful overview of the semantics of noun patterns is offered in Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 83–94. Like Waltke and O'Connor, Joshua Blau (*Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction, LSAWS 2* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010]) also presents noun patterns according to their synchronic rather than their historical patterns, remarking (p. 274) that “[f]rom a practical viewpoint of learning nominal patterns, it generally seems more advantageous to arrange the material synchronically.” As noted in this and the following paragraphs, however, there are also important benefits to be gained from a knowledge of the historical patterns underlying Hebrew nouns.

4. Throughout this paper, we will adhere to the traditional distinction between substantives (substantival nouns), such as *house*, and adjectives (adjectival nouns), such as *old*. Of course, the latter are frequently substantivized in Hebrew, as in other Semitic languages: זָקֵן *zāqēn* ‘old, old man’. When the distinction is not relevant, the non-specific “noun” is used for both categories.

derive from the pattern *\*qīl*, which frequently denotes the action of a verb or the result of that action (see below, §B.1.b): זָכַר *zēker* < *\*ōikr-* ‘memory’, הֵן *hēn* < *\*hinn-* ‘favor’, כָּאֵב *kā’ēb* < *\*ki’b-* ‘pain’, פְּרִי *pārī* < *\*piry-* ‘fruit’, שִׁמָּע *šēma’* < *\*sim’-* ‘report’.

In addition, knowledge of underlying patterns helps one both to elucidate a great deal of the allomorphic variation that characterizes so much of Biblical Hebrew noun morphology, and in turn to recognize such variation. For instance, the presuffixal forms of most of the words cited in the preceding paragraph retain the original *\*qīl* pattern more transparently than do the absolute forms: זָכַר *zīkr-ō*, חָנוּ *hinn-ō*, פְּרִי *pīry-ō*, שִׁמָּע *šim’-ō* (but כָּאֵב *kā’ēb-ī* irregularly because of the medial *’ālep*).

Finally, because Hebrew underwent many phonological developments (sound changes), Hebrew nouns frequently have a different shape from their cognates in other Semitic languages that did not undergo such developments. Awareness of the underlying—original or historical—pattern of a Hebrew noun allows us to discover such cognates with more confidence. In the same vein, comparison with other Semitic languages indicates that some patterns were not attested in early Semitic, so that forms that seem to exhibit such patterns in Hebrew are generally to be accounted for otherwise, either as the result of early sound changes or as loanwords; see below, §B.3.b(4), on Hebrew *qāṭil* forms, and §C.1.c, on Hebrew *qīṭīl* forms. Similarly, the rigorous observation of the operation of regular sound rules within the history of Hebrew also indicates that certain other patterns are not native to Biblical Hebrew, and thus that nouns exhibiting those patterns may be loanwords; see below, §B.3.a, on Hebrew *qāṭāl* forms.

Throughout the paper the paradigmatic root used is *q-t-l* (*q-l* for biconsonantal nouns, *q-l-l* for geminate roots). For reasons of space, only forms without preformatives (such as *m-* and *t-*) and sufformatives (such as *-ōn*) are presented; reduplicated forms (such as the *qulqul* form קֹדֶקֶד *qodqōd* ‘[top of] head’) are also omitted. The presentation of the patterns is subdivided according to vowel quality and vowel length; they are arranged as follows:<sup>5</sup>

#### A. Biconsonantal Forms

1. *CvC*
  - a. *\*qal*
  - b. *\*qil*
  - c. *\*qul*
2. *Cv̄C*
  - a. *\*qāl*
  - b. *\*qīl*
  - c. *\*qūl*

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5. The words cited under each pattern are representative samples only, not intended as comprehensive lists. An alphabetical list of words cited appears at the end of the paper.

- B. Triconsonantal Forms without Doubling
1.  $C\check{v}CC$ 
    - a. *\*qaʔl*
    - b. *\*qiʔl*
    - c. *\*quʔl*
  2.  $C\check{v}C\check{v}C$ 
    - a. *\*qaʔal*
    - b. *\*qaʔil*
    - c. *\*qaʔul*
    - d. *\*qiʔal*
    - e. *\*quʔul*
  3.  $C\check{v}C\bar{v}C$ 
    - a. *\*qaʔāl*
    - b. *\*qaʔīl*
    - c. *\*qaʔūl*
    - d. *\*qiʔāl*
    - e. *\*quʔāl*
    - f. *\*quʔūl*
  4.  $C\bar{v}C\check{v}C$ 
    - a. *\*qāʔal*
    - b. *\*qāʔil*
- C. Triconsonantal Forms with Doubled Second Radical
1.  $C\check{v}CC\check{v}C$ 
    - a. *\*qaʔʔal*
    - b. *\*qaʔʔil*
    - c. *\*qaʔʔul*
    - d. *\*qiʔʔal*
    - e. *\*quʔʔal*
    - f. *\*quʔʔul*
  2.  $C\check{v}CC\bar{v}C$ 
    - a. *\*qaʔʔāl*
    - b. *\*qaʔʔīl*
    - c. *\*qaʔʔūl*
    - d. *\*qiʔʔāl*
    - e. *\*quʔʔāl*
    - f. *\*quʔʔūl*
- D. Triconsonantal Forms with Doubled Third Radical:  $C\check{v}C\check{v}CC$
- a. *\*qaʔall*
  - b. *\*qaʔill*
  - c. *\*qaʔull*
  - d. *\*quʔull*

Within each subsection, forms are presented according to root type (where this is significant), in the following order: Sound, I–Guttural, II–Guttural, III–Guttural, I–*n*, II–*n*, II–*w*, II–*y*, III–*w*, III–*y*, Geminate. Forms marked with

feminine *\*-at* or *-t*, where attested, appear immediately after the corresponding unmarked forms.

When a general meaning may be associated with at least some examples of a pattern, it will be noted. For each subtype, the normal Hebrew allomorphs (abs. = absolute, cst. = construct, sf. = presuffixal [before the “light” suffixes]), sg. and pl., are given.

Preforms of Hebrew words are cited with a final hyphen to indicate the earlier presence of a case-vowel, e.g., *\*dam-* ‘blood’ for nominative *\*damu*, genitive *\*dami*, accusative *\*dama*. Note the following representations of the Proto-(Northwest) Semitic sibilants, with their reflexes:<sup>6</sup>

P(NW)S	Hebrew	Syriac	Akkadian	Arabic
*s	š (שׁ)	š	š	s
*ś	ś (שׂ)	s	š	š
*ʃ	s (ס)	s	s	s

Also represented as affricates, like *\*ʃ* = Hebrew *s* (ס), are P(NW)S *\*dʒ* = Hebrew *z* (ז) and *\*ś* = Hebrew *š* (שׂ).

### A. Biconsonantal Forms

#### 1. CVC: *\*qal*, *\*qil*, *\*qul*

##### a. *\*qal*

(1) Sound: לָל *qāl*, cst. לָל *qal*, sf. -לָל *qāl-*; pl. לָלִים *qālīm*, cst. לָלִי *qālē* (לָלִי *qālē* in participles of II-*w/y* verbs, by paradigmatic pressure).

Isolated substantives: *\*dam-* > דָּם *dām* ‘blood’, *\*yad-* > יָד *yād* ‘hand’.  
(For the substantives אָב *ʾāb* ‘father’, אח *ʾāḥ* ‘brother’, and חָם *\*ḥām* ‘father-in-law’, see below under *\*qaṭl* III-*w*, §B.1.a.6.)

Active participles of triradical roots II-*w/y*:<sup>7</sup> *\*baʔ* > בָּא *bāʔ* ‘entering’  
(pl. cst. בָּאִים *bāʔē*), *\*qam-* > קָם *qām* ‘rising’.

6. For this view of the Proto-Semitic sibilants, see, inter alios, Richard C. Steiner, *Affricated Šade in the Semitic Languages* (New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1982); Alice Faber, “Semitic Sibilants in an Afro-Asiatic Context,” *JSS* 29 (1984): 189–224; eadem, “Akkadian Evidence for Proto-Semitic Affricates,” *JCS* 37 (1985): 101–7; Leonid Kogan, “Proto-Semitic Phonetics and Phonology,” in *Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, ed. Stefan Weninger in collaboration with Geoffrey Khan, Michael P. Streck, and Janet Watson, Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 36 (Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 55–151.

7. These forms probably had a long medial vowel in Proto-Northwest Semitic, e.g., *\*qām-*, which was reduced in Proto-Hebrew to a short vowel, *\*qam-*, by analogy with the same change in the perfect. See John Huehnergard, “Features of Central Semitic,” in *Biblical and Oriental Essays in Memory of William L. Moran*, ed. Agustinus Gianto, BibOr 48 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2005), 176–78.

Fem. (i) \**qal-t*: abs. and cst. קֶלֶת *qélet*, sf. קֶלֶת *qalt-*; pl. קֶלֶתוֹת *qəl-āt-ōt* (with repetition of the fem. marker, as *-at*, \**qal-at-ōt*).

Isolated substantives: \**dal-t* > דֶּלֶת *délet* ‘door’, \**qas-t* > קֶשֶׁת *qéšet* ‘bow’; for בַּת *bat* ‘daughter’, see \**qil-t*, below (§b).

Verbal substantives from triradical roots II-*w/y*:<sup>8</sup> \**nah-t* > נָחַת *náhat* ‘rest’, \**sah-t* > שָׁחַת *śáhat* ‘pit’; see also \**qāl-at* > *qólā* in §A.2.a, below.

(For דָּעַת *dá‘at* ‘to know’ < \**da<sup>h</sup>-t* < \**di<sup>h</sup>-t*, see *qil-t*.)

Fem. (ii) \**qal-at*: קָלָה *qālā*, cst. קֶלֶת *qəlat*, sf. קֶלֶת *qəlāt-*.

Isolated substantives: \**am-at* > אִמָּה *‘āmā* ‘female slave’ (pl. תַּמָּה *‘āmāhōt* < \**am-ah-āt*<sup>9</sup>), \**śap-at* > שָׁפָה *śāpā* ‘lip’ (dual \**śap-at-aymv* > שְׁפָפִים *śəpātáyim*), \**san-at* > שָׁנָה *śānā* ‘year’ (pl. שְׁנֵים־שָׁנִים *śānīm/śānōt*; but Northern Hebrew \**san-t* > שָׁת = [šatt]<sup>10</sup>).

(2) II-*w/y*: \**śaw-* > שֶׁ *śe*, cst. הַשֶּׁ *śē* ‘sheep’ (see n. 18, below).

## b. \**qil*

(1) Sound: abs., cst. and sf. קָל *qəl*; pl. קְלִים *qəlīm*, cst. קְלִי *qəlē* or קְלִי *qələ* (the latter because of paradigmatic pressure).

Isolated substantives: \**il-* > אֵל *‘ēl* ‘god’ (pl. אֱלִים *‘ēlīm* and, more often, אֱלֹהִים *‘ēlōhīm* < \**il-āh-īma*, in which \**-āh-* is an ancient Semitic plural marker<sup>11</sup>), \**iš-* > עֵץ *‘ēš* ‘tree’.<sup>12</sup> The two substantives \**bin-* > בֵּן *bēn* ‘son’ (pl. irregular \**ban-īma* > בָּנִים *bānīm*) and \**sim-* > שֵׁם *śēm* ‘name’ have suffixal forms בְּנֵי *bən-*, שְׁמֵי *śəm-* (and sometimes cst. forms בְּנֵי *ben-*, שְׁמֵי *šem-*).<sup>13</sup> (Note also the forms of ‘two’: masc. \**θ(i)n-aymv* > שְׁנֵים *ś(ə)náyim*, fem. \**θin-t-aymv* reformed as שְׁתֵּים *śtáyim*.<sup>14</sup>)

8. With reduction of original \**ā* to \**a* in a closed syllable, i.e., *nah-t* < earlier \**nāh-(a)t-* (< \**nawah-at-*). On this phonological process, see John Huehnergard, “*qātīl* and *qətīl* Nouns in Biblical Hebrew,” in *Sha‘arei Lashon: Studies in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Jewish Languages Presented to Moshe Bar-Asher*, ed. A. Maman, S. E. Fassberg, and Y. Breuer (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007), 1:\*3–\*45, esp. \*10–\*13.

9. Cf. Sab. pl. *‘mh* ‘female slaves’. In these forms, \**-ah* is probably a vestige of an ancient plural marker; compare \**-āh* in אֱלֹהִים *‘ēlōhīm* < \**il-āh-īma* in §A.1.b(1), below.

10. See Jo Ann Hackett, “Hebrew (Biblical and Epigraphic),” in *Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical and Related Languages*, ed. John Kalter and Steven L. McKenzie (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 142.

11. The sg. אֱלֹהִי *‘ēlōah* < \**ilāh-* is probably a backformation from the extended pl. form, already in Proto-Central Semitic.

12. The substantives חֵלֶל/חֵל *həl/hél* ‘rampart’ and חֵק/חֵק *həq/hēq* ‘bosom’ may also be \**qil* forms, but the etymologies of both are uncertain.

13. On these forms, see David Testen, “The Significance of Aramaic r < \*n,” *JNES* 44 (1985): 143–46.

14. See Robert D. Hoberman, “Initial Consonant Clusters in Hebrew and Aramaic,” *JNES* 48 (1989): 25–29.

Verbal adj. of triradical roots II–w/y:<sup>15</sup> \*gir- > גַּר *gēr* ‘sojourner’, \*mit- > מֵת *mēt* ‘dead’.

Fem. (i) \*qil-t: abs. and cst. קִלְתַּי *qélet*, sf. קִלְתִּי *qilt-*.

Isolated substantives: cst. אִשָּׁת *’ēšet* ‘wife of’ < \*’iś-t- (< \*’iś-t-, fem. of אִישׁ *’iš* ‘man’),<sup>16</sup> \*in-t- > עַתָּה *’ēl* ‘time’;<sup>17</sup> with \*i > a: \*bin-t- > בַּת *bat* ‘daughter’ (with suffix בִּיתִי *bitt-i*), \*gin-t- > גַּת *gat* ‘wine-press’ (plural תִּתּוֹת *gittōt*).

Infīn. cst. of many roots I–w and of some roots I–n: I–w: \*lid-t- > לָדַת *lédet* ‘to bear’ (√\*w-l-d; cf. לָדָה *lēdā*, below), \*ši<sup>2</sup>-t- > יָצָאת *šē(’?)t* ‘to go out’ (√\*w-š-’), \*θib-t- > שָׁבַת *šebet* ‘to sit’ (√\*w-θ-b); also III–G \*di<sup>3</sup>-t- > \*da<sup>3</sup>-t- > דָּעַת *dá’at* ‘to know’ (√\*w/y-d-<sup>3</sup>; cf. דָּעָה *dē’ā*, below); I–n: \*giθ-t- > גָּשַׁת *gésēt* ‘to approach’ (√n-g-θ), \*tin-t- > \*titt- > תַּתָּה *tēt* ‘to give’ (√n-t-n).

Fem. (ii) \*qil-at: קֵלָה *qelā*, cst. קָלַת *qalat*, sf. קָלַתִּי *qalāt-*; pl. קֵלֹת *qelōt*.

Isolated substantive (numeral): \*mi<sup>2</sup>-at- > מֵאָה *mē’ā* ‘hundred’.

Infīn. and verbal substantive of some roots I–w: \*di<sup>3</sup>-at- > דָּעָה *dē’ā* ‘to know’ (cf. דָּא’ַת, above), \*lid-at- > לָדָה *lēdā* ‘to give birth’ (cf. לָדַת *lédet*, above), \*sin-at- > שָׁנָה *šēnā* (√\*w-s-n) ‘sleep’.

- (2) II–y: ? \*piy- > פֶּה *pe*, cst. and sf. *pṽ* → *pī* > פִּי *pī* (cf. אֲבִי *’ābī*) ‘mouth’.<sup>18</sup>

- c. \*qul ? : קָל \*qōl(?), pl. קָלִים *qalīm* (also קָלִים \*qōlīm?), cst. קָלֵה *qalē*.

Isolated substantive: \*mut-, pl. \*mut-īma > מְתִים *məṭīm* ‘men’ (cst. מְתִי *məṭē*; also nom. sg. מְתוֹ *məṭū-* in names such as מְתוֹשֶׁלַח *məṭūšēlah*; cf. Akk. *mutu*, and Amorite and Eblaite personal names with *mut-*).

15. Like the participles of verbs II–w/y with medial \*a, such as \*gam-, for which see §A.1.a.(1), above, with n. 7, these forms also probably had a long medial vowel in Proto-Northwest Semitic, e.g., \*mūt-, which was reduced in Proto-Hebrew to a short vowel, \*mit-, by analogy with the perfect.

16. It is difficult to account for the phonology of אִשָּׁת *’ēšet* as a cst. form of אִשָּׁה *’iššā*; more likely, therefore, *’ēšet* is the cst. of a fem. counterpart of *’iš*, i.e., originally \*’iśat- → *’iśt-* > *’ist-* (vowel shortening in a closed syllable; see n. 8 above) > *’ēšet*. See Carl Brockelmann, *Die Femininendung t im Semitischen* (Breslau: G. P. Aderholz, 1903), 15; Bauer and Leander, *Historische Grammatik*, 617; Lettinga, *Grammatica*, 73.

17. Cf. Akk. *inu* ‘when’, Aramaic *’antā*, *kə-’eneṭ* ‘now’. It is also possible, but less likely, that עַתָּה *’ēl* derives from \*’id-t-, from the root √\*w/y-<sup>3</sup>-d ‘to appoint’; cf. Akk. *ittu* ‘characteristic’, with cst. *idat*.

18. The Proto-Semitic form of ‘mouth’ is uncertain, but \*piy- accounts for most of reflexes in the various languages. It is also difficult to reconcile the absolute forms *pe* and *še* with their respective cst. forms, *pī* and *šē*. For the former, see Alexander Militarev and Leonid Kogan (*Semitic Etymological Dictionary*, vol. 1: *Anatomy of Man and Animals* [Münster: Ugarit, 2000], 195–97), who reconstruct \*pay- rather than \*piy-; for the latter, see eidem, *Semitic Etymological Dictionary*, vol. 2: *Animal Names* (Münster: Ugarit, 2005), 280–82, who, as we do here, reconstruct \*śaw-.

Fem. \**qul-t*: abs. and cst. קֹלֶת *qōlet*, sf. קֹלֶת־ *qolt-*.

Verbal substantive of a root II-w: \**buθ-t*<sup>19</sup> > בֹּשֶׁת *bōšet* ‘shame’.

2. C̄vC: \**qāl*, \**qīl*, \**qūl*

a. \**qāl*?: abs., cst., and sf. קֹל/קוֹל *qōl/qōl*.

Isolated(?) substantives: \**gāy-* > גֹּי *gōy* ‘nation’ (pl. *gōyīm*; cf. Amorite *gā<sup>2</sup>-/gāy-* ‘tribe’<sup>20</sup>). Probably also דֹּר *dōr* ‘generation’, חוֹל *hōl* ‘sand’, קוֹל *qōl* ‘voice’; for the proto-forms of these, cf. Aramaic *dār*, *hāl*, *qāl*, but note also Arab. *dawr*, *qawl*, and Akk. *dūru* ‘perpetuity’, which show the pattern \**qawl* rather than \**qāl*.

Probably also verbal adjectives like \**dād-* > דוֹד *dōd* ‘beloved’, \**tāb-* > טוֹב *tōb* (cf. Aram. and Akk. *dād*, *tāb*).

Fem. \**qāl-at*: קוֹלָה *qōlā*, cst. קוֹלַת *qōlat*, sf. קוֹלַת־ *qōlāt-*.

Verbal substantive: \**qām-at* > קוֹמָה *qōmā* ‘height’ (unless < \**qawmat*, but cf. Arab. *qāma*).

b. \**qīl*: abs., cst., and sf. קִיל *qīl*; pl. קִילִים *qīlīm* / קִילָה *qīlōt*.

Isolated substantives: \**ʾīs-* > אִישׁ *ʾiš* ‘man’ (pl. אֲנָשִׁים *ʾānāšīm* < \**ʾanas-īma*),<sup>21</sup> \**ʾīr-* > עִיר *ʾīr* ‘city’ (pl. עָרִים *ʾārīm*, perhaps < \**ʾar-īma* < \**ʾiyar-īma*),<sup>22</sup> \**qīr-* > קִיר *qīr* ‘wall’, \**šīh-* > שִׁיחַ *šīah* ‘bush’.

Infīn. cst. and verbal substantives of triradical roots II-y (i.e., \**qiyl* > \**qīl*): \**giyl-* > \**gīl-* > גִּיל *gīl* ‘rejoicing, to rejoice’, \**diyn-* > \**dīn-* > דִּין *dīn* ‘judgment, to judge’.

Fem. \**qīl-at*: קִילָה *qīlā*, cst. קִילַת *qīlat*, sf. קִילַת־ *qīlāt-*.

19. \**buθ-t* from earlier \**būθ-(a)t*, with vowel shortening in a closed syllable (see n. 8, above); cf. בּוֹשֶׁת *būšā*, below.

20. See Michael Streck, *Das amurritische Onomastikon der altbabylonischen Zeit*, vol. 1: *Die Amurriter, Die onomastische Forschung, Orthographie und Phonologie, Nominalmorphologie*, AOAT 271.1 (Münster: Ugarit, 2000), 89, 320–21 (who, however, considers both the Amorite and the Hebrew forms to derive from \**gawiy-*).

21. The sg. אִישׁ *ʾiš* and pl. אֲנָשִׁים *ʾānāšīm* derive from suppletive roots, the former from  $\sqrt{2-w/y-s}$ ; cf. Sabaic  $\text{ʾs}^1$  ‘man’ (see Peter Stein, *Untersuchungen zur Phonologie und Morphologie des Sabäischen* [Rahden: Marie Leidorf, 2003], 56 n. 59) and the element *iš* in NWS personal names in Late-Bronze Age Akkadian texts from Emar such as Iš-Dagan ‘man of Dagan’. It is not possible to derive *ʾiš* from the same root as its plural, which exhibits the root  $\sqrt{2-n-s}$ , also attested in אֲנוֹשׁ *ʾenōš* ‘person, people’ (for which see below, §B.3.e).

22. I.e., perhaps an old broken plural, from a root  $\sqrt{c-r-r}$ . So also L. Kogan, “Three Problems in the Historical Grammar of Hebrew,” *Anuari* 18 (1995): 13. Note the unique pl. עָרִים *ʾyārīm* in Judg 10:4. Since, however, *ā* remains in the pl. cst. עָרֵי *ʾārē*, rather than reducing to *ā* (cf. יָמֵי *yāmē*, the pl. cst. of יוֹם *yōm* ‘day’, which does exhibit reduction; see below, §B.1.a.4.b), perhaps the pl. of ‘city’ derives from a suppletive (or biform?) root  $\sqrt{c-r-r}$ , thus \**arr-īma* > *ʾārīm*; cf. Sab. *ʾr*, pl. *ʾrr* ‘citadel, hill-town’, as Kogan also tentatively suggests (if so, the unique עָרִים *ʾyārīm* would be either a relic pl. of *ʾīr* or a secondary innovation).

Verbal substantives of triradical roots II-y: \*biyn-at- > \*bīn-at- > בינה *bīnā* ‘understanding’, \*qiyn-at- > \*qīn-at- > קינה *qīnā* ‘dirge’.

Cf. also אֶשֶׁת *’ēšet*, under \*qil-t, above §1.b.

- c. \*qūl: abs., cst., and sf. קוּל *qūl*; pl. קוּלִים *qūlīm* / קוּלֹת *qūlōt*.

Isolated substantives: סוּס *sūs* ‘horse’ (a loan from Indo-European),<sup>23</sup> \*θūr- > צוּר *šūr* ‘cliff’; for לוּחַ *lūah* ‘tablet’, see n. 25 below.

Infīn. cst. and verbal substantives of triradical roots II-w/y (i.e., \*quwl, \*quyl > \*qūl): \*buw<sup>d</sup>- > \*bū<sup>d</sup>- > בּוּז *būz* ‘contempt’, \*tuyb- > \*tūb- > טוּב *tūb* ‘goodness’, \*ruwm- > \*rūm- > רוּם *rūm* ‘height, be high’.

Fem. \*qūl-at: קוּלָה *qūlā*, cst., קוּלַת *qūlat*, sf., קוּלָת־ *qūlāt-*.

Infīn. and verbal substantives of triradical roots II-w: \*buwθ-at- > \*būθ-at- > בוּשָׁה *būšā* ‘shame’ (cf. בּוּשָׁת *bōšet*, above, under \*qul), \*sūp-at- > סוּפָה *sūpā* ‘storm-wind’.

## B. Triconsonantal Forms without Doubling

1. CṽCC: \*qaṭl, \*qiṭl, \*quṭl

Note: in Sound roots the patterns \*qaṭl, \*qiṭl, \*quṭl and the corresponding feminine patterns \*qaṭlat, \*qiṭlat, and \*quṭlat regularly form plurals with the bases \*qaṭal-, \*qiṭal-, \*quṭal-, i.e., with -a- inserted between the second and third radicals (except in some hollow and geminate roots), a vestige of the broken (internal) plural system inherited from Proto-Semitic.

- a. \*qaṭl. See the discussion below, following \*qiṭl.

- (1) Sound: abs., cst. קֶטֶל *qēṭel*, sf. קֶטֶל־ *qaṭl-*; pl. קֶטֶלִים *qəṭālīm*, cst. קֶטְלִי *qaṭlē*.

\*abn- > אֶבֶן *’ēben* ‘stone’, \*arś- > אֶרֶץ *’ēreš* ‘earth’, \*kalb- > כָּלֵב *kēleb* ‘dog’, \*malk- > מֶלֶךְ *mēlek* ‘king’, \*’abd- > עֶבֶד *’ēbed* ‘slave’.

A few verbal substantives(?): \*ha’sd- > חֶסֶד *hēsed* ‘kindness’.

Fem. \*qaṭlat: קֶטְלָה *qaṭlā*, cst. קֶטְלַת *qaṭlat*, sf. קֶטְלַת־ *qaṭlāt-*; pl. קֶטְלֹת *qəṭālōt*, cst. קֶטְלֹת *qaṭlōt*.

\*malk-at- > מַלְכָה *malkā* ‘queen’, \*’galm-at- > עַלְמָה *’almā* ‘young woman’.

Infīn. or verbal substantive of some stative verbs: \*’aθm-at- > אֲשָׁמָה *’ašmā* ‘(to be) guilt(y)’.

Some \*qaṭlat > \*qiṭlat?: note כַּבְּשָׁה/כַּבְּשָׁה *kabšā/kiḇšā* ‘lamb (f)’, שַׁלְמָה/שַׁלְמָה *šalmā/šimlā* ‘cloak’.

- (2) II-G

- (a) II-ʔ: \*raʔs- > \*rās- > [rōš], written ראש *rō(?)š* ‘head’, pl. \*raʔas-  
*īma* > \*rəʔāšīm > [rāšīm] (loss of intervocalic ʔ), written ראשיִם *rāšīm*

23. See Ḥayim Rabin, “Words in Biblical Hebrew from the Indo-Aryan Language of the Near East,” in *Sefer Shemu’el Yeyvin*, ed. S. Avramski et al. (Jerusalem: Ha-Hevrah le-ḥeker ha-Mikra be-Yisra’el ‘al yad hotsaat Kiryat sefer, 1970), 462–97 [Hebrew].



*rā(ʔ)šim*; similarly \*šaʔn- > \*šān- > צֶאֱן *šō(ʔ)n* ‘flock’.

- (b) Other \*qaG: *qāGal* (= cst.), sf. *qaG(ā)l-*; pl. *qāGālīm*, cst. *qaG(ā)lē*: \*lahb- > לָהַב *láhab* ‘flame’, \*nahl- > נָחַל *náhal* ‘stream’, \*naʕr- > נָעַר *náʕar* ‘young man’, \*sahr- > שָׁחַר *šáhar* ‘dawn’, \*θagr- > שַׁעַר *šáʕar* ‘gate’. But also *qéGel* in \*lahm- > לֶחֶם *léhem* ‘bread’ and \*rahm- > רֶחֶם *réhem* (also רָחַם *ráham*) ‘womb’.<sup>24</sup> (See also below under *quf!* II–G for אֹהֶל *ʔóhel* ‘tent’ and מֹדָר *módhar* ‘bride-price’.)

Fem.: *qaG(ā)lā*:

\*nahl-at- > נַחְלָה *nahlā* ‘possession’, \*naʕr-at- > נַעֲרָה *naʕrā* ‘young woman’.

Infín. or verbal substantive: \*ahb-at- > אָהַבָה *ʔahābā* ‘(to) love’.

- (3) III–G: \*qatG > *qétaG*:

\*ðarʕ- > זֶרַע *zéraʕ* ‘seed’, \*qamḥ- > קֶמַח *qémah* ‘flour’.

But III–ʔ: \*parʕ- > פֶּרֶא *péreʕ* ‘onager’.

- (4) II–w: \*qawl<sup>25</sup>

- (a) abs. קוֹל *qól*, cst. and sf. קוֹל *qól*: \*ʔawn- > אָוֶן *ʔáwen* ‘trouble’ (pl. אוֹנִים *ʔónim*), \*mawt- > מוֹת *máwet* ‘death’, \*ʕawl- > עוֹל *ʕáwel* ‘injustice’ (cst. עוֹל *ʕéwel*, sf. עוֹלוֹ *ʕawlô*), \*tawk- > תָּוֶק *táwek* ‘midst’; note also the III–G forms שְׁוֵא *šāw(ʔ)* ‘emptiness’ < \*sawʕ-, רוּחַ *réwah* ‘interval’ < \*rawḥ-.

- (b) abs., cst., and sf. קוֹל *qól*: \*ʔawn- > אוֹן *ʔón* ‘vigor’ (pl. אוֹנִים *ʔónim*), \*yawm- > יוֹם *yóm* ‘day’ (pl. יָמִים *yāmim* < \*yam-īma [*< PS \*yawam-īma?*; cf. *ʕr*, under *qīl*], cst. יָמִי *yāmē*), \*sawṭ- > שׁוֹט *šót* ‘whip’ (pl. שׁוֹטִים *šótīm*), \*θawr- > שׁוֹר *šór* ‘bull’ (pl. שׁוֹרִים *šōwārīm*). Some of these may be < \*qāl (q.v., above).

Fem. \*qawlat:

עוֹלָה *ʕawlā* ‘injustice’ (once עוֹלוֹת *ʕólōt*);<sup>26</sup> perhaps also forms such as קוֹמָה *qômā* ‘height’ (but see \*qāl-at, above).

24. It is difficult to account for the *segōls* in לֶחֶם *léhem* and רֶחֶם *réhem*, vs. the *patahs* in the other forms II–G, such as נָחַל *náhal*; the medial guttural in both *léhem* and *réhem* was originally \*h, but that is also true, e.g., of שָׁחַר *šáhar* ‘dawn’. (A. Rubin, personal communication, suggests that perhaps the final *m* in *léhem* and *réhem* might have been a factor.)

25. The two reflexes of \*qawl in BH, *qáwel* and *qól*, appear to be randomly distributed. Note that ם for monophthongized [yōm] appears in the Siloam Inscription.

The substantive לִיחָה *lūah* ‘tablet’ probably derives from \*lawḥ-, which is the form of its cognates in Arab. and Eth.; for the change of \*aw to \*ū after \*l, see Richard C. Steiner, “Lulav versus \*lu/law: A Note on the Conditioning of \*aw > ū in Hebrew and Aramaic,” *JAOS* 107 (1987): 121–22.

26. In עוֹלָה *ʕawlā*, the irregular preservation of the diphthong *aw* in an unstressed syllable is probably due to pressure from the near-synonym עוֹל *ʕáwel*; a similar pressure probably also accounts for the preservation of *aw* in the suffixal form of the latter, עוֹלוֹ *ʕawlô*.

- (5) II–y: \*qayl: קַיִל *qáyil*, cst. and sf. קֵיל *qél*.  
 \*<sup>ʔ</sup>ayl- > אֵיל *ʔáyil* ‘ram’ (pl. אֵילִים *ʔélim*), \*bayt- > בַּיִת *báyit* ‘house’ (pl. בַּתִּים *bātīm* < ʔ<sup>27</sup>), \*<sup>d</sup>zayt- > זַיִת *záyit* ‘olive’ (pl. זֵיתִים *zēlīm*), \*hayl- > חַיִל *háyil* ‘might’ (pl. חַיִלִים *hāyālīm*), \*<sup>ʕ</sup>ayn- > עַיִן *ʕáyin* ‘eye, spring’ (pl. עַיִנוֹת *ʕāyānōt*), \*<sup>ʕ</sup>ayr- > עִיר *ʕáyir* ‘young donkey’ (pl. עִירִים *ʕāyārīm*), \*<sup>š</sup>ayd- > צֵיד *šáyid* ‘provisions’, \*<sup>t</sup>ays- > תַּיִשׁ *táyis* ‘he-goat’ (pl. תַּיִשִּׁים *tayāšīm*).  
 Fem. \*qaylat: קֵלָה *qēlā*, cst. קֵלַת *qēlat*, sf. קֵלַת־ *qēlāt-*.  
 ʔayl-at- > אֵילָה *ʔēlā* ‘oak?’, \*<sup>š</sup>ayd-at- > צֵדָה *šēdā* ‘piece of meat’, \*<sup>š</sup>ayb-at- > שֵׁבָה *šēbā* ‘old age’; perhaps also \*<sup>ʔ</sup>aym-at-(?) > אֵמָה *ʔēmā* ‘dread’.
- (6) III–w: one or more of the substantives אָב *ʔāb* ‘father’, אָח *ʔāḥ* ‘brother’, and חָם *\*hām* ‘father-in-law’, which have cst. forms in *-ī* (e.g., אָבִי *ʔābī*), probably derive from \*qatw forms originally, with loss of the third radical *w*, compensatory lengthening of the following case-vowel, and subsequent shortening of that vowel in a closed syllable, e.g., for ‘father’, \*<sup>ʔ</sup>abwum > \*<sup>ʔ</sup>abūm > \*<sup>ʔ</sup>abum, and, with further loss of mimation and case-vowel, > \*<sup>ʔ</sup>ab > אָב *ʔāb*; but construct genitive \*<sup>ʔ</sup>abwi > \*<sup>ʔ</sup>abī > אָבִי *ʔābī* and sf. \*<sup>ʔ</sup>abī-kā > אָבִיכָה *ʔābīkā* ‘your (ms) father’.<sup>28</sup> In the pl. of אָח *ʔāḥ* ‘brother’, the second radical was originally doubled: \*<sup>ʔ</sup>ahḥ-īma > אָחִים *ʔahīm* (cf. Akk. *ahḥū* ‘brothers’).  
 Note also, however, \*<sup>š</sup>ahw- > \*<sup>š</sup>áhū, pausal שָׁחוּ *šáhū* ‘swimming’, שְׁלוֹי *šalw-ī* ‘my prosperity’.  
 Fem.: \*<sup>ʔ</sup>ahw-at- > \*<sup>ʔ</sup>ahāt- > אָחוֹת *ʔahōt* ‘sister’, pl. \*<sup>ʔ</sup>ah(h)awāt- > sf. אָחוֹתַי *ʔahwōt-ay* ‘my sisters’ (Kt; also with *w* > *y* as in אָחוֹתַי *ʔahāyōtēk*); \*<sup>h</sup>amw-at- > \*<sup>h</sup>amāt- > חָמוֹת *\*hāmōt* ‘mother-in-law’.  
 But note also \*<sup>š</sup>alw-at- > שְׁלוֹה *šalwā* ‘quietude’.
- (7) III–y: \*qaty > \*qity; see \*qitl, III–y; but note also the fem. form אֵלֵי *ʔalyā* ‘fat tail (of a sheep)’.
- (8) Geminate: \*qall: abs. and cst. קַל *qal*, sf. קַל־ *qall-*; pl. קַלִּים *qallīm*, cst. קַלִּי *qallē* (rarely, in substantives, קַלְלִים *qalālīm*, cst. קַלְלִי *qal(ə)lē*).  
 Isolated substantives: \*kapp- > כַּף *kap* ‘palm’, \*qass- > קַשׁ *qaš* ‘chaff’, \*<sup>š</sup>saqq- > שַׁק *šaqq* ‘sack’; with final *m*, usually קַל *qāl*: \*yamm- > יָם *yām* ‘sea’, \*<sup>ʕ</sup>amm- > עַם *ʕām* ‘people’ (also עַם *ʕam*; pl. \*<sup>ʕ</sup>am(a)mūma > עַמִּים/עַמְמִים *ʕammīm/ʕāmāmīm*).

27. Cf. Ugar. *bhtim* ‘houses’, presumably for /bahatūma/ < \**bayatūma*. For recent suggestions to account for the unusual form בַּתִּים *bātīm*, see Kogan, “Three Problems,” 12–15; Romain Garnier and Guillaume Jacques, “A Neglected Phonetic Law: The Assimilation of Pretonic *yod* to a Following Consonant in North-West Semitic,” *BSOAS* 75 (2012): 135–45.

28. Aren Wilson-Wright, “Father and Brother as III–w Nouns in Semitic,” forthcoming in *BSOAS*. All three substantives may have had this shape originally, or only one or two, with direct analogy affecting the other(s).

Verbal adjectives of stative roots (early PS *\*qalal*): *\*dall-* > דַּל *dal* ‘poor’, *\*rabb-* > רַב *rab* ‘much’, *\*hayw-* > *\*hayy-* > חַי *hay* ‘alive’ (for the original root, cf. Eth., Sabaic, and Mehri *h-y-w*), *\*raʿ-* > רַע *raʿ* ‘evil’, *\*tamm-* > תָּם *tām* ‘complete’ (with *\*a* > *ā* before *m*); substantivized: *\*sarr-* > צַר *sar* ‘adversary’, *\*sarr-* > שָׂר *sar* ‘chief’.  
 Fem. *\*qallat*: קַלְלָה *qallā*, cst. קַלְלַת *qallat*, sf. קַלְלַת *qallāt*; pl. קַלְלֹת *qallōt*.  
*\*ʿamm-at-* > אַמָּה *ammā* ‘cubit’, *\*kall-at-* > כַּלְלָה *kallā* ‘bride’.  
 Substantivized adjectives: *\*hayw-at-* > *\*hayy-at-* > חַיָּה *hayyā* ‘animal’,  
*\*sarr-at-* > צָרָה *sārā* ‘distress’, *\*sarr-at-* > שָׂרָה *sārā* ‘princess’.  
 Some *\*qallat* > *\*qillat*? See *\*qitl*, geminates.

b. *\*qitl*. See the discussion following the examples.

(1) Sound: abs. and cst. קֵטֶל/קֵטֵל *qēṭel/qēṭel*, sf. קֵטֵל *qitl*; pl. קֵטְלִים *qəṭālīm*, cst. קֵטְלִי *qitlī*.

Isolated substantives: *\*iθl-* > אֶשֶׁל *ʿēšel* ‘tamarisk’, *\*igl-* > עֵגֶל *ʿēgel* ‘calf’, *\*idr-* > עֵדָר *ʿēḏer* ‘flock’, *\*in<sup>d</sup>z* > *\*izz-* > עֵז *ʿēz* ‘female goat’.

Frequently derived from transitive verbs, denoting the result of the verbal action: *\*ōkr-* > זִכָּר *zēker* ‘memory’, *\*hidr-* > חֶדֶר *hēder* ‘room (enclosure)’, *\*hilq-* > חֶלֶק *hēleq* ‘portion (division)’, *\*nidr-* > נֶדֶר/נִדְרָה *nēder/nēder* ‘vow’.

Often an abstract substantive (overlaps with the preceding sense): *\*hirq-* > הֶרֶג *hēreḡ* ‘murder’, *\*imq-* > עֵמֶק *ʿēmeq* ‘valley (depth)’, *\*qʿsp-* > רֵצָף *qēšep* ‘anger’.

Fem. *\*qitlat*: קֵטְלָה *qitlā*, cst. קֵטְלַת *qitlat*, sf. קֵטְלַת *qitlāt*; pl. קֵטְלֹת *qəṭālōt*, cst. קֵטְלֹת *qitlōt*; in I-G, > *Geṭlā*, etc.

Isolated substantives: *\*gib<sup>i</sup>-at-* > גִּבְעָה *gibʿā* ‘hill’, *\*hint-at-* > חִטָּה *hiṭṭā* ‘wheat’, *\*him<sup>2</sup>-at-* > חֶמְאָה *hemʿā* ‘curd’, *\*igl-at-* > עֵגְלָה *ʿeglā* ‘heifer’.

Deverbal: *\*dim<sup>i</sup>-at-* > דִּמְעָה *dimʿā* ‘tears’, *\*ōiqn-at-* > זִקְנָה *ziqnā* ‘old age’, *\*himd-at-* > חֶמְדָּה *hemdā* ‘desire’, *\*minḥ-at-* > מִנְחָה *minḥā* ‘gift’, *\*simḥ-at-* > שִׂמְחָה *simḥā* ‘joy’.

Infīn. or verbal substantive: *\*vir<sup>2</sup>-at-* > יִרְאָה *yirʿā* ‘(to) fear’, *\*sin<sup>2</sup>-at-* > שִׂנְאָה *sinʿā* ‘(to) hate’.

Some *\*qatlat* > *\*qitlat*? אִשָּׁה *ʿiššā* ‘woman’ perhaps < *\*ašš-at-* < *\*anθ-at-*;<sup>29</sup> see also *\*qatlat*, above.

(2) II-ʿ: *\*qiʿl* > קֵאֵל *qəʿēl*.<sup>30</sup>

29. Cf. *\*anθ-at-* in Syriac and Akk.; but note also the rare Akk. substantive *iššum* ‘woman’, which also exhibits *i*, like BH *ʿiššā*. The suppletive pl. נָשִׁים *nāšīm* ‘women’ derives from a common Semitic word for ‘people’, *\*nis-*; cf. Ugar. pl. /našūma/ ‘men’, Akk. pl. *nišū* ‘people’.

30. It may be that *\*qiʿl* > [qēl], i.e., underwent loss of ʿ and compensatory lengthening, and that the vocalization *qəʿēl* is a hypercorrection on the part of the Massoretes; see Frank R. Blake, “Pretonic Vowels in Hebrew,” *JNES* 10 (1951): 250;

Isolated substantives: *\*biʿr-* > בְּאֵר *bəʿēr* ‘well’, *\*ḏiʿb-* > זָבַב *zəʿēb* ‘wolf’, *\*riʿm-* > רְאָם *rəʿēm* ‘wild ox’, *\*siʿr-* > שָׁרָר *šəʿēr* ‘flesh’.

Verbal substantive: *\*kiʿb-* > כָּאַב *kəʿēb* ‘pain’.

Fem.: *\*tiʿnat-* > תְּאֵנָה *təʿenā* ‘fig-tree’.

(3) II-y > *\*qīl*, q.v., above.

(4) III-G

(a) III-ʿ: *\*diθʿ-* > דֵּשֶׁשׁ *déseʿ* ‘grass’, but *\*hiʿʿ-* (i.e., [hiʿʿ-ʿv] > [hiʿʿ]) > חֵטָא *hēt(ʿ)* ‘sin’.

(b) Other III-G: *\*qétaG/qéʿtaG*: *\*ḏibh-* > זֶבַח *zəbāh* ‘sacrifice (what is offered)’, *\*tībh-* > טֶבַח *təbāh* ‘slaughter’, *\*simʿ-* > שָׁמַע *šémaʿ* ‘report (what is heard)’.

(5) III-y: *\*qity* (including < *\*qaty*).

(a) *\*qity* > *\*qiʿt* > abs. and cst. קָטִי *qəʿtī*, sf. קִטְי־/קִטְי־ *qity-/qety-*; pl. קִטְיָיִם *qəʿtāyīm*.

Isolated and verbal substantives: *\*biky-* > בָּכִי *bākī* ‘mourning’, *\*hiʿsy-* > חֲצִי *həšī* ‘half’ (sf. חֶצֵי *hešy-*), *\*kily-* > כֶּלִי *kālī* ‘vessel’ (sf. כְּלֵי *kely-*), *\*piry-* > פְּרִי *pəri* ‘fruit’ (sf. פְּרִי־/פְּרִי־ *piry-/pery-*), *\*šiby-* > צְבִי *šəbī* ‘beauty’, *\*siby-* > שְׁבִי *šəbī* ‘captivity’ (sf. שְׁבִי־ *šiby-*).

Originally *\*qatł*: *\*gady-* > גְּדִי *gəđī* ‘kid’ (Arab. *jady*, Aram. *gadyā*), *\*ḥaby-* > *\*ḥiby-* > צְבִי *šəbī* ‘gazelle’ (Arab. *ḥaby*, Syriac *ḥabyā*, Akk. *šabītu*); perhaps also *\*lahy-* > *\*lihy-* > לְחִי *ləḥī* ‘cheek’ (Arab. *lahy*, Akk. *lahū*; but BH sf. לְחִי־ *leḥy-*, Aram. *lihyā* may indicate an original *\*qiʿt*).

Fem.:

(i) *\*qityat* > קִטְיָה *qityā*: *\*qiry-at-* > קִרְיָה *qiryā* ‘city’, *\*siby-at-* > שְׁבִיָּה *šibyā* ‘captivity’, pl. *\*kilay-āt-* > כִּלְיֹת *kəlayōt* ‘kidneys’.

(ii) *\*qityat* → *\*qiʿt* (by analogy with masc. *\*qiʿt*) > קִטְיָה *qəʿtī*: בְּכִית *bəkīʿt* ‘mourning’, בְּרִית *bərīt* ‘covenant’, שְׁבִיָּה *šəbīt* ‘captivity’.

(iii) *\*qəʿt* + *-a(t)* > קִטְיָה *qəʿtīyā*: צְבִיָּה *šəbīyā* ‘gazelle (f)’.

(b) by analogy to sound roots, *\*qity* > קִטְיָה/קִטְיָה *qéte/qéte*.  
בְּכָה *béke* ‘mourning’, הִגָּה *hége* ‘moaning’, קֶצֶה *qése* ‘end’.

(6) Geminate: *\*qill* > abs. and cst. קָל *qəl*, sf. קֵל *qill-*; pl. קָלִים/קָלוֹת/קָלִים *qəllim/-ōt/qəlālīm*, cst. קָלִים/קָלִים *qəllé/qil(ə)lé*.

*\*ʿimm-* > אִם *ʿēm* ‘mother’ (pl. אִמּוֹת *ʿimmōt*), *\*giʿz-* > גֵּז *gēz* ‘fleece’, *\*hinn-* > חֵן *hēn* ‘favor’, *\*hiθθ-* > חֵץ *hēs* ‘arrow’ (pl. חֲצִים *hiššīm*), *\*θill-* > צֶל *šəl* ‘shadow’ (pl. צִלָּים *šəlālīm*).

Fem. *\*qill-at* > קִלָּה *qillā*: *\*midd-at-* > מִדָּה *middā* ‘measure’ (pl. מִדּוֹת *middōt*), *\*pinn-at-* > פִּנָּה *pinnā* ‘corner’ (pl. פִּנּוֹת *pinnōt*).

Discussion: *\*qaṭl* and *\*qiṭl* Nouns.<sup>31</sup>

As is well known, there is inconsistency in the development of *qaṭl* and *qiṭl* nouns in Tiberian Hebrew. The problem becomes even more complex when other vocalization traditions of BH are taken into account, such as the Babylonian pointing tradition<sup>32</sup> and the Greek transcriptions in the second column of Origen's Hexapla,<sup>33</sup> as shown by the *qaṭl* and *qiṭl* forms in the following paradigms:

	Tiberian		Babylonian		Hexapla
<i>*qaṭl</i>	<i>mélek</i>	<i>malkî</i>	<i>málaḵ</i>	<i>malkî</i>	<i>malk(î)</i>
?	<i>sédeq</i>	<i>šidqî</i>	<i>šádaq</i>	<i>šadqî</i>	<i>sedq(î)</i>
?	<i>qéreb</i>	<i>qirbî</i>	<i>qárab</i>	<i>qirbî</i>	<i>qerb(î)</i>
<i>*qiṭl</i>	<i>sēp̄er</i>	<i>sīp̄rî</i>	<i>sēp̄ar</i>	<i>sīp̄rî</i>	<i>sepr(î)</i>
<i>*qill</i>	<i>lēb</i>	<i>libbî</i>	<i>lab</i>	<i>labbî</i>	<i>leb(bî)</i>

There is also considerable disagreement among the traditions with regard to individual forms. For Tiberian *qaṭlî*, the Hexapla has *qeṭlî* in almost half of the attested forms (e.g., TH דַּרְכִּי *darkî* = Hex. *derkhi*, TH חַסְדִּי *ḥasdî* = Hex. *esdi*; TH נַפְשִׁי *naṗšî* = Hex. *nephsi*, TH רַגְלִי *raḡlay* = Hex. *reglai*). The Babylonian forms also often differ from their Tiberian counterparts (e.g., TH בִּימִי *biṣmî* = BabH *batnî*, TH דַּרְכּוֹ *darkô* = BabH *dirkô*, TH קִבְרִי *qibrî* = BabH *qabri*, TH רַגְלֵהֶם *raḡlēhem* = BabH *riḡlēham*).

Further, even within Tiberian there exist many *\*qiṭl* nouns that appear as both *qéṭel* and *qēṭel*: e.g., יָשַׁע/יִשְׁע *yéša/yēša* 'rescue', כֶּסֶל/כְּסֵל *késel/késel* 'folly', נָדַר/נֶדֶר *néder/néder* 'vow', נֶצַח/נִצָּח *néšah/néšah* 'perpetuity', סֶמֶל/סְמָל *sémel/sémel* 'image', שֶׁטַף/שֻׁטָּף *šéteṭep/šéteṭep* 'flood'.

No strictly phonological solution will account for all of these inconsistencies. In an important study, however, Lambdin points out the following significant data:<sup>34</sup>

31. The following discussion relies heavily on an unpublished manuscript of T. O. Lambdin. See also his article cited in n. 34, below.

32. See Israel Yeivin, *The Hebrew Language Tradition as Reflected in the Babylonian Vocalization*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1985 [Hebrew]).

33. See Einar Brønno, *Studien über hebräische Morphologie und Vokalismus auf Grundlage der mercatischen Fragmente der zweiten Kolumne der Hexapla des Origenes* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1943); Gerard Janssens, *Studies in Hebrew Historical Linguistics based on Origen's Secunda* (Leuven: Peeters 1982).

34. Thomas O. Lambdin, "Philippi's Law Reconsidered," in *Biblical Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry*, ed. Ann Kort and Scott Morschauer (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1985), 135–45. An alternative approach is taken by E. J. Revell, "The Voweling of 'i-type' Segholates in Tiberian Hebrew," *JNES* 44 (1985): 319–28. Revell also points to certain specific consonants as factors; but his purely phonological approach and his claim that "There is no need to invoke 'analogy'" (p. 327) are difficult to accept,

85% of the *\*qaṭl*/*\*qiṭl* nouns (sound roots only) in which the middle radical is a sonorant, i.e., *l*, *m*, *n*, or *r*, have *qéṭel* (not *qéṭel*) as their only non-suffixal form (e.g., מֶלֶךְ *mélek* ~ מַלְכִי *malkî*, קֶרֶב *qéreb* ~ קִרְבִי *qirbî*).

83% of the forms whose middle radical is *not* one of the sonorants have *\*qiṭl*- as the suffixal base (e.g., שֵׁדָד *šédeq* ~ שִׁדְדִי *šiddî*, סִפֵּר *séper* ~ סִפְרִי *siprî*).

These facts suggest that *\*qaṭl* and *\*qiṭl* nouns underwent a partial redistribution on the basis of a phonological factor, namely, the presence or absence of a sonorant *l*, *m*, *n*, or *r* as the middle radical (below, *R* = *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*), as follows:

- (1) early Hebrew *\*a* was pronounced [e] before a consonant cluster, provided the first consonant of the cluster was not a sonorant (i.e., *a* = [e] /  $\_C_1C_2$ ,  $C_1 \neq R$ ): *\*šadq(ā)* > *šedq(ī)*;
- (2) early Hebrew *\*i* was also pronounced [e] before a final consonant cluster, when the first consonant of the cluster was a sonorant (i.e., *i* = [e] /  $\_RC\#$ ): *\*qirb* > *qerb* (> *qéreb*, but *qirbî*); in the Hexaplaric transcription, *e* and *i* were written as *e* (epsilon);
- (3) in Tiberian Hebrew Hebrew, *\*a* became *e* before a final consonant cluster (i.e., *a* > *e* /  $C\_C_1C_2\#$ ): *malk* > *melk* (> *mélek*, but *malkî*);
- (4) in Tiberian, unstressed *e* became *i*: *šedqī* > שִׁדְדִי *šiddî*; in Babylonian, *e* became *a* (*šadaq*, *qárab*).

Thus, there was a merger of original *\*qaṭl* and *\*qiṭl* patterns in some phonetic environments, and biforms of the type *qéṭel*/*qéṭel* will have arisen because of the ambiguity of the suffixal form *\*qiṭl*- (< *\*qaṭl* and *\*qiṭl*). Even with these rules, however, exceptions and inconsistencies remain, such as Tiberian עֲבָדִי *‘abḏî* (with *a* due to initial  $\text{ʕ}$ ?). For some of these, it must perhaps be assumed that Hebrew inherited biforms from PNWS: *\*ragl*-/*\*riḡl*- (*\*riḡl*- elsewhere in Semitic), *\*dark*-/*\*dirḱ*-, etc.<sup>35</sup>

c. *\*quṭl*

- (1) Sound: abs. and cst. קֹטֵל *qóṭel*, sf. קֹטֵל- *qoṭl*- (rarely קֹטֵל- *quṭl*-, especially before a labial); pl. קֹטְלִים/קֹטְלִים/קֹטְלִים *qə/ō/otālīm*, cst. קֹטְלֵי *qoṭlê*.

Isolated substantives: *\*uḏn*- > אוֹזֵן *‘ózen* ‘ear’ (dual אוֹזְנַיִם *‘oznáyim*), *\*gurn*- > גֹּרֵן *góren* ‘threshing-floor’ (pl. גֹּרְנוֹת/גֹּרְנוֹת *gə/ōrānōṭ*), *\*urp*- > עֲרֵף *‘orep* ‘(back of) neck’, *\*surs*- > שֹׁרֵשׁ *šōreš* ‘root’ (pl. שֹׁרְשֵׁי *\*šorāšim*).

especially when the non-Tiberian traditions are taken into consideration.

35. Note also *\*malk*- and *\*milk*- in various NWS languages; see W. H. van Soldt, “The Vocalization of the Word *mlk* King in Late Bronze Age Syllabic Texts from Syria and Palestine,” in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Prof. T. Muraoka on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. M. Baasten and W. Th. van Peursen, OLA 118 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 449–71.

Abstract substantives from stative roots: \**ʔurk-* > אָרְךְ *ʔōrek* ‘length’, \**gudl-* > גְּדֹלְ גֹדְלָהּ *gōḏel* ‘greatness’, \**husk-* > חֹשֶׁק *hōšek* ‘darkness’, \**yusr-* > יֹשֶׁר *yōšer* ‘uprightness’, \**umq-* > עֹמֵק *ʔomeq* ‘depth’, \**ʔuθr-* > עֹשֶׁר *ʔōšer* ‘wealth’, \**rug<sup>d</sup>-z-* > רִגְזָהּ *rōḡez* ‘agitation’.

Verbal substantives from active roots, denoting the result of the verbal action: \**ʔukl-* > אֲכָל *ʔōkel* ‘food (what is [to be] eaten)’, \**ʔumr-* > אָמַר *ʔōmer* ‘speech’.

Perhaps the original form of the verbal substantive of certain other verbs, preserved in, and regularized as, the sf. form of the Qal Infin. cst.: קֹטֵל *qoṭl-*; see \**qatāl*, below, §B.3.a.

Fem. \**quṭl-at-* קֹטְלָהּ *qoṭlā* (occasionally קֹטְלָהּ *quṭlā*, especially before a labial), cst. קֹטְלַת *qoṭlat*, sf. קֹטְלַת־ *qoṭlāt-*; pl. קֹטְלַת/קֹטְלָת *qatālōt/qōtālōt*, cst. קֹטְלַת *qoṭlōt*.

Isolated substantive: \**ḡurl-at-* > עָרְלָהּ *ʔorlā* ‘foreskin’.

Verbal substantives: \**ʔukl-at-* > אֲכָלָהּ *ʔoklā* ‘food’, \**hukm-at-* > חֻכְמָהּ *hokmā* ‘wisdom’, \**hurb-at-* > חֻרְבָהּ *horbā* ‘ruin’, \**tuhr-at-* > טְהֻרָהּ *tohōrā* ‘purification’, \**tum<sup>2</sup>-at-* > טְמֻמָּהּ *tum<sup>2</sup>ā* ‘uncleanness’, \**qurh-at-* > קֹרְחָהּ *qorhā* ‘baldness’, \**rug<sup>d</sup>-z-at-* > רִגְזָהּ *roḡzā* ‘quivering’.

(2a) II-<sup>2</sup>: \**qu<sup>2</sup>l-* קֹאֵל *qəʔōl*,<sup>36</sup> sometimes קֹאֵל *qō(?)*, קֹל *qōl*.

\**bu<sup>2</sup>r-* > בּוֹר *bōr*, and Kt באר *pit*’.

\**bu<sup>2</sup>s-* > בְּאִשׁ *bəʔōš* ‘stench’, \**mu<sup>2</sup>d-* > מְאֹד *məʔōd* ‘muchness’. [לָאֵם *ləʔōm* ‘people (gathering?)’ is probably a \**quṭull* form; see §D.d, below.] But note also \**tu<sup>2</sup>r-* > תְּאֹר *tōʔar* ‘form’, like other II-G.

Fem.: \**bu<sup>2</sup>s-at-* > בְּאִשָּׁהּ *boʔšā* ‘noxious weeds’.

(2b) Other II-G: *qōGal*. \**pu<sup>2</sup>l-* > פְּעַל *pōʔal* ‘deed’, \**ruh<sup>2</sup>-* > רֹחַב *rōḥab* ‘width’; II-h: \**muhr-* > מְהָר *mōhar* ‘bride-price’, \**suhm-* > שְׁהָם *šōham* ‘carnelian(?)’; but \**u<sup>2</sup>hl-* > אֹהֶל *ʔohel*, pl. \**u<sup>2</sup>halīma* > אֹהֶלִים/אֹהֲלִים *ʔō/ʔhālīm*,<sup>37</sup> \**buhm-* > בְּהֵן *bōhen* ‘thumb’.<sup>38</sup>

(3) II-w: > \**qūl*, q.v., above.

(4) III-G: *qōṭaG*. \**urh-* > אֹרַח *ʔōrah* ‘way (going)’, \**gubh-* > גֹּבַח *gōḇah* ‘height’.

36. As with \**qi<sup>2</sup>l* > *qəʔēl* (see above, n. 30), it may be that \**qu<sup>2</sup>l* regularly > [qōl], which was hypercorrected to *qəʔōl* by the Massoretes in most instances.

37. Since the cognates of *ʔohel* and *mōhar* are *qaṭl* forms (e.g., Arab. *ʔahl*, Akk. *ālu*; Arab. *mahr*, Syriac *mahrā*), it is also possible, though less likely, that the ancestors of the Hebrew forms were likewise *qaṭl* forms, in which however the medial *h* ceased to be pronounced, with compensatory lengthening of the *a* to *ā*, followed by the action of the Canaanite shift; i.e., \**ahl-* > \**āl-* > [ʔōl] and \**mahr-* > \**mār-* > [mōr] (cf. the development of \**ra<sup>2</sup>s-* > *rōš*, above), later hypercorrected to [ʔōhel] and [mōhar] with reinsertion of the *h* in a spelling-pronunciation. Cf. also above on *quṭl* forms II-<sup>2</sup> such as *məʔōd* < \**mu<sup>2</sup>d-*.

38. The pl. cst. בְּהוֹנֹת *bəhōnōt* is from a biform \**bəhōn* < \**bihān-*; cf. Arab. dialectal *bihām* (with *n* > *m*, probably by assimilation to the labial *b*), beside *ʔibhām*, and Akk. *ubānu* < \**ibhān-* (with assimilation of \**i* to \**u* before *b*).

- (5) III–w: perhaps *\*tuhw-* > תוהו *tōhū* and *\*buhw-* > בהו *bōhū* (one of these probably formed by direct analogy with the other).  
Fem.: note pl. *\*ʔurawāt-* > אַרְוֹת *ʔurāwōt* ‘manger’, cst. אַרְוֹת/אַרְוֹת *ʔurwōt/ʔuryōt*.
- (6) III–y: *\*quty* > קִטְי/קִטְי *qə/ōtī*, sf. קִטְי *qoty-*.  
Isolated substantives: *\*ʔuny-* > אֲנִי *ʔōnī* ‘fleet’, *\*θury-* > צָרִי *ṣōrī* ‘balsam’ (but cf. Ugar. *zrw/zurwu*).  
Verbal substantives: *\*huly-* > חֲלִי *hōlī* ‘sickness’, *\*yupy-* > (pausal) יָפִי *yōpī* (cst. יָפִי *yāpī*) ‘beauty’, *\*ʔuny-* > עֲנִי *ʔōnī* ‘affliction’; *\*ruʔy-* > רְאִי *rōʔī* ‘sight’.  
Fem.: *ʔōnī* + *-ā* > אֲנִיָּה *ʔōnīyā* ‘ship’.
- (7) Geminate: *\*qull-* abs. and cst. קֹל *qōl*, sf. קֹל *qull-*; pl. קֹלִים *qullīm*, cst. קֹלֵי *qullē*.  
Isolated substantives: *\*dubb-* > דָּב *dōb* ‘bear’, *\*muḥḥ-* > מֶחַח *mōaḥ* ‘marrow’.  
Verbal substantives: *\*huqq-* > חֻק *ḥōq* ‘statute’, *\*hurr-* > חֹר *ḥōr* ‘hole (something bored)’ (pl. חֹרִים *ḥōrīm* < *\*hurrīm*), *\*murr-* > מֹר *mōr* ‘myrrh (bitterness)’, *\*uʔzʔz-* > עֹז *ʔōz* ‘strength’, *\*rubb-* > רֹב *rōb* ‘multitude’, *\*ruʔʔ-* > רַע *rōaʔ* ‘evil’, *\*tumm-* > תָּם *tōm* ‘completeness’.  
Fem. *\*qull-at-*: קֹלָה *qullā*, cst. קֹלֶת *qullat*, sf. קֹלֶת *qullāt-*; pl. קֹלֹת *qullōt*.  
Isolated substantives: *\*ʔumm-at-* > אֲמָה *ʔummā* ‘people’, *\*gull-at-* > גֻּלָּה *gullā* ‘basin’.  
Verbal substantives: *\*huqq-at-* > חֻקָּה *ḥuqqā* ‘statute’, *\*sukk-at-* > סֻכָּה *sukkā* ‘booth’, *\*tumm-at-* > תְּמָה *tummā* ‘integrity’.

## 2. CVCVC: *\*qaṭal*, *\*qaṭil*, *\*qaṭul*, *\*qīṭal*, *\*qūṭal*, *\*qūṭul*

Note: Patterns with *\*i* and another high vowel (*\*qīṭil*, *\*qīṭul*, *\*qūṭil*) are not reconstructable for Proto-Semitic and are not native to BH.

### a. *\*qaṭal*

- (1) Sound: קֹטַל *qāṭāl*, cst. קֹטַל *qəṭal*, sf. קֹטַל *qəṭāl-*; pl. קֹטַלִּים *qəṭālīm*, cst. קֹטַלֵּי *qīṭlē*.<sup>39</sup>

Note: A few substantives and adjectives of this pattern have suppletive stems, with doubled third radicals (i.e., *\*qaṭall-*), before endings (see D, below, for examples); in a majority of these the third radical is a sonorant (*l*, *m*, *n*, *r*): גָּמַל *gāmāl* ‘camel’, pl. גָּמַלִּים *gəmallīm*; קָטַן *qāṭān* ‘small’, fs קֹטַנָּה *qəṭannā*, mp קֹטַנִּים *qəṭannīm*; שָׂפָן *šāpān* ‘badger’, pl. שָׂפָנִים *šəpānīm*; further, pl. פְּלָגוֹת *pəlaggōt* ‘streams’; note also perhaps the (poetic) sg. שָׂדַי *šāday* < *\*šadayy-(?)* = שָׂדֵה *šāde* < *\*šadaw-* ‘field’.

- (2) II–weak: ? *\*qawal/qayal* > *\*qāl* > קוֹל *qōl(?)*: e.g., אֹר *ʔōr* ‘light’.

39. On the phonetically problematic word שֶׁבֶת *dəbaš* ‘honey’, see Alexey Yuditsky, “*dəbaš* and Similar Forms,” *Lešonenū* 71 (2009): 281–86 [Hebrew]. For substantives with the pattern *qəṭāl*, see *\*qaṭāl* (below, §B.3.a).



- (3) III–weak *\*qaṭaw/yw*: קָטַעַ *qāte*, cst. קָטַי *qatē*; pl. קָטַיִם *qātīm*, cst. קָטַי *qatē* (these forms also reflect *\*qaṭil*, III–weak; see below, §c); but note also *\*anaw-* > עָנָו *ʿānāw* ‘poor’.
- (4) Geminate: *qālāl* (substantives; for most *\*qalal* adjectives, see *\*qall* above).

Isolated substantives: *\*adam-* > אָדָם *ʾādām* ‘person, humanity’, *\*haday-* > חֶזֶה *hāze* ‘breast (of an animal)’, *\*nahar-* > נָהָר *nāhār* ‘river’, *\*naway-* > נָוֵה *nāwe* ‘steppe’, pl. *\*panawīma* > פָּנִים *pānīm* ‘face’, *\*paras-* > פָּרָשׁ *pārāš* ‘horse’, *\*raḥam-* > רָחַם *rāḥām* ‘vulture’, *\*śadaw-* > שָׂדֵה *śāde* ‘field’.

Some *\*qaṭal* substantives may reflect old collectives (plurals): *\*baqar-* > בָּקָר *bāqār* ‘cattle’, *\*daqan-* > זָקָן *zāqān* ‘beard (whiskers?)’, *\*maṭar-* > מָטָר *mātār* ‘rain’, *\*qanaw-* > קָנֵה *qāne* ‘reed(s)’, *\*ṭalal-* > שָׁלַל *šālāl* ‘plunder’.

Abstract verbal substantives: *\*aṭam-* > אָשָׁם *ʾāšām* ‘guilt’, *\*dabar-* > דָּבָר *dābār* ‘word’, *\*ḥama’s-* > חָמָס *ḥāmās* ‘violence’, *\*kaḏab-* > כָּזָב *kāzāb* ‘lie’, *\*naqam-* > נָקָם *nāqām* ‘vengeance’, *\*amal-* > עֲמָל *ʿāmāl* ‘labor(s)’, *\*ṭama’-* > צָמָא *šāmā* ‘thirst’, *\*qa’saw-* > קָצָה *qāše* ‘end’, *\*raḡab-* > רָעַב *rāʿāb* ‘hunger’, *\*śakar-* > שָׂכָר *śākār* ‘wages’.

Adjectives from stative roots: *\*hadaθ-* > חָדָשׁ *ḥādāš* ‘new’, *\*ḥakam-* > חָכָם *ḥākām* ‘wise’, *\*halaq-* > חָלָק *ḥālāq* ‘smooth’, *\*yaqar-* > יָקָר *yāqār* ‘precious’, *\*yasar-* > יָשָׁר *yāšār* ‘straight’, *\*laban-* > לָבָן *lābān* ‘white’, *\*nabal-* > נָבָל *nābāl* ‘foolish’, *\*raḥab-* > רָחַב *rāḥāb* ‘wide’, *\*sapal-* > שָׁפַל *šāpāl* ‘low’. Note also *\*ḥalal-* > חָלַל *ḥālāl* ‘pierced’.

Fem. *\*qaṭal-at*: קָטַלְתָּ *qatālā*, cst. קָטַלְתְּ *qitlat*, sf. קָטַלְתְּ *qitlāt*; pl. קָטַלְתְּ *qatālōt*, cst. קָטַלְתְּ *qitlōt*.

Note: A few feminine words exhibit allomorphs of the form *\*qaṭal-t*.<sup>40</sup> e.g., *\*aṭar-at* > עֲטָרָה *ʾāṭārā* ‘crown’, but cst. *\*aṭar-t* > עֲטָרֶת *ʾāṭeret*.

Isolated substantives?: *\*adam-at* > אֲדָמָה *ʾādāmā* ‘ground’, *\*qa’ar-at* > קַעֲרָה *qəʿārā* ‘dish’; singulative (*nomen unitatis*) *\*namal-at* > נַמְלָה *nəmālā* ‘ant’.

Abstract verbal substantives: *\*barak-at* > בְּרָכָה *bərāḳā* ‘blessing’, *\*naqam-at* > נִקְמָה *nəqāmā* ‘vengeance’, *\*š/zaʿaq-at* > זַעֲקָה/צַעֲקָה *š/zəʿāqā* ‘cry’; from stative adjectives *\*qaṭal*: *\*nabal-at* > נְבָלָה *nəbālā* ‘folly’, *\*anaw-at* > עֲנָוָה *ʿānāwā* ‘humility’; from unattested stative adjectives *\*qaṭal*: *\*daʿag-at* > דְּאָגָה *dəʿāḡā* ‘anxiety’, *\*śadaq-at* > צַדִּיקָה *šəḏāqā* ‘righteousness’.

40. See Richard C. Steiner, “Vowel Syncope and Syllable Repair Processes in Proto-Semitic Construct Forms,” in *Language and Nature: Papers Presented to John Huehnergard on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach and Naʿama Pat-El, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 67 (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 2012), 365–90.

b. *\*qaṭil*

- (1) Sound: קָטֵל *qāṭēl*, cst. קָטַל *qaṭal*, sf. -קָטַל *qaṭēl-*; pl. קָטְלִים *qaṭēlim*, cst. קָטְלִי *qaṭlī*.

Note: (a) The sg. cst. form קָטַל *qaṭal* is probably the result of analogy to *\*qaṭal* forms, after the falling together of the plural cst. forms:<sup>41</sup>

*yišrē : ziqné :: yəšar : X = zəqan.*

- (b) A few forms of the pattern *\*qaṭil* have cst. (but not sf.) forms *\*qaṭl* (or *\*qaṭlʔ*): e.g., *\*katip-* > כַּתֵּף *kātēp* ‘shoulder’, cst. *\*katp-* > כַּתֵּף *kétep*; similarly גִּדֵּר *gādēr* ‘wall’, cst. גִּדֵּר *géder*; יָרֵךְ *yārēk* ‘thigh’, cst. יָרֵךְ *yérek*; כָּבֵד *kābēd* ‘heavy’, cst. כָּבֵד *kābad* and כָּבֵד *kébed*. These alloforms may be compared with their Arab. cognates, some of which occur in biforms, such as *katif/katf/kitf*, *warik/wark/wirk*. It is not clear whether these alternations reflect true biforms going back to PS or an early vowel reduction rule, as proposed recently by Steiner (i.e., abs. *\*qaṭilu*, cst. *\*qaṭilu* > *\*qaṭlu*).<sup>42</sup> (Cf. in this regard fem. forms cited above of the type abs. עֲטָרָה *‘āṭārā* < *\*‘aṭarat-*, cst. עֲטָרַת *‘āṭeret* < *\*‘aṭart-*.)

Isolated substantives: *\*yatid-* > יָתֵד *yātēd* ‘peg’, *\*‘aqib-* > עֲקֵב *‘āqēb* ‘heel’, *\*raḥil-* > רַחֵל *rāḥēl* ‘ewe’; also גִּדֵּר *gādēr*, יָרֵךְ *yārēk*, כַּתֵּף *kātēp*, discussed above.

Adjectives from stative verbs: *\*daqin-* > זָקֵן *zāqēn* ‘old’, *\*ṭami<sup>2</sup>-* > טָמֵא *ṭāmē<sup>2</sup>* ‘unclean’, *\*kabid-* > כָּבֵד *kābēd* ‘heavy’ (also ‘liver’), *\*ḥami<sup>2</sup>-* > צָמֵא *šāmē<sup>2</sup>* ‘thirsty’, *\*raḡib-* > רָעֵב *rā‘ēb* ‘hungry’, etc.

Abstract substantive: *\*ga<sup>1</sup>zil-* > גָּזֵל *gāzēl* ‘robbery’.

Fem. *\*qaṭil-at-*: קָטְלָה *qaṭēlā*, cst. קָטְלַת/קָטְלַת *qaṭlat/qaṭēlat*, sf. קָטְלַת- /קָטְלַת *qaṭlāt-/qaṭēlāt-*; pl. קָטְלוֹת *qaṭēlōt*, cst. קָטְלוֹת *qaṭlōt*.

Note (a) In the sg., the expected cst. and sf. forms קָטְלַת-/קָטְלַת *qaṭlat/qaṭlāt-* (by the rule of shwa), as in *\*nabil-at-* > נִבְלָה *nəbēlā* ‘corpse’, cst. נִבְלַת *niblāt*, sf. נִבְלַתוֹ *niblāṭō*, have often been replaced by analogical re-formations that avoid the stem allomorphy: *\*barik-at-* > בְּרִיכָה *bərēkā* ‘pool’, cst. בְּרִיכַת *bərēkat*; cf. also נִבְלַתוֹ *nəbēlāṭō*.

- (b) A few words exhibit allomorphs from *\*qaṭil-t* (see n. 40): e.g., *\*bahim-at-* > abs. בְּהֵמָה *bəhēmā* ‘animal’ and cst. (*\*bəhəmat* > *\*bihmat* >) בְּהֵמַת *behēmat*, but sf. *\*bahim-t-* > בְּהֵמַת *bəhemt-*; abs. *\*gadir-at-* > גִּדֵּרָה *gədērā* ‘wall’, but also *\*gadir-t-* > גִּדֵּרַת *gədəret*; *\*amin-t-* (?) > (*\*imitt?* >) אֱמֵת *‘emet* ‘truth’ (sf. אֱמִית *‘āmitt-*).

- (c) A small number of nouns, for which the expected pattern is *\*qaṭil-at*, have instead doubled third radicals (i.e., *\*qaṭill-at*);

41. T. O. Lambdin, personal communication.

42. Steiner, “Vowel Syncope.”

see D, below.

Isolated substantives: \**bahim-at-* > בַּהֵמָה *bəhēmā* ‘animal’, \**barik-at-* > בַּרְכָּה *bərēḵā* ‘pool’.

Substantives from (sometimes unattested) \**qaṭil* adjectives: \**ḥasik-at-* > חֹשֶׁכָּה *ḥāšēḵā* ‘darkness’, \**mahir-at-* > מְהֵרָה *məhērā* ‘haste’, \**mali<sup>2</sup>-at-* > מְלֵאָה *mələ<sup>2</sup>ā* ‘fullness’, \**nabil-at-* > נְבִילָה *nəbēlā* ‘corpse’; from active roots: \**ganib-at-* > גַּנְבָּה *gəṇēbā* ‘thing stolen’, \**tarip-at-* > תְּרִפָּה *tərēpā* ‘torn flesh’.

Abstract substantives: \**harig-at-* > הֲרִיגָה *hārēgā* ‘slaughter’, \**palit-at-* > פְּלִיטָה/פְּלִטָּה *pālē/ētā* ‘escape’, \**sariq-at-* > שְׂרִיקָה *šərēqā* ‘hissing’.

- (2) II–weak: PS \**qayil* > PHeb \**qil* > קָל *qēl*: e.g., \**mit-* > מֵת *mēt* ‘dead’: cf. \**qil* above (§A.2.b).
- (3) III–weak \**qaṭiw/y-*: קָטֵה *qāṭe*, cst. קָטֵה *qəṭē*: e.g., \**dawiy-* > דָּוִי *dāwe* ‘ill’, \**wapiy-* > יָפֵה *yāpē* ‘fair’, \**qasiw-* > קָשֶׁה *qāše* ‘hard’; \**qaṭiw/y* falls together with \**qaṭaw/y* (above, §a), as in \**ḥaḏay-* > חֶזֶה *ḥāze* ‘breast (of an animal)’, \**qanaw-* > קָנֵה *qāne* ‘reed(s)’.

- c. \**qaṭul*: קָטֹל *qāṭōl*, cst. קָטֹל *qəṭōl* (קָטֹל- *qəṭol-*), sf. קָטֹל- *qəṭōl-*; pl. קָטֹלִים *qəṭōlīm*, cst. קָטֹלֵי *qəṭōlē*.

Fem. \**qaṭul-at-*: קָטֹלָה *qəṭōlā*; pl. קָטֹלוֹת *qəṭōlōt*.

Note: The pl. cst. קָטֹלֵי *qəṭōlē* is at variance with the form קָטֹלֵי *qīṭlē* from \**qaṭal* and \**qaṭil*. *qəṭōlē* has replaced expected *qīṭlē* because of the merger of *ō* < \**u* with *ō* < \**ā*, the latter an irreducible vowel.

Adjectives from stative roots: \**gabuh-* > גָּבֹהַ *gābōah* ‘high’, \**gadul-* > גָּדֹל *gādōl* ‘big’, \**ṭahur-* > טָהוֹר *tāhōr* ‘clean’, \**qadus-* > קָדוֹשׁ *qādōš* ‘holy’, \**qarub-* > קָרֵב *qārōḥ* ‘near’, \**raḥuq-* > רָחוֹק *rāḥōq* ‘distant’.

Note: There has been some mixing of the pattern \**qaṭul* with forms of another adjectival pattern, \**qaṭull*, in which the third radical is doubled. The masc. sg. of \**qaṭul* and \**qaṭull* ultimately merged (i.e., *qāṭōl*) by regular sound rules. For \**qaṭull*, see below, §D.c.

- d. \**qīṭal*

- (1) Sound: קָטַל *qētāl*, cst. קָטַל/קָטַל/קָטַל *qəṭal/qēṭel/qētel*, sf. קָטַל- *qəṭāl-*; pl. קָטַלִּים/קָטַלִּים *qəṭālīm/ōt*.

An infrequent pattern for substantives, which seems to be related to \**qīṭl*; note that the pl. base of the latter is \**qīṭal*.

\**ḥimar-* > חֶמֶר *ḥēmār* ‘bitumen’, \**libab-* > לֵבָב *lēbāb* ‘heart’ (cst. לֵבָב *ləbāb*, sf. לֵבָב- *ləbāb-*; pl. לֵבָבוֹת *ləbābōt*; cf. \**libb-* > לֵב *lēb*, pl. לֵבוֹת *libbōt*, also ‘heart’), \**nikar-* > נִכָּר *nēkār* ‘foreignness’ (cst. נִכָּר- *nēkar-*), \**inab-* > עֲנָב *ēnāb* ‘grapes’ (usually pl. עֲנָבִים *‘ānābīm*), \**šila<sup>c</sup>-* > צֶלַע *šēlā<sup>c</sup>* ‘rib’ (cst. \**šil<sup>c</sup>-* > צֶלַע/צֶלַע *šēla<sup>c</sup>/šēla<sup>c</sup>*, sf. צֶלַע- *šal<sup>c</sup>-*; pl. צֶלַעוֹת/צֶלַעוֹת *šalā<sup>c</sup>īm/-ōt*), \**šiar-* > שֵׁעַר *šē‘ār* ‘hair’ (cst. שֵׁעַר *šə‘ar*, also \**šiar-* > שֵׁעַר *šá‘ar*, sf. שֵׁעַר- *šə‘ār-/šá‘ār-*; cf. the singulative \**šar-at-* > שְׂעָרָה *šə‘ārā* ‘a hair’), \**sikar-* > שֶׁכָּר *šēḵār* ‘strong drink’.

- (2) III–weak: \**miʿay-* (sg.) > cst. מַעַה *məʿē*, reinterpreted as pl. cst. מַעֵי *məʿē*, sf. מַעֵי *məʿē* ‘gut’ (cf. Arab. *miʿan* < \**miʿay-un*).

e. \**quṭul*

Sound: abs., cst., and sf. קַטֹּל *qəṭōl*; pl. קַטְלִים *qəṭōlīm*, cst. קַטְלֵי *qəṭōlē*.

Note: This pattern falls together with קַטֹּל *qəṭōl* from \**qiṭāl* and \**quṭāl* (below), and thus the *-ō-* remains unreduced in the pl. cst., contrary to expectation (cf. \**qaṭul*, above). The original form of קַטֹּל *qəṭōl* substantives can be determined only through comparison with cognates in other languages.

A rare substantive form: \**bukur-* > בְּכֹר *bəḵōr* ‘firstborn’, \**hulum* > חֶלֶם *ḥālōm* ‘dream’.

Fem. \**quṭul-t-*: abs. and cst. קַטְלֵת *qəṭōlet*, sf. קַטְלֵת/קַטְלֵת *qəṭolt-/qəṭult-*.

Note: Some nouns of the pattern קַטְלֵת *qəṭōlet* may reflect original \**qviāl+-t-*, through a process of re-analysis (cf., e.g., \**thalāθ-at-* > שְׁלֹשָׁה *šəlōšā*, cst. שְׁלֹשֶׁת *šəlōšet* ‘three’).

\**hurus-t-* > cst. חֲרֻשֶׁת *ḥārōšet* ‘carving’, \**kutub-t-* > cst. כְּתָבָה *kəṭōḇet* ‘mark’, \**kutun-t-* > כְּתָנִת *kəṭōnet* ‘tunic’ (biform of כְּתָנִת *kəṭōnet*; see *quṭul*, below), \**nuhus-t-* > נְחֻשֶׁת *nəḥōšet* ‘copper’ (sf. נְחֻשִׁי *nəḥōštī*, נְחֻשְׁתָּה *nəḥuštāh*; dual נְחֻשְׁתַּיִם *nəḥuštáyim*; cf. Arab. *nuḥās*), \**nuʿur-t-* > נְעֻרָה *nəʿōret* ‘tow (fiber)’, \**quṭur-t-* > קַטְרָה *qəṭōret* ‘smoke’ (sf. קַטְרֵי *qəṭortī*), \**sukub-t-* > שְׂכֻבָּה *šəḵōḇet* ‘copulation’ (only sf. שְׂכֻבָּת *šəḵōḇt-*).

3. CṽCṽC: \**qaṭāl*, \**qaṭīl*, \**qaṭūl*, \**qiṭāl*, \**quṭāl*, \**quṭūl*

a. \**qaṭāl*

- (1) Sound: קַטֹּל *qāṭōl*, cst. and sf. קַטֹּל *qəṭōl*; pl. קַטְלִים *qəṭōlīm*, cst. קַטְלֵי *qəṭōlē*.

Isolated substantives (rare): numeral \**thalāθ-* > שְׁלֹשָׁה *šəlōš* ‘three’; substantives in *ṭi-ōn*, some of which may reflect early PS biradicals with the sufformative \**-ān*: \**adān-* > אֲדֹנָי *ʾādōn* ‘lord’ (cf. Ugar. /ʾadu/ and /ʾadānu/ ‘father, lord’); \**atān-* > אֲתֹנָה *ʾātōn* ‘female donkey’ (Comm. Sem. \**ʾatān-*); \**garān-* > גַּרְוֹן *gārōn* ‘neck’ (cf. Arab. *jirān*, BH גַּרְוֹת *gargərōt* ‘neck’); \**lašān-* > לָשׁוֹן *lāšōn* ‘tongue’ (cf. Ugar. /lašānu/; other Sem. cognates all reflect \**lisān-*; cf. Egyptian *ns*, Coptic *las*; Berber *irs* < *ils*).

Agent nouns (cf. Eth. ptcl. *qaṭāli*); rare: \**bahān-* > בַּחֹן *bāḥōn* ‘assayer’, \**yaqās-* > יָקוֹשׁ *yāqōš* ‘fowler’ (1x, vs. \**yaqūs-* > יָקוּשׁ *yāqūš* 3x; see \**qaṭūl*, below, §B.3.c), \**asāq-* > עֹשֶׂה *ʿāšōq* ‘oppressor’ (more common in Mishnaic Heb.: טָחֹן *tāḥōn* ‘miller’, לֹדֵן *lāʿōz* ‘speaker of a foreign language’, סָרוֹק *sārōq* ‘wool comber’).

Note: Nouns with the pattern *qəṭāl* in the absolute are loans from Aramaic: כְּתָב *kəṭāḇ* ‘writing’, סָפָר *səpār* ‘calculation’, קָרָב *qərāḇ* ‘battle’.

Qal Infinitive absolute (so also Ugar., Akk.): קָטַל *qāṭōl*; the sf. form of this pattern was replaced by that of another verbal noun, \**quṭl*- > -קָטַל *qoṭl*-.

Fem. *qəṭāl-at*: only numeral \**ṭalāθ-at* > שְׁלֹשָׁה *šəlōšā* ‘three’ (cst. → שְׁלֹשֶׁת *šəlōšəṭ*).

(2) II–weak \**qaw/yāl* > \**qāl*: קָוַל *qōl*: e.g., שׂוּם *sóm* ‘placing’.

(3) III–weak *qəṭāw/y*: *qāṭō*: e.g., בָּנָה *bānō* ‘building’.

Fem. *qəṭāw/y-at* (?): \**qāṭōṭ*, cst. קָטַוֹת *qəṭōṭ*.

Only the Infin. cst. of verbs III–weak: e.g., \**banāy-at* > \**banāt*- > cst. בָּנוּחַ *bənōṭ* ‘to build’.

b. \**qəṭīl*<sup>43</sup>

(1) Sound: קָטִיל *qāṭīl*, cst., sf. קִטִּיל *qəṭīl*; pl. קִטִּילִים *qəṭīlīm*, cst. קִטִּילֵי *qəṭīlē*. Isolated substantives (?; rare): \**samīr*-(?) > שָׁמִיר *šāmīr* ‘thorns, flint’.

Verbal substantives (?; perhaps all substantivized adjectives; see next entries); frequently used for agricultural terms:<sup>44</sup> \**bašīr*- > בָּצִיר *bāšīr* ‘vintage’, \**zamīr*- > זָמִיר *zāmīr* ‘pruning’, \**harīθ*- > חָרִישׁ *ḥārīš* ‘plowing’.

Common adjectival pattern:

from stative roots: \**ha’sīd*- > חָסִיד *ḥāsīd* ‘kind, pious’, \**na’īm*- > נָעִים *nā’īm* ‘pleasant’, \**šaḡīr*- > צָעִיר *šā’īr* ‘little’;

from active roots (passive): \**d’sīr*- > אָסִיר *’āsīr* ‘bound, captive, prisoner’, \**kalīl*- > כָּלִיל *kālīl* ‘complete(d), whole’, \**šakīr*- > שָׂכִיר *šākīr* ‘hired, hireling’.

Very often substantivized (cf. the last three words above): \**masīh*- > מָשִׁיחַ *māšīaḥ* ‘anointed one’, \**nabī*?- > נָבִיא *nābī’* ‘prophet (called)’, \**nagīd*- > נָגִיד *nāḡīd* ‘leader (foremost)’, \**našī*?- > נָשִׂיא *nāšī’* ‘prince (raised)’, \**palīt*- > פָּלִיט *pālīt* ‘escapee’, \**paqīd*- > פְּקִיד *pāqīd* ‘chargé’, \**ša’īr*- > שָׁעִיר *šā’īr* ‘buck (hairy)’.

Fem. \**qəṭīl-at*: קִטִּילָה *qəṭīlā*, cst. קִטִּילַת *qəṭīlat*, sf. קִטִּילָתִי *qəṭīlāt*; pl. קִטִּילֹת *qəṭīlōṭ*.

Verbal substantives:<sup>45</sup> \**halīk-at* > הֹלִיכָה *hālīkā* ‘going’, \**halīp-at* > הֹלִיפָה *hālīpā* ‘change’, \**salīḥ-at* > סְלִיחָה *səlīḥā* ‘forgiveness’.

Substantivized adjectives: \**galīl-at* > גְּלִילָה *ḡalīlā* ‘circuit (bounded)’, \**halīš-at* > חֲלִיֶּשָׁה *ḥālīšā* ‘plunder’, \**ha’sīd-at* > חָסִידָה *ḥāsīdā*

43. See Huehnergard, “*qāṭil*.”

44. See Aaron J. Koller, *The Semantic Field of Cutting Tools in Biblical Hebrew: The Interface of Philological, Semantic, and Archaeological Evidence*, CBQMS 49 (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2012).

45. In Mishnaic Hebrew, fem. *qəṭīlā* became the regular *qal* verbal noun. See Huehnergard, “*qāṭil*,” \*9.

‘stork (kind)’.

- (2) II–weak \*qaw/yīl: קיל *qīl*, q.v. above; e.g., \*šayīm- > \*šīm- > שים *śim* ‘placed’ (passive ptcpl.).
- (3) III–weak \*qaṭīw/y: קטי *qāṭī*, cst. קטיי *qaṭīyīm*, pl. קטיים *qaṭīyīm*.  
\*naqīy- > נקי *nāqī* ‘free’, \*anīy- > עני *‘ānī* ‘poor’.

Fem. *qaṭīw/y-at*: קטייה *qaṭīyā*.

\*alīy-at- > עלייה *‘ālīyā* ‘roof-chamber (upper)’.

- (4) קטיל *qaṭīl* (= cst., sf.); pl. קטילים *qaṭīlīm*, cst. קטילי *qaṭīlē*.

קטיל *qaṭīl* forms are substantives, at least some of which may plausibly be considered substantivized adjectives. If קטיל *qaṭīl* reflects a genuine Hebrew pattern, it must derive from earlier \*qīṭīl or \*quṭīl, neither of which is certainly attested elsewhere in Semitic (note that P(NW)S \*qaṭīl > Heb. קטיל *qāṭīl*; see above). Thus it is likely that most *qaṭīl* forms are loans from Aramaic (or elsewhere), although the pattern probably became established in Hebrew once a number of loans had entered the language.

אליל *‘ēlīl* ‘worthlessness’, בדיל *bādīl* ‘alloy’, בריוח *barīah* ‘bar’, גביר *gabīr* ‘lord’ (Gen 27:29, 37; perhaps by analogy with the fem. גבירה *gabīrā* ‘lady’; cf. גברת *gabēret* below), חזיר *hāzīr* ‘pig’, כסיל *kaśīl* ‘fool’, כפיר *kaṭīr* ‘lion cub’, נציב *naṣīb* ‘pillar, prefect’.

Note the fem. גברת *gabēret*, sf. גבירת- *gabīrt-*, in which the unusual abs. may be a backformation on the basis of the more common suffixal form (i.e., \**gabir-t*).

### c. \*qaṭūl

- (1) Sound: קטול *qāṭūl*, cst., sf. קטול *qaṭūl*; pl. קטולים *qaṭūlīm*, cst. קטולי *qaṭūlē*.

An adjectival pattern:

Stative roots: \*aṭūm- > עצום *‘aṣūm* ‘strong’, \*arūm- > ערום *‘arūm* ‘clever’.

Generalized as the Qal passive participle for active roots: \*katūb- > כתוב *kātūb* ‘written’, \*patūh- > פתוח *pātūah* ‘open(ed)’, etc.

Substantivized: \*harūš-<sup>46</sup> > חרוץ *hārūš* ‘gold (yellow)’, \*yašūf- > יצוע *yāšūaf* ‘couch (mat spread out)’, \*ṭabūr- > שבור *šābūr* ‘fracture’.

Abstract verbal substantives: \*ḏakūr- > זכור *\*zākūr* ‘males (coll.)’, \*naʾūm- > נאם *naʾūm* ‘utterance’, \*sabūf- > שבוע *šābūaf* ‘week’ (dual שבועים *šābū‘āyim*, but pl. שבועות/שבועים *šābū‘ōt/-īm*, with irregular retention of *ā*); unclear: \*yaqūs- > יקוש *yāqūš* ‘fowler’ (3x, vs. \**yaqās-* > יקוש *yāqōš* 1x); see \**qaṭāl*, above, §B.3.a).

Fem. \**qaṭūl-at*: קטולה *qaṭūlā*, cst. קטולת *qaṭūlat*, etc. These fall together

46. Proto-Semitic \**xarūš-* (and/or \**xurāš-*); see John Huehnergard, “Akkadian *h* and West Semitic \**h*,” in *Studia Semitica III*, ed. Leonid Kogan (Moscow: Russian State University for the Humanities, 2003), 105 n. 6.

with, and are largely indistinguishable from, \**quṭūl-at*, q.v. below, §f.

Substantivized adjectives: \**batūl-at*- > בתולה *baṭūlā* ‘young woman (weaned?)’, \**sabūʿ-at*- > שבועה *šəbūʿā* ‘oath’, \**samūʿ-at*- > שמועה *šəməʿā* ‘report (what is heard)’.

Abstracts (overlap semantically with preceding): \**gabūr-at*- > גבורה *gabūrā* ‘strength’, \**yaθūʿ-at*- > ישועה *yəšūʿā* ‘rescue’, \**qabūr-at*- > קבורה *qəbūrā* ‘burial’.

- (2) II–weak \**qaw/yūl*: קול *qūl*, e.g., \**mawūl*- > \**mūl*- > מול *mūl* ‘circumcised’; for forms like שים *šim*, see *qaṭīl*, above.
- (3) III–weak: e.g., \**banūy*- > בָּנוּי *bānūy*, fs בְּנוֹיָהּ *bənūyā*, mp בְּנוֹיָם *bənūyīm* ‘built’.

d. \**qitāl*

- (1) Sound: abs., cst., and sf. קטול *qəṭōl*; pl. קטולים *qəṭōlīm*, cst. קטולי *qəṭōlē*. These merge with קטל *qəṭōl* from \**quṭūl* and \**qitāl*, and can be identified only on the basis of comparative evidence.

Isolated substantives: \**bihān*- > pl. cst. בְּהַנּוֹת *bəhōnōt* ‘thumbs’ (see n. 38 above), \**dirāʿ*- > זְרוּעַ *zərōʿāʿ* ‘arm’ (also a rare, late biform זְרוּעָה *ʿezrōʿāʿ*, with prothetic syllable), \**himār*- > חֲמֹר *hāmōr* ‘male donkey’, \**tihām*- > תְּהוֹם *təhōm* ‘sea’.

Fem. \**qitāl-at*: קטולה *qəṭōlā*, etc.

Isolated substantives: \**bisār-at*- > בְּשׂוּרָה *bəšōrā* ‘tidings’, \**ibād-at*- > עֲבָדָה *ʿəbōdā* ‘service, labor’ (Arab. *ʿibāda*).

- (2) I–<sup>2</sup>: Note, for expected \*\**ēCōC*, forms like אָזוֹר *ʿəzōr* ‘waistcloth’, with *ē* rather than *ʿ* in the first syllable.  
(For אֵלֹהַ *ʿēlōh* ‘god’ < \**ʿilāh*-, see above, §A.1.b, with n. 11.)

e. \**quṭāl*: abs., cst., and sf. קטול *qəṭōl*; pl. קטולים *qəṭōlīm*, cst. קטולי *qəṭōlē*.

These fall together with קטל *qəṭōl* < \**quṭūl* and \**qitāl*, q.v.

Isolated substantives and abstracts: \**ʿunās*- > אָנוּשׁ *ʿənōš* ‘person, people’ (Arab. (*ʿu*)*nās*, Aram. (*ʿē*)*nāš*), \**burāθ*- > בְּרוּשׁ *bərōš* ‘juniper’, \**ruhāb*- > רְחוּב *rəḥōb* ‘open area, plaza’.

Fem. \**quṭāl-at*: קטולה *qəṭōlā*, etc.

\**lubān-at*- > לְבוֹנָה *ləbōnā* ‘frankincense’ (Arab. *lubān*).

See also \**quṭūl-t*, above, for \**quṭāl+t*.

f. \**quṭūl*<sup>47</sup>

- (1) Sound: abs., cst., and sf. קטול *qəṭūl*;<sup>48</sup> pl. קטולים *qəṭūlīm*, cst. קטולי *qəṭūlē*

47. See C. W. Gordon, “*Qəṭūl* Nouns in Classical Hebrew,” *AbrN* 29 (1991): 83–86.

48. *qəṭūl* < \**quṭūl* results from dissimilation: the first of two *u* vowels becomes \**i*, which then reduces to *ə* in open syllables: \**quṭūl* > \**qitūl* > *qəṭūl*. (For the intermediate stage, cf. perhaps Amarna Canaanite *ki-lu-bi* ‘cage’, although that writing might also represent [kəlūbi], since it was not possible to write [ə] in cuneiform.) Similarly \**quṭūl* >

*qəṭûlē*.

Note: In Arab., \**quṭūl* forms are (a) verbal substantives, and (b) broken plurals (originally collectives).

Isolated substantives: \**ḏubūb-* > זָבוּב *zəḇūḇ* ‘fly’ (Aram. *dibbā(bā)*, Arab. *ḏubāb*, Akk. *zubbū*), \**kulūb-* > כָּלוּב *kalūḇ* ‘basket’, \**kurūb-* > כְּרוּב *karūḇ* ‘cherub’.

Collectives: \**gubūl-* > גְּבוּל *gəḇūl* ‘territory, border’, \**gudūd-* > גְּדוּד *gəḏūḏ* ‘band, troop’, \**lubūs-* > לְבוּשׁ *ləḇūš* ‘clothing (> garment)’, \**rukūs-* > רְכוּשׁ *raḵūš* ‘possessions, property’.

Abstract verbal substantives: גְּמוּל *gəṃūl* ‘recompense’, יְבוּל *yəḇūl* ‘produce’; note also the abstract plural forms \**buḥūr-īma* > בְּחוּרִים *bəḥūrīm* ‘youth’, \**butūl-īma* > בְּתוּלִים *bəṭūlīm* ‘virginity’, \**ḏuqūn-īma* > זְקוּנִים *zəqūnīm* ‘old age’, \**nu‘ūr-īma* > נְעוּרִים *ne‘ūrīm* ‘youth’.

Fem. \**quṭūl-at-*: קְטוּלָה *qəṭūlā*, etc. These fall together with \**qaṭūl-at-*, q.v.

גְּבוּלָה \**gəḇūlā* = גְּבוּל *gəḇūl*, גְּמוּלָה *gəṃūlā* = גְּמוּל *gəṃūl*.

- (2) I-<sup>2</sup>: for expected \*\**ēCūC*, *‘ēCūC* occurs; cf. I-<sup>2</sup> *qīṭāl* forms such as *‘ēzōr*, above.

אָבוּס *‘ēḇūs* ‘crib’; אָטוּן *‘ēṭūn* ‘yarn’, אֱמֻן *‘ēmūn* ‘trust’, אֶסוּר *‘ēsūr* ‘bond’.

Fem.: perhaps אֱמוּנָה *‘ēmūnā* ‘fidelity’ (or \**qaṭūl-at*).

#### 4. CṽCṽC

- a. \**qāṭal*: קְטָל *qəṭāl*, cst. קְטַל *qəṭal*, sf. קְטָל- *qəṭāl-*; pl. קְטָלִים *qəṭālīm*, cst. קְטָלֵי *qəṭālē*.

A rare substantive pattern: \**‘ālam-* > עוֹלָם *‘ōlām* ‘long time’.<sup>49</sup>

The words שׁוֹבָב *šōḇāḇ* ‘apostate’ and עוֹלָל *‘ōlāl* ‘child’, from roots II-w, show reduplication of the final radical; i.e., they are *qawlal* forms.

The forms גּוֹזָל *gōzāl* ‘young bird’ and גּוֹרָל *gōrāl* ‘lot’ seem to reflect a rare \**qawṭal* pattern (for the former, cf. Arab. *jawzal* and, with metathesis, Syriac *zugallā*; for the latter, also with metathesis, Arab. *jarwal* ‘gravel, pebbles’). The word כּוֹקֵב *kōḵāḇ* ‘star’ derives from a reduplicated biradical, \**kawkab-* < \**kabkab-*.

