WHAT WE CAN LEARN ABOUT OTHER NORTHWEST SEMITIC DIALECTS FROM READING THE BIBLE

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The past several decades have witnessed a burgeoning of interest in the various languages and dialects used in the area of greater Canaan during the Iron Age. This flurry of scholarly activity has been sparked by several catalysts: (a) the publication of W.R. Garr's *Dialect Geography of Syria–Palestine* (1985),[1] which may serve as a watershed; (b) new epigraphic finds, which continue to emerge during archaeological excavations (Ekron, Tel Dan, etc.); and (c) a greater awareness of what the Bible itself contains relevant to the subject. In this essay our focus is on the last of these three factors, though naturally the first two remain ever present as we proceed in our investigations. In addition, while I have used the expression 'other Northwest Semitic dialects' in the title, by this designation I include Hebrew dialects beyond SBH in which the majority of the Bible is composed.[2]

It is my great honour to dedicate this essay to our dear friend and colleague Frank Polak, who has done so much during his distinguished career to advance our knowledge of the workings of the Hebrew language. His pioneering research into verbal vs. nominal style, the use of hypotaxis, and the employment of noun groups—to name the most important new horizons—have impacted the study of ancient Hebrew in singular fashion.[3] In

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1. W. Randall Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 BCE* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

2. Note the following abbreviations: SBH = Standard Biblical Hebrew; IH = Israelian Hebrew; JPA = Jewish Palestinian Aramaic; JBA = Jewish Babylonian Aramaic.

3. Among the many seminal articles, see Frank Polak, 'Development and Periodization of Biblical Prose Narrative: Part One', *BM* 43 (1997), pp. 30-52 (Hebrew); Frank Polak, 'The Oral and the Written: Syntax, Stylistics and the Development of Biblical Prose Narrative', *JANES* 26 (1998), pp. 59-105; Frank Polak, 'Sociolinguistics: A Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Hebrew', *HS* 47 (2006), pp. 115-62; and Frank Polak, 'Parallelism and Noun Groups in Prophetic Poetry from the Persian Era', in *A Palimpsest: Rhetoric, Ideology, Stylistics, and Language Relating to Persian Israel* (ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, Diana V. Edelman and Frank Polak; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009), pp. 199-235. Another line of enquiry, which has received less attention, focused on the distribution of key verbs from the same semantic field; see Frank Polak,

addition, Frank has always been exceedingly generous in sharing his data sets, as a glimpse at some of my own published articles, so indebted to his work, will demonstrate.[4]

The present article, as adumbrated above, is less dependent on Frank's investigations into the different Hebrew writing styles, and yet it intersects with his abiding interest in the broad framework of the Hebrew language—especially through the sociolinguistic lens—as revealed in the ancient sources. By necessity, due to space limitations, the treatment will be sketchy at times (including via the use of lists, especially when I present examples discussed in earlier articles), but this outline format at least will allow the reader to realize in a single essay the full amount of data available to us.

1.0. *The Shibboleth Incident (Judges 12)*

The *locus classicus* for dialectal differences within ancient Hebrew itself is the well-known Shibboleth incident (Judg. 12.6):

וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אֱמָר־נָא שִׁבֹּלֶת וַיֹּאמֶר סִבֹּלֶת וְלֹא יָכִין לְדַבֵּר כֵּן

> And they said to him, 'say please *šibbōlɛt*', and he said '*sibbōlɛt*', for he could not speak thus.[5]

E.A. Speiser was the first to offer the correct interpretation of this passage,[6] while I myself have written several articles on the subject.[7] In short, Judg. 12.6 demonstrates that the phoneme /t̠/ was preserved in Transjordanian dialects (Gilead, Ammon), but Cisjordanians could not pronounce this sound and thus realized it as [s].

2.0. *Style-Switching: Genesis 24—Abraham's Servant in Aram*

The biblical authors delighted their audiences with the literary device of style-switching, by which the foreignness of various characters and geographical settings is reflected in the narrative, both in direct discourse and

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'Development and Periodization of Biblical Prose Narrative: Part Two', *BM* 43 (1997), pp. 142-60 (Hebrew).

4. See, e.g., 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), pp. 23-46 (34 n. 54).

5. Throughout this article, the Hebrew text is taken from the St Petersburg (Leningrad) Codex, Firkovich B 19 A, as presented by Matthew Anstey at www.bhgrammar.com. All English translations are my own.

6. E.A. Speiser, 'The Shibboleth Incident (Judges 12:6)', *BASOR* 85 (1945), pp. 10-13.

7. Gary A. Rendsburg, 'More on Hebrew *šibbōlet*', *JSS* 33 (1988), pp. 255-58; and Gary A. Rendsburg, 'The Ammonite Phoneme /T̠/', *BASOR* 269 (1988), pp. 73-79.

in third-person narration. The first major example of this technique in the Hebrew Bible occurs in Genesis 24, as the camera follows Abraham's servant in his journey from Canaan to Aram. The following seven items are all atypical of Hebrew, or at least SBH, but are common in Aramaic:[8]

1. The expression אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם 'God of heaven', vv. 3, 7.
2. The phrase אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִקַּח 'that you not take' in v. 3, calquing on Aramaic דלא (instead of the expected Hebrew אִם).
3. The root ג-מ-א (hiphil) 'give drink' in v. 17.
4. The root ע-ר-ה 'pour' in v. 20.
5. The root שׁ-א-ה (hithpael) 'gaze, watch' in v. 21.
6. The particle אִם־לֹא 'but rather' in v. 38 (cf. אלא > אן לא).
7. The noun מִגְדָּנֹת 'choice gifts' in v. 53.

3.0. *Style-Switching: Genesis 30–31—Jacob in Aram*

The narrative in the book of Genesis returns to the land of Aram in chs. 30–31, as Jacob spends twenty years in the country residing in the household of Laban. Once more the author treats his audience to a host of Aramaic-like features, embedded in both the narration and in direct discourse, as a means of creating the proper ambience for the story set in a foreign land. Examples include:[9]

1. The noun גָּד 'fortune' in 30.11 (in the naming of Gad).
2. The root ז-ב-ד 'provide, supply' (as both verb and noun) in 30.20 (in the naming of Zebulun).
3. נָקְבָה שְׂכָרְךָ עָלַי וְאֶתֵּנָה 'designate your wage for me, and I will give it' in Gen. 30.28, with נ-ק-ב 'mark, specify, designate' (cf. Isa. 62.2).
4. The noun תְּיָשִׁים 'he-goats' in 30.35, more common in JPA and other Western Aramaic dialects than in Hebrew (see below, §15.2).
5. The noun לוּז 'almond' in 30.37 (in place of שָׁקֵד).

