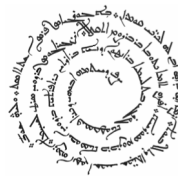# Contemporary Examinations of Classical Languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Greek)

Perspectives on Linguistics and Ancient Languages

8

Series Editor

Terry C. Falla

Perspectives on Linguistics and Ancient Languages (PLAL) contains peer-reviewed essays, monographs, and reference works. It focuses on the theory and practice of ancient-language research and lexicography that is informed by modern linguistics.

Contemporary Examinations of Classical Languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Greek)

Valency, Lexicography, Grammar, and Manuscripts

Edited by

Timothy Martin Lewis

Alison G. Salvesen

Beryl Turner

GORGIAS PRESS

2016

2016   ,

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXAMINING MANUSCRIPTS AND TEXT-CRITICAL MATTERS

SERIES PREFACE

—a life's work in the agony and sweat of the human spirit,
not for the glory and least of all for profit,
but to create out of the materials
of the human spirit
something
which did not exist before.

William Faulkner

Perspectives on Linguistics and Ancient Languages contains peer-reviewed essay collections, monographs, and reference works. It is a publication of the International Syriac Language Project (ISLP), an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary group which meets annually to reconsider the theory and practice of ancient-language research and of ancient-language lexicography.

The study of ancient languages is a time-honoured field of endeavour. Lexicography is an equally venerable and even more ancient tradition. Modern lexicography, the art and science of dictionary making, began about four centuries ago. But pre-scientific lexicography has ancestors in many ancient languages and stretches back four millennia. Yet as old as lexicography and ancient-language study are, on the time-line of history they were conceived only recently when compared to the emergence of human language, which may go back, say, a 100,000 years: lexicography about an hour ago and modern lexicography around five minutes if we reduce the life span of language to a twenty-four hour period.

The related discipline of modern linguistics is more recent still, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century and experiencing rapid growth in the latter half of the twentieth century. Because it is the science of the study of language, it became an integral part of ancient-language inquiry and adopted the lexicography of ancient and contemporary languages as one of its sub-disciplines.

Today, lexicography, no less than ancient-language research, is a mature discipline in its own right. All three—linguistics, ancient-language study, and lexicography—therefore stand beside each other rather than one being subordinate to the other.

For ancient-language research the dictionary is a primary resource. For its part, ancient-language lexicography in its microscopic probing, quest for the larger perspective, and provision of various forms of information, must draw on all aspects of ancient-language study. In contemporary inquiry, both disciplines are

inextricably linked to developments in modern linguistics. Sound lexicography requires sound linguistic theory. Linguistic theory and practice are implicit in a methodology for ancient-language study. The aim of this series is therefore to address the disciplines of ancient-language research, lexicography, and issues of linguistics as they relate to a contemporary approach to the other two.

The aim of the ISLP to be also interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary in its research is motivated by three primary factors. The first is that many linguistic disciplines meet in the investigation of ancient languages and in the making of modern lexica. The second is that developments in the study of one language, theoretical and applied, are often pertinent to another. The third is that the development of electronic ancient-language data and lexica require attention to advances in computational linguistics. Thus our planning for a lexicon for a particular language for a new generation is not pursued in isolation, but embraces an understanding of what is taking place in the study of other ancient languages and in the wider worlds of lexicography, linguistics, and digital technologies.

Terry C. Falla
Series Editor

THE COMPLEXITY OF SIMPLICITY

The prefaces to this series and to the PoSL series preceding it tell the story of the International Syriac Language Project (ISLP) from its beginnings to the present. These prefaces allow each volume to be read in the context of an evolving interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary project. In this publication we welcome the results of a new initiative: in 2012 in response to an unforseen opportunity, Janet Dyk, with the support of A. Dean Forbes, suggested a specially convened mini-ISLP session at the Annual Meeting of SBL in Chicago. The four-paper session was devoted to a one-off "in depth" study of valence and language variation. These papers form an important part of this volume and complement other articles on valence published in this series. We record here our gratitude to Janet and Dean for their initiative.

Most of the other articles were presented earlier in 2012 as ISLP research papers at the XIth Symposium Syriacum in Malta and at the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament in Munich 2013. And once again the quality of the series has been enriched by other scholars who accepted our invitation to contribute to one or another of the volume's themes, and I express here on behalf of the ISLP our appreciation to the authors for their participation.

Another unusual feature of this publication is that it has three rather than the customary two volume editors. It began with the good team work of Alison G. Salvesen and Timothy Martin Lewis, with some assistance from Nicholas Al-Jeloo. When the demands of other commitments required them to hand over, we were fortunate that Beryl Turner was willing to bring the volume to completion, including completing the final proofreading and indexing. We are deeply grateful to the editors for their combined efforts and the rewarding results of their collaboration.

How conscious we have become that virtually every aspect of ancient-language study has a place in the research repertoire of the ancient-language lexicographer. In the most welcome way, this volume widens and deepens the complexities of this repertoire. Playwrights and film directors tell us the goal of their complex art is simplicity: simplicity that is cognitively, aesthetically and emotionally satisfying—and has depth and substance. Our challenge as lexicographers is how best to transform increasingly multifaceted and often intricate findings into lexical entries that impart significant content and yet achieve the optimum simplicity.

Terry Falla
Series Editor

EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS VOLUME

Nicholas Al-Jeloo
University of Melbourne
Australia

Jeff Childers
Graduate School of Theology,
Abilene Christian University
USA

John A. Cook
Asbury Theological Seminary
USA

Janet W. Dyk
Eep Talstra Centre for Bible and
Computer
Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam
The Netherlands

Mats Eskhult
Uppsala University
Sweden

Terry C. Falla
Whitley College, University of Divinity
Australia

A. Dean Forbes
University of the Free State,
Bloemfontein
South Africa

Johan D. Hofstra
The Netherlands

Tim Lewis
Whitley College, University of Divinity
Australia

Jonathan Loopstra
University of Northwestern – St Paul,
Minnesota
USA

Jerome A. Lund
Accordance Bible Software, Kviteseid
Norway

Na'ama Pat-El
The University of Texas, Austin
USA

Alison G. Salvesen
Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies,
Faculty of Oriental Studies,
University of Oxford
UK

Beryl Turner
Whitley College, University of Divinity
Australia

Nicolai Winther-Nielsen
Fjellhaug International University
College
Denmark

INTRODUCTION

Ancient language study is becoming an increasingly sophisticated and complex discipline, as scholars not only consider methods being used by specialists of other languages, but also absorb developments in other disciplines to facilitate their own research investigations.

This publication reflects such a movement. The series of which the volume is part began with the International Syriac Language Project's focus on Syriac lexicography. As recognition of the usefulness of interdisciplinary study became apparent, the series broadened its scope to draw on the wisdom of other language studies and disciplines, recognizing both the obvious and the unexpected contributions that each makes to the other.

This interdisciplinary approach is reflected in the scope of research papers offered here, invited and peer-reviewed by the ISLP. Most papers were presented at the ISLP meetings at two conferences: the XIth Symposium Syriacum in Malta, 16–18 July 2012 and the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament in Munich, 4–9 August 2013, and one paper each came from the SBL International Meeting in Amsterdam, 22–26 July 2012, and the 217th Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society at San Antonio, Texas, 15–19 March 2007.

The volume is presented in three parts. The first examines verbs, the second, particles, and the third, manuscript and text-critical matters.

PART 1: EXAMINING VERBS: PUTTING SYNTAX INTO LEXICA AND GRAMMARS

The first five papers treat specific Syriac and Hebrew verbs by taking into account relevant syntactic information. Effectively, the first two chapters, by Beryl Turner and Jerome A. Lund, follow up the challenge posed in an earlier article by Janet W. Dyk, "Desiderata for the Lexicon from a Syntactic Point of View," in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography I* (ed. A. Dean Forbes and David G.K. Taylor; PoSL 1; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2005), 141–56, in which Dyk argued that it is essential for a lexicon to include syntactic information. Our first two authors begin with preliminary, yet essential, questions for lexicographers to consider in regards to treating several Syriac verbs in conjunction with relevant syntactic information.

Previously, for example, Syriac lexica have not observed that adultery committed by males can be distinguished, syntactically, from adultery committed by females. In chapter 1, "Who Commits Adultery with Whom, and Why it Matters in

a Lexicon," Turner argues that such an observation is relevant to include when writing a lexical entry for Syriac verbs built on the root ܓܘܪ. Turner demonstrates that the transitive use of such Syriac verbs (by males) should be distinguished from other constructions mediated by prepositions and hence not all constructions can be glossed by the traditional intransitive construction "to commit adultery with." Lexicographers must grapple with the fact that contemporary English lacks a corresponding transitive use of the verb "commit adultery" to represent the Syriac use of males "adultering" females. Turner uncovers just as many questions as answers, showing that the criteria for determining meanings may be unexpected, that some unpointed forms traditionally categorised as Aphel may not be as previously assumed, and that not all Aphel forms necessarily have causative meanings.

In a similar vein, in chapter 2, Lund offers some "Soundings with Regard to Verbal Valency in the Peshitta Old Testament" by considering the prepositions used with Peal ܕܚܠ "he feared", Pael ܨܠܝ "he prayed," and Peal ܗܘܐ "it was." Lund's computer-assisted analysis allows him, for example, to distinguish between ܕܚܠ ܡܢ ("to fear someone") and ܕܚܠ ܥܠ ("to fear for someone") as well as observing the compound preposition ܡܢ ܩܕܡ used with ܕܚܠ ("to fear from before [someone or something]"). Lund also suggests several other points for lexicographers to consider, such as the order of presentation for a verbal lexical entry.

Chapters 3–5 represent three different linguistic approaches to identifying and treating verbal valency patterns as an essential component of Hebrew grammar, beginning with Janet W. Dyk, "How Do Hebrew Verbs Differ? A Flow Chart of the Differences," in which Dyk demonstrates how scholars might identify the semantics of a Hebrew verb by examining its co-occurring elements. In doing so, the uncertainties involved, for lexicographers and translators, in regard to knowing which meaning is pertinent to each occurrence, can be substantially reduced. Dyk provides an introduction to linguistic terminology and a methodological flow chart with the questions to ask of a Hebrew verb (the example given is for Qal נתן) in order to identify the items which influence the significance of a form. Dyk is critically aware that lexica have not always specified "under which conditions a particular meaning is applicable" and that without the identification of verbal patterns translators and exegetes may "fail to recognize the peculiarities of the construction before them."

In chapter 4, John A. Cook, "Valency: the Intersection of Syntax and Semantics," points out that so far verbal valency has only played a minor role in Hebrew grammars due to the fact that the study of verbal valency is still in its infancy. Cook demonstrates the superiority of a valency approach over traditional grammatical approaches and distinguishes between valency, voice, and transitivity. Cook also identifies several issues currently under discussion, such as the difficulty of distinguishing between complements and adjuncts, and advocates his preference for Thomas Herbst's three-way complement distinction. Cook's approach is being refined during the ongoing development of the Accordance Bible software syntax module.

In chapter 5, "How to Classify Hebrew Verbs: Plotting Verb-Specific Roles," Nicolai Winther-Nielsen explains how he utilises the theory of Role and Reference

Grammar (RRG) to analyse the most frequent Biblical Hebrew verbs occurring in the Qal conjugation. RRG is built around how event structure involves verb-specific roles. Winter-Nielsen's introduction to RRG is concise given the specific purpose of demonstrating how the theoretical framework of RRG can assist in classifying high-frequency verbs in biblical Hebrew, namely classifying verb-roles for predicates. The goal of the analysis is "to build a reference corpus which can be used in a tool like the Role-Lexical Module" (being developed online for linguists). The paper begins with the more simple "primitive" components first, namely dealing with "state" ("single argument," "non-verbal predicates," and "two argument" states) then continues with verbs of "activity" ("single argument," "two argument," and "accomplished activity") and finally with "causative" predicates ("causation," "accomplishment," and "achievement"). Winther-Nielsen concludes that "there are relatively few predicates which cannot be accounted for in terms of primitive states or activities as well as their derived predicates."

Chapter 6 in many ways brings us back full circle by pondering preliminary questions concerning the criteria needed for determining the meanings of biblical verbs and the expectations of those who wish to examine verbs and syntax. A. Dean Forbes, "The Proper Role of Valency in Biblical Hebrew Studies," thus completes part 1 by providing a counterbalance to the growing optimism concerning valency studies as necessarily promising. By contrast, Forbes acknowledges the messy nature of valency by pinpointing several theoretical issues that remain unsolved and potentially unsolvable, arguing that valency approaches have their limitations.

PART 2: EXAMINING PARTICLES: LEXICAL CORRESPONDENCES AND LEXICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Two papers in Part 2 deal with particles, beginning in chapter 7 with Mats Eskhult, "The Use of Syriac ܗܐ in Rendering Hebrew הִנֵּה and Greek ἰδού or ἴδε in the Peshitta to Genesis and the Gospels." Eskhult reveals some of the differences between how the Hebrew particle הִנֵּה and the Greek particles ἰδού and ἴδε are translated into Syriac in the Peshitta of Genesis and the Gospels. Eskhult finds that "Syriac ܗܐ exhibits a stronger connection to direct speech than the corresponding Greek particles ἰδού and ἴδε." Namely, the Peshitta of Genesis renders Hebrew הֵן and הִנֵּה by ܗܐ more often in direct speech (and more often than הֵן and הִנֵּה is rendered in the Septuagint). Similarly, the Peshitta Gospels predominantly render ἰδού and ἴδε by ܗܐ within direct speech and much less in narration proper.

In chapter 8, Na'ama Pat-El, "The Function and Etymology of the Aramaic Particle *LM*: A Re-Examination," argues against the commonly held assumption that ܠܡ/לם is a quotative marker, that is, that it functions as a marker introducing direct speech. Pat-El asserts that "it is ill-advised to attempt reconstruction without first fully understanding the various aspects of the form's syntax and distribution." After examining an alternative etymology, Pat-El concludes based on syntactic evidence that "לם is probably an emphatic adverb" and that "[c]onsidering its function in biblical quotations, it may have been used to mark the relative truth value the speaker attributes to the words."

PART 3: EXAMINING MANUSCRIPTS AND TEXT-CRITICAL MATTERS

Chapters 9, 10, and 11, each examine, respectively, three Syriac manuscripts from the British Library (BL Add. MS 12138; BL Add. 17119; and BL Add. 12134), whilst chapters 13 and 14 examine some text-critical matters in Syriac manuscripts.

In chapter 9, Jonathan Loopstra, "Exploring Patterns of Accentuation in BL Add. MS 12138 (the East-Syrian "Masora"): Perspectives and Possibilities," demonstrates the value of one ninth-century Syriac manuscript for enriching our understanding of patterns of pitch variation between Syriac words. Previously, such patterns of "accentuation" (or "prosody" or "intonation") have been largely undeveloped or under-researched. Loopstra asserts that Add. MS 12138 is "one of the largest collections of accentuated sample texts from the Old and New Testaments associated with the punctuating traditions of the *maqryānē*" and that electronic databases of the scriptural sample texts "now allow for a more comprehensive study of this manuscript than has previously been possible." For example, Loopstra provides a lexicographical application showing that: "An accent is usually placed above or below the ܚܕܡ, except when ܚܕܡ is followed by a ܘܗ. In these cases, the ܘܗ almost always receives the accent from ܚܕܡ."

Chapter 10, Jeff Childers, "Embedded Oracles: *Sortilege* in a Syriac Gospel Codex," explores the varied illicit methods by which the power of scripture was brought to bear on the lives of ordinary people, outside – and often at loggerheads with – the official contexts of liturgical practice. Childers thus provides an extensive examination of the mystical guidance provided by specialized popular interpreters in a sixth or seventh century Syriac Peshitta manuscript of John's Gospel, in the form of an unusual *sortilege* apparatus incorporated directly into the biblical text. This is accompanied by a comparative analysis of the material and structure in relation to parallel materials surviving in Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Armenian, establishing the essential interrelationship of these traditions. Childers therefore asserts that the nature and contents of the manuscript functioned as part of a divinatory device. Childers concludes that: "When one disconnects a text from the concrete artifact in which it resides, one runs the risk of missing critical dimensions of the text's original significance."

Chapter 11, Alison Salvesen, "The Lexicon of the Tabernacle Accounts in the Syrohexapla Version of Exodus," examines how the early seventh century Syriac translator worked to render items in the Tabernacle described in Exodus. Salvesen explores the degree to which such technical terms already existed in the Syriac of the Peshitta, and how consistent the translators were in using them, illustrating the translator's working methods and lexicographical expertise. Salvesen thus demonstrates the existence of circles of scholarly translation in monasteries, and the training of each following generation of translators with a working knowledge of Greek. This study also uncovers a few examples where the text has Peshitta renderings in one place and Greek-based ones in the parallel passage. Salvesen concludes that: "Such lapses may indicate a lack of a word list, or merely a failure to consult it, since it would be easy to lapse into using the familiar Peshitta term."

Chapter 12, "Towards a New Critical Edition and Translation of Isho'dad of Merw's commentary on the Gospel of John with an Identification of His Sources"

by Johan D. Hofstra, provides an extensive study of the sources used by Isho'dad of Merw in composing his Syriac commentary on the Gospel of John and demonstrates that it is time for a new critical edition of Isho'dad's commentary. Building on the pioneering work of Margaret Dunlop Gibson (1911), Hofstra attempts "to make the text of Isho'dad's commentary—frequently so intractable and complicated—more accessible to the readers of the present time." As a result Hofstra furthers research on two fronts, namely the identification of Isho'dad's sources and the best manuscripts to be used for a new critical edition.

Finally, in chapter 13, Jerome A. Lund, "The Hebrew as a Text Critical Tool in Restoring Genuine Peshitta Readings in Isaiah," demonstrates how Hebrew manuscripts of Isaiah can assist in making emendations to the extant Syriac text of Isaiah. Although no manuscripts in the Leiden edition contain any of the suggested readings, Lund demonstrates clearly that the Masoretic text "can be used with discretion as a text critical tool in restoring genuine readings." The emendations correct common errors in scribal transmission, namely "confusion of graphically similar letters (ܪ and ܕ; ܒ and ܟ; and connecting ܝ and connecting ܢ), other single letter differences (ܚ and ܥ where both words suit the context; the plus of a ܘ, once immediately following the graphically similar ܩ; final ܐ and final ܝ), and the metathesis of two contiguous consonants."

The interplay in this volume between semantics, syntax, verbal valency, source and texts, versions, manuscripts, and the intricacies of accentuation, form an ancient-language tapestry into which the concerns of contemporary ancient-language lexicography are indeed woven.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

>	derived from
1/2/3m.s	first/second/third person masculine singular
1/2/3f.s.	first/second/third person feminine singular
1/2/3m.pl.	first/second/third person masculine plural
1/2/3f.pl.	first/second/third person feminine plural
act. pt.	active participle
ad loc	at the place
ADD. MS	Additional Manuscripts (the named series collection in the British Library)
BCE	Before the Common Era
BDB	Brown–Driver–Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*
BL	British Library
BM	British Museum
CE	Common Era
ch(s).	chapter(s)
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSD	J. Payne Simth, ed. *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*
DTC	*Dictionnaire de théologie catholique.* Edited by A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, and E. Amann; 15 vols. in 30 parts (1903–1950)
ed.	editor
e.g.	for example
et al.	and others
etc.	and so on, and so forth,
ff.	following
fol., fols.	folio, folios
HALOT	Koehler et al. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*
ibid.	(found in) the same reference (as previous)
idem	the author previously mentioned
impf.	imperfect

inf.	infinitive
inf. abs.	infinitive absolute
IoM	Ishoʿdad of Merv
LOC	*Book of the Laws of the Countries*
LXX	Septuagint
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*
MS(S)	manuscript(s)
MT	Masoretic Text
N.B.	*nota bene*, note well
NJPS	New Jewish Publication Society of America Tanakh
NP	noun phrase
NRSV	The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
P	Peshitta Old Testament
(et) passim	(and) everywhere
pf.	perfect
PG	Patrologia graeca [Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca] Edited by J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1857–1886)
PP	prepositional phrase
r	recto
RPS	R. Payne Smith, ed., *Thesaurus Syriacus*
sic	found this way (in the original or quotation)
SL	Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon*
s.v.	under the head word
Syh	Syrohexapla
Syr^C	Curetonian manuscript of Old Syriac Gospels
Syr^H	Harklean version
Syr^P	Peshitta textform (New Testament)
Syr^S	Sinaitic manuscript of Old Syriac Gospels
Tg	Targum
trans.	translator
transl.	translation
v	verso
VP	verb phrase
vs(s).	verse(s)

CHAPTER 1
WHO COMMITS ADULTERY WITH WHOM, AND WHY IT MATTERS IN A LEXICON

Beryl Turner

Whitley College
University of Divinity, Melbourne

> It has been argued that a lexical entry should provide not just the meaning of a lexeme but also evidence on how it is used.[1] This is particularly necessary when it comes to lexicalizing prepositions and other particles which do not have much semantic content in themselves but take meaning from their context, and give meaning to their context, particularly to verbs. Conversely, the meaning of a verb can be directly influenced by the prepositions with which it occurs, as demonstrated by Dyk. A verb's semantic value can also be affected by whether it is used transitively or intransitively. This article focuses primarily on one verb, Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ "commit adultery," which is used both transitively and intransitively, and seeks to discern whether there is a difference in semantics according to the transitivity used in each instance.

1. INTRODUCTION TO TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE VERBS

Most Syriac verbs are clearly either transitive or intransitive. In simple terms, a Syriac transitive verb can take an object suffix, an unmarked direct object, or an object marked by Lamadh (ܠ) functioning as an object marker.[2] Intransitive verbs cannot take an object suffix or an unmarked direct object: all their complements are

---

[1] Dyk, "Desiderata," 153–5.

[2] Other transitive constructions include having both the object suffix on the verb and Lamadh prefixed to the object, or Lamadh prefixed to a pronoun in addition to the presence of an object or object suffix. For a more detailed analysis see Williams, *Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings*, 47–9.

mediated by a preposition, either Lamadh or another preposition.[3] Given that Lamadh can function as either an object marker or a preposition, the answer to the question of which function a Lamadh has following a verb depends on whether that verb is transitive or intransitive: if it is transitive, the Lamadh is an object marker; if it is intransitive then the Lamadh is a preposition. For example, Lamadh functions as an *object marker* with the direct object of the Syriac verb, Peal ܚܙܐ "see":

Mt 9:9	ܚܙܐ ܓܒܪܐ	*he saw a man*	(unmarked direct object)
Lk 19:5	ܚܙܝܗܝ	*he saw him*	(pronominal object suffix)
Lk 5:12	ܚܙܐ ܠܝܫܘܥ	*he saw Jesus*	(object marked with Lamadh)[4]

However, Lamadh functions as a *preposition* for the complement of the Syriac verb "bow in worship," Peal ܣܓܕ, a verb which does not occur with an object suffix or an unmarked object. Any "object" of Peal ܣܓܕ is indirect and preceded by a preposition, usually Lamadh, but also ܥܠ:[5]

| Mt 15:25 Syr^P | ܣܓܕܬ ܠܗ | *she bowed in worship to him* |
| Mt 15:25 Syr^S | ܣܓܕܐ ܗܘܬ ܠܗ | *she bowed in worship to him* |

While most Syriac verbs are used either transitively or intransitively, there is a smaller group of verbs that exhibits characteristics of both groups: sometimes these verbs appear with an object suffix or unmarked direct object and sometimes their object is mediated by a preposition other than Lamadh. A lexicographer must determine whether this apparent ambiguity is significant for the lexicalizing of the verb concerned, and must answer two questions:

1. If the difference in syntax reflects a difference in meaning, what does the verb mean when it is transitive as opposed to when it is intransitive?
2. When there is a Lamadh, what is its function in that instance? Is that Lamadh functioning as an object marker with the transitive function of the verb, or as a preposition with the intransitive function? Or is the transitivity more complex and requires an explanation?

---

[3] In the present paper so-called "intransitive" verbs include verbs with verbal complements (objects) where such complements are mediated by some kind of preposition.

[4] A direct object is more likely to be marked with Lamadh if it is a person, or definite, or to distinguish it from the subject (Joosten, *Syriac Langauge*, 37–47, Williams, *Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings*, 47–83) but these functions, and indeed the use or non-use of an object marker, are not of concern to this study. The primary question being addressed here is: where Lamadh is present, is the accompanying verb transitive with an object marker, or intransitive with a preposition, and what difference if any does the syntax make to meaning?

[5] This verb is usually glossed and translated as "to worship." However, because the English verb is transitive and the Syriac is intransitive, I have adjusted the gloss to reflect the intransitivity of the Syriac.

Usually the answer can be found in lexica which specify the two meanings for the two types of use. For instance, when Aphel ܢܗܪ is followed by a direct object it means to enlighten (of a person), or to light (of a lamp)—that is, the object itself shines. It lights up. When the verb is intransitive, as when it is followed by the preposition ܥܠ, it means to shine upon: the light shines upon something else.

Where the lexica do not specify which constructions have which meanings, it is possible to look up all occurrences of the verb in a text and work out the semantic difference between the transitive and intransitive uses, because it shows up in the context and the English translations. The transitive instances would have one meaning, the intransitive instances another meaning. This study focuses on one verb, Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ, which occurs both transitively and intransitively, and seeks to determine whether the change in syntax reflects a change in meaning, and to determine the function of any co-occurring Lamadh.

An issue to be aware of is that transitivity in a language may vary according to time and place. For instance, in English the verb "visit" is used transitively in England—I visit someone—but intransitively in the USA—I visit *with* someone. Conversely the verb "write" is used intransitively in England—I write *to* someone—but transitively in the USA—I write someone. Therefore, in its study of Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ, this study uses a limited corpus to reduce the possibility of difference due to dialect.[6]

2. PEAL/PAEL ܓܘܪ

2.1 Transitivity and Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ

Neither Syriac-English lexica nor English translations of Syriac texts indicate semantic distinctions between the transitive (where the verb has an object suffix) and intransitive (when the object is mediated by ܒ or ܥܡ) functions of the verb Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ, "commit adultery." Lexica note that both structures are possible: Jessie Payne Smith (*CSD*) notes that Peal ܓܘܪ occurs with pronominal affix, or with ܒ, but gives no examples or explanation for the two structures. Sokoloff's *A Syriac Lexicon* (*SL*) offers more information than the original Brockelmann, noting that Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ is used alone; "w. acc."; and "w. ܒ–", and cites examples, but does not comment on them. Like *CSD*, *SL* does not indicate a possibility that each category might mean something different, or at least may contain some distinctive nuance. The same gloss, "commit adultery," is consistently used in lexica and in the English translation of texts to translate both constructions.

In order to ascertain whether there is indeed some semantic distinction between the two syntactic constructions, as many examples as possible were listed where Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ is cited with a subject and an object. These were divided into

---

[6] For this study the texts examined were: The Bible; Drijvers, *The Book of the Laws of the Countries*; and Jansma, *Acts of Judas Thomas*.

three lists: transitive, intransitive with the preposition ܒ, and intransitive with the preposition ܥܡ, to see what the common elements are within each list and how the three sets of examples differ from each other. The source texts of the biblical examples were examined to see if the terminology offered clues as to the transitivity. All the Old Testament examples translated Qal or Piel נאף and every instance except Prov 6:32 included the object marker/preposition את. However this does clarify the issue of transitivity, as את can function as both an object marker and a preposition meaning "with," and other Old Testament studies have shown that the presence or absence of את in a Hebrew source text is not a reliable guide to the presence or absence of Lamadh in its Syriac translation.[7]

An immediate difficulty in translating examples in the first list (transitive) is that the English term "commit adultery" can only be used intransitively, and there is not a transitive term in English comparable to the Syriac. For this reason I have here coined the term "adulter" to translate the instances where Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ is used transitively so that the difference in transitivity, and potentially in meaning, is immediately apparent.

Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ with a subject and an object is found in the Bible, the *Book of the Laws of the Countries*, and *The Apology of Aristides*:

List 1: transitive, with object suffix or unmarked direct object[8]

Lev 20:10 ܘܓܒܪܐ ܕܢܓܘܪ ܐܢܬܬ ܓܒܪܐ ܘܢܓܘܪ ܐܢܬܬ ܚܒܪܗ

Peal impf. *and the man that adulters a man's wife, even adulters his neighbour's wife*

Prov 6:32 ܘܕܓܐܪ ܥܡ ܐܢܬܬܐ

Peal act. pt. *but who adulters a woman (has no sense)*

Jer 29:23 ܘܓܪܘ ܥܠ ܢܫܐ ܕܚܒܪ̈ܝܗܘܢ

Peal pf. *and they [3m.pl.] adultered their neighbours' wives*

Mt 5:28 ܓܪܗ ܒܠܒܗ

Peal pf. *adultered her in his heart*

Apol Arist 10:12 ܐܘ ܕܢܓܪܘܢ ܓܢܣܐ ܕܢܫܐ ܡܝܘ̈ܬܬܐ

Pael/Aphel impf. *(and some transformed themselves into the likeness of animals) to seduce the race of mortal women* [9]

---

[7] Williams, *Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings*, 80.

[8] In the following examples, some nouns and verbs have person (*1, 2, 3*), gender (*m.,f.*) and number (*s., pl.*) specified for clarification.

[9] Translation from Kay, "The Apology of Aristides."

List 2: intransitive, with object mediated by ܒ

Jer 3:9   ܘܓܪܬ ܐܦ ܥܡ ܟܐܦܐ ܘܩܝܣܐ

Peal pf.   *(she polluted the land) and committed adultery with stones and wood*

Ezek 23:37   ܘܥܡ ܦܬܟܪ̈ܝܗܝܢ ܓܪ

Peal pf.   *and they [two women] committed adultery with their idols*

LOC 44.1.15   ܐܡܬܝ ܕܓܪ̈ܢ ܥܡ ܢܘܟܪ̈ܝܐ

Peal act. pt.   *(no-one reproaches them) when they [3f.pl.] commit adultery with strangers*

Apol Arist 16:11   ܐܢܐ ܓܝܪ ܡܓܝܪܐ

Pael act. pt.   *[of Aphrodite] she commits adultery with men*

Apol Arist 14:20   ܠܗܘܕܝܛܐ ܓܝܪ

Pael pf.   *[of Ares] he committed adultery with Aphrodite*

List 3: intransitive, with object mediated by ܥܡ

A third list has two items in which the verb is intransitive, the preposition is ܥܡ, and the subjects of the verb are men:

Rev 2:22   ܘܠܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܓܝܪ̈ܝܢ ܥܡܗ

Peal act. pt.   *and those who are committing adultery with her [Jezebel]*

Apol Arist 10:15   ܥܝ̈ܢ ܐܡܐ ܠܟܠ ܥܡ ܓܝܪ̈ܝܢ ܕܐܠܗܝܗܘܢ ܕܥܠ

Peal pf.   *And they say of their gods that they committed adultery with the daughters of men (and of these there was born a certain race which also was mortal)*

In nearly every example from all lists the verb has been glossed in English in the lexica and translations in exactly the same way, "committed adultery with." But a comparison of the lists indicates two appreciable differences between them. In the first list, where the verb is transitive, it is only males who commit adultery. In the second list, where it is intransitive, and a preposition ܒ is used, it is mostly women who commit adultery. In the third list, where the preposition ܥܡ is used, it is men who commit adultery. Does this gender difference mean anything, or is it coincidental?

     Also, a possible difference between the lists is that committing adultery may not mean quite the same thing in each list. In the first list, the contexts suggest that the *intention* to commit adultery belonged to the man alone and he, as agent, acts upon her, the patient. At no time in the text is the woman named or even clearly identified: she is the wife of a neighbour or someone who is at hand, and not necessarily a willing partner. But how should this be expressed in English? There is not an English word that means quite what the Syriac seems to mean. Here the man

"adulters" the woman: no preposition; she does not commit adultery "together with" him. She is "adultered." The nearest English equivalent is used by D.M. Kay, translator of *The Apology of Aristides*, who uses "seduce" to translate the transitive verb and uses "commit adultery with" to translate the intransitive. This is helpful in that it reflects the transitivity of the Syriac verb. With the transitive, it also highlights the subject of the verb as the perpetrator. However, "seduce" does not hint that the action might be unlawful, whereas this is a primary distinctive of the Syriac verb. Nor does "seduce" include a sense of defilement which is likely to be part of the sense of the Syriac.

In list 2, in most of the examples the woman is the *subject*, the agent, and the preposition ܒ is used. There is no hint that the objects of the verb, the men, are unwilling participants: indeed, in the *Book of the Laws of the Countries* the action is noted *because* it arouses no distress. Both parties are in it together. It is difficult to comment on the imagery of Jer 3:9, committing adultery with stones and wood, that is, with idols, other than to say the only human participant, the feminine Israel, is herself the agent and is violated only by her own behaviour.

In the second list (both parties acting together) the only instance where it is clearly a man committing adultery *with* a woman (with ܒ) rather than the other way around, is in *The Apology of Aristides*, where it is said of the god Ares, that

Apol Arist 14:20   ܓܝܪ ܒܐܦܪܘܕܝܛܐ

Pael pf.   *he committed adultery with Aphrodite*

However, the context indicates that this is most likely to mean committing adultery (together) with her, seeing Aphrodite is the goddess of love, and she also commits adultery: later it says of Aphrodite

Apol Arist 16:11   ܓܝܪܐ ܗܘܬ ܓܐܪܐ ܐܢܬܐ

Pael/Aphel act. pt. *[of Aphrodite] she commits adultery with men*

In the third list, where the preposition ܥܡ is used, the activity seems to be on-going. In Rev 2:22 the imagery of adultery is used to illustrate the peoples' apostasy under the influence of their so-called prophetess, Jezebel. Whether the reference to "those who are committing adultery with her" is literal or figurative, the context makes it clear that Jezebel is active in committing the adultery, indeed she is the instigator. She is not being "adultered" as the women in the first list are.

It is difficult to comment on the degree of participation of the "daughters of men" in the example from Aristides. The context is a list of the sins of the gods, so it could be argued that this is a case of "adultering" rather than "committing adultery with." However, it was also a habitual action given that it resulted in the birth of a race, so it may have implied a mutual and on-going situation.

2.2 Syntax and Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ

A comparison of the transitive and intransitive lists indicates that a change in syntax does reflect a change in meaning: that the transitive construction of Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ refers to men "adultering" women or men without reference to the other's participation or lack of it; and the intransitive use refers to instances where the two

parties indulge in sexual acts together. Thus far our lexica and translations fail us in that in English the same gloss is used to describe these two different semantic domains, where the Syriac syntax makes a clear distinction between the two. There is a need for two distinct English terms to represent the two domains. This cannot be done with the English "commit adultery with" because such terminology can only be used intransitively, with a preposition. It cannot be adjusted to be used transitively: we cannot actually say "he adultered her" as has been done in the list above. A different term, that can be used transitively, is needed to translate the verb for the examples in the first list where the transitive construction of Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ is used to denote what is most likely not-quite-consensual sex, but not the more forceful sense of rape for which there is a different Syriac term. Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ does not seem to include a sense of outrage over the fact that the woman has been violated. It is more about social and religious law and infidelity, and men's property rights: the focus is on laws and norms that have been transgressed rather than on any abuse of the victim. It may most usefully be explained as illicit sexual activity for which, unfortunately, there is not one corresponding *transitive* English term. English does have vulgar expressions that are transitive but do not mean quite the same, and besides, the Syriac term does not appear to be vulgar.

2.3 Semantics and Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ

A second problem with the terminology "to commit adultery" is its definition. Today in various places and traditions adultery is being defined as

- *voluntary sexual intercourse between a married man or woman and a partner other than the legal spouse* (Collins English Dictionary);[10]
- *when a married woman has sexual intercourse with a man other than her husband, whether married or not, both are guilty of adultery* (2010 Minnesota Statute 609.36);[11]
- *"voluntary violation of the marriage bed," c.1300, avoutrie, from O.Fr. avoutrie, aoulterie, noun of condition from avoutre/aoutre, from L. adulterare "to corrupt" (see adulteration). Modern spelling, with the re-inserted -d-, is from early 15c. (see ad-). Classified as single adultery (with an unmarried person) and double adultery (with a married person). O.E. word was æwbryce "breach of law(ful marriage)."* (Online Etymology Dictionary);[12]

---

[10] *Collins English Dictionary*, s.v. "adultery," accessed January 3, 2014, http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/adultery.

[11] "Minnesota Statutes," §609.36. *The Office of the Revisor of Statutes,* accessed July 12, 2010, https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=609.36.

[12] *Etymonline*, s.v. "adultery," Online Etymology Dictionary, Douglas Harper, 2001–2014, accessed January 3, 2014, http://www.etymonline.com/

- *In a latter-day revelation, the Lord condemned not only adultery, but "anything like unto it"* (Doctrine and Covenants 59:6). *Fornication, homosexuality, and other sexual sins are violations of the seventh commandment* (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints);[13]
- *Whoever has sexual intercourse with a person who is and whom he knows or has a reason to believe to be the wife of another man without the consent or connivance of that man. Such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of rape is the offence of Adultery.* (Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code, 1870). *As it stands, this Section makes only men having sexual intercourse with the wives of other men without the consent of their husbands punishable and women cannot be punished even as abettors.*[14]

According to his or her background, the reader of the text and of the lexicon may have any of these definitions in mind when reading of adultery.

The meaning of adultery in the mind of the ancient writer may have further nuances again. The following are examples rather than an exhaustive list:

- sexual activity with another man's wife, thereby transgressing that man's property rights or violating the sanctity of his family:

> If a man is found sleeping (ܘܡܥ) with (another) man's wife, they must die: both the man who slept with her and also the woman. You must purge the evil from Israel. If there is a young woman who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the town and he sleeps with her, you shall take both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death—the young woman because she was in a town and did not scream for help, and the man because he dishonoured (ܪܚ) another man's wife (Deut 22:22–24)

Although these verses do not include Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ, the meaning is plainly the same;

- unfaithfulness to God, demonstrated by worship of idols:

> How can I pardon you? Your children have forsaken me, and have sworn by those who are no gods. When I fed them to the full, they committed adultery (ܓܘܪ) and trooped to the houses of prostitutes. They were well-fed lusty stallions, each neighing for his neighbour's wife. Shall I not punish them for these things? says the Lord; and shall I not bring retribution on a nation such as this? … For the house of Israel and the

---

[13] "Ten Commandments," *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, accessed January 3, 2014, http://www.lds.org/topics/ten-commandments?lang=eng.

[14] Varad Deore, "Adultery: A Provision Redundant in Penal Law in Changed Legal and Social Context," *Legal Service India*, last modified January 23, 2009, accessed January 3, 2014, http://www.legalserviceindia.com/article/l291-Adultery.html.

house of Judah have been utterly faithless to me, says the Lord." (Jer 5:7–9, 11);

- illicit sexual activity, by which a man defiles himself: "He who commits adultery (Syr: ܢܐܦ ܥܡ ܐܢܬܬܐ, *adulters a woman*) has no sense; he who does it destroys himself. He will get wounds and dishonour, and his disgrace will not be wiped away." (Prov 6:32, 33);

- Louw and Nida's lexicon[15] defines μοιχεύω as "sexual intercourse of a man with a married woman other than his own spouse," while

> sexual intercourse of a married man with an unmarried woman would usually be regarded as πορνεία … but sexual intercourse of either an unmarried or a married man with someone else's wife was regarded as adultery, both on the part of the man as well as the woman."

Most of these seem at some time to have been the point at issue, and others besides, when "committing adultery" has been mentioned in Scripture. The context in each instance gives the clue to what actually happened.

3. COMPARISON OF TERMS

3.1 Comparison with Syriac terms synonymous with Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ

If indeed a change in syntax indicates a change in semantic nuance with Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ it seems prudent to check synonymous expressions—other Syriac verbs that refer to sexual activity—to see whether that same syntactic pattern is in evidence. Again, to avoid dialectical differences, the examples have been drawn from the same limited corpus.

The first are verbs for sexual activity. Pael ܙܢܝ, "commit fornication," is used only intransitively in the New Testament. It appears three times with an indirect object,[16] the immoral Babylon, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and each time the verb is followed by ܥܡ. With Peal ܨܥܪ, "abuse, rape,"[17] the focus in both Syriac and English is on the fact that a woman has been forcibly subjected to abuse. The focus is not on any laws or mores that might have been transgressed as in the transitive use of Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ, but on the violation of the woman. As might be expected, Peal ܨܥܪ is a transitive verb where the woman is directly acted upon; she is the direct object and there is no preposition that suggests she might have been an active participant.

Second, there are two Syriac verbs "to know," Peal ܝܕܥ and Peal ܚܟܡ, which may also refer to sexual activity. These verbs normally refer to "knowing" something cognitively, but where they apply to sexual relations, they refer to the act of copulation itself regardless of the context: whether it is a man "knowing" his wife

---

[15] Louw and Nida et al., *Greek-English Lexicon.*
[16] Rev 17:2, 18:3, 9.
[17] Gen 34:7; Deut 21:14; Judg 19:24, cited by *SL*.

and she conceives, as with Adam and Eve,[18] or rapists "knowing" and abusing a concubine until she dies,[19] or men wanting to "know" another man.[20] In all instances the person being known, male or female, is the direct object; no preposition is used. In all of them the agent, the subject of the verb, is a man.

A third group of verbs, verbs whose literal meaning is "to lie with"[21] and "to sleep with"[22] can also be used as euphemisms meaning to copulate with. The context does not always make clear whether lying with someone also means sexual activity, but where it presumably does, the examples are less clear than in the previous lists. This may indicate a weakness in my theory, or it may indicate that the theory does not apply to this group of verbs in quite the same way. In the instances where the preposition ܥܰܡ is used the activity is clearly the choice of the man not his partner: a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed ܘܢܕܡܟ ܥܡܗ *and sleeps with her,*[23] and a man ܐܢܫܐ ܕܡܟ ܥܡ ܒܥܝܪܐ *lies down with an animal.*[24] However in the transitive example, where a man confesses that "ܘܕܡܟܬܗ ܘܩܛܠܬܗ *I slept with her and killed her (because I could not bear to see her while she was having intercourse with other men)*[25] it may be supposed that he took her forcibly.

The syntax and semantics of these three groups of verbs fit the pattern of Lists 1 and 2/3 fairly closely. Where the verb is used transitively it refers to a man acting sexually upon another person with or without that person's cooperation, and could be said to support the observation that syntax affects semantics.

3.2 Comparison with Hebrew and Greek *Vorlagen*

The Hebrew behind the Syriac Old Testament instances of Peal/Pael ܢܐܦ is in each case Qal or Piel נאף accompanied by the preposition/object marker את in all but one instance, Prov 6:32, where there was no preposition/object marker. The Hebrew verb has the same semantic range as the Syriac ܢܐܦ and does not appear with any particle other than את, suggesting that this functions only as a transitive verb, including in those instances where the Syriac translation has introduced a preposition. Whether את is regarded as a preposition or an object marker, its presence or absence does not appear to indicate a distinction between possible changes in semantics for this verb, unlike in the Syriac translation.

The Greek term μοιχεύω underlying New Testament instances of Peal/Pael ܢܐܦ is similarly transitive, with objects appearing in the accusative case. Liddell and

---

[18] Gen 4:1 ܘܐܕܡ ܚܟܡ ܠܚܘܐ ܐܢܬܬܗ.

[19] Judg 19:25 ܘܚܟܡܘܗ ܘܐܬܥܠܠܘ ܒܗ ܟܠܗ ܠܠܝܐ.

[20] Judg 19:22 ܐܦܩ ܠܓܒܪܐ ܕܥܠ ܠܒܝܬܟ ܘܢܚܟܡܝܘܗܝ.

[21] Peal ܘܕܡܟ Exod 22:15.

[22] Peal ܕܡܟ 1 Cor 6:9.

[23] Exod 22:15.

[24] Lev 20:15.

[25] Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas*, §51, 92.

Scott define μοιχεύω as "*commit adultery with* a woman, *debauch* her, c. acc.",[26] with the latter gloss indicating the transitive nature of the verb. The only instance in scripture of an accompanying preposition is with an articular participle in Rev 2:22: τους μοιχεύοντας μετ' αὐτῆς *those committing adultery with her [Jezebel]*. However, in an article on μοιχᾶται ἐπ' αὐτήν in Mk 10:11,[27] Berndt Schaller cites two instances where the object of "commit adultery with" is expressed in prepositional constructions similar to the one employed in Mk 10:11.

(a) Acts of Thomas 56: "These are the souls of women that left their husbands, and committed adultery with others (εἰς ἄλλους)."

(b) Apostolic Constitutions I 3[4] "For you have caused her to whom this happened to commit adultery with you (ἐπι σοί) through (her) desire."

Schaller argues that the use of a Greek preposition is an Aramaism, saying, "In the Syriac literature 'commit adultery with' is usually expressed by *gr bᵉ* or *gr k*." While it is not impossible that the Syriac has influenced the Greek, Schaller's argument is not convincing: his term "usually" is an overstatement; it does not take into account the possibility of a semantic shift in certain circumstances such as proposed in the present paper; and it assumes that all instances of Lamadh are prepositions, when Lamadh may in fact be functioning as an object marker for a transitive verb. Unfortunately the Syriac version of the paragraph from *The Acts of Thomas* is phrased quite differently from the Greek version so that there is no Syriac equivalent to *committed adultery with others*.

These are the only instances I know of in Greek non-Biblical literature where a prepositional phrase is used to introduce the other participant in committing adultery, and it is of interest that in both cases the protagonist is a woman. It is not feasible to draw a conclusion from so small a sample, and neither can one conclude that preposition usage in one language may impact on the use of prepositions in another language. Where there does appear to be a correlation between preposition usage, one cannot always be sure which language is influencing which. Examples such as the above can only remain teasers inviting further research.

This study began with asking two questions:

1. What does the verb Peal/Pael ܓܘܪ mean when it is transitive as opposed to when it is intransitive?
2. Seeing as Lamadh can occur in either a transitive or intransitive construction, when there is a Lamadh, is that Lamadh a preposition or an object marker?

The first question has been answered in sections 2.1 and 2.2 above: the transitive use refers to a man "taking" a woman or a man when he is not entitled to do so; and a woman is not the agent (the subject) of the verb. Where the verb is intransitive and used with a preposition it indicates consensual, if illicit or even promiscuous,

---

[26] Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9th ed.).

[27] Schaller, "'Commits Adultery with Her', Not 'Against Her'.

sexual activity, and the woman is likely to be the agent (the subject) of the verb or at least an active participant.

In order to answer the second question, the issue of possible Aphel forms must be addressed, and the instances where Lamadh occurs with the verb will be examined.

4. APHEL ܓܘܪ

So far the Aphel ܓܘܪ has not been addressed. Aphel ܓܘܪ is treated in four ways in the lexica: as an active verb, as a causative, as both active and causative, and in some lexica the Aphel ܓܘܪ is not cited at all. Those who offer only an active meaning, "to commit adultery" are *CSD*[28] and Pazzini.[29] Ferrer-Nogueras[30] and Costaz[31] have only a causative meaning "to lead into adultery," while Brun[32] and *SL* have both active and causative meanings. Neither RPS,[33] Brockelmann[34] nor Audo[35] cite an Aphel form in their entries. The only examples offered in any of these lexica for a causative meaning are the two in *SL* which are cited below. However, they are both unpointed, and so it is not impossible that they could also be read as Peal (ܓܳܐܰܪ) or Pael (ܓܰܝܰܪ) as well as Aphel (ܓܰܝܰܪ).

The first, from The Apology of Aristides, is

Apol Arist 12:9   ܐܡܪܐ ܘܝܓܝܪ ܠܢܫܐ ܡܬܩܠܬܐ ܘܢܩܝܡ ܠܗ ܡܢܗܝܢ ܒܢܝܐ

(of Zeus: And they say that he changed himself into a beast and other shapes) in order to seduce mortal women, and to raise up by them children for himself.[36]

Pael/Aphel act. pt.: *he [3m.s.] seduced [3m.s.] them [3f.pl.]*

From the context it is clear that Zeus was seducing the women rather than causing them to commit adultery (with someone other than himself), seeing he was raising

---

[28] *CSD* cites an Aphel form ܐܰܓܺܝܪ, but it is cited together with the Pael and they are glossed as "to commit adultery." No examples are given.

[29] Pazzini, *Lessico Concordanziale*.

[30] Ferrer and Nogueras, *Breve Diccionario Siríaco*.

[31] Costaz, *Dictionnaire syriaque-français*.

[32] Brun, *Dictionarium Syriaco-Latinum*.

[33] Robert Payne Smith, ed. *Thesaurus Syriacus*.

[34] Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum*.

[35] Audo, ܣܝܡܬܐ ܕܠܫܢܐ ܣܘܪܝܝܐ [Treasure of the Syriac language].

[36] The concept of changing into a beast for such purposes is mentioned again soon afterwards in the text: "Once, they say, he changed himself into a bull through love of Europe and Pasiphae. And again he changed himself into the likeness of gold through love of Danae, and to a swan through love of Leda, and to a man through love of Antiope, and to lightning through love of Luna, and so by these he begat many children. … And lastly he changed himself into the likeness of an eagle through his passion for Ganydemos (Ganymede) the shepherd." (Kay's translation)

children by them for himself. This means that either the verb is intended to be a Pael, or an Aphel which has an active rather than causative meaning.

The second example, from the Old Syriac, could also be either a Pael (ܡܓܝܪ) or Aphel (ܡܓܝܪ). There is strong external evidence for an Aphel causative reading, as cited below. Later I will argue for an alternative reading.

Mt 5:32 Syr[S,C]	ܗܘ ܡܓܝܪ ܠܗ
Aphel *m.s.* act. pt.	*(if a man divorces his wife …) he causes her to commit adultery* Cureton[37] (Syr[C]), Lewis[38] (Syr[S]), Wilson[39] (Syr[S,C]), Jennings,[40] citing Syr[P] as a comparison:
Mt 5:32 Syr[P,H]	ܥܒܕ ܠܗ ܘܠܐܝܟܘ
	he causes her to commit adultery [Peal 3f.s. impf.] Murdock[41] (Syr[P])
Greek	ποιεῖ αὐτὴν μοιχᾶσθαι/μοιχευθῆναι

While the weight of scholarship and the underlying Greek and the later Peshitta and Harklean translations all opt for the causative reading, *he caused her to commit adultery*, two other factors must be taken into account. First, it must be observed that the active participial form is masculine not feminine, indicating that the one who commits adultery is the male, and that she, ܠܗ, is either the direct object, the "adultered" one, or, she is an indirect object and the Lamadh is a preposition.

The second factor is the very nature of the Aphel as a causative pattern. Cross-linguistically, morphological causatives are normally intransitive verbs with a cause added, so that someone is caused to experience the action of the verb.[42] Some languages such as Hindi have a second type of causative pattern for transitive verbs whereby someone is caused to act upon a third party.[43] However, there does not seem to be such a pattern in Syriac.[44] There are relatively few instances of Aphels (in comparison with Peal, Pael and Eth- forms), and of the Aphels that exist, many in the New Testament have an active rather than causative sense.[45] The causative ones normally make an intransitive verb transitive by introducing an agent, causing

---

[37] Cureton, *Four Gospels in Syriac*.

[38] Lewis, *A Translation of the Four Gospels*.

[39] Wilson, *The Old Syriac Gospels*.

[40] Jennings, *Lexicon to the Syriac New Testament*.

[41] Murdock, *The New Testament*.

[42] Alsina, "On the Argument Structure of Causatives."

[43] Ibid.; Næss, *Prototypical Transitivity*, 63–8.

[44] A small group of transitive verbs with "ingestive" semantics such as "eat" and "drink" may typically have causatives, as in Syriac, but such a group may not necessarily include "commit adultery."

[45] In his handbook on verbal paradigms, George Kiraz notes that the Peal and Pael meanings of a verb may not be related, and that the Aphel form "while it sometimes gives a causative meaning, in many cases the meaning of an ܐܦܥܠ verb is not related to that of its ܦܥܠ measure." Kiraz, *Verbal Paradigms*, 3.

something to happen to someone, so that the patient experiences a change in state, but not in the sense that they are caused to perform an action upon a third person. Thus, even if there is an Aphel ܓܘܪ, it would not be likely to mean that it causes someone to go out and commit adultery as such. At the most it would mean that someone might lead another into adultery with themselves, that is, the agent would be "adultering" or seducing them as we have seen above, and so it comes back to an active meaning as in Peal and Pael (as glossed by *CSD*).

By way of comparison, an examination of the Aphel forms of other verbs may indicate whether causativity in Syriac describes the activity of one participant in a two-participant construction as argued here, or whether it can indeed introduce a third participant to a two-participant construction. This would not indicate whether or not there is an Aphel of ܓܘܪ, but would indicate whether such a verb, if it exists, involved two participants or three.

One potential such verb is ܩܛܠ. An examination of the ܩܛܠ verbs shows that no Western lexica cite an Aphel ܩܛܠ: one does not cause someone to kill, though one may cause them to die (Aphel ܡܘܬ). Audo's Syriac-Syriac lexicon does cite an Aphel ܩܛܠ with the gloss "to kill by the hand of another." However, semantically in this example the agent of death is not the one who actually kills; it remains the causer-agent who uses the actual killer as an instrument. No references are given so it is not possible to check the context or the time and provenance of the manuscript.

Furthermore, as illustrated in the examples of the Aphel verb forms below, the verb agrees in number and gender with the subject, and the object suffix or object pronoun agrees in number and gender with the objects, and a preposition introduces any other person or condition.

Jas 5:15   ܘܨܠܘܬܐ ܕܗܝ ܕܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ ܡܚܠܡܐ ܠܗ ܠܗܘ ܕܟܪܝܗ

and the prayer [f.s.] of faith cures [3f.s.] him [3m.s.] the one who is ill

Col 2:13   ܐܚܝܟܘܢ ܥܡܗ

he has made alive [3m.s.] you [3m.pl.] with him; he has made you alive with him

Mk 8:35   ܢܚܝܗ

he will save it [f.s. his soul]; he will make it [his soul] live

Lk 9:24   ܗܘ ܡܚܐ ܠܗ

he will save it [f.s. his soul]; he will make his soul live

These examples demonstrate that Aphel verbs involve two participants not three: the subject of the Aphel verb acts on the object, or causes something to happen to the object, but does not cause the object him- or herself to perform an act on a third person.

Thus this study concludes that if there is an Aphel ܓܘܪ then it involves two people not three, so it does not mean to cause another to commit adultery with a third party. But there is probably no Aphel pattern for ܓܘܪ at least for Biblical literature, and the examples cited above are probably Paels rather than Aphels, as discussed further below. Given that the texts in question are unpointed, it is not possible to argue from the morphology.

With this in mind, it is necessary to return to Mt 5:32 Syr[S,C], to examine whether the active participle is a Pael and not an Aphel:

Mt 5:32 Syr[S,C]   ܘܗܘ ܓܐܪ ܠܗ

Pael act. pt.   *(if a man divorces his wife …) he commits adultery against her/with respect to her*

If it is a Pael active participle, then the Lamadh is either an object marker following a transitive use or a preposition following an intransitive use. If the verb is transitive and the Lamadh is an object marker, then in the terms of our study thus far the translation is "he adulters her," but as he has divorced her this scenario is improbable. If the Lamadh is a preposition, and given that this verb does not take Lamadh meaning "with," then the translation may be "he commits adultery against her" or "with respect to her." This possibility may be supported by a similar phrase that occurs later in Matthew's gospel, Mt 19:9. Here the Greek and Peshitta clearly state that a man who dismisses his wife and takes another commits adultery, but the Curetonian manuscript (Syr[C]) adds ܠܗ to the infinitive absolute construction. Cureton translated it as "commits adultery towards her." The only Greek variant extant reads "makes her commit adultery" but this meaning cannot be construed from the Curetonian Syriac, as the infinitive absolute serves to emphasise the verb or draw a contrast between this action and another, and it does not have a causative sense.

Mt 19:9 Syr[C]   (ܡܢ ܕܫܒܩ ܐܢܬܬܗ ... ܘܢܣܒ ܐܚܪܬܐ) ܓܐܪ ܓܪ ܠܗ

Peal inf. abs. (inf. + act. pt.) *(whoever dismisses his wife … and takes another) commits adultery against her (towards her Cureton)*

Mt 19:9 Syr[P]   ܡܢ ܕܫܒܩ ܐܢܬܬܗ ... ܘܢܣܒ ܐܚܪܬܐ ܓܐܪ ܓܪ

Peal inf. abs.   *(whoever dismisses his wife … and takes another) commits adultery*

Greek: μοιχαται *commits adultery*

Gk variant (N):   ποιεῖ αὐτὴν μοιχευθῆναι *causes her to commit adultery*

Given that the Curetonian Syriac cannot have a causative meaning, it must be separated from the extant Greek and the Peshitta readings and treated as an active form.

An answer to the second question, whether a Lamadh would be a preposition or an object marker, can now be attempted. In the materials available for this study, Lamadh occurs only with forms that are either Aphel or Pael. In one instance, *The Apology of Aristides* 12:9 (see section 4 above), the verb clearly has an active meaning and the following Lamadh functions as an object marker.

12:9   ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܢܓܘܪ ܠܢܫܐ ܡܝܘܬܬܐ ܘܢܩܝܡ ܠܗ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܒܢܝܐ

      … in order to seduce mortal women, and to raise up by them children for himself.

The other two examples Mt 5:32 Syr[S,C] and Mt 19:9 Syr[C] above are either Peal or Aphel, and either way are being regarded here as having an active, not causative, meaning. In neither sentence does it make sense for the following pronoun, marked by Lamadh, to be a direct object, so the Lamadh must be a preposition, and Cureton's reading of "commits adultery towards her" seems the most likely

understanding for both verses. However, with such a small sample of examples these conclusions must remain conjectural until further examples can be found and examined.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this examination of Peal, Pael, and Aphel ܓܘܪ raises a few points for the lexicographer.

1. We see that information on syntax, in this instance transitivity, is vitally important when creating lexical entries. It is not enough simply to point out that there are different constructions; it must be shown that the different constructions have different nuances of meaning, and it must be shown what those nuances are.

2. The criteria for determining meanings may be unexpected. I certainly had not expected the gender of the participants to be a vital clue to defining the semantic fields. Who knows what other criteria may be essential for other lexemes in their various constructions?

3. We cannot always rely on current and familiar English glosses for Syriac words, be they in lexica or in translations of a text. The English language may not have a suitable term for a Syriac term, and so a definition of what is meant, plus a phrase or sentence instead of a single gloss, along with a guide to appropriate syntactic constructions, may be needed to portray the meaning accurately, as is necessary for the verb examined here.

4. We cannot assume that, for instance, an unpointed form is an Aphel when in fact it may be a Pael, or that an Aphel necessarily has a causative meaning. Until one gathers the evidence from the text and examines and compares actual examples rather than other authors' lexical entries, one may not have an accurate idea of what a lexeme means or how it functions.

5. Finally, lest it seem as though I am asking to crowd too much information into a single entry, it should be said that we do not need to cover every issue, just the pertinent ones; we do not need a lot of words in a lexical entry, we just need the right ones. In the instance of Peal, Pael, and perhaps Aphel ܓܘܪ, it does matter who commits adultery with whom because that affects the syntax and semantics and, therefore, needs to be taken into account when creating an entry for a lexicon.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alsina, Alex. "On the Argument Structure of Causatives." *Linguistic Inquiry* 23 (1992): 517–55.

Audo, Thomas. ܣܝܡܬܐ ܕܠܫܢܐ ܣܘܪܝܝܐ ܚܒܪ ܠܐܗܘܬܐ ܐܘܘ ܡܛܪܦܘܠܝܛܐ ܕܐܘܪܡܝܐ (Treasure of the Syriac language: A dictionary of classical Syriac). 2 vols. Mosul: Dominican, 1897. Repr. in 1 vol. as *Assyrian Dictionary by Mar Touma Oddo Metropolitan of Urmia*. Chicago: Assyrian Language & Culture Classes, 1978. Repr. as *Treasure of the Syriac Language by Thomas Audo, Metropolitan of*

Ourmy. Losser, Netherlands: Monastery of St Ephrem the Syrian, 1985. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2008.

Brockelmann, Carl. *Lexicon Syriacum.* 2nd ed. Halle: Niemeyer, 1928.

Brun, J. *Dictionarium Syriaco-Latinum.* Beirut: Societas Jesu, 1895, 2nd ed. 1911.

Costaz, Louis. *Dictionnaire syriaque-français, Syriac-English Dictionary,* قاموس سرياني عربي. Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1963. 2nd ed. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1986. 3rd ed. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 2002.

Cureton, William. *Remains of a Very Antient Recension of the Four Gospels in Syriac: Hitherto Unknown in Europe.* London: J. Murray, 1858. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2005.

Deore, Varad. "Adultery: A Provision Redundant in Penal Law in Changed Legal and Social Context." *Legal Service India.* Last modified January 23, 2009. Accessed January 3, 2014. http://www.legalserviceindia.com/article/l291-Adultery.html.

Drijvers, H.J.W. *The Book of the Laws of the Countries, Dialogue on Fate of Bardaisan of Edessa.* Assen: Van Gorcum, 1965. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2006.

Dyk, Janet W. "Desiderata for the Lexicon from a Syntactic Point of View." Pages 141–56 in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography I.* Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics 1. Edited by A. Dean Forbes and David G.K. Taylor. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2005.

Ferrer, Joan, and Maria Antònia Nogueras. *Breve Diccionario Siríaco: Siríaco-Castellano-Catalán.* Estudios de Filología Semítica 1. Barcelona: University of Barcelona, 1999.

Jansma, T. *A Selection from the Acts of Judas Thomas.* Semitic Study Series 1. Leiden: Brill, 1952.

Jennings, William, *Lexicon to the Syriac New Testament.* Rev. by Ulric Gantillon. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926.

Joosten, Jan. *The Syriac Language of the Peshitta and Old Syriac Versions of Matthew: Syntactic Structure, Inner-Syriac Developments and Translation Technique.* Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 22. Leiden: Brill, 1996

Kay, D.M, trans. "The Apology of Aristides the Philosopher." *Early Christian Writings.* Accessed January 3, 2014. http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/aristides-kay.html.

Kiraz, George Anton. *Verbal Paradigms in Syriac.* Gorgias Handbooks 16. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2010.

Klijn, A.F.J. *The Acts of Thomas: Introduction, Text, Commentary.* Leiden: Brill, 1962.

Lewis, Agnes Smith. *A Translation of the Four Gospels from the Syriac of the Sinaitic Palimpsest.* London: Macmillan, 1894.

Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones, and Roderick McKenzie. *A Greek-English Lexicon.* 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1940; with supplement 1968.

Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains.* 2 vols. New York: United Bible Societies, 1988.

Murdock, James. *The New Testament, or, The Book of the Holy Gospel of Our Lord and Our God, Jesus the Messiah: A Literal Translation from the Syriac Peshito Version.* New York: Stanford & Swords, 1852.

Næss, Åshild. *Prototypical Transitivity.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007

Payne Smith, R., ed. *Thesaurus Syriacus.* 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1891. Repr. Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1981. Repr. in 3 vols with *A Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus* Piscataway: Gorgias, 2007.

Pazzini, Massimo. *Lessico Concordanziale del Nuovo Testamento Siriaco.* Jerusalem: Franciscan, 2004.

Schaller, Berndt. "'Commits Adultery with Her', Not 'Against Her', Mk 10:11." *The Expository Times* 83 (1971–1972): 107–8.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's 'Lexicon Syriacum'.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2009.

Williams, Peter J. *Studies in the Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings.* Monographs of the Peshitta Institute 12. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Wilson, E. Jan. *The Old Syriac Gospels: Studies and Comparative Translations.* 2 vols. Eastern Christian Studies 1–2; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2002.

CHAPTER 2
SOUNDINGS WITH REGARD TO VERBAL VALENCY IN THE PESHITTA OLD TESTAMENT[1]

Jerome A. Lund

Accordance Bible Software
Kviteseid, Norway

1. INTRODUCTION

In her groundbreaking essay "Desiderata for the Lexicon from a Syntactic Point of View," which references in particular the Old Testament, Janet W. Dyk[2] has called attention to the issue of verbal valency[3] in producing a new comprehensive lexicon of the Syriac language. She remarks that the recording of valency patterns with their resultant meanings in the lexicon would be a great aid to all users, beginners and advanced alike, describing this feature as "a gold-mine which has hardly been tapped."[4] This study will offer a modest examination of three common verbs in the Syriac Old Testament with regard to verbal valence, namely for the verbs ܕܚܠ "he feared" in the Peal conjugation, ܨܠܝ "he prayed" in the Pael conjugation, and ܗܘܐ "it was" in the Peal conjugation. There are some interesting results that are worth noting, both for semantics and for exegesis. In the case of the first two verbs,

---

[1] The present essay was presented in an earlier form at the XXI Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München on August 7, 2013.

[2] Dyk, "Desiderata," see esp. 153–55.

[3] I would like to thank the following colleagues for sharing their contributions on the subject that appear in this volume prepublication: John A. Cook, Janet W. Dyk, A. Dean Forbes, and Nicolai Winther-Nielsen. See also Paul S. Stevenson, "The Semantics of Syriac Motion Verbs in Exodus 1–19," and "The Semantics of Syriac Motion Verbs in Exodus 1–19, Part II." Further, I would like to thank my anonymous peer reviewers for substantive criticisms which led to an improvement of this essay.