\**qīṭūl* and \**quṭūl* > \**qīṭūl*, for which see further below, §C.1.f.

49. A form \**‘ālam-* appears in most West Semitic languages. But Arab. and Eth. *‘ālam* may be loans from Aramaic (for references, see Wolf Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge‘ez (Classical Ethiopic)* [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1987], 61), in which case *‘ālam-* is a specifically NWS word, in which the ending *-am* may have been adverbial originally (with the final mimation preserved, probably, by the presence of an enclitic *-mv*; see Horace D. Hummel, “Enclitic *mem* in Early Northwest Semitic, Especially Hebrew,” *JBL* 76 [1957]: 85–107, esp. 95; Hackett, “Hebrew,” 140); for the use of a frozen adverbial form as a substantive, cf. English “it took *forever* to finish.” The original root of \**‘ālam-* would thus have been \**‘-w/y-l*.



The following words are certainly or probably loans: הֹזָם *hōzām* ‘seal’ (from Egyptian), קֹבֵעַ/קֹבְעָה *k/qōḇaʿ* ‘helmet’ (from Hittite), שׁוֹפָר *šōpār* ‘ram’s horn’ (from Sumerian, via Akk.), and the fem. כְּתֹרֶת *kōtēret* ‘capital (of a pillar)’ (pl. כְּתָרִית *kōtārōt*; from Egyptian?).<sup>50</sup>

b. \**qāṭil*

(1) Sound: abs. and cst. קָטַל *qōṭēl*, sf. קָטַל- *qōṭal-*; pl. קָטַלִּים *qōṭalīm*, cst. קָטַלְתָּ *qōṭalē*.

Fem. \**qāṭil-t*: abs. and cst. קָטַלְתָּ *qōṭélet*, sf. קָטַלְתָּ *qōṭilt-*; pl. קָטַלְתֶּם *qōṭalōt*;

\**qāṭil-at*: קָטַלְתָּ *qōṭalā*, cst. קָטַלְתָּ *qōṭalat*, sf. קָטַלְתָּ *qōṭalāt-*; pl. קָטַלְתֶּם *qōṭalōt*.

The Qal active participle: \**kātib-* > כָּתֵב *kōṭēb* ‘writing, writer’, fem.

\**kātib-t* > כָּתֵבְתָּ *kōṭēbet*, \**kātib-at* > כָּתֵבְתָּ *kōṭēbā*.

Frequently substantivized: \**kāhin-* > כֹּהֵן *kōhēn* ‘priest’, \**sāpir-* > סָפֵר *sōpēr* ‘scribe’; perhaps also \**gārib-* > עֶרֶב *ʿōrēb* ‘raven’.

(2) II–weak: \**ʿāyib-* > אֵיב *ʿōyēb* ‘enemy’.

(3) III–weak \**qāṭiw/y-*: קָטַע *qōṭe*, cst. קָטַע *qōṭē*; pl. קָטַעִים *qōṭīm*, cst. קָטַעְתָּ *qōṭē*.

Fem. \**qāṭiw/y-at*: קָטַעְתָּ *qōṭā*, cst. (based on abs.) קָטַעְתָּ *qōṭat*; pl. קָטַעְתֶּם *qōṭōt*.

\**rāʿiy-* > רֹעֶה *rōʿe* (m), \**rāʿiy-at* > רֹעֶה *rōʿā* (f) ‘shepherd’; \**hāmiy-at-* > חֹמָה *hōmā* ‘wall (protector)’, \**ʿāliy-at-* > עֹלָה *ʿōlā* ‘offering (riser)’, \**qāriy-at-* > קֹרֶה *qōrā* ‘rafter (meeting)’. But note also the fem. ptcl. biforms בְּנִיָּה/בְּנָה *bōnā/bōnīyā*.

C. Triconsonantal forms with Doubled Second Radical<sup>51</sup>

1. CṽCCṽC: \**qaṭṭal*, \**qaṭṭil*, \**qaṭṭul*, \**qiṭṭal*, \**quṭṭal*, \**quṭṭul*

Note: Patterns with \**t* and another high vowel (\**qiṭṭil*, \**qiṭṭul*, \**quṭṭil*) are not reconstructable for Proto-Semitic and are not native to BH.

a. \**qaṭṭal*

(1) Sound: קָטַט *qaṭṭāl*, cst. קָטַט *qaṭṭal*, sf. קָטַט- *qaṭṭāl-*; pl. קָטַטִּים *qaṭṭālīm*,

50. The etymology of עֲפָרֶת *ʿōpéret* ‘lead’ is uncertain; it is presumably connected with Akk. *abāru* ‘lead’ (Syriac *ʿabārā* and Arab. *ʿabār* are both loans of the Akk. word). If these are cognate, perhaps we are to reconstruct Proto-Semitic \**gab/par(-t)-*, with \**a* > \**u* in BH before the labial, thus \**gupar-t* > *ʿōpéret*. In the Akkadian form, the second *a* may have been short originally, preserved by the following *r*, as in *nakaru* and *šikaru*; \**g* was occasionally lost in Akkadian with no change in the vowels, as shown by Leonid Kogan, “*g* in Akkadian,” *UF* 33 (2001): 263–98.

Note also אֹפֶן/אֹפֶן *ʿōpān/ʿōpān* ‘wheel’, pl. אֹפְנִים *ʿōpanīm*, thus earlier \**qāṭall* (cf. Ug. *āpn*, but also Syriac pl. *ʿupnē*).

51. See in general Joshua Fox, “Gemination in C<sub>2</sub> of Noun Patterns in Hebrew and Other Semitic Languages,” *Lešonenu* 61 (1998): 19–30 [Hebrew].

csť. קַטְּלֵי *qattālē*.

Note: Since Arabic and Aramaic nouns of occupation and related words often have the pattern *qattāl*, the BH pattern קַטְּלֵי *qattāl* is also sometimes said to derive from PS *\*qattāl*.<sup>52</sup> But the latter should become BH קַטְּלֵי *qattōl*, with the Canaanite shift of *\*ā* to *ō* (on *\*qattāl* > *qattōl*, see below). Further, Akkadian exhibits both *\*qattal* and *\*qattāl* for such nouns; for example, ‘thief’ is *šarraqum*, since the second vowel undergoes vowel harmony (i.e., has the form *šarruqum*) in the Assyrian dialects of Akkadian, a process that affects only short *a*, not long *ā*.<sup>53</sup> Finally, fem. forms such as יַבְּשֵׁת *yabbéšet* ‘dry ground’ also indicate an original short vowel in the second syllable (i.e., *\*yabbas-t*).

An adjectival pattern denoting habitual or durative action: *\*hattā*<sup>2</sup>- > אַחַד *\*hattā*<sup>2</sup> ‘sinful’, *\*h/hallas-* > חַלְלָשׁ *hallāš* ‘weak’, *\*naggah-* > נִגְגָה *naggāh* ‘prone to goring’, *\*sallah-* > סָלַח *sallāh* ‘forgiving’, *\*awwal-* > עוֹל *awwāl* ‘unjust’, *\*qanna*<sup>2</sup>- > קָנָא *qannā*<sup>2</sup> ‘jealous’.

Frequently substantivized, as an agent noun or noun of occupation: *\*ayyal-* > אֵיל *ayyāl* ‘stag (leader?)’, *\*gannab-* > גַּנָּב *gannāb* ‘thief’, *\*dayyan-* > דַּיָּאן *dayyān* ‘judge’, *\*tabbah-* > טַבָּח *tabbāh* ‘cook, guard’, *\*sabbal-* > סַבַּל *sabbāl* ‘bearer’.

Fem. *\*qattal-at*: קַטְּלֵיָה *qattālā*, csť. קַטְּלֵיָה *qattéleṯ* (< *\*qattal-t*);  
*\*qattal-t*: abs. and csť. קַטְּלֵיָה *qattéleṯ* (see also *\*qattil-t*, below);  
III-G *qattāGat*.

*\*ayyal-(a)t-* > אֵילָה/אֵילָת *ayyālā/ayyéleṯ* ‘doe’ (cf. אֵיל *ayyāl*), pl. *\*tabbah-āt-* > טַבָּחוֹת *tabbāhōt* ‘cooks’, *\*yabbas-(a)t-* > יַבְּשֵׁת/יַבְּשֵׁת *yabbāsā/yabbéšet* ‘dry ground’; the names of various diseases: *\*dallaq-t-* > דַּלְּקָה *dalléqet* ‘inflammation’, *\*yabbal-t-* > יַבְּלָת *yabbélet* ‘running sore’, *\*yallap-t-* > יַלְּפֵת *yallépet* ‘scab’, *\*qaddah-t-* > קַדְּחָה *qaddāhat* ‘fever’ (some of these may be *\*qattil-t*, q.v., below).

Abstract substantives: *\*baššar-at-* > בַּצָּרָה *baššārā* ‘dearth’, *\*hattā*<sup>2</sup>-  
(*a)t-* > חַטָּאת/חַטָּאָה *hattā<sup>2</sup>ā/hattā<sup>2</sup>ā* ‘sin’; perhaps also *\*addar-t-* > אֲדָרָת *addéret* ‘glory, cloak’ (sf. *\*addart-*; but cf. אֲדִיר *addîr* ‘mighty’); probably also substantives like *\*šallah-t-* > צַלְחָה *šallāhat*

52. Theodor Nöldeke, *Mandäische Grammatik* (Halle: Waisenhaus, 1875), 120 n. 2, plausibly suggested that the pattern *qattāl* for nouns of occupation in Arabic was borrowed from Aramaic, and several other Semitists concurred. Not, however, Eduard König, *Hebräisch und Semitisch: Prolegomena und Grundlinien einer Geschichte der semitischen Sprachen nebst einem Exkurs über die vorjordanische Sprache Israels und die Pentateuchquelle Pc.* (Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1901), 57–61; idem, *Lehrgebäude*, II/1, 89–90. See also Kjell Aartun, “Über die Grundstruktur der Nominalbildungen vom Typus *qattāl/qattōl* im Althebräischen,” *JNSL* 4 (1975): 1–8.

53. See also Viktor Christian, *Untersuchungen zur Laut- und Formenlehre des Hebräischen* (Vienna: Rudolf M. Rohrer, 1953), 133–34.

‘dish’, \*<sup>f</sup>*šappah-t* > שַׁפָּהַת *šappáhat* ‘jar’.

(2) II–Guttural

(a) With virtual doubling (II–<sup>2</sup>/h/h): \**qaGGal* > *qeGāl*:<sup>54</sup> \**kahḥas-* > כְּחָשׁ \**kehās* ‘deceptive’.

Fem. (i) \**qaGGal-t* > *qaGélet*: \**bahhar-t* > בְּהָרֵת *bahéret* ‘bright spot (scar)’, \**gaḥhal-t* > גַּהֲלֵת *gaḥélet* ‘coal’, \**saḥḥap-t* > שַׁחֲפֵת \**šahépet* ‘consumption’.

Fem. (ii) \**qaGGal-at* > *qeGālā*: \**bahhal-at* > בְּהָלָה *behālā* ‘dismay’, \**lahhab-at* > לַהֲבָה *lehābā* (cst. \**lahhab-t* > לַהֲבֵת *lahébet*) ‘flame’, \**na<sup>??</sup>a<sup>s</sup>-at* > נֶאֱשָׂה \**ne<sup>2</sup>āšā* ‘contempt’, \**naḥḥam-at* > נֶחַמָה \**nehāmā* ‘comfort’.

(b) With compensatory lengthening (II–*r*): \**qaGGal* > *qāGāl* (with irreducible *ā* in the first syllable): \**harras-* > חָרַשׁ *hārāš* ‘artificer’, \**parras-* > פָּרָשׁ *pārāš* ‘horseman’.

Fem.: \**harrab-at* > חָרַבָה *hārābā* ‘dry ground’, \**šarra<sup>s</sup>-t* > שָׂרְעַת \**šārā<sup>s</sup>at* ‘leprosy’.

(3) III–weak: cf. \**dawway-* > דָּוַי *dawwāy* ‘faint’.

Fem. \**qattaw/y-at* > קַטְתָּה *qattā*: \*<sup>2</sup>/*hawway-at* > הָוָה/הָוָה \*<sup>2</sup>*awwā/hawwā* ‘desire’.

b. \**qattil*

Note: A Proto-Canaanite sound change must be posited:

*a* > *v*<sub>1</sub> / #C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>1</sub>v<sub>1</sub>; i.e., \**qáttil-* > \**qíttil-* and \**qátul-* > \**qúttul-*; feminine and plural forms of such adjectives followed suit analogically, but derived nouns of the patterns \**qattil-t* and \**qatūl-t* did not (nor did the Piel Infin. Cst., which > קַטַּל *qattēl* because of the association between Infin. Cst. and Imperfect forms).<sup>55</sup>

(1) Sound: abs. and cst. קַטַּל *qittēl*, sf. קַטַּל־ *qittāl-*; pl. קַטַּלִּים *qittālīm*, cst. קַטַּלֵּה *qittālē*.

Adjectives denoting physical condition: \*<sup>2</sup>*attir-* > אִטַּר *iṭṭēr* and \**pa<sup>s</sup>’siḥ-* > פִּסְעַח *pissēaḥ* ‘lame’, \**gabbih-* > גִּבְּחַ *gibbēaḥ* ‘bald’, \**gabbin-* > גִּבְּנָן *gibbēn* ‘hump-backed’, \*<sup>2</sup>*awwir-* > עִוְרָר *iwwēr* ‘blind’, \*<sup>2</sup>*alliy-* > עִלִּי \*<sup>2</sup>*illi* ‘upper’ (only in fem. עִלִּית *iillit*), \*<sup>2</sup>*aqqis/θ-* > עִקְשׁ *iqqēš* ‘twisted’, \**paqqih-* > פִּקְקַח *piqqēaḥ* ‘having good vision’.

Note also שִׁלְשִׁים *šillēšim*, רִבְעִים *ribbēšim* ‘third, fourth (generation)’.

Abstract substantives derived from \**qattil* adjectives: \**gabbih-t* > תַּגְּבַחַת *gabbāḥat* ‘baldness’, \*<sup>2</sup>*awwir-t* > עִוְרָרַת *awwēret* ‘blindness’.

54. The seghol in the first syllable of forms such as כְּחָשׁ \**kehās* and בְּהָלָה *behālā* is the result of a regular sound rule, by which short *a* becomes *e* before a virtually doubled guttural when *ā* (*qāmeš*) appears in the following syllable; note, e.g., \**ahhīma* > אָחִים *’ahīm* ‘brothers’ but אָחָיו *’ehā(y)w* ‘his brothers’; הָעִיר *hā-’ir* ‘the city’ but הָעָרִים *he-’ārīm* ‘the cities’.

55. John Huehnergard, “Historical Phonology and the Hebrew Piel,” in *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*, ed. Walter R. Bodine (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns), 209–29.

See also the names of various diseases קִטְלֵת *qattélet* listed above under *\*qattal*.

- (2) II–Guttural, with compensatory lengthening (examples are II–r):

*\*qiGGil* > *\*qēGēl*:

*\*harris-* > שִׁרְיָה *šērēš* ‘deaf’, *\*qarriḥ-* > קָרְחָה *qērēaḥ* ‘bald’.

Fem. *\*qaGGil-t* > *\*qāGēlet*: *\*qarriḥ-t* > קָרְחָת *qārāḥat* ‘baldness’.

- (3) II–Guttural and III–weak:

(a) With virtual doubling: *\*qaGGiw/y-* > *\*qiGGiw/y-* > *qiGe*: *\*šahhiy-* > שָׁחַח *\*šihē* (only cst. שָׁחַח *šihē*) ‘parched’.

(b) With compensatory lengthening: *\*qaGGiw/y-* > *\*qiGGiw/y-* > *qēGe*: *\*gaʔiy-* > גָּאֵי *gēʔe* ‘proud’, *\*kahhiw-* > *\*kēhe* (only fem. כָּהָה *kēhā*) ‘failing (of eyes, wicks), faint’.

- c. *\*qattul*: by the same Proto-Canaanite rule noted just above under *\*qattil*, *\*qattul* forms without fem. *-t* probably > *\*quṭṭul* > קִטְטֹל *qittōl* (see f, below); for *qattōl*, see *\*qattāl* (§2.a, below).

Fem. *\*qattul-t*: קִטְטֹלֵת *qattōlet*.

*\*baššur-t-* > בַּשְּׁרָת *baššōret* ‘dearth’, *\*kappur-t-* > כַּפְרָת *kappōret* ‘cover’.

- d. *\*qittal*: קִיטָל *qittāl*

A rare pattern: *\*ʔisʔsar-* > אִסָּר *ʔissār* ‘vow’ (but with suffix, אִסָּרָה *ʔēsār-āh* < *\*ʔisʔsar-*, i.e., *\*qittal*). Note forms with suffix *-ōn*, such as *\*dikkar-ān* > זִכְרֹן *zikkārōn* ‘remembrance’; III–weak *\*niqqay-ān* > נִקְיֹן *niqqāyōn* ‘purity’.

- e. *\*quṭṭal*: קִטְטָל *quṭṭāl*

A rare pattern: *\*sullam-* > סִלָּם *sullām* ‘ladder’ (hapax; cf. Akk. *simmiltu*). (Arab. *\*quṭṭal* is adjectival, e.g., *ḥullab* ‘deceptive’.)

Fem. *\*quṭṭal-t*: קִטְטֹלֵת *quṭṭēlet*; כִּסְמֵת *kussēmet* ‘spelt’, קִבְבָּעַת *qubbāʔat* ‘cup’.

- f. *\*quṭṭul*: > *\*qittul* > קִיטָל *qittōl*, including some *\*quṭṭul* < *\*qattul*.

Note: Most examples of the pattern קִיטָל *qittōl* probably derive from earlier *\*quṭṭul*, by means of a Proto-Canaanite sound rule by which the first two *u* vowels dissimilated to *i*,<sup>56</sup> thus, *\*quṭṭul* > *\*qittul* > *\*qittōl*. (For *\*quṭṭul* elsewhere in Semitic, note the Babylonian Akk. D verbal adjective and Infin.) Some of the *\*quṭṭul* forms are themselves probably reflexes of still earlier *\*qattul* (cf. the Assyrian Akk. D forms), as suggested above §b under *\*qattil*: thus, *\*qáttul* > *\*qúttul* > *\*qittul* > BH קִיטָל *qittōl*.

abs. and cst. קִיטָל *qittōl*/קִיטָל *qittōl*; pl. קִיטָלִים *qittōlīm*, cst. קִיטָלִי *qittōlē*.

Note that קִיטָל *qittōl* is also the reflex of earlier *\*qittāl* and *\*quṭṭāl* (below, §§2.d and 2.e).

Adjectives, frequently substantivized: *\*gubbur-* > גִּבּוֹר *gibbōr* ‘mighty’,

56. See W. Randall Garr, “On Vowel Dissimilation in Biblical Hebrew,” *Bib* 66 (1985): 572–79; Huehnergard, “Historical Phonology,” 222 n. 54; Kogan, “Three Problems,” 7–10.

warrior',<sup>57</sup> \*yullud- > ילוד *yillōd* 'born', \*sukkur- > שׁכר *šikkōr* 'drunken, drunkard'; perhaps also \*yu's'sur- > יסור *yissōr* 'faultfinder', \*šuppur- > צפר *šippōr* 'bird' (note Aram. *šeppar*, Arab. *ʿuṣṣūr*, Akk. *iṣṣūru*, Ugar. *ʾuṣṣūru*), \*qummuθ- > קמוש *qimmōš* 'thistles (thorny)', \*quppud- > קפד *qippōd* 'porcupine (rolled up?)' (Arab. *qunfuḏ*, Eth. *qʷənfəz*; Aram. *qup(pə)dā*).

Possibly also from \*quṭṭul is the sole example of a Pual Infinitive, נגב *gunnōḅ* 'to be stolen' (Gen 40:15; cf. the Babylonian Akk. D Infin.), without dissimilation to \*qiṭṭul (because of paradigmatic pressure). But the pattern \*quṭṭāl is also possible; note the Ugar. D Infin. /quṭṭalu/.

Fem. \*quṭṭul-t > \*qiṭṭul-t: קטלת *qiṭṭōlet*.

Perhaps \*subbul-t > שבולת *šibbōlet* 'ear of grain' (Arab. *sunbul(a)*, Aram. *šubbaltā*, Akk. *šubultu*, Eth. *sab(bə)l*). Note also \*kuttun-t- > כותנת *kuttōnet* (a biform of *kəṭōnet* < \*kutun-t-) 'tunic', without dissimilation (Akk. loanword).

## 2. CṽCCṽC: \*qattāl, \*qattīl, \*qattūl, \*qiṭṭāl, \*quṭṭāl, \*quṭṭūl

### a. \*qattāl: קטל *qattōl*.

A rare adjectival pattern: \*qannā- > קנא *qannō*<sup>2</sup> 'jealous' (= קנא *qannā*<sup>2</sup> < \*qanna<sup>2</sup>-), substantivized \*rattāq- > רתוק *rattōq* 'chain' (i.e., 'binding'?).

Perhaps the rare Piel Infin. Abs. קטל *qattōl*, although the -ō- may be the result of analogy with Qal קטל *qātōl* (alternatively, the form may derive from \*qattul): e.g., רפא *rappō*<sup>2</sup> (Exod 21:19).

### b. \*qattīl

(1) Sound: abs., cst., and sf. קטיל *qattīl*; pl. קטילים *qattīlim*, cst. קטיל *qattīlē*.

Fem. \*qattīl-at: קטילה *qattīlā*, etc. (once, \*qattīl-t: פטת *šallāteṭ* 'ruling').

Adjectives: \*abbār- > אביר *ʾabbār* and \*ammīš- > אמין *ʾammīš* 'mighty', \*kabbār- > כביר *kabbār* 'great', \*allīz- > עליז *ʿallīz* 'jubilant', \*šaddīq- > צדיק *šaddīq* 'just'; uncertain: \*lappīd- > לפיד *lappīd* 'torch'.

(2) II-Guttural, with compensatory lengthening (II-r): \*qaGGīl > qāGīl: \*barrīḥ- > בריח *bārīḥ* 'fugitive', \*arrīḥ- > ערין *ʾarīs* 'terrible', \*parrīš- > פריש *pārīš* 'violent' (but cst. *pārīs* < \*parīs; perhaps a loan from Akk.<sup>58</sup>).

57. The preform \*gubbur- is more likely than \*gibbār- or \*gabbār-, despite the Aram. and Arab. cognates that exhibit the latter patterns; see Huehnergard, "Historical Phonology," 222 n. 55.

58. Huehnergard, "qātīl," \*27.

c. *\*qaṭṭūl*

(1) Sound: abs. and cst. קטול *qaṭṭūl*; pl. קטולים *qaṭṭūlīm*, cst. קטולֵי *qaṭṭūlē*.

Fem. *\*qaṭṭūl-at*: קטולָה *qaṭṭūlā*, etc.

A rare adjective pattern: *\*allūp-* > אלוף *ʾallūp* ‘tame, friend(ly)’, *\*ḥannūn-* > חנון *ḥannūn* ‘merciful’, *\*qassʾūb-* > קשב *\*qaššūb* ‘attentive’, *\*θakkūl-* > שכול *šakkūl* ‘bereaved’.

Fem. sg. and pl. as abstract substantives (rare): *\*baṭṭūh-āt-* > בטחות *baṭṭūhōt* ‘security’, *\*bakkūr-āt-* > בפרות *bakkūrōt* ‘early ripeness’, *\*hʾabbūr-at-* > הבררה *ḥabbūrā* ‘blow, clout’.

A small number of isolated substantives (some perhaps substantivized adjectives): *\*allūp-* > אלוף *ʾallūp* ‘chief’, *\*ṭabbūr-* > טבור *\*ṭabbūr* ‘apex(?)’, *\*ammūd-* > עמוד *ʾammūd* ‘pillar’, *\*attūd-* > עתוד *\*ʾattūd* ‘male goat’ (but Arab. *ʿatūd*, Akk. *a/etūdu*).

(2) II–Guttural, with virtual doubling: *\*qaGGūl* > *qaGūl*.

*\*raḥḥūm-* > רחום *raḥūm* ‘compassionate’; also *\*bahḥūrīma* > בחורים *bahūrīm*, the pl. of בחרור *bāḥūr* (*\*qaṭṭūl*) ‘young man’.<sup>59</sup>

d. *\*qiṭṭāl*: קטול *qiṭṭōl*; *qiṭṭōl* is also the reflex of earlier *\*quṭṭul* (above, §1.f) and *\*quṭṭāl* (below, §e).

A very rare pattern, possibly attested only in (early NWS) loanwords, such as כנור *kinnōr* ‘lyre’ (cf. Aram., Ugar. *kinnār*).

e. *\*quṭṭāl* > *\*quṭṭōl* > קטול *qiṭṭōl* (dissimilation; see above, at *\*quṭṭul*); *qiṭṭōl* is also the reflex of earlier *\*quṭṭul* and *\*qiṭṭāl* (above, §§1.f and 2.d).

A very rare pattern, like *\*qiṭṭāl* possibly attested only in (early NWS) loanwords, such as רמון *rimmōn* ‘pomegranate’ < *\*rummōn-* < *\*rummān-*; cf. Aram. *rummān* (loaned into Arab. *rummān*, Eth. *rom(m)ān*); note also Akk. *lurimtu/lurmū/nurmū*, Ugar. *lrmm*).

Note also the unique Pual Infin. גנב *gunnōb*; see above, under *\*quṭṭul* (§1.f).

f. *\*quṭṭūl*: > *\*qiṭṭūl* (dissimilation; see above, at *\*quṭṭul*, §1.f).

(1) Sound: קטול *qiṭṭūl*.

Verbal substantives of Piel verbs: *\*šuppūy-* > צפוי *šippūy* ‘plating’, *\*sullūm-* > שלום *šillūm* ‘requital’, *\*sʾuqqūʾšʾ-* > שקוץ *šiqquš* ‘detestation > detestable thing’; more often in the pl.: *\*bukkūr-īma* > בפרים *bikkūrīm* ‘first-fruit’, *\*guddūp-īma* > גדופים *giddūpīm* ‘defamation’, *\*hullūl-īma* > הלולים *hillūlīm* ‘rejoicing, praise’.

59. The pattern of BH pl. בחורים *bahūrīm* corresponds to Ugar. /baḥḥuru/ ‘lad’ (John Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary in Syllabic Transcription*, rev. ed., HSS 32 [Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008], 84, 387), although the latter has a short vowel in the second syllable. The BH sg. בחרור *bāḥūr*, a *\*qaṭṭūl* form rather than the expected *\*bahūr* < *\*baḥḥūr-*, may be the result of the word having been associated with the originally unrelated root *b-ḥ-r* ‘to choose’, in a kind of folk-etymology.

\**kuppūr-īma* > כִּפּוּרִים *kippūrīm* ‘atonement’, \**mullū<sup>2</sup>-īma* > מְלֻאִים *millū<sup>2</sup>īm* ‘setting’, \**sullūh-īma* > שְׁלוּחִים *sillūhīm* ‘parting (gift)’.

From other stems: \**suppūn-* > סִפְּוּן *sippūn* ‘ceiling’ (Qal), \**suqqūy-* > שִׁיקְוִי *siqqūy* ‘drink’ (Hiphil).

Rarely adjectival: \**lummūd-* > לְמֻד *limmūd* ‘instructed’ (Piel), \**‘u<sup>d</sup>z<sup>d</sup>zū<sup>d</sup>z-* > עֲזוּז *‘izzūz* ‘strong’ (Qal); these were originally substantives: שֵׁן לְמֻד *‘iš limmūd* ‘man of instruction’ > ‘instructed man’, etc.

Note also pl. \**quθθū<sup>2</sup>-īma* > קִשְׁשׁוּ<sup>2</sup> *qiššū<sup>2</sup>īm* ‘cucumbers’.

Fem. \**qittūl-at-* קִטְוֹלָה *qittūlā*, etc.:

\**bukkūr-at-* > בִּכּוּרָה *bikkūrā* ‘early fig’, \**sullūm-at-* > שְׁלוּמָה *‘šillūmā* ‘requital’.

(2) II–Guttural

(a) Virtual doubling: pl. \**nu<sup>2</sup>ūp-īma* > נְאֻפִים *ni<sup>2</sup>ūpīm* ‘adultery’, \**nuhḥūm-īma* > נְחֻמִים *niḥūmīm* ‘comfort’.

(b) Compensatory lengthening (II–r): \**ḏurrū<sup>2</sup>-* > עֲרוּעַ *zērūa<sup>2</sup>* ‘sowing’ (Qal).

D. Triconsonantal Forms with Doubled Third Radical: CṽCṽCC

a. \**qaṭall*: fs קְטַלְלָה *qəṭallā*; mp קְטַלְלִים *qəṭallīm*, fp קְטַלְלוֹת *qəṭallōt*.

Apparently a rare biform of \**qaṭal*; note the following:

Adjectives: pl. חֲלָקוֹת *ḥālaqqōt* ‘flattery’ (cf. חֲלָקָה *ḥālāq* < \**halaq-* ‘smooth’); קָטָן *qātān* (< \**qaṭan-*) ‘small’, but fs קְטַנָּה *qəṭannā*, mp. קְטַנְנִים *qəṭannīm*.

Substantives: גַּמְלָה *gāmāl* (< \**gamal-*) ‘camel’, pl. גַּמְלִים *gəmallīm*; pl. תּוֹת פְּלָגוֹת *peḥlāgōt* ‘streams, divisions’.

Aramaic loanwords(?): אֲגָמָה *‘āgām* ‘marsh’ (pl. אֲגָמִים *‘āgammīm*; but cst. אֲגָמִי *‘āgāmē*; from Akk.); הֲדַס *hāḏas* ‘myrtle-tree’ (pl. הֲדַסִים *hāḏassīm*).<sup>60</sup>

b. \**qaṭill*: only fem. \**qaṭill-at-* קְטַלְלָה *qəṭillā*.

A rare pattern for verbal substantives: \**kalimm-at-* > כְּלֻמָּה *kəlimmā* ‘insult, ignominy’, \**qahill-at-* > קְהִלָּה *qəhillā* ‘assembly’, \**samitt-at-* > שְׁמִיטָה *šəmittā* ‘remission’.

c. \**qaṭull*: קְטַלְלָה *qəṭillā*; pl. קְטַלְלִים *qəṭullīm*; fem. \**qaṭull-at-* קְטַלְלוֹת *qəṭullōt*.

Note: \**qaṭull* adjectives seem originally to have denoted primarily features of external appearance. The masc. sg. קְטַלְלָה *qəṭillā* merged with the reflex of \**qaṭul* (above, §B.2.c).

\**adumm-* > אֲדָמָה *‘ādōm* ‘red’, \**‘amuqq-* > עֲמֻקָּה *‘āmōq* ‘deep’, \**‘aqudd-*

60. On הֲדַס *hāḏas*, see David Testen, “Semitic Terms for ‘Myrtle’: A Study in Covert Cognates,” *JNES* 57 (1998): 281–90.

> עֶקֶד *ʿāqōd* ‘striped’, \**sahurr-* > שְׁחֹר שְׁחֹר *šāhōr* ‘black’ (fem. sg. שְׁחֹרָה *šāhōrā* < \**sahurr-at*).

- d. \**quṭull-*: קֹטֹל *qəṭōl*; pl. קֹטְלִים *qəṭullīm*, fem. \**quṭull-at*: קֹטְלָה *qəṭullā* (some perhaps \**qatull-at*?).  
 masc.: \**luʾumm-* > לְאֻמִּים *ləʾōm*, pl. לְאֻמִּימִים *ləʾummīm* ‘people’.  
 fem.: many abstract verbal substantives:<sup>61</sup> \**uḥuṣṣ-* > אֲחֻצָּה *ʾāḥuzzā* ‘possession’, \**guʾull-at-* > גְּאֻלָּה *gəʾullā* ‘redemption’, \**gudull-at-* > גְּדֻלָּה *gəḏullā* ‘greatness’, \**hunukk-at-* > חֲנֻכָּה *ḥānukkā* ‘dedication’, \**yuruṯṯ-at-* > יְרֻשָּׁה *yəruššā* ‘inheritance’, \**kuhunn-at-* > כְּהֻנָּה *kəhunnā* ‘priesthood’, \**sugull-at-* > סְגֻלָּה *səḡullā* ‘possession’, \**puqudd-at-* > פְּקֻדָּה *pəquddā* ‘oversight’.

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חֹב <i>tōb</i> A.3.a	כְּסִימָה <i>kussēmet</i> C.1.e	מֵר <i>mōr</i> B.1.c(7)
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חֹמֵם <i>tāmē'</i> B.2.b(1)	כִּפּוּרִים <i>kippūrīm</i> C.2.f(1)	מֵת <i>mēt</i> A.1.b(1), B.2.b(1)
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חֹם <i>yām</i> B.1.a(8)	כְּתוּנָה <i>kəṭōneṭ</i> B.2.e	נֶגֶד <i>nāgēd</i> B.3.b(1)
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חֹפֵי <i>yāqōš</i> B.3.a(1)	כְּלָבָה <i>kəḇāḥ</i> B.2.d(1)	נְחָלָה <i>naḥālā</i> B.1.a(2)
חֹפֵי <i>yāqūš</i> B.3.c(1)	כְּלוּנָה <i>kəḇōnā</i> B.3.e	נְחָמָה <i>*neḥāmā</i> C.1.a(2a)
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נְכָר <i>nēkār</i> B.2.d(1)	עֲלֻמָּה <i>‘almā</i> B.1.a(1)	צֶאֱזַ <i>šē(?)</i> A.1.b(1)
נְמָלָה <i>nəmalā</i> B.2.a	עָם <i>‘ām</i> B.1.a(8)	צָבִי <i>šəbī</i> B.1.b(5)
נְעוּרִים <i>nə‘ūrīm</i> B.3.f(1)	עַמּוּד <i>‘ammūd</i> C.2.c(1)	צְבִיָּה <i>šəbīyā</i> B.1.b(5)
נְעִים <i>nā‘īm</i> B.3.b(1)	עַמָּל <i>‘āmāl</i> B.2.a	צַדִּיק <i>šaddīq</i> C.2.b(1)
נְעַר <i>nā‘ar</i> B.1.a(2)	עַמֶּק <i>‘āmōq</i> D.c	צְדָקָה <i>šədqāqā</i> B.2.a
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נְצִיב <i>nəšīb</i> B.3.b(4)	עַנְבָּה <i>‘ənāb</i> B.2.d(1)	צִיד <i>šayīd</i> B.1.a(5)
נְקִי <i>nāqī</i> B.3.b(3)	עַנְוָה <i>‘ānāvā</i> B.2.a(3)	צִדְדָה <i>šēdā</i> B.1.a(5)
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נְסֻבָּה <i>sabbāl</i> C.1.a(1)	עָצוּם <i>‘āšūm</i> B.3.c(1)	צָעִיר <i>šā‘ir</i> B.3.b(1)
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נְסֻפָּה <i>súpā</i> A.3.c	עַקְדָּה <i>‘āqōd</i> D.c	צָפוּי <i>šippūy</i> C.2.f(1)
נְסֻכָּה <i>sukkā</i> B.1.c(7)	עַקְשָׁה <i>‘iqqēš</i> C.1.b(1)	צַפְחַת <i>šappāḥat</i> C.1.a(1)
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נְסֻלָּם <i>sullām</i> C.1.e	עַרְיָן <i>‘ārīš</i> C.2.b(2)	צָרָה <i>šārā</i> B.1.a(8)
נְסֻפָּן <i>sippūn</i> C.2.f(1)	עַרְלָה <i>‘orlā</i> B.1.c(1)	צָרִי <i>šōrī</i> B.1.c(6)
נְסֻפָּר <i>səpār</i> B.3.a(1)	עַרְפָּה <i>‘ōrep</i> B.1.c(1)	צָרַעַת <i>šārā‘at</i> C.1.a(2b)
נְסֻפָּר <i>sōpēr</i> B.4.b(1)	עַשׂוֹק <i>‘āšóq</i> B.3.a(1)	צָבֻרָה <i>qəbūrā</i> B.3.c(1)
נְעֻבָּה <i>‘ébed</i> B.1.a(1)	עַשְׂרָה <i>‘ōser</i> B.1.c(1)	צָבֻרָה <i>qubbá‘at</i> C.1.e
נְעֻבָּה <i>‘əbōdā</i> B.3.d(1)	עַתָּה <i>‘ēt</i> A.1.b(1)	צָדֻחַת <i>qaddāḥat</i> C.1.a(1)
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נְעֻלָּה <i>‘églā</i> B.1.b(1)	פָּה <i>pe</i> A.1.b(2)	צָהִלָּה <i>qəhillā</i> D.b
נְעֻדָּר <i>‘éder</i> B.1.b(1)	פְּלָגוֹת <i>pelaggót</i> B.2.a(1), D.a	צָהִבַּע <i>qōbā‘</i> B.4.a
נְעֻלָּה <i>‘áwel</i> B.1.a(4a)	פְּלִטָּה/פְּלִטָּה <i>pəlē/étā</i> B.2.b(1)	צָהִלָּה <i>qól</i> A.3.a
נְעֻלָּה <i>‘awwāl</i> C.1.a(1)	פְּלִיטָּה <i>pālīt</i> B.3.b(1)	צָהִמָּה <i>qōmā</i> A.3.a
נְעֻלָּה <i>‘awlā</i> B.1.a(4)	פְּנֵה <i>pinnā</i> B.1.b(6)	צָהִרָה <i>qōrā</i> B.4.b(3)
נְעֻלָּה <i>‘ólā</i> B.4.b(3)	פְּנִים <i>pānīm</i> B.2.a	צָהִרָה <i>qātān</i> B.2.a(1)
נְעֻלָּלָה <i>‘ólāl</i> B.4.a	פְּנִים <i>pānīm</i> B.2.a	צָהִרָה <i>qəṭannā</i> D.a
נְעֻלָּם <i>‘ólām</i> B.4.a	פְּסָח <i>pissēah</i> C.1.b(1)	צָהִרָה <i>qəṭōret</i> B.2.e
נְעוּרָה <i>‘iwwēr</i> C.1.b(1)	פְּסָח <i>pissēah</i> C.1.b(1)	צָהִרָה <i>qīnā</i> A.3.b
נְעוּרַת <i>‘awwēret</i> C.1.b(1)	פְּעֵל <i>pō‘al</i> B.1.c(2b)	צָהִרָה <i>qīr</i> A.3.b
נְעוּרָה <i>‘ēz</i> B.1.b(1)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qām</i> A.1.a(1)
נְעוּרָה <i>‘ōz</i> B.1.c(7)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qāmmōš</i> C.1.f
נְעוּזָה <i>‘izzūz</i> C.2.f(1)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qəmah</i> B.1.a(3)
נְעוּרָה <i>‘āṭārā</i> B.2.a	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qannā‘</i> C.1.a(1)
נְעוּרָה <i>‘āyīn</i> B.1.a(5)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qāne</i> B.2.a
נְעוּרָה <i>‘āyir</i> B.1.a(5)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qannō‘</i> C.2.a
נְעוּרָה <i>‘īr</i> A.3.b	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qə‘ārā</i> B.2.a
נְעוּרָה <i>‘āliyā</i> B.3.b(3)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qippōd</i> C.1.f
נְעוּרָה <i>*‘allīz</i> C.2.b(1)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qāše</i> B.2.a
נְעוּרָה <i>‘illīt</i> C.1.b(1)	פְּקֻדָּה <i>pəquddā</i> D.d	צָהִרָה <i>qēše</i> B.1.b(5)

קָצֵף <i>qéṣep</i> B.1.b(1)	שְׂכִיר <i>šākīr</i> B.3.b(1)	שְׂמוּטָה <i>šamūṯā</i> B.3.c(1)
קָרַב <i>qārōḅ</i> B.2.c	שְׂכָר <i>šākār</i> B.2.a	שְׂמִיטָה <i>šamiṯṯā</i> D.b
קָרַב <i>qārāḅ</i> B.3.a(1)	שְׂלֵמָה <i>šalmā</i> B.1.a(1)	שְׂמִיר <i>šāmīr</i> B.3.b(1)
קָרַח <i>qērēaḥ</i> C.1.b(2)	שְׂמִיחָה <i>šimḥā</i> B.1.b(1)	שְׂמַע <i>šéma<sup>f</sup></i> B.1.b(4)
קָרְהָה <i>qorhā</i> B.1.c(1)	שְׂמִלָּה <i>šimlā</i> B.1.a(1)	שְׂנָה <i>šānā</i> A.1.a(1)
קָרַחַת <i>qārāḥat</i> C.1.b(2)	שְׂנָאָה <i>šin'ā</i> B.1.b(1)	שְׂנָה <i>šenā</i> A.1.b(1)
קִרְיָה <i>qiryā</i> B.1.b(5)	שְׂעִיר <i>šā'īr</i> B.3.b(1)	שְׂנִימִים <i>š(ə)náyim</i> A.1.b(1)
קֶשׁ <i>qaš</i> B.1.a(8)	שְׂעָר <i>šē'ār</i> B.2.d(1)	שְׂעָר <i>šá'ar</i> B.1.a(2)
קֶשְׂאִים <i>qiššū'im</i> C.2.f(1)	שְׂעָרָה <i>ša'ārā</i> B.2.d(1)	שְׂפָל <i>šāpāl</i> B.2.a
קֶשֶׁב <i>*qaššūḅ</i> C.2.c(1)	שְׂפָה <i>šāpā</i> A.1.a(1)	שְׂפָן <i>šāpān</i> B.2.a(1)
קֶשֶׁה <i>qāše</i> B.2.b(3)	שֶׁק <i>šaḡ</i> B.1.a(8)	שְׂקוּי <i>šiqquy</i> C.2.f(1)
קֶשֶׁת <i>qéšet</i> A.1.a(1)	שָׂר <i>šar</i> B.1.a(8)	שְׂקוּץ <i>šiqquš</i> C.2.f(1)
רָאִי <i>rō'i</i> B.1.c(6)	שָׂרָה <i>šārā</i> B.1.a(8)	שְׂרֵשׁ <i>šōreš</i> B.1.c(1)
רָאֵם <i>rə'em</i> B.1.b(2)	רָאֵר <i>rə'er</i> B.1.b(2)	שְׂרַנָּה <i>rə'enā</i> B.1.b(2)
רָאֵשׁ <i>rō(?)š</i> B.1.a(2)	רָבֵנַע <i>šābūa<sup>f</sup></i> B.3.c(1)	תָּאֵר <i>tō'ar</i> B.1.c(2a)
רַב <i>rab</i> B.1.a(8)	רָבֵנָה <i>šəbū'ā</i> B.3.c(1)	תָּהוּ <i>tōhū</i> B.1.c(5)
רֹב <i>rōḅ</i> B.1.c(7)	רָבֹור <i>šābūr</i> B.3.c(1)	תָּהוֹם <i>təhōm</i> B.3.d(1)
רִבְבֵיִם <i>ribbē'im</i> C.1.b(1)	רָבִי <i>šəbī</i> B.1.b(5)	תָּוֶקֶל <i>tāweḡ</i> B.1.a(4a)
רִנָּה <i>rōḡez</i> B.1.c(1)	רָבִיָּה <i>šibyā</i> B.1.b(5)	תַּיִשׁ <i>táyis</i> B.1.a(5)
רִגְנָה <i>roḡzā</i> B.1.c(1)	רָבִיִּת <i>šəbīt</i> B.1.b(5)	תָּם <i>tām</i> B.1.a(8)
רִוַח <i>réwaḥ</i> B.1.a(4a)	רִבְלַת <i>šibbōlet</i> C.1.f	תָּם <i>tōm</i> B.1.c(7)
רִוּם <i>rúm</i> A.3.c	רִבְתָּ <i>šébet</i> A.1.b(1)	תָּמָה <i>*tummā</i> B.1.c(7)
רִחָב <i>rāhāḅ</i> B.2.a	רִשָּׁה <i>šōham</i> B.1.c(2b)	תָּת <i>tēt</i> A.1
רִחָב <i>rōhāḅ</i> B.1.c(2b)	רִשָּׁא <i>šāw(?)</i> B.1.a(4a)	
רִחֹב <i>rəḥōḅ</i> B.3.e	רִשָּׁב <i>šōḅāḅ</i> B.4.a	
רִחוּם <i>rahūm</i> C.2.c(2)	רִשָּׁט <i>šōṯ</i> B.1.a(4b)	
רִחֵל <i>rāhēl</i> B.2.b(1)	רִשָּׁפָר <i>šōpār</i> B.4.a	
רִחָם <i>rāhām</i> B.2.a	רִשָּׁר <i>šór</i> B.1.a(4b)	
רִחָם <i>réhem</i> B.1.a(2)	רִשָּׁפַת <i>šahēpet</i> C.1.a(2a)	
רִחֹק <i>rāhōq</i> B.2.c	רִשָּׁחַר <i>šáhar</i> B.1.a(2)	
רִכּוּשׁ <i>rakúš</i> B.3.f(1)	רִשָּׁחַר <i>šāhōr</i> D.c	
רִמּוֹן <i>rimmōn</i> C.2.e	רִשָּׁחַת <i>šāḥat</i> A.1.a(1)	
רַע <i>ra<sup>f</sup></i> B.1.a(8)	רִשְׁכַּת <i>*šəḡōḅet</i> B.2.e	
רַע <i>rōa<sup>f</sup></i> B.1.c(7)	רִשְׁכּוּל <i>šakkūl</i> C.2.c(1)	
רַעֵב <i>rā'āḅ</i> B.2.a	רִשְׁכָּר <i>šēkār</i> B.2.d(1)	
רַעֵב <i>rā'ēḅ</i> B.2.b(1)	רִשְׁכֹּר <i>šikkōr</i> C.1.f	
רַעֲוָה <i>rō'ā</i> B.4.b(3)	רִשְׁלוֹה <i>šalwā</i> B.1.a(6)	
רַעֲוָה <i>rō'e</i> B.4.b(3)	רִשְׁלוּחִים <i>šillāḥīm</i> C.2.f(1)	
רַפָּא <i>rappō'</i> C.2.a	רִשְׁלוּי <i>šalw-ī</i> B.1.a(6)	
רַפְּדָה <i>sāde</i> B.2.a(4)	רִשְׁלוּמָה <i>*šillūmā</i> C.2.f(1)	
רַפְּדִי <i>sāday</i> B.2.a(1)	רִשְׁלֻטָּת <i>šallāteṯ</i> C.2.b(1)	
רַשָּׁה <i>še</i> A.1.a(2)	רִשְׁלָל <i>šālāl</i> B.2.a	
רַשָּׁחוּ <i>šāḥū</i> B.1.a(6)	רִשְׁלָם <i>šillūm</i> C.2.f(1)	
רַשִּׁם <i>sóm</i> B.3.a(2)	רִשְׁלָשׁ <i>šālōš</i> B.3.a(1)	
רַשִּׁיבָה <i>šēbā</i> B.1.a(5)	רִשְׁלָשָׁה <i>šālōšā</i> B.3.a(1)	
רַשִּׁיחַ <i>šiaḥ</i> A.3.b	רִשְׁלָשִׁים <i>šillēšīm</i> C.1.b(1)	
רַשִּׁים <i>šīm</i> B.3.b(2)	רִשְׁמִ <i>šem</i> A.1.b(1)	

## Style-Switching in Biblical Hebrew

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It is a pleasure to contribute this essay in honor of Jo Ann Hackett, who has done so much to foster Biblical Hebrew pedagogy and research during her several decades of teaching both at Harvard University and more recently and presently at the University of Texas. Moreover, one of the texts surveyed in this article, namely, the Balaam narrative (Num 22–24), relates to our honoree’s early work on the Deir ‘Alla inscriptions.<sup>1</sup>

The term “style-switching” in the title of this article refers to the intentional use of language to reflect either (1) the foreign setting of a particular story, or (2) the foreignness of a particular character. The employment of “literary dialect” (to use a more-or-less synonymous term) constitutes a brilliant example of the use of language in the service of literature, devised by the skillful authors of the biblical text.

We begin with two stellar narratives that utilize the former type, stories in Genesis which convey the reader from the main geographical context, that is, the land of Canaan, to the foreign land of Aram. In the former locale, various Canaanite dialects, Hebrew prime among them, were spoken. In the latter land, Aramaic, a closely related but not mutually intelligible language, was used. Accordingly, when Abraham’s servant visits the family homeland in Gen 24, with the goal of obtaining a bride for Isaac, we must assume that the conversation takes place in Aramaic. Similarly, when Jacob spends twenty years living with his uncle Laban in the land of Aram in Gen 29–31, one will assume that the characters (including Jacob and his two wives, Leah and Rachel) conversed in Aramaic. And yet the stories are narrated in Hebrew and the characters speak Hebrew.

To add the local color, however, the storyteller peppers his prose with Aramaic words, forms, and grammatical usages, in order to evoke the Aramean atmosphere. By so doing, both the camera (as it were) and the language transport the reader to the land of Aram. Had the prose been written in Aramaic, the Israelite reader would not have been able to understand the proceedings—but by writing in Hebrew with an admixture of basic Aramaic, the storyteller

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1. Jo Ann Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Allā*, HSM 31 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984).



was able to allow the consumer of this literature to enjoy the narrative to its fullest.

ASIDE NO. 1: A basic parallel from our own experience may be helpful. When we (as Britons, Americans, etc.) watch a World War II movie, the entire dialogue is in English, but the Nazis speak a German-tinged English. Their German accent comes through at all times, and their English is sprinkled with words and phrases such as “Achtung,” “mach schnell,” “jawohl, mein Kommandant,” and the like. Had the Nazis spoken in German, subtitles would have been necessary—and of course this option is sometimes followed in cinematic production. But in movie classics such as “Casablanca,” “Stalag 17,” and so on, the Germans speak English, though with their native tone audible throughout.<sup>2</sup>

But back to our Genesis stories set in Aram. Actually, the narrator does something more than simply have the characters speak in Aramaic-tinged Hebrew. Just as frequently he narrates the story itself (in typical third-person voice) with Aramaic-tinged Hebrew instead of standard diction. By so doing, the author transports his readership to the foreign land to an even greater extent.

## I. GENESIS 24

We begin our survey with Gen 24. While the contemporary reader, even the trained Hebraist, may not recognize the foreignness of these forms and words at first blush, I am quite certain that the ancient Israelite listening to this text would have identified the following features as atypical Hebrew, flavored with a hint of Aramaic. In an attempt to keep the material below accessible for the general reader, including the beginning student of Hebrew, I present only the bare minimum of linguistic data. The reader interested in a fuller treatment is invited to consult my previous studies on the subject.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Though in the latter film, the Nazis also speak German at times, without subtitles. Clearly the hand of producer, director, and co-screenwriter Billy Wilder is present here.

3. Gary A. Rendsburg, “Some False Leads in the Identification of Late Biblical Hebrew Texts: The Cases of Genesis 24 and 1 Samuel 2:27–36,” *JBL* 121 (2002): 23–46; and idem, “Aramaic-like Features in the Pentateuch,” *HS* 47 (2006): 163–76. I refrain from providing additional footnotes with page numbers for each item registered below; suffice to note that all of the usages discussed are treated in the cited articles. See now also idem, “What We Can Learn about Other Northwest Semitic Dialects from Reading the Bible,” in *Discourse, Dialogue, and Debate in the Bible: Essays in Honour of Frank Polak*, ed. Athalya Brenner-Idan, Hebrew Bible Monographs 63, Amsterdam Studies in Bible and Religion 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2014), 161–64, §§2–4, though in more of an outline format. For the most succinct summary, see idem, “Style-Switching,” *EHL* 3:633–36.

1. The stage is set already in the land of Canaan, with Abraham's instructions to his servant, during which he twice uses the expression אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם 'God of heaven' (vv. 3, 7). This phrase occurs elsewhere in the Bible only in late texts: Jon 1:9; Ezra 1:2; Neh 1:4, 5; 2:4, 20; 2 Chr 36:23, all under the influence of Aramaic אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיָא 'God of heaven'. This epithet of God is attested in Aramaic texts in the Bible (Dan 2:18, 19, 37, 44; Ezra 5:12; 6:9, 10; 7:12, 21) and in such extrabiblical documents as the Elephantine papyri (e.g., Cowley 30:2 = *TAD* A 4.7:2).

2. The phrase וְאֶשְׁבַּעְיָךְ . . . אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבְנֵי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי 'I adjure you . . . that you not take a woman for my son from amongst the daughters of the Canaanite' (v. 3) utilizes an unusual idiom for vowing. The verb שָׁבַע 'vow' (*qal, niphal*), 'adjure' (*hiphil*) typically is followed by the particle אִם serving as the negator ('no, not'); see, for example, Gen 21:23; 1 Sam 19:6; 30:15 [2x]; Song 2:7 [2x]; 3:5 [2x]; 5:8; Neh 13:25 [2x]; etc.)—but that is not the case in Gen 24:3. Instead, Abraham's words to his servant employ the Aramaic-style idiom. In fact, the wording in Gen 24:3 is a calque (loan translation) of the Aramaic phrase.<sup>4</sup> In short, the ancient Israelite listener to this story would have stopped at this point and said something like, "wait a minute, that's not how we speak Hebrew"—but that, of course, is precisely what the author intended.

3. AND 4. In v. 17 we read of the initial words spoken by the servant to the woman at the well (Rebekah, of course): גַּם מְעַט־מַיִם מִכַּדָּךְ 'cause-to-flow-forth for me please a bit of water from your jug'. Our attention is directed to two lexemes.

The first is the verb גָּמַא (*hiphil*) 'cause-to-flow-forth' (or more simply 'give drink'). The root occurs elsewhere in the Bible only in Job 39:24 (albeit with different nuance), a book replete with Aramaisms—not because Job is a late composition necessarily, but rather because the setting of the book, in the Transjordanian desert fringe, prompts such usages (see below, §IX). The broader Aramaic picture provides some further usages of the root גָּמַא. While it is true that one never finds the verb in regular or frequent use within Aramaic, the evidence is sufficient to allow the conclusion that an ancient Israelite would have recognized the Aramaic-ness of the verb.

The second item is the noun כַּד 'jug, pitcher, vessel', which occurs a remarkable nine times in Gen 24 (vv. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 43, 45, 46). This word is well attested in diverse Aramaic dialects, whereas it is restricted in the Bible to certain settings only, our story prime among them. The author's use of this distinctive word nine times in Gen 24 is part of his effort to create the Aramean atmosphere.

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4. As witnessed by the manner in which the Targumim render the standard Hebrew imprecation formula.

5. Several verses later we encounter the verb ער"ה 'pour (liquids)' (v. 20), the only such case in the Bible. Once more we are dealing with a verb better attested in Aramaic, meaning both 'pour (liquids)' and 'flow'.

6. The reader is frozen for a moment by the phrase וְהָאִישׁ מִשְׁתַּאֲהָ לָהּ 'and the man is gazing at her' (v. 21): (a) because of the pause in the action, as the servant observes the woman's actions; and (b) because of the employment of the *hapax legomenon* שֹׂא"ה (*hithpael*) 'gaze, watch'. True, the corresponding Aramaic verb typically connotes 'stay, delay, hesitate', so that the semantics are not identical, but once more we may observe (pun intended?) how an Aramaic-style lexeme is employed in Gen 24 to enhance the literary effect.<sup>5</sup>

7. In v. 38, while relating his story, the servant quotes Abraham as having instructed him as follows: אִם-לֹא אֶל-בֵּית-אָבִי תֵלֶךְ וְאֶל-מִשְׁפַּחְתִּי וְלִקְחָתָּ אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי: 'but rather unto the house of my father you should go, and unto my family, and you shall take a wife for my son'. Our attention is drawn to the initial phrase אִם-לֹא, which normally in Hebrew means 'if not' (Gen 4:7; 18:21; etc.), but which in our passage means 'but rather'. This too represents the Aramaic usage, attested as earlier לֹא אֲנִי, later אֲלֵא, which actually passed into Hebrew in the post-biblical period and continues until the present day with the force of 'but rather'.

8. The final example from this episode is the noun מְגִדָּנֹת 'choice gifts' (v. 53), which once more evokes an Aramaic usage. Elsewhere in the Bible this word is attested in Ezra 1:6; 2 Chr 21:3; 32:23—that is, in Late Biblical Hebrew under the direct influence of Aramaic. Its presence in Gen 24 is due to another reason, as we have outlined here, to flavor the narrative with Aramaic-like features in order to create the proper ambiance.

ASIDE NO. 2: Before proceeding to our second text from the book of Genesis (chs. 30–31), it may be useful to transition here from ancient Hebrew to modern English (both British and American) literature—to remind the reader that the technique described herein continues to reverberate. Nineteenth-century authors, in particular, it seems, were fond of casting their prose in the local dialect—in Britain one thinks of Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell, in America writers such as Mark Twain and George Washington Harris stand out. One single word from the works of Mrs. Gaskell, representative of Lancashire English, will suffice to illustrate: 'liefer', in the sense of 'gladly', as in: "I'd liefer sweep th'

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5. In addition, one notes the use of משתאָה *alliterationis causa* ("for the purpose of alliteration") as it evokes the sounds of other words in close proximity, namely, שְׁתָּה (v. 18), אֲשָׁב (v. 19), לְשִׁתָּה (v. 19), לְשָׂב (v. 20), וְתִשָּׂב (v. 20), וְהָאִישׁ (v. 21), לְשִׁתּוֹת (v. 22), הָאִישׁ (v. 22).

streets” (*North and South*) and “I would liefer live without fire” (*Mary Barton*).<sup>6</sup> Such examples, of course, could be multiplied, for Mrs. Gaskell, for the aforementioned authors, and for countless more not mentioned here—but this single illustration from English literature hopefully helps the reader new to the subject of “style-switching” or “literary dialect” with the point under consideration in Biblical Hebrew prose.

## II. GENESIS 29–31

And with that digression into English literature we may return to our main subject. The second narrative in the book of Genesis set in the land of Aram, namely, chs. 29–31, the account of Jacob in the household of Laban, provides ample additional specimens of this literary technique. Interestingly, the author does not introduce Aramaic-like features in ch. 29, perhaps because Jacob is still a recent arrival (notwithstanding the passage of seven years [see v. 20]). When we continue reading in chs. 30–31, by contrast, the text is once again heavily flavored with atypical lexical and grammatical features—atypical in Hebrew, that is, but representative of Aramaic.

The linguistic features embedded in the story of Jacob in the land of Aram were first studied by Jonas Greenfield.<sup>7</sup> His pathfinding research focused on three items, as follows:

1. The verbs וַיֵּצֵל ‘and he (sc. God) removed’ (31:9) and הֵצִיל ‘he (sc. God) removed’ (31:16) are based on the root נִצַּל (*hiphil*), which typically in Hebrew means ‘save, rescue’, but in these two instances means ‘remove, take away’, which connotation it bears in Aramaic (in addition to ‘save, rescue’). Note that the first is spoken by Jacob to his two wives, Rachel and Leah, while the second is spoken by the two wives themselves, whose native language in ‘real life’, of course, was Aramaic.

2. At the end of Gen 31:23 we read וַיִּדְבֶק אֹתוֹ בְּהַר הַגִּלְעָד ‘and he (sc. Laban) overtook him in the Mount of Gilead’. In Hebrew the verbal root דִּבֶק means ‘stick, adhere, cling’ (both *qal* and *hiphil*). This is true of the Aramaic cognate as well, though in this language the verb gains the additional meaning ‘overtake’. The author of our narrative took full advantage of this linguistic datum by introducing וַיִּדְבֶק ‘and he overtook’ at this key point in the storyline.

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6. For guidance, see Wendy A. Craik, *Elizabeth Gaskell and the English Provincial Novel* (London: Methuen, 1975). For some instances in American literature, see Michael Ellis, “Literary Dialect as Linguistic Evidence: Subject-Verb Concord in Nineteenth-Century Southern Literature,” *American Speech* 69 (1994): 128–44.

7. Jonas C. Greenfield, “Aramaic Studies and the Bible,” in *Congress Volume Vienna 1980*, ed. John A. Emerton, VTSup 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 110–30, esp. 129–30.

For the reader unfamiliar with this usage, the author “explains” it, as it were, two verses later with the phrase *וַיַּעַבְדֵם לָבָן אֶת־יַעֲקֹב* ‘and Laban overtook Jacob’, utilizing the standard Hebrew lexeme, the *hiphil* of *נָשָׂא* (see, for example, Gen 44:4, 6).

3. In Gen 31:28, Laban says to Jacob, *וְלֹא נָשָׂאתָנִי לְנִשְׁקָ לְבָנַי וּלְבָנֹתַי*, ‘and you did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters’. Only here in the entire Bible does the verbal root *נָשָׂא* mean ‘allow, permit’; elsewhere it carries the meaning ‘abandon, forsake’. The background for this unique usage was brilliantly deduced by Greenfield: in Aramaic a single verb *שב”ק* means both ‘leave, abandon’ and ‘allow, permit’, so that the clever Israelite author—placing much demand on his reader’s knowledge and equal cleverness—extended the semantics of the Hebrew verb *נָשָׂא* from typical ‘leave, abandon’ to include ‘allow, permit’ as well.

Building on the strong foundation laid by Greenfield, I was able to identify numerous other elements of “style-switching” within Genesis 30–31.<sup>8</sup> These include the following:

4. The word *גַּד* ‘fortune’ (30:11), used in the naming of Gad, occurs only here in the Bible as a common noun.<sup>9</sup> In Aramaic, on the other hand, it is the common word for ‘fate, fortune’.

5. In 30:20, upon the birth of Zebulun, Leah states: *זָבַדְנִי אֱלֹהִים | אֶתִּי יָבֵד טוֹב* ‘God has provided me with a good provision’ (or perhaps, ‘God has granted me a good dowry’). This passage includes the only two attestations of the root *זָבַד* ‘provide, supply, give’ (once as verb, once as noun) in the Bible. The root is part of the standard Aramaic lexis.

6. The following expression in Gen 30:28 attracts our attention: *נִקְבֵה שְׂכָרְךָ עָלַי | וְאֶתְּנֶה לְךָ* ‘designate your wage for me, and I will give it’. The verbal root *נִקְבַּח* typically bears the core meaning ‘bore, pierce’, though in this instance by extension it comes to mean ‘mark, specify, designate’ (as a parallel, note the derivation of English/Latin ‘designate’, from ‘sign’, that is, ‘incise, make a mark’, etc.). This meaning is attested in the later Palmyrene and Nabatean dialects (also in later Amoraic Hebrew, presumably as a borrowing from Aramaic); while in Syriac the related noun form means ‘weight’, a connotation which also fits the passage in Gen 30:28, when one recalls that wages were paid in silver weighed out (before the invention of true money). The only other

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8. In addition to the aforementioned article in *Hebrew Studies*, see my earlier study: Gary A. Rendsburg, “Linguistic Variation and the ‘Foreign’ Factor in the Hebrew Bible,” *IOS* 15 (1996): 177–90, esp. pp. 182–83. Note that item no. 6 below is identified here for the first time.

9. The term occurs elsewhere in Isa 65:11 as the name of a foreign deity Gad/Fortune.

attestation נק"ב 'mark, specify, designate' in the Bible is Isa 62:2, as a true Aramaism, in the words of Second Isaiah, living in Babylon in the sixth century BCE, during which time and place Aramaic was in standard usage.

7. The noun תִּישִׁים 'he-goats' in 30:35 is rare in Hebrew (in fact, it seems always to be used for style-switching effect<sup>10</sup>), though common in (at least Western) Aramaic dialects.

8. The noun לֹזֵז 'almond' (30:37) occurs only here in the Bible; it is the Aramaic word for this tree/nut, used here instead of standard Hebrew שָׁקֵד 'almond'.

9. The noun רְהִיטִים 'troughs' (30:38, 41) reflects Aramaic, in which the root ט"רה 'run' corresponds to Hebrew רו"ץ 'run'. Thus one reconstructs the semantic development of the word for 'trough' as derived from 'runner'.<sup>11</sup>

10. The 3rd person feminine plural form וַיִּחַמְנָה 'and they (sc. the female members of the flock) were in heat' (30:38) reflects Aramaic morphology with *y-* before the root and *-na* following. The standard Hebrew form would be וַתִּחַמְנָה\*, with *t-* and *-na* affixed to the root.

11., 12., AND 13. In Gen 31:7, Jacob says to his two wives: וַיַּחַלֵּף אֶת־מִשְׁכָּבְתִּי עֶשְׂרָה מִנִּים 'and he changed my wage ten times', with reference to Laban's treatment of his nephew/son-in-law. In v. 31, Jacob addresses Laban with more or less the same expression: וַתִּחַלֵּף אֶת־מִשְׁכָּבְתִּי עֶשְׂרָה מִנִּים 'and you changed my wage ten times'. The wording in v. 7 contains no less than three Aramaic-like features: two lexical (both repeated in v. 31) and one grammatical.

(a) The verb חִלֵּף 'change, exchange' occurs in other contexts in Hebrew (e.g., Gen 41:14, with reference to changing one's clothes), but with reference to monetary or fiscal change or exchange, the usage is rare.<sup>12</sup> It will come as no surprise, by this point, to learn that this usage has greater currency (pun intended?) in Aramaic (especially the Jewish Palestinian Aramaic dialect).

(b) The noun מִנִּים 'times' is another non-standard Hebrew term (limited to our two verses), but which is more common in Aramaic.

(c) In v. 7, the verbal form וַיַּחַלֵּף in standard Biblical Hebrew would constitute a *wəqatal* form, pointing to the future; in the present instance,

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10. See Rendsburg, "Aramaic-like Features in the Pentateuch," 167 n. 11; and idem, "What We Can Learn," 175, §15.2.

11. By way of comparison, note the English words "runner" and "runnel" meaning 'small stream, rivulet'. More significantly, see also the technical meaning of "runner" = 'a channel along which molten metal runs from the furnace to the mould' (*OED* s.v. *runner*, def. II.9.c.); as well as "runnel" in the sense of a man-made conduit, as in this 1883 citation: "Small runnels are generally chiselled for the purpose of conducting the water into the cistern" (*OED* s.v. *runnel*, def. 2).

12. Elsewhere only Lev 27:10.

however, the tense is clearly past, hence, ‘and he changed’, on par with Aramaic usage.

14. The unique usage represented in לֹא עַל-בְּלִי הִגִּיד לּוֹ ‘by not telling him’ (31:20) bespeaks Aramaic, which uses an especially large number of compound particles based on עַל (e.g., עַל אַפִּי, עַל גְּבִי, עַל מִנֵּת, עַל עֲסִיק, עַל שֵׁם, etc.<sup>13</sup>), even if בְּלִי itself is not attested (to the best of my knowledge).

15. The form גָּנַבְתִּי ‘I was robbed’ (31:39 [2x]) constitutes an inflected passive participle (note the suffix תִּי-, borrowed from the suffix-conjugation paradigm, yet attached to the participle here), a most unusual grammatical form. Such forms are known from later Jewish Palestinian Aramaic,<sup>14</sup> and one will assume that they were current in earlier Aramaic as well, including the dialect assumed for the conversation between Jacob and Laban, and/or at the time of the composition of Gen 30–31.

16. Our final example takes us one verse beyond the two chapters considered here, though there can be no doubt that its presence in Gen 32:1 is part of the same literary portrayal—especially since the action still concerns Laban and Jacob’s family. The linguistic element is אֲתָהֶם ‘them’, as opposed to standard Hebrew אֹתָם ‘them’.<sup>15</sup>

Now, if this were not enough to carry the reader/listener into an Aramean context, the author of this material included one final zinger as well: a pure Aramaic two-word expression, יָגֵר שְׂהֵדוּתָא ‘mound of witness’ (31:47), in the mouth of Laban, equaling Hebrew גִּלְעָד ‘mound of witness’ (written as one word), expressed by Jacob.<sup>16</sup> The introduction of this pure Aramaic phrase serves as an explicit reminder that the characters have been speaking Aramaic all along, and not Hebrew—just as Shakespeare’s single phrase *et tu, Brute?* (*Julius Caesar*, Act 3, Scene 1) suffices to remind the theatergoer that Julius

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13. Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1992), 406–8; and Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2002), 863.

14. See Gustaf Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1905), 284.

15. For a related instance, see below, §III, item no. 11.

16. True, the location of this place in the land of Gilead (see Gen 31:23, 25), where one assumes a Transjordanian dialect of Canaanite was spoken (indeed, of the type present in the Deir ‘Alla inscription, as elucidated by our jubilarian [see above, n. 1]), is at some remove from Aramaic-speaking territory. Be that as it may, the story wishes to represent this spot as the border between Hebrew-speaking Jacob(ites) and Aramaic-speaking Laban(ites). All of this aside, for our present purposes, with an eye to stylistic and narratological concerns, the two-word Aramaic phrase in the mouth of Laban remains the final zinger in the narrative.

Caesar and his cohorts have been speaking Latin all along, and not Elizabethan English.

We now turn to the second type of style-switching, in which foreigners are present in the land of Canaan, and hence their diction appears as non-standard Hebrew. The most major biblical composition which employs this technique is the story of Balaam (Num 22–24). In this narrative, the geographical setting remains in the land of Canaan,<sup>17</sup> but the main character is an Aramean prophet brought from Pethor (=Pitru), in the heart of Aramean territory, by Balaq king of Moab to curse the people of Israel. Accordingly, Balaam's oracles—comprising the key component of his presence in the story—are heavily tinted with Aramaic-like features.

ASIDE NO. 3: Again we may point to a parallel from the oeuvre of William Shakespeare, most conspicuously in *Henry V*. For in this play, the English military leader Captain Gower is joined by three others in the campaign, Captain Fluellen of Wales, Captain Macmorris of Ireland, and Captain Jamy of Scotland. Captain Gower speaks standard English, no different from the standard speech of his king or other members of the royal family. The dialects of the other three military men, by contrast, each bears traits of the English used in the neighboring lands. The most striking one, which would have been recognized by the contemporary theatergoer immediately, is the phrase “look you”, uttered by Fluellen twenty-two (!) times during the performance, including a staggering eleven times in Act III, Scene 2, with the remaining eleven scattered throughout the remainder of the play. The phrase, by the way, still may be heard in Welsh English to the present day. Furthermore, even the character's surname rings with the audience, for in Welsh it clearly would have been Llewellyn or Llywelyn. But since the English have great difficulty in pronouncing the voiceless alveolar lateral fricative [ɬ] (to use the technical term for this phoneme and its official International Phonetic Alphabet symbol), they typically replace the sound with the combination [fl]; compare “Floyd” for “Lloyd”—as reflected already in the Shakespearean adaptation “Fluellen”.

The Irish officer Captain Macmorris also has distinctive aspects in his English (e.g., “Chrish” for “Christ”), but most foreign of all are the speeches of the Scot, Captain Jamy, which are virtually unintelligible to one attending the play, a fact which no doubt reflects the reality of an Englishman's (in)ability to understand a Scot ca. 1600.<sup>18</sup> Consider, for example, these lines (*Henry V*, Act III, Scene 2):

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17. To be more specific, the land of Moab, on the other side of the Jordan River, within what I would call “greater Canaan”, and in any case certainly within the Canaanite linguistic purview, since Moabite is a dialect of Canaanite (along with Hebrew, Phoenician, etc.).

18. In some cases, not much has changed, one could say. See the playful description by Bill Bryson, *Notes from a Small Island* (London: Doubleday, 1993), 366–67, 369–70.



By the mess, ere these eyes of mine take themselves  
 to slomber, ay'll de gud service, or ay'll lig i'  
 the grund for it; ay, or go to death; and ay'll pay  
 't as valourously as I may, that sall I suerly do,  
 that is the breff and the long. Marry, I wad full  
 fain hear some question 'tween you tway.

—which is so difficult that further comment hardly is necessary.<sup>19</sup>

### III. NUMBERS 23–24

With this digression into English literature serving as background for what follows, we may proceed to our analysis of Balaam's oracles embedded within Num 23–24. The following linguistic traits, all signifying Aramaic more so than standard Hebrew, serve to signal the foreignness of the main character, as revealed through his own speech.<sup>20</sup>

1. The reduplicatory plural form of the common noun הַר 'mountain' occurs in the phrase מְהַרְרֵי־קְדָם 'from the mountains of old' (23:7). The standard Hebrew construct form is הַרְי 'mountains of' (32x).
2. The noun צָרִים 'mountains' in 23:8 in the a-line of the couplet, replaces standard Hebrew הַרִים 'mountains', here paired with גְּבְעוֹת 'hills' in the b-line (the only such case in the Bible). The form צָרִים evokes Aramaic טוּרִים 'mountains', and no doubt reflects an attempt to include that Aramaic word in the poetry.<sup>21</sup>

19. For elucidation and further information on the speech of all three non-English officers, see Dennis Freeborn, *From Old English to Standard English*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 322–23, with Text Commentary Book 16.2.

20. The first effort in this direction was the seminal article by Stephen A. Kaufman, "The Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Panel Sessions: Hebrew and Aramaic Languages* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1988), 41–57, esp. pp. 54–55. Another important study is Shelomo Morag, "Rovde Qadmut," *Tarbiz* 50 (1981): 1–24, many of whose interpretations are accepted in what follows. The most comprehensive treatment of this material is Clinton J. Moyer, *Literary and Linguistic Studies in Sefer Bil'am (Numbers 22–24)* (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2009), 14–192.

21. The form צָרִים uses the Old Aramaic orthography still, in which the emphatic interdental /z/ is represented by צ *ṣ* (before the shift to ט *ṭ* occurred). In fact this orthography occurs still in the Adon letter, line 8, where 'he guarded' appears as נִצַּר (and not expected נִטַּר).

3. The phrase **לֹא יִתְחַשֵּׁב** ‘and among the nations he [sc. Israel] is not reckoned’ (23:9) includes an unusual usage. The *hithpael* verb **יִתְחַשֵּׁב** ‘is not reckoned’ bears not its usual reflexive connotation (i.e., ‘does not reckon himself’), but instead occurs with passive voice—exactly as occurs with the T-stem in Aramaic (in standard Hebrew one expects the *niphal* for the passive).

4. The noun **רֶבֶע** ‘dust-cloud’ in 23:10 occurs only here, but is explicable via its cognates in Samaritan Aramaic, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, and Akkadian.<sup>22</sup>

5. The expression **מֵוֹת יְשָׁרִים**, lit. ‘death of the upright’ (23:10), was elucidated by Menahem Kister as the opposite of the Aramaic expression **מוֹת לַחָה** ‘evil death’ in Nerab tomb inscription, no. 1 (*KAI* 225), line 10—and indeed this entire biblical verse shares much in common with Nerab tomb inscription, no. 2 (*KAI* 226), lines 3–4.<sup>23</sup>

6. In 23:18 Balaam addresses Balaq with the words **הִאֲזִינָה עָדִי**. The phrase frequently is translated ‘give-ear to me’, but a problem arises since the verb **אָזַן** (*hiphil*) typically governs the preposition **אֶל** or **לְ**, both meaning ‘to’ (see especially Deut 1:45, Ps 77:2, Job 34:2).<sup>24</sup> We elect, accordingly, to interpret the expression differently, with **עָדִי** meaning ‘my warnings’, closely related to the noun **עֵדִי** ‘covenant, testimony’ occurring repeatedly in the Aramaic Sefire treaty texts (*KAI* 222–224).

7. The noun **נְחֹשׁ** ‘divination’ occurs in 23:23; a bit further on one encounters the plural form **נְחֹשִׁים** ‘divinations’ in 24:1 within the prose narrative. These are the

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22. H. L. Ginsberg, “Lexicographical Notes,” *ZAW* 51 (1933): 309. I take the opportunity to correct the information presented in my earlier publications, which mentions a Syriac cognate, though none exists: Rendsburg, “Aramaic-like Features in the Pentateuch,” 169; and idem, “What We Can Learn,” 164, §4.4. I am grateful to Jan Joosten (University of Oxford) for calling this error to my attention. As indicated above, the Aramaic evidence comes not from Syriac, but rather from Samaritan Aramaic and Christian Palestinian Aramaic, for which see, respectively, Abraham Tal, *A Dictionary of Samaritan Aramaic*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 2:812–13; Friedrich Schulthess, *Lexicon Syropalaestinum* (Berlin: Reimer, 1903), 188; and Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Christian Palestinian Aramaic*, OLA 234 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 387–88.

23. Menahem Kister, “Some Blessing and Curse Formulae in the Bible, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions, Post-Biblical Literature and Late Antiquity,” in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to T. Muraoka on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. M. F. J. Baasten and W. Th. van Peursen, OLA 118 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 325.

24. The only other collocation of the verb **אָזַן** (*hiphil*) and the preposition **עַד** is in Job 32:11 **אֲזִין עַד־תְּבוּנֹתֶיכֶם** ‘I listen to your wise-sayings’. Note, however, that in this instance the preposition introduces the speech heard, not the one speaking.

only two attestations of this noun in the Bible, though it is well distributed across Aramaic dialects with the meaning ‘augury, divination’.

8. The fossilized form **נִאָּ** ‘said, spoken, uttered’<sup>25</sup> is used with reference to human speech (to introduce words delivered by Balaam) in 24:3–4 (3x), 24:15–16 (3x). This rare usage in the Bible (almost always the form introduces divine speech, especially within the prophetic books) occurs elsewhere only in northern settings in the Bible, that is, in the area of Israel geographically closest to Aram. While the word is not attested in Aramaic per se, most likely Hebrew **נִאָּ** finds a cognate in Eblaite,<sup>26</sup> which once more takes us to the general region of Aram, even if the floruit of Ebla was at the end of the Early Bronze Age, a millennium and then some before Aramaic first emerges in the written record.

9. The verbal form **נָטִי** ‘inclining’ (or perhaps ‘standing tall’<sup>27</sup>) in 24:6 retains the third root-letter *yōd*, as in Aramaic. We have just noted two possible meanings for this verb, though a third one also may be present, namely ‘be damp’ (vb.), ‘moist’ (adj.), known from Syriac,<sup>28</sup> especially given the overall intent of this verse, with the recurrent water imagery: **כְּנַחְלִים נָטִי כְּגִנַּת עֲלֵי נָהָר**: **כְּנַחְלִים נָטִי כְּנַחְלִים נָטִי כְּנַחְלִים נָטִי כְּנַחְלִים נָטִי כְּנַחְלִים נָטִי**: ‘like palm-trees inclining, like gardens along the river, like aloes planted by YHWH, like cedars along the water’.

10. The noun **מְלִכְתָּ** ‘kingdom’ in 24:7 constitutes the classic Aramaic form of this noun, in place of the standard Hebrew form **מַמְלָכָה** ‘kingdom’. The former term, in its fuller spelling **מְלִכְוֹתָ**, entered Hebrew as a genuine loanword from Aramaic with the passage of time, so that it comes to dominate in books such as Ezra-Nehemiah (8x), Chronicles (28x), Esther (26x), and Daniel (16x), all written during the post-exilic period. The attestation in Num 24:7, however, is to be explained otherwise, as part of the style-switching effect achieved by the author, who places this vocable in the mouth of Balaam.

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25. The term “fossilized” means that the verb is not productive, it never occurs in any other form, it is not conjugated, and so on—so that all 377 occurrences of the word are in the same form.

26. See Cyrus H. Gordon, “Vocalized Consonants: The Key to *um-ma/en-ma*/נאם,” in *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo*, ed. Mark E. Cohen, Daniel C. Snell, and David B. Weisberg (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993), 109–10; and Gary A. Rendsburg, “Hebrew Philological Notes (I),” *HS* 40 (1999): 29–30.

27. See Menahem Moreshet, “כְּנַחְלִים נָטִי,” *Bet-Miqra* 48 (5732): 51–56; and Morag, “Rovde Qadmut,” 15–16, esp. n. 54.

28. For the verb, see J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903; repr., Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1998), 336. For the adjective, see Michael Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009), 910.

11. The word **עצמותיהם** ‘their bones’ in 24:8 includes the pronominal suffix **יהם**- ‘their’ added to a plural noun ending in **ות**-. Standard Biblical Hebrew prefers the form **ם**-, while Late Biblical Hebrew prefers the form **יהם**- as a result of Aramaic influence.<sup>29</sup> In the case of the Balaam narrative, however, we are firmly within Standard Biblical Hebrew, save for the Aramaic-like features branding Balaam’s speech. And while not every instance of **יהם**- ‘their’ in pre-exilic texts is an example of style-switching, in the present instance, in the mouth of Balaam, this is most likely the proper explanation.<sup>30</sup>

12. The full phrase in which the preceding form occurs is the following: **יגרים ועצמותיהם** ‘and their bones he gnaws’ (24:8). The linguistic oddity here is the verbal root **גרם** ‘gnaw bones’, a denominative verb based on the Aramaic noun **גרם** ‘bone’.

In short, the Balaam oracles are filled with Aramaic-like usages, which together serve the purpose of the style-switching employed by the ancient Israelite author.

#### IV. 2 KINGS 5

Another section of the Bible which employs this second type of style-switching concerns the interplay of the Arameans and the Israelites in 2 Kgs 5–6. Here one finds at least two forms (one in each chapter) which reflect the native Aramaic speech of the speakers.<sup>31</sup>

1. The first is Naaman’s use of the Aramaic form of the infinitive construct **בהשתחויתי** ‘in my prostrating myself’ while addressing Elisha (2 Kgs 5:18).<sup>32</sup>

2. The second is spoken by the king of Aram, who uses the interrogative **איכה** ‘where’ when addressing his servants (2 Kgs 6:13), again, as per Aramaic usage

29. For general discussion, see Avi Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel*, CahRB 20 (Paris: Gabalda, 1982), 24–27. For the most recent treatment, see Moshe Bar-Asher, “Leshon Qumran ben ha-Miqra’ li-Leshon Hazal (‘Iyyun ba-Se’if be-Morfologya),” *Meghillot 2* (2004): 137–49.

30. For a related feature, see above, §II, item no. 16.

31. See Ian Young, “The ‘Northernisms’ of the Israelite Narratives in Kings,” *ZAH* 8 (1990): 63–70.

32. Note, however, that Naaman uses the more proper Hebrew form **להשתחות** earlier in the verse. This may be an instance of morphological variation for the sake of variation, on which see Robert J. Ratner, “Morphological Variation in Biblical Hebrew Rhetoric,” in *Let Your Colleagues Praise You: Studies in Memory of Stanley Gevirtz* (Part 2) (ed. Robert J. Ratner et al.) = *Maarav* 8 (1992): 143–59. Be that as it may, the Aramaicizing form nonetheless was placed in the mouth of an Aramean general visiting the land of Israel—and not in the mouth of a local native speaker of Hebrew.

(in standard Hebrew the stem of this interrogative means ‘how’, not ‘where’).<sup>33</sup> There are many more Aramaic-like features within these chapters, which no doubt enhance the literary effect,<sup>34</sup> though I limit myself to mentioning these two specific items, since these are the ones which the author placed in the speech of the Aramean characters.

## V. JOSHUA 9

A third and less well-recognized illustration of style-switching with reference to foreigners in the land of Israel occurs in Joshua 9, with reference to the Hivites resident in Gibeon. These people claim to have come from a distant land (cf. Josh 11:3; Judg 3:3, which situate the Hivites in the territory from Mt. Hermon northward to Lebo-Hamath), though now they reside in Gibeon in the heartland of the central hill country (specifically, within the territory of Benjamin). Several linguistic features of their speech appear to represent their foreign (or in this case, immigrant) status.

1. The first is the syntagma of the demonstrative pronoun placed before the noun, a feature known from Aramaic and Phoenician (that is to say, in languages spoken in the homeland of these Hivites), witnessed three times in Josh 9:12–13: *וְהָאֵלֶּה הַיַּיִן* ‘this our bread’; *וְהָאֵלֶּה נִאֲדוֹת הַיַּיִן* ‘these bottle-skins of wine’; and *וְהָאֵלֶּה וְשִׁלְמוֹתֵינוּ וְנַעֲלֵינוּ* ‘and these our clothes and our shoes’.<sup>35</sup>

2. The second item is Josh 9:24 *וַנַּעַשׂ* ‘and we did’, which is wholly irregular and unique in the Bible: (a) the expected form is the apocopated *וַנַּעַשׂ* (Jer 35:10); and (b) while long *wayyiqtol* forms of לִיָּהּ (III-י) verbs occur, the final vowel is always /*ɛ*/ *segol*, not /*ē*/ *šere* as here (cf. GKC §75hh). One suspects,

33. For the Aramaic usage, see, e.g., Tg. Onq. to Gen 37:16, Tg. Jon. to Judg 8:18, both rendering Hebrew *אֵיפֹה*, Peshitta to Gen 3:9, rendering Hebrew *אֵיפֹה* (the specific form there is *אֵיפֹה* ‘where are you?’). Variant forms (especially those beginning with *he* instead of *aleph*) occur in other Aramaic dialects. For basic bibliography, see Edward M. Cook, *A Glossary of Targum Onkelos* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 10; and Sokoloff, *Syriac Lexicon*, 33–34 (and the references there).

34. See William Schniedewind and Daniel Sivan, “The Elijah-Elisha Narratives: A Test Case for the Northern Dialect of Hebrew,” *JQR* 87 (1997): 303–37, esp. 323–25, for instances of what the authors call “literary stylizing” (p. 323). Or these other features—appearing as they do in the third-person narrative but not within the speech of the Aramean king and his general—may simply be elements of Israelian (northern) Hebrew, on which see Gary A. Rendsburg, *Israelian Hebrew in the Book of Kings*, Occasional Publications of the Department of Near Eastern Studies and the Program of Jewish Studies, Cornell University 5 (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2002).

35. See Gary A. Rendsburg, “Šimuš Bilti Ragil šel Kinnuy ha-Remez ba-Miqra’: ‘Edut Nosefet le-‘Ivrit Šefonit bi-Tqufat ha-Miqra,’” *Shnaton* 12 (2000): 83–88.

accordingly, that this form signifies another attempt by the author to portray the immigrant speech of the Hivites, even though we lack supporting cognate evidence in this instance.

As such, the non-standard usages in the speech of these Hivites of Gibeon may be considered as a special sub-type of style-switching, namely, immigrant speech (or better, the literary representation thereof).<sup>36</sup>

## VI. 2 SAMUEL 14

Style-switching also may occur within inner-Hebrew contexts (in which case the definition presented in the second paragraph of this essay may require a slight tweaking). The best illustration of this occurs in 2 Sam 14, in which the presumably Judahite author of the David story incorporates Israelian Hebrew (IH) elements into the speech of the wise woman of Tekoa (to be associated with Tekoa of the Galilee, not Tekoa near Bethlehem). IH traits include the following.<sup>37</sup>

1. In telling her tale, the woman of Tekoa employs the locution **הָאֶחָד אֶת־הָאֶחָד** ‘the one [struck] the other’ (2 Sam 14:6) to express the correlative or reciprocal, whereas standard Biblical Hebrew uses the collocation **אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ** ‘one the other’ (lit. ‘each man his friend’) (e.g., Exod 21:18), or the similar expression **אִישׁ אֶת־אָחִיו** ‘one the other’ (lit. ‘each man his brother’) (e.g., Exod 32:27).<sup>38</sup> The expression employed by the woman of Tekoa finds parallels in Aramaic **חַדָּא עִם חַדָּא** (e.g., Tg. Onq. and Tg. Ps-J. to Exod 26:3 [bis]), with similar constructions in Tg. Neof. **חַדָּא לְקַבֵּל חַדָּא** and Sam. Tg. **אֶחָדָּה לְאֶחָדָּה** or in Aramaic-tinged Hebrew in Job 41:8 **אֶחָד בְּאֶחָד**.

2. Later in the narrative, during her response to David’s question if Joab had played a role in her performance, the woman of Tekoa uses the particle of existence **אֵשׁ** ‘there is, there are’ (2 Sam 14:19), attested elsewhere only in IH texts (Mic 6:10; Prov 18:24—the latter with *plene* spelling **אֵישׁ**), in contrast to standard Biblical Hebrew **יֵשׁ**.<sup>39</sup>

3. Immediately following are the two irregular forms **לְהֵמִין וּלְהִשְׁמִיל** ‘to go-right and to go-left’ (2 Sam 14:19): the former not irregular to a great extent, though note the *defectiva* spelling, without the first root-letter *yōd* indicated; the latter more so, since the expected *ālep* is elided. And while we cannot state

36. See idem, “Foreigner Speech: Biblical Hebrew,” *EHL* 1:903–4.

37. See also idem, “What We Can Learn,” 166, §7 (in more schematic presentation).

38. Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2 vols., SubBi 14 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 2:546–47.

39. Gary A. Rendsburg, “Millat ha-Qiyyum **אֵשׁ**,” *Mehqarim be-Lashon* 9 (2003): 251–55.

unequivocally that these forms reflect the speaker's northern regional dialect,<sup>40</sup> or even her colloquial speech, there is a good chance that they do, or in the very least add to the literary portrayal of the wise woman of Tekoa.<sup>41</sup>

## VII. ISAIAH 21:11–12

Our next illustration of style-switching removes us from Biblical Hebrew prose and takes us to the domain of poetry, or to be more specific prophecy. The passage to be presented here borders on what I have termed “addressee-switching”, with reference to the prophetic oracles to the foreign nations<sup>42</sup>—though given the specific wording, Isa 21:11–12 seems better suited to the style-switching umbrella.<sup>43</sup> These two verses, which constitute the oracle to Dumah (= medieval-modern Dūmat al-Jandal, in present-day northwestern Saudi Arabia),<sup>44</sup> portray the speech of individual denizens of that city or region.<sup>45</sup> In biblical times the language of the region was Ancient North Arabian (ANA),<sup>46</sup> with a possible admixture or adstratum of Aramaic. This is borne out in the language of Isa 21:11–12, as seen in the following relevant linguistic elements:

1. Verse 11 (on which see below) describes someone calling to the watchman enquiring about the night. In v. 12, the watchman commences his response with אֶתְּהָ בָקֵר וְגַם-לַיְלָה ‘morning has come, and also the night’, with the atypical verbal root אֶתְּהָ ‘come’, known more commonly from Aramaic, ANA (in Safaitic, the best-attested dialect, at least), and Arabic (‘*atā*). The standard Hebrew verb, of course, is בִּיֵּא ‘come’.

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40. Note that these two verbs are particularly susceptible to non-standard forms. The standard (or at least expected) forms appear in Gen 13:9, but there is something atypical about one or the other verb in all other instances: Isa 30:21; Ezek 21:21; 1 Chr 12:2.

41. Naama Zahavi-Ely, “‘Turn Right or Left’: Literary Use of Dialect in 2 Samuel 14:19?” *HS* 53 (2012): 43–53.

42. Gary A. Rendsburg, “Addressee-switching,” *EHLH* 1:34–35.

43. See the classic study by Chaim Rabin, “An Arabic Phrase in Isaiah,” in *Studi sull’Oriente e la Bibbia, offerti al P. Giovanni Rinaldi del 60e compleanno* (Genoa: Studio e Vita, 1967), 303–9; along with the brief comment by Kaufman, “Classification,” 55.

44. Though note the reference to Seir, placing us closer to the southern reaches of greater Canaan, in v. 11.

45. For more on ancient Dumah, including references in Assyrian texts, see Israel Eph’al, *The Ancient Arabs* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1982), 120–21.

46. Even if only three Ancient North Arabian inscriptions have been found at Dumah. I am grateful to Ahmad Al-Jallad (Leiden University) for this information, for the other ANA linguistic data to follow, and for the reference in n. 53 below.

2. AND 3. The watchman then continues with the phrase אַם־תִּבְעֵינוּ בְּעֵינֵי ‘if you would enquire, enquire’, which includes two items of interest:

(a) The root בע"ה (בע"י) ‘seek, enquire’ is an atypical Hebrew lexical feature, used elsewhere in BH only in Obad 1:6 (note the Edomite context!),<sup>47</sup> though it is exceedingly well known and productive in both Aramaic<sup>48</sup> and Arabic (as the root *b-ǧ-y*), and once more known also from ANA (again, Safaitic dialect).

(b) One also notes the atypical morphology, with the third root-letter *yōd* retained in both instances, תִּבְעֵינוּ and בְּעֵינֵי, the former a 2.m.pl. prefix-conjugation form, and the latter a m.pl. imperative form. One cannot say that this too is a feature of Aramaic, for generally Aramaic agrees with Hebrew in the elision of the *yōd*, though in this case both ANA and Arabic (at least to some extent) provide the cognate morphology.<sup>49</sup>

4. Finally, the watchman concludes his enigmatic words in v. 12 with שְׁבוּ אִתִּי ‘return, come’. Our attention is drawn to the last word, which again attests to the root אה"ה ‘come’ and which once more reflects retention of the third root-letter *yōd*, this time in a suffix-conjugation form.<sup>50</sup>

5. In light of these atypical lexical and grammatical features, one is tempted to identify another one in v. 11, which has the voice from Seir calling as follows: שֹׁמֵר מִה־מַּלְיָהּ שֹׁמֵר מִה־מַּלְיָהּ ‘Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what says one?’ Now, quite possibly the second clause simply repeats the first one, using a different morphology for the word ‘night’, with לַיִל (even though normally this is the construct form) instead of לַיְלָה.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, one must countenance the possibility that מַּלְיָל introduces something new, to wit, the 3.m.sg. suffix-conjugation of the verbal root מל"ל ‘say’ (*piel*), spelled *plene* here, in imitation

47. That is, with the meaning ‘seek, enquire’, which is presented in *HALOT*, 1:141, as בעה (I), and in *DCH*, 2:236, as בעה (II). The homonymous verbal root בע"ה (בע"י) means “swell, bulge, protrude” (Isa 30:13; 64:1). Somewhat oddly, BDB, 126, subsumes both meanings under a single lemma, though then sub-divides the entry with the separate connotations.

48. For convenient references, see Cook, *Glossary of Targum Onqelos*, 37. See also the entry at the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon (<http://cal1.cn.huc.edu/>), using the CAL Lexicon Browser, s.v., B(Y).

49. See the discussion in Edward Lipiński, *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar*, OLA 80 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 432. Incidentally, the Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, col. 16, line 29) uses the standard Hebrew forms תבועון and בעו.

50. Though in this case, the Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, col. 16, line 29) retains the non-standard morphology, agreeing with MT in its use of איתי.

51. Hence, this would be another instance of morphological variation, on which see above, n. 32.



of the earlier key word, to create a graphic play between מלילה and מליל.<sup>52</sup> The context would certainly permit this interpretation, as per my translation above. And if this be the case, then once more we have another lexeme associated more regularly with Aramaic.<sup>53</sup>

### VIII. PROVERBS 31:1–9

A second poetic text which may qualify as an illustration of style-switching is the snippet of Massa material in Proverbs 31:1–9, presenting the reader with proverbial wisdom emanating from this locale in the Syrian Desert.<sup>54</sup> The clearest instances of atypical linguistic usages that color this composition as foreign, with hints of Aramaic once more, are as follows:

1. Three times in Prov 31:2 we encounter the word בַּר ‘son’, as opposed to standard Hebrew בֶּן ‘son’.
2. The form קְלָיִין ‘kings’ in Prov 31:3 employs the masculine plural nominal ending יִן instead of standard Hebrew יִם.

### IX. JOB

No survey of style-switching in the Bible would be complete without mention of the book of Job, though naturally the composition is far too extensive to enter into detailed analysis here. Suffice to say that the geographical setting occurs in a foreign land, to wit, the land of Uz, in the area where the southern Syrian and northern Arabian deserts meet—and that the main characters (Job and his three

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52. One final note concerning the Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>): in this case the scribe created a perfect graphic match, since both forms appear as מליל (col. 16, line 28).

53. The verb does not appear in ANA, though the noun *mly* appears in a Safaitic inscription with the apparent meaning ‘word’. See Michael C. A. Macdonald, Muna Al-Mu’azzin, and Laïla Nehmé, “Les inscriptions safaitiques de Syrie, cent quarante ans après leur découverte,” *CRAI* 140.1 (1996): 435–94, esp. 484–85.

54. Though to be honest, this interpretation requires reading against the Masoretic accents accompanying the first three words of v. 1: דְּבַר־יְהוָה לְמוֹעֵל מִלֵּךְ מִשָּׂא אֲשֶׁר-יִסְרְתוּ אִמּוֹ: with the *’atnah* on מִלֵּךְ requiring something like “the words of Lemuel (the) king; (the) oracle which his mother taught him.” Presumably this reading arose within the Masora due to the identification of Lemuel with Solomon in Jewish tradition (the earliest source for this appears to be Qoh. Rab. 1:2); hence the need to shift the major pause in the verse by one word, though the grammar becomes strained thereby. Once more, see Kaufman, “Classification,” 54–55. For the location of Massa, see Eph’al, *Ancient Arabs*, 218–19.

friends) are all associated with lands in the general region (see Job 1:1; 2:11).<sup>55</sup> This will explain why the book is replete with both Aramaic and Arabian lexical and grammatical features—far too numerous to inventory here.<sup>56</sup>

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The texts surveyed herein (Gen 24; Gen 30–31; Num 23–24; Josh 9; 2 Sam 14; 2 Kgs 5; Isa 21:11–12; Prov 31:1–9; Job) illustrate well the use of language in the service of literature. The ancient Israelite literati knew their language well, were able to differentiate “standard” and “native” Hebrew usages from “dialectal” and “foreign” (especially “Aramaic-like”) words and phrases, and no doubt could depend on at least the well-educated segment of their audience to both apprehend the results and take pleasure in the effort.

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55. In which case, we return to the first type of style-switching, as with §§I-II above, with the story set in a foreign land.

56. Again see Kaufman, “Classification,” 54–55, for a concise statement. In greater detail, and with an eye to literary effect, see the series of recent articles from the pen of Edward L. Greenstein, including: “The Language of Job and Its Poetic Function,” *JBL* 122 (2003): 651–66; and “The Invention of Language in the Poetry of Job,” in *Interested Readers: Essays on the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David J. A. Clines*, ed. James K. Aitken, Jeremy M. S. Clines, and Christl M. Maier (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 332–46.

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## 4

# The Aramaic Root ‘To Go’— *HWK* or *HLK*?

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### INTRODUCING THE PROBLEM

The true verbal root for one of the verbs meaning ‘to go’ in Old Aramaic has been a matter of dispute for some time among Semitists. There are a variety of forms whose shape makes it difficult to determine the true three-letter root. Some suggest that prefix conjugation forms such as *yhk* ‘he goes’ come from the root *HWK*. In these forms, they argue, the medial *waw* is lost, obscuring the underlying root. Others suggest that the true root is *HLK*, a root well attested in Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic, and then provide various explanations for the missing *lāmed*. An array of scholars occupies each side of the debate. Theodor Nöldeke, Hans Bauer, Pontus Leander, Franz Rosenthal, and Randall Garr favor the root *HWK*. Others, such as André Dupont-Sommer, Giovanni Garbini, Herbert Donner, and Jacob Hoftijzer suggest that the true root is *HLK*.

In this study I reexamine the positions on this question, list the occurrences of the verbal forms and their contexts among the oldest Aramaic inscriptions, and make some suggestions in support of the verbal root *HLK* in Aramaic.

