LITERARY AND LINGUISTIC MATTERS
IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS*

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The present study surveys an array of literary and linguistic issues relevant to the book of Proverbs. The topics discussed and the examples presented are selected somewhat at random, though they all cohere at the nexus of language and literature within the composition. Much of what is put forth here is not original, but rather is based upon the work of earlier scholars. Nonetheless, the present author hopes that the reader will find this exposition beneficial on a number of levels.

In addition, because I wish to include as much data as possible within the confines of a scholarly essay, the presentation herein will be very schematic. The author begs the reader's forbearance for the outline form of this study. The knowledgeable reader will realize that each of the passages presented could easily deserve several paragraphs if not a short essay for further elucidation. Hopefully, the accumulation of data included herein will compensate for my inability to provide such elucidation on this occasion.[1]

1.   The same holds true for the lack of a developed bibliography. No doubt the many fine commentaries on the book of Proverbs treat many of these passages, but I have elected to keep references to the secondary literature to a bare minimum.

1. *Israelian Hebrew*

As earlier scholars have realized, the language of the book of Proverbs departs from Standard Biblical Hebrew (= Judahite Hebrew [JH]) in manifest ways. Especially in its lexis, but also in its grammar, Proverbs is replete with Israelian Hebrew (IH) features (see especially Albright 1955; Ginsberg 1982: 34-38). Since I do not wish to encumber the beginning of this study with a long list of such features, I direct the reader's attention to the Appendix at the end. The registry there collects in convenient fashion the many instances of IH lexical and grammatical features in the book of Proverbs. The vast majority of these are culled from my two studies published in the journal *Orient* (Rendsburg 2003a, 2003b), which in turn are based to a great extent on the doctoral dissertation by Yiyi Chen (2000), which I had the honour of supervising.

2. *Transfer to Judah*

Eventually the book of Proverbs made its way to Judah, for which see most importantly Prov. 25.1 (Ginsberg 1982: 37 n. 53): גַּם־אֵלֶּה מִשְׁלֵי שְׁלֹמֹה אֲשֶׁר הֶעְתִּיקוּ אַנְשֵׁי חִזְקִיָּה מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה ('These also are the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah transferred/imported'). While most translations render the key verb הֶעְתִּיקוּ as 'copied' (thus RSV, NRSV, NIV, NJPS, etc.), the connotation 'transferred' or 'imported' is preferable. Note that the verbal root עתק means 'move, proceed, advance' (thus BDB, 801) in the qal, so that the hiphil form means 'cause to move, cause to proceed, cause to advance' (even if these glosses are hyper-literal). This may be seen most clearly in Job 9.5 הַמַּעְתִּיק הָרִים ('he who moves mountains'), with reference to God's ability to transfer mountains from one place to another. In its two other attestations, the hiphil of עתק is actually intransitive, to wit, Gen. 12.8; 26.22, but the connotation once more is movement from place A to place B. Hence, Prov. 25.1 must refer not to the copying of this section of the book of Proverbs by Hezekiah's men, but rather to the transfer of this material from one place (viz., Israel) to another (viz., Judah).[2]

  The setting for a transfer of an Israelian literary composition to Judah fits perfectly within the reign of Hezekiah, moreover. For it was during his reign that a significant number of Israelians moved southward to

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  2. For an altogether different approach to the passage, see Carasik (1994), who proposes that the mention of the 'men of Hezekiah' in Prov. 25.1 is not to be taken as a historical reference, but rather arose via inner-biblical exegesis, on par with the development of superscriptions within the book of Psalms.

Judah, to escape the Assyrian onslaught. The most pertinent biblical text is the story in 2 Chronicles 30, in which Hezekiah invites the remnant of the northern kingdom to Jerusalem in order to celebrate Passover.[3] But we also have important archaeological data which confirm the movement of Israelians to Judah during this time.[4]

3. *Alliteration in Proverbs*

Proverbs across linguistic and cultural boundaries frequently employ sound-play of various types: rhyme, assonance, alliteration, etc. One need only consider the English expressions 'look before you leap', 'dead as a doornail', and 'making a mountain out of a molehill'. (One should also look before one jumps, a dead item is equally dead as a floorboard nail, and the small matter is as much an anthill as a molehill—but these replacement terms would denude the sayings of their sound-play.)

One is not surprised, accordingly, to find alliteration (the commonest type of sound-play in Hebrew) scattered throughout the book of Proverbs.[5] In the following illustrations, I pay particular attention to proverbs which include rare words, even *hapax legomena*. To my mind, the presence of these uncommon lexemes is not coincidental; rather, I believe that the authors have reached deep into the Hebrew lexis to pluck just the right word for their literary purpose.[6]

(1) Prov. 11.18, רָשָׁע עֹשֶׂה פְעֻלַּת־שָׁקֶר וְזֹרֵעַ צְדָקָה שֶׂכֶר אֱמֶת ('The wicked man makes a false profit; but the one who sows righteousness [earns] a true wage'):[7] The noun שֶׂכֶר ('wage') in the b-line occurs elsewhere only in Isa. 19.10. It is employed here to resound the similar phonemes in the noun שָׁקֶר ('falsehood') in the a-line.

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3. On the historicity of this episode, see Japhet 1993: 935 (and the literature cited there).

4. See the summary of this material presented in Rendsburg and Schniedewind 2010.

5. For the classical treatment, see Boström 1928; for a more recent work, see McCreesh 1991. In addition, many examples are identified in the recently published commentary of our late lamented colleague, Avigdor (Victor) Hurowitz (2012).

6. For an earlier study of mine, which highlights the use of such rare words *alliterationis causa*, see Rendsburg 2008. Several of my other relevant studies are cited on p. 84, n. 3, of said article. More recently and more concisely, see now Rendsburg 2013a.

7. The translations of proverbs from any source-language to any target-language are notoriously difficult. In general, I have followed my usual practice of rendering the Hebrew as literally as possible into English, even though this makes for unsmooth reading at times. Some of my translations were produced with an eye to Fox 2000, 2009, and especially to Alter 2010.

(2) Prov. 13.3, נֹצֵר פִּיו שֹׁמֵר נַפְשׁוֹ פֹּשֵׂק שְׂפָתָיו מְחִתָּה־לוֹ ('He who watches his mouth guards his life-force; he who opens-wide his lips, disaster is his'): The root פשׂק ('open wide') occurs elsewhere in the Bible only in Ezek. 16.25. It is evoked here, with its /p/-/ś/ combination, in anticipation of the same two consonants occurring in the following word שְׂפָתָיו (in reverse order), and as an echo of the preceding word נַפְשׁוֹ, with its like-sounding /p/-/š/ combination.

(3) Prov. 13.20, [הלוֹך] הוֹלֵךְ אֶת־חֲכָמִים [וחכם] יֶחְכָּם וְרֹעֶה כְסִילִים יֵרוֹעַ ('He who walks with the wise becomes-wise; and he who consorts with fools suffers harm'): The alliteration in the second stich of this verse is self-evident: note the collocation of the two roots: (a) רעה ('consort, associate with'), and (b) רעע ('be bad' [qal], 'suffer' [niphal]).[8]

(4) Prov. 14.19-22:

שַׁחוּ רָעִים לִפְנֵי טוֹבִים וּרְשָׁעִים עַל־שַׁעֲרֵי צַדִּיק: ¹⁹

גַּם־לְרֵעֵהוּ יִשָּׂנֵא רָשׁ וְאֹהֲבֵי עָשִׁיר רַבִּים: ²⁰

בָּז־לְרֵעֵהוּ חוֹטֵא וּמְחוֹנֵן [עניים] עֲנָוִים אַשְׁרָיו: ²¹

הֲלוֹא־יִתְעוּ חֹרְשֵׁי רָע וְחֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת חֹרְשֵׁי טוֹב: ²²

19   The evil bow-down before the good,
         and the wicked (bow-down) at the gates of the righteous.
20   Even by his neighbour, the poor-man is hated,
         but the lovers of the rich-man are many.
21   He who scorns his neighbour sins,
         but he who pities the poor is noble.[9]
22   Indeed, devisers of evil stray,
         but fealty and truth (are for) devisers of good.

These four verses provide a veritable aural delight, with (a) the following string of words with the *reš-šin-ʿayin* combination (in different order-ings): עָשִׁיר, שַׁעֲרֵי, רְשָׁעִים; (b) three items with an alternating guttural:

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8.   Given the fact that the Hebrew grapheme ע was used to represent two separate phonemes in ancient Hebrew, the pharyngeal fricative /ʿ/ and the velar fricative /ġ/, further comment is necessary here. Unfortunately, however, the cognate evidence (from Ugaritic, Arabic, etc.) is not very helpful in this instance, with neither of the two roots having firm congeners in other Semitic languages. See the proposals provided in *HALOT*, 1264, 1269. Regardless, however, even if different sounds were heard when this half-verse was read aloud, they were both fricatives pronounced in close proximity to each other deep in the throat. For general introduction to the phonology involved, see Rendsburg 1997a: 71-72; 2013c: 103.

9.   I here accede to the etymological sense of Hebrew אַשְׁרֵי, 'noble', which eventually yielded the more general meaning 'happy'. For discussion, see Rubin 2010.

חֹרְשֵׁי, אַשְׁרָיו (2×); and (c) five additional lexemes of two root consonants each adding support: רַע, רָשׁ, רֵעֵהוּ (2×), רֵעִים.[10]

(5) Prov. 15.12, לֹא יֶאֱהַב־לֵץ הוֹכֵחַ לוֹ אֶל־חֲכָמִים לֹא יֵלֵךְ ('A scoffer does not love [it when] one reproves him, to the wise he will not go'): The alliteration in this verse is conducted by the string of /l/ sounds, from beginning to end. An aural linkage between the two stichs is created by הוֹכֵחַ and חֲכָמִים.[11]

(6) Prov. 19.26, מְשַׁדֶּד־אָב יַבְרִיחַ אֵם בֵּן מֵבִישׁ וּמַחְפִּיר ('He who despoils a father, he who drives-away a mother, a shameful and disgracing son'): All four verb forms are relatively rare: the sounds of the second and fourth (יַבְרִיחַ and מַחְפִּיר) evoke each other;[12] while the first and third (מְשַׁדֵּד and מֵבִישׁ) both include /m/ and /š/, even if the /m/ in these two forms is generated by the use of participle forms, piel and hiphil, respectively.

