LIPIŃSKI'S SEMITIC LANGUAGES


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At first glance, it is not clear to me why this book is subtitled as an Outline, for Edward Lipiński has produced nothing short of a fully-researched presentation of comparative Semitic grammar, encyclopedic in scope, with replete examples of every phenomenon discussed. The richness of the information conveyed in its 754 pages justifies more than the subtitle Outline. The reader should not expect merely a simple sketch of Semitic grammar, such as Sabatino Moscati’s An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages (1964), a valuable introductory essay of 185 pages. At second glance, one realizes why the word Outline appears in the subtitle. It is the English equivalent of the German Grundriss, a word which immediately calls to mind Carl Brockelmann’s magnum opus, Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen (1908–1913). Of course, one could question the use of the word Grundriss in that title too, yet the term was common in German reference works of that era. Neither Brockelmann’s nor the present work should be considered a mere Outline or Grundriss, but the association permits one to appreciate that Lipiński will serve scholars in the 21st century in the manner that Brockelmann served them in the 20th.

The volume follows the traditional format of a comparative grammar. Part One introduces the reader to the Afro-Asiatic macrofamily, then presents the individual Semitic languages according to Lipiński’s classification scheme. Parts Two, Three, and Four deal with Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax. Part Five, the shortest of the five parts, is nevertheless a bonus. Its 35 pages treat the Lexicon, a subject not typically embraced in works of this nature. The topics covered include etymology, derivatives, languages in contact, internal change, and proper names (with subsections on anthroponymy and toponymy).

The classification of the Semitic languages is still a disputed subject. Apart from labeling Akkadian as East Semitic and the now near-consensus of grouping South Arabian and Ethiopian together as South Semitic, to the exclusion of Arabic, there is little agreement among scholars who have considered the issue. For example, while H. L. Ginsberg argued strongly for including Ugaritic within Canaanite (specifically, with Phoenician as its closest
relative), Albrecht Goetze linked it with Amorite, and recently Alan Kaye has allied it with Arabic. And if such debate swirls around a relatively well-attested language such as Ugaritic, with continuous literary texts yielding most of the necessary grammatical information, all the more is this the situation with Eblaite, a language for which we have a fair amount of lexical information but very little in the way of sustained text.

Lipiński weighs in as follows. He accepts the aforementioned categories of East Semitic and South Semitic; he groups Palaeosyrian (Eblaite, the Tell Beydar tablets, and pre-Sargonic and post-Ur-III texts from Mari), Amorite, and Ugaritic together as North Semitic; and he brackets Canaanite, Aramaic, and Arabic together as West Semitic. I am on record (a) as accepting Ginsberg’s view on Ugaritic as Canaanite, and (b) with a proposal to link Eblaite, Amorite, and Aramaic as a Syrian Semitic Sprachbund within West Semitic, so naturally I disagree with this classification schema. But this is a minor issue. The great strength of this book is not in its argumentation for one particular method of categorizing the Semitic languages, but rather, in the wealth of data conveyed and the clear manner of presentation. This combination is what makes this book work so well and what makes it so indispensable for the scholar of Semitic. I hasten to add, moreover, that even for the scholar with facility in only one or two of the Semitic languages, this book is worth owning. My main field of research is Hebrew, yet there are insights into the language that I have learned from Lipiński’s treatment and not from other, more standard grammars of Hebrew (I will note some examples below).

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6 The attentive reading will note some inconsistency in the transliterations. For example, Lipiński uses i to represent the long /i:/ vowel throughout Semitic, including Hebrew. Within Hebrew, however, I use the macron for tone-long vowels and the circumflex for pure long vowels. Thus Lipiński uses -im for the plural morpheme, whereas I use -im. Moreover, I sometimes use Lipiński’s method even when not citing him directly within quotation marks. To further complicate matters, note that Lipiński sometimes follows my method, as in his transliteration of יִשָּׁמ as ’āšūm (§29.8), using the macron for the tone-long first vowel (and for the pure long second vowel).
Lipiński presents the data from the Semitic languages in their broadest definition. That is, he incorporates material not only from the classical languages, but also from the Semitic languages still spoken today: colloquial Arabic dialects, the Ethiopian and South Arabian languages, and Neo-Aramaic. Modern Hebrew is referred to only several times, for example, the use of the -ît suffix to form diminutives like kadît “little pitcher” (§29.49). Though not stated explicitly, most likely Lipiński has limited references to Modern Hebrew because, unlike the other Semitic languages spoken in the present day, there is no continuous development from antiquity to today.

In addition, Lipiński goes beyond Semitic at every turn. Whenever there is something of value in Afro-Asiatic, Lipiński notes the parallel, and if there is something of value in another language family, not related to Semitic, Lipiński incorporates this information as well. A good example is the following, within the context of a brief discussion on the traceable alternation of t and k (for example, in the second person pronoun markers, with the former attached to verb forms and the latter suffixed to nouns). Lipiński writes, “Instead of being original, this opposition may result from a specialized function obtained by the allophones t and k of the same phoneme. An example of a phoneme realized as [t] or [k] is encountered nowadays in the Samoan language which is believed to represent the oldest form of Malayo-Polynesian, also known as Austronesian” (§12.4). One can only stand in awe of Lipiński’s ability to produce linguistic parallels from such far-flung quarters.

The volume includes a 45-page bibliography listing hundreds of works, organized according to the branches of Semitic, the branches of Afro-Asiatic (though oddly no listing of works relevant to Egyptian), and two other topics (Languages in Contact; Anthroponomy and Toponymy). But within the presentation of the data there is no attempt to associate a particular position with a particular scholar. The author obviously can be excused for this: Such references would have encumbered the volume tremendously and would have interrupted the flow of the discussion. The informed reader will know immediately that a specific scholar’s view is represented in a specific instance. Thus, for example, Lipiński states that the shifts of aw > ā and ay > ā occur in Eblaite (§22.3), a view proposed by I. J. Gelb in “Ebla and the Kish Civilization,” an article duly noted in the Bibliography (p. 597), contra the position taken by P. Fronzaroli and others. But the reader not aware of the scholarly debate will not know the source of Lipiński’s view. Similarly, this reviewer recognizes his own work when Lipiński refers to the preservation

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8 For a full discussion of the issue, see my article cited above in n. 5.
of the interdental $t$ in Transjordan, both in the Hebrew spoken there and in Ammonite (§13.7). In this case, however, the articles that deal with this issue are not cited in the Bibliography, presumably because they are very short and very specific.  