### REVIEW OF POSITIONS

#### SCHOLARS SUPPORTING *HWK*

Although Theodor Nöldeke is the scholar most often cited in support of the root *HWK*,<sup>1</sup> the first scholar to posit the existence of the root *HWK* in Aramaic was, to my knowledge, Adalbert Merx. Merx was also the first to associate the putative Aramaic root *HWK* with the Ethiopic root *HWK*.<sup>2</sup> Nöldeke is cited positive-

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1. Theodor Nöldeke, “Die aramäischen Papyri von Assuan,” *ZA* 20 (1907): 142 n. 1.  
2. Adalbert Merx, *Chrestomathia Targumica* (Berlin: Reuther, 1888), 190.

ly by Bauer and Leander.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Randall Garr suggests that *HWK* is the only root meaning ‘to go’ attested in Old Aramaic.<sup>4</sup> Garr also connects these forms with the Ethiopic root *HWK*, and posits that the root serves as an isogloss distinguishing Aramaic from the other Northwest Semitic dialects.<sup>5</sup> What these linguists have in common is their reliance on Nöldeke. Often this reliance is presented with no further supporting argumentation. In his Aramaic grammar, Franz Rosenthal proposes two roots found in complementary distribution. He lists both *HWK* (‘to go’), found only in G-stem prefix conjugation and infinitive forms and *HLK* (‘to walk about’) found in the D- and C-stem participles.<sup>6</sup> Koehler and Baumgartner list both roots. They consider *HWK* to be hypothetical (marked with an asterisk in their lexicon), citing Bauer-Leander,<sup>7</sup> and *HLK* is presented as a regular entry.<sup>8</sup> Jastrow lists only *HLK*.<sup>9</sup>

#### SCHOLARS SUPPORTING *HLK*

Those who posit *HLK* as the underlying root explain the unexpected Aramaic forms lacking the medial *lāmed* by referring to the anomalous forms of the same root in Biblical Hebrew where it is the *hē* that is lost in many of the inflected forms. The explanation given by Rainer Degen is that one must assume that the prefix conjugation forms attest an assimilation of the *lāmed* into the *hē*.<sup>10</sup> André Dupont-Sommer cites the forms of this verbal root in the Sefire inscriptions and states that they all come from the root *HLK*.<sup>11</sup> The same observation is made by Emil G. Kraeling regarding the Aramaic papyri from Elephantine.<sup>12</sup> Giovanni Garbini likewise assumes the root *HLK* to be the basis for forms with this semantic value in Old Aramaic.<sup>13</sup> A number of Aramaic grammars that have ap-

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3. Hans Bauer and Pontus Leander, *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1981), 144 §46b.

4. W. Randall Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 144.

5. Garr, *Dialect Geography*, 145.

6. Franz Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 7th, exp. ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), §169.

7. *HALOT* 2:1859b.

8. *HALOT* 2:1860a.

9. *DTML* 352b.

10. Rainer Degen, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, AKM 38.3 (Wiesbaden: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1969), §64.

11. André Dupont-Sommer, *Les inscriptions araméennes de Sfiré* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1958), 40.

12. Emil G. Kraeling, *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri: New Documents of the Fifth Century B.C. from the Jewish Colony at Elephantine* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 311.

13. Giovanni Garbini, “Nuovo materiale per la grammatica dell’aramaico antico,” *RSO* 34 (1959): 50.

peared in the past few decades also list *HLK* as the root with the meaning 'to go'.<sup>14</sup>

#### AN ARGUMENT FOR *HLK*

As noted earlier, I would like to suggest that the evidence for these forms of the verb 'to go' in Aramaic points to *HLK* as the true verbal root. In what follows I set forth three supporting arguments for my suggestion. First, I note the prevalence of the verbal root *HLK* in the other Northwest Semitic languages. Second, I return to the 1907 article by Nöldeke where the suggestion regarding the putative root *HWK* has its genesis, and I note both the brevity of the comment, and the concomitant hesitancy with which he proffers it. Additionally, I address the cogency of the supposed Ethiopic connection with the verbal root *HWK*. Third, I turn to another verbal root in Aramaic that behaves similarly in its prefix conjugation and suggest that this root might help us explain by analogy how these anomalous forms of *HLK* came to be.

#### UBIQUITY OF *HLK* IN NORTHWEST SEMITIC

As we begin to address the question regarding the explanation of these unique forms, one important consideration is the ubiquity of the verbal root *HLK* in the surrounding Semitic landscape. Certainly, an argument that suggests that Aramaic must employ the same verb for the meaning 'to go' as most other Semitic languages that surround it would not be persuasive on its own. It is well known that languages have lexical isoglosses marking them as unique. Yet in this case we are faced with an option: the underlying root is either a virtually unique isogloss, as Nöldeke and his cogeners would have it, or the various inflections demonstrate unexpected permutations of a rather common Semitic root, a root that shows anomalous permutations in other Semitic languages that attest the root. The root *HLK* appears in Ugaritic, dating the root's earliest historical attestation in the twelfth century BCE.<sup>15</sup> Phoenician attests the root *HLK* in the seventh-century inscription on the plaque from Arslan Tash (KAI §27.21) in what is either an imperative or infinitive absolute form. Cross and Saley analyze the form *hlk* in the inscription as an imperative 'go forth'.<sup>16</sup> The plaster texts from

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14. See Alger F. Johns, *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1972), 99. More recently, see Frederick E. Greenspahn, *An Introduction to Aramaic*, RBS 46 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 62, 223. Most recently see Andreas Schuele, *An Introduction to Biblical Aramaic* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 86.

15. Gregorio Del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 1:337.

16. Frank Moore Cross, Jr. and Richard J. Saley, "Phoenician Incantations on a Plaque of the Seventh Century B.C. from Arslan Tash in Upper Syria," *BASOR* 197 (1970): 46.



Deir 'Allā (KAI §312) attest a G participle *hlk* in combination 2, line 7, rendered 'traveler' by Jo Ann Hackett.<sup>17</sup> Additionally an imperative form appears as *lkw* in combination 1, line 5, suggesting derivation from the root *HLK*.<sup>18</sup> A further imperative in the form of *lk* (m. sg.) appears in the Moabite Mesha Inscription (KAI §181), attesting the same form seen numerous times in Biblical Hebrew from the root *HLK*. The Mesha Inscription provides further attestation of an underlying root *HLK* in the form of a prefix conjugation *w'hlk* with the meaning 'and I went'. So the root *HLK* appears in Ugaritic, Phoenician, Moabite, the language of Deir 'Allā, and Hebrew. These numerous attestations of the root *HLK* constitute a consistent picture of usage throughout the Levant.

#### RELIANCE ON NÖLDEKE'S BRIEF SUGGESTION

The scholars who posit *HWK* as the true root behind the forms meaning 'to go' in Aramaic typically cite Nöldeke's 1907 article, often with little further argumentation. When we examine the case made by Nöldeke, we should be disappointed at both its brevity and the lack of conviction with which Nöldeke himself made the observation. The suggestion to posit a verbal root *HWK* appears in a footnote with Nöldeke noting simply that "It seems incorrect to me to derive our forms from *hlk*" ("Unsere Formen zu *hlc* zu ziehen scheint mir unrichtig"). Nöldeke goes on to say that one can associate these forms with the Ethiopic *HWK*, meaning 'to agitate', but he is also aware of the differences in transitivity between the two meanings.<sup>19</sup> At the end of his brief comments about this root in the footnote, Nöldeke cites Merx's *Chrestomathia Targumica* wherein Merx posited the underlying root as *HWK*.<sup>20</sup> This abbreviated discussion constitutes the apparent basis for a number of citations among the Semitists who posit the root *HWK*.

#### PARALLELS WITH THE ROOT *SLQ*

Finally, even though the loss of a *lāmed* is not a normal phenomenon in Aramaic, there is another verb that behaves in a way similar to *HLK*. The root *SLQ* 'to

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17. Jo Ann Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Allā*, HSM 31 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), 30. The word "combination" refers to the plaster fragments on which the texts appear. The fragments have been organized into two large combinations (labeled 1 and 2) and several smaller combinations. The relationship between the two remains an open question. See eadem, "Deir 'Allā, Tell (Texts)," *ABD* 2:129–30.

18. Eadem, *Balaam Text*, 39. See the glossary at the end of Hackett's book (p. 128) where the root *hlc* is connected to these two forms.

19. Nöldeke, "Aramäischen Papyri," 142 n. 1. The Ethiopicist Wolf Leslau is not convinced of this connection between Aramaic and Ethiopic, calling Nöldeke's suggestion "unlikely" (Wolf Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez* [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991], 220).

20. Merx, *Chrestomathia Targumica*, 190. Merx provides no discussion about this theory.

go up' attests a similar pattern in its prefix conjugation forms in which the medial *lāmed* is lost. In what follows I trace the examples of these forms that appear in the earliest Aramaic inscriptions at Tel Dan and Sefire and suggest that loss of *lāmed* in this verbal root can elucidate the phenomenon in the root *HLK*.

TEL DAN (KAI §310). In the Tel Dan Inscription there seems to be an attestation of the prefix conjugation of *SLQ*. In line 2 of fragment A the phrase 'by ys[q] appears with the possible meaning 'my father went up.' In line 3, just below this phrase in line 2, we have 'by yhk. The phrase in line 3 is certain and the meaning is most likely 'my father went', analyzed as a *yaqtul* preterite.<sup>21</sup> The *qôp* in the form on line 2 ('by ys<sup>r</sup>q') is not fully preserved in the form, as is indicated by the half-brackets surrounding the letter. The bottom portion of the vertical tail is all that remains. The tail is consistent with the other attestations of *qôp* on the three fragments.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the reconstructed *qôp* is assumed by a number of epigraphers who have examined the fragment.<sup>23</sup>

SEFIRE (KAI §222–224). The Sefire Inscriptions attest several forms of the root *SLQ* demonstrating the loss of the medial *lāmed*. In the first Sefire Inscription, KAI §222, there are two occurrences of the 3.m.pl. form of the prefix-conjugation. The first one appears in the first section (section A), line 5, where the parties involved in the treaty are listed. The relevant portion of line 5 reads: *w'm bnwh zy ysqn b'srh* ("and with his sons who arise in his place...") The meaning of the root *SLQ* here has a more abstract or metaphorical meaning of 'to go up/arise' in that it is synonymous with generational succession.

In the third section (section C) of the same stele, a similar phrase appears with the same connotation of generational succession. The voice behind the inscription, presumably Mati'el, speaks of the sons and grandsons who will come after him. The relevant portion of lines 3–4 reads: *bry zy ysqn b'sry* ("my [grand]son who will arise in my place") Again, the meaning of the root *SLQ* conveys the more abstract sense of dynastic succession.

In the third stele of the Sefire collection, KAI §224, the form *ysq* appears four times in three successive lines. All four express the sense '(if) it arises (to your mind)' (lines 14, 15a, 15b, and 16) similar to our English idiom 'comes to mind'.

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21. See Takamitsu Muraoka, "Linguistic Notes on the Aramaic Inscription from Tel Dan," *IEJ* 45 (1995): 19. For the validity of assuming the presence of the *yaqtul* preterite more broadly in Aramaic, see Jo Ann Hackett, "Yaqtul and a Ugaritic Incantation Text," in *Language and Nature: Papers Presented to John Huehnergard on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach and Na'ama Pat-El, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 67 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), 111.

22. See George Athas, *The Tel Dan Inscription*, JSOTSup 360 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2003), 128, for a complete set of images of every *qôp* in the Tel Dan Inscription.

23. See Avraham Biran and Joseph Naveh, "An Aramaic Stele Fragment from Tel Dan," *IEJ* 43 (1993): 87. See also Muraoka, "Linguistic Notes," 19.

Within this set of verbal forms attesting the loss of a medial *lāmed* in the root *SLQ* within the earliest Aramaic inscriptions from Tel Dan and Sefire, one can see a potential similarity in the forms of the verb ‘to go’ attested from the same time.<sup>24</sup>

#### THE OCCURRENCES OF *HLK* IN OLD ARAMAIC AND IMPERIAL ARAMAIC

I now turn to examine the forms of the verb that derive from either *HLK* or *HWK*. I will include the oldest exemplars among the inscriptional evidence, but I will also include a few later forms to show how the pattern attested early on is continued in later centuries.

TEL DAN. I return to the Tel Dan inscription for the first example. This inscription is dated to the ninth century BCE by a number of epigraphers.<sup>25</sup> As I noted earlier, the form *yhk* appears in line 3 of fragment A. This form should be parsed as a G prefix-conjugation 3.m.sg. The stated subject would appear to be the word just before it, translated as ‘my father’. The context is difficult to reconstruct with certainty, given the lack of completed lines in this inscription. The context appears to be a reference to the death of the speaker’s father. Biran and Naveh reconstruct this clause as “And my father lay down, he went to [his ancestors].”<sup>26</sup> The form here is likely the oldest attestation of the verbal form with the missing *lāmed*.

SEFIRE. In addition to Tel Dan the Sefire Inscriptions provide a number of examples of the root *HLK*. The *terminus ante quem* for these inscriptions is 740 BCE, making these texts slightly later than the Tel Dan Inscription.<sup>27</sup> Their early date provides important attestations for these verbs in Old Aramaic.

Sefire (KAI §§222–224) attests three forms relevant to our discussion. In §222 A:24 the form is *yhkn*, analyzed as a G prefix conjugation 3.m.pl. (‘they will go’). The third stele has two occurrences of the verb in question. In §224:5 the form *wyhkn* is analyzed as a G prefix-conjugation 3.m.pl. with a conjunctive *waw*. The instructions begin in line 4 with *whn yqrq mny qrq* (‘Now if a fugitive flees from me’) and in line 5 the conditional clause continues anomalously with a plural form: *wyhkn* (‘and they go’). In line 6 the verbal form is *’hk*, analyzed as a G prefix-conjugation 1.c.sg. The subject of the verb is the person speaking the

24. In the Hebrew Bible there is one occurrence of the verbal root *SLQ* in Ps 139:8. The form in this verse, *’essaq* is a G prefix-conjugation, 1.c.sg. The medial *lāmed* is lost in this form, possibly an Aramaic loanword (so BDB 701b).

25. See Avraham Biran and Joseph Naveh, “The Tel Dan Inscription: A New Fragment,” *IEJ* 45 (1995): 17. This date continues to be held by later assessments; e.g., Christopher A. Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel: Epigraphic Evidence from the Iron Age*, ABS 11 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 51.

26. Biran and Naveh, “New Fragment,” 13.

27. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, rev. ed., BibOr 19A (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1995), 19.

words of the stele, giving directions to the readers. The instructions regarding what to do with the fugitives are set forth, followed by the prepositional phrase ‘until I come’ (*d ’hk*).

ELEPHANTINE. To illustrate how the pattern of usage extends further in time, I include verbal forms from the fifth-century Aramaic papyri from the Jewish colony living in Elephantine. In Kraeling 3 (*TAD* B3.4) a contract regarding a house is the context for the form in line 23 reading *wkl ’šrn zy yhkn ’l byt* “and all the lumber which will go into that house.” The verb *yhkn* should be analyzed as a G prefix-conjugation 3.m.pl., translated as ‘will go’. In Kraeling 10 (*TAD* B3.11) the form *yhk* (G prefix-conjugation, 3.m.sg.) appears in line 15, which reads “If he [i.e., a potential litigant] *goes* into court, he shall not win.” Kraeling 7 (*TAD* B3.8) attests two uses of the verb in question (lines 24 and 28). Both forms are *thk* (G prefix-conjugation 3.f.sg.), translated as ‘she will go’.

Although Cowley 71 (*TAD* C1.2) is rather fragmentary, it provides two more examples of verbal forms relevant to our discussion. In lines 4 and 6 the form *thk* (G prefix conjugation, 2.m.sg.) appears in a context of instruction, rendered as ‘you will go’. An identical form, *thk* (G prefix-conjugation, 2.m.sg.), appears in Aḥiqar (*TAD* C1.1), line 86, translated ‘you will go’. Two identical G prefix-conjugation forms, *thk* (‘she will go’), appear in Cowley 15 (*TAD* B2.6) in lines 25 and 28. Cowley 8 (*TAD* B2.3), line 22, contains the form *’hk*, a G prefix-conjugation 1.c.sg. (‘I will go’). Finally, Cowley 10 (*TAD* B3.1), line 19, attests the form *yhkwn*, a G prefix-conjugation 3.m.pl., translated as ‘they will go’.

Outside of prefix conjugation forms of the root *HLK*, the form *mhlk*, a D participle, appears in Aḥiqar (*TAD* C1.1), line 40, and Segal 5 (*TAD* B8.3), line 4.<sup>28</sup> The graphic appearance of the consonants *hê*, *lāmed*, and *kāp* in these forms further strengthens the notion that the true root of the verbal forms that appear in the prefix conjugation is actually *HLK*.

#### SOLUTION – ANALOGY

The solution to the question regarding the Aramaic verb ‘to go’ comes down to two possibilities which can be formulated as questions. Is it more likely that Aramaic has departed from the use of *HLK*, a verbal root attested in numerous

28. J. B. Segal, *Aramaic Texts from North Saqqāra with Some Fragments in Phoenician* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1983), no. 5, line 4. Note also that Hofstijzer and Jongeling list the suffix conjugation form *hlkw* in the Deir ‘Allā texts as well. See Jacob Hofstijzer and Karel Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 1:281. I have omitted it above because I am convinced that the language of Deir ‘Allā is distinct from Aramaic. See, e.g., P. Kyle McCarter, “The Dialect of the Deir ‘Alla Texts,” in *The Balaam Text from Deir ‘Alla Re-evaluated: Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Leiden 21–24 August 1989*, ed. Jacob Hofstijzer and Gerrit van der Kooij (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 97; and John Huehnergard, “Remarks on the Classification of the Northwest Semitic Languages,” in *ibid.*, 282.

surrounding Northwest Semitic languages and replaced it with the root *HWK*, a root that only appears in Ethiopic and is attested there only as an intransitive verb meaning ‘to agitate’? Or is it more likely that the Aramaic verbal root underlying the forms noted above are simply Aramaic variations of the ubiquitous root *HLK*. If we opt for the latter we see that these verbal forms that omit the *lāmed* look remarkably similar to another Aramaic root, *SLQ*, meaning, ‘to go up’.

I suggest that an analogy occurred within the Aramaic morphological system, *HLK* : *YHK* :: *SLQ* : *YSQ*. My suggestion is certainly not an absolutely new solution. Bauer and Leander mention this possibility, but quickly dismiss it.<sup>29</sup> In Nöldeke’s 1907 article, he too indicates that some might opt for such a comparison.<sup>30</sup> I would like to suggest that this analogy is indeed plausible. I would say that it is even more plausible than positing a separate verbal root rarely attested and confined to one segment of this group of Semitic languages.

One might question what factors precipitated such an analogy between the two roots. I provide here a few observations that address this particular question. We begin with the verbs’ respective meanings. Since both verbs convey motion, they inhabit the same general semantic field. This connection might have led to the kind of analogy I am positing. This is particularly true if we consider that the imperatives of these verbs would be used quite frequently in daily language; speakers would have had ample opportunity to hear them and employ them in similar contexts. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the Biblical Hebrew roots *NTN* ‘to give’ and *LQH* ‘to take’. Both G imperatives of these two roots involve the loss of the initial consonant: *tēn* ‘give!’ and *qah* ‘take!’ Like these two Biblical Hebrew verbs, Aramaic *SLQ* and *HLK* inhabit a similar contextual proximity that could have contributed to the suggested analogy. That both verbs appear in close proximity in the Tel Dan Inscription (A 2, 3) is perhaps a further indication that both verbs are at home in the same general semantic sphere.

The analogy is also invited by the way the two verbs employ similar sounds. The vocalization generated by the combination *-LK* from *HLK* and *-LQ* from *SLQ* might have encouraged the analogy. Admittedly, the *lāmed* – vowel – *kāp* sound, derived from the root *HLK*, was not identical to the sound made by *lāmed* – vowel – *qōp*, derived from the root *SLQ*, since *qōp* was an emphatic plosive, while the *kāp* was an unvoiced plosive. Both, however, were articulated in the velar region. I would suggest, therefore, that they shared essential features to encourage an analogy in a speaker’s mind.

The ready availability of morphological analogy, driven by semantic proximity and the similar phonology in spoken versions of the two verbs, favors *HLK* as the root underlying the Aramaic forms discussed here. Basing the development of the form *yhk* on the analogy *HLK* : *YHK* :: *SLQ* : *YSQ* makes more sense than assuming an Ethiopic connection with its verb meaning ‘to agitate’.

29. Bauer and Leander, *Grammatik*, 144.

30. Nöldeke, “Aramäischen Papyri,” 142 n. 1.

Positing this analogy inevitably leads to a chronological question. We simply cannot know, give the paucity of the material, when this analogical process began to take place. Our oldest inscriptional sources for Old Aramaic indicate that the change had been made before the ninth century BCE, the date of the Tel Dan Inscription.<sup>31</sup> Language change is indeed a slippery enterprise, and the factors precipitating the unexpected forms of the roots *HLK* and *SLQ* remain hidden for now.<sup>32</sup> Despite these uncertainties, the analogy explanation's assets outweigh the liabilities. The analogy simply provides a better—and, I would say, simpler—explanation for the forms in Aramaic lacking the *lāmed*.

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31. More than a millennium and a half later the Masoretes vocalized the prefix vowel of the prefix-conjugation forms of *HLK* the way they vocalized prefix-conjugation forms of middle weak roots, using a *šəwā* as in *yəhak*. With only two verbs in the corpus that expressed a loss of a medial *lāmed*, the most obvious analogue in the language was the class of middle weak verbs. The *šəwā* of the prefix vowel used in middle weak roots extended by paradigmatic pressure to *HLK*.

32. On language change in general see Rudi Keller, *On Language Change: The Invisible Hand in Language*, trans. Brigitte Nerlich (New York: Routledge, 1994), 68–74; Jean Aitchison, *Language Change: Progress or Decay?* 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 135–37.

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## Translation Technique in Targum Onqelos: The Rendering of Hebrew הל"ך

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Targum Onqelos is an early translation of the Hebrew Bible, whose composition is usually assigned to the end of the Middle Aramaic period (200 BCE–200 CE).<sup>1</sup> The Targum has influenced the study of the Hebrew Bible beginning already in Talmudic times.<sup>2</sup> Its influence is especially striking in the Middle Ages where one finds frequent references to Targum Onqelos by Rashi and other medieval exegetes and grammarians when explicating difficult words and passages;<sup>3</sup> it is also clearly visible in the language of medieval Aramaic compositions.<sup>4</sup>

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1. E. Y. Kutscher, "The Language of the 'Genesis Apocryphon': A Preliminary Study," in *Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Chaim Rabin and Yigael Yadin, *ScrHier* 4 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1958): 2–3, 9–11; idem, "Aramaic," *EncJud*<sup>2</sup> 2:347; Edward M. Cook, "A New Perspective on the Language of Onqelos and Jonathan," in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context*, ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara, *JSOTSup* 166 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 150. The earliest attested Targumic fragments to the Pentateuch are found in 4Q456 from Qumran, whose paleography dates to the second century BCE. The text is not identical to that of Targum Onqelos, however. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Targum of Leviticus from Qumran Cave 4," *Maarav* 1 (1978): 5–23.

2. Abraham Tal, "The Role of Targum Onqelos in Literary Activity During the Middle Ages," in *Aramaic in Its Historical and Linguistic Setting*, ed. Holger Gzella and Margaretha L. Folmer, *VOK* 50 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008), 159–63; Willem F. Smelik, "Targum in Talmud," in idem, *Rabbis, Language and Translation in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 325–431.

3. See, e.g., Isaac Avineri, *היכל רש"י* (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1979–1985), 2:11 [Hebrew]; Aharon Maman, *Comparative Semitic Philology in the Middle Ages from Sa'adiyah Gaon to Ibn Barūn (10th–12th C.)*, trans. David Lyons, *SSLL* 40 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), *passim*.

4. Abraham Tal, "The Status of Targum Onqelos in Medieval Aramaic Works," *Lešonenu* 65 (2003): 261–78 [Hebrew]; idem, "Role of Targum Onqelos."



Even in the modern period Targum Onqelos continues to have a significant effect on the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. Formulations and explanations originating in the Targum show up repeatedly in Jewish translations of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>5</sup>

Little if anything is known about the identity of the translator of Targum Onqelos. Some have identified him with Aquilas the proselyte, who lived during the second century CE, and translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek.<sup>6</sup> More is known, however, about the method of translation employed in the Targum. There have been several general studies on the topic (A. Berliner, Y. Qorah, S. D. Luzzatto, and R. Posen)<sup>7</sup> as well as specific investigations of words and phrases (e.g., R. Hayward, M. L. Klein, B. Grossfeld, and D. Golomb).<sup>8</sup> In this essay I shall examine the way in which Targum Onqelos translates the biblical verb ה"ל,<sup>9</sup> not only for what it contributes to our understanding of the transla-

5. E.g., for the influence of Targum Onqelos on a modern Jewish English translation, see Harry M. Orlinsky, ed., *Notes on the New Translation of the Torah: A Systematic Account of the Labors and Reasoning of the Committee that Translated the Torah* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1970), passim. For the influence of Targum Onqelos on modern Jewish Neo-Aramaic translations, see Yona Sabar, "Targumic Influence on Jewish Bible Translations in Neo-Aramaic," *AS 1* (2003): 55–65.

6. Louis Jacob Rabinowitz, "Onkelos and Aquila," *EncJud*<sup>2</sup> 15:433–34; Tal, "Role of Targum Onqelos," 159–62; Willem F. Smelik, "The Faces of Aquila," in idem, *Rabbi, Language and Translation in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 434–99.

7. Abraham Berliner, *Targum Onkelos: Text nach Editio Sabbioneta V.J. 1577* (Berlin: Gorzelanczyk, 1884), vol. 2; Yaḥya Qorah, מרפא לשון, printed in the Yemenite edition of the Pentateuch כתר התורה ספר, commonly referred to as the התאג הגדול (Jerusalem: Yosef Ḥasid, 1970); Samuel David Luzzatto, *Philonexus, sive de Onkelosi Chaldaica Pentateuchi versione, Dissertatio hermeneutico-critica* [מאמר מחקרי על תרגום] (Vienna: Anton Schmid, 1830) [Hebrew]; Rafael B. Posen, *The Consistency of Targum Onkelos' Translation* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2004) [Hebrew].

8. Robert Hayward, "The Memra of YHWH and the Development of its Use in Targum Neofiti 1," *JJS* 25 (1974): 412–18; Bernard Grossfeld, "The Relationship Between Biblical Hebrew ברח and נוס and Their Corresponding Aramaic Equivalents in the Targum – אפך, ערק, אול, אפך, ערק: A Preliminary Study in Aramaic-Hebrew Lexicography," *ZAW* 91 (1979): 107–23; Michael Klein, "Converse Translation: A Targumic Technique," *Bib* 57 (1986): 515–37; David M. Golomb, "The Targumic Renderings of the Verb *l'hištaḥ'wôt*: A Targumic Translation Convention," in "*Working with No Data*": *Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin*, ed. David M. Golomb with the assistance of Susan T. Hollis (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 105–18.

9. The Targum will be cited according to the edition of Alexander Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic: The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos* (Leiden: Brill, 1992). The supralinear Babylonian vocalization in Sperber's edition is presented here with the corresponding Tiberian vowel signs. The data for this study were gathered through Accord-

tion technique of Onqelos, but also for what light it might shed on the use of the Hebrew verb and on the importance of the comparative and philological method for biblical studies.

The verb הִלִּיךְ is attested more than 310 times in the Pentateuch, primarily in the *qal* stem, eleven times in the *hithpael*, and eight times in the *hiphil*. This constitutes a sizeable database for examination. Three verbal roots usually translate the forms of הִלִּיךְ: הוֹרֵךְ (*peal*), הִלִּיךְ (*pael*), and אָזַל (*peal*).<sup>10</sup> There is general consistency in their use and distribution.<sup>11</sup>

## II. THE DATA

### 1. הוֹרֵךְ

The verbal root הוֹרֵךְ is attested in Aramaic only in *peal* and only in the imperfect and infinitive.<sup>12</sup> It shows up in Old Aramaic, Egyptian Aramaic, Biblical Aramaic, the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls, and in a late manuscript of the Samaritan Targum.<sup>13</sup> In later Aramaic corpora and dialects the root disappears entirely

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ance Bible Software and verified through an examination of Sperber's edition. The concordance compiled by Hayim Jehoshua Kasovsky (*Ozar Leshon Targum Onkelos Concordance*, 2 vols. [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1986]) was also consulted.

10. The *hiphil* of הִלִּיךְ is usually translated by other Aramaic verbs: בִּרְחַח (*peal*; Gen 31:20, 21, 22, 27; Exod 14:5); גִּלְיִי (*aphel*; Deut 28:36); דִּבְרִיךְ (*pael*; Exod 14:21; Lev 26:13; Deut 8:2,15; 29:4), and יִבְרִיךְ (*aphel*; Num 17:11). Only once does one find the use of הִלִּיךְ (*pael*; Exod 2:9), which translates the irregular Hebrew *hiphil* form הִילִיכִי. On possible exegetic or midrashic reasons for the translation, see Posen, *Consistency*, 90–91. See also Grossfeld, "Relationship."

11. A glance at Targum Jonathan to the Former Prophets reveals a similar pattern of translating הִלִּיךְ by הוֹרֵךְ, הִלִּיךְ, and אָזַל.

12. Though some have viewed the verb as a secondary derivation from הִלִּיךְ (e.g., Gustaf Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinsichen Aramäisch*, 2nd ed. [Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1927], 317), there is no evidence for the elision or assimilation of *lamed* in Aramaic (the example of what looks like assimilation in יִסַּק 'he will go up' from סִלַּם is probably the result of attraction to its antonym יִחַוּ 'he will go down' from חָוָה), and thus is it better to assume a different root, viz., medial-*w/y*, as suggested by Theodor Nöldeke, "Die aramäischen Papyri von Assuan," *ZA* 20 (1907): 142; and Hans Bauer and Pontus Leander, *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1927), 144. Cf. Bembry (in this volume) for an argument supporting a secondary derivation from הִלִּיךְ.

13. Steven E. Fassberg, "Salient Features of the Verbal System in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings on the Conference of the Aramaic Texts from Qumran in Aix-en-France 20 June – 2 July 2008*, ed. Katell Bertholet and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, STDJ 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 69–70.

and is replaced by *אז"ל*. There are sixty-five examples of *הו"ך* in Targum Onqelos.

(a) It translates the imperfect (indicative and modal uses) of the verb *הל"ך*, e.g.:

Gen 33:12

ואמר ניטול ונהך ונהך לקבלך  
MT ויאמר נסעה ונלכה ואלכה לנגדך

Exod 32:23

עיביד לנא דחלן דיהקן קדמנא  
MT עשה לנו אלהים אשר ילכו לפנינו

Exod 32:34

הא מלאכי יהך קדמך  
MT הנה מלאכי ילך לפניך

Deut 20:6

ומן גברא דנצב כרמא יהך ויתוב לביתה  
MT ומי־האיש אשר־נטע כרם ולא חללו ילך וישב לביתו

In two passages it translates the imperfect of the verb *בו"א*:

Gen 20:13

לכל אתר דנהך לתמן  
MT אל כל־המקום אשר נבוא שמה

Exod 18:23

על אתריה יהך בשלם  
MT על־מקמו יבא בשלום

(b) It translates *wāw*-consecutive forms expressing the future, e.g.:

Lev 26:23

ואם באלין תתרדון למימרי ותהכון קדמי בקשיו  
MT ואם־באלה לא תוסרו לי והלכתם עמי קרי

Lev 26:27–28

ואם בדא לא תקבלון למימרי ותהכון קדמי בקשיו ונהך עמכון בתקוף רגו  
MT ואם־בזאת לא תשמעו לי והלכתם עמי בקרי: והלכתי עמכם בהמת־קרי

Deut 26:2

ותשוי בסלא ותהך לאתרא  
MT ושמת בטנא והלכת אלי־המקום

(c) In one example it follows a *wāw*-consecutive form that continues a series of imperatives:

Gen 19:2

זורו כען לבית עבדכון וביתו ואסחו רגליכון ותקדמון ותהכוון לאורחכון  
 סורוֹנָא אַל־בֵּית עַבְדְּכֶם וְלִינוּ וְרַחְצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁכַּמְתֶּם וְהִלַּכְתֶּם לְדַרְכְּכֶם  
 MT

(d) It translates the infinitive construct, e.g.:

Exod 4:21

בְּמַהְרָךְ לַמַּתֵּב לַמְצָרִים  
 בְּלִכְתָּךְ לְשׁוּב מִצְרַיִמָּה  
 MT

Deut 2:7

סופיק לך צורכך בְּמַהְרָךְ ית מדברא רבא הדין  
 יִדְעַ לְכַתְּךָ אֶת־הַמְדַבֵּר הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה  
 MT

Deut 8:6

לְמַהְרָךְ באורחון דתקנן קדמוהי  
 לְלַכְתָּ בְּדַרְכֵי  
 MT

(e) The infinitive מהך occurs also in non-translational additions:

Gen 49:6

ברוהון לא הות נפשי באתכנושיהון לְמַהְרָךְ לא נחתית מן יקרי  
 בְּסֹדֶם אֶל־תִּבְאֵ נַפְשִׁי בְקֶהְלֶם אֶל־תִּחַד כְּבִדִּי  
 MT

Lev 16:21

וישלח ביד גבר דומין לְמַהְרָךְ לַמְדַבְּרָא  
 וְשִׁלַּח בְּיַד־אִישׁ עֲתִי הַמְדַבֵּרָה  
 MT

Deut 33:18

ויששכר בְּמַהְרָךְ לַמְעַבֵּד זמני מועדיא בירושלם  
 וְיִשְׁשַׁכֵּר בְּאֵהְלִיךְ  
 MT

## 2. ה־ל"ך

The verb ה־ל"ך occurs twenty-nine times and only in the *pael* stem. It first shows up in Official Aramaic, continues into both Eastern and Western Late Aramaic, and survives into Western Neo-Aramaic (Ma'lula, Bax'a, and Jubb'adin). Unlike הו"ך, its forms are not limited to translating the imperfect and the infinitive construct. Furthermore, ה־ל"ך has an inherent lexical property (*Aktionsart*) of durativity and iterativity, which הו"ך does not.

(a) It translates the *qal* participle, e.g.:

Gen 2:14

ושום נהרא תליתאה דגלת הוא מְהַלִּיךְ לַמְדִּינְחָא דַּאֲתוֹר  
 וְשֵׁם הַנְּהַר הַשְּׁלִישִׁי חַדְקֵל הוּא הַהַלְדֵי קַדְמַת אַשּׁוּר  
 MT

Gen 24:65

ואמרת לעבדא מן גברא דיכי דמהלך בחקלא לקדמותא  
 MT ותאמר אלהעבד מיהאיש הלזוה ההלך בשדה לקראתנו

Exod 2:5

ונחתת בת פרעה למסחי על נהרא ועולימתהא מהלכן על כף נהרא  
 MT ותדר בתפרעה לרחץ עליהאר ונערתיה הלכת עלינד היאר

(b) It translates the *qal* perfect, e.g.:

Exod 14:29

ובני ישראל הליכו ביבשתא  
 MT ובני ישראל הלכו ביבשה

Num 24:1

ולא הלך כזמן בזמן אליהן לקדמות נחשיא  
 MT ולאהלך כפעם-בפעם לקראת נחשים

Deut 4:3

ארי כל גברא דהלך בתר בעלא פעור  
 MT כי כלהאיש אשר הלך אחרי בעלפעור

(c) In one passage the perfect of ה"ך translates a *wāw*-consecutive expressing the past:

Deut 1:19

ונטלנא מחורב והליכנא ית כל מדברא רבא ודחילא ההוא  
 MT ונסע מחרב וילך את כלהמדבר הגדול והגורא ההוא

In two other passages the participle translates a *qal wāw*-consecutive in the past:<sup>14</sup>

Gen 7:18

ותקיפו מיא וסגיאו לחדא על ארעא ומהלכא תיבותא על אפי מיא  
 MT ויגברו המים וירבו מאד עליהארץ ותלך התבה עלפני המים

Exod 9:23

ומהלכא אישתא על ארעא  
 MT ותהלך אש ארצה

(d) It is attested once translating the *qal* infinitive (as opposed to several examples of ה"ו):

Lev 18:4

וית קימי תיטרוון להלכא בהון  
 MT ואתחלקתי תשמרו ללכת בהם

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14. The use of the participle turns the translation of the MT independent clause into a circumstantial clause.

(e) It translates all *hithpael* forms of ה"ל (participle, perfect, imperfect, *wāw*-consecutive, imperative), e.g.:

Gen 3:8

ושמעו ית קל מימרא דה' אלהים מהליך בגינתא  
 MT וישמעו את־קול יהוה אלהים מתהלך בגן

Gen 5:22

והליך חנוך בדחלתא דיזי  
 MT ויתהלך חנוך את־האלהים

Gen 13:17

קום הליך בארעא  
 MT קום התהלך בארץ

Exod 21:19

אם יקום ויהלך בברא  
 MT אם־יקום ויהתהלך בחוץ

(f) In one passage it translates a *hiphil* imperative:

Exod 2:9

הליכי ית רביא הדין  
 MT היליכי את־הילד הזה

### 3. אז"ל

אז"ל is a common general verb of movement ('go, walk, come') that is well attested in all periods and dialects of Aramaic. It occurs one hundred and seventy-eight times in Targum Onqelos for MT ה"ל.

(a) It translates the imperative, e.g.:

Gen 12:1

אזיל לך מארעד ומילדותך ומבית אבוך  
 MT לך־לך מארצך וממולדתך ומבית אביך

Exod 2:8

ואמרת לה בת פרעה אזילי  
 MT ותאמרי לה בת־פרעה לכי

Exod 5:18

וכען אזילו פלוחו  
 MT ועתה לכו עבדו

(b) It translates the infinitive absolute (by either a participle or an infinitive), e.g.:

Gen 8:3

ותבו מֵא מַעַל אֲרַעָא אֲזִילִין וְתִבִין  
 MT וַיָּשׁבוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַלְוָד וַיָּשׁוּב

Gen 26:13

ורבא גברא אֲזִיל סגי ורבי  
 MT וַיֵּלֶךְ הַלְוָד וַיְגַדֵּל

Gen 31:30

וכען מִיָּזֵל אֶזְלֵתא  
 MT וְעַתָּה הֲלֹךְ הֲלִכְתָּ

(c) It translates the infinitive construct with prefixed *lāmed*, e.g.:

Gen 11:31

ונפקו עמהון מיאור דכסדאי לִמְיָזֵל לֵאֲרַעָא דכנען  
 MT וַיֵּצְאוּ אֹתָם מֵאִוֶּר כְּשָׂדִים לְלִכְתָּ אֲרַעָה כְּנַעַן

Exod 3:19

ארי לא ישבוק יתכון מלכא דמצרים לִמְיָזֵל  
 MT כִּי לֹא־יִתְּנוּ אֹתְכֶם מִלֶּךְ מִצְרַיִם לְהֵלֶךְ

Exod 13:21

לִמְיָזֵל ביממא ובליליא  
 MT לְלִכְתָּ יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה

(d) It translates the imperfect and *wāw*-consecutive forms expressing the future (indicative and modal), e.g.:

Gen 3:14

על מעך תִּיזִיל ועפרא תיכול כל יומי חייד  
 MT עַל־גִּחְזֹנְךָ תֵּלֵךְ וְעַפְרָא תֹאכַל כָּל־יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ

Gen 24:58

וקרו לרבקה ואמרו לה הִתְיָזֵלִין עם גברא הדין ואמרת איזיל  
 MT וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְרִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הֲתֵלְכִי עִם־הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וְתֹאמְרִי אֵלָיו

Gen 34:17

ואם לא תקבלון מננא למגזר ונדבר ית ברתנא וְנִזְיָל  
 MT וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁמַעוּ אֵלֵינוּ לְהַמּוֹל וְלִקְחָנוּ אֶת־בָּתְנוּ וְהִלְכָנוּ

Gen 45:28

אִיזִיל ואחזיניה  
 MT אֲלֵכֶה וְאֶרְאֶנּוּ

(e) It translates the perfect and *wāw*-consecutive forms expressing the past, e.g.:

Gen 13:3

ואזל למטלנוהי  
 MT וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמִסְעֵי

Gen 31:19

ולבן אָזל למיגו ית עניה  
 MT וְלִבְנוֹ הַלֵּד לְגִזּוֹ אֶת־צֹאֲנֵהּ

Num 22:21

וזריו את אתניה וְאָזל עם רברבי מואב  
 MT וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת־אֲתָנֹהּ וַיֵּלֶדְ עִם־שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב

Num 32:41

ויאיר בר מנשה אָזל וכבש ית כפרניהון  
 MT וַיֵּאִיר בְּרַמְנִשָּׁה הַלֵּד וַיִּלְכַּד אֶת־חֻוְתֵיהֶם

(f) It translates a *wāw*-consecutive form continuing an imperative:

Exod 17:5

סב בידך וְתִזְוִל  
 MT קַח בְּיָדְךָ וְהִלַּכְתָּ

Though *אזל* does not have an inherent lexical property of durativity and iterativity like *הל"ך*, it is used sometimes in durative or iterative contexts, and it may translate a participle, imperfect, infinitive absolute, and infinitive construct, as seen in some of the examples above as well as below:

Gen 13:5

ואף ללוט דְאָזיל עים אברהם הוּ ען ותורין ומשכנין  
 MT וְגַם־לְלוֹט הֵהֱלִיךְ אֶת־אַבְרָם הֵיָהּ צֹאֲן־וּבָקָר וְאֵהֱלִים

Exod 5:7

לא תוספון למיתן תבנא לעמא למרמי לבנין כמיאתמלי ומדקדמוהי אינון יִזְלוּן ויגבובו  
 להון תבנא  
 לא תאסֶפּוּן לָהֶן תְּבוֹן לְעַם לְלָבֹן הַלְבָנִים כְּתִמּוֹל שְׁלִשָּׁם הֵם יִלְכוּ וְקִשְׁשׁוּ לָהֶם תְּבוֹן  
 MT

Gen 12:9

ונטל אברם אָזיל ונטיל לדרומא  
 MT וַיֵּסַע אַבְרָם הַלְוִי וְנָסוּעַ הִגְגָבָה

Exod 13:21

לְמִזְוִל ביממא ובליליא  
 MT לְלִכְתּוֹת יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה

### III. ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY

This short study of the way in which Targum Onqelos translates Hebrew *הל"ך* demonstrates that the translator(s) of the Targum was sensitive to grammatical forms and nuances of the Hebrew verb. In Targum Onqelos three Aramaic verbs *אזל*, *הל"ך*, and *הו"ך* occur where the MT has a form of the verb *הל"ך*. *אזל* is the most frequent, it translates all the different grammatical forms of *הל"ך* (perfect, imperfect, imperative, participle, infinitive construct, infinitive abso-



lute, and *wāw*-consecutive forms), and, thus, is the unmarked translational equivalent. Less common are the Aramaic verbs הו"ך and הל"ך, neither of which is attested translating a Hebrew infinitive absolute. הו"ך and הל"ך overlap in translating the Hebrew imperfect and infinitive construct, and although הו"ך is attested in Aramaic only in the imperfect and infinitive, it is, nonetheless, more than twice as frequent as הל"ך. Of the three Aramaic verbs, it is הל"ך that is marked for durativity and iterativity. This is clear from its occurrences where the Hebrew text has a participle (הלכות, הלכים, הלכת, הלך) and forms of the *hithpael* היתהלך (neither הו"ך nor אז"ל translate היתהלך): the former (participle) is durative by nature and the latter (*hithpael*) may be durative or iterative.

The *pael* of הל"ך is noteworthy in the light of its Biblical Hebrew *piel* cognate, which occurs twenty-five times in the Hebrew Bible, but only in the Prophets and Writings.<sup>15</sup> BDB notes that the Hebrew *piel* הל"ך is "chiefly poet. & late" and in addition to sometimes being synonymous with the *qal*, it also has a durative meaning of 'walking around.'<sup>16</sup> Like the *piel* and *hithpael* of הל"ך,<sup>17</sup> the Aramaic *pael* הל"ך has the same non-telic and durative/iterative force. It may not be coincidence that the late use of the Hebrew *piel*<sup>18</sup> הל"ך is contemporaneous with the Aramaic *pael* הל"ך.

Bauer and Leander viewed הו"ך and אז"ל as suppletive forms.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted, however, that both verbs overlap when translating the imperfect and infinitive construct and that הל"ך is also partially suppletive with both verbs. In addition, הו"ך and אז"ל overlap to a limited extent with הל"ך in marking durativity.<sup>20</sup>

15. In the Targum to the Prophets, the occurrences of Hebrew הל"ך in *piel* are translated three times by *pael* הל"ך (1 Kgs 21:27; Isa 59:9, and Ezek 18:9) and in a fourth passage there is a completely different reading (Hab 3:11).

16. BDB, 235. Other modern lexicons similarly translate the *piel* forms of הל"ך as non-telic and durative: e.g., 'move about' (*HALOT* 247), 'wandeln' (Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*<sup>18</sup>, 277), 'go about' (*DCH* 2:556).

17. On the use of *piel* and *hithpael* with the same meaning, see G. Bergsträsser, *Hebräische Grammatik* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929), 2:98; E. A. Speiser, "The Durative Hithpa'el: A *tan*-Form," *JAOS* 75 (1955): 118–19.

18. *Piel* הל"ך is common in Second Temple Period Hebrew: it occurs in Ben Sira, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and Tannaitic Hebrew.

19. Bauer and Leander, *Grammatik*, 144.

20. That אז"ל and הו"ך are not exact synonyms can be seen in the Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran where both verbs occur side by side, קום הלך ואזל (1Q20 XXI 13; the first two verbs echo and, in fact, translate the biblical בארץ היתהלך Gen 13:17), as well as in the following example from Targum Jonathan, where both occur in the same verse translating Biblical Hebrew הל"ך, but one (הל"ך) occurs where the Hebrew verb is durative and the other (אז"ל) occurs when the Hebrew verb is not:

2 Sam 2:29

ואבנר וגברוהי תליכו במישרא כל ליליא הוא ועברו ית ירדנא ואזלו כל בתרון

MT ואבנר וְגַבְרֹהֵי תִלְכּוּ בְּמִישְׁרָא כָּל לַיְלִיָּא הוּא וְעִבְרוּ יְתַרְדְּנָא וְאָזְלוּ כָּל בְּתָרְוֹן

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## 6

### Inscribed in Vocality

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M. O'Connor maintained that much biblical poetry appears "comparably close to the oral poetic situation"<sup>1</sup> and recently I have tried to elaborate this idea, by detailing and specifying the nature of the orality that informs so much of the Bible's poetry.<sup>2</sup> To state that the roots of biblical verse are oral in nature will elicit little surprise. After all, it has now been over a century since H. Gunkel started articulating his program of form criticism, at the heart of which stood the unshakable conviction that the poems and stories of ancient Israel and Judah emerged initially as oral productions.<sup>3</sup> The recent spate of monographs in the field on the broad topic of orality and literacy has underscored the overwhelming and thoroughgoing orality of ancient Israelite and Judahite culture in general.<sup>4</sup> Here I consider the textuality that eventually preserves this poetry and

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1. M. O'Connor, "Parallelism," in *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Alex Preminger and T. V. F. Brogan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 878.

2. F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp, "An Informing Orality: Biblical Poetic Style," in idem, *On Biblical Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 233–325. The present essay is a slightly adapted version of material from that chapter. It is a pleasure to offer it in celebration of the life and work of my good friend and colleague, Jo Ann Hackett. In particular, my reflections here on the textuality of biblical poetry are meant to honor Jo Ann's own formative contributions to our philological understanding of the textuality of the biblical world, as epitomized, above all, in her work on the Balaam texts from Deir 'Alla.

3. Hermann Gunkel's most elaborate statement on the topic comes in his *The Legends of Genesis*, trans. W. H. Carruth (Chicago: Open Court, 1901). But the assumption pervades most of his writings from the turn of the century on. For a thorough and critical overview of Gunkel and his scholarship, see Martin J. Buss, "Gunkel in His Context," in idem, *Biblical Form Criticism in Its Context*, JSOTSup 274 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 209–62. Both Walter J. Ong (*Orality and Literacy: The Technology of the Word* [London: Methuen, 1982], 173) and R. C. Culley ("An Approach to the Problem of Oral Tradition," *VT* 13 [1963]: 113) credit Gunkel's influence with the widespread assumption in the field about the informing orality of so much biblical literature.

4. See esp. Susan Niditch, *Oral World and Written Word: Ancient Israelite Literature* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996); William Schniedewind, *How the Bible*

suggest that, contrary to the typical position of modern biblical scholarship, the textuality of biblical poetry is an “emergent” form of textuality, a textuality forged at the interface with orality, and thus a textuality in which the traditional techniques and tropes of orality remain critical to the production and successful reception of poetry. That is, in a number of important respects biblical poems, even once written down, are decidedly more oral and aural than not.

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To describe the textuality of biblical poetry as “emergent” is to emphasize its nascent and non-static nature and to resist the idea that mere textuality immediately gives way to fully-fledged literate or monolithic conceptions. To be sure, the modern literary study of the Bible almost from its very inception with R. Lowth has proceeded (mostly tacitly) as if the texts it studies were in fact just like modern, post-Gutenberg texts, and though the achievements gained from such an angle of vision have been considerable,<sup>5</sup> so too has been the cost, not least in the misapprehension of the historical phenomenon in view. However sublime we judge biblical poems to be, they are the products of what A. N. Doane calls a distinctly “interfacial moment”:

At certain discrete historical moments a culture that has adopted writing as a privileged or as a secondary mode for the production and preservation of texts may form an “interface” ... with a primary(ily) oral culture or with an oral strain of culture within itself. An interface is the moment when the oral text and the technology of literacy are capable of penetrating and interpreting each other. The result of these encounters is the gradual undermining of the oral culture by the power of writing and literacy. Once it comes into contact with writing, the orality of oral cultures tends to bifurcate into written traces, the production of high formalism being replaced by the power of writing, and into ordinary language which is not considered worth preserving in writing. At the same time, during these interfacial moments (moments which may last for months, years, centuries—even millennia, as in the case of India), many performative situations may migrate into written residue. These “oral-residual texts” are always particular reflexes of specific, individual historical encounters

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*Became a Book* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); idem, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Seth L. Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

5. The general effectiveness of literary criticism practiced on oral-derived poetry is not surprising. Oralists (e.g., Paul Zumthor, “The Text and the Voice,” *New Literary History* 16 [1984]: 67–92; Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance, and Social Context* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977]) often stress the linguistic sameness of oral and written verbal art and even the overlap in genres and techniques—especially since so much written verbal art was originally birthed in orality.

at the oral/written interface and constitute the body of the various “oral literatures” available for study in contemporary lettered culture.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of the Bible, the interfacial moment was prolonged—“biblical literature seems for the most part to belong to a transitional stage during which there developed an interplay among oral tradition, MS tradition, and memory”<sup>7</sup>—and the written poetic texts that were produced, though neither fully oral nor fully written, nevertheless do remain (to use again O’Connor’s phrase) “comparably close to the oral poetic situation.” The chiefest evidence here is the prevailing vocality of written biblical poems. However ultimately composed, biblical poems, like their archaic and classical Greek and medieval European vernacular (e.g., English, German, French) counterparts, were written to be read aloud, and thus heard. That is, reading in ancient Israel and Judah and in the greater southern Levant, certainly through the Persian period, was normally a vocal practice and publication (reception) inevitably still performative and aural in nature—biblical poems were distinctly more dependent on the ear than the eye for their reception.

This state of affairs is now widely observed and follows from various considerations.<sup>8</sup> For example, as many have noticed, the etymology of the BH verbal root that becomes used with the meaning ‘to read’,  $\sqrt{QR}$ , betrays its deep rootedness in oral culture in its base root meaning ‘to call, cry out, make a noise’—a meaning it retains throughout the biblical period: for example, “... all the people ... called (*qārə ’û*) a fast .... And then Baruch read (*wayyiqrā*) in the scroll the words of Jeremiah ... in the hearing of all the people” (Jer 36:9–10). Further, the representations of reading preserved in the Bible routinely make the vocality of the reading experience explicit, as in Jer 36:9–10. Most spectacular is the couplet from Isa 29:18: “On that day the deaf shall hear / the words of the scroll” (NRSV). Vocal performance is also in view in these lines from Habakkuk: “Write down (*kəṭōb*) the vision and make it plain on tablets / so that a herald (lit. ‘a crier’, *qōrē[’]*) might run with it (and proclaim it)” (2:2). One reads ‘in the hearing’ (*bə ’oznê*) of an audience (e.g., Exod 24:7; Deut 31:11; Jer 36:6, 10, 13–15, 21; 2 Kgs 19:14–16) or ‘before’ (*neged, lipnê*) one (e.g., Josh 8:35; 2 Kgs 22:10; Esth 6:1). Words are proclaimed from the ‘mouth’ (*pe[h]*),

6. A. N. Doane, “Oral Texts, Intertexts, and Intratexts: Editing Old English,” in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. J. Clayton and E. Rothstein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 79.

7. R. B. Coote, “Tradition, Oral, OT,” *IDBSup*, 917.

8. E.g., Colette Sirat, *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages*, trans. Nicholas de Lange (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 147–48; Daniel Boyarin, “Placing Reading in Ancient Israel and Medieval Europe,” in idem, *Sparks of the Logos: Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics*, Brill Reference Library of Rabbinic Judaism (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 59–88; van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 12, 14; William Doan and Terry Giles, *Prophets, Performance, and Power: Performance Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 31; Robert D. Miller, II, *Oral Tradition in Ancient Israel* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 110.

Josh 1:8) and ‘muttered, mumbled’ vocally ( $\sqrt{HGH}$ ) even if alone (Ps 1:2; cf. Josh 1:8).

What has not been emphasized as much is the very vocalicity required by the manner of inscription itself, how the poetry was physically encoded on the page (as it were). The “old Hebrew” script (like all other forms of vernacular alphabetic writing in the Levant, e.g., Phoenician, Aramaic) was always consonantal. This is a reflection both of alphabetic writing’s genealogical debt to Egyptian writing and of the syllable structure of West Semitic (WS) languages more generally, which require all syllables to start with a consonant (e.g., *CV*, *CVC*).<sup>9</sup> As a consequence, such consonantalism necessitates at the very least active vocalization in order to render the consonantal text as spoken language. The reader must provide vowel sounds and articulate syllable structure, stress contours, and actualize any other features that make any (spoken) language linguistically comprehensible. Every written lexeme requires on the part of a reader literal vocalization in order for the graphic symbols on a potsherd or a piece of papyrus to be translated into a Hebrew word—to turn *mlk* into a linguistically meaningful word, *melek* (<\**malk-*) ‘king’ (*Lach* 3:19) or to distinguish *zr* ‘/zərōā’/ ‘arm’ (*Arad* 88:2) from *zr* ‘/zera’/ ‘seed’ (*Lach* 5:10).<sup>10</sup> The advent of *matres lectionis* begins to provide some minimal readerly cues for vocalization (e.g., ‘*rr*, *BLei* 3:1; cf. ‘*rwr*, *Silw* 1:2 for /‘arūr ‘cursed!’), but these never become widespread prior to the inscription of the manuscripts found at Qumran.<sup>11</sup> Such consonantalism is a part of WS poetic textuality from the beginning of the inscription of vernacular poetry in an alphabetic script at Late Bronze Ugarit and is not substantially modified for ocular reception until the introduction of sub- and super-linear vowel points (e.g., Aleppo Codex [A],

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9. The supposed perfection of the alphabet by the Greeks through the addition of vowel letters (a kind of modification also widely attested in Levantine alphabetic writing) is nothing other than the necessary fine tuning of a consonantal-based writing system for a language in which syllables may start with vowels. As Roger D. Woodard observes, in such an environment “vowel representation would have been the *sine qua non* of writing” (*Greek Writing from Knossos to Homer: A Linguistic Interpretation of the Origin of the Greek Alphabet and the Continuity of Ancient Greek Literacy* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997], 252).

10. I use the Tiberian vocalizations as a convenient means of distinguishing lexemes. The actual historical pronunciations would have been different (though uncertain), e.g., Tiberian *zera* ‘< \**zar*’ ‘seed’; Tiberian *zərōā* ‘< \**zirā*’ ‘arm’; Tiberian ‘*arūr* < \**arūr* ‘cursed’.

11. Cf. M. C. A. Macdonald, “Literacy in an Oral Environment,” in *Writing and Ancient Near Eastern Society: Papers in Honour of Alan R. Millard*, ed. Piotr Bienkowski, Christopher Mee, and Elizabeth Slater, LHBOTS 426 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 91. For details more generally, consult Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Early Hebrew Orthography: A Study of the Epigraphic Evidence*, AOS 36 (New Haven, CT: AOS, 1952); Ziony Zevit, *Matres Lectionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs*, ASORMS 2 (Cambridge, MA: ASOR, 1980); Sandra Landis Gogel, *A Grammar of Epigraphic Hebrew* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 49–74.

Leningrad Codex [B19<sup>A</sup>]).<sup>12</sup>

Further, a running format (i.e., words divided only by points or the like filling the column or page from right to left margin) would have likely prevailed for writing Hebrew poetry in pre-Hellenistic manuscripts. This follows, on the one hand, from the example of all currently extant written poetic texts in WS from the pre-Hellenistic Levant<sup>13</sup>—the only two currently attested collections of Levantine poetry (the Ugaritic mythological texts and the proverbs of Ahiqar from fifth-century Elephantine), the fragmentary poetic inscription from Kuntillet Ajrud (*KA* 4.2, ca. 800–750 BCE), and the later Aramaic psalm text in Demotic script (Papyrus Amherst 63, ca. third century BCE)—and, on the other hand, from the usual Egyptian practice of writing papyrus rolls (whether verse or prose) in a running format.<sup>14</sup> The latter may be underscored. On all current evidence, poetic texts (verse), like their prosaic counterparts, were written normatively in a running format—that Egyptian practice was the principal model for writing on papyrus and leather at this time and in this region cannot be overemphasized. Such a format is virtually devoid of any kind of punctuation or meta-script conventions to aid readers in navigating sentence contours, let alone mapping larger discourse structures (e.g., poetic lines, paragraphs, stanza or poem boundaries). In such a manner of writing readers need to hear (as they vocalize) the rhythm, syntax, and meaning of words in order to perceive the poetry’s structure. Some aid is provided lexically. For example, the transition to a new topic is sometimes headed by (*w*)’t ‘(and) now’ (e.g., *Arad* 2:1; 40:4; *Lach* 4:2) and direct discourse is often introduced explicitly (e.g., *l’mr* ‘saying’,

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12. In fact, at Ugarit not only does the consonantal manner of transcription implicate extra-textual vocal contribution, but at one point in the Baal Cycle the scribe Ilimilku even inserts an extra-narrative notation (between horizontal lines at *CAT* 1.4.V:42–43) that appears to instruct the reader/reciter to supply the missing messenger type scene from memory (*wṭb lmspr .. ktlakn/ ḡlmm* “And return to the recitation, ‘when the lads/ are sent....’”; cf. *CAT* 1.19.IV:63 [left-hand edge at line 23]; 1.40:35; cf. Mark S. Smith and Wayne T. Pitard, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, vol. 2: *Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU/CAT 1.3–1.4*, VTSup 114 [Leiden: Brill, 2009], 572–74). This suggests that a chief function at least of the one extant written copy of the Baal Cycle (and likely the other mythological texts inscribed by Ilimilku as well) was as an aid to memory, as John Herington supposes for written versions of early Greek song texts—a mostly “mechanical means of preserving [the poems’] wording between performances” (*Poetry into Drama: Early Tragedy and the Greek Poetic Tradition* [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985], 45). The notation makes the requirement of extra-textual input by a reader explicit.

13. On current evidence, the kind of special formatting for (some) poetic texts exhibited at Qumran does not likely arise earlier than the fourth or late fifth century BCE. For details, see F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp, “Space, Line, and the Written Biblical Poem in Texts from the Judean Desert,” in *Puzzling Out the Past: Studies in Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures in Honor of Bruce Zuckerman*, ed. Marilyn J. Lundberg, Steven Fine, and Wayne T. Pitard, CHANE 55 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 19–61, esp. 36–40.

14. Richard Parkinson and Stephen Quirke, *Papyrus* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 46.



*Lach* 3:14, 20–21; 6:4–5, 9). These, too, are the telltale signs of active readerly oralization and contrast distinctly with visually oriented cues such as lineal indentation (e.g., for marking new paragraphs) or quotation marks (for distinguishing quoted speech or direct discourse) that evolve to maximize fluidity for ocular processing. The word divider itself, which is characteristic of writing in the “old Hebrew” script (though by no means unfailingly systematic),<sup>15</sup> is one kind of visually oriented meta-script convention—an early precursor to the period, comma, and colon that eventually develop to guide predominantly optically oriented—sight!—reading in the West. In this case, then, the consonantal components of a word (or closely bound phrase) are graphically distinguished for readers.<sup>16</sup> Such writing is practical and decodable even without maximal vocalizing for many everyday uses in relatively short texts, for example, as in ownership markers, basic record keeping (e.g., Samaria ostraca), short letters, or memoranda (e.g., Arad, Lachish). This kind of readerly ability may well lie behind Hoshayahu’s boast in Lachish 3 (viz., “By the life of Yahweh, no one has tried to read for me a letter—ever!”, lines 9–10). However, for more extended and complex texts, whether poems or prose narratives, the “old” Hebrew-script language is mostly useless absent a reader with prior extra-textual knowledge of the text in question and of how to perform it.<sup>17</sup> A. Ford offers a similar assessment of written manuscripts of early Greek song texts: “Altogether, a lyric song text of the archaic period was fairly useless to anyone who had not already heard the song.”<sup>18</sup> The same point has been made about written versions of Anglo-Saxon poetry from the Middle Ages.<sup>19</sup> In fact, one

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15. Dobbs-Allsopp, “Space, Line,” 36–40 (with bibliography).

16. Cf. Macdonald, “Literacy in an Oral Environment,” 90.

17. So also Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 5; cf. van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 21–22.

18. Andrew Ford, “From Letters to Literature: Reading the ‘Song Culture’ of Classical Greece,” in *Written Texts and the Rise of Literate Culture in Ancient Greece*, ed. Harvey Yunis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 21; cf. Herington, *Poetry into Drama*, 44. In fact, the sparseness (i.e., lack of meta-script cues) of early writing generally meant that readers inevitably needed to bring an abundance of non/extra-textual knowledge (e.g., content, melody) to bear on the reading of written texts, see F. G. Kenyon, *Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951), 68–69; M. W. Green, “The Construction and Implementation of the Cuneiform Writing System,” *Visual Language* 15 (1981): 359–60; Katherine O’Brien O’Keefe, *Visible Song: Transitional Literacy in Old English Verse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), x–xi, 21; M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1992), 10–11; Parkinson and Quirke, *Papyrus*, 46; Paul Saenger, *Space between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 1–51. Parkes’s examples of how readers of Latin negotiated the bare *scriptio continua* of written texts are also illuminating for imagining analogous ways in which readers of ancient Hebrew verse might have gone about negotiating non-specially formatted manuscripts.

19. Parkes, *Pause and Effect*, 9, 11, 13–17, 18, 97–98; Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: “Grammatica” and Literary Theory, 350–1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 69–72; O’Brien O’Keefe, *Visible Song*, 3, 186–87; Zumthor,

idiom preserved in BH for the ability to read is literally ‘to know the document’ ( $\sqrt{YD}$  ‘to know’ + *sēper*, ‘document, scroll’): “The vision of all this has become for you like the words of a sealed document (*dibrē hassēper heḥātūm*). When it is given to one who knows the document (*yōdēa ‘hassēper*), with the command, ‘Read this (*qārā’ nā’-zeh*),’ he says, ‘I am unable for it is sealed.’ And when the document (*hassēper*) is given to one who does not know the document (*‘āšer lō’-yāda’ sēper*), saying, ‘Read this (*qārā’ nā’-zeh*),’ he says, ‘I do not know the document (*lō’ yāda’ tī sēper*)’” (Isa 29:11–12).<sup>20</sup>

One tangible, albeit belated, measure of the difficulty caused by this spare manner of writing—just the spatialized words (set off by word dividers) with little else—is the consternation often expressed by contemporary biblical scholars over the amount of biblical poetry found in the received tradition (MT) in a running format (esp. in the Latter Prophets), which can make it difficult to know (and always contestable!) where line or couplet boundaries are, or to distinguish poems from other poems (or sections of poems) or even from passages of narrative prose. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that the general lack of special formatting for biblical poems may mean that the West’s familiar distinction between prose and poetry (verse) is not appropriate to this material.<sup>21</sup> However, in my view, it is more likely a bout of (mostly unintended) ethnocentrism that gives rise to such consternation in the first place, for two reasons associated with the graphic layout of the text. First, this western view is problematic because of its hyper-literate orientation, which assumes all writing is optimized for sight reading. Accordingly, poems are therefore thought to be somehow naturally distinguishable in writing from prose. Second, it encounters difficulties emerging from the specificity of how this distinction is supposed to be realized: verse is to be written out stichically (i.e., in lines). But writing everywhere is a local and highly culture-specific technology.<sup>22</sup> There are no universal rules for its development. Scripts and meta-script conventions that are optimally fashioned for fluid sight reading with a minimum of presumed extra-textual knowledge are relatively late phenomena and everywhere historically

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“Text and the Voice,” 67; Carol Braun Pasternack, *The Textuality of Old English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 8–12, 21–28; A. N. Doane, “The Ethnography of Scribal Writing and Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Scribe as Performer,” *Oral Tradition* 9 (1994): 431; cf. Jeffrey Kittay and Wlad Godzich, *The Emergence of Prose: An Essay in Prosaics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 15.

20. Compare the rendering of NRSV, of which mine is a more literal and wooden adaptation: “The vision of all this has become for you like the words of a sealed document. If it is given to those who can read, with the command, ‘Read this,’ they say, ‘We cannot, for it is sealed.’ And if it is given to those who cannot read, saying, ‘Read this,’ they say, ‘We cannot read.’”

21. Esp. James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

22. Dobbs-Allsopp, “Space, Line,” esp. 19–51; and now also idem, “‘Verse, Properly So Called’: The Line in Biblical Poetry,” in idem, *On Biblical Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 14–94.

tractable. And the stichic lineation of verse that is now ubiquitous in the West is the cultural heir to one very specific tradition, that of ancient Greece. Other conventions for writing out verse are amply attested historically, and even in ancient Greece verse was not always specially distinguished in writing (e.g., Timotheos papyrus, ca. fourth century BCE). There are surely genres in the Bible that defy being neatly characterized as poetry or prose, but they are not so many. And poetry is among the world's oldest and most widely attested forms of verbal art, oral and written. To suppose its presence in the Bible, while requiring substantiation (so Lowth), is hardly a cultural imposition.<sup>23</sup>

In any case, the troubles for even highly educated scholars (i.e., readers with a high degree of extra-textual knowledge) provoked by the Masoretic consonantal script and running formats<sup>24</sup> are at least emblematic of those faced by ancient readers of Hebrew poems set out in a similarly “bare” script-language—“fairly useless” to anyone who did not already know the poem. Consider what is likely our earliest extant bit of written Hebrew poetry, the fragmentary ink on plaster inscription from Kuntillet Ajrud (*KA* 4.2, ca. 800–750 BCE).<sup>25</sup> The script is Phoenician, which is consonantal like the “old Hebrew” script (e.g., *ʾrṣ* for *ʾeres*, ‘earth’ [*<\**ʾars-], line 4; *mlḥm*<sup>26</sup> for *milḥāmā*, ‘battle’ [*<\**malḥamat-], line 5). Moreover, the text evidences the use of word dividers (e.g., *br ʾš. wbrḥ. ʾl. br[m]*, line 2), and is elaborated in a running format. The latter should be underscored. Even if the editors are correct in their estimate that “it does not appear that much of the line width is missing,”<sup>27</sup> several of the inked lines appear to contain more than one poetic unit. *KA* 4.2:2 is perhaps the most telling. A single poetic line is preserved in the middle of the line: *wbrḥ. ʾl. br[m]* “and when El shines forth from on hi[gh].” Compare Deut 33:2, which similarly portrays the march of the Divine Warrior

23. To the contrary, to suppose that the general corpus of biblical poetry as known since Lowth is something different altogether (and not poetry as currently understood) requires at the very least sustained and ethnographically informed argumentation.

24. These manuscripts also include vowel pointing and accentuation marks, additional readerly helps not present in the earlier manuscript tradition.

25. Shmuel Aḥituv, Esther Eshel, and Ze'ev Meshel, “The Inscriptions,” in *Kuntillet 'Ajrud (Ḥorvat Teman): An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*, ed. Ze'ev Meshel (Jerusalem: IES, 2012), 73–142, esp. 110–17. For convenience, I cite the reading of the *editio princeps*, though there remain matters (esp. epigraphic in nature) at dispute. I query some of these in the notes.

26. Only a small part of an oblique vertical stroke is visible in the published photographs, which the editors interpret as the downstroke (or leg) of a *hē*. P. K. McCarter suggests interpreting it as a word divider (reading: *mlḥm.*), which would be consistent with Phoenician orthography. The final *-ā* (instead of *-at*) “shows that the language of the text is Heb[rew]” (P. Kyle McCarter, notes to “Kuntillet 'Ajrud: Plastered Wall Inscription,” *COS* 2.47B, p. 173 n. 5).

27. Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, “Inscriptions,” 110. The editors also rightly emphasize that “it is impossible for us to know the full size of the intact inscription.” The possibility of longer inked lines should not be dismissed, cf. *KA* 4.3:7 (preserved *in situ*), also fragmentary, but is a bit longer than any of the preserved lines in *KA* 4.2.

from the southland:

<i>yhwh missīnay bā(')</i>	Yahweh came from Sinai
<i>wāzārah miššē'ir lāmō</i>	and shone upon them from Seir
<i>hōpīa' mēhar pā(')rān</i>	he appeared from Mount Paran
	(cf. Judg 5:4; Hab 3:3; Ps 68:8)

The first extant phrase in *KA* 4.2:2, *br'š.*, ‘with/in shaking’, must be a part of a preceding poetic line, referencing the shaking and quaking of the earth and mountains that routinely accompanies Yahweh’s theophany in the Bible (e.g., Judg 5:4; 2 Sam 22:8=Ps 18:8; Ps 68:9; 77:19; cf. Isa 13:13; Jer 4:24; 10:10; Joel 4:16; Nah 1:5; Ps 60:4).<sup>28</sup> And if the editors are correct in seeing a mention of Yahweh in the last preserved letters in the line ([*y*]*hw*[*h*]), they are also correct in assuming that it must be “the beginning of a new” poetic unit.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the preserved portion of *KA* 4.2:2 contains parts of three separate poetic lines without any graphic indication of the poetic division.

*KA* 4.2:3 is similar. The bulk of what is extant (*wymšn. hrm. wydkn. [g]bnm*,<sup>30</sup> “and the mountains melt and the peaks are crushed”) may be construed as either a single poetic line (cf. Judg 5:4 [A, B19<sup>A</sup>]) or two short poetic lines composing a couplet (cf. Ps 68:9 [BHS]; Nah 1:5 [BHS]). In either case, part of the head of a *rēš* and a word divider are clearly preserved prior to this material, and likely belong to yet another poetic line. Finally, *KA* 4.2:5, *hkn [l]brk. b'l. bym. mlhḡmh* (“prepare to bless Baal on the day of battle”), if taken as a single poetic line, is fairly long by biblical poetic standards. Nevertheless, the inked line like the others is likely fragmentary and thus incomplete.<sup>31</sup> So here,

28. Typically, notice of the earth’s quaking follows the commencement of the deity’s march (esp. Judg 5:4; Hab 3:6; Ps 68:9), so perhaps the poetic line contained some parallel mention of the deity’s marching or coming forth amidst (lit. ‘in’) the rumbling of the earth (cf. Job 39:24).

29. Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, “Inscriptions,” 111. The editors actually write “new sentence,” but this is not the pertinent structural unit if this indeed is a poem.

30. [*g*]bnm is the reading of the editors (Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, “Inscriptions,” 110). The use of brackets surrounding the *gīmel* (i.e., [*g*]) is uncertain since the letter is quite visible in figs. 5.55a–b, though, as McCarter observes (“Kuntillet ‘Ajrud,” 173 n. 2), “the letter is a perfect *pe* but unparalleled as a *gīmel*.” He suggests reading *pbnm* as a Hurrian loanword (*pabn-*), ‘mountains’.

31. Certainly, the beginning of the line is broken. And this is likely the case with the end of the line as well, although the parallel phrasing in *KA* 4.2:6 (*lšm 'l. bym. mlh[mh]* “to the name of El on the day of battle”) seems to incline the editors toward thinking that the end of this line is complete (Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, “Inscriptions,” 110). However, the semantics of the phrasing (i.e., blessing) might presume more material is missing—despite the editors’ contention to the contrary (ibid., 114). Blessings addressed to the deity *per se* are not petitionary in nature (Judg 5:2, 9 are not of this kind), though they may be used to motivate divine response to a petition (e.g., Ps 63:5; cf. 2 Sam 22:4=Ps 18:4; Hab 3:17–19; Ps 106:47). Certainly, a request for the deity’s blessing on someone may be petitioned (e.g., *KA* 1:2; 3:1, 6, 9; cf. Ps 28:9; 29:11; 72:15), but this is something quite different. The blessing of the deity here presumably is in grateful

too, more than one poetic unit is contained on the inked line of the inscription. In sum, the format of *KA* 4.2 appears to be the same as for all other extant written poems in alphabetic vernaculars from the pre-Hellenistic Levant, a running format.

Nothing about how this inscription is textualized identifies it as poetry. That knowledge must be brought to the reading process. Scholars have inferred the inscription's poetic content precisely from knowledge of the larger Hebrew poetic tradition. This knowledge includes familiarity with: (a) the formulaic language and high (non-everyday) register of theophanic hymns (e.g., Deut 33:2; Judg 5:4–5; 2 Sam 22:8–16=Ps 18:8–16; Hab 3:3–6; Ps 68:8–9), (b) the basic constraints of Hebrew poetic line structure (compare: *wbẓrh. 'l. br[m]*, *KA* 4.2:2 // *wəzārah miššē'ir lāmō*, Deut 33:2), (c) parallelism and its prominence in Hebrew poetic utterances (e.g., *wymśn. hrm. // wydkn. [g]bnm*, *KA* 4.2:3; *hkn [l]brk. b'l. bym. mlhḡm // ... lšm 'l. bym. mlh[mh]*, *KA* 4.2:5–6), and (d) the customary place of myth in Hebrew poetry (only rarely appearing in prose compositions).<sup>32</sup> We must presume this display inscription anticipated readers already at the time of transcription. Correspondingly, those readers, too, had to bring knowledge of the Hebrew poetic tradition to bear on the reading process. Though for them such knowledge was intrinsic and traditional, it represented what U. Schaefer calls “confirmational discourse falling back on something ‘we all know.’”<sup>33</sup> Moreover, at most this is a textuality that preserves the “words” of the song (so Deut 31:30: *dibrē haššîrâ hazzō[']t*, “the words of this song”; cf. 2 Sam 22:1; Jer 36:2, 4; Ezek 33:32; Ps 137:3), though vowels still need to be supplied in order to fill out the consonantal frames of the script (e.g., *wymśn* [*KA* 4.2:3] indicating /wVymmassūn/, N Impf 3.m.pl. √MSS ‘to melt’; cf. Isa 34:3; Mic 1:4; Ps 97:5). This lexeme-based preservation leaves the poem's larger rhetorical structures (e.g., line breaks, couplets, stanzas), rhythm, and accompanying melody, as in oral verbal art more generally, to be articulated and perceived acoustically, with only the barest of semantic cues as an aid to their discernment and performance. That is, in order to be performed *as poetry*, this text required a reader already in possession of a great deal of pre-/extra-textual knowledge and capable of actively oralizing (i.e., voicing and hearing) the

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response to the Divine Warrior's successful march (e.g., 2 Sam 22:47–51=Ps 18:47–51; Ps 68:20; cf. Ps 31:22; 106:48). Of course, this line could be construed otherwise (e.g., F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions: Texts from the Biblical Period of the Monarchy with Concordance* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005], 286–89). After all, the line is fragmentary and not all the preserved readings are certain. Further, the presence of a word divider (instead of a *hē*, so McCarter) at the end of the preserved material, if correct, would suggest that the inked line likely continues on beyond this point.

32. See Luis Alonso Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, SubBi 11 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1988), 17.

33. Ursula Schaefer, “Hearing from Books: The Rise of Fictionality in Old English Poetry,” in *Vox intexta: Orality and Textuality in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. N. Doane and Carol Braun Pasternack (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 123.

verbal artifact signified by the consonantal text. Only the reader with this background knowledge would have been competent in sounding out the words, discerning and articulating the line structure, hearing the rhythm. This poem, even were it fully preserved, is not reducible to the mere alphabetic marks on plaster—"the phonemic string we call text."<sup>34</sup> Such textuality, by its very failure to fully accommodate a performerless environment (viz., a readerly or literary textuality), remains shaped by and in service to vocal performance and dependent on the extra-textual world in order to be meaningful.

The advent at Qumran of the use of extra spacing for the delimitation of verse units in some written biblical poems is a huge boon for readers.<sup>35</sup> Lines of biblical verse, engineered (initially) to accommodate human memory constraints and vocal capacities, routinely uncoil in clausal or sentential wholes. Therefore, to signify these junctures textually (graphically) is to provide information about verse units and syntactic rhythms and structures that in a running format could only be supplied by active oralization from a reader already familiar with the aural patterns of the poem and prepared to interpret them for a listening audience. Consider the extra spacing setting off *yhwh baṣē(')tākā miššē'ir* in Judg 5:4 (in A or B19<sup>A</sup>) or *'ēlōhīm baṣē(')tākā lipnē' ammekā* in Ps 68:8 (in A), which makes the line structure visually apparent. In contrast, consider the lack of extra spacing for *wəzārah miššē'ir lāmō* in Deut 33:2 (in A) or *wbzrh. 'l. br[m]* in *KA* 4.2:2, where knowledge of line shape must be supplied (and performed) by the reader without any explicit graphic cues. Yet even such special formatting (i.e. with extra spacing supplied) remains relatively spare (and inconsistent) in the information conveyed ocularly, far from that required for the autoreferentiality characteristic of fully written and literate poetic discourse.

In his work on Anglo-Saxon poetry, Doane uses the term "chirograph" to distinguish this kind of bare writing that evolves from a primar(ily) oral context. This type of writing, he notices, remains comparatively close to oral utterances, as it emerges similarly from embodied activity and shows the traces of this emergence (e.g., in the handwriting, individual layout, [in]consistency of word and line division). Chirographs are always unique materially, both in the language material they contain (e.g., full of variation, mechanical errors) and how that language material is laid out and in the actual material used for the writing surface itself: whether potsherd, papyrus, leather, stone, or plaster, no two surfaces are ever exactly alike.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, he emphasizes that chirographs "are 'performative productions' by which a relatively valuable or rare skill (that of the scribe) is brought to bear in a direct communicative link with a reading or

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34. Doane, "Oral Texts," 77.

35. See Dobbs-Allsopp, "Space, Line."

36. Doane, "Oral Texts," 83–87. Pasternack (*Textuality*, 2) uses "inscribed verse" as a means of differentiating the kind of textuality evident in Old English poetic manuscripts from that of oral and printed (and now electronic) compositions—"inscribed" because these texts "inherit significant elements of vocality from their oral forebears and yet address the reader from the pages of manuscripts."

hearing audience that cannot or does not write for itself, in many cases a specific individual or corporate audience (though we in many or most cases do not know who these audiences were).<sup>37</sup>

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Textuality is not everywhere the same but arises and takes on meaning only locally, in culturally and historically specific environments. Biblical poetry is inscribed in vocality, a manner of writing that stubbornly requires extra-textual investment and active vocalization to make sense of what is written, to perform this poetry *as poetry* (for them). To recognize this is an important historical datum. It will also necessarily constrain how contemporary readers engage these poems, if only as a reminder that their textuality is complicated and distinctive, an emergent textuality that both anticipates and differs from (often strikingly so) that which is more familiar to our own post-Gutenberg textual sensibilities. Chief among these differences is the dominantly indexical nature of this poetic discourse, where meaning is not so much found in the text (as in modern, fully literate forms of textuality) but in the context, in a shared discourse everyone is already familiar with. The illumination of such “contextual meaning” is something philology (old and new) is especially well disposed to accomplish.<sup>38</sup> The requirement of active vocalization demanded by the very writtenness of biblical poems, moreover, also resolves a crucial dimension of the orality that informs so much biblical poetry diagnosed by O’Connor. It helps us to see that the “informing orality” of biblical poetry is not only the trace of something in the past, bits of performative contexts that have migrated into a written residue (as Doane emphasizes), though it is this, too. But such signs of orality also point ineluctably to the ongoing relevance of oral semiotics even for the written versions of the poetic texts that have survived in the Bible. That is, the informing orality of biblical poetry is there both because it is a poetry, and thus a style, that emerges out of a primar(il)y oral environment and because oral tradition (with all that this phrase connotes) remains vital to the production and successful vocal reception of this poetry, even once entexted. Said differently, an expressly oral semiotics is still required for written biblical poems, on the one

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37. Doane, “Oral Texts,” 83. It should be emphasized that a running format in particular requires performance (for example, judgment as to where to make line breaks). Similarly, this format remains, like oral verbal art more generally, a distinctly open medium, inviting of performance and re-performance, of taking the words and disposing them to one end at one time and to some other end at another time. Such a writing has not yet achieved the settled, boxed-in character of written poetry in a fully literary textuality.

38. See Sheldon Pollock, “Future Philology? The Fate of a Soft Science in a Hard World,” *Critical Inquiry* 35 (2009): 931–61, esp. 954–56. The contextuality of such “discourse in vocality,” as Schaefer emphasizes, “is mainly to be seen in its semiotic orientation, which is directed externally.” This contextuality contrasts with print-based written and read texts that must be “largely autonomous” from their “nonlinguistic context in order to be meaningful” to their recipients (“Hearing from Books,” 123–24).

hand, because it could hardly have been otherwise for writing poets/scribes for whom the very sensibility of poetry—viz., *šîr*, *māšāl*, *qînâ*—was only traditional and oral. Scribes (at least initially) wrote (down) the oral poetry they knew and in which they were immersed. Writing changes the semiotic equation, but the pace of that change is gradual and nowhere in the biblical poetic corpus does textuality (and the literacy it unleashes) fully overwrite and thus mute the tradition's informing orality. On the other hand, as K. van der Toorn stresses, "the oral delivery of the texts" was also determinative for "their style"<sup>39</sup>—the reception of this poetry was always ultimately aural and thus requiring a semiotics that would facilitate such uptake, a language shaped "to fit the requirements of oral communication and auditory memory."<sup>40</sup> The signs of (an informing) orality in these poetic texts (e.g., short lines, rhythmic speech, parallelism, repetitive phrasing, archaisms, episodic structure), then, are themselves the very evidence of the ongoing importance of orality (*cum* vocality) for biblical poetry and its successful reception and form the core of what may be described as biblical poetic style.

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## PART 2: EPIGRAPHY



## Two Methodological Issues Concerning the Expanded Collection of Early Alphabetic Texts

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The landscape of the study of early alphabetic writing, ca. 1900–900 BCE, has changed significantly over the course of the last fifteen years with the discovery of new inscriptions at Wadi el-Ḥol and Gebel Tingar in Egypt as well as at Kefar Veradim, Tell eš-Šafi, Tel Rehov, Tel Zayit, Tell Beth-Shemesh, Tell el-Far‘ah (S), Khirbet Qeiyafa, and Jerusalem in Canaan,<sup>1</sup> plus the relocation in museum collections of two texts from the western Sinai and one from Lahun, Egypt,<sup>2</sup> and the assignment to this corpus of two inscriptions found long ago at Deir Rifa in Egypt<sup>3</sup> and Tell el-‘Ajjul in Canaan.<sup>4</sup> This paper will focus on two methodological issues that have arisen in this expansion of early alphabetic texts and scripts. The first concerns the temporal direction in which one reconstructs a typology of the forms of the early alphabetic letters, a crucial step in identifying the consonants correctly and charting the periods in that tradition of writing accurately. The second concerns the speed with which one moves from the paleographic to the linguistic stages when deciphering newly found inscriptions.<sup>5</sup>

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1. For a survey of most of these texts (with select bibliographies), see Gordon J. Hamilton, “From the Seal of a Seer to an Inscribed Game Board: A Catalogue of Eleven Early Alphabetic Inscriptions Recently Discovered in Egypt and Palestine,” *The Bible and Interpretation*, January 2011, [http://www.bibleinterp.com/PDFs/Seal\\_of\\_a\\_Seer.pdf](http://www.bibleinterp.com/PDFs/Seal_of_a_Seer.pdf). For an attempt to lower the dates for all of the later early alphabetic texts, see Israel Finkelstein and Benjamin Sass, “The West Semitic Alphabetic Inscriptions, Late Bronze II to Iron IIA: Archeological Context, Distribution and Chronology,” *HBAI* 2 (2013): 149–220 (note the major contradiction in their dating scheme raised but not resolved on pp. 196–98). The higher chronology will be employed in this paper.

2. Gordon J. Hamilton et al., “Three Recently Relocated Early West Semitic Early Alphabetic Texts: A Photographic Essay,” *Maarav* 14 (2007): 27–37.

3. Gordon J. Hamilton, “A Proposal to Read the Legend of a Seal-Amulet from Deir Rifa, Egypt as an Early West Semitic Alphabetic Inscription,” *JSS* 54 (2009): 51–79.

4. Gordon J. Hamilton, “The Early Alphabetic Inscription Painted on a Spouted Cup from Tell el-‘Ajjul,” *Maarav* 17 (2010): 103–48.

5. That which is well reasoned in this paper is dedicated with deep gratitude to Prof. Jo Ann Hackett for having been a superlative teacher of Biblical Hebrew during my M.T.S. program, having served as a wise advisor and gracious role model during my

I. THE TEMPORAL DIRECTION USED FOR CHARTING  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LETTER TYPES

The most significant methodological change in early alphabetic studies has been the temporal direction in which one charts the graphic development of the types of the letters. An earlier generation of scholars often started with the forms of the letters attested on the royal inscriptions from Byblos assigned to the tenth century BCE and worked its way backwards to antecedent letter shapes on inscriptions dating to the second millennium BCE, sometimes positing ultimate sources for those letters in Egyptian scripts. A more recent generation of paleographers starts with the graphic prototypes of the early alphabetic letters in Egyptian scripts, traces the development of both the forms and the stances of each letter throughout the scripts of the second millennium found in Egypt, the western Sinai, and the southern Levant, and only then charts the transition in letter types from the multi-directional to the single-directional stages of alphabetic handwriting now witnessed in inscriptions from Phoenicia, Philistia, and Israel early in the first millennium BCE.

While working chronologically backward seemed surest because it started from the “known” of the certain identifications of the consonants made usually by scribes of the royal court of Byblos shortly after 1000 BCE and then moved to the relatively “unknown” readings of letter forms of the preceding five to nine centuries (from ca. 1500 to 1900 BCE, depending on when one dated the origin of the alphabet), it is an unsound application of typological method. Typology in any other circumstance begins with the earlier (or earliest) form of an artifact and then analyzes the development of a later form from that antecedent. It is a temporally one-directional (and limited) method of analysis that works poorly, if at all, in reverse. Working from tenth century BCE letter forms from Phoenicia to earlier ones appeared to work at an earlier stage in early alphabetic studies because that approach was most often applied to a number of inscriptions, usually inscribed arrowheads with no known provenance, that were dated to just before the base Byblian forms, to the eleventh century BCE. But I would submit that that chronologically backwards approach is the single largest source of the widely divergent readings proposed for many of the consonants of inscriptions stemming from earlier in the second millennium BCE. In effect it introduced a degree of subjectivism in the paleographic stage of the decipherment of those inscriptions; if the handwriting on a new object was similar to those found, for example, on the Aḥiram Sarcophagus one made little guesses, if farther removed from that starting point, the guesses could sometimes be quite large. That subjectivism in turn has led to a lessening of confidence by many outside of this specialized area of study in our ability to read these important primary documents. While there remains plenty of room to dispute the consonantal identifications of damaged letters or ones with rare forms, if paleographers of early alpha-

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doctoral studies, and having drawn me back into the study of Northwest Semitic epigraphy at an important juncture later in my academic life.

betic scripts cannot agree on the readings of well-preserved and -attested letter forms, why should scholars in other fields, particularly Biblical Studies, listen to us?

The growing number of early alphabetic inscriptions allows typological method to be applied to that corpus in the temporal direction for which it was built, as a tool to analyze the development of letter forms and the scripts of entire inscriptions from their earliest to their more developed forms. The key turning point was the publication in 2003 and 2005 of two early alphabetic inscriptions found in southern Egypt at Wadi el-Hôl.<sup>6</sup> The Egyptologist John Darnell and a team of Semitists spear-headed by Fredrick Dobbs-Allsopp were able to establish two key points about the beginnings of early alphabetic writing: when it began, ca. 1850 BCE; and the nature of its script, a mixture of a limited number of Egyptian hieroglyphic and hieratic forms borrowed by West Semites for their new writing system. In 2006, I was able to build upon those findings and apply a temporally forward-directional analysis of the typological method to the whole early alphabet, including the relocation of an important complete inscription found long ago at Lahun, a major pyramidal site located further north in Egypt, by using a method comparing the variety of the forms of Egyptian signs borrowed by Semites that was first developed by Butin in the 1930s.<sup>7</sup> Unlike the chronologically backward approach, the results of this typologically forward application can be checked, refined, or revised by scholars in a number of different fields (an important safeguard in an area that is by definition interdisciplinary, one in which no one single scholar would likely possess all of the information).

This temporally forward approach does not only involve the analysis of often small changes to the forms of individual early alphabetic letters, it also comprises taking a “large picture” view of how that entire system of handwriting morphed over the course of centuries. In 2014 I proposed that there were three distinct stages in the development of early alphabetic scripts: Early Alphabetic A, ca. 1900–1400 BCE; Early Alphabetic B, ca. 1400–1000/950 BCE; and Early Alphabetic C, ca. 1050–after 900 BCE (or to the rise of distinctly national scripts).<sup>8</sup> Early Alphabetic A may be characterized as a semi-pictographic or semi-cursive script, the forms of almost all of whose letters can now be traced to either Egyptian hieroglyphic or hieratic prototypes. The letters of Early Alpha-

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6. John C. Darnell, “Die frühalphabetischen Inschriften im Wadi el-Hôl,” in *Der Turmbau zu Babel, Ursprung und Vielfalt von Sprache und Schrift*, ed. W. Seipel (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2003), 3A:165–71; John C. Darnell et al., *Two Early Alphabetic Inscriptions from the Wadi el-Hôl: New Evidence for the Origin of the Alphabet from the Western Desert of Egypt*, AASOR 59 (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005).

7. Gordon J. Hamilton, *The Origins of the West Semitic Alphabet in Egyptian Scripts*, CBQMS 40 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2006).

8. Gordon J. Hamilton, “Reconceptualizing the Periods of Early Alphabetic Scripts,” in *An Eye for Form: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, ed. Jo Ann Hackett and Walter E. Aufrecht (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 30–54.



betic A could be arranged either as vertical columns or as horizontal lines written in either direction, although vertically arranged texts are much more frequently attested. Most of the extant witnesses to this earliest stage were inscribed on stone. Early Alphabetic B shows a transformation from a semi-pictographic into a predominantly linear stage of handwriting. Many of the simplified forms of the letters during this second stage come to resemble geometric figures (variations on triangles, circles) or other basic shapes (e.g., spirals, crosses, tridents). Texts arranged as horizontal lines are attested much more commonly during Early Alphabetic B, as are inscriptions written more cursorily with paint or ink on ceramic surfaces. Early Alphabetic C witnesses a direct continuation of the earlier forms of the letters, but shows considerably less variety in terms of their shapes or stances. During this third stage inscriptions came to be arranged exclusively as horizontal lines written from right to left (as witnessed by a growing number of discoveries from sites in Palestine as well as ones found long ago at Byblos). Following Misgav,<sup>9</sup> one needs to posit an overlap between the end of the multi-directional Early Alphabetic B and the emergence of the one directional Early Alphabetic C phases at the end of Iron Age I or the beginning of Iron Age II, at least in Palestine, but it is debatable whether that overlap lasted as short as fifty years, or slightly less (from ca. 1050–1000 BCE), or, as long as a century (from ca. 1050–950 BCE).<sup>10</sup>

## II. THE SPEED FROM PALEOGRAPHIC TO LINGUISTIC STAGES IN DECIPHERING NEW INSCRIPTIONS

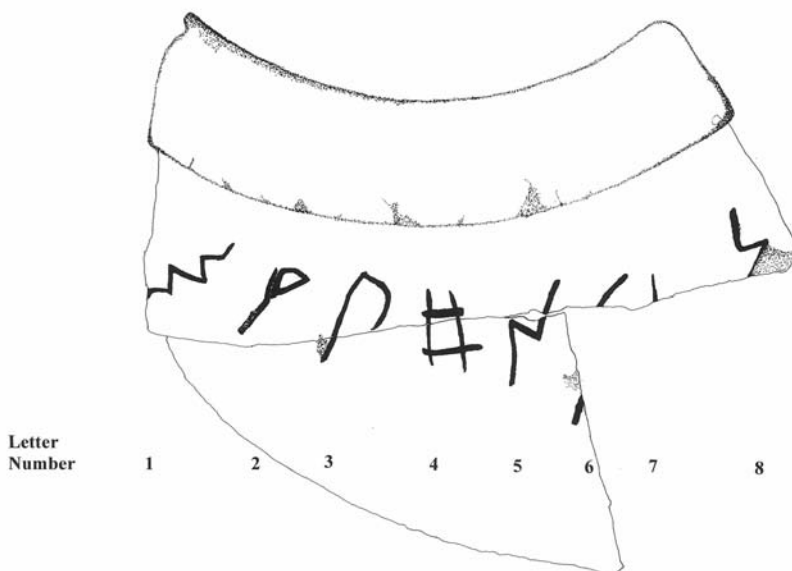
The decipherment of recently found early alphabetic inscriptions usually involves four aspects: a paleographic decipherment of the letters preserved in whole or in part on an ancient artifact; a linguistic decipherment of what those letters could mean; how that decipherment might connect with the type of artifact on which the inscription is written; and how that decipherment might relate to the archeological context in which that artifact was discovered. When all four of those aspects come into alignment, one can legitimately propose a decipherment of that text for the review of others. While there may be valid reasons for investigating the type of artifact and its archeological context before or after addressing the paleographic and linguistic issues, it is crucial in terms of method that the paleographic analysis be completed as thoroughly as possible before entering into the linguistic stage of decipherment since rushing into the latter or merging those two stages could easily lead to a misreading of these often short or incomplete texts. I fear that the communication systems of the twenty-first century CE are sometimes encouraging epigraphers to move too quickly from

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9. Haggai Misgav, Yosef Garfinkel, and Saar Ganor, “The Ostrakon,” in *Khirbet Qeiyafa*, vol. 1: *Excavation Report 2007–2008*, ed. Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2009), 249.

10. See the discussion in Hamilton, “Reconceptualizing,” 41–42, 49.

the paleographic to the linguistic stages when proposing a decipherment for recently published early alphabetic inscriptions. Let us take the case of the pithos fragments inscribed with letters of the early alphabet that was found by Prof. Eilat Mazar in her excavations on the Ophel in Jerusalem.



**Fig. 1: A drawing of the Ophel Inscription (by the author)**

Mazar, Ben-Shlomo, and Ahituv recently published two fragments of a pithos found in an early Iron Age IIA context on the Ophel in Jerusalem that was inscribed below its rim with early alphabetic letters.<sup>11</sup> Positing that this inscription was written from left to right, they identified five letters that are largely complete—*m*, *q*, *p*, *h*, *n*—and two that are extant only in part, possibly an *l*, and perhaps another *n*. Ahituv, who was responsible for the epigraphic section of the first edition, could identify no Semitic words (or even Semitic roots) in this short and incomplete text (fig. 1).

Four studies quickly appeared either online or in print with counter-proposals for the reading of individual letters, three of which would allow for a linguistic decipherment of this early alphabetic inscription:

In blog format Christopher Rollston proposed reading letter 3 as a *lāmed* (not a *pê* as read by Ahituv) and giving possible identifications for the remnants

11. Eilat Mazar, David Ben-Shlomo, and Shmuel Ahituv, “An Inscribed Pithos from the Ophel, Jerusalem,” *IEJ* 63 (2013): 39–49.

of letters 6 and 8 (following the numbering in fig. 1).<sup>12</sup> His palaeographic findings could be summarized as: ] *m*, *q*, *l*, *h*, *n*, a possible *r*, and a possible *š* [. Rollston was also the first to put forward a tentative linguistic decipherment of this text: “The root present in this inscription is *qop*, *lamed*, *het*, that is the word for ‘pot,’ or ‘cauldron’ (cf. 1 Sam 2:14; Mic 3:3, with the noun attested in Biblical Hebrew with the feminine marker *tav* of Hebrew).” Building on his new tentative reading of the incomplete sixth letter as a *rēš*, he suggested that a personal name, *Nr*, may have followed the identification of the container, thus achieving a translation of a large portion of this inscription: “Pot belonging to Ner.” Rollston emphasized that the reading of “Ner” is not certain.

Again in blog format, Aaron Demsky identified letter 2 as a *rēš* (one of the possibilities raised but considered less likely by Ahituv), accepted Rollston’s identification of letter 3 as a *lāmed*, and proposed a new reconstruction of letter 6 as a *nūn*.<sup>13</sup> Demsky offered the following readings based upon the published photograph and Rollston’s drawing of it: “[...] mem resh lamed het nun [nun] [space].” By supplying one letter before the *m*, Demsky was able to propose a new translation for almost all of the extant letters and remnants on this incised pithos. He put forward that an initial, now incomplete word possibly referred to the contents of this storage jar, [*h*] *mr*, understood either as being a liquid, ‘wine,’ or perhaps marking a capacity measure for dry goods, the ‘homer.’ He understood *lhnn* as being composed of a possessive use of the preposition *l* followed by a personal name, *hnn*, a name that he notes has several parallels in other early alphabetic texts and in the Hebrew Bible. Demsky’s translation of this new inscription from Jerusalem could be rendered as: “Wine (or a homer) (belonging) to *Hanan*.”

Initially online and then in article format Gershon Galil then countered that this incomplete text was written from right to left (and not left to right as it had been done by Ahituv, Rollston, and Demsky).<sup>14</sup> He proposed a new reading for the incomplete letter 8 as a *mēm* (but allowed for the possibility that it could be a *nūn*), reconstructed the incomplete letters 6 and 7 as a pair of *yōds*, followed Rollston’s identification of letter 3 as a *lāmed*, and retained Ahituv’s original reading of letter 2 as a *qōp*. To my knowledge, Galil was the first to insist that at least traces of eight letters are present on these ceramic fragments (a possibility raised but rejected by Ahituv). Galil’s alternative paleographic readings may be standardized as follows: “[...] *m/n* [ʿyy]’n *hlq m* [...].” He put forward a translation

12. Christopher A. Rollston, “The Decipherment of the New ‘Inscribed Jerusalem Pithos’,” *Rollston Epigraphy*, 11 July 2013, <http://www.rollstonepigraphy.com/?p=56>.

13. Aaron Demsky, “The Jerusalem Ceramic Inscription,” sidebar in “Artifact Found Near Temple Mount Bearing Canaanite Inscription from the Time before King David,” *Foundation Stone*, 7 July 2013, <http://www.foundationstone.org/mazar/>.