[4] Dyk, "Desiderata," 155.

namely Peal ܕܚܠ and Pael ܕܚܠ, the study will focus on the prepositions that they govern. In the case of Peal ܗܘܐ, a special form will be examined. Comparison of the results in the Peshitta OT will be compared with findings from the Syriac New Testament using Accordance.[5] The relevant entries in the existing dictionaries of classical Syriac will be evaluated in light of the findings. The results of the study contribute to the lexical and exegetical knowledge of the Peshitta OT.

2. GOVERNMENT OF PEAL ܕܚܠ "HE FEARED"

2.1 Verbal government as found in the lexica

2.1.1 Government of Peal ܕܚܠ "he feared" according to Sokoloff's Syriac Lexicon

The new dictionary of Michael Sokoloff (*SL*) defines the Peal ܕܚܠ as meaning "to fear, be afraid, revere," with four subheadings, all involving verbal government.[6] *SL* notes two usages of Peal ܕܚܠ with the preposition ܡܢ, the first with the meaning "be afraid of something" and the second "be afraid of someone".[7] For example, the clause ܐܝܠܝܢ ܗܘܘ ܡܢ ܓܠܝܕܐ in Job 6:16 means "they who were afraid of the ice," while the clause ܐܠܐ ܐܢ ܕܬܕܚܠ ܡܢ ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܟ in Deut 10:12 means "but that you should be afraid of (or fear) the Lord your God." His third subheading combines Peal ܕܚܠ with the preposition ܡܢ, followed by the conjunction ܕܠܐ "lest." However, only one of his examples under this third subheading includes the preposition ܡܢ. The following example captures the additional verbal argument, which should, in my opinion, exclude the preposition ܡܢ in the basic description: ܐܠܐ ܡܛܐܬ ܗܘܐ ܣܛܢ *Satan was afraid lest he enter hell by himself*.[8] In this case Peal ܕܚܠ governs the conjunction ܕܠܐ "lest" that introduces a verb in the prefix conjugation.[9] Sokoloff's fourth subheading, Peal ܕܚܠ with ܕܠܡܐ defined by him as meaning "lest, perhaps" contains no examples, only a cross-reference to the grammar of Nöldeke.[10] Both cases containing the Peal ܕܚܠ cited by Nöldeke,

---

[5] The Accordance Peshitta Old Testament module used in this research contained the entire Hebrew canon, but not the Apocrypha. The Peshitta Old Testament in this study will be limited therefore to the Hebrew canon unless otherwise indicated.

[6] *SL*, 290.

[7] *SL*, 290. Bickell, *S. Isaaci*.

[8] Ibid., citing Isaac of Antioch (Bickell, *S. Isaaci*, 1:58, verse 98). *SL*'s translation is dubious, since the preposition is ܒܠܥܘܕܘܗܝ and not ܒܠܚܘܕܘܗܝ: "Satan was afraid lest he would enter Hell without him." Bickell, 1:59, translated the preposition correctly: "Timuit enim diabolus, ne solus in gehennam intraret."

[9] One should regard the compound form ܕܠܐ as a conjunction. It would not make sense to divide the form ܕܠܐ into its constituents, ܕ functioning as a conjunction + the negative ܠܐ functioning as an adverb. The resultant meaning, *Satan was afraid that he would not enter hell by himself*, does not make sense.

[10] *SL*, 291, references Nöldeke, § 373.

however, introduce the following dependent clause with ܕ, not ܕܠܡܐ. Nöldeke records ܕܠܡܐ ܗܘܘ ܕܚܠܝܢ ܢܬܒܥ ܐܢܘܢ *they were afraid that he would perhaps take vengeance on them* (Jos. St. 19, 21) and ܕܚܠ ܡܢܗ ܕܠܡܐ ܢܣܓܘܢ ܡܝܐ *he is afraid of it, lest perhaps the waters should increase* (Aphr. 145, 15; var. ܕܠܡܐ).[11] Rather than governing ܕܠܡܐ in these cases, the Peal ܕܚܠ governs ܕ. The particle ܕܠܡܐ in these cases functions as an adverb modifying the main verb of the dependent clause.

2.1.2 Government of Peal ܕܚܠ *"he feared" according to J. Payne Smith*

J. Payne Smith (*CSD*) also notes the use with the preposition ܡܢ with the resultant meaning "to be afraid of."[12] Under the meaning "to fear, dread, stand in awe of, reverence," J. Payne Smith also notes that the verb can govern the prepositions ܠ and ܒ, bringing one example with ܠ: ܕܚܠ ܠܐܠܗܐ "God-fearing, one who fears God." She also brings an example with the cognate accusative, which is not introduced by a preposition: ܕܚܠܘ ܕܚܠܬܐ ܪܒܬܐ "they were terribly afraid" (literally: *they feared a great fear*).[13] Her source, namely the dictionary of her father, reveals the basis for her remark about ܒ. The only evidence for Peal ܕܚܠ governing the preposition ܒ comes from 1 Sam 6:19: ܘܡܚܐ ܡܪܝܐ ܠܐܢܫܐ ܕܒܝܬ ܫܡܫ ܥܠ ܕܕܚܠܘ܂ ܒܩܐܒܘܬܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ *And the Lord struck the men of Beth-Shemesh because they feared with respect to the ark of the Lord*. In this unique case, the choice of the preposition seems to be conditioned by the Hebrew. The Hebrew MT, however, reads כִּי רָאוּ בַּאֲרוֹן יְהוָה *because they looked at the ark of the Lord*, where the Hebrew source text of P presumably read כי יראו בארון יהוה *because they feared with respect to the ark of the Lord*.[14] Unless this use of Peal ܕܚܠ with ܒ can be further substantiated, it should be regarded as unique and conditioned by its Hebrew source text.

2.1.3 Peal ܕܚܠ *"he feared" governing* ܠ *in R. Payne Smith*

R. Payne Smith (RPS) brings other examples where Peal ܕܚܠ governs the preposition ܠ. ܠ can mark the direct object of Peal ܕܚܠ as in Judg 6:10, ܠܐ ܬܕܚܠܘܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܕܐܡܘܪܝܐ *Do not fear the gods of the Amorites*. It can also introduce an infinitive complement as in Mt 1:20 ܠܐ ܬܕܚܠ ܠܡܣܒ *Do not fear to take (Mary as your wife)*. Further, as RPS observes, Peal ܕܚܠ can govern a ܕ-phrase, consisting of ܕ and the prefix conjugation as in Mt 2:22 ܕܚܠ ܕܢܐܙܠ ܠܬܡܢ *he [Joseph] was afraid to go there*.

---

[11] The translations are mine, not those of Nöldeke. I have rendered ܕܠܡܐ as the adverb "perhaps" in both cases. The variant ܕܠܡܐ instead of ܕܠܡܐ in the second case does not alter the picture because its phrase is no longer a dependent clause, but constitutes a new sentence (*is afraid of it. Perhaps the waters will increase …*).

[12] *CSD*, 89.

[13] By "cognate accusative" I mean that the direct object derives from the same root as its governing verb.

[14] RPS, 862, translates *arcam timuerunt*, taking the ܒ as a marker of the direct object.

2.1.4 Summary for valency of Peal ܕܚܠ "he feared" in current lexica

To sum up what is currently found in the lexica, the Peal ܕܚܠ may govern the prepositions ܡܢ with the meaning "be afraid of someone or something,"[15] ܠ as the marker of the direct object[16] or as introducing an infinitive complement,[17] ܕ as introducing a "that-clause," which contains a verb in the prefix conjugation,[18] and ܒ (one unique case conditioned by the Hebrew source text).[19] In the case of the cognate accusative, no preposition appears.[20]

2.2 Two items not indicated in the lexica

First, in addition to the syntagm ܕܚܠ ܡܢ "he feared from," the syntagm ܕܚܠ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ "he feared from before" appears. In other words, Peal ܕܚܠ can also govern the compound preposition ܡܢ ܩܕܡ. One can fear "from before the Lord" as in ܠܡܕܚܠ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܢ *to fear from before the Lord our God* (Deut 6:24)[21] or the hand of the Lord as in ܐܠܐ ܕܚܠܬ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܐܝܕܟ *but I feared from before your hand* (Jer 15:17); from before a man of authority as in ܘܠܐ ܐܫܟܚܘ ܐܚܘܗܝ, ܠܡܬܒ ܠܗ ܦܬܓܡܐ, ܡܛܠ ܕܕܚܠܘ ܡܢ ܩܕܡܘܗܝ *but his [Joseph's] brothers were not able to reply because they feared from before him* (Gen 45:3) or a man perceived as having authority as in ܘܕܚܠ ܫܐܘܠ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܕܘܝܕ *and Saul feared from before David* (1 Sam 18:12); from before fire as in ܒܕ ܕܚܠܬܘܢ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܢܘܪܐ *because you feared from before the fire* (Deut 5:5); from before enemy nations as in ܠܟܠܗܘܢ ܥܡܡܐ. ܕܐܢܬ ܕܚܠ ܐܢܬ ܡܢ ܩܕܡܝܗܘܢ *all the nations before which you fear* (Deut 7:19), or enemy archers as in ܘܕܚܠ ܠܗ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܩܫܬܐ *and he*

---

[15] Examples of ܕܚܠ ܡܢ: One can fear the Lord (Exod 14:31), fear the word of the Lord (Exod 9:20), fear the name of the Lord (Deut 28:58), fear the sanctuary of the Lord (Lev 19:30; 26:2), fear the law of God (Ezra 10:3), be afraid of God's signs (Ps 65:9), be afraid of one's father's family (Judg 6:27), fear evil (Ps 23:4), fear bad news (Ps 112:7), fear reproach (Isa 51:7), fear the sword (Ezek 11:8), fear the sound of battle (Job 39:24), fear suffering (Job 9:28), fear a wild animal (Job 5:22), fear distress (Job 11:15), fear the fear of the night (Ps 91:5), and fear destruction (Job 5:21).

[16] Cf. ܘܠܐ ܕܚܠܘ ܠܗܘܢ ܐܒܗܬܟܘܢ *and your fathers did not reverence them (the demons // new gods)* (Deut 32:17); ܘܐܙܕܗܪܘ ܒܠܒܟܘܢ ܠܡܕܚܠ ܠܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܟܘܢ *Be very careful in yourselves to fear the Lord your God* (Josh 23:11); ܘܢܕܚܠܘܢ ܥܡܡܐ ܠܫܡܟ ܡܪܝܐ *the nations shall fear your name, O Lord* (Ps 102:16); ܡܛܠ ܕܫܒܩܘܢܝ. ܘܕܚܠܘ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ *because they forsook me and reverenced other gods* (2 Chr 34:25).

[17] Cf. ܡܛܠ ܕܕܚܠ ܠܡܬܒ ܒܨܥܪ *because he was afraid to live in Zoar* (Gen 19:30); ܘܕܚܠܘ ܠܡܩܪܒ ܠܘܬܗ *and they (Aaron and all the people of Israel) were afraid to approach him (Moses)* (Exod 34:30); ܠܐ ܬܕܚܠܘܢ ܠܡܦܠܚ ܠܟܠܕܝܐ *Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans* (Jer 40:9).

[18] Cf. ܘܐܡܪ ܚܬܝ ܗܝ, ܗܘ, ܡܛܠ ܕܕܚܠ ܠܡܐܡܪ ܕܐܢܬܬܝ ܗܝ *Then he said: She is my sister. For he was afraid to say: She is my wife* (Gen 26:7); ܘܕܚܠ ܫܡܘܐܝܠ ܠܡܚܘܝܘ ܚܙܘܐ ܗܢܐ ܠܥܠܝ *And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli* (1 Sam 3:15).

[19] 1 Sam 6:19.

[20] Cf. Gen 28:17; Ps 14:5; 53:6; Jon 1:10, 16; Mk 4:41; Lk 2:9.

[21] MS 6b1 omits ܩܕܡ.

[Saul] feared greatly from before the archers (1 Sam 31:3);[22] from before wrath as in ܐܠܗܕܪ, ܐܬܡܠܘܐܕ ܣܬܗܬܡ ܪܡܚ ܡܘܗ ܠܟ ܐܢܡܝܟܐܬܣܡܐ *and you fear continually daily from before the wrath of the oppressor* (Isa 51:13).

2.2.1 Peal ܠܚܕ "he feared" governing ܡܕܩ ܢܡ "from before"

2.2.1.1 Its attestation

The choice between the syntagm ܢܡ ܠܚܕ "he feared from" and the syntagm ܠܚܕ ܡܕܩ ܢܡ "he feared from before" in the Peshitta OT in large part reflects the Hebrew source text. Where the Hebrew verb for "fear" governs the preposition מִפְּנֵי, the Syriac preferred the rendering ܠܚܕ ܡܕܩ ܢܡ.[23] But where the Hebrew verb for "fear" governs the particle אֵת or the preposition מִן, the Syriac preferred the rendering ܠܚܕ ܢܡ.[24] The preposition ܢܡ by itself in this collocation, however, does correspond to the Hebrew מִפְּנֵי some 12 times[25] and מִלִּפְנֵי twice.[26] Moreover, the compound preposition ܡܕܩ ܢܡ in this collocation does render Hebrew אֵת six times[27] and מִן by itself twice.[28]

---

[22] Some MSS omit ܡܕܩ.

[23] 26 times: Gen 45:3; Exod 9:30; Num 22:3; Deut 1:17; 2:25; 5:5; 7:19; 9:19; 28:60; 1 Sam 7:7; 18:15, 29; 21:13; 1 Kgs 1:50; 3:28; Isa 51:13; Jer 1:8; 15:17; 22:25; 42:11; Zeph 1:7; Hag 1:12; Zech 2:17; Neh 4:8; 1 Chr 21:30; 2 Chr 33:12. Thrice the translator rendered the Hebrew source מִלִּפְנֵי as ܡܕܩ ܢܡ ܠܚܕ *he feared from before* (1 Sam 18:12, some MSS read מפני; Eccl 8:12–13) and twice the translator rendered the Aramaic source text מִן־קֳדָם as ܠܚܕ ܢܡ ܡܕܩ *he feared from before* (Dan 5:19; 6:27). Once the preposition ܡܕܩ ܢܡ "from before" with Peal ܠܚܕ also appears as the formal translation equivalent of the Hebrew construction without any introducing preposition or particle (Deut 25:18).

[24] 39 times rendering אֵת: Gen 32:12; Exod 1:17, 21; 9:20; 14:31; Num 14:9; 21:34; Deut 3:2; 6:2; 8:6; 10:12, 20; 28:58; 31:13; Josh 4:14 (twice); 10:8; 24:14; Judg 6:27; 1 Sam 12:14, 18, 26; 15:24; 1 Kgs 18:12; 2 Kgs 4:1; Isa 57:11; Jer 5:22; 26:19; 38:19; Ezek 2:6; Hos 10:3; Jon 1:16; Ps 67:8; 112:1; Prov 3:7; 24:21; Dan 1:10; Neh 7:2; 1 Chr 13:12. 36 times rendering מִן: Lev 19:14, 32; 25:17, 36, 43; Deut 2:4; 7:18; 18:22; 20:1; 28:10; 1 Sam 28:20; 2 Kgs 25:24; Isa 31:4; 51:7; 59:19; Jer 10:2, 5; 42:11, 16 (twice); Ezek 2:6; Job 5:21–22; 6:16; Ps 3:7; 22:24; 91:5; 112:7; 119:120, 161:2; Prov 3:25; 31:21; Eccl 12:5.

[25] Exod 10:3; Deut 7:21; Josh 11:6; 2 Kgs 1:15; 19:6; 25:26; Isa 37:6; Jer 1:17; 39:17; 41:18; 42:11; Ezek 3:9.

[26] Eccl 3:14; 2 Chr 36:12. Other Hebrew formal translation equivalents of ܢܡ by itself in this collocation include the construct (Exod 18:21; Isa 50:10; Job 1:1; Ps 25:12; 128:1, 4; Prov 14:2; 31:30), ø (absence of marker in Hebrew before the direct object) (Lev 19:3, 30; 26:2; Ezek 11:8; Ps 23:4; 55:20; Prov 13:13; Eccl 9:2), attached pronominal suffix to the verb (Deut 3:22; Mal 3:5; Job 9:35), אֶל (2 Kgs 4:13; Jer 2:19), and ב (Jer 51:46; Ezra 10:3).

[27] Deut 6:24; 17:19; 2 Sam 6:9; 1 Kgs 1:51; 18:3; Eccl 12:13.

[28] 1 Sam 31:3; 1 Chr 10:3.

2.2.2 Peal ܕܚܠ "he feared" governing ܠ "for"

Second, Peal ܕܚܠ can govern the preposition ܠ with the meaning "fear for someone" as evident from ܕܠܡܐ ܢܫܒܘܩ ܐܒܝ ܡܢ ܐܬܢܐ ܘܢܕܚܠ ܠܢ. ܬܘ ܢܗܦܘܟ *Come, let us return. Perhaps my father will forget thinking about the donkeys and fear for us* (1 Sam 9:5) and ܐܫܬܟܚܝ ܐܬܢܐ ܕܐܙܠܬ ܠܡܒܥܐ. ܘܗܐ ܫܒܩ ܐܒܘܟ ܡܢ ܐܬܢܐ ܘܕܚܠ ܠܟܘܢ. ܘܐܡܪ ܡܢܐ ܐܥܒܕ ܠܒܪܝ *The donkeys that you went to seek have been found. And behold your father has forgotten thinking about the donkeys and fears for you and said: What should I do about my son?* (1 Sam 10:2). Both cases appear in the episode where young Saul and a servant seek the lost donkeys of his father Kish.

2.3 Josh 9:24

The appearance of the syntagm ܕܚܠ ܡܢ in Josh 9:24 needs to be evaluated in light of the foregoing. The text, in which the inhabitants of Gibeon are speaking to Joshua, reads as follows: ܘܕܚܠܢ ܠܟ ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܢܦܫܢ *(That the Lord your God commanded to Moses his servant to give you the entire land and to destroy all its inhabitants from before you has indeed been heard by your servants.) So we feared exceedingly from our inner being (and did thus).* The Hebrew ונירא מאד לנפשתינו could be translated *and so we were very frightened for our lives.*[29] Everywhere else in the Peshitta OT the ܡܢ of the collocation ܕܚܠ ܡܢ could be translated by "(be frightened) of." To express "fear for someone" one would expect the preposition ܠ to be used. So, I suggest, that this ܡܢ be understood as "from the standpoint of," that it expresses the origin[30] of the activity of fearing.

3. GOVERNMENT OF PAEL ܨܠܝ "HE PRAYED"

3.1 Government of Pael ܨܠܝ "he prayed" in Peshitta Isaiah

The Peshitta of Isaiah distinguishes praying to God and praying to idols by its choice of preposition governed by Pael ܨܠܝ. When prayer is addressed to God, Pael ܨܠܝ governs the preposition ܩܕܡ. But, when the prayer is offered to idols, Pael ܨܠܝ governs the preposition ܠ. Pael ܨܠܝ governs the preposition ܩܕܡ three times in Isaiah: ܘܨܠܝ ܚܙܩܝܐ ܩܕܡ ܡܪܝܐ ܘܐܡܪ *And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord* (Isa 37:15; ויתפלל חזקיהו אל יהוה); ܟܠ ܕܨܠܝܬ ܩܕܡܝ ܥܠ ܣܢܚܪܝܒ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܬܘܪ ܫܡܥܬ *All that you have prayed before me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard (the Lord speaking to Hezekiah* Isa 37:21; אשר התפללת אלי אל־סנחריב מלך אשור); ܘܨܠܝ ܚܙܩܝܐ ܩܕܡ ܡܪܝܐ *And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord* (Isa 38:2; ויתפלל אל יהוה). By contrast, Pael ܨܠܝ governs the preposition ܠ four times in Isaiah: ܘܡܨܠܐ ܠܗ *and they pray to it [the idol]* (Isa 44:17; ויתפלל אליו); ܘܡܨܠܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܕܠܐ ܦܪܩ *and they pray to a god [a wooden idol]*

---

[29] Jerome however rendered the context as: "timuimus igitur valde et providimus animabus nostris vestro terrore conpulsi" (*we feared therefore exceedingly and we provided for ourselves, compelled by fear of you*).

[30] For ܡܢ expressing origin cf.: ܘܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܡܢ ܨܒܝܢܝ *and it was not of my own will* (Num 16:28); ܘܐܡܪ ܠܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܡܬܢܒܝܢ ܡܢ ܠܒܗܘܢ *and say to those who prophesy from their imagination* (Ezek 13:2); ܐܡܠܟܘ ܐܠܐ ܠܐ ܡܢܝ *they crown kings but not at my prompting* (Hos 8:4).

that cannot save (Isa 45:20; ומתפללים אל אל לא יושיע‎); ܠܗ ܡܨܠܝܢ ܗܘ *they also pray to it [a silver idol]* (Isa 46:6; אף ישתחוו‎); ܠܗ ܡܨܠܝܢ ܗܘܐ *and also they pray to it [an idol]* (Isa 46:7; אף־יצעק אליו‎).

3.2 Government of Pael ܨܠܝ "he prayed" according to the lexica

The lexical tradition of Payne Smith lists the prepositions ܠ and ܠܘܬ with the Pael ܨܠܝ, but not the preposition ܩܕܡ.[31] By contrast, *SL* lists the prepositions ܩܕܡ and ܠ, but not the preposition ܠܘܬ.[32] How do the findings in Peshitta Isaiah measure up to those in the rest of the Peshitta OT? Is this idiosyncratic on the part of the translator of Isaiah or does it reflect a certain period of Syriac?

3.3 Government of Pael ܨܠܝ "he prayed" elsewhere in the Peshitta Old Testament

Elsewhere in the Peshitta OT, Pael ܨܠܝ in reference to the God of Israel governs the preposition ܩܕܡ in the vast majority of cases, 103 times or 91% of the cases.[33] Pael ܨܠܝ governs the preposition ܠ seven times or 6% of the cases[34] and the preposition ܠܘܬ three times or 3% of the cases.[35] The syntagm ܨܠܝ ܠ appears in three other books, 2 Kings, Psalms, and 2 Chronicles, while the syntagm ܨܠܝ ܠܘܬ appears in only two books, Judges and Psalms. In 2 Chr 17:3, ܨܠܝ ܠ refers to images, but in all the other six cases, four of which appear in 2 Chronicles, to the God of Israel. In Judg 10:14, ܨܠܝ ܠܘܬ refers to "the gods," but in the Book of Psalms to the God of Israel.

3.4 Government of Pael ܨܠܝ "he prayed" in the New Testament

There is very little data from the Peshitta NT (two cases), where only ܨܠܝ ܠ is attested. Mt 6:6 reads ܘܨܠܐ ܠܐܒܘܟ ܕܒܟܣܝܐ *and pray to your father who is in secret* both in the Old Syriac and the Peshitta versions. 1 Cor 11:13 reads ܐܢ ܐܦ ܕܝܢܘܬ *Is it fitting for a woman that she should pray to God with her head uncovered?* The referent in both New Testament cases is God.

---

[31] RPS, 3400; *CSD*, 478.

[32] *SL*, 1288. Brockelmann, 628, did not indicate which prepositions Pael ܨܠܝ governed.

[33] Gen 20:17; 25:21; Exod 8:4, 8, 25–26; 9:28; 10:17–18; 14:10, 14–15; 15:25; 17:4; 22:22, 26; 32:11; Num 11:2; 21:7 (2x); 1 Sam 1:10, 12, 26; 7:5, 8–9; 8:6; 12:8, 10, 19; 15:11; 2 Sam 7:27; 1 Kgs 8:28–30, 42, 44, 48, 54; 13:6 (2x); 2 Kgs 4:33; 6:17–18; 13:4; 19:15, 20; 20:2; Jer 26:19; 29:7, 12; 32:16; 37:3; 42:2, 4, 20; Jon 2:2, 4:2; Zech 7:2; 8:21–22; Mal 1:9; Job 22:27; 33:26; Ps 37:7; 69:26; Ezra 6:21; Neh 1:4, 6; 2:4; 4:3; 9:28; 1 Chr 13:3 (2x); 16:11; 17:25–26; 21:30; 22:19; 2 Chr 6:19–21, 26, 32–34, 37; 14:3, 10; 15:4, 12–13, 15; 19:3; 20:3, 9; 25:15; 26:5; 32:24; 33:12–13; 34:21; 36:13.

[34] 2 Kgs 6:33; Ps 32:6; 2 Chr 17:3–4; 22:9; 30:19; 34:3.

[35] Judg 10:14; Ps 5:3; 107:13.

3.5 Comparative evidence from the Aramaic targums

For comparative purposes, Targum Onqelos, Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, Targum Neofiti, the Fragmentary Targums, the Geniza fragments of Palestinian targum, and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan attest only the syntagm צלי קדם. Late Jewish Literary Aramaic, however, does attest the syntagm צלי ל "pray to": צליתי לשמך ייי *I prayed to your name, O Lord* (Tg. Lam 3:55); וצלי יעבץ לאלהא דישראל *And Jabez prayed to the God of Israel* (Tg 1 Chr 4:10) and the syntagm צלי לות "pray to": קבל בקל בעותי במצליי לותך *accept the sound of my request, when I pray to you* (Tg Ps 28:2); ותצלי לותיה *and you pray to him* (Tg Job 35:14 "another rendering" of the Hebrew ותחולל לו *and you wait for him*).

3.6 Synthesis of the data

Given the distribution within Syriac and the external evidence of the targums, we can postulate that the syntagm ܨܠܝ ܩܕܡ is the more primitive of the two syntagms found in Peshitta Isaiah and that the syntagm ܨܠܝ ܠ entered the language later as its equivalent. The translator of Peshitta Isaiah arbitrarily chose to make a distinction in his use between the two syntagms, but his choice does not reflect wider usage.

4. PEAL ܗܘܐ "IT WAS" IN THE SUFFIX CONJUGATION PLUS ATTACHED PRONOMINAL SUFFIX

4.1 The lexica

In Syriac the suffix conjugation of Peal ܗܘܐ "it was" can take a pronominal suffix. The lexicographers agree on the meaning of the construction, namely "it happened to someone." Yet, they disagree on the description of the construction. J. Payne Smith states that the construction appears "often in exclamations."[36] The evidence, however, does not corroborate this assertion. R. Payne Smith is more circumspect, only describing the form as a verbal construction with an affix.[37] He does, however, bring examples from texts and early lexica.[38] Sokoloff, following Brockelmann, describes this construction as ܗܘܐ with the accusative ("with acc."), though translating ܡܢܐ ܗܘܐܠܗ as "what happened to him" (Exod 32:1).[39] His descriptive category "with the accusative" is problematic in view of his translation, which is a dative. Apparently, his use of the descriptive "accusative" derives from Arabic, since his source Brockelmann was an Arabist, and signals an adverbial accusative.[40] In Arabic the verb can govern either a noun in the accusative case or a preposition

---

[36] *CSD*, 101. In my opinion, she mistranslates ܡܢܐ ܗܘܐܠܗ as "what is this? why is this?"

[37] RPS, 985.

[38] Ibid., 984–85.

[39] *SL*, 334, meaning 6. Brockelmann, 173, translates *ei accidit*.

[40] I owe this observation to Dr. Steven A. Kaufman, who suggested understanding the construction as expressing "it was to himwise" and so forth.

with the noun in the genitive case.[41] By "accusative" then, it seems that Sokoloff, following Brockelmann, means the absence of a preposition, though he does not explain his use of the term. The parallel structure in Hebrew requires the preposition ל introducing an indirect object (מה היה לי Exod 32:1).

4.2 Attestation in the Peshitta Old Testament

This unusual form, a finite form of the verb "to be" plus a suffix, appears eight times in the Peshitta OT. Its use here is restricted to the third person masculine and feminine singular of the suffix conjugation. The third masculine singular and first common singular suffixes appear with the third masculine singular suffix conjugation, while the second masculine plural suffix appears with the third feminine singular suffix conjugation. The data from the Peshitta OT follow:

4.2.1 3m.s. suffix conjugation + 3m.s. suffix

4.2.1.1 Exod 32:1, ܘܡܢܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܠܐ ܝܕܥܝܢ *We do not know what happened to him*

4.2.1.2 Exod 32:23, ܘܡܢܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܠܐ ܝܕܥܝܢ *We do not know what happened to him*

4.2.1.3 2 Sam 18:29, ܗܘܐ ܠܗ ܡܢܐ ܠܐ *I don't know what happened to him [Absalom]* (Ahimaaz speaking to King David)

4.2.2 3m.s. suffix conjugation + 1c.s. suffix

4.2.2.1 2 Sam 16:10 ܗܟܢܐ ܗܘܐܢܝ ܠܡܢܐ *Why has it happened to me so?*

4.2.2.2 Job 6:2 ܐܫܬܩܠ ܪܘܓܙܝ ܕܝܢ ܐܠܘ, *And would that my wrath be weighed, and what happened to me, in the balances together.*

4.2.2.3 Job 30:13 ܚܕܝܘ ܗܘܐܢܝ ܟܠ ܥܠ ܘܗܘ *and they rejoiced over what happened to me.*

4.2.3 3f.s. suffix conjugation + 2m.pl. suffix

4.2.3.1 Judg 20:12 ܕܗܘܬ ܗܕܐ ܒܝܫܬܐ, ܗܝ ܡܢܐ *What is this evil that has happened to you?*

4.2.3.2 Isa 50:11 ܗܕܐ ܗܘܬܟܘܢ ܐܝܕܝ ܡܢ *From my hand this happened to you.*

4.3 Attestation in the Peshitta New Testament

In the New Testament, the use of this construction is attested only in the Book of Acts. All three cases consist of the third masculine singular suffix conjugation plus the third masculine singular pronominal suffix:

---

[41] Wright, *A Grammar*, 2:44D, § 21.

4.3.1 3m.s. suffix conjugation + 3m.s. suffix

4.3.1.1 Acts 7:40 ܠܗ ܢܪܥܐ ܒܝܠܐ ܡܢܘ ܗܘܝܗܝ، *We do not know what happened to him* (see Exod 32:1 and 23)

4.3.1.2 Acts 28:5 ܘܡܕܡ ܕܒܝܫ ܠܗ ܗܘܝܗܝ، *and nothing bad happened to him* (after Paul shook a serpent off his hand into the fire)

4.3.1.3 Acts 28:6 ܘܚܙܘ ܕܡܕܡ ܕܒܝܫ ܠܗ ܗܘܝܗܝ، *and they saw that nothing bad happened to him [Paul]*

4.4 Attestation outside the Bible

4.4.1 As cited by R. Payne Smith and J.P. Margoliouth

Robert Payne Smith and his daughter J.P. Margoliouth[42] have cited cases in sources outside of the Bible, which we include here for the sake of completeness:

4.4.1.1 3m.s. suffix conjugation + 2m.s. suffix

4.4.1.1.1 ܡܢ ܗܘܝܟ *What happened to you?*[43]

4.4.1.2 3f.s. suffix conjugation + 1c.s. suffix

4.4.1.2.1 ܗܘܬ ܠܝ ܐܢܐ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܕܣܘܪ̈ܝܝܐ ܘܚܠܫܐ ܕܟܪ̈ܣܛܝܢܐ ܕܐܛܢ ܡܢ ܥܡܠܐ ܕܚܬܝܪ̈ܘܬܗܘܢ ܘܠܡܣܚܦܘ ܪܡܘܬ ܓܘܕܦܝ̈ܗܘܢ *it has befallen me, the feeble one of the Syrians and the weak one of the Christians, to be zealous against the toil of their conceits and to destroy the haughtiness of their vituperations.*[44] The preposition ܠ + attached pronoun (ܠܝ) seems to emphasize the "me" (ܝ-) attached to the verb, unless it is conditioned by the apposition (the feeble one of the Syrians and the weak one of the Christians).

4.4.1.2.2 ܗܘܬܢܝ *it happened to me*[45]

4.4.1.3 3f.s. suffix conjugation + 1c.pl. suffix

4.4.1.3.1 ܗܘܬܢ *it happened to us*[46]

---

[42] Jessie Payne Margoliouth is the married name of Jessie Payne Smith. She published under both her maiden name and her married name.

[43] Cited by Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 97; from Bickell, *Kalilag und Damnag*, 12, line 8, 56, line 7; and Budge, *The Book of Paradise*, vol. 2, 690, line 14.

[44] Ebedjesu (Abdisho bar Brikha; †1318), cited by RPS, 984, from Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*, 3.1:326. RPS cites only ܗܘܬ ܠܝ ܠܡܛܢ, which he glosses as *evenit mihi, oblata est mihi occasio insurgendi*.

[45] Balai (early 5th century) in Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri*, 314, line 2, cited by RPS, 984.

[46] Balai in Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri*, 309, line 9, cited by RPS, 984.

4.4.2 As cited by Sokoloff (Brockelmann)

Sokoloff following Brockelmann records a case of the third masculine singular suffix conjugation with the third feminine singular suffix:

4.4.2.1 3m.s. suffix conjugation + 3f.s. suffix

4.4.2.1.1 ܗܘܐ ܟܒܝ ܠܚܠܝܬܗ، ܗܘ *Alas for my oppressed state, what has happened to it?*[47]

4.5 Summary

To summarize the findings, the construction of Peal ܗܘܐ in the third singular masculine or feminine singular[48] suffix conjugation with a pronominal suffix means "it happened to someone." The attached pronoun expresses the indirect object.

4.6 The Syrohexapla

The language of the Syrohexapla manifests the indirect object with Peal ܗܘܐ indicated by ܠ + pronominal suffix as in ܠܐ ܝܕܥܝܢ ܟܢܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܗ *We do not know what happened to him* (Exod 32:1, 23 οὐκ οἴδαμεν τί γέγονεν αὐτῷ) and ܡܛܠܠܝ، ܗܘܝ، ܗܘ ܠܟܘܢ *because of me these (things) happened to you* (Isa 50:11 δι᾽ ἐμὲ ἐγένετο ταῦτα ὑμῖν).

4.7 The syntagm ܐܢܘܢ ܗܘܐ "it happened to them"

SL cites two cases where Peal ܗܘܐ appears with the third masculine plural independent pronoun ܐܢܘܢ in, the syntagm meaning "it happened to them," which fact speaks for his use of the term "accusative" in his definition. The Peshitta of Lk 13:2 reads as follows: ܕܗܟܢܐ ܗܘܐ ܐܢܘܢ *for thus it happened to them*. The Old Syriac Gospel text witness Sinaiticus reads the same. However, the Old Syriac text witness Curetonianus reads ܕܗܘܐ ܗܟܢ ܓܕܫ ܠܗܘܢ *for thus it happened to them* instead. Curetonianus substitutes another idiom, where Peal ܓܕܫ appears and the indirect object is expressed by ܠ + attached pronoun.[49] In the Acts of the Martyrs the construction also appears: ܘܠܐܝܘ ܘܐܬܬܥܝܩܘ ܥܠ ܡܕܡ ܕܗܘܐ ܐܢܘܢ *and they toiled and grieved over what happened to them*.[50] So, while we may not be satisfied with the

---

[47] *SL*, 334, citing the 5th century Narsai in Feldmann, *Syrische Wechsellieder von Narses*, 25, verse 24.

[48] The form ܢܗܘܝ, the plural of Peal ܗܘܐ plus a suffix, cited by RPS, 985, according to the lexicon of Bar Ali is spurious.

[49] Peshitta OT attests the syntagm ܠ + ܓܕܫ both with an attached pronoun and with a noun, meaning "to happen to," as in ܘܐܫܬܥܝܘ ܠܗ ܟܠ ܡܕܡ ܕܓܕܫ ܠܗܘܢ *and they told him everything that happened to them* (Josh 2:23) and ܕܠܡܐ ܐܚܙܐ ܒܒܝܫܬܐ ܕܬܓܕܫ ܠܐܒܝ *lest I see the evil that will befall my father* (Gen 44:34). Susanna, however, attests the syntagm ܓܕܫ + attached pronoun to mean the same: ܡܕܡ ܕܓܕܫܗ *what happened to her* and ܥܠ ܡܕܡ ܕܓܕܫܗ *because of what happened to her*" (Sus 26, 35 = Dan 13:26, 35).

[50] Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, 2:103, line 9.

description as ܗܘܐ with the accusative, at least we can grasp the problem. Functionally, the pronoun expresses the indirect object and that might make a better descriptive. Or perhaps we should describe the construction as consisting of the verb directly governing an attached pronoun that functions as the recipient of the action. After all, Syriac has no case endings.

4.8 Order of the meanings of Peal ܗܘܐ "it happened, it was" presented in a lexicon

Further, this syntagm raises the issue of order of presentation of meanings in the dictionary. For, as Frank Polak has demonstrated, the Hebrew Qal היה originally was a motion verb meaning "to fall."[51] Then it took on the meaning "to occur," and finally the meaning "to be." What can be said here for Hebrew can also be said of Aramaic, including Syriac. In view of Polak's research, the Syriac form discussed here reflects an earlier usage of the lexeme, forming one meaning of Peal ܗܘܐ.

Comparison with the Hebrew lexica on their presentations of the cognate Hebrew verb (Qal היה) proves instructive. BDB gives three definitions of the cognate Hebrew verb: 1) "fall out," "come to pass," 2) "become," and 3) "be." HALOT lists the first three meanings as 1) "to come to pass, occur," 2) "happen, occur," and 3) "to be, become." In other words, the Hebrew lexica consider the meaning "to be" to be a development from "come to pass, happen." The future lexicon of Syriac would be wise to follow suit. The basic meaning of Syriac Peal ܗܘܐ was not "he was," but rather "it happened." The order of presenting the semantic range of a verb is important. By contrast to the Hebrew lexical tradition, the Syriac lexical tradition records "to be" as the first definition, then "to become, be made" and "to happen."[52] *SL* also adds the definitions "to come true, be fulfilled" and "to fall down."[53] The last definition is tentative, based on the interpretation of God's command addressed to the snow ܗܘܝ ܐܪܥܐ (Job 37:6) as *fall down to earth*.[54]

5. CONCLUSION

Computer assisted analysis of the Peshitta OT has produced some positive results regarding verbal valency of Peal ܕܚܠ "he feared," Pael ܨܠܝ "he prayed," and Peal ܗܘܐ "it was." While ܕܚܠ ܡܢ means "to fear someone," ܕܚܠ ܥܠ means "to fear for someone." The compound preposition ܡܢ ܩܕܡ also appears frequently with ܕܚܠ, meaning "to fear from before (someone or something)." The syntagm ܨܠܝ ܩܕܡ is the primary syntagm to express "pray to" in the Peshitta OT, while ܨܠܝ ܠ and ܨܠܝ ܥܠ and ܠܘܬ are marginal and probably reflect language development. Historically, Peal ܗܘܐ

---

51 I thank Prof. Jan Joosten for pointing me to Polak, "Hebrew HĀYĀH: Etymology, Bleaching, and Discourse Structure."

52 *SL*, 333–34; Brockelmann, 173; RPS, 983–84; *CSD*, 101.

53 *SL*, 334.

54 Ibid.

meant "it happened" before taking on the meaning "it was." Future lexicographers of Syriac should follow this order in their presentation of this verb. The pronoun attached to Peal ܗܘܐ in the construction rendered "it happened to someone" should be described as the indirect object or as the expresser of the recipient, not as an accusative.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Assemanus, Joseph Simonius, ed. *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana.* Part 3 vol. 1. Rome: Sacra Congragatio de Propaganda Fide, 1725.

Bedjan, Paul, ed. *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum.* 7 vols. Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1890–1897.

Bickell, Gustav, ed. *S. Isaaci Antiocheni, Doctoris Syrorum, Opera Omnia.* Vol. 1. Gissae: J. Ricker, 1873.

———. ed. *Kalilag und Damnag.* Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1876.

Brockelmann, Carl. *Lexicon Syriacum.* 2nd ed. Halle: Niemeyer, 1928.

Brown, Francis, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs*, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic*, based on the lexicon of William Gesenius as translated by Edward Robinson. Oxford: Clarendon, 1907; corrected ed. 2002.

Budge, E.A. Wallis, ed. *The Book of Paradise: Being the Histories and Sayings of Monks and Ascetics of the Egyptian Desert.* Vol. 2: *English Translation–Continued, Index and Syriac Text.* London: Drugulin, 1904.

Dyk, Janet W. "Desiderata for the Lexicon from a Syntactic Point of View." Pages 141–56 in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography I.* Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics 1. Edited by A. Dean Forbes and David G.K. Taylor. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2005.

Feldmann, Franz, ed. *Syrische Wechsellieder von Narses.* Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1896.

Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, M.E.J. Richardson and J.J. Stamm et al., *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000).

Margoliouth, J.P. *Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus of R. Payne Smith.* London: Oxford University Press, 1927. Repr. Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1981.

Nöldeke, Theodor. *Compendious Syriac Grammar.* Translated from the 2nd German ed. by James Crichton. London: Williams & Norgate, 1904. Repr. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001.

Overbeck, J. Josephus, ed. *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni, Balaei Aliorumque, Opera Selecta e Codicibus Syriacis Manuscriptis in Museo Britannico et Bibliotheca Bodleiana Asservatis Primus Ededit.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1865. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2007.

Payne Smith, J., ed. *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, founded upon the Thesaurus Syriacus of R. Payne Smith*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1903. Repr. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1998. Repr. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1999.

Payne Smith, R., ed. *Thesaurus Syriacus*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1891. Repr. Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1981. Repr. in 3 vols with *A Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus* Piscataway: Gorgias, 2007.

Polak, Frank. "Hebrew HĀYĀH: Etymology, Bleaching, and Discourse Structure." Pages 379–98 in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation: Studies Presented to Professor Eep Talstra on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*. Edited by W.Th. van Peursen and J.W. Dyk. Studia Semitica Neerlandica 57. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's 'Lexicon Syriacum'*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2009.

Stevenson, Paul S. "The Semantics of Syriac Motion Verbs in Exodus 1–19." Pages 121–56 in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography IV*. Edited by Kristian S. Heal and Alison G. Salvesen. Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics 5. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2014.

———. "The Semantics of Syriac Motion Verbs in Exodus 1–19, Part II." Pages 107–9 in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography V*. Edited by Jonathan Loopstra and Michael Sokoloff. Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics 7. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2013.

Wright, William. *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*. Vol. 2. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898. Repr. 1971.

CHAPTER 3
HOW DO HEBREW VERBS DIFFER?
A FLOW CHART OF THE DIFFERENCES

Janet W. Dyk

Eep Talstra Centre for Bible and Computer
Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

A strict distinction between semantics and syntax is difficult to maintain since the significance of a sentence is contained in and expressed by the elements occurring in it. In the majority of languages a verb is necessary as the core of the most frequent type of sentence structure. The chosen verb determines the basic structure of the sentence involved, often not so much in the order of elements as in the number and nature of the elements occurring in the sentence. The core lexical meaning of a verb is made visible in the elements with which it occurs; specific satellites modify the significance by reducing or expanding the valence or by adding other types of information. The differences between biblical Hebrew verbs as projected onto syntax are brought together in a flow chart. The presence or absence of specific sentence constituents is charted through a set of choices. In this way differences between verbs are traceable and comparable. It is possible to compare the specific contribution a particular type of sentence constituent makes to the significance of a verb with the contribution of the same constituent to sentences with other verbs. The elements contributing to patterns occurring with different types of verbs, for example, a transitive verb, an intransitive verb, or a verb of movement, are made visible.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the majority of languages a verb is necessary as the core of the most frequent type of sentence structure. Not only do various types of verbs reveal their differences by means of the patterns in which they occur (for example, transitive verbs versus verbs of movement), but a single verb may also occur in a variety of syntactic patterns which influence the particular meaning in a given instance. Lexica often provide a broad range of meanings for a single verb, including specific significances when accompanied by particular prepositional phrases, but because a

pattern might be affected by a combination of elements, it is not always clear under which conditions a specific significance is applicable. Exegetes and translators at times take the liberty of choosing rather freely from the available dictionary glosses, apparently not being sufficiently aware that elements present in the context could pose restrictions on the choice of rendering.

The French linguist Lucien Tesnière (1893–1954) introduced the term *valence* into linguistics.[1] He borrowed the term from chemistry where it is a measure of the number of bonds formed by an atom of a given element. For most elements in chemistry the number of bonds can vary. The number of bonds and the types of elements with which an element bonds result in different compound elements (for example, the element oxygen in H_2O and CO_2). With regard to language, the term *valence* is used to refer to various types of relations, such as:

- lexical valence—lexical items that communicate a "negative or positive attitude,"[2] such as "ensure," with a positive ring to it, and "conspire," with negative connotations;
- semantic valence—the thematic relations within a sentence, that is, the role that a phrase has in the action or state presented by the verb, for example, the agent, who performs an action of the verb, and the patient, who undergoes the action. These thematic roles are sometimes also called "participant role," "semantic role," or "deep case relations";[3]
- syntactic valence—the "range of syntactic elements either required or specifically permitted by a verb,"[4] or the number and kind of arguments controlled by a verbal predicate.[5]

Our research is concentrated on the latter type, that is, on syntactic valence, in which we focus on the ability of a verb to occur in specific patterns of other sentence constituents.[6] How important a verb is within a sentence can be seen in the fact that in many languages the verb determines the basic structure of the sentence involved, not so much in the order of elements as in the number and nature of elements occurring in that sentence.

The other elements in a sentence indicate the participants filling a role in the action of the verb as well as providing information on diverse aspects of the situation in which the action takes place, such as location, time, manner, and other accompanying circumstances.[7]

---

[1] Cf. Tesnière, *Éléments de syntaxe*, 238.

[2] Polanyi and Zaenen, "Contextual Valence Shifters," 1.

[3] Cf. Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 147: "semantic valence … valence here refers to the number of semantic arguments that a particular verb can take."

[4] Matthews, *Dictionary of Linguistics*, 294.

[5] Crystal, *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 507.

[6] Allerton, *Valency*, 1, 2; cf. Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 147: "The syntactic valence of a verb is the number of overt morpho-syntactically coded arguments it takes."

[7] Allerton, *Valency*, 57, 58; cf. also Allerton, "Valency Grammar."

For the sentence in which it occurs to be grammatically correct, a verb requires a certain number and type of arguments. Considerable efforts are invested within linguistics to determine what the valence of a verb is. The fact that a verb can occur with different valence patterns has led to the use of the terms *valence reduction* and *valence expansion*. An example is the verb "eat," which by nature is said to be transitive or divalent, as in "he eats an apple." However this can be reduced to "he eats," without becoming ungrammatical. On the other hand, verbs such as "sleep," which usually do not take a direct object, can occur with a direct object, such as in the sentence, "she sleeps the sleep of the innocent." This is then called *valence expansion*.

On what basis can we determine that a verb is monovalent and has undergone expansion when it occurs with a direct object instead of calling the verb divalent or transitive? Or, that it is divalent or transitive by nature and undergoes *valence reduction* when it occurs without a direct object? Is that which occurs the most frequently— that is, statistics—determinate? What happens then when the language shifts in its preference and the statistics change?

Besides this, a verb together with a specific element does not necessarily mean the same as when occurring without that element, for example, the verb "eat" does not mean the same in the two sentences "he eats an apple" and "he eats." The latter is about the act of eating itself, while the former is about eating something specific. The statement without a direct object could be a significant communication in the context of someone who has been fasting or who has been too ill to eat at all.

When registering which elements occur with a verb, distinction is made between required elements, called *complements*, and optional elements, called *adjuncts*.[8] It is no simple matter to define the distinction between the two. Tests designed to distinguish them on the basis of semantic, morpho-syntactic, or functional criteria have proven to be less than watertight.[9] There seem to be "no formal or operational criteria for the distinction" and no types of constituents that are by nature a complement or an adjunct.[10] For example, a phrase indicating location is in some sentences merely extra information, but with verbs of movement such phrases consistently form a part of the pattern occurring with these verbs. Also, in longer stretches of text, elements which are commonly viewed as obligatory for a particular verb could be omitted because the context supplies the information. Furthermore, even when an optional element can be omitted without creating ungrammaticality, the meaning of the sentence may be altered by the presence or absence of this optional element: it is not the case that the sentence with the extra element entails the sentence without it.[11]

---

[8] Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 355; Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 689–90.

[9] See Vater, "Complements and Adjuncts," 21–46; cf. also Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 163.

[10] Cf. Vater, "Complements and Adjuncts," 39.

[11] Cf. Günther, "Valence in Categorial Syntax," 131.

Compare the meaning of "go" in the sentences "I'm going to the city," meaning that I will move in the direction of the city, "I'm going to cook," meaning I am about to undertake the activity of cooking, and "I'm going," meaning "I am leaving." As interesting as the question concerning the theoretical valence of a particular verb may be, before one could take the step of abstracting this from patterns as they occur, it is necessary to chart the diverse syntactic combinations in which a verb occurs, registering which elements are present, which roles these elements have in relation to the verb, and what the effect on the significance of the total structure is.

In the present project we employ the following method:

1. collect all occurrences of a verb with the complete patterns of elements as they occur in the data;
2. sort these by pattern;
3. analyse the differences between the various patterns, observing what relation the separate sentence constituents have to the verb involved.

This method brings to light the various patterns in which a verb occurs as well as the specific function which a certain element has when occurring with a particular verb. As a recent development in our research, we have realized that to capture the relation which an element has to the verb, it is not sufficient merely to distinguish between complements and adjuncts. Rather, the latter distinction must often be supplemented by some combination of three additional dimensions:[12]

- the grammatical function (specifically: direct object and indirect object)[13]
- the lexical characteristics of the elements involved
- the semantic role of the element in the construction

---

[12] Cf. "A verb's inherent relationality is obviously semantically motivated… From a semantic point of view, participants are commonly characterized by the semantic roles they fulfill … However, a verb's valence pattern is not completely predictable on the basis of the semantic roles that its participants play in the situation in question. On the one hand, participants with identical semantic roles may show up as different types of arguments … On the other hand, participants with different semantic roles my show up as the same type of argument … It is therefore common for grammarians to take valence as a syntactic notion and to characterize the verbal arguments by the **grammatical relations** they bear, such as subject, direct object, indirect object, etc. But most common is perhaps the characterization of valence both in semantic and in syntactic terms, reflecting both its semantic motivation and its partial conventionalization in terms of arbitrary linguistic rules." Haspelmath and Müller-Bardey, "Valence Change," 1131; emphasis original.

[13] In treatment of the subject, we have chosen to acknowledge the distinctive character of the relationship of the subject to the verb as compared to the other sentence constituents. Therefore, our list of grammatical relationships does not include the subject. This choice is based on our work with Hebrew data, where an explicit subject is often not required, and not on a theoretical preference for constituency grammar over dependency grammar.

Though the lists of lexical characteristics and semantic roles are theoretically open sets, in practice once the complement–adjunct distinction has been established and the grammatical function, where applicable, only a rather limited list of lexical characteristics and semantic roles is necessary to account for the significance of the pattern present. The elements which most frequently need to be further specified in the patterns are *location* (which can be either a lexically determined characteristic or a semantic role of an element in the constellation) and the semantic role *benefactive*, or, "the one affected," since this could also be negative (*malefactive*). Which combination of the four dimensions (complement–adjunct, grammatical function, lexical characteristic, semantic role) is necessary varies per verb and per type of constellation.[14] Using a combination of various dimensions has the advantage that no single aspect need be expanded to cover all of the observed phenomena. The language system is efficient in its use of a selection of a limited set of elements from the four dimensions.[15] One of the effects of incorporating multiple dimensions in accounting for the valence pattern is that the way is paved for discussion with colleagues who follow other approaches.

Although a verb can have different meanings, most often the pattern in which in occurs determines which of its various possibilities is applicable in a particular case. Thus, the long lists of dictionary meanings turn out not to be available as translation or interpretation at all times and in all cases. In this we see that syntax

---

[14] For results of the analysis of double-object constructions, see Dyk, Glanz, and Oosting, "Analysing Valence Patterns in Biblical Hebrew;" Glanz, Oosting, and Dyk, "Valence patterns in Biblical Hebrew: Classical Philology and Linguistic Patterns." For the analysis of the patterns of verbs of motion, see Oosting and Dyk, "Valence Patterns of Motion Verbs: Syntax, Semantics, and Linguistic Variation."

[15] This approach to valence distinguishes itself from approaches which concentrate on one of these aspects, whereby the categories falling under the chosen aspect need to be extended in order to cover the many different patterns and their relationships to the verb. Cf. in the present volume John Cook, "Valency: The Intersection of Syntax and Semantics," who in his work on Hebrew valence finds the suggestion of Herbst ("English Valency Structures: A First Sketch,") to be "promising." In this approach, obligatory, optional, and contextually optional complements are distinguished to account for the various relationships between a verb and its satellites. Cook does admit that "[d]etermining *contextually* optional complements is complicated by the previous category of optional complements." For the approach using semantic roles, cf. Nicolai Winther-Nielsen, "How to Classify Hebrew Verbs: Plotting Verb-Specific Roles," Chapter 5 in the present volume, where an extensive arsenal of labels of predicate classes, features, operators, and argument states are invoked to account for the semantics of a verb, which in turn is needed to explain a verb's relationship to the bound and free constituents in the verbal valence patterns. In his conclusion, Winther-Nielsen comments: "The discussion has illustrated the use of a very complex system of logical structure which many outside linguistic circles no doubt will find very difficult to use."

and semantics are intimately related, for the meaning of a structure is portrayed through, expressed in, and carried by the formal pattern in which it occurs.[16]

So as not to get stranded in theoretical issues, using examples of the verb נתן in the Qal conjugation as a case study, I first relate the range of meanings for this verb found in dictionaries to elements present in the construction.

2. RANGE OF MEANINGS FOR QAL נתן

In Hebrew, this verb occurs in combinations which at least in English need to be translated with verbs as diverse as "give," "bestow," "grant," "permit," "yield," "place," "set," "appoint," "allow to do," "deliver," "make something to be something else," and "constitute."[17] In the lexica it is not always clear under which conditions a specific significance is to be preferred. Exegetes and translators sometimes take the liberty of choosing rather freely from the available dictionary glosses without sufficiently taking into account that it could be that specific elements in the context impose restrictions on the choice of rendering.[18]

How exact are the limitations from the syntactic context on which meaning should be selected? Which elements are of importance for this? Are there factors which play a role in the effects these elements have in relation to the verb? Are there general principles which apply to a wide range of verbs? What can be formally registered in and retrieved from the database?

3.   PATTERNS PRESENT IN CONSTRUCTIONS

Qal נתן provides interesting examples because of the different patterns in which it occurs. The chief elements which affect the significance of this verb within an active construction include:

- direct object – element given, placed, or instituted
- indirect object – one to whom something is given
- location – place where the object is put

---

[16] For the "Projection Principle," see Haegeman, *Government and Binding Theory*, 47, 59, 63.

[17] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 167, refer to "the translation trap" in relation to the multiple meanings a Hebrew form can have in, for example, English.

[18] Malessa, *Untersuchungen*, 15n1, mentions four valence patterns of נתן with their distinctive significances and concludes: "Man könnte deshalb sogar statt von vier Valenzen eines Verbs von vier homonymen Verben sprechen." Our approach recognizes the need to select different verbs in translating the various patterns, but sees the different renderings as a correct recognition of the contribution the syntactic pattern as a whole to the meaning, and would not go so far as to introduce separate homonyms into the Hebrew lexicon to cover the distinctions needed by the target language to capture the syntactic patterns.

In its most frequently occurring pattern, Qal נתן occurs with a single direct object. Dependent on whether there is an indirect object present or a locative, the verb can be translated "give" or "place," respectively, as in:

With an indirect object:

Gen 12:7

לְזַרְעֲךָ֗ אֶתֵּ֕ן אֶת־הָאָ֣רֶץ הַזֹּ֑את

To your seed I will give this land

With a locative:[19]

Gen 9:13

אֶת־קַשְׁתִּ֕י נָתַ֖תִּי בֶּעָנָ֑ן

My bow have I placed in the clouds

Interestingly, multiple locative phrases can be used to more exactly specify the place where the object is to be placed without the locatives being a specification of each other, as in:

Exod 39:20

וַיִּתְּנֻ֞ם עַל־שְׁתֵּ֣י כִתְפֹ֣ת הָאֵפֹ֡ד מִלְמַ֩טָּה֩ מִמּ֨וּל פָּנָ֜יו לְעֻמַּ֣ת מֶחְבַּרְתּ֔וֹ מִמַּ֕עַל לְחֵ֖שֶׁב הָאֵפֹֽד

and he put them [two golden rings] on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart of it, over against the coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod

This verb also can occur with more than one object in what is called a "double-object" construction. The verb then takes on the meaning of "make something into something else" or "institute something," for example:[20]

Ps 105:32

נָתַ֣ן גִּשְׁמֵיהֶ֣ם בָּרָ֑ד

He turned their rain into hail (NIRV)[21]

---

[19] Cf. Malessa, *Untersuchungen*, 31, describing the occurrence of locative elements with verbs of movement: "aber auch שים G und נתן G in der Bedeutung 'zetzen, stellen, legen'."

[20] Cf. Malessa, *Untersuchungen*, 23: "dreiwertigen Verben wie נתן G und שים G in der Bedeutung 'machen zu'."

[21] The offered translations are only a selection as illustration, being neither a complete summary of renderings in the various versions, nor a promotion of one translation or the other. Abbreviations include: ASV (American Standard Version), BBE (Bible in Basic English), DBY (Darby Bible), ERV (English Revised Version), ESV (English Standard Version), GNV (Geneva Bible), GWN (God's Word to the Nations), JPS (Jewish Publication Society), KJV (King James' Version), NAB (New American Bible), NBG (Netherlands Bible Society 1951), NBV (Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling 2004), NET (New English Translation), NIRV (New International Reader's Version), NLT (New Living Translation),

The second element of the double-object construction is often a noun phrase with or without the object marker אֵת, but it can also be introduced by ל or by כ. For such a construction to qualify as a double-object construction, it is necessary that the first and second object together form a "small clause" (verbless or nominal clause), that is, the prepositional phrase cannot introduce a location or an indirect object.

With ל:

Ps 136:21

וְנָתַן אַרְצָם לְנַחֲלָה
And he made their lands a heritage (NAB)

With כ:

1 Kgs 10:27

וַיִּתֵּן הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף בִּירוּשָׁלַ͏ִם כָּאֲבָנִים
And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones (ASV)

An infinitive clause can occur as the second object, in which case the construction means "allow someone to do something." A condition for this significance is that the first object is the one to perform the action of the infinitive. This is often but not always used in a negative sense of "not allowing" or "not permitting:"[22]

Exod 3:19

וַאֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי לֹא־יִתֵּן אֶתְכֶם מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם לַהֲלֹךְ
But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go (NET)

Ps 16:10

לֹא־תִתֵּן חֲסִידְךָ לִרְאוֹת שָׁחַת
You will not let your faithful one rot away (NIRV) … *see corruption* (KJV)

When the verb occurs without a direct object, not even an object to be inferred from the direct context, it has a more intransitive meaning, and refers to the act itself of producing, yielding, or giving:

RSV (Revised Standard Version), TNK (JPS Tanakh), WEB (The Webster Bible), W95 (Willibrordvetaling 1995), YLT (Young's Literal Translation).

    22 Cf. Malessa, *Untersuchungen*, 33: "Derartige Inf[finitiv]Gr[uppe]sind subklassen-spezifisch. Sie kommen bei zwei- und dreiwertigen Verben vor, z.B. … נתן G in der Bedeutung 'erlauben, zulassen'." The infinitive occurs both with the introductory preposition ל and without it. Cf. Malessa, *Untersuchungen*, 152–56, esp. 153 for examples of נתן.

Ps 37:21

וְצַדִּיק חוֹנֵן וְנוֹתֵן

the upright man has mercy, and gives to others (BBE)

At times translations appear to feel uncomfortable with an intransitive meaning and choose to fill in an assumed object or to adapt the text in various ways:[23]

Prov 12:12

וְשֹׁרֶשׁ צַדִּיקִים יִתֵּן

Supplying an object:

the root of the righteous yieldeth (fruit) (DBY; also ERV, GWN, JPS, KJV, NIRV, NLT, TNK)

Adapting the text:

the root of upright men is forever (BBE; also NAB, NET, RSV)

When an object is present but a locative or indirect object is lacking, the verb also has the meaning "produce; yield," or refers to the act of giving without indicating to whom something is given:

Exod 5:18

וְתֹכֶן לְבֵנִים תִּתֵּנּוּ

you must still produce the full quota of bricks (NLT)

Exod 9:23

וַיהוָֹה נָתַן קֹלֹת וּבָרָד

and the LORD sent thunder and hail (ASV)

This construction is also used for the payment of a wage or a price, indicating that the price is to be produced, not so much given as a gift:

---

[23] Cook discusses cases of "generalized complement," where the object is assumed by the nature of the verb itself, for example, the generalized complement "food" for the verb "eat." These are contrasted with "contextually optional" or elliptical objects which are present in the context and can be assumed. This approach, however, appears to leave no room for the fact that even though "eat" does imply that something is eaten, the absence of the object could have a special significance, and refer to the act itself. Even in the example of Elijah in 1 Kgs 19:5–8, where what was eaten is made explicit in the context, it could be that the fact that Elijah ate was the point of the passage, and that what he ate was incidental. Cook argues for assuming a "contextually optional" object to be present in this case; thus, eating would always be about eating something. Cf. Cook, "Valency: The Intersection."

Gen 23:13

נָתַ֛תִּי כֶּ֥סֶף הַשָּׂדֶ֖ה

I will pay you the price of the field (NAB–with added indirect object)

Exod 2:9

וַאֲנִ֖י אֶתֵּ֥ן אֶת־שְׂכָרֵ֑ךְ

and I will pay your wages (TNK)

In many languages, body parts can be used in a figurative or metaphorical manner. In the pattern just discussed, when the object involved is "hand," a different rendering is required in English, because "give a hand" in English means "to help someone do something," which does not reflect the Hebrew idiom. The Hebrew verb can be rendered "stretch forth." Similarly, when "voice" is the object with this verb, the verb needs to be rendered as "raise (produce) voice," in the sense of "letting oneself be heard loudly," which deviates from the sense of "give voice" in English, where it is used for "articulate; put into words; give expression to":

Gen 38:28

וַיִּתֶּן־יָ֑ד

and one of the babies reached out his hand (NLT)

Prov 1:20

בָּ֝רְחֹב֗וֹת תִּתֵּ֥ן קוֹלָֽהּ

in the open places she [wisdom] raises her voice (NAB)

Recognizing the meaning "produce, yield" or the simple act of giving in itself for the pattern without locative or indirect object in examples which are clear helps to identify these shades of meaning in less clear examples:

Ps 68:12

אֲדֹנָ֥י יִתֶּן־אֹ֑מֶר

The Lord gives the word (BBE, DBY, NLT, similarly ERV, JPS, KJV, NIRV, WEB)

If our analysis of the pattern holds, Ps 68:12 should carry the sense that the Lord "brought forth" or "produced" the word. This same sense can be observed in the following two texts:

Ps 81:3

וּתְנוּ־תֹף

bring hither the timbrel (ERV, KJV, WEB)[24]

Ps 85:13

גַּם־יְהוָֹה יִתֵּן הַטּוֹב וְאַרְצֵנוּ תִּתֵּן יְבוּלָֽהּ

Yea, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase (RSV)

During our search for the elements which affect the significance of the verb, after exposure to much data, a series of yes–no questions to be asked of the context emerged. The questions to be asked of the context are ranked in their order of importance for determining the significance of the construction. After two elements have been registered, the significance of the verb is not altered by other elements present, even though those other elements still can retain their status as complements of the verb.

For Qal נתן, the following elements are of importance:

- the presence of the object: no object, single object, multiple objects
- the presence of an indirect object
- the presence of a location: no locative, a single locative, multiple locatives

4. FORMAL PATTERNS AND RESEARCHER'S INPUT

Sentence constituents relate to the verb in various ways and this makes a difference in the interpretation of the text. At times the relation to the verb is determined by formal characteristics of the constituent, such as the particular introductory preposition. There are also points at which the researcher, exegete, or translator makes a choice which is determinate for the analysis, for example, in assigning a particular relation of an element to the verb, and in assuming the presence of an element not explicit in the pattern under consideration,[25] that is, making explicit information which is assumed to be implicit in the source text.

With Qal נתן the input of the researcher is noticeable in regard to the phrase introduced by ל, since the ל phrase can introduce three different elements: the indirect object, the location where something is placed (though only when occurring in combination with elements such as עיני, "eyes," פני, "face," or נגד, "opposite, over against"), and the second object in a double-object construction. Each of these combinations results in a distinctive significance of this verb.

---

[24] Other translations choose for the significance which this verb has in when occurring with "voice" ("produce/raise voice"), thus rendering "sound" (DBY, GNB, JPS, NAB, NBG, RSV, TNK), "beat; strike" (GWN, NBV, NLT), or "play" (BBE, NET, NIRV, W95) the instrument.

[25] Cf. the case of whether the direct object should be filled in in 1 Kgs 19 mentioned in note 23 above.