In these instances, and in many others, I, as a sample reader, am able to recognize a particular scholarly voice speaking. My question is: What about the numerous cases where I read something that I had not encountered before? For example, in the Phonology section, one reads: “Also $t$ may be palatalized as, for example, the Semitic noun qāt-, ‘hand’, well-known in East Semitic, which corresponds to West Cushitic (Omotic) kuč-, kis-, ‘hand, arm’” (§15.8). I am curious to know: Is this Lipiński’s original proposal? Or has someone else already suggested the connection? I have no way of knowing. I would not expect Lipiński to record the source of each of the thousands of opinions voiced in the book. I simply note the experience of reading the book and wishing to know, on occasion, what is Lipiński’s and what comes from elsewhere.

I could spend pages praising this work, utilizing the thesaurus to find additional synonyms to “magnificent,” “magisterial,” and “monumental,” but let me simply say to anyone who ever has pondered a particular point in an individual Semitic language or in the family as a whole: Obtain this book! How often do we read in laudable reviews that a certain book deserves to be on the bookshelf of every scholar in the field? In this case, I not only repeat those words, but I offer the following prediction, continuing the comparison noted above. Just as scholars today continue to refer to Brockelmann, notwithstanding how outdated that work is, a century from now scholars will still be utilizing Lipiński as a standard reference work.

The best way to extol this book is to spend the remainder of this review presenting random notes on items raised in this volume, thereby giving the reader of this review a sampling of the vast erudition reflected within its contents. Some of my comments speak to issues on which no communis opinio has been reached by Semitists; some are corrections or additions to the material presented; and some are simply findings that I found of interest. My remarks stem mainly from my own interests in the fields of Hebrew in particular and West Semitic in general. My focus is on the first three parts of the book; I have but few comments on the Syntax and Lexicon sections. References are to paragraph numbers.

1.1. I learned that Judah ibn Quraysh from Tiaret in Algeria noted connections between Semitic and Berber already in the 9th century!

1.2. Lipiński agrees that there are points of contact between Afro-Asiatic and Indo-European, though “these are scarcely sufficient to warrant

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assumption of any genetic connection.” On the other hand, he notes some very basic links between Afro-Asiatic and Bantu, e.g., the noun prefix \textit{mu-}, the reciprocal verb morpheme \textit{-dn-}, and the causative morpheme \textit{-is-/iš-}.

2.17. While some scholars have posited that Egyptian is the branch of Afro-Asiatic most closely related to Semitic, perhaps based on geography, or on close cultural and political contacts over millennia, Lipiński deems Berber and Cushitic closest to Semitic, then Egyptian, with Chadic as the most distantly-related group.

3.3 Lipiński considers North Africa to be the original homeland of the Semites. He suggests that they migrated “through the Nile delta from the West to the East, and reached Western Asia, where written documents of the third millennium BC preserve noticeable traces of Pre-Semitic and, in Mesopotamia, also of pre-Sumerian substratum.”

7.46. In classifying the various Arabic colloquials, Lipiński links Maltese with the Maghribi dialects. Others would classify Maltese unto itself within the Arabic realm, or even as a language no longer to be considered Arabic, regardless of its origins.\textsuperscript{10}

8.18. Lipiński notes that Gafat, now extinct but formerly in use in western Ethiopia, “is the only Semitic language preserving, e.g., the plural noun \textit{kitač} (\textless \textit{*kitati}), ‘children’, related to Egyptian \textit{ktt}, ‘little one.’” This is an example of what makes this book so remarkably informative. But see also Ugaritic \textit{kdd} “child” in \textit{KTU/CAT} 1.19 IV 12, 16 (\textless \textit{UT} 1 Aqht 174, 178), as well as Aramaic \textit{[k]i-da-di-e} “children” in the cuneiform incantation text.\textsuperscript{11} Note that the vowels of the syllabically-written Aramaic form conform exactly to the Gafat form.

9.11. Scholars who study ancient West Semitic inscriptions, where \textit{scriptio continua} is sometimes found, will be interested to learn that there are also “Ethiopian newspapers where words are run together.”

10.9. On the thorny question of how the emphatic consonants were pronounced in antiquity—glottalized as in contemporary Ethiopian and Modern South Arabian, or velarized or pharyngalized as in Arabic—Lipiński opts for the latter. He uses evidence from Ugaritic and Aramaic to support his position, e.g., the shift of \textit{z} > \textit{g} in Ugaritic in such words as \textit{ṣm} / \textit{šm} “be thirsty” or \textit{nṣr} > \textit{nṣr} “guard.”

10.10. On the same topic, we learn that Georgian-speaking Jews articulate the Hebrew emphatics as glottalized consonants, although the cause is due to particular phonological developments in their speech.

11.4. Lipiński notes correctly that “interchanges between \textit{b} and \textit{p} are frequent in Semitic languages,” but I highly doubt that “some of them go


probably back to the time when \( b/p \) was one phoneme.” On what grounds does Lipiński postulate this single phoneme? As far as I can tell, no-one posits a single phoneme for the two labials, certainly not in the Semitic stage nor in the earlier Afro-Asiatic stage.\(^{12}\)

11.6; 63.8. In a discussion of the occasional alternation between \( b \) and \( m \), Lipiński suggests that Common Semitic \( bn \) and Aramaic \( bar \) “might be related to Babylonian \( māru, \)” all meaning “son.”\(^{13}\) As the lack of a vowel in such forms as Arabic \( ɪbn \), Hebrew \( 本身 \) (the latter meaning “my son”) indicates, we are dealing here with a rare phenomenon in Semitic, either that of a lexeme comprised only of consonants or, more likely, the presence of vocalic \( n \).\(^ {14}\) Accordingly, it is most doubtful that Akkadian \( māru \) “son,” with a long vowel between the two consonants, is relevant here. Rather one should look to Arabic \( muhr \) “foal, colt” as a cognate to the Akkadian term.

11.15. Lipiński cites several examples of the passage of the interdental \( ι \) to the labiodental \( f \) in Arabic. Note that this shift is more common in colloquial Arabic dialects. Lipiński further states that this shift may explain the Egyptian 3rd person masculine singular pronoun suffix \( -f \), though he does not explain further and I do not see how this could be.