8. For detailed treatment, see my earlier analysis of this chapter: Rendsburg, 'Some False Leads', pp. 24-35.

9. See earlier treatments by Jonas C. Greenfield, 'Aramaic Studies and the Bible', in *Congress Volume Vienna 1980* (ed. John A. Emerton; VTSup, 32; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981), pp. 110-30 (129-30); and Gary A. Rendsburg, 'Aramaic-like Features in the Pentateuch', *HS* 47 (2006), pp. 163-76 (166-68). For a wide-ranging analysis of other issues pertinent to the Aramean background of the Jacob story, including one nod to the linguistic, see Dalit Rom-Shiloni, 'When an Explicit Polemic Initiates a Hidden One: Jacob's Aramaic Identity', in *Words, Ideas, Worlds in the Hebrew Bible: Biblical Essays in Honour of Yairah Amit* (ed. Athalya Brenner and Frank H. Polak; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012), pp. 206-35.

6. The verb פ-צ-ל 'peel, split' in 30.37-38, common in JPA, JBA, Syriac, etc.[10]

7. 3rd person feminine plural form וַיֵּחַמְנָה 'and they were in heat' in 30.38 (SBH would be וַתֵּחַמְנָה*) (see below, §12.1).

8. וַאֲבִיכֶן הֵתֶל בִּי וְהֶחֱלִף אֶת־מַשְׂכֻּרְתִּי עֲשֶׂרֶת מֹנִים (Gen. 31.7) 'and your father cheated me, and he changed my wages ten times'

- The verb הֶחֱלִף 'exchange' (31.7, 41) occurs only here (2x) in the Bible with reference to wages, money, etc., paralleling a usage well attested in JBA in particular.
- The verbal form, *w^{e}qatal* for past tense, aligns with Aramaic syntax, not SBH.

9. The noun מֹנִים 'times' in 31.7, 41, occurring only here in the Bible; note also the root מ-נ-ה 'count', standard in Aramaic and more productive than in Hebrew.

10. The verbs וַיַּצֵּל 'and he took away' in 31.9 and הִצִּיל 'he took away' in 31.16 (otherwise נ-צ-ל hiphil means 'save').

11. The verb וַיַּדְבֵּק 'he overtook' in 31.23 (instead of expected Hebrew וַיַּשֵּׂג—though see 31.25).

12. The verbal clause וְלֹא נְטַשְׁתַּנִי 'you did not allow me' in 31.28 (calquing on Aramaic שׁ-ב-ק).

13. The inflected participle גְּנֻבְתִי 'I was robbed' in 31.39 (2x) (even though this morpheme is attested only later in JPA).

14. The form אֶתְהֶם in Gen. 32.1 (in place of standard אֹתָם), with the preservation of the *he* in this form linking it to Aramaic יתהון/יתהום (see below, §8.4).

4.0. *Style-Switching: Balaam—Numbers 22–24*

A slightly different kind of style-switching occurs in the Balaam story, for in this case the setting remains in greater Canaan (Moab, to be specific), but the main protagonist is a prophet brought from Aram. Balaam's oracles, accordingly, are replete with grammatical and lexical features known from Aramaic, but which are non-standard in Hebrew. Examples include:[11]

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10. This is a new item, not treated in the articles cited in n. 9. For the use of this lexeme in Aramaic, consult the standard dictionaries. While not directly relevant to Genesis 30, for a discussion of this verbal root with a legal nuance, see Andrew D. Gross, *Continuity and Innovation in the Aramaic Legal Tradition* (JSJSup, 128; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2008), pp. 167-68 (see also 162, 188-89, 198).

11. See Rendsburg, 'Aramaic-like Features', pp. 169-71; and Clinton J. Moyer, *Literary and Linguistic Studies in Sefer Bil'am (Numbers 22–24)* (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2009), pp. 14-192. For earlier brief comments, see Stephen A. Kaufman, 'The Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Impli-

1. The reduplicatory plural form הַרְרֵי 'mountains' (construct) in 23.7 (see below, §6.2).

2. The noun צֻרִים 'mountains' in 23.9 in the a-line of the couplet, replacing standard Hebrew הָרִים, paired with גְּבָעוֹת 'hills' in the b-line (the only such case in the Bible); the form צֻרִים evokes Aramaic טורים 'mountains', and no doubt reflects an attempt to include that Aramaic word in the poetry, using the Old Aramaic orthography still, in which the emphatic interdental /ẓ/ is represented by צ (before the shift to ט occurred)—in fact this orthography appears still in the Adon letter, line 8, where 'he guarded' appears as נצר (and not expected נטר).

3. The verb יִתְחַשָּׁב 'be considered' in 23.9, with the hithpael serving for passive voice, as with the T-stem in Aramaic (one expects the niphal in Hebrew).

4. The noun רֹבַע 'dust-cloud' in 23.10, with a cognate in Syriac, as well as in Akkadian.

5. The noun נַחַשׁ 'divination' in 23.23 (with the plural form נְחָשִׁים in 24.1 in the prose narrative).

6. The verbal form נִטָּיוּ 'stretched out' (or 'standing tall') in 24.6, with the retention of the *yod* in the *lamed-he* (IIIy) verb, as in Aramaic.

7. The noun מַלְכֻתוֹ '(his) kingdom' in 24.7, the classic Aramaic form, in place of the standard Hebrew form מַמְלְכָה.

8. The suffix ־יהֶם added to a plural noun ending in *-ôt*, as in עַצְמֹתֵיהֶם 'their bones' in 24.8; SBH prefers the form ־ם.

9. The verbal root ג-ר-ם 'devour bones' in the expression וְעַצְמֹתֵיהֶם יְגָרֵם 'and their bones he devours' in 24.8, using the denominative verb based on the Aramaic word גרם 'bone' (2x elsewhere in the Bible).

In all three of these sections (§2, §3, §4), it is important to note that many of these Aramaic-like features are not attested in actual Aramaic texts until centuries, perhaps not even a millennium, later (note my nods to JPA and JBA above, for example). And yet based on their presence in these narratives from the Torah, which should be dated early rather than late—especially in light of Polak's discovery of the greater verbal (rather than nominal) style used therein[12]—we may assume that these elements were present in Aramaic already during the Iron Age.

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cations Thereof', in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Panel Sessions: Hebrew and Aramaic Languages* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1988), pp. 41-57 (54-55). For a classical study with some relevance to the topic, see Shelomo Morag, 'Layers of Antiquity: Some Linguistics Observations on the Oracles of Balaam', *Tarbiz* 50 (1981), pp. 1-24 (Hebrew) (reprinted in Shelomo Morag, *Studies in Biblical Hebrew* [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1996], pp. 45-69).

12. Polak, 'The Oral and the Written', especially the convenient chart on p. 70.

5.0. *Israelian Hebrew: Genesis 49—Blessings to the Tribes*

As is now well recognized, ancient Hebrew was divided into two main dialects, one northern (Israelian) and one southern (Judahite). The latter is essentially SBH, since the majority of the biblical texts were composed in Judah generally or Jerusalem specifically, or by exiles from Judah/Jerusalem. The best place to find IH is in those compositions set in the north, such as the narratives concerning the northern judges and the northern kings, along with other Israelian compositions, such as the book of Proverbs.[13] But even in texts emanating from the south one may find IH traits, as the following three sections demonstrate.