5. HIERARCHY IN THE ROLE OF THE SENTENCE CONSTITUENTS FOR נתן QAL

The verb we are looking at occurs with different constellations of elements which result in distinct renderings. What happens when the elements of more than one pattern occur within a single text? Examples can be found with the following combinations, though this is not exhaustive:

With direct object, indirect object, and locative:

Gen 23:11

לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי־עַמִּי נְתַתִּיהָ לָּךְ

in the presence of the sons of my people I give it to you (NLT)

Gen 43:23

אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבִיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם מַטְמוֹן בְּאַמְתְּחֹתֵיכֶם

Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks (NET)

Gen 47:11

וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אֲחֻזָּה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּמֵיטַב הָאָרֶץ בְּאֶרֶץ רַעְמְסֵס

and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses (ESV)

A double object plus an indirect object:

Exod 7:1

נְתַתִּיךָ אֱלֹהִים לְפַרְעֹה

I have made you a god to Pharaoh (DBY)

Ps 74:14

תִּתְּנֶנּוּ מַאֲכָל לְעָם לְצִיִּים

Thou makest him food, For the people of the dry places (YLT)

A double object involving an element introduced by כ, plus an indirect object:

Song 8:1

מִי יִתֶּנְךָ כְּאָח לִי

O that you were like a brother to me (RSV)

A double object involving an element introduced by ל, an indirect object, and a locative:

Gen 23:9

בְּכֶסֶף מָלֵא יִתְּנֶנָּה לִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם לַאֲחֻזַּת־קָבֶר

for a full price let him make it to be for me in your midst a possession for burying (lit.)

Since a direct object plus an indirect object indicate the significance "give," a direct object plus a location indicate the significance "place," and a double object indicates the meaning "grant that something or someone become something else," constructions containing elements from more than one pattern require a hierarchy between the elements which is valid for making a justifiable choice between the possible renderings.

It appears that the significance of a structure is anchored by two elements in the context. The relative weight or importance of an element in anchoring the meaning within a construction is reflected in the following list of questions and the order in which the questions are to be asked:

- does the verb have an object?[26]
- if so, does it have another object? → results in meanings: "make X [to be] Y," "institute X [to be] Y," "grant that someone or something become something else," "[not] allow someone to do something"
- if a single object, is there an indirect object? → results in meaning: "give something to"[27]
- if a single object, is there a locative? → results in meaning: "place something somewhere"
- if a single object, lacking indirect object and locative →"yield, produce, [simple act of] giving"
- if no object → simple act of "yielding, producing, giving"

This means that, when present, the double-object pattern dominates,[28] and that an indirect object dominates over a locative in the construction. The presence of other elements does not alter the significance determined by the first two elements in the hierarchy. In our project we have chosen not to change the parsing of the other elements even though they no longer affect the rendering of the whole, choosing rather to recognize a hierarchy between the elements which function as

---

[26] Often in translations, a rendering will provide a particular verb, not so much because it is the usual equivalent for the verb in the source language, but because in the target language the verb is appropriate for the object present.

[27] Were that not the case, Gen 23:11 above would read: "place it in the presence of the sons of my people for you;" Gen 43:23 would read: "put a treasure in your sacks for you," as indeed BBE, NAB, NLT, TNK do; Gen 47:11 would read: "placed a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Ramses for them."

[28] Were that not the case, Exod 7:1 above would read: "I give you to Pharaoh, a god," to which one would tend to add "as" to the final phrase, thus converting it to one of the double-object type constructions anyway. Similarly, Ps 74:14 would read: "you give him to the people of dry places, food;" Song 8:1 would read: "Who would give you to me as a brother?"; Gen 23:9 would read with the locative predominating: "place it in your midst for me for a possession for burying," and with the indirect object predominating: "give it to me in your midst for a possession for burying."

complements to the verb. This avoids having to parse, for example, the indirect object sometimes as a complement and sometimes as an adjunct.

6. HIERARCHY BETWEEN DIRECT OBJECTS IN MULTIPLE OBJECT CONSTRUCTIONS

When multiple objects occur in a clause, which is the first object and which is the second into which the first will be made? We have found the following hierarchy to be valid between the objects:

- object suffix > את (object marker) phrase > noun phrase > prepositional phrase
- when the objects have the same form, the degree of determinativeness is determinative: the most determinate is the first object
- when the objects have the same form and degree of determinativeness, the order in which they occur is determinative: first comes first

Examples of dominance of the object suffix:

Exod 7:1

נְתַתִּ֖יךָ אֱלֹהִ֣ים לְפַרְעֹ֑ה

I have made you a god to Pharaoh (DBY)

Ps 74:14

תִּתְּנֶ֣נּוּ מַ֭אֲכָל לְעָ֣ם לְצִיִּֽים

Thou makest him food, For the people of the dry places (YLT)

These observations dovetail with those proposed for the ranking of subjects and predicates in nominal clauses,[29] and thereby reflect the fact that in a double-object construction, the verb can be said to govern a small clause.[30] It is, therefore, not strange to have the same hierarchy between multiple objects reflected as is present between the elements of a nominal clause. I must add that this aspect plays a more significant role with other verbs than with the one we are dealing with here.

7. A FLOW CHART FOR HEBREW VERBS

From the analysis of various verbal patterns, a flow chart has emerged in which the pertinent questions are asked to chart the items which influence the significance of a form. Here I will present the chart filled in specifically for the values of Qal נתן, but behind this chart is a more comprehensive chart which allows for all the pertinent questions to be asked for any verb.

---

[29] Cf. Dyk and Talstra, "Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic Features."

[30] Cf. Haegeman, *Government and Binding Theory*, 160–61.

Notes:

[1] Direct object takes the form of verbal suffix, אֶת-phrase, or unmarked NP.

[2] Referenced object is one referred to by the relative (אֲשֶׁר, שֶׁ, or הַ-relativum).

[3] Assumed direct object must be overtly present in the immediate context, though outside the current clause.

[4] Refers to cases where כְּ introduces object from which a subset is taken, לְ as object marker, or other prepositions.

[5] Hierarchy determining which object is Objc1 when there are multiple objects: sfx > אֶת-phr > NP > PP. When the phrases are of the same form, the degree of definiteness is determinate – the most definite is Objc1. When the phrases are of the same form and definiteness, the order of elements is determinate – first occurring is Objc1.

[6] The second Objc is not a locative (Cmpl-Loca), and not one affected (Cmpl-Ind Objc or Adju-Benf).

Flowchart: "Verbal Root נתנ in the Qal"

- Direct Object?[1] — No / Yes
- Referenced Object?[2] — No / Yes
- Assumed Dir. Objc?[3] — No / Yes
- Cmpl present? — No / Yes
- Cmpl as Dir. Objc?[4] — No / Yes
- Cmpl-Ind Objc? — No / Yes → 'produce; yield; give' — Prep / specific significance / ל 'to, for'
- Cmpl-Loca? — na
- No instances: with Cmpl-Loca the presence of a Dir. Objc. is assumed
- '(act of) producing, yielding, giving' (in itself)

- Establish which direct object is present in context
- Another Object?[1] — No / Yes
- Referenced Object?[2] — No / Yes
- Assumed Dir. Objc?[3] — No / Yes
- Cmpl present? — No / Yes
- Cmpl as Dir. Objc?[4] — No / Yes
- Cmpl-Ind Objc? — No / Yes → 'give' — Prep / specific significance / ל 'to, for'
- Cmpl-Loca? — No / Yes → 'place'

- Establish whether object creates an idiom
- 'produce; yield; give'

- specific significance with a double object pattern[5]
  - Objc1: sfx/ אֶת /NP, Objc2: אֶת /NP — 'make Objc1 to be Objc2'
  - Objc1: sfx/ אֶת /NP, Objc2: לְ-phrase[4] — 'make Objc1 to become Objc2'
  - Objc1: sfx/ אֶת /NP, Objc2: בְּ-phrase — 'make Objc1 to be as Objc2'
  - Objc1: sfx/ אֶת /NP, Objc2: לְ + InfConst — 'allow Objc1 to do Objc2'

- אֶל +pers: 'deposit with' +loca: 'deposit at'
- בְּ +pers: 'against' +loca: 'in'
- עַל +loca 'over; upon'
- שָׁם 'there'

The path a verb takes through the flow chart makes visible the nature of the verb involved, for instance, a verb of movement would follow a different path through the flow chart than would an intransitive or a transitive verb. Furthermore, for the benefit of translators, the path a verb takes is indicative of which factors need to be taken into account in choosing a verb in the target language that would be most suited to rendering a particular pattern present in the source language, even though the verb in the target language might not be the usual equivalent for the verb in the source language.

8. THEORETICAL QUESTIONS AS TO INHERENT VALENCE

Linguistic theory pays due attention to the question concerning the inherent valence of a verb, and provides terms such as *valence reduction* and *valence expansion* to accommodate constructions which do not represent the indicated inherent valence of the verb.

If statistics are to be a guide, we would have to propose that Qal נתן is inherently a transitive or divalent verb, since this pattern occurs in the majority of cases. However, there could be another way of looking at it, namely, from the perspective of the simplest construction, that is, the pattern without an object, referring to the act of "yielding," "producing," or "giving" in itself, without expressing an object. From this the other significances could be projected on the basis of the presence of particular characteristics of the satellites. For lexicographers, one could debate the issue whether a higher frequency of the occurrence of a particular pattern should be determined for the entry in the lexicon, or whether the basic significance could be seen as being modified by elements in the context. This would involve registering a basic meaning which would in most cases not be the most frequently occurring significance. We do not think it advisable to assume separate homonyms for each of the different syntactic patterns occurring with a verb, as Malessa suggested doing.[31] The fact that divergent renderings are necessary in a target language is not to say that in the source language these syntactic patterns represent homonyms.

The question remains, however, for what purpose is it necessary to pin a verb down to a single valence or one basic significance? At least during the phase of ongoing research, it seems to me to be much more fruitful to allow for a verb to have multiple patterns, each with its own dynamics to be rendered in the target language by a variety of verbs, if necessary.[32]

---

[31] Malessa, *Untersuchungen*, 15n1.

[32] Cf. Dyk, "The Cognate Verbs שׂים and ܣܘܡ," 185–98, where in a comparison of the occurrences of two cognate verbs within the MT and the Peshitta of Kings. In spite of correspondences in form and meaning between these two verbs, the Hebrew verb was rendered in only half of its occurrences by its cognate in Syriac, due to the diversity of valence patterns in Hebrew.

9. SUMMARY

If translators and exegetes fail to recognize the peculiarities of the construction before them, they might be in danger of choosing a significance of the verb which does not reflect the pattern present in the source text. One is not at liberty to choose freely from the lists of meanings offered in a lexicon, for the pattern of elements in the context impose restrictions on what the verb means at that point. Many lexica provide specific significances of the verb when accompanied by particular prepositional phrases, but because a pattern might be affected by a combination of elements, it is not always clear under which conditions a particular meaning is applicable. On the other hand, translations which stick rigidly to the form of the source text, could in their rendering inadvertently misrepresent the significance of the pattern present in the source language.

In creating a reliable database it is essential that the choices made by the researcher be annotated as to the relation of an element to the verb (required for its rendering or extra information), as to the assumption of information present elsewhere in the context, and as to an idiomatic expression assumed to be present. This allows other researchers to be more alert to whether they would prefer to make a different choice at that point.

There are relatively few elements which determine the significance of a verb and these are related to one another in a hierarchy as to their effect on the significance of the structure as a whole. A flow chart of "yes"–"no" questions concerning the context of a verb guides the user in recognizing which elements are important for determining the significance of the verb in question. The most determinative element for the significance of a verb is the direct object. Quite appropriately so, translations often choose a verb which matches the direct object present, even if that verb is not a usual rendering of the Hebrew verb used. Not to be forgotten is the fact that the particular direct object present in the construction may be idiomatic in its use. We saw an example of this with "stretch out" when in combination with "hand" as object ("give a hand" has a different significance in English), and "raise" when in combination with "voice" ("give a voice" has a different meaning in English). Furthermore, specific prepositions have a particular role and significance to the verb and these functions cannot be arbitrarily exchanged with one another.[33] After two questions in the Flow Chart have been answered with "yes," the significance of the construction is anchored and will not be affected by other elements present.

---

[33] The question of variation and shift in the use of prepositions is, of course, one to be kept in mind. In noting valence patterns, we have concluded that it is necessary to record not only the complement–adjunct distinction, but also the lexical characteristics of the item involved and its semantic role in relation to the verb. With this information, the researcher will be able to distinguish cases where there is variation in the use of the prepositions from cases where different lexical characteristics and/or semantic roles are involved.

There remains yet much to be discovered, sometimes small details, and sometimes radically different translations with far-reaching theological consequences. In spite of all the effort involved, the insights gained from time to time make this endeavour most rewarding. Particularly with the development of categorization which includes grammatical function, lexical characteristics, and semantic role besides the complement–adjunct distinction, we hope that the interaction with colleagues interested in valence will be enhanced.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allerton, D.J. *Valency and the English Verb*. London: Academic, 1982.

———. "Valency Grammar." Pages 301−14 in *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*. Vol. 13. Edited by Keith Brown. 2ⁿᵈ ed. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2006.

Andersen, Francis I., and A. Dean Forbes. *Biblical Hebrew Grammar Visualized*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Crystal, David. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. 6ᵗʰ ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008.

Dyk, Janet W. "The Cognate Verbs שׂים and ܣܡܡ in the Books of Kings: Similarities and Differences." Pages 185–98 in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography IV. Colloquia of the International Syriac Language Project*. Edited by Kristian S. Heal and Alison G. Salvesen. Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics 5. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2013.

Dyk, Janet W., and Eep Talstra. "Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic Features in Identifying Subject and Predicate in Nominal Clauses." Pages 133–85 in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches*. Edited by Cynthia L. Miller. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999.

Dyk, Janet, Oliver Glanz, and Reinoud Oosting. "Analysing Valence Patterns in Biblical Hebrew: Theoretical Questions and Analytic Frameworks." *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 40/1 (2014): 43–62.

Glanz, Oliver, Reinoud Oosting, and Janet Dyk. "Valence Patterns in Biblical Hebrew: Classical Philology and Linguistic Patterns", *JNSL* 41/2 (2015): 31–55.

Günther, Hartmut. "Valence in Categorial Syntax." Pages 127–56 in *Valence, Semantic Case, and Grammatical Relations: Papers Prepared for the Working Group "Valence and Semantic Case" 12th International Congress of Linguists University of Vienna, Austria, August 29 to September 3, 1977*. Edited by Werner Abraham. Studies in Language Companion Series 1. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1978.

Haegeman, Liliane. *Introduction to Government and Binding Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.

Haspelmath, M., and T. Müller-Bardey. "Valence Change." Pages 1130–45 in *Morphology: An International Handbook on Inflection and Word-Formation*. Edited by Geert Booij, Christian Lehmann, Joachim Mugdan, and Stavros

Skopeteas. Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 17.2. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004.

Herbst, Thomas. "English Valency Structures: A First Sketch." *Erfurt Electronic Studies in English* 6 (1999). Accessed December 11, 2012. http://webdoc.sub.gwdg.de/edoc/ia/eese/artic99/herbst/main1.html.

Malessa, Michael. *Untersuchungen zur verbalen Valenz im biblischen Hebräisch*. Ph.D diss., Leiden University, 2003

Matthews, Peter H. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. 2nd ed. 2007.

Merwe, Christo H.J. van der, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999.

Oosting, Reinoud, and Janet Dyk. "Valence Patterns of Motion Verbs: Semantics and Linguistic Variation in Biblical Hebrew." (i.p.).

Polanyi, Livia, and Annie Zaenen. "Contextual Valence Shifters." Pages 1–10 in *Computing Attitude and Affect in Text: Theory and Applications*. Edited by James G. Shanahan, Yan Qu, and Janyce M. Wiebe. The Information Retrieval Series 20. Dordrecht: Springer, 2006.

Tesnière, Lucien. *Éléments de syntaxe structurale*. 2nd ed. Revised and corrected by Jean Fourquet. Paris: Klincksieck, 1969.

Van Valin, Robert D., Jr., and Randy J. LaPolla. *Syntax: Structure, Meaning, and Function*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Vater, Heinz. "On the Possibility of Distinguishing between Complements and Adjuncts." Pages 21–46 in *Valence, Semantic Case, and Grammatical Relations: Papers Prepared for the Working Group "Valence and Semantic Case" 12th International Congress of Linguists University of Vienna, Austria, August 29 to September 3, 1977*. Edited by Werner Abraham. Studies in Language Companion Series 1. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1978.

Waltke, Bruce K., and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

CHAPTER 4
VALENCY: THE INTERSECTION OF SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS

John A. Cook

Asbury Theological Seminary

As the analysis of ancient texts progresses past lexical and morphological levels to syntax, the syntactic structures highlight the inadequacy of earlier lexicographic studies. In particular, the lexical determination of verbal arguments and semantic contrasts associated with variations in verb argument structure have been insufficiently treated by the standard lexica. Valency theory provides a framework for analyzing these variations in a way that advances both syntactic and lexical analysis of these ancient texts. In this paper I present a theory of valency that has been developed out of the Accordance syntax project and discuss its contribution to our knowledge of Biblical Hebrew syntax and lexicography.

1. INTRODUCTION

Along with the familiar triad of tense, aspect, and mood, *valency* is a defining property of verbs.[1] Although in Hebrew all these properties involve interaction among verbal lexemes, inflection, and syntax, valency is particularly associated with the system of *binyanim* in contrast to the association of tense, aspect, and mood foremost with the verbal conjugations. Traditionally, valency has been treated under the rubric of either voice or transitivity. However, a valency approach to Biblical Hebrew has two distinct advantages over these traditional categories: firstly, valency analysis is not hampered by the traditional categories of classical grammar; secondly, valency focuses on the nexus between verbs (that is, lexeme and *binyanim*) and argument structure (syntax). Because of this particular focus, valency studies can

---

[1] Though valency is not restricted to verbs (e.g., Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, treat valency patterns of English verbs, nouns, and adjectives), my study of valency in Biblical Hebrew has been restricted to verbal valency.

potentially contribute to Biblical Hebrew lexicography and our understanding of the *binyanim*, as well as to the decipherment of Biblical Hebrew syntax.

In this paper I introduce the concept of valency and contrast it with voice and transitivity (section 2). After this introduction, I briefly summarize approaches to valency in Hebrew grammars (section 3), explore some of the issues involved in analyzing valency patterns in Biblical Hebrew, including addressing some objections to such a study (section 4), and finally, I illustrate with specific examples how my approach to valency advances our understanding of the Biblical Hebrew lexicon and syntax (section 5).

2. UNDERSTANDING VALENCY

The term valency derives from the field of chemistry. In linguistic usage the term refers to the number of syntactic elements a verb requires or permits combining with; in short, valency refers to a verb's syntactic "combining capacity." Although theoretically limitless, the typical range of verbal valency is zero to three constituents. These four patterns—avalent, monovalent, bivalent, and trivalent—are illustrated in (1) with examples in both English and Biblical Hebrew. The constituents that define each verb's valency pattern are underlined and marked by a subscript in each example.

(1)   a.   Avalent:

תַּשְׁלֵג בְּצַלְמוֹן

(It) was snowing *on Zalmon*. (Ps 68:15)

b.   Monovalent:

לָכֵן שָׂמַח לִבִּי

Therefore $_1$*my heart* rejoices. (Ps 16:9)

c.   Bivalent:

יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי יִקָּח

$_1$*Yhwh* will accept $_2$*my prayer*. (Ps 6:10)

d.   Trivalent:

וַתַּשְׁקוּ אֶת־הַנְּזִרִים יַיִן

$_1$*You* gave $_2$*wine* $_3$*to the Nazarites*.
(or, $_1$*You* made $_2$*the Nazarites* drink $_3$*wine*.) (Amos 2:12)

These examples are self-explanatory. However, let me note that the avalent pattern illustrated in (1a) is relatively rare, because a well-formed clause typically requires both a subject and a predicate. What defines the examples in (1a) as avalent is that even where they employ a "dummy" subject pronoun, as in the English example and gloss, that pronoun fulfils no thematic role.[2] Therefore, the null-subject strategy

---

[2] "Thematic role" refers to the semantic role an argument performs, such as agent, patient, instrument, cause, locative, source, etc. (see Crystal, *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 483). This understanding of the "dummy pronoun" importantly distinguishes true

in Biblical Hebrew should not be interpreted as a valency-reducing feature of the language;[3] in all cases except the rare avalent pattern illustrated in (1a), clauses that lack an overt subject in Biblical Hebrew are best analyzed as having a null-subject constituent that serves the appropriate thematic role in the clause.

Transitivity is the analysis of the relationship of a verb to its dependent constituents, and as such clearly intersects valency. However, transitivity is a more narrow concept than valency in two crucial ways. First, transitivity analyzes only "internal arguments"; that is, the verb-phrase–internal constituents, in contrast to valency's scope of analysis that includes both internal and external arguments (that is, the subject).[4] Second, transitivity treats only the verb-dependent constituents that are found in traditional grammar, that is, direct and indirect objects; it does not take into account other constituents governed by the verb that might be included in a valency analysis. As such, the transitivity approach of traditional grammar leads to awkward discussions about so-called accusative noun phrases that function as something other than direct object and other "objects" of the verb as mediated by prepositions.[5] Given transitivity's exclusion of the subject and some prepositional constituents in its analysis, it only partially correlates with valency, as illustrated in (2).

(2)   a.   Avalent verbs are intransitive.
       b.   Monovalent verbs are intransitive, but intransitive verbs may have any valency.
       c.   Bivalent verbs may be intransitive or transitive.
       d.   Transitive verbs are at least bivalent; they cannot be monovalent.
       e.   Trivalent verbs are often ditransitive, but they may be transitive or, rarely, intransitive.
       f.   Ditransitive verbs are always trivalent; they cannot be monovalent or bivalent.

More importantly, a valency analysis better clarifies the relatedness between argument structures such as those in (3) than the traditional grammar analysis in terms of transitivity allows: valency theory identifies both the noun phrase in (3a) and the prepositional phrase in (3b) as *complements* of the verb אחז in each example.

---

subjectless constructions from those with "indefinite" subject referents, such as the impersonal constructions in Biblical Hebrew (cf. Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4.4.2 and §22.7a).

[3] Cf. Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 167.
[4] See Crystal, *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 34.
[5] E.g., Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §10–11.

(3)   a.   Bivalent אחז with noun phrase complement:

וַיֹּאחֲזוּהוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים

₁*The Philistines* seized ₂*him*. (Judg 16:21)

   b.   Bivalent אחז with ב prepositional phrase complement:

וָאֹחֵז בְּפִילַגְשִׁי

(₁*I*) seized ₂*my concubine*. (Judg 20:6)

Voice analyzes the relationship between the syntactic subject and object and the thematic roles of agent and patient as determined by the verb. For example, the transitive verb with active voice in (4a) takes a subject as agent and the object as patient, whereas the corresponding passive verb in (4b) expresses the same underlying sense while switching the patient role to subject and encoding the agent role with a prepositional phrase.

(4)   a.   *The* Subject & Agent*opera singer* sang Object & Patient*an aria*.
   b.   Subject & Patient*An aria* was sung Agent*by the opera singer*.

Voice is therefore, like transitivity, both a more narrow concept than valency and derives from traditional grammar, in which the Latinate orientation focuses on morphological distinctions of voice. In Biblical Hebrew voice distinctions are expressed in large part by *binyanim*, and in her study, Maya Arad has observed several correlations among transitivity, voice distinctions, and the *binyanim*: according to Arad, both Niphal and Hitpael verbs are intransitive, and the Niphal may also frequently be passive; the Pual and Hophal *binyanim* are limited to verb-derived verbs, as opposed to root-derived verbs, in that they always encode the passive counterpart of the Piel and Hiphil verb of the same root, respectively.[6] However, because valency is broader than either transitivity or voice, these correlations do not help us escape having to determine the valency patterns of these passive and intransitive verbs, despite the fact that they will tend to have lower valency than verbs in the Qal, Piel, and Hiphil *binyanim*.

3. APPROACHES TO VALENCY

Valency gets only the slightest mention in recent Hebrew grammars, whose approach generally still betrays a traditional-grammar orientation to valency phenomena. For example, Waltke and O'Connor note that "[g]rammarians sometimes distinguish between adjuncts and complements, the former signifying an optional constituent of a sentence, the latter an obligatory constituent."[7] However, they proceed to translate these notions into the traditional-grammar categories of "direct-object accusative" and "adverbial accusative." Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze escape the traditional-grammar approach somewhat more successfully than

---

[6] Arad, *Roots and Patterns*, 184–85.

[7] Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §10.2a.

Waltke and O'Connor and embrace the terminology of complement and adjunct in a more thorough-going approach. In addition, they revise the inherited and simplistic understanding of these categories embraced in Waltke and O'Connor by focusing on the semantic factors rather than the syntactic ones. They define complements as constituents that "cannot be omitted without changing the meaning of the clause or without making the clause ungrammatical," whereas adjuncts "add information to the core of the clause and may be omitted without changing the basic meaning of the clause." Further, they state in an accompanying footnote that "[t]he complement of a verb may be omitted, but then only when it can be inferred from the context of the sentence."[8] Unfortunately, measuring meaning change and grammaticality on a closed corpus for an ancient language is no simple task.

More recently, Andersen and Forbes in an "aside" on valency in their *Biblical Hebrew Grammar Visualized* reject a valency approach as problematic on three fronts.[9] First, adopting Crystal's standard definition of valency as analyzing the number of valents with which a verb combines to create a well-formed sentence,[10] Andersen and Forbes object that the notion of well-formedness is too vague to be analytically useful for Biblical Hebrew. To illustrate, they provide a statistical analysis of the five verbs that most frequently occur with subjects and those that most frequently appear with a direct object to illustrate how inconsistently the valency pattern of these verbs are. Second, they draw attention to the inherent danger of analyzing English translations of the Hebrew data rather than the Hebrew valency patterns themselves insofar as the semantics and accompanying valency patterns do not match between languages. Third, they note that valency analysis has limited applicability because of the dearth of data; specifically the high incidence of low-frequency verb forms does not allow us to draw valid generalizations from the data.

However, the latter two objections are no serious grounds for abandoning a valency analysis of Biblical Hebrew inasmuch as they apply equally to any linguistic study of Biblical Hebrew. For instance, I have drawn attention to precisely the danger of translation confusion with the target language in my study of tense, aspect, and modality in Biblical Hebrew.[11] And given the closed and uneven data set that constitutes Biblical Hebrew, any linguistic generalizations about the language must be seen as tentative to one degree or another. By contrast, their objection regarding well-formedness is more serious, especially given the lack of native speakers of Biblical Hebrew: methodologically we must assume that all of the Biblical Hebrew data is well-formed until a case is made to the contrary. However, even in valency studies of spoken languages, well-formedness fails as the central criterion for distinguishing complements and adjuncts, and some studies retreat to

---

[8] Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Hebrew Reference Grammar*, §33.

[9] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 165–68. Cf. also chapter 6 in the present volume, A. Dean Forbes, "The Proper Role of Valency in Biblical Hebrew Studies."

[10] Crystal, *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 508.

[11] Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 56.

the use of statistics in making such judgements.[12] I submit that by reassessing the complement–adjunct distinction as I propose below, this difficulty which Andersen and Forbes point out can be obviated to the degree that it is no longer a serious hindrance to a fruitful valency analysis of Biblical Hebrew.

4. ISSUES IN VALENCY ANALYSIS

This brief survey suggests two cautions in developing an analytically useful valency approach to Biblical Hebrew: first, we must develop a more sophisticated understanding of complements and adjuncts than the simplistic identification of these two arguments as obligatory and optional, respectively; on the other hand, we need more rigorous guidelines than a simple vague notion of "well-formedness," as Andersen and Forbes point out. What is needed is an approach that recognizes the instinctually correct idea that complements are more integral to the predication than adjuncts and analyzes this distinction in a nuanced way that involves both syntactic and semantic factors, given that valency involves the intersection of these two domains. In this way valency study can contribute to our understanding of Biblical Hebrew syntax and lexical semantics, and contribute to the philological task of deciphering the Hebrew texts of the Bible.

Consider the English examples in (5): despite the variation of valency and transitivity of the verb *give*, all three expressions are equally "well-formed," grammatically speaking.

(5) a.   ₁*I* give *and* ₁*I* give, *but do I ever receive any thanks?* (Monovalent/intransitive)
     b.   *When I heard of her passing,* ₁*I* gave ₂*flowers in her memory.* (Bivalent/transitive)
     c.   ₁*I* gave ₂*flowers* ₃*to my wife on Valentine's day.* (Trivalent/ditransitive)

The simplistic and binary distinction between complement and adjunct is insufficient for analyzing these various argument structures. The two "graded" divisions in (6) have been suggested as alternatives to the traditional binary distinction of complements and adjuncts.

(6) a.   Primary complements — Secondary complements — Adjuncts[13]
     b.   (Obligatory) complements — Optional complements — Contextually optional complements — Adjuncts.[14]

The intermediate category of secondary complements in (6a) is based on the contrastive results of linguistic tests applied to benefactive, instrumental, and some types of locative prepositional phrases: while "do-so" and "pseudo-cleft" tests identify these constituents as complements, the preposition-stranding test identifies

---

[12] E.g., Villavicencio, ("Learning to Distinguish PP Arguments From Adjuncts,") sets a threshold of 80% occurrence for identifying a type of constituent as a complement rather than an adjunct.

[13] DeArmond and Hedberg, "Complements and Adjuncts;" idem., "More Issues."

[14] Herbst, "English Valency Structures."

them as adjuncts.[15] Unfortunately, the application of linguistic tests of these sorts to Biblical Hebrew is difficult given the absence of native speakers and a closed corpus of data.

Herbst's three-way complement distinction in (6b) is a more promising basis for valency analysis of Biblical Hebrew verbs, not only because it does not rely on linguistic tests, but because the nature of these distinctions is more obvious and measurable from the data. Let me explain Herbst's graded categories as they apply to Biblical Hebrew, based on the ongoing use of this model in the development of the Accordance Bible software syntax module.[16] Because my concern is with distinguishing complements and adjuncts, and due to the infrequency of avalent or subjectless constructions, I will simply ignore the subject-role complements in my analyses.

4.1 Syntactically Obligatory Complements

First, a verb may have syntactically obligatory complements; that is, the absence of these constituents makes the expression ungrammatical. However, "obligatory" is in parenthesis in reference to this category in (6b), because different complement patterns may be associated with a single verb. Often a distinction in meaning can be discerned among the different patterns, such as illustrated in (7–8) below.

(7) **Qal** סמך

a. Bivalent with NP complement: "support someone/something"

הֲקִיצוֹתִי כִּי יְהוָה יִסְמְכֵנִי

I awake, because ₁*Yhwh* supports ₂*me*. (Ps 3:6)

---

[15] The do-so and pseudo-cleft tests both separate out VP-internal arguments from the verb itself, thus helping distinguish between complements and adjuncts (i.e., complements presumably must move with the verb itself whereas adjuncts can be separated from them). For example, compare these two sets of transformations: *Colin gave a book to the teacher and so did Jared* versus **Colin gave a book to the teacher and so did Jared to the student* (the do-so test); *What Colin did was give a book to the teacher* versus **What Colin did to the teacher was give a book*. In each case the latter construction is ungrammatical because the complement (*to the teacher / teacher*) has been separated from the verb itself (*give*).

[16] The Accordance syntax project was begun in 2008 through a collaboration between Robert D. Holmstedt of the University of Toronto and Martin G. Abegg Jr. of Trinity Western University, working in conjunction with Roy Brown of Accordance. The database that is being developed by the project is distinguished by four specific features: first, its scope includes biblical and extra-biblical texts from the first-millennium BCE, including the Hebrew Bible, epigraphic texts, and the Qumran manuscripts; second, it is native to the Accordance Bible software rather than being a stand-alone database; third, it is narrowly focused on clause syntax, building on existing morphological databases (which also facilitates our task) and eschewing treatment of semantic or discourse-pragmatic features of the Hebrew texts; fourth, it has a generative syntactic theoretical orientation.

b.   Trivalent with NP and על-PP complements: "lay something on someone"

וְסָמַךְ יָדוֹ עַל רֹאשׁ הָעֹלָה

(₁*He*) should lay ₂*his hand* ₃*upon the head of the burnt offering*. (Lev 1:4)

Examples (7a–b) illustrate two distinct meanings for the Qal סמך, which are associated with the two distinct valency patterns: a bivalent one and a trivalent one. The trivalent pattern appears to be a technical meaning, appearing only in sacrificial contexts with the exception of one occurrence in Amos 5:19.[17]

A different sort of semantics-based variation is illustrated by the examples in (8): a trivalent pattern with a noun phrase and prepositional complements is associated with the meaning to "give" (or "place"), as illustrated by (8a), whereas a trivalent pattern with a noun phrase and complementary infinitive is associated with the meaning "allow", as illustrated by (8b).[18]

(8)   **Qal** נתן

a.   Trivalent with NP and PP complements: "give something to someone"

הָאֵל הַנּוֹתֵן נְקָמוֹת לִי

The God ₁who gives ₂*vengeance* ₃*to me*. (Ps 18:48)

b.   Trivalent with NP and Inf. complements: "allow someone something"

לֹא־יִתְּנֵנִי הָשֵׁב רוּחִי

(₁*He*) will not allow ₂*me* ₃*to catch* *my breath*. (Job 9:18)

Finally, variation among obligatory valency patterns might admit other explanations. For example, the monovalent intransitive pattern for the Hiphil נגע "to arrive," illustrated in (9), occurs once only in Ezekiel, Songs, and Qoheleth, and six times in Esther.[19] This sort of clustering of a pattern within a particular corpus (i.e., Esther) or in books that are philologically "late" (i.e., Esther and Qoheleth) may indicate that the pattern is associated with a particular dialect or diachronic period of the language.

(9)   **Hiphil** נגע

הַנִּצָּנִים נִרְאוּ בָאָרֶץ עֵת הַזָּמִיר הִגִּיעַ

The blossoms have appeared in the land, the time of pruning has arrived. (Song 2:12)

---

[17] Exod 29:10, 15, 19; Lev 1:4, 3:2, 3:8, 3:13, 4:4, 4:15, 4:24, 4:29, 4:33; 8:14, 8:18, 8:22; 16:21; 24:14; Num 8:10, 8:12; 27:18, 27:23; Deut 34:9; Amos 5:19; 2 Chr 29:23.

[18] Whether one should refer to these as, e.g., נתן (I) and נתן (II) is a matter we need not enter into here.

[19] Ezek 7:12; Song 2:12; Eccl 12:1; Esth 2:12, 2:15; 4:3; 6:14; 8:17; 9:1.

4.2 Optional Complements

A complement is "optional," according to Herbst,[20] if it is implied by the structure of the predicate itself. Consider the English examples in (10): the former examples in each pair imply a "generalized" complement based on the semantics of the verb itself—one normally reads something with words; one normally cooks food. If the meaning departs from these general senses, a complement is required to cancel the implied complement, as in the second pair in each example.

(10) a.   ₁*She* is reading. (Implied complement: something with words)
          cf. ₁*She* could *always* read ₂*his face*.
     b.   ₁*He* is cooking. (Implied complement: food)
          Compare: ₁*He* is cooking up ₂*trouble*.

A Biblical Hebrew example that falls into this category is the Qal שיר "to sing": in its monovalent pattern in (11a), the verb implies a generalized complement of "song" or the like. However, the verb may also exhibit a bivalent pattern, as in (11b), in which what is sung or sung about is specified by a noun phrase complement. An important piece of evidence supporting the claim of an implied complement is the occasional presence of a cognate complement with such verbs in the bivalent pattern, as in example (11c), in which שירה "song" is the cognate complement of Qal שיר. In these cases the cognate complement reinforces the generalized complement implied by the verb itself.[21]

(11) **Qal שיר**
     a.   Monovalent with implied complement
          אָשִׁירָה וַאֲזַמְּרָה לַיהוָה
          (₁*I*) will sing *and make melody to Yhwh*. (Ps 27:6)
     b.   Bivalent with overt complement: for examples "sing something"
          וַאֲנִי אָשִׁיר עֻזֶּךָ
          But ₁*I* will sing *of* ₂*your strength*. (Ps 59:17)
     c.   Bivalent with cognate complement
          אָז יָשִׁיר־מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה
          Then ₁*Moses and the children of Israel* sang ₂*this song to Yhwh*. (Exod 15:1)

4.3 Contextually Optional Complements

"Contextually optional" complements refer to constituents that are recoverable or identifiable from the discourse context, in contrast to being implied by the verbal semantics alone, as in the previous case. One indication of this category of valency

---

[20] Herbst, "English Valency Structures."

[21] Similarly Hiphil רוע "shout, raise a shout" with cognate complement in Josh 6:5, and Hiphil שקה which can have only a complement of the person who is given a drink (bivalent) or specify in addition what is given as a drink (trivalent) (e.g., cf. Gen 24:14 and 24:43).

variation is the infrequency with which a complement might be absent. For example, only three of fifty-nine occurrences of the Hiphil שקה "to give a drink" lack a complement referring to the recipient of a drink. In each of these instances a good case can be made that the complement is elliptical—that is, null but identifiable from the context. The null constituent and its antecedent are in parentheses in the examples in (12). Note also that what is offered to drink is unspecified, being an optional complement, as in the case of Qal שיר, just discussed.

(12) a. Deut 11:10

אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ וְהִשְׁקִיתָ בְרַגְלְךָ

… *where (you) sowed your seed and* watered (*it* = *your seed*) *with your foot*

b. Ps 78:15

יְבַקַּע צֻרִים בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיַּשְׁקְ כִּתְהֹמוֹת רַבָּה

(He) *split rocks in the wilderness and* gave (*them* = *them* vs. 14) drink *as the great depths.*

c. Esth 1:7

וְהַשְׁקוֹת בִּכְלֵי זָהָב וְכֵלִים

… giving (*them* = *all the people* vs. 5) drinks *in gold vessels*

Determining *contextually* optional complements is complicated by the previous category of optional complements, because a verb might exhibit both types of valency variation with the result that in the case of a contextually optional example the text is not syntactically "fragmentary" as we expect for elliptical structures. Consider the examples of the Qal אכל "to eat" in (13): as with English "eat," Qal אכל may imply a generalized complement of food as in (13a);[22] but in Gen 3:6, cited in (13b), the verb has a contextually optional (that is, elliptical) complement whose antecedent is מִפִּרְיוֹ.

(13) a. Ruth 3:7

וַיֹּאכַל בֹּעַז וַיֵּשְׁתְּ וַיִּיטַב לִבּוֹ

Boaz ate *and drank and his heart became merry.*

b. Gen 3:6

וַתִּקַּח מִפִּרְיוֹ וַתֹּאכַל

She took some of the fruit and she ate (*it* = *some of the fruit*).

This type variation among an optional and contextually optional complement may appear in a single passage, as in (14).

---

22 Also Prov 23:7 אֱכֹל וּשְׁתֵה *Eat and drink!*

(14) 1 Kgs 19:5–8

> וַיִּשְׁכַּב וַיִּישַׁן תַּחַת רֹתֶם אֶחָד וְהִנֵּה־זֶה מַלְאָךְ נֹגֵעַ בּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ קוּם אֱכוֹל: 6 וַיַּבֵּט
> וְהִנֵּה מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו עֻגַת רְצָפִים וְצַפַּחַת מָיִם וַיֹּאכַל וַיֵּשְׁתְּ וַיָּשָׁב וַיִּשְׁכָּב: 7 וַיָּשָׁב מַלְאַךְ
> יְהוָה שֵׁנִית וַיִּגַּע־בּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר קוּם אֱכֹל כִּי רַב מִמְּךָ הַדָּרֶךְ: 8 וַיָּקָם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׁתֶּה וַיֵּלֶךְ
> בְּכֹחַ הָאֲכִילָה הַהִיא אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה עַד הַר הָאֱלֹהִים חֹרֵב:
>
> *He lay down and fell asleep under a broom bush. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat." 6 He looked about; and there, beside his head, was a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water! He* ate (*it = the cake*) and drank (*it = the water*), *and lay down again. 7 The angel of the LORD came a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and* eat, *or the journey will be too much for you." 8 He arose and* ate (*it = the cake*) and drank (*it = the water*); *and with the strength from that meal he walked forty days and forty nights as far as the mountain of God at Horeb.* (NJPS)

In verse 5 the angel awakes Elijah and tells him קוּם אֱכוֹל. Here the imperative אֱכוֹל appears to be monovalent, with an optional complement implied by the predicate itself: *Eat (something).* In the following verse (vs. 6), however, Elijah looks near his head and finds a stone-baked cake (עֻגַת רְצָפִים) and a jar of water (וְצַפַּחַת מָיִם), and the text reports וַיֹּאכַל וַיֵּשְׁתְּ. Both these verbs should be treated as bivalent with contextually optional (i.e., elliptical) complements. Thus, we can intelligibly render them: *He ate it and drank it.* This command-narrative pattern is repeated in the following two verses (vss. 7–8), where the angel tells Elijah to eat and drink again. Although the bread and water are now known entities in the discourse, the expression in verse 7 is parallel with that of verse 5, suggesting that as in the previous case the repeated command here is likewise monovalent with a generalized optional complement. The fact that the angel does not specifically tell him to eat *and* to drink lends some weight to this monovalent interpretation. Similarly, for the repeated report in verse 8 that Elijah וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׁתֶּה *ate and drank* we should understand the two verbs as bivalent, their null complements referring to the cake and water that the reader will infer the angel resupplied or were left over from Elijah's previous meal.

5. SOME ILLUSTRATIONS

Having explained valency and advocated a specific approach to valency analysis in Biblical Hebrew, it remains to illustrate the value of carrying out such an analysis. The contribution of valency analysis to our understanding of Biblical Hebrew goes in two directions. In the one direction, valency studies can contribute to lexicography by providing a syntactic basis for distinguishing different nuances of meaning as they are demonstrated to align with specific valency patterns. In the other direction, valency analysis can inform philology by providing data to arbitrate between alternative analyses of some clauses in the text. Let me illustrate each of these with an example.

First, analyzing lexical meaning in terms of valency patterns may undergird distinctions among homonymy in the lexicon in ways that simple semantic analysis cannot. For example, HALOT lists together under the single root עלל (I) the Poel meanings "treat severely" and "glean," which are illustrated by the examples in (15).

(15) **Poel עלל (I)**

    a.   treat severely

       עֵינִי עוֹלְלָה לְנַפְשִׁי

       ₁*My eye* treats ₂*me* severely. (That is, "afflicts me") (Lam 3:51)[23]

    b.   glean

       וְכַרְמְךָ לֹא תְעוֹלֵל

       And ₂your vineyard (₁*you*) do not glean (*completely*). (Lev 19:10)

While one might be able to do some acrobatics to see how these are etymologically semantically related, HALOT's entry is only marginally helpful in pointing out that these meanings are distinguished by valency pattern: "treat severely" has a ל prepositional phrase complement whereas the meaning "to glean" has a noun phrase complement. The former occurs only in Lamentations, where the passive Poal also occurs with the sense of "be treated severely." Based on this semantic alignment with the different valency patterns, it may be best to see these as two separate verbs, as indeed BDB treats them: though it ultimately relates the verbs to the same root as HALOT, BDB identifies the meaning "glean" as a denominative form from the feminine noun עֹלֵלוֹת "a gleaning."

An example in which attention to valency patterns aids philological analysis of the text is provided by the passage in (16).

(16) **Qal דרך**

    גַּת דָּרַךְ אֲדֹנָי לִבְתוּלַת בַּת־יְהוּדָה

    NRSV: *The Lord has trodden as in a wine press the virgin daughter Judah.*

    NJPS: *As in a press the Lord has trodden Fair Maiden Judah.*

    The Lord has trodden the wine press for the virgin daughter Judah. (Lam 1:15c)

Both the NRSV and NJPS treat לִבְתוּלַת as the complement of the verb דרך, and גַּת as some sort of adverbial accusative. But דרך does not elsewhere take as its complement a ל prepositional phrase, though it does appear five times with על and ten times with ב prepositional complements both with a locative idea "upon" or "on." The majority of the time, however, it takes a noun phrase complement. Based on this valency pattern, it is best to identify גַּת as the complement and the prepositional phrase לִבְתוּלַת בַּת־יְהוּדָה as an adjunct, as indicated by the third translation option in (16). And indeed, this is how Keil takes the text, explaining: "These [i.e., the young men mentioned in 1:15b] celebrate a feast like that of the vintage, at which Jahveh treads the wine-press for the daughter of Judah, because her young men are cut off like clusters of grapes (Jer. vi. 9), and thrown into the wine-press (Joel iv. 13)."[24]

---

[23] See Lam 1:12 (Poal), 22; 2:20.

[24] Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study of verbal valency in Biblical Hebrew is in its infancy. It is crucially focused on the intersection of syntax and semantics, with the result that it can inform our understanding of both syntax and lexical semantics of Biblical Hebrew. The approach I have proposed and illustrated above, and which is being continually refined in the course of the development of the Accordance Bible software syntax module, is one that successfully overcomes possible objections to valency analysis of Hebrew and provides a usable approach to the analysis of Biblical Hebrew argument structure.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Accordance, *Oak Tree Software Inc.* Accessed January 4, 2014.
        http://www.accordancebible.com/OakTree-Software.

Andersen, Francis I., and A. Dean Forbes. *Biblical Hebrew Grammar Visualized.*
        Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Arad, Maya. *Roots and Patterns: Hebrew Morpho-Syntax.* Studies in Natural Language
        and Linguistic Theory 63. Dordrecht: Springer, 2005.

Brown, Francis, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs*, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of
        the Old Testament with an appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic*, based on the
        lexicon of William Gesenius as translated by Edward Robinson. Oxford:
        Clarendon, 1907; corrected ed. 2002.

Cook, John A. *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: the Expression of Tense, Aspect, and
        Modality in Biblical Hebrew.* Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7.
        Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Crystal, David. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics.* 6th ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008.

DeArmond, Richard C., and Nancy Hedberg, "On Complements and Adjuncts."
        Pages unknown in *Proceedings of the 1998 Annual Conference of the Canadian
        Linguistics Association.* University of Ottawa: Cahiers Linguistiques d'Ottawa,
        1998.

——. "More Issues on the Argument Structure of Primary Complements."
        Proceedings of the 2003 Annual Conference of the Canadian Linguistics Association
        (2003)

Herbst, Thomas. "English Valency Structures: A First Sketch." *Erfurt Electronic
        Studies in English* 6 (1999). Accessed December 11, 2012.
        http://webdoc.sub.gwdg.de/edoc/ia/eese/artic99/herbst/main1.html.

Herbst, Thomas, David Heath, Ian F. Roe, Dieter Götz, with the assistance of
        Michael Klotz. *A Valency Dictionary of English: A Corpus-Based Analysis of the
        Complementation Patterns of English Verbs, Nouns, and Adjectives.* Topics in
        English Linguistics 40. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004.

Keil, Carl Friedrich and Franz Delitzsch. *Commentary on the Old Testament*. 10 vols. Translated by James Martin. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1989.

Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, M.E.J. Richardson and J.J. Stamm et al., *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 5 Vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000.

Merwe, Christo H.J. van der, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999.

Villavicencio, Aline. "Learning to Distinguish PP Arguments from Adjuncts." *Proceedings of the 6th Conference on Natural Language Learning* 20 (Taipei, Taiwan, 2002): 1–7. Accessed December 11, 2012. http://acl.ldc.upenn.edu/W/W02/W02-2033.pdf.

Waltke, Bruce K., and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

CHAPTER 5
HOW TO CLASSIFY HEBREW VERBS: PLOTTING VERB-SPECIFIC ROLES

Nicolai Winther-Nielsen

Fjellhaug International University College Denmark

Semantic roles and grammatical relations are central for grammatical analysis, but they are not often explained and used in studies of Biblical Hebrew. However, without an understanding of this relational aspect of clause structure, it is neither possible to build a Hebrew lexicon, nor to explain the function of verbal valency patterns and determine the nature and function of nouns governed by the verb and influencing the meaning.

One solution is to use Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) which is built around how event structure involves verb-specific roles. Classes of verbs are distinguished by characteristic configurations of roles in typical groupings. This allows the linguist to map from syntax to semantics through a lexicon which stores the logical structure of the predicates. The meaning of a verb is described in semantic representations which takes the characteristic role configuration into account.

This paper will illustrate a decision process developed for lexical decomposition. A database application called the Role Lexical Module plots predicates in the database of the Eep Talstra Centre for Bible and Computing at the Vrije Universiteit (http://lex.qwirx.com/lex/clause.jsp). The paper presents the results of analyzing the 100 most frequent verbs in the basic (Qal) stem of Biblical Hebrew and classifies them according to the logical structure categories developed for Role and Reference Grammar.

1. INTRODUCTION: PLOTTING SEMANTIC ROLES[1]

Andersen and Forbes, the creators of the most widely distributed linguistic database of the Hebrew Bible, recall how back in the mid-1980s they invented a labelling system to assist them in computer-assisted parsing and how semantic "categories arose willy-nilly."[2] Thirty years and many projects later, this is unfortunately still often the case in Hebrew semantics, and our two computer pioneers are among those few who have proposed principled taxonomies for the labelling of semantic functions. By and large semantic solutions often evolve out of projects to enhance the information in linguistic databases for Bible Software, for example, Logos' distribution of the Andersen-Forbes Analyzed Text.

This is the background to the research presented herein. My proposal is shaped by research into Hebrew linguistics, learning design, and corpus-linguistics through decades of collaboration with the team working under the former director Professor Talstra. This team, at the Eep Talstra Centre for Bible (ETCB) and Computing at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, has produced one of the three major databases of the Hebrew Bible.[3] Furthermore, I am currently directing a project for developing database-driven learning technology which has as one of its goals to exploit new valency data being generated by the team in Amsterdam.[4] My proposal seeks to establish a robust and *independent* semantic framework for evaluating syntactic valency and structural descriptions such as the one offered in this volume by Janet Dyk. At the same time I seek to develop a better learning ecology which could integrate semantic roles into research, development, and teaching.

In this paper, I first introduce the approach developed for verb-specific semantic roles in Role and Reference Grammar (RRG). This grammar offers a system of lexical representation in the tradition of an "*Aktionsart*-based classification of verbs."[5] I then offer a complete analysis based on the 100 most frequent verbs in the Qal stem from the Hebrew Bible in order to use the semantic module of RRG for "exploratory data analysis."[6] The purpose is both to put RRG to the test on the most central data and to develop a reference sample of verb-roles for predicates. They are intended as data to assist with the construction of a lexicon and as

---

[1] I would like to thank Robert Van Valin and Judith Gottschalk for helpful comments on RRG, and David Kummerow for language editing.

[2] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 39.

[3] Besides ETCB there are two other major databases, namely the Andersen-Forbes database (Logos software) and the Holmstedt-Abegg "Grammatical Syntax" database (Accordance software). The most recent presentation of the ETCB database is given by Ulrik Sandborg-Petersen, "Biblical Hebrew and Computer Science," 261–76. I am using the current name of the centre (since May 2013); it was formerly known as Werkgroep Informatica.

[4] Winther-Nielsen, "WP5: PLOTLearner Development."

[5] Van Valin, *Exploring*, 31.

[6] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 97.

pedagogical examples to instruct learners as they try to analyze the verb-specific semantic roles.

Although the classification of the verb-specific roles associated with the 100 most frequent verbs covers only a little part of the semantics interface of a grammar, it is noteworthy that two of the three most crucial categories in human language are semantic roles and grammatical relations.[7] No Hebrew scholar will be able to make valid claims on the precise meaning of Hebrew verbs without knowledge of the basic mechanics of semantic roles, and I will argue that RRG offers a valuable solution.

2. PLOTTING VERB-SPECIFIC ROLES IN RRG

In many traditional Hebrew grammars and introductory textbooks one looks in vain for verb semantics, and there is little or no reflection on how referents are associated with the predicate as bound or free constituents. In contrast, contemporary linguistic theories tend to include lexical aspect as part of their grammars and assume that morphosyntax cannot stand alone without a robust theory of the lexicon. Levin and Rappaport Hovav in 2005 offered a major synthesis of recent work on all different lexical aspects of arguments. They conclude that all works reviewed share the "assumption that there is a relationship of general predictability between the lexical semantic representation of a verb and the syntactic realization of its arguments."[8]

The challenge for every approach is how to account for the systematic relationship between, for example, "be dead," "die (on spot)," "die (after a period of illness)," "have someone die," "kill," and "murder" in syntax and semantics. These examples illustrate how some forms are distinguished by contextual information and adjuncts, others vary according to lexical rules, and some are lexicalized meanings. The following account will adhere to a system based on semantic valency in order to explain how none, one, or several arguments co-occur with the predicate. This means that a clause like "it snows" lacks the semantic argument while having a syntactic dummy pronoun. Furthermore, the explanation for the predicate samples above focuses on valency changing constructions in order to show how causativization, passivization, instruments, and benefactives can add or remove a semantic argument and influence the classification of the predicate.

The framework is indebted to Vendler's classification of verbs into the four classes of state, activity, achievement and accomplishment.[9] This was taken up in RRG and developed into a new proposal for a *semantic "logical structure"* by Foley and Van Valin in 1984, primarily by implementing a system Dowty had developed in

---

[7] Ibid., 114.

[8] Levin and Rappaport Hovav, *Argument Realization*, 131.

[9] Vendler, *Linguistics in Philosophy*.

1979 for verb classification of Australian aboriginal languages.[10] In this system lexical representation refers to roles the participants play in a state of affairs in some world. Verbs are decomposed into logical structures which characterize a situation as static or dynamic, continuing for some time, or having an endpoint. RRG adopted Dowty's semantic metalanguage to break complex meanings into their basic components and their concomitant semantic roles, and by lexical decomposition paraphrased "kill" as "cause to die" and "die" further into "become dead." Functional Grammar rejected logical reduction of predicate frames,[11] but RRG subsequently refined logical structure semantics.[12] The current RRG verb-classification system divides predicates into six classes which all have causative variants. Four features determine whether the event structure of a predicate is static with an undivided internal structure, dynamic with internal ongoing stages, telic with a result as its inherent endpoint, punctual as an instantaneous event, or a gradually accumulating process, as set out in example (1).

(1) The six non-causative predicate classes in RRG
- State (STA) for a condition without an inherent endpoint
- Activity (ACT) for an ongoing event without any inherent endpoint
- Active accomplishment (ActACC) for an ongoing activity accumulating towards a definite endpoint (or active achievement)
- Semelfactive (SEML) for a punctual event without any internal change in the situation
- Achievement (ACH) for a punctual event resulting in an instantaneous transition into its endpoint
- Accomplishment (ACC) for a process accumulating towards an endpoint

This system retains the four Vendler *Aktionsart*-classes, but adds a category called "active accomplishment." Van Valin and LaPolla introduced this verb-class in order to avoid a sentence like *Carl ran to the store* being counterproductively analyzed as causation, namely that a running causes the arrival at a goal.[13] RRG thus offers a viable solution for the difference in semantic structure between plain ongoing activity and activity where meaning is changed by a specified entity or quantity.[14]

---

[10] Foley and Van Valin, *Functional Syntax*, 15, 36–39; Dowty, *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar*.

[11] Following Dik, *Structure of the Clause*, 21–22, "we should avoid representations like kill(x)(y) = CAUSE (x)(BECOME(NOT(ALIVE(y))))" because "there is hardly any limit to the analyses which can be argued to underlie lexical elements" (so Winther-Nielsen, *Functional Discourse Grammar*, 33–34).

[12] Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*; Van Valin, *Exploring*.

[13] Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 101. Note that I am referring to the standard description and not using newer proposals like **process′** which in Hebrew would be expressed aspectually.

[14] Van Valin, *Exploring*, 33n2.

This telic use of activity verbs was later characterized as active achievement because the temporal structure entails "termination with result state."[15] It is renamed as such in Pavey who points out that the traditional label "achievement" is an awkward term for instantaneous change.[16] However, for at least some of the verbs in this class they clearly imply the completion of a process and in this sense the activity is more related to true accomplishment (for example, the completed eating of an apple or the finished construction of a house). As long as this question is not settled entirely within RRG it may be premature to change the old term for this class. Semelfactive has been introduced from Charlotta Smith's work.[17]

For pedagogical reasons the discussion is simplified and summarized in Table 1 which uses a pedagogical set of four operators. These are not the standard in RRG, but can help the linguist to discern the structure in the system more easily.[18]

Table 1. Predicate classes defined by features and new operators

Feature	Dynamic	Punctual	Accomplishment	Result	
Operator	DO	INST	PROC	TEL	
STA	–				Condition without result
ACT	+				Activity without result
ActACC	+		+	+	Activity with result
SEML	+	+			Instantaneous event without result
ACH	+	+		+	Instantaneous event with result
ACC	+		+	+	Process with result

We can also pedagogically illustrate this as a plus or minus telicity switch system built within a causative outer layer in Figure 1. A causative paraphrase surrounds all classes and the non-causative variants distribute according to a crucial binary distinction between telic and atelic classes. Dynamicity and punctuality then refine the internal subdivision into six classes.

---

[15] Ibid., 44.

[16] Pavey, *Structure of Language*, 97, 100–1, 373n4, 373n7.

[17] Van Valin, *Exploring,* 32.

[18] This DO (Dynamic Operator) is *not* the operator for wilful agent mentioned in Van Valin, *Exploring*, 57.

Figure 1. Illustration of features in RRG

These classes plus their causative counterparts are used as the main labels for explaining event structure in terms of verb-specific roles. RRG offers a theory on semantic roles which it claims is consistent, albeit extremely complex. It predicts how semantic functions of first, second, and third arguments are calculated by deducing the logical structure of the verbs in simple logic. The assignment of semantic functions is not arbitrary, but based on clear and simple diagnostic questions. The decision process essentially boils down to the stepwise procedure in example (2) based on Van Valin and LaPolla:[19]

   (2) The three steps in plotting semantic roles
   1. CLASSIFY BY MEANS OF TEST QUESTIONS: Specify verb class as from inherent temporal structure of event.
   2. DECOMPOSE TO LOGICAL STRUCTURE: Use conventional semantic notation to sort predicates into six basic types listed as boldface with *prime* (verb *primes* are marked by ´) plus *modifiers* (such as CAUSE and BECOME) within square brackets.
   3. ASSIGN SEMANTIC ROLES: For x, or x and y argument apply appropriate semantic role labels.

The strength of the decompositional approach is that it lends itself to computational implementation. Thus step 1 is an algorithm for plotting roles based on the diagnostic questions and mapping this result onto the six classes, which has already been used successfully in a decision chart developed for the Role-Lexical Module.[20] In an orderly stepwise procedure we start testing for the most complex features first

---

[19] Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax,* 91–102, 113–14, 129.

[20] Winther-Nielsen, "A Role-Lexical Module," 455–78; idem, "Biblical Hebrew Parsing," 1–51; Wilson, "Lex."

and therefore decide on the causative. Next we look at the two values involved in accomplishment (see below in Table 2). If the predicate endures for a while according to test 4 (*for*-an hour) and then reaches an end point according to test 5 (*in*-an hour) the algorithm returns an accomplishment structure. If no process is involved, but the event rather instantly changes into its end point to judge from a negative answer to test 4 (*for*-an hour does NOT apply), then we have an achievement predicate. Semelfactive is instant activity without end point as in a single jump or clap. Test 2 on dynamicity also applies for active accomplishment, and now the test 5 returns a positive value (*in*-an hour applies). If none of the above tests has given a match we have either pure and simple state or activity (see below in Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2. Test questions and class values

Test	Question	YES	NO
1. **Prog**	Is this situation incompatible with progressive aspect? (not a static condition)	ACT	**STA** ACH
2. **Dyn**	Can this action be done *actively*? (violent force without controlling agent)	**ACT** ActACC	
3. **Dur**	Can this process be done *slowly*? (space adverbs and speed expressions distinct)	**ACC** (ACT)	**ACH** (STA)
4. *For*-hour	Does this event endure for some time? (it is *never done instantly*)	**ACT, ACC** (STA)	**ACH** (1 SEML)
5. *In*-hour	Does event reach a result state after some time? (inherently bounded telic)	**ACC,** **ActACC**	ACH

Step 2 and step 3 turn the predicates of each verb-class into logical structure by using a generalized activity predicate like **do´**, or a primitive semantic predicate like **be**-**LOC´**, from the semantic metalanguage as well as modifiers of the predicate like CAUSE and BECOME. Van Valin has introduced new structures such as PROC **cold´**(x) to capture an expression like "become cooler" and BECOME is refined into PROC (x) & INGR (x) by Gottschalk who even suggests this process as a seventh verb class.[21] We will use the canonical logical notation below as long as the notation is still open to debate, but for pedagogical reasons we prefer the more simple operators tentatively suggested in Table 3. The main problem is that ingressive (INGR) is used both for an instantaneous event with a result state in ACH (INGR$_2$) and for activity events that have a result state without being instantaneous (INGR$_1$), though for accomplishments it is not specified. The operators in Table 3 would be easier to use in a new version of RRG, but are so far entirely our own.

---

[21] Van Valin, *Exploring,* 32; Gottschalk, "Storage;" idem, "Computability."

Table 3. Predicate classes: simplified operators and temporal structure

Class	Simplified operators	RRG	Event	Result
STA	**pred´** (x)		Ø	
ACT	DO **pred´** (x, (y))		_____	
ActACC	DO TEL {STA, ACT}	$INGR_2$	_____	[]
SEML	INST {STA, ACT}	SEML	_	
ACH	INST TEL {STA, ACT}	$INGR_1$	_	[]
ACC	PROC TEL {STA, ACT}	$INGR_2$	= = = = = = = =	[]
CAU CAU(z)	{LS}			

Semantic representations are achieved by filling Hebrew phrases into the slots of the x, y, and z-terms and then looking at the appropriate pedagogical labels for the verb-specific roles.

Our goal here is to move beyond earlier work on Hebrew RRG logical structure and the analyses of Hebrew verbs like "die," "kill," and "murder," the contrast between "see" and "show," and a significant predicate like "create."[22] In this sense we still focus on the Role-Lexical Module as a research project designed to help the linguist build the lexicon and display semantic representations for a linguistic project. We are interested in how technology can help us plot the most frequent Hebrew predicates, and the roles they involve are crucial for the Role-Lexical Module. This will be illustrated by providing the entire algorithm for frequent predicates associated with their characteristic configurations of semantic roles in typical groupings. In this way we also aim to provide guidelines for how to map meaning from Hebrew syntax to semantics and to guide a linguist who would want to construe a lexicon which stores the logical structure of the predicates.

The methodological approach was straightforward. I gained permission from Eep Talstra to use the gloss list published in 2003.[23] Programmer Ulrik Sandborg-Petersen then retrieved all the statistical data on frequency of verbs distributed according to stem. I used these tables to pull out the 100 most frequent verbs and then create codes for each verb that could then be subsequently improved and sorted as simple Word document tables. This procedure is important because our data are very limited: for more than a thousand verbs or two thirds of the cases—in the Andersen and Forbes database 1,007 out of a total 1,573 verbs—their occurrences are ten times or less.[24] This renders these verbs useless as statistically valid evidence. Andersen and Forbes therefore use those 114 verbs which occur more than 100 times in the Hebrew Bible. For this analysis I selected the 100 most

---

[22] Winther-Nielsen, *Functional Discourse Grammar,* 33–36; idem, "Role-Lexical Module," 269–75; idem, "Biblical Hebrew Parsing," 41–47.

[23] Bosman, Oosting and Postma, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon.*

[24] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 96.

frequent verbs in the Qal stem because the Qal *binyanim* contains lexicalizations that need not involve the tricky question of derivation to complicate the inquiry.

The Role-Lexical Module's algorithm was designed to reveal the most complex logical components starting with the causative and moving towards activity and state. However, in the following description we will proceed in the opposite direction and go from bare primitives to complex causation, allowing the reader to understand the simple terms first.

3. STATES

The first cluster of predicates involves states expressing conditions, existences or attributions with no eventive aspect at all in their temporal structure. The test used to disclose state in RRG is that the progressive is not used with a lasting condition and when it occurs it will enforce a special interpretation. However, this test is not easy because the progressive is disputed for Biblical Hebrew and therefore the test question is more generally phrased as whether or not this predicate is a lasting condition (see Figure 2). However, there is probably not only an old progressive imperfective *yiqtol* form,[25] but also a progressive aspect participle.[26] The contribution by Andersen and Forbes contains a helpful distinction among four kinds of participles from which we find the pure verbal participle.[27] This would allow the linguist to do at least a preliminary exploration into the use of a potential state verb to eliminate a progressive use of the verb.

---

[25] Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb*, 336, 340–42.

[26] Anstey, *Functional Discourse Analysis*, 124; Kummerow, "Functional–Typological," 286.

[27] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 32–34.

Figure 2. Verb-role selection for State

With this as background we now discuss the evidence for single argument and non-verbal states (Table 4).