14. Gershon Galil, “A Reconstruction of the Jerusalem Inscription,” *Zwinglius Redivivus*, 17 July 2013, <http://zwingliusredivivus.wordpress.com>; idem, “More on the Jerusalem Inscription,” *Zwinglius Redivivus*, 29 July 2013, <http://zwingliusredivivus.wordpress.com>; idem, “‘yyn hlq’ The Oldest Hebrew Inscription from Jerusalem,” *Strata: Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 31 (2013): 11–26.

of this incomplete string of consonants as: “[in the...year], wine of inferior quality, (sent) from GN.” This proposal envisions this text as being originally composed of three parts: a now largely lost date formula (that could be restored in one of four ways); the classification of the contents of this vessel as a type of inferior quality wine (with a single difficult possible cognate, Ugaritic *yn hlq* [KTU 4.213]); and a preposition suggesting that a now lost geographical name indicated the provenance of that wine concluded this text.

In article format Reinhard Lehmann and Anna Elise Zernecké largely accepted the readings of the *editio princeps*, making only three modifications.<sup>15</sup> Interacting with previous research by Ahituv, Rollston, and Demsky (but not Galil), Lehmann and Zernecké proposed that: there were remnants of eight letters; and letter 6 would be better identified as a *mê* and letter 7 as the remnant of a *šādê*. After presenting the most detailed paleographic analysis in print, they concluded by transcribing the eight letters with no translation so that they could have been written in either direction: “*m-q-p-h-n-m-š-n*” or “*n-š-m-n-h-p-q-m*.”

The paleographic readings of the Ophel Inscription by those authors<sup>16</sup> may be summarized as follows:

Scholar	Direction of Reading	Letter Number (starting on the left)							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ahituv	left to right	<i>m</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>l?</i>		<i>n?</i>
Rollston	left to right	<i>m</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>r?</i>		<i>š?</i>
Demsky	left to right	<i>m</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>n</i>	[ <i>n</i> ]	[space]	
Galil	right to left	<i>m</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>y'</i>	<i>m/n</i>
Lehmann and Zernecké	either left to right or right to left	<i>m</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>š</i>	<i>n</i>

In terms of paleography, six important points of disagreement are apparent: (a, b) the identification of two well-preserved letters, letters 2 and 3; (c, d) the reconstruction of two letters only parts of which are extant, letters 6 and 8; (e) whether one should posit the original existence of an eighth consonant, numbered letter 7 above; if so, whether that remnant is distinctive enough to claim a

15. Reinhard G. Lehmann and Anna Elise Zernecké, “Bemerkungen und Beobachtungen zu der neuen Ophel-Inschrift,” *KUSATU* 15 (2013): 437–50.

16. No claim is made in this paper to cover all of the online treatments of this inscription, which are numerous. See, for example, the most extensive paleographic treatment in blog format by Douglas Petrovich (“Jerusalem’s Oldest Hebrew Inscription,” *Bible Archaeology*, 25 July 2013, <http://www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2013/07/25/New-Find-Jerusalem-Oldest-Hebrew-Inscription.aspx>), who advocates one set of readings in the body of his study but another in a brief addendum to it. A revised form of that study, endorsing Galil’s proposals with only one modification, has since been published (Douglas Petrovich, “The Ophel Pithos Inscription: Its Dating, Language, Translation, and Script,” *PEQ* 147 [2015]: 130–45), but unfortunately appeared too late to be interacted with in this chapter.

reading; and (f) whether there are any paleographic indicators in which direction this short horizontal text was written. It would be methodologically unsound to proceed to an evaluation of the three proposed linguistic decipherments of this text until those more basic issues of handwriting are resolved.

#### A. LETTER 2: *QÔP* OR *RÊŠ*?

Letter 2 was initially identified as a *qôp* by Aḥituv (followed by Rollston, Galil, and Lehmann and Zernecke), although the possibility that it was a *rêš* was raised but evaluated as being less likely in the *editio princeps*. Demsky identified letter 2 as an *r* (with no argumentation). I would submit that the essentially triangular head on this letter assures its identification as a *rêš*, albeit a hybrid of two usually distinct types of *r* in early alphabetic scripts (figs. 2A, 2B).<sup>17</sup>

*Rêš* followed two lines of development in Early Alphabetic A and B scripts: *rêšs* with their heads centered on their necks (fig. 2A); and *rêšs* with the backs of their heads and sides of their necks made as continuous lines (fig. 2B). Letter 2 on the Ophel Inscription represents a hybrid of those two types, with its triangular head centered on its stem, but with the left side—the back its neck and the back of its head—almost merging into one line. It shows further development in the basically triangular form of its head (with only a vestige of curvature at its top) and in the relatively long, single-line execution of its neck. This mixed form of *rêš* is not surprising in a late Early Alphabetic B script, since the variety of *rêš* with its neck centered on its stem is discontinued in Early Alphabetic C handwriting.

The typological development of *qôp* in early alphabetic scripts is disputed. I would posit that a good part of that dispute results from a reversal in the usual order of *q* and *r* in the abecedary line of the 'Izbet Šarṭah Ostrakon.<sup>18</sup> See fig. 3 for my reconstruction of *qôp*'s development from an outlined pictographic form, to one with a small head followed by a single lined stem ending in a curl, to one whose head is beginning to be bisected by the top of the stem with no terminal curl. The crucial aspect is what is not seen in those attestations. Since no writing of early alphabetic *qôp* ever has a triangular head, letter 2 on the Ophel Inscription cannot be identified as a writing of that letter (even after claiming a retracing on its upper left as Aḥituv does).

Read as a *rêš*, the stance of letter 2 may be suggestive of the direction of writing employed in the Ophel Inscription. In the semi-pictographic Early Alphabetic A stage, *rêš* generally faces towards the end of the horizontal line in


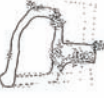

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17. The following abbreviations will be employed in figs. 2–10: MB stands for Middle Bronze Age, LB for Late Bronze Age, Iron I or II for Iron Age I or II, No Prov. for an inscription without provenance, r-l for a horizontal text whose lines are arranged from right to left, l-r for a horizontal text arranged from left to right, and v for an excerpt from a vertically arranged text. With one exception, all drawings in these figures are by the author.





18. See Hamilton, *Origins*, 214, fig. 2.68, 218 n. 282.

**Fig. 2:** Letter 2 on the Ophel Inscription compared with forms of *rēš* with its head centered on its neck (fig. 2A) and examples of *rēš* with its neck on the side (fig. 2B) in representative early alphabetic scripts.

**Fig. 2A: *Rēš* with its head centered on its neck**

<i>Early Alphabetic A</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic B</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic C</i>
Sinai 364 MB	el- Ajjul LB r-l	Qeiyafa Iron I/IIA l-r / v
		
		<b>Ophel letter 2</b>

**Fig. 2B: *Rēš* with its neck on the side**

<i>Early Alphabetic A</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic B</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic C</i>
Sinai 376 MB v	1930 Beth-Shemesh Iron I v	Qeiyafa Iron I/IIA l-r / v
		
		<b>Ophel letter 2</b>
		Tel Gezer Iron IIA r-l
		Zayit Iron IIA r-l
		

which it occurs: rightward on the left-to-right line of Sinai 357, leftward on the right-to-left line of Sinai 349 (but cf. Wadi el-Ḥol Text 1 where *rēš* faces in both directions).<sup>19</sup> In the predominantly linear Early Alphabetic B stage, there is some evidence that the same pattern continues: *r* faces right on an impression of the Megiddo Ring and on line 4 of the Ostrakon from Khirbet Qeiyafa when that text is viewed as a series of horizontal lines arranged from left to right,<sup>20</sup> but there is at least one exception, *r* faces rightward on the right-to-left line of the spouted cup from Tell el-‘Ajjul (see fig. 2A above). Since *rēš* always has its head placed on the left on many Early Alphabetic C inscriptions that were written exclusively in one direction, from right to left (see fig. 2B), it may be that the stance of *r* inscribed on this ceramic vessel from Jerusalem, with the head placed on the right side of its stem, signals that its text was meant to be read in the opposite direction, from left to right.

I would conclude that letter 2 is definitely to be identified as a *rēš* (and not a *qōp*). Its hybrid form combines aspects of the subtype of early alphabetic *r* that shows its head centered on its neck and the subtype of that letter that manifests its neck on the side. The positioning of the typologically developed triangular head of this letter on its right side assures that one is dealing with a late manifestation of a linear Early Alphabetic B script. That stance of *r* would suggest that the Ophel inscription was written from left to right.

#### B. LETTER 3: *PÊ* OR *LĀMED*?

The consonantal identification of letter 3 represents the paleographic *crux interpretum* of the Ophel Inscription. Whereas Aḥituv identified letter 3 as a *pê* (a reading followed by Galil as well as Lehmann and Zernecke), Rollston and, independently, Anat Mendel proposed that it would be more reasonably identified as a *lāmed* (a reading subsequently endorsed by Demsky). Those contrary readings constitute a *crux* because a case can be made for identifying letter 3 as either *p* or *l*. Significantly, the parallels for each of those readings come from different strata of early alphabetic writing: the case for *p* relies on a parallel from the single-directional Early Alphabetic C stage, while the case for *l* rests on comparable forms and stances in the multi-directional Early Alphabetic A and B phases of that script tradition.

*Pê* evolved from the outlined corner of a wall in Early Alphabetic A scripts into an angular figure made with single lines and thence into a form resembling a semi-circle late in Early Alphabetic B scripts. The transformation from out-

19. Most recently, Hamilton, *Origins*, 229.

20. Letters excerpted from the Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostrakon will be given twice in the figures of this paper, given first as if they were written on horizontal lines that read from left to right and then as if they occur as parts of a text arranged as vertical columns since it has not yet been established which of those arrangements was employed for this text (for a brief discussion of that issue, see Hamilton [“Reconceptualizing,” 40–41 n. 17, with literature]).

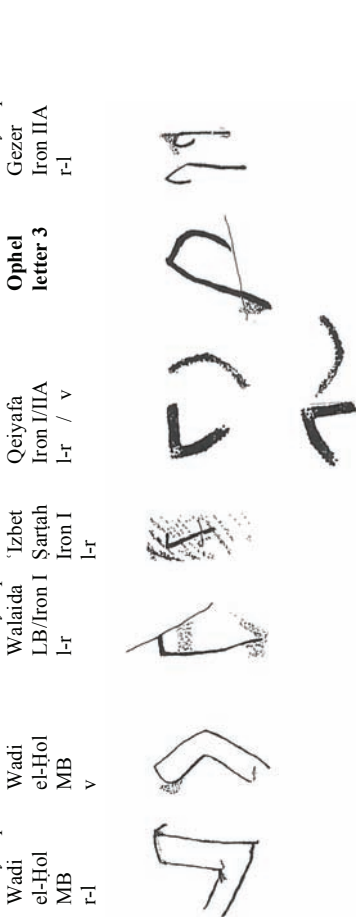
**Fig. 3. Letter 2 on the Ophel Inscription compared with forms of early alphabetic qôp.**

<i>Early Alphabetic A</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic B</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic C</i>
Sinat	Grossman	Gezer
351	No Prov.	Iron IIA
MB	v	r-1
v		



**Fig. 4. Letter 3 on the Ophel Inscription compared with writings of pê in selected early alphabetic scripts.**

<i>Early Alphabetic A</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic B</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic C</i>
Wadi	Walaïda	Gezer
el-Hol	LB/Iron I	Iron IIA
MB	r-1	r-1
r-1		





lined to single-lined forms of this letter is illustrated in fig. 4 by older forms from Wadi el-Ḥol Texts 1 and 2 versus the more developed ones on the Qubur Walaida Ostrakon and the abecedary line of the 'Izbet Ṣarṭah Ostrakon (both of the latter slightly damaged). The further change from an angular to a semi-circular shape of *pê* appears to have been occurring during the transition between Iron Age I and IIA to judge from the appearance of both models in line 2 of the ostrakon from Khirbet Qeiyafa (following the identification of the angular writing by Misgav and the semi-circular one by Yardeni).<sup>21</sup> Alternate ways of viewing the stances of those two *pês*, as parts of horizontal lines written from left to right or of vertical columns, are given in fig. 4. When viewed as part of a horizontal text, the semi-circular *p* on the Qeiyafa Ostrakon could potentially represent the formal antecedent for letter 3 on the Ophel Inscription, but with considerable difficulty. That Qeiyafa *p* is curved and opens widely on the left, whereas Ophel letter 3 is formed by a straight stem connected at its top left to a short right angular shape with a curved corner. One would be hard pressed to match the form of the third letter on this pithos to any extant writing of *pê* in multi-directional early alphabetic scripts.

The only way I can see to read this letter as a *pê* is through an appeal to a single form in an Early Alphabetic C inscription, the Gezer Tablet, written from right to left.<sup>22</sup> One of the two *pês* on that advanced learner's tablet does have a long stem connected to a curved line that shows a small opening between its curve and downstroke (the other *p* is more angular and has a wider opening; see fig. 4). Such would provide roughly a mirror image of the letter under discussion (the heads of the *pês* from Gezer on the top left, that from the Ophel on the top right). But therein lies the rub: letters in the single-directional stage of writing do not have mirror image stances. Reading letter 3 on the Ophel Inscription as a *p* would require positing mirroring of a developed cane-shape of that letter that is so far attested only on a single-directional early alphabetic text, an *ad hoc* solution that is best avoided.

Since *lāmed* possesses a wider range of forms and stances than practically any other letter in the early alphabet, the following discussion first addresses largely angular forms of that letter and then afterwards ones that occur with up-right stances as both of those aspects pertain to the possible identification of Ophel letter 3.

One variety of *lāmed* descends from a hieratic form of the Egyptian sign V1, "coil of rope" and shows an angular beginning and a long, diagonal stem

21. Misgav, Garfinkel, and Ganor, "Ostrakon," 253; Ada Yardeni, "Further Observations of the Ostrakon," in *Khirbet Qeiyafa*, vol. 1: *Excavation Report 2007–2008*, ed. Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2009), 259.

22. The cane-shaped *pê* proposed in the abecedary of the Tel Zayit stone cannot be used as evidence in this discussion since it is illegible in published photographs (Ron E. Tappy et al., "An Abecedary of the Mid-Tenth Century B.C.E. from the Judean Shephelah," *BASOR* 344 [2006]: 27, fig. 16, 39, fig. 24).

Fig. 5. Letter 3 on the Ophel Inscription compared with angular forms of *lāmed* (fig. 5A) and upright stances of that letter (fig. 5B) in selected early alphabetic scripts.

**Fig. 5A: Angular forms of *lāmed***

<i>Egyptian Prototype</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic B</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic C</i>
Hieratic V1	Hesi	Tel Zayit
“coil of rope”	“el- Khadr” II	Amal
Dyn. 12/MB	No Prov.	Iron IIA
v	v	r-l

**Ophel  
letter 3**



**Fig. 5B: Upright stances of *lāmed***

<i>Early Alphabetic A</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic B</i>	<i>Early Alphabetic C</i>
Sinai	Sinai	Fekhariyeh
346a	358	idealized form
MB	MB/LB	Iron II
l-r	v	r-l

**Ophel  
letter 3**



that, *in toto*, creates a three-sided boxy figure (see fig. 5A).<sup>23</sup> Two Early Alphabetic B *lāmeds*, each composed of three strokes, clearly descend from such a cursive form: incised as part of a vertical column on fragments of ceramic fine ware found in a Late Bronze Age context at Tell el-Ḥesi; and, with a mirrored stance, on the columnar text of an unprovenanced arrowhead, “el-Khadr” II.<sup>24</sup> Two other *lāmeds* clearly continue that three-stroke form into the single-directional phase of early alphabetic writing: in the abecedary scratched on the Tel Zayit Stone, which the excavator assigned to a mid-tenth century BCE context (or slightly earlier); and incised on the shoulder of a large jar from an Iron IIA horizon at Tel ‘Amal. While both of those Early Alphabetic C *lāmeds* are slightly damaged, each unambiguously shows a new stance with its “head” on the bottom right and its stem jutting up on the left. In terms of its stance, letter 3 on the Ophel Inscription forms an almost exact up-down mirror image of the *lāmed* in the Tel Zayit Abecedary; while vertical mirroring is considerably less common than sideways mirroring of letter forms, it does occur (as is unambiguously witnessed by the up-down mirror images formed by the *lāmeds* on the Ḥesi Bowl and “el-Khadr” II Arrowhead in fig. 5A).

There are multiple witnesses to early alphabetic *lāmeds* of different formal varieties that show comparable upright stances to that found on letter 3 of the new inscription from Jerusalem. During the semi-pictographic Early Alphabetic A phase, *inter alia*, in fig. 5B see four examples of *lāmeds* with the upright stances and their heads either on the top left (Sinai 346a and 365a) or top right (Sinai 354 and 358).<sup>25</sup> During the largely linear Early Alphabetic B phase, letter 4.10 on the ‘Izbet Ṣarṭah Ostrakon clearly has its spiral on the top left, although the length of its downstroke is debatable due the shallowness of incision on a rough surface. And Rollston rightly pointed to multiple writings of *lāmed* with upright stances, coils on their top left, on the Tell Fekhariyeh Statue (one form idealized in fig. 5B), whose alphabetic script is archaizing, i.e. imitating, with various degrees of success, the handwriting of the Early Alphabetic B phase. Letter 3 has almost the exact stance as the *lāmeds* previously identified on Sinai 354 and 358. There is thus no problem in positing an archaic, upright stance for letter 3 on the Ophel Inscription read as a *lāmed*; it is simply continuing one of the many stances known for that letter. I would, however, be hesitant to use the position of the head on the right side of that *l* as evidence that the horizontal line on this inscription was written from left to right as Rollston does (citing the position of the head of the Fekhariyeh *lāmeds* on the top left in lines reading from right to left). There are too many variations in the positions of the “heads” of this letter in early alphabetic scripts to use it as a reliable indicator of the direction of writing (e.g., see fig. 5A and B).

23. Hamilton, *Origins*, 129, fig. 2.37, 132–33.

24. Regarding the Ḥesi inscription, whose inclusion in the early alphabetic corpus has been disputed, see Hamilton, “Reconceptualizing,” 36–37 (with literature).

25. For instances of other *lāmeds* with upright stances, see especially Sinai 345, 376, 378 and Wadi el-Ḥol Text 1 (Hamilton, *Origins*, 128, figs. 2.35, 2.36, 134, fig. 2.39).

I would assess the case for reading letter 3 as a *lāmed* as being considerably stronger than one that can be made for *pē*. *Pēs* with similar forms are lacking in multi-directional early alphabetic scripts. One would need to postulate an *ad hoc* sideways mirroring of a single writing of *p* on one Early Alphabetic C text to achieve that reading. The case for *lāmed* is much more straightforward. There are four very close parallels in terms of its largely angular form composed of three strokes and two almost exact instances of comparable upright stances of certain *lāmeds* from inscriptions that can be dated securely to before and after the writing of the Ophel Inscription.

### C. LETTER 6: *LĀMED*, *RĒŠ*, *NŪN*, *MĒM*, OR *YŌD*?

Only two remnants of letter 6 are extant: a curved line situated on a top-right-to-bottom-left axis that runs into the broken edge of the upper fragment of this ceramic vessel; and a lower diagonal with a top-right-to-bottom-left tilt that remains on the broken right edge of its lower fragment. Various readings or reconstructions have been proposed for these remnants: *l?* (Ahituv); *r?* (Rollston); [*n*] (Demskey); *m* (Lehmann and Zernecke); and “*y*” (Galil). Two of those potential readings, *l?* and *r?*, can be set aside because they would not be able to account for both of the extant remnants (see fig. 6). Two others, *y* and *m*, are possible reconstructions but each of would require positing unusual proportions, forms, or stances for this incomplete letter (see figs. 7, 8). In contrast, the extant remnants of letter 6 are distinctive enough to posit its identification as a *nûn* with a mirror-image stance to the almost complete *n* directly preceding it (see fig. 9).

I would set aside the tentative identifications of letter 6 as a *lāmed* or as a *rēš* because the former would not account for its lower remnant, a weakness acknowledged by Ahituv (see fig. 6A), while the latter would not account for its upper remnant (see fig. 6B), especially if the forms of *lāmed* and *rēš* were based on attestations established earlier in this inscription (see the discussion under letters 3 and 2 above).

While reconstructing letter 6 as a *yôd* would account for both the upper and lower remnants of that letter, I would evaluate it as an unlikely alternative because those remnants require positing proportions that would be unlike any early alphabetic *yôd* that shows the developed feature of a “foot.” Early alphabetic *yôd* descends from two prototypes: a “forearm” prototype (as illustrated on the Lachish Ewer in fig. 7); and a “curved palm” prototype.<sup>26</sup> That “curved palm” type often became an angular F-shape by the transition between the Late Bronze and Iron Ages as attested on the ostrakon from Qubur Walaidah (fig. 7). The vestigial fingers of that F-shaped form are always short compared to the stroke to which they are attached. Possibly through an assimilation of the “curved palm” and “forearm” types, many *yôds* underwent a further development, the addition of a “foot,” a fourth line attached to the end of the long stroke, located

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26. Hamilton, *Origins*, 108–14 (with earlier literature).

Fig. 6: The remnants of letter 6 reconstructed as a possible *lāmed* (fig. 6A) or *rēš* (fig. 6B).

Fig. 6A: *Lāmed*?

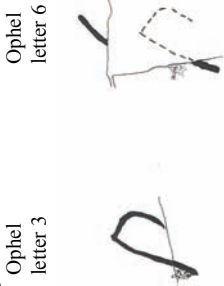


Fig. 6B: *Rēš*?

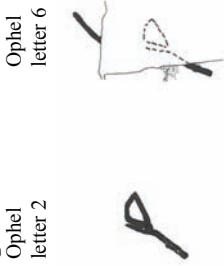
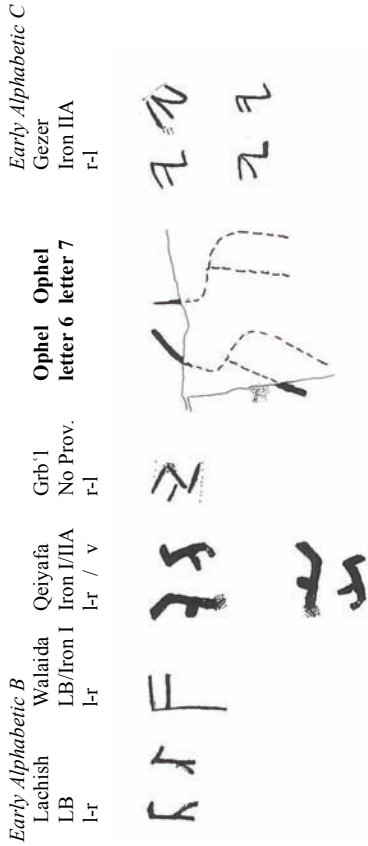


Fig. 7: A tracing of letters 6 and 7 reconstructed as *yōds* proposed by Galil compared to representative examples of that letter in Early Alphabetic B and C scripts.



on the side opposite to their two “fingers” (in fig. 7 see especially the *yôds* on the unprovenanced Grb’l Arrowhead and the Gezer Tablet). That “foot” could sometimes be very short (e.g., the writing of *y* of the Qeiyafa Ostrakon) or about the same length as the two parallel “fingers” (e.g., the Grb’l and Gezer *yôds*). But neither the “fingers” nor the “feet” ever exceeded the length of the strokes connecting them as proposed by Galil in his reconstruction of letter 6 as a *yôd* (his proposed form is traced in fig. 7). He appears to recognize that problem by reconstructing the following letter 7 as a *yôd* with a foot that has standard proportions (fig. 7). Since *yôds* with “feet” are very well attested in later early alphabetic scripts,<sup>27</sup> I would evaluate a reconstruction of letter 6 on the Ophel Inscription as a *yôd* with atypical proportions as being highly unlikely.

The reconstruction of letter 6 as a *mêm* is more likely, depending on the latitude one allows an ancient writer when executing repeated instances of the form of that letter. If one considers the essence of *mêm*’s form to be a number of shallow zigzags whose exact number of strokes is unimportant (e.g., the *mêms* with nine or eight strokes and six strokes made by the same writer in Wadi el-Ḥol Text 1<sup>28</sup>), then one can reconstruct letter 6 as a *mêm* having seven strokes compared to the writing of *m* with six extant strokes (and hints of a seventh at its bottom) at letter 1 as seen in fig. 8. But I am hesitant about endorsing that reconstruction because of several relatively small contrasts between the form of the certain reading of letter 1 and that required by the remnants for letter 6: letter 1 was written on a widely diagonal axis, while letter 6 would stand much more vertically; the first stroke of letter 1 is short and almost vertical, whereas the highest remnant of letter 6 is a much longer, curved, and set on a top right-to-bottom-left diagonal slant; and the highest remnant of letter 6 would force one to reconstruct the second stroke as veering to the right while the second stroke of the certain *mêm* clearly zags to the left (see fig. 8). Those kinds of contrasts are not seen in other early alphabetic inscriptions that have multiple attestations of *mêm*, even when their total number of strokes or size vary (in fig. 8, see especially the multiple writings of *mêm* from Wadi el-Hol Text 1 and on the Aḥiram Sarcophagus).<sup>29</sup> I would conclude that reconstructing Ophel letter 6 as a *mêm* is possible but problematic.

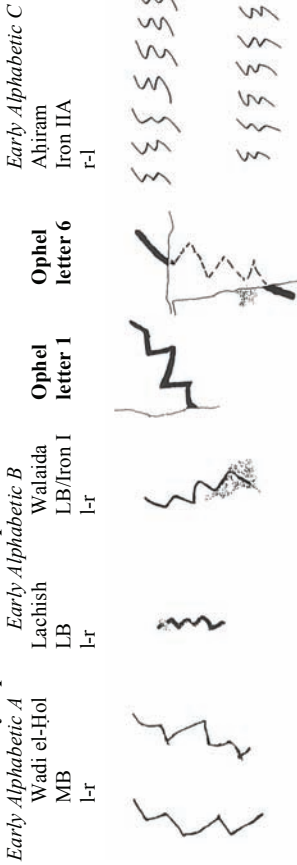
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27. *Inter alia*, see: the damaged *y* in the abecedary of the Tel Zayit Stone (Tappy et al., “Abecedary,” 32, fig. 21); the *yôds* on the Byblian Spatula (drawing of the full inscription: Christopher A. Rollston, “The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary and Putative Evidence for Israelite Literacy,” in *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan: The Tel Zayit Abecedary in Context*, ed. Ron E. Tappy and P. Kyle McCarter [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008], fig. 8); and multiple attestations on the Aḥiram sarcophagus (script chart: Marilyn J. Lundberg, “Editor’s Notes: The Aḥiram Inscription,” *Maarav* 11 [2004]: fig. 3).

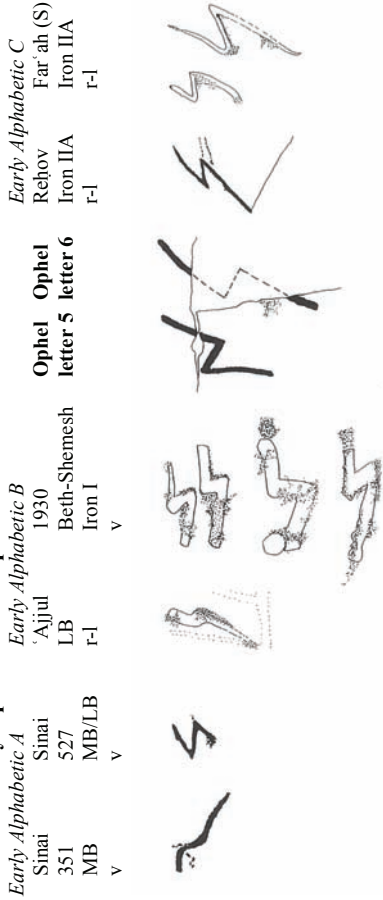
28. On the varieties of the number of strokes and two stances for early alphabetic *mêm*, see Hamilton, *Origins*, 138–44.

29. With many thanks, the drawings from the latter are excerpted courtesy of Marilyn J. Lundberg (“Editor’s Notes,” 90, fig. 3).

**Fig. 8: Letter 6 on the Ophel Inscription reconstructed as a *mēm* compared to Ophel letter 1 and *m* in other representative early alphabetic inscriptions.**



**Fig. 9: Letter 6 on the Ophel Inscription reconstructed as a *nûn* compared to letter 5 and representative writings of *n* in other early alphabetic inscriptions.**



The two remnants of letter 6 can more easily be reconstructed as the beginning and end of an early alphabetic *nûn*. Because of the positions of those remnants, this reconstructed *n* would have to have had basically a mirror-image stance to the largely complete *nûn* that is located directly to its left, letter 5.<sup>30</sup> The closest parallels to the stance of letter 6 reconstructed as a *nûn* occur in both earlier and later scripts: the developed short form on Sinai 527; a longer form on the Spouted Cup from a Late Bronze Age tomb at Tell el-'Ajjul; a longer form from Tel Rehov; plus shorter and longer forms on an ostrakon found in a secondary context at Tell el-Far'ah (S). All of these continue semi-cursive or cursive forms of one type of early alphabetic *nûn*, "cobra in repose" that could face in either direction.<sup>31</sup> As illustrated by one writing of *n* from Sinai 351 in fig. 9, that prototype is composed of two short lines connected to a longer one in roughly a zigzag fashion. Probably under influence from the development of shortened forms, first seen in Sinai 527, some later early alphabetic writings of this type of *n* tend to show lengthening of their beginning strokes (illustrated in fig. 9 by multiple forms on the 1930 Beth-Shemesh Ostrakon). Such lengthening of the initial stroke certainly occurred in the complete *n* numbered as letter 5 on the Ophel Inscription and probably also occurred in letter 6 reconstructed as a *nûn*, although one cannot be sure exactly where that largely horizontal middle line would have been placed. That middle line may have been situated higher in the figure (also see fig. 11 below for a reconstruction of letter 8 as a *nûn*). Simply by following the trajectories of the two extant remnants of letter 6 and adding a short connective segment between those trajectories one can reconstruct a well-known type of early alphabetic *n* for that letter.

Two potential objections to this reconstruction need to be addressed: (1) positing mirror images of the same letter on one short inscription; and (2) positing different sizes for the same letter written side by side. First, two other early alphabetic texts that have been only recently published show clear precedence in that writing tradition for the use of the same letter facing opposite directions on the same short text. One *rêš* on the short horizontal line of Wadi el-Hol text 1 faces left, while another faces right.<sup>32</sup> And several *'āleps* on the ostrakon from Khirbet Qeiyafa face in opposite directions: two pointing downward and one up, like an "A," if the writing on that ostrakon were considered to have been written as five horizontal lines; or two pointing to the left and one pointing to the right if it were deemed to have been composed as a series of vertically arranged columns.<sup>33</sup> Given those clear parallels, positing mirror-image stances for two *nûns*

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30. Demsky ("Jerusalem Ceramic Inscription") does not appear to realize that his reading of letter 6 requires positing two stances for *nûn* in this text: "...we have an ancient Hebrew inscription written in a late provincial (e.g., no word dividers, *stance* of *nun*) Proto-Canaanite style" (emphasis added).

31. Hamilton, *Origins*, 161–70.

32. See: Darnell et al., "Two Early Alphabetic Inscriptions," pl. 4; Hamilton, *Origins*, 324, fig. A.1.

33. Compare the contrasting arrangements of this text in: Misgav, Garfinkel, and Ganor, "Ostrakon," 245, fig. 14.3 *versus* Aaron Demsky, "The Enigmatic Inscription



on the inscribed pithos from the Ophel would not be particularly problematic but represent another instance of a relatively rare use of stances during the multi-directional stages of early alphabetic writing.<sup>34</sup> Secondly, positing differing sizes of the same letter written side by side is also not problematic given the larger and considerably smaller *nûns* attested on the 1930 Beth-Shemesh Ostrakon's still legible back side and on another ostrakon retrieved from the fill of Petrie's excavations at Tell el-Far'ah (S)—see fig. 9 above. Minimally, the presence of mirror-image forms of *n* on the Ophel pithos, one all but complete and the other largely reconstructed based on traces distinctive to that letter, serves as another indication that this inscription belongs to the multi-directional Early Alphabetic B stage of handwriting and not to the Early Alphabetic C phase when the stances of many letters became more standardized (but multiple stances of some letters, including *nûn*, still existed). Since letters 5 and 6 on the Ophel Inscription face in opposite directions, *nûn* supplies no information regarding the direction of writing intended for this short text.<sup>35</sup>

Lastly, one needs to assess the strength of the identification of letter 6 as a *nûn*. Demsky sends “mixed signals,” once enclosing this *nûn* in square brackets, [*n*], which usually indicates a restored letter, and at another point transliterating it as the last consonant of the word *hnn*, with no brackets, appearing to indicate that this letter is complete enough to claim a reading. I would conclude that the traces of letter 6 are distinctive enough of *nûn* in early alphabetic scripts to claim a damaged but the most likely reading of that letter (*mêem* representing the only other, but more difficult possibility).

#### D. LETTER 7: 'ĀLEP, YÔD, LĀMED, SĀMEK, ŠĀDÊ, TĀW?

Galil—as well as Lehmann and Zernecke—was right to posit that a letter was written between what are numbered letters 6 and 8 in this study (a possibility raised but dismissed by Ahituv). Yet only a small remnant of the top of letter 7 is extant: a short, nearly vertical incision that runs into the broken edge of the ceramic. That remnant could potentially represent the top of a vertical of any of six letters to judge from comparable forms in other Early Alphabetic B and C scripts (listed in alphabetical order): 'ālep (fig. 10A); yôd, so Galil (fig. 10B);

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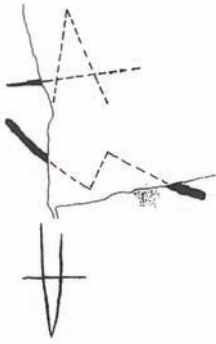
from Khirbet Qeiyafa—Response B,” in *New Studies in the Archaeology of Jerusalem and its Region, Collected Papers*, ed. D. Amit, G. D. Stiebel, and O. Peleg-Barkat (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009), 3:126.

34. In a more tentative fashion Mazar, Ben-Shlomo, and Ahituv (“Inscribed Pithos,” 46, Table 1) already posited the possibility of a similar contrast in the stances of two *nûns* when they offered a possible reading of *n* for the remnant on the far right of this inscription. Reconstructing letter 8 as a *nûn* requires positing a mirror-image stance of the complete *nûn* numbered letter 5 in this paper (see fig. 11 below).

35. Cf. Rollston (“Decipherment”) regarding the stance of letter 5 indicating a left-to-right direction.

Fig. 10. Remnant of letter 7 reconstructed as an *ʾālep* (fig. 10A), *yôd* (fig. 10B), *lāmed* (fig. 10C), *sāmek* (fig. 10D), *šādê* (fig. 10E), or *tāw* (fig. 10F) compared with a single example of each of those letters in Early Alphabetic B or C scripts. A reconstruction of Ophel letter 6 as a *nūn* is given to visualize potential spacing.

**Fig. 10A:** *ʾĀlep*  
Sinai  
375c



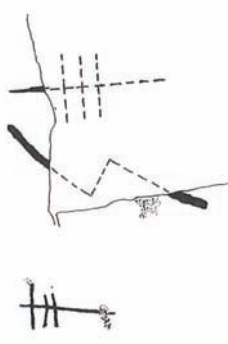
**Fig. 10B:** *Yôd*  
Qeiyafa  
I-1



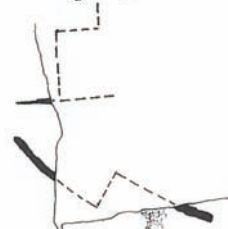
**Fig. 10C:** *Lāmed*  
Tel  
Zayit



**Fig. 10D:** *Sāmek*  
Gezer



**Fig. 10E:** *Šādê*  
Gezer



**Fig. 10F:** *Tāw*  
ʾIzbet  
Šartiah



*lāmed* (fig. 10C); *sāmek* (fig. 10D); *šādē*, so Lehmann and Zerneck (fig. 10E); or *tāw* (fig. 10F). Of those six possible reconstructions, I would consider three to be very unlikely in this context: *yōd* because no extant writing of that letter has its “foot” situated vertically (in fig. 7 above, see one potential parallel on the Qeiyafa Ostrakon, but with its “foot” set obliquely); *lāmed* because it would require positing a rare up-down mirroring of the stance found in the complete *l*, Ophel letter 3 (as reflected in the tracing on the right in fig. 10C);<sup>36</sup> and *tāw* because the postulated large *t* required by the extant remnant would come too close to the reconstructed *nūn* on its left (see fig. 10F). I see no paleographic basis for choosing one of the remaining three possibilities over the others. I would conclude that this small remnant is not distinctive enough to claim a reading, only to posit a restoration as one of three possible consonants: [ʔ], [s], or [š].

#### E. LETTER 8: *NŪN*, *ŠĪN*, OR *MĒM*?

Letter 8 is extant only in part. Its three remaining lines form a broad zigzag pattern: two completely preserved lines make a sideways “V” on its top (midpoint on the left); and, connected to the bottom of that angular configuration, an only partially preserved diagonal runs into the broken edge of the top ceramic fragment. If one extends the trajectory of that diagonal beyond the break, then this letter could have been a *nūn* (so Aḥituv, followed by Lehmann and Zerneck), similar to long-tailed *nūns* found on early alphabetic inscriptions of several periods (e.g., from Tel Far‘ah (S) in fig. 11A; see fig. 9 above for other examples). If one reconstructs a short diagonal set on an upper-left-to-lower-right axis to the bottom of the preserved parts, then letter 8 could have been an upright *šīn* (so Rollston), similar to an angular form and stance of *š* attested on the Early Alphabetic B bowl inscription from Qubur Walaida (fig. 11B).<sup>37</sup> If one completes the extant parts of letter 8 with a series of lines to form a long zigzag figure (so Galil), then one could identify that letter as a *mēm*, perhaps comparable to one writing of that letter from Wadi el-Hol (fig. 11C). Of these three reconstructions, I would assess *mēm* as representing the least likely option since it would require positing a *mēm* with deeper zigzags set on a much more vertical stance (traced from Galil fig. 1 in fig. 11C) than are seen in a clear writing of *m* earlier in this inscription, letter 1. I would assess the reconstruction of letter 8 as either a *nūn* or a *šīn* as equally viable options paleographically, even presenting a balance of potential objections (to *n*: positing a mirror-image stance and shorter initial

36. Up-down mirroring of the stances of letters is attested in early alphabetic scripts, although it represents a much rarer phenomenon than sideways mirroring (see Hamilton, *Origins*, 277).

37. See also the angular form, open on the left, published recently by Yosef Garfinkel et al., “The ‘Isba‘al Inscription from Khirbet Qeiyafa,” *BASOR* 373 (2015): 225, fig. 13. For other angular forms, see Hamilton, *Origins*, 237, fig. 2.73.

Fig. 11. Letter 8 reconstructed as a *nûn* (fig. 11A), *šin* (fig. 11B), or *mêm* (fig. 11C) compared with examples of those letters in early alphabetic scripts or elsewhere on the Ophel Inscription.

Fig. 11A: *Nûn*  
Far ah (S)  
Iron I  
r-l

Ophel  
letter 5

Ophel  
letter 8



Fig. 11B: *Šin*  
Walaïda  
LB/Iron I  
l-r

Ophel  
letter 8



Fig. 11C: *Mêm*  
Wadi  
el-Hol  
MB  
r-l

Ophel  
letter 1



stroke than the nearly complete *n* written at letter 5—see fig. 11A; to *š*: the proposed stance differs from that attested on the angular *šm* on the Qubur Walaida Ostrakon).

#### F. CONCLUSIONS ABOUT METHOD IN DECIPHERING THE OPHEL INSCRIPTION

Speed has both hurt and helped in the decipherment of the Ophel Inscription. It has hurt that effort in three ways. First, the *editio princeps* of this broken text contained only a sentence or two about the identification of each of its letters and the direction in which it may have been written. Secondly, that initial inadequate paleographic analysis then led almost immediately to challenges to the readings of over half of the consonants. For the most part the online challenges to the readings of letters 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8 did not contain detailed paleographic justifications for those alternates. Instead, thirdly, three linguistic decipherments were quickly proposed for this incomplete text. What the Ophel Inscription may have meant in terms of language quickly became the primary element controlling the identifications of more than half of its letters and its direction of writing. From this writer's perspective, that is poor epigraphic method!

Speed has also helped in the decipherment of this inscription. Epigraphy has been characterized as a slow discipline, in part because it involves raising many paleographic and linguistic possibilities and then rejecting almost all of those options until the one that is left is considered the most plausible.<sup>38</sup> While that process of sifting has been greatly accelerated, some of the identifications proposed by scholars are superior to those first published. Rollston and Mendel's reading of letter 3 as a *lāmed* is better than the *pē* advocated in the first edition. Rollston's proposal to reconstruct letter 8 as a *šm* is also as strong an alternative as the *nūn* in that publication. Demsky's reading of letter 2 as a *rēš* is surely correct (a possibility raised but dismissed by Ahituv). The reconstruction of letter 6 as a *nūn* by Demsky also best matches both extant remnants of that letter. To Galil as well as Lehmann and Zernecke should also go credit for insisting that a letter occupied the space between letters 6 and 8 (the *šādē* proposed by the latter representing one of the three most likely restorations for that tiny remnant). And the present writer uncovered only one possible indicator of the direction of writing employed on this text: the position of the triangular head of the *rēš*, letter 2, on the right would suggest that the Ophel Inscription was written from left to right.<sup>39</sup>

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38. F. M. Cross once observed that ninety per cent of his time in epigraphy was spent in raising and ultimately rejecting possible readings (oral communication).

39. The stance of the upright *šm*, open on the right, proposed by Rollston as a reading of letter 8 would also most likely have occurred on a horizontal line written from left to right, the mirror image of the vertically-positioned form of that letter attested on the recently discovered Jar Inscription from Khirbet Qeiyafa (see Garfinkel et al., "Išba'al Inscription," 225, fig. 13; but *nūn* is an equally viable identification for the remnants of Ophel letter 8).

## G. THE MOST PLAUSIBLE LINGUISTIC DECIPHERMENT OF THE INCOMPLETE OPHEL INSCRIPTION

Reading from left to right, Demsky has proposed the most plausible decipherment of most of the Ophel Inscription currently available. His identification of the consonantal values of letters 1–6, often incorporating the work of others, stands after a careful paleographic scrutiny of them: ] *m r l ḥ n n* [. His proposed linguistic decipherment is basically solid as far as it goes: *ḥ]mr ḥnn*], “[w]ine (belonging) to Hanan [.]” While small improvements could be made to his proposed restoration of the contents of this vessel<sup>40</sup> and his reading of the name of its original owner,<sup>41</sup> the most significant weakness in his proposed decipherment is that it fails to account for the remnants of writing after letter 6. At that point, there is not a space as Demsky blogged but a small remnant of letter 7 and a very substantial part of letter 8 (see fig. 12).

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40. Three revisions to Demsky’s treatment of *[ḥ]mr* are necessary. First, the rare cognate *ḥemer* does not appear to have served as a word for wine in general in Biblical Hebrew, a developed meaning that is frequently attested in later Aramaic dialects, but as a designation for a stage in the production of that beverage, ‘(still fermenting) wine’ (*HALOT* 1:331, 5:1877). Secondly, that Hebrew cognate is attested clearly only in the archaic poem of Deut 32:14. The reading of *ḥmr* in the MT of Isa 27:2 cited by Demsky has long been put aside in favor of *ḥwmr* in 1QIs<sup>a</sup> (*HALOT* 1:330). One could seek another occurrence in the later Hebrew of Sir 31/34:10 (*HALOT* 1:330). Thirdly, the alternate translation that Demsky gives for *[ḥ]mr* as a *ḥōmer*, a dry measure, is extremely unlikely as a meaning for that word on this pithos for two reasons: (a) there is not yet any firm evidence that the biblical units of measure, usually derived from Egyptian hieratic, were employed as early as the pithos from the Ophel was inscribed; and (b) while Mazar gave no estimate for the exact capacity of that very large storage jar, the capacity of a *ḥōmer* would likely have been too large for this vessel when it was whole. One *ḥōmer* has recently been estimated to be the equivalent of ca. 220 liters (Stephan Wimmer, *Palästinisches Hieratisch: Die Zahl- und Sonderzeichen in der althebräischen Schrift*, ÄAT 75 [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008], 246).

41. Two criticisms could be leveled at Demsky’s treatment of the personal name *Ḥnn*, which he vocalized as Ḥanan. First, Demsky overinterprets the toponym *bêt-ḥānān* in Biblical Hebrew (1 Kgs 4:9) and three attestations of personal names containing the consonants *ḥnn* in other early alphabetic inscriptions (two from Tel Beth-Shemesh and one from Tel Batash) to create a clan, *\*bānē ḥānān*, ‘the sons/children of Hanan.’ He does not seem to recognize that the root *ḥnn* is one of the most commonly documented in Semitic names of almost all periods, a root that was used in the onomastica of many different groups (see, *inter alia*, the overviews of *ḥānūn* and/or *ḥānān* in *HALOT* 1:333, 335; *DUL*, 366; and Frank M. Cross, “Personal Names in the Samaria Papyri,” *BASOR* 344 [2006]: 78). None of these individuals may have been related. Secondly, the three early alphabetic occurrences of *ḥnn* contain no markings for any vowels; one would need a reason to prefer the vocalization of *\*ḥanan* over, for instance, *\*ḥanūn* or *\*ḥananī* (to give but three possible vocalizations attested in just one linguistic tradition, Biblical Hebrew [*HALOT* 1:333, 335]). The names of the individuals from Tel Beth-Shemesh, Tel Batash, and Jerusalem may share the same root but have been vocalized differently.

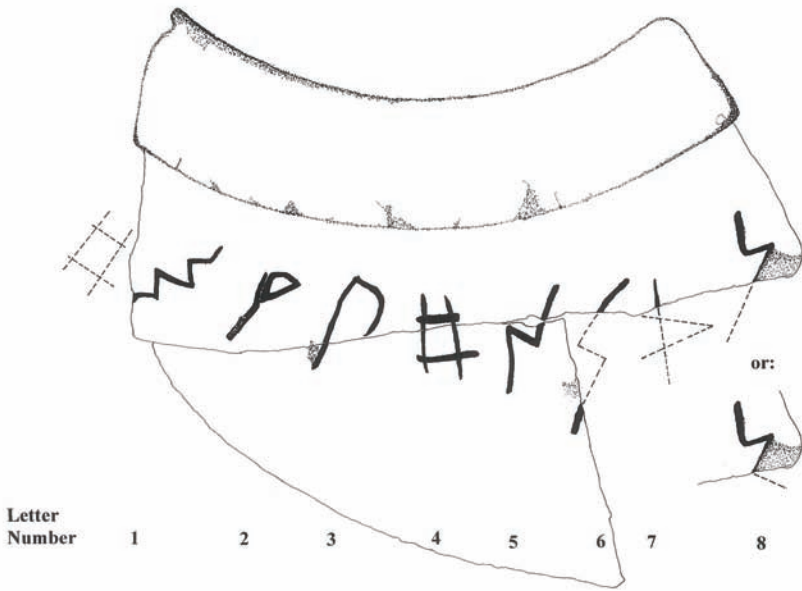


Fig. 12. A reconstruction of the Ophel Inscription, largely following Demsky, but revising his treatment of letters 7 and 8.

Choosing one among the three possibilities identified in the paleographic analysis above, I would suggest restoring letter 7 as *'ālep*, positing a likely hypocoristic ending of the name of the owner of this vessel. While *hnn simpliciter*—whether vocalized as *\*hanan*, or *\*hanūn*, or otherwise—would have many parallels documented in the West Semitic onomasticon, I would suggest that an abbreviated writing of *\*'il*, 'god/God/EI', most likely followed those three consonants on the Ophel pithos. *Hnn*[ ] would represent a shortened form of the personal name *hānan 'ēl* attested in later biblical sources as the name of a tower in Jerusalem (Jer 31:38; Zec 14:10; Neh 3:1; 12:39). An almost exact parallel to the shortened form of that name occurs in a later inscription from Ammon, *hn'* (spelled with just one *nūn*).<sup>42</sup> And personal names ending with hypocoristic *'āleps* are attested in two other early alphabetic inscriptions: *yrš'* in the name of the owner of a spouted cup found in a Late Bronze Age tomb at Tell el-'Ajjul; and *nšr'* inscribed on a gold signet ring assigned to the same period found in another tomb at Megiddo.<sup>43</sup> Restoring letter 7 as an *'ālep* would fulfill two necessary conditions: first, it would represent one of the several letters to have left that tiny remnant paleographically; and secondly, it would fit into the linguistic

42. Walter E. Aufrecht, *A Corpus of Ammonite Inscriptions*, Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies 4 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1989), 255–56.

43. Regarding both of those occurrences see Hamilton, "Early Alphabetic Inscription," 138 n. 101.

environment in which it occurs, as the completion of a name with well-documented parallels. But it should be emphasized that this proposal remains a restoration and not a reading.

Given that proposed restoration of the preceding personal name, the last letter extant on the Ophel Inscription can be interpreted in one of two ways. Letter 8 could represent the first letter, a *nūn* or a *šīn*, of the name of *Hnn*[']s father. Or, it could be the initial letter of the beginning of a title used to identify *Hnn*['] himself: e.g., *n*[ 'r...], 'boy/assistant of...'; e.g., *š*[ 'r...], 'prince, commander of...'<sup>44</sup> Preference should be given to the first alternative since it is the more banal interpretation. There are also two good parallels of names followed directly by the names of their fathers in other early alphabetic inscriptions (with no intervening *bn* or *bt*, 'son of' or 'daughter of'): *lbṭ/št / nšr*, "(Belonging) to *Bṭ/št* (daughter of) *Nšr*'" on the Megiddo Ring,<sup>45</sup> and *šmp 'l / 'y' l / šx*[...], "\**Šim-pa 'al* (son of) 'Hyga-'il ŠX]" on the Qubur Walaida Ostrakon (largely following F. M. Cross).<sup>46</sup>

The major weakness in the paleographic and linguistic readings of the Ophel Inscription proposed by Demsky, ignoring the remnants of letters 7 and 8, can thus be addressed with some relatively minor revisions: *[h]mr lhnm ['] n/š*["[(Fermenting) w]ine (belonging) to *Hnn*[', son of] *N/š*[XX]".] It is possible that the Ophel Inscription is missing only two or three letters, the initial letter of *[h]mr* and as few as one or two letters that may have completed the name of his father.

The initial editors of this inscription were likely correct when they intuited that the inscription incised under the rim of this large storage jar likely marked the contents or ownership of this vessel. But caution needs to be applied when assessing the interpretation of an inscription both ends of which are broken. I would assess the various parts in the revision of Demsky's interpretation of this short text as follows (in descending order of probability): the paleographic and linguistic readings of *lhnm*, "(belonging) to *Hnn*" are secure; the reconstruction of the initial words as *[h]mr*, '[fermenting w]ine,' is very likely,<sup>47</sup> designating this huge storage vessel as an ancient equivalent of a fermenting vat (so marked that it would not be used for other purposes and thus contaminated); the restoration of a hypocoristic *'ālep* following the name of the owner of this vessel can be deemed as likely because it matches both the small remnant of one letter (although not distinctively so) and naming patterns in West Semitic languages; but

44. For a recent compilation of occurrences of those nouns in various Semitic sources, see *DUL*, 616 and 842.

45. Choosing the best of the readings of the patronym given in Gordon J. Hamilton, "W.F. Albright and Early Alphabetic Epigraphy," *NEA* 65 (2002): 38.

46. Frank Moore Cross, *Leaves from An Epigrapher's Notebook: Collected Papers in Hebrew and West Semitic Palaeography and Epigraphy*, HSS 51 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 214–16.

47. Were future testing of the inside surface of the fragments of this large pithos for minute traces of fermenting grapes to prove positive, then the reconstruction of *[h]mr* could be moved from the category of "very likely" to "certain."



the interpretation of the final word as the name of the owner's father must be treated as only plausible since it is incomplete.

### III. CONCLUSION

Careful application of method is important in the study of the recently expanded corpus of early alphabetic inscriptions, both in terms of working from typologically earlier to later forms in this script tradition and in taking as much time as is required when conducting a paleographic examination of a newly found inscription before moving onto the admittedly more exciting stage of linguistic decipherment. These primary texts, mostly from the second millennium BCE, deserve to be deciphered using the same methods employed for Northwest Semitic epigraphs stemming from the first millennium BCE. However humble the early alphabetic inscriptions may now be, they are our only records of what various peoples living in or coming from the ancient southern Levant wrote about themselves and their property in their own indigenous system of writing.<sup>48</sup>

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48. The author would like to thank the editors of this volume, particularly Prof. Hutton, for their extraordinary efforts in bringing this complex study to fruition.

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## The Scribal Art at Ugarit\*

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As is the case with other forms of handwriting, writing cuneiform was a dynamic process involving the training, skill and choices made by the individual scribe. Although scribal schools and guilds no doubt developed collective stylistic conventions that distinguished them from their contemporaries, each individual scribe also had characteristics that were unique—characteristics that can be identified and used to distinguish the “hand” of the individual scribe.<sup>1</sup> On occasion, this feature of writing has been used by scholars to assign a group of cuneiform texts to an individual scribe or scribal school based on the scholars’ interpretation of the scribe’s unique writing characteristics. For example, in a popular publication in which he translated the so-called Baal Cycle and the Ugaritic texts known as Kirta and Aqhat, Michael Coogan affirmed the scholarly position concerning the writing of these texts, stating that

The fifteen tablets translated in this book have a common origin—all were found in the library of the chief priest of Baal in the city’s main temple complex—and a common scribe, Ilimilku from Shubbani. His clear, precise touch with reed on damp clay is unmistakable, and he occasionally signed his work.<sup>2</sup>

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\* The following essay is taken, with edits and additions, from my unpublished doctoral dissertation, “A Paleographic Study of the Alphabetic Cuneiform Texts from Ras Shamra-Ugarit” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2002). Jo Ann Hackett was my adviser for this project and in the process of my research she worked and experimented with me as I focused on the particular issue of how the stylus might have been held and manipulated by individual scribes. It is fitting, I believe, that this portion of my unpublished research appear in the context of a volume dedicated in her honor. I am grateful to her for her guidance and support. She is, and always will be, my mentor and my friend.

1. This is, of course, because no two people can write exactly the same. Indeed, research shows that no one person can write *exactly* the same each time. As Wing states, our neuromuscular system is “inherently” unreliable (Alan M. Wing, “Variability in Handwritten Characters,” *Visible Language* 13.3 [1979]: 286).

2. Michael D. Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan* (Louisville: Westminster, 1978), 10.

Coogan's identification of the "unmistakable" hand of Ilimilku sparked my interest in scribal ductus as the focus of my doctoral thesis.<sup>3</sup> A large part of my initial research was focused on the mechanical process of cuneiform writing and I found that I first had to identify the criteria one would need to focus on this area.

In my initial work I found that many scholars had documented the various characteristics one would need to examine in order to conduct a study of cuneiform paleography and scribal ductus, though at the time there were no exhaustive works on the subject. In an article entitled "Cuneiform Calligraphy," for example, Peter Daniels discussed criteria that he felt were specifically focused on the written characters of cuneiform. Daniels adapted a list of "constant features" that were suggested by Edward Johnston for use in the analysis of handwriting.<sup>4</sup> Johnston's list included:

the angle of the pen relative to the horizontal line of writing, the weight or thickness of the pen, the shape of the letters, the number of separately made strokes, the order of strokes, the direction the pen moves in making the separate strokes, and the speed of writing.<sup>5</sup>

Daniels had previously applied these features to the analysis of linear alphabetic texts and argued that they could be used in the same way for cuneiform, though he had not undertaken such a study.<sup>6</sup> Instead, Daniels modified these criteria for

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3. I use the term "ductus" to refer to all the distinctive factors that make up an individual's handwriting, including the distinctive features found in the script and the writing implement—in the case of cuneiform, the stylus.

4. Peter T. Daniels, "Cuneiform Calligraphy," in *Nineveh 612 BC: The Glory and Fall of the Assyrian Empire*, ed. R. Mattila (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1995), 82.

5. Edward Johnston, *Formal Penmanship and Other Papers*, ed. H. Child (London: Lund Humphrie, 1977), 120, fig. 50. Daniels described Johnston's constants as features that could be "varied for aesthetic effect" (Daniels, "Cuneiform Calligraphy," 82). But Daniels's description of the features in those terms does not seem to coincide with Johnston's intent—or with Daniels's earlier use of the constants in the study of Aramaic documents (idem, "A Calligraphic Approach to Aramaic Paleography," *JNES* 43 [1984]: 55–68). Johnston referred to his constants as "the seven rules for copying a manuscript," in which the writer was trying to avoid variation in order to "preserve the essential family likeness or character of any particular kind or variety of the alphabet" (Johnston, *Formal Penmanship*, 119). Variation, whether inadvertent or for "aesthetic effect," was avoided. By examining manuscripts using the features highlighted in these seven rules, Johnston believed that one could see the connections between the manuscripts and understand which tradition the writer was trying to emulate. Nevertheless, a given handwriting will still differ from any other handwriting—as Johnston stated, "in some or all of the seven features, as one family or tribe differs from another" (ibid., 121). This character of the features (i.e., their inherent variation by writer) makes them applicable to the study of handwriting.

6. Daniels, "Cuneiform Calligraphy," 82.

the study of cuneiform and added to them others that were recommended to him by Simo Parpola. Parpola suggested the following items:

Stylus, Stylus angle, Depth of impression, Basic wedges, Basic wedge clusters, Order of wedges, Number of wedges per sign, Relative size of signs, Horizontal distribution of signs, Lengthening of horizontal strokes, Horizontal/vertical sign alignment, Distribution of text on tablet, Writing speed.<sup>7</sup>

Because Daniels concentrated his analysis on the written characters rather than the tablets, he adjusted the list of significant features to include only the items he felt were important for such a study:

the shape of the stylus, the way it was held and manipulated, its pressure on the pliable surface of the clay; the assortment of resulting wedges, the consistent groupings they enter into that in turn make up cuneiform signs; the order they are written within a sign; the number of wedges in a sign.<sup>8</sup>

In his discussion Daniels suggested that the way a stylus was manipulated is information we cannot determine<sup>9</sup>: this is one of many facets of the process of cuneiform writing that we still do not understand and for which we have no living witnesses. There are, however, clues available in the wedges themselves that can help us compare differences between scribal hands in relation to how the scribes manipulated the stylus and these have occupied the attention of scholars in several studies. This was a particular feature that I found both intriguing and, I believe, not fully examined. It is to this particular characteristic that I focus the remainder of this study.<sup>10</sup>

In the analysis of cuneiform writing, when scholars have examined how a stylus was held and manipulated it has often been accepted that this feature

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7. Personal communication cited by *ibid.*, 82–83.

8. *Ibid.*, 83.

9. *Ibid.*, 83.

10. It should be noted that all of the characteristics presented, plus several additional features, should be examined to produce a complete paleographic study of a group of cuneiform texts. Indeed, all of the listed characteristics, with the notable exception of the depth of the impression, were found to be significant in distinguishing the scribal hands at Ugarit. Concerning the depth of a wedge, I found in the texts from Ugarit that the amount of measurable variation within a single identified hand was as great as the variation between different hands. In other words, the pressure each scribe might exert on the clay that produced the measurable depth varied too widely to be used as a distinguishing feature. Such variation might also be dependent upon many factors that are beyond our ability to establish objectively, including the condition of the clay when it was impressed, its dryness and pliability, as well as such features as the clay's chemical and mineral composition. This is, I believe, also related to the limitations of our neuromuscular system noted above: it is too "unreliable" for this feature to be sufficiently consistent to be significant (see n. 2 above, and Wing, "Variability in Handwritten Characters," 286; see also Ellison, "Paleographic Study," 92–97).

could be extrapolated from a one-to-one comparison of the shape of the wedge and the shape of the writing end of the stylus. Thus, when a wedge was impressed by the scribe the head of the wedge was formed by the head of the stylus, while the sides of the stylus to the right and left of the writing edge formed the sides of the wedge to the right and left of the mid-line of the stylus respectively (see fig. 1).<sup>11</sup> In order to write a horizontal wedge, therefore, the scribe impressed the stylus in a horizontal position relative to the horizontal line of the text (fig. 2a); for a vertical or oblique wedge, the stylus was held in a vertical or oblique position respectively (figs. 2b and 2c–2e).<sup>12</sup> This reconstruction is, of course, both possible and a logical conclusion based on the shapes of the wedges preserved in the clay. But writing horizontal, vertical, or oblique wedges with the stylus aligned only horizontally, vertically, or obliquely requires either a change in the position of the stylus, a change in the position of the tablet, or both. And sometimes that change in position would have to be substantial.

In a study of the techniques used by scribes for writing cuneiform in archaic texts, for example, Marvin Powell reconstructed what he believed was the standard technique for writing tablets from the mid-third millennium onward.<sup>13</sup> According to Powell's reconstruction,

a right-handed scribe writing his tablet in lines top-to-bottom and in columns right-to-left has to position himself in an angle of roughly 45° to his tablet and approach it from the left side, never from the right side. Thus, there must have been from the beginning a strong tendency to *write* the tablet at an angle rather differently from that at which it was read.<sup>14</sup>

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11. The terminology I use was developed as part of my dissertation. The "mid-line" of the wedge is the line formed by the writing edge of the stylus. The position of the mid-line varies depending on how the stylus was held (see below). The "head" of the wedge is that part of the wedge that is at an intersecting angle to the mid-line. The majority of wedges are shaped like a triangle, with the head being the widest part and the "tail" tapering gradually as one moves away from the head.

12. The wedges in alphabetic cuneiform were impressed with their mid-lines aligned in one of these five general directions. The arrows in fig. 2 point in the direction of the approximate position of the heads of any wedges written using these alignments but is not necessarily related to how the stylus was held, as will be discussed below.

13. Marvin A. Powell, "Three Problems in the History of Cuneiform Writing: Origins, Direction of Script, Literacy," *Visible Language* 15.4 (1981): 426.

14. *Ibid.*, 426–29. One of the features Powell believed proved his analysis to be correct was the reed patterns left in the clay: Powell states that, "Stylus impressions provide the key, not only for inferring the nature of the material and how it was shaped, but also how it was manipulated. The stylus is called in both Sumerian and Akkadian 'reed,' and this is entirely confirmed by the fibrous impressions left in the clay by the vascular bundles present in the reed itself" (*ibid.*, 425). Powell described the left side of the stylus as creating the "smooth, right-hand faces of the wedge," while on the right side the stylus "leaves behind the reed patterns found on the tablets" (*ibid.*, 426). Powell concludes, "These reed patterns show that the stylus was held in one basic position and that the surfaces of the stylus which made contact with the tablet were always the same in all periods from the mid-third millennium on" (*ibid.*, 426). In my own work I noted that it is not only

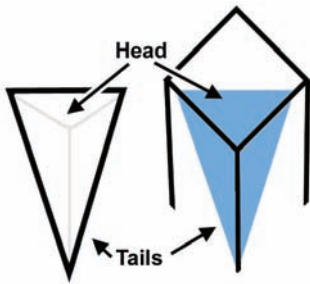


Fig. 1 (top, left)



Fig. 2 (top, right)

Fig. 3 (below)




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the sides of a reed that have a grain that would leave a pattern in the clay, but also the grain found in the cross-cut section at the head of the stylus. The head of the stylus produces the exact same grain pattern that Powell describes, therefore indicating that the pattern is not a conclusive feature informing us as to how the stylus was held and impressed in the clay.





**Fig. 4 (top)**  
**Fig. 5 (bottom)**





Fig. 6

Fig. 7 (below, left)

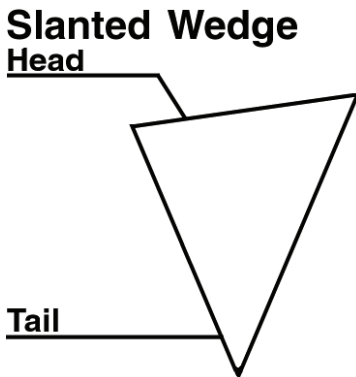
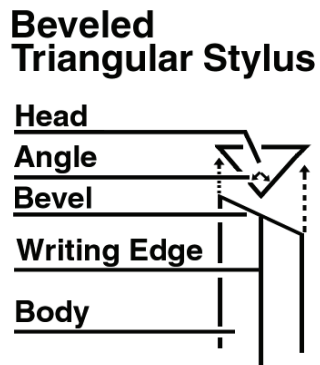


Fig. 8 (below, right)



Powell's reconstruction required movement of both the tablet and the scribe's hand as each wedge was impressed. To write a horizontal wedge, for example, the scribe in Powell's reconstruction would hold the tablet at a position rotated 90° clockwise from the neutral position for reading, and impress the stylus from

the neutral position to impress the wedge (fig. 3).<sup>15</sup> For reading, the tablet would be rotated counterclockwise 90°, so that the wedge would appear horizontal. In Powell's reconstruction, to write a vertical wedge the scribe would hold the tablet in the rotated 90° position and rotate the stylus approximately 270° from the neutral position, holding it almost even with the left arm (fig. 4).<sup>16</sup> For reading, the tablet would be rotated back 90° counterclockwise so that the wedge was vertical. To impress an oblique wedge with its mid-line aligned toward the upper left, the scribe would again hold the tablet rotated 90° clockwise and hold the stylus rotated clockwise at approximately 45° from the neutral position (fig. 5).<sup>17</sup> To read the wedge, the tablet would be rotated back 90° counterclockwise. If it was necessary to impress an oblique wedge with its mid-line aligned in the opposite direction, that is toward the upper right, with the tablet in the neutral writing position (rotated 90° clockwise) the stylus had to be repositioned in the scribe's hand and held 135° from the neutral position (fig. 6).<sup>18</sup> Once again, in order to read the wedge, the tablet must be rotated 90° counterclockwise.<sup>19</sup>

As can be seen in all of these examples, the movement of the tablet and the movement of the writing hand are extensive and sometimes awkward. And when a scribe was writing on a large tablet that could not be held in the hand, one either has to presume that the scribe worked while moving around the tablet or the tablet was placed on a moveable surface. In any case, such movements would likely be detrimental to the efficiency of the writing process and would, I believe, slow it down significantly, something that would be generally undesirable for writing the most common records.

If we accept the one-to-one comparison of the shape of the stylus with the shape of the wedge, Powell's reconstruction may be as close as we get to understanding the characteristic of how a stylus was held and manipulated. But one could ask whether the basic understanding of the stylus itself is accurate for all cuneiform script in all geographic and chronological periods in which it was used. In my study I determined that Powell's reconstruction was incorrect for the Ugaritic tradition and, in fact, completely unnecessary for any cuneiform script tradition. To explain my findings it is necessary to revisit my research and subsequent conclusions regarding the shape of the stylus in the Ugaritic cuneiform tradition.

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15. *Ibid.*, 427, fig. 3. I created figures 3–6 here following Powell's photographs. I have attempted to replicate his work, but used different wedges and attempted to create clearer and more explanatory photographs. Following Powell, in all of the figures, the fingers of the "scribe" would be located at the top of the tablet.

16. *Ibid.*, 429, fig. 5.

17. *Ibid.*, 428, fig. 4.

18. *Ibid.*, 429, fig. 6.

19. Powell provides several additional examples of oblique wedges that appear in logo-syllabic cuneiform. These wedges require similar extreme movements of the tablet and writing hand. Because these wedges are not attested in alphabetic cuneiform and are uncommon in logo-syllabic texts, they are not included in the discussion here.

There has been much discussion about the shape of the head of cuneiform styli in the literature on cuneiform handwriting. Examining the shape of the wedges in the clay, scholars have considered whether the head of the stylus was square, rectangular, or triangular; and whether the writing end of the stylus was beveled or symmetrical. Further, they have attempted to estimate the angle of the writing edge of the stylus based on the shape of the preserved wedges.

G. R. Driver summarized several of the main theories in his book *Semitic Writing*.<sup>20</sup> Following Messerschmidt, Driver suggested that the head of the stylus was a triangle, carefully manufactured from reeds that are found throughout Mesopotamia.<sup>21</sup> He further observed that the head of a cuneiform wedge was often slanted slightly (fig. 7), indicating that the writing end of the stylus must have been cut at an angle, or beveled (fig. 8). According to Driver, this bevel remained the standard in the construction of styli “for all time.”<sup>22</sup>

In Driver’s reconstruction, the angle measured in the interior of the wedge had to be the same size as the angle found on the writing edge of the stylus. This angle varied widely depending on the period and locality of the writing, from as little as 10° to as much as 95° in the early periods of cuneiform writing.<sup>23</sup> As the angle became larger, the reed also had to be larger.<sup>24</sup>

In 1981, H. Saggs analyzed the reed stylus and agreed that the head of the stylus was triangular, but argued against an elaborate system of manufacture. Instead, Saggs identified a plant that was indigenous throughout Mesopotamia and was easily used as a stylus without elaborate cutting and shaping.<sup>25</sup> This reed grew naturally with an angle for the writing edge that could be altered to less than 60° simply by removing parts of the sheathing leaves. Saggs also demonstrated that, while it was impossible to make a wedge with an interior angle less than that of the stylus, it was possible to make a wedge with a much greater interior angle simply by twisting the wrist, thus refuting Driver’s hypothesis that the interior angle of the wedges was equal to the angle of the writing edge of the stylus, and hence, refuting the necessity of a larger source for the stylus.<sup>26</sup>

Saggs also argued that, based on his own experimentation, the upward slope on the head of the wedge could be made with a stylus with a “symmetrical” writing end simply by the manner in which the scribe manipulated the stylus. By

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20. G. R. Driver, *Semitic Writing: From Pictograph to Alphabet*, The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1944 (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 18–31.

21. Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 23–24; L. Messerschmidt, “Zur Technik des Tontafel-Schreibens,” *OLZ* 9 (1906): 304–12.

22. Driver, *Semitic Writing*, 23.

23. *Ibid.*, 25.

24. According to Driver, the angle stabilized and remained at 90° until the Neo-Babylonian period when it decreased to about 80° (*ibid.*, 26).

25. H. W. F. Saggs, “The Reed Stylus,” *Sumer* 37 (1981): 127–28.

26. *Ibid.*, 127–28.

demonstrating this capability, Saggs eliminated the need for the beveled writing end of the stylus as it had been envisioned by Driver.<sup>27</sup>

While they disagreed both on the amount of shaping that was required to construct a stylus and on the size of the angle of the writing edge, Driver and Saggs agreed that the shape of the head of the stylus was triangular. This conclusion has been generally accepted in the scholarly literature. As I discovered, however, it should not be assumed to be true for all cuneiform texts. The shape of the head of the stylus must be established for every corpus, and, in fact, for every tablet under review. Indeed, while the styli that Driver and Saggs were investigating may have been triangular, it is clear that the shape of the head of the stylus used by the Ugaritic scribes was predominately square or rectangular, both in the alphabetic and in many of the logo-syllabic texts. This shape has a significant impact on our understanding of how a scribe could have manipulated the stylus to write more accurately and efficiently.

I first came to this conclusion by measuring the inside angle of representative wedges across the surface of the tablet with a soft plasticine material and an angle measurement scale. The plasticine was carefully inserted into a wedge so that it would take the shape of the inside angles. This shape was then measured and, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the angle measured exactly 90°.<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, because Saggs had demonstrated that it was possible to form a 90° angle using a stylus with a much smaller angle simply by twisting the wrist,<sup>29</sup> the measurement of 90° on the inside angle does not provide conclusive evidence for the shape of the head of the stylus. It should be recalled, however, that when cuneiform signs were written the stylus was impressed from a position above the clay in an almost straight downward motion. As the stylus was pressed into the clay, the clay in the path of the stylus was not removed but only displaced. Therefore, any movement of the stylus would remain evident by the position of the clay. Likewise, if the stylus were twisted as it was withdrawn, it is likely that the head of the wedge would show striations. In examining the tablets, no sign of the movement of the stylus was evident, suggesting that the angle of the edge of the stylus was indeed 90°.<sup>30</sup>

Two other factors also contribute to my conclusion that the head of the stylus was most often squared. First, in several cases, the scribe impressed the sty-

27. *Ibid.*, 128.

28. In the few cases where it was not exactly 90° it was within 1° and therefore within any margin of error for this method of measurement.

29. Saggs, "Reed Stylus," 127.

30. In my own experiments, I found that at the very least, clay would be displaced to the side of the wedge where the twisting ended and thus confirm this action. In a personal communication, Dennis Pardee agreed that if the stylus was manipulated as in Saggs's reconstruction, some sign of this would most likely appear in the clay. Neither Pardee nor I have found such evidence in the alphabetic texts from Ugarit. In light of this, Saggs's conclusions regarding the manipulation of the stylus to produce a beveled head must be rejected for alphabetic cuneiform.

lus so deeply that two or more angles could be measured in the clay (fig. 9).<sup>31</sup> When the resulting wedge was measured, the additional angle(s) were also 90°, indicating that the only shape possible for the head of the stylus was a square or a rectangle (see, for example, the *'ayin* in fig. 10, from RS 15.080 [= *CTU* 6.19]).<sup>32</sup>

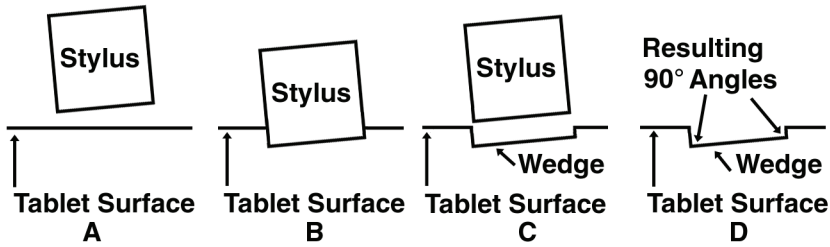


Fig. 9 (above)

Fig. 10 (below)



Second, a reexamination of the archaeological work of Claude Schaeffer and an inspection of unpublished bronzes from Tell Ras Shamra lends further support to the conclusion that stylus heads were generally square in Ugarit. In his publication of the so-called Western Archive, Schaeffer stated that he had found bronze styli in room 3 of the Royal Palace, suggesting to him that the room had been a scribal office.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, the styli were not published at the time I conducted the research for my study. Nevertheless, while in the Da-

31. Figure 9A-D shows the progression of the deep impression of the stylus and the resulting wedge.

32. RS is the abbreviation used to identify the number as the Ras Shamra excavation number assigned to the object by the Mission Archéologique Française de Ras Shamra-Ougarit.

33. Claude F. A. Schaeffer, "Reprise des recherches archéologiques à Ras Shamra-Ugarit: Sondages de 1948 et 1949 et campagne de 1950," *Syria* 28 (1951): 14; see also Wilfred H. van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit: Dating and Grammar*, AOAT 40 (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1991), 49 n. 21.

mascus National Museum, I was permitted to inspect Schaeffer's field notes and all of the bronze pieces from the Royal Palace, particularly those found in room 3.<sup>34</sup> Although it was impossible to determine exactly which of the bronzes Schaeffer had identified as styli, I was able to find several ideal candidates that came from the correct find spot and year. All of the candidates had a square head. With the permission of then Director General of Antiquities and Museums, Dr. Sultan Muhesen, local craftsmen made steel models of the bronzes according to my specifications, and Pierre Bordreuil, Dennis Pardee, and I conducted experiments with them. What we found through these experiments was as expected: all of the forms of the alphabetic cuneiform found in the texts from Ugarit could easily be duplicated using styli with square heads.

Using a stylus with a square head, the question of whether the writing edge of the stylus was beveled or symmetrical seems clear in the Ugaritic script. While it is possible to manipulate the stylus and create a slant, as Saggs suggested, it is unlikely that this would be done on every wedge, at every angle, and on every tablet where slanted wedges appear consistent in shape, without leaving any trace of these movements. Instead, it is much more likely, in light of the preponderance of upward and downward-sloped wedge heads, that most of the styli used by the Ugaritic scribes had in fact, a beveled writing edge (compare fig. 11 to fig. 12).<sup>35</sup>

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34. The analysis of the artifacts for my project was conducted between September 1997 and October 1998 in the Syrian Arab Republic. I would like to express my appreciation to the Mission Archéologique Française de Ras Shamra-Ougarit, under the direction of Madam Marguerite Yon and later Yves Calvet, and to the epigraphers for the Mission, Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee. Without the kindness of the Mission in allowing me to inspect and photograph all of the alphabetic texts, and inspect the unpublished bronzes, my research would not have been possible. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Syrian government and particularly to the staff of the Directorate of Antiquities and Museums, under the direction of Dr. Sultan Muhesen, and then Dr. Abd al-Razzaq Moaz. Throughout my project I was allowed unprecedented access to the tablets in the National Museums in Damascus, Aleppo, and Latakia. The support of the office of Director General and their staff, made the experience of researching this project particularly rewarding. I also wish to acknowledge the kind assistance of Dennis Pardee during this investigation. Though quite busy with his own research, Pardee took time off to assist me in examining both the field notes and the bronzes in a search for Schaeffer's styli.

35. While many of the bronzes I examined appear to have been beveled, several were symmetrical. Therefore the resolution of whether a stylus was beveled or symmetrical is a feature that must be established by examining the shapes of the wedges found in the clay. It is also likely that this is a feature which could vary between scribes and, indeed, even with the same scribe—there is no reason to assume a scribe had only one stylus and that each stylus the scribe used had to be the same shape. Note, however, that no examples where an individual scribe changed styli in the middle of a text were found in the course of this study. This consistency suggests that the shape of the wedges on a tablet (and thus the shape of the stylus) is a significant tool for analyzing scribal ductus on a tablet.

### Stylus Writing End

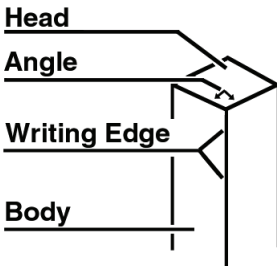


Fig. 11

### Beveled Square Stylus

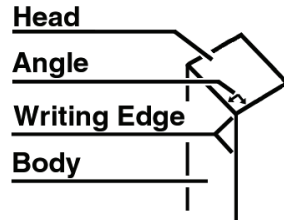


Fig. 12

A comparison of wedges that were written with styli with symmetrical writing edges and those that were written with styli with beveled writing edges can demonstrate this clearly. The letter *t* in figure 13 (from RS 19.029 [= *CTU* 2.63]) shows how the head of the wedge was shaped by a stylus with a symmetrical head: the head of the wedge is exactly perpendicular to the wedge's mid-line.<sup>36</sup> In figure 14 (from RS 28.058 E [= *CTU* 7.210]), on the other hand, the head of the wedge has a significant slant downward right-to-left relative to the wedge's mid-line. Because the wedge itself is not complex (being simply a single horizontal wedge), it is clear that the wedge preserves the shape of the stylus and that the stylus was beveled. When formed by styli with beveled writing edges, vertical and oblique wedges also show the same slant (see the letter 'ayin in figure 15, from RS 16.264 [= *CTU* 2.26]).<sup>37</sup> With this feature clearly preserved in the wedges, it should be possible to determine the shape of the head of the stylus on most tablets.

Once the shape of the stylus was determined I was able to return to the question of how the stylus was held and manipulated. In my own experiments I found that moving the tablet or repositioning the writing hand considerably

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36. In this study, a mid-line arrow is placed on the mid-line of the wedge and the point, or head of the arrow, is placed as near as possible to the deepest part of the wedge and is directed toward the head of the wedge. This convention was an important tool I developed to illustrate a comparison of the signs in my research without pre-determining how the stylus was held and manipulated.

37. The shape of the 'ayin in fig. 15 requires comment and can illustrate some of what is presented here. It is clear from an analysis of the sign that the stylus was held horizontally over the tablet when it was impressed to form the sign: the scribe rotated the stylus clockwise before it was impressed so that the wedge has a near vertical head, a near horizontal right side (the "top" of the wedge in the photograph), and a sloping left side. The "bottom" of the wedge in fig. 15 is squared because the scribe impressed the stylus so deeply that two corners of the head of the stylus entered the clay (as in fig. 9 above). Because of this, it is certain that the stylus used by this scribe was square or rectangular and held in a manner similar to what is presented below.



when writing a tablet results in a decrease in the accuracy and the speed of writing. Accuracy in the placement of the components of graphs is very important for legibility because most cuneiform signs are written with a combination of wedges aligned to different planes and in differing relationships to each other. The precise alignment of the signs on the writing surface and of the wedges within the signs is difficult if one moves the tablet or the writing hand excessively. In fact, excessive movement is unnecessary; it is possible to minimize the movement of the hand and the tablet when writing, thereby making the process more efficient. And if it was possible to write efficiently it is likely that the ancient scribe would have done so.<sup>38</sup>

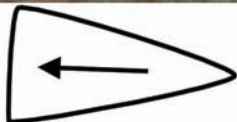


Fig. 13



Fig. 14

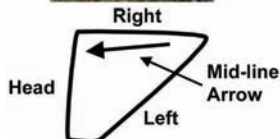


Fig. 15

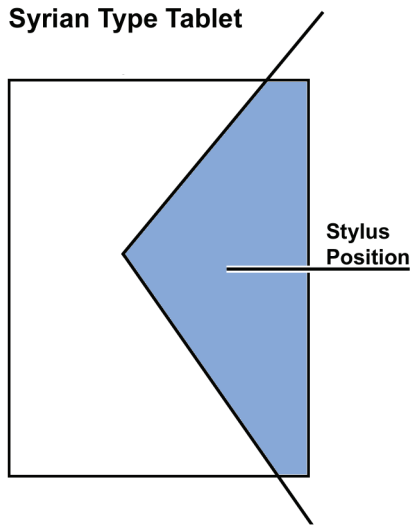
During the process of the conducting the research for my project I found that it is in fact possible to make every cuneiform sign with the stylus held exclusively in a position to the right side of the tablet (see fig. 16, area shaded in blue). What is more, there is no need to reposition the stylus in the writing hand or reposition the tablet—a particularly important consideration for writing large tablets. By writing all of the wedges from this position, both speed and accuracy are increased since there are minimal hand movements required to write the wedges for any sign. With the stylus held to the right of the wedges, however, the one-to-one comparison of the parts of the wedge with the parts of the stylus (as in fig. 1) can no longer be assumed. To illustrate the change, it is necessary to examine the technique in some detail.

When wedges were written, the portion of the stylus that came into contact with the clay and formed the wedge depended upon three factors: the angle of the stylus with respect to the surface of the clay, the depth to which the stylus was impressed, and the extent of the rotation of the stylus before it was impressed. As the angle of the stylus with respect to the clay was decreased, the portion of the stylus that came into contact with the clay was increased so that the wedges were elongated (see figs. 17 and 18, and below). Additionally, as the

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38. Writing is technology, invented and perfected for the purpose of record keeping. It can therefore be expected that it developed both in style and in technique for purposes of efficiency.

stylus was impressed deeper, more of the length and width of the stylus would come into contact with the clay, thus increasing both the length and width of the wedges (figs. 19 and 20). Finally, as the stylus was rotated, different portions of the three relevant surfaces of the stylus came into contact with the clay (figs. 21 and 22). By altering these three factors the scribe could easily write different wedges from similar positions. The significance of these movements and these general observations to the discussion of the way the stylus was held and manipulated can be seen if the techniques that might be used to write cuneiform wedges are contrasted.



**Fig. 16**

The writing end of a square stylus, whether symmetrical or beveled, has five different flat surfaces (four sides and the head), each of which can be used in writing cuneiform (see again fig. 21). According to the traditional understanding of the way the stylus was held and manipulated, the writing surfaces of the stylus directly correspond to the parts of the wedge (see fig. 23). If, on the other hand, the stylus is held in a position to the right of the wedge so that the stylus is perpendicular to the wedge's mid-line, different surfaces are used in writing (contrast fig. 24 with fig. 23). When the stylus is held in this position, the head of the wedge is made by a side of the stylus, while the head of the stylus forms the left side of the wedge (fig. 25).

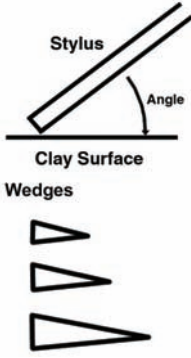


Fig. 17 (top, left)

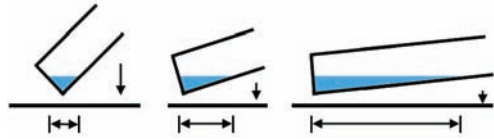


Fig. 18 (top, right)

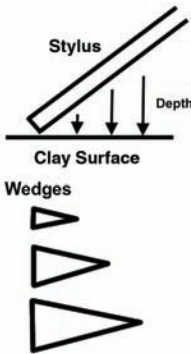


Fig. 19 (center, left)

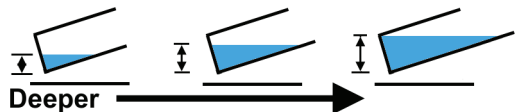


Fig. 20 (center, right)

Fig. 21 (top, left)

**Stylus  
Writing Surfaces**

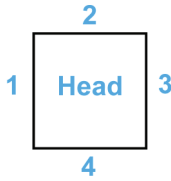
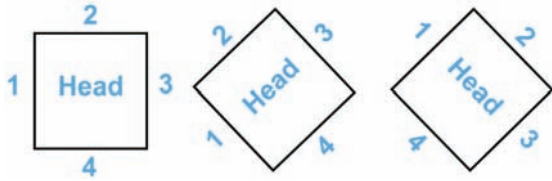


Fig. 22 (top, right)



**Stylus  
Writing Surfaces**

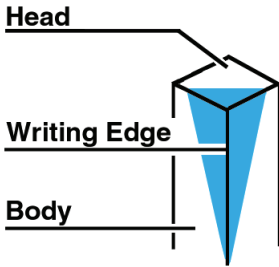


Fig. 23

**Stylus Writing Surfaces**

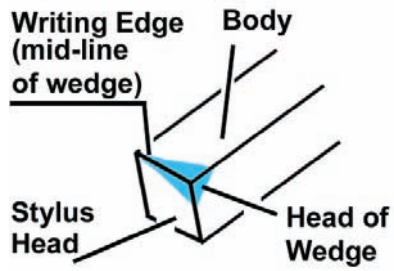
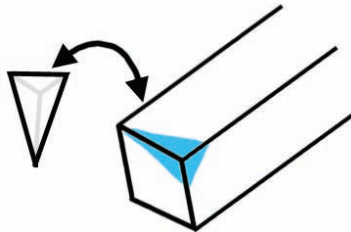


Fig. 24

Fig. 25



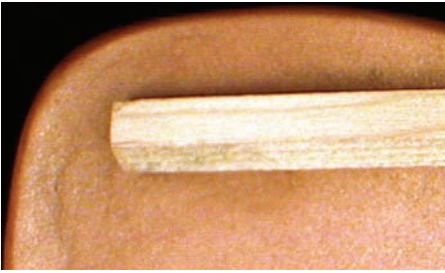


Fig. 26

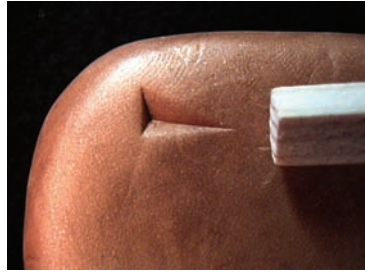


Fig. 27

To impress a horizontal wedge using the stylus according to the traditional understanding, so that there is a one-to-one comparison of the portions of the stylus with the parts of the wedge (as in fig. 1), the scribe only needed to hold the tablet in its neutral, reading position, and impress the stylus horizontally (fig. 26 and the resulting wedge in fig. 27). To impress an oblique wedge, the stylus only has to be rotated clockwise  $45^\circ$  from the horizontal position (fig. 28 and the resulting wedge in fig. 29). A vertical wedge, on the other hand, according to the traditional understanding, requires that the stylus be impressed from a position rotated clockwise  $90^\circ$  from the horizontal plane (fig. 30 and the resulting wedge in fig. 31).

Fig. 28 (left)

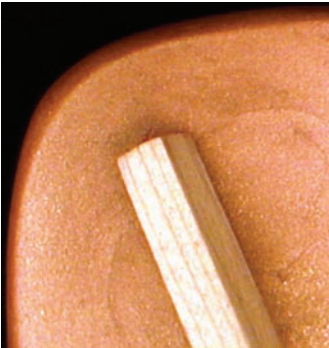


Fig. 29 (right)



Fig. 30 (left)

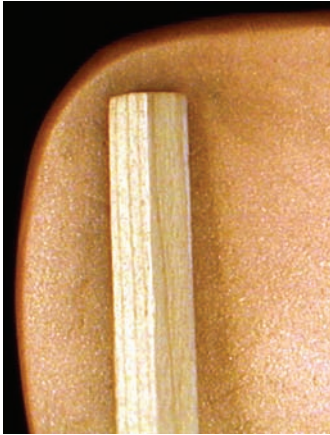
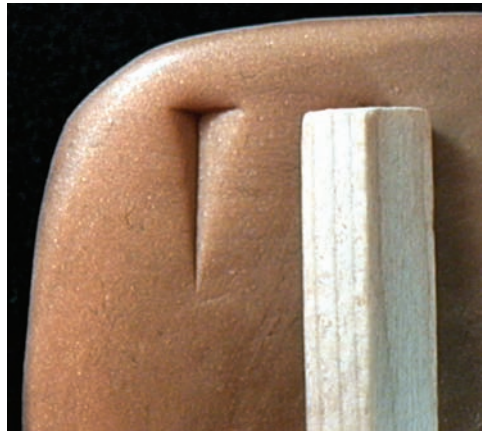


Fig. 31 (right)



To impress wedges with the writing surfaces of the stylus as illustrated in figure 25, however, the scribe would increase the angle of the stylus with respect to the clay so that more of the head of the stylus and less of its body came into contact with the clay (fig. 32). Additionally, the scribe would have to rotate the stylus slightly so that one corner of the head of the stylus could be impressed more deeply while the second corner did not touch the clay at all (see fig. 33).

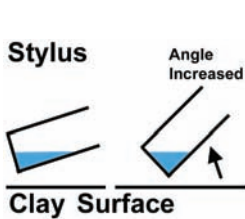


Fig. 32

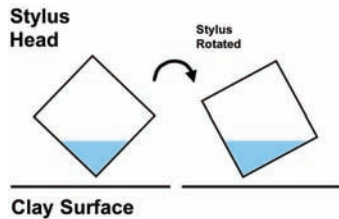
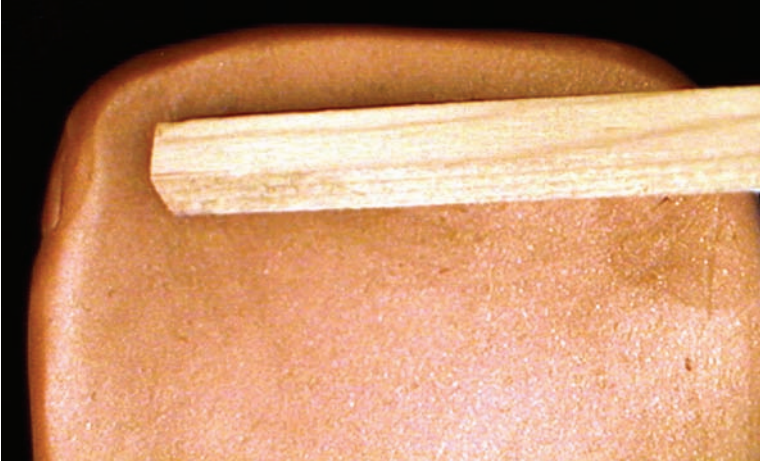
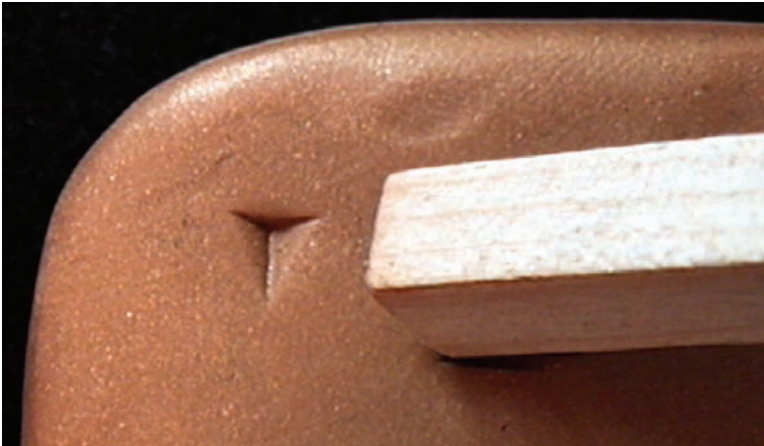


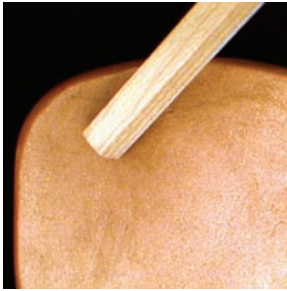
Fig. 33

While holding the stylus in this manner, the scribe would simply have to impress the stylus from a horizontal position to write a vertical wedge (fig. 34 and the resulting wedge in fig. 35). To write an oblique wedge, the scribe would only have to move the stylus approximately 45° counterclockwise before it was impressed (fig. 36 and the resulting wedge in fig. 37). To write a horizontal wedge in this fashion, the scribe would be required to hold the stylus vertically, either below (fig. 38 and the resulting wedge in fig. 39) or above the tablet (fig. 40 and the resulting wedge in fig. 41), and at a high angle relative to the surface of the clay.



**Fig. 34 (top)**  
**Fig. 35 (bottom)**





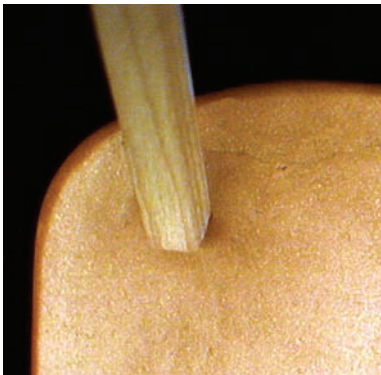
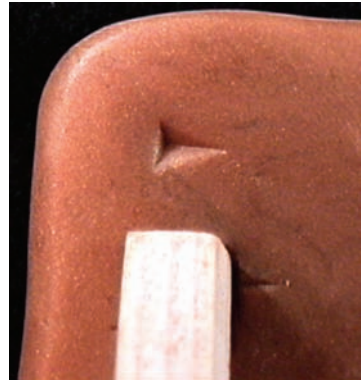
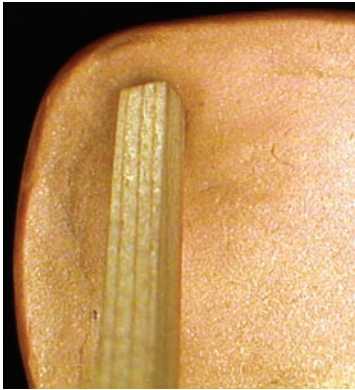
**Fig. 36**



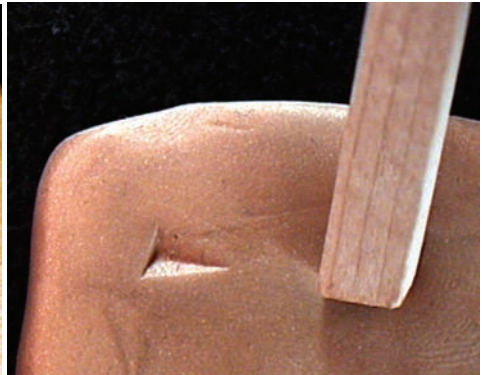
**Fig. 37**

**Fig. 38**

**Fig. 39**



**Fig. 40**



**Fig. 41**

In order to change the length of a wedge, if the stylus was held in a position aligned with the mid-line of the wedge, the scribe would simply have to change



the angle of the stylus in respect to the surface of the clay: to lengthen the wedge, the scribe would have to decrease the angle; to shorten the wedge, the angle would have to be increased (see again fig. 18). The length of the wedge would only be limited by the length of the stylus. With the stylus held in a position perpendicular to the mid-line of the wedge, that is, in the position illustrated in figure 25, the scribe would simply have to rotate the stylus: rotating the stylus counterclockwise would lengthen the wedge, clockwise would shorten the wedge (fig. 42). In this position, the only restriction for the length of the wedge would be the width of the stylus: the wider the stylus, the longer the wedge could be (fig. 43).

## Stylus Rotated

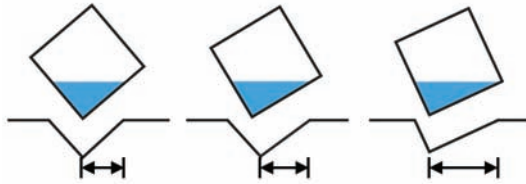
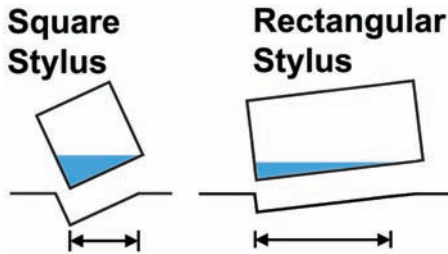


Fig. 42 (above)

Fig. 43 (below)



While any of these positions are technically possible, it seems most likely, based on efficiency and on the shape of the wedges attested in the alphabetic script, that the scribes combined techniques. Indeed, based on my own research, I would suggest that the scribes at Ugarit most likely impressed horizontal wedges using the technique and positions illustrated in figure 26 (that is, with the stylus held horizontally), vertical wedges using the technique illustrated in figure 34 (from the right perpendicular to the mid-line of the wedge), and oblique wedges using the technique and positions illustrated in figures 28 and 36

(which one was employed would depend on the preferences of the individual or the context of the wedge).



Fig. 44

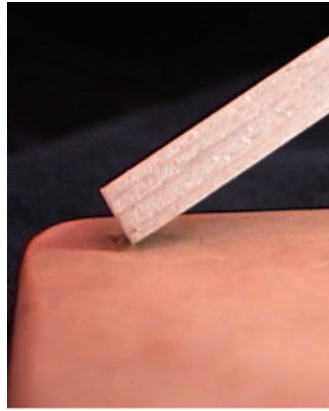
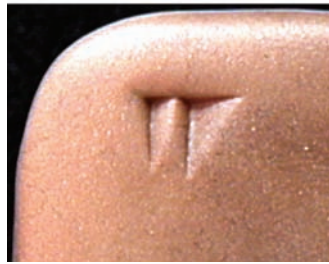
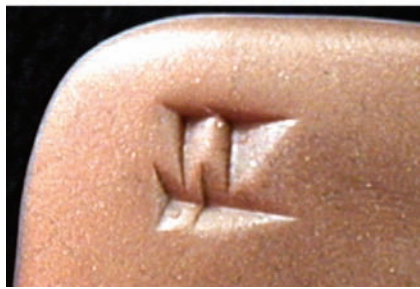
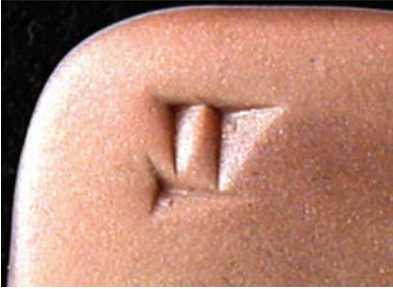


Fig. 45



Writing letters composed of various wedges in this composite manner would be very efficient and require minimal movement of the hand. To write the letter *b* using these techniques, for example, the scribe would impress two parallel vertical wedges with the stylus held horizontally as in figure 34 (see also figs. 44 and 45). After the placement of those wedges, the scribe need only rotate the stylus slightly (either clockwise or counterclockwise) and decrease the angle of the stylus with respect to the surface of the clay to impress the two horizontal wedges—the position of the stylus relative to the face of the tablet did not have to change (figs. 46 and 47, and the resulting sign in fig. 48). Because of the minimal hand movement required, both speed and accuracy are enhanced.