We begin with four features from the blessings to the northern tribes in Genesis 49:[14]

1. The noun גֶּרֶם 'bone' in v. 14 (blessing to Issachar), in place of Hebrew עֶצֶם.

2.-3. The expression אִמְרֵי־שָׁפֶר 'lambs of beauty' in v. 21 (blessing to Naphtali).

4. The noun שׁוּר 'wall' in v. 22 (blessing to Joseph); the only other occurrence is in 2 Sam. 22.30 = Ps. 18.30, in the b-line.

6.0. *Israelian Hebrew: Deuteronomy 33—Blessings to the Tribes*

Similarly, the blessings to the northern tribes in Deuteronomy 33 also include IH elements:[15]

1. The noun יְרָחִים 'months' in v. 14 (blessing to Joseph), as opposed to standard Hebrew חֲדָשִׁים.

2. The plural form הַרְרֵי 'mountains' (construct) in v. 15 (blessing to Joseph) (see above, §4.1).

3. The verb וַיֵּתֵא 'and he came' in v. 21 (blessing to Gad), from the root א-ת-ה, standard Aramaic equivalent of Hebrew ב-ו-א.

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13. Space does not allow a treatment of these works here; see Gary A. Rendsburg, 'A Comprehensive Guide to Israelian Hebrew: Grammar and Lexicon', *Orient* 38 (2003), pp. 5-35, and the literature cited there.

14. For earlier treatment, see Gary A. Rendsburg, 'Israelian Hebrew Features in Genesis 49', in *Let your Colleagues Praise You: Studies in Memory of Stanley Gevirtz* (Part 2) (ed. Robert J. Ratner *et al.*) = *Maarav* 8 (1992), pp. 161-70.

15. For earlier treatment, see Gary A. Rendsburg, 'Israelian Hebrew Features in Deuteronomy 33', in *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and its Cultural Environment in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay* (ed. Nili S. Fox, David A. Glatt-Gilad and Michael J. Williams; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), pp. 167-83.

4. The adjective סָפוּן 'honored, esteemed' in v. 21 (blessing to Gad); cf. Mishnaic Hebrew, Aramaic.[16]

5. The noun דָּרוֹם 'south' in v. 23 (blessing to Naphtali), the Aramaic equivalent to the various Hebrew words for 'south,' including תֵּימָן, יָמִין and נֶגֶב—otherwise, דָּרוֹם appears in Ezekiel, Qohelet and Job, as an Aramaism.

7.0. *Israelian Hebrew: Wise Woman of Tekoa—2 Samuel 14*

Based on the presence of two IH features in her speech, the wise woman of Tekoa, whom Joab brings to appear before David, must stem from northern Tekoa in the lower Galilee, not southern Tekoa near Bethlehem. Note the following:[17]

1. The particle of existence אֵשׁ 'there is, there are' in 2 Sam. 14.19: אֵשׁ־אִם לְהֵמִין וּלְהַשְׂמִיל ׀ 'there is naught (to turn) to go-right or to go-left'; cf. Ugaritic *'it*, Aramaic לית / איתי (negative).

2. The syntagma אחד . . . אחד to express the reciprocal in 2 Sam. 14.6: וַיַּכּוֹ הָאֶחָד אֶת־הָאֶחָד 'and he struck him, the one the other', vs. SBH אִישׁ אֶת־אָחִיו 'the man his brother' or אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ 'the man his friend'; for further instances of this usage, see:

- Job 41.8 אֶחָד בְּאֶחָד יִגַּשׁוּ 'one touches the other'
- Samaritan Pentateuch Exod. 26.3-6 אחת אל אחת (4x)
- Targum Onqelos Exod. 26.3-6 חדא עם חדא (3x), חדא לקבל חדא (1x).[18]

8.0. *Midianite Dialect—Exodus 18 plus Two Other Relevant Passages*

Both Edward Greenstein and Mordechay Mishor have pointed to a series of atypical grammatical usages in Exodus 18, within Jethro's advice to Moses concerning the juridical process.[19] The result is a text that attempts to portray the foreign speech of the Midianite priest-sheikh. The most prominent of these features are these:

16. See my detailed article: Gary A. Rendsburg, 'סָפוּן (Deut 33:21)', *HUCA* 81 (2010), pp. 17-42.

17. See Gary A. Rendsburg, 'The Particle of Existence אֵשׁ', *Meḥqarim be-Lashon* 9 (2003), pp. 251-55 (Hebrew).

18. For more on the speech of the Woman of Tekoa, see Naama Zahavi-Ely, '"Turn Right or Left": Literary Use of Dialect in 2 Samuel 14:19?', *Hebrew Studies* 53 (2012), pp. 43-53.

19. Edward L. Greenstein, 'Jethro's Wit: An Interpretation of Wordplay in Exodus 18', in *On the Way to Nineveh: Studies in Honor of George M. Landes* (ed. Stephen L. Cook and S.C. Winter; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1999), pp. 155-71; and Mordechay Mishor, 'On the Language and Text of Exodus 18', in *Biblical Hebrew in its Northwest Semitic Environment: Typological and Historical Perspectives* (ed. Steven E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz; Jerusalem: Magnes Press; and Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), pp. 225-29.

1. Exod. 18.14 מִן־בֹּקֶר 'from morning'; non-assimilation of *nun* (cf. Exod. 18.13 מִן־הַבֹּקֶר).

2. Exod. 18.18 עֲשֹׂהוּ 'to do it'; instead of the expected עֲשֹׂתוֹ (as in Jer. 23.20; 30.24); cf. Samaritan Pentateuch עשותו.

3. Exod. 18.20 וְהִזְהַרְתָּה אֶתְהֶם 'and you shall instruct them'—the root ז-ה-ר is non-standard; cf. 2 Kgs 6.10; Qoh. 4.13, etc.

4. Exod. 18.20 וְהִזְהַרְתָּה אֶתְהֶם 'and you shall instruct them'—non-standard אֶתְהֶם (5x) in place of אוֹתָם / אֹתָם (475x) (see above, §3.14).