12.4. Lipiński refers briefly to “traceable alternations” of \( i/k \) and \( d/r \). I referred to the former above, though here I wish to add the evidence of Hebrew \( נם \) and \( נב \), both meaning “open” (the latter with specific references to the eyes), and Hebrew \( נין \) “drink” (in the Qal) and \( ני \) “give drink” (in the Hiphil), notwithstanding the fact that here we have an alternation between \( t \) and \( q \), the emphatic form of \( k \). On the issue of \( d/r \), note also the sporadic use of Egyptian \( r \) to represent Semitic loanwords with \( d \), a finding which points to the Egyptian \( /r/ \) as a “‘tapped’ (or ‘flapped’) \( r \), as opposed to vibrating ‘trilled’ (‘rolled’) \( r \).”\(^ {15}\)

16.2. Lipiński writes: “Neither do the Amarna glosses and the Egyptian transcriptions indicate that an autonomous phoneme \( s \) existed in the Canaanite languages of the II millennium B.C.,” and he presents some evidence to bolster this statement. But there are occasional transcriptions in the cunei-

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\(^{12}\) See, e.g., I. M. Diakonoff, Afrasian Languages (Moscow, 1988), p. 34.

\(^{13}\) Though Lipiński does not note the additional cognate, see also Modern South Arabian \( ber \) “son.”

\(^{14}\) On vocalic consonants, see C. H. Gordon, “Vocalized Consonants: The Key to \( um-ma / en-ma / ⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞⦞/svg
form syllabary and in the hieroglyphic script that indicate the contrary. See, respectively, the standard works of A. F. Rainey and J. E. Hoch.16

16.5. In a discussion of the phonological realization of Hebrew š, Lipiński notes that the lateral nature of this consonant “is confirmed by the incompatibility of contiguous š and l in Hebrew roots . . . since Semitic languages avoid homorganic radicals in contiguous position.” Most likely he relies on the detailed studies of Kalevi Koskinen (cited in the Bibliography),17 but see the additional statistical analysis put forward by Richard Steiner (also in the Bibliography).18 None of this, however, denies the basic conclusion, presented in detail by Steiner, that indeed Hebrew (and proto-Semitic) š is was a lateral consonant.

17.8. Lipiński refers to the fact that “Oriental Jews use a strongly nasalized ‘ain in Hebrew.” But the most nasalized realization of this consonant is to be found among Italian Jews. See also the outcome of the diminutive of עוקב among Yiddish-speaking Jews as “Yankel.”

17.8; 23.9. The kind of detail that is furnished in this volume may be illustrated by Lipiński’s citation of both “r insertion” and “dissimilation through r” in the following examples from Hebrew. For the former he cites יִשְׂרָאֵל (Ps 94:19, 139:23) for אֶשְׁרָאֵל (cf. Arabic šaʿaf “passion, ardent zeal”); מִשְׁרָאֵל (Ezek 31:5) for מֶשְׁרָאֵל (cf. Arabic saʿaf “palm leaves”); and Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) רָשִׁים “nose” (alongside רַשִׁים) (cf. Arabic ḥaṭm). For the latter he cites יִדְרָשִׁים “(the pig) gnaws it” (Ps 80:14), derived from יָדָשֶׁם (with dissimilation ss > rs; and מִרְבִּיל) (1 Chr 15:27), from the root kbl “wrap” attested in MH, with dissimilation bb > rb. Note also Lipiński’s attention to MH, an oft-neglected subject in comparative Semitic studies.19

19.8; 45.8. Lipiński believes that Ugaritic qrat “she called” represents qarāt, and not qaraʾat (and similarly with other forms of III verbs). That is to say, the cuneiform signs a/i/u (= ʾaʿād/iʿād) “were employed also as vowels . . . when the etymological 3 was not pronounced in postvocalic or intervocalic position.” He invokes the evidence of proper names written in the cuneiform syllabary to support this claim, but I cannot accept his conclusion

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16 A. F. Rainey, Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets (Leiden, 1996), 1:19 (on the use of the rare sign š20); and Hoch, Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts, pp. 409–410.
19 Lipiński errs slightly in implying that the actual form mokabbāl “wrapped” is attested in MH. According to Mc_eargin: The Hebrew Language Historical Dictionary Project, CD-ROM version of the Academy of the Hebrew Language (Jerusalem, 1998), the root occurs once as a Qal active participle, three times as a Qal passive participle, and three times as a noun meaning “garment,” but it does not occur in the Puʿal or otherwise.
here. Nor would most Ugaritic specialists, as exemplified by Daniel Sivan in his recent grammar.20

27.9. On the question of the development of the Hebrew segolate nouns, Lipiński accepts the standard explanation of vowel harmony, thus, e.g., *kalb > *kaleb > keleb “dog” (pausal kâleb).

27.11. Students of Hebrew know the familiar rule that the definite article takes the form he- before unaccented hâ- and ā-, and before hâ- regardless of accent, e.g., heḥâkâm for *haḥâkâm “the wise man.” It is to Lipiński’s credit that he places this shift into the greater context of dissimilation of vowels, illustrated by the parallel example of Syriac šlêmôn “Solomon” for Hebrew šlômô, Greek Salômôn.

27.12. Lipiński’s range is exemplified when he adduces the following trio of cognates to illustrate metathesis: Phoenician ḥîš, Early Aramaic ḥîl, Tigre lahaša, all meaning “to save.”

27.20. One of the best examples of Sandhi in Semitic, not noted by Lipiński, is to be found in the Masoretic pronunciation of לודג as ladônî, as ladônî, lodônî, etc.

27.26. The cross-reference to §27.29 should read §27.30.

28.13. Lipiński explains the MH forms נא as “father” and נאמ “mother” as examples of “the enlargement of certain biconsonantal roots with ā,” comparable to Arabic ʔâbā “father,” ʔâhā “brother,” ʔàdā “hand,” damā “blood,” attested in some ancient dialects (as opposed to standard Arabic ʔab, ʔâh, yad, dam). That is, the MH forms “are unlikely to have been borrowed from the Aramaic emphatic state.”

28.16. In a discussion of the root morpheme, affixes, and infixed, Lipiński uses the addition of -im to Hebrew kalb- to form kalb-im “dogs” as his example. Naturally, he should have sought a different example, since *kalb-im is not attested in the language; the plural “dogs” is based on the stem *kilâb- > kâlîb-, thus kâlîbîm.

29.11. Hebraists continue to be baffled as to why the shift of ā > ò does not occur in the nomen agentis forms, e.g., rakkâb “horseman.” Lipiński notes the problem, but he too offers no solution: “The vowel ā should normally have changed into ò in Hebrew, but this did not happen for some unknown reason.”

29.16–17. These two sections on noun patterns are introduced as “Preformatives ʔ-/-ʕ,” but this should be corrected to “ʔ-/-ʕ-.”

29.16. Lipiński notes ʔârnab “hare,” in several Semitic languages, as an example of an animal name with preformative ʔ-. He then correctly compares annabu, but neglects to note the language of this form. It is Akkadian.