(7) Prov. 19.28, עֵד בְּלִיַּעַל יָלִיץ מִשְׁפָּט וּפִי רְשָׁעִים יְבַלַּע־אָוֶן ('A corrupt witness scorns justice, and the mouth of the wicked covers iniquity'): The verbal root בלע here means not 'swallow' (its usual meaning, though clearly a hint of that connotation is present as well, given the subject 'mouth'), but rather 'cover', attested elsewhere only in Num. 4.20. It is employed here in the light of בְּלִיַּעַל in the first stich.[13] Note, moreover, that in the parallel expressions in Prov. 10.6, 11 וּפִי רְשָׁעִים יְכַסֶּה חָמָס, the

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10. As far as Semitic cognates permit us to decide the matter, it appears that all of the phonemes represented by ע in this collection of words are /ʿ/, with the exception of /ġ/ in the second word, for which see Ugaritic *t̠ġr*, 'gate'. Since the parallel phonological issue concerns the letter ח (for which see Rendsburg 1997a: 71-72; 2013c: 102-103), I here register the point that the ח in חֹרְשֵׁי ('devisers', 2× in v. 22, viz., 'devisers of evil' and 'devisers of good') represents the pharyngeal fricative /ḥ/, as determined via Ugaritic *ḥrš*, 'craftsman, labourer'. The basic semantic connection in these usages is 'work' (including, incidentally, 'magic' [n.], 'perform magic' [v.]).

11. Both of the phonemes underlying the ח are the pharyngeal fricative /ḥ/; cf. Ethiopic *wakkəḥa*, 'clamour, quarrel', and Arabic *ḥakim*, 'wise man, physician'.

12. Even if the two gutturals are different: the pharyngeal fricative /ḥ/ in the former (cf. Arabic *bariḥa*, 'move, leave, depart') and the velar fricative /ḫ/ in the latter (cf. Arabic *ḫafira*, 'be shy'; Ethiopic *ḫafara*, 'be ashamed').

13. The etyma of the two relevant words are unknown, so one cannot determine the precise articulation of the guttural fricatives represented by ע, whether they be velar /ġ/ or pharyngeal /ʿ/. Regardless, the sounds are so proximate that, especially in combination with the other consonants, /b/ and /l/, the aural effect would have been readily apprehended. Incidentally, *HALOT*, 135, 420, offers potential cognates for both lexical entries, but they are not convincing. Notwithstanding the prodigious achievement marked by *HALOT* (and its predecessors), one should proceed cautiously regarding the cognate material offered in the dictionary.

more standard verb כסה 'cover' is used, because the parallel stich reads differently, without the key word בְּלִיַּעַל.[14]

(8) Prov. 20.14, רַע רַע יֹאמַר הַקּוֹנֶה וְאֹזֵל לֹו אָז יִתְהַלָּל ('"Bad, bad", says the buyer, but he goes-away [and] then praises himself'): The root אזל ('go') appears only five times in the Bible; this is its only attestation in Proverbs. The poet evoked the rare word in anticipation of the following two words, לֹו אָז.

(9) Prov. 23.2, וְשַׂמְתָּ שַׂכִּין בְּלֹעֶךָ אִם־בַּעַל נֶפֶשׁ אָתָּה ('And you put a knife in your gullet, if you are a gluttonous man'):[15] This verse presents a classic instance of the use of a *hapax legomenon* for the purposes of alliteration. The unique word here is לֹעַ ('gullet'), which, when combined with the prefixed preposition בְּ- ('in'), presents the sounds that the listener will hear two words ahead in בַּעַל ('master').[16]

(10) Prov. 23.5, [הֲתָעִוף] הֲתָעִיף עֵינֶיךָ בֹּו וְאֵינֶנּוּ כִּי עָשֹׂה יַעֲשֶׂה־לֹּו כְנָפַיִם כְּנֶשֶׁר [וְעִיף] יָעוּף הַשָּׁמָיִם ('Do your eyes blink at it, and it is no-more? For indeed it will make itself wings, like an eagle, flying to the sky'): The verb תָעִיף ('blink'[?]) at the beginning of the verse occurs only here in the Bible; it is employed *alliterationis causa* in expectation of the common verbal root עוף in יָעוּף ('fly') in the b-line.[17]

(11) Prov. 24.11, הַצֵּל לְקֻחִים לַמָּוֶת וּמָטִים לַהֶרֶג אִם־תַּחְשֹׂוךְ ('Rescue those who are taken to death, and [for] those who totter on [the brink of] slaughter, do not withhold yourself'): The verb מוט ('totter, stumble') is used in a most unusual way here; its purpose is to echo the sounds in the preceding word מָוֶת ('death').

(12) Prov. 25.13, כְּצִנַּת־שֶׁלֶג בְּיֹום קָצִיר צִיר נֶאֱמָן לְשֹׁלְחָיו וְנֶפֶשׁ אֲדֹנָיו יָשִׁיב ('Like the chill of snow on a day of harvest, a faithful envoy to his senders, he refreshes the soul of his masters'): Once more we encounter a

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14. For reasons that are not clear to me, neither Snell 1993 nor Heim 2013 discusses the relationship between Prov. 10.6, 11 and 19.28. For discussion of 10.6 and 10.11, see Snell 1993: 42, 141; and Heim 2013: 217-23.

15. In this case, I have attempted to capture the alliteration in my English rendering, with the use of 'gullet' for the *hapax legomenon* לֹעַ, and of 'gluttonous' for the Hebrew expression בַּעַל נֶפֶשׁ, lit. 'master of appetite'. In so doing, I follow the lead of others, including Alter 2010: 291 (though he makes no comment on the matter).

16. The ע in בַּעַל clearly represents /ʿ/ (cf. Ugaritic *bʿl*, 'lord'), but the etymon of לֹעַ is unclear. Akkadian *luʾu / luḫḫu*, 'throat' (as indicated in *HALOT*, 532; see further *CAD* [L], 258), constitutes a distinct possibility, but even here the precise guttural consonant is uncertain.

17. Once more we are stymied in our attempt to know the precise relationship between the two sounds represented by ע in the two key words. The latter is clearly the pharyngeal fricative /ʿ/ (cf. Ugaritic ʿ*p*, 'fly'), but the exact meaning and potential cognates of the former word constitute a black hole.

hapax legomenon employed *alliterationis causa.* The unique word is the construct form צִנַּת ('chill, cold'), used at the head of the verse, with its acoustic associates קָצִיר ('harvest') and צִיר ('envoy') following. The auditory effect is increased with the prefixing of the preposition -כ ('as, like'), to create the specific form כְּצִנַּת; note the voiced velar /k/ and the emphatic velar /q/ at the onset of קָצִיר. Finally, note that the nasal /n/ of the key noun and the liquid /r/ in the two following nouns share phonetic qualities within the sonorant category.[18]

(13) Prov. 25.26, מַעְיָן נִרְפָּשׂ וּמָקוֹר מָשְׁחָת צַדִּיק מָט לִפְנֵי־רָשָׁע ('A muddied spring, an infested [water-]source, the righteous tottering before the wicked'): The root רפשׂ ('muddy') occurs in the Bible only here and twice in Ezekiel (32.2; 34.18—the former with *samekh* instead of *śin*). The author of this aphorism employed this word in the niphal form נִרְפָּשׂ with the consonantal string /n/-/r/-/p/-/ś/, in anticipation of the anagrammatic string /p/-/n/-/r/-/š/ bridging the last two words of the verse.

4. *Wordplay in Proverbs*

Another frequent element in proverbial literature is the presence of wordplay or double meaning. In the book of Proverbs we find examples such as the following.[19]

(1) Prov. 3.18, עֵץ־חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחֲזִיקִים בָּהּ וְתֹמְכֶיהָ מְאֻשָּׁר ('She is a tree of life to those who grasp her, and those who clutch her are fortunate'): In the context of the 'tree of life' in the a-line, one will sense an allusion in the word מְאֻשָּׁר ('fortunate') to אֲשֵׁרָה ('Asherah'), especially given the dendric imagery associated with this goddess (Taylor 1995).

(2) Prov. 3.26, כִּי־יְהוָה יִהְיֶה בְכִסְלֶךָ וְשָׁמַר רַגְלְךָ מִלָּכֶד ('For YHWH will be behind you / your support, and he will guard your leg from being-caught'): Note that כֶּסֶל means both 'loin, thigh' (Leviticus 5×; Job 15.27; cf. Ugaritic *ksl*, 'back, behind, tendon, sinew') and 'support, confidence' (Ps. 78.7). Both meanings fit the context here.

(3) Prov. 8.30, וָאֶהְיֶה אֶצְלוֹ אָמוֹן וָאֶהְיֶה שַׁעֲשֻׁעִים יוֹם יוֹם מְשַׂחֶקֶת לְפָנָיו בְּכָל־עֵת ('And I was with him [as] a counsellor / craftsman / nursling, and I was a delight every day, rejoicing before him at all times'): Scholars have debated the specific meaning of the key noun אָמוֹן, with the

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18.   This explains such issues as the realization of the Babylonian royal name *Nabû-kudurri-uṣur* as נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר (28×) / נְבוּכַדְנְאצַּר (20×) (with shift of /r/ > /n/) in Hebrew, save for the more accurate נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר (with retention of the /r/) in the book of Jeremiah (32×) + Ezek. 29.19. For general orientation, see Fitzgerald 1978.

19.   Once more I direct the reader's attention to Hurowitz 2012, from which I have culled many of these examples.

following proposals proffered (for the best summation, see Hurowitz 1999):[20] (a) 'counsellor' (cf. Akkadian *ummānu*); (b) 'artisan, craftsman, architect' (cf. Aramaic אוּמָן, Mishnaic Hebrew אוֹמָן); and (c) 'nursling, ward' (parsing אָמוֹן as infinitive absolute of אמן, that is, 'one raised'; cf. אוֹמֶנֶת / אוֹמֵן 'foster parent'). Since all three meanings fit the context, one should accept all three connotations, as a brilliant display of polysemy.[21]

(4) Prov. 11.5-6:

צִדְקַת תָּמִים תְּיַשֵּׁר דַּרְכּוֹ וּבְרִשְׁעָתוֹ יִפֹּל רָשָׁע: ⁵
צִדְקַת יְשָׁרִים תַּצִּילֵם וּבְהַוַּת בֹּגְדִים יִלָּכֵדוּ: ⁶

⁵   The righteousness of the blameless makes straight his way;
         and via his wickedness the wicked-one will fall.
⁶   The righteousness of the upright delivers them;
         and in (their) desire/destruction/words the treacherous are caught.

The key word is הַוַּת in v. 6, which (as in the previous example) is patient of three different meanings (Kselman 2002): (a) '(bad) desire' (see Prov. 10.3); (b) 'disaster, destruction' (see Job 30.13); and (c) 'words' (see Ps. 52.4; cf. Ugaritic *hwt*, Akkadian *awātu*). In addition, one notes the manner in which the term רִשְׁעָתוֹ ('his wickedness', v. 5) alludes to רֶשֶׁת 'net', the object into which a wicked person typically falls (see Pss. 35.7-8; 57.7).