Another oddity occurs in Exodus 18, though in this case one must admit that the reverse of the expected occurs:

5. Exod. 18.22 יִשְׁפְּטוּ־הֶם 'let them judge'
   Exod. 18.26 יִשְׁפּוּטוּ הֵם 'they would judge'
   • with retention of /u/ in *yaqtul(u)* (see below, §17.3)

Based on the first four items listed above, which are in the mouth of Jethro, one would expect the atypical form יִשְׁפּוּטוּ to be spoken by the protagonist, with the standard form יִשְׁפְּטוּ placed within the third-person narration. Yet just the opposite occurs. Here one must recall that in the two narrative texts characterized by style-switching presented above (§2, §3), a large number of the Aramaic-like features occur not within the mouths of the individuals either visiting or resident in Aram, but rather within the voice of the narrator. In light of this, I am inclined to explain יִשְׁפּוּטוּ, with retention of /u/ > [u:] in the *yaqtul(u)* prefix-conjugation verb, as yet another instance of the author's attempt to depict the foreign setting in the land of Midian.[20]

If we expand the 'Midianite' material to include another scene in which Jethro/Reuel appears, another atypical grammatical feature stands out:

6. Exod. 2.20: feminine plural imperative קְרֶאָן 'call', instead of expected קְרֶאןָ (as in Ruth 1.20).[21]

Now, needless to say, we know nothing about the ancient Midianite dialect or language. Yet given the conservative nature of Bedouin Arabic, one is justified to look at the speech of Bedouin in the region to the present day, if only to determine whether any of the features listed above may resonate עד היום הזה (until today). Remarkably, parallels to three of the six afore-listed items are present in Sinai Bedouin Arabic, accessible now via the superb fieldwork conducted and recorded by Rudolf de Jong. The first of these is the manner of adding the pronominal suffix to the infinitive

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20. For additional insight into יִשְׁפּוּטוּ in Exod. 18.26, see Shamma Friedman, 'Problematic Lexemes in Qumranic Hebrew', *Leshonenu* 64 (2002), pp. 167-74 (173) (Hebrew).

21. Elsewhere this form of the feminine plural imperative occurs only as שְׁמַעַן in Gen. 4.23 (used by Lamech), though I am unable to explain its presence there along the current line of reasoning.

form (§8.2 above), as in the form *mimšāh* 'his going'.[22] The second is the retention of /u/ in *yaqtul(ū)* verbs (§8.5 above), as witnessed in forms such as *yúgʿud* 'he sits', *yúgʿudū* 'they sit', *yúḍrub* 'he hits', *yúḍrubū* 'they hit', etc.[23] While the third is the feminine plural imperative (§8.6 above), represented by such forms as *íkitbin* 'write!', *ášṛaban* 'drink!', *áftaḥin* 'open!', etc.,[24] in contrast to the Classical Arabic form ending in -*na*.

This is not to imply that Jethro in particular or the Midianites in general spoke an ancient form of (Bedouin) Arabic—for to repeat, we know naught about the ancient Midianite dialect/language. If pressed, however, I think most scholars would conjecture that said language was on the fringe of Northwest Semitic, with ample isoglosses with Ancient North Arabian or even Arabic. The picture painted here certainly suggests precisely that, with the three features anticipating contemporary Bedouin Arabic from the general Sinai/Midian region.

The following feature is not directly relevant to any potential Midianite dialect, but since both the geographical setting and the literary context are close by, I take the opportunity to note an additional linguistic item here:

7. Exod. 16.15 הוּא מָן 'what is it' (with reference to manna); cf. Ugaritic *mh*, *mn*, Amarna *manna*, for example, EA 286.5 *ma-an-na ep-ša-ti a-na* LUGAL EN-*ia* 'what have I done to the king my lord?'

Clearly, the author of Exodus 16 achieves a delightful wordplay with the use of the interrogative מָן 'what' in close proximity to the word מָן 'manna' (vv. 31, 33, 35 [twice]). Nevertheless, we learn from this usage that the form מָן 'what' was recognizable to an educated Israelite audience. As indicated

22. Rudolf de Jong, *A Grammar of the Bedouin Dialects of the Northern Sinai Littoral* (HO, 1.52; Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 203, noted for the Aḥaywāt sub-dialect.

23. De Jong, *Bedouin Dialects of the Northern Sinai Littoral*, pp. 190, 299, 378, 460, 516; and Rudolf de Jong, *A Grammar of the Bedouin Dialects of Central and Southern Sinai* (HO, 1.101; Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 82, 164, 251-52. Note the vowel harmony inherent in these forms, with the shift of the distinctive /a/ vowel in the first syllable to /u/ in these *u*-type imperfects (to use de Jong's term); this phonological feature is common in Sinai Bedouin Arabic in a wide variety of verbal forms. In addition, note that I have simplified the ending of the 3rd masc. pl. forms, which in actuality may end in *u*, *uw*, *um*, *ūn*. The reader is invited to consult the two volumes for the specific sub-dialects in which these forms are attested—though in general all of the Bedouin dialects of the Sinai reflect this feature. For an earlier statement on Negev Bedouin Arabic, see Haim Blanc, *The Arabic Dialect of the Negev Bedouins* (Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 4.7; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1970), pp. 136-37 [pp. 25-26].

24. De Jong, *Bedouin Dialects of the Northern Sinai Littoral*, pp. 192, 302, 379, 462; and de Jong, *Bedouin Dialects of Central and Southern Sinai*, pp. 82, 166, 253. Once again, the reader is invited to consult the two volumes for the specific sub-dialects in which these forms are attested—though in general all of the Bedouin dialects of the Sinai reflect the same usage. And once more, for an earlier statement concerning Negev Bedouin Arabic, see Blanc, *The Arabic Dialect of the Negev Bedouins*, p. 137 [p. 26].

above, this morpheme is attested in Late Bronze Age texts from Ugarit and Jerusalem (El-Amarna 286), though the latter in turn reflects a Syrian scribal tradition.[25]

9.0. *Phoenicianisms in the Temple Building Account (1 Kings 6–8)*

The account of the building of the Temple during Solomon's reign includes a series of Phoenician grammatical and lexical features. I conclude from this finding that not only did the Phoenicians provide the architect, the crafts-men, and the raw materials for the building of Solomon's Temple, but that Phoenician scribes recorded the work, perhaps in conjunction with Israelite scribes. The following are the most prominent:

1. Month names: זִו 'Ziv' (6.1; 6.37), בּוּל 'Bul' (6.38), אֵתָנִים 'Etanim' (8.2)
2. יֶרַח 'month', as in:
   6.38 בְּיֶרַח בּוּל הוּא הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁמִינִי
   8.2 בְּיֶרַח הָאֵתָנִים בֶּחָג הוּא הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי
3. קֶצֶב 'shape, form' (6.25; 7.37)—only here in BH; cf. KAI 145.9 (Mak-tar, Tunisia) עקצב 'dressed stone, statue'
4. פַּעַם 'tier, step, corner' (architectural term), as in:
   7.4 וּשְׁקֻפִים שְׁלֹשָׁה טוּרִים וּמֶחֱזָה אֶל־מֶחֱזָה שָׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים:
   7.5 וּמוּל מֶחֱזָה אֶל־מֶחֱזָה שָׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים:
   7.30 וְאַרְבָּעָה פַּעֲמֹתָיו כְּתֵפֹת לָהֶם
   See Phoenician פעם 'tier, platform' (*KAI* 80.1, *Tripolitania* 41.1)[26]
5. /á/ > /o/ shift (see also below, §10.1), as in:[27]
   1 Kgs 5.24; 5.32; 7.40 חִירוֹם 'Hirom' (~ חִירָם 'Hiram') (both king and builder)
   1 Kgs 9.26 אֵלוֹת 'Elot' (~ אֵילַת 'Elat')

25. William L. Moran, 'The Syrian Scribe of the Jerusalem Amarna Letters', in *Unity and Diversity: Essays in the History, Literature, and Religion of the Ancient Near East* (ed. Hans Goedicke and J.J.M. Roberts; Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), pp. 146-66.