**Fig. 46 (above, left)**

**Fig. 47 (above, right)**

**Fig. 48 (below)**



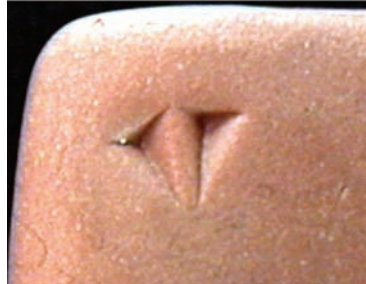


Fig. 49 (top)

Fig. 50 (below, left)

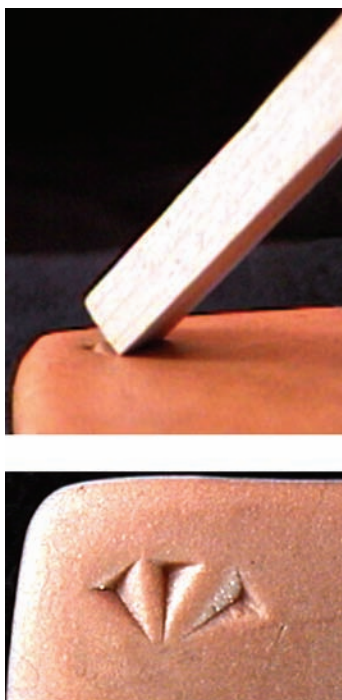


Fig. 51 (below, right)



When writing signs composed of oblique wedges, the scribe could also avoid having to radically reposition either the tablet or the stylus. For example, one form of the Ugaritic letter š was written by the placement of three wedges, one oblique wedge with its mid-line directed toward the upper left, one vertical

wedge, and one oblique wedge with its mid-line directed toward the upper right (fig. 49, from RS 17.141 [= *CTU* 4.277]). To impress the first wedge, the scribe would have held the stylus with a high angle with respect to the surface of the clay and rotated the stylus approximately  $45^\circ$  (or so) counterclockwise from horizontal (fig. 50; contrast fig. 28). Once the wedge was placed, the scribe would simply have to rotate the position of the stylus  $45^\circ$  clockwise, essentially even with the horizontal plane, to impress the vertical wedge (fig. 51; contrast fig. 30). To impress the final oblique wedge, the scribe would simply have to rotate the stylus further  $45^\circ$  clockwise and slightly decrease the angle of the stylus with respect to the clay before impressing the wedge (fig. 52, and the resulting letter in fig. 53). Once again, because of minimal movement of the hand (the stylus is essentially twisted between the fingers and thumb), the sign could be written quickly and accurately.



**Fig. 52**



Fig. 53

It is impossible to be certain how every scribe held and manipulated the stylus when writing every sign but, as mentioned above, there are several characteristics that can provide relevant information. One characteristic, the relationship of individual wedges to either the true vertical or horizontal plane, is an important indicator for both how the stylus was held and manipulated and the speed with which a text was written. The relationship of the wedges must be established by first noting what is the true horizontal orientation for the individual line (as opposed to that of the entire tablet—the tablet might have a certain orientation while the orientation for the lines might be different). Establishing the horizontal orientation for the line allows one to establish the horizontal and vertical planes that should be expected for each sign (the vertical essentially 90° from the horizontal). Once the planes are established, the relationship of the individual wedges to those planes can be measured.

In the alphabetic texts, horizontal wedges were sometimes written so that their tails slant either up or down away from the horizontal plane of the line (see for example fig. 54, from RS 24.278 [= *CTU* 1.128]). If consistent, this indicates that the scribe held the stylus and impressed the wedges from that position.

For vertical wedges, the relationship of the wedge to what would be the true vertical of the line is measured. When the relationship varies (for example, some signs leaning slightly to the right of vertical while others are on vertical), this feature can be an indicator of the speed with which the text was written.<sup>39</sup> On the

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39. The speed at which one writes is an individual characteristic and would likely vary depending on what was being written. It would also be influenced by the skill and training of the writer and the urgency of the writing. But the writing speed may seem to be beyond our reach to measure objectively since we have no way to establish it: there are still too many unknowns about the process of writing ancient texts. Nevertheless, as Wing has shown, the speed of all handwriting is largely limited by the needs of legibility

other hand, if all of the signs in the text have the same lean relative to the vertical plane, it is a clear indicator of how the scribe held the stylus when the wedges were impressed (see for example, fig. 55, from RS 17.049 [= *CTU* 4.263]; compare also fig. 54, where the vertical wedges are written at 90° angles to the horizontal wedges).



**Fig. 54**



**Fig. 55**

The position of the head of the wedge can also provide important information about how the stylus was held and manipulated. As discussed above, the styli used by scribes could be either beveled or symmetrical. By carefully examining the wedges found on a tablet, the scholar can determine whether there was a bevel to the stylus. With that information it is possible to examine other wedges and determine which part of the wedge is the head and which part the tail and thus establish how the scribe held the stylus. For example, on the tablet RS 16.396 (= *CTU* 4.244) it is not clear from which direction the scribe held the

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(Wing, "Variability in Handwritten Characters," 283). Therefore, while it is necessary to place this feature in the category of uncertainty, it may be possible to estimate a relative speed for the purpose of comparison based on the neatness of the writing. A description of neatness might include an analysis of whether the text was written carefully: were the signs evenly spaced and aligned both horizontally and vertically? Or were they written haphazardly, with the signs running together and features such as the vertical and horizontal spacing of lines inconsistent? For this feature to be as objective as possible, the general observation of neatness cannot be based solely on the opinions of the researcher, but must also rest upon such measurable criteria as the relative closeness of signs, horizontal and vertical sign alignment, horizontal distribution of signs, etc., as well as on features specifically related to the way the stylus was held and manipulated, and the characteristics of the signs.

It is important to note that in analyzing the "neatness" of a tablet, what is often in focus is the consistency of the particular characteristics that one is observing. Because a writer can write slowly but still produce imprecise writing, "neatness" must be examined carefully and determined on the basis of as many objective criteria as possible. Additionally, when possible, several tablets from the same scribe should be examined, so that the features that make the writing "messy" can be readily identified. In order to make this feature a dependable characteristic for the discussion of paleography, it should be generalized so that factors that alter such a judgment (such as the state of preservation of a tablet) can be mitigated.

stylus as he impressed the letter 'ayin (fig. 56), both a horizontal position and a position from the lower left is possible. An examination of other wedges on the tablet, however, reveals that the heads of the wedges are slanted, indicating that the stylus used by the scribe to write this tablet was beveled (figs. 57 and 58). By reexamining the 'ayin it is possible to determine in what position the stylus was held based on the shape of the stylus: the beveled head of the stylus would cause the head of the wedge to be slanted. It is therefore possible to determine that the stylus was held horizontally to the right of the sign when it was impressed (see fig. 59).



Fig. 56 (above, left)

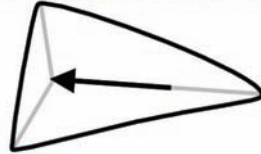
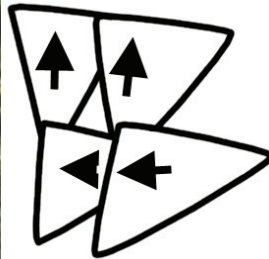


Fig. 57 (above, right)

Fig. 58 (below)





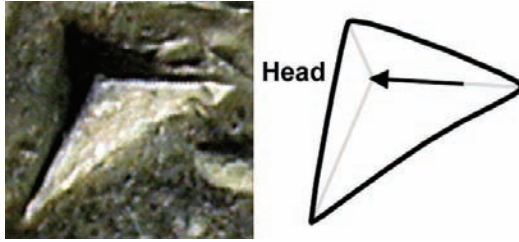
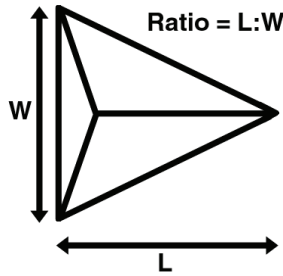


Fig. 59 (above)

Fig. 60 (below)



To further inform one's findings about how a particular scribe might have held and manipulated the stylus, additional information is available from an examination of some of the features of the sign. For example, the "ratio of the sign" is the relation of the length of the body of a wedge ( $L$ ) to that of the width of its head ( $W$ ; see fig. 60).<sup>40</sup> In order to understand how the ratio of the body of a sign to the head of the sign demonstrates how the stylus was held, it is necessary to present the stylus in terms of its relationship to the surface of the clay.

As mentioned above, when the stylus was impressed the portion of the stylus that formed the wedge depended on how large an angle existed between the stylus and the clay surface and how deeply the stylus was impressed. For exam-

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40. Because the measurement is based on the relative length of the two sides of the signs, it does not matter whether the sign is oriented vertically or horizontally. Several factors, however, determine which signs are suitable for the measurement. First, because oblique wedges were often impressed in non-standard ways, the most suitable wedges should have a primarily horizontal or vertical orientation. Second, if there is any elongation in a sign, however slight, it will skew the ratio measurement. Because there is the possibility of elongation near the end of a line (particularly in horizontal wedges), the wedges to be measured should be selected from the middle of the lines. Next, if the wedge to be measured is a component of a sign (that is, one of the wedges in a multi-wedge sign), it has to be easily isolated and cannot have any part altered by the other components of the same sign. In practical terms, this means that it has to be the last wedge placed in a sign and in such a position that a subsequent sign did not alter its size or shape. In a cramped text, this is often nearly impossible.

ple, if the scribe held the stylus as traditionally understood and at a distance such as that illustrated in figure 61, the resulting wedge would have a certain ratio between its tail and head (as in fig. 60). If the angle between the clay and the stylus was lessened so that more of the body of the stylus was involved in making the wedge (see fig. 62), the tail of the wedge would be longer and the resulting ratio different (see fig. 63). If the angle between the surface of the clay and the stylus was increased (see fig. 64), less of the stylus's body would come into contact with the clay and the resulting wedge would have a shorter tail, resulting in an entirely different ratio (see fig. 65). If, on the other hand, the scribe held the stylus from the right and used only the head to form some wedges, a change in the ratio of the head to the tail of the wedge indicates that the scribe rotated the stylus so that less (or more) of the edge of the head of the stylus came into contact with the clay (see fig. 66). Regardless of how the stylus was held, by recording the ratio found between the tail and the head on representative wedges, the differences in the way the stylus was manipulated can be highlighted.

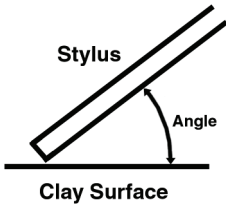


Fig. 61 (left)

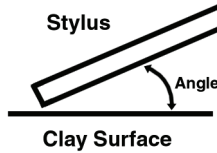


Fig. 62 (center)

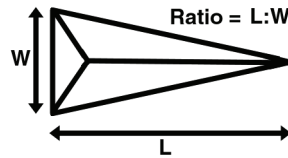


Fig. 63 (right)

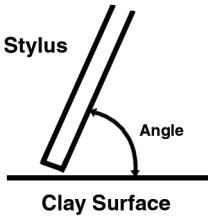


Fig. 64

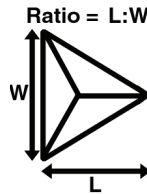


Fig. 65

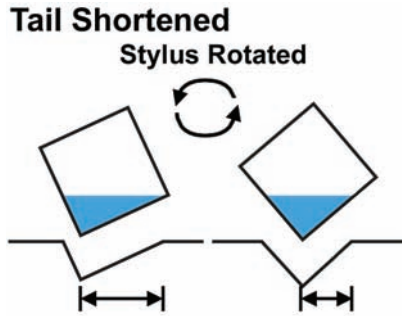


Fig. 66

The shape of the interior of the wedge provides further evidence for the way a stylus was held and manipulated. When the stylus was impressed into the clay, the location of the mid-line was dependent on the way the writing edge of the stylus was impressed. If the stylus was held so that the body of the stylus to the right and left of the writing edge was impressed evenly, the interior of the wedge appeared evenly spaced with the mid-line in the center of the wedge (fig. 67). A cutaway of the interior of the wedge made with the stylus held in this manner would show the mid-line in the center of the wedge (fig. 68). In what might be called a left-oriented wedge, the wedge will appear to have more of the surface of the stylus showing to the left of the mid-line than to the right because of the way the stylus was held (fig. 69). In such a wedge, the scribe held the stylus with the writing edge slightly to the right of center (rotated counterclockwise) so that more of the surface to the left of the writing edge was in contact with the clay (see cutaway in fig. 70). In what might be called a right-oriented wedge (see fig. 71), the stylus was held with the writing edge more to the left so that more of the surface to the right of the writing edge came in contact with the clay (see cutaway in fig. 72).

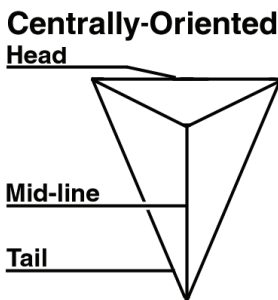


Fig. 67

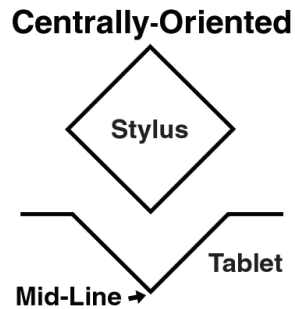


Fig. 68

**Left-Oriented**

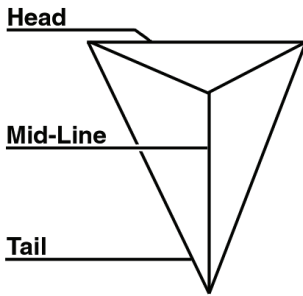


Fig. 69

**Left-Oriented**

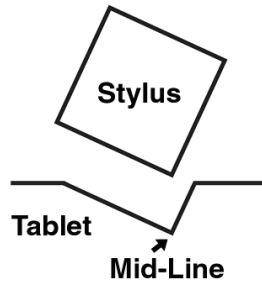


Fig. 70

**Right-Oriented**

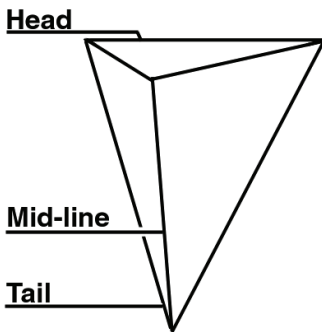


Fig. 71

**Right-Oriented**

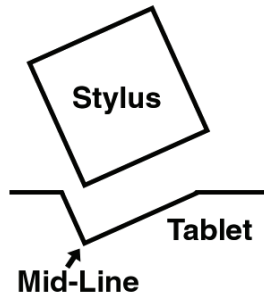
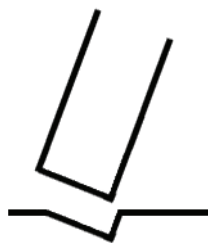


Fig. 72

If the scribe impressed the wedges in a sign with the stylus held in the position discussed above, that is, using the head of the stylus to impress vertical and oblique wedges from the right side of the tablet, the orientation of the wedges could still vary. If the scribe held the stylus with an increased angle relative to the surface of the clay, the resulting wedge could be either left-oriented (fig. 73) or centrally-oriented (fig. 74), depending on the angle. If, on the other hand, the scribe decreased the angle of the stylus relative to the clay, the wedge would be right-oriented (fig. 75).

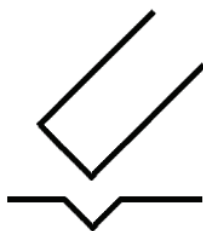
The way a scribe held and manipulated the stylus is an individual characteristic very closely tied to the scribe's training, skill and experience. As we analyze scribal ductus and identify individual scribal "hands" it is important to note all of the features that can illuminate how the scribe actually worked. While it is indeed something difficult to establish conclusively, evaluating the possibilities, analyzing the relationship of the wedge to true horizontal or true vertical, the

position of the head of the wedge, the ratio of the body of a wedge to its head, and the shape of the interior of a wedge provide valuable insight, and can help us to appreciate scribal schools and scribal training and come to more fully understand the scribal art.



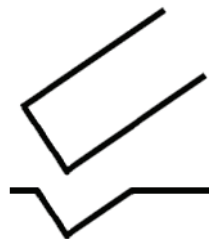
**Left-  
Oriented**

**Fig. 73**



**Centrally-  
Oriented**

**Fig. 74**



**Right-  
Oriented**

**Fig. 75**

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“Observe Due Measure”:  
The Gezer Inscription and Dividing  
a Trip around the Sun\*

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*Observe due measure;  
and best in all things is the right time and right amount.*

Hesiod, *Works and Days*,  
694.<sup>1</sup>

I. INTRODUCTION

A seven-line Northwest Semitic alphabetic text was discovered in 1909, in a pile of debris at the site identified as biblical Gezer. Ever since then, scholars have struggled to contextualize this inscription. Nearly every study has acknowledged that the text attempts to coordinate discrete periods of time with agricultural activities, but beyond this basic fact, interpretations of the text vary widely.<sup>2</sup>

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\* I would like to dedicate this article to Jo Ann Hackett on the occasion of the presentation of her *Festschrift* and in celebration of her own momentous trips around the sun. I am indebted to my colleague and friend Robert Jennings, who collaborated with me on the first foray into this topic at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Baltimore, MD, 24 November 2013 in the Hebrew Bible, History, and Archaeology Section, “Who is a Canaanite? Who isn’t a Canaanite! The Gezer Calendar, the Modern Palestinian Agricultural Calendar, and the End of the Essential Archaeological Subject.” I thank Dennis Pardee, Humphrey Hardy, Charles Huff, Eva Mroczek, Charles Otte, and Matthew Suriano for reading and commenting upon drafts of this article. I would also like to thank the editors, Jeremy Hutton and Aaron Rubin, for inviting me to contribute to this special volume.

1. Original: μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι: καιρὸς δ’ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος. This translation emphasizes the temporal measurement sense of καιρὸς; Laura M. Slatkin, “Measuring Authority, Authoritative Measures: Hesiod’s *Works and Days*,” in *The Moral Authority of Nature*, ed. L. Daston and F. Vidal (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 25–49.

2. William F. Albright (“The Gezer Calendar,” *BASOR* 92 [1943]: 21) suggested that the inscription was a school text intended to teach the sequence of agricultural tasks.

Current scholarly consensus identifies the text as a calendar.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, questions persist as to whether this identification presses the boundaries of our definitions of *calendar* or *month*. For example, the text uses no known names for months. Moreover, the term used in the inscription for *month* does not neatly correspond to the known duration of the agricultural activities listed.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, scholars have suggested that the text may have been written for bureaucrats or scribes rather than farmers.<sup>5</sup> According to an older reading of the text, only eight months and not twelve are listed—certainly not a complete solar year.<sup>6</sup> This reading, which persists among only a minority of scholars, has led to suggestions that the text is not a calendar at all, but perhaps a poem or a song.<sup>7</sup> Other scholars have argued that since *calendar* is too narrow a term, the description *list of times* is more fitting.<sup>8</sup>

Judah B. Segal (“‘YRH’ in the Gezer ‘Calendar,’” *JSS* 7 [1962]: 220) pointed out that this suggestion makes little sense, that even a child growing up in an agricultural milieu would not need to be reminded of the cycle of activities punctuating his or her life.

3. To be specific, the current scholarly consensus is that the text divides a full agricultural cycle over a period of twelve equal *yrh* units, or “months.” See Segal, “‘YRH,’” 219.

4. Seth L. Sanders (“Writing and Early Iron Age Israel: Before National Scripts, Beyond Nations and States,” in *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan: The Tel Zayit Abecedary in Context*, ed. Ron E. Tappy and P. Kyle McCarter [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008], 100–102) describes the use of the putative term for *month* in the inscription as designating “loose” and “colloquial” time units, and not actual lunar months, concluding that the text could not have been functional for farmers.

5. This interpretation can be traced back to H. Vincent (“Un calendrier agricole israélite,” *RB* 6 [1909]: 243–69, esp. 262–64.), who interprets the text as the work of a kind of state or local authority regulating periods of agricultural activities.

6. M. Lidzbarski (“An Old Hebrew Calendar Inscription from Gezer,” *PEFQS* 41 [1909]: 26–29) interpreted the text as the work of a farmer who divided the entire year into eight periods. S. Yeivin (“הלווח הרוקלאי העברי,” *BJPES* 3 [1936]: 118–21) compared the text to the bas-relief of Zodiac signs from second century CE synagogues of the Upper Galilee which he restored to have eight periods of agricultural activity, like his reading of the Gezer text, some with two months and some of one month. Umberto Cassuto (“The Gezer Calendar and Its Historical-Religious Value,” in *Biblical and Oriental Studies by Umberto Cassuto*, trans. Israel Abrahams [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1973–1975], 2:211–28, esp. 226) challenges the interpretation of a conventional eight-period agricultural year by bringing evidence of a six-period year in t. Ta’an. 1:7, itself an interpretation of supposedly six periods in Gen 8:22.

7. This suggestion seems to have first been made by Johannes Lindblom, “Der Sogenannte Bauernkalender von Gezer,” *Acta Academiae Aboensis, Humaniora* 7 (1931): 1–25. A more recent argument along these lines is that of W. H. Shea, “The Song of Seedtime and Harvest from Gezer,” in *Verses in Ancient Near Eastern Prose*, ed. J. C. de Moor and W. G. E. Watson (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1993), 243–50.

8. David Diringer (*Le iscrizioni antico-ebraiche palestinesi*, Pubblicazioni della R. Università degli Studi di Firenze, Facoltà di lettere e filosofia 3, vol. 2 [Florence: Le Monnier, 1934], 16) understood the inscription as a list of periods of activity, and thus

Previous scholarship has thus focused on defining the purpose or compositional context of the inscription. These studies assigned the text to conventional categories like *calendar* or *song*, concentrating on various features of the inscription, and then examined the possible practical applications for such texts.<sup>9</sup> What I propose in this study is to postpone questions of the inscription’s genre, acknowledging that scholars have reached an impasse in addressing them. Before we try to mold the text to our own textual categories, we must first consider the priorities and strategies of the text itself, and consider its relationships with other sources across generic categories.

As I argue below, the theme and structure of the text of the Gezer inscription find parallels in biblical wisdom literature. Specifically, I will posit that the list of times in Eccl 3:2–8 can be read productively as a parallel to the text of the Gezer inscription. By examining the inscription’s division of an annual cycle and by comparing it to modern ethnographic data, I will argue that the inscription’s organization of time is a complex combination of two systems. These two important features of the inscription—its highly structured discourse and its complex organization of time—mitigate against interpreting the text as a practical document. Neither is the inscription to be understood as a mere exercise in writing, however. By observing its thematic and structural parallels and conducting an analysis of its organization of time, I will posit that the inscription is an intellectual exercise in observing due measure. The Gezer inscription, as a literary expression of the human project of searching for order in nature, should thus be understood broadly within the category of “wisdom literature.”

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did not cover periods of inactivity. Similar lists exist; see the discussion below on the description of the annual agricultural cycle which excludes periods without activity in the Palestinian Talmud (y. Yebam. 15:2), but lacks specific terms for discrete time periods such as “month.” Oded Borowski (*Agriculture in Iron Age Israel* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987], 31–44) dedicates a substantial section of his study to the Gezer inscription. He terms the text “The Gezer manual,” explaining that the text is “obviously a list of chores and not a calendar to tell time,” arguing that *yrh* does not necessarily designate a “calendrical month but rather ... a measure of time,” 32. André Lemaire’s conclusion (*Les écoles et la formation de la Bible dans l’ancien Israël*, OBO 39 [Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981], 11) does not see the text as fitting our definition of a calendar, and instead identifies it as “list of the names of months.”

9. A minority of philological studies have bypassed issues of the inscription’s compositional context or purpose by addressing questions of the language, an issue which is not directly related to the present study. Studies of the language of the text are, however, equally important, and can illuminate the historical and cultural context of the inscription. For the most recent example of such a study, see Dennis Pardee, “A Brief Case for the Language of the ‘Gezer Calendar’ as Phoenician,” in *Linguistic Studies in Phoenician*, ed. Robert D. Holmstedt and Aaron Schade (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 226–46.



## II. THE MEASUREMENT OF TIME AS AN INTELLECTUAL TASK

R. A. S. Macalister, the archaeologist attributed with the inscription's discovery, noted the difficulty in assigning the text to a category of ancient literary production: "There is nothing historical, votive, epistolary, talismanic, or magical in the inscription. It is of too formal a character to be classed with the random scribbles by which a writer tries the capacity of a doubtful pen."<sup>10</sup> And while it is true that the inscription's discourse seems to fit none of those literary categories, perhaps Macalister was too hasty (not to mention judgmental!) in his conclusion that "[t]he tablet was prepared by the writer simply to shew off his own attainments... [The writer] was a person of a limited range of ideas, but possessed the unusual accomplishment of writing."<sup>11</sup> Does the discourse of the text in fact show that the text's author "was a person of a limited range of ideas"? What of the text's formal features or content supports such an argument? Aside from its terseness and formulaic nature, a description which also applies to "high" Northwest Semitic literature, there is little to defend this claim. In fact, as this study will show, the text of the Gezer inscription demonstrates a high degree of structure and a complex organization of time. Its topic of discourse itself places it firmly within the broad ancient literary category of knowledge production. Indeed, knowing the *right time* for human action is a central value reflected in biblical wisdom literature.

In biblical wisdom texts, the important skill of calculating and ordering time does not result in the production of calendars or time-keeping systems. Rather this central value manifests itself in reflective discourse. The literature systematically examines the role of human action in the face of the unfolding of events through time. For example, harvest-time arrives when the crops are ready, an occurrence out of direct human control. Harvesting the crop, however, is a willed action. Determining the happy intersection of action and occurrence is an exercise in skill, as expressed in the following example from Proverbs:

אָגַר בְּקוֹץ בֶּן מִשְׁכִּיל נִרְדָּם בְּקִצִּיר בֶּן מְבִישׁ:

He who stores up in the summer is a sensible son,  
he who sleeps through the harvest is disappointing one. (Prov 10:5)

As our own saying goes, *timing is everything*. Likewise, the third chapter of Ecclesiastes explores the challenge of calculating "the right time" for the many different experiences of life in fourteen highly formulaic lines, "A time for X, a time for Y," where X and Y are apparently antithetical experiences like *crying* and *laughing*.<sup>12</sup> The speaker then breaks the formulaic verse, shifting into prose analysis. What follows radically undercuts the preceding methodical presenta-

10. R. A. S. Macalister, *The Excavation of Gezer, 1902–1905 and 1907–1909* (London: John Murray, 1912), 2:27.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Eccl 3:2–8.

tion of human experience in its temporal frame, declaiming the futile attempt of those fourteen verses to systematize that which humans ultimately cannot predict:

אֶת־הַכֹּל עָשָׂה יְיָ בְּעֵתוֹ  
 גַּם אֶת־הָעֹלָם נָתַן בְּלִבָּם  
 מִבְּלִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִמְצָא הָאָדָם אֶת־הַמַּעֲשֶׂה  
 אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹהִים מִרֵּאשִׁי וְעַד־סוֹף:

(God) does everything fittingly in its time,  
 moreover He has placed the task<sup>13</sup> in (mortals’) minds,  
 without man grasping everything God  
 has made happen from the beginning until the end. (Eccl 3:11)

Biblical wisdom literature grapples with the human search for order in the world. Finding order in time is an important part of that project. So too in early Greek poetry. In Hesiod’s *Works and Days*, the mortal human experience is determined by its finite quality, and thus is framed temporally.<sup>14</sup> For Hesiod the farmer in particular was a convenient trope to explore the idea of ordering human experience vis-à-vis nature.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the human endeavor of dividing time is a profoundly meaningful activity in the expression and structuring of experience.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, however, it is a project of an arbitrary nature. The many different, experientially determined, and never-exact ways of measuring time can attest to this. Perhaps it is this paradox that the speaker in Ecclesiastes

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13. This translation follows an emendation of the MT from העולם, ‘eternity’ or ‘the world’, to העמל, ‘the task’, presuming scribal metathesis of the *mem* and the *lamed* and emended following a comparison to similar wording in Eccl 8:17. See Michael V. Fox, *A Time to Tear Down and a Time to Build Up: A Rereading of Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 211. Without the emendation, one could translate the phrase as follows: “moreover, he has placed (a sense of) the future in (mortals’) minds.” When read with the emendation to העמל, however, the verse supports the argument that biblical wisdom literature understands the challenge to find temporal order in the world as an intellectual *task* that is central to the human experience.

14. According to Slatkin (“Measuring Authority,” 28), both the *Iliad* and *Works and Days* express the strife of human experience as the endless task of measurement and division. I thank Bruce Rosenstock for pointing me to this study.

15. Slatkin (“Measuring Authority,” 28) argues that the discourse on farming and proper timing in *Works and Days* is not really about farming: “The poem uses the farmer to think with because it is through farming that humans are most immersed in natural processes, and the farmer is the human type who most obviously must accord his behavior with the exigencies and contingencies of nature’s patterns.”

16. According to Paul Ricoeur (“Narrated Time,” *Philosophy Today* 29 [1985]: 259–72, esp. 263), the human conception of *time* involves paradoxical notions of nature, or cosmic time, on the one hand, and human experience on the other. For the lifetime of any individual is minuscule and insignificant when considered in the grand scheme, yet it is during this brief period in which everything is meaningful for the individual.

wishes to underscore in the larger discussion of fundamental challenges to the human production of knowledge.

Like biblical wisdom literature and Hesiod's *Works and Days*, the Gezer inscription tasks itself with giving order to time. As will be discussed below, the prosody of the inscription is reminiscent of the list of times in Eccl 3. Like the Gezer inscription, biblical wisdom literature demonstrates esteem for highly structured discourse. There is, however, an important distinction to be made. Biblical wisdom literature and early Greek poetry offer reflections upon the activity of temporally ordering experience in the world. The Gezer inscription, on the other hand, is not self-reflective. The discourse of the inscription merely participates in the intellectual activity of ordering experience. The question thus arises: Must systematizing experience in the world be self-reflective to be considered *wisdom*? Perhaps non-self-reflective forms like a collection of sayings, an abecedary, and even the Gezer inscription should be included in this category as well.<sup>17</sup> As the following analyses of the inscription's formal organization and understanding of time will demonstrate, although the text may seem simple at first blush, it is surprisingly complex.

### III. THE GEZER INSCRIPTION AND ITS FORMAL ORGANIZATION

#### A. TRANSCRIPTION<sup>18</sup>:

1. y]rhw'sp.yrhwz
2. r'yrhwlqš
3. .yrh'šdpšt
4. yrhqsrs'rm
5. yrhqsrwkl
6. yrhwzmr
7. yrhqs

Edge: 'by[...

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17. See Sanders, "Writing," 100–103, and esp. 101, on his interpretation of the Tel Zayit abecedary and the Gezer inscription. Sanders understands these texts against the grain of the conventional interpretation, which categorizes them as tools for a growing bureaucracy. Instead, Sanders sees the Tel Zayit abecedary and the Gezer inscription as examples of the writing down of traditional literature. He calls this phenomenon "literizing," borrowing from the work of Natalie Z. Davis, who makes a similar claim for collections of folk wisdom in early Modern France (*Society and Culture in Early Modern France* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975], 227–67).

18. Since the inscription itself only provides three vertical lines (which have been interpreted as word or phrase dividers) in the first three lines of the text, I have not indicated word boundaries with spaces in the transcription.

B. FORMAL ANALYSIS<sup>19</sup>

Each entry maintains a strict formula comprised of two elements, which aids the division of the text into eight discrete units. The first element consists of a form of *yrh*.<sup>20</sup> The second element consists of an activity.<sup>21</sup> There seems to be a strict distribution of the combination of the varieties of the first and second elements of the formula.<sup>22</sup> Beyond the micro-structure of the individual entries, a two-part macro-structure of four lines each can be discerned for the entire text.<sup>23</sup>

The first section encompasses activities that can be described as those which involve the preparation and manipulation of the ground. The second section encompasses the forcible removal of produce from the plants themselves. While at least one of the activities of the first section can be designated as a “harvest,” that is, the “ingathering” of some fruits, olives, or nuts, these activities do not involve the removal of produce *from the plants*. Rather, it is the ground itself that is the locus of the activities in the first section.

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19. This analysis follows the semantic and morpho-syntactic interpretation reflected in the given translation, which generally follows Pardee, “Brief Case,” 236–40. Deviations are noted and explained. The translation here reflects an interpretation of the *wāw* following the lexeme *yrh* in lines 1 (twice), 2 (once), and 6 (once) as denoting the 3.m.sg. pronominal suffix on the suffixed form of the m.pl. noun */yarah-/* or the suffixed form of the dual, */yarah-ay-/*. Although the consonantal representation cannot distinguish between a plural or dual of *yrh*, in a text such as this which gives a particular order to time in discrete, measured units, one would expect the form to represent the dual unless otherwise indicated numerically.

20. This first element has two varieties. In its first variety it surfaces orthographically as <YRH>, which is understood here to be its singular form with a proleptic 3.m.sg. pronominal suffix whose referent is the activity noted in the second element of the line. This suffix is not marked orthographically. In its second variety the form of *yrh* surfaces orthographically as <YRH̄W>, understood here to be either a plural or dual form with a semantically identical pronominal suffix as in the first variety. However, the plural/dual suffixed form of the noun is morphosyntactically and phonologically distinct from the singular and thus is marked orthographically with a *wāw*.

21. This second element has two possible varieties. In the first variety, it is a single lexeme, understood to be either an infinitive (entries 1, 2, 3, and 7) or a m.sg. noun (8). In the second variety, there are two lexical items, either a construct phrase (entries 4 and 5) or a conjunctive phrase (entry 6).

22. The second variety of the first element, *yrhw*, only occurs with the first variety of the second element, a single lexeme, and never with the second variety of the second element, a two noun phrase. The singular *yrh* only occurs with a single lexeme in the second element in the final entry of the text, *yrh qš*.

23. Shea observed a tri-partite structure in his analysis of the text as a song (“Song,” 244–45).

## I. Manipulation of the Ground

- |                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) <i>yrḥw 'sp</i>    | its (two) months: ingathering |
| 2) <i>yrḥw zr'</i>    | its (two) months: sowing      |
| 3) <i>yrḥw lqš</i>    | its (two) months: late sowing |
| 4) <i>yrḥ 'šd pšt</i> | its month: hoeing weeds       |

## II. Produce Removal from Plants

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 5) <i>yrḥ qsr š'rm</i> | its month: barley harvest                     |
| 6) <i>yrḥ qsr wkl</i>  | its month: (wheat) harvest and its completion |
| 7) <i>yrḥw zmr</i>     | its (two) months: (vine) pruning              |
| 8) <i>yrḥ qs</i>       | its month: summer (fruit)                     |

The first section outlines activities which can be seen as pre-growth preparation of the earth, each activity building upon the next: *'sp*, collecting what has fallen to the ground;<sup>24</sup> *zr'*, sowing and general preparation of the ground for the growth of plants; *lqš*, late sowing and tending to the maturation of plants in the soil; and finally, the removal of weeds, an activity which both prepares the ground and manipulates plants for use in the production of hay.<sup>25</sup> By contrast,

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24. The activity designated *'sp* 'ingathering', requires explanation for its thematic inclusion in a group of activities which I have identified with the preparation of the ground. As Pardee notes ("Brief Case," 237), this ingathering of fruits, olives, and possibly some nut varieties is distinguished from the activities of *qsr* '[grain] harvest', *zmr* 'pruning', and the plucking involved in harvesting the *qs* 'summer [fruit]', in that the olives and the like are gathered from the ground, whereas the others are actively removed from the plant. Dalman, who likewise translates "in-gathering," relates the activities listed to his knowledge of modern Palestinian agricultural activities. He explains the activity *'sp* not as harvest, but rather as the gathering of fruit "to the house" ("Notes on the Old Hebrew Calendar-Inscription from Gezer," *PEFQS* 41 [1909]: 118–19). The verb  $\sqrt{SP}$ , as it is used in Biblical Hebrew, can refer generally to the ingathering of that which lies on the ground (Exod 23:10), specifically the activity temporally opposite to the first harvest of grain, i.e., the ingathering of produce at the end of the year (Exod 23:16), an activity which sequentially follows *zmr* of vineyards (Lev 25:3). While the verb  $\sqrt{ZR}$  'to sow', is found most frequently alongside  $\sqrt{QSR}$  'to harvest [grain]', (twelve times), it is also found alongside  $\sqrt{SP}$  'to gather', (six times). It seems that  $\sqrt{SP}$  is understood to be an activity, like  $\sqrt{QSR}$ , which follows  $\sqrt{ZR}$ . But unlike  $\sqrt{QSR}$  which is the first activity in attending to produce,  $\sqrt{SP}$  denotes the final step. Thus it follows the eighth entry on the Gezer inscription, *yrḥ qs*, 'its month: summer (fruit)', resuming the annual cycle and initiating pre-growth activities.

25. S. Talmon's study of the Gezer inscription ("The Gezer Calendar and the Seasonal Cycle of Ancient Canaan," *JAOS* 83 [1963]: 177–87) cast doubt on whether *pšt* should be translated as 'flax', and instead, comparing to an agricultural activity sequence found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (1QS 10:7), argues that *pšt* of the Gezer inscription is equivalent to *dš* 'grass' in the sequence in 1QS. Talmon argues that *pšt* need not be the flax for linen production, but could be "verdurous growth." Borowski (*Agriculture*, 34–35) points out problems in interpreting the activity *'šd pšt* as 'harvesting flax with a hoe', and suggests the reading "hoeing weeds," i.e., the removal of weeds and its preparation as hay. Here he follows Cassuto ("Gezer Calendar," 44) and Talmon ("Gezer Calendar," 187) in their interpretation of *pšt* as a f.sg. substantive meaning 'weeds'. He explains that in modern practice, flax is sown in December and harvested in July. Even in ancient

the second section outlines activities of post-growth activity, moving from grain to fruit. The activities of this second section all relate to the forceful removal of produce from plants: the first harvest of grain, the barley harvest, highlights the celebrated first forceful removal of produce from plants;<sup>26</sup> *qsr*, reaping and harvesting grain; *zmr*, pruning the vine and harvesting of some grapes;<sup>27</sup> and plucking the *qs*, the summer (fruit). From this perspective, the text is highly structured, both at the micro-level of individual entries and at the macro-level of the organization of activities.

In fact, its micro-structure is remarkably similar to the list of times in Ecclesiastes. In Eccl 3:2–8 the basic formula is comprised of two elements: the first element is *תָּעַת*, *time period*, and the second element is an activity, most frequently an infinitive construct, with little variation (see fig. 1).

There are a few differences between the list found in the Gezer inscription and Eccl 3:2–8 that are worth mentioning. The first difference is that the Gezer text has the full formula of the two elements—the term for time and the activity phrase—only once in a given entry. On the other hand, the list in Ecclesiastes has the full formula twice in each entry. In the list in Ecclesiastes, the activity phrase of the second iteration is always antithetical to its counterpart in the first iteration.<sup>28</sup>

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times it would not have been harvested so early in the year in Gezer. Recently Aaron Koller (“Ancient Hebrew *מעצד* and *עצד* in the Gezer Calendar,” *JNES* 72 [2013]: 179–93) argued that since flax is not harvested by cutting, but rather by uprooting the plant, the term *ʿsd* ‘chopping’ should be reconsidered. Koller’s solution lies not in the reanalysis of *pšt*, as the previously discussed scholars have suggested, but in a rereading of *ʿsd* as etymological *ḥsd* ‘to reap’. This is a brilliant solution to the issue of translating *chopping* for the harvesting of flax when flax is not harvested by cutting. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the entry on the inscription falls at a time when flax would not have been harvested, and so the reanalysis of *pšt* as ‘weeds’ appears to be a simpler solution.

26. Talmon, “Gezer Calendar,” 184.

27. The term *zmr* can refer to both pruning and harvesting of certain varieties of grapes, and seems to be used to designate the cutting of various parts of the plant, including the removal of grapes with a sharp object. Cassuto (“Gezer Calendar,” 217) interpreted the term as referring specifically to the grape harvest in this case, because in his view, the pruning would have occurred earlier. Borowski (*Agriculture*, 37–38) likewise argues that  $\sqrt{ZMR}$  means both ‘to prune’ and ‘to harvest [grapes]’ because the basic meaning of the root is ‘to cut’, and the same tool (*מזמרה*) which is used to care for the vine is also used to cut the grapes from the plant. He adds that the term in Gen 43:11, and particularly in Song 2:12, *עַת הַזְּמִיר*, can be interpreted as referring specifically to the grape harvest. Pardee (“Brief Case,” 240) takes a conservative approach, concluding that the term is ambiguous here, and could refer to care of the vine for appropriate sun exposure or to the harvesting of certain varieties which would have been ready before those in the subsequent period, *qs* ‘summer [fruit]’.

28. One can be assured that the two iterations form a single entry, as these two phrases are joined by a *wāw* conjunction. These conjunctions only occur between iterations of the formula and do not occur between entries.

**Figure 1. Comparison of Entries in the Gezer Inscription and in Eccl 3:2–8**

<b>Formula</b>	<b>Term for time</b>	<b>Activity Phrase</b>
Gezer Inscription	<i>yrh</i>	infinitive + noun noun + noun noun
	<i>yrhw</i>	infinitive
Eccl 3:2–8	עת	/I/ + infinitive
		/I/ + infinitive + noun
		infinitive
		infinitive + noun noun

The second difference is that although the term used in the first element of the formula in Ecclesiastes, עת, refers to a period of occurrence as does *yrh*, it does not designate a specific quantity of time. One could argue, as some have, that *yrh* in its usage in this text does not necessarily designate a month of the lunar calendar whose boundaries are marked by the observation of the new moon.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the term is used in Biblical Hebrew to designate a period of days corresponding to a lunar month but not beginning with a new moon.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, *yrh*, unlike עת, is a quantifiable period of time, otherwise the phrase ירח ימים would be meaningless.

The final distinction I would like to point out is one of context. The list in the Gezer inscription has no written context informing its interpretation. By contrast, the list in Ecclesiastes is framed by reflective discourse. There is an introduction which identifies the theme unifying the various periods of activity,<sup>31</sup> and there is a conclusion which situates the list in the context of the speaker's point about the search for meaning in one's actions and complicates the human endeavor to identify the right time for action.<sup>32</sup>

In spite of these differences, the formal and thematic similarities between the two texts are remarkable. Perhaps there was a larger intellectual tradition, preserved in these two texts, of expressing the organization of time in such a fashion.

29. See Sanders, "Writing," 101; Borowski, *Agriculture*, 32.

30. The term ירח ימים is apparently used to designate a period of a month, though not necessarily beginning at the appearance of the new moon. See its usage in Deut 21:13; 2 Kgs 15:13.

31. Eccl 3:1.

32. Eccl 3:9–14.

## IV. AGRICULTURAL “CALENDARS”: OBSERVE DUE MEASURE?

As we have seen, the text of the inscription is highly structured and finds a parallel in the list of times in Eccl 3:2–8. Some may conclude that the text is thus more concerned with expressing meaning through prosody than through the systematic organization of time. As a result, scholars express divergent opinions on the genre of the inscription: it is either primarily a calendar or primarily a song or poem. We should, however, keep in mind that these categories are not native to the text; they arise out of our own textual categories and expectations.

Comparing the Gezer inscription to the list of times in Eccl 3:2–8, we observe a significant difference in their respective organization of time, which I have noted in the previous section. The list of times in Ecclesiastes is organized by  $\text{ny}$ , a term for unbounded periods of time. By contrast, the Gezer inscription is organized by  $\text{yrh}$ , a term for bounded, quantifiable durations. The use of  $\text{yrh}$  in the text’s organization of time, a discrete time period lasting 28–30 days,<sup>33</sup> is the crux for interpreting the inscription as a calendar or some other kind of literary work. If  $\text{yrh}$  does indeed mark bounded units of time, which is a logical conclusion given the semantics of the term and its use in Biblical Hebrew, then it makes sense that these units of time are sequential and intend to divide up a longer period, like a year. The text itself brings forth evidence that the  $\text{yrh}$  entries are listed sequentially because each entry is made to correspond to supposedly sequential agricultural activities. For example, it is well known that in the seasonal agricultural cycle, sowing must precede the harvest. This fact establishes the basic correspondence of the Gezer inscription’s sequence of entries to the agricultural cycle, and the remainder can be filled in from ancient textual evidence and modern agricultural practice in the region.

Yet it is this very feature of the text, the correspondence of  $\text{yrh}$  entries to sequential activities in the annual agricultural cycle, which challenges its interpretation as a calendar. This is because the duration of the agricultural activities indicated do not correspond neatly to 28–30 day periods. Nor does any activity correspond neatly to two such periods. Borowski includes several charts of modern sowing and harvesting practices in Israel, showing that they loosely align with the text of the Gezer inscription, but also that they do not neatly correspond to the listed periods in the inscription. Some crops are sown or harvested for more or less than the period indicated on the Gezer inscription.<sup>34</sup> This fact is not surprising. The commencement and conclusion of an agricultural activity, while based upon human action, is timed to give the best results, and thus is beyond human control. It is unlikely that the harvest of any given crop will be ready at the same appointed day every year, and climate conditions, which change from year to year, yield varying results at varying times. As a result, *any*

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33. And thus allowing the interpretation of the text’s enumeration of twelve  $\text{yrh}$ -periods (four single  $\text{yrh}$ -periods and four double  $\text{yrh}$ -periods), five to eleven days shy of a full solar cycle, depending on how the lunar month is counted.

34. See tables 2 and 3 in Borowski, *Agriculture*, 34, 37.



attempt to divide the agricultural cycle into discrete, bounded periods is an inexact science—despite any pretense of precision.

Modern ethnographic data from the region on dividing the year attest to the same phenomenon. The activities of the agricultural cycle do not fit equal, discrete periods. When they are made to fit such a model, they rarely correspond to 28–30 day periods. Following an apparently common appellation for the year, *as-sabi* ‘*hamsīnāt*’ ‘the seven fifties,’ Cana’an’s 1913 study of the rural Palestinian calendar divided the year into seven fifty-day periods.<sup>35</sup> Cana’an’s calendar identifies the commencement and conclusion of each period by both agricultural activities as well as seasonal and religious festivals.<sup>36</sup>

Likewise, a recent ethnography published by Ali Qleibo on the Palestinian agricultural calendar records a seven-period annual cycle.<sup>37</sup> According to Qleibo’s informant, the periods of agricultural activity are loosely demarcated and are dependent on unpredictable events: the first rain, the viability of the land for sowing, the beginning of the grain harvest, etc. Seasonal and religious festivals are indicated as signposts for the general beginning and ends of periods, but they by no means determine the commencement or conclusion of activities.<sup>38</sup> The only fixed period are those without any major agricultural activities: the winter periods. The olive harvest, which begins the agricultural cycle according to Qleibo’s ethnography, is followed by the period characterized by sowing and additional preparation of the ground, and then three periods of inactivity follow. These are the “forty coldest days,” followed by the “fifty cold days,” and concluded by the “fifty dusty days.”<sup>39</sup> The representation of Qleibo’s modern Palestinian agricultural cycle (fig. 2) demonstrates a combination of two systems of keeping time. Qleibo’s list of times is already a combination of two systems even without accommodating it to a calendar of fixed, equal units such as “months.” The first system is one that is fluctuating and unbounded, wholly dependent on unpredictable and uncontrollable factors. This first system, the first two and last two periods of Qleibo’s calendar, frames the second system: three periods which are quantified, bounded, and conventional. After all, who can decide whether any given day in the forty coldest days is really colder than any given day in the period of the fifty cold days? Rather, the quantification of these periods and their designations as *coldest*, *cold*, and *dusty* are a matter of conventional characterization and not actual experience.

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35. Tawfiq Cana’an, “Der Kalender des palästinensischen Fellachen,” *ZDPV* 36 (1913): 272.

36. Cana’an’s seven periods, in sequential order, with the year beginning in Spring: Easter-Pentecost; Pentecost-Vintage; Vintage-Olive harvest; Olive harvest-Lod-fest; Lod-fest-Christmas; Christmas-Lent; Lent-Easter (“Der Kalender,” 272).

37. Ali H. Qleibo, “Canaanites, Christians, and the Palestinian Agricultural Calendar,” *Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies* 3 (2009): 9–20.

38. Qleibo, “Canaanites,” 12–15.

39. *Ibid.*

**Figure 2. Schematization of the Modern Palestinian Agricultural Cycle according to Qleibo**

Olive harvest (~ 51 days)	Sowing (~ 52 days)	40 Cold- est Days	50 Cold Days	50 Dusty Days	Wheat Har- vest (varies)	Fruit Har- vest (varies)
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Approximate correspondence to Gregorian months:

Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
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**Figure 3.  
Schematization of y. Yebam. 15:2 with absent periods of ground preparation and inactivity**

barley harvest	wheat harvest	vintage	olive harvest	ground preparation	pre-harvest inactivity
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What would a single-system calendar of the agricultural cycle look like? We find an example in the Jerusalem Talmud cited as a teaching of the house of Shammai (y. Yebam. 15:2).

והלא כל השנה כולה קציר  
 ... יצא קציר שעורים ונכנס קציר חטים  
 יצא קציר ונכנס בציר  
 יצא בציר ונכנס מסיק  
 נמצאת כל השנה כולה קציר

Is not the whole year [the time of] harvest?  
 ... When the barley harvest ends, the wheat harvest begins  
 when the [wheat] harvest is over, the vintage begins  
 when the vintage ends, the olive harvest begins.  
 It happens that the entire year is [the time of] harvest!

This calendar is essentially a list of agricultural activities in sequential order. No duration is specified for any activity; each subsequent activity begins when the previous ends. As the frame itself makes clear, this depiction of the agricultural cycle is entirely focused on food production: והלא כל השנה כולה קציר... נמצאת כל השנה כולה קציר. 'Is not the whole year [the time of] harvest? It happens that the entire year is [the time of] harvest!' It follows, then, that large periods of the year are conspicuously absent from this list: the preparation of the ground and the long periods of agricultural inactivity in the winter. It is a convenient feature of this calendar's structure, or perhaps a deliberate one, that the missing periods

are precisely those which occur outside of the cycle, either before the barley harvest or after the olive harvest (fig. 3).

V. THE ORGANIZATION OF TIME IN THE GEZER INSCRIPTION: OBSERVE *DEUX* MEASURES

By contrast to the single-system division of time in y. Yebam. 15:2, in the text of the Gezer inscription we observe an attempt to accommodate two independent and exclusive systems of organizing time. On the one hand, the year of the inscription is divided into heterogenous periods of duration which are characterized by their dominant agricultural activity: collecting fallen produce, sowing, late sowing, hoeing weeds, harvesting grain, caring for the vintage, and harvesting fruit. These are periods whose temporal boundaries are imprecise and are determined by fluctuating and unpredictable seasonal climate conditions. Moreover, all of these periods are qualitatively different from one another. One could identify such a description of time as qualitative: it describes the quality of the duration and not its quantity (fig. 4).

**Figure 4. Qualitative System: Eight Periods of Agricultural Activity<sup>40</sup>**

collecting [olives and other fallen produce]	sowing	late sow- ing	hoeing weeds	harvesting barley	harvesting [wheat] and its comple- tion	pruning [the vine]	[plucking] summer [fruit]
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**Figure 5. Quantitative System: Twelve *yrh* Periods**

<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>	<i>yrh</i>
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**Figure 6. Combination of the Two Systems in the Gezer Inscription**

Its two <i>yrh</i> periods: collecting [olives etc.]	Its two <i>yrh</i> periods: sowing	Its two <i>yrh</i> periods: late sowing	Its one <i>yrh</i> period: hoeing weeds	Its one <i>yrh</i> period: harvest- ing barley	Its one <i>yrh</i> period: harvest- ing [wheat] and its comple- tion	Its two <i>yrh</i> periods: pruning [the vine]	Its one <i>yrh</i> period: [pluck- ing] sum- mer [fruit]
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40. The qualitative system is schematized, but the chart is not representative of the respective duration of each period.

On the other hand, each period of the Gezer inscription is designated by the same term, *yrh*, a root which in its most concrete sense seems to designate *moon* and in a distinct lexeme of the same root comes to designate a full cycle of the moon, or *month*.<sup>41</sup> The term *yrh* designates a quantifiable period of time, whether or not it is used in this text to mark periods of time that begin with the new moon or not.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the term is used without discrimination to mark each quantity of the period it designates, probably 29–30 days.<sup>43</sup> That is to say, each *yrh* occurs in succession without respect to the activities of those days; it is its quantity which determines its identification as *yrh* and nothing more (fig. 5).

The result of accommodating two systems of organizing time, a qualitative system and a quantitative system, is a single calendar with little functional use (fig. 6).<sup>44</sup> It is an inaccurate representation of the duration of agricultural activities, since each activity is only given one of two options for duration—a single *yrh* period or a double *yrh* period. The inscription only indicates each of these single or double *yrh* periods for a single activity, and does not allow for shorter or longer periods. The designation of a single activity for each period excludes other activities which may occur at the same time. Moreover, unlike the previously discussed calendar from Yebamot, the duration of the activity is given (*yrh* or *yrhw*), but it is not clear when the activity commences or concludes. Does the activity start at the beginning of a new period? Does it occur sometime during the period? These questions remain because the actual designation of times is unclear.

The text is thus not prescriptive for farmers, as their activities would be determined by inexact and fluctuating factors which are external to the division of the year into *yrh* periods. For this reason, the text is also not informative for bureaucrats who need to know the periods of these activities for taxation or accounting purposes.<sup>45</sup> Its function as a school-text cannot be evaluated, since there are no extant examples of school-texts from the region in the Iron Age.

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41. From vocalized traditions of Semitic we can reconstruct PS *\*yariḥ* for ‘moon’ but PS *\*yarḥ* for a full moon cycle, or a ‘month.’

42. According to the now conventional morphological interpretation of the four occurrences of *yrhw* as meaning ‘its two months,’ the inscription divides the year into eight periods of twelve *yrh*, ‘moon-units,’ i.e., lunar months.

43. The synodic period, that is, the full lunar rotation around the earth as observed from earth, is 29.5 days. This period of time is the same irrespective of the phase from which the counting begins. A *yrh* is a measure of the synodic period. Since measurement units like *months* tend to quantify whole days and not half days in their use in calendars, the period of a *yrh* would need to alternate between 29 and 30 days to preserve an accurate accounting of the synodic period.

44. Not to mention the fact that uncorrected, neither twelve periods of complete lunar rotations (approximately 354 days) do not add up to a complete rotation of the earth around the sun (approximately 365 days). Sanders aptly sums up this fact of the Gezer “calendar” when he remarks that “after a few decades of twelve 30-day months, the ‘month of summer fruit’ would come solidly in the middle of winter” (“Writing,” 101).

45. Contra Talmon, “Gezer Calendar,” 177.

The themes or content of a text like the Gezer inscription likely had as much a place in education as did instructions and conventional sayings. It is, however, impossible to know whether or not the Gezer inscription *itself* was used in such a context.<sup>46</sup>

In spite of its apparent lack of practical application, the Gezer inscription is not entirely outside of our concept of a calendar. The Gezer inscription represents a complex combination of two systems of organizing time. In this sense, the calendar is not unlike the previously discussed articulations of the modern Palestinian agricultural calendar, wherein either the ethnographer or the informant accommodates the agricultural cycle of activities to quantifiable units. Both the ancient and modern experience of explaining the division of the year in such a way underscores a tension between the intuited knowledge of physical experience and a more reasoned knowledge gained through an intellectual endeavor. Knowledge of the agricultural cycle is an intuitive knowledge that comes from experience. One knows from experience how to appropriately time their activities for every season. The division of time into quantifiable units, on the other hand, is reasoned knowledge. The combination of these two systems of organizing time is a complicated project. This kind of project could be understood as systematizing the intuitive experience of the agricultural cycle: an intellectualizing of common sense. It could be seen from the other direction as well, as expressing the reasoned division of time in vernacular seasonal activities. It is not, however, a project of dividing time that finds a practical use.

If the Gezer inscription was not meant to have practical use, as I have argued here, then what *was* its purpose? I would argue against Macalister's explanation that the text was an uninspired display of literacy, and instead find its purpose as an intellectual exercise in observing due measure. This argument can be supported by its complex yet impractical division of a complete cycle of agricultural activities into quantifiable units as well as by its similarity to the list of times in Eccl 3:2–8. As we have seen, the Gezer inscription is a text with highly structured discourse whose project is a systematic division of the annual cycle. Its organization of time combines both experiential knowledge—the lived agricultural cycle—and technical knowledge—the division of time into discrete, bounded periods with specialized terminology. As such, the Gezer inscription should be considered alongside other intellectual works which transmit and transform experiential and technical knowledge through a written medium.

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46. Lemaire argues that the Gezer inscription, along with abecedaries and other texts like single-word inscriptions, should be grouped together as examples of literacy training. *Les écoles*, 7–36. Speaking only of the Gezer inscription, however, such a classification prejudices the laconic discourse of text. As the arguments presented here have shown, the minimalism of the text's structure should not condemn it to the category of practice or study texts for beginners.

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10  
Field of View:  
Northwest Semitic Palaeography and  
Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)\*

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INTRODUCTION: NORTHWEST SEMITIC EPIGRAPHY AND PALAEOGRAPHY,  
IMAGES AS A CRUCIAL RESOURCE

Burgeoning interest in technologically self-aware approaches to the humanities (which often go under the rubric “Digital Humanities”) has inspired researchers to apply increasingly sophisticated methods of computer-aided analysis to age-old problems. New technological advances continue to provide researchers with new lenses (both figurative and literal) through which to view various data sets. These advances pave the way for innovative or revised conclusions to perennial research quandaries for a variety of fields. Northwest Semitic epigraphy and palaeography comprise one such arena.

Northwest Semitic epigraphy is the broad study of ancient inscriptions written in the daughter languages of Proto-Northwest Semitic (e.g., Hebrew, Aramaic, Phoenician, and Ugaritic). It is concerned with linguistic, grammatical, syntactic, lexicographic, onomastic, historical, palaeographical, and/or genre studies.<sup>1</sup> One subset of this field, palaeography, is the study of the way in which the

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1. Joseph Naveh, *Early History of the Alphabet: An Introduction to West Semitic Epigraphy and Palaeography*, rev. ed. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1987; repr., 1997), 6; Mark D. McLean, “Palaeography,” *ABD* 5:58–60. The terms *epigraphy* and *palaeography* are used somewhat differently in other fields engaged in text studies, for example the field of Classics.



letters of the scripts of Northwest Semitic inscriptions are formed and of how these forms develop and change over time. At the most fundamental level, practitioners of palaeography are concerned with providing accurate readings of texts, that is, with deciphering the actual graphemes that are written on a surface.<sup>2</sup> In order to examine texts and to determine their correct readings and script characteristics, palaeographers need to view them. This viewing is best done using two interrelated methods of examination: (1) direct examination of inscriptions by studying them on site in collections, such as those belonging to museums and departments of antiquity, and (2) indirect examination of inscriptions by studying images of them. Ideally, these modes of examination are performed in tandem with one another, each contributing to the other.

Though pairing these two methods with one another is important for accurate analysis, it is not always possible. The inscriptions that make up the corpus of Northwest Semitic texts are scattered in collections throughout the world, particularly in the Middle East and Europe. Scholars are often prohibited from analyzing these inscriptions on site for a variety of reasons, including limited travel funds, the hesitancy of museums or departments of antiquity to grant permission for study, volatile political situations in regions where collections are located, or the loss or destruction of collections either in part or in whole. In such cases, the second possible mode of study, studying inscriptions in images, becomes of paramount importance, since it is the only feasible access to the epigraphs. Moreover, even if on-site examination of inscriptions is possible, studying images of inscriptions remains quite valuable. Images are an important reference, affording scholars the opportunity to reanalyze and reassess inscriptions and the data they contain and to refine their conclusions long after they have left an epigraphic collection. As the imaging technologies used to document inscriptions have evolved, so too have imaging techniques, and this evolution has led to the production of increasingly representative images of inscriptions.

#### IMAGES OF NORTHWEST SEMITIC INSCRIPTIONS: THE STATE OF THE FIELD

Due to the valuable role that images play in the palaeographic analysis of inscriptions, it is important that any images used for such analysis be both detailed and accurate. Unfortunately, however, it has at times been difficult for scholars to obtain high-quality images of many Northwest Semitic texts.<sup>3</sup> This is so for a variety of reasons.

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2. J. Brian Peckham, *Development of the Late Phoenician Scripts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 3; Naveh, *Early History*, 6; McLean, "Palaeography," 58–59.

3. For many years the best images of Northwest Semitic inscriptions could be found in the several volumes of *CIS* (= *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum ab Academia inscriptionum et literarum humaniorum conditum atque digestum* [Paris: e Reipublicæ typographeo, 1881–1950]). This resource, however, is quite dated. Though good for the time it was produced, the quality of its images is less than desirable. The epigraphic data

Palaeographers studying inscriptions for the first time have not always taken images of a quality that would enable subsequent scholars to analyze those inscriptions. This has to do with, first, the fact that inscriptions are often studied and photographed by scholars untrained in photography. Furthermore, though collections that house inscriptions are at times both willing and able to produce high-quality images of a piece, professional photographers are not typically able to read the inscriptions they are photographing, or they are unaware of the pre-

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captured in the images (in concert with the poor printed quality of those images) were limited by the imaging technology available at the time. Also, since its publication many more inscriptions have been found. Other compendia of inscriptions contain images of varying quality. These include Mark Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris für semitische epigraphik*, 3 vols. (Giessen: Ricker, 1902–1915); John C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975–1982); Herbert Donner and Wolfgang Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften [=KAI]*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1962–2002). The quality of images in individual publications of inscriptions varies, as discussed below.

In his 2002 Harvard dissertation, advised by Jo Ann Hackett, John Ellison advocated for the application of advanced photographic technology in the study of the Ugaritic script (see his chapter in this volume). Both he and Wayne Pitard proposed treating Ugaritic tablets in the same manner as linear alphabetic inscriptions in publication (i.e., with “palaeographic-quality” images appearing alongside facsimile drawings and transcriptions). John L. Ellison, “A Paleographic Study of the Alphabetic Cuneiform Texts from Ras Shamra/Ugarit” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2002), 17–18, 34; Wayne Pitard, “The Shape of the ‘*Ayin* in the Ugaritic Script,” *JANESCU* 51.4 (1992): 261–62. See also John L. Ellison, “The Ugaritic Alphabetic Script,” in *An Introduction to Ugaritic*, by John Huehnergard (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2012), 179–88; and idem, “The Ugaritic Alphabetic Script,” in “*An Eye for Form*”: *Epigraphic Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, ed. Jo Ann Hackett and Walter E. Aufrecht (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 56–71. Such treatment of the tablets represented a departure from what had previously been the norm for publication of cuneiform-based inscriptions (i.e., with facsimile drawings only). However, regarding linear alphabetic inscriptions, Ellison further suggested that “The two-dimensional nature of the inscriptions has also meant that simple photographic techniques generally provide enough detail for the paleographer” (“Paleographic Study,” 17–18; see also idem, “The Ugaritic Alphabetic Script” [2014], 60 n. 15). Pitard hinted at the limited use of some photographs that had appeared prior to his article, stating, “In the vast majority of cases, the *editio princeps* of a linear inscription will provide one or more photos which can *ostensibly* (although not always actually) allow other scholars to examine the traces that are preserved on the inscription and evaluate the editor’s readings” (Pitard, “Shape of the ‘*Ayin*,” 262; emphasis added).

No inscription is strictly “two-dimensional.” High-quality digital images (indeed, even three-dimensional renderings) of linear alphabetic inscriptions can reveal data that are not made apparent through “simple photographic techniques.” Since the publication of Ellison’s and Pitard’s initial work, imaging technology has continued to improve (e.g., Reflectance Transformation Imaging [RTI], discussed below), and the bar for “palaeographic-quality” images has continued to rise. Note that Pitard has championed the use of cutting-edge imaging technologies in the field(s) of Northwest Semitic epigraphy and palaeography and has been trained in RTI (and other imaging techniques) by the West Semitic Research Project (WSRP) (see below).

cise kinds of details scholars would prefer to see in images of inscriptions.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, these photos often do not capture all of the available data from the represented inscriptions. One pervasive problem, which will be addressed in detail below, is that when inscriptions are photographed, they are often illuminated with a flash or other light source that is positioned from only a single direction relative to the object (normally a “northwest” direction—that is, illumination from above and to the left of the inscription). The interplay of light and shadow on an inscription can both reveal and conceal its data,<sup>5</sup> especially in an inscription that is incised or carved in relief. In order to read damaged or abraded areas of text or to get a sense of the accurate shape of the graphemes in such an inscription, the palaeographer will often rake light back and forth across a text using a flashlight or similar light-source. Likewise, when analyzing epigraphic images, the palaeographer will typically need to consult a variety of photographs, with each photograph capturing the inscription in a different light.

Moreover, once quality images of inscriptions have been produced, they often remain too difficult or too costly to reproduce in publication. Many past publications of Northwest Semitic inscriptions include only a single image of the object on which an inscription was made along with a drawing (autograph) of that inscription. In most cases, this autograph represents a single scholar’s interpretation of the inscription’s material remains. A close-up image of the inscription itself might or might not be included. Frequently, even if a detail photograph of the inscription is included, it is often not of a quality that would permit further independent analysis of that inscription by other scholars. Publications rarely include multiple images that focus on the areas of an inscription that are difficult to read or that show the inscription in various lights. Still, as the need for more and better images has become increasingly recognized, publications have begun to improve and to endeavor to meet that need.<sup>6</sup>

The quality and the availability of images are always subject to available technologies—these technologies impinge upon both imaging (data capturing) and publication (data sharing). The advent of digital technologies has made easier both the production of high-quality images and the dissemination of such images. Equally, it has reduced dramatically the costs inherent in both procedures.

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4. Moreover, collections frequently charge substantial fees for images, making their procurement cost prohibitive.

5. As discussed in more detail below, photographing an inscription in too much direct light can overexpose its text and other data, making them invisible in the resultant images. Shadows can also create false impressions, for example, taking on the appearance of letter strokes.

6. Good examples include Ron E. Tappy and P. Kyle McCarter Jr., eds., *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan: The Tel Zayit Abecedary in Context* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008); Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, *Khirbet Qeiyafa*, vol. 1: *Excavation Report 2007–2008* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009); André Lemaire and Benjamin Sass, “The Mortuary Stele with Sam’alian Inscription from Ördekburnu near Zincirli,” *BASOR* 369 (2013): 57–136.

In recent years, many scholars have set to work addressing the need for high-quality images for the study of Northwest Semitic inscriptions. One of the most visible groups is the West Semitic Research Project (WSRP), directed by Bruce Zuckerman of the University of Southern California. He and his associate, Marilyn Lundberg, are trained in the fields of Northwest Semitic epigraphy and palaeography; they are also highly specialized photographers. The mission of WSRP is to use advanced photographic and computer-imaging techniques and technologies, such as multi-spectral, infrared, and Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) (discussed in detail below), to document texts and objects from the ancient world.<sup>7</sup> The group has done groundbreaking work in the production of sophisticated images of antiquities, focusing particularly on the study of Northwest Semitic inscriptions. WSRP has also been at the forefront of the dissemination of such images, making available their photographs free of charge to the wider scholarly community (once permissions have been granted by the various collections housing the inscriptions) via their online digital image library, InscriptiFact.<sup>8</sup> The work of various other groups should also be mentioned here, such as Cultural Heritage Imaging's work with RTI,<sup>9</sup> as well as work with multi-spectral imaging at Tel Aviv University and by R. B. Toth Associates.<sup>10</sup>

#### REFLECTANCE TRANSFORMATION IMAGING (RTI): AN ADVANCE IN THE FIELD

The introduction of Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) into the field of Northwest Semitic epigraphy and palaeography has been groundbreaking. RTI is a digital technology in which a material object is documented through high-resolution digital photography. This process addresses the limitations of standard images, wherein, as noted above, inscriptions are illuminated from only a single direction.<sup>11</sup>

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7. "West Semitic Research Project (WSRP)," <http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/>; Marilyn J. Lundberg, "New Technologies: Reading Ancient Inscriptions in Virtual Light," <http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/information/article.html>. WSRP's most recent work has involved the combination of multispectral imaging and RTI: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/information/>. See also Todd R. Hanneken, "The Integration of Spectral and Reflectance Transformation Imaging Technologies" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Diego, CA, 23 November 2014).

8. "InscriptiFact," [www.inscriptifact.com](http://www.inscriptifact.com).

9. "Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)," <http://culturalheritageimaging.org/Technologies/RTI/>. See also the work of the Worcester Art Museum (<http://www.worcesterart.org/collection/conservation/>).

10. Barak Sober et al., "Multispectral Imaging as a Tool for Enhancing the Reading of Ostraca," *PEQ* 146 (2014): 185–97; R. B. Toth Associates, <http://www.rbtoth.com/spectral-imaging--standards.html>.

11. See also Elizabeth Froid and Kathryn Howley, "Applications of Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) in the Study of Temple Graffiti," in *Thebes in the First Millennium BC*, ed. Elena Pischikova, Julia Budka, and Kenneth Griffin (Newcastle upon

To produce an RTI image, a series of images is taken with the camera in a single fixed position. Each image, however, represents the object illuminated from a different direction. These images are then processed using specialized software. The software analyzes the data in each image and creates a “texture map” of the photographed object. Finally, when the RTI image is analyzed in a computerized RTI viewer, this map allows a researcher to manipulate in real time the light source illuminating that virtual (computerized) image. Just as a palaeographer studying an inscription on site in a museum might use a flashlight to rake light across it from various angles in order to reveal subtle details of the text, a researcher can also use the dynamic light source available within RTI viewer software to reveal details of an inscription that are not visible in images taken from a single light direction. Thus, RTI technology enables researchers to recreate field-like research conditions remotely and thereby to increase the effectiveness of “home-based” study. Most importantly, by using RTI images researchers are at times able to see details of an inscription that are invisible to the naked eye, thus detecting and preserving text that might otherwise be lost. While the finer mathematical computations and computer programming details utilized by RTI technology are beyond the scope of this essay, a brief discussion of these aspects is warranted here, along with a description and discussion of RTI photographic method.

RTI utilizes various mathematical algorithms. One algorithm, Polynomial Texture Mapping (PTM),<sup>12</sup> was developed by Tom Malzbender, Dan Gelb, and Hans Wolters of Hewlett-Packard labs in 2001. Polynomial Texture Mapping is the process by which the surface shape of an object is recorded. It is a result of an object’s “reflectance function” (i.e., the amount of light that reflects off of an object relative to the light’s incoming direction or vector) manipulated mathematically through a continuous polynomial function. Essentially, PTM uses fixed points of data to establish a skeletal structure of an object’s surface and its relationship to the light that reflects off of its surface. It then uses mathematical-

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Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2014), 625–38. For examples of the application of RTI to material culture objects other than inscriptions, see Paula Artal-Isbrand and Philip Klausmeyer, “Evaluation of the Relief Line and the Contour Line on Greek Red-figure Vases Using Reflectance Transformation Imaging and Three-Dimensional Laser Scanning Confocal Microscopy,” *Studies in Conservation* 58.4 (2013): 338–59; Ashley Fiutko Arico, Nathaniel E. Greene, and Heather Dana Davis Parker, “Ancient Near Eastern Material Culture Studies and Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI),” in *Proceedings of The Future of the Past: From Amhipolis to Mosul. New Approaches to Cultural Heritage Preservation in the Eastern Mediterranean. Conference at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania* (American Institute of Archaeology Site Preservation Program: Heritage, Conservation, and Archaeology: December 2015); and Heather Dana Davis Parker and Ashley Fiutko Arico, “A Moabite-Inscribed Statue Fragment from Kerak: Egyptian Parallels,” *BASOR* 373 (2015): 105–20.

12. “Glossary of Photographic and Technical Terms for RTI,” 8, [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary\\_v1.pdf](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary_v1.pdf). See also <http://www.hpl.hp.com/research/ptm/>.

ly-calculated interpolations to fill in the interstices between those points, thus creating a map (or image) of the object's surface that is three-dimensional in appearance.<sup>13</sup> Already in the initial stages of their research, Malzbender, Gelb, and Wolters recognized potential applications of the technology to antiquities, noting, "We have found that PTMs provide a valuable representation for the study and archiving of ancient artifacts, in particular early clay writings ... PTMs allow interactive control of lighting conditions that enable greatly increased perception of surface structure compared to photographs of these objects."<sup>14</sup>

An international team of researchers, led by Cultural Heritage Imaging (CHI), continues to improve upon Malzbender, Gelb, and Wolters's initial work. They and their collaborators have developed and distributed another RTI algorithm, Hemispherical Harmonics (HSH).<sup>15</sup> CHI defines HSH as "A model of distribution across a hemisphere of directions (as opposed to spherical harmonics, which model a distribution across an entire sphere of possible directions). This is a natural representation in the study of reflectance off an opaque surface, which only occurs in a hemisphere." The staff of CHI describes the new possibilities afforded by the technology, noting several salient benefits of the technology's ability to enhance a photographic image:

RTI is a computational photographic method that captures a subject's surface shape and color and enables the interactive re-lighting of the subject from any direction. RTI also permits the mathematical enhancement [or, transformation] of the subject's surface shape and color attributes. The enhancement functions of RTI reveal surface information that is not disclosed under direct empirical examination of the physical object.<sup>16</sup>

Considering the fact that Northwest Semitic palaeographers base their readings on what they perceive in an object's texture, "surface shape," and "color attributes," RTI has proven to be an apt tool for enhancement of this common approach to epigraphic analysis. It is particularly illuminating for chiseled or incised inscriptions.

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13. "Polynomial Texture Mapping (PTM)," <http://www.hpl.hp.com/research/ptm/index.html>.

14. Tom Malzbender, Dan Gelb, and Hans Wolters, "Polynomial Texture Maps" (paper presented at the SIGGRAPH 2001 Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 17 August 2001), 6. This paper may be accessed online at: <http://www.hpl.hp.com/research/ptm/papers/ptm.pdf>.

15. "Glossary of Photographic and Technical Terms for RTI," 6, [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary\\_v1.pdf](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary_v1.pdf).

16. "Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)," <http://culturalheritageimaging.org/Technologies/RTI/>.



**Fig. 1. RTI photo shoot, vertical orientation, of a Palmyrene funerary relief (*PAT 0145*). Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, Jerusalem.  
(Image by Nathaniel E. Greene and Christopher A. Rollston)**

Typically, 45 or more photographs of an object are taken during an RTI photo shoot. The camera<sup>17</sup> may be oriented vertically over (fig. 1) or horizontally in front of (fig. 2) an object. All photographs are taken from a single position—both the camera and the object remain stationary. However, the camera flash (or other light source) is moved into various positions around the object over the course of the shoot, always at the same distance from the object, and a single image is taken each time the flash is moved in order to capture a view of the object from that particular lighting direction or vector. The light is moved around the object in order to create a virtual dome of light over it (fig. 3). Each time the flash is repositioned around an object, a new light vector is utilized. The ultimate compilation of vectors yields a more comprehensive representation of an object's surface shape and texture by means of the shadows cast by the surface features of the object. Physical, as opposed to virtual, domes, with multiple lights fixed in permanent positions, may also be used, especially for smaller objects (fig. 4). Such domes have the added benefit of achieving consistent light coverage over various objects every time an RTI sequence is performed.<sup>18</sup>

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17. The best type of camera, in our experience, for producing RTI images is a digital SLR (single-lens reflex) camera with *Live View* capability. Live View allows a user, with the aid of a computer, to fine-tune the focus of the camera more accurately than by using the human eye alone.

18. Objects are placed inside of the dome for the duration of the photography session. For various examples of both tabletop and handheld domes see: WSRP (<http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/information/article.html>) and CHI ([http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Gear/Lighting\\_Array/index.html](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Gear/Lighting_Array/index.html) and [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Do/Projects/wam/](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Do/Projects/wam/)). See also Klaus Wagensonner, "On an Alternative Way of Capturing RTI Images with the Camera Dome," *Cuneiform Digital Library Notes* (2015:001), <http://cdli.ucla.edu/pubs/cdln/php/single.php?id=000054>.



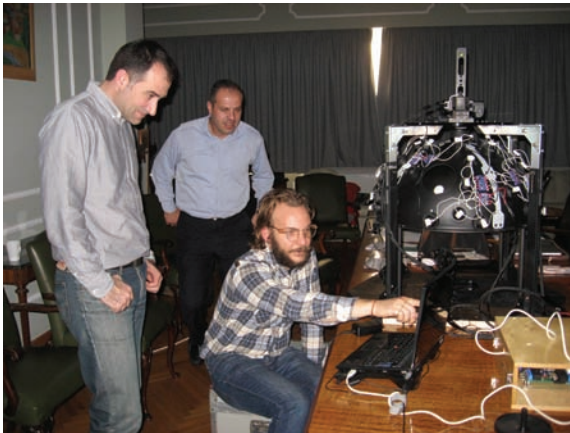
**Fig. 2. RTI photo shoot, horizontal orientation, of the Mesha stele (Moabite stone; *KAI* 181). Louvre Museum, Paris (AO 5066, AO 2142, AO 5060). (Image by Heather Dana Davis Parker and Johanan Daniel Church Davis)**





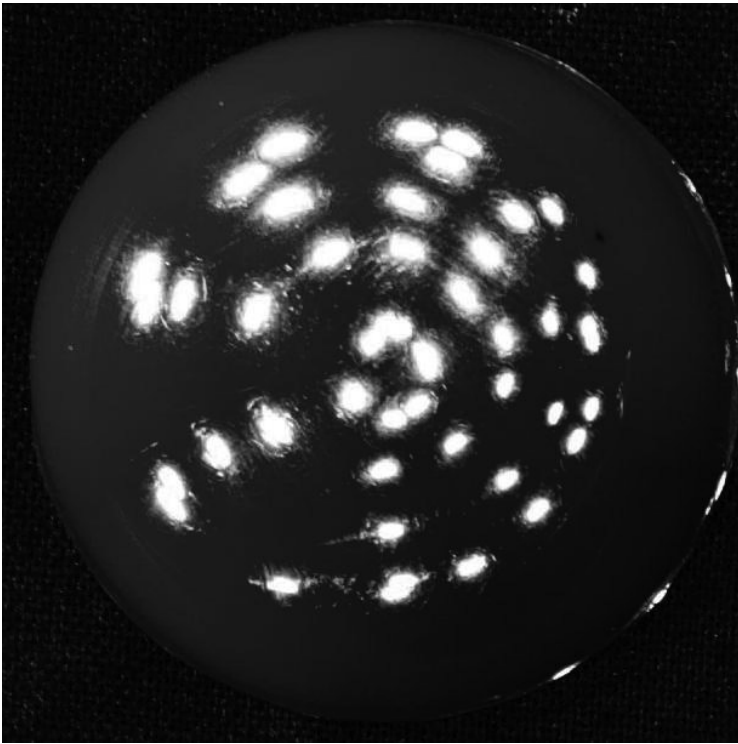
**Fig. 3. Moving the flash around an object (Sheshonq I/Abiba'al fragment; *KAI 5*) at a consistent distance in a typical RTI photo shoot. Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin (VA 3361).**

**(Image by Heather Dana Davis Parker and Johanan Daniel Church Davis)**



**Fig. 4. A physical light dome. Cyprus Institute, Nicosia. (Image by the West Semitic Research Project; used with permission)**

Prior to imaging, one or two reflective (hemi)sphere(s), black or red in color, are placed near the object within the camera's field of view (i.e., the area visible through the camera lens). In each individual picture, these spheres capture and reflect the position of the flash in relation to the object being documented. When the shoot is complete, the images are processed through specially-designed RTI builder software<sup>19</sup> that detects the highlight of the flash on the sphere and, in turn, compiles all of the highlights into a highlight blend map (fig. 5). Using the relative positions provided by the blend map, the software plots the



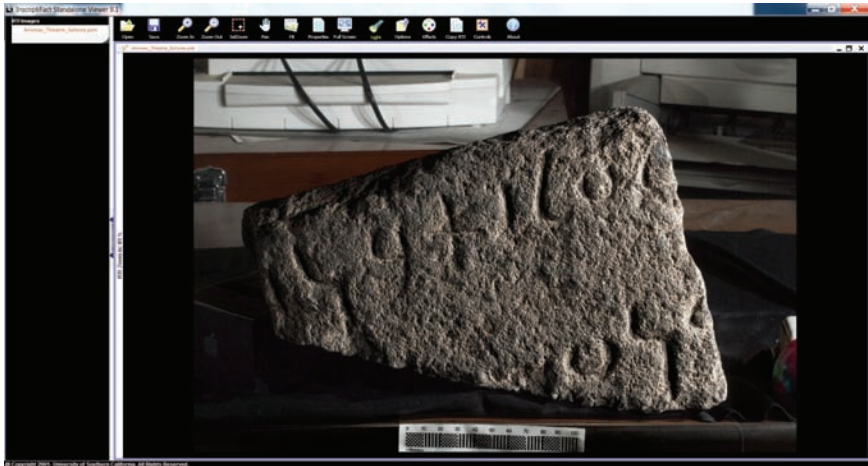
**Fig. 5. Sample RTI highlight blend map from the RTI photo shoot of the 'Izbet Şarḫāh abecedary. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (IAA 1980-1). (Image by Nathaniel E. Greene)**

fixed points of the flash's position in the "dome" in each photograph, and then interpolates in a single PTM or HSH file how the light would shine and reflect

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19. CHI and Hewlett-Packard have made their RTI builder software and relevant literature available online free of charge: [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Downloads/](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Downloads/); and <http://www.hpl.hp.com/research/ptm/downloads/download.html>.

off of each pixel in the photograph from various directions or vectors. The final compilation of a PTM or HSH file produces a composite RTI image. As described above, when this image is analyzed in an RTI viewer,<sup>20</sup> the researcher can manipulate virtually the light source illuminating the object under study.<sup>21</sup> This is done simply by moving the computer cursor (using a mouse or track pad) over the image of the object, just as one might move a flashlight over an inscription, lighting and relighting the image however necessary (figs. 6–7).<sup>22</sup>

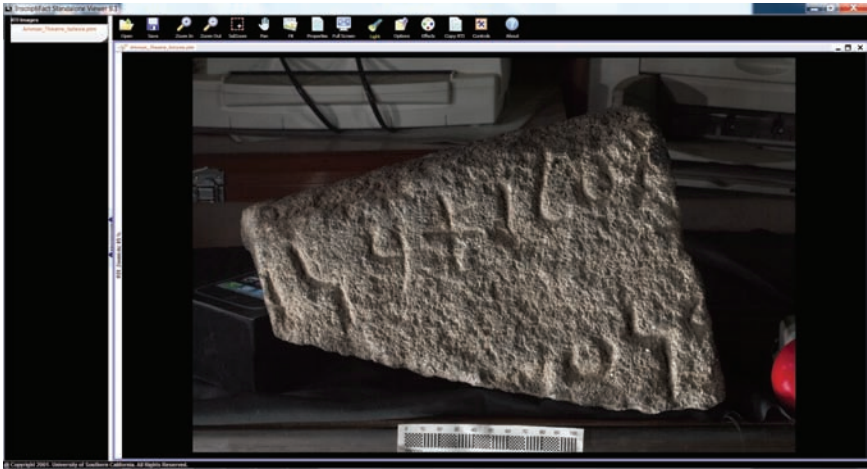


**Fig. 6. The Amman Theater inscription (CAI 58) lit from top right in (WSRP's) RTI viewer. Amman Citadel Museum, Amman (DAJ 11680). (Image by Heather Dana Davis Parker)**

20. WSRP, CHI, and Hewlett-Packard have made their RTI viewer software and relevant literature available online free of charge: see [http://ruth.usc.edu:7060/inscriptfact\\_standalone.html](http://ruth.usc.edu:7060/inscriptfact_standalone.html); [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Downloads/](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Downloads/); and <http://www.hpl.hp.com/research/ptm/downloads/download.html>.

21. Traditionally, when individual photographs of an object are taken in various lighting environments, a researcher must manually sort through and examine every image, which is a tedious and time-consuming process. By using RTI software, a researcher can view objects with dynamic lighting, manipulating the light source for more finely tuned inspection of areas of interest within the RTI file.

22. It is of note that once a researcher has virtually “captured” an inscription in a particularly helpful light, RTI viewer software allows him/her to export a JPEG file of that particular view of the inscription.



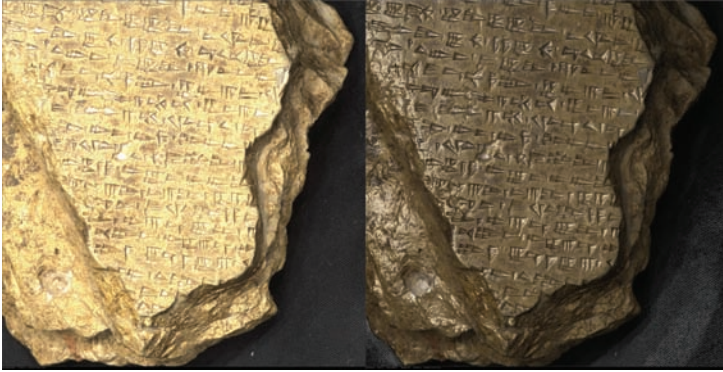
**Fig. 7. The Amman Theater inscription lit from bottom left  
in (WSRP's) RTI viewer.  
(Image by Heather Dana Davis Parker)**

When manipulating an RTI file, the user has at his or her disposal various digital filters (or transformations) capable of enhancing the computerized view of an object. As a result, the researcher might increase the amount of data recoverable from the object. One of these filters is *specular enhancement*. Specular enhancement changes the reflective capacity (“shininess”) of an object, virtually transforming the surface of the object and granting the user better visual access to details of its surface shape.<sup>23</sup> One example of the benefit of specular enhancement is illustrated by an RTI image of the Ugaritic Aqhat tablet (*KTU* 1.18) (fig. 8). By viewing this image, researchers are given further insight into Ugaritic scribal practices. In order to form Ugaritic letters, scribes impressed square-headed reeds into wet clay. Most letters were formed by combining two or more wedges, and as the second wedge was made, overlapping the first, some wet clay was pushed back into the impression left by the first wedge, creating a *dam*. (This process continued as each successive wedge was made.) This *damming*<sup>24</sup> was preserved when a clay tablet dried or was fired and thus a scribe’s

23. CHI defines *specular enhancement* as “An image enhancement technique that yields improved perception of surface shape by photographically acquiring the reflectance functions of a surface, extracting per-pixel surface normals from these reflectance functions, and then rendering the resultant surface with added specular highlights computed from the surface normals...” (“Glossary of Photographic and Technical Terms for RTI,” 9, [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary\\_v1.pdf](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary_v1.pdf)).

24. The term *damming* was coined by Christopher A. Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel*, ABS 11 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 146.

*ductus*—the particular order in which he made the wedges that formed a particular letter—was preserved in the surface shape of an Ugaritic tablet. This *ductus* can be seen quite clearly in a specularly-enhanced RTI image of the Aqhat tablet.<sup>25</sup>



**Fig. 8. Left: Standard RTI image of the Ugaritic Aqhat tablet in direct light. Right: RTI image of the Ugaritic Aqhat tablet in direct light with specular enhancement filter. (KTU 1.18; British Museum, London, AO 17.325; image by Wayne Pitard, edited by Nathaniel E. Greene)**

A second digital filter, *diffuse gain*, enhances a user's perception of the depth of surface features of an object. It does so by digitally heightening the sensitivity of an object's surface shape to changes in light direction.<sup>26</sup> This filter is especially helpful for use with incised objects, since evaluating the depth of incisions in an object is paramount for deciphering those parts of the object's surface that exhibit writing and those parts that do not. Often a palaeographer is forced to make an evaluative judgment as to whether a particular incision in the surface of an object was made intentionally or is merely the result of damage to the surface of the object. If the depth of a given mark or stroke is consistent with other, clearly intentional incisions, then it is more likely that that mark or stroke was also intentionally made. In addition, the precise readings of various letters

25. See note 3. Of course, this observation is not limited to the assessment of Ugaritic scribal praxis. The same approach could be applied to the studies of Sumerian or Akkadian cuneiform.

26. CHI defines *diffuse gain* as "An enhancement technique that helps to see surface detail due to shape. Keeps the surface normal for each pixel at the value estimated mathematically from the input images, but allows the user to arbitrarily control the second derivative (curvature) of the reflectance function interactively. *This transformation makes the surface more sensitive to variations in lighting direction.*" ("Glossary of Photographic and Technical Terms for RTI," 4, [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary\\_v1.pdf](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Downloads/Capture/CHI-RTI-Glossary_v1.pdf); emphasis added).



**Fig. 9. Left: Standard RTI image of the 'Izbet Şarṭah abecedary, lit from bottom left. Right: RTI image of the 'Izbet Şarṭah abecedary, lit from bottom left, with diffuse gain filter. (Image by Nathaniel E. Greene)**

or graphemes in an inscription can be more easily determined with the use of the diffuse gain filter, as continuations (or breaks) in letter strokes or segments can be discerned more accurately on the basis of the depth of an incision.

Figure 9 exhibits the difference between a standard RTI image of the 'Izbet Şarṭah abecedary<sup>27</sup> and the same image filtered with diffuse gain. Note that in the image filtered with diffuse gain, the incisions made in the sherd are much more visible. Ultimately, with the use of various filters, a researcher is given several new technological tools with which to approach the decipherment of ancient texts. Unfortunately, however, RTI technology is still limited in several ways.

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE USE AND APPLICATION OF RTI

Although RTI has the ability to provide new data that were previously unrecoverable through standard photographic methods and/or on-site analysis, some aspects of the application of the technology or the physical characteristics and condition of an object can limit results. Several examples of such limitations prove illustrative.

**LOCATION:** The application of RTI is directly affected by the conditions of the location where an object is photographed. When a photographer is required to shoot in a museum gallery or storeroom (as opposed to a dedicated photography

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27. See Shmuel Ahituv, *Echoes from the Past: Hebrew and Cognate Inscriptions from the Biblical Period*, trans. Anson F. Rainey (Jerusalem: Carta, 2008), 249–52; Aron Dotan, “New Light on the 'Izbet Şarṭah Ostrakon,” *TA* 8 (1981): 160–72 and the bibliography there.

studio), space limitations might impinge on the photographic process. A photographer might be required to work around other pieces within a collection; limited with respect to the positioning of the flash by walls, ceilings, and corners; disrupted by museum patrons; and so on. Smaller spaces allocated for photography increase the risk of poor photographic results. In an area with limited space, the possibilities that the photographer might not be able to position the flash at an adequate and consistent distance from the object being photographed increase. These problems can adversely affect the construction of the virtual dome over the object and, ultimately, distort the final output of the RTI shoot due to either incomplete or inconsistent light coverage over the object.

Equally troublesome is the likelihood that the camera will be accidentally jostled during the photo shoot. Because the individual images compiled into an RTI file are analyzed and blended into a model of the photographed object's surface, each image must align precisely with the others. The only thing that should change or move over the course of an RTI photo shoot is the direction of the light source (i.e., the flash). Movement of the camera or the object during the shoot can create a "ghost" effect in the final image. That is, when one views an RTI file, the image will be obscured or blurred in places where the photographs do not align appropriately.

Similarly, documentation of objects and inscriptions that remain *in situ*—that is, in the archaeological contexts where they were recovered—presents its own set of challenges. Each situation will have particular field conditions that necessarily alter the approach a photographer is required to take. Finally, whether shooting indoors or out, another challenge to the construction of a virtual light dome is the ambient lighting; naturally, adjustments to the camera, (such as the use of neutral density filters, which block ambient light, etc.) must be made in order to accommodate lighting conditions.

SIZE: The size of an object itself might also affect the results of RTI photography in similar ways. The object's size determines the space necessary for photography, as well as the size and type of photographic equipment used. Concordantly, the size of the object determines the size of the light dome constructed around that object. Smaller objects, such as the bullae from Khirbet Summeily,<sup>28</sup> require less space for the photographer to position the flash around them. Smaller objects can be moved more easily, and thus can often be transported to areas that are more conducive to RTI photography. As noted above, smaller objects can also be photographed using handheld or tabletop light domes. Though such domes are not very portable, they allow for objects to be photographed quickly

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28. C. A. Rollston ultimately concluded, through analysis of the RTI images produced by Greene, that the Khirbet Summeily bullae are anepigraphic in nature. In this case, one can recognize the benefit of *negative* data (i.e., one can be more certain that there are no extant graphemes on the bullae). James W. Hardin, Christopher A. Rollston, and Jeffrey A. Blakely, "Iron Age Bullae from Officialdom's Periphery: Khirbet Summeily in Broader Context," *NEA* 77.4 (2014): 299–301.

and with more precision and control over the photographic process. Larger objects, such as Palmyrene funerary reliefs,<sup>29</sup> can be difficult to photograph because they require greater amounts of space in which to do so, cannot be easily moved, and will not fit inside a physical light dome. Often, in order to create a virtual light dome over a larger object, the flash must be attached to a boom arm in order to keep it an adequate distance from the object (fig. 10).<sup>30</sup> This greatly increases the amount of space required to photograph such an object.

**PHYSICAL DISPOSITION:** In addition to size, other physical characteristics of an object might impact negatively the results of RTI photography. If an object has an area that is carved in particularly high relief, this might limit the results of RTI photography, as in such cases, the flash can distort or overexpose other areas of interest on the object. For example, the side of the head or mantle on busts of Palmyrene funerary reliefs tends to generate a “halo-effect” when a raking light/flash<sup>31</sup> is applied to the object. This halo-effect is produced when the flash reflects off the side of the figure’s protruding head or mantle, which creates an oversaturation of light on adjacent areas of the object. Such overexposure can limit the amount of data that can be recovered from those areas (fig. 11).<sup>32</sup>

**CURVATURE:** Alternatively, the curvature of an object can present the opposite lighting problem. One example is the curved sherd on which the ‘Izbet Şarṭah abecedary is inscribed. Because the abecedary is incised into the outer, convex surface of the sherd, a raking flash illuminates only a portion of the inscription, with the shadow(s) cast by the object’s highest point(s) obscuring much of the remaining surface area (fig. 12). In order to avoid this problem, the photographer must perform multiple RTI sequences, creating multiple RTI images, each covering a different portion of the inscription.

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29. Gunhild Ploug, *Catalogue of the Palmyrene Sculptures: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* (Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, 1995); Malcolm A. R. Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1976). The texts associated with these objects are collected in Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonora Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts (= PAT)*, publications of The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

30. One could also photograph large objects in sections, treating each section like a small individual object.

31. An image taken with a “raking light” is an image in which the flash (or other light source) is held at a low angle relative to the surface of the object being photographed. The shadows cast by a raking light can be especially helpful for seeing incisions or raised details on an object’s surface.

32. Overexposure of images due to excessive light causes a picture to be “blown out.” If too much light is allowed to pass through the aperture of the camera, a picture will appear too white and details of the object being documented will be obfuscated, rendering the picture useless, since the RTI builder software ignores the data in the overexposed pixels.





**Fig. 10. RTI photo shoot of a Palmyrene funerary relief (*PAT 0821*) with flash attached to boom. Freer Art Gallery, Washington, D.C. (F1908.236). (Image by Nathaniel E. Greene and Catherine Bonesho)**

DEPTH OF INCISION: An object bearing a shallow inscription or whose surface has been heavily abraded demonstrates lower contrast between its surface and the depth of the incisions made in it. Because RTI records the surface shape and texture of a given object, RTI images of objects with such shallow inscriptions will often provide limited data. The Mesha stele provides another good example of an inscription that challenges current RTI capabilities, as it is heavily abraded in many areas (fig. 13).



**Fig. 11. RTI image of a Palmyrene funerary relief (PAT 0959) exhibiting “halo effect.”**

**Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha (1960.266).**

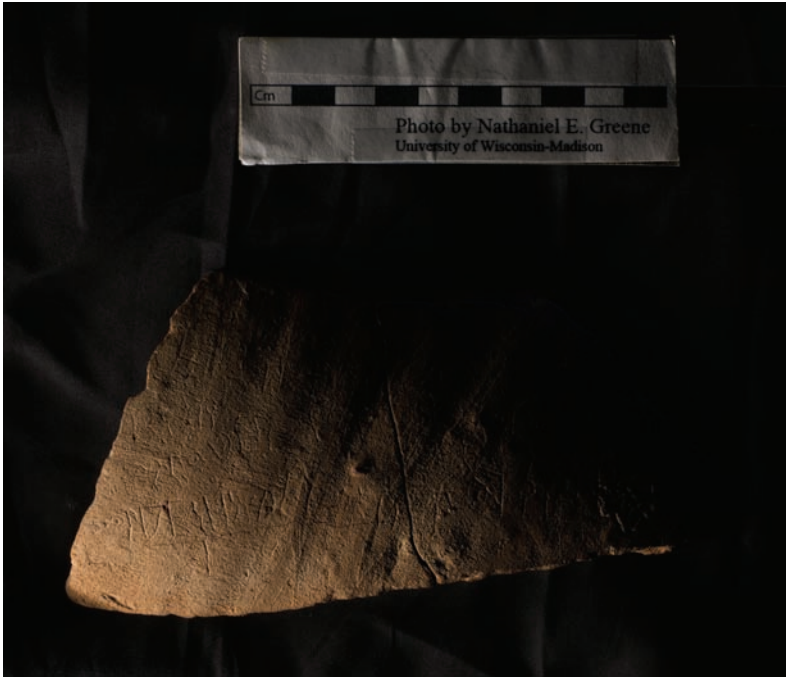
**(Image by Nathaniel E. Greene and Jeremy M. Hutton)**

MEDIUM: Finally, various artistic media can affect the usefulness of an RTI image. Some surfaces, such as the glossy finish on Phoenician blackware pottery,<sup>33</sup> or the worn, stone surfaces of some stamp seals,<sup>34</sup> are highly reflective. The reflective nature of an object’s surface might lead to data-loss by creating over-

33. Nicola Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery of the Iron Age* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

34. Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals* (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities; The Israel Exploration Society; and The Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997); and Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000–586 B.C.E.* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 505–7.

exposed areas of the photograph when the flash reflects off of it, similar to the halo-effect discussed previously.



**Fig. 12. RTI image of the 'Izbet Şarṭah abecedary, lit from bottom left. Note that a significant portion of the inscription is "blacked out."  
(Image by Nathaniel E. Greene)**

The limitations of RTI detailed above should not restrict researchers from experimenting with this technology. Negative results collected from experimentation play a role in the development of technology as much as positive results. Learning and understanding those things about RTI that are not successful help to eliminate avenues of inquiry that might not prove fruitful. Moreover, even if the final RTI image is problematic, the individual shots from which it was produced can themselves be useful for palaeographic analysis, in part because they preserve the inscription captured in a variety of lighting environments. We therefore encourage the application of RTI to as many Northwest Semitic inscriptions in as many different media as possible.



**Fig. 13. RTI image of the heavily-abraded beginning lines of the Mesha stele (Moabite Stone). The precise forms of many of the letters are difficult to see. (Image by Heather Dana Davis Parker)**

#### THE FUTURE OF RTI: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Having provided a general overview of the nature, use, and limitations of RTI for the field(s) of Northwest Semitic epigraphy and palaeography, we now wish to raise several questions and offer a few brief suggestions regarding improvements that might be made in RTI method, technology, and application. We hope that these suggested improvements might lead to more fruitful documentation of epigraphic antiquities.