(5) Prov. 14.4, בְּאֵין אֲלָפִים אֵבוּס בָּר וְרָב־תְּבוּאוֹת בְּכֹחַ שׁוֹר ('Without oxen the stall is clean [grain], but great harvest is through the strength of the bull'): Michael Fox (2009: 573) espied not only the surface meaning of בַּר in this passage as 'clean' (thus RSV), but also the underlying meaning 'grain' (thus NJPS). Both senses work well within the context of oxen in the stall. Fox further noted the alliteration of /b/ and /p/ throughout, with each word save the last one containing either of these two labial consonants (voiced and voiceless counterparts). At the centre, moreover, stands the clearest echo, with בָּר ('clean', 'grain'), followed by רָב ('great').[22]

20.   For an earlier article, not cited by Hurowitz 1999, see Cooper 1987: 73-75.
21.   In Cooper's words (1987: 74): 'The fact that divergent interpretations of *ʾāmôn* are both possible and plausible ['both', because Cooper fused definitions (a) and (b) above into a single entry—G.A.R.] suggests to me that no single interpretation can contain the "real meaning" of the text'. While Hurowitz argued strongly for 'nursling' as the desired meaning, based especially on the larger context of Prov. 8, he also added the following comment concerning the other proposed meanings (1999: 400): 'it is slightly possible that other interpretations are legitimate secondary meanings, on the level of intentional wordplays and double entendres'.
22.   For other instances of this technique, reversing the two letters of short words, see Gen. 6.8 with נֹחַ 'Noah' followed by חֵן, 'grace', and Gen. 38.7 with עֵר, 'Er', followed by רַע, 'evil'.

(6) Prov. 14.24, עֲטֶרֶת חֲכָמִים עָשְׁרָם אִוֶּלֶת כְּסִילִים אִוֶּלֶת ('The crown of the wise is their wealth; the throne of the fools is stupidity'): Most scholars emend this verse, but no alteration is necessary once one realizes that the first אִוֶּלֶת is cognate with Ugaritic *alt* ('cathedra, throne, base, support'), attested in *KTU* 1.6.VI.27 (Baʿal Myth) (see Dahood 1963: 31-32): *l . ysʿ . alt / tbtk . l yhpk . ksa . mlkk* ('He will surely uproot the cathedra of your seating, he will surely overturn the throne of your dominion').

(7) Prov. 21.9, טוֹב לָשֶׁבֶת עַל־פִּנַּת־גָּג מֵאֵשֶׁת מִדְיָנִים וּבֵית חָבֶר ('Better to sit on the corner of the roof, than with a contentious woman—and a house of noise/storage'): The noun חָבֶר (contextual form: חֶבֶר) is another word which elicits multiple meanings: (a) 'noise' (cf. Akkadian *ḫubūru*); and (b) 'brewery, alehouse' (cf. Akkadian *bīt ḫiburni*, and Ugaritic *bt ḫbr* in *KTU* 1.14.II.25 [Keret]). In addition, a third meaning may be lurking: (c) 'friend' (cf. חָבֵר, 'friend, associate', 12× in Biblical Hebrew, more commonly attested in Rabbinic Hebrew [262× in the Mishnah alone, including the feminine equivalent]). This third sense may surface in light of רֵעֵהוּ ('his fellow') in the following verse (v. 10), and it also may explain the somewhat awkward syntax at the end of the verse (note my rather literal rendering above).

(8) Prov. 23.7, כִּי כְּמוֹ־שָׁעַר בְּנַפְשׁוֹ כֶּן־הוּא אֱכֹל וּשְׁתֵה יֹאמַר לָךְ וְלִבּוֹ בַּל־עִמָּךְ ('For like one who reckons to himself [serves his appetite] is he; "Eat and drink" he says to you; but his heart is not with you'): This verse includes the only occurrence of a verb derived from the root שער in the entire Bible. Typically it is connected to the noun שְׁעָרִים ('measures') attested in Gen. 26.12, itself a unique occurrence. The root is much better known from Rabbinic Hebrew, with 222 attestations in the Tannaitic corpus, always in the piel (not the qal), even if the vast majority of these are the verbal noun שִׁיעוּר ('measure, measurement') (including all 75 occurrences within the Mishnah). In theory, this meaning fits the context of Prov. 23.7, but given the larger discussion of eating and drinking (and recalling that נֶפֶשׁ may mean 'neck, throat, appetite' as well), one will countenance the second meaning for the verb שער ('serve a meal'), based on the presence of the root *tʿr* ('serve a meal, arrange the table') in the Ugaritic lexicon (Barker 1999).

(9) Prov. 27.17, בַּרְזֶל בְּבַרְזֶל יָחַד וְאִישׁ יַחַד פְּנֵי־רֵעֵהוּ ('Iron sharpens iron, and a man gladdens the face of his fellow'): Two verbal roots are to be seen here: (a) חדד 'sharpen' in the a-line; and (b) חדה ('gladden') in the b-line. In addition, a third sense arises, especially in the b-line: (c) יַחַד ('together'). The wordplay works perfectly on the graphic level, since the written form יחד contains all of the above meanings. A phonological problem presents itself, however, especially regarding the second stich.

The first root letter of the first verbal root is /ḥ/ (cf. Arabic *ḥadda*), while the first root letter of the second verbal root is /ḫ/ (cf. Akkadian *ḫadû*). But the middle consonant of the form יַחַד ('together') is /ḥ/ (cf. Ugaritic *yḥd*)—which raises the question: when the performer/presenter of this proverb intoned the key word in the b-line, did he read [yaḫad] or [yaḥad]? I suspect the former, with a hint of the latter, perhaps through some compromise pronunciation (see Noegel 1996: 148 n. 1).

  (10) Prov. 30.4:

מֶי עָלָה־שָׁמַיִם וַיֵּרַד
מֶי אָסַף־רוּחַ בְּחָפְנָיו
מֶי צָרַר־מַיִם בַּשִּׂמְלָה
מֶי הֵקִים כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ

> Who has ascended the heavens and come-down?
>> Who has collected the wind in his fists/garment?
> Who has gathered the water in his clothing?
>> Who has established all the ends of the earth?

The key word in this verse is חֹפֶן (reconstructed singular),[23] with two meanings (Cathcart 1970; 1998; Rendsburg 2001): (a) 'fist' (cf. Arabic *ḥafna*); and (b) 'garment' (cf. Ugaritic *ḫpn*) (note LXX ἐν κόλπῳ). Both are appropriate for the context, since collecting the wind in one's hand/palm/fist is a common idiom in world languages; while the sense of 'garment' is rehearsed in the next stich with שִׂמְלָה ('clothing'—as recognized by the LXX, apparently). Once more we have the phonological hurdle of the slightly different pronunciation of the two fricatives (one velar, one pharyngeal: /ḫ/ and /ḥ/, respectively), but the wordplay cannot be denied.

5. *Janus Parallelism*

A special type of wordplay occurs in Prov. 31.21-22, to wit, the Janus parallelism created by the Janus term שנים at the end of v. 21:

לֹא־תִירָא לְבֵיתָהּ מִשָּׁלֶג כִּי כָל־בֵּיתָהּ לָבֻשׁ שָׁנִים׃
מַרְבַדִּים עָשְׂתָה־לָּהּ שֵׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּמָן לְבוּשָׁהּ׃

> She does not fear for her household on account of snow,
>> for her entire household is clothed in crimson/double-layers.
> Bedspreads she makes for herself,
>> linen and purple are her clothing.

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23.   Note that in Rabbinic Hebrew the singular form is also not attested; indeed nine of the ten occurrences in the Tannaitic corpus are the same form as in Prov. 30.4, namely, חָפְנָיו, lit. 'his two fists' = 'two fistfuls'.

Scholars have rightly questioned the Masoretic reading שָׁנִים ('crimson'), for as G.R. Driver (1947: 11) noted, 'scarlet is neither more nor less warm than other colours for clothing in snowy weather'.

The solution, accordingly, is to revocalize the form to שְׁנַיִם ('two'), since double layers would indeed be appropriate on a wintry day. A hint of this reading may occur at the start of the next verse in the LXX: δισσὰς χλαίνας ('she duplicated cloaks', NETS)—with no indication of 'two', 'crimson', or any other reflection of שנים at the end of v. 21.

Substantiation for the reading שְׁנַיִם ('two'), though retaining the word at the end of v. 21, may be forthcoming from *KTU* 1.10.III.24 (Baʻal and the Heifer), though the reading is difficult. The *Ugaritic Data Bank* reads as follows: *wtks̊ẙṅn . bṯṅ---* ('and she covers him with two [?]'); while the *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry* volume does not: *wtks[y]nn.b—* ('and she covers him with [?]') (Parker 1997: 185).

With or without the evidence forthcoming from either the Septuagint or the Ugaritic corpus, however, we may confirm the interpretation שְׁנַיִם ('two'), since, as indicated above, double layers serve to combat the cold during snowy weather.

At the same time, however, we should retain the sense of שָׁנִים ('crimson'), as transmitted by the Masoretes, for it anticipates the use of its congeners שֵׁשׁ 'linen' and אַרְגָּמָן ('purple') in v. 22 (note the collocation of all three words 23× in the Tabernacle account [Exod. 25.4; 26.31; 27.16; 28.5; etc.]). As such, the graphic representation שנים at the end of v. 21 constitutes a Janus word, with the meaning 'two' facing backward to the context of the verse as a whole, and with the meaning 'crimson' facing forward to the setting of v. 22.

6. *Double Polysemy*

A special kind of wordplay occurs in Prov. 31.19, יָדֶיהָ שִׁלְּחָה בַכִּישׁוֹר וְכַפֶּיהָ תָּמְכוּ פָלֶךְ ('Her hands she sends-forth to the spindle / with skill, and her palms grasp the whorl / with dexterity'). Here the key nouns in both stichs each have double meaning (Rendsburg 1997b). These nouns and their two connotations are as follows: (a) כִּישׁוֹר ('spindle' / 'skill'; cf. כשר; Ugaritic *ktr*); and (b) פֶלֶךְ ('whorl' / 'dexterity'; cf. Jibbali *flk*). The result is an exceedingly adroit line of poetry, whose deftness no doubt parallels that of the master weaver-woman's hands a-work at her task, as described in this section of Proverbs 31.

7. *Bilingual Wordplay*

Bilingual wordplay may be observed in Prov. 31.26-27:

<div dir="rtl">

²⁶ פִּיהָ פָּתְחָה בְחָכְמָה וְתוֹרַת־חֶסֶד עַל־לְשׁוֹנָהּ׃

²⁷ צוֹפִיָּה הֲלִיכוֹת בֵּיתָהּ וְלֶחֶם עַצְלוּת לֹא תֹאכֵל׃

</div>

26   She opens her mouth with wisdom,
       and the teaching of *ḥesed* is upon her tongue.
27   She watches (over) / Sophia are the ways of her house,
       and the bread of laziness she does not eat.