29.28–31. These sections are devoted to nouns with preformative r-. Lipiński does not note that in Hebrew such nouns occur more commonly

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20D. Sivan, A Grammar of the Ugaritic Language (Leiden, 1997), pp. 111, 114. I agree that ʔaleph is elided occasionally in Ugaritic (ibid., pp. 32–33), but not that this occurs in ʔ- verbs.
with forms derived from weak roots. Thus, to cite some of his examples: תחלת "resident," תבש "praise," תשמ "south." I am not sure that this point has been noted in the scholarly literature.

29.35. In a discussion of the affirmative -ān, Lipiński writes, “In Hebrew and Phoenician -ān usually changes into -ān, and it develops later to -ān (e.g., אֶלָּוֹב 'Most High’).” But this second shift is limited to Phoenician. It occurs in Hebrew in only one instance, in the tribal name נְבָּלַן “Zebulun,” most likely due to the fact that this tribe dwelled near Phoenicia and presumably shared this isogloss with Phoenicia.²¹

29.49. Correct Modern Hebrew קָסִית “little glass” to קָוִית.

30.5. In a discussion of nouns which may be either masculine or feminine, Lipiński notes Sabaic ṇḥl “palmgrove,” a point confirmed by the standard dictionary.²² I would explain this particular example by the unusual botanical phenomenon of palm trees having distinct gender, either male or female.

30.5. In the same discussion, Lipiński notes Hebrew וֹאֵר “vineyard” as an example of a noun which occurs in either gender. But then he states, “Animal names can be feminine when they designate a female; e.g. . . . שָׁור, ‘bull’, can designate a ‘cow’ in Hebrew.” But as far as I know, the only possible examples are Lev 22:28 and Num 18:17,²³ both referring to offspring. But in these two passages the word רֶם must refer to the cattle class, not to a specific cow.

30.6. Lipiński continues the discussion on the gender of nouns by noting the well-known rule, “Names of parts of the body, especially paired, are generally feminine.” He then continues, “However, instances occur, even in literary texts, where such nouns are treated as masculine,” with ד in Ex 17:12 and כּ in Prov 27:16 as examples. But neither of these passages demonstrates the point beyond doubt. In the former, נֵבֶד may be a dual participle;²⁴ in the latter, it is not clear that כּ is the subject of this notoriously difficult passage.²⁵

30.10. Another example of Lipiński’s breadth may be seen by his connecting Gafat and Argobba hansia, both meaning “donkey,” with

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²⁵ See, e.g., the NJPS rendering: “Or declare one’s right hand to be oil.”
Sumerian *انش* “donkey,” which “therefore seems to indicate that *حانش* was a West Asiatic culture word used around 3000 B.C.”

30.10–11. Lipiński accepts the view of A. van Selms that “the postpositive determinant *-b* qualifies the grammatical gender of wild and dangerous animals.” I had not encountered the views concerning two other postpositive determinants presented by Lipiński: *-l/-r* used to qualify the “grammatical gender of domestic or tamed animals” (thus in Hebrew: כָּבֵס, בָּשָׂר, כָּבֵר, דָּבָר, צָבָא), and *-n* used to qualify the “grammatical gender comprising names of parts of the body” (thus in Hebrew: כְּפֵר, כֶּפֶן, גָּשִׁי, יָד, יִסְרָאֵל, יָרָאֵל, בֵּר, נָבָל, מָלָל, אֵין, שָׂר, יָרָה, רַח, אָדָם).

31.11. Lipiński judges the suffixed *-w* in the Gezer calendar (4x) as the remains of a plural nominative case ending (as opposed to a dual ending), thus הר וּל וּר וּר means “months of ingathering” (and not “two months of ingathering”). He compares Samalian mlkw “kings” versus mlky in the oblique case.

31.13. Lipiński states that נַשׁ “year” “has the plural šānīm in the absolute state, but šmōt in the construct state.” Actually the construct plural šmē is more frequently attested.

31.26. In a discussion of the internal plural pattern ʼf ʼl with preformative ʼa-, well known from Arabic and from South Semitic, Lipiński adduces as an additional example the form ahlāmu, the “probable Old Babylonian designation of the Proto-Arameans and their congeners which must transcribe a native ʼaglām, ‘boys, lads.’”

31.28. Lipiński accepts the view, still debated in some circles, that the plural of Hebrew segolate nouns is an internal or broken plural, with the external plural superimposed on it.

31.1–2. Lipiński believes that Semitic originally had but two cases, “the subject case or ‘ergative’ in -u and the non-subject case or ‘predicative’ in -a,” in accordance with the evidence from Cushitic and Libyco-Berber.

32.7 He continues the discussion with the following: “As for the ‘new’ genitive marker -i, it is likely to have the same origin as the gentilitial [sic] suffix -iy- > i, which may derive from a postposition. In Highland East Cushitic, e.g., there is a postposition -i which includes the idea ‘out from’ or ‘away from.’” Though Lipiński adds, “Further research work is needed in this field; it should be made on a comparative Afro-Asiatic basis.”

32.17. The following is quite exemplary of Lipiński’s mind and method. He correlates the Akkadian adverbial ending -iš with the Palaeosyrian preposition iš (Mari), eš (Elbaite). “This double use of a particle as a preposition and postposition is not exceptional in Afro-Asiatic and it may be compared

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with the parallel existence of the common Semitic conjunction wa-, ‘and’, and of the East Semitic and South Ethiopic enclitic -ma, ‘and’, which may have the same origin, since the alternation w : m is well attested.’’

29.55; 32.18. Lipiński considers מַשְׂנֵה “the day before yesterday” to be a blend of שלש “three” + דָּי “day.” Most Hebraists, I believe, would consider this word to be an example of adverbal -ōm (< Proto-Semitic -um), as in מָרוּמ “suddenly.”

33.8; 33.18. The range of Lipiński’s volume, even when he finds weakness in a particular opinion, may be illustrated by the following. The Mehri lexicon includes a number of nouns with prefixed ḫa-, e.g., ḫayd “hand,” ḫayb “father.” Lipiński records the suggestion that this suffix “may go back to *had, ‘one’, serving as an indefinite article.” This was the opinion of Brockelmann, which, as far as I can determine, appeared only in an article in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, not in the Grundrisse. Still, Lipiński takes the time and care to note it, if only to add, “This hypothesis is weakened by the fact that the Mehri numeral ‘one’ is ṭāṭ.”