26. On this particular item, see M.J. Mulder, '*paʿam* as a Measure of Length in 1 Kings 7.4 and KAI 80.1', in *Text and Context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F.C. Fensham* (ed. W. Claassen; JSOTSup, 48; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), pp. 177-81. As per the title of Mulder's article, the word in question may be a measure of length, as opposed to an architectural term.

27. On this feature, see Joshua Fox, 'A Sequence of Vowel Shifts in Phoenician and Other Languages', *JNES* 55 (1996), pp. 37-47. Note that the shift discussed here concerns short, accented /a/, and is not to be confused with the more general Canaanite (save Ugaritic) shift of (long) /a:/ > /o:/, on which see now Steven E. Fassberg, 'Two Biblical Hebrew Sound Laws in the Light of Modern Spoken Semitic', in *Nicht nur mit Engelszungen: Beiträge zur semitischen Dialektologie. Festschrift für Werner Arnold zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Renaud Kuty, Ulrich Seeger and Shabo Talay; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013), pp. 95-100, esp. 95-97.

10.0. *Addressee-Switching—Phoenicianisms*

As first noted by Chaim Rabin, the prophets often peppered their addresses to the foreign nations with linguistic traits evocative of their fictive audiences.[28] Thus, for example, we find the following Phoenicianisms in three separate prophetic books:[29]

1. Ezek. 26.11 וּמַצְּבוֹת עֻזֵּךְ לָאָרֶץ תֵּרַד
   'and the pillar of your strength to the earth will fall'
   • reflecting /á/ > /o/ (see above, §9.5)

2. Joel 4.5 וּמַחֲמַדַּיּ הַטֹּבִים הֲבֵאתֶם לְהֵיכְלֵיכֶם
   'and my precious treasures you have brought unto your palaces'
   • Ugaritic-Phoenician *hkl* / הכל 'palace'[30] (SBH בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ)

3. Zech. 11.3 וַתִּצְבָּר־כֶּסֶף כֶּעָפָר וְחָרוּץ כְּטִיט חוּצוֹת
   'and she has amassed silver like dust,
   and gold like mud in the streets'
   • Ugaritic-Phoenician *ḫrṣ* / חרץ 'gold' (SBH זָהָב)[31]

11.0. */á/ > /o/ in Philistine dialect*

The precious little that we know about the Philistine dialect is forthcoming mainly from the Ekron inscription. What may be discerned from this epigraph, however, is quite instructive, for one notes several isoglosses with Phoenician.[32] Quite astonishingly, decades before the discovery (in 1996) of the Ekron inscription, the remarkable H.L. Ginsberg, based on virtually no evidence whatsoever, had proposed that Phoenician and Philistine formed a 'Phoenic' sub-group within Canaanite (along with earlier Ugaritic and later Punic), which was written and spoken up and down the Levantine coast.[33]

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28. Chaim Rabin, 'An Arabic Phrase in Isaiah', in *Studi sull'Oriente e la Bibbia offerti al P. Giovanni Rinaldi* (Genoa: Studio e Vita, 1967), pp. 303-90 (304-305). Rabin built upon the short discussion by N.H. Tur-Sinai, 'Aramaic: Aramaic Influence on Hebrew', *Enṣiqlopedya Miqra'it* 1 (1950; Hebrew), cols. 593-95 (594), though the context is slightly different.

29. See in general Gary A. Rendsburg, 'Linguistic Variation and the "Foreign" Factor in the Hebrew Bible', *IOS* 15 (1995), pp. 177-90 (184-88, esp. 186).

30. To be technical, הכל 'palace' is attested in Phoenician only as an element within personal names; see Frank L. Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1972), pp. 302-303.

31. Note also the four-fold attestation of חָרוּץ in Proverbs (3.14; 8.10, 19; 16.16) as a key piece of evidence in support of the finding that this book emanates from northern Israel, as remarked above, §5, with n. 13.

32. Seymour Gitin, Trude Dothan and Joseph Naveh, 'A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron', *IEJ* 47 (1997), pp. 9-16 (see p. 12 esp.).

33. H.L. Ginsberg, 'The Northwest Semitic Languages', in *The World History of the Jewish People,* 2: *The Patriarchs* (ed. Benjamin Mazar; New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers

As one additional witness to this alignment, we note the presence of the /á/ > /o/ shift (see above §9.5, §10.1) in Philistine, as reflected in the divine name דָּגוֹן 'Dagon' (thirteen times in the Bible, eleven of which are in 1 Samuel 5, always written *plene*). In every other case where we gain evidence concerning the vowels of this theonym within Semitic, the name is always *dagan* (Eblaite, Old Akkadian, Emar Akkadian, Ras Shamra Akkadian, etc., spelled either ᵈ*da-gan* or ᵈ*da-ga-an*),[34] with reference to the ancient grain god. Whereas Hebrew retains the word דָּגָן 'grain' as a common noun, by contrast the Masorah marks the second syllable of the name of the Philistine deity with /o:/ vowel, which itself accords with the information recorded by Sanchuniathon and transmitted by Philo of Byblos, to wit, Δαγών.[35] The Bible, accordingly, reflects the /á/ > /o/ shift not only in Phoenician (once more, see above §9.5, §10.1), but in Philistine as well.[36]

12.0. *Third Feminine Plural Prefix-Conjugation Form*

The SBH 3rd fem. pl. prefix-conjugation form is תִּקְטֹלְנָה *tiqṭolna*. On four occasions, however, we encounter different forms:

1. Dialectal form: יִקְטֹלְנָה *yiqṭolna* (à la Aramaic and indeed proto-Semitic)
   - Gen. 30.38 אֲשֶׁר תָּבֹאןָ הַצֹּאן לִשְׁתּוֹת לְנֹכַח הַצֹּאן וַיֵּחַמְנָה בְּבֹאָן לִשְׁתּוֹת (Aram)
   - 1 Sam. 6.12 וַיִּשַּׁרְנָה הַפָּרוֹת בַּדֶּרֶךְ עַל־דֶּרֶךְ בֵּית שֶׁמֶשׁ (Philistia)
   - Dan. 8.22 אַרְבַּע מַלְכֻיּוֹת מִגּוֹי יַעֲמֹדְנָה וְלֹא בְכֹחוֹ׃ (Aramaism in LBH)

As noted earlier (§3.7), the usage in Gen. 30.38 supports the style-shifting effect in Genesis 30–31. While our knowledge of the Philistine dialect

University Press, 1970), pp. 102-24, 293 (see esp. pp. 110-11).