Table 4. Single argument and non-verbal states (codes 1x, 2x, 0x)

Single argument states				
Code	Name	Logical Structure	1st arg	
11	State or condition	**broken´**(x)	x=PATIENT	
12	existence	**exist´**(x)	x=ENTITY	
Two argument states				
Code	Name	Logical Structure	1st arg	2nd arg
26	Possession	**have´**(x, y)	x=POSSESSOR,	y=POSSESSED
01	Attributive	**be´**(x, [**pred´**])	x=ATTRIBUTANT,	y=ATTRIBUTE
02	Identificational	**be´**(x, [**pred´**])	x=IDENTIFIED,	y=IDENTITY
03	Specificational	**be´**(x, y)	x=VARIABLE,	y=VALUE
04	Equational	**equate´**(x, y)	x, y=REFERENT	

Condition of patient (code 11). The first example is the pure state and condition, the **pred´**(x). The patient role is completely affected and there is no inherent start or end point, even through the condition can be temporary. The most frequently quoted logical predicate quoted is **broken´**(x). In Biblical Hebrew this form would usually be expressed in a passive Pual or old passive like נֻתַּץ *nuttaṣ* (Judg 6:28) or in the Niphal stem which lexicalizes this meaning.

Often quoted examples of unchanged conditions are "be sick" or "be tired." In Biblical Hebrew the condition "be sick" can be expressed by the predicate participle חֹלֶה *ḥōleḇ* "[is] sick" (1 Sam 19:14). Typically, the eventive meaning "fell sick" will be expressed with a viewpoint perfective aspect conjugation (1 Kgs 14:1; 1 Sam 30:13). Tense and aspect categories can therefore affect the interpretation of lexical aspect and one should always look at predicates in the present tense.[28] These kinds of condition predicates differ from attribute predicates such as "be tall" or emotional predicates such as "feel sick."

Among the 100 most frequent Qal verbs we find שׂבע *śābaʕ* "be satiated" in the sense of "be satiated with food" or "have enough to eat." Consequently, this verb often follows the verb "to eat" or it has a lexical filler noun phrase as in תִּשְׂבְּעוּ־לָחֶם *tiśbᵊʕû-lāḥem*, *you-satiated by-bread* (Exod 16:12), which is not an argument of the verb. Another example from the list of 100 is the interesting verb טמא *ṭāmēʔ* "be ritually unclean." In his seminal dissertation on semantic classes, Creason uses this particular verb as his prime evidence for a stative *a-e* vowel pattern with state meaning.[29] This cannot occur with the III guttural *śābaʕ* (Qal שׂבע) but both verbs

---

[28] Pavey, *Structure of Language*, 95.

[29] Creason, "Semantic Classes," 2.

have a parallel stative adjective, and thus also שָׂבֵעַ *śābēₐʕ* in Prov 19:23.[30] Furthermore, Creason notes how the narrative verb form, sometimes referred to formally as *wayyiqtol*, produces a change from state into "became ritually-unacceptable" (Lev 18:25). He classifies this as a telic achievement while in RRG this process leading to an endpoint would be an accomplishment. Another important observation is that when a state verb is modified by a temporal adverb, this event will refer to the entry into this condition, for example, וּבְיוֹם...יִטְמָא *ûvᵉyôm yiṭmāʔ* in Lev 13:14 is glossed by Creason *he will become ritually unacceptable*.[31] In RRG these cases would rather be interpreted as viewpoint aspect changes following Pavey's suggestion. Another interesting point is that state verbs can be used in the imperative if the person addressed has the power to effectuate this particular condition.[32] Similar work has been carried out by Dobbs-Allsopp who applies a model of pragmatic implicature rather than a semantic model of type-shifting in order to explain why state verbs are open to both a state and an activity reading.[33] He also points out how change of state can relate to entry or exit points in narrative sequences to the extent that in unmarked narrative sequences "the sequence of discrete situations is enough to allow an ingressive reading."[34]

The distinction between the adjective and the state verb can be expressed through the notation of logical structure in RRG.[35] In the case of Tagalog the predicate *puti* "white" is an inherent attribute **be´**(x, [**white´**]) while *maputi* "be clean" is a temporary result state and hence **white´**(x). Following RRG we analyze the verb *ṭāmēʔ* (Qal טמע) as **unclean´**(x) and associate the verb with the patient role while the adjective *ṭāmēʔ* טָמֵא has the notation **be´**(x, [**unclean´**]). The latter expresses inherent uncleanness in the case of a priestly notion of the uncleanness of certain animals (Lev 10:10; 11:47; and elsewhere), because it is viewed as an inherent property that can be ascertained and explained by the priests. In other cases the adverb is used for cyclically incurring uncleanness which can be cleansed and hence logically captured by the ingressive operator INGR **unclean´**(x), subject to an instantaneous declaration by a priest.

At times it is all but impossible to distinguish verbal states from non-eventive forms. This can be illustrated by "be old" because the word זָקֵן *zāqēn* is homonymous. In several hundred cases זָקֵן *zāqēn* is an adjective which in Hebrew is used not only as a noun modifier, but also as the predicate of verbless clauses. An interesting illustration of this problem is found in example (3) from Gen 18:12 where זָקֵן is used as predicative, but in the following verse (part of the same conversation) זָקַנְתִּי *zāqantî, I am old* in example (4) clearly has verbal morphology and it refers to the same unchanging condition of age.

---

30 Ibid., 46.

31 Ibid., 75.

32 Ibid., 135.

33 Dobbs-Allsopp, "Statives," 38.

34 Dobbs-Allsopp, "Statives," 45.

35 Van Valin, *Exploring*, 48–49.

(3) Gen 18:12 וַאדֹנִי זָקֵן[36]

  wa= *ʔdōnî-* Ø= Y Ø- Ø- *zāqēn-* Ø= Ø

  CLM lord usgCs 1=Sg PERF Qa be.old 3Msg CLT

  And my lord is old

(4) Gen 18:13 וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי[37]

  wa= *ʔ°nî* Ø- Ø- *zāqan-* *tî=* Ø

  CLM PRON PERF Qa be.old 1sg CLT

  And I am old

Or take the case when God is promising David an eternal dynasty, and David in return praises God with perfective גָּדַלְתָּ *gādaltā, you.great* (2 Sam 7:22). This must be intended as a permanent condition and such conditions can be anchored in the future through imperfective וְיִגְדַּל *w°yigdal* (2 Sam 7:26) used for a prediction. The adjective גָּדוֹל *gādôl* can be used in comparative predications, for example when Cain's sin is too big for him (Gen 4:13), the day (time) is big (Gen 29:7) or Moses is great (Exod 11:3). It is now clear why an adjectival predicate is preferred in those cases.

Non-verbal predicates and their roles (code 01-04). For such cases RRG offers a notation to distinguish the meaning according to four different types.[38] We use the two-letter set of codes from 01 to 04 because they primarily are two-argument non-verbal predicates. The verbal predicate *gādal* (Qal גדל) is specified as **be´**(God, [**big´**]) with patient, while the attributive predicate גָּדוֹל *gādôl* is linked to the referential attributant in the logical structure notation **be´**(day, [**big´**]). Among the 100 most frequent verbs we find Qal חזק *ḥāzaq* "be strong" which has the logical structure **be´**(x, [**strong´**]).

This can be compared to an identificational predicate. In Gen 14:18, for example, כֹּהֵן *kōhēn* "priest" is the identity predicate in the logical structure **be´**(x, [**priest´**]) which refers to מַלְכִּי־צֶדֶק *malkîṣedeq* by an anaphoric personal pronoun. An example of the verbal predicate is the activity verb כהן *kāhan* "act as priest" (in Exod 28:1). A specificational variant can be illustrated by the semantic representation of the variable and the value linked by the logical operator as in **be´**(מִשְׁקָלוֹ *miśqālôw* "its

---

[36] See http://lex.qwirx.com/lex/clause.jsp?book=1&chapter=93490&verse=93959&clause=30181. The linguistic displays and codings presented in this paper from this application are explained in Winther-Nielsen, "Role-Lexical Module," 466–68, and idem, "Biblical Hebrew Parsing," 16, 20-24, 26, *et passim*.

[37] http://lex.qwirx.com/lex/clause.jsp?book=1&chapter=93490&verse=93960&clause=30187.

[38] Thus Van Valin, *Exploring,* 48: attributive **be´**(Pat, [**tall´**]), identificational **be´**(Kim, [**lawyer´**]), specificational **be´**(Chris, [the winner]) and equational: **equate´**(Kim's sister, Sandy's lawyer).

weight," בֶּקַע *beqaʕ* "a beqa").[39] The equational class is less clear-cut, because cases such as **equate´**(הוא *hûʔ* its=פְּרָת *pərāt* "Euphrates") from Gen 2:14 have a personal pronoun הוא *hûʔ* which can also be interpreted as a copula according to Kummerow.[40]

Existence of entity (code 12). The Hebrew predicates for existence pose problems of their own. The **exist´**(x) with an entity role is unambiguously expressed by a predicator of existence as in אוּלַי יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צַדִּיקִם *ʔûlay yēš ḥᵃmiššîm ṣaddîqim, perhaps there.is fifty righteous* (Gen 18:24) or by the opposite predicator of non-existence וְאָדָם אַיִן *wᵊ-ʔādām ʔayin, and-man not.exists* (Gen 2:5). Hebrew has as its second most frequent verb *ḥāyᵃʰ* (Qal היה) which is a challenge for decomposition analysis because it must not be confused with the logical expression **be´** nor is it an obligatory copula. Rather היה *ḥāyᵃʰ* functions as a pragmatically optional operator in non-verbal clauses for aspectual specification, serving most frequently as an optional auxiliary, but sometimes as a main verb. Yet sometimes it does function as the primitive predicate **exist´** and therefore it may be wise to exclude it because it would require a completely different study all on its own.[41] However, in the corpus of the hundred most frequent verbs there is the unproblematic **exist´** predicate חיה *ḥāyᵃʰ* which in its first occurrence in וָחַי לְעֹלָם *wāḥay lᵊʕōlām, and-he.live for-ever* (Gen 3:22) has a co-referential entity and a clearly state-compatible temporal adverb for permanent condition.

Possessor and possessed (code 26). The final two-argument non-verbal predicate is the possessive construction **have´**(x, y) which in Hebrew is expressed by a "(belong) to" possessor construction. The y=POSSESSED is expressed as a bare nominal while the x=POSSESSOR is expressed in a phrase governed by the preposition ל *lᵊ* "for." In the clause immediately preceding the זָקֵן *zāqēn* clause in example (3), the possession predicate "to have sexual desire" is used with the optional aspectual operator *ḥāyᵃʰ* (Qal היה) in example (5).

(5) Gen 18:12 הָיְתָה־לִּי עֶדְנָה

Ø-   Ø- hāy- ᵊtāh-= Ø   ll- Î   ʕedn-   āʰ=   Ø

PERF Qa Be   3Fsg CLT   P 1=sg sexual.delight FsgAB CLT

Shall I have pleasure?

The next major group of two-argument state predicates take their point of departure in a locational primitive predicate and evolve into prototypes for internal image of place and further into internal mental states. These state predicates cluster along a

---

[39] http://lex.qwirx.com/lex/clause.jsp?book=1&chapter=93496&verse=94136&clause =30935.

[40] Kummerow, "Functional–Typological."

[41] Creason, "Semantic Classes," 24; contrast the exclusive syntactic solution in Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 186–97.

cline from visual space to internal intellectual capacity and an emotional reflection (Table 5).

Table 5. Two argument verbal states (code 2x)

Code	Name	Logical Structure	1ˢᵗ arg	2ⁿᵈ arg
21	Pure location	**be-LOC′**(x, y)	x=LOCATION,	y=THEME
22	Perception	**hear′**(x, y)	x=PERCEIVER,	y=STIMULUS
23	Cognition	**know′**(x, y)	x=COGNIZER,	y=CONTENT
24	Desire	**want′**(x, y)	x=WANTER,	y=DESIRE
25	Propositional attitude	**consider′**(x, y)	x=JUDGER,	y=JUDGEMENT
27	Internal experience	**feel′**(x, y)	x=EXPERIENCER,	y=SENSATION
28	Emotion	**love′**(x, y)	x=EMOTER,	y=TARGET

Location and theme (code 21). The first two-argument class is the pure location **be-Loc′**(y, x). It occurs frequently in the Hebrew Bible, the first time in וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹם *wᵊ-ḥōšex ʕal pᵊnê tᵊhôm, and-darkness on surface.of sea* (Gen 1:2) which has the semantic representation **be-on′**(darkness, Sea) for y=THEME and x=LOCATION. This locative construction resembles the non-verbal predicates introduced earlier, but there are also very significant verbal predicates represented in this class. Van Valin mentions that "sit," "stand," and "lie" can occur with progressive if they function as *stage-level* predicates which do not depict a necessarily permanent situation, for example, *the book is lying on the table*, but not when they are permanent states, for example *the city lies at the base of the mountain*.[42] This answers the objection of Malessa to the use of the progressive test.[43] There are six stage-level Qal predicates in the corpus (the most frequent mentioned first): ישׁב *yāšav* "sit," "dwell at," עמד *ʕāmad* "stand,' שׁכב *šāxav* "lie," שׁכן *šāxan* "dwell," גור *gûr* "stay as resident alien," and לין *lîn* "spend the night."

Perceiver and stimulus (code 22). We move from position to the mental image of space in visual and aural perception. The two perception roles are covered by the highly frequent verbs ראה *rāʔāʰ* "see" (**see′**(x, y)) and שׁמע *šāmaʕ* "hear" (**hear′**(x, y)).

Cognizer and content (code 23). Mental images of spaces can also be created within the human mind in cognition. The cognition roles are best represented by the highly frequent verb ידע *yādaʕ* "know" (**know′**(x, y)), but זכר *zāxar* "remember" and שׁכח *šāxaḥ* "forget" are also found in our corpus.

---

[42] Van Valin, *Exploring,* 35n3.

[43] Malessa, *Untersuchungen,* 119.

Wanter and desire (code 24). Desire is not directly represented among the 100 verbs, but we will suggest with some reluctance that the Qal בחר *baḥar* "choose, elect" represents the **want´**(x, y) category.

Judger and judgment (code 25). Propositional attitude is usually exemplified by the state verb **consider´**(x, y). In our corpus we have חשב *ḥāšav* "think, consider." It is also obvious that שפט *šāfaṭ* "decide, judge" belongs to this group. With some caution we include the verb בטח *bāṭaḥ* "trust" in this group.

Experiencer and sensation (code 27). The next group is internal experience which is represented by **feel´**(x, y). To this group belong ירא *yārēʔ* "fear, be afraid," שמח *śāmaḥ* "be glad," בוש *bôš* "be ashamed," חפץ *ḥāfēṣ* "be pleased with," and with some hesitation also חרה *ḥārāʰ* "burn" which can be used in the sense of "be angry."

Emoter and target (code 28). The final state class, emotion, is represented by אהב *ʔāhēv* "love" (**love´**(x, y)), שנא *śanēʔ* "hate" and מאס *māʔas* "reject." Dobbs-Allsopp points out that these emotional state verbs can occur with the progressive use of the participle to express change of attitude in cases such as *loving at all times* (Prov 17:17) and *was not hating earlier* (Deut 4:42).[44]

4. ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT

We now move to activity which is the other major primitive predicate category with no further decomposition in Figure 3. Like states, these verbs do not have an inherent endpoint, but unlike states they are dynamic and thus can be performed actively.

Endpoint (Achievement)
- ⦿ This *activity* has no endpoint
- ○ This *activity* has an endpoint (*Active Achievement*) & INGR
  - Predicate:
  - Argument: <x>

Thematic Relation
<x> does something unspecified (<x>:EFFECTOR)

<x> does something unspecified
<x> moves
<x> emits something
<x> performs <y>
<x> consumes <y>
<x> creates <y>
<x> destroys <y>
<x> perceives <y>
<x> uses <y>

Save

---

44 Dobbs-Allsopp, "Statives," 38.

Figure 3. Verb-role selection for Activity

RRG points to a series of activity verbs such as "march," "walk," "roll [intransitive]," "rush," "swim," "dance," "snow," "rain," "write," "drink," "eat," "read," "paint," "sing," "cry," "talk," and again offers a metalanguage for distinguishing subgroups and logical features which may have an effect on the grammatical treatment of roles (Table 6).

Table 6. Single argument activities (code 3x)

Code	Name	Logical Structure	1ˢᵗ arg
31	Unspecified activity	**do′**(x, Ø)	x=EFFECTOR
32	Motion	**do′**(x, [**walk′**(x)])	x=MOVER
33	Static motion[45]	**do′**(x, [**spin′**(x)])	x=STATIC-MOVER
34	Light emission	**do′**(x, [**shine′**(x)])	x=L-EMITTER
35	Sound emission	**do′**(x, [**gurgle′**(x)])	x=S-EMITTER

Effector (code 31). Unspecified activity is represented as **do′**(x, Ø) and in the logical structure notation this operator is added to all predicates decomposed into activity. Hebrew has a *do*-verb עשׂה *ʕāśᵃʰ* which often has the creation sense "make."

    Mover (code 32). Motion has the logical structure **do′**(x, [**walk′**(x)]). As expected, there are many verbs from this group among our 100 most frequent Qal lexicalizations such as the very frequent הלך *hālax* "walk" and the less frequent רוץ *rûṣ* "run." Directional movement out, up, or down is covered by the verbs יצא, *yāṣāʔ* "go out," עלה, *ʕālᵃʰ* "go up," and ירד, *yārad* "go down." The mover role is also involved in פנה *pānᵃʰ* "turn," and סבב *sāvav* "go around." Movement away from danger is involved in נוס *nûs* "flee."

    Several movement verbs appear to include a reference point in their inherent meanings. Following Van Valin, the lexical entry for English "go" is specified as **do′**(x, [**move.away.from.ref.point′**(x)] & BECOME **be-LOC′**(y, x)).[46] This rather complex logical structure helps us more precisely classify סור *sûr* "depart," נסע *nāsaʕ* "set out on travel," and עזב *ʕāzav* "leave" as having the same logical structure but adding a negation in BECOME NOT **be-at′**. In a similar fashion we can explain קרב *qārav* "approach" and נגשׁ *nāgaš* "draw near" by means of a lexical entry like **do′**(x,[**move.towards.ref.point′**(x)] & BECOME NOT **be-LOC′**(y, x)). Logical structure thus helps us explain the grammatical behaviour of רדף *rādaf* "pursue" as a movement verb which in its inherent meaning has an animate object of pursuit as its "transitive" argument (the clitic *-m* suffix) in example (6). This also means that the

---

[45] The static-mover role (code 33) in static motion (**do′**(x, [**spin′**(x)])) is not attested in the Hebrew Bible. There are no lexicalizations of the Light-emitter (code 34) role of emission verbs (**do′**(x, [**shine′**(x)])), and a verb like נָגַהּ "shine" is only found three times in the Qal form.

[46] Van Valin, *Exploring*, 66.

location in the direction of חוֹבָה *ḥôvāʰ* Hobah is *not* the argument of the movement verb but rather a locative adjunct.

(6) Gen 14:15 וַיִּרְדְּפֵם עַד חוֹבָה

wa=	*yyi-*	*Ø-*	*rdᵊfē-*	*Ø=*	*M*	*ʕad*	*ḥôvāʰ-*	*Ø=*	*Ø*
CLM	NARR	Qa	follow	3Msg	3Mpl	P	Hobah	usgAB	CLT

And he pursued them to Hobah

Sound-emitter (code 35). A sound emission predicate like **do´**(x, [**gurgle´**(x)]) is perhaps attested by Qal בכה *bāxāʰ* "weep."

Speaker (code 36). Verbs of communication were defined as a sub-class of activity verbs by Van Valin and LaPolla.[47] They are here allotted a separate code 36 even if they have some familiarity to sound-emission as in Qal קרא *qārāʔ* "call," "cry," and "read aloud." The logical structure **do´**(x, [**express**(α).**to.**(ß)´)]) α=content; ß=addressee is assigned in the following way: אמר *ʔāmar* "say" has α=utterance or thought; שאל *šāʔal* "ask" has α=question; ענה *ʕānāʰ* "answer" has α=answer; and ברך *barax* "bless" has α=priestly blessing.

We can now move to the one- or two-argument activity classes in Table 7.

Table 7. One- or two-argument activities (code 4x)

Code	Name	Logical Structure	1ˢᵗ arg	2ⁿᵈ arg
41	Performance	**do´**(x, [**sing´**(x, (y))])	x=PERFORMER,	y=PERFORMANCE
42	Consumption	**do´**(x, [**eat´**(x, (y))])	x=CONSUMER ,	y=CONSUMED
43	Creation	**do´**(x, [**write´**(x, (y))])	x=CREATOR,	y=CREATION
44	Directed perception[48]	**do´**(x, [**see´**(x, (y))])	x=OBSERVER,	y=STIMULUS
45	Use[49]	**do´**(x, [use´(x, y)])	x=USER,	y=IMPLEMENT

Performer and performance (code 41). The performance group covers verbs such as *sing* which is by nature transitive (**do´**(x, [**sing´**(x, (y))])), but not among the 100 most frequent. Furthermore, it is not easy to decide between an artistic performance and a creative production, but I will stipulate that this group has active self-expression as its defining feature. If one widens the focus in this class to the performer and downsizes the product it is possible to include עבד *ʕāvad* "work" and

---

[47] Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax,* 116–18.

[48] The observer and stimulus (code 44) for directed perception can be expressed through the verb "see" with preposition in ראה ב, or infrequent verbs such as שקד, נצר and צפה. However, we have tentatively assigned שמר "watch, guard" to this class.

[49] There is no lexicalized "use" predicate with user and implement roles (code 45) in our corpus.

"serve" as well as רעה *rāʕāʰ* "tend sheep." It is not far, then, to other kinds of performers involved in voluntary activity such as עזר *ʕāzar* "help" or in sexual services such as זנה *zānāʰ* "act as a prostitute." A related verb is משל *māšal* "have dominion over" and it is not unlike the use of מלך *mālak* "be king" or "rule over" as an activity rather than a state. In Hebrew, serving as king in some contexts is synonymous with *rāʕāᵇ* (Qal רעה). Once we are in the administrative and social area we can broaden self-expressing performance to פקד *pāqad* "visit," "muster," "appoint," and thereby avoid the temptation to resort to hypothetical causative state interpretations for this verb.

Other candidates may be harder to handle. Tentatively the performer role is dominant in דרש *dāraš* "inquire" and "seek" objects or answers. However, רחץ *rāḥaṣ* "wash" refers to cleaning of clothes, other objects and one's own body which may eventually lend itself to a causative paraphrase. Finally, חטא *ḥāṭāʔ* "sin" or "incur guilt" may still have a performer focus: circumscribing the meaning to breach of religious rules is better left to encyclopaedic knowledge to be activated in context.

Consumer and consumption (code 42). It goes without saying that the consumption class (**do´**(x, [**eat´**(x, (y))])) is represented by the very frequent verb אכל *ʔāxal* "eat" which will be discussed in relation to active accomplishment as well as the less frequent verb שתה *šātāᵇ* "drink." However, it turns out that a verb such as שרף *śāraf* "burn" from our corpus also naturally falls into this group.

Creator and creation (code 43). The creation class (**do´**(x, [**write´**(x, (y))])) is represented by the verbs כתב *kātav* "write" and בנה *bānāᵇ* "build" and will be dealt with below.

One of the new features introduced by Van Valin and LaPolla was the analysis of motion verbs with a definite goal as "active accomplishment verbs."[50] To this group belong not only motion verbs as in *run to the park* (contrast the activity counterpart *run in the park*) but also consumption predicates such as *eat the apple* and creation predicates such as *write the poem*. Certain English verbs such as "devour" and "go" are lexicalized as active accomplishment as they have no activity counterparts.

Table 8. Accomplished activities (code xx50)

Code	Name	Logical Structure
3250	Accomplished Movement	**do´**(x, [**walk´**(x, (y))]) & INGR **be-at´**(y, x)
4250	Accomplished Consumption	**do´**(x, [**eat´**(x, (y))]) & INGR **consumed´**(y)
4350	Accomplished Creation	**do´**(x, [**create´**(x, (y))]) & INGR **created´**(y)

Active accomplishment for mover (code 3250). The primary parallel in Hebrew is Qal בוא *bôʔ* "come," "arrive." For example, the activity reaches a final endpoint when the mover "dove" arrives at a specific time in the "evening" in example (7).

---

[50] Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 99–100.

(7) Gen 8:11   וַתָּבֹא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה לְעֵת עֶרֶב

wa=	tā-	Ø-	vô?-	Ø=	Ø	?el- aᵃw	ha=	yyôn-	āh=	Ø
CLM	NARR	Qa	enter	3Fsg	CLT	P 3Msg	ART	Dove	FsgAB	CLT

?=	Set-	Ø=	Ø	Serev-	Ø=	Ø
P	time	usgCS	CLT	evening	usgAB	CLT

And the dove returned to him

Similar lexicalizations are found with Qal verbs such as אסף *?āsaf* "gather" and שׁוב *šûv* "return." A verb such as קום *qûm* "stand up" also implies that a very short movement reaches an endpoint. עבר *Savar* "pass by" or "pass through" (and even secondarily trespassing laws) also aligns well with this group. Finally a verb such as חנה, *ḥānā*ᵇ "encamp" refers to a completed movement into a camp site.

　　Active accomplishment for consumer and consumed (code 4250). In the beginning of the Hebrew Bible ongoing activity of eating part of the fruit of the tree is expressed consistently by מן + אכל *?āxal min* "eat from" as in example (8). This construction is the activity predicate and it is also expressed with the non-definite noun phrase in תֹּאכַל לֶחֶם *tō?xal leḥem, eat bread* (Gen 3:19) or בָּשָׂר...תֹאכֵלוּ *bāśār tō?xēlû, eat flesh* (Gen 9:4) which are not second arguments but semantic specifications. However there are also second argument noun phrases preceded by a preposition for object marker as in אֶת־עֵשֶׂב *?et Sēśev* in example (9). That this construction is active accomplishment is clearly collaborated by a phrase such as וַיֹּאכַל גַּם־אָכוֹל אֶת־כַּסְפֵּנוּ *wayyō?xal gam ?āxôl ?et kaspēnû, he even completely consumed our money* (Gen 31:15) and the logical structure is **do´**(Ø, [**eat´**(Ø, money)]) & BECOME **consumed´**(money).

(8) Gen 3:1 (הַגָּן) לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִכֹּל עֵץ

lō?	tō-	Ø-	?xl-	û=	Ø	mi=	kōl-	Ø=	Ø	Sēṣ-	Ø=	Ø	(…)
NEG	IMPF	Qa	eat	2Mpl	CLT	P	All	usgCS	CLT	tree	usgCS	CLT	

You must not eat from any tree

(9) Gen 3:18 (הַשָּׂדֶה) וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת עֵשֶׂב

wᵊ=	Ø-	Ø-	?axal-	tā=	Ø	?et	Sēśev-	Ø=	Ø	(…)
CLM	SEQU	Qa	eat	2Msg	CLT	P	herb	usgCS	CLT	

And you shall eat the plants of the field.

Active accomplishment for creator and creation (code 4350). Qal בנה *bānā*ᵇ "build" rarely occurs without the creation role and the noun phrase is rarely marked by the object marker אֶת *?ēt* mentioned above. On the other hand Qal כתב *kātav* "write" when referring to the activity appears to use a prepositional phrase governed

by עַל *ʕal* "on" while the produced object in definite form is associated with the accomplishment meaning as in example (10).

(10) Exod 34:1 וְכָתַבְתִּי עַל הַלֻּחֹת אֶת הַדְּבָרִים

wᵊ=	Ø-	Ø-	*xātav-*	*tî=*	Ø	*ʕal*	*ha=*	*lluḥ-*	*ōt=*	Ø
CLM	SEQU	Qa	write	1usg	CLT	P	ART	tablet	FplAB	CLT

ʔet	*ha=*	*dᵊvār-*	*îm=*	Ø
P	ART	word	MplAB	CLT

And I will write the words on the tablets.

To summarize, we have up to this point now been able to account for the large majority of the 100 most frequent verbs which are lexicalized in the basic Qal in Biblical Hebrew. They have been assigned to the two primitive main groups of state or activity plus or minus accomplishment.

5. Causation, Accomplishment, and Achievement

The final step in our classification of the remaining verbs in our corpus of the 100 most frequent predicates is to follow the first step in the algorithm and remove the logical operators shown in the decision chart of Figure 4.

Causativity
- ☐ There is a controlling agent (α CAUSE β)   **do'(<x>, Ø) CAUSE [...]**

Punctuality
- ☐ This must be done in an instant (punctual)
  - ◯ It has a result state   INGR
  - ◉ It has **no** result state   SEMEL

Non-punctuality
- ☐ This must be done as a process reaching an endpoint (... in an hour) BECOME

Figure 4. Verb-role selection for derived logical structures

The first test question concerns the check for the presence of causation in order to isolate the CAUSE operator. The next question checks whether the verb implies an instantaneous or a "processual" change into some result state. This reveals whether the verb should be decomposed with an instantaneity operator which is called ingressive INGR or the processual operator BECOME.

Causative accomplishment (code xx89). Causation should be handled with great care and only be proposed when there is no simpler solution—it is all too easy to gloss something as "something causes something else" when in fact this is only a logical relation. This would not reveal true causation, however, because it must have an additional causer argument added to its structure. Only by proceeding with strict self-imposed restraint and not falling prey to inventing causation for verbs arbitrarily can we establish a viable list from the 100 most frequent verbs.

As discussed in Winther-Nielsen "Role-Lexical Module," a CAUSE operator links two logical structures in the case of the verb הרג *harag* "kill" which is causative accomplishment for conditional state (code 1189). Other verbs from our corpus are שחט *šāḥaṭ* "slaughter" in a general sense and זבח *zāvaḥ* "slaughter" in the case of animals for sacrifice.

A next major sub-group is represented by שים *śîm* "put" and the very similar verb שית *šît* "put." Their logical structure is causative accomplishment for pure location (code 2189) and the notation is [**do´**(x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **be-in´**(y, z)]. Other kindred verbs with the same structure are ערך *ʕārax* "arrange" when ordering entities into specific patterns, and קבר *qāvar* "bury" when committing dead bodies to burial chambers or the earth. A more specialized format is used for a verb such as מלא *mālēʔ* "fill (with)" which refers to the completion of the process, hence the logical structure [**do´**(x, Ø)] CAUSE [[BECOME **be-in´**(y, z)] CAUSE [BECOME **full´**(y)]].

The very frequent Qal verb נתן *nātan* "give" is a causative accomplishment of possession (code 2689) and has the structure [**do´**(x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **have´**(y, z)]. When the doer and possessor roles in the x and y arguments are co-referential, this structure also covers the verb קנה *qānāʰ* "buy." The opposite of "give" is לקח *lāqaḥ* "take" which negates the possession in the logical structure [**do´**(x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME NOT **have´**(z, y)]. The same logical structure is found in the verb לכד *lāxad* "capture" and "catch" as well as in ירש *yāraš* "take possession of" and "inherit" property as an heir or through conquest. A specialized verb from the legal and religious sphere such as גאל *gāʔal* "redeem" also belongs here because it refers to legally reclaiming lost property or persons by paying some substitution.

The analysis of other verbs is less certain. I will tentatively suggest that the verb ילד *yālad* "bear a child" or "become father" is a causative accomplishment for existence (code 1289) and thus [**do´**(x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **exist´**(y)]. Possibly שפך *šāfax* "pour" can be analyzed as a causative accomplishment of movement (code 3289) for liquid substances. A similar notion is at play in the verb נשא *nāśāʔ* "lift up" and "carry" which refers to causing solid material to move. On this basis it may be possible to isolate a completion of caused movement in the verbs שלח *šālaḥ* "send" and נטה *nāṭāʰ* "stretch out" hence causative active accomplishments (code 3259).

Accomplishment (code xx80). The second test question focuses on whether there is a happening in an instant, because if the answer to this question is no, the logical structure could be a process leading to an end result. Among our 100 most frequent verbs are מות *mût* "die" which is traditionally interpreted as a process leading to an instant change into the state of death and hence the logical structure BECOME **dead´**(x). The only other verb in the corpus is אבד *ʔāvad* "perish."

Achievement (code xx70). However, if the answer to the second test question is yes, there is an instantaneous change into a result state for the achievement class. The most convincing examples of this kind of non-temporal duration is the predicate נפל *nāfal* "fall" which implies that some static role in a matter of seconds is positioned in a new location. The theme in their logical structure INGR **be-in´**(y, x) can be an animate or inanimate body or a body part.

On this basis we can also interpret פתח *pātaḥ* "open" as a change from closed to opened that happens in a split second so this verb is prototypically an achievement in its intransitive core meaning. The fourth verb in this group is קרא *qārāʔ* "happen to" which can be explained as achievement of existence with an entity role and INGR **exist**´(x) structure (code 1270).

Semelfactive (code xx60). Among the 100 most frequent the only case of an instant event with no change into a result state is Qal נגע *nāgaʕ* "touch," with the logical structure SEML **do**´(x, Ø) (namely, code 3160).

However, after all is said and done, there are a few lexemes which, for now, I have failed to analyze, and in these dubious cases I will not make any final decision for the moment. Qal יכל *yāxōl* "be able to" is perhaps unspecified action (code 31). Qal מצא *māṣāʔ* "find" is probably not a performance verb (code 41), because the meaning implies that an activity is completed, but it is also precarious to posit causation for its logical structure. Finally, Qal כרת *kārat* "cut" should not be analyzed as "use a knife as an implement" (code 45), because the tool is hardly ever mentioned in the clausal structure of this particular verb, so some causative accomplishment may be preferable.

6. CONCLUSION: PLOTTING A NEW COURSE

We set before us the task to plot the verb-specific roles of the 100 most frequent lexicalized verbs in the corpus of the entire Hebrew Bible. This test has shown that there are relatively few predicates which cannot be accounted for in terms of primitive states or activities as well as their derived predicates. The list of the 100 most frequent Qal verbs was intended as a challenge to decomposition: if RRG could not convincingly reveal the logical operators one by one for the most frequent data, then either the theory or the work of the analyst would be seriously jeopardized.

The discussion has illustrated the use of a very complex system of logical structure which many outside linguistic circles no doubt will find very difficult to use. The logic built into the Role-Lexical Module was used in order to reveal logical operators during analysis, but for pedagogical reasons lexicalization was described with examples moving from the simplest to the most complex. However, the point of this analysis was not to use this particular research tool for the task, but rather to build a reference corpus which can be used in a tool such as the Role-Lexical Module.

The advantage of RRG is that it provides a fairly consistent basic framework and it has been tested in typological work for 30 years. We propose some refinement of the operators. Perhaps the time has come to replace Dowty's logical operators with simpler notations which would retain the steps for plotting semantic roles, yet be easier to learn and simpler to implement for computational linguists. In earlier work we recommended the use of a widely accepted general framework such

as WordNet for the ontology.[51] The attempt in Winther-Nielsen ("Parsing") to tie logical structure into the Functional-Lexematic Framework proved less viable because the verb lists are too closely defined in terms of English and Spanish predicate frames.[52]

Nevertheless, even if RRG in the future moves in new directions, linguists will still need reference lists built within the traditional framework. When the task in front of us is to develop next generation learning technology we will especially need to have access to canonical reference lists which can guide students in learning semantic roles. We have barely touched the syntactic data, but inevitably the next step is to use this as a lexicon in an RRG analysis of syntax and information analysis. Since we collaborate with the Eep Talstra Centre of Bible and Computing, we of course also hope that verb-specific role analysis can be used as a supplement to the syntactic analysis and creation of valency data in Amsterdam.

7. GUIDE TO TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration employed here was designed to help linguists and others who do not read Hebrew to be able to consult the data online in Bible Learner Online (http://bibleol.3bmoodle.dk/text/select_text).[53]

---

[51] Winther-Nielsen, "Role-Lexical Module."

[52] Without going into detail, new work should explore the inheritance networks proposed by Gottschalk, "Computability," as well as Conceptual Graphs, following Petersen, "Genesis 1:1–3 in Graphs." http://www.see-j.net/index.php/hiphil/article/view/37.

[53] See Winther-Nielsen, Tøndering and Wilson, "Transliteration." The transliteration was designed by Nava Bergman according to the way Hebrew is spoken today in Israel. The entire Hebrew Bible is available from the German Bible Society. The transliteration of the entire Hebrew Bible is now available in Bible Online Learner (http://bibleol.3bmoodle.dk/).

Name	Consonant	Transliteration	Pronunciation	Fricative	Transliteration	Pronunciation	Final
ʔālef	א	ʔ	glottal stop/silent				
bêt	בּ	*b*	**b**oy	ב	*v*	lo**v**e	
gīʸmel	גּ	*g*	**g**ive	ג	*g*	ba**g**	
dālet	דּ	*d*	**d**og	ד	*d*	goo**d**	
hēʔ	ה	*h*	**h**at				
wāw	ו	*w*	**v**oice				
zayin	ז	*z̃*	**z**ip				
ḥēʸt	ח	*ḥ*	Ba**ch**				
ṭēʸt	ט	*ṭ*	**t**ide				
yôd	י	*y*	**y**ellow				
kāf	כּ	*k*	**k**eep	כ	*x*	*Ba**ch***	ךְ
lāmed	ל	*l*	**l**etter				
mēm	מ	*m*	**m**other				ם
nûn	נ	*n*	**n**oon				ן
sāmex	ס	*s*	**s**it				
ʕayin	ע	ʕ	guttural/silent				
pēʔ	פּ	*p*	**p**ie	פ	*f*	**f**ish	ף
ṣādēʸ	צ	*ṣ*	ca**ts**				ץ
qôf	ק	*q*	**k**eep				
reš	ר	*r*	**r**ace				
śīʸn	שׂ	*ś*	**s**it				
šīʸn	שׁ	*š*	**sh**ine				
tāw	תּ	*t*	**t**ide	ת	*t*		

Vowel Sound	Name	Sign	Transliteration	Example	Reference
I long/short	ḥireq	◌ִ	*i*	הַשָּׁמַ֫יִם	Gen 1:1
Ultra short	šᵊwāʰ mobile	◌ְ	ᵊ	בְּרֵאשִׁית	Gen 1:1
E long	ṣērê	◌ֵ	*ē*	בְּרֵאשִׁית	Gen 1:1
Short	Segōl	◌ֶ	*e*	וְהָאָ֫רֶץ	Gen 1:1
Ultra short	ḥāṭēp segōl	◌ֱ	ᵉ	אֱלֹהִים	Gen 1:1
A long	qāmeṣ	◌ָ	*ā*	בָּרָא	Gen 1:1
Short	pataḥ	◌ַ	*a*	הַשָּׁמַ֫יִם	Gen 1:1
Ultra short	ḥāṭēp pataḥ	◌ֲ	ᵃ	הָאֲדָמָה	Gen 1:25
O long	ḥōlem waw	וֹ	*ô*	תְהֹום	Gen 1:2
Long	ḥōlem	◌ֹ	*ō*	אֱלֹהִים	Gen 1:2
Short	qāmeṣ ḥāṭûp	◌ָ	*o*	לְאָכְלָה	Gen 1:29
Ultra short	ḥāṭēp qāmeṣ	◌ֳ	ᵒ	לְקָחָה	Gen 2:23
U long	šûreq	וּ	*û*	וְרוּחַ	Gen 1:3
Short	qibbûṣ	◌ֻ	*u*	וְכִבְשֻׁהָ	Gen 1:28

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andersen, Francis I., and A. Dean Forbes. *Biblical Hebrew Grammar Visualized.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Anstey, Matthew. *Towards a Functional Discourse Analysis of Tiberian Hebrew.* Canberra: self-published, printed by AddColour Digital, 2006.

Bosman, Hendrik-Jan, Reinoud Oosting, and Ferenc Postma. *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon to the Old Testament: English and German.* Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2003.

Cook, John A. *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: the Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew.* Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Creason, Stuart Alan. "Semantic Classes of Hebrew Verbs: A Study of Aktionsart in the Hebrew Verbal System." Ph.D dissertation. University of Chicago, 1995.

Dik, Simon C. *The Theory of Functional Grammar Part I: The Structure of the Clause.* Dordrecht: Foris, 1989.

Dobbs-Allsopp, F.W. "Biblical Hebrew Statives and Situation Aspect." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 45 (2000): 38.

Dowty, David. *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar: The Semantics of Verbs and Times in Generative Semantics and in Montague's PTQ.* Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979.

Foley, William A., and Robert D. Van Valin, Jr. *Functional Syntax and Universal Grammar.* Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 38. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Gottschalk, Judith. "Storage of Linguistic Knowledge in the Mental Lexicon: An Approach within Role and Reference Grammar." *ITB Journal* 19 (2010): 20–45. Accessed December 6, 2012. http://www.itb.ie/files/journal/issue-19.pdf.

———. "On the Computability of Role and Reference Grammar: A New Approach to the Analysis of Three-Place Predicates and the Hierarchical Lexicon." *ITB Journal* 22 (2012): 124–92. Accessed December 6, 2012. http://www.itb.ie/files/journal/issue-22.pdf.

Kummerow, David. "Functional–Typological and Constructional Linguistic Studies on Tiberian Hebrew: Anaphora, Deixis, and the Verbal System." Ph.D dissertation. Australian College of Theology, Sydney, 2010.

Levin, Beth, and Malka Rappaport Hovav. *Argument Realization.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Malessa, Michael. *Untersuchungen zur verbalen Valenz im biblischen Hebräisch.* Studia Semitica Neerlandica 49. Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006.

Pavey, Emma L. *The Structure of Language: An Introduction to Grammatical Analysis.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Petersen, Ulrik. "Genesis 1:1-3 in Graphs: Extracting Conceptual Structures from Biblical Hebrew." *SEE-J Hiphil* 4 (2007). http://www.see-j.net/index.php/hiphil/article/view/37.

Sandborg-Petersen, Ulrik. "On Biblical Hebrew and Computer Science: Inspiration, Models, Tools, and Cross-Fertilization." Pages 261–76 in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation: Studies Presented to Professor Eep Talstra on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday.* Edited by W.Th. van Peursen and J.W. Dyk. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Van Valin, Robert D., Jr., *Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Van Valin, Robert D., Jr., and Randy J. LaPolla. *Syntax: Structure, Meaning, and Function.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Vendler, Zeno. *Linguistics in Philosophy.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967.

Wilson, Chris. "Lex: a Software Project for Linguists." Technical Report. *SEE-J Hiphil* 6 (2009). Accessed December 6, 2012.

http://www.see-j.net/index.php/hiphil/article/view /60.

Winther-Nielsen, Nicolai. *A Functional Discourse Grammar of Joshua: A Computer-Assisted Rhetorical Structure Analysis*. Coniectanea Biblical Old Testament Series 40. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995.

———. "A Role-Lexical Module (RLM) for Biblical Hebrew: A Mapping Tool for RRG and WordNet." Pages 455–78 in *Investigations of the Syntax-Semantics-Pragmatics Interface*. Edited by Robert D. Van Valin, Jr. Studies in Language Companion Series 105. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2008.

———. "Biblical Hebrew Parsing on Display: The Role-Lexical Module (RLM) as a Tool for Role and Reference Grammar." *SEE-J Hiphil* 6 (2009). Accessed December 6, 2012.
http://www.see-j.net/index.php/hiphil/article/view/78.

———. "WP5: PLOTLearner Development." EuroPLOT. Accessed December 6, 2012. http://www.eplot.eu/project-definition/workpackage-5.

Winther-Nielsen, Nicolai, Claus Tøndering, and Chris Wilson. "Transliteration of Biblical Hebrew for the Role-Lexical Module." Technical Report. *SEE-J Hiphil* 6 (2009). Accessed December 6, 2012.
http://www.see-j.net/index.php/hiphil/article/view/62.

CHAPTER 6
THE PROPER ROLE OF VALENCY IN BIBLICAL HEBREW STUDIES[1]

A. Dean Forbes

University of the Free State
Bloemfontein, South Africa

The basic assumption of valency theory is that the verb occupies a central position in the sentence because the verb determines how many other elements have to occur in order to form a grammatical sentence.[2]

The usefulness of valency concepts in linguistic description and theoretical inquiry is well established, especially in dependency grammars.[3] In non-dependency grammars, alternate formalisms are adopted (government, complementation, subcategorization). Across both kinds of grammar, the resulting lexical-unit characterizations and theoretical insights are similar.

In carrying out general valency studies, analysts rely on: (1) intuition-based well-formed-ness assessments and/or (2) attestation patterns in verb corpora.

In Biblical Hebrew studies, the intuition-based approach may yield unreliable inferences due to intrinsic vagueness and/or non-native-speaker uncertainty. The corpus-based approach risks faulty inferences when it: (1) ignores the fuzziness of the complement/adjunct distinction; (2) fails to take confounding variables into account; (3) ignores the

---

[1] Presented at the 2012 SBL Meeting in Chicago.

[2] Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, xxiv.

[3] Trask, *Dictionary of Grammatical Terms*, 77: "[*Dependency grammar* is an] approach to grammatical description which is based, not on constituent structure [as is *constituency grammar*], but on relations between individual words."

damaging effects of noise; and/or (4) is oblivious to the generalization-deflating effects of small sample sizes. The essay concludes with a brief assessment of the state of affairs of (biblical) valency studies.

1. VALENCY AND RELATED CONCEPTS

1.1 Valency

In his posthumously published *Éléments de syntaxe structurale* (1959), Lucien Tesnière expounded his theory of syntax (later to become known as *dependency grammar*) and developed his *atom metaphor* in which a clause's verb is viewed as like "an atom with a particular number of hooks that can—according to the number of hooks—attract a varying number of actants, which it keeps in its dependence. The number of hooks that a verb possesses, and consequently the number of actants that it governs, constitutes what we call the valency of a verb."[4] One modern definition of *valency* preserves the original concept while making it more wide-ranging:

> [Valency refers] to the number and type of bonds which syntactic elements may form with each other… A valency grammar presents a model of a sentence containing a fundamental element (typically, the verb) and a number of dependent elements (variously referred to as arguments, expressions, complements or valents) whose number and type is determined by the valency attributed to the verb.[5]

These definitions leave unstated exactly what "arguments, expressions, complements or valents" are. In this essay, I will always refer to the core-dependent elements as *complements*.[6] The much-debated identification of complements will be addressed in section 2.1.

I find it useful to distinguish three aspects of valency:

- Quantitative valency: The minimum and maximum number of complements occurring with a given verb in active clauses with finite verbs.[7]
- Semantic valency: "The semantic role that a complement holds to its lexical governor."[8]
- Syntactic valency: The syntactic structures exhibited by complements.[9]

---

[4] Cited by Ágel and Fischer, "Dependency Grammar and Valency Theory," 230.

[5] Crystal, *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 507.

[6] A simple definition will do for now: "**complement** A syntactic unit seen historically as 'completing' the construction of a word or other element… E.g. in *He put it on the floor*, the complements of *put* might be *he*, *it*, and *on the floor*." Matthews, *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 67.

[7] Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, x.

[8] Fillmore, review of Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, 64.

[9] Bickel, "Clause-Level vs. Predicate-Level Linking," 156.

To give a simple example: "the [quantitative] valence of *hit* is 2, the semantic valence is <agent, patient>[, and] the syntactic valence of *hit* is <NP-NOM, NP-OBJ>."[10]

1.2 Related Concepts

The concept of valency is not restricted to dependency grammars. It also has immediate analogs in various constituency grammars. Note that the following concepts from non-dependency grammars are "largely equivalent"[11] to valency:

- Government: "The relation seen between a head and [a] complement. Thus, in *I saw her in Bristol*, the object *her* is governed by the verb *saw*."[12]
- Complementation: "A set or series of complements that a verb etc. must take. E.g. the complementation of verbs such as *read* includes a direct object (*I read a newspaper*); that of *put* includes both a direct object and a locative (*I put it on the floor*)."[13] Note that the complements are here specified in terms of grammatical functions and that the subject has not been included as a complement.
- Subcategorization: "The assignment of a lexical item to a subclass of its part of speech, especially with respect to the syntactic elements with which it can combine."[14] This implies that *subcategorization* is equivalent to *syntactic valency*. This is borne out in the literature where one finds assertions such as:
  - ○ "I use the term valency to subsume (syntactic) subcategorization and realization, argument structure, selectional preferences on arguments, and linking and/or mapping rules which relate the syntactic and semantic levels of representation."[15]
  - ○ "Valency … is a property of … lexemes: of words, that is, as entered in a lexicon or dictionary… [I]t has to do … with subcategorization."[16]

2. ISSUES IN GENERAL VALENCY THEORY

I shall here take up four issues that complicate the practical exploitation of valency theory in general: (1) the fuzziness of the complement/adjunct distinction; (2)

---

[10] Ibid. The entry for "hit" in *A Valency Dictionary of English* recognizes five senses of "hit" and concludes with a listing of four additional idiomatic phrasal-verb usages (389–91).

[11] Fischer, "Verb Valency," 4–5; §0. See also Cornell, Fischer, and Roe, eds., *Valency in Practice*, 7.

[12] Matthews, *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 161.

[13] Ibid., 68.

[14] Ibid., 386.

[15] Briscoe, "From Dictionary to Corpus," 79.

[16] Matthews, "The Scope of Valency," 4.

factors that alter apparent valency; (3) the effects of confounding variables; and (4) imperfect recognition of subcategorization frames.[17]

2.1 Complement/Adjunct Differentiation[18]

The Nature of the Distinction. Not all non-verb constituents comprising clauses are classified as complements. Such non-verb, non-complement constituents are termed *adjuncts.* The linguistic dictionary definitions make matters seem straightforward. Consider Crystal's definition: "A term used in grammatical theory to refer to an optional or secondary element in a construction: an adjunct may be removed without the structural identity of the rest of the construction being affected."[19] Or Trask's: "A category which is a modifier of a lexical head without being subcategorized for by that lexical head and which could in principle be removed without affecting well-formedness."[20]

One realizes that one has encountered dictionary-writer oversimplification when one repeatedly comes upon references to "optional complements" such as:

> [C]omplements which, though they demonstrate the [supposed] characteristics of complements …, do not have to be present for the sentence in which the governing verb occurs to be grammatical … Complements can be classified as obligatory, optional or contextually optional."[21]

To see what we are up against, consider two sentences put forward by Aarts: "She lives *in London*" versus "I live my life *in London.*" He asserts that in the first sentence, *in London* is "clearly a complement," while in the second it is "an undisputed adjunct."[22] The distinction that he makes seems to me to be neither *clear* nor *undisputed.*

The Centrality of the Distinction. The complement–adjunct distinction is viewed as crucial by valency theorists:

---

[17] *Technical Note*: A fourth issue is relevant but too technical to be considered here: the fact that language distributions are "fat-tailed." Briscoe, "From Dictionary to Corpus," 86, writes that "no matter how much data is analysed however accurately, this data will still be inadequate from a statistical perspective for the acquisition of an accurate and comprehensive valency lexicon… Both the unconditional distribution of valency frames and the conditional distributions of frames given specific predicates are approximately Zipfian." Briscoe is unduly pessimistic here. See also Baayen, *Word Frequency Distributions*.

[18] For a concise yet accessible introduction to this topic, see Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 94–96.

[19] Crystal, *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 12.

[20] Trask, *Dictionary of Grammatical Terms*, 8.

[21] Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, xxxi.

[22] Aarts, *Syntactic Gradience*, 186. In Quirk et al., *A Comprehensive Grammar*, 505, we are dumbfounded to learn that *in London* in the first sentence is an "*obligatory predication adjunct.*"

- "Tesnière … does not overlook the problem of complement–adjunct differentiation that has come to occupy such a central place in modern valency theory."[23]
- "die Valenztheorie steht und fällt mit der Unterscheidung von Komplement und Adverbial."[24] ["Valency theory stands or falls on the difference between complement and adjunct."]
- "A correct and consistent characterization of the [complement]-adjunct distinction is crucial both for defining and identifying subcategorization."[25]
- "The distinction between adjuncts and complements is central to valency theory."[26]

The reason for this focus is that one seeks to identify those constituents that specifically complete each verb, excluding peripheral constituents, somehow defined.

Differentiating Complements from Adjuncts. The asserted necessity of excluding adjuncts from consideration when assessing valency has led to a great deal of work on this challenging problem. There are at least three approaches to differentiating complements from adjuncts: native-speaker intuitions, rule sets, and accumulated characteristics scores.

<u>Native-Speaker Intuitions</u>: Native-speaker intuitions are either very much up front (especially in older work) or are relied on, typically without comment, to settle disputed cases (particularly in more recent work).

In early work, an "elimination test" was used: if a sentence remained grammatical (by native-speaker intuition) when a constituent was removed, then the removable constituent was judged to be an adjunct or an optional complement.[27]

In more recent work, native-speaker intuition is called upon when standard tests are stymied. Hence, for example, we find: "If no such [so-called general] use *seems possible* for a verb or verb sense, no zerovalent use is indicated."[28] Or, again: "**Communicative necessity** means that an element is necessary in a particular context in that if it were deleted the resulting sentence would no longer *appear to make sense*."[29]

---

[23] Ágel and Fischer, "Dependency Grammar and Valency Theory," 230–31.

[24] Heringer, *Deutsche Syntax*, 157.

[25] Korhonen, "Subcategorization Acquisition," 26.

[26] Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, xxiv.

[27] Günther, "Valence in Categorial Syntax," 127.

[28] Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, x. Italics added.

[29] Ibid., xxx. Italics added.

<u>Batteries of Tests</u>: Over time, batteries of tests have been devised to fill the coverage gaps left by single tests.[30] More-or-less concurrently the realization has grown that complements and adjuncts lie along a gradient, a squish. Herbst et al. refer to "the gradience character of the distinction between complements and adjuncts."[31]

<u>Accumulated Relation Scores</u>: In response to Joachim Jacobs' withering attack, *Kontra Valenz*—published in 1994[32]—some valency theorists produced multidimensional models of valency.[33] An overall set of valency relations was identified. If a candidate phrase exhibited a relation, its complement score was increased by one. "The more relations [could] be attributed to a phrase, the stronger [was] its claim to complement status."[34] This approach implicitly gave each of the relations the same weight in the decision-making process,[35] a procedure well-known in pattern recognition circles to be sub-optimal.[36] The reckoning also unwisely assumed that the relations were mutually independent, even though they were known not to be: "There are implications between the relations."[37]

The Status of Complement–Adjunct Differentiation. To characterize the status of complement–adjunct differentiation in general, Faulhaber translates Welke:

> Complements and adjuncts (arguments and modifiers) are obviously differentiated between in a vague and prototypical way. Thus, they are well distinguished in a core area. There is, however, a broad border and transition area. This renders the differentiation a notorious problem.[38]

This sort of observation appears occasionally in biblical studies. For example, Muraoka has observed that:

> A general question which arises not only in respect of our corpus, but also in respect of many languages, a question which has been extensively debated in general linguistics but not resolved so far, is that of how to distinguish between an argument which may be considered more essential, an object, whether direct

---

[30] DeArmand and Hedberg, "On Complements and Adjuncts." See also Pollard and Sag, *Information-Based Syntax and Semantics*, 135–39; quoted in Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 95–96.

[31] Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, xxviii. See also Aarts, *Syntactic Gradience*, 186.

[32] Jacobs, *Kontra Valenz*. The manuscript circulated from 1986 onward, according to Fischer.

[33] Ágel and Fischer, "Dependency Grammar and Valency Theory," 239–41.

[34] Ibid., 240.

[35] Langbehn and Woolson, "Discriminant Analysis," 2679–700.

[36] Duda, Hart, and Stork, *Pattern Classification*, 52–3.

[37] Ágel and Fischer, "Dependency Grammar and Valency Theory," 240.

[38] Faulhaber, *Verb Valency Patterns*, 257–58.

or indirect, and an argument which may be regarded as optional, peripheral and dispensable, an adverbial modifier. Locatives can be particularly difficult here.[39]

Overall, we are left with this good-natured, yet telling, admission of Herbst et al. in their massive valency dictionary of English:

> Given the complexity of the task and the prototypical nature of crucial distinctions … between complements (*Ergänzungen*) und [sic] adjuncts (*Angaben*), it might seem advisable to modify the standard text used in German programmes when the winning lottery numbers are announced, and say: *Alle Angaben und Ergänzungen ohne Gewähr.*[40] [*For all adjuncts and complements, no responsibility taken.*]

2.2 Factors that Alter Apparent Valency

We consider three factors that may alter apparent valency: (1) differing verb sense, (2) alternation, and (3) context-permitted omission.

Differing Verb Sense. When native speakers are making the valency assessments, their declaration that some verb-form is exhibiting multiple senses is usually compelling. But, when are non-native analysts justified in making such pronouncements? They may amount to problem-solving by way of untestable assertion.

Alternation. Two kinds of alternation are distinguished in the literature: *valency-changing alternation* and *valency-preserving alternation*. Humphreys has provided a thorough catalogue of valency change alternation in English.[41] This phenomenon accounts for much of the range of variation in the entries found in valency dictionaries. For example, "[a] normally transitive verb exhibits object alternation when it is realized in some context without an explicit object, e.g. *Mary ate* instead of *Mary ate her dinner.*"[42]

Since Biblical Hebrew is a pro-drop language,[43] it exhibits behaviour not possible in English: "subjects in pro-drop languages can have a 'micro-realization' in verb inflection."[44] Consider this clause from Gen 31:54: וַיֹּאכְלוּ לֶחֶם *and-they-ate bread*. We say that the subject of this clause is "micro-realized" in the finite verb inflection. Hence, this clause is said to have *two* complements, a (micro-realized) subject and a direct object. In Jer 31:29 we find: אָבוֹת אָכְלוּ בֹסֶר *fathers they-ate unripe-fruit*. Here too, we reckon that the clause contains two complements, one the free-standing subject and the other the object. We do not "double-count" the subject.

Context-Permitted Omission. To see how context can affect the realization of complements, consider Gen 19:3b: וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם מִשְׁתֶּה וּמַצּוֹת אָפָה וַיֹּאכֵלוּ *and-he-made to-*

---

[39] Muraoka, "Verb Complementation," 94.

[40] Herbst et al., *A Valency Dictionary*, xxii.

[41] Humphreys, "Valency Changing Alternation." (Deals with quantitative valency.)

[42] Ibid., 392.

[43] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 92.

[44] Cornell, Fischer, and Roe, eds., *Valency in Practice*, 8.

them banquet and unleavened-bread he-baked and-they-ate. The third clause has a micro-realized subject but no explicit direct object. It is often argued that the direct object has been ellipted, being supplied in the prior context, in this case by "banquet, *including* unleavened bread." But another approach is to invoke an *ontological object*, an entity required to exist by the semantics of the verb but not necessarily explicit. In either case, how should a valency theorist proceed? Is the quantitative valency of the third clause, *one* or *two*? Further, how are the syntactic and semantic valencies to be specified?

Locally, complements may be dropped when they are established nearby and ellipted.[45] As regards situations where complements are established at a greater remove, it has been hypothesized "that [complement] drop is licensed at the level of discourse and that only continuing topics or backgrounded information may be omitted."[46]

2.3 Confounding Variables

The Problem in General. As one works out the valency of a given verb, it is important to ensure that all potential conditioning variables have been taken into account or have been shown to have negligible influence. For, as has repeatedly been pointed out in the literature: "predicates change behaviour between sublanguages, domains and over time."[47] Hence, an investigator should carefully take account of at least these variables. Typically, valency analysts attempt to neutralize potentially confounding variables by basing study on a so-called *balanced corpus*—a language sample so extensive and so carefully assembled that mischief-prone variables "average out."

Consider the case of *A Valency Dictionary of English*. This massive study is based on the Bank of English, which "at the time the dictionary was completed comprised more than 320 million words."[48] This database was and is an uneven mixture of sources: genre (speech, newspapers [about 50%], magazines, fiction, etc), dialect (British [about 70%], American, Australian), and epoch (the 1960's through 2005).[49] When one bases a survey of valency upon the entire database, has one described: (1) Modern-day English or (2) an indeterminate "dog's breakfast" of English genre, dialect, and epoch?

---

[45] For the situation in Biblical Hebrew, see Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 304–9. Note that both forward and backward ellipses occur.

[46] Butt and King, "Null Elements in Discourse Structure," 19.

[47] Korhonen, *Subcategorization Acquisition*, 3. See also Matthews, "The Scope of Valency," 12: "Not only does each member of the category [of verbs] have a valency; but *exactly what it is can vary between speakers and can change quite easily*. Judgments, therefore, are notoriously difficult."

[48] Ibid., vii.

[49] Davies, "The Corpus."

If, instead of agglomerating the data across all potential confounding variables, one's analysis omits *some* of the possibly important variables but retains others, then one has carried out a *marginal analysis*, and the results may be quite misleading.[50]

The Problem in Biblical Hebrew: Text Types. There is a fairly extensive literature on the effects of genre (text type) on various corpus characteristics in English.[51] Although, as noted above, several valency investigators have commented that "predicates change behaviour between sublanguages, domains and over time,"[52] I know of no biblical studies quantitating such effects.

Andersen and I tagged our data with text types, but the original work had serious limitations.[53] We have recently substantially improved the tagging, as explained in a white paper on our web site.[54] Consequently, we may now be in a position to assess the effects of text type variation on valency for Biblical Hebrew verbs, subject to all of the cautions lodged above.

The Problem in Biblical Hebrew: Multiple Compositional Epochs. The dating of the MT text portions is currently the subject of intense argument.[55] As regards the evidence for dating supplied by spelling practices, Andersen and I have recently explained our position: received spelling allows one, imperfectly but defensibly, to order the MT text portions along a gradient most credibly interpreted as time.[56] Further, using the methods of pattern recognition and meta-analysis, I have critiqued the major arguments advanced by the proponents of minimalism and by their opponents.[57]

Muraoka and others are aware that the compositional epoch and/or transmission history may alter valency patterns, perhaps in diagnostically useful ways.

2.4 Imperfect Recognition of Subcategorization Frames

Problems Generating Valency Lexicons. A verb's *subcategorization frame* (SCF) is *the count and kinds of syntactic arguments with which it appears.* SCFs are gathered to produce a valency lexicon. Unfortunately, it has been found that "manually built lexicons are prone to

---

[50] *Marginal analysis* is a technical term from contingency table analysis. It does not mean "a fringe analysis" or the like. For a brief non-technical consideration of *marginal analysis*, see Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 96–97. For an illustrative example, investigated via contingency table analysis, see Agresti, *Categorical Data Analysis*, 48–52.

[51] A prime contributor to this area of research is Douglas Biber. See Biber, "Corpus-Based and Corpus-Driven," 99–136.

[52] Korhonen, *Subcategorization Acquisition*, 3.

[53] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 356–58.

[54] See www.andersen-forbes.org, under "White Papers."

[55] Miller-Naudé and Zevit, eds., *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew.*

[56] Forbes and Andersen, "Dwelling on Spelling," ibid.

[57] Forbes, "The Diachrony Debate."

errors of omission and commission which are hard to detect automatically."[58] Further, attempts to automate the lexicon-generating process have had limited success. Among other difficulties, "many [complement]-adjunct tests cannot yet be exploited since they rest on semantic judgments that cannot yet be made automatically."[59]

Algorithmic Subcategorization Extraction. In an effort to overcome the flaws associated with manually generated valency lexicons, a great deal of work has gone into their algorithmic generation.

SCF Classification: In the mid-90's, Briscoe and Carroll gathered from the literature and augmented a set of 163 subcategorization frames for English.[60] The listing is impressive but has several limitations: (1) Recognition of certain SCFs seems to require high-level (human) analysis. For example, SCF23 ("INTRANS-RECIP") holds at least for verbs of "social interaction,"[61] but coding verbs for this characteristic involves human classification. (2) The SCFs are not mutually exclusive. For example, SCF23 reads INTRANS-RECIP (with example sentence "they met") while SCF22 reads INTRANS (with example sentence "he went"), the former verb class being a subset of the latter. (3) While some SCFs are *hapaxes* in the British National Corpus, the list is not (due to "fat-tailed-ness," cannot be?) exhaustive.[62]

3. ISSUES SPECIFIC TO BIBLICAL TEXT ANALYSIS

In addition to the just-discussed issues characteristic of general valency analysis, four further challenges are especially relevant to biblical text analysis: (1) the lack of native speakers, (2) availability of a rather small corpus, (3) the effects of noise, and (4) the fact that the corpus is composed of multiple text types and most likely was written over a considerable time interval. I know of only a few references to these issues in the literature on valency studies of Biblical Hebrew.[63]

---

[58] Korhonen, *Subcategorization Acquisition*, 18.

[59] Korhonen, Krymolowski and Briscoe, "Subcategorization Lexicon," 1.

[60] Briscoe and Carroll, "Automatic Extraction," 357. A full listing of the SCFs may be found in Korhonen's thesis: Korhonen, *Subcategorization Acquisition*, 155–70.

[61] Levin, *English Verb Classes*, 200–202.

[62] Korhonen, *Subcategorization Acquisition*, 53–55.

[63] Michael Malessa has provided a concise introduction to valency theory in Biblical Hebrew studies, based primarily on the foundational work of Richter and of Groß: Malessa, *Untersuchungen*, 1–26. Malessa's introductory chapter includes 30 references to Richter's 1980 monograph (Richter, *Grundlagen*); and 23 references to Groß's 1996 monograph (Groß, *Die Satzfolge*). For a helpful exposition of the contributions of Wolfgang Richter, see Rechenmacher and Van der Merwe, "The Contibution of Wolfgang Richter." Leavins, "Verbs of Leading," 6–11. Both Rechenmacher/Van der Merwe (p. 74) and Leavins (pp. 10–11) refer favourably to Nissim's pilot study for a Biblical Hebrew valency lexicon (Nissim, *Die Bedeutung des Ergehens*). She notes both the small-corpus problem and the lack-of-native-speaker problem (p. 66).