First, are there ways that photographers might improve their imaging methods to address the issues raised above? That is, could imaging methods be improved to account for the conditions of either photographic environment or the physical characteristics and condition of objects being photographed? As discussed earlier, the results of RTI imaging are directly affected by the amount of light coverage applied to a particular object. Problems arise when objects or portions of objects are either overexposed or underexposed to light. Are there ways that photographers could better adjust their techniques to accommodate objects with challenging projections or curvatures? Could they orient the flash or light source in different ways when working in cramped conditions, while still effectively covering all portions of an object in light? What improvements in photographic equipment might help with this? Moreover, since during an RTI photo shoot even the slightest movement of the object or camera can tremendously affect the quality of an RTI image, in what ways can photographers im-

prove the stability of their working environment and most effectively anchor or weight objects and cameras?

Second, advancement of programs used for RTI image processing is required in order to continue to improve the post-photography production of RTI images. Much of this software is still in alpha or beta stages of development. One tangible example of potential improvement is found in CHI's RTI builder. When errors occur in compiling RTI files, this software returns error codes in the form of abstract numbers that most users are unequipped to troubleshoot without guidance. It can be difficult to ascertain if the cause of the particular issue at hand is, for example, problematic file naming, corrupt image files, or something else. More user-friendly features, such as interactive error reporting, accessible error code definitions, troubleshooting guides, and a more stable user interface platform, would all be welcome developments. In addition, it is often beneficial for the researcher to have RTI images of various sizes when studying an inscription—for example, the researcher might wish to have available a full-sized image of high resolution for in-depth analysis alongside a smaller version for quick reference. Therefore, RTI builder software might also be enhanced by adding the capability to generate RTIs of different file size as part of the same building operation. This would greatly increase workflow efficiency. Ultimately, scholars who utilize RTI technology need to continue to work closely with specialists, such as photographers and technology and software developers, who can improve the methods and tools for both photography (data capture) and image processing (data manipulation). The venture is, by necessity, interdisciplinary.

Third, the various software suites commonly available to palaeographic researchers (e.g., Adobe Creative Collection, including Photoshop and Illustrator)<sup>35</sup> are not integrated with RTI viewing capabilities. If a palaeographer wishes to create a drawing of an inscription in Photoshop or Illustrator, that individual is forced to create the drawing directly on top of a static image. If the same user wishes to utilize the added benefits provided by RTI images, the user is forced to switch back and forth between the RTI software and the drawing program to create a drawing. Although there are workarounds for this issue, the process can prove to be tedious and complicated. As a result, an Adobe plug-in that would permit a Photoshop or Illustrator user to draw directly on top of RTI images would be a significant addition to the toolbox of the palaeographer.

Fourth, it is incumbent upon scholars studying Northwest Semitic inscriptions to further the use of RTI in the documentation and study of these inscriptions by partnering with professionals who know how to produce RTI images. It is equally imperative that more scholars receive training in the production and analysis of RTI images themselves. CHI and WSRP both offer training in RTI

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35. For a discussion of various digital tools available for epigraphic/palaeographic research, see Heather Dana Davis Parker and Christopher A. Rollston, "Teaching Epigraphy in the 21st Century: The Epigraphic Digital Lab," forthcoming.

photography.<sup>36</sup> Notably, WSRP has partnered with the Andrew M. Mellon Foundation and the Institute for Museum and Library Services to provide grants for scholars to participate in this training.<sup>37</sup>

Another way to further the use of RTI and to raise awareness regarding the applications of this technology is for scholars utilizing RTI to foster relationships with museums, departments of antiquity, and other collections. One way to do this, when approaching an institution to work in its collection, is to provide kits that showcase RTI technology and the benefits of photographing inscriptions and other objects in this way. Within such kits researchers should make clear the goals of a given photography project and the benefits of such a project not only to the researcher's particular field of study, but also to the institution's collection as a whole.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, given that digital media facilitate a certain amount of expediency in the creation of a final product, researchers can provide museums and departments of antiquity with image files immediately upon completion of a photo shoot. In our experience, museum personnel have always been gratified to receive the final product—especially when those images are handed over to the staff before the researcher even leaves the building. Moreover, working on site in a collection provides opportunities to offer “crash courses” or even seminars in RTI photography to collections staff and patrons. Such cooperation fosters productive, long-term relationships between researchers and curators of antiquities. These relationships, in turn, can pave the way for more and better research in the field(s) of Northwest Semitic epigraphy and palaeography and can improve researchers' access to objects held within various collections.

Considering the current and prevailing socio-political unrest in the Middle East, the preservation of ancient Near Eastern cultural heritage has reached a critical state, wherein the necessity of high-quality documentation of the material culture from the region is at an all-time high. The creation and promulgation of RTI images comprises one way in which the academic and technological/computer science communities can continue to contribute to heritage preservation. To offer one example of the urgent need for preservational efforts, we point to the ruins of Palmyra in Syria and the way in which the documentation of Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions is contributing to the preservation of Syrian cultural heritage during an extremely tumultuous time in that nation's history.

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36. For opportunities to learn from CHI's training regimen, see [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Offer/Training/training/index.html](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Offer/Training/training/index.html).

37. See WSRP's announcement at <http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/projects/>. The Worcester Art Museum also provides training in RTI (<http://www.worcesterart.org/collection/conservation/>); see also [http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What\\_We\\_Do/Projects/wam/](http://culturalheritageimaging.org/What_We_Do/Projects/wam/)).

38. These kits might include documentation such as a cover letter describing the project, the RTI process, the type of equipment to be used, and research goals; as well as requests for permission to photograph and to publish and distribute captured images.

The remains of Roman-era Palmyrene culture that remain *in situ* have been significantly damaged as a result of the ongoing Syrian Civil War.<sup>39</sup> According to reports from the field, the Temple of Bel has undergone catastrophic levels of shelling. As of the period before the Civil War, many Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions remained on the site and in the adjacent museum.<sup>40</sup> In light of the destruction caused by the fighting at Palmyra and also because of the heavy increase in black-market antiquities trade generally associated with the war, these inscriptions, along with other objects from the site, remain in jeopardy, if they have not already been destroyed. Unfortunately, the current status of much of this corpus is unknown.

As a response to this situation, some members of the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Department of Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies have embarked on a project to image the publically-accessible Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions in the collections of American and other museums. Led by Jeremy Hutton, the Wisconsin Palmyrene Aramaic Inscription Project (WPAIP) is intent on applying RTI technology to as many Palmyrene Aramaic epigraphs as possible. Over the course of the summer of 2013, Greene and Catherine Bonesho completed preliminary documentary work, producing RTI images of approximately thirty Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions in various museums and collections in New England and the Mid-Atlantic United States. Since then, Greene has documented a handful of other Palmyrene Aramaic epigraphs held in Jerusalem at the Albright Institute for Archaeological Research with Christopher Rollston (of George Washington University) and in various institutions throughout the Midwest United States with Hutton. While these particular objects are not in imminent danger from the political unrest in Syria, their value to scholarship and to Syrian cultural heritage has increased dramatically due to the threat to the larger Syrian corpus. In response to this threat, WPAIP has begun documenting and preserving these items as expediently as possible, doing what they can from afar. WPAIP has shared its images with the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections, which provides open access to these images to the broader scholarly community.<sup>41</sup>

As with any technology, the best way to improve it is to use it. The continued application of RTI technology to the documentation of epigraphic and other

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39. For more details and a selection of images of known damage to the Palmyrene ruins as of 15 May, 2015, see <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32756301>.

40. [Editor’s Note: This essay was submitted before May, 2015, when ISIL took over the ruins of Palmyra. In the intervening months, this group has destroyed several major edifices, raided the Museum, and likely conducted the excavation of several previously undisturbed archaeological contexts. JMH]

41. This collection is hosted in the Department of Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The Wisconsin Palmyrene Aramaic Inscription Project (WPAIP) can be found online at: <http://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/ClassicalStudies/WPAIP>. The WPAIP project is currently ongoing, and it intends to add even more images to its library in the coming months and years. It also hopes, eventually, to be able to incorporate live RTI files into its digital library.

antiquities will lead to more ideas, better results, and the refinement of current methodology. In short, we will continue to learn by doing.

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## The Ivory Pomegranate: The Anatomy of a Probable Modern Forgery\*

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The great American epigrapher and palaeographer Frank Moore Cross (1921–2012) of Harvard University wrote the following about the inscription (in a putative Old Hebrew script) on the Ivory Pomegranate, an object that was not found on a scientific archaeological excavation, but rather surfaced on the antiquities market:

If you had written to me in 1981, when the pomegranate first came onto the antiquities market, I would have answered saying that the piece was priceless, almost certainly from the Temple of Solomon (the inscription breaks off after the word, ‘temple,’ presumably to be filled out with the Israelite name of God: *bêt* [Yahweh]), and dating to the eighth century BCE. In fact, I am in print to this effect.

I must now state my opinion concerning the ivory piece quite differently. I think that the ivory piece itself is authentic (though we do not know certainly whether it is Israelite). The inscription (‘Belonging to the temple of [Yahweh?] Holiness of the priests’) on the contrary is highly suspicious.

The inscription has always raised serious palaeographical problems. Now we are faced with a number of forgeries made by a highly knowledgeable crook: the so-called James Ossuary, the Jehoash Temple Inscription, and the Mousaieff Ostraca.... are forgeries.... and the next in line is the Ivory Pomegranate. I think that the inscription is forged.

Sincerely yours,  
Frank Moore Cross<sup>1</sup>

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\* Prof. Jo Ann Hackett is a mentor, colleague, and dear friend of some twenty years now, and I’m very grateful to the editors for the invitation to contribute to this Festschrift honoring her. I would also like to thank Marne Taylor and Danielle Weeks of George Washington University for bibliographic assistance with this article. Moreover, I would like to thank Dr. Eran Arie, Curator of the Iron Age at the Israel Museum (Jerusalem) for allowing me to collate microscopically the Ivory Pomegranate. In addition, I am grateful to the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research (Jerusalem) for providing such a marvelous context for research and writing during my National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship of 2013–2014.

Such is the verdict of one of the greatest palaeographers in the history of Northwest Semitic epigraphy.

This was not the first time that Cross had noted that people had produced, and are still producing, textual forgeries in the modern period. After all, during the late 1960s, Cyrus H. Gordon (1908–2001) had contended that “the Brazilian Phoenician Inscription” was not modern (as scholars of the nineteenth century had argued), but ancient. Cross marshaled palaeographic and philological evidence to demonstrate that this inscription was a definitive modern forgery.<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to say that the “Brazilian Phoenician Inscription” had not been found on a scientific archaeological expedition. Not long after this, William H. Brownlee (1917–1983) and George Mendenhall (b. 1916) argued at a meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature that the “Philistine Hebron Inscriptions” were ancient.<sup>3</sup> Cross stated emphatically, after seeing photos of these inscriptions, that they were modern forgeries, modeled on the Old Hebrew Siloam Tunnel Inscription. Mendenhall persisted in arguing for the authenticity of these texts, so the great Israeli epigrapher and palaeographer Joseph Naveh (1928–2011) of Hebrew University authored an article demonstrating that these inscriptions were poor modern forgeries, in essence the Siloam Tunnel Inscription written backwards.<sup>4</sup> Suffice it to say that “the Philistine Hebron Inscriptions” were not found on a scientific archaeological expedition, but rather were “found” on the antiquities market. More recently, the “Jehoash Stele Inscription” was touted in some circles as a dedicatory inscription from King Jehoash of Judah, a famous monarch of the ninth century BCE.<sup>5</sup> Scholars such as Chaim Cohen persist even today in proposing that this inscription is probably ancient.<sup>6</sup> But Frank Moore Cross was among the first to state definitively that this inscription was a modern forgery.

1. This letter was sent from Frank Cross to me on September 13, 2003.

2. Frank Moore Cross, “The Phoenician Inscription from Brazil: A Nineteenth-Century Forgery,” *Or* 37 (1968): 437–60. As noted, Cross was responding to Cyrus H. Gordon, “The Authenticity of the Phoenician Text from Parahyba,” *Or* 37 (1968): 75–80. For the discussion of this inscription during the 19th century, see Christopher A. Rollston, “Non-Provenanced Epigraphs I: Pillaged Antiquities, Northwest Semitic Forgeries, and Protocols for Laboratory Tests,” *Maarav* 10 (2003): 140–42.

3. W. H. Brownlee and George E. Mendenhall, “An Announcement Published by the Department of Antiquities of Jordan and the Archaeologists Dr. William H. Brownlee and Dr. George E. Mendenhall regarding the Decipherment of Carian Leather Manuscripts Found in 1966 in the Hebron Area, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,” *ADAJ* 15 (1970): 39–40; G. E. Mendenhall, “The ‘Philistine’ Documents from the Hebron Area: A Supplementary Note,” *ADAJ* 16 (1971): 99.

4. Joseph Naveh, “Some Recently Forged Inscriptions,” *BASOR* 247 (1982): 53–58. For more details about this, see Rollston, “Non-Provenanced Epigraphs I,” 142–45.

5. Hershel Shanks, “King Jehoash Inscription Captivates the Archaeological World,” *BAR* 29.2 (March/April 2003): 22–23.

6. Chaim Cohen, “Biblical Hebrew Philology in Light of the Last Three Lines of the Jeho’ash Royal Building Inscription (YI: lines 14–16),” in *New Inscriptions and Seals Relating to the Biblical World*, ed. Meir Lubetski and Edith Lubetski (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 243–76.

Indeed, the epigraphic evidence is damning and demonstrates that it is a modern forgery, and a rather poor forgery at that.<sup>7</sup> In any case, suffice it to say that this inscription was not found on a scientific expedition, but rather it surfaced on the antiquities market.

It is necessary to mention that not all scholars have been capable of discerning that an inscription is a forgery. Indeed, people have been forging texts for in excess of twenty-five hundred years, and during this time many textual forgeries have found those willing to declare them to be genuine.<sup>8</sup> But Frank Cross was a particularly gifted scholar, especially capable of discerning the sorts of blunders (large and small) that forgers often commit; therefore, it is predictable that he would have ferreted out a fair number of forgeries.<sup>9</sup> Of course, with regard to the Ivory Pomegranate, even Cross had believed for some time that the accompanying inscription was ancient, but he ultimately came to the conclusion that the problems with this inscription mandated that it too be relegated to the status of a modern forgery. It was also during this same year (2003) that I stated my own determination that the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription was a modern forgery.<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that the statement of Frank Cross that the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription is a modern forgery long antedated the Israeli indictment (which inaugurated the forgery trial) that declared the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription to be a modern forgery.<sup>11</sup>

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7. Frank Moore Cross, "Notes on the Forged Plaque Recording Repairs to the Temple," *IEJ* 53 (2003): 119–23. For additional discussion and bibliography, see Rollston, "Non-Provenanced Epigraphs I," 148–50 and 175–82.

8. For discussion of some ancient, medieval, and modern epigraphic forgeries, see Christopher A. Rollston, "Forging History: From Antiquity to the Modern Period," in *Archaeologies of Text: Archaeology, Technology, and Ethics*, ed. Matthew T. Rutz and Morag M. Kersel (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), 176–97. For a superb monograph that is devoted to the subject of forgeries within Early Christianity, see Bart D. Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

9. Note, for example, that Cross culled some modern forgeries from the documents the Bedu brought in with the fragments from Qumran Cave 4. For reference to this, see Christopher A. Rollston, "Non-Provenanced Epigraphs II: The Status of Non-Provenanced Epigraphs within the Broader Corpus of Northwest Semitic," *Maarav* 11 (2004): 77 n. 53.

10. Idem, "Non-Provenanced Epigraphs I," 182 n. 115.

11. To be precise, Frank Cross wrote his letter to me (cited on the first page of this article) on September 13, 2003. During the ensuing months, he and I discussed the pomegranate on multiple occasions. The Israeli Indictment that named various inscriptions as modern forgeries and accused various people of forging and selling inscriptions was released in late December 2004. The Ivory Pomegranate was among the inscriptions that had been named in that indictment as a modern forgery. For reference to this indictment, the inscriptions singled out as modern forgeries, and the people accused of forging them, see Andrew G. Vaughn and Christopher A. Rollston, "Fakes, Forgeries, and Biblical Scholarship: The Antiquities Market, Sensationalized Textual Data, and Modern Forgeries," *NEA* 68 (2005): 61–68. The story of the "forgery trial" (in which I testified for the prosecution) is an interesting one, but for the purposes of this article it is sufficient to

Before continuing, it is useful to emphasize two critical factors. (1) First and foremost, it should be stated that some ancient inscriptions (i.e., genuine inscriptions) can and do surface on the antiquities market. That is, not everything on the antiquities market is a modern forgery.<sup>12</sup> (2) It is common for modern epigraphic forgeries to “surface” (e.g., on the antiquities market) after an important epigraphic discovery (of an actual ancient inscription). Moreover, the modern forgeries that appear in the wake of the discovery of an actual ancient inscription are often modeled (in some fashion) on the form or content of the actual ancient inscription. For example, the Mesha Stele (written in Moabite) was discovered in 1868, and not long after its publication, pottery vessels with letters modeled on those of the Mesha Stele began to appear on the antiquities market in Jerusalem, almost all of them associated with an antiquities dealer named Moses Wilhelm Shapira.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the Temple Mount Stele (written in Greek) was discovered in 1871, and not long after this, a modern forgery surfaced that attempted to replicate the form and content of the original find.<sup>14</sup> Or again, the Tel Dan Stele (Aramaic) was discovered in 1993 (Fragment A) and 1995 (Fragments B and C), and in 2001 a modern forgery known as the Jehoash Stele Inscription surfaced on the antiquities market.<sup>15</sup> In short, there is a repeating cycle that is often part of the forgery-phenomenon.

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note that the pomegranate was not a factor, presumably because of the constraints of the statute of limitations (as this piece had putatively surfaced on the market in 1979).

12. Cross has stated multiple times in print that he believes pillagers can and do find ancient inscriptions and that these inscriptions often make their way to the antiquities market. See, for example, Frank Moore Cross, “Statement on Inscribed Artifacts without Provenience,” *BAR* 31.5 (September/October 2005): 58, 60. Similarly, I have also made it clear that I believe some of the inscriptions that surface on the antiquities market are genuine ancient inscriptions, though I have also emphasized that pillaging inscriptions forever reduces the amount of data that can be gleaned from these ancient texts. See, for example, Rollston, “Non-Provenanced Epigraphs II,” 57–79.

13. For a good discussion of this discovery, see M. Patrick Graham, “The Discovery and Reconstruction of the Mesha<sup>c</sup> Inscription,” in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman, ASOR and SBL Archaeology and Biblical Studies (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 41–92. For a very fine, accessible discussion of Shapira pottery and the Shapira scrolls, see Irit Salmon, ed., *Truly Fake: Moses Wilhelm Shapira, Master Forger* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 2000).

14. For photo and discussion of the original (genuine) inscription, see *CIIP I:1*, no. 2. For the modern forgery that was modeled on the original (genuine) inscription, see Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, “Genuine and False Inscriptions in Palestine,” *PEFQS* (1884): 89–100, esp. 93–95.

15. For discussion, references, and a drawing, see Rollston, “Non-Provenanced Epigraphs I,” 146–50; 175–80, esp. 146 n. 29.

ANTECEDENTS TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE INSCRIBED POMEGRANATE ON THE  
ANTIQUITIES MARKET:

SOME EXCAVATED INSCRIPTIONS OF THE 1950S AND 1960S

Among the most fascinating textual discoveries of the 1950s and 1960s were those at Hazor, Beersheva, and Arad. Yigael Yadin (1917–1984) had held his third season of excavation at Hazor in 1957. The finds flowing from the excavations at Hazor were stunning and among them was a deep bowl with the letters  $\text{קדש}$  (*qds*) inscribed on the rim of the bowl and also on the exterior of the same bowl. It hailed from Hazor Stratum V (according to Yadin, late eighth century BCE). Shortly after the discovery, Yadin proposed that these letters could be understood as the Hebrew word for “holy” or for the neighboring town Qedesh.<sup>16</sup> Writing a number of years later, Yadin said about this same inscription:

There was no doubt in our minds that the last occupants of the citadel were Israelites. Nevertheless, it was gratifying to find some Hebrew inscriptions to bear us out. The most interesting of these—the word *qodesh* (holy) incised twice—was on the rim of a bowl found in the citadel. The same word, preceded by an undecipherable one, was also incised on the outer face. This, of course, does not indicate that the area had been a temple; but it points out that this particular vessel was either dedicated to the priest or contained holy food.<sup>17</sup>

Of course, Yadin is certainly correct: this is the word for “holy” or “holiness” (depending on the manner in which one vocalizes it). This was certainly a sacred vessel of some sort and Yadin associated it, quite reasonably, with either “priests” or “sacred food.” But, of course, the inscription itself did not include either the word “priests” or the word “food.” For this reason, the precise referent could not be determined with certitude.<sup>18</sup>

Not long after this, at the archaeological site of Arad, Yohanan Aharoni (1919–1976) discovered two pottery bowls with two signs inscribed. In 1968, shortly after the discovery, Aharoni wrote the following about these two signs: the first letter is a “*qof* in ancient Hebrew script, perhaps an abbreviation of *qodesh* (*qds* ‘holy’)” and the second is a sign that “resembles the ancient *kaf*.” According to Aharoni, these bowls were found in Arad Stratum X (a stratum he

16. Yigael Yadin, “The Third Season of Excavation at Hazor, 1957,” *BA* 21 (1958): 30–47, esp. 41.

17. Idem, *Hazor: The Rediscovery of a Great Citadel of the Bible* (New York: Random House, 1975), 182 (with photo).

18. It is perhaps useful to mention that during the 1963/64 Masada excavations Yigael Yadin also found an inscription from the late Second Temple Period with the letters  $\text{קודש}$  written in a formal script. Written in a cursive script prior to those three letters was the letter  $\text{ב}$  and written in a cursive script after those three letters was the letter  $\text{ס}$ , that is,  $\text{לקודשא}$ . On this inscription, see Yigael Yadin, “The Excavations of Masada: 1963/64,” *IEJ* 15 (1965): 1–120, here 111. The script of this inscription is, of course, not the First Temple Old Hebrew script, but a much later script.



considered to be ninth century BCE).<sup>19</sup> Aharoni would later state that the second of these “signs” was not a letter, but a symbol for the word *qorbān*, that is, “offering.”<sup>20</sup> Also found at Tel Arad during the excavations of the 1960s was an unstratified body-sherd with the letters קדש (*qdš*) inscribed, that is, again, the word for “holy” or “holiness.”<sup>21</sup> Then, during Aharoni’s excavations at Beersheva of 1969–1971, he found a krater with the letters קדש (*qdš*) as well, the word for “holy” or “holiness” yet again. In terms of date, Aharoni stated that he believed this krater was “roughly contemporaneous” with Yadin’s inscribed bowl from Hazor.<sup>22</sup>

Also of significance is the fact that during Yohanan Aharoni’s third season of excavations at Arad, the summer of 1964, several Old Hebrew ostraca were discovered in Stratum VI (early sixth century BCE). The last line of the recto of one of these ostraca was quite scintillating, as it read: בית יהוה (*byt yhwḥ*), “The Temple of Yahweh,” the first such epigraphic reference. Aharoni believed that the temple herein referenced was certainly the Jerusalem Temple.<sup>23</sup> But, of course, it is entirely plausible to contend that the “Temple” (literally: “house”) was a reference to the sanctuary at Arad, not Jerusalem.

It is plain that these vessels from Hazor, Beersheva, and Arad with the root קדש (*qdš*) were understood in antiquity to be sacred (i.e., the vessels and/or the contents). The precise signification or semantic reference, of course, could not be determined with certitude. But the two bowls from Arad with just two signs, the first of which is a *qôp*, were particularly interesting. To understand the *qôp* as signifying the root קדש (*qdš*) is rational. But the second sign was most complicated. As noted, Aharoni had suggested that the second sign was similar to that of an archaic *kāp*, but then decided that it was a symbol for the word *qorbān*. This interpretation, however, seems strained. In fact, Yohanan Aharoni’s close friend Anson Rainey (1930–2011) had long considered Aharoni’s proposal problematic. In fact, Rainey had actually been contending that the second sign was a *kāp* and he believed that it should be understood to signify the word כהנים (*kōhānīm*), that is, the letter *kāp* was an abbreviation. Rainey, there-

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19. Yohanan Aharoni, “Arad: Its Inscriptions and Temple,” *BA* 31 (1968): 1–32, esp. 20. The dating of the Arad strata has been much debated. For example, Zeev Herzog has argued that Arad Stratum X dates to the middle of the eighth century, not to the ninth. For distillation of some of the discussion and bibliography, see Christopher A. Rollston, “Scribal Education in Ancient Israel: The Old Hebrew Epigraphic Evidence,” *BASOR* 344 (2006): 47–74, especially 52 and n. 20.

20. Yohanan Aharoni, *Arad Inscriptions* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1981), 115–17, nos. 102 and 103 (with photos).

21. The final publication of this inscription is *ibid.*, 118, no. 104 (with photo).

22. *Idem*, *Beer-Sheba I: Excavations at Tel Beer-Sheba, 1969–1971 Seasons* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology), 73 and pl. 42.4 (photo).

23. The English version of the *editio princeps* of this inscription was published by *idem*, “Hebrew Ostraca from Tel Arad,” *IEJ* 16 (1966): 1–7, especially 5–7. For the final publication, see *idem*, *Arad Inscriptions*, 35–38, no. 18.

fore, understood the letters *qôp* and *kâp* on these bowls as “holy” and “priests.”<sup>24</sup> But during the late 1960s and 1970s, the debate regarding the best reading for the second sign on these two bowls was even broader. After all, Frank Cross had been arguing that the second sign was *not* a sign for the word *qorbân* and that it was also *not* the letter *kâp*. Rather, according to Cross, it was a *šîn*, that is, the first and last letter of the word *qdš*. In addition, Cross argued that these bowls dated not to the ninth century BCE, but to the second half of the seventh century BCE and that the script was Phoenician, not Hebrew.<sup>25</sup> In any case, critically important to remember is that during the 1960s and 1970s *שקד* was a hot topic, with the finds at Hazor, Arad, and Beersheva front and center; moreover, the subject of *בית יהוה* in Arad Ostrakon 18 was garnering a lot of attention as well.<sup>26</sup> Then something rather striking happened.

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24. For a statement by Anson Rainey (published after Lemaire’s publication of the pomegranate) about his own views that the second sign was a *kâp*, see Zeev Herzog et al., “The Israelite Fortress at Arad,” *BASOR* 254 (1984): 1–34, esp. 32. In terms of chronology, it should be mentioned that Anson Rainey began teaching at Tel Aviv University in 1964. Yohanan Aharoni had been teaching at Hebrew University. During the late 1960s, Aharoni accepted a professorial position at Tel Aviv University. In 2008, Anson Rainey mentioned to me that he and Aharoni had some lively discussions at Tel Aviv about this letter.

25. For the published version of his views, see Frank Moore Cross, “Two Offering Dishes with Phoenician Inscriptions from the Sanctuary of ‘Arad,” *BASOR* 235 (1979): 75–78.

26. This is not to suggest that there have not been additional discoveries of the word *שקד* on excavations since the 1960s and 1970s. There have been. For example, four storage jars were found during excavations at Tel Migne (a Philistine site) with the word *שקד* inscribed on them. Two of these storage jars have only the word *שקד*, one of the jars has *שקד* on one side of the jar and *אשרה*, ‘Asherah’ or ‘sanctuary,’ on the other side, and the fourth jar has the word *שקד* + six additional letters. However, this fourth inscription is broken into some ten fragments and some of the letters are missing, so the precise reading of these six letters is not certain. On these inscriptions, see Seymour Gitin, “Seventh Century B.C.E. Cultic Elements at Ekron,” in *Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology, Jerusalem, June-July 1990*, ed. Avraham Biran and Joseph Aviram (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993), 248–58, esp. 250–51 (and figs. 2 and 3). Note also that a bowl from the antiquities market with the word *שקד* inscribed on it has also been published, complete with a long discussion about epigraphic attestations of *שקד* and the importance of these attestations for dating the Priestly sources in the Pentateuch! For this discussion, see Gabriel Barkay, “A Bowl with the Hebrew Inscription *שקד*,” *IEJ* 40 (1990): 124–29. N.B.: Barkay is convinced the inscription on this bowl is ancient, but I would be disinclined to assume this.



**Fig. 1. Panoramic photograph of the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription.  
Collection of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.  
Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by Peter Lanyi.  
Used with permission.**



**Fig. 2. Ivory Pomegranate Inscription, letters 27.**  
Collection of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.  
Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by Peter Lanyi.  
Used with permission.



**Fig. 3. Ivory Pomegranate Inscription, letters ש, ק, ד.**  
Collection of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.  
Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by Peter Lanyi.  
Used with permission.



**Fig. 4. Ivory Pomegranate Inscription, letters כהנים.**  
Collection of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.  
Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by Peter Lanyi.  
Used with permission.



**Fig. 5.** Photo of C. Rollston by Marne Taylor

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE IVORY POMEGRANATE INSCRIPTION

The French epigrapher and palaeographer André Lemaire found the inscribed Ivory Pomegranate in an antiquities store in Jerusalem during the summer of 1979. Although Lemaire did not purchase it, he was granted permission to publish it. The *editio princeps* of the Ivory Pomegranate appeared in 1981.<sup>27</sup> The inscription reads: לְבִית יְהוָה קֹדֶשׁ כְּהֹנָם (*lb[yt yhw]h qdš khnm*), that is, “Belonging to the Te[mple of Yahwe]h, Holiness of the Priests.” This inscription garnered greater interest when Lemaire published it in *Biblical Archaeology Review*.<sup>28</sup> Subsequently, Nahman Avigad (1905–1992) published an article about the Ivory Pomegranate, stating in print that he agreed with Lemaire and considered it to be absolutely genuine.<sup>29</sup> It is reported that the Israel Museum subsequently purchased the Ivory Pomegranate in 1988 for ca. \$550,000.<sup>30</sup> This demonstrates, by the way, how the publication of an inscription from the antiquities market can elevate its perceived value, sometimes in a dramatic fashion.

In any case, during recent years, several articles have been devoted entirely to the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription’s authenticity, with a growing number of scholars now also arguing that the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription is a modern forgery, but with André Lemaire still contending that it is indeed an ancient inscription.<sup>31</sup> Within these recent articles, the debate has often revolved around the patina that is present (but I would note that a good patina can be rather easily fabricated in the modern period) and the placement of the letters *vis-à-vis* the breaks in the pomegranate. There has also been some continuing discussion about palaeographic anomalies, especially the problematic morphology of the *mēm* (I would argue that this is not the only palaeographic problem).<sup>32</sup>

To be sure, I am quite certain that the debate about the inscription on the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription will continue in certain circles. But, at the end of the day, I have long been more Candide than Pangloss, that is, more of a realist than an idealist. Since 2003, following Cross, I have stated that the Ivory Pome-

27. André Lemaire, “Une inscription paléo-hébraïque sur grenade en ivoire,” *RB* 88 (1981): 236–39.

28. André Lemaire, “Probable Head of a Priestly Scepter from Solomon’s Temple Surfaces in Jerusalem,” *BAR* 10.1 (January/February 1984): 24–29.

29. Nahman Avigad, “The Inscribed Pomegranate from the ‘House of the Lord,’” *BA* 53 (1990): 157–66.

30. Hershel Shanks, *In the Temple of Solomon and the Tomb of Caiaphas* (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1993), 24–27.

31. See especially, Yuval Goren et al., “A Re-examination of the Inscribed Pomegranate from the Israel Museum,” *IEJ* 55 (2005): 3–20; André Lemaire, “A Re-examination of the Inscribed Pomegranate: A Rejoinder,” *IEJ* 56 (2006): 167–77; and Shmuel Ahituv et al., “The Inscribed Pomegranate from the Israel Museum Examined Again,” *IEJ* 57 (2007): 87–95.

32. Suffice it to say that I shall turn to the subject of script and patina in due time, and in a different publication. The purpose of this article is to marshal some circumstantial evidence about the epigraphic finds on excavations that preceded the “appearance” of the Ivory Pomegranate and its inscription.



granate Inscription is a probable modern forgery. Here is a scenario that can account rather nicely for the inscription's production and it is also in keeping with the factors that normally accompany the production of a modern forgery (i.e., first an important inscription is found on an excavation, and then an inscription with similar form or content appears on the antiquities market). The modern forger of the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription was following with interest the epigraphic finds on archaeological excavations of the 1960s and 1970s, and the forger knew about the discussions that were revolving around the excavated inscriptions herein discussed. In fact, I believe that in addition to knowing about the inscriptions with *קדש* (*qdš*) and *בית יהוה* (*byt yhw*), the forger also knew of Anson Rainey's readings and his proposal regarding the readings *qôp* and *kāp* for Aharoni's two pottery bowls, that is, *ק* (*q*) for *קדש* (*qdš*) and *כ* (*k*) for *כהנים* (*khnm*). Then the forger produced an inscription that putatively answered two of the most important questions: the phrase *בית יהוה* (*byt yhw*) of Arad Ostrakon 18 referred to the Jerusalem Temple, just as Aharoni believed,<sup>33</sup> and the *ק* and *כ* of Arad Bowls 102 and 103 should be understood as abbreviations for *khnm* ('priests') and *qdš* ('holy' or 'holiness'), just as Rainey believed. Of course, the forger knew that Anson Rainey would be delighted with this demonstration of the accuracy of his proposal, and he was.<sup>34</sup> To be sure, Yohanan Aharoni might have been disappointed with the *kāp* signifying *kōhānīm*, but he had died in 1976. Of course, the original forger may, or may not, have made much money for his labors (rumors indeed suggest that he did not make much), but even a few thousand dollars in the late 1970s would not have been low compensation for the careful labor of just a few days.

Some might object and suggest that modern forgers would not have all the tools necessary for a high quality forgery. But modern forgers have all of the primary and secondary sources needed for the production of a fine forgery and the raw materials as well.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, just as in the days of the Shapira Forgeries of the nineteenth century, modern forgers read scholarly articles and attend scholarly lectures. Furthermore, the financial motivations are certainly tempting for modern forgers, but additional motives are no doubt alluring as well.<sup>36</sup> Some might retort (as has sometimes been done in the past) that no one with the ability to produce forgeries would produce forgeries. But twenty-five hundred years of textual forgeries demonstrates otherwise.<sup>37</sup> Ultimately, I believe that the words of Israel Eph'al and Joseph Naveh are instructive in this connection, and it is with those words that I wish to conclude:

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33. It must be remembered that the Ivory Pomegranate Inscription was believed to have come from Solomon's Temple, that is, "The Temple of Yahweh" in Jerusalem.

34. See the reference in n. 24.

35. Rollston, "Non-Provenanced Epigraphs I," 136–39.

36. See, for example, the discussion in Rollston, "Non-Provenanced Epigraphs I," 191–93.

37. See Rollston, "Forging History," *passim*.

One should bear in mind that many West Semitic seals and bullae, mostly Hebrew ones, bought on the antiquities market since ca. 1970, may have been produced by a skilled hand, with somewhat peculiar iconography and letter forms not represented in the epigraphical corpus known at the time of their publication. Although it is impossible to prove definitively that these seals are forgeries, there is room for suspicion that modern forger(s) might have had excellent knowledge of Biblical Hebrew and Old Hebrew epigraphy, and possessed the technical ability to produce seals and ostraca of very high quality.<sup>38</sup>

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38. Israel Eph’al and Joseph Naveh, “Remarks on the Recently Published Mousaieff Ostraca,” *IEJ* 48 (1998): 270.

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## Interpreting Translation Techniques and Material Presentation in Bilingual Texts: Initial Methodological Reflections\*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

An important aspect of ancient scribal culture is the practice of translation. Septuagintalists and Targumists have long demonstrated concern for the tactics and methods of translation in antiquity. Beginning already with the likes of Cicero and Jerome, the capabilities, practices, and presuppositions of ancient translators have undergone increasing theorization.<sup>1</sup> In this essay, we are indebted to previ-

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\* This essay is dedicated to Jo Ann Hackett, whose good humor and sincere devotion to her students serves as a model to those of us who studied with her. This article was completed with the support of the Vilas research fellowship, awarded by the University of Wisconsin–Madison. During our initial preparation of the texts studied here, we had access to a word-processor format file of *PAT* containing complete English translations of all inscriptions published in *PAT* and of additional Palmyrene inscriptions; that file was created by Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonora Cussini. However, the translations given below are the work of the authors (except where noted).

1. For discussion of Cicero's and Jerome's respective works, see Jeremy Munday, "Issues in Translation Studies," in *The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies*, ed. Jeremy Munday, rev. ed. (London: Routledge, 2009), 1–2. Jerome's work is widely accessible as "Letter to Pammachius," trans. Kathleen Davis, in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2012), 21–30. Important recent contributions include, e.g., Theo A. W. van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint: Towards an Interaction of Septuagint Studies and Translation Studies*, CBET 47 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007); Anneli Aejmelaeus, *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators: Collected Essays*, CBET 50 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007); Ronald L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation*, JSJSup 124 (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Cameron Boyd-Taylor, *Reading Between the Lines: The Interlinear Paradigm for Septuagint Studies*, BTS 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011); and J. Ross Wagner, *Reading the Sealed Book: Old Greek Isaiah and the Problem of Septuagint Hermeneutics*, FAT 88 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

ous scholarship on the biblical versions. But the biblical versions comprise only a portion of the total translational work that occurred in antiquity. We intend to broaden the inquiry to encompass translation in ancient Northwest Semitic inscriptional evidence as well. In this field, the practices and habits of ancient translators have gone largely un- or undertheorized. Thus, further insight into translation in antiquity can be derived from investigation of other known instances of translation.<sup>2</sup> In nearly all known cases involving the Northwest Semitic dialects, a text in a Northwest Semitic (NWS) language (Phoenician-Punic or a dialect of Aramaic) is paired with a corresponding text composed in a language from outside of the NWS family. Often, the non-NWS text is composed in a language relatively accessible to most Semitists (e.g., Akkadian)<sup>3</sup> or to those familiar with the Classical Indo-European languages (i.e., Greek and Latin, as are many Palmyrene Aramaic and Neo-Punic bilingual inscriptions). Sometimes, however, the second text is written in a language in which the average Semitist has received little or no training: we cite here the Phoenician-Cypriote bi- and trilinguals (with Greek) from Idalion and Tamassos, Cyprus (*KAI* 39, 41); the Punic- and Neo-Punic-Numidian bilinguals from Dougga, Bordj Helal, and Henshin Makthar, all in modern-day Tunisia (*KAI* 101, 139, 153); the Aramaic-Lyidian bilingual from Sardis, Turkey (*KAI* 260); and the Phoenician-Luwian inscription from Karatepe, also in modern-day Turkey (*KAI* 26). With such a minimal corpus of texts, many of which are inaccessible even to the well-trained NWS epigrapher, it comes as no surprise that researchers have not typically focused on the ancient methods of and cognitive processes associated with translation in the epigraphic record.<sup>4</sup> We intend to demonstrate in the present essay that attention to the static *product* of translational action in antiquity can help researchers infer certain cognitive and physical *processes* of that translation. In turn, this study can reveal some intriguing aspects of social identity and ancient cognition.

In a less sophisticated, popular account, translation is often treated as merely a necessary byproduct and facilitator of cultural contact. Accordingly, translation is necessary from a communicative view, but it can only ever serve as a poor substitute for the original. Its purposes are clearly utilitarian, designed as a

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2. For discussions of translation and second language acquisition in the Classical Mediterranean setting, see recently van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, esp. 25–55; and Eleanor Dickey, “Teaching Latin to Greek Speakers in Antiquity,” in *Learning Latin and Greek from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Elizabeth P. Archibald, William Brockliss, and Jonathan Gnoza, YCS 37 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 30–51.

3. E.g., the Tell Fakheriyeh inscription (*KAI* 309); Ali Abou-Assaf, Pierre Bordreuil, and Alan R. Millard, *La statue de Tell Fekherye et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne*, Études Assyriologiques (Paris: Éditions recherche sur les civilisations, 1982).

4. Here, too, there are exceptions. See, for example, the excellent study by Annick Payne, “Multilingual Inscriptions and Their Audiences: Cilicia and Lycia,” in *Margins of Writing, Origins of Culture*, ed. Seth L. Sanders, Oriental Institute Seminars 2 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2006), 125–40, discussed further below.

conduit for interlinguistic and intercultural communication. Its unintended (and, frequently, unfortunate) byproducts include the introduction and solidification of textual plurality, regardless of the benefits accruing from the new audience's increased access to the text or from the increased social capital garnered from the ability to commission a translation as a projection of social power.

In 1972, James S. Holmes differentiated the "product-oriented" study of translation from a "process-oriented" approach.<sup>5</sup> When the focus of research becomes the process rather than the product, the researcher is primarily concerned not with the material and textual products of the act of translation, but instead with the cognitive actions involved in the process itself. This orientation, Holmes suggested, allows researchers greater access to the translator's cognitive operations that ultimately led to the product at hand. This orientation is attuned to "[t]he problem of what exactly takes place in the 'little black box' of the translator's 'mind' as he creates a new, more or less matching text in another language...."<sup>6</sup> Holmes's essay inaugurated a new focus in studies of translation; this new focus on the *process* of translation has led researchers to practice increased scrutiny of translation as an object worthy of study for its own sake. A solely product-oriented perspective of translation frequently misses the value of translation as communicating not only linguistic information, but nonlinguistic information as well: translation—specifically, the peculiar *style* of translation consisting of the translator's social conventions, ingrained habits, and deliberate choices—projects the translator's identity, communicating more than the mere semantic message of the source text. Attending to these considerations can serve to clarify the ancient audience for whom the translator felt him- or herself to be working: we must assume that the translator sought to produce a translation that was at the same time both acceptable to and constitutive of the target audience. Thus, study of *translational process* and of its *target audience* is study not solely of a translated text, but rather of the translator's social identity and the associated cultural context into which the translated text was intended to fit.

Modern studies of translation techniques have the luxury of observing living translators in the process of translating. Researchers observe the process through eye-movement studies, neuro-imaging, and other measurable experiments, as well as through think-aloud protocols and retrospective translation studies.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, these translators are themselves capable of articulating subsequent reflections on their acts of translation, thus informing researchers how they went about translating the texts at hand. Translation theorists design experiments that are restricted by protocols serving to enhance their scientific

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5. For the categories of "product-oriented" vs. "process-oriented" studies of translation, see James S. Holmes, "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, 2nd ed. (Routledge: London and New York, 2000), 172–85, esp. 176–77.

6. *Ibid.*, 177.

7. For a (skeptical) overview of the various types of studies currently being conducted in the field, see Juliane House, "Towards a New Linguistic-Cognitive Orientation in Translation Studies," *Target* 25 (2013): 46–60, esp. 48–53.

validity and are governed by tightly constrained controls. In contrast, cases such as biblical translation present difficulties that quickly move beyond a laboratory environment: because the only remaining evidence of the translational act is the translated material (i.e., the *product*), the lack of a clear source text for these translations complicates analysis of the translations themselves. The study of the Septuagint, for example, is replete with reconstructions, hypotheses, and assumptions concerning the *most likely* methods (often described as “techniques”) of translation. Although many of these complications can be mitigated by comparison with modern acts of translation, the process remains a largely reconstructive one, in which students of the versions must compare their object of study (LXX or Targum manuscripts, for example) with a textual tradition that may not have served as the exact source text for the translational process.

While scholars of the Septuagint, Targums, and Peshitta have been the first scholars of the ancient Near East to adopt the theoretical perspectives and methodologies of Descriptive Translation Studies, Northwest Semitic epigraphers and philologists have been slower to take up these same tools. In part, this reticence derives from the paucity of translated data in Northwest Semitic epigraphic contexts, as well as from the inaccessibility of that data. In this article, we suggest that further controls and constraints on ancient translators may be adduced through the investigation of bilingual inscriptions. Bilingual inscriptions present two texts in different languages in close physical proximity to one another and overlapping to a greater or lesser extent in the semantic information and pragmatic intent they communicate. In the following discussion we call such paired, semantically- and pragmatically-overlapping texts *co-texts*. In cases of bilingual co-texts, we have not one but two fixed points (texts), *products* from which to investigate and reconstruct the *processes* of translation practiced in antiquity.

The goal of the present study is to draw attention to the fruitful avenues of research opened up by attentiveness to ancient translations *as the products of cognitive and cultural processes*. Because some methodological problems attend this type of study, it is our purpose in this paper to outline some of those problems and to formulate preliminary responses to them. The corpus under study here comprises two of the approximately twenty Latin–Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions discovered in sites distributed across the former Roman Empire.<sup>8</sup> This corpus has been selected because of its small size, the authors’ familiarity with the objects of study, and the intriguing problems raised by study of the objects. In section II, we provide a brief overview of the discipline of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), summarizing a few of its main principles, the problems it attempts to solve, and the methods employed by its practitioners. We also address some recent cognitive models that have been developed to capture the empirically tested realities of bilingualism. Here we propose a model that is based

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8. We are currently preparing a short monograph-length study of these ca. twenty inscriptions. In that study we will develop more thoroughly the issues discussed here, and will address the entire corpus of Latin–Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions.

on translation-critical typologies and the material presentation of epigraphic texts. This model allows us to achieve educated conclusions concerning the temporal and conceptual ordering of bilingual co-texts. In section III, we conduct an intensive study of two Latin–Palmyrene inscriptions. We identify several points where the Latin texts differ from their Aramaic counterparts, and inquire whether these differences necessarily mitigate the identification of these texts as “translations.” Finally, in section IV, we restate our findings and propose a few modest methodological principles for the investigation of bilingualism and translation in antiquity.

## II. TRANSLATION OR BILINGUALISM? EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE AND MATERIAL PRESENTATION

A significant problem to be addressed is whether ancient bilingual co-texts provide any more demonstrable evidence for the *processes* of translation than do (sometimes putative) translations where no extant text is identifiable as the exact manuscript from which the “translation” was made. Texts falling into this latter group include the pluriform manuscript products of the Septuagint (although in this case we at least have available a manuscript tradition [i.e., the Masoretic Text] that approximates the reconstructed source text). The focus on the cognitive *process* of translation remains limited to observations that can be drawn from empirical study of the *product*: we no longer have direct access to the individuals who composed the bilingual co-texts—but do we have any *indirect* access either? What do we really know about the individuals who produced these documents? Furthermore, how are we to understand the complicated network of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic relationships tying together the individual members of a bilingual text? Neither is *necessarily* the source text of the other: It remains possible that a third text, not represented in the present configuration, served as the source of both texts. It is equally possible that a single composer who was able to work adeptly in both languages composed each of the constituent texts, without intending to represent the message of one in the linguistic system of the other. Both possibilities call into question whether bilingual inscriptions may, in fact, contribute any evidence to the study of *translation*, per se.

The Classicist J. N. Adams has adopted the latter position as a means of sidestepping such discussions in favor of focusing on individuals’ perceived social identities. The study of social identity projected through the composition of bilingual co-texts is complicated by the fact that every translator is, by definition, an individual capable of understanding and producing at least some phrases in more than one language. This so-called “bilingualism” has begun to feature prominently in many studies of such individuals and their cultural and literary products. The study of bilingualism throughout the Roman Empire is particularly indebted to Adams and his descriptions of Latin bilingual (and trilingual)



texts found throughout the Empire.<sup>9</sup> Adams defines bilingual texts as “texts written in two languages in which the two versions are physically discrete and have a content which is usually, at least in part, common to both. The degree of overlap need not be complete, and generally is not.”<sup>10</sup> Positing a “bilingual” origination of two physically and conceptually related texts inherently disrupts the project of studying them as instances of *translation*. It is the very definition of a translated text that one member of a set of co-texts takes conceptual and temporal precedence over the other, since translation is the act of producing a subsequent text in a target language (TL) that approximates the source text (ST) closely enough so as to replicate in some way the concepts and perhaps even the diction of the earlier text.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, for Adams, this priority of one textual version over the other cannot always be demonstrated in cases of bilingual texts. Rather, the similarity of conceptual content contrasts with the dissimilarity of lexical diction. As a result of this mismatch, argues Adams, these associated co-texts are properly considered synchronically as co-textual partners at best: “bilingual inscriptions were often put together by *two separate acts of composition*, not by composition in one language followed by translation into the other.”<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Holger Gzella performs a brief analysis of Greek–Palmyrene bilingual inscriptions, and finds that both languages utilize grammatical constructions, lexical items, and genre conventions appropriate to each tradition (despite some demonstrable influence of Greek lexis on the Aramaic). He therefore concludes that co-textual inscriptions written in the two languages were independent compositions.<sup>13</sup> The same is not the case with the Latin members of the trilingual inscriptions studied by Gzella, which show clear signs of dependence on their respective Greek counterparts.<sup>14</sup>

According to the bilingualism account, then, the language choices of bilingual co-texts cannot reliably be attributed to translational effects. A more important factor in the lexical choices is the identity that the author is attempting to project at that particular time and place.<sup>15</sup> With respect to two Latin–Palmyrene

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9. J. N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); see also the essays in J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain, eds., *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Word* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

10. Adams, *Bilingualism*, 30.

11. See below for further clarification; although the temporal dynamics articulated here continue to obtain, Descriptive Translation theorists have developed a model that accounts more successfully for cases of content divergence.

12. Adams, *Bilingualism*, 258; emphasis added.

13. Holger Gzella, “Die Palmyrener in der griechisch-römischen Welt: Kulturelle Begegnung im Spiegel des Sprachkontaktes,” *Klio* 87 (2005): 449.

14. *Ibid.*, 452. These inscriptions are among our larger corpus, but will not be addressed further here.

15. J. N. Adams and Simon Swain, “Introduction,” in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Word*, ed. J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1–20, esp. 2.

funerary inscriptions, Adams argues that “Habibi and Barates [*PAT* 0251 (from Tibiscus in Dacia) and *PAT* 0246 (discussed below), respectively] were both far from home, in regions in which Palmyrene would not have been understood; a token expression is enough to make a point.”<sup>16</sup> Similarly, with regard to *PAT* 0990 (discovered in el-Kantara, Algeria), Adams states, “The Latin explicitly identifies the referent as a Palmyrene for potential Latin-speaking readers, whereas the Palmyrene text does not need to do so for those who could read it. Latin emerges as the deceased’s professional voice, while Aramaic is his mother tongue.”<sup>17</sup>

To some degree, this rejection of a diachronic component of the investigation is pragmatic: the investigated bilingual co-texts exist in a finalized form, with no extra- or paratextual record of their composition (including any description of their temporal and conceptual ordering). It is difficult, then, to assign either one or the other chronological or conceptual priority. Moreover, as Adams and Simon Swain point out, “Writing is by its very nature more contrived than informal speech, and a good deal of thought may lie behind the production of the text.”<sup>18</sup> By investigating these texts as instances of “bilingualism,” produced by a single individual as variant co-texts, Adams sidesteps the need to offer a diachronic account of the texts’ development.

Despite Adams’s compelling argumentation, we will assert that a diachronically-ordered relationship between bilingual co-texts is often discoverable on the basis of three interdependent considerations: (1) comparison with empirically-conducted research on translation typologies, including “translation universals”—i.e., those features of translation that appear to be ubiquitous or even universal among the world’s translators; (2) attention to cognitive linguistic features of bilingualism and second language acquisition; and (3) detailed study of the co-texts’ material presentations. As will emerge from this study, we agree with Adams’ fundamental presupposition that the desire to project identity—including varying identities coincident with and represented by the language of each constituent text—plays a significant role in the authors’ (and translators’) construction of bilingual co-texts. But we reject the principle that bilingualism *necessarily* explains the divergences of locution between two bilingual co-texts. Instead, semantic and grammatical divergences, as well as omissions or additions of material, are well-known strategies in translators’ repertoires. These strategies can be used in various combinations to produce texts that lie along a continuum joining *literal, verbatim translation* with mere *synopsis*.

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16. Adams, *Bilingualism*, 256. The Habibi addressed here is not the same Habibi of *PAT* 0250, treated below.

17. *Ibid.*, 257. Although we agree with Adams on both counts, the latter quotation runs the risk of conflating the deceased with the author of the inscription. The inscription names *two* Palmyrenes, both of whom are apparently commemorated in death: Yarhibola and Astorga his son. This suggests that it was, minimally, the latter who commissioned the memorial for Yarhibola. But in all probability, the author of this single funerary commemoration was a third, unnamed Palmyrene soldier of the same military unit.

18. Adams and Swain, “Introduction,” 2.

## A. STUDYING TRANSLATION, POSITING EQUIVALENCE

Although we concur with Adams that the linguistic choices made in the composition of such co-texts necessarily projects the composer's identity, we dispute two of the assumptions that Adams seems to make in his studies. First, we do not consent to Adams's characterization of co-texts that vary from one another in diction (accounting, of course, for the difference in language) as departing *necessarily* from the rubric of "translation."<sup>19</sup> Descriptive Translation theorists have demonstrated conclusively that *transformations* of a ST occur as a natural concomitant when moving it into a different linguistic system.<sup>20</sup> In light of the expected (and frequently *obligatory* transformations between source texts and their translated target texts [TT]), defining what constitutes a "translation" is an inherently difficult task. As a result, recent interpreters have increasingly moved away from definitive proposals. Andrew Chesterman, drawing on terminology from Richard Dawkins's *The Selfish Gene*, states simply, "Translations are survival mechanisms for memes."<sup>21</sup> Memes are analyzable as the common denominator of more developed complex concepts shared between people; the intention of their human originators is that memes replicate and serve as vehicles for communication between their human "hosts": "ideas that turn out to be *good* ideas survive; i.e., those that are conducive to the survival of their carriers.... Bad ideas ... do not last...."<sup>22</sup> As "survival mechanisms for memes," translations are correspondingly vehicles for the transfer of concepts and ideas between human subjects. Yet memes, like biological genes, rarely retain their exact morphologies, even when they replicate their contents retaining the same basic material. Gideon Toury is even less concerned than Chesterman with describing

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19. Adams and Swain are clearly aware of problems associated with the deliberate transformations inherent to translated texts (e.g., "Introduction," 4), citing the essays by Langslow, Taylor, and Rutherford in the same volume: D. R. Langslow, "Approaching Bilingualism in Corpus Languages," 23–51; Ian Rutherford, "Interference or Translationese? Some Patterns in Lycian-Greek Bilingualism," 197–219; David G. K. Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia in Late Antique Syria and Mesopotamia," 298–331, all in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Word*, ed. J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

20. See early translation theoretical work by, e.g., Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, *Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation*, Benjamins Translation Library 11 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995); and J. C. Catford, *A Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Essay in Applied Linguistics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965). More recent anthologies contain a selection of early essays and chapters; see especially Lawrence Venuti, *The Translation Studies Reader*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2012). Two textbooks provide accessible introductions to translation theoretical studies; see especially Anthony Pym, *Exploring Translation Theories* (London: Routledge, 2010); and Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2012).

21. Andrew Chesterman, *Memes of Translation*, Benjamins Translation Library 22 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997; repr., 2000), 5.

22. *Ibid.*, 6.

what, exactly, a translation *is*: “the obsession with restrictive definitions proves counter-productive precisely when the aspiration is to leave behind the discussion of idealized notions and account for real-life phenomena in their immediate contexts instead.”<sup>23</sup> Restrictive definitions are arbitrary; far more helpful is an examination of the types of texts that have been considered translations within the cultures in which they came to be. The notion of an “assumed translation” takes precedence here over normative criteria. Toury argues that at least three broad postulates obtain in various cultures’ ideas about translation:

- (1) The *Source-Text Postulate* holds that “Regarding a text as a translation entails the obvious assumption that there is another text, in another culture/language, which has both chronological and logical priority over it.”<sup>24</sup>
- (2) The *Transfer Postulate* is a corollary of the preceding principle. It “entails the assumption that the process whereby the assumed translation came into being involved the transfer from the assumed source text of certain features that the two now share.”<sup>25</sup>
- (3) Finally, the *Relationship Postulate* states that “adopting the assumption that a particular TL (Target Language—i.e., the language into which a text is translated) text may be a translation also implies that there are tangible relationships that tie it to its assumed original, an obvious function of whatever the two texts allegedly share (Postulate 2) and of what is taken to have been transferred across the cultural-semiotic (and linguistic) border.”<sup>26</sup>

These three postulates serve to move away from a model in which a translation’s degree of “equivalence” to its ST is directly proportional to its putative ability to transfer the semantic and pragmatic value of the source text into another language. Instead, Toury’s model redefines equivalence as “that translation relationship which would have emerged as constituting the *norm* for the pair of texts under study.”<sup>27</sup> For Anthony Pym, this means that “equivalence [is] a feature of *all* translations, simply because they were thought to be translations, no matter what their linguistic or aesthetic quality.”<sup>28</sup> In the descriptive project, then, there is no expectation that investigation will uncover *whether* a translation is equivalent to its ST. Instead, Descriptive Translation Studies seeks to uncover what makes a translation equivalent to its ST: “the intention is to expose the culturally determined interdependencies of function, process and product....”<sup>29</sup>

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23. Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies—and Beyond*, rev. ed., Benjamins Translation Library 100 (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2012), 26.

24. *Ibid.*, 29.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*, 30.

27. *Ibid.*, 32.

28. Pym, *Exploring Translation Theories*, 64.

29. Toury, *DTSB*, 33.

## B. BILINGUALISM AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

The second of Adams's assumptions with which we take issue is the automatic allocation of individuals capable of working in more than one language to the category of "bilingual" individuals. Although Adams himself recognizes that the degree to which translators understood and spoke a second language varied widely—as exhibited in particular in his differentiation between "bilingualism" and "biliteracy"<sup>30</sup>—we must stress the graded scale of competency in a language learned subsequent to a speaker's cognitive development. In all likelihood, very few individuals in the ancient world probably attained the status of *bilingual first language* speakers, as defined by modern linguists (that is, those who attain native-level fluency in more than one language, in parallel).<sup>31</sup> In order to achieve this type of fluency, speakers must have begun hearing and speaking *both* languages in native contexts at a very young age.<sup>32</sup> Far more commonly, speakers would have spoken one language natively (i.e., as their "mother tongue", L1) and learned any additional languages as second languages (L2). This recognition

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30. Adams and Swain, "Introduction," 5–8. See also Adams's statements in *Bilingualism*, esp. 8.

31. For compound bilingualism, in which languages are learned "in parallel"—as opposed to coordinate bilingualism, in which multiple languages are acquired in different contexts—see Wolfgang Klein, *Second Language Acquisition*, Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 11–13. A similar distinction is made in more recent studies between "simultaneous bilingualism" and "sequential bilingualism"; see Patsy M. Lightbown and Nina Spada, *How Languages are Learned*, 3rd ed., Oxford Handbooks for Language Teachers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 25–26.

32. Klein states that the age dividing first- from second-language acquisition is around three to four years of age (*Second Language Acquisition*, 15). Lightbown and Spada (*How Languages are Learned*, 69–70, see also 73–74), citing Mark S. Patkowski ("The Sensitive Period for the Acquisition of Syntax in a Second Language," *Language Learning* 30 [1980]: 449–72), stress the critical role played by age in language acquisition. Even here there would be multiple levels of capability, since those individuals who learn a second language between the ages of ca. three to four years old and puberty learn the language differently than do individuals beyond puberty (Lightbown and Spada, *How Languages are Learned*, 69–70). Patkowski himself tested (and confirmed) the hypothesis that "full, native-like acquisition of syntax in a nonnative language can be achieved only if learning begins before the age of fifteen years.... Adult second language acquisition ... would be expected never to result in total native fluency" (*ibid.*, 451). Thus, although we find it plausible that many Palmyrenes likely spoke both Aramaic and Greek fluently, we strongly suspect that most of the translators by whom the texts at hand were produced should be classified as *second language bilingual speakers*, most of whom were probably imperfectly acquainted with Latin. Many examples of adult bilingual education in antiquity exist; see, e.g., Ann Ellis Hanson, "Papyri and Efforts by Adults in Egyptian Villages to Write Greek," in *Learning Latin and Greek from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Elizabeth P. Archibald, William Brockliss, and Jonathan Gnoza, YCS 37 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 10–29; and Dickey, "Teaching Latin to Greek Speakers," 30–51.

suggests that we should continue to employ the paradigm of *bilingualism*, but one nuanced with an informed theory of varying levels of bilingual linguistic performance, particularly in contexts of *second language acquisition*.

Although the literature on bilingualism is far more plentiful than we are able to survey here in such a small forum, we provide a brief overview of a few recent attempts to understand the effects of bilingualism in translators' cognitive processes. In a discussion of "the cognitive basis of translation universals," Sandra Halverson utilizes the Cognitive Linguistic model of Ronald W. Langacker to found a theory of translation.<sup>33</sup> Halverson's model of linguistic representation in the bilingual brain provides support for our claim that translation and bilingual composition are two ends of a single continuum. Following Anette M. B. de Groot's work on semantic representation in bilingual cognition, Halverson posits "that there are two layers of representational elements": the lexical level, and the conceptual level.<sup>34</sup> Halverson sees a "growing consensus on the 'one-store' account of the conceptual level."<sup>35</sup> That is, researchers and theorists are increasingly in agreement that conceptual content—traditionally known as the "semantic value" referenced by linguistic units—is stored in a single cache, even in bilingual speakers. And although L2 learners may initially process L2 lexical items through the filter composed by L1, in de Groot's account, "frequency will affect the strength of the various connections between nodes,"<sup>36</sup> eventually strengthening the links connecting the lexical items of L2 directly to the conceptual content they denote. This process is one of *entrenchment*, as it is typically known from Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Cognitive Linguistics.<sup>37</sup>

The effects of frequency can be further strengthened by the effects deriving both from the concreteness of the concept and from phonological similarities between cognate languages.<sup>38</sup> Concreteness is an important index in studies of

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33. Sandra Halverson, "The Cognitive Basis of Translation Universals," *Target* 15 (2003): 197–241; Ronald W. Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, 2 vols. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987–1991); more recently, idem, *Cognitive Grammar: A Basic Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and John R. Taylor, *Cognitive Grammar*, Oxford Textbooks in Linguistics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

34. Halverson, "Cognitive Basis," 209, citing Anette M. B. de Groot, "The Cognitive Study of Translation and Interpretation: Three Approaches," in *Cognitive Processes in Translation and Interpreting*, ed. Joseph H. Danks et al. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997), 25–56.

35. Halverson, "Cognitive Basis," 210; for an instance of this consensus, see, Marina Sherkina, "The Cognate Facilitation Effect in Bilingual Speech Processing," *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics* 21 (2003): 135–51.

36. Ibid., 211, citing Anette M. B. de Groot, "Bilingual Lexical Representation: A Closer Look at Conceptual Representations," in *Orthography, Phonology, Morphology, and Meaning*, ed. R. Frost and Marian Katz (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1992), 389–412.

37. See, e.g., Langacker, *Cognitive Grammar*, 16.

38. Halverson, "Cognitive Basis," 212, citing Anette M. B. de Groot, "Word-type Effects in Bilingual Processing Tasks: Support for a Mixed Representational System," in

bilingualism, because the more concrete an object is, the more likely it is that the conceptual content denoted by lexemes in L1 and L2 will overlap (or, indeed, be coterminous):

Content words refer to entities whose function is likely to be the same across languages. The outward appearance of these entities and the behaviours that they elicit are also likely to be similar across language communities because they relate directly to their function. As a consequence, the conceptual representations for the translations of concrete words will have very similar contents.<sup>39</sup>

Similarly, overlapping phonological and morphological content at the lexical level can promote quicker storage and retrieval of cognate lexical items.<sup>40</sup> But professional translators and interpreters are well acquainted with the problems arising from interference between L1 and L2 in instances where cognate lexemes denote divergent conceptual content. Because of this possibility, modern translators are typically trained to avoid the use of cognate lexemes to a greater extent than are bilinguals without such professional training,<sup>41</sup> in spite of the fact that cognate selection normally results in lower cognitive load.

The formation and entrenchment of connections between L2 lexical and grammatical representations and their corresponding conceptual content creates networks of signification that exist independently from the same connections between L1 lexicon and grammar and the conceptual storage accessed from that language. Because the patterns of phono-semantic correspondence and of grammatical structure differ between L1 and L2, each network of signification develops a different set of cognitive domains accessed by supposedly corresponding L1 and L2 symbolic structures. To complicate matters, some conceptual content may only be directly accessible through one of the languages, but not the other: “there may be configurations, or patterns of activation, in networks of meaning that are linked only to phonological representations in one of the two languages, though these may ultimately, in different configurations and through different, less direct, routes, be linked to phonological representations in the other language.”<sup>42</sup> With the increasing conventionalization of certain routes comes a higher level of cognitive salience. In turn, “highly salient structures will exert a gravitational pull, resulting in an overrepresentation in translation of the

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*The Bilingual Lexicon*, ed. Robert Schreuder and Bert Weltens (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1993), 27–51.

39. De Groot, “Word-Type Effects,” 41, quoted in Halverson, “Cognitive Basis,” 213.

40. Maribel Tercedor, “Cognates as Lexical Choices in Translation: Interference in Space-Constrained Environments,” *Target* 22 (2010): 178, citing Masaomi Kondo, “3-Party 2-Language Model of Interpreting Revisited,” *Forum* 1 (2003): 77–96; and Robin Setton, “Words and Sense: Revisiting Lexical Processes in Interpreting,” *Forum* 1 (2003): 139–68.

41. Tercedor, “Cognates,” 177–93.

42. Halverson, “Cognitive Basis,” 215.

specific TL lexical and grammatical structures that correspond to those salient nodes and configurations in the schematic network.”<sup>43</sup> This observation bears great importance for the subject of this paper, because it explains why translation and bilingual composition may be considered to lie on a single spectrum of bilingual action: routinized linguistic structures—including those at the discourse-level, we posit—attract linguistic utterances in novel situations to conventionalized forms. In short, regardless of whether an ancient Latin-and-Palmyrene Aramaic bilingual speaker was translating a Latin text into Palmyrene Aramaic or was composing two putatively independent texts beside one another, there were grammatical- and discourse-level structures that were only appropriate to one of the languages, and which could not properly be subsumed into the other linguistic system. This brief account of bilingualism and translation, founded on principles of cognitive linguistics, provides a rationale for the acceptance of the transformations treated below as *translational operations*.

We adopt the stance articulated by Toury and Pym in what follows, seeking to identify the kinds of relationships obtaining between the constituent members of certain bilingual co-texts. Although these relationships manifest themselves as synchronic, conceptually divergent versions, we will show that DTS provide a valuable framework for dealing with these texts. For the purposes of the present article, we have chosen a small sample: we investigate here two bilingual inscriptions containing Latin and Palmyrene Aramaic epigraphs. Although some bilingual co-texts do not evince any indicators of conceptual and linguistic priority of one text over its corresponding co-text, this datum cannot automatically rule out that a translational process occurred in other cases. We intend to demonstrate that the categories frequently employed by translation theorists can help to explain the apparently non-corresponding Latin–Palmyrene Aramaic bilingual inscriptions. Our analysis suggests that co-texts in variant linguistic systems can in reality be charted on a spectrum. On one end of the spectrum are those bilingual co-texts exhibiting only the most oblique conceptual parallels (compare, for example, rewritten biblical texts such as the Genesis Apocryphon and Josephus’s *The Jewish Antiquities*). At the other end stand literalistic translations diverging only in the most inconsequential elements (see, for example, the bulk of both Targum Onqelos and the Vulgate).

### C. MATERIALITY AND PHYSICAL DISPOSITION

As noted above, in order to establish that two bilingual co-texts comprise an instance of *translation*, one must first identify the *direction of translation*—that is to say, we must establish the conceptual ordering of the two texts. In the following discussion, we propose that it is often possible to discover the conceptual and chronological ordering of bilingual co-texts by attending to the inscriptions’

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43. *Ibid.*, 218, see further 218–21. See also House, “Towards a New Linguistic-Cognitive Orientation,” 56.



physical completeness, their technical completeness, and their material presentation.

1. PHYSICAL COMPLETENESS. First, it is necessary to evaluate the completeness of the paired inscriptions. Regardless of which language was used to compose the ST and which the TT, having a complete text in both languages is the only way to draw firm conclusions. Without complete texts, the researcher is forced to reconstruct one text—this process of reconstruction usually occurs through reference to the corresponding co-text, thus prejudicing the experiment. Completion may be gauged from linguistic- and discourse-critical considerations. For example, the researcher must ask: Does the text make sense as it stands? Does it imitate cognate exemplars of the same genre? Or does it depart from literary conventions in unpredictable ways?

Reconstruction is always and necessarily an inexact procedure: As Michael T. Davis and Loren T. Stuckenbruck recognize in their analysis of several Greek–Aramaic bilingual texts, “The apparently formulaic nature of the phraseology of many types of Palmyrene inscriptions may lead one to expect that semantic equivalents are predictable in occurrence and, thus, can form a secure basis for reconstruction. While such an assumption is not at all unreasonable, it should not be presumed.”<sup>44</sup> In other words, even the formulaic nature of the translated texts does not allow us to reconstruct with absolute certainty the content of lacunae in bilingual texts. Several of the inscriptions in the full Latin–Palmyrene corpus are incomplete. As a result, many of our conclusions may only be considered provisional with regard to the larger corpus. However, the two inscriptions studied below demonstrate physical completeness. Our conclusions in this study have not required reconstruction of any text.

2. TECHNICAL COMPLETENESS. How do we know that the authors of accompanying texts in a second language were, in fact, offering a translation and not a bilingual paraphrase? As argued above, we consider translation and paraphrase (or synopsis) to lie on a single continuum. The difference is not one of *type*, but rather of *scope*. Although a paraphrase denotes a TT whose total information is far outstripped by the information provided in its ST, analysis of a text as a “paraphrase” nonetheless assumes Toury’s three postulates and can still be subjected to an analysis of its formative operations. One of the major operations used to produce a paraphrase would be the omission of what is deemed by the tradent to be non-essential information; see Chesterman’s category *Information Change [Pr3]: Omission*.

Andrew Wilson summarizes the cumulative rhetorical effects of Punic inscriptions vis-à-vis their Latin co-texts: “the Punic version plays down some elements of Roman identity and stresses some more local elements; and omits

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44. Michael T. Davis and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Notes on Translation Phenomena in the Palmyrene Bilinguals,” in *Intertestamental Essays in Honour of Józef Tadeusz Milik*, ed. Zdzisław J. Kapera (Krakow: Enigma, 1992), 265.

entirely the proconsul's dedication. This is not resistance to Rome, but two faces of a double identity, rendered in their appropriate languages."<sup>45</sup> Given the preceding discussion of translation strategies and equivalence, we have cause to dispute Wilson's qualification of the co-texts under scrutiny as "non-equivalent bi-versions." Nonetheless, we concur generally with his assessment here. Similarly, Ted Kaizer discusses the use of formulaic conventions in Palmyrene Aramaic, Greek, and Latin in a study of the "religious mentality in Palmyrene documents."<sup>46</sup> He observes, "the intrinsic value of such cultural elements is dependent on the language system by means of which they are expressed and may therefore be modified (no matter how slightly) once articulated in another tongue."<sup>47</sup> Accordingly, transferring semantic content from one linguistic system to another requires not only lexical reformulation, but higher-level (discourse-, or cultural-systematic-level) reconfiguration as well. In the cognitive account adopted above, this reconfiguration is forced upon individuals because of the separate networks of signification and meaning-making that are accessible from each constituent language. Although the two languages spoken by a bilingual speaker may share a single underlying conceptual repository, the linguistic networks accessing this repository are not mirror images of one another. One concept may be entirely inaccessible through one language, whereas it plays a heavy role in the symbolic networks accessed by the other.

3. MATERIAL PRESENTATION. A third criterion for consideration of conceptual priority is the material presentation of the paired texts. In this study, we have attempted to remain cognizant of the inscriptions' physical characteristics. The judgment concerning conceptual priority may be based on indices such as (a) the use of a decorative frame (sometimes in the form of a frame or possibly a *tabula ansata*<sup>48</sup>) to delimit one of the paired inscriptions and not the other; (b) the formality of the script used in each of the inscriptions; (c) the quality of workmanship in each inscription; (d) the relative positions of the inscriptions on the item

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45. Andrew Wilson, "Neo-Punic and Latin Inscriptions in Roman North Africa: Function and Display," in *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds*, ed. Alex Mulren and Patrick James (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 299.

46. Ted Kaizer, "Religious Mentality in Palmyrene Documents," *Klio* 86 (2004): 165–84.

47. *Ibid.*, 167–68.

48. Many of the frames enclosing the inscriptions studied here are simply rectangular, with varying levels of decorative sophistication (including multiple mouldings around the perimeter). A *tabula ansata* is a panel adjoined by two 'handles' (*ansae*). For further elaboration of how stonemasons worked and decorated their products, see the excellent essay by Jonathan Edmondson, "Inscribing Roman Texts: *Officinae*, Layout, and Carving Techniques," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 117–21. Equally important is Wilson's recognition that the use of a *tabula ansata* is a form of non-linguistic code switching that imputes a Latinizing cultural milieu to a text (Wilson, "Neo-Punic and Latin Inscriptions," 312, also 313).

inscribed; and (e) the continuity or discontinuity of either of the constituent texts.

Annick Payne takes into account the relative positioning of co-texts in her study of bi- and trilingual inscriptions from Iron Age II and Persian period Anatolia. In the case of the Çineköy inscription of Warikas, Payne recognizes the apparent “pre-eminence” of the Phoenician text over its hieroglyphic Luwian co-text.<sup>49</sup> She also notes the compact placement of the Phoenician text, “on a single space leaving the impression of a compact, united text,” whereas its Luwian co-text is discontinuous, “spread out over several, not always immediately connected spaces, wedged in between sculptural elements, leaving the impression of a less harmonious, somewhat haphazard compilation.”<sup>50</sup> The same relative degree of organization can be attributed to the bilingual Karatepe inscription(s) (*KAI* 26), in which the Phoenician text “is found on adjoining orthostats” and “provides the reading order for the hieroglyphic text.”<sup>51</sup>

Davis and Stuckenbruck address similar concerns of relative placement. They assert that the placement of textual versions on different faces of a monument “almost emphasizes the intended independence of each version,” by virtue of the physical difficulty of comparison.<sup>52</sup> This argument assumes that the juxtaposition of bilingual co-texts necessarily invites comparison. In light of more refined interpretations of translation, in which the crafting of a translation constitutes a deliberate act of filling a perceived gap in the target language’s literary repertoire, the comparison of bilingual co-texts is a procedure that is limited almost solely to the philologist’s office. In contrast, Wilson stresses the possibility of “a separation of display functions” in instances where the Latin co-text is “monumentally more prominent.”<sup>53</sup> Although Wilson demonstrates this principle using a pair of “equivalent inscriptions” on a market building in Lepcis Magna,<sup>54</sup> this observation is particularly relevant when evaluating other translations as well. Few English-speaking readers today would consult the Greek text of the New Testament or of Aeschylus. Even in instances of natively bilingual readers (e.g., English–Spanish), it is difficult to assume that these individuals’ primary reading procedures would involve textual comparison of both versions

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49. Payne, “Multilingual Inscriptions,” see esp. 127; for the *editio princeps* of this inscription, Payne cites Recai Tekoğlu et al., “La bilingue royale louvito-phénicienne de Çineköy,” *CRAI* 144 (2000): 961–1007.

50. Payne, “Multilingual Inscriptions,” 127. Payne is careful to note, however, that this discontinuous arrangement occurs in monolingual Luwian inscriptions as well; it is possible that the scattered impression we receive from the hieroglyphic Luwian text is a normal scribal convention of the culture. She notes that it does not necessarily contribute to the apparent preeminence of the Phoenician text.

51. Payne, “Multilingual Inscriptions,” 128.

52. Davis and Stuckenbruck, “Notes on Translation Phenomena,” 276 n. 26.

53. Wilson, “Neo-Punic and Latin Inscriptions,” 283, also 305.

54. For a lamentation of the dearth of photographic and architectural data along with collections of inscriptional data, see Wilson, “Neo-Punic and Latin Inscriptions,” 268. For his discussion of the building at Lepcis, see *ibid.*, 274–78.

of a translated text. Far more conceivable is Itamar Even-Zohar's principle that translation constitutes the importation of the ST into the target culture's literary "polysystem" so that the translated text may stand as part of the total literary corpus of the TL.<sup>55</sup>

Moreover, it remains possible that a *visually prior* constituent text is not the *conceptually prior* one. In the case of Payne's example of the Karatepe inscription, the researcher is forced to ask whether the integrated, visually preeminent Phoenician text necessarily indicates its conceptual priority over its Luwian counterpart? Although the prominent placement and continuous inscription of the Phoenician text imply a primary Phoenician audience, Payne is careful not to push the evidence too far: "[T]he continuation of the Hittite tradition, especially the use of the hieroglyphic script seems to argue for a reasonable amount of stability in this area ... and—we may assume—a large Luwian population."<sup>56</sup> She considers it more likely that the Luwian inscription is "original" (in our terminology, it is the *conceptually prior* text), whereas the Phoenician translation was designed to act "as a claim to modernity and worldliness" (and, we might add, power) rather than being crafted for merely communicative purposes.<sup>57</sup> In short, then, the *visual priority* embodied in the inscribed text is not necessarily indicative of the *conceptual priority* embedded in the very act of translation. The translated text may be accorded a visually prime position regardless of whether the intended audience was likely to be able to actualize its linguistic message. Far more relevant was its nonlinguistic projection of power and, in Payne's formulation, modernity and worldliness.

Finally, an additional problem is raised when Wilson suggests the possibility that co-texts might be "visually equal bilingual texts on the same stone."<sup>58</sup> If we are correct in according spatial organization a role in this determination, it would be difficult to propose that co-texts can ever be perfectly equal in their material presentations.

The preceding discussion has indicated that an assessment of two bilingual co-texts' conceptual and chronological priority is ultimately based on material indicators lodged in synchronic contemporaneity by virtue of the texts' deposition on a single object. But presentational priority is not necessarily identical to conceptual priority: in many cases, we cannot definitively make the argument that the less formal (usually the Aramaic) text was not the *cognitive* ST, even though the Latin text was inscribed more formally and emphasized through its relative positioning and other material indicators. Equally confounding to the results presented here is the possibility that the paired texts may have arisen roughly contemporaneously in the minds of ancient bilingual (and bicultural)

55. E.g., Itamar Even-Zohar, "The Position of Translated Literature in the Polysystem," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2012), 162–68.

56. Payne, "Multilingual Inscriptions," 129.

57. *Ibid.*, 130–31.

58. Wilson, "Neo-Punic and Latin Inscriptions," 283.

agents, as argued by Adams and his congeners. In such cases, the cognitive simultaneity of the texts would eradicate the applicability of Toury's ST postulate. As a result, the texts would no longer properly qualify as a ST and its translation, and texts that outwardly present themselves as bilingual co-texts would only tenuously be categorized as translations. This qualification must be kept in mind throughout the following discussion. Yet although we cannot definitively rule out contemporaneous composition of the two texts and their independence from one another, the material presentation of each set of co-texts examined here has allowed us to accept each pair as a case of ST and TT.

### III. TRANSLATIONAL OPERATIONS IN *PAT* 0246 (*RIB* 1065) AND *PAT* 0250 (*CIL* VI 3.19134)

#### A. THE CORPUS

As noted above, the full corpus of Latin–Palmyrene inscriptions consists of around twenty epigraphs. A few of those are so fragmentary as to preclude detailed investigation. Many of these texts are included in the compendium of *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* assembled by Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonora Cussini, but a few have found publication subsequently, or were overlooked in the compilation of that volume.<sup>59</sup> We have selected two texts for study here because they illustrate several of the most common translational operations, and because both sets of Latin and Palmyrene co-texts demonstrate physical completeness. Correlated with their Latin counterparts<sup>60</sup> and arranged by provenances, these two inscriptions are:

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59. Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonora Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). For a more recent appendix of inscriptions that eluded attention in that volume or which have been published subsequently, see Jean-Baptiste Yon, "L'épigraphie palmyrénienne depuis *PAT*, 1996–2011," *Studia Palmyrensiæ* 12 (2013): 333–79.

60. The abbreviations of Latin and Punic sources indicate the collections in which these inscriptions are catalogued:

*CIL* = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. A multivolume series, most of which can be accessed online on a website hosted by the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. We cite inventory numbers by volume, part, and inventory number (e.g., *CIL* VI 1.710).

*EE* = *Ephemeris Epigraphica: Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum Supplementum*, 9 vols. (Rome: Institutum and Berlin: G. Reimer, 1872–1913).

*HNE* = Mark Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik* (Weimar: Emil Felber, 1898).

*ILS* = Hermann Dessau, ed., *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, 5 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1892–1916).

*RIB* = R. G. Collingwood and R. P. Wright, eds., *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965–1995).

(1) *RIB* 1065 (Latin) ⇒ *PAT* 0246 (Aramaic)<sup>61</sup>: the “Regina Inscription”, discovered in 1878 in South Shields, England, and on display in The Arbeia Roman Fort and Museum in South Shields.<sup>62</sup> Both members of the bilingual inscription are found on the front of the memorial, below a carving “of a woman sitting on a chair or throne, with flowers on her lap and a basket of fruit at her left side.”<sup>63</sup> The *editio princeps* describes the Latin inscription as “well executed,”<sup>64</sup> but Phillips contrasts the “confident execution of the Palmyrene inscription” with the “erratic lettering of the Latin inscription.”<sup>65</sup> In our opinion, both inscriptions are of relatively high quality, with stylistic embellishments attesting to a practiced hand. The drawing accompanying the *editio princeps* shows that the Latin inscription appears in a frame, the Aramaic text is centered immediately below the frame (see fig. 1). The texts of the paired inscriptions read:

(Latin)

1. *D(is) M(anibus) . REGINA . LIBERTA . ET . CONIUGE .*
2. *BARATES . PALMYRENUS . NATIONE .*
3. *CATUALLAUNA*<sup>66</sup> . *AN(nis) . XXX.*

(Aramaic)

1. *rgyn' bt hryr br 't' hbl*

*IGLS* = Jean-Baptiste Yon, *Palmyre*, vol. XVII.1 of *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 195 (Beirut: Institut Français du Proche-Orient, 2012).

61. = *CIS* 3901 = *HNE*, 482 d. γ5, pl. xli, 13 = *EE* IV.718a = *ILS* 7063. We use a unidirectional arrow (⇒) to indicate what we believe to be the direction of translation (i.e., the direction of influence from conceptually primary text to conceptually secondary text).

62. Initially mentioned in “Notes on Art and Archaeology,” *The Academy* (2 Nov., 1878): 438; William Wright, “The South Shields Inscription,” *The Academy* (9 Nov. 1878): 454; idem, “Note on a Bilingual Inscription, Latin and Aramaic, Recently Found at South Shields,” *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 6 (1878): 436–40; Walter de Gray Birch, “The Palmyrene Monument Discovered at South Shields,” *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 34 (1878): 489–95; J. Collingwood Bruce, “On the Recent Discoveries in the Roman Camp on the Lawe, South Shields,” *Archaeologia Aeliana* N.S. 10 (1885): 238, 239–43; T. Hodgkin, “On a Palmyrene Inscription Illustrating the Epitaph of Regina in the South Shields Museum,” *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne* 2/9 (1899): 158–60; David Smith, “A Palmyrene Sculptor at South Shields?” *Archaeologica Aeliana* 4/37 (1959): 203–7, pl. xxxi fig. 1; E. J. Phillips, *Corbridge: Hadrian’s Wall East of the North Tyne*, *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani* 1.1 (Oxford: British Academy, 1977), 90–91 no. 247; Adams, *Bilingualism*, 253–55, no. 6.

63. Wright, “Note on a Bilingual Inscription,” 436.

64. Ibid. Wright did not describe the Aramaic inscription, since its identification at that time was “conjectured to be Syriac characters.”

65. Phillips, *Corbridge*, 91.

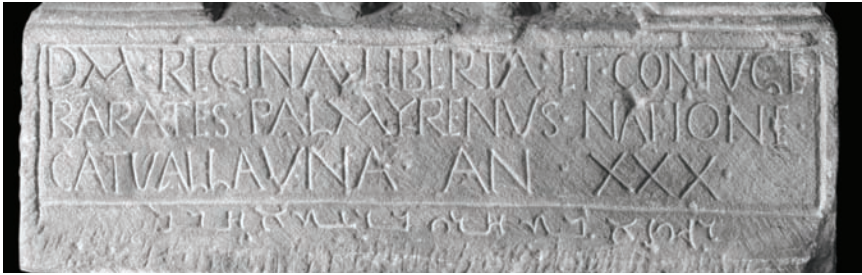
66. *CATUALLAUNA* as read by Wright, *CIS*, against *CATUALLANA* of *PAT*; cf. copy in Wright, “Note on a Bilingual Inscription,” and fig. 1 here.

(Translation: Latin)

1. [Dedicated] to the spirits of the dead: Regina, free-woman and wife
2. of Barates (a Palmyrene by nation),
3. a Catuallaunian, [she lived] 30 years.

(Translation: Aramaic)

1. Regina, freed-woman of Bar-ʿAtē. Alas!



**Fig. 1: © Arbeia Roman Fort and Museum (Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums). Used with permission.**

It has been suggested that the titular author of the text, a certain Bar-ʿAtē the Palmyrene, may be the same historical figure reconstructed in a Latin monolingual inscription from Britain, *RIB* 1171 (*[BAR?]ATHES . PALMORENUS*),<sup>67</sup> but Collingwood and Wright demur from this identification on account of the name's popularity among Palmyrenes.<sup>68</sup> Walter de Gray Birch went so far as to suggest that Barates himself cut the inscription at hand: "Perhaps the surviving husband cut with his own hands the Oriental inscription...."<sup>69</sup> He attributes this identification to the style of speech used in the co-texts and the simple wording on which the scribe settled. Reporting the words of Emil Hübner, Birch states that the "Palmyrene uses the Latin tongue in a somewhat rustic way. He uses

67. The full text of the inscriptions reads: *[D(is)] M(anibus) | [. ]RATHES . PALMORENUS . UEXIL(I)A(rius) | VIXIT . AN(n)OS . LXVIII*. F. J. Haverfield, "A New Roman Inscription," *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne* 3/5 (1911): 102–4; idem, "Report of the 1911 Excavations at Corstopitum: VII. Other Smaller Objects," *Archaeologica Aeliana* 3/8 (1912): 188; idem, "An Account of the Roman Remains in the Parish of Corbridge," *A History of Northumberland*, vol. 10: *The Parish of Corbridge* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Reid & Co., 1914): 503 no. 29; idem, untitled paper printed in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London* 2/24 (1911–1912): 268–69; Eric Birley and G. S. Keeney, "Fourth Report on Excavations at Houssteads," *Archaeologica Aeliana* 4/12 (1935): 219; J. C. Mann, "A Note on the Numeri," *Hermes* 82 (1954): 505; Smith, "Palmyrene Sculptor," 206–7.

68. Collingwood and Wright, *RIB*, 386 n. to no. 1171 (noted by Hillers and Cussini, *PAT*, p. 54); see also Phillips, *Corbridge*, 91.

69. Birch, "Palmyrene Monument," 493.

ablatives for datives, and at last gives up the construction, and says simply ‘she was a native of the tribe of Catuvellauni.’”<sup>70</sup> This identification pushes the evidence beyond credibility; we prefer to attribute the stonework to a professional stonecutter. Edmondson has written, “Army units had stonecutters among their staff, who as part of their duties would carve any official inscription a unit commander required....”<sup>71</sup> If Edmondson’s reconstruction of the Latin epigraphic habit is correct, Barates would at most have been involved in the composition of the Latin epitaph, and may perhaps have provided the stonecutter with the Aramaic co-text.<sup>72</sup> Although the style of the Aramaic inscription shows signs of a skilled hand capable of carving an evenly spaced inscription in a monumental style, the relative position of these inscriptions and the omission of the Aramaic from the frame around the Latin suggests preliminary analysis of the Aramaic text as the translated TT. As will be suggested below, the relative brevity of the Aramaic text vis-à-vis its Latin co-text conforms to translational patterns paralleling those known from more recent exemplars, and imposed by culturally-relevant constraints.

(2) *CIL* VI 3.19134 (Latin) ⇒ *PAT* 0250 (Aramaic)<sup>73</sup>: the “Habibi Inscription,” discovered in the “vineyard of Corsi (along) the Appian Way,” and currently on display in the Capitoline Museum (inventory number CE 6271 = NCE 2402).<sup>74</sup> This stele contains seven lines of Latin text in a moderately sophisticated hand, wherein the letters are neither evenly spaced nor of consistent height within each line. However, the graphemes do exhibit a serif-style, lending some aesthetic value to the inscription. The Aramaic inscription, positioned below the Latin, consists of two brief lines in a simple cursive script:

(Latin)

1. *D(is) M(anibus)*
2. *HABIBI*<sup>75</sup> . *ANNU-*

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70. *Ibid.*, 493. See n. 81 below for a reference to Adams’s discussion of the cases used in the inscription.

71. Edmondson, “Inscribing Roman Texts,” 113.

72. *Ibid.*, 117–18.

73. = *CIS* 3905 = *HNE*, 481 d. γ1, pl. XLI, 1.

74. *CIS*, p. 18 (our interpolation); see also Enrico Fabiani, “Bilingue iscrizione di habibi,” *Bullettino della Commissione archaeologica comunale di Roma* 6 (1878): 153–61; *idem*, “Appendice all’articolo sulla bilingue iscrizione di Habibi già divulgata in questo bullettino,” *Bullettino della Commissione archaeologica comunale di Roma* 6 (1878): 272–74; William Wright, “Note on a Sepulchral Monument from Palmyra,” *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 7 (1880): 3–4; Adams, *Bilingualism*, 253 no. 5.

75. Charles Clermont-Ganneau (“Sur quelques noms propres palmyréniens et nabatéens,” *Recueil d’archéologie orientale* 2 [1898]: 386) suggested that *HABIBI* could be compared to the Nabatean name *hbybw*; accordingly, its form in this text may be genitive, and this case ending was copied by the author of the Latin text. For a similar remark, see



3. BATHI . F(*ilius*) . PAL-
4. MURENUS<sup>76</sup> . V(*ixit*) . AN(*n*)IS
5. XXXII . M(*ensibus*) . V. D(*iebus*)
6. XXI . FECIT . HERES
7. FRATER

(Aramaic)

1. *npš ḥbyby br*
2. *mlkw<sup>77</sup> 'nbt ḥbl*

(Translation: Latin)

1. [Dedicated] to the spirits of the dead:
- 2–4. Habibi, the son of Annubathus, a Palmyrene.
- 4–6. He lived 32 years, 5 months, 21 days.
- 6–7. [His] heir, [his] brother made [this].

(Translation: Aramaic)

1. The funerary monument of Habībī bar-
2. Malkū [son of] 'Annubat. Alas!

In contradistinction to the co-texts of *PAT* 0246, both co-texts of *PAT* 0250 are included within the simple border following the perimeter of the stele. Nonetheless, the relative positioning of the texts and the greater paleographic sophistication of the Latin text assert the visual priority of the Latin inscription. As above, the conceptual priority of the Latin text is suggested by the inclusion of more information in the Latin inscription. And, again, the transformations between the putative Latin ST and its Aramaic TT are consistent with trends known widely in historical studies of translation.

## B. GRAMMATICAL STRATEGIES

Chesterman's basic set of translation strategies is the grammatical set, in which transformations are limited to the grammatical structures of the two co-texts. The most foundational set of changes occurring under this rubric is "literal translation." This strategy of translation goes by several different names: For some theorists, it is what is meant by *formal equivalence*—the translation's adherence to the grammar, style, and semantic values (even if not the pragmatic implicatures) of its ST.<sup>78</sup> For descriptivists, it constitutes *adequacy*, "a representation ... of a text already existing in some other language, belonging to a different culture

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J.-B. Chabot, "Notes d'épigraphie," *JA* 12 (1898): 109–10 no. 15. See below for further discussion, and for our assessment that the name appears in the nominative case.

76. We read *PALMURENUS* with a photograph available online (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/jasonmkelly/8326142043/>) instead of *PALMYRENUS* (with *PAT*).

77. The final letter here seems graphically similar to *y*.

78. Our description here is deliberately abbreviated; for a fuller discussion, see Pym, *Exploring Translation Theories*, 6–23.

and occupying a definable position within it.”<sup>79</sup> And for those who deal in more pragmatic approaches to translation, this same strategy constitutes “faithfulness” to the ST.<sup>80</sup> Most of the Palmyrene texts display the mechanics of this most basic translational operation. The overwhelming ubiquity of this mechanism for translating segments of text permits us to treat this mode of translation quickly, in favor of focusing our investigation on other categories of transformation.

LITERAL TRANSLATION. We consider the appropriation of Aramaic names in Latinate contexts to be a subcategory of *Literal Translation* (Chesterman’s rubric *GI*). In this subset, the name of the individual is rendered nearly identically in both the Latin and the Aramaic inscriptions. The slight changes occurring through addition of a Latinizing ending on names (such as *BARATES* = Aram. *br‘t*, *PAT* 0246; see also *GURAS* = Aram. *gwr*, *PAT* 0251) recommend this categorization over against limiting the phenomenon to the rubric of mere transliteration. For the most part, however, the correspondences are regular, with Latin names rendered phonetically in Aramaic, and Aramaic names rendered in the Latin as uninflected (despite sometimes bearing Latin or Greek endings such as *-S*). In the texts under study here we find the following three names:

<i>REGINA</i> (acc.) <sup>81</sup> ⇒ <i>rgyn</i> ’	( <i>PAT</i> 0246)
<i>BARATES</i> (undeclined?) <sup>82</sup> ⇔ <i>br‘t</i> ’	( <i>PAT</i> 0246)
<i>HABIBI</i> (nom.) <sup>83</sup> ⇔ <i>hbyby</i>	( <i>PAT</i> 0250)

A similarly transparent use of this operation can be found in cases of [DESCENT.FORMULA], which indicates the subject’s father. In the bilingual inscriptions, the typical Latin formulation is  $PN_1.CASE_x + PN_2.GEN + F(ili-.CASE_x)$ , with the final abbreviation covertly matching  $PN_1$  in number and case. Conversely, Aramaic syntax dictates the order  $PN_1 + br + PN_2$ . Removing from considera-

79. Toury, *DTSB*, 69.

80. Toury criticizes C. Nord for “(re)introduc[ing] the concept of ‘loyalty’, and as an a priori *moral* principle at that, which lends privileged status to what we would call ‘adequacy’”; Toury, *DTSB*, 20, citing Christiane Nord, “Scopos, Loyalty, and Translational Conventions,” *Target* 3 (1991): 91–109.

81. For assessment of the personal name as accusative, see J. N. Adams, “Two Notes on RIB,” *ZPE* 123 (1998): 235–36; see also idem, *Bilingualism*, 254–55. See also the following note.

82. Although the name is indeclinable, Adams has identified the inscription’s pattern as being derived from the Greek model, in which “a standard construction is the accusative of the honorand juxtaposed with the nominative of the dedicator, with a verb of honoring or setting up usually understood” (“Two Notes,” 235). Accordingly, Barathes’s knowledge of this convention may be traced to his bilingual background (*ibid.*, 236). We use the siglum ⇔ here to indicate the origination of the personal name in Aramaic, its representation in Latin, and its re-“translation” into the Aramaic text.

83. Here, too, the native Palmyrene name is indeclinable, but that *HABIBI* is formed in the nominative is suggested by its apposition with *PALMYRENUM* (nom.). See also below.

tion the absence of morphologically encoded case in Aramaic and the necessary *Unit Movement* involved in the rearrangement of the syntactic ordering, the literalness of this translation is inescapable. *PAT* 0250 provides an example of this type of replacement (PN + *ANNUBATHI F[ilius]* ⇒ PN + *br ... 'nbt*). However, the insertion of *ANNUBATHUS*'s Palmyrene Aramaic name (*mlkw*) in the Palmyrene co-text provides a clear case of *Cultural Filtering* (see below).

### C. SEMANTIC STRATEGIES

**DISTRIBUTION CHANGE.** We are confronted by a more difficult case of translation in *PAT* 0246. Aside from the obvious grammatical strategy *Phrase Structure Change*, in which the bare noun *LIBERTA* is rendered as a highly conventionalized metaphorical noun phrase (*bt ḥry*, literally, 'daughter of freedom'), this example would appear to qualify as a *Literal Translation*. However, the respective contexts of the putative equivalence should be reason for pause. As Cussini has pointed out, the Latin inscription indicates that the deceased was the "freed-woman and wife of Barateh (*LIBERTA ET CONIUGE BARATES*)," while the Aramaic translation notes only that Regina (*rgyn*) was the *bt ḥry br 't*. She notes that the straightforward interpretation of {*bt ḥry*} as the replacement of the segment {*LIBERTA*}, commonly adopted by interpreters, requires the concomitant assumption that the Latin *CONIUGE* has not been represented in the Aramaic text (i.e., that the Latin segment {*ET CONIUGE*} has been replaced with Aram. Ø).<sup>84</sup> This assumption is dissatisfying, to say the least, and is called into question by the wealth of data from monolingual Palmyrene Aramaic inscriptions. There is, in fact, an Aramaic term for 'wife' that could have been used to replace {*ET CONIUGE*}: 'tt (e.g., *PAT* 0001, 0005, 0010, and ubiquitously throughout the corpus). But nowhere in the corpus of Palmyrene Aramaic are we able to find the coincidence of 'tt with *b(r)t ḥry*. As Cussini points out, "[t]he equivalence *br / bt ḥry = libertus / liberta* rests upon Regina's inscription."<sup>85</sup> This dependence of the interpretation on the text at hand (together with its subsequent extension throughout the interpretation of the Palmyrene corpus) suggests that a revised interpretation of the boundaries of the Latin segment is in order.

Pointing to *PAT* 0698, which also describes a woman as the *bt ḥry* of a man "with no indication whether she was his wife as well," Cussini suggests that the semantic value of the phrase may be subject to revision. She points to the occurrence of a cognate phrase in a text from Naḥal Ḥever (*P. Yadin* 10, line 8: *brt ḥwryn*), "where it likely indicates a wife-to-be."<sup>86</sup> Baruch A. Levine extends

84. Eleonora Cussini, "Regina, Martay and the Others: Stories of Palmyrene Women," *Or* N.S. 73 (2004): 235–37.

85. *Ibid.*, 237.

86. *Ibid.*, citing personal communication from Baruch A. Levine. Levine published his remarks as part of his contemporaneous article, "Lexicographical and Grammatical Notes on the Palmyrene Aramaic Texts," in *A Journey to Palmyra: Collected Essays to Remember Delbert R. Hillers*, ed. Eleonora Cussini, CHANE 22 (Leiden: Brill, 2005),

Cussini's reevaluation of the term, adding the possibility that "'free' may mean 'free born,' rather than 'freed, manumitted.'" Or, it may mean that the man and woman in question were free and unencumbered to marry; in the case of the woman, that she was no longer under the jurisdiction of her father, or pledged to another man."<sup>87</sup> He therefore prefers the translation 'free woman' over 'freed woman.'<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, Levine points to *PAT* 0095, where a woman designated as the *bt hry* of a man "is *mprnsyt* 'the executor' of that man's son. Here, too, the sense may be 'free wife,' namely that she was simply his wife."<sup>89</sup>

We would suggest here, in parallel with Cussini and Levine, that the connotation of the Aramaic phrase is properly understood in relation to the larger context in which it appears, and encompasses a larger semantic domain than its mere denotation would indicate. At the level of denotation, it would appear that the phrase *bt hry* does mean 'free(d)woman'. Indeed, investigation of the corpus shows that a *bt hry* can be followed by the former owner, even when that owner was a woman (e.g., *bt hry 'wrly' 'qm* "freedwoman of Aurelia 'Aqmē," *PAT* 1142). However, as generally recognized, the same phrase, when collocated with male *nomina recta*, presumably indicates that not only was the woman freed from servitude or freeborn, but that, if the former, she had been elevated from a position of slavery specifically to become the man's wife (e.g., *brt hry yrhy* "freedwoman of Yarḥay," *PAT* 1266; *brt hry bss* "freedwoman of Bassos," *PAT* 1434; etc.). We prefer, therefore, to consider this a case of *Distribution Change*, subtype *Compression*, in which the semantic value of the Latin segment {*LIBERTA ET CONIUGE*}<sup>90</sup> can be compressed, thanks to the implications of the Aramaic context, into a single replacement phrase {*bt hry*}. No conjunction of this phrase with *'tt* is necessary because context allows readers competent in the Aramaic context to recognize cases of the collocation *bt hry* + PN as "freed-woman (and wife) of PN."