33.9. Lipiński states the well-known rule that the Hebrew definite article is elided after the prepositions b-/k-/l-, but also notes that “the article is sometimes preserved in Late Biblical Hebrew,” e.g., 2 Chr 10:7 מַשְׂנֵה “for the people.” Note that this feature is attested eight times in Punic (though admittedly not in any standard Phoenician inscriptions), and that a significant proportion of the BH examples occur in northern texts. I have concluded that the non-ellipsis of the definite article before the unconcatenated prepositions should be considered an element of Israeli Hebrew (IH), with the concomitant suggestion that the appearance of this usage in exilic and post-exilic Hebrew compositions is due to the union of Israeli exiles and Judean exiles in Mesopotamia in the 6th century BCE.

33.10; 36.32; 49.1. Lipiński accepts the view that “the original articulation of the [Hebrew] article was han-,” as attested by Liyamic ḫn-, apparently rejecting the view that the gemination of the first consonant is due to junctural doubling. On the other hand, he does not accept the “hypothetically reconstructed form *wan- of the Hebrew conjunction used in the wayyiqtol

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29 Rendsburg, Northern Origin of Selected Psalms, p. 40.


tense,” preferring instead to consider the doubling of the consonants y/t/n which follow wa- as a “secondary phenomenon” (see further below §38.11).

34.5. In his treatment of the elative, Lipiński presents the three well-known examples from Hebrew: רָ֑בָּא, “cruel,” יְ֑זְרַע, “deceitful,” and יָ֑תְרִי, “lasting.” He then suggests something quite original (as far as I know not found in the standard dictionaries): “A remnant of a larger use of this pattern in Semitic languages may be preserved by Hebrew ‘almān and Assyro-Babylonian almānu, ‘widower’, a noun probably derived from lemnu, ‘bad’, and meaning etymologically ‘worse.’”

35.3. Lipiński’s treatment of ʾaš- “one” leaves the reader with the impression that the form is productive in Hebrew. It is limited, of course, to fossilized usage in the forms for “eleven”: masculine יָ֑שֵׁשׁ and feminine יָ֑שְׁשָׁה.

35.4. To be pedantic, Lipiński’s use of ʾin- > ʾir- as Aramaic “two” should have asterisks before the forms, since the attested Aramaic has ʾ as the initial consonant.

35.4. In a discussion of the numeral “two” in Semitic, Lipiński notes that “the substantive ʾn means ‘brother’ in Egyptian (šnt, ‘sister’), as well as in Cushitic (e.g., Bedja san) and in Chadic (e.g., East Chadic sin, etc.).” Beyond Afro-Asiatic one should also note Hurrian ʾēnā “brother.”

35.4. Lipiński states, “In Maghrebine Arabic, the noun zawq, ‘pair’ is used as numeral ‘two’, pronounced čūız, čūz, or čuċ.” It should be noted that this word is not native Semitic. It is borrowed from Greek zeugos “pair.”

35.10. In the discussion of the numeral “five” in Semitic, it might be of interest to note that the Hebrew forms ʾāmēs and hamiṣšāh run counter to the Semitic norm. Proto-Semitic ʾāmēs- is continued in Akkadian ʾāmšat, Aramaic ʾāmšā, Arabic ʾāms, ḥamsa, Geez ḥams, etc. The vowel patterns of the Hebrew forms were altered due to attraction to the following forms for “six”: šēš and šiṣšāh.

35.16. Another illustration of Lipiński’s attention to detail is in his presentation of the exceptional Hebrew form for “fifteen” occurring in Ezek 45:12 as ʾasār ṣāḥa. We learn that what is exceptional in Hebrew is standard in other languages, e.g., Phoenician, Nabatean, Modern South Arabian, Geez, Tigre, and Gurage. Lipiński’s transliteration, however, should be corrected from ʾāsār wa-ḥāmiṣšā to ʾāsārā wa-ḥāmiṣšā.

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32 In line with Lambdin, “The Junctural Origin of the West Semitic Definite Article,” p. 324.


34 As a tentative explanation for the sole Hebrew example: Did Ezekiel mix with Phoenicians in Mesopotamia and adopt this numeral from their dialect?
35.18. In his discussion of the decade numerals, Lipiński notes the following words for “thirty”: Hebrew שָׁלוֹשִׁים, Aramaic תָּלָתִין, Classical Arabic تَلَّاثُنا, Damascene colloquial تَلَّتِين. The last entry is of interest, because it exemplifies the shift of ז→ת in Damascene Arabic (and generally in Syrian Arabic), a result of the Aramaic substratum. As far as I can tell, this specific issue is not treated in this volume (e.g., at §13.9, in the treatment of the interdentals in the Phonology section), though Lipiński provides an excellent example of Aramaic substratum in Iraqi Arabic elsewhere (§40.25).

35.22. For “10,000,” Lipiński cites only Hebrew רבָּע, but the form רבּ is actually more common in the Bible. Lipiński ends his treatment of the cardinals with “10,000,” but notes that Eblaite now provides us with the numeral “100,000” in the form of ma-iat. C. H. Gordon pointed to a potential Hebrew parallel, namely, the Ketiv תсан in 2 Kgs 11:4, 11:9, 11:10, 11:15. I have proposed that Ugaritic miyt, which appears in the Kret epic (UT 126:iii:4 = KTU/CAT 1.16), should be understood as “100,000” as well.

36.7; 36.22; 40.7–8; etc. Lipiński does not accept the existence of dual pronouns and dual verbs in Hebrew. Either he is unaware of my research into these forms, or he opts for Joshua Blau’s alternative interpretation of the data.

36.28. Once more we may illustrate Lipiński’s vast erudition at work. Specialists in West Semitic are familiar with the reflexive pronoun qnm in Phoenician and Punic, qnūm in Syriac and Samaritan Aramaic, but have long sought an explanation for this form. First Lipiński notes Christian Palestinian Aramaic qiqn-, e.g., qiqni “I myself.” He then posits a reduplicated root *qṇqṇwn, “the simple form of which is used in Gurage dialects with the sense of ‘single,’ ‘alone’ (quna > qura-),” and which also appears in Amharic qwl “oneself” (e.g., qwl-u) “himself”) “with the change n > l.”

36.46; 36.47. Lipiński posits a relationship between the two sets of determinative-relative pronouns in Semitic, those with voiceless interdental t- and those with voiced interdental ɗ-. The former appears in North and East Semitic, though often with the shift of ɗ→š-, e.g., Akkadian ša. (As such, there is no connection between this relative marker and the 3msg independent pronoun šū and the related demonstrative šū). The latter appears in West and South Semitic, e.g., Arabic dū, Hebrew ו, though Lipiński notes that the unvoiced form also appears in West Semitic, e.g., Hebrew -ו.