3.1 Native Speakers *Not* Available[64]

In section 2.1, I indicated some ways in which native-speaker intuitions are relied upon, in general, by valency analysts. These intuitions are not available to us (or at least not to this student of Biblical Hebrew). I agree with Robert Holmstedt's basic point—if not some of the details—when he writes:

> Since we lack native speakers, who could have provided us with further data as well as intuitive judgments about grammaticality, etc., we must admit that any and every proposal we make is at the mercy of new epigraphic tidbits, or any newly identified construction hiding in the biblical, Qumran, or mishnaic corpora … And so, we must take extra care in our analyses and write with considerable humility.[65]

3.2 Small Corpus[66]

The State of Affairs. In the literature on computerized English corpora, one finds:

> The numerical pattern of correlations differs somewhat from the Google data, likely because *the BNC contains only 100 million words*, only one 10,000th the size of the Google dataset for English.[67]

So, the British National Corpus contains *only* 100,000,000 words! The Hebrew Bible? Around 300,000 words, 1/333 the size of the quite small BNC …

To infer the valency associated with a particular verb, there are two rules-of-thumb argued for in the literature: one needs at least 300 or at least 100 clauses containing that verb.[68] Because of the degrading effects of noise, the fewer instances of the verb there are, the less confidence one can have in inferences based upon the data.

For Biblical Hebrew, 34 root-binyan types (1.2%) occur 300 times or more and 101 root-binyan types (3.5%) occur 100 times or more, while 2,768 root-binyan

---

[64] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, refer to this issue under the heading "The Translation Trap," 167. We stand by the three cautions regarding valency discussed in our grammar (see 165–68): operational vagueness, the risks of "the translation trap," and limited applicability.

[65] Holmstedt, "Linguistic Analysis" §6 "Conclusion." Matters are not as perilously perched as Holmstedt states.

[66] Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, refer to this issue under the heading "Limited Applicability," 167–68.

[67] Piantadosi, Tily, and Gibson, "Word Lengths," 3528. Italics added.

[68] Laura Rimell et al., ("Technologies and Tools for Lexical Acquisition," 23) call for 100 or more instances of each verb. Korhonen (*Subcategorization Acquisition*, 106n5) suggests a more stringent requirement: "As we evaluated our results against manual analysis of corpus data, we required at least 300 occurrences for each verb to guarantee sufficiently accurate evaluation."

types (96.5%) occur fewer than 100 times. Hence *for somewhere between 96% and 99% of the root-binyan types in Biblical Hebrew, inferences regarding valency are statistically suspect.*

A Possible Limited Assist: Grouping Semantically Similar Verbs. To improve on the less-than-stellar results of computational inference of valency lexicons, Korhonen investigated the effects of combining feebly realized verbs into semantically similar groups (as defined by Levin) and submitting these to analysis. She suggests that "[a] semantically-driven approach to hypothesis selection can significantly improve the accuracy of large-scale subcategorization acquisition."[69] Against this hopeful assessment, one should consider Susen Faulhaber's conclusion that,

> the valency patterns of verbs cannot simply be inferred from their meaning…
> [S]emantic features which are typically considered crucial for determining the
> complementation possibilities of a verb are neither a reliable factor for predicting
> restrictions nor do they help in accounting for them.[70]

3.3 Noise Effects

A further source of problems is the potential existence of three sorts of noise in the Biblical Hebrew corpus and its markup: (1) *transmission noise* (changes introduced as the texts were passed along), (2) *feature noise* (imprecision due to textual ambiguity and markup inconsistency), and (3) *class noise* (contamination of one corpus by another). These three sorts of noise are discussed in section 2.4 of my paper on diachrony.[71]

Transmission noise. As texts were copied and recopied, changes accumulated. Evidence from careful analysis of the present status of spelling in the texts indicates that the change-rates likely were reasonably low.[72] It is difficult to envision very many scenarios by which copying changes ("transmission noise") could alter the text in ways that would yield changed but still coherent texts. But, for example, by a substitution error one mono-consonantal preposition might easily be changed into another in the process of copying; thereby might one SCF be changed into some other SCF, altering the valency profile. Or, a simple substitution might convert one root-binyan token into a token of some other root-binyan, altering the valency census. Further, entire clause immediate constituents might be omitted.[73]

Feature noise. Feature noise afflicts the corpus as a result of inconsistent labelling and/or textual ambiguity. Consider but one example: feature noise associated with

---

[69] Korhonen, *Subcategorization Acquisition*, 3. Leavins, "Verbs of Leading in the Hebrew Bible," has investigated a specific subgroup of verbs in the Hebrew Bible.

[70] Faulhaber, *Verb Valency Patterns*, 299.

[71] Forbes, "The Diachrony Debate."

[72] Forbes and Andersen, "Dwelling on Spelling."

[73] The parade example of this phenomenon occurs in Gen 4:8, where an entire speech (object of address) likely has been lost. See Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 221.

inconsistent attachment of prepositional phrases to parse trees ("phrase markers").[74] The parade example of prepositional phrase attachment ambiguity in English is the parsing of *I saw the man with the telescope*. Does *saw* have two sister constituents (*I* and *the man with the telescope*) or three (*I*, *the man*, and *with the telescope*)? If the clause before the one being parsed was *I took my new telescope to the park*, then the answer would be three. But if the prior clause was *The man carried his new telescope into the park*, then the answer would be two. But, suppose that the little story appeared twice as: *I took my new telescope to the park. I saw the man with the telescope.* If *saw* was parsed to have two accompanying constituents in one instance and three in the other, then we would have encountered *feature noise*.[75]

Class noise. This sort of noise is relevant when the goal of analysis is to compare valency configurations across sub-corpora. For example, suppose we ask: Does the valency of Qal עשׂה "make" vary across the Pentateuchal documents? To answer this question, we need to tag the Torah with document labels.[76] If some of these class labels are incorrect, then we have introduced "class noise."

4. THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN BIBLICAL VALENCY STUDIES

In summary, I see the state of affairs as regards valency studies as follows:

- *Complement/Adjunct Differentiation:* There are no convincing algorithms for distinguishing between complements and adjuncts. Hence, the student of Biblical Hebrew is left either to improvise the distinctions, as do valency analysts in general, or to somehow dispense with the distinction.
- *Valency variation:*
  - *Fundamental valency variation* results when a verb has more than one *sense*, now this, now that. One risks making faulty inferences if one chooses to detect sense changes by relying on the lexical-unit boundaries in traditional lexicons. But what other options are there?
  - *Contextual valency variation* results when complements are absent due to contextual effects, be they local (ellipsis-related) or global (discourse-related). To date, the detection of omissions requires human insight and so is subject to endemic inconsistency and imprecision.

---

[74] Andersen and Forbes, "Attachment Preferences."

[75] As text markup is made more consistent, instances of feature noise should decrease. See Forbes, "The Challenge of Consistency."

[76] This has been done in the Andersen-Forbes database. See Andersen and Forbes, *Grammar Visualized*, 354–56.

- o *Mysterious valency variation* may result when changes in *sublanguage*, *domain*, and/or *time* are not catered for. Methods of gauging such effects exist but have not yet been applied to valency analysis.[77]
- *Additional limitations holding for Biblical Hebrew:*
  - o Native-speaker intuition of Biblical Hebrew is beyond our grasp.
  - o Nor are there easy ways of overcoming the restrictions imposed by the *very* limited size of the Biblical Hebrew corpus.
  - o Further, there are no definitive ways of detecting and neutralising the effects of transmission, feature, and/or class noise in the received texts.

In light of the foregoing, I agree with Herbst that "valency is one of the more messy aspects of language."[78]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aarts, Bas. *Syntactic Gradience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Ágel, Vilmos, and Klaus Fischer. "Dependency Grammar and Valency Theory." Pages 223–55 in *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis*. Edited by Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Agresti, Alan. *Categorical Data Analysis*. 2nd ed. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2002.

Andersen, Francis I., and A. Dean Forbes. *Spelling in the Hebrew Bible*. Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1986.

———. "Attachment Preferences in the Primary History." Pages 167–86 in *Bible and Computer: The Stellenbosch AIBI-6 Conference: Proceedings of the Association Internationale Bible et Informatique, "From Alpha to Byte," University of Stellenbosch, 17–21 July, 2000*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

———. *Biblical Hebrew Grammar Visualized*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Baayen, R. Harald. *Word Frequency Distributions*. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001.

Biber, Douglas. "Corpus-Based and Corpus-Driven Analysis of Language Variation and Use." Pages 159–91 in *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis*. Edited by Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Benton, Richard. "Review of Malessa's *Untersuchen zur verbalen Valenz im biblischen Hebräisch*." *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 8 (2008). www.jhsonline.org/cocoon/JHS/r311.html.

---

[77] I refer here to *sparse contingency table analysis*. See Agresti, *Categorical Data Analysis*. Andersen and Forbes explained and extensively used contingency table analysis in their work on orthography (Andersen and Forbes, *Spelling in the Hebrew Bible*).

[78] Herbst, "Valency Complements," 27.

Bickel, Balthasar. "Clause-Level vs. Predicate-Level Linking." Pages 155–90 in *Semantic Role Universals and Argument Linking*. Edited by Ina Bornkessel, Matthias Schlesewsky, Bernard Comrie, and Angela D. Friederici. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2006.

Briscoe, Ted. "From Dictionary to Corpus to Self-Organizing Dictionary: Learning Valency Associations in the Face of Variation and Change." Pages 79–89 in *Proceedings of the Corpus Linguistics 2001 Conference*. Edited by Paul Rayson, Andrew Wilson, Tony McEnery, Andrew Hardie, and Shereen Khoja. Lancaster: University Centre for Computer Corpus Research on Language, 2001.

Briscoe, Ted, and John Carroll, "Automatic Extraction of Subcategorization from Corpora." Pages 356–63 in *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference on Applied Natural Language Processing: 1997, Washington, DC*. San Francisco: Morgan Kaufmann, 1997.

Butt, Miriam, and Tracy King. "Null Elements in Discourse Structure." Pages 1–19 in *Papers from the NULLS Seminar*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 2000.

Cornell, Alan, Klaus Fischer, and Ian F. Roe, eds. *Valency in Practice / Valenz in der Praxis*. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2003.

Crystal, David. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. 6th ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008.

Davies, Mark. "The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the Bank of English." *Brigham Young University*. Accessed 7 July 2016. http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/compare-boe.asp.

DeArmond, Richard C., and Nancy Hedberg, "On Complements and Adjuncts." Pages unknown in *Proceedings of the 1998 Annual Conference of the Canadian Linguistics Association*. University of Ottawa: Cahiers Linguistiques d'Ottawa, 1998.

Duda, Richard O., Peter E. Hart, and David G. Stork. *Pattern Classification*. 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley, 2001.

Faulhaber, Susen. *Verb Valency Patterns: A Challenge to Semantics-Based Accounts*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011.

Fillmore, Charles. Review of Thomas Herbst, David Heath, Ian Roe, and Dieter Götz. *A Valency Dictionary of English. International Journal of Lexicography* 22 (2009): 55–85.

Fischer, Klaus. "Verb Valency—an Attempt at Conceptual Clarification." *Web Journal of Modern Language Linguistics 4–5*. Last modified October 1999. Accessed 7 July 2016. http://wjmll.ncl.ac.uk/issue04-05/fischer.htm.

Forbes, A. Dean. "The Challenge of Consistency." Pages 99–115 in *Computer Assisted Research on the Bible in the 21st Century*. Edited by Luis Vegas Montaner, Guadalupe Seijas de los Ríos-Zarzosa and Javier del Barco. Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias, 2010.

———. "The Diachrony Debate: Perspectives from Pattern Recognition and Meta-Analysis." *Hebrew Studies* 53 (2012): 7–42.

Forbes, A. Dean, and Francis I. Andersen. "Dwelling on Spelling." Pages 127–45 in *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew.* Edited by Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Groß, Walter. *Die Satzfolge im Verbalsatz alttestamentlicher Prosa.* Tübingen: Mohr, 1996.

Günther, Hartmut. "Valence in Categorial Syntax." Pages 127–56 in *Valence, Semantic Case, and Grammatical Relations: Papers Prepared for the Working Group "Valence and Semantic Case" 12th International Congress of Linguists University of Vienna, Austria, August 29 to September 3, 1977.* Edited by Werner Abraham. Studies in Language Companion Series 1. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1978.

Herbst, Thomas. "Valency complements or valency patterns?" Pages 15–35 in *Valency: Theoretical, Descriptive and Cognitive Issues.* Edited by T. Herbst and K. Götz-Votteler. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2007.

Herbst, Thomas, David Heath, Ian F. Roe, Dieter Götz, with the assistance of Michael Klotz. *A Valency Dictionary of English: A Corpus-Based Analysis of the Complementation Patterns of English Verbs, Nouns, and Adjectives.* Topics in English Linguistics 40. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2004.

Heringer, Hans J. *Deutsche Syntax dependentiell.* Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1996.

Holmstedt, Robert. "Issues in the Linguistic Analysis of a Dead Language, with Particular Reference to Ancient Hebrew." *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 6, 2006. Accessed 7 July 2016. http://www.jhsonline.org/Articles/article_61.pdf.

Humphreys, R.L. "Valency Changing Alternations." Pages 391–400 in *Concise Encyclopedia of Grammatical Categories.* Edited by Keith Brown and Jim Miller. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1999.

Jacobs, Joachim. *Kontra Valenz.* Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1994.

Korhonen, Anna. "Subcategorization Acquisition." Technical Report 530. Computer Laboratory, University of Cambridge. Accessed 7 July 2016. http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/techreports/UCAM-CL-TR-530.pdf.

Korhonen, Anna, Yuval Krymolowski, and Ted Briscoe. "A Large Subcategorization Lexicon for Natural Language Processing Applications." *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation, Genoa, Italy, 2006.* Accessed 7 July 2016. http://hnk.ffzg.hr/bibl/lrec2006/pdf/558_pdf.pdf.

Langbehn, D.R., and R.F. Woolson, "Discriminant Analysis Using the Unweighted Sum of Binary Variables: A Comparison of Model Selection Methods." *Statistics in Medicine* 16 (1997): 2679–700.

Leavins, Daniel. "Verbs of Leading in the Hebrew Bible." Ph.D. dissertation. Catholic University of America, 2008.

Levin, Beth. *English Verb Classes and Alternations.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Malessa, Michael. *Untersuchungen zur verbalen Valenz im biblischen Hebräisch.* Studia Semitica Neerlandica 49. Assen: Van Gorcum, 2006.

Matthews, Peter H. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. 2nd ed. 2007.

———. "The Scope of Valency in Grammar." Pages 3–14 in *Valency: Theoretical, Descriptive, and Cognitive Issues.* Edited by Thomas Herbst and Katrin Götz-Votteler. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter: 2007.

Merwe, Christo H.J. van der. "Review of Malessa, *Untersuchen zur verbalen Valenz im biblischen Hebräisch.*" *Review of Biblical Literature* 04 (2007). Accessed 7 July 2016.
http://www.bookreviews.org/bookdetail.asp?TitleId=5540&CodePage=5540.

Miller-Naudé, Cynthia L., and Ziony Zevit, eds. *Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012.

Muraoka, Takamitsu. "Verb Complementation in Qumran Hebrew." Pages 92–149 in *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira.* Edited by T. Muraoka and J.F. Elwolde. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Nissim, Ute. *Die Bedeutung des Ergehens: Ein Betrag zu einem Biblisch-Hebräischen Valenzlexicon am Beispiel von Ergehensverben.* St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 2000.

Piantadosi, Steven T., Harry Tily, and Edward Gibson. "Word Lengths are Optimized for Efficient Communication." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 108 (2011): 3526–29.

Pollard, Carl, and Ivan A. Sag. *Information-Based Syntax and Semantics* [vol. 1]: *Fundamentals.* Stanford: CSLI, 1987.

Quirk, R., S. Greenbaum, G. Leech, and J. Svartvik. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language.* London: Longman, 1985.

Rechenmacher, Hans, and Christo H.J. van der Merwe. "The Contibution [sic] of Wolfgang Richter to Current Developments in the Study of Biblical Hebrew." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 50 (2005): 59–82.

Richter, Wolfgang. *Grundlagen einer althebräischen Grammatik III: Der Satz (Satztheorie).* St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 1980.

Rimell, Laura, Anna Korhonen, Valeria Quochi, Núria Bel, Tommaso Caselli, Prokopis Prokopidis, Maria Gavrilidou, Thierry Poibeau, Muntsa Padró, Eva Revilla, Monica Monachini, Maurizio Tesconi, Matteo Abrate, and Clara Bacciu. "Technologies and Tools for Lexical Acquisition." *PANACEA Project Programme.* July 2010.

Tov, Emanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible.* 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001.

Trask, Robert L. *A Dictionary of Grammatical Terms in Linguistics.* London: Routledge, 1993.

CHAPTER 7
THE USE OF SYRIAC ܗܐ IN RENDERING HEBREW הִנֵּה AND GREEK ἸΔΟΥ OR ἼΔΕ IN THE PESHITTA TO GENESIS AND THE GOSPELS[1]

Mats Eskhult

Uppsala University

The Peshitta to Genesis renders Hebrew הֵן and הִנֵּה by ܗܐ in cases where the Septuagint tries other options than ἰδού, but agrees with it by rendering הִנֵּה more often in direct speech than in narration proper. The Peshitta Gospels almost invariably render ἰδού and ἴδε by ܗܐ as far as direct speech is concerned. In narration proper, however, the Peshitta takes other options than just rendering ἰδού by ܗܐ, especially when ἰδού does not visualize any imagined scene. Also, a Greek genitive absolute followed by an ἰδού-clause is preferably rendered by a ܟ-clause without an initial ܗܐ in the main clause. In general, Syriac ܗܐ exhibits a stronger connection to direct speech than the corresponding Greek particles ἰδού and ἴδε.

1. INTRODUCTION

In view of its various uses, Syriac ܗܐ is appropriately described as an interjection that prompts attention to, stresses, and validates what is communicated.[2] The purpose of this article is to discuss the correspondence of Syriac ܗܐ to Hebrew הֵן and הִנֵּה, and to Greek ἰδού and ἴδε. The compositions selected are the Peshitta to Genesis and the Gospels. The obvious reason is that both compositions make a rich use of these particles; thus, Genesis comprises 115 out of 176 correspondences between ܗܐ and הִנֵּה in the Pentateuch, and a glance at the concordance shows that the Gospels comprise a vast majority of the occurrences of ܗܐ (including ܗܘܐ and ܗܘܝ) in the New

---

[1] I wish to express my gratitude to the two reviewers, unknown to me, for valuable suggestions.

[2] See Falla, *A Key*, *s.v.*

Testament. Also, the text types "direct speech" and "narration proper" are treated separately in order to illuminate differences in translation technique. The advantage of working with translational texts is that in these one knows what word—and hence underlying idea—that Syriac ܗܐ is meant to render.

As can be gathered from standard dictionaries,[3] Syriac ܗܐ is primarily an interjection corresponding to English "look," or "behold!" In its various uses, the particle ܗܐ, with or without a prefixed ܘ, is stated to stress the immediacy or suddenness of a situation, while ܘܗܐ commonly introduces reported speech, or gives the reason for a statement. In temporal phrases, in contrast, ܗܐ assumes the meaning of "since" and "still," rendering Hebrew זֶה in expressions such as זֶה שְׁנָתַיִם (Gen 45:6), namely ܗܐ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܫܢܝܢ *for two years*. The same is true for Greek ἤδη in expressions such as ἤδη ἡμέραι τρεῖς (Mt 15:32), namely: ܗܐ ܬܠܬܐ ܝܘܡܝܢ *three days already*. Also, ܗܐ introduces a rhetorical question, a function that corresponds to Hebrew הֲלֹא,[4] as in Gen 29:25 ܗܐ ܒܪܚܝܠ ܦܠܚܬ ܠܟ *didn't I serve you for Rachel*.[5]

Biblical Hebrew הִנֵּה is a deictic particle which—like its Syriac counterpart—calls attention to, emphasizes, and validates what is communicated. In addition, it exerts the literary function of switching the perspective, the point of view, from the narrator to some character(s). According to Francis Andersen, הִנֵּה may consequently be classified as both "presentative" and "perspectival."[6] The perspectival function may be described as a device through which the audience is, so to speak, invited to see what a character sees. In Gen 18:2 וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲנָשִׁים נִצָּבִים עָלָיו *and he lifted his eyes and saw three men standing in front of him*, the narrator, as it were, lends his eye to Abraham, so that וְהִנֵּה *and look* introduces what he perceives from his position sitting at ease at the entrance of his tent.[7]

2. THE SEPTUAGINT TO GENESIS

In direct speech, LXX Genesis uses ἰδού (once ἴδε) in fifty-nine of ninety-four possible instances for Hebrew הֵן or הִנֵּה—including הִנְנִי, הִנָּךְ and the like.[8] An

---

[3] E.g., Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon*.

[4] Rarely ܗܐ corresponds to Hebrew הֲ as is the case in Judg 8:6.

[5] The LXX reads οὐ περὶ Ραχηλ ἐδούλευσα, with οὐ instead of the otherwise used οὐχί, as in Num 22:37 οὐχὶ ἀπέστειλα πρὸς σὲ *did I not send to you?* For ܗܐ rendering Hebrew הֲלֹא see, for example, Gen 4:7; 29:25; 31:15; 34:23. The NT Peshitta usually employs ܠܐ ܗܐ for Greek οὐχί, e.g., in Mt 5:46: ܠܐ ܗܐ ܐܦ ܡܟܣܐ ܗܐ ܗܕܐ ܥܒܕܝܢ *do not even tax collectors do the same?* See also Mt 5:47; 6:25; 13:27, *et passim*.

[6] Andersen, "Lo and Behold!" 55.

[7] This use of וְהִנֵּה actually shows resemblance to direct speech. Had the particle כִּי been used instead of הִנֵּה in Gen 18:2 the statement would have presented the same view from the narrator's own position and would consequently have shown similarity to indirect speech. See Mirguet, *The Representation*, 75–77.

[8] The Hebrew particle הִנֵּה occurs 125 times in Genesis. The particle הֵן occurs 12 times but the LXX interprets only six of them as an interjection. As Gen 31:51, however, is only partly represented in the LXX, the number of possible correspondences between הֵן/הִנֵּה and

illustrative example is Gen 18:9, where the question posed is אַיֵּה שָׂרָה *where is Sarah?* and the answer runs: הִנֵּה בָאֹהֶל *behold, in the tent*, in Greek ποῦ Σαρρα – ἰδοὺ ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ. Of those instances where ἰδού is not employed, there are various options available, depending on the logical relationship between the clauses. At times the particles ἐπειδή "since" and νῦν "now" are used, but in many cases הִנֵּה is not rendered at all. This is in particular the case when וְהִנֵּה continues a rejoinder. An example of this is Gen 37:6–7 where the opening clause *listen to the dream I dreamt* is followed by three clauses, all introduced by וְהִנֵּה; the first of which the Septuagint reflects in ᾤμην *I imagined (we were binding sheaves)*, while the remaining two, namely [וְהִנֵּה] *my sheaf rose*, and [וְהִנֵּה] *your sheaves gathered around it*, are simply left out in translation. In fact, LXX Genesis ignores וְהִנֵּה in half of the passages of this kind. The particle ἰδού is added in Gen 31:44; 34:10; and 47:6.

In narration proper, the Greek translator is even more reluctant to render וְהִנֵּה. In fact, καὶ ἰδού for וְהִנֵּה is used in only fifteen of thirty-six possible instances. As a rule, those passages which do have καὶ ἰδού also involve a verb of seeing that presents something as contemplated in reality; in other words, in its perspectival function וְהִנֵּה is preferably rendered by καὶ ἰδού. If the perception presented is merely mental, however, the translator commonly opts for καί with εὐθύς (Gen 15:4; 24:45; 38:29), or καί with a form of the verb εἰμί "to be" (for example Gen 25:24; 29:2; 38:27), or just καί (for example Gen 8:11; 28:12, 13), or simply ὅτι (Gen 6:12; 8:13). In those cases where an inserted Hebrew וְהִנֵּה encodes an accidental circumstance on the part of the object, it may be rendered by a Greek conjunct participle, as in Gen 24:63 וְהִנֵּה גְמַלִּים בָּאִים *he saw camels coming*, εἶδεν καμήλους ἐρχομένας, and Gen 26:8 וְהִנֵּה יִצְחָק מְצַחֵק אֵת רִבְקָה *he saw Isaac fondling Rebecca*, εἶδεν τὸν Ισαακ παίζοντα μετὰ Ρεβεκκας, as well as in Gen 37:15: *a man found him* [וְהִנֵּה] *wandering in the fields*, καὶ εὗρεν αὐτὸν ἄνθρωπος πλανώμενον ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ. There is no example of an added ἰδού in narration proper.

3. THE PESHITTA TO GENESIS

In direct speech, the Peshitta to Genesis—in contrast to the Septuagint—is much more literal in rendering הִנֵּה/וְהִנֵּה and הֵן.[9] These are rendered by ܗܐ(ܐ/ܘ) in ninety-six of ninety-nine possible instances,[10] and are omitted only three times, namely, in Gen 18:10; 19:2; and 42:28.[11] On the other hand, ܗܐ is added in, for example, Gen

---

ἰδού/ἴδε are 130. Of these, 94 are found in direct speech and 36 in narration. The calculations are based on Accordance.

[9] The calculations are based on Borbone et al., *Concordance: The Pentateuch*, in comparison with Werner Strothmann, *Konkordanz*, and *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon*.

[10] Save for Gen 30:34, the Peshitta interprets all instances of Hebrew הֵן in Genesis as an interjection, which makes a number of 99 possible instances of correspondence in direct speech; together with the 36 instances in narration the total number would then be 135.

[11] In Gen 29:7 and 45:19 the manuscript 5b1 lacks ܗܐ, and in Gen 41:29 it has ܗܘܐ instead. In Gen 48:22, in contrast, it does not—as other manuscripts—add ܗܐ to stress the

19:31; 34:10; and 48:22; and as mentioned above, ܗܐ is also employed to render other words than וְהִנֵּה/הִנֵּה and הֵן, such as זֶה in temporal phrases and rhetorical הֲלֹא. Accordingly the total number of occurrences of ܗܐ in direct speech is about 110.[12]

In narration proper, the Peshitta to Genesis prefers a literal translation of וְהִנֵּה but not as invariably as in direct speech. To be exact, ܘܗܐ is used to render וְהִנֵּה in twenty-eight of the thirty-six possible instances. This means that the Peshitta renders וְהִנֵּה in several of those instances where the Septuagint leaves it out. Illustrative is Gen 28:12–13: ܘܗܐ. ܚܠܡܐ ܡܢܗ ܣܡܝܟ ܘܪܝܫܗ ܡܛܐ ܠܫܡܝܐ ܘܗܐ ܣܒܠܬܐ ܩܝܡܐ ܒܐܪܥܐ *look* (καὶ ἰδού), *a ladder stood on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and look, the angels* (καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι) *of God were ascending and descending on it; and look, the Lord* (ὁ δὲ κύριος) *stood above it* (see further Gen 8:11, 13; 24:45; 25:24; and 37:29). But the Peshitta has other options than ܘܗܐ in rendering וְהִנֵּה; in Gen 29:25 the particle ܕ is used to introduce an object clause ܘܚܙܐ ܗܘ ܕܠܝܐ *and he saw that it was Leah*, likewise for Gen 6:12 and 31:2. Moreover, the וְהִנֵּה-clause in Gen 26:8 is understood as descriptive of the object and hence rendered by ܟܕ with a participle: ܘܚܙܝܗܝ ܠܐܝܣܚܩ ܟܕ ܡܓܚܟ ܥܡ ܪܦܩܐ *he saw Isaac laughing with Rebekah*. The same function of the ܟܕ-clause is discernible in Gen 37:15: ܘܐܫܟܚܗ ܓܒܪܐ ܟܕ ܛܥܐ ܒܚܩܠܐ *a man found him wandering in the fields*.[13] Very rarely, the Peshitta ignores וְהִנֵּה, as in Gen 38:29: *he draw back his hand* [וְהִנֵּה] *his brother came out,* ܘܟܕ ܐܗܦܟ ܐܝܕܗ ܢܦܩ ܐܚܘܗܝ.

Sometimes in narration, however, an added ܗܐ serves the presentative function of enhancing the dramatic point of a story, as in Gen 25:29: *(Jacob cooked a dish) and his brother Esau came,* ܘܗܐ ܐܬܐ ܥܣܘ ܐܚܘܗܝ, so also in Gen 27:30.

4. NEW TESTAMENT

New Testament Greek is influenced by Hebrew diction as transmitted by the Septuagint, which, among other things, helps explain the common use of ἰδού. The question is how translational Syriac handles this phenomenon. The Old Syriac versions of the Gospels, Sinaiticus and Curetonianus, are fairly literal in their use of ܗܐ for Greek ἰδού as far as direct speech is concerned.[14] The same is true for the

---

performative function. For these and other instances, see notes in Koster, *Preface: Genesis–Exodus.*

[12] Also, the particle ܗܐ translates Hebrew כִּי in Gen 31:37 ܗܐ ܒܨܝܬ ܟܠܗ ܡܐܢܝ *look, you have examined all my goods*, and הֵא in Gen 47:23 ܗܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܙܪܥܐ for the Hebrew הֵא־לָכֶם זֶרַע *here is seed for you.*

[13] In the similar passages in Gen 24:30, 63, however, the Syriac has no ܟܕ-clause but simply ܘܗܐ (=7a1; 5b1=ܗܘܘ).

[14] See Kiraz, *Comparative Edition.* As stated in the introduction of this work, xxff., the Old Syriac translation, from between the late 2nd century and the early 4th century, has survived in two lacunar manuscripts representing different stages of revision, namely the Sinaiticus palimpsest (*Sin. Syr. 30*) and the Cureton manuscript (BL Add. 14451).

Peshitta version. In direct speech in the Gospel of Matthew, accordingly, ‎ܗܐ‎(ܘ/‎ܘ‎) is used for (καὶ) ἰδού and ἴδε in all thirty-three instances.[15] The correspondence is demonstrated by Mt 20:18 ‎ܗܐ ܣܠܩܝܢ ܚܢܢ ܠܐܘܪܫܠܡ‎ *look, we are going up to Jerusalem*, rendering ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἰεροσόλυμα; and Mt 28:7 (twice) ‎ܘܗܐ ܩܕܡ ܠܟܘܢ‎ ‎[...] ‎ܟܝܓܠܝܐ‎, ‎ܘܗܐ‎ ‎[...] ‎ܐܡܪܬ ܠܟܘܢ‎, rendering καὶ ἰδοὺ προάγει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν […] ἰδοὺ εἶπον ὑμῖν, *and look, he goes before you to Galilee, […] look, I have told you*. An added (second) ‎ܗܐ‎ is found in Mt 12:49 ‎ܗܐ ܐܡܝ ܘܗܐ ܐܚܝ‎, *behold, my mother, and behold, my brothers*, rendering ἰδοὺ ἡ μήτηρ μου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί μου, and in Mt 26:65 ‎ܗܐ ܓܕܦ‎ *look, he has blasphemed*, rendering ἐβλασφήμησεν.

The parts in direct speech in Luke employ ‎ܗܐ‎(ܘ/‎ܘ‎) to render (καὶ) ἰδού in thirty-seven of thirty-nine possible instances, ignoring it only twice, namely, in Lk 6:23 and 9:39.[16] An added ‎ܗܐ‎ is found in Lk 3:16: ἐγὼ μὲν ὕδατι βαπτίζω *I baptize you with water*, in Syriac ‎ܗܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܥܡܕ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ ܒܡܝܐ‎; other instances are Lk 6:42; 11:49; 19:30; and 22:12.

In Mark ἰδού and ἴδε occur thirteen times; in John these particles occur altogether eighteen times.[17] In these two gospels ἰδού and ἴδε are *solely* employed in direct speech, and invariably rendered by Syriac ‎ܗܐ‎, with or without a preposed ‎ܘ‎ or ‎ܘ‎, save for those cases where ἴδε has the force of a full verb and is therefore rendered by ‎ܚܙܝ‎.[18] The particle ‎ܗܐ‎ is added three times in Mark, namely, Mk 14:13, 15, 64,[19] and five times in John (Jn 3:29; 8:40; 12:27; 14:29; 19:30).

In narration proper, however, the state of affairs is quite different. Only Matthew and Luke employ ἰδού in these parts.[20] In addition, the readiness to render ‎ܗܐ‎ in the parts of the narrator is not at all as common as it is in direct speech. In Matthew, ‎ܗܐ‎ is used to render Greek ἰδού solely in twelve of thirty-two possible instances; the corresponding numbers in Luke are six of sixteen instances. In those passages where ‎ܗܐ‎ does render ἰδού, as in Mt 2:9 καὶ ἰδοὺ ὁ ἀστήρ […] προῆγεν αὐτούς, in Syriac ‎ܘܗܐ ܟܘܟܒܐ‎ ‎[...]‎ܗܘ ܐܙܠ‎ ‎[...]‎ ܩܕܡܝܗܘܢ‎ *and, look, the star [...] went before them*, the underlying idea seems to be that an imagined perception may be inferred from the context. Similar examples are found in, for example, Mt 3:17; 4:11; 8:24; 9:20; 15:22; 20:30; 26:51; and 28:2.[21] The same goes for the Peshitta to Luke, and may be illustrated by the description of the Transfiguration of Jesus in Lk 9:30 καὶ

---

[15] The calculations are based on Accordance, and Kiraz, *Concordance*. In quotations from the LXX, such as Mt 1:23; 11:10; 21:5, ‎ܗܐ‎ might rest on a fixed phraseology.

[16] In Lk 1:20 the Peshitta has ‎ܡܛܠ‎ *therefore*; in Lk 12:49 the *Vorlage* apparently had κἀγώ, see note in Aland et al., *The Greek New Testament*.

[17] In John, ἴδε is used 14 times and ἰδού 4 times.

[18] See Mk 2:24; Jn 1:46; 7:52; 11:34; and 20:27.

[19] Mk 14:64 ‎ܗܐ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܗ ܫܡܥܬܘܢ ܓܘܕܦܐ‎ *look, from his mouth you have heard the blasphemy* stands out, since the Greek simply reads ἠκούσατε τῆς βλασφημίας.

[20] Save for Lk 2:9, ‎ܗܐ‎ in narration proper never marks a surplus vis-à-vis the Greek *Vorlage*. As for Lk 2:9 ‎ܘܗܐ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ‎, see note in Aland et al., *The Greek New Testament*, *ad loc.*

[21] Save for Mt 3:17; 20:30; and 8:24, the Old Syriac version, too, employs ‎ܗܐ‎ in these passages.

ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο συνελάλουν αὐτῷ, in Syriac ܟ̇ܢܫܐ ܗ݀ܘܐ ܡܡܠܠܝܢ ܚܕܬܝ ܐ݀ܢܝ ܘܗܐ *and look, two men were talking with him* (see also Lk 10:25; 14:2; 22:47; 24:4, 13).[22] Admittedly, the choice is not easy to predict, for in Mt 17:3 the Syriac text simply says ܟ̇ܢܫܐ ܡܡܠܠܝܢ ܗ݀ܡ ܘܐܠܝܐ ܠܗ݀ܡ ܘܐܬܚܙܝܘ for the Greek καὶ ἰδοὺ ὤφθη αὐτοῖς Μωϋσῆς καὶ Ἡλίας συλλαλοῦντες μετ' αὐτοῦ *and look, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with him*.[23] Nevertheless, it would seem that the translator perceived as less visualized the many situations in which καὶ ἰδού is not rendered by ܘܗܐ, for example, Mt 8:34: καὶ ἰδοὺ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐξῆλθεν, is rendered ܡܕܝܢ̱ܬܐ ܟ̇ܠܗ ܘܢܦܩܬ *and the whole city went out* (see also Mt 8:29; 9:3; 17:3; 19:16; 27:51).[24] For Luke, see Lk 2:25; 5:12, 18; 7:37; 8:41; 9:38; 13:11; 19:2; and 23:50.[25]

From a more syntactic point of view, a genitive absolute followed by an ἰδού-clause is commonly rendered by a ܟ̇-clause directly followed by a main clause without initial ܘܗܐ. This pattern occurs some times in Matthew, but only occasionally in Luke. Illustrative is Mt 1:20 ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐνθυμηθέντος ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐφάνη αὐτῷ, in Syriac, ܘܚܙܢܐ ܡ̇ܠܐܟܐ ܠܗ ܐܬܚܙܝ ܘܗܝ ܐ݀ܬܪܥܝ ܕ݀ܝܢ ܗ̇ܠܝܢ ܟ̇ܕ *as he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him* (see also Mt 2:1, 13; 9:10, 18, 32; 12:46; 28:11). Nevertheless, in similar cases, ܘܗܐ may be used after ܡܟܝܠ, as in Mt 26:47: ܗ݀ܘ ܡܟܝܠ ܡܡܠܠ ܗ̇ܘ ܘܝ̇ܗܘܕܐ ܐ݀ܬܐ [...] *while he was still speaking, look, Judas [...] arrived*; so also in the parallel in Lk 22:47.

5. SUMMARY

Genesis and the Gospels make rich use of the particles for "look," "behold!" within both narrative and discourse. The Peshitta renders Hebrew הֵן and הִנֵּה by ܘܗܐ more often in direct speech than in narrative proper. Within direct speech, the Peshitta renders הִנֵּה more often than the Septuagint does. In the New Testament, ἰδού and ἴδε are chiefly found in direct speech and much less in narration proper. The Peshitta translators to the Gospels almost invariably render ἰδού and ἴδε by ܘܗܐ within direct speech but within narration proper other options are employed—whenever the translators felt that καὶ ἰδού was not enhancing a scenic representation, they did not employ ܘܗܐ. Overall, Syriac ܘܗܐ exhibits a stronger connection to direct speech than the corresponding Greek particles ἰδού and ἴδε.

---

[22] Save for Lk 9:30, the Old Syriac version, a bit unexpectedly, prefers other options than using ܘܗܐ in these passages.

[23] Also, ἰδού is not rendered in Mt 19:16 ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܐ݀ܢܫ ܡ̇ܢ ܩ̇ܪܒ ܘܗܐ, *and* [καὶ ἰδοὺ] *someone came to him*, in Syriac, but in Mt 8:2 ܠܗ ܩ̇ܪܒ ܓ̇ܪܒܐ ܘܗܐ, καὶ ἰδοὺ λεπρὸς προσελθὼν *and look,* [καὶ ἰδοὺ] *a leper came*.

[24] The Old Syriac version—in contrast to the Harklean—does not use ܘܗܐ in these passages either.

[25] Save for Lk 5:18, the Old Syriac version—in contrast to the Harklean—does not use ܘܗܐ in these passages.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Accordance, *Oak Tree Software Inc.* Accessed January 4, 2014. http://www.accordancebible.com/OakTree-Software.

Aland, Kurt, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, and Allen Wikgren, eds. *The Greek New Testament.* 4th revised ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.

Andersen, Francis I. "Lo and Behold! Taxonomy and Translation of Biblical Hebrew הִנֵּה." Pages 25–56 in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday.* Edited by M.F.J. Baasten and W.Th. van Peursen, Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Borbone, P.G., J. Cook, K.D. Jenner, and D.M. Walter in collaboration with J.A. Lund and M.P. Weitzman, eds. *Concordance: The Pentateuch.* Part 5 vol. 1 of *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version.* Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Falla, Terry C. *A Key to the Peshitta Gospels.* Vol. 2. *He-Yodh.* Leiden: Brill, 2000.

Kiraz, George Anton. *A Computer-Generated Concordance to the Syriac New Testament according to the British and Foreign Bible Society's Edition.* Leiden: Brill, 1993.

———. *Comparative Edition to the Syriac Gospels Aligning the Sinaiticus, Curetonianus, Peshîṭtâ, and Ḥarklean Versions.* Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Koster, M.D., ed. *Preface: Genesis–Exodus.* Part 1 vol. 1 of *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version.* Leiden: Brill, 1977.

Mirguet, Françoise. *The Representation of Vision in the Book of Genesis.* Master of Theology dissertation. Harvard Divinity School, 2006.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's 'Lexicon Syriacum'.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2009.

Strothmann, Werner. *Konkordanz zur Syrischen Bibel. Der Pentateuch.* 4 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986.

The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon. Accessed January 3, 2014. http://cal1.cn.huc.edu.

CHAPTER 8
THE FUNCTION AND ETYMOLOGY OF THE ARAMAIC PARTICLE *LM*: A RE-EXAMINATION[1]

Na'ama Pat-El

The University of Texas, Austin

The particle *lm* is found in Official Aramaic (לם) and Syriac (ܠܡ). It has been generally described as a marker of direct speech (quotative) by many scholars of Aramaic (Nöldeke, Brockelmann, Segert, Kaufman, Muraoka and Porten, Porten and Lund, and others). It is assumed to be an abbreviated form of the "G(round) infinitive" *lʾmr* לאמר "to say" (Kaufman, "An Assyro-Aramaic *egirtu ša šulmu*;" Hug, Altaramäische Grammatik). This paper will argue on syntactical grounds that *lm* does not function as a quotative marker in Official Aramaic and in Syriac. The paper will further show that Kaufman's etymology is not justified on phonological and morphological grounds. In addition, an alternative etymology will be examined.

---

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the aspects of Syriac syntax, which has garnered much scholarly attention, is the origin and syntax of its particles.[2] These particles of diverse sources are abundant in Syriac and certainly deserve to be the subject of a thorough linguistic study. Some studies concentrate on their syntax, that is, synchrony,[3] and some on their origin, that is, diachrony.[4] In this paper I would like to discuss one of these particles and to show that its syntax is the key to its origin; in other words, synchrony and diachrony cannot be decoupled and a thorough investigation into the syntax of the particle is essential to any conclusions as to its provenance and linguistic history.

The Aramaic particle *lam* (written consonantly as לם) makes its first appearance in Egyptian Aramaic texts. We have no way of knowing whether the vocalization is identical to the Syriac particle, but it is a reasonable assumption which we will follow here. The particle is not found in other Aramaic dialects of the region and period. Similarly, in Late Aramaic, the particle is only attested in Syriac and is apparently not found in the other contemporaneous dialects, Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, Classical Mandaic, and in none of the Palestinian dialects of this period. Whether this is an accident of attestation or indicative of an absence is unclear, but it is reasonable to assume that it was only available to speakers of Syriac.

Attestation of this particle in other Semitic languages is dubious. There are several possible examples of לם in Deir 'Alla (2:5, 16),[5] which Hoftijzer has connected to Aramaic לם.[6] This interpretation was, however, rejected by various scholars. Kaufman[7] suggested that the Deir 'Alla form is a defective spelling of *lmh* "why" (compare Biblical Hebrew לָמָּה *lāmmā*, Arabic لِمَ *lima*). Hackett[8] reads this lemma in Deir 'Alla as *lam* "why" with dropping off of the final vowel while Cook reads *lammā* "why," similar to Ug. *lm* /lamă.[9]

This interpretation, if correct, leaves Aramaic as the only branch of Semitic with this particle, although it is not a pan-Aramaic one. Hence, its correct interpretation depends solely on our understanding of its function and distribution in Egyptian Aramaic and Syriac. A study of its syntax is therefore essential.

The particle is usually described by Aramaicists and Semitists as a direct speech marker (henceforth quotative) or some kind of discourse marker. Nöldeke notes

---

[2] E.g., Eitan, "Hebrew and Semitic Particles;" Bravmann, "Syriac *dalma.*" Studies of the predicative particle *ʾit* and the relative particle *d-* abound.

[3] E.g., Kuty, "The Position of the Particle *dên.*"

[4] Rubin, "On Syriac *hārkā.*"

[5] Fragment VIIc is too corrupt for any comment to be made about its syntax.

[6] Hoftijzer and Van der Kooij, *Aramaic Texts from Deir ʿAlla*, 222.

[7] Kaufman, review of Hoftijzer and Van der Kooij, *Aramaic Texts from Deir ʿAlla*, 73.

[8] Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir ʿAllā*, 29, 38.

[9] Cook, "The Orthography of Final Unstressed Long Vowels," 65.

that Syriac ܠܰܡ is used "particularly in citing foreign remarks or thoughts."[10] Brockelmann is even more decisive, and states that Syriac ܠܰܡ "führt direkte Rede ein" ("introduces direct speech").[11] Costaz lists Syriac ܠܰܡ as a conjunction and notes that "ܠܰܡ … annonce ordinairement que la citation est commencée et renforce le *d-* qui introduit le discours" ("ܠܰܡ … generally announces that the quote is started and strengthens the *d-* introducing the speech").[12] Some dictionaries and grammars of Syriac use rather vague descriptions; Duval: "sans doute" ("probably"),[13] Brockelmann: "videlicet, scilicet" ("namely, that is"),[14] Costaz: "à savoir, certes" ("namely, indeed").[15] Muraoka and Porten assert that Egyptian Aramaic לם is "mostly confined to direct speech."[16] Miller terms the Egyptian Aramaic particle a complementizer and claims that it functions exactly like the infinitive *l'mr* (לאמר) in this dialect,[17] that is, it introduces speech; however, she further determines that לם is not etymologically related to *l'mr*.[18] Some grammatical descriptions argue for the existence of two separate particles: affirmative and quotative. The reason is that the actual syntactic behaviour of לם does not always fit its presumed function, that is, introducing direct speech. Segert suggests two separate etymologies: the affirmative לם is related to the negation *l-* and the quotative לם is an abbreviated form of *l'mr*.[19] Hoftijzer and Jongeling also favour this division.[20]

The orthography of the particle in Aramaic is fairly fixed. There are, however, some possible exceptions with intermediate Alaph.[21] The first, לאם, is found in a pre-Achaemenid Assyro-Aramaic tablet (Louvre AO 25.341), dated to the mid-seventh century BCE, which was published and analyzed by Kaufman.[22] Already

---

[10] Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, 101 §155. By the term "fremde Reden," Nöldeke presumably means both direct and indirect speech. I thank Holger Gzella for alerting me to this point.

[11] Brockelmann, *Syrische Grammatik* (1938), *171. He is less resolute in his *Lexicon Syriacum*, where the particle is translated as a discourse marker.

[12] Costaz, *Grammaire syriaque*, 148 §496. For the function of *d-* in marking direct speech see Pat-El, *Studies in the Historical Syntax of Aramaic*, 163ff.

[13] Duval, *Traité de grammaire syriaque*, 283 §293.

[14] Eitan, "Hebrew and Semitic Particles," 367a.

[15] Costaz, *Dictionnaire syriaque-français*, 173a.

[16] Muraoka and Porten, *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic*, 339 §90e.

[17] Miller, "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers," 130.

[18] Note, however, that in her study, Miller does not include occurrences of לם other than those immediately introducing direct speech (ibid., 131n9).

[19] Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, 233 §5.5.6.2.1.

[20] Hoftijzer and Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions*, 1:578–79.

[21] The lemma לאם in a pre-Achaemenid Assyro-Aramaic tablet (Louvre AO 25.341) is probably not connected to לם, see Fales, *Aramaic Epigraphs*, 255–56. Another possible similar orthographic form is found towards the end of the fifth century BCE: לאם לא שליט *l'm l' šlyṭ* … (C 46:7/B6.3:8).

[22] Kaufman, "An Assyro-Aramaic *egirtu ša šulmu*."

Cowley[23] suggested (with a question mark) that it is a possible spelling of לם, but he stands alone here. Sachau[24] reads it as "people" (cognate to BH לְאוֹם *lᵊʾōm*). Folmer reads it as an abbreviation of *lʾmr*,[25] and admits that this is a unique spelling.[26]

Two etymologies have been suggested for this particle: an abbreviated form of the infinitive of the verb "to say," *lʾmr*, or an emphasizing particle based on asseverative prefix *la-* (**la-*) with an enclitic *-m* or *mā*.[27] The claim, most prominently presented in Kaufman,[28] that לם is an abbreviation of לאמר is based on the well attested function of the infinitive לאמר "to say" as a quotative marker in Egyptian Aramaic.[29] If indeed לם is used to introduce speech, its syntactic, if not etymological, connection to *lʾmr* is a reasonable working hypothesis. If, however, לם is not used systematically as a quotative marker, this etymology will either require more support or be discarded. In what follows I will examine these suggestions and evaluate them on the basis of the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the form.

2. *L'MR > LM*: DISCUSSION[30]

Kaufman, and others before him, interpreted an occurrence of לאם in line 5 of an Assyro-Aramaic tablet as an intermediate stage between the infinitive לאמר and the Egyptian Aramaic and Syriac particle, لم/ܠܰܡ, which functions "as a marker of direct and indirect speech."[31] Kaufman argued that the particle first preceded direct speech, then became an enclitic marker of direct speech and eventually became an adverb with the meaning "then." According to him, this is further corroborated by

---

[23] Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, 152.

[24] Sachau, *Drei aramäische Papyrusurkunden*.

[25] Folmer, *The Aramaic Language*, 284n109. Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*, 138, also seem to take *lʾm* here as a corrupt form of *lʾmr*.

[26] Folmer, ibid, 189n2, specifically notes that she does not intend to discuss the origin of *lm*, as her work is not diachronic.

[27] Another suggestion pointed to למה *lmh* "why" as the origin of this particle (Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 1/2, 11). Rosenthal does not offer any arguments to support this etymology, though he may mean some kind of rhetorical expression; this suggestion was not adopted by later scholars and will not be discussed here.

[28] Kaufman, "An Assyro-Aramaic *egirtu ša šulmu*;" idem, "Assyro-Aramaica," 100n14.

[29] The G infinitive of the root *ʾmr* is the only infinitive in this dialect without the expected *m-* prefix typical of infinitives in this verbal stem. There are only two attestations of the infinitive of the root *ʾmr* with a prefix *m-* in Egyptian Aramaic; neither is used to introduce speech (Folmer, *The Aramaic Language*, 189 §3.1.1). Note also that an abbreviation of *lᵊmēmar* will not yield the Syriac form *lam* through regular sound changes, so if an infinitive is the source of the particle, it must have been a *m*-less infinitive.

[30] Reference to examples from OfA is given from the original publication, Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, and Driver, *Aramaic Documents*, as well as from Porten and Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents*. Reference to the Bisitun Inscription is given from Bae, "Comparative Studies."

[31] Kaufman, "An Assyro-Aramaic *egirtu ša šulmu*," 121ff.

the lemma אמהם *ʾmhm* in the same text (l. 2), which he connects to the root *ʾmr* as well.[32] Kaufman later retracted this reading, but maintained the etymology is correct.[33] The lack of intermediate forms is not necessary for Kaufman's etymology to work, although their existence would have made a problematic morphological change a bit more plausible.

2.1 Phonology and Morphology

In order to substantiate his argument that לם should be derived from לאמר, Kaufman suggests that the infinitive לאמר lost its final consonant, *-r*, in a process similar to the loss of final *-r* in this root in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic.[34] This phenomenon, which is well attested in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic and the Geonic literature, affects roots ending with a certain set of consonants (*r, m, l, d, b*),[35] which in certain morpho-syntactic positions assimilated to a following liquid. The most common trigger of assimilation is the clitic preposition *l-* "to," which motivated the following process culminating in reanalysis:[36] *emar lak > emallak > emalak > ema*.[37] The deletion of final continuants is not random, but rather it is a result of sandhi, a phenomenon which operates in boundaries of words whose components are closely linked syntactically. The result is re-syllabification and eventual elision.[38]

Obviously, in order for a similar process to have operated in the language which preceded Egyptian Aramaic and/or Syriac, one must prove that a previous dialect contained evidence of a similar speech-marker function for the infinitive as well as evidence of some incentive for the assimilation and subsequent deletion of the final *-r*. However, there is no data to support such an assumption. None of the Old Aramaic dialects uses the infinitive of the root *ʾmr* as a direct speech marker as it is used in Egyptian Aramaic. In fact, the infinitive לאמר itself is not attested in Old Aramaic.[39] Furthermore, In Egyptian Aramaic when the infinitive לאמר

---

[32] This interpretation was also accepted by Hug, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, 25: "*lʾm* entsprict wohl syr. *lm* zur Einführung der direkte Rede und könnte … eine Nebenform von *lʾmr* … sein."

[33] Kaufman, "Assyro-Aramaica," 100n14.

[34] Kaufman, "An Assyro-Aramaic *egirtu ša šulmu*," 122.

[35] Morgenstern, *Studies in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, 116.

[36] This phenomenon is also attested sporadically in Syriac: **nətan l- > *nətal l- > nətal* ܢܬܠ "he gave;" **hab l- > *hal l- > hal* ܗܒ "give!" (imperative 2ms). Another example of *l-* assimilating and then dropping out is attested in verbal forms from the root *ʾzl* ܐܙܠ "go," but in this case, the trigger was not syntactic.

[37] Epstein, דקדוק ארמית בבלית (A Grammar of Babylonian Aramaic), 57; Boyarin, "The Loss of Final Consonants," 103. The reconstruction presented here is slightly more detailed than the one found in Boyarin, "The Loss of Final Consonants."

[38] More examples of *-r* deletion or assimilation in Semitic are discussed in Huehnergard, "Etymology of the Hebrew Relative *šɛ-*." Note that all such examples are motivated by syntax, mostly cliticization.

[39] Finite forms of the root *ʾmr* are indeed used to introduce speech, but they are not

introduces direct speech, it typically does not take an object introduced by *l-* following it; this happens only with finite verbs, which do not exhibit any assimilation or deletion when in contact with *l-*.[40]

Thus, the path quotative לאמר > quotative לם lacks both a syntactic forerunner and a catalyst for assimilation and subsequent deletion of the final consonant. Kaufman's reconstruction seems, therefore, weak and unsubstantiated, though not impossible.[41]

2.2 The Syntax of Egyptian Aramaic *LM*

Speech is introduced via various syntactic constructions in Egyptian Aramaic. The vast majority of cases involve a form of the root *ʾmr* (see below, example 1). The assumed origin of לם, Egyptian Aramaic לאמר, always introduces direct speech and stands directly before the quote;[42] in such cases, there is no need to use another verb of speech, since the quote is already marked. Given this syntax, one would expect a derivative particle to be likewise a sufficient marker of speech and be immediately followed by a speech. However, in the majority of the examples in this dialect, לם does not mark speech without a verb of speech (*verbum dicendi*, henceforth VD) or other speech markers. When לם appears in the context of speech, typically some form of the root *ʾmr*, the regular marker of speech, is present (see example 2). There are nine examples (out of twenty-five occurrences) of לם opening speech with no other quotative present (see example 3). Its position in the quote is by no means fixed. It may be the first (C 10:11–12/B3.1:11), second (C 32:1–2/A4.9:2) or third (Aḥ 59–60/C1.1:60) lemma.[43]

---

usually positioned immediately before the quote, but are rather typically separated from the speech by their object. E.g., *w-l-tʾmr lhm šlw ʿl ʾšrkm* (Sefire III 5) "And you will not tell them: stay quietly in your place." This is exactly the environment where sandhi-triggered assimilation is attested in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, but as noted above, the infinitive *lʾmr* is not attested in this environment. The Old Aramaic evidence is in line with the attestation in other Aramaic dialects, where only finite forms or participles are followed by the preposition *l-*, but not the infinitive.

[40] It is also most likely that the use of the infinite *lʾmr* as a quotative is an innovation of Egyptian Aramaic, as it is not attested before, outside or after this dialect. The source of its syntax is probably external; Miller, "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers," suggests Biblical Hebrew and Pat-El, "Quotative marker *lʾmr*," suggests Egyptian.

[41] Teixidor, "Bulletin d'épigraphie sémitique," 391, in his review of Kaufman's analysis of the text concludes that the comparison between לאם and לאמר does not prove that there was any reduction of consonants. Indeed, the use of finite forms of the root *ʾmr* to introduce direct speech did not change, and was very common in Old Aramaic and later (with or without לם). Thus, it is unlikely to have random reduced forms, while the original full form and its syntax are still in common use, far more than the allegedly reduced form.

[42] Folmer, *The Aramaic Language*, 189.

[43] Note also ברה לם ז (*brh lm ẓ*) Segal, *Aramaic Texts*, 94 text 70:1: "His son (saying) that …" where in a text from the 4th–5th century BCE לם occurs with זי, which is attested as

(1)

VD, no *LM*:

אמר... לאמר יהבת על ידן שע[רן]

He said: you have delivered barley to us. (C 2:1–3/B4.4:3)

(2)

VD, *LM*:

ולא אכל אמר לך לם שלמתך בכספך

And I will not be able to tell you that I paid you your money. (C 10:11-12/B3.1:13)

(3)

No VD, *LM*:

לא אכל אקבל עליך קדם סגן ודין לם לקחת מני ערבן וספרא זנה בידך

I will not be able to file a complaint against you before an official or a judge [saying] you took a security from me, while you still hold the deed. (C 10:12-13/B3.1:11)

The evidence is quite clear that in the vast majority of the cases לם is not the introducing element; crucially, some form of the root *ʾmr* is still needed to mark speech, as may be expected given the syntax of earlier and later dialects.

There are also many examples where no speech act is involved (see examples 4–5), or where לם is integrated into the speech itself (see example 6), or positioned somewhere preceding it but does not seem to be introducing it (see examples 7–8):[44]

(4)

הן על מראי לם כות טב אגרת מן מראי תשתלח על נחתחור

If my lord thus wishes, let a letter be sent from my lord to N. (D 10/A6.13:2)

(5)

דחלת לם אחיקר

I, Aḥiqar, was afraid. (Aḥ. 45/C1.1:45)[45]

---

a marker of speech in Official Aramaic. Unfortunately, this papyrus is too fragmentary to conclude much about its syntax. For more on the development of זי to mark direct speech, see Folmer, "Instances of So-called *(k)zy*-Recitativum."

[44] Miller, "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers," 133, claims that *lm* introduces more details about the noun it follows through a relative clause. However, there are two examples where the noun is not followed by a relative clause (C 32:1–2/A4.9:2; Aḥ. 2/C1.1:2; D 12:1–2/A6.15:1) and several examples where *lm* follows other elements: a verbal phrase, personal pronouns and adverbs (Aḥ. 3/C1.1:3; Aḥ. 20/C 1.1:20; Aḥ. 54/C1.1:54; Aḥ. 56–7/C1.1:57; Aḥ. 59–60/C1.1:60; C1.1:58; D23.1:12) and thus is probably not introducing further specification of the NP.

[45] Miller, "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers," 132, claims that in examples

(6)

אחר [ענה] נבוסמכן ואמר לי אל תדחל לם [תח]יי אחיקר

Then N answered and said to me: do not fear; you shall live, Aḥiqar. (Aḥ. 54/C1.1:54)

(7)

ישתלח לם אשרנא זנה יתיהב עליד שמו

Let word be sent: these materials will be supplied by PN. (C 26:21/A6.2:21)

(8)

[כזי שלח] עלין מתרדת נופתא לם כן אמר...

As M the boatman informed us, he said thus: … (C 26:1–2/A6.2:2)

These examples make clear that syntactically לם has a more varied distribution than has been claimed in works such as Kaufman and Miller.[46] In fact, the connection of לם to speech is rather peripheral and can only account for a minority of its occurrences. Synchronically, then, there is no reason to assume that Egyptian Aramaic לם is a quotative.

2.3 The Syntax of Syriac ܠܡ

Syriac shows a rather long history of this particle. However, throughout its history, the syntax of *lam* remains fairly consistent and curiously similar to that of Egyptian Aramaic: it is not restricted to direct and indirect speech and appears in many non-speech as well as speech environments. Classical Syriac typically introduces direct and indirect speech through its relative particle *d-* ܕ.[47] The earliest text in Syriac, the Peshitta, has ample opportunities to translate quotatives, as both the Old and New Testaments use such particles regularly.[48] Since the text in the original languages is rich with direct speech, it seems reasonable to expect a quotative ܠܡ to feature prominently. In the Peshitta OT the Hebrew infinitive לֵאמֹר, which regularly opens direct speech,[49] is mostly rendered by ܕ, a regular quotative device in Syriac, and much less by the literal translation ܠܡܐܡܪ *lmēmar* "to say."[50] The particle ܠܡ is not attested.

---

such as this "*lm* serves to introduce a personal name that elucidates the interpretation of the first-person reference indexed in the verbal form, i.e. a message that refers to the code." In short, Miller claims that this function is an extension of *lm*'s function as a direct speech complementizer.

[46] Kaufman, "An Assyro-Aramaic *egirtu ša šulmu*;" Miller, "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers."

[47] This development has obvious forerunners in earlier dialects of Aramaic. See Pat-El, "Historical Syntax of Aramaic," 67–70; idem, *Studies in the Historical Syntax of Aramaic*, 163ff.

[48] Aejmelaeus, "OTI Recitativum;" Goldenberg, "On Direct Speech."

[49] Goldenberg "On Direct Speech;" Miller, *The Representation of Speech*.

[50] Williams, *Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings*, 123–24.

The earliest text in which ܠܡ appears is the Peshitta NT, where only two examples are attested (Col 2:21; 2 Thess 2:2). The first verse is textually presented as a quotation from a priest laying down the Jewish law. No verb of speech is used (see example 9). The second verse is also a quote, this time from an alleged letter sent to the faithful. There is a verb of speech present, and the quote opens with the relative particle ܕ (see example 10):

(9)

ܠܐ ܠܡ ܬܩܪܘܒ ܘܠܐ ܬܛܥܡ ܘܠܐ ܬܩܪܒ

Do not approach and do not eat and do not touch. (Col 2:21)

(10)

ܒܥܝܢܢ ܕܝܢ ܡܢܟܘܢ ܐܚܝ ... ܘܠܐ ܢܬܠܘܢ ܡܕܥܝܟܘܢ ܕܬܬܡܗܘܢ ... ܘܠܐ ܡܢ ܐܓܪܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܗܘ ܕܡܢܢ ܫܕܝܪܐ ܗܘܬ ܠܟܘܢ ܕܡܛܐ ܠܗ ܝܘܡܗ ܕܡܪܢ

We ask you, my brothers, ... do not fret, ... and not because of a letter, supposedly sent by us, (claiming) that there arrives the day of our Lord. (2 Thess 2:1–2)

So in early translated texts in which a quotative is used regularly, ܠܡ is not found, even though the translator identified these quotatives and rendered them correctly with the relative particle ܕ. In non-translated Classical Syriac texts, the particle ܠܡ is of course widely attested; however, even in texts where ܠܡ is used, ܕ is not excluded:

(11)

ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ ܕܗܘܝܘ ܐܦ ܐܘܝܕܐ ܠܡ ܬܘܒ ܐܡܪ ܗܘܐ ܐܡܪ ܗܘ ܗܘܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܛܠ ܟܝܢܗ ܘܡܢ ܟܝܢܗ ܗܘ ܡܚܛܐ ܒܪܢܫܐ

I said to him: this Awida also said: it is because of his nature that man sins. (Bar Daiṣan 20:22–24)

(12)

ܘܐܡܪܢ ܕܝܢ ܠܡ ܗܠܟܘܗ ܗܘܐ ܗܘ

We said: here is what happens. (Penkaya 154:22)

(13)

ܐܡܪ ܗܘܐ ܠܡ ܛܘܗܡܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܢ ܙܟܝܢܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܝܬ ܠܢ ܡܢܗ ܫܘܒܗܪܐ ܐܝܟ ܗܝ ܘܐܢ ܗܢܘܢ ܙܟܘܢ ܚܣܕܐ ܪܒܐ

He said: this race! if we overcome them there is not much pride for us [in it], if they overcome us – [there will be] great shame [upon us]. (Bar Hebraeus 58)

Furthermore, as was demonstrated above for Egyptian Aramaic, ܠܡ in Syriac is used also in non-speech contexts. Note examples 14–15 below, which are part of a narrative not containing speech and cannot be said to allude to one:

(14)

ܟܬܒܘܢܝܗܝܢ ܒܝܢ ܠܐܪܡܝܐ ܐܝܟܐ ܐܡܝܪ ܐܡܝܢ ܐܝܟ ܐܢܫܝܢ ܠܡ ܒܐܝܢܐ ܕܝܢ ܛܘܟܣܐ ܗ...