#### D. PRAGMATIC STRATEGIES

INFORMATION CHANGE. One of Chesterman's pragmatic categories pertinent to our study is *Information Change*. Here information that cannot reasonably be

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112–13. The edition of the papyrus can be found in Yigael Yadin et al., eds., *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabatean-Aramaic Papyri*, with additional contributions by Hannah M. Cotton and Joseph Naveh, *Judean Desert Studies* 3 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; The Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, 2002), 118–41, esp. 126.

87. Levine, "Lexicographical and Grammatical Notes," 113. Indeed, the translation 'freeborn wife' is the one given by the editors of *P. Yadin* 10 (see Yadin et al., *Documents*, 135).

88. Levine, "Lexicographical and Grammatical Notes," 113.

89. *Ibid.*

90. We use {brackets} to delineate the boundaries of translation segments.

inferred by the intended audience is either added or omitted in the TT.<sup>91</sup> We have found cases of both *Addition* and *Omission* in our full corpus of Latin–Palmyrene Aramaic bilinguals. Both operations frequently occur in conjunction with *Cultural Filtering* (see below). All of the cases discussed here fall into the rubric of *Omission*.

A common feature of Latin funerary inscriptions is the provision of a date formula (given here in our interlinear morphological notation as [AGE.FORMULA]). Normally, Latin inscriptions present the decedent’s age with various abbreviations or expressions of the collocation (*vixit annis* ##<sub>1</sub> (+ *mensibus* ##<sub>2</sub> + *diebus* ##<sub>3</sub>)).<sup>92</sup> Both *PAT* 0246 (*AN[nis] XXX*) and 0250 (*V. AN[n]IS XXXII. M. V. D. XXI.*) exemplify cases in which the Latin [AGE.FORMULA] is omitted in the Aramaic TT. Although this is the norm in the full corpus (in which the Latin ST is adapted to Aramaic conventions by *Cultural Filtering*), one counterexample is provided by *PAT* 0253, in which *ANN(is) XLV* is rendered by Aramaic *br šnt 40 + [5]*.<sup>93</sup>

A second formula frequently employed in Latin inscriptions identifies one of the named individuals specifically as Palmyrene. This identification can be spelled out or abbreviated. Fully spelled exemplars include a few variations: Barates is identified as *PALMYRENUS* in *PAT* 0246, whereas *PALMURENUS* is found in *PAT* 0250 (see also *PAT* 0255; and *PALMIRENUS* in the Latin–Greek–Aramaic trilingual *PAT* 2801).<sup>94</sup> We represent this here as [NATIONALITY.FORMULA]. In nearly all cases of the full corpus, including those inscriptions under study here, the Latin inscription’s [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] is replaced by Aramaic Ø.<sup>95</sup> One of the inscriptions under study here exhibits the apparent

91. Chesterman, *Memes of Translation*, 109–10.

92. We use the siglum “##” here to indicate numerals. The associated subscript Arabic numerals indicate the relative independence of each of these numerals. Latin frequently uses the abbreviation *ANN* (*PAT* 0251) as an abbreviation of *annis* (John Edwin Sandys, *Latin Epigraphy: An Introduction to the Study of Latin Inscriptions*, 2nd ed. [Groningen: Bouma’s Boekhuis, 1969], 294; Jean-Marie Lassère, *Manuel d’épigraphie romaine*, *Antiquité/Synthèse* 8 [Paris: Picard, 2005], 2:1064; *ANIS* [*PAT* 0250], which is not listed in Lassère’s index, may be a misspelling). Similarly, we find *V* as an abbreviation for *vixit* as well as other inflections of this same verb (as in *PAT* 0250; see Sandys, *Latin Epigraphy*, 55–56, 310; and Lassère, *Manuel d’épigraphie romaine*, 2:1096).

93. H. duc de Luynes (“Lettre à M. de Sauley sur une inscription bilingue trouvée en Afrique,” *Revue archéologique* 4 [1848]: 703) suggests that there is enough space for three letters at the beginning of the line. The lacuna might be reconstructed, in our opinion, as [*VIX*] or [*V*], on the basis of comparable abbreviations in the Latin inscriptions of our sample.

94. The spelling of *PALMIRENUS* with an *I* is otherwise unattested in our sample. Compare the Greek co-text (probably the Source Text), which reads (regularly) Παλμυρηνός.

95. Only two outliers replace the Latin [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] with its semantic equivalent in the Aramaic TT. *PAT* 0253 has replaced *PAL(murenus)* in its Latin ST with *tdmwrj* (‘the Tadmorian’ = ‘the Palmyrene’). Similarly, *PAT* 2801 contains the [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] *tdmry*. This latter datum is especially intriguing, since the Aramaic

omission of the Latin [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] in its Aramaic co-text. The Latin version of *PAT* 0246 contains the ethnicon *CATUALLAUNA* in apposition to the name *REGINA*. Regina's husband Barates, who erected the stele for her, is identified in the Latin text as Palmyrene (*PALMYRENUM NATIONE*, see above<sup>96</sup>). In both cases, the Latin [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] is rendered with  $\emptyset$  in the Aramaic replacement text.

EXPLICITATION CHANGE. Although we have so far categorized these cases of omission of the [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] in the Aramaic co-text under the rubric of *Information Change*, it may be that this categorization is errant. We should consider the possibility that the commemorated individual's Aramaic name and the presence of Palmyrene Aramaic script were taken by the translator as sufficient evidence to convey the individual's identity *as a Palmyrene*. We might thus reevaluate omission of the [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] as a case of *Explicitation Change*<sup>97</sup>). This consideration becomes all the more important when we recognize the difficulties encountered in the various presentations of the onomastic data encountered by each scribe. Typically, the Latin inscription gives the Palmyrene subject's Aramaic name suffixed with a Latinizing ending, even when no further declension has occurred. See, for example, the description of Regina as *LIBERTA ET CONIUGE BARATES PALMYRENUM NATIONE*: despite belonging in the genitive (as the one to whom the "freedwoman and wife" belongs), *BARATES PALMYRENUM* occurs here in the nominative. We are unable to say with certainty why *PALMYRENUM* is nominative, but the cause is most likely to be found in the fact that the name *BARATES* is treated as indeclinable (despite the addition of the Latinizing or Hellenizing *-S*). Other cases in the full corpus are more ambiguous, with the Semitic name given in a form analyzable as either in the nominative or (in fitting with the dedication of the stele for the individual) dative case.

Payne's analysis of Lycian–Greek bilinguals provides a control whereby we may confirm this suggestion. She shows that, aside from the linguistic details omitted from the Greek TT, the conceptual priority of the Lycian text is confirmed by the fact that "Lycian writing does not carry much force as an identity marker, as visually the script was not particularly distinctive.... Visually, the

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version of *PAT* 2801 may plausibly be construed as the ST for its Latin (and Greek?) companion(s), since it contains more information than the Latin text.

96. Adams rightly claims that "*natione* could go either with *Palmyrenus* or *Catallauna*" (Adams, "Two Notes," 236).

97. In Chesterman's system of classification, *Explicitness Change*, which has long been recognized as a formative feature of translations, encompasses two distinct subtypes: *Explicitation* consists of the addition of inferable information in the TT, when a literal translation would normally not render this material. *Implication* is the opposite procedure, whereby overt information that should be inferable to the translator's audience is suppressed in the TT and made implicit. Chesterman, *Memes of Translation*, 108–9; see also Vinay and Darbelnet, who originally offered the antonyms "explicitation" and "implication" (e.g., *Comparative Stylistics*, 342–43, 344).

Lycian and Greek scripts appear so very alike to the eye of the uninitiated that the significance of putting up Lycian–Greek bilinguals must lie in the language, not the script.”<sup>98</sup> The same was clearly not the case in the Latin–Palmyrene bilingual inscriptions, where the dissimilarity of scripts—and the deliberate inclusion of a Palmyrene inscription—seems to have served as an overt, albeit nonlinguistic, expression of the decedent’s (or dedicant’s) Palmyrene identity.

Chesterman’s definition of *Explicitation Change* is broad enough to take into account non-linguistic, paratextually-inferable information such as script type and material context. We therefore consider it more satisfying to flag this categorization as tentative, but plausible: the added or deleted information is, especially in the case of Barates, recoverable from the *linguistic (and onomastic) content* of the paired inscriptions, as well as from the material disposition of the object as a bilingual inscription presenting an Aramaic version. In short, the very fact of the Palmyrene text’s existence may provide a paratextual indicator of the individual’s identity as a Palmyrene, rendering any overt [NATIONALITY.FORMULA] for the individual unnecessary in the Aramaic text.

CULTURAL FILTERING. One of the most obvious strategies used by the bilingual translators of the Latin–Aramaic inscriptions falls under Chesterman’s rubric *Cultural Filtering*. This strategy “describes the way in which SL [Source Language] items, particularly culture-specific items, are translated as TL cultural or functional equivalents, so that they conform to TL norms.”<sup>99</sup> We have found in the corpus several cases in which the translators’ choices seem to have been influenced or constrained by the cultural norms typically correlated with the languages. Because *Cultural Filtering* seems frequently to operate in conjunction with other procedures—and especially with the formulae categorized above as *Information Change*—it seems to be a superordinate category, rather than on the same plane as those other pragmatic operations.

A major example of this operation occurs when Latin #*D(is) M(anibus)*, always positioned at the beginning of an inscription, was rendered with Aramaic *hbl#* (‘alas!’, frequently rendered at the end of an epitaph).<sup>100</sup> The Latin phrase *dis manibus*, typically translated ‘[dedicated] to the spirits of the dead’ and usually abbreviated simply *DM*,<sup>101</sup> is ubiquitously positioned at the beginning of

98. Payne, “Multilingual Inscriptions,” 137.

99. Chesterman, *Memes of Translation*, 108.

100. We use the # sign here to indicate discourse boundaries; thus, #*D(is) M(anibus)* should be read as “discourse-initial *D(is) M(anibus)*” and, correspondingly, *hbl#* as “discourse-final *hbl#*”.

101. In a few instances in our full corpus, the formula appears as *DMS[acrum]* (*PAT* 0253, 0255) or *DMM[emoriae]* (*PAT* 0251, where there appears to be a second *M* in the first line, indicating an expanded formula *Dis Manibus Memoriae*). See, e.g., Sandys, *Latin Epigraphy*, 55–56; and Arthur E. Gordon, *Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 62.

funerary inscriptions.<sup>102</sup> This Latin phrase is stereotypical, and its position at the beginning of several of our inscriptions attests to its cultural relevance. In none of the exemplars was inscription-initial *DM* rendered in a comparable position by the Aramaic co-text. Instead, a frequent replacement of this segment was the equally formulaic Aramaic term *hbl* (in both *PAT* 0246, 0250) positioned at the end of the TT. The movement of this segment from the beginning of the ST to the end of the TT might warrant proposal of a subcategory of *Cultural Filtering* that we call *Unit Movement*.<sup>103</sup>

But cultural filtering is not the only operation at work here. The phrase *dis manibus* is composed of two plural nominal forms in the dative case from, respectively, the lexical forms *deus* ‘deity’ and *manis* ‘shade of the dead’. *DM* is one of the more common funerary formulae, especially in the Imperial Period, and was intended to represent dedication to the spirits of dead loved ones.<sup>104</sup> Its frequent Aramaic replacement *hbl* comprises an interjection meaning ‘alas!’ or ‘woe!’<sup>105</sup> This replaced-replacement pair thus qualifies as an example of Ches-

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102. Sandys, *Latin Epigraphy*, 62. This statement holds true also for monolingual Latin inscriptions in the Palmyrene sphere: this formula precedes any of the specific data. See, e.g., the monolingual Latin funerary inscription from Palmyra published in Heinz Heinen, “Die Grabinschrift für Annia Nice,” in *Syrische Grabreliefs hellenistischer und römischer Zeit: Fundgruppen und Probleme*, by K. Parlasca (Mainz: von Zabern, 1982), 35: *D(is) M(anibus) / Anniae Nice nutricia Baebia BAE?/RIANA bene mer/enti fecit*. Edmonson (“Inscribing Roman Texts,” 115) mentions an exemplar from the Via Appia which “has its elaborate decoration fully finished, but the moulded panel for the epitaph contains just a first line of text, *D(is) M(anibus)*..., with the name of the deceased and other details left to be inscribed later, but this never occurred.” See also Giancarlo Susini, *The Roman Stonecutter: An Introduction to Latin Epigraphy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973), 35. Apparently, the convention of placing *DM* at the beginning of funerary texts was so pervasive, stonecutters could keep on hand pre-inscribed stelae, waiting for a customer to choose the particular combination of stone, frame, and inscription.

103. It is unclear whether the position of *hbl* at the end of the Aramaic text was conceived to be conforming to a cultural norm, because the position of this interjection appears to be variable throughout the Palmyrene corpus: it appears both at the beginning and the end of funerary inscriptions; its attestation only in text-final position in the corpus surveyed here may be due to the small size of the sample and to accidents of preservation.

104. See, e.g., J. M. C. Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), 35–39; and Kristina P. Nielson, “Aeneas and the Demands of the Dead,” *The Classical Journal* 79 (1984): 200–206.

105. See Michael Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 406b–8a, esp. 407b; idem, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period*, 2nd ed., Dictionaries of Talmud, Midrash and Targum 2 (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 185a; idem, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods*, Dictionaries of Talmud, Midrash and Targum 3 (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 427a; Marcus Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature* (New York: Judaica Press, 1971; repr., 1996), 418; see also J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac*



terman's *Unit Shift*, subtype: *phrase*  $\Rightarrow$  *word* (see above).<sup>106</sup>

Closely related to transformation in which Latin *DM* is paralleled by the Aramaic funerary convention *hbl* in the Aramaic co-text are the Latin cultural constraints that prevent inscriptions on objects from directly referencing the object on which the text is inscribed. The resulting convention of covert, implicit deictic reference to the dedicated object applies throughout the full corpus we have investigated. In contrast, the Aramaic dedicatory tradition—and, in fact, the Semitic tradition as a whole—demanded overt deictic reference to the object inscribed. This tradition is attested possibly as early as the 16th–15th centuries BCE in the early dedicatory inscription Sinai 345 from Serabit el-Khadem,<sup>107</sup> but examples of this syntactic construction are plentiful and can be found in several of the Northwest Semitic languages, including some dialects of Phoenician (e.g., *KAI* 29, 34, 38, 101, etc.<sup>108</sup>) and other dialects of Aramaic (e.g., *KAI* 215, 231[?], 258, 262, etc.<sup>109</sup>). The syntagm NOUN.(DEF) (+ DEM) is ubiquitous in Palmyrene Aramaic, as is demonstrated by monolingual dedicatory inscriptions (e.g., *PAT* 0008, 0009, 0158–0166, 0170–0175, and many others). Correspondingly, the Palmyrene translators of the texts in our corpus nearly unanimously included overt reference to the object on which the epigraph was inscribed. We might also categorize these as instances of *Explicitness Change*, here subtype *Explicititation* (see above). Within this category, we find two subtypes:

- (1) Latin  $\emptyset \Rightarrow$  Aramaic NOUN: One certain case of this replacement exists (*PAT* 0250, which renders *npš*). In addition, one tentative case might also be included here from the full corpus (*PAT* 0308, *šlm* ‘image, likeness’), but the full Latin inscription has not been preserved and it would be hazardous to draw conclusions from this exemplar.
- (2) Latin  $\emptyset \Rightarrow$  Aramaic NOUN.DEF + DEM (+ REL + NOUN[.GEN]): Given the limited full corpus with which we are working, it is surprising that this re-

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*Dictionary*, Ancient Language Resources (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1902; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1999), 124; *DNWSI*, 345; all sources cited from the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon; online: <http://call.cn.huc.edu/>.

106. Chesterman, *Memes of Translation*, 95–96. See also Catford, *Linguistic Theory of Translation*, 73–82, esp. the kinds of shifts discussed under “category shifts” (pp. 75–76).

107. See Aren Wilson-Wright, who reads *hnd wz lb 'lt* ‘this stele/inscription (is given) to Baalat’ (“Interpreting the Sinaitic Inscriptions in Context: A New Reading of Sinai 345,” *HBAI* 2 [2013]: 136–48). Whatever the precise meaning of *wz*, this inscription contains the syntagm DEM + *wz*.(DEF?), which was syntactically reconfigured to NOUN.DEF + DEM in later varieties of Semitic.

108. We do not include *KAI* 1 and others where the ambiguous construction *'rn z* might be analyzed as NOUN + REL rather than as NOUN + DEM. Many of the cases above occur in syntagmata best represented as NOUN + DEM + REL, in which the presence of the relative particle confirms the identification of the demonstrative adjective. In *KAI* 101 (*tmqdš z bn ' PN*), the direct object marker *t* precedes the item dedicated, forcing the following *z* to be read as the demonstrative.

109. The construction *nšb' zy* (*KAI* 201, 202) is probably to be understood as NOUN.DEF + REL, similar to the construction found in many Phoenician inscriptions.

placement occurs with five different lexemes; in all cases the item dedicated is the determining factor. We leave this transformation for elaboration in a fuller study, however, since it does not occur in our smaller corpus of *PAT* 0246 and 0250 examined here.

It is possible that types (1) and (2) here should be considered examples of overlapping segment boundaries. It goes almost without saying that discourse-initial *DM* serves pragmatically to identify the object on which it is inscribed as a funerary object of some sort. As a result, one could argue that #*DM* has a single normal replacement, the two constituents of which (NOUN[.DEF + DEM] and *hbl*!) are disconnected from one another and placed at opposite ends of the TT. *PAT* 0250 and a few other exemplars from the full corpus would serve as evidence of this segmental overlap. However, the combination of these replaced-replacement pairs into a single category unnecessarily complicates our typology; it is more convenient to maintain a separation between the two types of segments.

A third significant pragmatic translational operation found in the full corpus is the frequent appearance of what we call a [MONUMENT.FORMULA] and its representation in or omission from the Aramaic co-text: these formulae add information to both funerary and dedicatory inscriptions, including the name of the person who took charge in erecting the memorial, as well as the relationship the dedicator held with respect to the honoree. *PAT* 0250 contains a [MONUMENT.FORMULA], and it occurs only in the Latin text (*FECIT . HERES FRATER*). In this inscription and in two other cases (*PAT* 0251, 0255) the Aramaic [MONUMENT.FORMULA] is so thinly represented as to be better schematized as being unrepresented entirely (and thus, exemplifying cases of *Information Change*; see above).

Although a more complex discussion would involve the four elements typically comprising the [MONUMENT.FORMULA] in the Latin inscriptions of the full corpus, we deal here only with those elements contained in *PAT* 0250. Whereas most of the bilinguals containing a [MONUMENT.FORMULA] provide both the name of the dedicator and a description of the dedicator,<sup>110</sup> *PAT* 0250 reports only the latter—the stele was commissioned by the honoree’s ‘heir’ (*HERES* or *H(eres)*; see also *PAT* 0251, 0255). In addition, *PAT* 0250 contains a verb of monumental dedication: *FECIT* (‘made [it]’) is used in its properly inflected form (see also *PAT* 0591, 2801, and *IGLS* XVII.1:400). One additional (and frequently attested) element is not included in the inscription at hand: the inscription contains no adverbial modifiers (including prepositional phrases) describing the act of dedication on the part of the dedicator or the honoree.

The above described inclination towards attending to culturally-specific forms of discourse in constituent members of a bilingual inscription is also at play in a study by Wilson, who studied a pair of “non-equivalent bi-versions” in

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110. Normally, this element indicates the dedicator’s relationship to the honoree, but in some cases it comprises the dedicator’s nickname or lineage and familial affiliation.

the co-texts *IRT* 338 (Latin) and *IPT* 26 (Punic).<sup>111</sup> These inscriptions are inscribed together on a single face of a monument at Lepcis Magna (in modern Libya). Wilson observes that the “non-equivalence” of these texts is predicated in part on the omission of “the elements of the Latin text that link the local event [of the paving of the Old Forum at Lepcis Magna] to a wider imperial context.”<sup>112</sup> We posit the same type of negotiation and interplay between Palmyrenes, who were native speakers of Aramaic (and perhaps Greek), and the hegemonic Roman Empire that took control of and subsequently romanized its territories, including Palmyra.<sup>113</sup> However, we conclude that these texts are not merely bi-versions resulting from a single act of composition. Instead, we view the Latin texts in both *PAT* 0246 and 0250 as the ST for their Aramaic counterparts; the Palmyrene texts are, accordingly, *translations*.

#### CONCLUSION: CULTURAL IDENTITY AS A DETERMINANT IN TRANSLATIONAL STRATEGIES

*The history of Latin and Greek as second languages emerges as a dynamic network of tensions: between native speakers, those casting themselves as native speakers, and secondary learners; between center and periphery; between pagan traditions and Christian receptions; between Caliban and Prospero; between auctoritas and innovation.*<sup>114</sup>

The preceding study of two bilingual inscriptions in Latin and Palmyrene Aramaic has identified several areas of inquiry that philologists and epigraphers of the NWS languages have traditionally omitted from consideration. Frequently, this omission is the result of a lack of familiarity with the theoretical structures and principles whereby such investigations may proceed. We have proposed the basic principles of a theoretical framework in which cases of ancient translation may be investigated:

(1) Insofar as the basic operations of translation are identical to, or at least analogous to, those employed in modern cases of translation, we have built an

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111. *IPT* = Giorgio Levi Della Vida and Maria Giulia Amadasi Guzzo, *Iscrizioni puniche della Tripolitania (1927–1967)*, Monographie di Archeologia Libica 22 (Rome: Bretschneider, 1987); *IRT* = Joyce Maire Reynolds and John Bryan Ward-Perkins, *The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania* (Rome: British School at Rome, 1952).

112. Wilson, “Neo-Punic and Latin Inscriptions,” 287.

113. See, e.g., Andrew M. Smith II, *Roman Palmyra: Identity, Community, and State Formation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

114. Elizabeth P. Archibald, William Brockliss, and Jonathan Gnoza, “Introduction: ‘Learning Me Your Language,’” in *Learning Latin and Greek from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Elizabeth P. Archibald, William Brockliss, and Jonathan Gnoza, YCS 37 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 9.

argument for the general suitability of the theoretical approaches employed by Descriptive Translation theorists. Although we have at hand only the *products* of translation, it remains possible to extrapolate from these remains in an attempt to discover and describe the cognitive and empirical *processes* whereby bilingual speakers in antiquity—of whatever form that bilingualism took—crafted documents in multiple languages. Sometimes a hierarchy is discernable, such that one text demonstrates clear conceptual priority over the other. In such cases, the term “translation,” as it is traditionally employed, applies. In other cases, such as both of the inscriptions studied here, the hierarchy cannot be tracked so easily. That does not mean, however, that the relationship exhibited by these co-texts is completely indeterminate. Instead of basing our conclusions on linguistic data, we are forced to rely on material and cultural clues—such as the respective position of each text, the representation of nationality, and adherence to culturally located formulae—in order to assign chronological and conceptual priority. In these cases, the term “bilingual co-texts” accurately captures the ambiguous nature of the texts’ connection. Nonetheless, we argue, the cognitive relationships between these texts comprise two ends of a single spectrum, in which the *type* remains the same.

(2) Correspondingly, we have provided a brief outline of some considerations that must be taken into account when studying bilingual co-texts—and, indeed, any inscription. It is not sufficient to study an inscription in isolation from the object on which it is found. Instead, the researcher must constantly be attuned to the epigraph’s physical completeness, its technical completeness, and its material presentation. As noted immediately above, it is by inspection of the physical arrangements and consideration of the cultural norms of inscriptional formulae that we are able to determine that both *PAT* 0246 and 0250 are examples of translations produced under the constraints of cultural filtering. While the physical completeness and technical completeness are unlikely to receive much dispute, the importance of the third aspect—material presentation—is undercut by the plethora of epigraphic compendia that present texts in isolation from the objects hosting them. A fuller appreciation of these objects is necessary, especially with regard to the use of decorative frames and other nonlinguistic features serving to demarcate one text from its surroundings; the formality of the script used in the inscription; the quality of workmanship in the inscription; the relative positions of any inscription on the item hosting it, especially with respect to any co-texts or accompanying iconographic features<sup>115</sup>; and the continuity or discontinuity of the text, in combination with the space(s) allocated to the text on the object.

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115. A model in this regard are the various publications treating the so-called Katamuwa inscription (see J. David Schloen and Amir S. Fink, “New Excavations at Zincirli Höyük in Turkey [Ancient Sam’al] and the Discovery of an Inscribed Mortuary Stele,” *BASOR* 356 [2009]: 1–13; Eudora J. Struble and Virginia Rimmer Herrmann, “An Eternal Feast at Sam’al: The New Iron Age Mortuary Stele from Zincirli in Context,” *BASOR* 356 [2009]: 15–49; and Dennis Pardee, “A New Aramaic Inscription from Zincirli,” *BASOR* 356 [2009]: 51–71).

(3) Finally, we have argued that achieving an understanding of the authors' and translators' cultural identity is integral to the project of studying translation strategies in antiquity. Drawing from both DTS and more empirical, culturally-specific studies of translation and bilingualism in antiquity, we have shown that "translation," properly construed, does not necessarily entail a word-for-word (or even segment-for-segment) correspondence between a ST and its corresponding rendition in the TL. Instead, the supralinguistic, discourse- and genre-level conventions appropriate to the TL's associated scribal culture may take priority over lexical and phrasal correspondences, occasioning the addition or omission of whole segments of the ST. This adherence to local cultural conventions is evident in the divergent positions of the requisite funerary formulae in the Latin and Aramaic texts of *PAT* 0246 and 0250. The fluidity of identity spanning the gap between Roman and Palmyrene is mirrored in the fluidity of these texts with respect to the linguistic expression and literary conventions appropriate to each of these poles. It should come as no surprise, then, that we agree with Adams in his assessment of *PAT* 0994 (from Tibiscus in Dacia): "In no sense is the form of the Latin determined by the phraseology of the Aramaic; it is formulaic funerary Latin, with dedicator as well as deceased named in a typical Latin manner."<sup>116</sup> However, in our opinion, the fact that the Latin text is composed in conventional, formulaic Latin is not mutually exclusive with the assessment that its Aramaic co-text—equally embedded in and reflective of its own Palmyrene cultural context—is a *translation*. We have shown that translations from one language to another can be effected *while at the same time* adapting the formulaic conventions and cultural specifics appropriate to the target culture and jettisoning those of the source language's culture.<sup>117</sup> In each of the inscriptions studied here, the dedicator signaled Palmyrene identity through his use of Aramaic, as well as by the explicit mention of his own (*PAT* 0246) or the deceased's (*PAT* 0250) Palmyrene nationality in the Latin text. Similarly, he signaled his participation in Roman culture through the primary use of Latin and its associated scribal conventions.

It is well known that Latin was used in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire predominantly by individuals associated with official administrative contexts and, to an even greater extent, with the military.<sup>118</sup> This association seems to have been bolstered by the fact that "[t]he Roman army, a common path to citizenship and social advancement, was a major source of Latin learning for recruits from the eastern empire and may even have conducted organized Latin classes for these recruits."<sup>119</sup> The use of Latin among members of the social elite classes was, in Adams's words, "symbolic rather than communica-

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116. Adams, *Bilingualism*, 258.

117. See also Payne, "Multilingual Inscriptions," 127.

118. Barbara Levick, "The Latin Inscriptions of Asia Minor," in *Acta Colloquii Epigraphici Latini: Helsingiae 3.–6. sept. 1991 habiti*, ed. Heikki Solin, Olli Salomies, and Uta-Maria Liertz, *Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* 104 (Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters, 1995), 394, 397.

119. Dickey, "Teaching Latin," 31, citing Adams, *Bilingualism*, 617–21.

tive.”<sup>120</sup> At the intersection of cultures, such as was found in the Roman-era Near East, we should not be surprised to find contact languages (pidgins, creoles, etc.), although we have little if any direct evidence for these linguistic forms. More tangibly, the available evidence we do have points to what might be called *contact scribal cultures*.<sup>121</sup> The adaptation and accommodation of one linguistic system (along with its associated scribal traditions) to another linguistic system (and its associated scribal culture) provides rationale for viewing Chesterman’s category of *Cultural Filtering* as something more than simply one pragmatic translational strategy among many. Instead, we view *Cultural Filtering* as a superordinate category that demands expression through multiple overlapping and interrelated procedures spanning genre-, discourse-, and linguistic-levels of textual analysis. This filtering interrupts conventionalized scribal habits and requires more sophisticated analysis than has normally been attempted by philologists and epigraphers of the NWS languages.

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120. Adams, *Bilingualism*, 34–35, quoted in Kaizer, “Religious Mentality,” 183.

121. One particularly intriguing point is the possibility of “visual ‘interference’ ... from Latin epigraphic practice” in one of the Punic inscriptions under study by Wilson (“Neo-Punic and Latin Inscriptions,” 287, also 304).

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PART 3: ISRAELITE RELIGION AND  
THE HEBREW BIBLE



## Israelite Religion as Communication: An Essay on Method\*

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To a layperson, the question, “how does the Bible help us reconstruct Israelite religion” might seem odd. After all, the Bible is a collection of Israelite texts that describe practices, values, beliefs, emotions, and words related to the realm of deity and human interactions. Sometimes the texts describe these religious features positively, sometimes negatively. Therefore, historical reconstruction ought simply to be a matter of cataloging evidence, it would seem.

Yet, as Lessing’s Nathan the Wise would say,

The way to Babylon from Jerusalem,  
I have been led to assume,  
is a quick right, then a left  
for a good two hundred miles...<sup>1</sup>

The trip from the Bible to Israelite religion covers more than two hundred miles, for it involves a challenging series of methodological and evidentiary issues, including (1) the nature of religion itself, (2) the conceptions of it informing

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\* It is a pleasure to dedicate this essay to one of the great teachers of our discipline, Jo Ann Hackett, to whom applies the description of the great teacher penned by Ben Sira (Sir 39:1) long ago: σοφίαν πάντων ἀρχαίων ἐκζητήσει (“she ferrets out the wisdom of the ages”). May she always enjoy the quest, just as her students do at her side.

1. “Babylon / ist von Jerusalem, wie ich den Weg, / Seitab bald rechts, bald links, zu nehmen bin / Genötigt worden, gut zweihundert Meilen....” Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Nathan der Weise* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1982), 5 (Act 1, Scene 1, lines 5–8). The original was published in 1779 and offered an exploration of Lessing’s conception of a rational religion for humankind. Cf. the grounding of religion in “nature” worked out by Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, ed. Joseph Kürschner, *Deutsche National-Literatur 77/Herders Werke 4* (Stuttgart: Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1974), 147–54 (Book 4, Section 6); originally published in 1784. For Herder, religion was the highest expression of humanization, the growth of human beings into their destiny as beings fulfilling the “Kraft” by and for which they were created. The impact of Herder’s notions on future scholarship, in Germany and then the Anglophone world, would be hard to overestimate.

modern scholars, (3) the shape of the surviving evidence, and (4) the aims and uses of the Bible by both its creators and the Jewish, Samaritan, and Christian communities that have used it as a sacred text, to say nothing of the goals of modern scholars of varying religious commitments (or none). To understand how the Bible might relate to ancient Israelite religion(s), one must consider all of these elements. It will then be useful to examine how a particular biblical text, here the book of Hosea, reveals aspects of the religious environment that produced it.

To be sure, scholars use texts in different ways to reconstruct history. In biblical scholarship at least three general approaches have prevailed over the past two centuries. (1) In extreme cases, scholars deny the possibility of historical reconstruction based on biblical texts which they allege are over-compromised by the political agendas of their creators.<sup>2</sup> This ideologically-driven view has attracted few adherents because, if consistently applied to all ancient texts, it would render historical reconstruction of the past nearly impossible.<sup>3</sup> (2) A more prevalent strategy has been to mine the biblical texts for data that can serve historical reconstruction, with little attention paid to the literary dimensions of the text itself. This approach is quite common among scholars seeking to coordinate the Bible and archaeology, for example, and does work for certain purposes. If, however, one understands history not merely as a record of events, but an intellectual activity aimed at reconstructing the past at its multiple layers (events, long-range processes, and the conjunctures between these two levels of history),<sup>4</sup> then a purely typological, data-oriented conception of history-writing will prove inadequate.<sup>5</sup> (3) A more robust approach recognizes, therefore, that ancient texts in general, and the Bible to an extraordinary degree, constitute part of the data of history, not just a repository for that data. While the complex editorial histories of the various biblical books complicate analysis by clouding their provenance(s), the editorial processes also reveal the intellectual histories that created the books in the first place. To take the specific example to be considered later, the book of Hosea not only reports various religious practic-

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2. An eloquent articulation of this view appears in Gary A. Phillips and Danna Nolan Fewell, "Ethics, Bible, Reading as If," *Semeia* 77 (1997): 1–21.

3. A splendid refutation of such an approach, couched in a discussion of the morality of memory and the liberation of historical reconstruction from the tyranny of power, appears in Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 56–92.

4. The classic articulation of this three-tiered view of history appears in Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, 2 vols., trans. Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

5. Note the comments of Martti Nissinen, "Reflections on the 'Historical-Critical' Method: Historical Criticism and Critical Historicism," in *Method Matters: Essays on the Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David L. Petersen*, ed. Joel M. LeMon and Kent Harold Richards (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 479–504, and in particular his observation that a critical historicism must take seriously the self-understandings of the ancient texts themselves.

es and beliefs of people it knew, but it represents a religious artifact in its own right as a whole. The creators of the book curated, modified, augmented, and transmitted the oracles of Hosea for their own religious purposes, which themselves deserve consideration. The document itself should occupy the attention of the historian of Israelite religion who must ask what it means that a culture could produce such a text.

This latter approach requires close readings of texts to identify their assumptions, omissions, arguments (for or against the arguments of others), and use of literary devices. The historian must, in Daniel Schwartz's felicitous expression, "rub texts together" to understand how they reveal the culture that gave them birth.<sup>6</sup> Schwartz, examining Josephus's usefulness for reconstructing the history of Judaism in the first century CE, helpfully calls historians to find the various voices in a text (those of the sources and the various users of the sources). I have sought to follow this counsel here.

#### WHAT IS RELIGION, AND WHAT IS ISRAELITE RELIGION?

It is useful, then, to begin with basic definitions. Jonathan Z. Smith once famously remarked that "while there is a staggering amount of data, of phenomena, of human experiences and expressions that might be characterized in one culture or another, by one criterion or another, as religious—*there is no data for religion*. Religion is solely the creation of the scholar's study. It is created for the scholar's analytic purposes by his imaginative acts of comparison and generalization."<sup>7</sup> Although this extraordinary claim may seem overstated or even nihilistic, it contains an important truth. Each culture decides for itself what counts as religious, and that negotiation of meaning is shot through with contestation and cooperation, rivalry and alliance as human communities' idea of the religious changes over time. Scholars are not exempted from such historical processes, however tempting the contrary assumption might be, but we can be aware of both our own histories and those we study.

Sam Gill developed Smith's insight by arguing for a "storytracking" approach to religious studies, which exploits the gaps among the various truth claims made by religionists to engage that

frame of mind in which one may both accept objectivity and truth in the radical sense of singularity and, at another phase of the oscillation, qualify and relativize such positions. A storytracking approach both appreciates the distinctiveness, authority, and groundedness of each subject perspective and acknowledges that, when

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6. Daniel R. Schwartz, *Reading the First Century: On Reading Josephus and Studying Jewish History of the First Century*, WUNT 300 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 110.

7. Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), xi. Emphasis in the original.



compared, the perspectives may conflict with one another, be mutually exclusive, or claim to be based in realms beyond academic purview.<sup>8</sup>

Gill proposed to study religion by tracing the stages of connection between the scholar of religion and the subject of his or her study, retracing the steps backward from the presentation of religion by the former to the creators of the practices and beliefs that must be studied. For him, the student of a religious tradition both (a) values that tradition's own truth claims by describing them as accurately as possible and (b) recognizes their historical contingency, as well as his or her own. If Gill is correct—and I think he is—then the student of ancient Israelite religion does well to engage in such a storytracking approach, acknowledging our own assumptions and conclusions, tracing them back to their sources, and eventually finding a path back to the world of the Israelites.

Such an approach rests on the considered view that, while religious data (Smith's phrase) differ, making the cross-cultural study of an abstraction called "religion" elusive, nevertheless real knowledge of a society's self-understanding(s) is possible. We might begin, then, with the assumption that concern for religion in a given culture or tradition (for some "religions," such as Christianity or Islam, span many cultures) must focus on the narratives, rituals, wisdom traditions, and prophetic or divinatory voices that point that culture to its deepest meanings, usually understood as a meta-natural or divine realm. Historians outside that culture may reconstruct its life habits with respect to that realm, in short its religion, for while it is true that an etic description of a culture always risks misunderstanding or essentializing the "other," it is also true that humans demonstrate a remarkable ability to cross the boundaries of culture because of our common humanity. The empathetic scholar should be able to draw conclusions about a culture, even one very different from her or his own.<sup>9</sup>

#### ISRAELITE RELIGION IN MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

A scholar who turns to the case of the Bible and the religious practices and beliefs of ancient Israel confronts several problems. Foremost among them is that arising from the ways in which Israelite religion has been reconstructed in modern scholarship. To state matters perhaps too simply, the primary methodological questions concern (1) the proper strategies for reading the biblical text, (2) the proper connections between biblical studies and other intellectual disciplines (theology or Near Eastern studies or both), and (3) the proper combination of typology and comparison, on the one hand, with scholarly self-awareness on the other.

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8. Sam D. Gill, *Storytracking: Texts, Stories, and Histories in Central Australia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 201.

9. As Caroline Schaffalitzky de Muckadell ("On Essentialism and Real Definitions of Religion," *JAAR* 82 [2014]: 495–520) argues, whatever problems arise from definitions of religion, avoiding definitions altogether creates more serious problems. Classification and naming are indispensable analytical practices for the humanities.

THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES. Modern histories of Israel's religion, often understood solely through the lens of the Hebrew Bible, began in the late eighteenth century as an attempt to sharpen the distinction between the ideas of Scripture and those of later Christian theologians.<sup>10</sup> However, since most such scholars were responsible for the instruction of (Protestant) clergy, they ordinarily sought to connect their work in some way to the larger issues of theology, as well as the emerging disciplines of Egyptology, Assyriology, and Near Eastern archaeology (all products of the mid-nineteenth century).<sup>11</sup> In part because they were seeking a synthesis of history and theology, scholars of that period usually understood Israelite religion as a phenomenon related to "Semitic polytheism" but also antecedent in a direct way to later Christian and Jewish theological developments.<sup>12</sup> In other words, the split between those studying Israelite religion and those studying biblical theology, now a presupposition of much of the discipline, had not yet occurred. Thus at roughly this period Wilhelm Herrmann could subtitle his work on the history of religion as "a foundation of systematic theology (*eine Grundlegung der systematischen Theologie*)" on the

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10. See the survey of the history of (especially German) scholarship in Henning Graf Reventlow, *From the Enlightenment to the Twentieth Century*, vol. 4 of *History of Biblical Interpretation*, RBS 63, trans. Leo G. Perdue (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 123–229.

11. For the history of this development, see Steven W. Holloway, "Introduction: Orientalism, Assyriology and the Bible," in *Orientalism, Assyriology and the Bible*, ed. Steven W. Holloway (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007), 1–41; Eckart Frahm, "Images of Assyria in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Western Scholarship," in *Orientalism, Assyriology and the Bible*, ed. Steven W. Holloway (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007), 74–94.

12. Note the typical statement of August Kayser, *Die Theologie des Alten Testaments in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung dargestellt*, ed. Édouard Reuss (Strassburg: Schmidt's Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1886), 1: "Within the theology of the Old Testament, we consider those disciplines that handle the presentation of the religious ideas of the Old Testament... The importance of biblical theology [Old and New Testaments] for the Christian minister hardly necessitates mention, because it is so obvious" ("Unter Theologie des Alten Testaments versteht man diejenige Disciplin, welche sich mit der Darstellung der Religionsideen des Alten Testaments befasst... Die Wichtigkeit der biblischen Theologie für den christlichen Prediger braucht kaum hervorgehoben zu werden, so selbstverständlich ist sie"). One may compare this brief work to the much more massive one of Heinrich Ewald, *Die Lehre der Bible von Gott, oder Theologie des Alten und Neuen Bundes* (Leipzig: Vogel, 1874); or idem, *Jesaja mit den übrigen Älteren Propheten*, vol. 1 of *Die Propheten des Alten Bundes*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1867). In the 1874 work, Ewald presents a systematic description of a theme within both parts of the Christian Bible, critically understood but still aiming at normativity. His very influential 1867 work on the prophets, meanwhile, speaks of these "heroes of divine Truth (*Helden der göttlichen Wahrheit*)" (2) whose inner life can be understood through careful analysis of their words and deeds (i.e., as reported in the biblical texts).

assumption that an objective basis for the latter lay in the former.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the enormously influential Scottish Orientalist William Robertson Smith could argue in his classic work, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*, that the oldest ideas of Israelite religion were shared by their neighbors, but that the distinctive features of Judaism and Christianity as “positive” religions derive from “the teaching of great religious innovators, who spoke as the organs of a divine revelation, and deliberately departed from the traditions of the past.”<sup>14</sup> During the same period, Julius Wellhausen in arguably the most important book ever written on the subject, used a source-critical approach to the biblical text to reconstruct a history of Israelite religion that evolved from the free spirit of the pastoralists to the rigid legalism of Second Temple Judaism,<sup>15</sup> a model that his younger contemporary and disciple Karl Marti simplified into four types of Israelite religion: those of the nomads, the farmers, the prophets, and the circles interested in law (*Gesetzesreligion*).<sup>16</sup> From the vantage point of today’s scholarship, such views seem to want to have things both ways, but in their context, these and many other scholars were seeking to work out the relationships among a group of interlocking intellectual disciplines with their own histories, conventions, and language codes.<sup>17</sup>

THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY. During the mid-twentieth century, in any case, the maturity of Syro-Palestinian archaeology and disciplines examining the textual and material culture remains of Mesopotamian, Iranian, Anatolian, Syrian, Canaanite, and Egyptian cultures made possible a reconstruction of Israelite religion that integrated biblical and non-biblical data. Especially in Anglophone circles, a sharp reaction against the earlier attempts to situate Israelite religion as one among many Near Eastern systems set in, with a number of scholars emphasizing the distinctions between the Bible and its “background.” Typical of this

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13. Wilhelm Herrmann, *Die Religion im Verhältnis zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit: Eine Grundlegung der systematischen Theologie* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1879).

14. W. Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (London: Black, 1894), 1.

15. Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (New York: Meridian, 1957); repr. of *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, trans. J. Sutherland Black and A. Enzies, with preface by W. Robertson Smith (Edinburgh: Black, 1885); trans. of *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Reimer, 1883).

16. Karl Marti, *Die Religion des Alten Testaments unter den Religionen des vorderen Orients* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1906).

17. At times, this attempt to have matters both ways took very strange forms as in the famous Bibel-Babelstreit or in works such as T. K. Cheyne, *Bible Problems and the New Material for their Solution* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1904), who sought to connect the early Church’s christology to ancient Near Eastern redeemer myths. See the more detailed discussion in Joachim Schaper, “The Question of a ‘Biblical Theology’ and the Growing Tension between ‘Biblical Theology’ and a ‘History of the Religion of Israel’: from Johann Philipp Gabler to Rudolf Smend, Sen.,” in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Sæbø, Peter Machinist, and Jean Louis Ska (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 3:625–50.

approach is the work of G. Ernest Wright, who could write that Israel's "faith was communicated through history ... and unless history is taken seriously one cannot comprehend biblical faith which triumphantly affirms the meaning of history," and again, "Biblical theology and biblical archaeology must go hand in hand, if we are to understand the Bible's meaning."<sup>18</sup> Scholarship in this mode could neatly contrast the Bible's view of "faith" with the inferior "religion" of the Bible's "environment," hence the stark title of another of Wright's works, *The Old Testament Against Its Environment*.<sup>19</sup>

To some degree, this pointed contrast between the faith or theology of Israel and the religion of its environment responded to the dominance of Barthian theology in mid-century Protestant circles. Barth's protest against the relativizing tendencies of his immediate predecessors exerted an enormous influence on scholars of the Hebrew Bible, even when they did not cite Barth directly.<sup>20</sup> However, this influence should not be overstated, because even during this period, more historically oriented presentations of Israelite religion existed, as in Roland de Vaux's magisterial discussion of religious institutions, which constitutes almost half of his history of ancient Israel.<sup>21</sup> For de Vaux, religion penetrated all of Israelite life, but the study of "those institutions which are directly

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18. G. Ernest Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 17. Wright's overall approach followed that of his teacher, the great Orientalist William F. Albright, notably from his books *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1940); and *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (London: Athlone, 1968). On Albright's legacy, especially his capacities as a typologist, observe the comments of Peter Machinist, "William Foxwell Albright: The Man and His Work," in *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the 21st Century: The William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference*, ed. Jerrold S. Cooper and Glenn M. Schwartz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 385–403; and the essays in Gus W. Van Beek, ed., *The Scholarship of William Foxwell Albright*, HSS 33 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).

19. G. Ernest Wright, *The Old Testament Against Its Environment*, SBT (London: SCM, 1950).

20. On Barth's legacy in biblical studies, see the remarks of Rudolf Smend, "K. B. als Ausleger der Heiligen Schrift," in *Theologie als Christologie: Zum Werk und Leben Karl Barths*, ed. Heideleore Köckert and Wolf Krötke (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 9–37; Eberhard Jüngel, "Barth," *TRE* 5:251–68. On Barth's shifting understandings of the nature of theological anthropology as they played out in his life, see the biography of Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 209–16, 423–30; on the move away from Barthian rejection of natural theology, see the remarks of John Day, "The Religion of Israel," in *Text in Context: Essays by Members of the Society for Old Testament Study*, ed. A. D. H. Mayes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 442–43.

21. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, trans. John McHugh (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 271–517; the nineteenth-century approach of using the Bible as the framework for the reconstruction of Israelite religion also survived into the twentieth century in such works as Helmer Ringgren, *Israelite Religion*, trans. David Green (London: SPCK, 1966).

concerned with the external worship of God<sup>22</sup> was fertile ground for an integration of archaeology, ancient Near Eastern texts and material culture, and the Bible.

RECENT SCHOLARSHIP. Since the 1960s, studies of biblical theology and Israelite religion have moved further apart, with archaeologists dropping biblical archaeology in favor of Syro-Palestinian archaeology that owed more to contemporary anthropology than to theology,<sup>23</sup> while theologians of the Old Testament worked toward other approaches to the field, often preferring to bracket historical (including history of religions) questions altogether in favor of literary approaches.<sup>24</sup> Contemporary questions for those reconstructing biblical theologies include the nature of the biblical canon(s) and whether canonization closes off, or invites, interpretation.<sup>25</sup> That is, a focus on the Bible as a literary collection whose “meaning” does not depend on its historical origins represents a different intellectual project than one whose goal is the reconstruction of Israelite religion in its various stages and complex variety. The tasks are, arguably, equally legitimate but ultimately incommensurate.<sup>26</sup>

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22. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 271.

23. A classic statement of the issue is by William Dever, “Will the Real Israel Please Stand Up? Part I: Archaeology and Israelite Historiography,” *BASOR* 297 (1995): 61–80; idem, “Will the Real Israel Please Stand Up? Part II: Archaeology and the Religions of Ancient Israel,” *BASOR* 298 (1995): 37–58; and in his more popular works such as *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel: Where Archaeology and the Bible Intersect* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 11–34 and *infra*.

24. For a recent survey of the state of the field, see Henning Graf Reventlow, “Biblisches, besonders alttestamentliche Theologie und Hermeneutik IV,” *TRu* 70 (2005): 408–54, esp. 408–20; but note also the critique of the linguistic turn in biblical theology in Brevard Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 21–22; Walter Brueggemann, “The ABCs of Old Testament Theology in the US,” *ZAW* 114 (2002): 412–32; D. Christopher Spinks, *The Bible and the Crisis of Meaning: Debates on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (London: T&T Clark, 2007); and most helpfully Georg Pfeleiderer, “Ausbruchsversuche aus der Moderne: Zur Problematik der kerygmatischen Programmatik Biblischer Theologie,” in *Beyond Biblical Theologies*, ed. Heinrich Assel, Stefan Beyerle, and Christfried Böttrich; *WUNT* 295 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 155–81.

25. Stefan Beyerle, “‘Beyond’—Grenzbeschreibungen zur Biblischen Theologie,” in *Beyond Biblical Theologies*, ed. Heinrich Assel, Stefan Beyerle, and Christfried Böttrich; *WUNT* 295 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 19–51, esp. 50–51; and in the same volume, Michael Welker, “Theological Realism and Biblical Theology,” 484–93.

26. Even if one does not agree with Brevard Childs that “the discipline of Old Testament theology is essentially a Christian discipline” (Brevard Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985], 7), a view with significant problems, still the normative task differs from the descriptive one in principle, even if they overlap in practice. Cf. Paul D. Hanson, “Biblical Interpretation: Meeting Place of Jews and Christians,” in *Canon, Theology and Old Testament Interpretation*, ed. Gene M. Tucker, David L. Petersen, and Robert R. Wilson (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 32–47; Jon D. Levenson, *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism* (Louis-

Current scholarship seems, however, to operate in a mode of reassessing both the divorce of biblical studies and archaeology and the separation of Near Eastern studies from biblical theology without returning to the situation characteristic of Albright, Wright, and other mid-twentieth-century scholars. The Bible is taking its rightful place as a repository of Israelite cultural memory, including its religious aspects,<sup>27</sup> as it seems increasingly clear both that many aspects of Israelite religion had parallels in other ancient Near Eastern culture, and that some elements were distinctive.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps more significantly, the search for distinctiveness may itself mislead the modern interpreter, for important characteristics of a given religious tradition may be shared with others, but the overall contour of those features is more important than individual elements.

Several contemporary reconstructions of Israelite religion seek, then, to integrate the Bible with extrabiblical material cultural and texts, often paying close attention to method and the limits of available evidence. Thus Frank Moore Cross traces Israelite religion from its beginnings to the Achaemenid period by drawing on a wide range of extrabiblical material alongside key texts in the Bible (especially old poetry), arguing for the substantial historical veracity of the biblical texts.<sup>29</sup> In a different way, Rainer Albertz questions the supposed objectivity of studies of Israelite religion, noting the inescapable importance of the afterlife of the ancient patterns of thought and action in Judaism and Christianity and the conditionedness of historical reconstruction, as well as necessity of history for biblical theology.<sup>30</sup> Yet he also argues for the primacy of Israelite religion over biblical theology because the former takes the reality of Israelite histo-

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ville: Westminster John Knox, 1993), esp. 82–105; Magne Sæbø, “Church and Synagogue as the Respective Matrix of the Development of an Authoritative Bible Interpretation: An Epilogue,” in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Sæbø, Chris Brekelmans, and Menachem Haran (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 1.1:731–45; but cf. Gershom M. H. Ratheiser, *Mitzvoth Ethics and the Jewish Bible: The End of Old Testament Theology*, LHBOTS 460 (New York: T&T Clark, 2007).

27. A point made by various scholars from several points of view: e.g., Ronald Hendel, “Culture, Memory, and History: Reflections on Method in Biblical Studies,” in *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (London: Equinox, 2010), 250–61.

28. Note the studies in Bernd Janowski, Klaus Koch, and Gernot Wilhelm, eds., *Religionsgeschichtliche Beziehungen zwischen Kleinasien, Nordsyrien und dem Alten Testament*, OBO 129 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993); Peter Machinist, “The Question of Distinctiveness in Ancient Israel: An Essay,” in *Ah, Assyria: Studies in Assyrian History and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography Presented to Hayim Tadmor*, ed. Mordechai Cogan and Israel Eph'al, *ScrHier* 33 (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1991), 196–212.

29. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); cf. idem, *From Epic to Canon* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

30. Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, trans. John Bowden, 2 vols. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 1:14–15.

ry more seriously than does the latter. Similarly, despite many differences in detail, Richard Hess argues that the study of Israelite religion concerns “what ancient Israelites actually believed and did, rather than what they were ideally expected to believe and do,”<sup>31</sup> while also using the Bible as a parallel resource with archaeology for the reconstruction of these beliefs and actions. Both Albertz and Hess highlight the fact of development of Israelite religion rather than presenting it as a static entity (even if surviving evidence is often not fine-grained enough to demonstrate that development in detail). Such a deeply historical awareness is less pronounced in the more biblically oriented study of Patrick Miller, which categorizes Israelite religion in terms that seem more resolutely theological by defining it “largely by the literature of the Old Testament or Hebrew Scriptures and the religious movements and developments reflected in them and out of which those sacred writings grew.”<sup>32</sup> Admittedly, however, reconstructing changes in ancient Israelite religion over time presents serious challenges related, for example, to the nature and dating of surviving evidence, periodization (e.g., how much changed during the so-called “Exile”?),<sup>33</sup> religious diversity, and the social location of ideas.

In arguably the most significant treatment of the subject in the past two decades, Ziony Zevit speaks of four paradigms of research and the avenues of their critique. (One might apply to these approaches the labels objectivist, lingual-constructivist, deconstructionist, and new-historicist, though Zevit does not use those labels.<sup>34</sup>) He opts for a sophisticated form of the second, which fits biblical data into a historical framework structured by archaeological and anthropological theory, while acknowledging the value of the fourth approach’s two-sided consideration of both data external to the researcher and the reality of his or her locatedness in history. Arguably, the present essay is an example, however imperfect, of the fourth paradigm whose emergence Zevit senses.

This brings us back, then, to the question, what do we know about Israelite religion(s)? Again, the answer depends on what one is looking for, at least in part. From the archaeological record alone, it is clear, for example, that Israelites built and used several temples (at Dan, Bethel, Samaria, Lachish, Jerusalem, Arad, and other sites); that some of them were dedicated to YHWH, that they re-

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31. Richard S. Hess, *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 347.

32. Patrick D. Miller, *The Religion of Ancient Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 208.

33. See e.g., Bob Becking, “Continuity and Discontinuity after the Exile,” in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times*, ed. Bob Becking and Marjo C. A. Korpel, *OtSt* 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 1–8; the entire volume discusses some aspects of the problem. More recently, Josef Wiesehöfer and Thomas Krüger, eds., *Periodisierung und Epochenbewusstsein im Alten Testament und in seinem Umfeld*, *OeO* 20 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2012).

34. Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallaxic Approaches* (London: Continuum, 2001), 30–73.

sembled other Levantine/Syrian temples in iconography and use of space;<sup>35</sup> that ritual practice and especially sacrifice was elaborately articulated, often in vocabulary extant elsewhere in Levantine cultures and their Mediterranean colonies;<sup>36</sup> and that the use of divine (often female, as in the so-called pillar figurines) images in homes was widespread.<sup>37</sup> It is possible to surmise from Israelite texts outside the Bible (Elephantine, Kuntillet 'Ajrud) that the worship of deities alongside YHWH was widespread, much as one would expect in an ancient Near Eastern setting. It is much more difficult to recover from archaeology alone all the layers of emotion and meaning-making that Israelites attached to these aspects of material culture, for while the artifacts are not mute, as William Dever has reminded us,<sup>38</sup> they do whisper and mumble sometimes, and ethnographic analogies, while often suggestive, leave gaps in our understanding.

In any case, none of this picture seems particularly contradictory of the biblical record itself. Indeed, it would be difficult to make sense of the Deuteronomistic or prophetic critique of "idolatry" without assuming that polytheism was widespread in Israel. The material and comparative evidence does, however, signal the fact that the biblical polemic against polytheism was just that, a polemic, an intra-Israelite dispute about fundamental theological issues. That is, the biblical texts furnish evidence for a particular kind of Israelite religion in dialogue with other kinds. Attempting to understand those other kinds of Israelite religion through the biblical lens always risks uncritical acceptance of the various agendas pursued by the creators of the Bible, to be sure, but a prudent use of the evidence for what it is seems both possible and desirable because the Bible offers the only available intellectually sophisticated emic discussion of Israelite religion. One may wish, for example, that devotees of YHWH of Samaria and his retinue had written a history of Israel as comprehensive as the Deuteronomistic History, but they apparently did not, and modern historians cannot be paralyzed by this lacuna.

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35. Erhard Blum, "Der Tempelbaubericht in 1 Könige 6,1–22: Exegetische und historische Überlegungen," in *Temple Building and Temple Cult: Architecture and Cultic Paraphernalia of Temples in the Levant (2.–1. Mill. B.C.E.)*, ed. Jens Kamlah in cooperation with Henrike Michelau (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 291–316; and Othmar Keel, "Paraphernalia of Jerusalem Sanctuaries and Their Relation to Deities Worshiped Therein during the Iron Age IIA–C," in *Temple Building and Temple Cult: Architecture and Cultic Paraphernalia of Temples in the Levant (2.–1. Mill. B.C.E.)*, ed. Jens Kamlah in cooperation with Henrike Michelau (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 317–42.

36. As in the Marseilles Tariff (*KAI* 69).

37. Inter alia, Raz Kletter, *The Judean Pillar Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah* (London: Tempus Reparatum, 1996); idem, "Between Archaeology and Theology: The Pillar Figurines from Judah and the Asherah," in *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan*, JSOTSup 331 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 179–216.

38. Dever, *Lives of Ordinary People*, 13–16.



## ISRAELITE RELIGION AS COMMUNICATION

If, then, the Bible offers evidence for an emic understanding of some forms of Israelite religion, how do we proceed to interpret it? Most modern scholars agree that conceptualizing religion as an interior state, a view that owes much to the Neo-Protestantism of Schleiermacher and his contemporaries, represents a misstep in the field, despite its abiding popularity.<sup>39</sup> To the contrary, religion is inevitably a social practice, a habitus of a group of people, and therefore it involves social structures and actions of communication. As Niklas Luhmann has put it, "...only as communication does religion have a social existence" (since communication is a fundamental sociological category).<sup>40</sup> He goes on to observe that religious communicative systems are self-referential and self-creating (*autopoietisch*), which I take to mean that reductionist approaches to religion as simply economics or class-structure under another name are fundamentally mistaken.

This understanding of religion as a communicative system has found significant traction in a range of disciplines, not just modern Christianity as in the volume in which Luhmann's essay appears, but also in the study of Roman religion as in the work of Jörg Rüpke. Rüpke authored a seminal essay on the relationships between Roman state religion and the numerous religious systems that were extant in the Roman Empire and which interacted with the empire as it evolved.<sup>41</sup> He poses five questions that seem relevant to the study of Israelite religion as well: (1) who is communicating with whom? (2) what do they communicate about? (3) what media of communication are involved? (4) who organizes and controls the communication? and (5) why does the communication take place?<sup>42</sup> Such an approach, while unable perhaps to capture everything about a society's religious systems (which, after all, involve many variables) seems of great heuristic value, and I will pursue these questions with respect to Israelite religion.

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39. See the useful discussion in Horst Firsching and Matthias Schleger, "Religiöse Innerlichkeit und Geselligkeit: Zum Verhältnis von Erfahrung, Kommunikabilität und Sozialität—unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Religionsverständnisses Friedrich Schleiermachers," in *Religion als Kommunikation*, ed. Hartmann Tyrell, Volkhard Krech, and Hubert Knoblauch, *Religion in der Gesellschaft* 4 (Würzburg: Ergon, 1998), 31–81.

40. "Nur als Kommunikation hat Religion deshalb eine gesellschaftliche Existenz." Niklas Luhmann, "Religion as Kommunikation," in *Religion als Kommunikation*, ed. Hartmann Tyrell, Volkhard Krech, and Hubert Knoblauch, *Religion in der Gesellschaft* 4 (Würzburg: Ergon, 1998), 137.

41. In Assyriology, note the fine introduction by Alan Lenzi, Christopher Frechette, and Anna Elise Zernecke, in Alan Lenzi, ed., *Reading Akkadian Prayers and Hymns: An Introduction* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), esp. 1–23.

42. Jörg Rüpke, "Roman Religion and the Religion of Empire: Some Reflections on Method," in *The Religious History of the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, ed. J. A. North and S. R. F. Price (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 22.

THE ACTORS IN THE COMMUNICATION OF RELIGION. If communication presupposes social structures and therefore social actors, how did Israel construct the transmission of the practices of religion? The most fundamental locus of communication was, as is usually the case throughout the world, the family, particularly the multigenerational family embedded in the life of the villages in which most Israelites lived. The emphasis on family was not an invention of the Deuteronomists, who most famously offered a theological rationale for its centrality as a bearer of culture (Deut 6; cf. Exod 13). Rather, it was part of the common stock of ancient Near Eastern religion.<sup>43</sup> Local shrines catering to closely intermeshed kinship groups provided the most fundamental network of communication of ritual and story. However, as also in many other religious traditions, particular functionaries such as priests, prophets, and diviners also lived in ancient Israel. Their roles developed over time, eventuating finally in a priestly caste, the Aaronid family of the Levites. The rules for communication within these networks of relationships evolved over time, but they remained a constant challenge to intellectual reflection of several generations of thinkers represented within the Bible.<sup>44</sup>

Nor should one neglect the obvious fact that ancient Israelites, like almost all religious people, understood the divine realm to be part of the communication process. Sometimes YHWH—other gods do not speak in the Bible!—appears in a theophany either to prophets (e.g., Isa 6; Amos 7) or to ordinary people (Judg 13), but most communication seems to have been one-way, in the form of prayer. Yet, as H. S. Versnel showed for Greek and Roman cultures, prayer assumes a circular relationship including supplication and thanksgiving, for “when ancient man ‘thanked’ his human or divine benefactor in word or deed he was most reluctant to do so without also ensuring the future.”<sup>45</sup> While the study of the rhetoric of prayer in Israelite texts is in its infancy,<sup>46</sup> it does seem obvious

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43. Karel van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel: Continuity and Change in the Forms of Religious Life* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Rainer Albertz and Rüdiger Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012).

44. See the discussion in Patricia Dutcher-Walls, “The Clarity of Double Vision: Seeing the Family in Sociological and Archaeological Perspective,” in *The Family in Life and in Death: The Family in Ancient Israel—Sociological and Archaeological Perspectives*, ed. Patricia Dutcher-Walls, LHBOTS 504 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 1–15 (as well as the other essays in the same volume).

45. H. S. Versnel, “Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer,” in *Faith, Hope and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World*, ed. H. S. Versnel, Studies in Greek and Roman Religion 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 63.

46. Arguably, such research logically extends the concerns of form criticism as in such works as Frank Crüsemann, *Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel*, WMANT 32 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1969); Richard J. Bautch, *Developments in Genre between the Exilic Penitential Prayers and the Psalms of Communal Lament*, AcBib 7 (Leiden: Brill, 2003). For several recent studies, see Melody Knowles, “The Flexible Rhetoric of Retelling: The Choice of David in the Texts of the Psalms,” *CBQ* 67 (2005): 236–49; Davida Charney, “Maintaining Innocence Before a

that Israelites believed themselves to be speaking to God and that they sought to be heard in fitting ways. All communication presupposes an existing or potential relationship of solidarity, including religious communication, and studying the rhetorical practices of Israelite prayer as it engendered solidarity between humans and the deity, and marked out identity for both, remains a desideratum.

THE CONTENT OF COMMUNICATION. While the “who” of Israelite religion is a commonly discussed topic, the (in some ways) more complex question concerns the “what” of the religious communication. Scholars in the mid-twentieth century often spoke of the pairing “myth and ritual,” two modes of religious expression they believed to be inextricably connected. The scholars of that period commonly believed that myths existed across cultural boundaries and were reconstructable by piecing together bits of the “common” myth from its individual expressions.<sup>47</sup> Recent biblical scholarship has, however, shown greater circumspection in relating myth and ritual, without abandoning the categories or ignoring their linkages.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, since the term “myth” labels a group of narrative genres, one should reposition the discussion by considering all the narratives that informed a society and how they interrelated.

Highly influential in such a reevaluation has been the retrieval of the older work by Vladimir Propp, whose *Morphology of the Folktale* sought to understand story through considering the functions of its characters, noting that “Function is understood as an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action.”<sup>49</sup> His narrative type scenes approach has influenced a range of studies in the past decade, moving the discipline away from interest in the problematic term “myth” toward other understandings of traditional narrative.<sup>50</sup> The marginalization of “myth” as a category

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Divine Hearer: Deliberative Rhetoric in Psalm 22, Psalm 17, and Psalm 7,” *BiblInt* 21 (2013): 33–63.

47. E.g., W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, *Hebrew Religion: Its Origin and Development* (London: SPCK, 1930); S. H. Hooke, *The Origins of Early Semitic Ritual* (London: British Academy, 1938); and the analysis of Mowinckel’s work in Sigurd Hjelde, *Sigmund Mowinckel und seine Zeit: Leben und Werk eines norwegischen Alttestamentlers* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 201–35.

48. E.g., L. E. Boadt, “Mythological Themes and the Unity of Ezekiel,” in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. L. J. de Regt, J. de Waard, and J. P. Fokkelman (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1996), 211–31; Kenton L. Sparks, “The Problem of Myth in Ancient Historiography,” in *Rethinking the Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible*, ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Thomas Römer; BZAW 294 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 269–80.

49. Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, trans. Laurence Scott, rev. Louis Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968; repr., Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), 21.

50. See, e.g., William H. C. Propp, *Exodus*, AB 2, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, 2006); Susan Niditch, *Folklore and the Hebrew Bible*, GBS (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); Matthias Henze, “4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: Literary Composition and Oral Performance in First-Century Apocalyptic Literature,” *JBL* 131 (2012): 181–200.

creates both problems (by abetting religiously motivated apologetics that decontextualize biblical texts) and opportunities (by reconnecting stories about human beings with those about non-humans and recognizing that “myth” is not an emic ancient Near Eastern literary category, but one derived from Greek philosophy of the Hellenistic period).

Whatever terminology one prefers, it should be clear that the Hebrew Bible contains both first- and second-order religious communication.<sup>51</sup> In other words, some material works to connect humans to each other and to the deity to achieve an end (first order), while other material either reports such activity or seeks to argue for particular ways of carrying it out (second order). Often, indeed, a first-order text becomes second-order (or vice versa) when it is put to new uses. The content of the communication, therefore, includes not only propositions about the actions and attributes of deity, proper ways of performing ritual, or the grounding of human morality in an understanding of the divine realm, all topics characteristic of most religious systems, but also the proper deployment of the discourses about such topics in communities engaging them. In other words, the boundary between content and form becomes blurred as the users of the biblical texts acquire skills in certain practices of using them.

The historian encountering such a complex text must, therefore, do more than simply try to extract from it data to be arranged in some display case marked “Israelite religion.” The act of historical representation itself includes processing of memory, selection of evidence, and decisions about rules for presentation and testing of conclusions—and is thus a highly complex intellectual exercise. Thus, a positivistic approach to historiography flirts with a naïve view of reality at many points. True, as Paul Ricoeur pointed out in a brilliant treatment of the epistemology of historiography, the historian works to eliminate praise and blame and to judge the judges.<sup>52</sup> But the biblical texts themselves pass judgment in all sorts of ways, and those judgments form part of the stuff of the history of Israelite religion that historians now seek to reconstruct. Therefore, simply pushing the texts’ agendas to the side does not suffice. Rather, one must dance a double figure, first identifying religious behavior that the text is judging without joining in that judgment, and then considering the judgment itself as yet another part of the religious behavior being studied.

MEDIA. If discovering the “what” poses enough challenges, still more significant is the question of “how,” i.e., the media through which religion was transmitted. This is true in part because the boundary between medium and content is not always clear (hence the hackneyed cliché, “the medium is the message”), but more significantly because the media continue in different forms in the traditions deriving from ancient Israel. To be specific, hymns and prayers, as well as

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51. A different but related concept to that articulated by Andreas Wagner and his interlocutors in Andreas Wagner, ed., *Primäre und sekundäre Religion als Kategorie der Religionsgeschichte des Alten Testaments*, BZAW 364 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006).

52. See Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 314–33.

more discursive oral or written texts, all employed words to convey meaning. Alongside these forms of communication, moreover, the coding of meaning in the form of ritual employed choreography of bodies and objects within demarcated sacred space in complex ways. Material objects (incense altars, food offerings to the divine realm or ancestors, and so on) played a role. Architecture and designated space provided not only the stage for enacting ritual but also part of the mental furniture by which Israelites conceived of the world itself. Each point deserves some mention.

First, the use of language requires attention to philology, grammar, and syntax, topics addressed in other essays in this volume. In the humanities in general, the last few decades have seen a turn toward language that has recognized its capacity to reveal and conceal the inner structures of culture—power and submission, otherness and belonging, marginalization and identity. For biblical studies in particular, the growing interest in language as a signifier of webs of meaning (semiosis) offers promising new directions for study.

For the moment, however, let us confine ourselves to one aspect of language—its role as signifier of emotion (especially emotions underwriting beliefs and practices) that a culture identifies as religious. Without returning to the nineteenth-century notion, deriving from the great theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher, that the essence of religion lay in *Gefühl* or the interior complex of passions and commitments characteristic of human beings,<sup>53</sup> a view properly dispatched by William James and a host of other scholars over the past century,<sup>54</sup> it does seem clear that the texts of the Bible provide the only available access to ancient Israelites' feelings and motivations regarding their religious practices (which is why purely archaeological reconstructions often seem so bloodless, or at any rate reductionistic, in their accountings of human behavior). Here one may profitably draw on Martha Nussbaum's recent book on political philosophy, *Political Emotions: Why Love Matters for Justice*. Nussbaum argues that societies cannot sustain a commitment to justice or any other virtue without a robust emotional life. As she puts it, "All societies must manage two very disturbing emotions: grief and disgust."<sup>55</sup> She calls for a richly articulated civil religion that makes space for individual religions and no religion at all, but that draws on the assumptions of meaning and commitment that ordinarily inform religious traditions. As an antidote to radical libertarianism, the book has many merits, but it is chiefly of interest for the present conversation for its recognition that human societies do not operate mechanistically. While the specifics of Nussbaum's case lie outside the project of reconstructing ancient Israelite reli-

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53. Articulated classically in his *Über die Religion: Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern* (Berlin: Unger, 1799 and subsequent editions).

54. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (London: Longmans, Green, 1902).

55. Martha Nussbaum, *Political Emotions: Why Love Matters for Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 201.

gion, her discussion does point the historian of that tradition in its various permutations to an important set of concerns.

The Bible contains evidence of a rich emotional life, not of discrete, identifiable individuals but of Israelite society in different times and places. As we will see in the discussion of Hosea below, it is possible to reconstruct from some texts the sorts of emotional life that their creators sought to foster in the communities whom they sought to persuade toward their own understanding of Israelite religion. Recovering this emotional life is a great desideratum in the current study of the ancient Israelites.

Second, if attention to language invites complex discussion, then the study of the body as communication medium is still more complex. The study of the body as a convergence point of sign systems has gone on apace since the work of Foucault and his successors in the 1970s and 1980s, influencing Greco-Roman and ancient Near Eastern studies and to some extent biblical studies.<sup>56</sup> In the last field, my study of embodied kingship took up one side of the problem,<sup>57</sup> Jon Berquist built on a more explicitly Foucauldian interest in power and control in the body and the household,<sup>58</sup> and a number of studies of divine embodiment and disembodiment have recently appeared.<sup>59</sup> However, none of these studies

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56. An up-to-date and fairly comprehensive survey in European scholarship appears in Anne Koch, "Reasons for the Boom of Body Discourses in the Humanities and the Social Sciences since the 1980s," in *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte im Alten Israel, in Ägypten und im Alten Orient*, ed. Angelika Berlejung, Jan Dietrich, and Joachim Friedrich Quack, *Orientalische Religionen in der Antike* 9 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 3–42; cf. Sarah Coakley, ed., *Religion and the Body* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); eadem, *Powers and Submission: Spirituality, Philosophy, and Gender* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone, 2011); eadem, "Why All the Fuss about the Body? A Medievalist's Perspective," *Critical Inquiry* 22 (1995): 1–33.

57. Mark W. Hamilton, *The Body Royal: The Social Poetics of Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

58. Thomas Staubli and Silvia Schroer, *Body Symbolism in the Bible* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001); Jon L. Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality: The Body and the Household in Ancient Israel* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002); M. B. Szlos, "Body Parts as Metaphor and the Value of a Cognitive Approach: A Study of the Female Figures in Proverbs via Metaphor," in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. P. van Hecke, BETL 187 (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 185–95; S. Gillmayr-Bucher, "'Meine Zunge—ein Griffel eines Geschickten Schreibers': Der Kommunikative Aspekt der Körpermetaphern in den Psalmen," in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. P. van Hecke; BETL 187 (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 197–213; S. Tamar Kamionkoski and Wonil Kim, eds., *Bodies, Embodiment, and Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, LHBOTS 465 (London: T&T Clark, 2010).

59. Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Andreas Wagner, *Gottes Körper: Zur alttestamentlichen Vorstellung der Menschengestaltigkeit Gottes* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2010); Esther Hamori, "When Gods Were Men": *The Embodied God in Biblical and Near Eastern Literature*, BZAW 384 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008); Joel M.

has focused on the explicitly communicative aspect of embodiment, and much work remains to be done.

For Israelite religion, the problem of divine (dis)embodiment ties directly to long-standing concerns with the gender of YHWH, the complex attitudes toward images of the divine present in the Hebrew Bible, and the nature of Israelite monotheism as an evolving phenomenon. While it seems clear that the elevation of a single deity to a status qualitatively different from others has parallels in various parts of the Near East, at least within esoteric priestly circles (the sorts of circles in which the idea began in Israel as well),<sup>60</sup> the question remains of just what happens when a religious system emphasizes the existence of a single, omniscient god. Most obviously, such a shift involves intense intellectual activity as cults recast rituals and texts to eliminate or sublimate other deities (in the Bible, both ascribing several divine names to YHWH and eliminating others), reflect on divine genderedness,<sup>61</sup> and settle on concepts of the divine personality (which becomes inherently less stable as the deity absorbs functions of previously sharply differentiated beings). Israelite texts eventually moved toward a sort of apophatic solution to divine embodiment, emphasizing that YHWH could not be represented by images and that his body was both characterized by splendor (דָּהָר; Isa 2:10, 19; 35:2; Pss 8:6; 29:4; 45:5; 90:16; 96:6; 110:3; 111:3; 145:5, 12; 149:12) and possessed of competences that distinguished YHWH from those of other deities, marked simply as “idols” (עֲצָבִים, אֱלִילִים) i.e., images that do not signify what they seem to point to, puissant beings (see, e.g., Ps 115:4–8). In other words, the absent image comes to symbolize a plenitude of embodied meaning, while the present image comes to signify layers of non-meaning: the image, for the priestly theologians whose texts we read, becomes a lie.

On the human side of things, however, biblical texts fairly obsess over bodies, particularly in the very priestly materials that seek to eliminate the divine iconography or rather to make the human body, properly configured, the prima-

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LeMon, *Yahweh's Winged Form in the Psalms: Exploring Congruent Iconography and Texts*, OBO 242 (Fribourg: Academic; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).

60. See the studies in Barbara Nevling Porter, ed., *One God or Many: Concepts of Divinity in the Ancient World* (Casco Bay, ME: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute, 2000); Beate Pongratz-Leisten, ed., *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011); and in Greek religion(s), Burkhard Gladigow, *Religionswissenschaft als Kulturwissenschaft*, *Religionswissenschaft heute* 1 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2005), esp. 62–84.

61. Genderedness is, however, not a problem unique to monotheistic systems. As Julia Asher-Greve and Joan Goodnick Westenholz have shown, for example, the centrality of Mesopotamian goddesses to their religious systems waxed and waned during the second and first millennia BCE, with some erstwhile female deities even becoming male. Thus the Israelite preference for a male deity may have been part of a larger complex of religious change not entirely clear to modern scholars. See Julia M. Asher-Greve and Joan Goodnick Westenholz, *Goddesses in Context: On Divine Powers, Roles, Relationships and Gender in Mesopotamian Textual and Visual Sources*, OBO 259 (Fribourg: Academic; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013).

ry sign of the divine.<sup>62</sup> Hence the emphasis on circumcision (for males), careful control of menstrual blood and semen, and the prohibition of scarification, as well as the attention to corpse impurity. The human body became a major medium for communication about religion in Second Temple Judaism (and probably before).

The body as sign, however, does not stand on its own, but interacts closely with the third set of media, ritual and place. A useful starting point with the former term, ritual, lies in the definition demurely offered by Roy Rappaport: “the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers.”<sup>63</sup> While the definition of ritual, like most other things in religious studies, remains contested, this minimalist explanation has the merit of signaling ritual’s capacity for communicating meaning in a social system through a set of sign systems over time and independently of the subjects and occasions involved in the ritual. Rappaport himself notes that some “messages” of ritual are self-referential but acknowledges that its use of time, space, language, objects, and bodies also allows religions to adapt to a wide variety of experiences.

For the biblical texts, this generalized approach to ritual is useful because it moves one past the mere cataloging of types of sacrifice, say, or structuralist or poststructuralist constructions of the Priestly Code’s notions of purity and impurity to concerns with how ritual shapes character<sup>64</sup> or how it helps participants imagine a divine sanctuary that they can inhabit<sup>65</sup> or how even the prophetic critique of the interlocking ritual systems of purity and sacrifice served as a discourse that revealed differing views of the human body as a vehicle of communication with the divine and of the morality of various social structures.<sup>66</sup> In short, the denigration of ritual that biblical scholarship inherited from certain forms of Protestantism has now fallen entirely into disrepute.

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62. Note the suggestions of Takayoshi Oshima, “When the Gods Made Us from Clay,” in *Menschenbilder und Körperkonzepte im Alten Israel, in Ägypten und im Alten Orient*, ed. Angelika Berlejung, Jan Dietrich, and Joachim Friedrich Quack, *Orientalische Religionen in der Antike* 9 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 407–31.

63. Roy Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 110 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 24.

64. As shown by Roy Gane, *Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005). Building on the seminal work of his teacher Jacob Milgrom, Gane shows that ritual can be understood as a system of practices aiming at a particular end, and thus it is necessary to understand the purposes of the entire structure.

65. Hanna Liss, “Of Mice and Men and Blood: The Laws of Ritual Purity in the Hebrew Bible,” in *Literary Construction of Identity in the Ancient World*, ed. Hanna Liss and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 199–213.

66. So Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), esp. 75–100.



To speak of ritual in these new veins also demands speaking of space and the ways in which space works to carry meaning. This fact is most obvious in those biblical texts that speak of the Tabernacle (Exod 25–31, 35–40; Lev 1–10; Num 1–14) or the Jerusalem Temple (1 Kgs 6–8 and many other texts), but the concern with space is not limited to the explicitly architectural references, for space and structures within space always exist both in physical reality and in the imaginations of individuals and communities.<sup>67</sup> Imagined space often becomes more important for the use of physical space than do the material features of the space itself. So, to take the biblical example, Israelites imagined the Temple to be the simulacrum of YHWH's heavenly palace and thus the cosmos itself (cf. Ezek 40–48; Job 38), an imaginative act that necessitated intense theological reflection once the Temple was sacked and then rebuilt. Important work has begun understanding the constructions of space in ancient Israel and the Bible, but much remains to be done.<sup>68</sup>

THE ORGANIZATION OF COMMUNICATION. If the media of religious communication take diverse forms within the Bible itself, as well as in Israelite religion, the organization of that communication seems deceptively familiar. Most histories of Israelite religion offer detailed analysis of the offices of priest, prophet, scribe, and sage, and sometimes to the family structure on the assumption that these institutions formed part of the religious structure of Israel. For a history of religion that emphasizes communication, however, these institutions must appear to be interlocking circles of human beings using media of communication, including texts that they created and used, to articulate and argue for their own understandings of proper religious ideas, practices, and habits of mind. Far from being static or closed-in groupings, as some presentations of them seem to imply, most of these intellectual circles existed in close, if not always easy, relationship with each other. Future research needs to consider the functioning of these circles and the ways in which they competed and cooperated, moving away from notions of hermetically sealed groups that has too often marked the understanding of the field.

Another set of questions about the control of religious communication center on the roles of non-Israelite power structures on Israelite religious ideas and practices. Typically, debates revolve around the extent to which the policies and ideologies of the succession of empires that dominated the Near East after the ninth century BCE affected the decisions of Israelites. Thus several scholars argue that the shifting ideas about divine kingship responded to Assyrian political theology,<sup>69</sup> while others see early Second Temple priestly ideas as respond-

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67. Mark K. George, *Israel's Tabernacle as Social Space*, AIL 2 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009).

68. E.g., the volumes on "constructions of space," edited by Gert T. Prinsloo and Christl M. Maier, including *Constructions of Space V: Place, Space and Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, LHBOTS 576 (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013).

69. Shawn W. Flynn, *YHWH Is King: The Development of Divine Kingship in Ancient Israel*, VTSup 159 (Leiden: Brill, 2014); on a broader scale, Eckart Otto, *Das Deu-*

ing directly to Persian rule.<sup>70</sup> Sometimes these connections seem plausible, but careful attention to historical method remains crucial, for traditions develop complexly, always responding both to external stimuli and to the organic developments within the structures of belief that they inherit and transmit (and through which they mediate interpretations of external events and historical movements). Often the evidence of linkage is circumstantial at best. Moreover, causation is thus very difficult to determine, especially when biblical texts almost never signal the precise nature or extent of their responses to imperial structures. Biblical scholars would be well served to study the reassessment of post-colonial historiography now enlivening many disciplines as we consider the agency of subaltern people (the biblical writers, in our case).<sup>71</sup>

THE PURPOSES OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION. The difficulty of determining such things brings us to the final dimension of religious communication, its purposes. Determining purpose presents serious challenges, not least because actors may not understand their own motives (a hazard for both scholars and the people they study) and because all of us make choices based on a wide range of constraints and perceived advantages, including the emotional ones that most resist outside analysis. In Hebrew Bible studies, therefore, discovering the purposes of Israelite religious communication inevitably reflects, at least in part, the suspicions and commitments and visions of the good motivating the researchers themselves. Unsurprisingly, then, scholars influenced by Foucault and his innumerable epigones, for example, have tended to emphasize the power of religion to coerce and manipulate. Other scholars, of which I count myself one, will be more inclined to argue that, while all important human discourses do have such agonistic capacity, an emphasis purely on these dimensions produces many problems for analysis: vulgar Marxism leads to the paradox of the controlled finding liberation only through recognizing his or her lack of agential capacity for self-liberation. Similarly, the rubric of “false consciousness” often applies more to the analyst than to the analyzed whose behavior does not “fit.” A more circumspect approach seems to recognize that religious communication can also engender cooperation, harmony, and creativity, as well as conflict.

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*teronomium: Politische Theologie und Rechtsreform in Juda und Assyrien*, BZAW 284 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999); Baruch Levine, “Assyrian Ideology and Israelite Monotheism,” in *NINEVEH: Papers of the XLIXe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale*, ed. D. Colon and A. R. George (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 2005), 2:411–27.

70. E.g., Erhard Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period: The Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.E.*, trans. Siegfried Schatzmann, BibEnc 8 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011).

71. See the remarks in Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, “Approaches to Global Intellectual History,” in *Global Intellectual History*, ed. Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 3–29 (and most of the contributors to their volume); Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

## THE CASE OF HOSEA

At this point, then, the study of Israelite religion has traveled more than Lessing's "good two hundred miles," with the detours left and right risking a loss of focus on the ultimate destination. What does a communication-oriented, media-aware study of Israelite religion look like in practice? A brief practical exercise would be to consider a single biblical text, the book of Hosea, from such a point of view.

## THE BOOK OF HOSEA AS RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION

To begin, the book as a whole survives as a witness of an intellectual process by which the words of the eighth-century prophet and his followers grew over time into an organic whole. Although much of this process of rewriting and reuse remains unclear, three things at least do appear clear. The first is that the final redactors worked the book up into three parts (1:2–3:5; 4:1–11:11; 12:1–14:10), with each moving from oracles of doom to oracles of hope, and the book as a whole shifting from the qualified hopefulness of chapter 3 to the more exuberant rhapsody of chapter 14.<sup>72</sup> (Notably, the move from doom to hope figures in every text in the Book of the Twelve, indicating some level of redactional leveling across that larger corpus as well, and signaling the non-isolation of Hosea's tradents from others interested in prophetic speech.<sup>73</sup>)

The second point is that the book's final sentences comment on the entire work, and indeed a rudimentary expression of its creators' literary theory or at least strategy for rendering their work intelligible:

מי חכם ויבן אלה נבון וידעם  
כי ישרים דרכי יהוה הצדקים ילכו במ  
ופשעים יכשלו במ

Who is wise and understands these things, perceptive and knows them?  
For YHWH's trails are straight, and the righteous walk in them.  
But sinners stumble in them. (Hos 14:10)

In other words, proper reading of prophetic texts requires a set of moral commitments as well as intellectual capacities (a view ubiquitous in antiquity and

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72. On this overall structure, see Jörg Jeremias, *Der Prophet Hosea*, ATD 24.1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983); but cf. Gale A. Yee, *Composition and Tradition in the Book of Hosea: A Redaction Critical Investigation*, SBLDS 102 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987).

73. However one understands the evolution of the Book of the Twelve, this point stands. For some recent considerations, see Philippe Guillaume, "A Reconsideration of Manuscripts Classified as Scrolls of the Twelve Minor Prophets (XII)," *JHebS* 7 (2007): art. 16; Andreas Schart, "Das Zwölfprophetenbuch als redaktionelle Großeinheit," *TLZ* 133 (2008): 227–46.

latterly revived as virtue epistemology).<sup>74</sup> Moreover, the interpretation of the book requires the reader to recognize that its meaning is not straightforward, for not only do the threats and promises of the book seem to pose numerous contradictions, but discovering their meaning requires that readers' latent moral commitments become patent. They must, to put it simply, choose whether to be people of doom or of hope by rejecting or embracing the book's ideas about proper Israelite religious practice.

The third aspect of the book that is relevant here is that its narrative substructure (a term borrowed from New Testament studies but surely relevant for Hebrew Bible texts)<sup>75</sup> emplots the readers as they identify with figures of their own past. The book's plot line includes the Mosaic era,<sup>76</sup> the period of the monarchy,<sup>77</sup> and the era of return from the mass deportations,<sup>78</sup> even as it also includes both the northern and southern Israelite kingdoms in a complex set of relationships (possibly owing to redactional activity reflecting different views of the moral status of Judah).<sup>79</sup> As Erasmus Gaß has recently shown, the book deliberately plays on the tension between tradition and innovation, seeking a view of the future that reframes the past by returning to the intentions of YHWH *ab origine*.<sup>80</sup> The reader must choose how to write his or her own history as part of this larger narrative.

TOPICS, IMAGES, AND ORACLES. Probably the most famous cluster of images in Hosea concerns metaphors of the human body, with YHWH as cuckolded husband, Israel as both wayward wife and her illegitimate children, and the other gods or perhaps foreign powers (or both?) as Don Giovannis seducing and aban-

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74. One need not argue, however, that the emphasis on "wisdom" in Hos 14:10 and other texts implies a location for the book in so-called Wisdom circles, contra Susanne Rudnig-Zelt, *Hoseastudien: Redaktionskritische Untersuchungen zur Genese des Hoseabuches*, FRLANT 213 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 213.

75. Seminally, Richard Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

76. See Heinz-Dieter Neef, *Die Heilstraditionen Israels in der Verkündigung des Propheten Hosea*, BZAW 169 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987). For Neef, Hosea understands the period of the nation's origins as one of salvation, pure and simple, a view that rests heavily on Hos 11 in particular.

77. Henrik Pfeiffer, *Das Heiligtum von Bethel im Spiegel des Hoseabuches*, FRLANT 183 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999).

78. Jörg Jeremias, *Hosea und Amos: Studien zu den Anfängen des Dodeka-pheton*, FAT 13 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 67–85.

79. The classic treatment of the Judah texts remains that of Hans Walter Wolff, *Hosea*, trans. Gary Stansell, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974). The texts about Judah do not seem to come from the same hand, or at least the same point of view, though whether they are as "easily distinguished" redactionally as Wolff asserts (xxxii) is debatable.

80. Erasmus Gaß, "Hosea zwischen Tradition und Innovation am Beispiel von Hos 2,16f.," *ZAW* 122 (2010): 169–84.

doing their featherbrained prey. The book's repeated reference to sexual irregularity, named by various forms of the root זנה,<sup>81</sup> prompted earlier scholars to speak of cult prostitution and similar practices<sup>82</sup> and more recent work to discuss the (mis-)construal of gender in ways that oppress potential readers.<sup>83</sup> Without diving into the endless analysis of gendered language for YHWH and human beings prevalent throughout the book and especially in Hos 1–3, one may take a wider view and recognize that the interaction of those bodies and the language about their interaction, operating as they do by juxtaposing several semiotic fields (sex, marriage, agriculture, commodity trading, parenting, and others), creates an imagined world for the reader through which he or she may consider questions of honor and shame, belonging and alienation, commitment and betrayal. Without specifying precisely the infractions of Israel that merit the creation of a literary work of criticism, the book evokes through language a world of bodies in disarray signifying the entire world's chaos and disintegration.

A brief survey of Hosea notes the book's interest in many aspects of the religious beliefs and practices of Israel, including the priesthood as teachers and diviners (Hos 4:4–9; 5:1; 6:9), the use of images of the divine either in association with the cult of YHWH or not (Hos 4:17; 8:4; 10:5–8; 13:2; 14:9), open-air sanctuaries (4:13; 10:2 [?]), divination (4:12), sacrifice (Hos 3:4; 4:13–19; 6:6, 13; 8:13; 9:4; 11:2; 12:12; 13:2), and festivals (5:8–9; perhaps 8:1–8), among many other things. The text reflects a long-running debate between Hosea and his circles with other Israelites about the proper use of space, ritual, iconography, and language—media of religious communication—reflecting both sharp disagreement over basic ideas about the nature of deity as well as agreement on both the constituent parties and terms of the debate (e.g., his accusations against the priests of demagoguery and theft reflect the view, doubtless shared with other Israelites, that these figures should play honest brokers in Israel's religious life—the disagreement lay in the meaning of “honest”).<sup>84</sup>

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81. זנור (Hos 4:11; 6:10); זנונים (Hos 1:2; 2:4, 6; 4:12; 5:4); זנה (Hos 1:2; 2:7; 3:3; 4:10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18; 5:3; 9:1).

82. H. L. Ginsberg, “Hosea, Book of,” *EncJud*<sup>2</sup> 8:1010–24; James Luther Mays, *Hosea*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), esp. 9–15.

83. So e.g., Yvonne Sherwood, *The Prostitute and the Prophet: Reading Hosea in the Late Twentieth Century* (London: T&T Clark, 1996); Marie-Theres Wacker, *Figurationen des Weiblichen in Hosea-Buch*, Herders Biblische Studien 8 (Freiburg: Herder, 1996); cf. Göran Eidevall, *Grapes in the Desert: Metaphors, Models, and Themes in Hosea 4–14*, ConBOT 43 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1996).

84. Analysis of Hosea's innovative approach to tradition (i.e., common practice) remains a desideratum, though many scholars have noted the combination of elements in the book. For an interesting, if ultimately idiosyncratic view, note R. Scott Chalmers, *The Struggle of Yahweh and El for Hosea's Israel*, Hebrew Bible Monographs 11 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2008).

Perhaps a valuable window into the religious communication embedded in the book of Hosea occurs in the difficult poem in Hos 8:1–8,<sup>85</sup> which reads:

The shofar to your cheek,  
 Like an eagle to the house of YHWH,  
 Because they forsake my covenant  
 And transgress my law.  
 They cry out to me, “My God, we, Israel, know you.”<sup>86</sup>  
 Israel rejects the good.  
 The enemy pursues him.  
 They make kings, but not at my behest.  
 They ennoble what I don’t know.  
 They process their silver and their gold into their idols,  
 So that it may be carved.  
 Your calf is rejected,<sup>87</sup> Samaria;  
 My anger burns against them.  
 How long will they avoid innocence?  
 For is it from Israel?<sup>88</sup>  
 And a craftsman made it, and it is not Elohim.  
 For the calf of Samaria is smashed to bits.  
 For they sow wind and reap whirlwind.  
 Springs up no sprout,  
 Unless meal comes out.  
 Perhaps he will make it for strangers to eat it.  
 Israel is (the one) swallowed.  
 Now they are among the nations like an ugly pot.

Interesting as a poem in its own right, this brief oracle with its multiple voices and recursiveness—and arguably deliberate “symbolist” obscurity—expresses the sort of poetic surprise that is necessary to speak truthfully about times of cultural breakdown, as the biblical prophets must do. The poetic medium allows the author to speak of various aspects of religious practice, including the creation of monarchs (a reference to the instability of the monarchy in the mid-eighth century BCE), the creation and destruction of divine images associated with Samaria, the relationship between the divine image and the provision of food (resulting in a very odd turn of phrase in which the powdered image re-

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85. On the limits of the pericope, which are debatable, see the discussion in Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Hosea*, AB 24 (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 482–83.

86. So Jeremias, *Hosea*, 102. However, the Hebrew line places *ישראל* at the end, intentionally leaving ambiguous its grammatical status as subject or object, as worshiper or worshiped.

87. LXX reads the MT consonants *נח* as the imperative *ἀπόρριψαι*. Here I follow Jeremias, *Hosea*, 102, and many other scholars in reading the form as a *qal* passive participle, in part because the hortatory tone of the LXX does not seem quite to fit the Hebrew poem, admittedly a quite subjective reason.

88. V. 6a seems corrupt somehow.

minds the poet of flour), and the flat denial that the image is אֱלֹהִים, a claim that later became a truism in the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions but must have astonished the earliest audiences of the book.

This much too brief analysis of one poem in its larger context leaves unanswered the question of purpose: why did the tradents of Hosea preserve a text such as this? In part, its literary context provides an answer, for the middle section of the book depicts an internal drama within the mind of YHWH, who must decide on reconciliation with an unreliable Israel. By framing their history as a drama involving the self-predication of the deity, the creators of the book of Hosea sought to relativize their religious world and its practices and beliefs (much as the author of Job was to do in a still more artistically extraordinary way). For the book's creators, including apparently the prophet himself, the practices of religion no longer mean what they seem to mean because the networks of significations that they had assumed have come into question. The comments of one great biblical commentator, Martin Luther, about the opening metaphors of the book apply to the work as a whole: "Instead, [Hosea's] wife and children had to bear such shameful names as a sign and punishment of the ungodly people, who were so full of spiritual prostitutions (that is, of false gods), as he [i.e., Hosea] himself says in the text, 'The land runs from the Lord after prostitutions.'"<sup>89</sup> The boundary between signifier and signified is thus deliberately blurred to invite ongoing interpretation and resignification.

## CONCLUSIONS

A history of Israelite religion that employs the Bible as a primary resource must, then, deal with the literary complexity of that work, recognizing that it both reflects and refracts the religion(s) of its successive historical environments, thus tempting the modern historian to follow false trails and see mirages. At the same time, no credible history of Israelite religion can ignore the Bible because without it the Israelite sign systems and communal emotions underwriting them would remain known only in fragments. So we proceed with caution, but proceed we must.

By adopting a storytracking approach that identifies both the historian and the ancient textual (and material culture) data as elements in our work, we can find a path that traces the development of Israelite narrative, ritual, wisdom, and prophecy (the religion's cybernetic structure) over time while contextualizing the traditional dualities of our field (polytheism/monotheism, priest/prophet,

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89. "Sondern, das Weib und die Kinder, haben solchen schendlichen namen müssen tragen, zum zeichen und straffe des Abgöttlichen volcks, so voll geistlicher Hureren (das ist, Abgötteren) war, wie er selbs sagt im Text, Das Land leufft vom HERRN der hureren nach." Martin Luther, "Vorrede über den Propheten Hosea" (1545 ed.) in *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 11, part 2: *Die Übersetzung des Prophetenteils des Alten Testaments (Daniel bis Malachi)* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1960), 183. The spelling, punctuation, and capitalization follow the original of the Weimar edition.

ritual/justice etc.) in meaningful patterns of behaviors that more closely mirror the complexity of life in the ancient world. Close analysis of the biblical texts can make this possible.

Here, I have argued that the category “communication” if fully explored could shed new light on the biblical information about Israelite religion. Such an approach is not the only possible one, of course, but it does seem worth pursuing. One may hope that a number of scholars will undertake to do so.

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14  
Vowing Women:  
Personal Religion, Gender, and Power\*

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The concept of personal religion is especially useful in exploring biblical literature of the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods. Nuances of personal religion are manifested in: the use of first person speech; autobiographic forms and orientations; debates concerning individual responsibility for sin and punishment; images of self-embodiment; interest in the interiority of biblical characters; the portrayal of everyday actions and things that relate to essential aspects of worldview; and descriptions of self-imposed ritual.

Relevant to an appreciation of the personal dimensions of religion is the related concept of “lived religion,” developed by Robert Orsi, Meredith McGuire, and others who emphasize the importance of understanding and describing what people actually do and believe in cultures of religion. One thread in Israelite lived religion, the making of vows, connects especially well to Jo Ann Hackett’s work on women in ancient Israel. Women’s vows in the Hebrew Bible point to the interplay between personal and public and between private and institutional aspects of religion. The study of women’s vows, moreover, leads to a discussion of empowerment as it relates to identity and gender.

The vow in ancient Israel, a stylized promise involving conditions, reciprocity, and consequences, is a means of creating and reinforcing a relationship with the deity. Like prayer, the vow is not a late biblical invention, but a long-standing feature of personal religion in Israel.<sup>1</sup>

One setting frequently involved in the making of vows is that of war, a time of intense anxiety in which fighters seek to invoke the help of the deity in battle. Language of vowing, “to vow a vow” [*\*nādar nēder*], is explicit in Num 21:2 and in Judg 11:30 but the vow is implicit in the banning traditions which prom-

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\* A longer and differently contextualized version of this essay will be a chapter in a new book on personal religion in biblical literature of the neo-Babylonian and Persian periods, to be published by Yale University Press.

1. Jacques Berlinerblau, *The Vow and “Popular Religious Groups” in Ancient Israel*, JSOTSup 210 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996); Tony W. Cartledge, *Vows in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, JSOTSup 147 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992); A. Wendel, *Die israelitische-jüdische Gelübde* (Berlin: Philo Verlag, 1931).



ise, upon victory, to devote to destruction for the deity all human conquests and often inanimate spoil as well.<sup>2</sup> This tradition extends to the wider ancient Near East as evidenced by the ninth century BCE Moabite Inscription, in which King Mesha describes himself as devoting his conquests to Kemosh his god.<sup>3</sup>

The scene imagined in Judg 11, involving an explicit war-vow of judge chieftain Jephthah, introduces the theme of women, for offering up the daughter of Jephthah in sacrifice turns out to be the fulfillment of the vow's conditions. Facing battle with the Ammonites, Jephthah is filled with the spirit of the Lord and in this warrior's frenzy, vows a vow to Yahweh, employing the formula pattern found in Num 21:2. "If you will indeed give [*'im-nātôn tittēn*] the sons of Ammon into my hand, it will be: the emerging thing that emerges from the doors of my house to meet me upon my returning in peace from the sons of Ammon, shall be for Yahweh, and I will offer it up as a whole burnt offering" (Judg 11:30–31). Whereas the scene in Numbers describes a brief transaction, victory followed by the imposition of the ban, Judg 11 includes a longer tale linking myth and ritual. The individual vow of Jephthah has to do with a custom shared by Israelites, who in turn participate in a ritual rite of passage on personal and public levels. As the tale-teller's audience surely knew, that which emerges from Jephthah's house is his daughter, his only child. Jephthah is horrified but he and the girl both agree that the vow cannot be undone, for he has "opened his mouth to God" (Judg 11:35, 36). The conditions must be met, the promise kept, for Yahweh has upheld his end of the deal, victory against the Ammonites.