34. See conveniently the evidence amassed in Gregorio del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* (trans. Wilfred G.E. Watson; HO, 1.67; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2003), I, p. 267. For the specific evidence from two god-lists from Ras Shamra, see John Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary in Syllabic Transcription* (HSS, 32; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987), p. 118.

35. See Harold W. Attridge and Robert A. Oden, *Philo of Byblos, The Phoenician History: Introduction, Critical Text, Translation, Notes* (CBQMS, 9; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America), pp. 48-49, 50-51, 52-53, 56-57 (with Greek text and English translation on facing pages).

36. The fanciful notion that דָּגוֹן 'Dagon' was a fish-deity (i.e. דָּג 'fish' + nominal suffix וֹן-), as held by some ancient and medieval exegetes (Jerome, Rashi, Qimḥi, *et al.*)—along with some moderns!—may be rejected outright, notwithstanding the maritime origins of the Philistines. Besides, Philo of Byblos states explicitly that Dagon = Grain and that he was the discoverer of both grain and the plow; see Attridge and Oden, *Philo of Byblos*, p. 87 n. 87; and Albert I. Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos: A Commentary* (Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain, 89; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981), pp. 190, 205.

is exceedingly limited (see above, §11)—and even if we knew more, there would be very little chance of our encountering the 3rd fem. pl. prefix-conjugation form—I would propose that the presence of וַיִּשַּׁרְנָה in 1 Sam. 6.12 also serves to create the style-switching effect, though with relation to Philistia. The third passage above, occurring in the book of Daniel, constitutes a true Aramaism.

   2. Dialectal form: תִּקְטְלוּ *tiqtᵉlū* (Edomite?) (see below, §13.3)
     • Jer. 49.11 עָזְבָה יְתֹמֶיךָ אֲנִי אֲחַיֶּה וְאַלְמְנֹתֶיךָ עָלַי תִּבְטָחוּ:

What I stated above about the Philistine dialect is equally true of Edomite: we know very little about either, and once more we have little chance of uncovering the 3rd fem. pl. prefix-conjugation form in this dialect. Its presence in Jer. 49.11, however, may give us a hint, with the prophet employing the Edomite form in the service of addressee-switching.[37]

13.0. *Edomite*

Given our scant knowledge of Edomite, it may be useful to exploit the biblical text for additional information. Thus, for example:

   1. אַלּוּף 'chief, leader'—Genesis 36 (43x), 1 Chron. 1.51-54 (13x), Exod. 15.15 אַלּוּפֵי אֱדוֹם

Given the collocation of the noun אַלּוּף 'chief, leader' and the land of Edom in biblical texts, one will assume that the word is intrinsic to the Edomite dialect (cf., e.g., English usages such as 'Arab sheikh', 'Japanese shogun', 'Russian czar', etc.). Noteworthy is the three-fold use of אַלּוּף 'chief, leader' to refer to the leaders of Judah in the book of Zechariah (9.7; 12.5, 6). I would attribute this to the northward advance of Edomite territory during the sixth century BCE, into the domain of southern Judah—so much so, apparently, that the noun once seen as specifically Edomite came to be used for leaders of Judah during this time period.

   2. No /a:/ > /o:/ shift, as per the proper nouns (all in Genesis 36):
     אֲרָן / עֵקָן / זַעֲוָן / בִּלְהָן / כְּרָן / יִתְרָן / אֶשְׁבָּן / חֶמְדָּן / עַלְוָן / לוֹטָן / דִּישָׁן
     • see also Jer. 49.8 דְּדָן
   3. 3rd fem.pl. prefix-conjugation form: תִּקְטְלוּ (see above, §12.2)
     • Jer. 49.11 עָזְבָה יְתֹמֶיךָ אֲנִי אֲחַיֶּה וְאַלְמְנֹתֶיךָ עָלַי תִּבְטָחוּ:
   4. Locative -ε (not -ā)
     1 Sam. 22.9 וַיַּעַן דֹּאֵג הָאֲדֹמִי . . . רָאִיתִי אֶת־בֶּן־יִשַׁי בָּא נֹבֶה
     Ezek. 25.13 (to Edom) וּנְתַתִּיהָ חָרְבָּה מִתֵּימָן וּדְדָנֶה בַּחֶרֶב יִפֹּלוּ
     [1 Sam. 21.2 וַיָּבֹא דָוִד נֹבֶה אֶל־אֲחִימֶלֶךְ הַכֹּהֵן]
     [1 Kgs 2.36 וְלֹא־תֵצֵא מִשָּׁם אָנֶה וָאָנָה:]

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37. See already Rendsburg, 'The "Foreign" Factor', pp. 186-87.

Four times in the Bible, the locative-adverbial ending appears not as הָ-,
but rather as הֶ-. In two of these instances, there is a connection to Edom, a
point that I consider to be revealing as opposed to coincidental: in 1 Sam.
22.9 the form נֹבֶה 'to Nob' occurs in the mouth of Do'eg the Edomite; while
Ezek. 25.13 דְּדֶנֶה 'to Dedan' occurs within the prophet's oracle addressed to
Edom. The third passage, in 1 Sam. 21.2, is problematic for this approach,
since the form נֹבֶה 'to Nob' appears within 3rd-person narration without
association with Edom; though one might wish to conjecture that contact
with the same form in the next chapter led to 'contamination' within the
Masoretic tradition here. The fourth example presumably constitutes an
idiom, with the first form differentiated from the second one, hence אָנֶה וָאָנָה.

In addition to the four features presented here, many atypical linguis-
tic elements in the book of Job may be relevant to the discussion as well.
Clearly, many of these items also have links to Aramaic and to Arabic. But
given the geographical setting of the composition, with characters hail-
ing from Uz and Teman, both associated with Edom (Gen. 36.11, 15, 28,
42; though see also Gen. 22.21 regarding Uz), were we to possess greater
knowledge of the Edomite dialect, we might be able to identify further
Edomite features in the book of Job.

14.0. *Ammonite*

1. Relative pronoun אש:

וַנִּירָם אָבַד חֶשְׁבּוֹן עַד־דִּיבוֹן וַנַּשִּׁים עַד־נֹפַח אֲשֶׁר עַד־מֵידְבָא׃ Num. 21.30

We know slightly more about Ammonite than we do about Edomite. One
grammatical feature known, via Heshbon ostracon 4.6, is the relative pro-
noun אש 'that, which'.[38] It is rather striking, accordingly, that in the difficult
verse cited above—quoting from the (ancient? Transjordanian?) הַמֹּשְׁלִים 'the
balladeers' (see v. 27)—the relative marker אֲשֶׁר appears with supralinear
dot above the *reš*, one of the ten times in the Torah that such a diacritic
appears. Even more remarkable is the fact that this verse appears within the
account of the Israelites' passage through Transjordan (see v. 24 for specific
reference to Ammon), and indeed mentions Heshbon explicitly (see also
v. 27)! We should conclude, accordingly, that the 'original' text read אש,
which a later Hebrew scribe changed to אשר—even as the Masoretic tradi-
tion remained aware of this alteration, hence the *punctum extraordinarium*.[39]

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38. Frank Moore Cross, 'Ammonite Ostraca from Heshbon: Heshbon Ostraca IV-
VIII', *AUSS* 13 (1975), pp. 1-20 (2, 5); Felice Israel, *The Language of the Ammonites*
(OLP, 10; Leuven: University of Leuven, 1979), pp. 143-59 (146); and Garr, *Dialect
Geography*, p. 85.