The scriptures were translated to Syriac, according to some, in this order: the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges ... (Ishoʿdad 3:16–17)

(15)

ܐܚܐ ܦܘܡܢ ܘܐܚܘ̈ܗܝ ܕܝܢ ܐܝܟܐ ܐܚܘܗܝ ܠܡ ܐܦܠܘܗܝ ܠܐܡܣܪܐ ܐܢܗ ܠܐ ܐܚܕܗ ܟܣܟܚܗܘܗܝ ܐܦܠܐ
ܡܠܠܘ ܚܡܗ

Father Puman and his brothers did not let their mother come up to their cell nor did they talk to her when she came to see them. (Bar Hebraeus 202)

The only context in which ܠܡ seems to have no other function than to introduce a quote is when biblical quotations are integrated into a native text. This may have nothing to do with direct speech, but rather potentially with truth value (see example 16). Moreover, even for this function ܠܡ is not always part of the Biblical quote itself and is not preferred over the relative particle ܕ (see examples 17–18):

(16)

ܟܦܢ ܗܘܝܬ ܠܡ ܘܝܗܒܬܘܢ ܠܝ ܠܡܐܟܘܠܬܐ

I was hungry and you gave me food [Mt 25:34ff]. (Sudaili 5:7–8)

(17)

ܠܝܬ ܗܘ ܠܡ ܡܢ ܕܩܪܐ ܠܛܒܬܐ ܒܝܫܐ ܘܠܒܝܫܬܐ ܛܒܐ ܐܡܪ ܟܬܒܐ

There is no-one who "calls the good bad, and the bad good" [Isa 5:20]*, said the scripture.* (Penkaya 147:21–148:1)

(18)

ܐܡܪ ܘܡܪܝ ܡܢܘ ܡܫܠܡܠܟ ܠܡ

He said: Lord, who betrays you? [Jn 13:25] (Apocryphal Acts 4:2–3)

The second-place position of ܠܡ in Syriac is relatively fixed, compared to Egyptian Aramaic; however, it is not unique to ܠܡ, but is rather typical also with other adverbs and monosyllabic sentential elements in Syriac.[51] Moreover, the syntax and distribution of Syriac ܠܡ and Egyptian Aramaic לם are quite similar: these particles appear in direct speech, indirect speech and non-speech environments. Even with biblical quotations, Syriac ܠܡ is not used consistently, and these quotations are rarely presented as direct speech and are mostly intertwined with the narrative. It is true that לם is frequently found in the vicinity of speech, albeit not always as part of the speech itself, but so do many other discourse particles. For example, the Syriac particle ܗܐ is also found frequently in speech oriented environments; it may introduce speech (see example 19) or stand directly at the beginning of a speech introduced by other means (see example 20). Like ܠܡ, ܗܐ is an adverb which can be

---

[51] See Kuty, "The Position of the Particle *dên*," 186–99, regarding Syriac ܕܝܢ and Pat-El, "Syntax of Negation in Syriac," 335, regarding sentential negation in Syriac.

attested in speech; but unlike ܠܡ, ܗܐ has a solid West-Semitic etymology which precludes an ad-hoc interpretation of its syntax and origin.[52]

(19)

ܘܫܐܠ ܡܢ ܡܪܗ ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܗܐ ܡܪܝ ܐܝܟ ܕܨܒܐ ܘܪܚܡܐ ܢܗܘܐ ܪܚܡܟ

He asked his master and said to him: my lord, as you wish, let your wish be. (Apocryphal Acts *163:16–18)

(20)

ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܚܬܢܐ ܘܗܐ ܩܪܝܡܐ ܢܦܩܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܠܟ

And the bridegroom said to him: you came in first! (Apocryphal Acts *170:21)

As noted above, understanding the synchrony of לם is likely to help us trace its linguistic origin. It seems that there is no reason to conclude that a minor function of *lam* is its most typical trait. Speech is only one of the environments it appears in. Thus, in addition to the problems with the reconstructed morphological connection to the infinitive *lᵓmr* discussed above, and the morphological and phonological problems discussed in Miller,[53] it is unlikely that לם is derived from לאמר. We turn now to examine an alternative etymology.

3. AN ALTERNATIVE ETYMOLOGY: **LA* + *M*: DISCUSSION

The possibility that לם is an emphatic particle was first mentioned by Segert.[54] He connected it to an emphatic *l-*, which he assumed is also the basis for the Semitic negation particle. In a more detailed study, Huehnergard argued that Syriac ܠܡ came from the asseverative **la*, which is unrelated to the Semitic negation particle, with additional *mā* or an enclitic *-m*.[55] Huehnergard suggested that Proto Semitic originally had two particles **lu/law* and **la*.[56] While the former was a sentential element denoting hypothetical propositions, the latter is an asseverative particle

---

[52] In fact, there are many particles which appear in speech environments, but due to their obvious etymology were never termed quotative markers, but rather adverbs, e.g. ܐܪܐ (<Greek), ܟܝ / ܐܘܟܝܬ, ܟܝ and others.

[53] Miller, "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers."

[54] Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, 233 §5.5.6.2.1.

[55] Huehnergard, "Asseverative **la*," 590. Miller, "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers," 126, rejected this etymology on the grounds that no other Semitic language uses asseverative **la* as a complementizer, and that asseverative **la* is not found elsewhere in Aramaic. The syntax of לם indicates that it is not a complementizer, thus Miller's first argument against Huehnergard's hypothesis is irrelevant. The second argument is easily refuted by the data, as there are several examples of this clitic before the prefix conjugation in the inscription from Tel-Fekherye, e.g., *l-šm* (11) "let him put," *l-zr'* (19) "he should sow." (A full list of instances of "precative" *l-* is found in Muraoka, "The Tell-Fekherye Bilingual Inscription," 95–96.)

[56] Huehnergard, "Asseverative **la*," 595.

which may be attached to any element in the sentence in order to topicalize it. The asseverative function of *la is well established in West-Semitic. It is very common in exclamations (for example, Classical Arabic la-ʿamru-ka لَعَمْرُكَ *by your life*) and in vocatives (attested in Amorite, Hebrew, Ugaritic, and Tigre). Testen proposed that the asseverative *la asserts the speaker's commitment to the truth value of the utterance.[57] In terms of distribution, *la-* may appear in speech environment, though not exclusively.[58]

The suggestion that the consonant *-m* originated from *mā is more problematic. Aramaic *mā* is usually written with a final Alaph or He, even when it forms a part of word combinations; for example in Aramaic *di-l-mā* "lest," "perhaps" is almost consistently written as דילמא or דילמה. There are a few instances of "defective" spellings of *mā* lacking a final *mater lectionis*, but this is not a regular sound change in Syriac, or Aramaic in general. It remains a possibility that there is a change *mā* > *-m*, whenever *mā* has a low prosodic prominence, which is a change commonly found in dependent function words; compare English *not* > *n't*, which is not a regular sound change.[59] Such an analysis has some evidence to support it in Semitic; Faber supplies several examples of *mā > -m* in Aramaic and other Semitic languages, where the reduction can be explained phonetically by low prosody.[60]

How can one account for the syntax and semantics of *lam*? Blejer, in a discussion of *-m-* in Semitic and Afro-Asiatic as a discourse element, suggests that the interrogative *mV* and the focusing *m*, attested in Akkadian among other languages, are ultimately related.[61] The basis for this proposal are instances, especially in Akkadian and Ethio-Semitic, of an affix *-m* with interrogative pronouns and adverbs.[62] Such a relationship between the interrogative and the focusing particle are, according to Blejer, pre-Proto Semitic, as this function of *-m-* is common to the entire phylum. Most importantly, Blejer shows that *-m-* is found in Semitic, among other patterns, as a marker of focus (including negation, cleft and tautological infinitives), with interrogatives and with imperatives.[63] All of these are common in speech environments.[64] There are sporadic examples that can

---

[57] Testen, *Parallels in Semitic Linguistics*, 91.

[58] For examples, in Classical Arabic, among other functions, it may express wishes (*lām al-ʾamar*) or introduce oaths (*lām al-qasam; lām al-jawāb al-qasam*).

[59] See Joseph, "Rescuing Traditional (Historical) Linguistics," 52–53, for a discussion of this phenomenon in other languages.

[60] Faber, "Indefinite Pronouns." In Samaritan Aramaic *dlm* is used for *dlmʾ* (though presumably pronounced /dalmā/). Another possible form is Syriac ܕܡ for ܘܠܡܐ, but it is a late form in this dialect.

[61] Blejer, *Discourse Markers*, 91. "*mV*" is Blejer's term, meaning m+vowel.

[62] Soden, *Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik*, 178.

[63] Blejer, *Discourse Markers*, 85.

[64] Faber, "Indefinite Pronouns," 231 argues that the common Semitic functions of *mā* are: interrogative, negative, conjunction and topicalization, though not every Semitic branch or dialect group shows all functions.

corroborate the existence of an emphatic -*m* in Aramaic: the Targumic complementizer/causal particle ארי (*ʾărē*) has a by-form ארום (*ʾrwm*) in Neofiti and Pseudo-Jonathan, possibly from ארי (*ʾry*) + הו (*hw*) + מ (*m*), where the mimation was unexplained thus far, but may be related to an emphatic -*m*.[65] There is also an interjection in the Palestinian Talmud, אוי (*ʾwy*) "alas," which has a by-form אוים (*ʾwym*) (San. 23e). This meagre set of examples is not very strong, but it shows a possible vestigial focusing function of a suffixed -*m*-. If indeed לם is a bi-morphemic form, constructed out of an asseverative *la*- and a focus enclitic -*m*, the syntax fits and the order of the elements corresponds to what we would expect: *la*- is always proclitic and -*m* is always enclitic. Thus, a reconstructed adverbial form **la-m* is not impossible in Aramaic, as both of its elements and their function are attested in the branch. Finally, the distribution of ܠܰܡ/לם in Syriac and Egyptian Aramaic follows the expected function of both elements, as they are attested in other Semitic languages.

If this new etymology is correct, we should avoid always translating ܠܰܡ as the Syriac equivalent of the Latin *scilicet* "certainly," and adopt a contextually appropriate adverb, like "namely," (example 14 above), "indeed," (example 11 above), or "truly," "really" (example 12 above).

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The function and distribution of *lm* (ܠܰܡ/לם) in Egyptian Aramaic and Syriac is similar. The particle appears in speech related texts, though it was shown that it cannot be said to function as a quotative, contra the common assumption. The suggestion that it is related to the infinitive לאמר was argued to be unwarranted both morphologically and syntactically. Similarly, the assumption that לם is a direct speech complementizer was shown to be incorrect by examples where לם does not introduce speech or is located outside the speech context. Moreover, the fact that from its first appearance לם almost always appeared with other markers of direct speech (the infinitive לאמר in Egyptian Aramaic, and the relative particle ܕ in Syriac) makes the assumption that it is a quotative independently quite unlikely.

An alternative etymology was examined and found to be plausible morphologically and syntactically. Syntactic evidence indicates that לם is probably an emphatic adverb, and like many of its kind it is common in speech, though it is not exclusively restricted to such environments. Considering its function in biblical quotations, it may have been used to mark the relative truth value the speaker attributes to the words.

Finally, this study has been an exercise in historical linguistics and its relation to synchronic analysis. As was suggested in the introduction, it is ill-advised to attempt reconstruction without first fully understanding the various aspects of the form's syntax and distribution. The reconstruction of **la-m > lam* is a hypothesis, but one

---

[65] This particle is related to the post-Biblical Hebrew presentative הרי which lacks final mimation.

that is far more substantiated than *l'mr > lam* not just from a phonological point of view, but also from a syntactic one. The only reason to assume that לאמר is the source of لم/לם is an unfounded assumption that the particle is a quotative.

5. GUIDE TO TRANSLITERATION

The following scheme was employed for transliterations:

ʾ	ܠ	א
b	ܒ	ב
g	ܓ	ג
d	ܕ	ד
h	ܗ	ה
w	ܘ	ו
z	ܙ	ז
ḥ	ܚ	ח
ṭ	ܛ	ט
y/i	ܝ	י
k	ܟ	כ
l	ܠ	ל
m	ܡ	מ
n	ܢ	נ
s	ܣ	ס
ʿ	ܥ	ע
p	ܦ	פ
ṣ	ܨ	צ
q	ܩ	ק
r	ܪ	ר
š	ܫ	שׁ
t	ܬ	ת
ā	$\overset{\prime}{\circ}$	◌ָ
ē	$\overset{\backprime}{\circ}$	◌ֶ
i	$\bar{\circ}$	◌ִ
ə		◌ְ
a	$\overset{\backprime}{\circ}$	◌ַ

PRIMARY SOURCES (SYRIAC)

Apocryphal Acts: *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*. 2 vols. Edited and translated by William Wright. London: Williams & Norgate, 1871. Repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1990. Repr. Piscataway, Gorgias, 2005.

Bar Daiṣan: *The Book of the Laws of the Countries, Dialogue on Fate of Bardaisan of Edessa*. Edited and translated by H.J.W. Drijvers. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1965. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2006.

Bar Hebraeus. *The Laughable Stories Collected by Mar Gregory John Bar-Hebraeus*. Edited and translated by E.A. Wallis Budge. London: Luzac. 1897. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2003.

Bar Penkaye. *Mšiḥa-Zkha (texte et traduction): Bar-Penkayé (texte)*. Vol. 1 of *Sources syriaques*. Edited and translated by A. Mingana. Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1907.

Bar Sudaili. *Stephen bar Sudaili, the Syrian Mystic, and the Book of Hierotheos*. Edited by Arthur L. Frothingham. Leiden: Brill, 1886.

Isho'dad. *Commentaire d'Išo'dad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament*. Edited by J.-M. Vosté and C. Van Den Eynde. 2 vols. Leuven: Durbecq, 1950.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aejmelaeus, Anneli. "OTI Recitativum in Septuagintal Greek." Pages 74–82 in *Studien zur Septuaginta – Robert Hanhart zu Ehren*. Edited by D. Fraenkel, U. Quast, and J.W. Wevers. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990.

Bae, Chul-Hyun. "Comparative Studies of King Darius's Bisitun Inscription." PhD diss. Harvard University, 2001.

Blejer, Hatte Anne Rubenstein. "Discourse Markers in Early Semitic, and their Reanalyses in Subsequent Dialects." PhD diss. University of Texas at Austin, 1986.

Boyarin, Daniel. "The Loss of Final Consonants in Babylonian Jewish Aramaic (BJA)." *Afroasiatic Linguistics* 3 (1976): 103–7.

Bravmann, M.M. "Syriac dalmā 'Lest,' 'Perhaps,' and Some Related Arabic Phenomena." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 15 (1970): 189–204.

Brockelmann, Carl. *Lexicon Syriacum*. 2nd ed. Halle: Niemeyer, 1928.

———. *Syrische Grammatik*. Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1938.

Cook, Edward M. "The Orthography of Final Unstressed Long Vowels in Old and Imperial Aramaic." *Maarav* 5–6 (1990): 53–67.

Costaz, Louis. *Grammaire syriaque*. Beirut: Librairie Orientale, 1955. 2nd ed. Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1964. 3rd ed. Beirut: Dar al-Machreq, 1992.

———. *Dictionnaire syriaque-français, Syriac-English Dictionary,* قاموس سرياني عربي. Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1963. 2ⁿᵈ ed. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1986. 3ʳᵈ ed. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 2002.

Cowley, A.E., ed. *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1923.

Cureton, William, and William Wright, eds. *Ancient Syriac Documents Relative to the Earliest Establishment of Christianity in Edessa and the Neighbouring Countries: From the Year after our Lord's Ascension to the Beginning of the Fourth Century.* London, Williams & Norgate, 1864. Repr. Amsterdam: Oriental, 1967. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2005.

Deutscher, Guy. *Syntactic Change in Akkadian: The Evolution of Sentential Complementation.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Driver, G.R. *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C.* Abridged and revised ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1965.

Duval, Rubens. *Traité de grammaire syriaque* Paris: F. Vieweg, 1881. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2010.

Eitan, Israel. "Hebrew and Semitic Particles: Comparative Studies in Semitic Philology." *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 44/3 (1928): 177–205.

Epstein, Jacob Nahum. דקדוק ארמית בבלית (A Grammar of Babylonian Aramaic). Jerusalem: Magnes, 1960.

Faber, Alice. "Indefinite Pronouns in Early Semitic." Pages 221–38 in *Fucus: a Semitic/Afrasian Gathering in Remembrance of Albert Ehrman.* Edited by Yoël L. Arbeitman. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1988.

Fales, Frederick Mario. *Aramaic Epigraphs on Clay Tablets of the Neo-Assyrian Period.* Rome: Università "La Sapienza." 1986.

Folmer, M.L. *The Aramaic Language in the Achaemenid Period: A Study in Linguistic Variation.* Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 68. Leuven, Peeters, 1995.

———. "Instances of So-called (k)zy-Recitativum in Aramaic Texts from the Achaemenid Period." *Dutch Studies – Near Eastern Languages and Literatures* 2 (1996): 145–55.

Goldenberg, Gideon. "On Direct Speech and the Hebrew Bible." Pages 79–96 in *Studies in Hebrew and Aramaic Syntax Presented to Professor J. Hoftijzer on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday.* Edited by K. Jongeling, H.L. Murre-van den Berg, and L. Van Rompay. Leiden: Brill, 1991.

Hackett, Jo Ann. *The Balaam Text from Deir ʿAllā.* Harvard Semitic Monographs 31. Chico: Scholars Press, 1984.

Hoftijzer, J., and K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions.* With appendices by R.C. Steiner, A. Mosak Moshavi, and B. Porten. Handbook of Oriental Studies 1. The Near and Middle East 21–22. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

Hoftijzer, J., and G. van der Kooij, eds. *Aramaic Texts from Deir ʿAllā.* Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui 19. Leiden: Brill, 1976.

Huehnergard, John. "Asseverative **la* and Hypothetical **lu/law* in Semitic." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983): 569–93.

———. "On the Etymology of the Hebrew Relative *šɛ-*." Pages 103–26 in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives.* Edited by Stephen E. Fassberg and Avi Hurvitz. Jerusalem: Magnes; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006.

Hug, Volker. *Altaramäische Grammatik der Texte des 7. und 6. Jh.s v. Chr.* Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag, 1993.

Joseph, Brian D. "Rescuing Traditional (Historical) Linguistics from Grammaticalization Theory." Pages 45–103 in *Up and Down the Cline: the Nature of Grammaticalization.* Edited by Olga Fischer, Muriel Norde, and Harry Perridon. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004.

Kaufman, Stephen A. "An Assyro-Aramaic *egirtu ša šulmu.*" Pages 119–27 in *Essays on the Ancient Middle East in Memory of Jacob Joel Finkelstein.* Edited by M. de Jong Ellis. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1977.

———. Review of J. Hoftijzer and G. van der Kooij, *Aramaic Texts from Deir ʿAllā. Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 239 (1980): 71–4.

———. "Assyro-Aramaica" (review of Frederick Mario Fales, *Aramaic Epigraphs on Clay Tablets of the Neo-Assyrian Period*). *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109 (1989): 97–102.

Kuty, Renaud. "The Position of the Particle *dên* in New Testament Syriac." *Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 38 (2001): 186–99.

Miller, Cynthia L. *The Representation of Speech in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: A Linguistic Analysis.* Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996.

———. "Variation and Direct Speech Complementizers in Achaemenid Aramaic Documents from Fifth Century B.C.E. Egypt." Pages 119–43 in *Variation and Reconstruction.* Edited by T.D. Cravens. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2006.

Morgenstern, Matthew. "Jewish Babylonian Aramaic in Geonic Responsa: Studies in Phonology, Verb Morphology, Pronouns and Style" [Hebrew]. PhD diss. Jerusalem, Hebrew University, 2002.

———. *Studies in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic based upon Early Eastern Manuscripts.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011.

Muraoka, T. "The Tell-Fekherye Bilingual Inscription and Early Aramaic." *Abr-Nahrain* 22 (1984): 79–117.

Muraoka, Takamitsu, and Bezalel Porten. *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic.* Handbook of Oriental Studies 1. The Near and Middle East 32. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Nöldeke, Theodor. *Compendious Syriac Grammar*. Translated from the 2nd German ed. by James Crichton. London: Williams & Norgate, 1904. Repr. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001.

Pat-El, Na'ama. "Some Notes on the Syntax of Negation in Syriac." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 51 (2006): 329–48.

———. "Historical Syntax of Aramaic: A Note on Subordination." Pages 55–76 in *Aramaic in its Historical and Linguistic Setting*. Edited by Holger Gzella and Margaretha L. Folmer. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2008.

———. "The Origin of the Official Aramaic Quotative marker *ʾmr*." *Aramaic Studies* 7 (2009): 27–38.

———. *Studies in the Historical Syntax of Aramaic*. Perspectives on Linguistics and Ancient Languages 1. Piscataway, Gorgias, 2012.

Porten, Bezalel, and Ada Yardeni, eds. and trans. *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt 1: Letters*. Texts and Studies for Students. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, Dept. of the History of the Jewish People, 1986.

Porten, Bezalel, and Jerome A. Lund. *Aramaic Documents from Egypt: A Key-Word-in-Context Concordance*. 3 vols. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002.

Rosenthal, Franz. *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1961.

Rubin, Aaron D. "On Syriac *hārkā* and Aramaic *r* < **n*." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 66 (2007): 123–4.

Sachau, Eduard. *Drei aramäische Papyrusurkunden aus Elephantine*. Berlin: Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1908.

Segal, J.B. *Aramaic Texts from North Saqqâra with Some Fragments in Phoenician*. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1983.

Segert, Stanislav. *Altaramäische Grammatik mit Bibliographie, Chrestomathie und Glossar*. Leipzig: Enzyklopädie, 1975.

Soden, Wolfram von. *Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik*. Rome: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1995.

Teixidor, Javier. "Bulletin d'épigraphie sémitique 1978–79." *Syria* 56 (1979): 353–405.

Testen, David D. *Parallels in Semitic Linguistics: The Development of Arabic la- and Related Semitic Particles*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Williams, Peter J. *Studies in the Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings*. Monographs of the Peshitta Institute 12. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

CHAPTER 9
EXPLORING PATTERNS OF ACCENTUATION IN BL ADD. MS 12138 (THE EAST-SYRIAN "MASORA"): PERSPECTIVES AND POSSIBILITIES

Jonathan Loopstra

University of Northwestern – St Paul
Minnesota

In his book *The Diacritical Point and Accents in Syriac*, Judah Segal took most of his examples of East Syriac accentuation from a small tract located in the back of BL Add. 12138, a unique handbook on how the Syriac Bible was to be read in the late ninth-century Near East. The placement of accents in this tract, however, differs in places from patterns found in the main body of the manuscript. Thus we have a situation where the short list of accents in this tract has been studied in some depth by Segal and others, but the system of accents carefully laid out by the compiler of the overall manuscript (consisting of over 310 folios of biblical texts) has been largely ignored.

Working from a database of the biblical sample texts in BL Add. 12138, this article will discuss some of the ways these dotted "accent" marks were placed in this valuable manuscript. Particular attention will be given to examples of accents on or near conjunctions in the Syriac bible. According to the accounts of Syriac authors, these accents helped the reader to interpret the text, and indicated which words to stress, or, possibly, to intone. Although much about these "accent" dots remains uncertain, by examining patterns of accents in BL Add. 12138, this article will shed more light on this important, but understudied field in Syriac Studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Patterns of pitch variation between words are often essential for helping to decipher a phrase's meaning. This process, called *intonation*, has been defined by linguist David Crystal as "the product of a conflation of different prosodic systems of pitch contrasts."[1] The importance of intonation did not go unnoticed in the ancient world. Over time, Syriac-speaking scribes devised various signs to guide the reader in the proper methods of scriptural recitation. Foremost among these signs were prosodic marks whose relative positions may well have indicated the proper modulation of the voice, and the connection or disconnection of words within a verse. By means of these marks, here called *accents*, readers could indicate the relationship of one word to another within a sentence, and communicate exclamations, pauses, questions, and so forth.[2]

Within the Syriac tradition, writers such as Jacob of Edessa and Bar Hebraeus attest to the importance of accents in helping the reader to elucidate the meaning of Scripture. Jacob of Edessa notes that such marks provide the reader with a certain level of "accuracy of meaning."[3] Bar Hebraeus writes that "in every language the hearer can distinguish by hearing (alone) the various meanings of one and the same phrase without the addition or omission of any nouns, verbs or particles, but simply by changes of modulation."[4]

Yet, while stressing the importance of these accents, both authors also reveal misgivings about the aptitude of scribes to correctly place or even understand these marks. Jacob accused scribes of randomly placing points as they desired.[5] Bar Hebraeus similarly complains that every scribe does what is best in his own mind.[6] Some of his thirteenth-century contemporaries, Bar Hebraeus continues, believed that the complex systems of accentuation they had inherited were simply inspired by the Holy Spirit and thus beyond the reach of human comprehension.[7]

The study of Syriac accents has been complicated as well by the variety of different accentuation schemes that developed over time. Both East- and West-Syrian Christians eventually developed their own divergent systems of accents. Over time, grammarians within each tradition added their own particular nuances and

---

[1] Crystal, *Prosodic Systems*, 6.

[2] I will label these marks "accents" here for lack of a better term. The native Syriac term sometimes used is *puḥāmā* (ܦܘܚܡܐ). See the introduction to these graphemes in Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 58–67.

[3] ܘܩܘܫܬܐ ܕܣܘܟܠܐ. Phillips, *A Letter*, ܝ.

[4] ܐܬܗܢܐ ܕܠܓܐ ܘܪܘܟܒܐ ܕܡܘܣܗ ܚܝܠܐ ܡܬܦܪܫܝܢ ܘܪܝܣ ܘܦܠܓܝܐ ܡܢ ܩܝܡܐ ܠܚܒܠ ܘܕܗ. ܐܠܐ ܚܘܦܣܟܐ ܚܟܡܘ ܘܥܡܠܐ. Phillips, *A Letter*, ܣܗ. Translation is from Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 61.

[5] Although, Jacob here has mainly diacritical points in mind. Phillips, *A Letter*, ܨ.

[6] Phillips, *A Letter*, ܣܙ.

[7] Phillips, *A Letter*, ܣܗ. Modern writers have also complained about a lack of standardization of accents in Syriac biblical manuscripts. Phillips, *A Letter*, vi; Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 25.

interpretations, often attempting to harmonize Syriac accents with Greek or Arabic systems.[8] Moreover, most of these later treatises on accents focus more on theory, while providing only a very limited number of concrete examples of accent placement. In light of this genuine diversity over time, one should perhaps be wary of imposing the explanations of later grammarians back onto earlier accent schemes.

Past studies have taken different approaches to this significant but understudied subject. In one of the more comprehensive studies of Syriac accents, Merx gathered witnesses to multiple, sometimes conflicting, systems.[9] Segal, on the other hand, limited his evidence only to accentuated biblical manuscripts and divided these witnesses by period.[10] Both approaches were helpful, providing scholars with insights into the formation and development of Syriac accents over time. However, both authors also recognized the limitations and ambiguities that resulted from working with so many manuscripts and so many different authors.

The current paper will illustrate the challenges and possibilities of approaching the study of Syriac accents through one unique ninth-century manuscript, British Library Add. MS 12138 (899 CE), an exhaustive and detailed guide to the punctuation and accentuation of the Old and New Testament Peshitta. New work on this valuable manuscript has shed more light on its text, thus allowing for increasingly comprehensive studies of patterns of accent placement across the entire Syriac Peshitta Bible. To this end, we will briefly survey previous assumptions regarding this manuscript and probe for examples of accent repetition and consistency in BL Add. 12138. This paper will then conclude with a consideration of intonation and semantics by looking at patterns of accent placement on and around a single conjunction throughout this manuscript. It will be suggested in this paper that much can be learned about how Syriac accents were practically applied by focusing specifically on an individual manuscript such as BL Add. 12138, a handbook for biblical recitation that lays claim to a tradition of accentuation linked to the teachers of reading in the East-Syrian schools.

2. BL ADD. 12138

BL Add. 12138 was written in Harran in 899 CE, and this manuscript was designed to pass on the system of accentuation, punctuation, and vowel quality found in the traditions of the East-Syrian schools.[11] The compiler of this manuscript, a certain Babai the Deacon, claims for his authority the punctuating tradition found in the "books of the *maqryānē*" (ܩܪ̈ܝܢܐ ܕܟ̈ܬܒܐ).[12] The *maqryānē* were teachers of reading in the East-Syrian schools, responsible, it appears, for preserving East-Syrian traditions

---

[8] See Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 58–150. See now, King, "Elements of the Syriac Grammatical Tradition."

[9] Merx, *Historia artis grammaticae*.

[10] Segal, *The Diacritical Point*.

[11] See Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts*, 1:101.

[12] BL Add. 12138, fols. 309v–310r.

of scriptural recitation.[13] In his *Chronicle*, Bar Hebraeus suggests that one of these *maqryānē* in the School of Nisibis named Joseph Hūzāyā was responsible for changes in the scriptural "reading" (ﻣﻨﻼﺍ) tradition of the East Syrians.[14] This is likely the same Joseph that is reported in BL Add. 12138 to have adopted the early system of nine accents.[15] Moreover, Babai, the compiler of BL Add. 12138, also claims that the traditions of recitation he is passing down began even earlier, from the time of Narsai, Abraham of Beth Rabban, and John of Beth Rabban.[16]

As a handbook for teaching biblical orthoepy, BL Add. 12138 consists mostly of individual words and clauses from the Old the New Testament Peshitta. The title makes this clear: "a book of gleanings of the *šmāhē* [ﻗﻤﺤﻪ] and *qrāyāṭa* [ﺍﺗﻨﻼ] which are in Holy Scripture."[17] The manuscript consists of "words and vocalized readings," or biblical sample texts which illustrate particular difficulties in Syriac pronunciation or accentuation.[18] Thus, BL Add. 12138 is a volume of exemplars from the Old and New Testaments, setting down the traditions of biblical recitation that had been passed down in the East-Syrian schools.

To complicate matters, BL Add. 12138 contains an additional layer of notations and accents. As a follower of the respected punctuator Rabban Ramišoʿ, Babai was concerned to pass down Ramišoʿ's observations on these books of the *maqryānē*.[19] To this end, Babai overlaid marks and accents from Ramišoʿ in red ink, in addition to the traditional annotations of the *maqryānē* in black ink. Consequently, by means of these rubricated and non-rubricated marks, Babai passed down two systems: readings from the books of the *maqryānē* and a commentary on these readings by the later punctuator Ramišoʿ.

Because this manuscript claims to represent a significant reading tradition in East-Syrian Christianity and because it is the earliest example of the so-called Syriac

---

[13] On the *maqryānē*, see Vööbus, *The Statutes of the School of Nisibis*, 51; 83; 88. Adam Becker associates the *maqryānē* with ancient grammarians. Becker, *Fear of God*, 71.

[14] See Abbeloos and Lamy, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, 3:78. By *qrāyṭā*, Bar Hebraeus might have in mind the accentuated readings of the Scriptures.

[15] BL Add. 12138, fol. 312r. For more background on this figure, see "Yawsep Hūzāyā" in *GEDSH* (ed. Brock et al.), 437–38.

[16] BL Add. 12138, fol. 310r.

[17] BL Add. 12138, fol. 1v.

[18] Babai sometimes refers to these selections as ﺍﺗﻨﻣﻪ ﺍﻗﻤﺤ ﺍﻫﺨﻤﻪ. BL Add. 12138, fols. 24r, 124v, 232v.

[19] Bar Hebraeus actually repeats, in part, one of Ramišoʿ's rules of accent use. See Phillips, *A Letter*, ﺳﻬ, and BL Add. 12138, fol. 310r. Merx suggested that Ramišoʿ was one of the students of East-Syrian Catholicos Mār Ābā (†552 CE). But Rahmani upset Merx's theory by publishing a letter (#14) by Dawid bar Pawlos (8–9th century) to a certain Bishop John. In this letter Ramišoʿ is portrayed as a West Syrian deacon at Mar Mattai monastery. Rahmani, *Studia Syriaca I*, 44–6. Although there is still ambiguity about his origins, we can be certain that the work of a punctuator named Ramišoʿ was recalled fondly by later generations of scholars.

"masoretic" tradition for the entire Bible, BL Add. 12138 has attracted the attention of many scholars. As early as 1872, William Wright wrote that this manuscript was "well deserving of a closer examination, if not of being published in full."[20] BL Add. 12138 consequently was a key piece of evidence for the groundbreaking work of J.P.P. Martin[21] and Adalbert Merx.[22] It was not long thereafter that individual biblical books in this manuscript were published by Gustav Diettrich, Theodor Weiss, and Rudolf Schmitt.[23] These publications raised awareness of the potential value of this manuscript as an early exemplar of Syriac accentuation, orthography, and vocalization.

Thanks in large part to the publicity provided by these earlier publications, some scholars have seen this manuscript as a reliable guide to how the East-Syrian Scriptures were pronounced in the ninth century.[24] A few have taken their views of this manuscript's accuracy or authority a step further. Francis Burkitt, for one, had a very high view of the reliability of BL Add. 12138.[25] Writing in 1976, he claimed that "… Add. 12138 [is] one of the most careful and accurate MSS. ever written."[26] Although others might not go so far, the question still remains whether BL Add. 12138 should be seen as a de facto authority in matters of East-Syrian pronunciation and accentuation.

Thus far, studies of only five biblical books in BL Add. 12138 have been published; that is, five out of a total of 56 books in this manuscript.[27] While these earlier reproductions and studies are indeed valuable, they focused mainly on material in specific biblical books, and they rarely looked at wider patterns of

---

[20] Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts*, 3:xviii.

[21] Martin, *Histoire de la ponctuation*, 38–9, 66–7.

[22] Merx, *Historia artis grammaticae*.

[23] Diettrich, *Die Massorah: Jesaia*; idem, "Die Massorah: Ruth;" Weiss, *Zur ostsyrischen Laut- und Akzentlehre*; and Schmitt, "Östsyrische Masora zu Exodus und Leviticus."

[24] Burkitt and Pusey and Gwilliam are just a few who have leaned upon the exemplars in BL Add. 12138 for examples of East Syriac punctuation. Burkitt, *Euphemia and the Goth*, 169; Pusey and Gwilliam, *Tetraeuangelium*, xiii–xv. Earlier scholars such as Nöldeke and Brockelmann bemoaned the fact that they were unable to gain access to this manuscript, and thus they were unable to include examples of vocalized Syriac words from BL Add. 12138, or other "masoretic" treatises in their respective publications. Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, vii–viii. Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon*, 1686.

[25] See Gwilliam, "The Punctuation of Saint John," 607.

[26] Burkitt, *New Testament Proper Names*, 403.

[27] Namely, Isaiah and Ruth (Diettrich); Genesis (Weiss); Exodus and Leviticus (Schmitt). For later studies, see Wood, *Vocalisation of the Proper Names*; idem, "A Syriac Masora;" Brovender, "כתבי יד השמהא הסוריים" ("The Syriac Shemahe manuscripts"). Brovender's study of BL Add. 12138 is one of the most comprehensive to date.

accentuation across the manuscript.[28] Moreover, very little account was taken in these studies of relationships between accents, a topic that appears to have been of importance to scribes within the tradition.[29] All told, despite several early studies of individual books in BL Add. 12138, the level of reliability and accuracy said to exist in this manuscript has often been much more assumed than critically established.

At one level, it has also been difficult to gain an accurate picture of accentuation in BL Add. 12138 because of complications involved in reproducing the rubricated text. The black and white reproductions published by Weiss and Diettrich, for example, only capture a portion of the accents present in the original manuscript. Diettrich used an innovative, complex font to reproduce the books of Isaiah and Ruth. Nonetheless, he had to leave out from the published text many of the rubricated accents importantly associated with the punctuator Rabban Ramišoʿ, readings essential to the tradition Babai was trying to convey.[30] As we will see, because of ambiguities in the rubricated system, these black and white reproductions have resulted, at times, in less than accurate portrayals of the text in BL Add. 12138.

At another level, the lack of versification in these sample texts has likewise proved a difficult obstacle for modern readers. In his classic work, *The Diacritical Point and the Accents in Syriac*, Segal relied heavily upon BL Add. 12138, which he called "the most important manuscript extant for the study of East Syriac textual criticism."[31] In his study of East-Syrian accents, however, Segal was guided in his conclusions more by a small tract included by Babai in the back of this manuscript than he was by the previous 303 folios of biblical sample texts said to have been copied from the "books of the *maqryānē*."[32] The advantage of this tract for Segal was that it is, unlike most sample texts in this manuscript, self-explanatory; it names each accent and gives two or three examples of each use. When possible, Segal compared examples in this tract to the sample texts in the body of BL Add. 12138. But given the thousands of sample texts in these first 303 folios, Segal was able to evaluate only a fraction of the available evidence. Had Segal been able to more comprehensively evaluate the system of accents in the main body of the manuscript,

---

[28] See, for example, Weiss' treatment of the *taḥtāyā da-ṭlāṯā* (ܠܬܚܬ, ܬܠܬܐ) in Genesis. Weiss, *Genesis*, 40. To his credit, Weiss does include some examples from outside Genesis, though not exhaustively.

[29] See the tract on accents provided towards the end of BL Add. 12138; namely, fol. 303v–309r.

[30] Compare Diettrich, *Die Massorah: Jesaia*, Isa 42:14 (ܡܚ ܬܚܡ) with BL Add. 12138, fol. 181v; Diettrich, *Die Massorah: Jesaia*, Isa 40:21 (ܘܠܐ ܝܐܚܕ) with BL Add. 12138, fol. 181v.

[31] Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 78.

[32] Note his assumptions about the relationship between this Tract and the main text of the manuscript. Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 79. Many are perhaps unaware that Diettrich published only about one-third of this tract. See Diettrich, *Die Massorah: Jesaia*, 98-113.

he could have drawn conclusions based more firmly on the main text copied down by Babai.[33]

    We see then, that despite several noteworthy studies on this manuscript in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, we still lack a comprehensive picture of the corpus of biblical sample texts in BL Add. 12138. Very little is yet known about larger questions of consistency in accent placement and characteristics of accentuation in this complex manuscript. How do we know that the compiler Babai passed down a relatively consistent system; a system that is somewhat, if not totally, representative of the traditions of the *maqryānê*? Or did he simply point as he desired?

3. NEW STUDY OF BL ADD. 12138

In order to make BL Add. 12138 more widely available, a new full-colour facsimile reproduction has been published, and an accompanying introduction will soon be available in a separate volume.[34] As part of this study, scriptural indices have been created to help the student identify each passage of Scripture and relevant variants. Other indices to the marginal notes in this manuscript will provide information about accents, orthography, phonology, vocalization, and exegesis. These new tools should allow the student to gain a better grasp of the various nuances of BL Add. 12138.

    One result of this work on the indices is that every biblical sample text in this manuscript has been identified and included in a database with appropriate versification. This new database makes it much easier to locate and compare the biblical examples in this manuscript. We now know that the main text of BL Add. 12138 (fols. 1v–303v) contains over 17,956 biblical sample texts, each text usually containing multiple accents. With this database it is now possible to search for and compare individual words, phrases, and even parallel passages within Babai's corpus. Moreover, because certain accents have been entered in this database, one can now also search for all instances of these accents and thus compare various patterns of accentuation across the Syriac Bible.

    The following sections of this paper will present some observations based on the data that was collected during the creation of the index and database to BL Add. 12138. This evidence suggests that we should, on the one hand, avoid blanket overgeneralizations about the accuracy of this manuscript, while on the other hand, we should feel free to acknowledge the presence of certain recurring patterns of accent placement.

---

[33] Yet, as Segal correctly speculated, this small tract is not necessarily representative of the accentuation set forth by Babai in the body of BL Add. 12138. Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 79.

[34] Loopstra, *An East Syrian Manuscript*.

4. DISCREPANCIES AND PROBLEMS

First, it is worth noting some discrepancies that came to light through this detailed study. These discrepancies show that it might be too optimistic to embrace Burkitt's view that this is "one of the most careful and accurate MSS. ever written."[35] Scribal errors and ambiguities have indeed made their way into this manuscript, just as they have made their way into most other Syriac manuscripts.

4.1 Dislocated Selections

For example, we now know that a small percentage of the sample texts in BL Add. 12138 were written by the scribe out of sequence. Such dislocations were hinted at by Jansma forty years ago, but only today, with the full indexing of BL Add. 12138, can the extent of these dislocations really be discerned.[36] It now appears that these dislocations are common to this genre of "masoretic" reader,[37] and it is understandable why these dislocations would have occurred. A tired scribe tasked with copying down lists of sample texts from biblical passages, without the appropriate context, could easily skip passages and write verses out of the correct biblical order. In BL Add. 12138, only very few of these dislocated texts have been corrected by later scribes.[38]

4.2 Erasures, Additions, and "Touch Ups"

As with many other manuscripts from antiquity, BL Add. 12138 shows signs of erasures and later additions.[39] It is at times difficult to discern which accents have been merely "touched up" in darker ink and which are new accents, added by later scribes. Close inspection reveals that now and again originally rubricated accents have been overlaid with black ink and black accents have been overlaid with red.[40] This "touching up" blurs distinctions between Ramišoʿ's accents and those of the *maqryānē* or later scribes; this is one reason why earlier black and white reproductions of this manuscript were inadequate.

4.3 Ambiguities in the Rubricated System

In addition, even when colours can be distinguished, the rubricated system used by Babai is not always clear to the modern reader. While Babai does discuss his

---

[35] Burkitt, *New Testament Proper Names*, 403.

[36] Jansma, "A Note on Dislocated Extracts."

[37] The same problems occur consistently in later West Syriac lists of biblical *šmāhē* and *qrāyāta*.

[38] E.g., see where a reading from Exod 2:23 has been placed between selections from Exod 3:6 and 3:7. BL Add. 12138, fol. 25r.

[39] See, for example, BL Add. 12138, fol. 114v, 152r, and 156r.

[40] See, for example, BL Add. 12138, fol. 191v, line 14 (Obad 1:5). An example of an originally black *mqimānā* in which the lower dot has been changed to red is in BL Add. 12138, fol. 172r, line 28 (Isa 1:6).

methodology behind the rubrics in the colophon,[41] the differences between red and black accents and their associated markings are still somewhat obscure. This is particularly true throughout the manuscript for the double-dot accent known as *mqīmānā* (محمحمد) (؛). Quite often the dot above the letter is black and the dot below is red.[42] We are left with an ambiguity. Does the single black dot above the letter, usually a *mzīʿānā* (محمحد) (؛), represent the original accent in the "books of the *maqryānē*"? Diettrich takes this position and includes here only the single *mzīʿānā* when this black accent occurs above the red one.[43] Further, does the lower red dot then infer that the *mqīmānā* itself is a later insertion by Ramišoʿ?[44] Segal suggests so.[45]

4.4 Ambiguities of Syriac Accents

Another difficulty with classifying and studying the accents in BL Add. 12138 is perhaps more obvious. Unlike Hebrew accents, Syriac accents consist of medium to large round dots. The most easily identifiable of these accents consist of two or three dots, such as the *rāhṭā* (ﻟﻮﻫﻳ), *rāhṭā d-karteh* (ﻣﻟﻳﻪﻭ ﻟﻮﻫﻳ), *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā* (ﻟﻴﻠﻴ ﻟﻴﻠﻴﻠﻴﻭ), or *mqīmānā*. But the proper identification of single-dot accents cannot always be certain. It may be for this reason that the names of these accents are often included in the margins of BL Add. 12138, helping the reader to identify what would otherwise be a fairly ambiguous accent. At the same time, practically speaking, it might not have been so necessary for the ninth-century reader of this manuscript to exactly define every accent. Although we do not know for certain, there is a possibility that any single-dot accent, above or below the line, would have in practice served much the same purpose—indicating how the voice should be appropriately raised or lowered.[46]

---

[41] BL Add. 12138, fol. 309v–310r.

[42] E.g., the *mqīmānā* occurs twice on fol. 21r (Gen 43:7 and Gen 43:11), but in both cases the dot above is black and the dot below is red. BL Add. 12138, fol. 21r, line 2 (:ﺍﺣﺪ) and line 9 (:ﻧﻳﻮﻟ). For another example of a word repeated twice in the same folio with the same questionable *mqīmānā*, see BL Add. 12138, fol. 140r, lines 5 and 6 (:ﻩﻮﺑ).

[43] For example, see treatment of ﻟﻮﺣﻠﻳ, (Isa 1:6) in Diettrich, *Die Massorah: Jesaia*, 1, line 7. The rubricated lower dot present in the manuscript is never indicated in his publication. BL Add. 12138, fol. 172r, line 28.

[44] But some of these questionable sample texts appear in the aforementioned tract in the appendix with two black dots, indicating *mqīmānā*. See, for example, the questionable accent in Gen 43:7 on BL Add. 12138, fol. 21r, compared to BL Add. 12138, fol. 303v, line 4.

[45] Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 115.

[46] Segal puts this more succinctly. "The only method of classification which can safely be adopted is that which met the eyes of the reciter—that is, according to the form and position of the points." Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 61.

5. LEVELS OF CONSISTENCY

Although there is evidence for erasures, additions, and other ambiguities in BL Add. 12138, there are reasons to believe that many accents were placed in the manuscript with some degree of care, consistency, and possibly even understanding. In 1910, the *Church Quarterly Review* suggested that "… [Add. 12138] is fuller and more accurate than any surviving Syriac Jacobite copy [of the Syriac masora]."[47] This is verifiably true in terms of consistency of accent placement. The compiler of BL Add. 12138 demonstrates a concern for accents that one does not encounter in the many West-Syrian "masoretic" manuscripts.

Yet, how should one begin to evaluate degrees of regularity in accent placement in this manuscript? Perhaps one can begin by surveying instances of repeated phrases or easily recognizable accents in this biblical corpus. After all, the aforementioned database allows us now to perform these types of searches. With these searches, one should be able to ascertain whether or not accent placement appears to be fairly systematic and logical. For example, are accents denoting exclamations or pauses regularly placed in an appropriate context?

5.1 Comparison of Parallel Passages

One can begin to evaluate the level of uniformity of accentuation in BL Add. 12138 by searching this manuscript for repeated phrases. For a basic example, take Jesus' "Amen, Amen" statements in the Gospel of John. When we compare each of these phrases in the book of John, we find that each pattern of accentuation is identical, although the passages are often separated in the manuscript by several folios.[48] Each phrase includes a *mziʿānā* and *reṯmā* (ܐܡܝܢ), ending with *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā* (ܐ). We know from other contexts that passages with this accent in BL Add. 12138 quite regularly convey a sense of exclamation, urgency, or excitement.[49]

Jn 1:51 (fol. 257v, line 30) ܐܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ· ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ

Jn 3:3 (fol. 258r, line 15) ܐܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ· ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ

Jn 13:16 (fol. 263r, line 4) ܐܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ· ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ

Yet, if we expand our search outside of John, we also find the same accentuation pattern in Gospel passages with only one "Amen." Thus this *mziʿānā - reṯmā - taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā* pattern is repeated consistently across biblical books.

---

[47] See Headlam, review of O'Leary, 220–21.

[48] Of these phrases, only Jn 1:51, Jn 3:3, and Jn 13:16 are included in BL Add. 12138.

[49] But Bar Hebraeus much later conveys a certain sense of the sound behind the Eastern accent *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā* as "a mournful sound, which is either a supplication or lamentation." Translation from Phillips, *A Letter*, 49.

Mt 5:26 ܘܐܡܝܢ · ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ (fol. 232r, line 25)

Mt 26:34 ܐܡܝܢ · ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ (fol. 240v, line 21)

Lk 23:43 ܐܡܝܢ · ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟܘܢ (fol. 256v, line 16)

As a next step, we can remove the "Amen" and observe the accentuation on the rest of the phrase, ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ, throughout this manuscript.[50] We soon discover that without the emphatic "Amen," the *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā* is rarely included at the end of the phrase. It is, however, included when context demands it, such as an exclamatory statement or a pronouncement, as in Jn 16:7.

　　As can be seen from the examples above, a high degree of correlation in accent placement exists between phrases that are paralleled between Gospels. For example, the Syriac ܢܣܒ ܒܐܦܐ, "hypocrites," occurs four times in BL Add. 12138. Two of these passages, Mt 7:5 and Lk 6:42, are Gospel parallels. It is not, therefore, surprising that the accentuation for both passages is identical: *mnaḥḥtā* (ܡܢܚܬܐ) (؛) and *taḥtāyā* (ܬܚܬܝܐ) (؛).

　　(Please note that dashes in the following Syriac texts indicate portions of the verse which were omitted from the sample texts in BL Add. 12138.)

Mt 7:5 - ܢܣܒ ܒܐܦܐ؛ (fol. 234r, line 23)
Hypocrite, (first remove the beam from your eye …)

Lk 6:42 - ܢܣܒ ܒܐܦܐ؛ (fol. 250r, line 4)
Hypocrite, (first remove the beam from your eye …)

This phrase, ܢܣܒ ܒܐܦܐ, is also repeated in Lk 13:15 and Acts 10:34, but the accentuation in these passages is different. These verses are not Gospel parallels, so the context has changed, and with it the accents. The Luke 13 passage includes two accents above the line, followed by a *zawgā* (ܙܘܓܐ).

Lk 13:15 - ܢܣܒ ܒܐܦܐ؛ ܠܘ ܚܕ ܚܕ ܡܢܟܘܢ· ܒܫܒܬܐ؛ - (fol. 253r, line 19)
(And he said to him), Hypocrites, does not each one of you on the Sabbath (unfetter his ox or his donkey …)?

On the other hand, there are no accents in the passage in Acts, very likely because "hypocrite" here is not a direct address.

Acts 10:34 - ܫܪܝܪܐܝܬ ܡܣܬܟܠ ܐܢܐ؛ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܢܣܒ ܒܐܦܐ. (fol. 269v, line 18)
In truth, I understand that God is not hypocritical …

---

　　[50] Exod 6:29; Num 22:20; Ezek 3:10, 12:28, Mt 5:22, 5:34, 10:27, 11:9, 11:22, 12:31, 16:18, 26:34; Mk 9:13; Lk 7:9, 7:47, 9:27, 12:5, 17:34, 22:34; Jn 13:19, 14:26, 16:7; 1 Cor 6:5; 2 Cor 13:2; Gal 5:2.

Taken at face value, these and similar parallels seem to hint at a basic level of consistency in accent placement, while allowing for variations when the context necessitates.

5.2 Accent Use

We still find other patterns when we search the text of BL Add. 12138 for all instances of accents with two dots or more. As noted earlier, these complex accents are more easily identifiable than single-dot accents and can thus provide better evidence of possible repetition or consistency in this manuscript. When each of these accents is identified and examined in context, it is possible to note a certain degree of regularity.

For example, we often find the accent *rāhṭā* in its capacity as a marker of address, often in conjunction with other single-dot accents such as the *mzīʿānā* or *pāqūḏā* (ﬞ). These patterns are fairly consistent. The *rāhṭā d-p̄āseq* (ﬞ, ﬞ), for example, occurs in passages such as in Jesus' command to his mother in Jn 2:4 or Jesus' command to Peter in Mt 16:23.

Jn 2:4 - ﬞ. ﬞ - (fol. 258r, line 1)
What [is that] to me and to you woman?

Mt 16:23 - ﬞ. ﬞ - (fol. 237r, line 30)
Get you behind me Satan!

As in these examples, the *rāhṭā d-p̄āseq* is most often placed on the object in the clause. Overall, in BL Add. 12138, this accent does not appear in unexpected locations, say over the imperative verb or the interrogative particle. In those cases, distinct single-dot accents (namely, *mzīʿānā* or *pāqūḏà*) are often provided.

Similar consistencies occur with other complex accents such as the *zawgā ʿesyānā* (ﬞ), the *mqīmānā,* and the *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṭlāṭā*. Because it is not possible to list every occurrence of these accents, a few examples will suffice.

It is worth noting, for example, that the compiler has been careful to include what appears to be a *zawgā ʿesyānā* in the final verse of many books of the Bible. This is particularly true for the New Testament, where a *zawgā ʿesyānā* has been placed in the last verse of every book except for Mark, John, and Acts. We don't know for certain, but in these contexts, the *zawgā ʿesyānā* may have been a signal for the reader to raise his or her voice, before gradually lowering the intonation upon completion of the book. This pattern is present on the last verse of all of the Pauline Epistles where the *zawgā ʿesyānā* has often been placed over specific words: the final ﬞ "Messiah," ﬞ "Holy Spirit," or often ﬞ "grace."[51] This consistency in accent placement is striking, and such evidence helps us to further understand how

---

[51] So, BL Add. 12138, fols. 283v, 288r, 291r, 292v, 293v, 294v, 295v, 296r, 296v, 297v, 298v, 299v, 303v.

accents such as *zawgā ʿesyānā* would have functioned in the ninth-century East-Syrian churches.

Other examples of regularity in accent use can be found in markers of address. It is noticeable that words such as ܒܢܝ "my sons," ܐܒܝ "my father," ܡܪܝ "my Lord," or ܐܚܝ "my brothers" are often paired with accents such as *zawgā ʿelāyā*, *rāḥṭā d-ḵārtēh*, or *mšalānā* (ܡܫܠܢܐ). At no point in BL Add. 12138 does the compiler confuse these markers of address with construct forms, such as [ܢܘܚ] ܒܢܝ *sons of Noah* (Gen 10:1). At times, multiple accents have been placed on these single words, possibly hinting at the varieties of interpretations, pauses, or modulations of the voice the reader would need to convey. For example, ܡܪܝ. *my Lord* in Jn 11:39 contains accents *pāqūḏā* (denoting exclamation), *mnaḥḥtā* (denoting address), and a *mqīmānā*.[52] Perhaps these multiple accents were attempts to convey to the listener Martha's appeal that Jesus should be wary of Lazarus' stench after four days in the tomb!

Other more localized variations also emerge when one surveys these markers of address. In James 5, for example, the biblical text repeats ܐܚܝ "brothers" several times.[53] But in what is a more nuanced accentuation than is found in printed editions of the Peshitta, the text in BL Add. 12138 varies the accentuation after each address. The overall effect is to frame the first and the last repetition of ܐܚܝ with *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā*, while varying the other repetitions with *rāḥṭā d-ḵārtēh* and *zawgā*.

Jas 5:7–12 (fol. 277r, lines 12–16)

5:7 - ܐܚܝ܇ ܗܟܝܠ ܐܓܪܘ

You then my brothers …

5:9 - ܠܐ ܬܬܢܚܘܢ ܚܕ ܥܠ ܚܕ ܐܚܝ܇ ܕܠܐ ܬܬܕܝܢܘܢ

Do not grumble against each other, my brothers, so you will not be judged …

5:10 - ܘܕܡܘܬܐ ܠܢܒܝܐ ܣܒܘ ܠܟܘܢ ܐܚܝ܇

As an example take the prophets, my brothers …

5:12 - ܩܕܡ ܟܠ ܡܕܡ ܕܝܢ ܐܚܝ܇

But before everything, my brothers …

Was the compiler intentional in framing this series of addresses between two *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā*? Although we will never know the intentionality of this accentuation scheme, such patterns certainly add variety and a level of expressiveness to the biblical reading that is not easily conveyed in modern printed editions that lack many of these antique accents.

---

[52] BL Add. 12138, fol. 262r, line 16. Although here Babai has placed a line above the *pāqoḏā*, indicating that its pronunciation is optional according to Ramišoʿ's commentary.

[53] Similar care in expressing these markers of address can be seen in 1 Jn 2:1, 2:18, 3:7 (fols. 278v–179r); Gal 4:19 (fol. 272r).

The above examples have been selected to illustrate the repetition of complex accents and possible patterns of accentuation in BL Add. 12138. Although much remains to be known about how these complex accents functioned, certain patterns of use can already be noted. One hopes that more systematic studies of these and other accents can lead to a much more nuanced understanding of Syriac accentuation, thus fleshing out the work already begun by Segal and others.

5.3 The Poetic and Parallelism

There are hints that the compiler has used accents in repetitive ways to communicate parallelisms in particular sections of Scripture. Some hints of this occur in passages that scholars have already recognized as poetic. In these texts, the compiler seems to place accents in a way that intentionally highlights natural parallelisms in the Scriptures. It might be suggested that some of these sample texts were selected and placed within this manuscript to help the reader better appreciate the parallelism or the poetic dimensions of these biblical passages in his or her reading.

A good example is Mt 11:17, recognized by W.D. Davies as a "characteristically Matthean" parallelism, and a passage where the Greek, Old Syriac, and Peshitta all retain word plays.[54]

Mt 11:17 (fol. 235v, lines 5-6)

ܙܡܪܢ݀ ܠܟܘܢ. ܘܠܐ ܪܩܕܬܘܢ.
ܐܠܝܢ݀ ܠܟܘܢ. ܘܠܐ ܐܪܩܕܬܘܢ.

We played for you, but you did not dance.
We wailed for you, but you did not lament.

The pattern of accent placement here certainly corresponds to the parallelism in the biblical text. These two parallel phrases are separated by a complete stop, a *pāsūqā* (ܦܣܘܩܐ). But the accents in each line reflect each other. The *mziʿānā* on the first word is followed by the *sāmkā* (ܣܡܟܐ) (below the line) on the ܠܟܘܢ, which in turn led to the high accent above the ܠܐ, before descending again to the final *pāsūqā*.

As noted, the accent patterns on this and many similar passages possibly served to highlight the parallelism in the biblical text. Other examples can be found throughout the manuscript. In some cases, accents seem to indicate repetitive rhythmic variations during the reading of long lists of names. This can be seen in the list of tribes in Numbers 13.[55] Note the constant variation between the *mziʿānā*

---

[54] Davies and Allison, *Saint Matthew*, 2:262.

[55] Also note accentuation in the long lists of names in Numbers 33 and 34. BL Add. 12138, fols. 59v–60v.

above ܡܛܠ and the *sāmkā* below the name of the following tribe, followed by a *pāsuqā*. It is also worth noting that entire biblical verses are included in these cases, a rare occurrence in this manuscript.

Num 13:4–15 (fol. 52r, lines 4–15)

4: ܘܗܘܐ ܗܢ ܢܒܘܟܘܪ . ܠܡܛܐ ܘܪܘܒܝܠ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ -

5: ܣܦܛ ܗܢ ܚܩܠܝ . ܘܠܫܡܥܘܢ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

6: ܝܦܢܐ ܗܢ ܟܠܒ . ܠܕܗ ܘܠܝܗܘܕܐ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

7: ܝܘܣܦ ܗܢ ܠܐܝܓܐ . ܝܓܐܠ ܕܢܣܬܐ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

8: ܗܘܫܥ ܗܢ ܒܪܢܘܢ . ܡܢ ܐܦܪܝܡ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

9: ܦܠܛܝ ܗܢ ܪܦܘ . ܠܒܢܝܡܝܢ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

10: ܓܘܪܝܐܠ ܗܢ ܣܘܕܝ . ܠܙܒܘܠܘܢ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

11: ܣܘܣܝ ܗܢ ܓܕܝ . ܠܡܢܫܐ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ ܠܝܘܣܦ . ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

12: ܓܡܠܝ ܗܢ ܥܡܝܐܠ . ܠܕܢ . ܘܝ ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

13: ܡܝܟܐܝܠ ܗܢ ܣܬܘܪ . ܠܐܫܝܪ . ܘܐܡܢ ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

14: ܘܦܣܝ ܗܢ ܢܚܒܝ . ܠܢܦܬܠܝ . ܘܢܩܒܝ ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

15: ܡܟܝܪ ܗܢ ܓܐܘܐܠ . ܠܓܕ . ܘܝܘܝ ܡܛܠ ܗܢ

In every verse in this list, the *mzīʿānā* above ܡܛܠ is followed by the *sāmkā* below the name of the tribe. The one exception is verse 11, where ܡܛܠ ܘܝܘܣܦ comes before the ܡܢ, in which case a *mzīʿānā* was placed above the name of the tribe "Joseph."

Similar patterns also extend to passages where parallel accent placement would have highlighted or "framed" portions the narrative for the reader. One of the best examples of this is in Genesis 18, when Abraham argues with God about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Notice that the compiler has included in BL Add. 12138 only those portions of the biblical passage where Abraham asks questions of God; the Almighty's answer and substantial portions of the narrative have been left out. Each question in this dialogue incorporates the multi-dot *mšalānā*, which denotes emphasis in interrogative sentences.

Gen 18:29–32 (fol. 8v, lines 4–9)

29: - ܘ̇ܐܢ ܡܫܬܟܚܝܢ ܬܡܢ ܐܪܒܥܝܢ.-

and if only forty are found there …

30: - ܘ̇ܐܢ ܡܫܬܟܚܝܢ ܬܡܢ ܬܠܬܝܢ.-

and if only thirty can be found there …

31: - ܘ̇ܐܢ ܡܫܬܟܚܝܢ ܬܡܢ ܥܣܪܝܢ.-

and if only twenty can be found there …

‫- ‫ہا‬ محھ۔ادمنی لامح جھھزا.‬ :32

and if only ten can be found there …

Unfortunately, despite the evident patterns of accent variation in these and other passages of Scripture, we still lack access to the oral traditions that would help us better understand these patterns.

The origin of these Syriac accent signs is still debated and remains uncertain. Both Duval and Merx suggested that these marks were originally borrowed from Greek signs, and later Syriac sources certainly make claims to this Greek pedigree.[56] However, it has also been suggested that similar marks derive from traditional cheironomic signs (imitations of traditional hand signals) which were "inherited from ancient Aramaic civilization, where an exact style of formal reading must have been highly developed …"[57] Yet, for the purposes of interpreting these accents in BL Add. 12138, it is important to grasp how East-Syrian readers of the ninth century would have likely understood these marks.

Earlier studies generally agree that East-Syrian accents generally fell into two categories by the ninth century: those that mark divisions or pauses in a sentence, and those that help the reader to elucidate the sense of the text.[58] Perhaps preserving a basic memory of these functions, later Syriac grammarians would connect accents with the modulation of the voice, and this modulation to the meaning of the scriptural passages.[59] So, although we lack conclusive evidence, it seems reasonable to assume that the relative positions of these accents, above or below the line, might have indicated to the reader a heightened or lowered intonation.

In an article written in 1919, the musicologist Egon Wellesz suggests that East-Syrian accents present in Sogdian lectionaries at Turfan indicate the raising or lowering of the voice in liturgical chant.[60] Thus Wellesz connects the raised point with the *oxeia* used in Byzantine neumes to indicate that the voice should rise to a higher pitch. Likewise, he connects the lower points with the *bareiai* indicating a lower pitch. He illustrates his interpretation in the following example taken from a Sogdian lectionary. [61]

'aṭ dês dâraṭ vidê sârbây. 'aṭ ši par dast qaṯâraṭ˙ qū-bây dâreṭ-sâ.

---

[56] Duval, *Traité de grammaire syriaque*, 137–39; Merx, *Historia artis grammaticae*, 62. See, for example, the claims made for Joseph Hūzāyā in BL Add. 12138, fol. 312r.

[57] Levin, "Traditional Chironomy," 68. See Gerson-Kiwi, "Cheironomy."

[58] Segal summarizes the history of the study of these accents. Segal, *The Diacritical Point*, 60–61.

[59] Phillips, *A Letter*, ܩ.

[60] Wellesz, "Miscellanea."

[61] See specifically, Wellesz, "Miscellanea," 510–11.

> und bau-te dort einen Turm, und ihn in die Hand gab-et den Gartnern

Overall, however, without access to more evidence, we have no way of firmly comprehending what types of tonality or musicality may have been conveyed through these accents. So, while we can recognize certain patterns of accentuation in BL Add. 12138, including possible changes in intonation or major and minor pauses, our ability to interpret possible musical or ekphonetic associations is quite limited.

6. COMPARISON WITH OTHER EAST-SYRIAN MANUSCRIPTS

BL Add. 12138 is without a doubt unique, given its ninth-century origins and its claim to the punctuating traditions of the books of the *maqryānē* and of Ramišoʿ. However, there is another later East-Syrian manuscript that lays claim to a somewhat similar pedigree.

6.1 Mingana syr. 148

Mingana syr. 148 is dated to 1613 CE. Like BL Add. 12138, Mingana syr. 148 contains a copiously vocalized and accentuated text. But unlike BL Add. 12138, this Mingana manuscript contains the entire text of the New Testament, not just sample texts, and no readings from the Old Testament. Moreover, the compiler of Mingana syr. 148 also claims to present a punctuating tradition going back to the East-Syrian school tradition. In his introduction, the anonymous scribe explains that he is setting down the "pointing of accents" (ܦܘܬܚܐ ܕܫܡܗܐ) from the "book of the *maqryānē* of the schools of Nisibis" (ܟܬܒܐ ܕܡܩܪܝܢܐ ܘܐܤܟܘܠܐ ܕܢܨܝܒܝܢ) and other schools.[62] Like BL Add. 12138, marginal notes in the manuscript indicate the particularities of one school or the other. In the colophon, the scribe claims to have accessed this material through a book "corrected" by the tenth-century monastic Rabban Joseph Būsnāyā.[63] Although many marks used for notation are identical between manuscripts, the compiler of Mingana syr. 148 includes several later marks not included in BL Add. 12138.

In 1935, Mingana suggested that Weiss apply the expertise he had gained from BL Add. 12138 to Mingana syr. 148; this suggestion was never taken up.[64] New work on the sample texts in BL Add. 12138 has now greatly facilitated comparisons

---

[62] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 3r "Book" (ܟܬܒܐ) is always singular in this introduction.
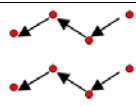
[63] ܗܘ ܡܢ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܢܨܝ ܕܟܒܗ ܕܚܤܝܐ ܘܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܚܘܕܬܐ ܐܘܪܐ ܡܢ ܟܚܘܢ. Mingana syr. 148, fol. 332. A monk in the Monastery of Abraham; it is thought that Joseph Busnaya died in the year 979 CE. Thus, he can be dated to within a century of BL Add. 12138. See Brock, "Yawsep Būsnāyā."

[64] "While the Old Testament Massorah is represented by a unique MS. in the British Museum, the New Testament Massorah is represented by a unique MS. in my collection (Mingana syr. 148), and it is to be hoped that Weiss, who has the diligence to investigate such a complicated subject as the Massorah of the Old Testament, will someday do the same for the less complicated text of the New Testament." Mingana, review of Weiss, 188.

with this Mingana manuscript. In fact, study of these two manuscripts reveals a notable, though not perfect, regularity in accent placement. Despite certain differences, the commonality one finds between sections of these manuscripts is remarkable given the 700 years of separation between them.