Al Wolters (1985) deserves full credit for the observation that צוֹפִיָּה is the only participle form among the long catena of feminine verbs predicated of the 'woman of valour' in Prov. 31.10-31. All the other forms are 3rd fem. sg. finite verbs, of different types (*qatal*, *yiqtol*, *wayyiqtol*—in their feminine guise, of course):

v. 12 – גְּמָלַתְהוּ
v. 13 – דָּרְשָׁה / וַתַּעַשׂ
v. 14 – הָיְתָה / תָּבִיא
v. 15 – וַתָּקָם / וַתִּתֵּן
v. 16 – זָמְמָה / וַתִּקָּחֵהוּ / נָטְעָה (Q)
v. 17 – חָגְרָה / וַתְּאַמֵּץ
v. 18 – טָעֲמָה
v. 19 – שִׁלְּחָה
v. 20 – פָּרְשָׂה / שִׁלְּחָה
v. 21 – לֹא־תִירָא
v. 22 – עָשְׂתָה
v. 24 – עָשְׂתָה / וַתִּמְכֹּר / נָתְנָה
v. 25 – וַתִּשְׂחַק
v. 26 – פָּתְחָה
v. 27 – לֹא תֹאכֵל
v. 30 – תִּתְהַלָּל

In light of this list, the presence of צוֹפִיָּה at the head of v. 27 is truly striking. The participle form, however, allows for the bilingual pun, for while in Hebrew the form means 'she watches (over)', the same word evokes the Greek term Σοφία ('Sophia, wisdom'). Note especially the resonance due to the presence of חָכְמָה ('wisdom') in the previous verse (v. 26).

    The attentive reader also would be struck by the rarer form of the fem. sg. participle, with the third radical *yod* retained, hence צוֹפִיָּה, as opposed to the more standard form צוֹפָה (not attested in Biblical Hebrew, but clearly the expected form; see GKC, 212 §75v). Observe how only the

attested atypical form צוֹפִיָּה, with its evocation of 'Sophia', and not the standard typical form צוֹפָה, allows the bilingual wordplay to operate.[24] The presence of 'Sophia' in Prov. 31.27 does not mean that the ancient Hebrew readership of the 'Woman of Valour' poem was conversant in Greek, no more than a modern English or French or German speaker who may know the connotation of 'Sophia' is conversant in Greek. Rather, the presence of 'Sophia' in Prov. 31.27 serves as witness to the truly international flavour of the wisdom tradition, across the Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Finally, I may add that these three sections (§§5–7) attest to the remarkable quality of Prov. 31.10-31. While other instances of Janus parallelism, double polysemy, and bilingual wordplay may occur in the book of Proverbs—either already discovered or yet to be discovered— the concentration of these three special literary devices in a single poem suggests that the person responsible for the canonical order of the book of Proverbs has left the best for last. For while the entire book is of high literary quality, the 'Woman of Valour' poem may be judged, if one may be permitted subjective comment here, the best of the best.

8. *Visual Wordplay*

In Prov. 1.10, בְּנִי אִם־יְפַתּוּךָ חַטָּאִים אַל־תֹּבֵא ('My son, if sinners entice you, do not assent'), our attention is drawn to the last word in the verse, which the Masorah transmitted as תֹּבֵא ('assent'), even though the graphemic form might suggest the reading תָּבֹא ('come') (as occurs 22× in the Bible; see also Isa. 47.11, the same form with conjunctive -וְ, 'and').[25] Why the unusual spelling? Why the unusual pronunciation?[26] Especially since the expected form is תֹּאבֶה ('assent'), for which see the following verses (including one instance in the plural): לֹא־תֹאבֶה לוֹ וְלֹא וְלֹא תֹאבוּ (1 Kgs 20.8); and אַל־תִּשְׁמַע וְלוֹא תֹאבֶה (Deut. 13.9); תִּשְׁמַע אֵלָיו לִשְׁמֹעַ לִי (Lev. 26.21). The answer is that the three letters which comprise the word תבא are a cipher for the reader (in this case, the one actually holding the scroll, with the visual signs before him/her). The next time that he/she encounters the opening בְּנִי ('my son'), followed by the negative particle אַל ('[do] not'), is in v. 15, where the cipher is decoded: בְּנִי אַל־תֵּלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ אִתָּם (Prov. 1.15). Observe how the three words which

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24. For other instances of bilingual wordplay in the Bible, see Rendsburg 1988.
25. For some brief comments, see de Waard 2008: 31*.
26. Note that GKC, 215 §75hh, understands the form as an Aramaism.

follow begin with the letters *taw*, *bet*, and *ʾaleph*, the same three letters which comprise the enigmatic תבא in v. 10 (see Gordon 1974: 29).[27]

   In this particular case, then, the scribal tradition transmitted the word in Prov. 1.10 as תבא, as if it were derived from בוא ('come'); but the tradents responsible for the oral reading tradition transmitted the word 'correctly' as תֹּבֵא, from the root אבה ('assent').[28] All of this, moreover, fits perfectly into the context of Proverbs 1, as the author informs his reader, in v. 6, that one of the aims of the book is לְהָבִין מָשָׁל וּמְלִיצָה דִּבְרֵי חֲכָמִים וְחִידֹתָם ('to understand the proverb and the epigram, the words of the wise and their riddles'). There is no better place than to begin the task than within the same chapter, as the parallel structures of vv. 10 and 15 demonstrate.

9. *An Arabism in Proverbs*

An Arabism may be detected in Prov. 30.29-31:

שְׁלֹשָׁה הֵמָּה מֵיטִיבֵי צָעַד וְאַרְבָּעָה מֵיטִבֵי לָכֶת: [29]
לַיִשׁ גִּבּוֹר בַּבְּהֵמָה וְלֹא־יָשׁוּב מִפְּנֵי־כֹל: [30]
זַרְזִיר מָתְנַיִם אוֹ־תָיִשׁ וּמֶלֶךְ אַלְקוּם עִמּוֹ: [31]

[29]   Three are excellent of stride;
          four, excellent of walk.
[30]   Lion, hero among beasts,
          and he does turn-back in the face of all.
[31]   Saluki of loins; or he-goat;
          and a king, the populace with him.

Scholars have long recognized all sorts of foreign influences on all sorts of biblical compositions: the influence of Mesopotamian legal traditions on the law collections in the Torah; the influence of Hittite and/or Assyrian treaty language on the Pentateuchal covenant traditions (especially Deuteronomy); Egyptian influence on Prov. 22.17–24.22 (see ahead, §11); Aramaic linguistic influence on Late Biblical Hebrew; the influence of Greek and/or Persian historiographical style on the book of

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27.   For a slightly alternative approach, which views תבא in Prov. 1.10 as an abbreviation rather than a cipher, albeit 'an incorrect restitution of an original ת׳ אל ב׳ א׳', imported from v. 15 into v. 10, see Driver 1960: 128-29. For a thorough investigation of this matter, see now in greater detail Williamson 2014. I am grateful to H.G.M. Williamson for sharing with me a pre-publication version of his article in the wake of my presentation to the Old Testament Seminar in November 2012.

28.   Note that the two paths of transmission are present already at the first occasion in the Bible where we encounter the verbal root כתב, 'write', namely Exod. 17.14. For a thorough treatment of the subject, see Levin 1997.

Esther (even if parodied [Berlin 2001]); and so on. Rarely, however, does one encounter any Arabian influence. It is for this reason that I opt to highlight the current passage, Prov. 30.29-31, by dedicating to it a separate, albeit short, section in this study.[29]

The crucial word is אַלְקוּם in v. 31, which is to be analysed as the equivalent of Classical Arabic ʾal-qawm ('the people'; see Lane 1863–93: 2996; Zammit 2002: 348), replete with the Arabic definite article and the noun following. If I have rendered the word as 'populace' (see above), it is due to my approach to Bible translation, which is to reserve common English words for common Hebrew words (e.g. עַם = 'people') and to use rarer English words to render rarer Hebrew words (e.g. קוּם = 'populace').

What is the source of this word? Classical Arabic, of course, is not attested until many centuries after the biblical period, and while the word most likely was part of the lexis of precursors to Classical Arabic in first-millennium BCE Arabia, other options need to be explored as well. I refer mainly to Ancient North Arabian, whose various dialects (Safaitic, Thamudic, etc.) were spoken in relatively close proximity to Israel (especially the Transjordanian tribes) during the period under consideration. In fact, one notes that the verse cited above occurs within the section of Proverbs attributed to Agur of Massa, located in the Syrian Desert (Ephʾal 1982: 218-19).[30]

The word *qm/qwm* is indeed found in Safaitic, for example, in the following passage within a short prayer text,[31] C 3811 (*CIS* 5.1.1: 480): *w h rḍy ġnmt l- qm gyᶜ* ('and, O Ruḍay, may there be booty for a starving people'). The lexeme also occurs as the second component in the divine name or epithet *s²ᶜ-h-qm* 'companion/protector of the people', which in turn is to be equated with the Nabatean divine name or epithet *šyᶜ-ʾl-qwm* (Healey 2001: 143-47).[32]

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29. For a parallel treatment, see Rendsburg 2014.

30. For other references to Massa in Ephʾal 1982, the reader should consult the Index, p. 252.

31. My sincere thanks to Ahmad Al-Jallad for providing me with the information contained in this paragraph, including the text cited here. Note that earlier scholars, including the *CIS* edition, read *nqm* in this inscription, but Dr Al-Jallad assures me (via e-mail communication, 22 April 2014) that 'the reading *l- qm* is clear on the copy and will be the accepted reading in the Safaitic Database Online', currently in development under the direction of M.C.A. Macdonald, http://krc2.orient.ox.ac.uk/aalc/index.php/en/safaitic-database-online.

32. To round out the picture from the Arabian peninsula, I also note here the presence of the noun *qwm*, 'people, community', in Sabaic (Biella 1982: 450—though curiously not listed with this meaning in Beeston *et al.* 1982: 111), and the

Several comments of a linguistic nature are necessary here. First is the matter of the definite article, which appears as ʾal in the cited Hebrew form. While *hn* may be the more common definite article in the various Ancient North Arabian dialects (Macdonald 2004: 517-18), the form ʾl /ʾal/ is also well attested (Al-Jallad forthcoming b). Moreover, it appears regularly in Nabatean as the definite article prefixed to Arabic proper nouns (Jobling 1995: 5) and in other sources of ancient Levantine Arabic (Al-Jallad 2011: 81, 84, 166, 178, 190, 199, and esp. pp. 316-21; forthcoming a: §5.5). In fact, as the reader will have noticed, quite strikingly the exact combination ʾl-qwm occurs within the just-cited Nabatean divine name or epithet.