37 “Eblaite and Some Northwest Semitic Lexical Links,” in Eblaitica (Winona Lake, IN, forthcoming), vol. 4.
38 See the article cited in n. 24.
36.51. Lipiński refers to the archaic Hebrew thponym zū-Sīnay, but this phrase is not attested. Rather, יִירָשׁ מָלָי appears in Judg 5:5, Ps 68:9. Accordingly, one should adjust the statement that “the pronoun zū is attested as indeclinable relative in poetry” (with the implication that only this form occurs). The facts are as follows: the forms נִי and מ both occur, the former as just cited, the latter, for example, in Ex 15:13, 15:16. In so far as they have lost any case significations, it is correct to refer to them as indeclinables.

37.1–8. Lipiński posits both aspect and tense for the Semitic verb, though he places much greater emphasis on the former: “Thus, the so-called present-future (iparras) of the grammars of Akkadian, e.g., really is an imperfective aspect, indicating basically that a process has not reached completion at a certain moment of time” (§37.8).

38.6. In addition, contra the opinion of most scholars, Lipiński posits the presence of a yaqattul in Ugaritic, corresponding to Akkadian iparras, alongside the widely recognized yaqtil (iprus) (= G-Stem or Qal) and yuqattil (uparras) (= D-Stem or Pi'el). I do not follow his argumentation here, and it is not clear to me how the attestation of forms such as yiḥd, yuḥd, and yahd relates to his issue. It seems better to explain these forms by lax use of the three ʿaleph signs to represent vowelless ʿaleph (expressed normally by i, but occasionally by u and a).

38.11. As alluded to above (re §§33.10; 36.32; 49.1), Lipiński does not consider the doubling of the consonants y/t/n which follow wa- in the waw consecutive form to be original. Thus he writes, “The old preterite preceded by wa-, ‘and’, kept on acting as a narrative past tense, at least sporadically, in Hebrew (e.g., way-yo2mer, ‘and he said’).” The problem with this approach is that it appears to purport a function to the wa- alone, since otherwise the prefix-conjugation would normally be future or modal.40 I see no other solution than to assume an assimilated -n-, with its closest parallel being the Egyptian n marking past tense.41 Note that the only Semitic languages which utilize the wayyiqtol form (Hebrew and Moabite, and probably Phoenician—the evidence from Aramaic is equivocal) are those languages used in areas formerly under Egyptian control during the New Kingdom. I would suggest that we are dealing here with an adstratum feature. I am also somewhat puzzled by Lipiński’s remark “at least sporadically,” since the wayyiqtol form is standard in Biblical Hebrew.

38.22. In a nod to the modern Semitic languages, Lipiński discusses the preverb b(i)- to express the continuous present in several Arabic dialects of

40 Notwithstanding an occasional preterite usage under certain circumstances, e.g., 1 Kgs 21:6, 2 Kgs 8:29, 9:15. Note that all three of these verses are in Israeli contexts. See further G. A. Rendsburg, Israeli Hebrew in the Books of Kings (forthcoming).
the Arabian peninsula and in Neo-Aramaic, and to express the general present in Syro-Palestinian and Cairene Arabic. He faults various explanations for this form, and then adds: "An explanation based on the preposition bi- cannot be discarded." Lipiński is clearly on the right track, and his approach is supported by the bet of predication attested in classical Semitic languages.  

39.2. Lipiński states that the indicative suffix -u "seems to appear in Amorite, in the Amarna correspondence, and perhaps in Ugaritic, at least with some prefix-conjugations." Leaving aside the Amorite evidence, which is difficult to assess, I do not understand the qualifications "seems to appear" and "perhaps." In both Amarna and Ugaritic, indicative -u is amply attested.  

39.15 There is something amiss in Lipiński’s discussion of the apocopated prefix-conjugation forms in Hebrew. He states: "The variations in the spelling, e.g., of the verb ṣyw, ‘to order,’—yṣw and yṣwh,  ̂ṣw, and  ̂ṣwh, sw and ṣwh,—gave rise to different Masoretic vocalizations,—yṣaw and yṣawwe,  ̂ṣaw and  ̂ṣawwe,  ̂ṣaw and  ̂ṣawwē,—although the differences are purely graphic and dialectal." If I understand him correctly, he claims that the different forms (in those cases where a distinction may be seen, e.g., in ills verbs) do not divide along the lines of short form for jussive, long form for indicative; rather that the two forms are simply variants of each other and that the jussive-indicative distinction has been lost. But notwithstanding some exceptions and crossovers, Biblical Hebrew in general retains the distinction between the jussive force of the apocopated prefix-conjugation and the indicative force of the regular prefix-conjugation form.  

40.2. The chart of actor affixes (Lipiński’s term) for the suffix conjugation shows -ū for both 3mpl and 3pl in Aramaic. But note that there is evidence for distinct forms in some Aramaic dialects. For example, the qeri of Dan 7:20 indicates that 3pl ended in -ā; and Jewish Palestinian Aramaic presents 3mpl -ān, 3pl -ān. This evidence brings Aramaic into line with other Semitic languages and with Proto-Semitic, 3mpl -ū, 3pl -ā.

40.17. The standard grammars of Ugaritic list y-/l- . . . (-n) as the 3mpl prefix conjugation, and Lipiński repeats that information here. But Deborah Dobrusin has convincingly shown, notwithstanding an occasional possible

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43 Rainey, Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets, 2:227–234 (for what Rainey terms the “indicative imperfect” yaqultu); Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook, pp. 71–72; and Sivan, Grammar of Ugaritic, pp. 98, 100–102 (following Rainey’s terminology).
44 For more detailed treatment, see B. K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax (Winona Lake, IN, 1990), pp. 566–570.
46 Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook, p. 154; and Sivan, Grammar of Ugaritic, pp. 111–112.
counterexample, that the form in Ugaritic was with \( t \)- only (instances with \( y \)-are dual forms)^47, \(^48^\).

40.17–18. As I stated at the outset, this is not the place to settle the issue of the classification of the Semitic languages. But an important isogloss is forthcoming from Lipiński’s presentation of the actor affixes of the prefix conjugation. Note that Eblaite, Ugaritic, and Amarna attest to 3mpl in \( t \).

41.2. It is not clear why Lipiński presents the Hebrew paradigm of the Basic Stem with “Mishnaic Hebrew.” The nine forms listed (\( kātab, kātabā, \) etc.) for the suffix conjugation (or perfect) are also the BH forms. He then correctly lists the seven forms (\( yiktoōb, tiktoōb, \) etc.) for the prefix conjugation (or imperfect), including the fact that \( tiktoōbā \) and \( yiktoōbū \) serve as the epicene 2pl and 3pl forms, respectively. But why not present the BH forms, with distinct 2pl and 3pl forms, the above two forms for the masculine, and \( tiktoōbnā \) as both 2pl and 3pl?