Some examples might help. When one compares the accentuation in the short book of Philemon between BL Add. 12138 and Mingana syr. 148, one finds that the accents differ in only eleven of fifty-seven instances, and most of these differences involve single-dot accents.[65] This ratio might be a good estimate for the general divergence one regularly finds between these two manuscripts.

Sometimes the accentuation is identical. See, for example, Mt 11:17, the passage mentioned above.

BL Add. 12138, fol. 235v	Mt 11:17	Mingana syr 148, fol. 25r
ܪܩܕܬܘܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܘܠܐ ܘܐܒܠܬܘܢ.		ܪܩܕܬܘܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܘܠܐ ܘܐܒܠܬܘܢ.
ܘܐܠܝܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܘܠܐ ܐܘܒܠܬܘܢ.		ܘܐܠܝܢ ܠܟܘܢ ܘܠܐ ܐܘܒܠܬܘܢ.

We also find that accentuation is nearly identical between these two manuscripts for all the examples taken from the New Testament in section five of this paper.[66]

It is not likely that the compiler of Mingana syr. 148 had direct access to BL Add. 12138, given the Mingana manuscript's late date. Nevertheless, this later manuscript and Babai's manuscript do share certain patterns of accent placement. Perhaps the types of continuity we see between these manuscripts can vouch for the tradition that was being passed down, whether or not that tradition was actually understood at the time. Doubtless, however, by the time Mingana syr. 148 was written in 1613, this tradition of accentuation was no longer in living memory.

6.2 East-Syrian Biblical Manuscripts

Although they lack allusions to the *maqryānē* and other features present in so-called "masoretic" handbooks discussed above, many non-"masoretic" East-Syrian biblical manuscripts also reflect similar patterns of accent placement as those found in BL Add. 12138 and Mingana syr. 148.

For instance, biblical manuscripts will often place the *pāqūḏā* over lists of names, often in combination with the *pāsūqā*, just as we find in BL Add. 12138. The accentuation of the list of proper names in Acts 6:5–8 in BL Add. 12138, for example, is exactly reflected in BL Add. 7157, dated to 767–768 CE from the Monastery of Beth Qūqā.[67] Here the *pāqūḏā* has been faithfully placed over the most

---

[65] Mingana syr. 148, fols. 313v and 314r BL Add. 12138, fol. 299v.

[66] The only real exception is that Lk 13:15 has an accent (*mnaḥḥtā*) under the ܒܥܒ instead of above it.

[67] For the purpose of illustration, I have intentionally chosen examples from non-masoretic manuscripts which are readily available for the reader to examine in Hatch's *Album*. See Hatch, *An Album*, plate CLXIII.

of the proper names, separated twice by a *pāsūqā* and once by a *sāmkā* (in the second line).

BL Add. 12138, fol. 235v, 25–27	Acts 6:5	BL Add. 7157, fol. 105r, 15–22b
ܘܠܦܢܠܩܘܗ ܘܠܩܙܡܙܘܗܣ.		ܘܠܦܢܠܩܘܗ ܘܠܩܙܡܙܘܗܣ.
ܘܠܢܦܡܘܙ ܘܠܗܡܥܘ. ܘܠܦܙܡܡܐ.		ܘܠܢܦܡܘܙ ܘܠܗܡܥܘ. ܘܠܦܙܡܡܐ.
ܘܠܢܦܠܗܘܗ ܝܗܘܙܐ ܐܢܗܘܕܡܐ.		ܘܠܢܦܠܗܘܗ ܝܗܘܙܐ ܐܢܗܘܕܡܐ.

Comparisons with nearly contemporaneous East-Syrian lectionaries produce similar results. In the following example from BL Add. 14492, dated to 861–862 CE, the accentuation in Deut 14:19 is identical to BL Add. 12138, with the exception of the extra accent above ܟܠ in the masoretic manuscript. [68]

BL Add. 12138, fol. 66v, 7–8	Deut 14:19	Add MS 14492, fol. 88
ܘܦܠܗ ܡܟܐ. ܘܦܢܣܟܐ.		ܘܕܠܗ ܡܟܐ. ܘܦܢܣܟܐ.
ܠܘܐ ܠܗܡܠ ܗܘ ܠܟܡ.		ܠܘܐ ܠܗܡܠ ܗܘ ܠܟܡ.

Moreover, many of the accentuation patterns present in BL Add. 12138 are also nearly identical to East-Syrian manuscripts found as far afield as the Turfan oasis along the ancient Silk Road, nearly 2,500 miles from Harran. The following example is taken from Rom 5:18 in the lectionary manuscript SyrHT 49, found in the library at Turfan (located today in eastern China).[69] Again, the accentuation is nearly identical, with both manuscripts including the *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā*, the marker of exclamation. Only a *reṭmā* has been omitted from above the ܠܟܕܗܘ in SyrHT 49.

BL Add. 12138, fol. 280v, 3–5	Rom 5:18	SyrHT 49v, 14–15
ܐܚܪܠ ܗܘܨܠܐ. ܘܥܠܗܠܐ ܗܩܗܕܐܠ ܘܣܒ.		ܐܚܪܠ ܗܘܨܠܐ. ܘܥܠܗܠܐ ܗܩܗܕܐܠ ܘܣܒ.
ܗܘܐ ܣܘܡܚܐ. ܠܟܕܗܘ ܚܢܬ ܐܢܗܐ.		ܗܘܐ ܣܘܡܚܐ. ܠܟܕܗܘ ܚܣܣܐ.

In short, comparisons with other non-masoretic manuscripts suggest that the placement of accents in BL Add. 12138, far from being an anomaly, reflects many common patterns of accentuation that were faithfully passed down in many East-Syrian manuscripts over the centuries.

---

[68] Hatch, *An Album*, plate CLXIV.

[69] SyrHT 48 and 49 are thought to reflect the cycle of readings from the Epistles during the Lenten season. Dickens, "The Importance of the Psalter," 365n42. For the text of the manuscript, see the International Dunhuang Project website: http://idp.bl.uk/.

7. LEXICOGRAPHICAL APPLICATION: EXAMPLE ܕܝܢ

Assuming then that Babai did not punctuate arbitrarily at his whim, and that he does reflect an underlying tradition, we might conclude by bringing our discussion back to the potential value of this corpus for our study of Syriac language and intonation. If we move forward with the assumption that many accents above or below the line indicate raised or lowered intonation, the self-contained corpus of sample texts from the entire Syriac Bible in BL Add. 12138 offers unique opportunities to explore how patterns of pitch variation may have functioned between Syriac words (or "tone units"), thus helping us to note the possible ways a word's meaning could have been inferred through its reading. Syriac conjunctions might provide a useful starting point for two reasons: conjunctions often take multiple meanings and they are often accentuated in this manuscript.

Take the conjunction ܕܝܢ. This conjunction occurs in a variety of contexts and thus it can be translated in a variety of ways, most often as "but," "but yet," "however," "nevertheless."[70] Using the aforementioned database of biblical sample texts, we can now identify all occurrences of ܕܝܢ in BL Add. 12138; as it turns out, ܕܝܢ occurs a total of fifty-three times. Having identified every repetition of ܕܝܢ, it is possible to discern certain patterns of accent placement, patterns that tend to correspond, not surprisingly, to different ways this word is expressed in the scriptural context.

A similar search of ܕܝܢ in the Mingana syr. 148 manuscript reveals nearly identical accentuation on or around this conjunction. As a point of comparison, each New Testament example that follows will include the relevant Mingana syr. 148 folio in the footnotes.

7.1 *Mzīʿānā* on ܘܝ

When these fifty-three examples are examined, one pattern becomes immediately clear. An accent is usually placed above or below the ܕܝܢ, except when ܕܝܢ is followed by ܘܝ. In these cases, the ܘܝ almost always receives the accent from ܕܝܢ. There is an exception which will be discussed below.

Lev 27:26 - ܩܕܡܬܐ. ܡܢ ܒܥܝܪܐ. ܘܠܡܚܣܐ. ܕܡܬܩܕܡ ܘܕܝܢ ܕܝܢ (fol. 47v, line 20)

Nevertheless, the firstborn which is offered as first fruits to the Lord from among the animals …

Lev 27:28 - ܠܗ: ܘܐܝܬ ܡܕܡ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܠܡܪܝܐ. ܕܩܕܡ ܪܒܐ ܘܡܣܠܡ. ܡܕܡ ܟܠ ܕܝܢ ܕܝܢ (fol. 47v, line 23)

Nevertheless, every devoted object which a man devotes to the Lord from everything he has …

Num 23:13 - ܠܟܠܗ. ܠܐ ܘܬܚܙܐ ܣܘܦܗ. ܣܘܦܗ. ܕܝܢ ܕܝܢ - (fol. 56r, line 13)

… nevertheless you will see its end and you will not see all of it …

---

[70] *CSD*, ܕܝܢ.

(fol. ܘܠܐ ܦܩܕܬܗ ܘܢܐܡܪ؛ - ܡܠܬܐ ܠܡܡܠܠܘ؛ ܢܒܝܐ ܘܒܫܡܝ؛ ܒܚܡܐ؛ ܒܪܡ ܢܒܝܐ (Deut 18:20
67v, line 31)

Nevertheless the prophet who will speak boldly a word in my name which I have not ordered him to speak …

(fol. 82r, line 29) ܒܪܡ ܢܒܝܐ؛ ܐܢ ܡܛܡܐܐ ܗܝ؛ ܐܪܥܐ ܘܡܢܬܝܬܟܘܢ؛ - (Josh 22:19

Nevertheless, if the land of your inheritance is profane …

Although none of the above examples are from the New Testament, passages with ܒܪܡ ܢܒܝܐ in Mingana syr. 148 follow the same pattern.[71] It is worth noting that a similar pattern often occurs when ܢܒܝܐ follows other conjunctions in BL Add. 12138.

7.2 *Mzīʿānā, Sāmkā,* and Points above the Line: Decreasing Then Rising Intonation?

Although in the vast majority of examples in BL Add. 12138 the accent occurs above the ܢܒܝܐ and not on ܒܪܡ, this seems to change when the compiler wishes to stress the word following ܢܒܝܐ. In these cases, the accent (*mzīʿānā*) remains on ܒܪܡ, but an accent below the line (*sāmkā*) is placed below the ܢܒܝܐ, allowing the following word to receive an accent above the line. Assuming that the dot below the line indicated a lower intonation, the overall effect is to lower the voice to the ܢܒܝܐ so the intonation can then be raised to emphasize the next word. So, in Sir 48:11 the ܒܪܡ retains the *mzīʿānā*, a *sāmkā* follows below the ܢܒܝܐ, followed by another accent above the ܠܐ.

(fol. 159v, line 31) ܒܪܡ؛ ܢܒܝܐ܂ ܠܐ ܢܡܘܬ؛ ܐܠܐ ܢܚܐ ܢܚܐ܂ - (Sir 48:11

Yet we shall not die, but live …

As the above example illustrates, this pattern is quite frequent with the negative particle ܠܐ, as if to stress the negative marker. But another, slightly different, example occurs in the book of Numbers.

(fol. 52v, line 15) ܒܪܡ؛ ܢܒܝܐ܂ ܚܝ ܐܢܐ܂ - (Num 14:21

Yet, as I live …

In the case of the above passage, the accent may have been lowered, then raised to emphasize that it is indeed the Lord who "lives."

This same pattern also occurs in passages when ܢܒܝܐ does not follow ܒܪܡ. Similarly, the *sāmkā* may serve to help provide stress on the next word. Once again, we see that this pattern is frequently used with the following negative particle ܠܐ.

---

[71] E.g., Acts 9:31, 11:29, 24:14; 1 Cor 11:11.

1 Kgs 8:19   ‏حده‌ ܐܢܬ. ܠܐ ܬܒܢܐ ܒܝܬܐ ܠܫܡܝ.‏ (fol. 112r, line 13)[72]

Yet, you will not build the house for my name …

7.3 *Sāmkā* and Points above the Line: Rising Intonation?

Similarly, when a *sāmkā* is placed below the last consonant of ‏ܒܪܡ‏, one almost always observes a mark above the line (and possibly rising intonation) after the conjunction. The word receiving the raised accent will often have a strong stress: "Woe!," "No!," or "Behold!" This is similar to the examples above from Sirach and 1 Kings. In these types of accent patterns, the ‏ܒܪܡ‏ clause frequently communicates contrast, disjunction, reversal, or denial. There are many examples of this type of accentuation, but a few illustrations should suffice.

Lk 6:24   ‏ܒܪܡ. ܘܝ ܠܟܘܢ. ܥܬܝܪܐ‏ (fol. 249v, line 22)[73]

But woe to you the rich …

Mt 26:39   ‏ܐܒܝ. ܐܢ ܡܨܛܒܝܐ. ܢܥܒܪܢܝ. ܟܣܐ ܗܢܐ. ܒܪܡ. ܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܢܐ ܨܒܐ ܐܢܐ ܐܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܢܬ ܘܐܢܬ‏ (fol. 240v, line 26)[74]

My Father, if possible, remove this cup from me; yet not as I desire, but as you [desire].

Lk 22:42   ‏ܐܒܐ. ܐܢ ܨܒܐ ܐܢܬ. ܢܥܒܪܢܝ. ܟܣܐ ܗܢܐ. ܒܪܡ. ܠܐ ܨܒܝܢܝ. ܐܠܐ ܕܝܠܟ ܢܗܘܐ.‏ (fol. 256r, line 7)[75]

… Father, if you desire, remove this cup from me; yet not my desire, but yours be done.

Gen 18:15   ‏ܠܐ. ܒܪܡ. ܓܚܟܬܝ‏ (fol. 8r, line 28)

… No, but you laughed.

Gen 28:19   ‏ܒܪܡ. ܠܘܙ ܫܡܗ ܗܘܐ ܕܐܬܪܐ ܗܘ ܡܢ ܩܕܝܡ‏ (fol. 13r, line 10)

(He named that place Bethel), but, the name of that place was previously Luz.

Lk 22:21   ‏ܒܪܡ. ܗܐ ܐܝܕܗ ܘܡܫܠܡܢܝ ܥܠ ܦܬܘܪܐ‏ (fol. 255v, line 26)

But behold, the hand of the one betraying me is upon the table.

---

[72] Another example is 1 Sam 8:9.

[73] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 89r, line 23b.

[74] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 49r, line 6a.

[75] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 118r, line 16a.

This last example is of particular interest because there is no accent above the ܘܗ as one would expect given the patterns above. Here is a possible discrepancy in BL Add. 12138. Perhaps the accent was omitted by mistake? In this situation, a look at the Mingana syr. 148 manuscript reveals the pattern as expected with an accent below the ܡܢܕ and an accent above the ܘܗ.[76]

7.4 *Mzīʿānā* and Points above the Line: Steady Intonation?

In other examples, a *mzīʿānā* on the ܡܢܕ will be followed by a *reṭmā* or other single-point accents above the line, possibly indicating level or even rising intonation. Most scriptural examples with this type of accentuation share a sense of declaration, utterance, or conclusion, as if the clause with ܡܢܕ completes the sense of the preceding clause. Quite often the ܡܢܕ has been translated as "only," "still," "yet," or "nevertheless." This clause can also include strong emphatic or pausal accents. So, in Acts 10:29, the ܡܢܕ clause ends with a *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā*, a strong exclamation.

Acts 10:29 — ܚܟܘܢ ܡܢܘܙܐܝܢ ܐܢܐ ܐܠܟܝ. ܡܛܠܟܝ: ܚܟܘܢ ܡܛܠ ܡܢܐ ܫܠܚܬܘܢ: ܡܢܕ

… Thus I ask you, why did you send for me.[77]

Similarly, in the parallel passages of Mt 11:22–24 and Lk 10:14, the accent above ܡܢܕ is later followed by a *mqīmānā* (heavy pause) or a *taḥtāyā ḏa-ṯlāṯā* (exclamation).

Lk 10:14 ܚܟܘܢ ܗܐ ܠܨܘܪ ܘܠܨܝܕܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܢܝܚ ܒܝܘܡܐ ܕܕܝܢܐ ܐܘ ܠܟܘܢ: ܚܪܝܢ ܘܨܝܕܘܗ: ܡܢܕ - (fol. 251v, line 14)[78]

Still it will be better off for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

Mt 11:22 (fol. ܚܟܘܢ ܗܐ ܠܨܘܪ ܘܠܨܝܕܢ ܢܗܘܐ ܢܝܚ ܒܝܘܡܐ ܕܕܝܢܐ ܐܘ ܠܟܘܢ. ܘܕܨܘܪ ܘܨܝܕܢ: ܐܦܢ ܐܢܐ ܐܠܟܝ: ܡܢܕ
235v, line 7)[79]

Still I say to you, it will be better off for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

Mt 11:24 (fol. ܚܟܘܢ ܗܐ ܠܐܪܥܐ ܕܣܕܘܡ ܢܗܘܐ ܢܝܚ ܒܝܘܡܐ ܕܕܝܢܐ ܐܘ ܠܟܘܢ. ܘܠܐܪܥܐ ܕܣܕܘܡ: ܐܦܢ ܐܢܐ ܐܠܟܝ: ܡܢܕ
235v, line 12)[80]

Still I say to you that it will be better off for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

---

[76] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 117r, line 19. Other examples of this pattern in BL Add. 12138 include: Job 23:14, 36:4; Sir 33:8; Jer 26:24; 1 Sam 1:23; Lam 2:17.

[77] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 174v, line 24a.

[78] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 98r, line 6b.

[79] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 25r, line 23.

[80] Mingana syr. 148, fol. 25v, line 3. Other examples of this pattern in BL Add. 12138 include: Gen 34:23; Lev 11:36; 1 Sam 25:34; 1 Kgs 15:14, 20:23; Job 14:22; Ps 140:13; Sir 33:11, 38:32, 38:35; Lk 10:11, 23:28; Acts 20:23; Phil 3:16.

Passages in Mingana syr. 148, which are not included in BL Add. 12138, follow nearly identical patterns.[81]

In the previous examples, we have seen that by isolating the simple conjunction ܘܟܕ in BL Add. 12138 we can gain a sense for how certain accent patterns might have functioned in a variety of different contexts. Yet, as it turns out, much in these patterns makes sense: raise the intonation after the conjunction to stress words or to communicate disjunction or contrast; steady the intonation to communicate continuity or conclusion. Again, we should be careful that we do not read too much into these patterns, or that we see patterns where none really exist. After all, we have a very limited knowledge of Syriac intonation. Still, an understanding of basic patterns of intonation could be yet another clue to help modern readers better understand how conjunctions may have been understood by ancient readers.

8. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has suggested that much can be learned about how Syriac prosodic marks functioned in the ninth-century East-Syrian milieu by focusing on a single manuscript BL Add. 12138. This manuscript is one of the largest collections of accentuated sample texts from the Old and New Testaments associated with the punctuating traditions of the *maqryānē*, and it is far more exact regarding accents than later West-Syrian "masoretic" lists. Given the complicated history of Syriac accents, one is more likely to discern a distinct accent system at a particular moment in time by focusing on a single manuscript containing thousands of accentuated biblical texts. Even so, there is no perfect text from antiquity, and it is important to reiterate the care that needs to be taken when evaluating these often ambiguous accents.

Increased access to the scriptural sample texts in BL Add. 12138 now allows for a more comprehensive study of this manuscript than has previously been possible. These studies hint at a degree of consistency in the placement of accent marks in this manuscript, taking into account changes by later scribes and other ambiguities. Levels of consistency are particularly clear when multi-dot accents are compared across this manuscript. In fact, careful examination of the placement of these accents may provide insights into how the reader would have been guided in the proper method of intoning the Scriptures in the East-Syrian tradition. Although many of our conclusions are tentative because we no longer have trained *maqryānē* to give us a sense of the living tradition of recitation, these various intonation patterns can be useful in helping to discern where the compiler may have placed emphasis, or even how he or she may have interpreted the meaning of particular phrases or individual words. In all, this new, more comprehensive access to the accents in BL Add. 12138 is a promising step forward for the study of Syriac prosodic marks,

---

[81] E.g., Lk 10:11, 10:20, 11:41, 12:31, 13:33, 18:8, 19:27; Acts 3:17, 8:22, 10:32, 27:26.

providing deeper insights into how the Scriptures would have been read in the ninth-century Syriac churches.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbeloos, Jean Baptiste, and Thomas Joseph Lamy, eds. *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Ecclesiasticum.* 3 vols. Leuven: Peeters, 1877. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2012.

Becker, Adam H. *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom: The School of Nisibis and Christian Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

Brock, Sebastian P. "Yawsep Būsnāyā." Page 436 in *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage.* Edited by S.P. Brock et al. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2011.

Brovender, Chaim. "כתבי יד השמהא הסוריים: נתוח טיפולוגי חשאתי" ("The Syriac Shemahe manuscripts: A typological and comparative study"). PhD diss. Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1976.

Burkitt, F.C. *Euphemia and the Goth: With the Acts of Martyrdom of the Confessors of Edessa.* London: Williams & Norgate, 1913. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2007.

———. *The Syriac Forms of New Testament Proper Names.* Proceedings of the British Academy 5. London, Oxford University Press, 1912. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2011.

Crystal, David. *Prosodic Systems and Intonation in English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.

Davies, W.D. and D.C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew.* 2 vols. London: T&T Clark, 1991.

Dickens, Mark. "The Importance of the Psalter at Turfan." Pages 357–80 in *From the Oxus River to the Chinese Shores: Studies on East Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia.* Edited by Li Tang and Dietmar W. Winkler. Zürich: LIT Verlag, 2013.

Diettrich, Gustav. *Die Massorah der östlichen und westlichen Syrer in ihren Angaben zum Propheten Jesaia nach fünf Handschriften des British Museum.* London: Williams & Norgate, 1899.

———. "Die Massorah der östlichen und westlichen Syrer in ihren Angaben zum Buch Ruth nach fünf Handschriften." *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 22 (1902): 193–201.

Duval, Rubens. *Traité de grammaire syriaque* Paris: F. Vieweg, 1881. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2010.

Gerson-Kiwi, Edith. "Cheironomy." Pages 191–96 in vol. 4 of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians.* Edited by Stanley Sadie. 20 vols. London: Macmillan, 1980.

Gwilliam, G.H. "The Punctuation of Saint John 1:3, 4, in the Peshitto." *Journal of Theological Studies* 4 (1903): 606–7.

Gwilliam, George Henry. *Tetraeuangelium sanctum juxta simplicem Syrorum versionem ad fidem codicum, Massorae, editionum denuo recognitum.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1901.

Hatch, William Henry Paine. *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts.* Boston: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1946. Repr. with a new foreword by Lucas Van Rompay, Piscataway: Gorgias, 2012.

Headlam, A.C. Review of De Lacy O'Leary, *The Syriac Church and Fathers. The Church Quarterly Review* 69 (1910): 217–21.

Jansma, T. "A Note on Dislocated Extracts from the Book of Genesis in the Syriac Massoretic Manuscripts." *Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971): 127–29.

King, Daniel. "*Elements of the Syriac Grammatical Tradition as these Relate to the Origins of Arabic Grammar.*" Pages 189–209 in *The Foundations of Arabic Linguistics: Sībawayhi and Early Arabic Grammatical Theory.* Edited by Amal Elesha Marogy. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

Levin, Saul. "The Traditional Chironomy of the Hebrew Scriptures." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 87 (1968): 59–70.

Loopstra, Jonathan. *An East Syrian Manuscript of the Syriac "Masora" Dated to 899 CE: A Facsimile Reproduction of British Library, Add. 12138.* 2 vols. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2014.

Martin, J.P.P. *Histoire de la ponctuation: ou de la massore chez les Syriens.* Paris: Nationale, 1875.

Merx, Adalbert. *Historia artis grammaticae apud Syros.* Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1889.

Mingana, A. Review of Theodor Weiss, *Zur ostsyrischen Laut- und Akzentlehre. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 67 (1935): 186–88.

Nöldeke, Theodor. *Compendious Syriac Grammar.* Translated from the 2nd German ed. by James Crichton. London: Williams & Norgate, 1904. Repr. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001.

Phillips, George. *A Letter by Mar Jacob, Bishop of Edessa, on Syriac Orthography; also A Tract by the Same Author, and a Discourse by Gregory Bar Hebraeus on Syriac Accents.* London: Williams & Norgate, 1869.

Pusey, Philip Edward, and George Henry Gwilliam. *Tetraeuangelium sanctum juxta simplicem Syrorum versionem ad fidem codicum, Massorae, editionum denuo recognitum.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1901.

Rahmani, Ignatius Ephraem II., ed. *Studia Syriaca I.* Lebanon: Scharfense, 1904.

Schmitt, Rudolf. "Östsyrische Masora zu Exodus und Leviticus." PhD diss. The University of Bonn, 1939.

Segal, J.B. *The Diacritical Point and the Accents in Syriac*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's 'Lexicon Syriacum'*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2009.

Van Rompay, Lucas. "Yawsep Būsnāyā." Page 437–38 in *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage*. Edited by S.P. Brock et al. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2011.

Vööbus, Arthur, ed., *The Statutes of the School of Nisibis*. Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 1961.

Weiss, Theodor. *Zur ostsyrischen Laut- und Akzentlehre auf Grund der ostsyrischen Massorah-Handschrift des British Museum: Mit Facsimiles von 50 Seiten der Londoner Handschrift*. Bonner Orientalistische Studien 5. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933.

Wellesz, Egon. "Miscellanea sur orientalistischen Musikgeschichte: Die Lektionszeichen in den soghdischen Texten." *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 1 (1919): 505–15.

Wood, J. *Vocalisation of the Proper Names in the Pentrateuch according to a Syriae Manuscript: Add 12138 in the British Museum*. Thesis. Manchester: University of Manchester, 1939.

———. "A Syriac Masora." *Glasgow University Oriental Society* 14 (1953): 35–42.

Wright, W. *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since the Year 1838*. 3 vols. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870–1872.

CHAPTER 10
EMBEDDED ORACLES:
SORTILEGE IN A SYRIAC GOSPEL CODEX

Jeff Childers

Graduate School of Theology
Abilene Christian University

The Syriac text of the New Testament has long been a focus of research. Less well-understood are the varied methods by which the power of scripture was brought to bear on the lives of ordinary people, outside the official contexts of liturgical practice. Even less studied are the ways in which the specific requirements of functional usage have shaped the very form of biblical codices. A unique sixth- or seventh-century Peshitta manuscript of John's Gospel supplies a glimpse into the practices of specialized interpreters who sought mystical guidance in the Bible according to methods that were often considered illicit. The manuscript includes an unusual apparatus for sortilege, incorporated directly into the biblical text. This Syriac manuscript is the most complete and intact instance of the phenomenon known to exist. Although such practices must have been fairly widespread, only vestigial traces remain in the biblical manuscript tradition to indicate the significance of this popular means by which to access the power of the sacred book. In the past, the true nature of this particular Syriac manuscript has been misconstrued or neglected. This study summarizes the nature and contents of the manuscript, clarifying its function. A comparative analysis of the material and structure in relation to the scanty parallel materials surviving in Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Armenian will establish the essential interrelationship of these traditions. The study concludes by exploring the overlooked connections between the oracular material and the contents of John's Gospel.

1. INTRODUCTION

Written into the cartulary of the Benedictine monastery of Eynsham in central Oxfordshire is a late thirteenth-century ceremony for warding off sheep murrain. After conducting a mass in honour of the Holy Spirit and making an offering, the priest gathers the sheep into a cote and performs a complex charm, commencing with a recitation from the beginning of John 1, *In principio*.[1] The occurrence of a text from John's Gospel in a medieval charm against sheep murrain is not surprising. The Gospel of John, often described as "mystical," was not infrequently adapted to such uses, from the apotropaic use of its opening statements of power in Syriac healing charms and Arabic amulets,[2] to Augustine's insistence that it is better for a person with a headache to sleep with a copy of John's Gospel than resort to amulets as a source of relief,[3] to the reports of a Nottingham sorcerer who sold copies of John's Gospel for ten shillings apiece as a protection against witchcraft in the early seventeenth century.[4] More than any other biblical text, it would seem, the Gospel of John has been used in ways that reveal an enduring belief in its mystical power—including its role as a tool in divination practices. The present study examines a distinct expression of this peculiar respect for the Gospel's power: a unique Peshitta manuscript of John that incorporates traditional oracular material into the Gospel text.

2. *SORTES* IN A SYRIAC BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPT

The Syriac manuscript BL Add. 17119 was copied in the sixth or seventh century.[5] It is a rarity in that it contains just one Gospel: John.[6] The notes at the end of the manuscript provide sparse details about its origin: it was copied by one George and belonged to the Monastery of Silvanus, near Damascus (fol. 83r). The Gospel text is

---

[1] Salter, *Eynsham Cartulary*, 1:18.

[2] E.g. in Harvard Syr. 156, one of several such texts from Urmia copied in the 17th–19th centuries (see Goshen-Gottstein, *Syriac Manuscripts*, 103–05); for Arabic examples, see Bosworth, *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld*, 128.

[3] *Tractates on John* 7.12.

[4] Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 187, 249 (see also 31, 36, 52, 275–76); see Skemer, *Binding Words*, 50–51, 67–68; Brown, *Stonyhurst Gospel of Saint John*, 29–37; Gifford, *Witches and Witchcraftes*, sig. B1v (Gifford, 1842 reprint, 10.)

[5] See Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts*, 1:71. The 83-leaf codex measures about 22 cm x 13 cm. The last folio includes a simple coloured cross of a type common to Syriac decoration, surrounded by a bold nimbus.

[6] Although the first few leaves are missing so that a definitive determination cannot be made, it is unlikely that the manuscript was ever part of a *tetraeuangelium*. Also, it has no Ammonian/Eusebian sections and is missing ܩܦܠܐܐ, the chapter divisions occurring in most Peshitta Gospel manuscripts. The manuscript was probably created for the express purpose of providing a copy of John containing oracular material.

simply that of the Peshitta,[7] yet the normal flow of the text is routinely interrupted with exclamations and exhortations in another voice. These are rubricated but written in the same hand within the text column. The statements are numbered in the margins of the manuscript, and the expression ܦܘܫܩܐ ("interpretation") normally prefaces the statements. The manuscript once contained 308 such "interpretations," though the first six are missing due to a defect in the manuscript.[8]

A subscription in the original hand mentions John Chrysostom, as an interpreter of John's Gospel, using the same Syriac root (ܦܫܩ) as in the prefatory term ܦܘܫܩܐ that accompanies the oracles.[9] This subscription led William Wright to presume that the unusual statements strung throughout the Gospel were somehow related to Chrysostom, specifically to his *Homilies on John*,[10] which were very popular in Greek and in Syriac.[11] But the utter lack of connection between the apparatus of oracular material and Chrysostom indicates that the Chrysostom reference is merely incidental.[12] Instead, the material of BL Add. 17119 bears much greater resemblance to so-called *hermeneiai* manuscripts of John, that is, Greek and Greco-Coptic fragments of portions of John that also have oracular responses in the margins.[13] The oracles in these manuscripts are typically prefaced by the term ἑρμηνεία, "interpretation." Participating in long-standing practices by which sacred texts were used in *sortilege*, that is, for reading fortunes, these fragments of John and their accompanying oracular pronouncements were divinatory tools.

---

[7] In personal correspondence, Andreas Juckel has confirmed that the biblical text has been collated in preparation for producing a new critical edition of the Peshitta text. Philip E. Pusey collated the biblical text for his edition as well: Pusey and Gwilliam, *Tetraeuangelium.*

[8] The original parchment folios 1–2 have been replaced by paper leaves written in a twelfth-century hand (Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts*, 1:71–72). They have only the text of John; no oracles. Folios 63 and 66 have also been replaced, but their replacements are in a somewhat earlier hand than the aforementioned (fols. 1, 2) and include oracles written in the margins, presumably replacing the ones that were lost when the original two leaves went missing.

[9] ܗܠܝܢ ܐܘ̈ܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܘܦܘܫܩ ܡܠܬܐ ܗܢܐ ܕܚܒܝܒ. ܘܐܬܐܦܩ ܡܢ ܝܘܚܢܢ ܐܦܣܩܘܦܐ ܘܦܘܡܗܕܗܒܐܝܣܩܘܕܝܗ. ܘܐܬܟܬܒ ܡܢ ܐܝܕܐ ܐܢܫ ܘܟܬܒܗܐ ܕܢܘܚܡܐܟܝܬܝܗܝܘܗ܀ (fol. 82).

[10] "There are 308 (ܣܚ) rubrics in the volume, referring, as it would seem from the above subscription, to the homilies of John Chrysostom on this Gospel" (Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts*, 1:71).

[11] See Childers, "Chrysostom's Exegetical Homilies;" idem, "Mapping the Syriac Chrysostom."

[12] Similarly, some West Syrian Psalters mention Athanasius' interpretation on the Psalms, yet no discernible connection exists between Athanasius' *Commentary on the Psalms* and the material of the Psalters in which the notes occur (see Taylor, "Psalm Headings in the West Syrian Tradition," 377). For more on this point, see Childers, "Chrysostom in Syriac Dress."

[13] Parker, "Manuscripts of John's Gospel;" see also Metzger, "Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel."

Historically, various means of *sortition* have used the biblical text.[14] These practices remain rather obscure, yet recent scholarly attention has shown that early ecclesiastical authorities may not have been as quick to condemn the divinatory consultation of the Bible as scholars once commonly presumed.[15] Nevertheless, canonical prohibitions emerging over time suggest that the popular use of such tools may have been widespread, but not generally sanctioned. The *Admonitions for Monks* 19, attributed to Rabbula of Edessa (411–35), has the following injunction: "Let none of the monks take an oracle [ܦܬܓܡܐ] out of a book for anyone."[16] The first canon in the list of rules attributed to Jacob of Edessa († 708) is more specific: "It is not lawful for a monk to take an oracle [ܦܬܓܡܐ] from the Gospel, or from David, or from the portions [ܦܣܐ; "lots"] that are called, 'of the Apostles.'"[17] Charlemagne's similar proscription in 789 demonstrates the widespread nature of these practices: "no one should presume to cast lots in the Psalter or in the Gospel or in other things, or perform any divinations."[18] These decrees suggest there was a rather lively fortune-telling industry using biblical manuscripts. Augustine is aware of the practice and is highly ambivalent about it.[19] Despite these hints of widespread Christianized bibliomantry in the East and the West, very few examples of specialized tools for *sortition* using scripture survive.

It is evident that BL Add. 17119 is a remarkable Syriac example of just such a practice. To illustrate: folios 8–9r have the text of Jn 3:7–19. Yet they also contain the following set of pronouncements embedded in the Gospel text, written in the same hand. The oracles include numbers written in the margin.

---

[14] See Horst, "*Sortes*." These types of tools have often been referred to generically, though improperly, as *sortes sanctorum* (see Klingshirn, "Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*.")

[15] For more on this point, see especially Klingshirn, "Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*," 81–4, 122–8.

[16] Vööbus, *Syriac and Arabic Documents*, 31.

[17] Ibid., 95.

[18] *Duplex Legationis Edictum* 20, MGH, Capit. 2.1:64; the reference and helpful discussion are in Klingshirn, "Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*," 110.

[19] "Regarding those who draw lots (*sortes*) from the pages of the Gospel, although it could be wished that they would do this rather than run about consulting demons, I do not like this custom of wishing to turn the divine oracles to worldly business and the vanity of this life, when their object is another life" (*Ep.* 55.37). The reference is from Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 240.

8	Jn 3:9	ܐܘܗ ܚܘܡܣܐ[20] ܩܘܚܩܕ ܡܝܕܩ ܐܡܡܗ	ܚܠ
	Interpretation: that which you were expecting (will) happen		32
	Jn 3:12	ܐܚܐ ܐܘܢܗ	ܠܓ
	speak the truth		33
	Jn 3:14	ܟܠ ܢܝܣܚܡ ܐܠܟܝܪܒ ܢܐ ܐܡܡܗ	ܠܕ
	Interpretation: if you lie they will reprove you		34
9r	Jn 3:16	ܐܘܗܐ ܐܕܚܙ ܐܠܟܘܒܚܠ ܐܡܡܗ	ܠܗ
	Interpretation: great glory (will) happen		35
	Jn 3:19	ܪܒܚ ܠܐ ܡܘܚܡ[21] ܐܢܝܒܣܚܘ ܢܠܝܚܡ ܐܡܡܗ	ܠܘ
	Interpretation: About poverty/reproof: leave (it and) do not do (it)		36

The material is marked by inconsistencies and errors. For example, *sors* 33 lacks the prefatory term ܐܡܡܗ. In *sors* 36, it appears that a topical heading has crept into the *sors* itself—ܐܢܝܒܣܚܡ ܠܝܥܡ ("about poverty/need"). This has occurred in a number of places throughout the manuscript, but does not occur consistently.[22] However, in this case a transposition of letters may also have occurred, producing ܐܢܝܒܣܚܡ ("poverty"). The original probably had ܠܝܥܡ ܐܢܝܒܣܚܡ, "about reproof/accusation," a heading that better fits the divinatory context and the actual content of many of the *sortes*.

These examples demonstrate the unusual nature of this Gospel manuscript as a specially designed tool for *sortition*, in which the ܐܩܩܘܗ (i.e. *hermeneiai*) that accompany the text constitute a system of divination by which an inquirer could receive an answer in the form of a numbered oracle keyed to the biblical text. The relationship of the *sortes* to specific biblical texts and the mechanism by which a *sors* would be chosen is largely unclear, though these matters are taken up again below. What details of the manuscript's provenance we have suggest that clergy were the usual practitioners and users of the manuscript for *sortilege*, a conclusion strengthened by the contexts of the aforementioned proscriptions, which are also clerical in focus.

3. PARALLEL TESTIMONY

3.1 Greek *Hermeneiai* Fragments

A comparison with other instances of this phenomenon will demonstrate the interrelatedness of parallel material across a fairly wide range of traditions. One of the aforementioned *hermeneiai* manuscripts is the papyrus commonly designated 𝔓[63] (Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Ägyptische Abteilung, P. 11914). Containing portions of John 3–4 in Greek, this manuscript of the fifth or sixth century also contains

---

[20] Read ܐܡܡܕ ܠܐ ? (i.e. "that which you were not expecting"). See discussion below.

[21] Read ܐܢܝܒܣܚܡ? ("reproof").

[22] The same phenomenon occurs in codices Bezae and *Sangermanensis* (see below).

oracular material in Greek and Coptic. Following the text of Jn 4:10 (column 4) appears this oracle:[23]

Jn 4:10   ερμηνια
εα[ν πι]στευσησ χα
ρα[σοι γ]ινεται
hermeneia if you believe, there will be joy for you
ⲉⲕⲱⲁⲛⲡⲓⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲟⲩⲛ
[ⲟⲩ ⲣⲁ] ⲱⲉ ⲛⲁⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲁⲕ
if you have trust, there will be joy for you

𝔓**63** contains four different *hermeneiai* and is only one of several such manuscripts or fragments, dating from the third/fourth–eighth centuries.[24] Their provenance is uncertain and the precise manner of their use is unclear. Yet apart from constituting textual witnesses to John's Gospel,[25] these *hermeneiai* manuscripts point to the early use of John's Gospel as a context in which to present oracular pronouncements to inquirers, designated "interpretations" and connected to the biblical text. Furthermore, in form and function they are parallel to the material in the Syriac BL Add. 17119.

3.2 Codex Bezae

The bilingual Greco-Latin copy of the Gospels and Acts known as codex Bezae (D) also includes a set of *hermeneiai*.[26] These consist of 69 oracles written in a rough hand in the lower margin of leaves containing Mark's Gospel. The manuscript's main text is dated to the fifth century, but the *hermeneiai* are later; their hand has been dated to as early as 550–650 and as late as the ninth or tenth century.[27] For instance, beneath the Greek text of Mk 6:3–13 (fol. 302), the following statement occurs: ερμἲνϊα + εαν ψυση ελενχουσϊν σε + (*hermeneia* + *if you are false, they will accuse you* +). Like Wright in cataloguing the Syriac BL Add. 17119, F.H. Scrivener did not recognize the proper function of these statements in codex Bezae, describing them as "moral apophthegms, some of them silly enough."[28] Yet their true nature is now clear,[29]

---

[23] Text from Stegmüller, "Zu den Bibelorakeln," 17; see also Metzger, "Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel," 164.

[24] Ibid., 163–164.

[25] Parker, "Manuscripts of John's Gospel," 48–50.

[26] See the codicological study by Parker, *Codex Bezae*. Parker does not thoroughly discuss the *hermeneiai* in codex Bezae.

[27] Parker prefers the earlier date (*Codex Bezae*, 43, 49), but Metzger dates it to the ninth or tenth century ("Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel," 165–6).

[28] Scrivener, *Bezae Codex Cantabrigiensis*, xxvii.

[29] See Harris, *The Annotators of the Codex Bezae*, 45–74; Stegmüller, "Zu den Bibelorakeln," 13–22; Metzger, "Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel," 165–7; and Outtier, "Les *Prosermeneiai* du Codex Bezae," 74–8.

even if the precise mechanism of their use remains mysterious. The *sortes* in Bezae are unnumbered, but the one just cited occurs 34th in sequence. Its content is basically the same as that of the oracle numbered 34 in BL Add. 17119, cited above. It is unusual that codex Bezae's *hermeneiai* occur with Mark's Gospel rather than with John, though it ought to be remembered that Bezae's "Western" order of the Gospels puts Mark in the fourth position.[30] Also, in codex Bezae the oracles are relatively late additions to the lower margin, having no numbers or other keys tying them to the Gospel text. Though in codex Bezae the *sortes* occur with Mark, it is not unlikely that they migrated there from the margins of a copy of John.

3.3 *Sangermanensis Primus*

One example of such a manuscript is *Sangermanensis primus*,[31] a Latin Bible from the early ninth century.[32] Its text of John is divided into 316 numbered sections, 185 of which are accompanied by Latin oracles written into the margins and keyed to the Gospel text. A great many of them parallel those in codex Bezae, often in the same sequence. For instance, at Jn 3:8 (fol. 126r), the following familiar oracle occurs: *xxxiii · si mentiris arguent te* (33: *if you lie, they will accuse you*). This Latin oracle is not only the same as the aforementioned Greek oracle in codex Bezae, but it also matches the Syriac oracle at Jn 3:14 cited above, explicitly numbered 34 (BL Add. 17119, fol. 8). But whereas in codex Bezae the oracle is one of only 69 and a much later addition, and in *Sangermanensis* it is a contemporary but marginal feature, one of only 185, in the Syriac manuscript we have a much fuller set of 308 oracles, incorporated in the same hand into the biblical text, dating to a significantly earlier period than the other two.

The interrelationship of all these materials is illustrated by the following comparison of diverse witnesses containing parallel oracles:

𝔓63	Jn 4:10	ερμηνια	εα[ν πι]στευσησ χαρα[σοι γ]ινεται
		hermeneia	*if you believe, there will be joy for you*
			ⲉⲕϣⲁⲛⲡⲓⲥⲧⲉⲩⲉ ⲟⲩⲛ · [ⲟⲩ ⲣⲁ] ϣⲉ ⲛⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ ⲛⲁⲕ
			if you have trust, there will be joy for you
17119 (11)	Jn 4:10	ܗܘ	ܡܚܢ ܐܢ ܡܬܛܦܝܣ ܗܘܐ ܚܕܘܬܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܟ [33]
		46	*Interpretation: if you are convinced, you will have joy*
Bezae (D; 308) Mk 7	(46)		ερμϊνϊα + εαν πϊστευσησ χαρα συ εσθω +
			herminia: if you believe, there will be joy for you
Sang. (*g*1; 126r) Jn 4:4		*xliii*	*si credideris gloria tibi*
		43	*if you believe, you (will have) glory*

---

[30] See Outtier, "Réponses oraculaires," 181.

[31] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 11553; i.e. *g*1.

[32] See Harris, "The 'Sortes Sanctorum';" idem, *Annotators of the Codex Bezae*, 59–74.

[33] The manuscript has ܡܫܪܐ ܐܢ *if you begin*, possibly due to a misreading of ܡܬܛܦܝܣ.

This Syriac oracle at Jn 4:10 in BL Add. 17119 illustrates the value of comparing the different sources. It has already been noted that the *sortes* in the Syriac manuscript manifest a number of errors; the same may be said for the materials occurring in the other witnesses. But a comparison of witnesses can suggest corrections. In this case, the parallel oracles suggest that the Syriac manuscript's reading ܐܢ ܡܫܪܝ *if you begin*, while possible, was originally to be read, ܐܢ ܡܫܪ *if you are convinced*, creating a sense that matches the reading in all the other sources.

3.4 Armenian Parallels

The prevalence of this phenomenon in ancient sources is further shown by the occurrence of parallel oracular material in Armenian biblical texts. Bernard Outtier described an eleventh-century Armenian manuscript of John's Gospel with *hermeneiai* written into the margin, like *Sangermenensis* (Erevan, Matenadaran 9650).[34] An even earlier witness is the palimpsest, Graz 2058/2. Although the upper writing of this manuscript is a Georgian liturgical psalter copied at St Catherine's monastery at Mt Sinai in the tenth century, the underwriting is an eighth-century Armenian text of John's Gospel.[35] At Jn 4:11–14 (fol. 79a), the manuscript includes the following oracle, numbered 48:

48   թէ հաւատաս խնդութիւն լինի քեզ

48   *If you believe, you (will) have joy*

This oracle is the same as those occurring in the four other witnesses given above. The Armenian evidence of this manuscript is incomplete and often illegible,[36] yet in style of execution it is similar to Syriac BL Add. 17119, because it incorporates oracles directly into the flow of the Gospel text, in the same hand. However, they are set off by blank spaces, sometimes surprisingly large, and often centred. Not all the Armenian *sortes* match those of the Syriac, in content or location, but many of them do, as the two following sets of examples further demonstrate:

---

[34] See Outtier, "Les *Prosermeneiai* du Codex Bezae," 76; idem, "Réponses oraculaires," 182.

[35] I am indebted to Erich Renhart at the university library in Graz, who has been working to decipher the text and has kindly shared with me some of his preliminary findings. See also Outtier, "Réponses oraculaires," 182.

[36] The first oracle, at Jn 1:1 (66b) is prefaced with the term, թարգման[…], i.e. what appears to be an expression corresponding to *hermeneia*.

17119 (17)	Jn 5:24	ܣܘ	ܩܘܦܟܐ ܘܦܘܠܐ ܕܛܒܐ
		67	*Interpretation: a good change/return*
Bezae (D; 320r)	Mk 9–10	(69)	ερμϊνηα + μεταβουλη καλϊ
			herminea: a good change
Graz 2058/2 (42b)	Jn 5:24a	73	Փոփոխումն բարի
			a good change
17119 (20)	Jn 6:11	ܟ	ܩܘܦܐ ܚܝܐ ܘܝܘܬܪܢܐ ܡܢ ܐܠܗܐ
		77	*Interpretation: life and profit from God*
Sang. (*g*1; 127r)	Jn 5:35	lxxvi[37]	*lucro et uita et do[38]*
			life and profit and (?) from God
Graz 2058/2 (19b)	Jn 6:10–11	83	կենդանութիւն եւ շահ յաս
			life and profit from G(od)

3.5 Corruption and Evolution

The interrelationships of these materials is obvious—as are their propensities towards alteration, corruption, and error. Again, by comparing the diverse traditions one may discover corrections to an apparently corrupt text, or at least discern likely antecedents for texts that have experienced transformations. For example, by comparing one of the Syriac oracles described above with parallels in the other witnesses, we learn that the negative particle ܠܐ seems to have dropped out of the Syriac text:

17119 (8)	Jn 3:9	ܚܒ	ܩܘܦܐ ܡܕܡ ܕܡܣܟܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘ ܡܕܡ
		32	*Interpretation: that which you were expecting will happen*
Bezae (D; 302r)	Mk 5–6	(33)	ερμϊνϊα + απροσδωκϊτον παραυγμα +
			herminia: an unexpected matter
Sang. (*g*1; 126r)	Jn 3:2	xxxi	*insperata causa perficitur*
		31	*an unexpected matter will be completed*
Graz 2058/2 (88b)	Jn 3:7–8	33	Անակնկալ իրք լինին
			unexpected things will happen

Here the Armenian, Greek, and Latin strongly indicate an original negative, suggesting that an original particle ܠܐ has gone missing from the Syriac—unless one postulates that the α- privative fell out of the Greek source on which the Syriac was based.

---

[37] Although the manuscript has lxxvi, by sequence the correct reading may be lxxii (Harris, *Annotators of the Codex Bezae*, 64).

[38] The text of *Sangermanensis* appears garbled. Harris suggested that it may originally have been the heading of a group instead of a *sors* proper, but the Syriac and Armenian texts confirm the basic sense of the oracular statement.

4. ANTECEDENTS, PRACTITIONERS, AND USE

It is obvious that the *sortes* in all these witnesses derive from common sources, though they presently show many differences. A reliable understanding of these materials will require comparative analyses and a better grasp of their interrelationships. At present it is possible to do little more than offer some very tentative understandings. The original source of these *sortes* was probably Greek, perhaps in the form of one or more separate databanks of answers, such as occur in similar divinatory tools, for example, the *Sortes Astrampsychi* (see below). It is reasonable to suppose that those databanks found their way into the margins of manuscripts of John, to produce tools similar in form to *Sangermanensis*. From the margins of these specialized codices, the *sortes* could be pulled straight into the Gospel text, as we see in the Syriac and Armenian examples. Throughout this process, including translation into various languages, deliberate alterations and accidental modifications would produce many different but related versions of these materials, such as meet us in the few extant witnesses of which we are presently aware.

4.1 The *Sortes Astrampsychi* and *Sortes Sanctorum*

It may be helpful to compare the apparatus in BL Add. 17119 with another ancient tool for sortition, for which we have more complete evidence: the *Sortes Astrampsychi*.[39] The latter is a very specialized pagan oracle device that came into existence in Greek probably in the second century, though it was subsequently edited and somewhat Christianized later.[40] It circulated in at least two major editions, the second of which came to consist of an introduction, a series of 92 numbered questions, followed by 1030 answers arranged into 103 numbered decades.[41] By means of an arcane and complex method of selection explained in the introduction, the diviner in possession of the book would assist the inquirer in discovering an answer appropriate to the topic of the question chosen. For example, an inquirer might choose question 24, "Will my wife have a baby?" According to the instructions, the diviner should ask the inquirer for a number from one to ten. We might speculate that he chose his lucky number, six. Adding the two numbers together yields 30 (24+6), so the diviner would consult the number 30 on a table which is part of the apparatus, which in turn points to decade 102 in the answer bank provided. It also instructs the inquirer to "Ask Lamech," though in the original pagan version one would expect the name of a god instead. Upon turning to the specified decade 102, one finds a variety of seemingly disconnected answers, but when the diviner reads the text to the inquirer's number six, it provides the

---

[39] See texts in Browne, *Sortes Astrampsychi. Vol. I: Ecdosis Prior*; Stewart, *Sortes Astrampyschi. Vol. II: Ecdosis Altera*; and Brodersen, *Astrampsychos das Pythagoras-Orakel.*

[40] See Stewart, "The Textual Transmission of the 'Sortes Astrampsychi'."

[41] See the discussion and translation of this edition by Randall Stewart and Kenneth Morell in Hansen, *Anthology of Ancient Greek Popular Literature*, 285–324.

following answer: "You'll father a baby, but the corresponding baby will be unprofitable"[42]—and so the inquirer had the answer to his question.

Like the *sortes* in the biblical manuscripts, the oracles of *Astrampsychi* are very brief. Many of them also deal with similar topics, such as travel, the outcome of legal actions, inheritance, finding lost objects, and business concerns. However, the questions addressed by *Astrampsychi* and the answers that it gives tend to be more specific than those in BL Add. 17119 and the other biblical manuscripts. The generic quality characterizing the answers in the biblical manuscripts suggests that specific questions were not prescribed as part of the divinatory apparatus[43]— certainly no such connected bank of questions has yet been identified. Rather than focusing on particular situations, the responses routinely feature the terms ܣܘܥܪܢܐ, *causa*, πραγμα, or ḥp—each of which refers generally to a "matter" or "affair." In this sense, the Syriac set of *sortes* in BL Add. 17119 is more like the *Sortes sanctorum*,[44] another ancient Christianized tool for sortition. As in the *Sortes sanctorum*, the responses in BL Add. 17119 are generic enough to be broadly applicable, though they are more concise and less florid than those in the *Sortes sanctorum*.[45]

4.2 Divining in Practice

Another distinction between the *sortes* in the biblical manuscripts and those in the *Sortes sanctorum* is the number; the latter has 56 responses, corresponding to the number of possible throws one might make throwing a die three times. However, if one were to cast a die three times and take note of the sequence of the number as well as the number thrown, we get 216 possibilities (6x6x6). It is perhaps a coincidence that *Sangermanensis* has a system of 316 numbered sections, exactly 100 more than the system of dice-throws just described—yet J. Rendell Harris suspected that an original system of 216 had been expanded by the addition of 100 to create the system that survives in *Sangermanensis*.[46] Outtier identified 316 sections in the Armenian manuscript Graz 2058/2,[47] yet in personal correspondence with the author, Erich Renhart reports that the manuscript originally had 318, though the last preserved number is 316. The Syriac BL Add. 17119 has a numbered system of 308. Apart from their intrinsic interest and the help they might provide in clarifying the relationships between the various surviving sets of *sortes*, the numbering systems

---

[42] Ibid., 293, 324.

[43] See Naether, *Die Sortes Astrampsychi*, 303; cf. Montero Cartelle and Alonso Guardo, *Los "Libros de Suertes" medievales*, 20–26.

[44] Designated by Klingshirn according to their incipit in several manuscripts: *Post solem surgunt stellae* ("Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*," 94–98).

[45] See examples in Klingshirn, "Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*," 97.

[46] Harris, *The Annotators of the Codex Bezae*, 48; Klingshirn, "Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*," 95–97.

[47] Outtier, "Réponses oraculaires," 182; idem, "Les *prosermeneiai* du Codex Bezae," 76.

invite further study as possibly the best clues to unlock the mechanism by which the divinatory tools were used.

Precisely how the diviner would correlate the inquirer's concerns to particular responses is uncertain. The instructions accompanying the *Sortes Astrampsychi* are complex yet clear, and the *Sortes sanctorum* were accessed through a prescribed system of die-casting or casting knucklebones. The biblical manuscripts include no such instructions. Yet *Sangermanensis* offers a clue. Prior to its presentation of the Eusebian Canons (fol. 89b), a wheel occurs, divided into eight sections and filled with a broken series of numbers leading up to 316—apparently a device to help the diviner select the right response.[48] Yet the mechanism of its operation is rather inscrutable; many of the numbers do not even correspond to sections in John with *sortes*, though most of them do. The Syriac Gospel codex BL Add. 17119 has no such device—though the absence of its original first two leaves is keenly felt, since they may have offered important clues as to the manuscript's intended use.

As for organization, the *sortes* in BL Add. 17119 show signs of an originally topical organization, though no simple pattern is immediately evident. The arcane arrangement of the topical sets of answers in the *Sortes Astrampsychi* stand as a reminder that cryptic patterns of organization are to be expected, and in their present form may have suffered from confusion and alteration in the transmission and translation processes. A few headings have left their traces by making their way into certain oracles in BL Add. 17119, presumably by accident. The following examples illustrate this phenomenon:

9	Jn 3:25	ܟܠܗ ܗܘ ܚܘܫܒܐ ܕܐܘܪܚܐ[49] ܫܦܝܪܐ ܗܘ	ܚܠܒ
		Interpretation: about the journey: it is good	38
10	Jn 3:36	ܐܢܬܐ ܠܐ ܬܬܚܪܐ ܟܠܗ ܗܘ ܚܘܫܒܐ	ܚܡ
		Interpretation: about controversy: do not quarrel	42
15r	Jn 4:53	ܕܥܘܕܪܢܐ ܟܠܗ ܗܘ ܚܘܫܒܐ	ܣܗ
		Interpretation: about help	60
22	Jn 6:31	ܕܦܘܪܩܢܐ ܐܣܐ ܟܠܗ ܗܘ ܚܘܫܒܐ	ܡܒ
		Interpretation: about life and deliverance	84

Parallel intrusions of topical headings occur in codex Bezae and *Sangermanensis* as well.[50] For example, at Jn 6:11 *Sangermanensis* includes the following "oracle," which is rather a heading, one that corresponds to number 84 in the Syriac text above: *lxxx. de uita et salute* (fol. 127). Again, at Jn 3:33, the following is parallel to the heading and oracle combination number 42 in the Syriac text: *xli. de contentatione ne creaueris*[51] (fol. 126r). Another exact parallel occurs in codex Bezae, in the unnumbered *hermeneia* that occurs in the 42nd position in that manuscript: ερμιϊνϊα +

---

[48] See Harris, "The 'Sortes Sanctorum'," 60–61.

[49] Corrected from ܟܠܝ.

[50] Harris, *Annotators of the Codex Bezae*, 70–71.

[51] i.e. *certaveris*?

περη ερϊσμου μϊ ερϊσησ[52] (fol. 306). The fact that these witnesses occasionally share even the intrusion of topical headings is a striking indication of their interrelationships. Yet none of these witnesses provides a full list of topics, nor do they allocate their *sortes* systematically into discernible groups. What topical clues we have appear to be accidental.

It is likely that the primary users of the *sortes* in biblical manuscripts would have been Christian clergy, though they could have consulted the *sortes* on behalf of lay clients. The Syriac BL Add. 17119 came to be owned by a Syrian monastery, and the proscriptions cited previously against the divinatory use of biblical texts are aimed at clerics. A monk or priest in possession of such a tool may have used it as an aid in the practice of pastoral counsel, but the contents of the *sortes* are not distinctly Christian and it is not unlikely that financial remuneration was involved in their use. The aforementioned monastic rules in particular have admonitions prohibiting various sorts of secular business for personal gain. The prohibitions against or restrictions of sortition in these texts may have been motivated as much by the desire to curb such unconventional entrepreneurship as by concerns regarding the practice's pagan origins.[53]

Given the labile nature of the *sortes*, the degree of corruption in our surviving evidence, and the absence of explanatory material, it may be impossible to reconstruct the system by which one arrived at particular answers, though it is to be hoped that further study of these materials will reveal additional clues as to their origin, organization, and use as a feature of biblical manuscripts.

5. *SORTES* AND JOHN'S GOSPEL

5.1 Long Association with John

Whatever the origin of the *sortes* in these manuscripts, or the precise method of sortition, in their current form they have been adapted to the context of John's Gospel. That John would be the text of choice for such a mystical application is not surprising, as we have seen.[54] The long association of these particular sets of *sortes* with John's Gospel may be seen in the following instance:

---

[52] N.B. the unusual and irregular orthographies of the *sortes* in Bezae, *Sangermanensis*, and BL Add. 17119.

[53] See Klingshirn, "Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*," 127.

[54] See the introduction above. For discussion of *sortes* attached to Mark's Gospel in codex Bezae, see §2.2 above.

17119 (15)	Jn 5:3	ܚܒ	ܩܘܡܥܐ ܗܐ ܣܚܠܡ ܐܢܬ ܠܐ ܐܣܟܠ
		62	*Interpretation: behold you are well, do not sin*
Bezae (D; 318r)	Mk 9	(65)	ερμηνϊα + ϊδε υγησ γεγονασ μϊκετϊ αμαρτανε + ϊνα μϊ τι χιρον συ γϊνετε +
			hermenia: behold you have become well, sin no more, so that nothing worse may happen to you
*Sang. (g*1; 126)	Jn 4:43	*lxii*	*ecce sanus factus es iam noli peccare*
			behold you are made well, sin no more

This is a unique example, almost certainly the result of an accident, yet it reveals that in an early version of the *sortes*, the text of Jn 5:14 was pulled into the *sortes* themselves, probably out of the main text into the margin, where the *sortes* resided.[55] The corruption is shared by our Syriac manuscript, Bezae, and *Sangermanensis*, testifying to the close connection between the archetype of the *sortes* and John's Gospel.

Yet apart from such accidents, it has been commonly held that these materials have little or no substantial connection to the actual contents of the Gospel. In 1884, M. Samuel Berger remarked that the *sortes* of *Sangermanensis* were "sans aucune relation avec la texte de l'Évangile."[56] Harris reflected the same belief, and it is tempting to follow the conventional viewpoint that the *sortes* are bound to the text of John only because of its potent and often mysterious language, not due to any meaningful connections with the narrative itself. Bruce Metzger was certainly correct in his observation that the *hermeneiai* are "not intended as exegetical comments on the Scripture text"[57]—that is, they do not function as interpretations of the text in the sense that contemporary exegetes normally mean interpretation. They do not gloss the biblical text, are not drawn from it, and their ancestry is ultimately traceable to pagan sources disconnected from the Bible. However, it can be shown that these *sortes* exhibit marked correspondences with the biblical text.

5.2 Substantial Connections with John's Narrative

To begin with, and unsurprisingly, many of the *sortes* echo the language of the Gospel or resonate with its tone. For instance, some of them talk about life or truth, which are common topics in John. *Sortes* numbers 9 and 33 focus on true speech and testimony, in contexts concerning accurate testimony (Jn 1:23; 3:11); indeed, testimony language is common in the *sortes*, as it is in John's Gospel. The language of glory is similarly common in both (e.g. *sors* 112). The promise of finding what one seeks is keyed to the story of discovering the empty tomb (Jn 20; *sors* 287), and an expectation of joy is expressed in the context of the resurrection narrative (*sors* 291).

---

[55] See Harris, *Annotators of the Codex Bezae*, 64n1.

[56] ("Unrelated to the text of the Gospel.") *Bulletin Critique* 5 (1884) 361–66; quoted by Harris, "The 'Sortes Sanctorum'," 59.

[57] Metzger, "Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel," 166–67.

Many of the *sortes* that are tied to the narrative of Lazarus' resurrection (Jn 11) promise that all will turn out well (e.g. *sortes* 168, 169, 171–77), and in the context of John 7, where Jesus is falsely accused, *sors* 105 enjoins, ܠܐ ܬܕܘܠ ܡܢ ܡܡܠܠܐ *Do not fear slander*. The oracle adjacent to Jesus' request for a drink in Jn 4:7 speaks of *refreshment and gain* ܢܝܚܐ ܘܬܘܬܪܐ (*sors* 44).

For some of these, the alleged connections are rather vague. But a few of them are so suggestive as to prompt a closer look, in which we find some connections responding even more directly to the narrative. For example, in the context of a dispute involving John the Baptist's disciples (Jn 3:25), *sors* 42 instructs, ܠܐ ܬܬܚܪܐ *Do not dispute*. At precisely the point where Jesus encourages his disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled" (Jn 14:1), *sors* 213 has, ܠܐ ܬܬܥܝܩ ܥܠ ܗܕܐ ܨܒܘܬܐ *Do not be distressed at this matter*. Just before Jesus warns his disciples that they will have the light only a little longer (Jn 12:35), *sors* 194 urges, ܣܥܘܪ ܨܒܘܬܐ ܘܠܐ ܬܬܚܒܠ ܚܦܝܛܐܝܬ *Accomplish the matter quickly, lest you lose it*. At Jn 16:33, where Jesus encourages his disciples to "take heart, for [he has] overcome the world," *sors* 246 also says, "you will overcome in judgment" (ܙܟܝ ܐܢܬ ܒܕܝܢܐ).

Oracles regarding court decisions and judgements seem especially frequent in the scenes of Jesus' trials in John 18, and an oracle about laughter and ridicule is keyed to Jn 19:2 (*sors* 272), where the soldiers are taunting Jesus. Further down in the same chapter, two oracles occur about deeds being completed well and finished, using the same term (ܫܠܡ) that occurs in the immediate Gospel context more than once to speak of Jesus' completing and fulfilling his work on the cross (Jn 19:28, 30). Oracles of salvation and escape appear alongside narratives of healing and Jesus' eluding danger (*sortes* 58, 139). At Jn 11:4, just before Jesus' disciples question his decision to return to Judea and face danger there, *sors* 165 says, ܠܐ ܬܥܒܕ ܗܕܐ ܨܒܘܬܐ *Do not do this thing*. In John 5, where the healed paralytic is challenged by the Jews to confess who was responsible for performing a healing on the Sabbath, *sors* 63 exhorts, ܠܐ ܬܟܦܘܪ ܐܠܐ ܐܘܕܐ *Do not deny but confess*. After Judas slips out to betray Jesus (Jn 13:30) and before Jesus speaks of his imminent glorification (13:31), *sors* 210 reads, ܡܢ ܚܘܣܪܢܐ ܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ ܗܘܐ *from want/deficiency will come glory*. Where Jesus bequeaths peace (Jn 14:27), *sors* 223 promises, *the affair will produce peace* ܢܦܩܐ ܨܒܘܬܐ ܠܫܠܡܐ. Just before Mary lavishes perfume on Jesus' feet (Jn 12:1ff.), *sors* 182 has, ܠܐ ܬܟܠܐ ܡܕܡ ܕܛܒ *do not withhold what is good*, and in the context alluding to Peter's martyrdom (Jn 21:19), *sors* 306 promises, *in a foreign country you will have cause to praise God at last* ܒܐܬܪܐ ܢܘܟܪܝܐ ܠܐܠܗܐ ܬܘܕܐ ܚܪܬܐ. The inquirer happy enough to get response *sors* 23, *joy that you did not expect will be yours* ܚܕܘܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܣܒܪܬ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܝܐ ܠܟ may notice that the promise occurs within the narrative where the head of the marriage feast is surprised by unexpectedly fine wine (Jn 2:9). After Andrew remarks that five loaves and two fish will not go far (Jn 6:9), *sors* 76 has, ܡܢ ܡܕܡ ܙܥܘܪܐ ܠܛܒܬܐ ܪܒܬܐ *from something small to a great good*. In two different contexts where it is remarked that Jesus' time had not yet come, *sortes* caution that the time is not right for a particular venture (*sortes* 98, 99, 122). A few involve numbers, as in *sors* 28, where it is promised that a thing will resolve after three days, shortly after Jesus' promise to rebuild the temple in three days (Jn 2:19–22).