The second issue is both the reduction of the diphthong /aw/ and its specific representation in the Hebrew form as [u:]. On the former, we note that the diphthong /aw/ typically is retained in the (proto-)Arabic forms of this general region, as seen by the consistent (save one exception) use of Greek αυ (Al-Jallad forthcoming a: §4.2.4.1). One may presume, nonetheless, monophthongization in certain dialects or sub-dialects or within certain environments, as suggested, for example, by the aforecited Safaitic *qm* ('people'). Naturally, the quality of this vowel cannot be determined. Typically, when the diphthongs in Arabic are reduced, the shifts /aw/ > [o:] and /ay/ > [e:] occur. The Masorah, however, has transmitted the form as אַלְקוּם, which suggests monophthongization of /aw/ > [u:].[33] This phonological feature actually occurs in colloquial Arabic dialects of North Africa (Pereira 2011: 958), though to the best of my knowledge it is not attested in any Arabian dialects.[34]

All said, we may assume that אַלְקוּם ('the populace') reached Hebrew from some North Arabian dialect which included both the definite article ʾal and the lexeme *qūm* resulting from the atypical shift of /aw/ > [u:]. How many fluent speakers of ancient Hebrew would recognize the word cannot be said, though one may assume that the educated elite understood the word, in like proportion to the number of ancient Israelites who

related form *mqm*, 'assembly, meeting', in Qatabanian. This evidence from Ancient South Arabian may be less relevant, given the considerable geographical remove of these inscriptions from ancient Israel; though it does demonstrate the widespread use of cognates to later Classical Arabic *qawm*, 'people', throughout the Arabian peninsula in antiquity.

33. For discussion concerning the parallel diphthong /ay/, see Young 1992; Steiner 2007.

34. For one possible instance, limited to initial position, see Rabin 1951: 165 n. 15, though as the author states, 'Cases of *au* becoming *ū* are rare outside the Maghrib'.

would have apprehended the bilingual wordplay inherent in צוֹפִיָּה (see above).

To be sure, no emendation of the Masoretic text of Prov. 30.31 is required. The alterations suggested by scholars—including קם אל עמו (McKane 1970: 664), either אל קדם עמו or קם אל עמו (Murphy 1998: 233), or אל קום עמו ('not to rise-up against him') (Waltke 2005: 462)—are all unnecessary once one identifies the origin and meaning of MT אַלְקוּם ('the populace').[35]

(The reader may have noticed my translation of the word זַרְזִיר at the beginning of Prov. 30.31 as 'saluki'. I have opted for this rendering, since an animal with outstanding loins is demanded.[36] 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 Islamic tradition.[37] I owe this suggestion and observation to Stephanie Dalley. Such a meaning for זַרְזִיר would fit well with the Arabian context discussed above. 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 to Prov. 30.31, unless a strutting cock is intended, but this seems most doubtful. For more on the ornithological term זַרְזִיר, see Nissan 2011: 450-51.)

10. *Egyptian Influence in Proverbs*

In terms of Egyptian influence, we should note Prov. 22.19-20:

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35.   One final comment here, for the sake of bibliographic completeness: Kassis (1999) makes no mention of the Arabian word present in Prov. 30.31.

36.   As sensed by two medieval Jewish commentators, Abraham ibn Ezra and Gershon ben Levi (= Ralbag = Gersonides); see further Forti 2008: 119. The latter, in fact, stated explicitly והוא הכלב דק המתנים שיוליכוהו הציידים לצוד, וענינו גם כן שימהר לרוץ, 'and this is the dog of thin loins, which the hunters lead to hunt, and which also is fast at running' (as kindly supplied to me by my colleague Seymour Feldman). Almost undoubtedly Gersonides had in mind the 'greyhound' (whence it makes its way, most likely, into early Protestant versions such as Martin Luther 'Windhund' and Bishop's Bible/Geneva Bible/KJV 'grayhound' [with variant spellings]). Note that the greyhound was treasured by the nobility in medieval Europe as a trusted companion and as a hunting dog. In fact, the greyhound appears on the heraldry of Charles V of France (r. 1364–1380), just to mention one king close in time and place to Gersonides (Provence, 1288–1344).

37.   For the dog in general, see Viré 2012; for the saluki in particular, see Smith 2012.

לִהְיוֹת בַּיהוָה מִבְטַחֶךָ הוֹדַעְתִּיךָ הַיּוֹם אַף־אָתָּה: ¹⁹
הֲלֹא כָתַבְתִּי לְךָ [שלשום] שָׁלִישִׁים בְּמוֹעֵצֹת וָדָעַת: ²⁰

¹⁹   That your trust may be in YHWH,
          I make-known to you, this-day even (to) you,
²⁰   Behold, I have written for you the three-fold,
          in counsel and knowledge.
          (though see below for a better translation)

For more than 90 years now, scholars have recognized that Prov. 22.17–
24.22 reflects the influence of the Egyptian sapiential composition, the
Teaching of Amen-em-opet.[38] Less well known, however, is the presence
of the name of the Egyptian sage in Prov. 22.19. While an argument may
be made that the string הַיּוֹם אַף־אָתָּה ('this-day even [to] you') provides
for acceptable Hebrew grammar (GKC, 438 §135e),[39] one still is left
with the problem that the verb הוֹדַעְתִּיךָ ('I make known to you') should
carry a direct object. What is it that the poet makes known to the reader?
I therefore propose that the consonantal string היומאפאתה, which under-
lies the Masoretic reading, constitutes the end of a process of inaccurate
scribal transmission which began with an original ימנמאפת = *ʾmn-m-ʾpt*
('Amen-em-opet').[40] The parallelism then works very well, for in v. 20
we are to understand the Hebrew word שָׁלִישִׁים ('thirty') (in contrast to
either of the options presented by the Kethib/Qere pair), as widely
recognized by scholars, based on the fact that the Teachings of Amen-
em-opet is divided into thirty sections (BM EA 10474, line 539). We
thus arrive at the following translation of Prov. 22.19-20:

38.   For a good summary of the history of scholarship, the issues involved, and
more, see Emerton 2001.

39.   Though GKC, 438 §135e, adds the remark '(but the text is most probably
corrupt)'. Naturally this is an exceedingly common observation within this classical
reference work. Moreover, I find myself here in the unusual position of agreeing
with GKC in this regard, since those who know my published oeuvre will recognize
that typically I defend MT.

40.   See my earlier study, Rendsburg 2001: 192-95. When I wrote my earlier
article, I neglected to mention the NAB rendering of Prov. 22.19, 'That your trust
may be in the LORD, I make known to you the words of Amen-em-Ope', which also
includes the name of the Egyptian sage within the verse. See the comment in the
Textual Notes on the NAB produced by St Anthony's Guild, Paterson, NJ: 392: 'For
hayyôm ʾap-ʾattâ read "Amen-em-Ope" (transcription in Hebrew uncertain):
conj[ecture]'. In addition, see also Black 2002: 377-78, including n. 282, 'To the
present writer, however, the logic [sc. the logic behind reading Amen-em-Ope in
Prov. 22.19] seems inescapable'.

That your trust may be in Yʜᴡʜ,
    I make-known to you Amen-em-opet,
Behold, I have written for you the Thirty,
    in counsel and knowledge.

11. *A Note about Negation*

A little-known fine point of Hebrew grammar is included here. As Weinfeld (1972: 260-74) observed, the book of Deuteronomy exhibits influence from the wisdom stream within ancient Israel. The best evidence is forthcoming from the prominent parallels between passages in Proverbs and Qohelet, on the one hand, and Deuteronomy, on the other:

Deut. 4.2:	לֹא תֹסִפוּ עַל־הַדָּבָר
Prov. 30.6:	אַל־תּוֹסְףְ עַל־דְּבָרָיו
Deut. 19.14:	לֹא תַסִּיג גְּבוּל רֵעֲךָ
Prov. 22.28, 23.10:	אַל־תַּסֵּג גְּבוּל עוֹלָם
Deut. 23.22:	כִּי־תִדֹּר נֶדֶר לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תְאַחֵר לְשַׁלְּמוֹ
Qoh. 5.3:	כַּאֲשֶׁר תִּדֹּר נֶדֶר לֵאלֹהִים אַל־תְּאַחֵר לְשַׁלְּמוֹ

To this Qimron (1983: 475) added the observation that, in the legal context of Deuteronomy, the expected negative particle לֹא is used, while in the wisdom texts, the negative particle אַל obtains. This distinction stems from the different genres of the two corpora, with Deuteronomy embodying legal prohibition and the wisdom literature axiomatic exhortation (Naudé and Rendsburg 2013: 804). This also will explain why the negative particle אַל occurs more frequently in Proverbs than in any other book of the Bible (Andersen and Forbes 1989: 275).[41] Just to compare the two relevant books here, note that Deuteronomy uses לֹא 412 times, but אַל only 21 times; whereas the ratio in Proverbs is nearly 1:1, with לֹא occurring 133 times and אַל appearing 90 times.

41. To be more precise, the 90 attestations of אַל in the book of Proverbs represents 130 occurrences per 10,000 words (to use the standard employed by Andersen and Forbes), which, to be technical, is outranked by the eight instances of אַל in Obadiah, representing 275 occurrences per 10,000 words—though for my present purposes I have elected to ignore this latter book, comprised of only one chapter and hence susceptible to statistical deviation.

12. *Repetition with Variation*

One of the main literary features of the book of Proverbs, when the composition is viewed as a whole, is the phenomenon of twice-told proverbs (or in some cases, thrice-told). Daniel Snell (1993) created the best catalogue of the material, though for further analysis the interested reader should consult the more recent works of David Carr (2011: 13-36) and especially Knut Heim (2013). Of the approximately one hundred examples to be found in the book of Proverbs, only a representative sampling, naturally, may be presented here:

Prov. 1.8:	שְׁמַע בְּנִי מוּסַר אָבִיךָ וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ׃
Prov. 6.20:	נְצֹר בְּנִי מִצְוַת אָבִיךָ וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ׃
Prov. 2.16:	לְהַצִּילְךָ מֵאִשָּׁה זָרָה מִנָּכְרִיָּה אֲמָרֶיהָ הֶחֱלִיקָה׃
Prov. 7.5:	לִשְׁמָרְךָ מֵאִשָּׁה זָרָה מִנָּכְרִיָּה אֲמָרֶיהָ הֶחֱלִיקָה׃
Deut. 23.22:	כִּי־תִדֹּר נֶדֶר לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תְאַחֵר לְשַׁלְּמוֹ
Qoh. 5.3:	כַּאֲשֶׁר תִּדֹּר נֶדֶר לֵאלֹהִים אַל־תְּאַחֵר לְשַׁלְּמוֹ
Prov. 20.16	לְקַח־בִּגְדוֹ כִּי־עָרַב זָר וּבְעַד [נכרים] נָכְרִיָּה חַבְלֵהוּ׃
Prov. 27.13	קַח־בִּגְדוֹ כִּי־עָרַב זָר וּבְעַד נָכְרִיָּה חַבְלֵהוּ׃
Prov. 21.9	טוֹב לָשֶׁבֶת עַל־פִּנַּת־גָּג מֵאֵשֶׁת מִדְיָנִים וּבֵית חָבֶר׃
Prov. 25.24	טוֹב שֶׁבֶת עַל־פִּנַּת־גָּג מֵאֵשֶׁת [מדונים] מִדְיָנִים וּבֵית חָבֶר׃

Moreover, as the reader may have recognized, the illustrations of twice-told proverbs which I have selected to display here are those with the most minor of alterations between the first and second iterations, to wit:

- נְצֹר ~ שְׁמַע
- מִצְוַת ~ מוּסַר
- לִשְׁמָרְךָ ~ לְהַצִּילְךָ
- קַח ~ לְקַח
- שֶׁבֶת ~ לָשֶׁבֶת

Other repeated proverbs reveal greater variation, for which see Snell and Heim, cited above.