The daughter makes one request, that she be allowed to mourn her maidenhood with a cohort of her friends in the mountains for two months. This custom is to be relived and the story retold in an annual four day festival by young women of marriageable age.<sup>4</sup> With the etiology for a custom marking young women's passage from girlhood to womanhood, virginity to marriage, the personal vow meets public religion, and shared community custom is seen to relate to individual religious experience and sensibilities.

The act of offering sacrifice suggests another relevant set of biblical texts, including Lev 7:16; 22:18–23; 27; Num 29:39; and Deut 12:6, 17, 26; 23:18, 22–24 [Eng. vv. 21–23], that deal with votive offerings. The assumptions behind references to these ritual votive acts and objects parallel those that lie behind narrative sources and point to long-held beliefs in ancient Israel concerning vows. Deuteronomy 23:18 and Lev 27 provide some rich material revealing of

2. See Susan Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible: A Study in the Ethics of Violence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 28–55.

3. See the translation and discussion by Kent P. Jackson, "The Language of the Mesha Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 111–12.

4. Peggy L. Day, "From the Child Is Born the Woman: The Story of Jephthah's Daughter," in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, ed. Peggy L. Day (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 58–74.

women's worth and place in the social structure.<sup>5</sup> Karel van der Toorn juxtaposes the prohibition against paying for vows with the wages of prostitution (Deut 23:18) with Prov 7:14–20, in which a wayward wife mentions having just offered sacrifices to fulfill her vow, and concludes that women often prostituted themselves to cover the cost of expensive vows.<sup>6</sup> This idea has been rejected by a consensus of scholars.<sup>7</sup> More plausibly, Tikva Frymer-Kensky emphasized the connection implicitly drawn in the woman's words between meat-eating (made possible by sacrifice) and uncontrolled, socially destructive passion.<sup>8</sup>

All of the above biblical texts assume a "social relationship" with the deity.<sup>9</sup> And while the vow may well be spontaneous,<sup>10</sup> the fulfillment is framed by shared, institutional, and customary ritual. While the vow, moreover, may be occasioned by a personal situation and/or made in private, the fulfillment in the case of sacrifice, is public and institutionally shared by priests.<sup>11</sup> These poles of private and public, personal and institutional, and the interplay between them arise again in the third corpus we will discuss, biblical texts relating to the Nazirite vow.

References to Nazirite vows suggest two general categories. One set of texts deals with special birth and divine selection and treats the Nazirite status of a male child as God's choice or as the mother's vow to the deity to set aside her son for divine service. Numbers 6, however, describes a temporary, self-imposed vow by an adult of either gender. I agree with scholars who view the priestly passage of Num 6 as reflecting a later development.<sup>12</sup> Numbers 6 suggests an effort to reframe, domesticate, and institutionalize the tradition, and this reframing holds significance for women's vows and wider views of gender. As Berlinerblau notes, vows can be problematical for the establishment,<sup>13</sup> a matter to be discussed below.

The tale of 1 Sam 1 begins by introducing a man, Elkanah, and his two wives, Peninah and Hannah. Peninah has borne him children and Hannah has not. We learn that annually the man takes his family to the local shrine at Shiloh

5. Carol Meyers, "Procreation, Production, and Protection: Male-Female Balance in Early Israel," *JAAR* 51 (1983): 585.

6. Karel van der Toorn, "Female Prostitution in Payment of Vows in Ancient Israel," *JBL* 108 (1989): 197–201.

7. See, e.g., Hennie J. Marsman, *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*, *OtSt* 49 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 598–99 and references.

8. Lecture presented at Mt. Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA, fall, 1981.

9. See Michael Satlow, "Giving for a Return: Jewish Votive Offerings in Late Antiquity," in *Religion and the Self in Antiquity*, ed. David Brakke, Michael L. Satlow, and Steven Weitzman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 95.

10. See Satlow's discussion of Berlinerblau's interest in the "tension between spontaneous and institutionalized religious expression and its control" (*ibid.*, 97).

11. See *ibid.*, 91, 97; and Berlinerblau, *Vow*, 67, 145.

12. See Tony W. Cartledge, "Were Nazirite Vows Unconditional?" *CBQ* 51 (1989): 411–12.

13. Berlinerblau, *Vow*, 103.

to offer sacrifice to God (v. 3). One thinks here of Rainer Albertz's suggestions about family and local contexts for religious expression.<sup>14</sup> In describing this local practice, the author soon focuses on more intimate scenes, the stuff of lived religion. Family life, ritual pattern, and religious experience intertwine in the brief cameo scene between Elkanah and Hannah. He asks why she cries (presumably, instead of enjoying the family festivities), and why she does not eat (refusing to participate in a commensal custom that binds kin and links family members to their deity). He wants to know why her heart is bitter (perhaps especially at this special time and sacred place). Isn't he more to her than ten sons (v. 8)? The intensely personal interaction, in a religious setting, points to lived religion. In this intimate scene we see the interplay between human relationships, "the circle of kin" and "bonds of commitment" to which Orsi alludes, a special sacred setting, "their sense of place,"<sup>15</sup> and implicit expectations of the deity, the object of human petition. Orsi notes that religion is always "religion-in-action," "religion in relationships between people,"<sup>16</sup> and it is "situated amid the ordinary concerns of life, at the junctures of self and culture, family and the social world."<sup>17</sup>

In the following scene comes the vow itself. "Bitter of soul," Hannah prays to Yahweh, crying. The formulaic language, "to vow a vow," is found, as is the conditional framework, "If..., then I will...." The approach to the deity during the making of the vow is filled with the woman's self-deprecation. Perhaps Yahweh might deign to look upon his servant, remember her, and give her a son. If the deity does so, she will give the son to Yahweh all the days of his life and no razor will go across his head (v. 11). The association between a mother's vow and the conception or birth of a special child is suggested by Prov 31:2. In the opening of an interesting wisdom speech directed to "King Lemuel," his mother calls him "son of my vows" [*bar-nədārāy*], an epithet implying that the existence and perhaps the success of this special man also relates to his mother's vow.<sup>18</sup> Samuel will, as the Septuaginal and Qumran versions make explicit, become a Nazir, dedicated to God.<sup>19</sup> Conditions, reciprocity, and seriousness about

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14. See Rainer Albertz and Rüdiger Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 53. See also Carol Meyers, "The Hannah Narrative in Feminist Perspective," in "*Go to the Land I will Show You*": *Studies in Honor of Dwight W. Young*, ed. Joseph E. Coleson and Victor H. Matthews (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 123–24.

15. Robert Orsi, "Is the Study of Lived Religion Irrelevant to the World We Live In?" *JSSR* 42 (2003): 169.

16. *Ibid.*, 172.

17. *Ibid.*, 172. See also Meyers, "Hannah Narrative," 125.

18. See the discussion by Marsman, *Women*, 224, 597. The advice of Lemuel's mother has to do with avoidance of the wrong sort of women who "destroy kings," temperance, and defense of the marginal members of society, and is followed by the ode to the woman of valor, the ideal wife, discussed below in connection with the Nazirite vow and female status.

19. See 1 Sam 1:11 LXX<sup>B</sup> and 1 Sam 1:11, 22 4QSam<sup>a</sup>.

the fulfillment of the promise are all present, as in the war vows explored above and in the votive offerings described in passages such as Lev 7:16–18, Num 15:2–13, and Deut 12:6, 17, 26; 23:22–24. Thus, after he is weaned, Hannah brings her son Samuel to the priest Eli, whom he serves at the Shiloh shrine. A charismatic hero, whose very birth from a barren woman is the divine response to a vowing process, Samuel goes on to become prophet, priest, and warrior hero. His birth story is thus a marker of future greatness, and the Nazirite status itself, indicated in particular by the hero's long never-cut hair, is not inherited, earned, or assumed, but a matter decided before his birth, even perhaps before his conception. The annunciation of the hero judge Samson's birth shares similar themes, but the selection of Samson as a Nazir seems to be God's choice rather than a vow initiated by the barren mother in the hopes of healing her inability to conceive. Nevertheless, once Samson is made a Nazirite, the responsibility falls upon him to uphold conditions, with special emphasis on not cutting his hair. God initiates the situation, in a sense, placing the human being under a conditional vow, and when the Nazir fails to keep up his end of the deal and allows his hair to be cut, the deity withdraws support and Samson becomes weak like other men. The language of vowing is overt in Num 6, describing a Nazirite vow that an individual takes upon himself or herself.

The passage begins with language that treats the taking on of a Nazirite vow by any man or woman as an accepted or common possibility: "A man or a woman who..." or "If/When a man or a woman..." The vow is open to both genders, and it is not a matter of divine selection but of self-imposition, like any other vow. That women can choose to undertake this vow is of special importance. The traditional Nazirism of Samuel and Samson involves manly charisma associated with long hair and divine selection. Amos 2:11 describes candidates for Nazirism as "young men (*baḥūrêkem*)" raised up by God. It is the warrior's charisma that the long-haired Absalom, who is ultimately unsuccessful in supplanting his father, seeks to project. It is the *parā'ôt* ("long locks") alluded to in Deut 32:42 and Judg 5:2 that is associated with this manly status. Hairiness is the purview of certain holy men such as Elijah (2 Kings 1:8; see also Zech 13:4 and Jer 7:29).<sup>20</sup> As noted by Martin Noth and others, the Nazirism of the texts dealing with Samson and Samuel differs considerably from the late priestly version described in Numbers 6.<sup>21</sup> The participation of women in the Nazirite vow is truly transformative, and perhaps reflects late writers' explicit effort to manipulate this charismatic phenomenon.

The conditions of the temporary Nazirite vow given in Num 6 are formalized and specific, seeming to gather together details associated with Nazirism in the narratives of 1 Sam 1 and Judg 13. Like Samson's mother, who will conceive and carry a Nazirite chosen by God, the one who imposes Nazirism on

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20. See Susan Niditch, "My Brother Esau Is a Hairy Man": *Hair and Identity in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 81–94.

21. Martin Noth, *Numbers: A Commentary*, trans. James D. Martin (London: SCM, 1968), 54; Morris Jastrow Jr., "The 'Nazir' Legislation," *JBL* 33 (1914): 266–85.

himself or herself is to drink no wine. With a Rabbinic-style extension, not only wine itself is forbidden, but other products of the grape are included by name: according to Num 6:3, the list of proscribed items includes wine vinegar [*hōmeš yayin*], vinegar from other alcoholic products [*hōmeš šēkār*], any type of grape juice [*kol-mišrat 'ānābīm*], fresh grapes, and raisins [*'ānābīm laḥīm wibēšīm*]. Not cutting one's hair for the period of the vow is critical, as in 1 Sam 1 and Judg 13 (v. 5), and the Nazirite is also enjoined not to go near the dead, thereby becoming unclean (v. 6). The vow, moreover, is temporary. The person who vows sets a time limit on his or her status (v. 5).

How does one recognize that a person is a Nazirite of the kind described by Num 6? How does he or she signal this set-apart status?<sup>22</sup> If the person, like Samson, has never cut his hair, he, like a Sikh, clearly signals his status. Samson is said to wear his long hair in plaits. But what of the person whose Nazirism is temporary? How long would hair have to grow until it showed? The root  $\sqrt{PR}$  is associated with hair that grows long, untamed by a razor, as is Samson's, but the term can also mean 'let loose', 'wild', not neatly done in woven plaits or braids. Could it be that the female Nazirite wears her hair down or uncovered, whereas Num 5:18 suggests that under normal circumstances an adult woman would wear her hair up or tied back? Could she leave her hair uncovered, whereas normally her hair would be covered in public? Captured and exiled Judean women of the eighth century BCE are portrayed on the Lachish reliefs with covered hair, even in such dire conditions. Did men and women who make a Nazirite vow dishevel their hair, as do mourners?

It is possible that for men and women who are temporary Nazirites, the avoidance of the dead and non-participation in the drinking of wine may have been clearer markers to on-lookers of his/her vow than the condition of the hair. To attend to the dead and to share in the drinking of wine are quintessentially social occasions, signals of kinship and community, so that a lack of participation in these environments sets the Nazirite apart from quotidian social intercourse. Women are frequently associated with mourning practices and preparation of the dead<sup>23</sup> and would presumably be precluded from assuming these roles during the period of the vow.

Rules concerning avoidance of wine and the dead in fact associate the sort of Nazirism described in Num 6 with priestly status, for the priest is not to drink wine or strong drink before entering the sacred space, the tent of meeting. In this way he is in a condition of seriousness and sobriety as he attends to his mediating activities linking divine and human, a state of wholeness and holiness (Lev 10:8). Moreover, priests are restricted in their contact with the dead, as they need to maintain a state of ritual purity that enables them to perform in the cult

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22. For a discussion of hairstyles for man and women and questions about the visual impact of a temporary Nazirite vow, see Niditch, "My Brother Esau," 93–94.

23. See Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 373.

(Lev 21:1–6). Again, one might ask why the priestly writer is comfortable with women assuming a priestly-like status even temporarily.

It is important first to take stock of the way in which personal and public, peripheral and institutional, official and unofficial categories apply to versions of Nazirite vowing. Hannah's vow is pictured as a private one that nevertheless is made in a local but "official" sacred space, the sanctuary at Shiloh. Her interaction with the officiate at that place, Eli, takes place in private, but his words of blessing again suggest the interplay between unofficial and official religion, personal and institutional dimensions.<sup>24</sup> The vow of Num 6, with its ritual and priestly aspects and its carefully articulated regulations, even more strongly challenges these seeming dichotomies, emphasizing as do Orsi and McGuire the interplay between public and private, official and unofficial in lived religion.<sup>25</sup>

In many ways, this privately made but publically displayed vow involves interaction with religious officials. At the end of his or her vow period (Num 6:13–20), or when the vow and his or her status are prematurely ended by contact with the dead (Num 6:9–12), the Nazirite participates in ritual activity that is directed and controlled by the priest and from which the priest benefits. The ceremony marking interruption of the vow because of contact with the dead involves the sacrifice of turtledoves or pigeons, one as a sin or purification offering and the other as a burnt offering. The hair is shaved, the vow is voided, the person atones, and the sanctification process of growing hair recommences (v. 11) as the person brings a year-old lamb as a guilt or reparation offering. The priest must oversee this ritual. At the successful conclusion of the vow, the hair itself is shaved and placed on the fire that is under the sacrifice of well-being (v. 18). There are costly offerings of a lamb, a ewe, and a ram along with bread and cakes, grain and drink offerings. Offerings are placed by the vow-maker in the hands of the priest as an elevation offering, "holy for the priest" [*qōdeš hū(') lakkōhēn*; v. 20]. In other words, the priest is integral to the emergence from Nazirite status, and benefits materially from the process. The official shrine is involved, along with its official personnel, emphasizing the interplay between private and public, personal and official.<sup>26</sup>

What do men and women get out of this vow? Cartledge sees "the vows offered by 'temporary' Nazirites" as probable "conditional promises offered to God in the prospect of answered prayer rather than unconditional promises of unselfish devotion."<sup>27</sup> Conditional or not, the deportment that results from the vow to behave like a Nazirite for a certain length of time does suggest an as-

24. See Meyers, "Hannah Narrative," 125.

25. See also Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "'Popular Religion' and 'Official' Religion: Practice, Perception, Portrayal," in *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah*, ed. Francesca Stavrakopoulou and John Barton (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 37–58.

26. Compare Berlinerblau's emphasis on the way in which vowing can "circumvent" official religion (*Vow*, 153). See also Cartledge (*Vows*, 31), who notes that "regulations concerning vows may be seen as an attempt to keep the practice within the confines and control of the official cultus."

27. Cartledge, *Vows*, 23.

sumption of holiness, a denial of the pleasures of conviviality, and a willingness to miss out on the soothing responsibility of caring for the dead, even within one's own immediate family. In closeness to the deity, one assumes a priestly status at the expense of forms of interaction with society and kin. The term "devotion" does not seem out of place. On the other hand, there is status to be gained by exhibiting a self-assumed closeness to the deity. The Nazirite is showing others he or she is a special devotee of Yahweh for a set period of time. The self-assumed variety of Nazirite status, moreover, is not within reach of marginal members of Israelite society due to the cost of sacrifices integral to the ritual process. To be a Nazirite of the kind described in Num 6 is not only to assume holiness by demeanor and behavior but also to declare that one can afford it. This is perhaps to take issue with Berlinerblau's suggestion that vows of various kinds often appeal precisely to those "social groups usually categorized under the rubric popular religion."<sup>28</sup> The vow may offer opportunities for members of peripheral groups or people on the socioeconomic margins to make their own "unofficial" appeals to the deity, but vows that involve sacrifice or interaction with the priestly establishment, and that require financial means for the person to uphold his or her end of the deal point to the interaction between unofficial and official, private and institutional. Such vows appeal to the wealthy. The promise to praise the deity or to give one's son to the service of God better suits Berlinerblau's concept, but even in these cases the praise, if public, may spill over beyond the private, personal realm and the son may serve the "official" religious establishment.

The sociohistorical environment that lies behind Num 6 is, we would argue, the late-biblical, Persian period. While some priestly material in Leviticus and Numbers relating to ritual, its personnel, and its accoutrements may well reflect a pre-sixth century BCE culture, I agree with those who date the current form of priestly literature in Numbers to the Persian period, a time when an important set of leaders hold positions with the support of the colonialist Persian government.<sup>29</sup> When considering the temporary Nazirite in this context, we want to ask about those members of the Jewish community who might have had the motivation and wherewithal to take on a vow of this kind and what the priestly establishment got out of allowing or encouraging some men and women to assume a holy status reminiscent in some respects of priestly status itself.

Haggai offers some hint of the wealthy members of the return community when he complains about people living in paneled homes who do not contribute initially to the rebuilding of the temple (Hag 1:4). Zechariah refers to wealthy

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28. Ibid., 16; see also 33, 103, 125, and 154–55.

29. See Erhard Blum, "Issues and Problems in the Contemporary Debate Regarding the Priestly Writings," in *The Strata of the Priestly Writings: Contemporary Debate and Future Directions*, ed. Sarah Shectman and Joel S. Baden, ATANT 95 (Zürich: TZV, 2009), 31–44. For an excellent summary of positions concerning the date and complexity of priestly literature in Numbers, see Adriane B. Leveen, "Variations on a Theme: Differing Conceptions of Memory in the Book of Numbers," *JSOT* 27 (2002): 206–7 n. 11 and 218 n. 30.

donors who contribute to the crown of the leader (Zech 6:10–11). It would appear then that at least some of the early returnees were people of means. Other people of means may have been Northern Israelites whose elites also had ties with Persian authorities and who apparently thrived during the exile of southern elites.<sup>30</sup> Some of these well-off members of society, northern and southern, seem to have made alliances with members of the hereditary priesthood as well (see Neh 13:7, 28). Also among the well-off are the “people of the land,” local Judean landed gentry whose economic and social position may have been enhanced during the absence of the king and his cronies. For any of these people, the assumption of Nazirite status may have held personal and public rewards.

Leong Seow offers a glimpse of the Persian period socioeconomic environment in which the appeal of temporary Nazirism makes sense. Seow has made a case for the “boom and bust” nature of economic well-being in the Persian period. Drawing upon a range of biblical and extrabiblical sources, he points to the existence of a new middle class, the lively participation in commerce by its members, and the role of a cash economy.<sup>31</sup> This situation led to new wealth but also to economic instability as today’s newly rich could suffer financial ruin tomorrow. The favor of Persian patrons is part of the mix, and such alliances could be fragile and unreliable. In the face of such heady uncertainty, assuming the image of the holy person who can take on the heavy financial responsibilities of sacrificial offerings due at the end of the process is understandable, a matter of status demanding others’ respect. At the same time, the vow no doubt expresses the hope that an act of devotion will encourage the deity’s continued support. That women seek to participate in this projection of status and request for divine favor is not surprising and speaks to the theme of women’s vows as they relate gender, power, periphery, and center.

Christine Yoder has pointed to Proverbs 31 as an indicator of women’s economic engagement in the Persian period.<sup>32</sup> This paean to the “woman of valor” describes a capable person engaged in cottage craft (v. 13), overseeing her complex and wealthy household’s economic needs (vv. 14, 15), and her commercial activities beyond the household (v. 16). She is a counterpart to her husband, an elder who sits in the city gate and whose success relates to his wife’s capabilities. That women in this period, as well as in the period preceding the exile, had economic and political power is confirmed by the existence of cylinder seals

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30. See Gary N. Knoppers, “Revisiting the Samaritan Question in the Persian Period,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 265–89.

31. Choon-Leong Seow, “The Social World of Ecclesiastes,” in *Scribes, Sages, and Seers: The Sage in the Eastern Mediterranean World*, ed. Leo Perdue, FRLANT 219 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 189–217.

32. Christine Roy Yoder, “The Woman of Substance (אשת-חיל): A Socioeconomic Reading of Proverbs 31:10–31,” *JBL* 122 (2003): 427–47.



inscribed with women's names.<sup>33</sup> The seals, which indicate ownership and identity, point to women's economic and political power. It is thus imaginable that an adult woman, like men of her class, would seek to take upon herself a Nazirite vow. A woman of means, perhaps a wealthy widow, or any woman of significant resources, might seek this obligation for the same reasons as men: to project status, to perform an act of devotion to Yahweh, to offer thanks as promised for his munificence, or to engage the deity in continued blessing. Why, however, are the priests who have provided us with Num 6 comfortable with this phenomenon for men and for women?

Holy people can be a challenge to the establishment. There is no reason to assume that the Persian period saw an end to the appearance of charismatic holy people regarded as Nazirites without having taken a vow mediated by the priestly elite, perhaps sons vowed by grateful parents or regarded as chosen by the deity.<sup>34</sup> Such figures can rally marginal members of society or form an alternative power base to the establishment, as did the hairy man Elijah. Indeed, in periods of social change such as the time following the Babylonian conquest, charismatic figures of various kinds may become more prevalent, a vehicle for protest.<sup>35</sup> Charismatic Nazirites, who have never cut their hair, could serve as visible symbols of alterity. I would argue that the hereditary priesthood, having their own vested interests in a particular kind of stability, attempt to co-opt Nazirism by making it just another vow, available to men and to women who can afford its responsibilities. The priests themselves oversee important concluding ritual aspects of the vow process and benefit from the sacrifices owed. But what about the women?

The priestly writers of the Hebrew Bible were in general not supportive of public displays of female religious power. One thinks here of the priestly version of Miriam's supposed pretensions to power in Num 12, a view of the female Levite leader which contrasts with her portrayal as prophet, her mention as one of the three heroes of the exodus account along with her brothers Moses and Aaron, and her inclusion in their genealogy elsewhere (Exod 15:20–21; Mic 6:4; Num 26:59). While on the one hand, the possibility of undertaking a Nazirite vow allows a woman temporarily to assume a special and holy status, on the other hand the fact that Nazirites may now be female might be seen to diminish the role's importance and significance. Even women can take on a vow to live as a temporary Nazirite.

In this way, the hereditary priests seek to transform Nazirism, offering people options for the expression of deep and sustaining religious devotion in a time of change and instability even while inserting themselves into the vowing pro-

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33. Nahman Avigad, "The Contribution of Hebrew Seals to an Understanding of Israelite Religion and Society," in *Ancient Israelite Religion*, ed. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 205–6.

34. See Niditch, "My Brother Esau," 89, 101 and the discussion of Jer 7:29 and Zech 13:4.

35. See Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 69–73, 306–8.

cess. The priests thus underscore their own unique, inherited status as those who link divine and human, a life-long condition of holiness rather than a limited assumption of special identity. Moreover, they domesticate Nazirite status, perhaps seeking to neutralize the life-long, powerful, charismatic, and manly phenomenon exemplified by a figure such as Samson, whose Nazirism, in fact, stems from his mother's interaction with the deity. It has often been noted, in fact, that it is Manoah's wife who first receives the message about Samson, not Manoah himself. It is she who is informed about the condition involving hair and she who understands the angel's presence as a blessing not to be feared. The husband is not in the loop.<sup>36</sup> In the priestly traditions of Numbers, however, there are protections for upholding male power in the form of conditions placed on the act of vowing itself, and the Nazirite vow as described in Num 6 would come under these controls.

Vows are a quintessential example of "personal" religion as they can, as Tony Cartledge notes, allow a person their own, unmediated "channel of access to the deity."<sup>37</sup> For Israelite women, vows can not only be private acts of devotion but also a means of self-assertion, a way to express their own desires and identities, apart from husband or father. In dealing with overbearing fathers or husbands, vows of asceticism of various kinds or vows not to participate in expected patterns of social behavior can be acts of rebellion or signs of passive aggression. These forms of resistance are sanctioned by the culture, ways in which women can use roundabout means to make a point or obtain a goal without direct confrontation. On the other hand, the priestly tradition insists on ways of reining in this potential display of power by women.

Numbers 30 begins with the reminder that an oath to Yahweh must be fulfilled and cannot be broken. The remainder of this chapter, however, is occupied with women's vows and with circumscribing women's independence in this arena. In this respect, a woman's relationship with the deity, like much else in her life, is the purview of the men around her.<sup>38</sup> Exceptions to this control are widows and divorcees (v. 10 [Eng. v. 9]), as is true with other aspects of their lives. And so, if a young woman in her father's household vows a vow or takes an oath upon herself, if the father hears of her vow or oath and says nothing [*wəhehēriš*, lit. "is silent"] then the vow stands and she must fulfill it (v. 5 [Eng. v. 4]). If, however, he hears about it and he refuses or restrains or forbids her, then the vow does not stand and the deity will forgive the young woman, not holding her to her obligation under the vow (v. 6 [Eng. v. 5]). Once she is married her husband has the same power, should he hear about the vow, to allow or to cancel (v. 13 [Eng. v. 12]). One variety of vow is mentioned in this chapter, the vow of self-abuse usually understood to mean fasting (v. 14 [Eng. v. 13]).

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36. See Susan Niditch, *Judges: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 145–46 and references there.

37. Cartledge, *Vows*, 31. See also Berlinerblau, *Vow*, 101.

38. See Susan Niditch, "The Wronged Woman Righted: An Analysis of Genesis 38," *HTR* 72 (1979): 145–46.

One wonders if perhaps she also can vow to neglect her appearance or to refuse to eat a particular food or to participate in festivals or to have sex. These are all issues that later Rabbinic material explores vis-à-vis women's vows, for women's vows continue to be an area of concern in the post-biblical period.<sup>39</sup>

What if the husband or the father somehow does not hear about what his wife or daughter has vowed? Might he not notice a less obvious vow until it had gone on for months? Would a hidden vow adequately accomplish a woman's goals of self-assertion or is it possible that a secret act of reciprocity between the woman and the deity might make her feel empowered and more able to deal with the conditions of her life? Does Elkanah learn of his wife's vow concerning their son Samuel only after the birth (1 Sam 1:22)? He acquiesces to her wishes in deference to her and perhaps even more importantly to the deity who controls all blessing (1 Sam 1:23).<sup>40</sup> Would other husbands refuse to give up a son even if his wife had vowed him to God? There could be not so subtle pressures at work, fears of denying God his due. God has, after all, fulfilled his end of the deal, to provide a son to the previously barren wife.

Vowing is thus a powerful medium but one with ambiguous limits and ambivalent implications for gender roles and relations. Controls surrounding the vow are somewhat porous, and the woman's vow may well be an arena for tension within families, as men and the women of their household vie for control on the one hand and a display of independence on the other. Numbers 6 and 30 suggest that the priestly establishment recognizes women's traditional power to place themselves under a vow, but this vow is circumscribed for daughters in their fathers' households and wives in their husbands'. In the view of priests, the vows of such women are generally under the control of their men, although as noted above, there may have been ways to keep the vows a secret or ways to force the men to acquiesce, and thereby to engage in genuinely personal expressions of religion. Adult widows and divorcees have the freedom to make vows without fear of abrogation. Including the Nazirite vow under the heading of vows open to women in fact diminishes the unique status of the long-haired, life-long, charismatic, and divinely selected holy person whose Nazirism is integral to his maleness but whose status, as in the case of Samuel, may result from the vow of a woman.

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39. A vow to make an offering to the Queen of Heaven on the part of a wife might well disturb her more orthodox husband as it does Jeremiah (Jer 44:15–30), although the husbands in Jer 44:15–18 are supportive of their wives. Husbands presumably have the right to intervene and cancel such vows, which were probably regarded to have power even when the enforcer is a deity other than Yahweh. On baking cakes to the Queen of Heaven, status, and women's religion see Susan Ackerman, "'And the Women Knead Dough': The Worship of the Queen of Heaven in Sixth-Century Judah," in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, ed. Peggy L. Day (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 109–24.

40. On Elkanah's response and its implications, see Marsman, *Women*, 240, 619.

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Biblical *'ādām* and Mesopotamian Adapa  
as “Primal Human”:  
A Cognitive Approach

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INTRODUCTION

Biblical scholars have long noticed connections between biblical Adam and the Mesopotamian Adapa myth.<sup>1</sup> Yet, because of the complexity of the texts and the presence of ambiguous and enigmatic elements, there is little agreement among commentators on how these thematic elements function within the narratives and how the texts address human experience.<sup>2</sup> At the heart of both narratives a character makes the choice to ingest something while under the influence of a speech. The speech occasioning each act of ingestion presents critical information about the nature of the substances, thereby linking the substances directly to life and death. Moreover, both narratives place considerable emphasis on the wisdom or knowledge of the protagonists. Recent developments in cognitive science offer new ways to consider such narratives. Through attention given to the fundamental problem of how language relates to experience, cognitive science, broadly construed, offers insight into how we assess concepts comparatively and how we think of their place in human experience.<sup>3</sup>

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1. For a review of the early literature, see Giuseppe Furlani, “Il mito di Adapa,” *Rendiconti della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche* 6.5 (1929): 113–71.

2. For a survey of positions, see Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 240–47; Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative: A Literary and Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 2–3* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 99–107. See also Giorgio Buccellati, “Adapa, Genesis and the Notion of Faith,” *UF* 5 (1973): 61–66; Niels-Erik Andreassen, “Adam and Adapa: Two Anthropological Characters,” *AUSS* 19 (1981): 179–94.

3. The cognitive approach pursued here is broad and heuristic. Cognitive approaches have been developed in a variety of ways, fed by greater interdisciplinary efforts among fields such as anthropology, psychology, linguistics, and philosophy, and combined with advances in neuroscience and AI (Artificial Intelligence). For a readable general discus-

The purpose of this article is to consider the central role that ingesting substances tied to life and death plays in the Eden narrative and the Adapa myth from a cognitive perspective. I will pursue this inquiry by giving attention to the cognitive structures governing ingestion decisions, and by considering how such structures relate to and are problematized by language. Cognitive science purports to model the fundamental relationship between image schemas and speech or language—or, differently stated, between implicit knowledge and explicit knowledge. I propose here that this relationship is similar to the relation between cultural knowledge embodied in adult food preferences on the one hand, and, on the other, linguistic expressions of this knowledge, wherein eating and drinking are expressed as matters of life and death. The contradictory instructions of Ea and Anu in the Adapa myth, and of the serpent and God in Genesis, are mediated verbally. In each case, these divergent linguistic expressions present alternative image schemas residing in the respective speakers' cognition. The metaphor of ingestion in the narratives is an ostensive ground (experienced by the body) that anchors the most salient problem and central concern of the text: the problem of language. If language is what constitutes the human, then we must consider more carefully the pragmatic value of the concept "primal human" in this light.

We may begin by observing how each literary character may be considered to represent a different type of "primal human" figure. Scholars have observed literary evidence suggesting Adapa was understood to be representative of humanity. The equation a-da-ab = a-mi-lu in the lexical series known as *lú = ša*, and the epithet *zēr amēlūti*, 'seed of humankind' (according to one version of the Adapa tradition [Fragment D 12]), point to an essential affinity between biblical Adam and Mesopotamian Adapa.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, Adapa is presented as a priest of the city of Eridu, and is referred to by the nominal phrase *apkallu mār eridu*, "a sage, a son of Eridu." These references suggest that Adapa was not regarded as the first human. Rather, the term *apkallu* connects Adapa with the culture-bearer tradition.<sup>5</sup> Biblical *'ādām* is explicitly situated at the beginning of humanity, in Gen 1, 2–3 and Job 15:7–8. Significantly, the outlines of a cogni-

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sion, see Edward Slingerland, *What Science Offers to the Humanities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Among the many treatments within biblical studies, see especially the programmatic work of Ellen van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies: When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition and Context* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009). See also recently Bonnie Howe and Joel B. Green, eds., *Cognitive Linguistic Explorations in Biblical Studies* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014).

4. M. Civil, *The Series lú=ša and Related Texts*, Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon 12 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 93. This equation was first recognized by Erich Ebeling, *Tod und Leben nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1931). See also S. A. Picchioni, *Il poemetto di Adapa* (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, 1981), 122–23.

5. For references and discussion, see Dexter E. Callender, Jr., *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human*, HSS 48 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 81–84.

tive approach are adumbrated by early interpreters of Gen 2–3, who found warrant for understanding the characters' eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as pertaining to the maturation of the individual or the civilizing development of humanity. In different ways Adapa and biblical 'ādām are threshold figures between the realm of "human" experience and the "divine" conditions that give rise to it.

### I. LANGUAGE AND COGNITION

Research in several areas of cognitive science has begun to demonstrate that human language ability extends cognitive activity that is prelinguistic. The human body encounters and interacts with its environment through sensory-motor systems that record patterns of neural activity. These patterns are, in effect, embodied "images," commonly referred to as "image schemas" in terminology coined by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson.<sup>6</sup> These "recurring patterns of our sensory-motor experience" are what, in essence, give us reality. Furthermore, they comprise the "ground" by which we make sense of and reason about the stream of our experience: they are available to us for use in structuring abstract concepts and "to carry out inferences about abstract domains of thought."<sup>7</sup> Image schemas form the basis of an implicit knowledge that orients us with respect to "the world" and its various entities. As such, they may also represent modes of naïve ("folk") theorizing—such as intuitive physics (our embodied knowledge of physical properties) and folk psychology—by which we make judgments about the mental states of other perceived intentional agents.<sup>8</sup> Inasmuch as they connect us with the world, image schemas are meaning-establishing entities within the body. Although the basic contours of reality are available to us through phenomenological reflection, the fields of neuroscience,

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6. Lawrence Barsalou and others view such patterns as "perceptual symbols" ("Perceptual Symbol Systems," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 22 [1999]: 577–609). On the term "image schema," see George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

7. Mark Johnson, "The Philosophical Significance of Image Schemas," in *From Perception to Meaning: Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics*, ed. Beate Hampe, *Cognitive Linguistics Research* 29 (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2005), 18–19. George Lakoff demonstrates how deeply our embodied experience is implicated in "objects" in the world when he observes that "the overall perceived part-whole structure of an object correlates with our motor interaction with that object and with the functions of those parts (and our knowledge of those functions). It is important to realize that these are not purely objective and 'in the world'; rather they have to do with the world as we interact with it; as we perceive it, image it, affect it with our bodies and gain knowledge about it"; Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, 50.

8. For discussion of the role of intuitive physics in cognition and in relation to religious concepts, see Pascal Boyer, *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), esp. 97–100, 130–31, 159.



psychology, and linguistics provide additional information through controlled examination of unconscious processes of thought.<sup>9</sup> Image schemas are “psychologically real.” That is to say, they are, in a sense, our deepest and most reliable sense of reality. They lie at the basis of our efforts to process information, both linguistic and nonlinguistic.<sup>10</sup> As noted above, cognitive theorists consider human language to extend cognitive activities that are prelinguistic, even though language lies along the same continuum and differs only in complexity. Thus, language serves to further enhance and extend the implicit knowledge encoded in image schemas.

As a result, language offers tremendous advantages for interpersonal communication. First, linguistic ability creates a new class of objects in the world. The linguist Ray Jackendoff characterizes language as providing “a scaffolding that makes possible certain varieties of thought that are more complex than are available to nonlinguistic organisms.”<sup>11</sup> Language thus offers increased and transformed conceptual capacity, making higher levels of learning without direct experience both possible and more readily preservable.<sup>12</sup> According to Andy Clark, it is language that makes available “second-order cognitive dynamics” and “creates the stable structures to which subsequent thinkings attach.”<sup>13</sup> Concepts are thus structured discursively as sentence-based objects, available for critical reflection and further extension in the form of even more complex linguistic objects. Accordingly, the products of language may aptly be thought of

9. Johnson, “Philosophical Significance,” 21. As Johnson cautions, although image schemas may be characterized structurally in terms of patterns, it is also important to give attention to the “nonstructural, more qualitative aspects of meaning and thought” and to “their embeddedness within affect-laden and value-laden experience” (*ibid.*, 27).

10. Raymond Gibbs and Herbert Colston, “The Cognitive Psychological Reality of Image Schemas and Their Transformations,” *Cognitive Linguistics* 6 (1995): 347. Antonio Damasio contends that “images are the main content of our thoughts, regardless of the sensory modality in which they are generated and regardless of whether they are about a thing or a process involving things; or about words or other symbols ... which correspond to a thing or process” (*Descartes’ Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* [New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1994], 107–8).

11. Ray Jackendoff, “How Language Helps Us Think,” *Pragmatics and Cognition* 4 (1996): 2.

12. Roy A. Rappaport suggests that “the transcendence of the concrete and the emergence of grammar were mutually causal,” in that discourse empowered by grammar escapes the concrete and the present and creates and explores “worlds parallel to the actual as those of ‘the might have been,’ ‘the should be,’ ‘the could be,’ ‘the never will,’ ‘the may always be’” (*Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* [Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1999], 5). Note also Michael Polanyi’s useful discussion of the emergence of hierarchy and boundary conditions, and his application of this concept to linguistic entities, in which he describes emergent products as necessarily less tangible than the level that produced them (“Transcendence and Self Transcendence,” *Soundings* 53 [1970]: 88–94, esp. 90).

13. Andy Clark, *Being There: Putting Brain, Body, and World Together Again* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 208–9.

in terms of technology. On this model, natural languages function like high level programming languages—machines run by the brain.

Resultantly, language use also suffers certain drawbacks. As Daniel Dennett explains, “High-level languages are virtual machines, and they create (temporary) structures in a computer that endow it with a particular pattern of strengths and weaknesses. The price one pays for making certain things ‘easy to say’ is making other things ‘hard to say’ or even impossible.”<sup>14</sup> Although the products of language offer considerable technological potential, the conventional (or “arbitrary”) nature of linguistic signs renders them potentially problematic. The linguistic signs we cooperatively create for use as tools to facilitate communication are also subject to various forms of “misuse.” The values of the products of language are established by cooperation and are under constant revision and negotiation.<sup>15</sup> Laboratory experiments on emergent communication demonstrate how the key to shared communication lies in the cognitive capacity to detect and then repair miscommunication in a variety of ways through the introduction of new symbols, changes to the meaning of symbols, or by otherwise adjusting conceptualizations to represent the imagined perspective of the other.<sup>16</sup> Because the products of language arise as a cooperative effort, information can also be misinformation. The medium that increases the capacity for sharing “knowledge” concerning “real” states of affairs—in the world or embodied in

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14. Daniel C. Dennett, *Consciousness Explained* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1991), 302. On language as emergent, see also van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 17–19.

15. Luc Steels points to the growing body of psychological evidence for “progressive and continuous adaptation of semiotic networks” demonstrated even within a single conversation (“The Symbol Grounding Problem Has Been Solved, So What’s Next?” in *Symbols and Embodiment: Debates on Meaning and Cognition*, ed. Manuel de Vega, Arthur M. Glenberg, and Arthur C. Graesser [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008], 225–26). Semiotic networks belong first to the individual, but are “coupled to those of others” and “progressively coordinated in a group, based on feedback about their usage” (*ibid.*, 225). Steels calls the set of all such networks a “semiotic landscape,” which, while reflecting “general tendencies,” continuously changes “as every interaction may introduce, expand, or enforce certain relationships in the networks of individuals” (*ibid.*, 226). My use of the term “conventional” is restricted to referencing the particulars separating natural languages. I do not intend “arbitrary” in the sense of Saussurian linguistics. Rather, I am pointing to the natural polyvalence of all signs, directly tied to the notion that meaning arises in use. On this, see especially Ray Jackendoff’s discussion of “gaps where language does not adequately express the structure of thought” (“How Language Helps Us Think,” 28–30).

16. Steels, “Symbol Grounding Problem,” 226. See also Bruno Galantucci, “An Experimental Study of the Emergence of Human Communication Systems,” *Cognitive Science* 29 (2005): 737–67. Steels appeals to the work of Elaine J. Francis and Laura A. Michaelis (*Mismatch: Form-Function Incongruity and the Architecture of Grammar* [Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications, 2002]) demonstrating “how human speakers and hearers engage in intense problem solving to repair inconsistencies or gaps in their grammars, and thus expand and align their linguistic systems with each other.”

the individual (as mental states of affairs)—with whatever consequences may follow also increases the capacity for sharing “false knowledge” with its attendant consequences. The attempt to evaluate false knowledge or acts of misinformation in terms of lies, social lies, oversimplifications, jokes, mistakes, irony, metaphors, figures of speech, etc., only hint at the complexity, depth, and truly subtle nature of the problem.<sup>17</sup>

## II. THEMATIC ELEMENTS AS COGNITIVE STRUCTURES: FOOD/DRINK AND CLOTHING

Both Adapa and Gen 2–3 feature a crucial ingestion choice influenced by language. In both cases, furthermore, this choice is directly associated with life and death, itself a central concern (if not principal theme) of each narrative. In both narratives, a second motif accompanies and amplifies the trope of the ingestion of particular substances. This second motif is comprised of the covering and adorning of the body; here too, the motif deals crucially with the themes of life and death, but its communicative role with respect to these themes is only indirect. Nonetheless, both the decision to ingest a substance and the subsequent clothing of the protagonist’s body remain highly relevant from a cognitive perspective: both plot points reflect fundamental aspects of human social experience that—in addition to having origins in remote antiquity—are established early in life for every individual. The fact that commentators have long observed the presence of food, clothing, and language in the narrative surrounding the primal human figure of Enkidu, who passes from an original animal-like state to “civilized” human, further recommends such an approach.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, each element may be approached from a developmental standpoint, in which prelinguistic cognitive image schemas are elaborated by a more complex linguistic expression.<sup>19</sup> In the following subsections of section II, I consider humans’ so-

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17. See Mark Johnson, *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 91–98. See also the extensive treatment by Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion*.

18. Mario Liverani argues Enkidu’s incorporation into human (civilized) life is brought about through “bread and beer, clothing and oil,” a “fourfold cluster of essential goods” that appears in texts from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Syria-Palestine and Anatolia (*Myth and Politics in Ancient Near Eastern Historiography* [London: Equinox, 2004], 11). See also Aldina Da Silva, “La symbolique du repas au Proche-Orient ancien,” *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 24 (1995): 147–57, esp. 147. For discussion of Enkidu in relation to biblical imagery of creation, see Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, esp. 247.

19. Douglas Knight’s discussion of the term *concept* among the various forms of *traditio* and *tradtum* to denote “the mental image of a thing” which “has its formal basis in lexemes” is especially appropriate in light of cognitive image schemas, as is his cautionary note regarding the “danger ... of identifying a concept too closely with a word” (*Rediscovering the Traditions of Israel*, 3rd ed., StBibLit 16 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006], 12–13). Mettinger gives considerable attention to defining such terms,

cial and cognitive associations with food and clothing within a theoretical framework informed by studies of cognitive development. In section III, I will suggest that this theoretical framework provides a principled basis for understanding ingestion decisions, the act of adornment with clothing, and these elements' respective relationships to linguistic expression as comprising the principal "ground" of the texts. Finally, in section IV, I apply these observations to the narratives themselves.

#### FOOD: LETHAL INGESTION AND LANGUAGE

Ingestion is a universal biological problem for humans. That is to say, all humans experience a fundamental life-death relation to food. This relation resides in prelinguistic cognitive structures and, in turn, facilitates the kind of linguistically-based cognition that mediates decisions concerning which substances are safe to ingest and which substances are not. As developmental psychologist Paul Rozin observes, "Ingestion and associated activities, such as food selection, engage far more choice, cognition, and acquisition of knowledge and attitudes than do the other basic biological needs."<sup>20</sup> Human biological constraints require that the enhanced complexity of this decision-making faculty be established early in life. Determining what is and is not edible is "one of the most significant categorizations that any animal makes, perhaps *the* most important."<sup>21</sup> Humans lack biological mechanisms (ingrained in genetic coding) possessed by many non-human species that would enable us either to distinguish edible from inedible or to efficiently extract nutrients from non-nutritive materials. Therefore, human survival hangs on the intervention of knowledgeable caregivers and extensive socialization. The child adopts adult food preferences as a result of these mechanisms.<sup>22</sup>

Humans address the ingestion problem through image schemas that are supported and enhanced by language. Underlyingly, the adult food preferences acquired by young children emerge as survival-based image schemas, embodied "cultural" knowledge shared by individuals and groups. For the individual, the cognitive structures or patterns that encode ingestion preferences are initially established through repetitive behavioral cues given by the caregiver, and per-

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particularly *theme*, which forms the principal basis for his analysis (*Eden Narrative*, 42–47). See also David J. A. Clines, "Theme in Genesis 1–11," *CBQ* 38 (1976): 438–507.

20. Paul Rozin, "Development in the Food Domain," *Developmental Psychology* 26 (1990): 555.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Rozin states, "learning about what is edible—and in what culinary and other contexts—is one of the most important and complex challenges that face a young child," noting, "the costs of errors are great, and yet with the lack of genetic specification of edible entities in [dietary] generalists and the highly restricted food experience of the nursing mammal, the problem seems almost insurmountable" (*ibid.*, 555, 558).

petuated through the young child's tendency to overimitate.<sup>23</sup> These cognitive image schemas are reinforced and extended in a variety of ways, including linguistically, and on the basis of several experiential and communally-established criteria. Among the factors that support the adult classification of edibles and inedibles, Rozin cites *sensory-affective factors*, whereby "some items are accepted or rejected because of liking or disliking for their sensory aspects: taste, smell, and, to a lesser extent, appearance"; *anticipated consequences*, whereby "some items are accepted or rejected primarily because of beliefs about the consequences of ingesting them"; and *ideational factors*, whereby "some substances are rejected or accepted primarily because of our knowledge of what they are, their origins or their symbolic meanings."<sup>24</sup>

Although language provides effective extension of and support to image schemas that address the ingestion problem, language also introduces a critical vulnerability. As Scott Atran and Joseph Henrich explain:

With the evolution of language, this faith in culturally transmitted information became vulnerable to exploitation by individuals—particularly successful and prestigious individuals—able to transmit practices or beliefs they themselves might not hold. Language makes exaggeration, distortion, manipulation, and deception easy and cheap. Before language, learners observed and inferred people's underlying beliefs or desires by their behavior. Those wishing to deceive would have to actually perform an action to transmit it.<sup>25</sup>

Given the hazards posed by the potential presence of undetected toxins and pathogens in levels high enough to render insufficient the categorization of substances into merely "edible" and "inedible," human cognition must also categorize all recognizably edible and potable substances under the rubric *provisionally* edible/potable. The most effective safeguard by which to verify that the substance is indeed ingestible—to witness one's food tasted—is also the most costly and impractical. Thus, language also places a premium on the capacity to detect intentional states that it can effectively mask. Commonly characterized as *social intelligence*, this capacity is referred to by cognitivists refer as *Theory of Mind Module* (ToMM or simply "Theory of Mind"). Simply put, this cognitive module reflects the capacity to infer internal mental states from external cues in

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23. See the discussion of Scott Atran and Joseph Henrich ("The Evolution of Religion: How Cognitive By-Products, Adaptive Learning Heuristics, Ritual Displays, and Group Competition Generate Deep Commitments to Prosocial Religions," *Biological Theory* 5 [2010]: 18–30, esp. 22), who cite as evidence from developmental psychology the study of D. E. Lyons, A. G. Young, and F. C. Keil ("The Hidden Structure of Overimitation," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA* 104 [2007]: 19751–56), documenting "a potent tendency for 'over-imitation' in children" and demonstrating "how deeply overimitation influences our acquisition and encoding of concepts."

24. Rozin, "Development in the Food Domain," 556–57.

25. Atran and Henrich, "Evolution of Religion," 22.

order to make sense of or predict behavior.<sup>26</sup> Procuring safe food and water requires a high degree of cooperation and trust. Food is therefore also a fundamentally social substance.

Significantly, studies demonstrate that while children at age two put virtually anything in their mouths, by age three they begin rejecting as inedible many of the items so rejected by adults.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, studies have demonstrated unwillingness on the part of toddlers to eat a novel food that a stranger has offered without first seeing the stranger eat it.<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting that this transition in a crucial sense constitutes an entry into the adult world. The successful transition to adult food habits is singularly inscribed in the weaning process, widely recognized among humans as being among the major transitions in an individual's life.<sup>29</sup>

The ingestion problem lays bare the problem of language. The individual's principal guide and defense are the adult food habits acquired early in life. Language provides an effective way to support and extend these image schemas; it also provides a tool by which they can be instantly and effectively undermined.

#### CLOTHING: COVERING AND COMMUNICATION

Apart from any physical protective function it might offer, covering and adorning the body bears a natural connection to language. Social psychologists have approached clothing in terms of *appearance perception*, "a social-cognitive process [that] leads to inferences and states of expectation as a result of these processes."<sup>30</sup> The individual organizes perceptions through inferences drawn from appearance cues, which are used in the naïve theorizing (folk psychology) that

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26. For general discussion of the idea of a Theory of Mind Module (ToMM) see Simon Baron-Cohen, *Mindblindness: An Essay on Autism and Theory of Mind* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 51–55; Slingerland, *What Science Offers*, 129–36.

27. Rozin, "Development in the Food Domain," 558. This accords with evidence that places weaning practices in the ancient Near East between ages two and three. For discussion and references see M. Stol, *Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting*, CM 14 (Groningen: Styx, 2000), 181.

28. See Atran and Henrich ("Evolution of Religion," 22), citing Lawrence Harper and Karen Sanders, "The Effect of Adults' Eating on Young Children's Acceptance of Unfamiliar Foods," *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 20 (1975): 206–14.

29. For general discussion of the definition and significance of weaning across species, see Paul Martin, "The Meaning of Weaning," *Animal Behaviour* 32.4 (1984): 1257–59. Not surprisingly, weaning as a rite of passage is amply demonstrated in biblical and ancient Near Eastern tradition. Age classes found in Middle Assyrian lists reflect an awareness of the cognitive development of the child in the transition around weaning, presenting in succession '(child) of the breast' (*ša irti*), 'weaned' (*pirsu*, literally 'separated one'), 'guided one' (*tarû / tarîtu*), 'pupil' (*talmîdu*). Note also the corresponding role of the adult in the term for 'dry nurse' *tārîtu* (lit. 'who brings [the child]', 'who leads', 'who guides'). See Stol, *Birth in Babylonia*, 190, and references.

30. Susan B. Kaiser, *The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context*, 2nd, rev. ed. (New York: Fairchild, 1997), 257.

recommends further action.<sup>31</sup> Appearance perception is an important contextual factor involved in this ongoing theorizing, which we may easily see as a process of divining, “the hunches, intuitions and revelations of human experience.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, in clothing, our acts of covering and adornment are acts of communication, in which we offer signs for others to perceive. Appearance perception also entails the concept of the hidden—that which does not appear or is not available to perception.

It was once widely held that the origins of clothing lay in the impulse to cover the body in response to instinctive shame. Critics have rightly pointed out the influence of Christianity and Gen 2–3 behind this view as well as the fact that modesty and standards of modesty are socially learned.<sup>33</sup> At the level of the individual, it stands to reason that of the cognitive schemas associated with clothing, an embodied sense of the socially-construed propriety of covering the body (physically enforced by another intentional agent) would be established prior to other schemas that encode more complex social distinctions.<sup>34</sup> Within the context of the ancient Near East, clothing began for the individual in the practice of swaddling infants.<sup>35</sup> Thus, until the individual acquisition of linguistic skills, covering the body would be reinforced by the repeated actions of the caregiver (through physical and other cues). At the risk of oversimplifying, re-

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31. Kaiser (ibid.) notes four commonly accepted stages of the process, according to which the perceiver *selects cues*, draws *interpretive inferences* by association with cognitive structures, makes additional “cognitive leaps” of *extended inference*, and anticipates a response, based on inferred traits, the *anticipatory set* (following W. John Livesley and D. B. Bromley, *Person Perception in Childhood and Adolescence* [New York: Wiley & Sons, 1973]). Kaiser observes many studies showing that adults, in comparison with children who verbalize their inferences, judge appearance “on a more implicit, complex level” (*Social Psychology of Clothing*, 257–58).

32. Ibid., 259.

33. For a survey of early views on the origins of clothing, see Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 14–17.

34. We may easily see such early physical and nonlinguistic reinforcement in terms of what Damasio refers to as “somatic markers” (*Descartes’ Error*, 165–222). As the patterns are established, they are associated with subtle emotional valences. See also Michael Kimmel, “Properties of Cultural Embodiment: Lessons from the Anthropology of the Body,” in *Sociocultural Situatedness*, vol. 2 of *Body, Language and Mind*, ed. Roslyn M. Frank, René Dirven, Tom Ziemke, and Enriqu  Baern rdez, *Cognitive Linguistics Research* 35 (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008), 77–108. Kimmel addresses what he calls the “Euclidean imagery bias,” the tendency to describe image schemas “devoid of the intentionality, emotions or entire scenario they are enacted with” (ibid., 87–88).

35. The imagery of the abandoned infant in Ezek 16:4, 7 (cf. Hos 2:3), who was not swaddled at birth and remained naked in youth, is predicated on bodily covering as the “proper” state from infancy into adulthood. Moreover, that the child is exposed in the open field at birth and remains there unpitied and naked until Yahweh’s act of compassion exhibited in the act of washing, anointing, and clothing her invites comparison with Enkidu’s movement from the field (and his corresponding nakedness) to civilization (in which he becomes clothed and anointed through the influence of Shamhat).

ardless of the adult values that attend clothing, it is the need to cover the body that establishes the earliest cognitive schemas with respect to clothing.

Finally, the association between covering the body and social emotions (such as embarrassment and shame) can reasonably be understood in light of the relatively early emergence of social emotions that are foundational to other more precisely articulated social distinctions encoded in dress.<sup>36</sup>

### III. INGESTION AND COVERING IN THE ADAPA MYTH AND GEN 2–3

Food and clothing, when viewed from the standpoint of emerging cognitive structures, take on a significance within these narratives that highlights the centrality of language as a force capable both of bolstering and imperiling the integrity of the structures.

#### LETHAL INGESTION AND LANGUAGE IN THE ADAPA MYTH AND GEN 2–3

In both Gen 2–3 and the Adapa myth, an ingestion choice is influenced by speech that presents critical information about the nature of the substances and articulates the direct link obtaining between the substances and the life or death consequences of ingesting the substance. The two narratives present this relationship in divergent, but typologically similar, ways: Genesis frames the issue within the natural context of distinguishing edible from inedible fruit in the garden. The Adapa myth frames the issue within the cultural context of hospitality. The inherent difficulty of determining food safety, discussed above, comprises an aspect of human daily life contributing to the dramatic tension in each narrative. The connection of food and language in the narratives bears cognitive relevance for all individuals. Because this relevance is fundamental to human cognition, it should be considered a primal coordinate of the human experience.

The danger posed by opportunities for ingestion places a premium on humans' capacity for social intelligence (see discussion of the "Theory of Mind" above). This necessary reliance on social intelligence is perhaps nowhere better exemplified than in the practices centered on the institution of hospitality. Hospitality is itself predicated upon the relationship between Self and Other—normally an Other that is previously unknown to the Self. Both the guest and, in more extreme cases, the stranger represent degrees of the Unknown to the host—and vice versa. Although from a formal standpoint the guest and the stranger are the "outsider" to the "insider" host, this relationship of insider to outsider is reciprocal. The danger each poses to the other lies in the close proximity of potentially conflicting interests that lie hidden within the individuals'

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36. For discussion, see Michael Lewis et al., "Self Development and Self-Conscious Emotions," *Child Development* 60 (1989): 146–56.



cognition and behind the screen of sociality and manners.<sup>37</sup> Thus, anthropologists consider it “scarcely surprising to find hospitality the ‘focus of parody and laughter, of fantasy and fear.’”<sup>38</sup>

THE ADAPA MYTH. This ambivalence toward the act of hospitality is precisely what we encounter in the Adapa myth, which presents the pivotal aspect of the narrative—the offer of food and drink—as a case of situational irony. Whether we are to infer acts of deception beyond the ironic tenor of the story is less clear. To summarize, Adapa, we are told, breaks the wing of the South wind by means of a curse, causing it to cease blowing “toward the land”—an amazing feat with catastrophic consequences for the local ecosystem.<sup>39</sup> Upon observing the consequences and then learning the cause, the enraged sky god and putative head of the pantheon Anu immediately summons Adapa to appear before him. To prepare his devotee for the encounter, Ea, “who knows heaven,” changes Adapa’s appearance and instructs him on how to comport himself. He dresses Adapa in mourning attire, tells him what to say upon his arrival, and informs him how to respond to offers of hospitality. Adapa is counseled to accept the offer of clothing and anointing but he is enjoined not to partake of the food substances offered. Ea’s warning suggests potentially lethal consequences:

“They will offer you food of death, do not eat!  
They will offer you water of death, do not drink!”<sup>40</sup>

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37. As Matei Candea and Giovanni da Col remind us, “Being a guest or a host in a meal or banquet is a daring venture. Mauss once remarked that *gift* is the German word for ‘poison’, and Maurice Bloch reflected that the closest commensal transactions are also the most dangerous, hence the fear of poisoning” (“The Return to Hospitality,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18 [2012]: S10, citing Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Ancient Societies* [New York: Norton and Company, 1967], 61–62; and idem, “Commensality and Poisoning,” in idem, *Essays on Cultural Transmission* [Oxford: Berg, 2005], 45–60).

38. Candea and da Col (ibid., quoting Sherry B. Ortner, *Sherpas Through Their Rituals* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978], 64).

39. The effect is also expressed in the disappearance of the fertility deities Dumuzi and Gizzida. On the significance of the South Wind, see Georges Roux’s study of weather patterns in Mesopotamia connecting the southeasterly wind to rainfall (“Adapa, le vent et l’eau,” *RA* 55 [1961]: 13–33).

40. B 29’–31’. My translation. Unless otherwise noted, all translations and references to tablet and line for Adapa will follow the edition published by Shlomo Izre’el (*Adapa and the South Wind: Language Has the Power of Life and Death*, Mesopotamian Civilizations 10 [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001]). See also the earlier translations and studies of Picchioni (*Poemetto di Adapa*); Stephanie Dalley (*Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000], 182–88); and Benjamin Foster (*Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*, 3rd ed. [Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2005], 525–30). An abridged version of Benjamin Foster’s translation of the fragment from Amarna (Fragment B), appears as “The Adapa Story,” *COS* 1.129. All references to the newly published Sumerian version from Tell

When the moment arrives, however, Anu instead calls for the “food of life” to be brought for Adapa and we read:

They brought him food of life, he did not eat.  
They brought him water of life, he did not drink.<sup>41</sup>

Anu’s response is to laugh and ask Adapa why he chose not to eat or drink, to which Adapa simply replies, “Ea my lord told me: ‘Do not eat, do not drink.’” What has happened? Was Ea wrong in his prediction of what Adapa would be offered? Or, as some have speculated, was his intent to trick Adapa? Was Anu’s call for “food of life” a ruse, in which he was attempting to poison Adapa? Some commentators consider the phrases “food of death” and “water of death” to reflect an assumed magical or otherwise special metaphysical property.<sup>42</sup> If, for a moment, we set aside assumptions concerning the metaphysical relations within the universe of the narrative, the cultural framework at a more basic level suggests that we should more simply hear in Ea’s advice, “they will offer you hospitality; don’t consume it or you will die.” The crucial aspect of the narrative here—if Anu’s laughter and question and Adapa’s response is any indication—is that Adapa is unable to tell the difference. Such an inability to distinguish lethal from safe substances appears in the myth of Nergal and Ereshkigal, where, in a similar scene, Ea warns Nergal not to partake of the offer of hospitality in the underworld. Here, however, the items are simply called “bread” (*aklu*), “meat” (*šīru*), and “beer” (*šikru*) without additional grammatically linked qualifiers.<sup>43</sup> Thus the elements appear to be normal apart from their chthonic associations with the underworldly baker, cook, and brewer who made them and who extend the offer to eat and drink. Interestingly, in the oldest and most complete version of Adapa (the recently published Sumerian version from Tell Haddad/Meturan [SumMet]), the parallel expression of Ea/Enki’s warning mentions only “bread” and “water.”<sup>44</sup> In an additional line that follows, however, Enki

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Haddad/Meturan (henceforth, SumMet), are to Antoine Cavigneaux, “Une version sumérienne de la légende d’Adapa,” *ZA* 104 (2014): 1–41.

41. B 77–78 (translation of Foster, *Before the Muses*, 529).

42. For F. M. T. de Liagre Böhl there is no deception in Ea’s advice. As otherworldly substances, the food and water in question convey life for the gods but are lethal to humans: “nectar and ambrosia are poison for mortals” (“Die Mythe vom weisen Adapa,” *WO* 2 [1959]: 416–31, here 426, my translation). Shlomo Izre’el argues that Adapa has died and understands the food and water of death as elements marking the passage from life to death. Accordingly, he sees the water of life (*mē balāti*) as having properties able to revive Adapa, as the *mē balāti* does for Ishtar in the Descent of Ishtar (*Adapa and the South Wind*, 137–41).

43. E.g., Stephanie Dalley, “Nergal and Ereshkigal,” *COS* 1.109:40’–ca. 45’. On the connection of this passage to Adapa, see Böhl, “Mythe vom weisen Adapa,” 419–20. See also discussion in Izre’el, *Adapa and the South Wind*, 138.

44. SumMet 138–39, see Cavigneaux, “Version sumérienne,” 24, 27.

clarifies these as “deadly gifts.”<sup>45</sup> Given the discordant note struck by the designations “food of death” and “water of death”—particularly within the context of hospitality here—it seems sufficient to consider Ea’s choice of terminology to be ironic by design.<sup>46</sup> That is, we should hear, in the most basic sense, a warning against rashly ingesting food or drink that will have been poisoned. Adapa is certainly in danger given the material efficacy of his curse, which has presented a challenge to the authority of Anu.<sup>47</sup> This danger seems particularly evident in the emphasis that Fragment A (2’) places on the power of Adapa’s speech and in the ambiguous manner by which the text presents Adapa’s speech as the speech of Ea and compares it to that of Anu. The danger is equally evident in the concern voiced by Anu in Fragment D (5’–6’) over the subversion of his own speech by that of another.<sup>48</sup> The conflict and danger highlight the ambiguity of the proffered substances as a fundamental and inescapable social reality associated with hospitality. Here the narrative reflects the dictum of Candea and da Col: “Objects transacted in hospitality are always ‘objectiles’, object-events which threaten to collapse into their opposites. Food may turn into poison ... and homes into prisons or traps.”<sup>49</sup>

The social dynamics that are constantly at work in daily life thus shift our focus from the substances offered in hospitality to the intentions of the one who offers them. The problem of ingestion as a biological constant and in its peculiar relation to language quite naturally serves to highlight the practical problem of agency, intentionality, and the Theory of Mind.<sup>50</sup> The danger posed by Anu’s

45. SumMet 140, following Cavigneaux’s reading, níġ-ba ug<sub>7</sub> “présents mortels” (ibid.). Cavigneaux considers line 140, which separates the instructions for food and water (lines 138–39) from the instructions regarding the garment and the oil (lines 141–42), the “explanation and pivot” of what is the “key passage of the story” (ibid., my translation).

46. Food and water are by definition edible and potable; together they sustain life. At the same time, however, any edible or potable substance is potentially contaminated with undetectable toxins, inadvertently or intentionally.

47. Thus Böhl suggests that Adapa “comes as a defendant and supplicant in sack-cloth and ashes, as if he were already doomed to die” (“Mythe vom weisen Adapa,” 426, my translation).

48. The fact that the act of breaking the wing of the South Wind is elsewhere performed only by the demon Pazuzu is telling. On the “strong ties” between the *apkallu* sages and Mesopotamian demonology, see most recently Amar Annus, “On the Origin of Watchers: A Comparative Study of the Antediluvian Wisdom in Mesopotamian and Jewish Traditions,” *JSP* 19 (2010): 277–320. On the connection of Pazuzu and Adapa, see Piotr Michalowski, “Adapa and the Ritual Process,” *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 41 (1980): 77–82.

49. Candea and da Col, “Return to Hospitality,” S10. They echo the work of Julian Pitt-Rivers, whose work has informed scholarly understandings of Adapa (see, for example, Liverani, *Myth and Politics*, 8, 22).

50. “Indeed when we consider their material trappings, hospitable events, like artworks, could be seen as traps ... apparatuses which are both objectified forms of the intentionality of their creator” (Candea and da Col, “Return to Hospitality,” S10, citing

putative act of hospitality is constructed as a matter of outward linguistic expression and inner cognition. Here we cannot help but notice that Ea's instructions to Adapa are predicated on the fact that he "knows the hearts of the great gods."<sup>51</sup> But as the ambiguity of the scene would have it, Adapa does not know the deities' intentions; neither does the reader. Whether Ea deceived Adapa or simply miscalculated and was outfoxed by Anu, the result is the same for Adapa in the position of guest. The narrative offer of food and water is mapped onto the human cognitive structures that are tasked with protecting the individual from potentially lethal ingestion and which recognize the vulnerabilities introduced with the medium of language.

Finally, Adapa's report of the instructions given by Ea highlights the central role of the offer of food and water; this report completes the frame of situational irony. According to Fragment B, after Adapa refuses the food of life and the water of life, Anu, seeming genuinely puzzled, questions Adapa concerning the reasoning behind his choice:

Anu looked at him; he laughed at him:  
 "Come, Adapa, why did you not eat or drink? Hence  
 you shall not live! Alas for inferior humanity!" "Ea my lord  
 told me: 'Do not eat, do not drink!'"<sup>52</sup>

What we are to make of the discrepancy between Ea's instructions reported earlier in the narrative and Adapa's report, which lacks references to the "food of death" and the "water of death," is not at all clear. Perhaps the narrator is offering relevant information about Adapa. The fact that Adapa does not further qualify his response invites us to consider the possibility of over-caution or misreading. Various proposals by D. O. Edzard, Stephanie Dalley, Ann Kilmer, and Jack M. Sasson present ways in which Ea's words might have been heard differently.<sup>53</sup> Although Sasson argues that such a solution relieves interpreters from

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Alfred Gell, "Vogel's Net: Traps as Artworks and Artworks as Traps," *Journal of Material Culture* 1 [1996]: 15–38).

51. C 4, 10, reflecting an expanded form of the epithet used in B, "who knows heaven." This phrase also follows the reference in line 2 of Fragment C to the rage of Anu's heart. On the character of Fragment C as an expansion, see Izre'el, *Adapa and the South Wind*, 36.

52. B 66'–69'.

53. D. O. Edzard argues for reading Ea's instructions as conditional, "If they offer you the food of death, do not eat..." ("Eas doppelzüngiger Rat an Adapa: Ein Lösungsversuch," *Or* 71 [2002]: 415–16). Edzard's proposal is followed in Foster's translation of Adapa (*Before the Muses*, 528). Dalley suggests a pun *akala ša mūti*, 'food of death', and *akala šamūti*, 'food of heaven' (*Myths from Mesopotamia*, 188 n. 9). See also the suggestion of Anne Kilmer, who reads on the basis of *emum*, 'to become', *mē emūti*, 'water of transformation' ("Verse Translation of Adapa [Amarna Version]," in *Mesopotamian Poetic Language: Sumerian and Akkadian*, ed. M. E. Vogelzang and H. L. J. Vanstiphout, CM 6, Proceedings of the Groningen Group for the Study of Mesopotamian Literature 2 [Groningen: Styx Publications, 1996], 111). Jack M. Sasson suggests

the “need to psychoanalyze Ea, questioning his motivation in derailing a wondrous future for his patron Adapa,” we are, nonetheless, left unable to account for Ea’s motives in using ambiguous language. Within a naturalistic frame, what seems most relevant for Adapa as human is the rupture in communication evident in Adapa’s failure to read the signs of his divine patron Ea—again, Ea knows the hearts of the great gods, but Adapa does not know the heart of Ea.<sup>54</sup> The relationship is one between the god who symbolizes the ability for humans to acquire knowledge and the paradigmatic human—in the particular form of the intermediary sign specialist—who constructs effective knowledge in part on the emergent symbols of language. In Fragment B, Anu’s laughter appears to be directed toward the situation in general, prompting his question to Adapa. In Fragment D, however, Anu does not question Adapa regarding his rejection of the food and drink. Rather, the reader is told explicitly that

[A]nu laughed loudly at the deed of Ea:  
 [“Among the god]s of heaven and earth, as many as there are—who could have  
 do[ne] this?  
 Who could have made his speech greater than the speech of Anu?”<sup>55</sup>

The “deed of Ea” clearly refers to Ea’s instructions. Given the anointing and change of clothing that Adapa accepts from Anu (and that we may consider as unnecessary to the storyline, were it not for the successful ruse of mourning attire [see below for further discussion]), the phrase may include the instructions in their entirety. Read alongside the ambiguous equation of the speech of Ea and Adapa earlier in the same fragment, it appears in these lines that the entire divine economy turns on the figure of Adapa and his ability (or lack thereof) to understand Ea’s admonitions. The Adapa myth is thus rife with irony in its ending, which praises neither Ea nor Anu—and certainly not Adapa! The command of the deity remains ambiguous.

GEN 2–3. We encounter the same interpretive difficulties in Gen 2–3. For good reasons, eating the fruit in Gen 2–3 has been widely understood in terms of an act of “disobedience” to the divine commandment.<sup>56</sup> On a more fundamental level, however, we observe that the act is framed as a potentially lethal decision

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interpreting a pun with *mūtum* and *mutum*, the latter normally rendered ‘husband’ but also ‘human being’ or ‘warrior’, and hence, the double meaning “food for humans/of death” (“Another Wrinkle on Old Adapa,” in *Studies in Ancient Near Eastern World View and Society Presented to Marten Stol on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. R. J. van der Spek [Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2008], 4).

54. Thus Edzard argues that Ea’s statement was hypothetical and “spoken with a wink” and that Adapa failed to read between the lines properly (“Eas doppelzüngiger Rat,” 416, my translation).

55. D 4’–6’. Translation by Izre’el (*Adapa and the South Wind*, 39).

56. In Gen 2:16 the instructions are presented explicitly as a command to the man ( $\sqrt{\$WH} + 'al$ ; cf. 3:11).

to ingest the forbidden fruit of the tree. The outcome of this decision hinges on language's dual abilities both to communicate the divine command and to be subverted. The narrative's plot is presented as following naturally from inferences drawn directly from speech acts. The couple is forced to make a decision in the face of contradictory information. First, the narrative progression presents an apparent discrepancy between God's statement concerning the lethal consequences of consuming the fruit ("As soon as you eat of it you will die"; 2:17), and the consequences that actually follow ("Then the eyes of both were opened"; 3:7). Viewed within the context of food selection and the complications posed by potentially lethal ingestion, the survival of the couple invites us to consider the motif of their eyes being opened. This motif seems to serve as an expression for the acquisition of a particular order of knowledge representing a cognitive advance. That is, against J. G. Eichhorn's naturalist suggestion that the couple was physically poisoned, the acquired knowledge was not an inherent property of the fruit itself, which could be passed to humans merely by ingesting it. Rather, I understand the result to be the cognitive realization made by the humans: their survival, despite having ingested the fruit, logically entails the direct contradiction of God's statement that they would "certainly die" (*môt tāmût*).<sup>57</sup> The serpent's unequivocal direct challenge "you will not die" (*lō' môt tāmûtûn*; 3:4) is immediately explained in the text by its revelation of God's unstated and therefore "hidden" motive that does not necessarily attach to "you will die": "God knows that on the day you eat some of it, your eyes will be opened (*nipqəhû 'ênêkem*) and you will be like God/gods, knowing good and evil" (v. 5). Thus, the couple's discovery, made in the process of eating the fruit and not dying, includes an important datum concerning the nature of God as a person and as an intentional agent: God's words do not correspond to reality. More crucially, this discovery entailed something about language in general: what is modeled in the events and aptly simplified in the pair "good and evil" is the potential within language for what the linguist Mario Pei popularized as "doublespeak."<sup>58</sup> Here, we are invited to consider the full creative potential that

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57. According to Eichhorn, The couple consumed fruit that they somehow learned was poisonous because the woman observed a serpent eat it without suffering harm. The effect of the poison made them aware of their own physical desire and was transmissible to their offspring. Eichhorn later revised his position and considered the text to be mythological, reflecting an intuitive account of the origin of evil in the world. J. G. Eichhorn, *Repertorium für biblische und morgenländische Literature*, vol. IV: *Urgeschichte* [1779], edited with introduction and notes by J. Ph. Gabler (Altdorf und Nürnberg: Monath und Kussler, 1790–1793). See John Rogerson, *Myth in Old Testament Interpretation*, BZAW 134 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 3–4.

58. Mario Pei, *Words in Sheep's Clothing* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1969); idem, *Double-Speak in America* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1973); idem, *Weasel Words: The Art of Saying What You Don't Mean* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978). William Lutz defines doublespeak as "language which pretends to communicate but really does not. It is language which makes the bad seem good, something negative appear positive, something unpleasant appear attractive, or at least tolerable" (as quoted by Wil-

lies within language along with the full range of problems that arise from its unstable high-level products. This position is much closer to that of Kant, who saw eating the fruit as an experiment, through which the humans came to realize that they had the “capacity to choose.”<sup>59</sup> Kant’s account can be extended here. Food selection, encoded in image schemas, is the embodied anchor for the dynamics of the text. Although Kant does include among the cognitive consequences of eating the fruit “conscious anticipation of the future,” he does not connect it with language. But if the child-oriented imagery latent within the biblical text is any indication, we may suppose that insights gained empirically by attention to human growth and development would be seen as exemplary.<sup>60</sup>

Second, we may thus also observe a discrepancy between the woman’s report of the command (3:3) and the command itself as given in 2:16–17 akin to what we encounter in the Adapa myth when Adapa reports the instructions of Ea. In 2:16–17 we are told, “The Lord God commanded the man, ‘You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat; as soon as you eat of it you shall die.’” When the serpent questions the woman, “Did God say, ‘you shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman responds, “We may eat of the fruit trees in the garden; but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, *nor shall you touch it*, or you shall die.” In the woman’s statement to the

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liam J. Vande Kopple, “Still Vigilant about Doublespeak?” *Language Arts Journal of Michigan* 23 [2007]: 87). Although such a narrow definition of doublespeak may not immediately fit the context, it is appropriate in at least two senses. The positive/negative, good/bad polarity is highly relevant, particularly when qualified following the cautionary note of Hugh Rank, who observes regarding doublespeak that “‘goodness’ or ‘badness’ depends on the context of the whole situation; on who is saying what to whom, under what conditions and circumstances, with what intent, and with what results” (Vande Kopple, “Still Vigilant,” quoting Hugh Rank, “Mr. Orwell, Mr. Schlesinger, and the Language,” in *Beyond Nineteen Eighty-Four: Doublespeak in a Post-Orwellian Age*, ed. William Lutz [Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1989], 23). This ambivalence fits the image of the otherwise uncontextualized “knowledge of good and evil.” The functional aspect of doublespeak that others recognize as the “conscious intention to mislead and manipulate others” (Vande Kopple, “Still Vigilant,” 87) is clearly articulated by the serpent.

59. “He discovered in himself a capacity to choose a way of life for himself and not, as other animals, to be bound to a single one.” Immanuel Kant, “Conjectural Beginning of Human History,” in *idem, Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, edited and with an introduction by Pauline Kleingeld (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 24–36, esp. 26.

60. This empirical dimension is much like what James Kugel describes of wisdom in its anthological aspect as not primarily designating a person’s [abstract] capacity for understanding or insight but as an acquired body of learning. The anthological image is apt for conveying wisdom as particularly interested in the power of language. See James Kugel, “Wisdom in the Anthological Temper,” *Proof* 17 (1997): 9–32. The metaphor of disciplining a child is central to the notion of adult success and to obedience to God. See also Ps 131:1–2 on the weaned child, and 1 Kgs 3:7, 9 where Solomon, likening himself to a small child (*na’ar qāṭōn*), requests the ability to discern good and evil.

serpent we meet an issue of over-caution or misreading that approximates Adapa's statement to Anu.<sup>61</sup> In light of this reference, the description of the woman's examination of the tree (3:6) seems especially relevant and, further, suggests that the daily life problem of food selection is an important anchor in the text, pointing to the common human experiences of making inferences, observing signs, and deducing others' intentions.

Beyond this, consuming the fruit also marks a shift in language use. Despite the discrepancy between the woman's report of the command in response to the serpent and the command as spoken by God (2:17), the woman's statement functions to ensure that the commandment is upheld.<sup>62</sup> This stands in contrast to what happens after consuming the fruit. When Yahweh poses the direct question, "did you eat...?" to the man and then "what is this you have done?" to the woman, each responds with a truthful answer (*wā- 'ōkēl* 'and I ate'; 3:12–13). Yet, both humans couch their answers in misdirection, in which responsibility for the action is shifted to another. Significantly, the woman claims to have been deceived by the serpent, whose words appear in the narrative to be truthful. If we understand the woman's speech in 3:2 as misdirection that adheres to the commandment and the speech of the couple in 3:12–13 as misdirection that diverts attention from the fact that they have already transgressed it, we may further suggest that the capacity they obtained was a greater realization of the potential for obfuscation and deception inherent in the language they already possessed.

#### CLOTHING AND COVERING IN THE ADAPA MYTH AND GEN 2–3

In each of the narratives examined here, clothing plays a less prominent role than does the choice whether to ingest food and drink. This asymmetry appears to support the prominence of the central metaphor of ingestion, since the danger-fraught act of ingestion lays bare the cognitive problem of language and intentionality. But if we consider the social and communicative aspects of clothing from a cognitive perspective in terms of appearance perception, we may observe that clothing relates—both conceptually and physically—to the individual human embodied "self" in a way that is homologous with the way linguistic signs relate to intentionality.<sup>63</sup> In this way, clothing may be understood as supporting or reinforcing the same fundamental concerns to which we are directed by the ingestion problem.

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61. One might also see in the addition "not to touch it" reference to the common parental response regarding a potentially poisonous or lethal item.

62. Against this, Westermann, citing von Rad's opinion that "It is as though she wanted to set a law for herself by means of this exaggeration," adds, "a command that is questioned is no longer the original command" (Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 239).

63. The sign value of clothing is reflected in the language of being clothed with various attributes; see, e.g., Ps 93:1: "majesty," "strength"; and Isa 59:17: "righteousness."



THE ADAPA MYTH. In the Adapa myth the problem of signs and intentionality is easily seen in the mourning attire that Adapa wears in order to dupe the gods Dumuzi and Gizzida into currying the favor of Anu on his behalf. Ea participates in the ruse by changing Adapa's appearance, making his hair unkempt and dressing him in mourning attire (B 15'–16').<sup>64</sup> Informing Adapa that Dumuzi and Gizzida will question him about his mourning attire, Ea then instructs him on what to offer as an answer: this dishevelment is a response to the absence of two gods, Dumuzi and Gizzida (B 21'–25'). Both the clothing and the response are designed to flatter the two gods and enlist their support before Anu (B 25'–28'). Later in the narrative, when Adapa stands before the angry Anu, the two gods report to Anu what Adapa had said to them. Anu suddenly becomes calm and silent, but immediately asks “Why did Ea expose to a human what is bad in heaven and earth?”<sup>65</sup> Here it appears that Adapa's words produced the desired effect and that Anu, realizing the change in his own disposition, refers to the ruse—what the narrator calls “his *good* speech (*amassu banīta*)”—as “what is bad (*lā banīta*) in heaven and earth.” Izre'el argues that the poet uses the contrast to “identify ‘what is bad in heaven and earth’ with the *power of speech*.”<sup>66</sup> Here, we may recognize in *banīta/lā banīta* a polarity reminiscent of “good and evil” (or good and bad) that characterizes the tree of Gen 2–3 and what we observed of doublespeak.<sup>67</sup> Anu's question about the revelation of what is bad is not simply about Adapa's speech act that broke the wing of the South Wind. Anu realizes that Adapa has learned from Ea a new capacity in manipulating signs, a capacity revealed in clothing and in speech.

GEN 2–3. In Gen 2–3, the clothing motif likewise reflects outer expression and inner cognition. The juxtaposing of *naked* and *not ashamed* in 2:25, “the two of them were naked, the man and his wife, and not ashamed” establishes the episode's point of departure. Here the “physical” state of nakedness (*ārôm*) is contrasted with the cognitive state of “not ashamed.” The frequent association of *ārôm*, ‘naked’, with poverty or need emphasizes absence.<sup>68</sup> We are thus invited to understand the couple to be described simply as physically bare. The appearance of the root  $\sqrt{BWS}$  in the *hithpolel* has not gone unnoticed and is well suited

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64. Cf. 2 Sam 14:2.

65. B 47'–58'; note esp. lines 55'–57'. Izre'el makes a convincing case for departing from the traditional understanding of *amassu banīta* in line 55 as referring to a good word that the two gods put in for Adapa, and instead understanding it as a repetition of Adapa's own “good speech” (*Adapa and the South Wind*, 130–31).

66. *Ibid.*, 131. Emphasis added.

67. Izre'el also notes the use of *lā banīta* in Akkadian to characterize “unseemly or detrimental” speech, leading him to conclude that the text presents “through a sophisticated linguistic choice, an equation of speech and intelligence” (*ibid.*).

68. Note the frequent use of *ārôm* to describe those subjected to distraint of a garment (Job 22:6, 7–10; Eccl 5:12–15), the poor or those in need (Ezek 18:5–9), and infants (Job 1:21). See H. Niehr, “עָרוֹם, עִירוֹם,” *TDOT* 11: 349–54, esp. 351–53.

to the complexity of phenomena such as shame, guilt, and embarrassment.<sup>69</sup> Its use to mark “double-status” action approximates cognitive understandings of so-called *social emotions*.<sup>70</sup> Developmental psychologists classify social emotions as “secondary emotions” because they appear in the individual after more basic emotions (like fear and anger, which are accordingly regarded as “primary”). Moreover, social emotions follow the onset of *self-referential* behavior. They thus appear to rest upon an additional cognitive capacity. Studies have further demonstrated that social emotions emerge in two stages. *Self-conscious* emotions (such as embarrassment, empathy, and envy) appear before *self-evaluative* emotions (such as guilt, shame, and pride). The latter require the acquisition of social knowledge such as emotional scripts and rules of conduct. Possessing these social norms allows individuals “to evaluate their own production and behavior.”<sup>71</sup> They too appear to rest upon a greater cognitive capacity. The complex relational nature of social emotions thus warrants recognizing the full complexity of reflexive and reciprocal in the verbal stem. Acts and states of shame are at once intra- and intersubjective, requiring participation of the subject. Finally, it is worth noticing that, like the descriptor “naked,” the negative phrase *wālō' yitbōšāšū* (“they were not ashamed”; 2:25) characterizes the couple by a lack or an absence.

The couple’s partaking of the fruit introduces a new situation. Accordingly, the text replaces *naked* and *not ashamed* with a new pair of juxtaposed states in *naked* and *clothed*. These descriptors also present a revised expression of inner and outer. In the couple’s *knowledge* of being naked (3:7) nakedness is no longer merely the bare physical state of the human bodies previously described by the narrator in 2:25. Instead, nakedness becomes a concept—an inner cognitive structure that informs their actions with respect to others. Further indicating a semantic shift is the lexical shift in 3:7, replacing *‘ārôm* with *‘ērôm*, a change that is maintained for the duration of the narrative. Similarly, the corresponding absence of the verbal root  $\sqrt{BW\check{S}}$ , which like *‘ārôm* ceases to appear in the narrative (particularly where the reader might anticipate its resumption), further establishes the knowledge of nakedness as inner. The inner state once character-

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69. See for example Jack M. Sasson, “*w<sup>e</sup>lō' yitbōšāšū* [Gen 2, 25] and Its Implications,” *Bib* 66 (1985): 420. Sasson, who renders “they did not shame [or embarrass] each other,” emphasizes the factitive and reciprocal but perhaps too much at the expense of the reflexive.

70. In double-status action a person plays the role both of subject and of direct, indirect or implied object (*IBHS*, 429, 690). It embodies the varieties of reflexivity as well as reciprocity. On the complexity and types of reflexivity and other uses of the *hithpaal* (including reciprocal) see *IBHS*, 429–32. On reciprocity in moral reasoning and in relation to specific grammatical constructions, see Nicholas Evans et al., “Introduction,” in *Reciprocals and Semantic Typology*, ed. Nicholas Evans et al., *Typological Studies in Language* 98 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011), 1–27, esp. 5–7; Saul M. Olyan, “Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations in Ancient Israel and Its Environment,” *JBL* 115 (1996): 201–18.

71. Lewis et al., “Self Development,” 148.

ized by an absence pertaining to the root  $\sqrt{BWS}$  is now characterized by the possession of conceptual nakedness.<sup>72</sup> Finally, this new inner state, the “knowledge of nakedness,” is immediately set in relation to a new outer state that arises from it, when the couple make garments (*hāgōrōt*) for themselves with leaves (3:7).

The *knowledge of nakedness* suggests a new cognitive capacity, particularly if we are to understand in nakedness a category that properly does not exist apart from the corresponding category of *clothed*. Bare skin is now noticed and charged with potential meaning. Conceptual nakedness becomes the site of exposure and revelation. Acquisition of the concept gives rise to a corresponding act of concealment. The two clauses in the statement “the eyes of both were opened and they knew they were naked” correspond to the two-part statement of the serpent “your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (3:5).<sup>73</sup> Thus, the knowledge of nakedness corresponds in a formal sense with “being like God, knowing good and evil.” The equation of the knowledge of nakedness with “being like God, knowing good and evil” is further underscored by the word choice of  $\sqrt{NGD}$  in God’s question, “who told you (*higgīd lakā*, lit. ‘revealed to you’) that you were naked?” (v. 11) Finally, the sewing together ( $\sqrt{TPR}$ ) of fig leaves (v. 7) suggests a new cognitive capacity emerging in a rudimentary technology. This innovation appears to be superseded at the end of the episode in the divine crafting of the garments of skin (*kotnōt ‘ōr*; v. 21).

In spite of their attempt to cover themselves, the humans nonetheless retain awareness of their nakedness. This seems evident both in the impulse to hide and in the reason given for hiding as the “fear” that arises from the realization of being naked: “I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself” (3:10). As a consequence, the couple further seeks to conceal their nakedness by removing their inadequately concealed bodies from sight completely.<sup>74</sup> This presents yet another inner/outer framework that we might think of in terms of conceptual blending: the different but related cognitive structures HIDING and COVERING serve as two input spaces blended onto the generic space of the couple’s bodies, which yields as the emerging blended

72. Similarly, Hos 2:11–12 [Eng. 9–10], using synonymous terms, combines the imagery of covering nakedness (*‘erwā*) and uncovering shame (*nablūt*). Cf. Isa 47:2–3; Nah 3:5. Tg. Ps.-J. to Gen 3:7 reads “they saw their shame” (*bhth*); Michael J. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible 1B (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 26.

73. Catherine Leigh Beckerleg suggests the reference to opening the eyes likens the couple’s experience to the “animation of the sensory organs” in the ritual transformation of the cult image into the divine (“The ‘Image of God’ in Eden: The Creation of Mankind in Genesis 2:5–3:24 in Light of the *mīs pī pīt pī* and *wpt-r* Rituals of Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt” [PhD diss., Harvard University, 2009], 235–36).

74. As S. Wagner observes, the root rarely diverges from the primary meaning of hiding a person or oneself and (significantly for our purposes) entails “not only the element of motion in escape, but also the element of being no longer perceptible to the senses” (“חבא,” *TDOT* 4:166).

space the notion of an obscured embodied agency.<sup>75</sup> Here emphasis on the hiddenness of the agent is explicit. Ultimately, the couple's sewing together leaves to cover themselves, which arose from the knowledge they acquired, is met by a corresponding act in vv. 21–22a, when God makes garments of skin (*kotnôt 'ôr*) for the couple and declares, "The man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil." The declaration repeats and forms an *inclusio* with the serpent's statement to the woman (v. 5), further inviting us to read "they knew they were naked" (v. 7) as an expression of "being like God, knowing good and evil."

The initial outer and inner of naked/not ashamed thus appears to be reinforced by a series of inner/outer structural associations that relate cognition and agency to the (dis-)appearance of the body:

<i>Inner</i>	<i>Outer</i>
not ashamed; 2:25	naked (' <i>ārôm</i> ); 2:25
knowledge of being "naked" (' <i>ērôm</i> ); 3:7	fig leaf loincloths; 3:7
"naked" (' <i>ērôm</i> ); fig leaf loincloths; fear; 3:10–11	cover of trees; 3:8
"knowing good and evil"; 3:22	garments of skins; 3:21

On the basis of the overall structure of the narrative, we might infer that an important conceptual metaphor (or cognitive structure) is to be found in *skin*, which demarcates the fundamental experience of embodiment as comprising inner cognition and outward expression.<sup>76</sup> The resolution of garments of skin (*kotnôt 'ôr*) draws attention to the play on words that lies at the heart of the narrative, by which the couple is compared and contrasted with the serpent (2:25–3:1). The description of the couple in 2:25 as naked ('*ārūmmîm*) and without experiencing shame/shaming (*wālō' yitbōšāšū*) is immediately followed in 3:1 by a description of the serpent as the most subtle ('*ārūm*) of creatures. The double intention behind "naked"/"subtle" in the lexeme '*ārūm* also manifests in the physical constitution of the serpent, which in shedding its skin is at once the most naked of creatures.<sup>77</sup> More important within the context of the narrative, it seems, is the plain fact that the serpent speaks. The play on words of "sub-

75. For a basic discussion of mental "spaces" and conceptual blending, see Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 40–44.

76. That is, the experience of inner/outer areas of *visual* access (both to the perceiver's own body and those of others). The concept of skin provides the primary mental space onto which are mapped additional related conceptual structures from other input domains.

77. Although it is not articulated explicitly in Genesis, it is worth noticing that in the Epic of Gilgamesh, the serpent that snatches the plant of life from Gilgamesh sheds its skin before disappearing beneath the water.

tle”/“naked” and the role of the serpent in challenging God’s speech and revealing God’s motives suggest interest in the nature of language as it pertains to intentionality. At issue is the power of language which humans possessed innocently and without guile—or, “naked and without shame”—until the consumption of the fruit, after which their use of speech takes on the same character as that of the serpent: subtle.

Here, the garments of skin appear less enigmatic. Considered in terms of appearance perception, clothing shares properties with linguistic communication. Over the course of the narrative, the couple obtains a special cognitive capacity through the counsel of the serpent. As suggested above, Yahweh’s act of clothing the humans with “garments of skin” (3:21) may be understood in connection with the proclamation of the deity, “The man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil” (v. 22a). As the telic statement “*lest* he reach out his hand and *also* . . .” in v. 22b makes clear, the limit placed on human life that closes the episode (vv. 23–24) is *ipso facto* a limit on the power achieved. In simple terms, the garments of skin reflect an act recognizing human acquisition of a divine prerogative. Although a cultic ceremonial investiture may lie in the background, the realm of hospitality is a reasonable and universally accessible cultural context through which to view the act. In this sense, the act resembles the curious element we encounter in the Adapa myth in Ea’s instructions to accept the clothing and anointing.<sup>78</sup> Given the element of danger present in each narrative, we might understand the act as neutralizing conflict between host and guest.<sup>79</sup> The guest is, in a restricted sense, incorporated into the community of the host. The metaphor of skin in connection with the image of clothing and covering thus underscores the talking serpent’s role as an embodiment of the power of the technology of language.<sup>80</sup> The framing of inner/outer juxtaposes the sphere of the individual with that of the social other.

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78. E. Burrows (“Note on Adapa,” *Or* 30 [1928]: 24) views the clothing and oil as acts of investiture and anointing, through which Anu grants authority to Adapa in recognition of the wisdom Ea had bestowed upon him. Together with the offer of food and drink of life, these represent for Burrows Anu’s attempt to keep Adapa in heaven and to incorporate him into his service. Against this, Thorkild Jacobsen (“The Investiture and Anointing of Adapa in Heaven,” *AJSL* 46 [1930]: 201–3) considers the food and drink simply to reflect hospitality. The vast anthropological literature on hospitality makes clear that there is no reason to consider the framework of hospitality practices at odds with Burrows’ suggestion.

79. Cf. Candea and da Col, “Return to Hospitality,” esp. S4–S5. On the need to “socialize” the stranger, see Julian Pitt-Rivers, “The Law of Hospitality,” *HAU Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2.1 (2012): 508.

80. Tg. Ps.-J., which departs from other Targumic traditions in its attitude toward matters of magic and witchcraft (such as the “evil eye,” the efficacy of curses, and the extraordinary powers of certain individuals), reflects an interpretive tradition that is sensitive to such an understanding (for discussion and for the following references, see Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 6, 21–31). In Tg. Ps.-J. to Genesis, Adam receives the faculty of speech at creation (2:7). The play on words “naked”/“subtle” is replaced by a wordplay around “wise” (*hkym*), in which the couple is not described as “naked” but as

Here we cannot help but notice the context in which Eliphaz introduces his reference to “the first man” (*ri'sōn 'ādām*) in Job 15:7–8, most notably in vv. 5–6, where he indicts Job specifically on the matter of his speech, in proclaiming his innocence:

Your iniquity instructs your mouth;  
 you choose the tongue of the subtle (*'ārūmīm*).  
 Your own mouth condemns you and not I;  
 your own lips testify against you.

The structure of the narrative emphasizes the dichotomy naked/clothed and draws attention to the most basic aspect of clothing as covering and more importantly to the inner/outer. This also casts the element of sexuality in a different light. If sexuality plays a role in the text, as is traditionally held, it does so only obliquely.<sup>81</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

Commentators have long observed connections between the language of Gen 2–3 and language suggesting the maturation of the individual.<sup>82</sup> I have suggested the importance of two tropes, food and clothing, on the basis that they involve cognitive patterns established early in life. Here one further related area of cognitive research is potentially illuminating. Developmental psychologists studying lying behavior in children and the ability of young children to conceal lies observe that children acquire the cognitive capacity to deceive around the age of

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“wise” (*hkym*) and the serpent is “skilled (*hkym*) in evil” (2:25, 3:1). The curse on the serpent (who “spoke slander against his creator”; 3:4) includes “you will cast off your skin every seven years” (3:14). Especially interesting, the garments God makes for the couple are called “garments of glory (*lbwšyn dyqr*),” constructed “from the skin which the serpent had cast off (to be worn) on the skin of their flesh” (3:21). For a discussion of the clothing in view of the glory and splendor (*kbd whdr*) with which humans are crowned in Ps 8:6 [Eng. 8:5], see Beckerleg, “‘Image of God’ in Eden,” esp. 228–44. See also Gary A. Anderson, “The Garments of Skin in Apocryphal Narrative and Biblical Commentary,” in *Studies in Ancient Midrash*, ed. James L. Kugel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies, 2001), 101–43.

81. For the interpretation that the “knowledge of good and evil” connotes sexual awareness, see Ivan Engnell, “‘Knowledge’ and ‘Life’ in the Creation Story,” in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East: Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley*, ed. M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 1955), 103–19; Robert Gordis “The Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Old Testament and the Qumran Scrolls,” *JBL* 76 (1957): 123–38. For a survey of older treatments of this position, see Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 243.

82. See, for example, the discussion of Jonathan Z. Smith, “The Garments of Shame,” in *Map is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 1–24.

three. Studies suggest that three-year-olds show skill in simulating nonverbal behaviors consistent with untruthful statements they have made, but they are as yet unable to avoid contradicting the lie verbally.<sup>83</sup> These children, it appears, have not yet acquired the specific cognitive abilities that are essential to successful lying, such as pragmatic understanding of verbal communication (picking out inconsistencies in verbal statements they and others make) and an advanced theory of mind. Other studies show children's ability to conceal their own mental states emerges around age four.<sup>84</sup> These further recommend the traditional intuition that Gen 2–3 appropriates imagery of human development.

The approach that I have taken suggests Gen 2–3 and the myth of Adapa use ingestion danger to draw attention to language as it relates to intentional agents, and suggests that both narratives recruit clothing in a way that highlights and further discloses within language the mystery of intentional agency. We mentioned at the outset that Adapa and Adam represent different models of primal humanity. Adapa is a culture-bearer figure, conveying higher knowledge from the realm of the gods. Biblical *'ādām* in Gen 2–3, the primal human in the form of Adam and Eve, conveys higher knowledge by way of a developmental model as human primogenitor. If Adapa as priest represents language power institutionalized in the intermediary offices that fall under his auspices, Adam and Eve represent its power as vested in all humans with its potential consequences.<sup>85</sup> The primal human then is the figure that represents the emergence of that particular threshold of consciousness in which language becomes wielded as social power.<sup>86</sup> The mind, through language, creates a scaffolding for itself out of signs for the fixing and management of Self and Other at various levels. Viewed through this lens, the coordinates of life and death, now grounded in the body in an integrative fashion, are seen to be situated within the realm of social

83. Victoria Talwar and Kang Lee, "Development of Lying to Conceal a Transgression: Children's Control of Expressive Behaviour during Verbal Deception," *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 26 (2002): 436–44.

84. Joan Peskin, "Ruse and Representations: On Children's Ability to Conceal Information," *Developmental Psychology* 28 (1992): 84–89.

85. For this interpretation of Adapa, see especially Izre'el, *Adapa and the South Wind*, 135–36; Michalowski, "Adapa and the Ritual Process," 77–82.

86. Westermann views "to know good and evil" as functional knowledge and finds it to be applied in the text not merely to an individual, but to the collective Adam as a whole—thus, humankind from its origin. He concludes that the knowledge "is a knowledge which is directed to the life of the community and which reaches its fulfillment in it. The knowledge is concerned above all with the life of the group, with existence in community" (Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 241–42). Here it is useful to recall Pierre Bourdieu's cautionary note that we must seek the proper object of social science not in the individual or in groups but in "the double and obscure relation between habitus, i.e., the durable and transposable systems of schemata of perception, appreciation, and action that result from the institution of the social in the body (or in biological individuals), and fields, i.e., systems of objective relations which are the product of the institution of the social in things" (Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], 126–27).

intelligence or Theory of Mind, and establish concern with how one uses the high-level machine-like products of language to one's pragmatic ends and at what cost.<sup>87</sup>

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87. Note also the connection suggested by Duane E. Smith, regarding the serpent who "communicates the mind, if not the will, of God" in the context of "good and bad" with Mesopotamian ophiomancy, wherein the oppositional terms *damqu* and *lemuttu* express, respectively, good fortune and ill fortune ("The Divining Snake: Reading Genesis 3 in the Context of Mesopotamian Ophiomancy," *JBL* 134 [2015]: 31–49).



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