39. This point was noted long ago by Nahum Slouschz, *Thesaurus of Phoenician
Inscriptions* (Tel-Aviv: Devir, 1942), p. 10 (Hebrew), though with reference to the
Phoenician relative pronoun אש. Obviously, this was before the discovery of the same
morpheme in Ammonite, which makes the case even stronger.

Support for this conclusion is forthcoming from the Samaritan Penta-teuch, which reads אש (understood as 'fire' in the Samaritan tradition), and the LXX rendering πῦρ, indicative of a Hebrew *Vorlage* reading אש.

2. T-stem, without metathesis when sibilant is present
   Jer. 49.3 (to Ammon) וְהִתְשׁוֹטַטְנָה 'roam to and fro'

In SBH the characteristic /t/ of the T-stem metathesizes with the first root letter of the verbal root when said consonant is a sibilant. In the above example, this phonological change does not occur. Two possibilities present themselves: (a) the presence of two more dentals following (viz. double /t/ in the root ש-ט-ט) blocked the metathesis; or (b) in light of the presence of this form within Jeremiah's oracle to Ammon, the non-metathesis consti-tutes an Ammonite linguistic trait. Since this same feature occurs in vari-ous Aramaic dialects, I incline toward the latter option. Special attention is drawn to the use of this feature in Nabatean Aramaic, thereby creating an isogloss in the Transjordanian region incorporating present-day central and southern Jordan. Eventually, this feature penetrated Hebrew more generally, or at least the postbiblical Hebrew dialect represented by the Judean Desert documents. The evidence is as follows:[40]

- Sefire I A 29 ואל יתשמע קל כנר 'may the sound of the lyre not be heard'
- Nabatean Aramaic (standard) / Palmyrean Aramaic (standard)
- Yadin 53.3 והתשדר / Yadin 54.6 התשכ<ח>ו / Yadin 54.10 יתשכח (letters)
- Yadin 7.16 אתזבן (contract) / Murabba'at 49.3 מתשדר (fragmentary)

15.0. *Non-SBH Lexical Items*

I here include two examples of ancient Hebrew lexemes which are limited to certain dialectal contexts, but which do not occur in SBH.

1. רֶחַם 'lass'
   - Ugaritic *rḥm* 'woman' (including as epithet of 'Anat)
   - Judg. 5.30 רַחַם רַחֲמָתַיִם לְרֹאשׁ גֶּבֶר 'a lass, two lasses, for each man'
   - Mesha Stele 16-17 גברן. וגרן ן וגברת. וג[ר]ת. ורחמת
     'men and boys, and women and girls and lasses'
   - Amos 1.11 (Edom) וְשִׁחֵת רַחֲמָיו
     'and he destroyed its mercies/wombs/women'
     (all three meanings may be intended)

From the evidence presented above, one will conclude that רֶחַם 'lass' was not a lexical element of SBH. Note that the noun occurs in Ugaritic,

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40. For a thorough treatment, see Steven E. Fassberg, '*t-Stem* Verbs without Metathe-sis in Aramaic and Hebrew Documents from the Judean Desert', 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: Oriental Institute, 2012), pp. 27-37.

Israelian Hebrew, Moabite, and in a prophetic oracle to Edom used by a northern prophet—but not in any SBH text.

2. תַּיִשׁ 'he-goat'
- Aramaic תיש / Arabic *tays*
- Gen. 30.35 (set in Aram) (see above, §3.4)
- Gen. 32.15 (set in Transjordan)
- 2 Chron. 17.11 (tribute of Arabs to Jehoshaphat)
- Prov. 30.31 (sayings of Agur) זַרְזִיר מָתְנַיִם אוֹ־תָיִשׁ וּמֶלֶךְ אַלְקוּם עִמּוֹ: 'the saluki of loins, the he-goat, and the king his people with him'[41]

From the passages listed here—which represent the totality of the evidence of this word in the Bible—one will conclude that תַּיִשׁ 'he-goat' is another non-SBH lexical trait. The Aramean, Transjordanian and Arabian contexts are rather striking in light of the cognate evidence for this word in both Aramaic and Arabic.

16.0. אַלְקוּם *'the people'—An Arabism in the Bible*

The verse cited immediately above, Prov. 30.31, includes a unique Arabic term in the Bible, namely אַלְקוּם, equivalent to Arabic *al-qawm* 'the people'. This verse occurs within the section of Proverbs attributed to Agur of Massa, located in the Syrian Desert.[42]

Two grammatical points may be raised here. First, the definite article of Classical Arabic, namely *'al*, must have been present already during the Iron Age in some Arabian dialect(s), even if we have no evidence for the morpheme outside of Prov. 30.31.[43] Second, assuming that the Masorah has

41. The meaning of זַרְזִיר remains uncertain. I have rendered the word as 'saluki' since an animal with outstanding loins is demanded. I have used 'saluki' specifically (as opposed to 'greyhound' or another species), since this dog is depicted in ancient Egyptian artwork and because it is treasured by the Arabs as a great hunting dog (even though dogs generally are eschewed in the Middle East). I owe this suggestion and observation to Dr. Stephanie Dalley (Oxford). On the Arabian connection, see the next section, §16. (Note that זַרְזִיר connotes a bird of some sort in Rabbinic Hebrew [e.g. *t. Ḥul.* 4.9]—in Modern Hebrew, specifically 'starling'—though to my mind an ornithological identification is not suitable for Prov. 30.31, unless a strutting cock is intended, but this seems doubtful.) For more on the ornithological term זַרְזִיר, see Ephraim Nissan, 'On a Mystery of Talmudic Zoonymy: The Parrot and the Myna? A Reassessment of the Identity of the Two *andrafta* Bird Species', *JAOS* 131 (2011), pp. 445-52 (450-51).

42. Israel Ephʿal, *The Ancient Arabs* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1982), pp. 218-19 (and elsewhere in the book, for which see the Index, p. 252).