The question remains: How to explain these repetitions with variation? Carr (2011: 13-36), on the one hand, has argued that these passages are to be understood as 'memory variants', thereby constituting evidence for the scribe's (or scribes') creating his (their) text from memory, with 'exchange of synonymous words, word order variation, presence and absence of conjunctions and minor modifiers, etc.' (Carr 2011: 33). If I have understood him correctly, in the main these variations are generated at the sub-conscious level. Heim, on the other hand, has argued that the

technique of 'variant repetition in Proverbs is a conscious, ubiquitous editorial strategy' (Heim 2013: 535).

Of the two options, I would opt for Heim's approach, especially due to the following consideration. It seems to me that if Carr's approach were correct, one would expect—out of the c. 100 examples of repeated proverbs—*at least one* example of verbatim repetition. Which is to say, had they been working strictly from memory, the authors/tradents/ scribes/etc. could not possibly have *never* created the same proverb in precisely the same wording. No matter how many times I or any other speaker of English says 'look before you leap' (to cite one of the maxims above), I or another reciter never would replace one of the key verbs to produce 'look before you jump' or 'observe before you leap' or any other possible variant with an 'exchange of synonymous words'. Hence, I prefer the approach set forth by Heim,[42] upon which I expand here to create a still larger picture: a single editor/compiler/redactor/etc. (or a circle of such individuals working together) must have been responsible for the final shape of the book of Proverbs. Said person or persons made every concerted effort not to repeat the same adage, when it was found in different collections (or even in the same collection) across the composition which emerged as the canonical book of Proverbs.[43]

13. *The Date of Proverbs*

The dating of biblical books remains a controversial subject, and the dating of poetic works may be even more difficult to ascertain.[44] For Proverbs we have a particular challenge, since 'we are essentially looking at material that has a timeless and universal quality and attempting to date it early or late' (Dell 2004: 266). This is not the place to enter the fray in any major way, but I do wish to make a few comments and to direct interested readers to several studies relevant to the book of Proverbs.

If the point made in §2 above is correct, that Hezekiah's men are responsible for the importing of northern proverbial material into Judah, then a sizeable chunk of material may be dated no later than the eighth century BCE. Moreover, given the very nature of proverbial wisdom, which tends to be more archaic and/or is handed down over the course of

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42. Naturally, for any given *individual* example, Carr's approach may be correct, but *in general*, as indicated, I prefer Heim's approach.

43. For an analogous situation within Song of Songs, see Noegel and Rendsburg 2009: 107-27.

44. For a fine overview, see Hornkohl 2013.

time, one may wish to suggest that this material stems from an even earlier period, especially given the floruit of the northern kingdom in the ninth century BCE.

Some scholars have pointed to certain Late Biblical Hebrew features in the book (Yoder 2001: 15-38),[45] but an 'Aramaism' may simply be due to the northern origin of the book (see above, §1, with the Appendix below), especially when one considers the relatively high number of features with parallels in Phoenician and Ugaritic in the book (again, see the Appendix). Other scholars have argued that the international flavour of wisdom literature explains the Aramaisms (and if accepted, the 'Phoenicianisms') in the book. Such an international flavour would go a long way to explaining the presence of the 'Greek' word צוֹפִיָּה ('Sophia, wisdom') in Prov. 31.21 (see above, §7), which, to be sure, is not to be taken as an indication of Hellenistic date.

Note, moreover, that there are no Persian words in the entire book of Proverbs, a remarkably long composition to be devoid of such loan-words, should the book have originated in the Achaemenid period.[46]

Readers familiar with my own work on the dating of biblical texts (see, e.g., Rendsburg 2013b) will realize that I am inclined to date texts earlier rather than later. It thus will come as no surprise that I find David Carr's (2011: 403-31) argument for the early date of Proverbs quite attractive. Carr's reasoning proceeds as follows: in the better-attested scribal curricula of other cultures, such as Egypt and Mesopotamia, 'the kind of material seen in Proverbs tended to be used earliest in ancient educational processes' (Carr 2011: 409); in addition, Proverbs 'stands as a good candidate for reflecting the dependence of Israelite education on foreign models for creation of its emergent curriculum' (Carr 2011: 409). To which we may add that the universal quality of axiomatic knowledge would not have been threatening to Israelite/Israelian/Judahite scribes, since the common wisdom imparted in proverbial collections is equally suitable for worshippers of Yahweh as is it for devotees of Amun-Ra or Marduk. Indeed, the strongest direct borrowing in all of biblical literature is the transference of the Teachings of Amen-em-opet to Prov. 22.17–24.22 (see above, §11, even if the point is not emphasized there).[47]

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45. Note, however, that Yoder's focus is on two selected portions, Prov. 1–9 and Prov. 31.10-31.

46. For discussion, see Young, Rezetko and Ehrensvärd 2008: II, 56-58, with specific mention of the lack of Persian loanwords on p. 58.

47. Clearly, Tablet XI of the Gilgamesh Epic influenced the writing of Gen. 6–8, though in this famous case, the Israelite author introduced important changes based on his different theological stance (Rendsburg 2007). For another case, note David

Finally, Carr (2011: 408), as others before him, noted that the 'names' of David's and Solomon's scribes look suspiciously like the Egyptian word *sš* ('scribe'), to wit, שַׁוְשָׁא סוֹפֵר (1 Chron. 18.16—David) and בְּנֵי שִׁישָׁא סֹפְרִים (1 Kgs 4.3—Solomon).

All of this suggests—even if I cannot do justice to Carr's cogent case in the limited space here—that other ancient Near Eastern (mainly Egyptian) scribal traditions, especially those based on the use of wisdom literature within the curriculum, influenced Israel at an early period. In light of this discussion, it is indeed quite possible that the book of Proverbs—in whole or in part—emanates from the early monarchy.[48]

14. *Proverbs 31.1-9 (Massa), with Special Attention to* בְּנֵי־עֹנִי *in Verse 5 and* בְּנֵי חֲלוֹף *in Verse 8*

The attentive reader will have noticed that most if not all of the material presented thus far is derivative of the work of other scholars (as adumbrated in my opening paragraph). Let me conclude, accordingly, by offering something original, or at least as far as I am able to determine after a perusal of the major commentaries.

We begin with a presentation of the short section (Prov. 31.1-9) ascribed to Lemuel, based on the instruction provided by his mother:

1 דִּבְרֵי לְמוּאֵל מֶלֶךְ מַשָּׂא אֲשֶׁר־יִסְּרַתּוּ אִמּוֹ:
2 מַה־בְּרִי וּמַה־בַּר־בִּטְנִי וּמֶה בַּר־נְדָרָי:
3 אַל־תִּתֵּן לַנָּשִׁים חֵילֶךָ וּדְרָכֶיךָ לַמְחוֹת מְלָכִין:
4 אַל לַמְלָכִים לְמוֹאֵל אַל לַמְלָכִים שְׁתוֹ־יָיִן וּלְרוֹזְנִים [אוֹ] אֵי שֵׁכָר:
5 פֶּן־יִשְׁתֶּה וְיִשְׁכַּח מְחֻקָּק וִישַׁנֶּה דִּין כָּל־בְּנֵי־עֹנִי:
6 תְּנוּ־שֵׁכָר לְאוֹבֵד וְיַיִן לְמָרֵי נָפֶשׁ:
7 יִשְׁתֶּה וְיִשְׁכַּח רִישׁוֹ וַעֲמָלוֹ לֹא יִזְכָּר־עוֹד:
8 פְּתַח־פִּיךָ לְאִלֵּם אֶל־דִּין כָּל־בְּנֵי חֲלוֹף:
9 פְּתַח־פִּיךָ שְׁפָט־צֶדֶק וְדִין עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן:

Wright's (2009) proposal that the Covenant Code of Exod. 21–23 is directly influenced by Hammurapi's Code, though—even if one accepts this theory—once more one notes changes and modifications, for example, the elimination of the Mesopotamian king and his replacement with the God of Israel, with the result that 'CC has transformed its primary source so as to be a distinct composition with its own ideological stamp' (Wright 2009: 349). These kinds of changes, I submit, are not present in the case of the book of Proverbs, whose alliance with other ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions (Amen-em-opet and beyond) is well known.

48. For a thorough review of the entire matter and for further arguments situating Proverbs in monarchic Israel, see Dell 2004.

¹ The words of King Lemuʾel, the teaching which his mother
    instructed him.⁴⁹
² What, my son, and what, son of my womb,
    and what, son of my vows—
³ Do not give to women your strength,
    and your powers to wipe-out kings.
⁴ Not for kings, Lemoʾel,
    not for kings, (to) drink wine,
    and for potentates, no liquor.
⁵ Lest he drink and he forget what-is-decreed,
    and he change the law (for) all the sons of poverty/alteration.
⁶ Give liquor to the one-who-is-lost,
    and wine to the bitter of soul.
⁷ Let him drink and let him forget his deprivation,
    and his toil he will remember no longer.
⁸ Open your mouth to the dumb,
    unto the law of all the sons of modification.
⁹ Open your mouth, judge (with) righteousness,
    and law (for) the poor/altered and downtrodden.

As is my wont, I have translated hyper-literally, and in two related cases
I have used a slash to convey the wordplay.⁵⁰ The key point will be
explicated below.

  First, however, I note the unusual grammatical forms (and in one case
lexical item) which congregate in this section, though such is to be
expected when one realizes the foreign source of this instruction,
especially if מַשָּׂא means 'Massa' here (see also Prov. 30.1):

- v. 2: בַּר, 'son' (3×)
- v. 2: וּמֶה, 'and what' (*mɛ* before non-laryngeal) (variation)
- v. 3: וּדְרָכֶיךָ, 'and your powers' (cf. Ugaritic *drkt*, 'power')
- v. 3: לַמְחוֹת, 'to wipe-out' (hiphil infinitive with *he* elided)
- v. 3: מְלָכִין, 'kings' (m.pl. ending -*în*) (note variation in v. 4)
- v. 4: אַל (negative particle before noun) (2×)
- v. 4: שְׁתוֹ, 'to drink' (unusual infinitive form)
- v. 4: אֵי (negative particle) (cf. MH, Phoenician, Ugaritic)

49. Alternatively, reading against the Masoretic accents/punctuation: 'The words
of King Lemuʾel of Massa, which his mother instructed him'.