41.7. In a discussion of the causative stem, Lipiński relates the \( š \)-prefix to the suffixed -\( s \) or -\( š \) in Cushitic and Chadic, as well as in Bantu, used to express the causative, e.g., Highland East Cushitic \( imm- \) “give,” \( imm-\text{is-} \) “cause to give.” He then states, “The \( š \)-suffix is attested also in Semitic, but only as a morpheme deriving verbs from nouns,” e.g., Hebrew \( šōḵ “blow” \) from \( ḫō “mouth,” šāḵ “weaken” from \( ḫl “weakness,” šēḵ “shake” from \( ḫy “evil,” šêr “cut in, engrave” from \( ḫr “hole.” This is an extremely imaginative and creative suggestion. But there are problems with some of these, either semantically or etymologically. To note the most serious: \( ḫēr \) represents two proto-Semitic roots, \( ḫrē “artisan, craftsman” \) and \( ḫrē “plow,” \) and derives from \( ḫr \) (all of these appear in Ugaritic); thus, no matter which of the two roots is the source of \( ḫēr “cut in, engrave,” \) one still must reckon with \( ḫēr “hole” \) having a different etymology altogether.^49

41.13. Most scholars have tacitly assumed that the Phoenician \( y \)-prefix of the causative stem and the third person masculine singular suffix pronoun \(-y \) are related, especially since Semitic languages generally correlate the two (with either \( š \) [as in Akkadian] or \( h \) [as in Hebrew]). But Lipiński argues for separate origins for these two forms in Phoenician. He suggests one of two origins for the causative \( y \)-prefix: (a) “the prepalatal \( y \) can be an on-glise before the vocalic initial \( i - \) resulting from the dropping of the laryngeal \( h \) in the causative \( h \)-prefix, originally pronounced \( *hi\)- like in Hebrew,” or (b)

^47 Oddly, Lipiński presents only “?“ for the Ugaritic 3rd person masculine dual.


^49 In line with Lipiński’s approach to the subject, one might have expected a nod to J. A. Soggin, “Tracce di antichi causativi in \( š \)-realizzati come radici autonome in ebraico biblico,” Annali, Istituto Universitario Orientali di Napoli 15 (1965) 17–30. Soggin suggested that a number of Hebrew roots with initial \( š \) are secondary formations built from other verbal roots, e.g., \( šūl “rare, \) \( šōr “field, \) \( šāl “catch, \) \( šāl “speak, etc.”
viewing y as an old causal morpheme used also to form verbs by suffixing it to a monosyllabic nominal base,” e.g., tn-y “to make another” from tn-two,” bn-y “to make a son” from bn “son,” etc., with further parallels in Cushitic. Of these two options, I admire the ingenuity of the latter, but find the former more likely. Lipiński continues, “As for the pronominal suffix -γ, it can best be explained as derived from a masculine suffix *-hi, such as occurs in Aramaic. After a vowel the h was elided, giving raise [sic] to a diphthong,” perhaps *-ay < *-ahi.

41.16. Lipiński states that the N-stem does not occur in Ugaritic. For a contrary view, see the standard grammars of Gordon and Sivan.50

41.22. Lipiński lists an array of Semitic languages with the t-infix after the first radical of the G-stem, but he does not mention Hebrew in this connection. The verb רותש “urinate” derives from the root סנ ( < сын), though it has been reanalyzed as a Hiphʿil of סון. From the presence of סומ “mock” in the D-stem (occurring only in 1 Kgs 18:27) and סומ “mock” in the H-stem, we can reconstruct an original G-stem of סומ “be foolish” with t-infix. In both cases, the t-infix came to be understood as a radical; and in the latter, moreover, the h came to be understood as the marker of the H-stem. So while Hebrew does not have pure remnants of the Gt-stem, these examples demonstrate that proto-Hebrew or Early Biblical Hebrew possessed this form.

41.25. In his discussion of the Hitpael (or Dt-stem), Lipiński presents the standard situation when the first root letter is a sibilant, that is, the t preserves its original place following said sibilant. He then notes, “In postclassical Hebrew, however, the t can be prefixed to a sibilant, e.g., htצאנ (1QIs) instead of hiatus ʾaw, `enjoy yourselves’ (Is. 29.9).”51 The citation is correct, though the reader would be right to question whether this is not just a scribal error made while copying a biblical manuscript. Indeed, a tav is inserted above the line following the first tav as an attempted correction, even though it is wrongly placed since it belongs after the first san.52 The general point is correct, but it would have been more appropriate to cite three such forms from 1QH, as this is more likely to represent real Qumran Hebrew.53 Furthermore, note that such form occurs in the Bible: Jer 49:3

50 Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook, pp. 81–82; and Sivan, Grammar of Ugaritic, pp. 131–132.
51 Incidentally, most scholars, as reflected in the standard Hebrew dictionaries, distinguish two meanings for the root שפ, “besmear” and “enjoy.” The usage in Isa 29:9 typically is related to the first of these, not to the latter, with a posited semantic extension from “besmear (one’s eyes)” to “blind.” Thus, for example, the NJPS renders וַשָּׁפַע as “act blind and be blinded.”
52 E. Y. Kutscher, Ha-Lashon we-ha-Regaḥ ha-Leshoni shel Megillat Yesha’yaḥu ha-Shelema mi-Megillot Yam ha-Melah (Jerusalem, 1959), p. 266.
53 For the references, see E. Qimron, The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Atlanta, 1986), p. 55.
This form occurs in the prophet’s address to Ammon, and it is most likely an example of addressee-switching, utilizing an Ammonite grammatical form.54 Of course, we have no such evidence from our meager corpus of Ammonite inscriptions, but I would speculate thus nonetheless. Support may be forthcoming from another Transjordanian dialect, Nabatean, in which such forms are attested.55

41.29 Lipiński correctly presents חסרתון “prostrate oneself” as the Št-stem (= Arabic Stem X) of the root ħwy “strike.” Too many scholars still state that it derives from a root ʾšw, ʾšy, ʾšh, etc.