43. For evidence from the period of late antiquity, see Ahmad Al-Jallad, *Ancient Levantine Arabic: A Reconstruction Based on the Earliest Sources and the Modern Dialects* (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2011), pp. 81, 84, 166, 178, 190, 199, and esp. pp. 316-21.

transmitted the pronunciation קוּם correctly, the Arabian (spoken?) dialect whence *qawm* was conveyed to the Israelites must have monophthongized the diphthong /aw/ to /uː/:[44]—even though the Arabic/Arabian evidence available to us suggests otherwise, with the preservation of both /aw/ and /ay/ reflected in the ancient sources.[45] Hence, one may wish to posit an alternative approach, namely, that the recipient Canaanite dialect (perhaps Phoenician, perhaps a sub-dialect of Israelian Hebrew) may have been one in which the diphthong /aw/ was realized as /uː/.[46]

17.0. *Archaic Language in the Book of Ruth*

Our final topic returns us to an inner-Hebrew issue, namely, the use of archaic language in the book of Ruth. The following features are noteworthy, for which see the convenient treatment by Robert Holmstedt.[47] Note that the vast majority of them are in the mouths of the people of the older generation (Naomi especially), set in contrast to the younger generation (Ruth especially), who never uses such grammatical features. This linguistic distinction thereby serves a literary-stylistic purpose, to mark the older generation via their distinctive speech, which in turn is brought into sharper focus when set against the speech of the more youthful Ruth.[48]

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44. As occurs, e.g., in certain Arabic dialects of Morocco–Algeria–Tunisia, even though this represents only a formal parallel, with no direct relevance to the matter at hand. For the data, see Christophe Pereira, 'Arabic in the North African Region', in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook* (ed. Stefan Weninger; Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2011), pp. 954-69 (958).

45. Ahmad Al-Jallad, Robert Daniel and Omar Al-Ghul, 'The Arabic Toponyms and Oikonyms in 17', in *The Petra Papyri II* (ed. Ludwig Koenen *et al.*; Amman: American Center of Oriental Research, 2013), p. 25; and Ahmad Al-Jallad, 'Graeco-Arabica I: The Southern Levant', in *Ecrit et écriture dans la formation des identités en monde syriaque et arabe IIIe–VIIe siècles* (ed. Laila Nehmé; Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming), §4.2.4.1. I am grateful to Dr. Al-Jallad both for a stimulating email exchange on this topic, October 2012 and June 2013, and for generously sharing his forthcoming publications with me.

46. For a discussion concerning the parallel diphthong /ay/, see Ian Young, 'The Diphthong *ay* in Edomite', *JSS* 37 (1992), pp. 27-30; and Richard C. Steiner, 'On the Monophthongization of *ay* to *ī* in Phoenician and Northern Hebrew and the Preservation of Archaic/Dialectal Forms in the Masoretic Vocalization', *Or* 76 (2007), pp. 73-83.

47. Robert D. Holmstedt, *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), pp. 47-49, though Holmstedt offers a different explanation than the one proffered here.

48. For an adumbration of the view expressed here, see Edward F. Campbell, *Ruth* (AB, 7; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), pp. 17, 25, 120.

1. Dual pronouns:[49]

   1.22   וַהֲמֶה בָּאוּ בֵּית לֶחֶם 'and they (sc. Naomi and Ruth) came to Bethlehem' (narrator)

   1.8   יַעַשׂ* יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד 'may Yʜᴡʜ deal kindly with you' (sc. Ruth and Orpah) (Naomi speaking)

   1.9   יִתֵּן יְהוָה לָכֶם 'may Yʜᴡʜ grant you' (sc. Ruth and Orpah) (Naomi speaking)

   1.11   הַעוֹד־לִי בָנִים בְּמֵעַי וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לַאֲנָשִׁים 'are there still to me sons in my innards, that they would be for you (sc. Ruth and Orpah) as husbands' (Naomi speaking)

   1.13   אַל בְּנֹתַי כִּי־מַר־לִי מְאֹד מִכֶּם 'don't, my daughters, for it is more bitter for me than for you' (sc. Ruth and Orpah) (Naomi speaking)

   1.19   וַתֵּלַכְנָה שְׁתֵּיהֶם 'and the two of them (sc. Naomi and Ruth) walked on' (narrator)

   4.11   אֲשֶׁר בָּנוּ שְׁתֵּיהֶם 'the two of whom (sc. Rachel and Leah) built' (townspeople at the city gate, with elders as witnesses)

2. Dual verb:

   1.8   כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם עִם־הַמֵּתִים וְעִמָּדִי 'as you did (sc. Ruth and Orpah) did with the dead and with me' (Naomi speaking)

3. *yaqtul* verb (see above, §8.5):

   2.8   לֹא תַעֲבוּרִי מִזֶּה 'do not pass from here' (Boaz speaking)

4. paragogic *nun*:[50]

   2.8   וְכֹה תִדְבָּקִין עִם־נַעֲרֹתָי 'and thus you shall cleave to my young women' (Boaz speaking)

   2.9   וְשָׁתִ֫ית מֵאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאֲבוּן הַנְּעָרִים 'and you shall drink from that which the young men draw' (Boaz speaking)

   2.21   עִם־הַנְּעָרִים אֲשֶׁר־לִי תִּדְבָּקִין 'with my young men you shall cling' (Boaz, as quoted by Ruth)

   3.4   וְהוּא יַגִּיד לָךְ אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂין 'and he will tell you what to do' (Naomi speaking)

   3.18   שְׁבִי בִתִּי עַד אֲשֶׁר תֵּדְעִין 'sit, my daughter, until you know' (Naomi speaking)

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49. On the subject of dual pronouns and dual verbs (see below, §17.2), see Gary A. Rendsburg, 'Dual Personal Pronouns and Dual Verbs in Hebrew', *JQR* 73 (1982), pp. 38-58. For opposing opinions, see Joshua Blau, 'On the Alleged Vestiges of Dual Pronouns and Verbs in Biblical Hebrew', *Lešonenu* 52 (1987–88), pp. 165-68 (Hebrew); and Elitzur A. Bar-Asher, 'Dual Pronouns in Semitics and an Evaluation of the Evidence for their Existence in Biblical Hebrew', *ANES* 46 (2009), pp. 32-49.

50. Our honoree also has taken note of the significance of this feature in the book of Ruth, though with a slightly different approach. See Frank Polak, 'On Dialogue and Speaker Status in the Scroll of Ruth', *BM* 46 (2001), pp. 193-218 (205) (Hebrew)—with English abstract on p. 288.

5. 2nd fem.sg. suffix-conjugation *-tī*

3.3   הַגֹּרֶן וְיָרַדְתְּ* [וירדתי]

'and you shall go down to the threshing-floor' (Naomi speaking)

3.4   וְשָׁכָבְתְּ* [ושכבתי] וְגִלִּית מַרְגְּלֹתָיו וּבָאת

'and you shall come, and you shall uncover his legs, and you shall lie down' (Naomi speaking)

* * *

The biblical text abounds with linguistic nuggets ready to be mined. No doubt, future epigraphic discoveries from the region of greater Canaan, including its geographical fringes (northern Arabia, etc.), will only enhance the picture. Hopefully, this survey will serve as the basis for further study and further developments.