50. Of all the comments I could make regarding my translation, I limit myself to
two: (a) by 'liquor' (vv. 4, 6) I do not mean, of course, distilled spirits, which did not
exist in antiquity, but rather any alcoholic beverage, including one made from grapes
(see *OED*, s.v. 'liquor' *n.*, def. 3a); and (b) I have opted to employ 'law' as a verb in
v. 9, based on its obsolete usage in English (see *OED*, s.v., 'law' *v.*).

My main interest, however, lies elsewhere. I begin with the expression וְיׁשַׁנֶּה דִּין כָּל־בְּנֵי־עֹנִי ('and he change the law [for] all the sons of poverty', v. 5). As Shalom Paul (1979) demonstrated, this single instance in the Bible about changing the law or verdict, especially once it has been decreed, *ex post facto*, finds clear antecedents in the Mesopotamian legal tradition (e.g. *Laws of Hammurapi* §5). Yitzhak Avishur (2010: 229-30) went further and demonstrated that the same warning appears twice in the Mishnah:[51] *m. Sanh.* 11.4, אֵין מְעַנִּין דִּינוֹ שֶׁלָּזֶה אֶלָּא מְמִיתִין אֹתוֹ מִיָּד ('one does not change one's decision, but rather should put him to death at once'); and *m. ʾAvot* 5.8, חֶרֶב בָּאׁ לָעוֹלָם שֶׁל עִינּוּי הַדִּין וְעַל עִיוּוּת הַדִּין ('the sword comes into the world for changing the law and for perverting the law'). In both traditions, moreover, the verb + noun combination is the same: Akkadian *enû dīni* ('change the law', *CAD* [E]: 174-75), Hebrew עָנָּה דִּין ('change the law'), from the Semitic verbal root ʿny. Accordingly, we are able to trace the same ancient Near Eastern juridical policy from Hammurapi to Lemuʾel to the rabbis.[52]

   There is more, however, for with this knowledge we are able to see wordplay at work in the expression at the end of v. 5: כָּל־בְּנֵי־עֹנִי, which means not only 'all the sons of poverty'[53] (who are to be protected by the king[54]), but also 'all the sons of alteration' (who would be doubly abused by an altered judicial decree)—hence my cumbersome translation above, with the two terms separated by a slash. The astute consumer of this text would be able to apprehend the double meaning in v. 5, but other readers/listeners would require additional assistance. Hence, the poet/ teacher elucidates the wordplay in v. 5 for his audience upon reaching v. 8. Scholars have been puzzled by the phrase כָּל־בְּנֵי חֲלוֹף, and hence they typically have followed one of two courses. Either they have expanded the meaning of the root חלף ('pass on, change, replace'), often

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51. Quoted according to Kaufmann Manuscript A50 (Budapest). Danby (1933: 400, 456) and Neusner (1991: 608, 687) render the key verb ענה as 'delay', but 'change' is to be preferred, especially in light of the Akkadian evidence to be presented just below.

52. For echoes of ancient Near Eastern law within rabbinic literature, see Greengus 2011. The author does not discuss the above-cited Mishnah passages, though he does connect (on p. 280) *Laws of Hammurapi* §5 with *t. Sanh.* 6.4-5, though in this latter passage, it is the witnesses who are enjoined not to alter their testimony.

53. For the term עֹנִי, 'poverty, affliction', see Exod. 3.7; Deut 16.3; etc.

54. For a good summary of this motif in Sumerian and Akkadian legal texts, see Paul 1979: 232-33. For an extended discussion, see Weinfeld 1995: 45-56 (with thanks to Shalom Holtz for directing my attention to this book).

to a point beyond the bounds of its semantic range (at least to my mind);[55] or, not surprisingly, they have resorted to textual emendation.[56]

Neither of these routes is necessary, however, for the expression כָּל־בְּנֵי־חֲלוֹף in v. 8 constitutes a clear echo of the similar phrase כָּל־בְּנֵי־עֹנִי in v. 5. In my translation above, I have rendered the expression in v. 8 as 'all the sons of modification', if only to introduce into the English a new lexeme to match the introduction into the Hebrew text of a new lexeme. But the meaning of the phrase is clear, for it refers to those who have suffered from a change in legal ruling, parallel to the 'dumb' in the a-line. Both require the king's intervention: the one (that is, the mute) because no words were spoken;[57] the other (that is, the one subjected to a change in the ruling) because too many words were spoken. And then, just for good measure, the poet/teacher rehearses the key words in the following and concluding verse with the expression וְדִין עָנִי ('and law [for] the poor/altered', v. 9). The result is wordsmithing at its very best within the ancient Israelite wisdom tradition.

Appendix: Israelian Hebrew in the Book of Proverbs

By necessity this Appendix devoted to Israelian Hebrew in the book of Proverbs comprises but an outline of the data, as opposed to a full treatment of each feature isolated. Part 1 is devoted to lexicon, divided into the three categories of nouns, verbs, and particles. Part 2 is devoted to grammar, with ten features listed in more or less random order. Many of the individual items are treated more fully in my various publications on the subject[58] and/or in Chen 2000. Perhaps because it is so special-ized, I provide bibliography for one single item, the final one in the Lexicon section. In the outline below, MH = Mishnaic Hebrew, by which I mean all of Tannaitic Hebrew; the number of attestations given for particular lexical items is based on the data available at *Maʾagarim: The Historical Dictionary of the Hebrew Language*, http://maagarim.hebrew-academy.org.il. The repeated references to Mishnaic Hebrew in the

55. See, for example, Murphy (1998: 239-40): 'dispossessed'; Waltke (2005: 506): 'fading away'; Fox (2009: 883, 888): 'about to expire'; and the various options surveyed by McKane (1970: 411-12). For an analysis of the versions, see de Waard (2008: 57*).

56. Again, see McKane (1970: 411) for various proposals.

57. This would be true whether the אִלֵּם in v. 8 connotes an actual mute or is to be understood figuratively for the humble or submissive, for which see Lichtenstein 1982: 205 n 9, and the Near Eastern parallels cited there.

58. See the references in Rendsburg 2003a: 9-10; Noegel and Rendsburg 2009: 221-22.

features listed below are relevant to the discussion, when one recognizes the fact that MH constitutes the northern dialect of Hebrew during the Roman period (Rendsburg 2003b).[59] In one instance only (the first in the list of verbs) I provide the information from MH², that is, Amoraic sources, given its relevance in this case.

Part 1: Lexicon
(A) *Nouns*

1. אֲהָבִים, 'love': Prov. 7.18 (Hos. 9.10).
2. אֲהָבִים, 'love': Prov. 5.19 (Hos. 8.9).
3. אוּלֶת, 'throne': Prov. 14.24 (cf. Ugaritic *alt*).
4. אָמוֹן, 'artisan, craftsman': Prov. 8.30 (Song 7.2 [byform]; MH 86×) (Phoenician *KAI* 178:3, YMMANNAI).
5. אֲלָפִים, 'cattle': Prov. 14.4 (cf. Phoenician אלף, Ugaritic *ʾlp*).
6. גֵּהָה, 'health': Prov. 17.22 (Hos. 5.13 [verb]).
7. גַּף, 'edge, rim, surround', in the phrase עַל־גַּפֵּי מְרֹמֵי קָרֶת ('on the surrounds of the heights of the city'—i.e., the crenellations): Prov. 9.3 (MH 21×, e.g., *m. Kel.* 8.3 [rim of a vessel], *m. Makš.* 1.4 [river's edge]; also as verb גפף, 'surround, embrace' [14×], e.g., *m. Kel.* 15.2) (cf. Ugaritic, e.g., *gp ym, gp thm, gpt ġr*).
8. גַּרְגֶּרֶת, 'neck, throat': Prov. 1.9; 3.3, 22; 6.21 (MH 15×).
9. גֶּרֶם, 'bone': Prov. 17.22; 25.15 (Gen. 49.14 [Issachar]); 2 Kgs 9.13; Job 40.18) (cf. Aramaic).
10. דֶּלֶף, 'leak, dripping': Prov. 19.13; 27.15 (Qoh. 10.18 [verb]; MH 7×; see also *m. Mid.* 4.6 בֵּית דִּילְפָה [2×]) (cf. Aramaic) (byform זלף, 'drip': MH, Deir ʿAlla, Aramaic).
11. הֵיכַל, 'palace': Prov. 30.28 (1 Kgs 21.1; Hos. 8.14; Amos 8.3; Ps. 45.9, 16; Joel 4.5 [Phoenicia]) (cf. Ugaritic *hkl*, Aramaic).
12. חֶדֶק, 'thorn': Prov. 15.19 (Mic. 7.4; *m. ʿErub.* 10.8) (cf. Aramaic).
13. חֹטֶר, 'rod': Prov. 14.3 (Isa. 11.1 means 'shoot') (cf. Phoenician חטר, Deir ʿAlla, Aramaic).
14. חֲלִי, 'jewel': Prov. 25.12 (variant forms: Hos. 2.15; Song 7.2; *t. Shab.* 4.11).

59. My research into Mishnaic Hebrew has isolated many linguistic interconnections between MH and Phoenician, but one also should take into account the ever-growing material of an archaeological nature (coins, etc.), for which see Fine 2009: 7-8. In Fine's words, 'Upper Galilee was part of the agricultural hinterland of Tyre' (p. 8); though naturally I recognize that Sepphoris, where the Mishnah was compiled, is located in Lower Galilee.

15. חָרוּץ, 'gold': Prov. 3.14; 8.10, 19; 16.16 (Zech. 9.3 [style-switching—Tyre]) (cf. Ugaritic *ḥrṣ*, Phoenician חרץ).

16. כֶּסֶא, 'full moon': Prov. 7.20 (Ps. 81.4) (cf. Ugaritic DN *yrḫ w ksa*, Phoenician כסא).

17. לֹעַ, 'throat': Prov. 23.2 (cf. Aramaic).

18. מָהִיר, 'skilled': Prov. 22.29 (Ps. 45.2; Ezra 7.6 [Aramaism]) (cf. Ugaritic *mhr*, Aramaic).

19. מוֹתָר, 'abundance, advantage, profit': Prov. 14.23; 21.5 (Qoh. 3.19; MH [70×]) (cf. Aramaic [Targumim for עֹדֶף, שָׂרִיד, יִתְרוֹן]).

20. מַתָּת, 'gift': Prov. 25.14 (1 Kgs 13.7; Qoh. 3.3; 5.18) (cf. Phoenician מתת).

21. נָעִים, 'good, nice': Prov. 22.18; 23.8; 24.4 (Ps. 16.11; 81.3; Song 1.16) (cf. Ugaritic *nˤm*, Phoenician נעם) (contrast Pss. 133.1; 135.3; 147.1, as b-word to טוב).

22. נֹפֶת, 'honey': Prov. 5.3; 24.13; 27.7 (Song 4.11) (cf. Ugaritic *nbt*, Phoenician נפת).