47.8. I do not quite understand the comment: “The Hebrew spelling lɔ of the negative goes back to an allophone lɔ2 of ʾl2 < ṭlā, which is attested in Ṭūrāyo and paralleled by lāʔ in Modern South Arabian.” Is Lipiński suggesting that the Hebrew negative particle was pronounced with either short lɔ or long lɔː Why not just assume a single form lɔː, which in time became a homophone of the word “to him,” that is, after the latter underwent the shift of lahu > law (through elision of the h) > law (with shift of the second vowel u to the homorganic consonant w) > ʾl (through monophthongization). Once the two exceedingly common words for “no” and “to him” were pronounced the same, Hebrew scribes developed a graphic convention to represent the former with א and the latter with י (reserving ה for “to her.”)56

48.12–23. With the exception of the primary prepositions (such as b- and l-), Lipiński posits a nominal origin for a wide series of prepositions. Thus, for example, י from” derives from the noun *mini “measure” (cf. Akkadian minitu), related to the verb mny “count, measure”; י “with” derives from the noun ʾam(m) “people”; י “between” is a noun meaning “separation, interval,” derived from the verbal root byn “discern, distinguish” (cf. the Hebrew Hiphʾil הרבע; and ידוע “with me” (attested in the first person singular only) derives from the noun ʾum-d- ʾim-d- ʾome-d “support.”

48.18. I devote a separate discussion here to Lipiński’s treatment of the preposition *ʔt, derived “from a noun used in ancient Egyptian ʾišt, ’belongings’ . . . and probably related to Arabic ʾattā ‘to be abundant, ʾatāt, ‘furnishings.’” This proto-form yields, among others, Eblaite dāš-tu, dāš-tā, dāš-ti /ʾatt-l “from, since, with,” and Hebrew ʾitt- “resulting from the assimilation ʾitt- > ʾitt-.” Once more we marvel at Lipiński’s ability to detect such distant connections.

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56 Though they did not carry out this distinction consistently, as indicated by the numerous ketiv-qere examples involving these two words. See R. Gordis, The Biblical Text in the Making: A Study of the Kethib-Qere (Philadelphia, 1937), pp. 150–156 (about a dozen such examples).
49.1. Lipiński considers enclitic *ma to be a “phonetic nasalized variant” of the common conjunction wa-. On the prefixing or suffixing of the same morpheme, see above §41.7. Lipiński uses this approach elsewhere as well, e.g., his correlation of the primary preposition is and the postposition -iš (§48.10).

49.2. Lipiński associates the conjunction ʿap, attested in Eblaite, Ugaritic, Hebrew, Phoenician, and Aramaic, with the conjunction pa-fa-, attested most notably in Samalian and Arabic, but elsewhere as well (e.g., Ugaritic).

49.4. Lipiński states that Hebrew זָן, meaning “or,” used especially in questions, e.g., Josh 5:13 (see also Phoenician-Punic ʿm and Arabic ʿam) “is likely to go back to a phonetic variant of ʿaw,” though it developed “by blend” with the conditional particle ʿim “if.”

49.23. Lipiński lumps the various particles of existence (and, with prefixed negatives, non-existence) in Semitic (Ugaritic it, Hebrew ψ, Aramaic יַן, Arabic laysa, etc.) into one category (with the note that Arabic laysa [and the alternative form lāta] “seem to imply borrowing”). But as Joshua Blau has demonstrated, two proto-forms are to be distinguished: *yiš, yielding Hebrew ψ, Arabic laysa; etc.; and *iṭay, yielding Ugaritic it, Aramaic יַן, etc.\(^{57}\) Note that Hebrew also has יַן, attested three times in the Bible, which aligns with the latter group.\(^{58}\)

50.1. Lipiński introduces the Syntax section by noting that his presentation is based on the evidence of those Semitic languages for which a full picture is available, mainly Arabic, Hebrew, and Akkadian. As for the other languages: “The wide use of logograms in Palaeosyrian, the shortness and the simplicity of the clauses forming Amorite personal names, the lack of vocalization in Ugaritic and in Epigraphic South Arabian inscriptions impose [on] us limits, and only a partial picture of Semitic syntax can therefore be gained.” But he is quick to add, correctly: “On the whole, however, the syntax of the languages just mentioned is very similar to the one of the ‘Classical’ languages.”

62.2. Lipiński’s range and approach are evident again in his claim that “the common Semitic verb bakaya, bakā, bakū, ‘to cry,’ ‘to weep,’ is formed from the sound of cries, just as the English verb ‘to beg’ or the Polish noun bek-sa, ‘weeper.’”

62.3. Correct “homonymous” to “synonymous” in the discussion of Arabic ʿattā and gāʾa, both meaning “he came.”

65.5. Scholars generally have assumed that Hebrew זָן “rose” (and its Aramaic and Arabic cognates) is a borrowing from Persian. Lipiński presents a wealth of evidence to suggest otherwise, most importantly “Mycenaean


\(^{58}\) See further G. A. Rendsburg, “‘מִלְטֶךְ חֲבָרָם’ בָּא-לַשׁוֹן,” Meḥqarim ba-Lashon (forthcoming).
Greek *Fopðø-, a variant of *Fpðø- that appears as βρόðov in the Aeolian dialect of the 7th century B.C.," along with the attestation of the element wrd in Nabatean, Palmyrene, and Safaitic anthroponyms.

65.10. *My Diglossia in Ancient Hebrew*59 is listed in Lipiński’s Bibliography (p. 604), but the discussion on diglossia is limited to Arabic, admittedly the paradigm example of the phenomenon, not only in Semitic but within all world languages.

67.19. Lipiński points to “Carmel” as an example of a toponym with an unknown etymology. I would point out the obvious: the word is comprised of דָּרֹפָּר “vineyard” + כֹּר, the latter element a shortened form of כֹּה “god,” used here as a superlative, thus “Carmel” = “choicest vineyard.” An analogy within Hebrew is יִרְשָר “thickest cloud” > “darkness, fog.” It is hard to imagine that Lipiński does not know this basic understanding of the word; presumably he rejects it as a folk-etymology, either among the Israelites of old or Hebraists of today.

Finally, it should be noted how wonderfully-produced this book is. The quality of the paper, the plates (of various ancient texts and medieval manuscripts), the page layout, etc., are all first-rate. The number of typographical errors in such a complex work is exceptionally low (rare examples, both dealing with English translations, and not transliterations, are in §41.26 where “he went made” should read “he went mad,” and in §54.6 where “don’t doe!” should read “don’t do!”). I congratulate Uitgeverij Peeters for this achievement.

The volume concludes with an extremely useful 41-page General Index and a very complete 71-page Index of Words and Forms covering 39 different languages or language groups.60 In addition, there is a helpful 18-page Glossary of Selected Linguistic Terms.

I am sure that I speak for many in congratulating Lipiński on this outstanding achievement. The book is a masterpiece that will serve scholars well for decades and generations to come.

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60 However, while trying to locate one of the forms referred to above, namely, Ugaritic qrat “she called,” I noticed that it was missing from the Index.