23. סַפְסָג, 'glaze': Prov. 26.23 (reconstructed) (cf. Ugaritic *spsg*).

24. עֶרֶשׂ, 'bed': Prov. 7.16 (Amos 3.12; 6.4; Job 7.13; Song 1.16; MH עריסה [19×]) (cf. Ugaritic *ˤrš*, Aramaic).

25. פַּעַם, 'foot': Prov. 29.5 (Pss. 58.11; 140.5; Song 7.2) (cf. Phoenician פעם, Ugaritic *pam*).

26. צִנָּה, 'cold': Prov. 25.13 (MH [12×], צנן [57×, all binyanim]) (cf. Aramaic).

27. קִרְיָה, 'city': Prov. 10.15; 11.10; 18.11, 19; 29.8 (Hos. 6.8; Ps. 48.3; Job 39.7) (Transjordanian cities: Num. 21.28; Deut. 2.36; 3.4) (cf. Ugaritic *qryt*).

28. קֶרֶת, 'city': Prov. 8.3; 9.3, 14; 11.11 (Job 29.7) (cf. Phoenician קרת, Ugaritic *qryt*, Aramaic).

29. קֹשְׁטְ, 'truth': Prov. 22.21 (elsewhere Ps. 60.5) (cf. Aramaic).

30. שׁוּק, 'street': Prov. 7.8 (Song 3.2; Qoh. 12.4-5) (cf. Aramaic).

(B) *Verbs*

1. אגר, 'gather, collect': Prov. 6.8; 10.5 (*Sifre Deb.* 16; MH² [11×]).

2. אזל, 'go': Prov. 20.14 (Deut. 32.36; Job 14.11) (cf. Aramaic).

3. אכף, 'press, urge': Prov. 16.26 (Job 33.7 [nominal form]) (cf. Syriac).

4. אלף, 'teach, learn': Prov. 22.25 (Job 15.5; 33.33; 35.11) (cf. Aramaic).

5. אשר, 'walk, proceed': Prov. 4.14; 9.6; 23.19 (cf. Ugaritic *ʾṯr*).
6. אתה, 'come': Prov. 1.27 (Deut. 33.21 [Gad]; Job 3.25; 16.22; 30.14; 37.22; Isa. 21.12 [2×]; 21.14 [Dumah]) (cf. Deir ʿAlla, Aramaic).
7. חרך, 'singe, roast': Prov. 12.27 (MH [2×: *m. Shab.* 16.7; *t. Shab.* 18.8]) (cf. Ugaritic *ḥrk*, Aramaic).
8. טרד, 'run, drip': Prov. 19.13; 27.15 (MH 7×) (cf. Ugaritic *ṭrd*, 'expel, banish' [*KTU* 1.3.III.47]).
9. כרה, 'make a feast': Prov. 16.27 (2 Kgs 6.23).
10. לבט, 'incite, be excited, be troubled': Prov. 10.8, 10 (Hos. 4.14) (cf. Syriac).
11. לחם, 'eat': Prov. 4.17; 9.5; 23.1, 6 (Ps. 141.4) (cf. Ugaritic *lḥm*).
12. מגן, 'give, deliver': Prov. 4.9 (Hos. 11.8) (cf. Phoenician מגן, Ugaritic *mgn*, 'gift, present', Aramaic).
13. מלל, 'crush, squeeze, rub': Prov. 6.13 (MH [11×]).
14. נעם, 'be good, be lovely': Prov. 2.10; 9.17; 24.25 (Gen. 49.15 [Issachar]; Ps. 141.6; Song 7.7) (cf. Phoenician נעם).
15. סחף, 'wash away': Prov. 28.3 (MH [*m. Ket.* 1.6; 7.8]) (cf. Syriac).
16. עדה, 'pass' (qal), 'remove' (hiphil): Prov. 25.20 (Job 28.8) (cf. Aramaic).
17. עצה, 'shut, press': Prov. 16.30 (cf. Syriac; perhaps Ugaritic *ʿṣy*).
18. ערב, 'be sweet, pleasant': Prov. 3.24; 13.19; 20.17 (Hos. 9.4; Song 2.14) (Aramaic).
19. פוק, 'find, obtain': Prov. 3.13; 8.35; 12.2; 18.22 (Ps. 140.9) (cf. Ugaritic *pwq*, Phoenician פוק).
20. פלח, 'cut, split': Prov. 7.23 (2 Kgs 4.39; Ps. 141.7; Job 16.13; 39.3).
21. פלס, 'level, straighten': Prov. 4.26; 5.6, 21; 16.11 (Pss. 58.3; 78.50) (cf. Phoenician פלס, 'architect').
22. פעל, 'make, do': Prov. 16.4; 30.20 (Deut. 32.27; Hos. 7.1; Pss. 44.2; 58.3; Job 7.20; 11.8; 22.17; 33.29; 34.32; 35.6; 36.23; Num. 23.23 [style-switching]) (cf. Phoenician פעל, Deir ʿAlla פעל; Ugaritic byform *bʿl*).
23. קבב, 'curse': Prov. 11.26; 24.24 (Balaam 8×; Job 2×) (cf. Phoenician).

24. קבל, 'take, receive': Prov. 19.20 (all other occurrences are post-exilic as true Aramaisms: Job, Esther, Ezra, Chronicles) (cf. Aramaic).

25. קצה, 'cut off': Prov. 26.6 (2 Kgs 10.32; MH 44×) (cf. Phoenician קצה).

26. שער, 'serve a meal': Prov. 23.7 (cf. Ugaritic *ṯ͑r*, 'serve a meal, arrange the table').

(C) *Particles*

1. בַּל, 'no, not': Prov. 9.13; 10.30; 12.3; 14.7; 19.23; 22.29; 23.7, 35; 24.23 (IH Psalms; Hos. 7.2; 9.16) (cf. Ugaritic *bl*, Phoenician בל).

2. אֵי, 'no, not': Prov. 31.4 (Qere) (MH 271×) (cf. Ugaritic *ay* [indefinite pronoun], Phoenician אי).

3. אֵשׁ, 'there is': Prov. 18.24 אִישׁ (2 Sam. 14.19; Mic. 6.10) (cf. Ugaritic *iṯ*, Aramaic איתי) (Blau 1972: 58-62; Rendsburg 2003–2004).

Part 2: Grammar

1. Feminine singular nominal ending -*ōt*, as in Phoenician:
   - Prov. 1.20; 9.1; 24.7: חָכְמוֹת, 'wisdom'.
   - Prov. 14.1: חַכְמוֹת, 'wise lady' (cf. Judg. 5.29).
   - Prov. 28.20: אֱמוּנוֹת, 'faith'.
     ○ Additional IH examples, e.g., Ezek. 26.11: וּמַצְּבוֹת עֻזֵּךְ לָאָרֶץ תֵּרֵד, 'and the pillar of your strength to the earth shall fall' (style-switching—Tyre).

2. Reduplicatory plural of geminate nouns, as in Aramaic:
   - Prov. 29.13: תְּכָכִים, 'oppression'.
     ○ Numerous IH examples, e.g., Judg. 5.14: עֲמָמֶיךָ.

3. אִישִׁים, 'men', as plural of אִישׁ, as in Phoenician:
   - Prov. 8.4: אִישִׁים, 'men' (see also Ps. 141.4; Isa. 53.3).

4. Retention of *yod* in IIIy verbs, as in Aramaic and Deir ʿAlla:
   - Prov. 26.7: דַּלְיוּ, 'hang'.
     ○ Numerous IH examples, e.g., Isa. 21.12 (3×) (style-switching—Dumah).

5. Retention of *lamed* in imperative of לקח, 'take', as in Aramaic:
   - Prov. 20.16: לְקַח, 'take'.
     ○ 1 Kgs 17.11: לְקְחִי (Elijah).
     ○ Ezek. 37.16: לְקַח (Israel/Joseph) (Exod. 29.1 לְקַח *alliterationis causa*).

6. Conjunction עַד לֹא, 'ere, before', literally 'while not', as in Aramaic:
   - Prov. 8.26: עַד־לֹא עָשָׂה אֶרֶץ 'before he made earth' (‖ v. 25, בְּטֶרֶם הָרִים הָטְבָּעוּ, 'before the mountains were sunk').

7. Hithpael used with passive sense, as in Aramaic (two different T-stem formations) and MH (in the nithpaal form):
   - Prov. 31.30: אִשָּׁה יִרְאַת־יְהֹוָה הִיא תִתְהַלָּל, 'a woman (with) fear of YHWH, she is to be praised'.
     - Mic. 6.16: וְיִשְׁתַּמֵּר חֻקּוֹת עָמְרִי וְכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה בֵית־אַחְאָב, 'and the laws of Omri and all the actions of the house of Ahab are observed'.
     - Qoh. 8.10: וְיִשְׁתַּכְּחוּ בָעִיר, 'and they are forgotten in the city'.
     - Num. 23.9: וּבַגּוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשָּׁב, 'and amongst the nations it [sc. Israel] is not to be reckoned'.

8. Preposition מִן with anarthrous noun, as in Aramaic and Deir ʿAlla:
   - Prov. 27.8: כְּצִפּוֹר נוֹדֶדֶת מִן־קִנָּהּ כֵּן־אִישׁ נוֹדֵד מִמְּקוֹמוֹ, 'As a bird wanders from its nest, so does a man wander from his place'.
     - Judg. 5.20: מִן־שָׁמַיִם.
     - Judg. 7.23: מִנַּפְתָּלִי וּמִן־אָשֵׁר וּמִן־כָּל־מְנַשֶּׁה.
     - 51× in Chronicles (Aramaism).

9. Negative particle אל followed by a noun, as in Deir ʿAlla I.6-7: חשך ואל נגה, 'darkness and not light':
   - Prov. 8.10: קְחוּ־מוּסָרִי וְאַל־כֶּסֶף וְדַעַת מֵחָרוּץ נִבְחָר, 'and not silver'.
   - Prov. 12.28: בְּאֹרַח־צְדָקָה חַיִּים וְדֶרֶךְ נְתִיבָה אַל־מָוֶת, 'not death'.
   - Prov. 17.12: פָּגוֹשׁ דֹּב שַׁכּוּל בְּאִישׁ וְאַל־כְּסִיל בְּאִוַּלְתּוֹ, 'and not a fool'.
   - Prov. 27.2: יְהַלֶּלְךָ זָר וְלֹא־פִיךָ נָכְרִי וְאַל־שְׂפָתֶיךָ, 'and not your lips'.
     - Additional IH examples, e.g., Amos 5.14 דִּרְשׁוּ־טוֹב וְאַל־רָע, 'and not evil'.

10. Relative pronoun זֶה/זוּ, with cognates in Aramaic and Byblian Phoenician:
    - Prov. 23.22: שְׁמַע לְאָבִיךָ זֶה יְלָדֶךָ, 'listen to your father who begot you'.
      - Additional IH examples, e.g., Pss. 9.16; 10.2.

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