This pattern of correlation between certain *sortes* and the Gospel text is far from thoroughgoing. In many instances there is no perceptible connection between

the language of the oracle and that of its biblical context. Furthermore, John presents more opportunities than the *sortes* exploit. For instance, one wonders why John 5, with its lengthy discussion of testimony, did not attract more *sortes* regarding testimony. Yet where they occur, the large number of thematic parallels and shared language cannot be coincidental. When the *sortes* were adapted out of their original context and wedded to the Gospel text, the structure and language of the biblical narrative influenced the placement of at least many of them, perhaps even the wording of some.[58] This is more evident in the Syriac set than in *Sangermanensis*, partly because the former is a more complete set, but also because in the Syriac the placement reveals greater intentionality than we see in the Latin; the Syriac may be less corrupt in this regard. In any case, the pattern of placement shows us that for their potency, the *sortes* draw not only on the authority of the sacred codex and the aura of mystery and power that John's Gospel enjoyed, but even on very specific elements of the narrative itself, sometimes in sophisticated ways. To the original users, they were ܦܘܫܩܐ *interpretations*—though their hermeneutic and underlying epistemology are distinctive.[59] They show us a different mode of interpretation by which to bring the divine authority of the text to bear on the believer's questions than we typically see in patristic and medieval commentaries, but a hermeneutic nonetheless; perhaps not officially sanctioned, but popular, and executed with some care by learned clergy.

6. CONCLUSION

The Syriac manuscript BL Add. 17119 is the most complete and legible instance of this remarkable phenomenon known to exist.[60] As such, it will play a major role in the study of the practice of sortition in ancient Christian contexts, and especially of *sortes* in biblical manuscripts. The codex stands as a reminder that scholars of ancient texts must not underestimate the importance of the artifacts bearing the texts. When one disconnects a text from the concrete artifact in which it resides, one runs the risk of missing critical dimensions of the text's original significance. Philip E. Pusey collated the Syriac manuscript for the 1901 edition of the Peshitta Gospels,[61] but no mention was made of the *sortes*. Pusey had a particular purpose for carefully extracting the Peshitta text as a separate item, but it is worth noting that the original

---

[58] Naturally, adjustments in placement would also mean changes in sequence and numbering, thereby bearing implications for the mechanism by which particular numbers would be selected and perhaps impinging on the *sortes*' topical organization as well.

[59] For a discussion of divination systems as distinctive modes of cognition tailored to the epistemologies of particular cultures, see Peek, "African Divination Systems," 194–208.

[60] In personal correspondence, Andreas Juckel has confirmed that of the many Peshitta and Harklean version manuscripts that he and his colleagues have collated in their ongoing work on the Syriac text of John, they have found no other Syriac codices of John with *hermeneiai* like BL Add. 17119.

[61] See n. 7 above.

scribe and users of the codex did not see the text in precisely this way. That is, they were not so disposed to detach the two elements, but went to considerable trouble and expense to ensure that they were integrally linked. Using the Pusey edition of the Peshitta, one may get a certain sense of the manuscript, but a fuller study of the codex itself yields a very different picture—one that discloses crucial features of the text's context and original significance that are effaced when the biblical text is isolated and extracted from its original context as part of a divinatory device. It is to be hoped that further research on these unusual materials will not only clarify their origins, interrelationships, and manners of use, but will also illuminate our understanding of the diverse functions that biblical texts have had amongst those who held them sacred.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bosworth, Clifford E. *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld: the Banū Sāsān in Arabic Society and Literature.* 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1976.

Brodersen, Kai, ed. *Astrampsychos das Pythagoras-Orakel und über magische Steine über Traumdeutung Liebesbindezauber.* Texte zur Forschung 88. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006.

Brown, T. Julian, ed. *The Stonyhurst Gospel of Saint John.* Oxford: The Roxburghe Club, 1969.

Browne, Gerald M., ed. *Sortes Astrampsychi Vol. 1. Ecdosis Prior.* Leipzig: Teubner, 1983.

Childers, Jeff W. "Chrysostom's Exegetical Homilies on the New Testament in Syriac Translation." Pages 509–16 in *Studia Patristica XXXIII.* Edited by E.A. Livingstone. Leuven: Peeters, 1997.

———. "Mapping the Syriac Chrysostom: The Topography of His Legacy in the Syriac Tradition." Pages 135–56 in *The Bible, the Qur'ān, & Their Interpretation: Syriac Perspectives.* Edited by Cornelia B. Horn. Eastern Mediterranean Texts and Contexts 1. Warwick, R.I.: Abelian Academic, 2013.

———. "Chrysostom in Syriac Dress." Studia Patristica 67 (2013): 323-32.

Gamble, Harry Y. *Books and Readers in the Early Church.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1997.

Gifford, George. *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes.* London, 1593. Reprinted with pagination, London: The Percy Society, 1842.

Goshen-Gottstein, Moshe H. *Syriac Manuscripts in the Harvard College Library. A Catalogue.* Harvard Semitic Studies 23. Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979.

Hansen, William, ed. *Anthology of Ancient Greek Popular Literature.* Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Harris, J. Rendel. "The 'Sortes Sanctorum' in the St. Germain Codex (*g*1)." *American Journal of Philology* 9 (1888): 58–63.

———. *The Annotators of the Codex Bezae (with Some Notes on Sortes Sanctorum).* London: C.J. Clay & Sons, 1901.

Horst, Pieter W. van der. "*Sortes*: Sacred Books as Instant Oracles in Late Antiquity." Pages 151–59 in *The Use of Sacred Books in the Ancient World.* Edited by Leonard V. Rutgers et al. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 22. Leuven: Peeters, 1998.

Klingshirn, William E. "Defining the *Sortes Sanctorum*: Gibbon, Du Cange, and Early Christian Lot Divination." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 10/1 (2002): 77–130.

Metzger, Bruce M. "Greek Manuscripts of John's Gospel with 'Hermeneiai'." Pages 162–69 in *Text and Testimony. Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A.F.J. Klijn.* Edited by Tjitze Baarda et al. Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1988.

Montero Cartelle, Enrique, and Alberto Alonso Guardo. *Los "Libros de Suertes" medievales: Las* Sortes Sanctorum *y los* Prenostica Socratis Basilei. *Estudio, traduccíon y edición crítica.* Neuva Roma 21. Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, 2004.

Naether, Franziska. *Die Sortes Astrampsychi. Problemlösungsstrategien durch Orakel im römischen Ägypten.* Orientalische Religionen in der Antike: Ägypten, Israel, Alter Orient 3. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Outtier, Bernard. "Réponses oraculaires dans des manuscrits bibliques caucasiens." Pages 181–84 in *Armenia and the Bible.* Edited by C. Burchard. University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies 12. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.

———. "Les *Prosermeneiai* du Codex Bezae." Pages 74–78 in *Codex Bezae. Studies from the Lunel Colloquium, June 1994.* Edited by D.C. Parker and C.-B. Amphoux. New Testament Tools and Studies 22. Leiden: Brill, 1996.

Parker, David C. *Codex Bezae: An Early Christian Manuscript and its Text.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

———. "Manuscripts of John's Gospel with *Hermeneiai*." Pages 48–68 in *Transmission and Reception: New Testament Text-Critical and Exegetical Studies.* Edited by Jeff W. Childers and David C. Parker. Texts and Studies 3.4. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006.

Peek, Philip M. "African Divination Systems. Non-normal Modes of Cognition." Pages 193–212 in *African Divination Systems. Ways of Knowing.* Edited by Philip M. Peek. Bloomington, Ill.: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Pusey, Philip Edward, and George Henry Gwilliam. *Tetraeuangelium sanctum juxta simplicem Syrorum versionem ad fidem codicum, Massorae, editionum denuo recognitum.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1901.

Salter, Herbert E., ed. *Eynsham Cartulary.* 2 vols. Oxford Historical Society 49–50. Oxford: Oxford Historical Society, 1907–1908.

Scrivener, F.H. *Bezae Codex Cantabrigiensis.* Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, 1864.

Skemer, Don C. *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages.* Pennsylvania State University: University Press, 2006.

Stegmüller, Otto. "Zu den Bibelorakeln im Codex Bezae." *Biblica* 34 (1953): 13–22.

Stewart, Randall. "The Textual Transmission of the 'Sortes Astrampsychi'." *Illinois Classical Studies* 20 (1995): 135–47.

———, ed. *Sortes Astrampyschi. Vol. 2: Ecdopsis Altera.* Leipzig: Saur, 2001.

Taylor, David G.K. "Psalm Headings in the West Syrian Tradition." Pages 365–78 in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy. Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium.* Edited by Bas ter Haar Romeny. Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 15. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Thomas, Keith. *Religion and the Decline of Magic.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Vööbus, Arthur, ed. *Syriac and Arabic Documents Regarding Legislation Relative to Syrian Asceticism.* Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile 11. Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 1960.

Wright, W. *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since the Year 1838.* 3 Vols. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870–1872.

CHAPTER 11
THE LEXICON OF THE TABERNACLE ACCOUNTS IN THE SYROHEXAPLA VERSION OF EXODUS

Alison G. Salvesen

Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies
Faculty of Oriental Studies
University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

The Harklean New Testament and the Syrohexapla are "mirror" translations of Greek Scripture, both produced in the early seventh century CE. The translators of both these works relied on centuries of expertise in rendering Greek biblical and theological texts into Syriac, and yet they may not have previously encountered certain technical terms they were required to translate.

This paper examines the nature of the Syrohexapla's renderings for items in the Tabernacle described in Exodus. It asks to what degree such terms already existed in Syriac, and how consistent the translators were in using them. It illustrates something of the working methods of the ancient translators and their lexicographical expertise.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Syrohexapla (Syh) is the Syriac rendering of Origen's revised Greek Septuagint text, carried out in 616/7 CE near Alexandria (the Enaton). The figure associated with this major undertaking is that of Paul, bishop of Tella, but this does not exclude the possibility that other translators were involved.

Given that the textual basis of Syh derived from the Origenic recension of the LXX, as suggested in several colophons to Syh manuscripts and demonstrated by

modern scholars,[1] the traditional role of the Syh in scholarship has been to shed light on the history of the LXX text. Indeed it frequently offers the best witness to Origen's activities.[2] Less attention has been paid to the achievement of the Syh translator(s). Though the style of rendering can be seen as rather "unnatural" Syriac compared to that of the Peshitta and even more to that of Ephrem, by the early seventh century similar translation techniques that attempted to mirror the Greek *Vorlage* had become the norm for rendering commentaries and other works from Greek.[3] No doubt this long history of rendering Greek works into Syriac was of considerable help to the Syh translator(s), but given the range of genres covered by the Old Testament books, the lexicographical angle of the work was probably fairly demanding.[4]

In Marketta Liljeström's chapter on the Syrohexapla translation of 1 Samuel,[5] she discusses the consistency of translation correspondences. In one section she comments specifically on the renderings of the more mundane cultic utensils. This lexical area is of particular interest, since Greek to Syriac translation was traditionally motivated by theological concerns. No doubt Paul and his circle had plenty of training in rendering commonplace vocabulary in addition to theological, philosophical and abstract terms.[6] However, one wonders how far their knowledge of both Greek and Syriac covered prosaic items such as different sorts of pots and pans, and also more specialized technical terms that were of no special interest theologically.

Thus, the two separate accounts of the building of the Tabernacle in Exodus, recounting the Lord's detailed commands (henceforth Tab A: chs. 25–31) and Moses' fulfilment of them (henceforth Tab B: chs. 35–40) respectively, may provide some insight into the translators' methodology and range. Both in Hebrew and Greek, these chapters contain many fairly obscure items. Furthermore, there are some differences between the LXX Greek of the first and second accounts.[7] Since

---

[1] See Hiebert, "Syriac Biblical Textual history," 182–83; and Law, *Origenes Orientalis*, 18–21.

[2] For instance, in 3 Kingdoms (1 Kings): Law, *Origenes Orientalis*, 362–70.

[3] See Brock, "Towards a History of Syriac Translation Technique," 5, 7; and Van Rompay, "Some Preliminary Remarks," 85.

[4] The work of T.S. Rørdam is a very thorough study of many aspects of Syh's translation technique, but does not analyze the lexicographical aspect of the enterprise, and there are no examples from the Pentateuch. Rørdam, *Libri Judicum et Ruth*, 3–59.

[5] Liljeström, "Observations on the Mode of Translation."

[6] See Brock, "Greek into Syriac," 3–4.

[7] The standard scholarly edition is that of John William Wevers—*Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, II.1: Exodus*. As with the other books of the Septuagint Pentateuch, its reconstruction of the earliest recoverable text of LXX Exodus (the "Old Greek") relies heavily on the earliest complete text of the book, that of Codex Vaticanus (fourth century CE). However, the Syrohexapla was based on the Greek text extensively revised by Origen in line with the later Jewish Greek versions and the Rabbinic Hebrew text and therefore does

the oldest witnesses to LXX Exodus have a shorter and different order of material in the second Tabernacle account, the Hebrew text of Exodus may have been still developing towards its present form when it was rendered into Greek around 250 BCE by the first LXX translators. From a certain lack of consistency between the Greek rendering of the two Tabernacle accounts it is also possible that a different Greek translator worked on the second account some years after the first account had been translated: in other words, terms found in Tab B do not necessarily match those established in Tab A.[8] In the early third century, the Greek Christian scholar Origen was the first to comment on the lack of match between the Church's LXX manuscripts of Exodus and the texts found among Jews, in both Hebrew and the later Jewish Greek revisions of Theodotion, Aquila and Symmachus that reflected the rabbinic Hebrew text.[9] In an attempt to sort out the textual chaos of Exodus for Christians, Origen matched up (or patched up) and re-organized a semi-revised LXX text by means of further additional material from Theodotion, Aquila and Symmachus, in order to close the gap between the Jewish and Christian forms of the text.[10]

Almost four centuries later, the translator of the Syrohexapla version of Exodus rendered the revised LXX text of Origen, replete with text-critical (Aristarchan) signs that marked adjustments to the form of Exodus found among Jews. (It should be noted that this Greek text was very different from the modern critical editions of Rahlfs and Wevers, which aim to recreate the *pre*-Origenic form of the LXX approximating that which the original Jewish translators produced.) We are fortunate in having a complete, legible and early manuscript of SyhExodus in the British Library manuscript BM Add. 12134, dated by its colophon to 697 CE. This is a mere eighty years after the creation of the Syrohexapla.[11] So we can be confident that it is a reasonably reliable witness to the original work of the Syh translator(s).

---

not correspond to the main text of the Göttingen edition. See also Wevers, *Text History of the Greek Exodus*; idem, "The Building of the Tabernacle;" and Wade, *Consistency of Translation Techniques*.

[8] Not all scholars agree with this analysis, and so offer alternative explanations. For a recent summary of the situation and the various positions, see Salvesen, "Textual Criticism."

[9] Origen, *Letter to Africanus*, §7.

[10] Origen's motives were likely to have been both apologetic and text-critical: see Salvesen, "A Convergence of the Ways?" 240 and n. 23.

[11] For this study, the edition by Lagarde was used: *Bibliothecae Syriacae a Paulo de Lagarde collectae quae ad philologiam sacram pertinent*. However, it was supplemented by consultation of a microfilm of BM Add. MS 12134 in order to clarify ambiguities in Lagarde's edition. Vööbus' photographic edition of the Midyat Syh Pentateuch manuscript was also of use: Vööbus, *The Pentateuch in the Version of the Syro-Hexapla*. This twelfth century manuscript includes fewer text-critical symbols (the "Aristarchan signs" of asterisk and obelus) and readings from the "Three" than the manuscript in the British Library. No doubt many of these signs and readings had fallen out in the course of transmission. The colophon records faithfully (if rather unclearly) its pedigree back through Greek exemplars taken from the

Many major items in the Tabernacle such as the lampstand, altar and ark, maintain their Peshitta rendering in Syh, probably because they were well-known and the Peshitta terms had been retained in other translations such as commentaries. Other less significant items such as hooks and fire-irons do not appear to have had a translation history behind them, and Paul of Tella may have been the first to try to render the Greek names into Syriac. In some cases, alternative Greek terms for the same items were known from the revisions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion. Before these were placed in the margins of the Syh, they required Syriac renderings that would preferably distinguish them from both those of the Peshitta and those provided by the Syh rendering of the LXX.[12] Interestingly, the translator seldom falls back on the Peshitta rendering for this kind of term. When he does so, it may be because no other word was available to him, or perhaps because he considered the Peshitta term to be synonymous with the LXX word anyway.

Since we have more-or-less parallel lists of items in chapters 26–31 and 36–40, it is possible to compare renderings in these parallel passages in order to check the translator's consistency. In a few places we find a LXX term translated once according to the Greek, and several chapters away the same term is rendered by the normal word used in the Peshitta.[13]

2. THE USE OF GREEK LOANWORDS IN THE SYROHEXAPLA OF EXODUS

In many cases, particularly for the basic items used in the construction of the Tabernacle, the Syh translator produces what are effectively transliterations of the Greek LXX terms. Some of these were well established as loanwords at an early stage of the Syriac language, being found in the Peshitta itself at times.[14] Others may be forms created specially by the Syh translator, but as with apparent neologisms in the LXX, it is hard to prove that the occurrence in the Syh is also the word's first attestation in Syriac. Sometimes Jewish Aramaic or Christian Palestinian Aramaic have similar transliterations, which may suggest that a particular Greek word was used more widely by speakers across a range of Aramaic dialects. Thus we find Syh ܐܢܩܠܐ for LXX ἀγκύλαι "loops, hooks"[15] (with the alternative transliteration ܐܢܩܘܠܣ

Hexapla in the library of Caesarea and the collation work of Eusebius.

[12] Readings from the "Three" may have come to the Syh through marginal material in Eusebius' Greek text (as suggested by the colophon of Exodus in BM Add. 12134), and also via the medium of commentaries, homilies, catenae, and other biblical MSS (Law, *Origenes Orientalis*, 19).

[13] Because of the confusing lack of match between the chapter and verse numbering of the Hebrew Bible (MT) and that of the Old Greek, and since this study focuses on Syh as a rendering of the Origenic LXX, throughout this article the numbering used is that of the MT, which conveniently tallies with that of the Syh and Peshitta.

[14] Schall, *Studien*, gives a useful survey of Greek loanwords in Syriac and the approximate date of their appearance. He mentions Syh on 136, 142–43. See also Brock, "Some Aspects of Greek Words," 87, on the nature of early loanwords.

[15] Exod 26:4, 5³, 10², 11; Exod 36:11, 12³, 17². Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text*, 615,

at Exod 38:17; 39:6). Similar transliterations of ἀγκύλη are found in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic and Mishnaic Hebrew, though not in the Peshitta.[16] Some must been used in everyday life by native Syriac speakers in the seventh century: note the very early use of ܡܘܟ̈ܠܐ "bolts, bars" derived from Greek μοχλοί, which appears in the Peshitta Old Testament to render Hebrew בְּרִיחִים as well as in SyhExod for μοχλοί.[17] At Exod 27:3 and 38:3 ܦ̈ܝܠܐܣ in Syh represents φιάλαι "shallow bowl, saucer." The loanword ܦ̈ܝܠܐܣ occurs in the Peshitta Pentateuch in other places, so must be a fairly early loan.[18] Similarly, Syh ܟܣ̈ܡܬܐ represents βάσεις "bases."[19] The Peshitta of Exodus uses the same word in another place (25:31). However, when Syh renders στύλος with ܐܣܛܘ̈ܢܐ (e.g. Exod 26 and 35–36 *passim*), according to Sokoloff (*SL*) and Schall, this is not in fact a loanword from Greek but from Middle Persian: yet the resemblance in sound and meaning to the Greek probably influenced its use to represent στύλος.[20] ܩܘܪ̈ܩܣܐ is a loanword from κρίκοι and occurs in the Peshitta of Exodus[21] to represent the Hebrew term קְרָסִים "hooks" (no doubt a guess influenced by homoiophony). However, it was subsequently used in Syh to represent the very term κρίκοι from which it derived.[22] Γωνίαι "corners" become ܓܘ̈ܢܝܐ in SyhExodus:[23] ܓܘ̈ܢܝܐ is attested in the Harklean version, contemporaneously with Syh, but it would not be surprising to find the word in technical works translated just before this period. Κεφαλίδες are rendered by either ܩܦ̈ܠܘܬܐ or ܩܦ̈ܠܬܐ, which do not appear to be early loans into Syriac, but a similar form apparently also appears in Christian Palestinian Aramaic.[24] ܬܝ̈ܩܐ renders θήκαι "cases":[25] this loan is apparently not earlier than the sixth century, since it appears in the Syriac *Life of Severus* (though the date of the latter is uncertain).

---

observes that the Greek word refers to fabric loops in Tab A, but to metal hooks in Tab B.

[16] See Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon* (*SL*), 64b. The form ܬܝܩܐ is a corruption of ܬܩܐ, according to Sokoloff (38a).

[17] E.g. Exod 26:26, 27. Theodore bar Koni gives an explanation of the word (Hespel, *Livre des Scolies*, 186, line 16). The difficulty, however, appears to arise not from the word itself but from the particular context where it is used, since "bars," normally associated with imprisonment, are used to carry the ark. On the early history of the word, see also Brock, "Some Aspects of Greek Words," 95–98.

[18] E.g. PNum 7:13, and in PExod 25:29.

[19] At Exod 26:19[3], 21[3]; 36:24[3], 26[3], 30[4], 38.

[20] Schall, *Studien*, 35; *SL* 68, cf. Targum Aramaic.

[21] Theodore bar Koni tries to explain the word (Hespel, *Livre des Scolies*, 186, line 21): though the text of the *Scholion* is corrupt, it indicates that he thought they were rings of some kind.

[22] Exod 26:6[2], 11; 27:10, 11; 36:13, 18. See *SL*, 1415b.

[23] E.g. Exod 26:23, 24; 27:2; Exod 36:28, 29.

[24] E.g. Exod 26:24, 32, 37; 27:17; Exod 36:36; ch. 38 *passim*, and Aquila and Symmachus 38:38.

[25] E.g. Exod 25:27; Exod 37:14, 27. *SL* 1642a also cites references in the Harklean version of John, as well as the Syriac Apology of Aristides, whose date of translation seems

Some loanwords for technical terms in Syh probably were restricted to texts translated from Greek.[26] For example, SyhExodus has ܦܩܠܝܣܐ (variously spelt ܦܩܠܝܣܐ or ܦܩܐܠܝܣܐ in both manuscripts) for ψαλίδες "rings; rounded mouldings."[27] A scholion in the margin of Syh at Exod 27:10 explains ܦܩܠܝܣܐ as meaning tongs (ܡܠܩܛܐ) of various metals used to grasp things. The fact that such an explanation was deemed necessary suggests that the term ܦܩܠܝܣܐ would not have been familiar to the reader. Regarding ܐܢܩܘܢܐ for ἀγκωνίσκοι "joints,"[28] the Syriac equivalent is based on the non-diminutive Greek form of the word, ἀγκών "bend, angle," and it occurs elsewhere in Syh for this latter term, but does not appear to be an early loanword.

In SyhExodus 28 and 39, the twelve stones in the high priest's breastplate are all rendered by transliterations of the Greek forms in LXX, whereas the Peshitta uses only two Greek loans for its own, rather differently ordered list of stones, ܩܪܟܕܢܐ (καρχηδόνιος) and ܒܗܪܘܠܐ (βήρυλλος), the latter being the only shared term.[29]

In other places the Syh translator took over terms from the Peshitta, either for general items of clothing, or as mentioned above, for well-known items such as the lampstand (Exod 25:32 etc., ܡܢܪܬܐ) and the altar (ܡܕܒܚܐ Exod 20:26 etc.). The Syh term ܦܪܣܐ referring to the veils in the Tabernacle, and translated by καταπέτασμα in LXX, is carried over from the Peshitta.[30] This could be either because there was no other appropriate term available to the translator, or it was due to the fact that the term can refer to the cloth covering the Eucharistic bread.[31] However, where LXX has κάλυμμα (for מָסָךְ) Syh registers the different Greek word by using ܐܣܟܡܐ (Exod 27:16) while the Peshitta continues to use ܦܪܣܐ. The native Syriac names for certain items of clothing such as ܟܘܬܝܢܐ,[32] ܡܨܢܦܬܐ,[33] ܗܡܝܢܐ,[34] in the Tabernacle accounts are found in both Peshitta and Syh. Yet στολαί is transliterated

---

to be unknown.

[26] Schall, *Studien,* 45, 50. He also refers to an inscription edited by Pognon and to the *Chronicle of Edessa*, on the Flood of 201.

[27] E.g. Exod 26:10, 11; 27:10, 11; 30:4; 36:38; 38:4, 9, 10, 17. There is a typographical error in this entry in *SL* 1210b: the penultimate *heh* should be *yudh*.

[28] E.g. Exod 26:17; 36:22.

[29] Exod 28:19, 20; 39:10–13. Both ܩܪܟܕܢܐ and ܒܗܪܘܠܐ are also mentioned in the Hymn of the Pearl: see Schall, *Studien,* 121–22 on loanwords from Greek for gems in the Hymn, though he notes that some may have come into Syriac through other oriental languages such as Sanskrit, rather than Greek.

[30] E.g. Exod 26:31, 33; 27:21 (Tab A); Exod 35:12; 39:34 (Theodotion) (Tab B) for Heb. פָּרֹכֶת, and Exod 26:36, 37 for מָסָךְ. Note that τὸ κατακάλυμμα τοῦ καταπετάσματος is rendered by ܐܣܟܡܐ ܘܦܪܣܐ at Exod 40:21.

[31] See RPS, 3278a–3279a.

[32] E.g. Exod 28:4; 40 (for χιτών, which renders כְּתֹנֶת).

[33] E.g. Exod 28:4, 40; 29:9 (for κίδαρις, which renders ܡܨܢܦܬܐ).

[34] E.g. Exod 28:4, 40; 29:9 (for ζώνη, rendering אַבְנֵט). However, see below for the different rendering at 39:29.

as اصطلا (cf. P ܠܚܬܩܡܐ)[35] and ποδήρης as ܦܪܘܙܐ (cf. P ܦܪܙܡܐ),[36] and there is the near-calque of ܚܙ ܣܝܡܐ for περιστήθιον (cf. P ܦܪܙܘܡܐ, probably a loanword from περίζωμα).[37]

Ref. (MT and Syh)	MT	LXX	Syrohexapla	Peshitta
Exod 27:4	מִכְבָּר	ἐσχάρα	ܓܪܝܠܬܐ	ܣܪܩܬܐ
Exod 27:5	כַּרְכֹּב	ἐσχάρα	ܓܪܝܠܬܐ	ܩܘܕܠܐ
Exod 35:16	מִכְבָּר	※κοσκίνωμα	ܓܪܝܠܬܐ	ܣܡܟܐ
Exod 38:4	כַּרְכֹּב	πυρεῖον	ܚܣܝܡܐ	ܩܘܕܠܐ
Exod 38:4,5,30; 39:39[38]	מִכְבָּר	παράθεμα	ܓܪܝܠܬܐ	ܣܪܩܬܐ

The table above shows the variety of LXX and Peshitta terms for the grating (מִכְבָּר) and the border of the altar (כַּרְכֹּב), and the way in which Syh uses ܓܪܝܠܬܐ as a blanket term for three different Greek words and three different Peshitta terms.

The Syh translator does not use the PExodus term ܣܪܩܬܐ, considered by *SL* to derive from Latin *cracli,* a form of *clathri* < κλεῖθρον (Exod 27:4: *CSD* glosses as "grating"[39]). He employs only ܓܪܝܠܬܐ, "gridiron," but a marginal note ܚܙܠܐ, "sieve," at 38:4 indicates that this may have been an unfamiliar word.[40] CSD associates ܓܪܝܠܬܐ with Latin *craticulum,* but *SL* derives it from the dissimilation of ܣܪܩܬܐ.[41] Had the

---

[35] E.g. Exod 28:2 (Tab A); Exod 39:41³ (Tab B).

[36] E.g. Exod 28:4.

[37] E.g. Exod 28:4. A marginal reading at 25:7 in both MSS of SyhExodus gives the word in Greek letters, and then an explanation: "a garment of the priests, reaching down to the feet."

Compare the Syriac renderings by Jacob of Edessa for Severus of Antioch's *Homily* 116 given by Lucas Van Rompay in the Greek-Syriac glossary to *La chaîne sur l'Exode,* (ed. Petit) §838 (Jacob glosses ποδήρης as ܐܣܛܠܐ ܕܡܛܐ ܐܘ ܦܘܪܙܐ ܕܡܚܬ ܥܕܡܐ, "a robe reaching to the feet"), §843, 78–81: the significance of a number of different items of high priestly apparel is drawn out by Severus. See also Brière, *Les Homélies Cathédrales,* 328–32, in which Jacob routinely gives both a transliteration in Syriac and the normal Peshitta term together. Salvesen, "Jacob of Edessa's Version," 50n21 comments on Jacob's use of terms for priestly garments.

[38] Not represented in the Old Greek. Rendered by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion as ܦܘܣܟܠܐ, according to the margin of the Syh.

[39] *CSD*, 521.

[40] Cf. also the marginal reading of Aquila, Symmachus. and Theodotion at Exod 27:4, ܐܝܟ ܚܙܠܐ.

[41] *CSD*, 182. The margin of the Syh records that the "Three" also have ܓܪܝܠܬܐ:

Peshitta form ܡܨܝܕܬܐ fallen out of normal usage by the early seventh century? Certainly, by the end of the eighth century, Theodore bar Koni lists ܡܨܝܕܬܐ among the obscure words of the Peshitta Pentateuch and explains it as something resembling a net (ܡܨܝܕܬܐ).[42] It may be pertinent that PLeviticus and PProverbs, both regarded by Michael Weitzman as two of the later books to be translated on the basis of other quirks of lexical usage,[43] use ܛܪܛܩܠܐ: for מרחשת at Lev 2:7 and for פחם at Prov 26:21. A marginal note in the Midyat manuscript of SyhExodus at Exod 27:4 gives ܛܪܛܩܠܐ in Greek letters (ΤΡΑΤΕΚΛΑ): this would suggest that by the medieval period, a scribe considered the word to be Greek in origin.

The Syh translator avoids replicating the Peshitta term ܡܪܒܥ "square,"[44] preferring a transliteration of LXX τετράγωνον instead (ܛܛܪܓܘܢܘܢ). Nearly a century later, for his own version of Exodus, Jacob of Edessa sometimes uses ܐܪܒܥ ܓܘܢ̈ܝܬܐ "four cornered," and at others ܡܪܒܥܐ—the Peshitta's term in the emphatic state. Jacob's version is a useful comparison to Syh. Even though he himself rendered Greek texts quite literally, his own late seventh century revision of Old Testament books that interweaves Peshitta and LXX material is less rigid than Syh, yet sometimes he appears to avoid certain expressions in the Peshitta that in his day may have been archaic.[45]

3. INCONSISTENCIES

Items for the bronze altar in SyhExod 38:23 (Tab B: MT and P 38:3) have three Greek-based renderings, ܦܝܠܬܐ, ܓܝܣܘܢ and ܒܣܝܣ, for φιάλαι, γείσιον, and βάσις, followed by two that follow the Peshitta, ܡܣܠܘ̈ܬܐ and ܦܝܪܡܐ for κρεάγραι and πυρεῖον. But in the earlier parallel list in Exod 27:3 (Tab A), the translator had used ܒܝܬ ܢܘܪܐ for πυρεῖον instead of Peshitta ܦܝܪܡܐ. Jacob of Edessa follows the Peshitta's terms in both accounts.

There are other intriguing inconsistencies between the two different Tabernacle accounts. In the descriptions of priestly clothing in the parallel accounts (Tab A in Exod 27 and Tab B in Exod 38), the Syh translator does not always use the same term for the Greek equivalent. In the case of the full-length robe, ὑποδύτης ποδήρη (מְעִיל הָאֵפֹוד), in Tab A he uses ܦܪܙܘܡܐ ܠܒܘܫܐ (LXX 28:27: MT/P 28:31), but in Tab B we find ܠܒܘܫܐ ܕܠ ܦܪܙܘܡܐ (LXX 36:30; MT/ P 39:22). In the case of the belts, ζῶναι (אַבְנֵטִים), he uses the Peshitta term ܗܡܝܢܐ in Exod LXX 28:36 (MT/P 28:40), but a transliteration of the Greek, ܙܘܢ̈ܣ, in LXX 36:37 (MT/P 39:29). The same happens in Exod LXX 28:29 (MT/P 28:33), where Syh has the

---

Theodotion and Symmachus in Exod 35:15 (LXX 17), and all three revisers in Exod 38:4. Jacob of Edessa also uses this word consistently in his version of Exodus.

[42] Hespel, *Livre des Scolies*, 187, line 1.

[43] Weitzman, *The Syriac Version*, 179.

[44] E.g. Exod 28:16; 37:25; 38:1.

[45] Salvesen, *I–II Samuel*, xi–xii.

Peshitta term ܠܘܡܐ for λῶμα, "hem," but in LXX 36:32–34 (MT/P 39:24–26) it is rendered as ܐܙܡܬ ܐܘ or ܐܘܡܙܐ.[46]

In this respect of lexical consistency, we should compare the Harklean version of the New Testament, which emerged from the same milieu and period to the Syh (616 CE at the Enaton near Alexandria). Like Syh it aspired to be a very close rendering of the Greek biblical text. Yet as Andreas Juckel remarks, its lexical consistency is not perfect: "whether due to semantics or rather to the defective concordance of the translator cannot be determined with certainty."[47]

4. SIGNS OF FLAIR?

The translator's expertise was tested in places where he had to come up with a range of Syriac terms to represent recurring alternatives in different versions. One example would be the varying interpretations of the wood called שִׁטִּים in Hebrew. Here the LXX term ἄσηπτα "(wood) that does not rot" (> Syh ܠܐ ܡܬܚܒܠ) was used theologically in patristic exegesis, for instance by Severus of Antioch, of the human body of Christ as a parallel to the Ark of the Covenant.[48] Symmachus understood the term to mean "thornwood," ἀκάνθινα, rendered in Syh as ܣܢܝܐ. In contrast, Aquila merely transliterated as σετείμ, rendered in Syh as another transliteration of course (ܣܝܛܝܡ).[49]

A frequently used Hebrew term in the Tabernacle accounts refers to fabric dyed scarlet, תּוֹלַעַת הַשָּׁנִי "scarlet" (literally "worm of scarlet"). This had been rendered in different ways by the various Greek versions. LXX and Origen's revised text usually interpret the element שָׁנִי as διπλοῦν "double" (as if associated with the word שְׁנַיִם "two") or κεκλωσμένον "woven." Aquila has the phrase σκώληκα διάφορον "different worm," based on an etymology of the Hebrew (שנה as "to change") that was inaccessible to the Syrohexapla translator but that he rendered nonetheless as ܬܘܠܥܐ ܡܫܚܠܦܬܐ. Symmachus understands שָׁנִי to mean δίβαφος "twice dyed," hence the rendering in Syh ܙܒܢܐ ܨܒܝܥܐ.[50]

Finally, the description of the cups on the lampstand as being "shaped like almond blossoms" ἐκτετυπωμένοι καρυίσκους, is expressed by the Syh as ܘܡܛܒܥܝܢ ܓܘܙܐ "figured with nuts" (ܓܘܙܐ "nuts" is probably a graphic corruption of ܠܘܙܐ "almonds" in Estrangelo script). Aquila and Theodotion tried to express the single

---

[46] Jacob of Edessa uses the Peshitta terms for hems and belts in his own version of Exodus here.

[47] Juckel, "Should the Harklean Version be Included?" Brock, "Aspects of Translation Technique," 85–86, notes that Syriac translators in general do not aim at total consistency but that, "each has his own area of special concern." Cf. the earlier comments of Field (*Origenis Hexaplorum*, I:lxix) on variable lexical consistency between different books of the Syrohexapla.

[48] See Petit, *La Chaîne sur l'Exode*, 64–66.

[49] E.g. Exod 25:23.

[50] E.g. Exod 28:6.

word of the Hebrew expression into a single Greek word also, using the neologism ἐξημυγδαλισμένοι, literally "almondized." In this case, the Syh translator did not attempt to emulate this, but instead he "unpacked" the sense of the Greek with an entire phrase, ܘܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܚܠܡܗܘܢ ܘܚܩܬܐ ܕܠܘܙܐ, "on which (are) the forms of almonds."[51]

As one would expect, all these show both a very good understanding of the Greek lexicon on the part of the Syh translator, and also reflect a long tradition of Greek-Syriac translation within the Syrian Orthodox Church.

5. CONCLUSION

The intense translational activity from the early fifth century into the seventh, principally of Greek texts and commentaries into Syriac, indicates the existence of circles of scholarly translation in monasteries and the training of each subsequent generation of translators. The Syrohexapla did not emerge out of a vacuum. Yet how far did the Syh translators depend on personal study and oral training in techniques of rendering Greek into Syriac? Did extensive word-lists exist, and how far would the translators have depended on them? And did they exist for the whole Syrohexaplaric corpus or for individual books? These sorts of questions have often been raised concerning the Jewish Greek translators of the Pentateuch in the third century BCE and their successors in the next generations who rendered the other books of Scripture into Greek. In the case of the Syh, which was accomplished in just a year rather than over nearly three centuries, it seems more likely that the translator(s) had some kind of basic lexicon. However, this is not incontrovertible. A thorough acquaintance and training in existing translations may have been regarded as sufficient for the purpose. And yet the challenge of unusual technical vocabulary may have tested the translator's knowledge to the limits: some of the Greek loanwords discussed above may have been the result of transliteration out of desperation. If they are not merely to indicate the correct pronunciation of the corresponding Syriac term[52] the many marginal notes in Greek preserved in both manuscripts of SyhExodus may have been intended to serve as justification to readers for the presence of unfamiliar Syriac words.[53]

A classic article by Sebastian Brock speaks of the three possibilities for translating technical terms in antiquity: a transcription, an etymological translation ("usually a neologism"), or a cultural equivalent.[54] Although he notes that etymological translation of technical terms was "very much a feature of the seventh century Syriac translators," in the case of the Tabernacle items surveyed above that

---

[51] Exod 25:33, etc. For the Syh translator's use of two words to represent one Greek word, see Weitzman, "The Reliability of Retroversions," 323.

[52] The twelfth century Midyat MS has several Greek personal names in the margin at Exod 31:1–6, perhaps as pronunciation aids, but none of these appears in the seventh century London MS.

[53] E.g. Exod 24:10 ΣΑΦΦΕΙΡΟΣ for ܣܦܝܠܐ; Exod 39:3 ΠΕΤΑΛΑ for ܛܣ̈ܐ.

[54] Brock, "Aspects of Translation Technique," 84.

lack any wider theological significance, transcription or neologism seems to be the most common resort of the Syh translator. This was perhaps less out of laziness than a desire to point to the Greek original.

This study has also uncovered a few examples where the text has Peshitta renderings in one place and Greek-based ones in the parallel passage. Such lapses may indicate a lack of a word list, or merely a failure to consult it, since it would be easy to lapse into using the familiar Peshitta term. However, we should be impressed by the translator's achievements and virtuosity rather than criticize him for occasional lapses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brière, Maurice. *Les Homélies Cathedrales de Sévère d'Antioche. Traduction syriaque de Jacques d'Édesse.* Patrologia Orientalis 26. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1948.

Brock, Sebastian P. "Towards a History of Syriac Translation Technique." Pages 1–14 in *III Symposium Syriacum 1980*. Orientalia Christiana Analecta 221. Edited by R. Lavenant. Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1983. Repr. in *Studies in Syriac Christianity. History Literature and Theology* X. Edited by S.P. Brock. Ashgate: Variorum, 1992.

———. "Greek into Syriac and Syriac into Greek." Article II in *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity*. Edited by S.P. Brock. London: Variorum, 1984.

———. "Aspects of Translation Technique in Antiquity." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 20 (1979): 69–87. Repr. as Article III in *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity*. Edited by S.P. Brock. London: Variorum, 1984.

———. "Some Aspects of Greek Words in Syriac." *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* IV. Edited by S.P. Brock. London: Variorum, 1984.

Field, Frederick. *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt* … 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875.

Hespel, Robert. *Théodore bar Koni: Livre des Scolies (recension d'Urmiah).* 2 vols. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 447–48. Scriptores Syri 193–94. Leuven: Peeters, 1983.

Hiebert, Robert J.V. "Syriac Biblical Textual History and the Greek Psalter." Pages 178–204 in *The Old Greek Psalter*, *Studies in Honour of Albert Pietersma*. Edited by R.J.V. Hiebert, C.E. Cox, and P.J. Gentry. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement 332. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

Juckel, Andreas. "Should the Harklean Version be Included in a Future Lexicon of the Syriac New Testament?" Pages 167–94 in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography I. Colloquia of the International Syriac Language Project*. Edited by A. Dean Forbes and David G.K. Taylor. Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics 1. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2005.

Lagarde, P. *Bibliothecae Syriacae a Paulo de Lagarde collectae quae ad philologiam sacram pertinent.* Göttingen: Horstmann, 1892.

Law, Timothy M. *Origenes Orientalis: The Preservation of Origen's Hexapla in the Syrohexapla of 3 Kingdoms.* De Septuaginta Investigationes 2. Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011.

Liljeström, Marketta. "Observations on the Mode of Translation in the Syrohexapla." Pages 71–82 in *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography* V. *Colloquia of the International Syriac Language Project.* Edited by Jonathan Loopstra and Michael Sokoloff. Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics 7. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2013.

Payne Smith, J., ed. *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, founded upon the Thesaurus Syriacus of R. Payne Smith.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1903. Repr. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1998. Repr. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1999.

Payne Smith, R., ed. *Thesaurus Syriacus.* 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1891. Repr. Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1981. Repr. in 3 vols with *A Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus.* Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2007.

Petit, F. *La chaîne sur l'Exode, I. Fragments de Sévère d'Antioche.* Traditio Exegetica Graeca 9. Leuven: Peeters, 1999.

Rørdam, Thomas Skat. *Libri Judicum et Ruth secundum versionem Syriaco-hexaplarem.* Copenhagen: Otto Schwartz, 1861.

Salvesen, Alison. *I-II Samuel in the Syriac Version of Jacob of Edessa.* Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 10. Leiden: Brill, 1999.

——— "A Convergence of the Ways? The Judaizing of Christian Scripture by Origen and Jerome." Pages 233–58 in *The Ways that Never Parted.* Edited by A. Yoshiko Reed and A. Becker. Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 95. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.

———. "Jacob of Edessa's Version of Exodus 1 and 28." *Hugoye* 8 (2005): 41–58.

———. "Textual Criticism. Textual and Literary Criticism and the Book of Exodus: The Role of the Septuagint." Pages 37–51 in *Biblical Interpretation and Method: Essays in Honour of John Barton.* Edited by P.M. Joyce and K. Dell. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Schall, A. *Studien über griechische Fremdwörter im Syrischen.* Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1960.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's* Lexicon Syriacum. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009.

Van Rompay, Lucas. "Some Preliminary Remarks on the Origins of Classical Syriac as a Standard Language. The Syriac Version of Eusebius of Caesarea's Ecclesiastical History." Pages 70–89 in *Semitic and Cushitic Studies.* Edited by G. Goldenberg and S. Raz. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994.

Vööbus, Arthur. *The Pentateuch in the Version of the Syro-Hexapla.* CSCO Subsidia 45.

Leuven: Peeters, 1975.

Wade, Martha Lynn. *Consistency of Translation Techniques in the Tabernacle Accounts of Exodus in the Old Greek*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

Weitzman, Michael P. "The Reliability of Retroversions of the Three from the Syrohexapla: a Pilot Study in Hosea." Pages 317–59 in *Origen's Hexapla and Fragments*. Edited by A. Salvesen. Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 58. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.

———. *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction*. University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Wevers, John William. *Text History of the Greek Exodus*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974.

———. *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*. Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 30. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990.

———. *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, II.1: Exodus*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991.

———. "The Building of the Tabernacle." *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 19 (1993): 123–31.

CHAPTER 12
TOWARDS A NEW CRITICAL EDITION AND TRANSLATION OF ISHOʿDAD OF MERW'S COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN WITH AN IDENTIFICATION OF HIS SOURCES

Johan D. Hofstra

The Netherlands

> In 1911 Ishoʿdad of Merw's commentary on the Gospel of John was edited and translated into English by M.D. Gibson. She based her text edition of the Gospels on three manuscripts. Since Margaret Gibson's work a century has passed by. During this time more manuscripts containing Ishoʿdad's commentary text have been discovered, among them several relatively old and reliable ones. Moreover the developments in Syriac studies have enriched us with the works of other Syriac predecessors.
>
> So the time seems ripe to publish a new critical text edition provided with a translation more accessible than Gibson's. In this paper the premises chosen for a new edition of Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Gospel of John are expounded. To this a survey of the sources used by Ishoʿdad is added.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1911, just over a century ago, Margaret D. Gibson (1843–1920)[1] published a text edition and an English translation of the commentary that Ishoʿdad of Merw, Bishop of the East Syrian church of Ḥedatta, wrote on the Gospels around 850

---

[1] For the story of her life and her twin-sister Agnes Smith Lewis, see *A. Whigham Price, The Ladies of Castlebrae: A Story of Nineteenth-Century Travel and Research; and* Janet Soskice, *Sisters of Sinai: How Two Lady Adventurers Discovered the Hidden Gospels.*

CE.[2] In the following years up to 1916, she successively published a text edition and translation of Isho'dad's commentary on the Acts and three Catholic Epistles[3] and on the Pauline Epistles.[4]

With these editions and translations Gibson has made a tremendous contribution to Syriac literature, opening up the New Testament part of one of the most important and extensive exegetical sources within the East Syrian Church. From 1955 to 1981 Ceslas Van Den Eynde devoted himself to the task of editing the Old Testament part of Isho'dad's commentary,[5] so by the end of the twentieth century the text of the entire commentary of the Bishop of Ḥedatta was available to all who occupy themselves with Syriac literature and the history and development of the East Syrian Church, which in the times of Isho'dad had managed to spread far into the Chinese Empire.[6]

Since Gibson's pioneering work many years have passed, years in which developments in the field of Syriac literature have not stood still. These developments are especially present in the area of manuscript tradition. More and also better manuscripts are available to us than those Gibson had at her disposal.

There has also been the discovery and publication of a number of new sources, especially East Syrian, which Isho'dad used when composing his commentary. In this context the work of Theodore bar Koni, who completed his "Scholion"[7] in 792 CE, and Isho' bar Nun (†828), the author of a book with "Questions and Answers,"[8] should be mentioned. In addition, the discovery of the Syriac version of Ephrem Syrus' commentary on the Diatessaron of Tatian[9] constituted an enormous advance on Gibson's situation, for she only had its Armenian text and translation[10]

---

[2] Gibson, *The Commentaries of Isho'dad of Merv, Bishop of Ḥadatta (c. 850 A.D.) in Syriac and English* [vol. 1]: *Translation of the Gospels*; [vol. 2]: *Matthew and Mark in Syriac*; [vol. 3]: *Luke and John in Syriac*).

[3] Idem [vol. 4.1–2]: *Acts of the Apostles and Three Catholic Epistles*.

[4] Idem [vol. 5.1–2]: *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle*.

[5] Vosté and Van Den Eynde, *Commentaire d'Išo'dad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament I: Genèse* [text]; Van Den Eynde, *Commentaire d'Išo'dad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament I: Genèse* [transl.]; *II: Exode Deutéronome*; *III: Livre des Sessions*; *IV: Isaïe et les Douze*; *V: Jerémie, Ézéchiel, Daniel*; *VI: Psaumes*.

[6] Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 216–17; Spuler, "Die nestorianische Kirche," 153–55.

[7] Syriac: ܐܣܟܘܠܝܘܢ, from σχολή (Latin: scholium). It means here "a little study of a word or passage, an explanation." Cf. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (RPS), 1:306, *s.v.*; Liddell, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9th ed.), 1747, *s.v.* σχολή.

[8] 'Abdisho' in his catalogue mentions this work (Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3.1:165–66), preserved in MS Add. 17217, Library of the University of Cambridge (Wright and Cook, *A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts*, 2:555–60); the title suggests a selection of the questions and answers Isho' bar Nun composed (Molenberg, *The Interpreter Interpreted: Išo' bar Nun's Selected Questions on the Old Testament*, 20; 24–25; 47–48; 328).

[9] Leloir, *Saint Éphrem: Texte Syriaque*; idem, *Saint Éphrem: Folios Additionnels*.

[10] Moesinger, *Evangelii concordantis*; Leloir, *Saint Éphrem: version arménienne*.

at her disposal. These sources were all used by Ishoʿdad when composing his commentary on the New Testament.

The developments mentioned prompt us to look again at the New Testament part of Ishoʿdad's commentary and to come to a new critical edition of the text.

Also, the translation of Ishoʿdad's commentary demands our renewed attention. J. Rendel Harris wrote in his Introduction to Gibson's edition of the Gospels:

> I am surprised at the courage (I had almost said daring) which she has displayed in attacking a work so extended and beset by so many difficulties; and if there should be found some places in which Mrs. Gibson has failed to grasp Ishoʿdad's meaning or has rendered the Syriac wrongly, a tolerant judgment will no doubt be given by scholars in view of the fact that so much has been added to Syriac literature at a single stroke.[11]

Indeed, in many respects Gibson's translation leaves much to be desired and is generally speaking not very accessible, due in part to the lack of extensive footnotes explaining difficult passages.

Building on Gibson's pioneering work, we will attempt to make the text of Ishoʿdad's commentary—frequently so intractable and complicated—more accessible to the readers of the present time.

We will begin with Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Gospel of John because we now know that Ishoʿdad used the commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia as his main source.[12] As far as the New Testament is concerned only his commentary on the Gospel of John has survived in the Syriac language.[13] The availability of this commentary enables us to identify the parallels within Ishoʿdad's commentary as clearly as possible. In addition, this new critical edition and translation of the text of Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Gospel of John will be provided with a survey of manuscripts in which the text of the Commentary on the Gospels is handed down along with the results of the investigation I made into the sources, the biblical text, the exegetical methods, and the Christology used by Ishoʿdad, being subjects that in Gibson's editions were discussed only in part or not at all.[14]

---

[11] Gibson, Introduction to *The Commentaries*, 1:XI.

[12] Amann, "Théodore de Mopsueste;" Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 102–4; Devreesse, *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste*; Scher, *Histoire nestorienne*, PO 5.2, 284–91; Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca*, 226; Sullivan, "Theodore of Mopsuestia."

[13] Edited by Vosté, *Theodori Mopsuesteni commentarius*. Fragments of the Greek original: Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentarii in Novum Testamentum* (PG 66:727–86).

[14] The edition will consist of three volumes: I. List of Manuscripts, Stemma Codicum, Syriac text; II. Ishoʿdad of Merw (life, work), Sources, Translation; III. Ishoʿdad's quotations of the Fourth Gospel, The Exegetical Methods, Christology.

2. THE MANUSCRIPTS

First we will closely examine the manuscripts used by Gibson for her edition of Isho'dad's commentary on the Gospels and then examine which manuscripts can be qualified as a basis for a new text-critical edition.

2.1 The Manuscripts used by Gibson

Gibson based her text edition of the commentary on the Gospels upon three manuscripts, namely:

– Manuscript C: belonging to the University of Cambridge (Cambridge Add. 1973).[15]

– Manuscript H: a copy of a manuscript from Urmia, put at her disposal by J. Rendel Harris (Harvard College Syr. 131).[16]

– Manuscript M: a manuscript lent to her by D.S. Margoliouth of Oxford.[17]

Gibson took manuscript H as the basis of her text edition, although later she came to the conclusion that M provided the best text of the three.[18] Thus for her edition of the commentary on the Acts and the Catholic Epistles, she chose manuscript M as her basic text, while the variant readings of manuscript H were removed to the text-critical apparatus. Besides this, she had at her disposal for her text edition a manuscript from Berlin (Berlin 81, B)[19] and a manuscript from the Imperial Library at St Petersburg (Petersburg 622, P).[20] These four manuscripts (M, B, P, H) also formed the basis for Gibson's edition of the Pauline Letters, on the understanding that manuscript P was taken as basic text from Heb 12:15, where manuscript M suddenly broke off.[21]

2.2 Textual Basis for a New Critical Edition

In 1993, in my dissertation concerning the Prologue of the Gospel of John, I published a list of twenty-one manuscripts which hand down the text of the New

---

[15] For a description see Wright and Cook, *A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts*, 1:56–58; Hofstra, *Isho'dad van Merw*, 243–44.

[16] In 1893 this MS was reproduced by order of J. Rendel Harris, probably at Urmia. He supposed that Urmia codex 9 was the archetype. Harris, Introduction to Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 1:XV; Hofstra, *Isho'dad van Merw*, 244.

[17] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 1:VII–VIII; idem, *The Commentaries*, 4:VII; Hofstra, *Isho'dad van Merw*, 245.

[18] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 1:VII–VIII.

[19] Sachau, *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse*, 1:304–9.

[20] Dorn, *Catalogue des Manuscrits*, 562–64; Pigulewskaya, *Katalog sirijskiw*, 113–16; idem, "Manuscrits syriaques."

[21] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 4:VIII.

Testament commentary.[22] Some of these twenty-one manuscripts are of less importance for our investigation, because they contain only part or none at all of the text of the commentary on the Gospels. Thus in manuscript Harvard College Syr. 70 only the text of the commentary on the Acts and the Epistles is present, and Urmia 223 provides only a part of the Gospel of Matthew. Likewise, Diarbakir Chaldean Church 95, the Trichur manuscript, and Trivandrum MS Syr. 8 give only a selection or a collection of questions concerning the New Testament commentary.[23] Some other manuscripts are unfortunately no longer available. This concerns particularly the manuscripts Séert 25 and 26, which according to the description of Addai Scher can be regarded as the oldest ones, respectively dating from the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries.[24]

For my new text-critical edition of the commentary on the Gospel of John I will use the following manuscripts:

– St Petersburg, Russian National Library, Syr. 33

This manuscript from the National Library of St Petersburg, formerly known as Oriental MS 622, is registered in the Catalogue as a historical work, but actually contains Ishoʿdad's commentary on the New Testament.[25] It was finished in the year 1801 of the Greeks (1490 CE), on "the third day of the month of Nisan, the day of the Sabbath, the sixth day of the great Fast" and was written in the town of Beth Selam, in the district of Baz, in the time of the Catholicos Simeon, Patriarch of the East and Elias, Metropolitan of the Assyrians. This manuscript dates from 1490 and so it presents itself up to now, in the absence of the missing Séert manuscripts, as the oldest manuscript that contains the integral text of Ishoʿdad of Merw's New Testament commentary. Gibson herself already discovered its value and used it at a later stage for her edition of Ishoʿdad's commentary.[26] This manuscript, together with the following manuscript, is demonstrably superior to the other witnesses and will provide considerable textual improvements in the new edition.[27]

– Manuscript Mingana 541 (M²). This manuscript from the Mingana collection[28] provides the text of the entire commentary of Ishoʿdad of Merw on the New Testament and dates, according to the statement of the colophon,[29] from Saturday September 23 of the year 2004 of the Greeks (1693 CE). It was written at Alqosh by the priest Homo, son of the priest Daniel, son of the priest Elijah. He wrote it by

---

[22] Hofstra, *Ishoʿdad van Merw*, 243–48.

[23] See respectively the numbers 5, 19, 4, 16, and 17 of the manuscript list in Hofstra, *Ishoʿdad van Merw*, 243–48.

[24] Scher, *Catalogue des manuscrits*, 17–18.

[25] See note 20.

[26] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 4:VIII.

[27] See e.g. notes 35–40.

[28] Mingana 541: Mingana, *Catalogue*, 1:993–95.

[29] See fol. 277a.

order of a certain priest Joseph, in the time of the East Syrian Patriarch Elijah.[30] It consists of 287 folios of double columns, written in a clear and neat East Syrian hand. This manuscript, written in 1693, which has already proved its value in my edition of the Prologue of St John, offers an old and very reliable text.

– Manuscript Margoliouth (M). This manuscript has constantly showed its significance in Gibson's editions of the commentary.

– Manuscript Leuven Syrus 07 (L)

The manuscript, designated as Syr. 07, contains Isho'dad of Merw's commentary on the New Testament.[31] It comprises 400 folios or 795 pages, with 18 to 21 lines each of unvocalized text. The colophon mentions no date, place or name.[32] Possibly it was written in Séert.[33] The manuscript dates from the time of Pius X, Patriarch Emmanuel II and A. Scher, Metropolitan of Séert. Of interest are the notes at the bottom of the pages, including variants, inter alia, from at least two old manuscripts, which are not accessible now, namely Séert 25 and 26.

The text of MS P is used as basic text, on the understanding that where the last two folios give a corrupted text, that of M² will be the leading one. The variant readings of the other manuscripts mentioned have been placed in the text-critical apparatus.

The MSS C and H, used by Gibson, no longer play a part in this new edition. I agree with Gibson's observation that MS C is "very much inferior to the others."[34] Codex C has a lot of variant readings. Many of them are very disputable and often evidently incorrect.[35]

MS H also deviates in many cases from the other text witnesses.[36] And so Gibson very frequently used the other manuscripts, especially MS M, to

---

[30] Mingana, *Catalogue*, 1:993–95.

[31] Halleux, "Les manuscrits syriaques," 35–48.

[32] This colophon is found on pages 795–96 of the manuscript.

[33] See Wilmshurst, *The Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 683.

[34] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 4: VIII.

[35] A comparative study of the variant readings in the first five pages of Gibson's edition shows MS C as having 43 variant readings not being supported by one of the other MSS H, L, M, M², and P. Among these variant readings many are incorrect. See Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:101.14; 101.20; 102.2 (2x); 102.9; 102.11; 102.15; 103.4; 103.12; 104.1; 104.8; 104.12; 104.15; 104.17; 104.19; 104.21; 105.3 (2x); 105.9, 105.13; 105.15; 105.18; 105.19; 105.20. In addition two sentences are omitted (104.15–17; 104.18–19).

[36] The above mentioned comparative study shows that MS H in this sample has 22 variant readings not being supported by one of the other MSS. Among these there are a number of additions, especially at the beginning of the commentary: 101.8 (2x), 101.9. One sentence is omitted (105.11–12). These numbers of variant readings of the MSS C and H are in sharp contrast with those we find in the same section in the other MSS, respectively: 9 (M), 8 (L), 4 (M²), and 1 (P).

reconstruct—what she thought was—the best possible text.[37] The choices she made were also sometimes very subjective.[38] In this respect the new text edition will provide a significant improvement. In addition one can expect improvements in many other places, especially where Gibson desisted from using MS M to correct the text of MS H.[39]

3. ISHOʿDAD AS A COMPILER

The commentaries of Ishoʿdad of Merw on the Old and New Testament are compilations. When composing his commentaries Ishoʿdad made use of already existing exegetical traditions, particularly the tradition to which he belonged. As a compiler Ishoʿdad did not merely copy the material he borrowed from other authors, but rewrote and reshaped it into a new unity.

In order to determine the sources Ishoʿdad used in his commentary on the Gospel of John, first an inquiry will be made into the relationship of Ishoʿdad's work to the older sources of Syrian exegetical tradition, and next the position of Ishoʿdad's commentary within the narrower circle of East Syrian exegesis will be looked at.[40]

4. ISHOʿDAD'S COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE OLDER SOURCES OF SYRIAN EXEGETICAL TRADITION

The older sources of the Syrian exegetical tradition include the works of both Syriac and Greek authors. In the Greek schools in Syria, at Antioch and elsewhere, the Greek and Syrian exegetical conceptions met and existed harmoniously side by side because of a great affinity in the matter of exegetical methods and premises.[41] In the work of Ishoʿdad these two streams of tradition are, in accordance with the exegetical practice of his time, also present.

---

[37] See 102.3 (M+C); 102.7(M); 103.5 (M); 104.19 (M); 105.11–12 (M+C); 105.17 (M); 105.21 (M+C).

[38] E.g., she chose against the MSS H, C, M for ܐܬܘܒܩ loco ܩܬܘܐ (105.20). However, all manuscripts used for my new text edition read also: ܩܬܘܐ.

[39] See for example: 102.10–11 (3x); 102.12; 102.13 (variant "l"); 103.14 (variant "h"); 103.16; 104.7; 104.9; 104.21 (variant "s"); 104.22 (variant "t"); 105.2 (variant "b"); 105.3 (variant "c"); 105.8.

[40] All sources, as far as possible, are included in the following survey. In two cases I desisted from recording in the list of sources, namely where IoM reports that Dionysius wrote a letter to Timothy and that Peter, Patriarch of Alexandria, testified about the Godhead of Jesus (Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:229.3), for these are only statements. For the letter of Dionysius Areopagita to Timothy, see Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 69.

[41] Van Rompay, "Quelques remarques."

4.1 Syriac Authors

In his commentary on the Gospel of John Ishoʿdad has made use of the following Syriac authors:

4.1.1 Aphrahat

Aphrahat, the so-called Persian Sage,[42] has to his name a collection of twenty-three treatises known as "Demonstrations,"[43] written in 336 to 345, and which have survived as one of the first literary products of the Syrian Church.[44] Aphrahat occupied himself with the text of John in many places of his work.[45] One of these places was used by Ishoʿdad in his commentary, referring to him as "the Persian Sage." The passage concerned applies to Jn 1:5.[46] Ishoʿdad quotes the words of Aphrahat very freely, concentrating particularly on his conception of "the light" and "the darkness."

4.1.2 Ephrem

The oeuvre of Ephrem Syrus (†373 at Edessa) consists of a number of works of various genres.[47] Besides hymns, dogmatic treatises and saints' lives, he wrote commentaries.[48] So far the work of Ephrem Syrus has been considered as one of the main sources used by Ishoʿdad for his commentaries on the Old and New Testament.[49] Regarding his commentary on the Gospel of John Ishoʿdad particularly used the commentary Ephrem wrote on the Diatessaron.[50]

---

[42] Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 30–31; Wright, *A Short History*, 32ff.; Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca*, 47–51; Parisot, "Aphraate ou Pharhad," *DTC* 1.2:1457–63.

[43] Edition: Jean Parisot, *Aphraatis sapientis Persae Demonstrationes* (Patrologia Syriaca 1–2; Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1894–1907); recent translations: Marie-Joseph Pierre, *Aphraate le Sage Persan. Les exposés* [vol. 1]: *I–X*; [vol. 2]: *XI–XXIII*; Sources Chrétiennes 349 and 359; Paris: Cerf, 1988).

[44] Concerning the chronology, see Baarda, *The Gospel Quotations*, 2, 6–7; Baumstark, *Geschichte,* 31.

[45] Baarda, *The Gospel Quotations*, 55–281.

[46] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:110.5–7; Aphrahat: Parisot, *Demonstrationes*, 1:1, 21.24 (text).

[47] Biesen, *Bibliography of Ephrem*; Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 31–52; Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologia*, 52–77.

[48] Cf. Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologia*, 55–70.

[49] In relation to the OT, cf. Van Den Eynde's prefaces to the various commentaries; concerning the NT, see Harris, Introduction to *The Commentaries* (ed. Gibson), 1:XVII and idem, *Fragments of the Commentary*, 24–91.

[50] See notes 9 and 10.

The following list gives a survey of the coincidences between Isho'dad and Ephrem:[51]

	Text IoM	Text Ephrem
1. Mar Ephrem	121.19–122.4	C.A. 20.20–26**
2. Mar Ephrem	125.1–2	C.A. 38.17–18*
3.	125.3–6	C.A. 38.3–5*
4.	133.19–21	C. 88.19; 90.1–2
5. Mar Ephrem	134.13–19	C. 92.13–20*
6.	135.3–9	C. 92.7–12*
7.	135.10–16	C. 92.23–94.5*
8.	140.3–7	C. 102.17–23
9. Mar Ephrem	147.19–20	C. 138.5–7*
10.	156.17–157.2	C. 184.21–186.2*
11.	160.3–4	C. 188.12–13. 17–18*
12.	162.3–4	C. 190.19
13.	163.12–13	C. 190.19
14.	167.15–17	C. 190.21–192.2*
15.	168.19–169.1	C. 192.9–12**
16.	169.1–4	C. 192.12–15*
17.	170.18–19	C. 196.10–11
18.	170.19–171.1	C. 198.23–24*
19.	171.17–19	C. 194.1–2**
20.	171.19–21	cf. C. 200.2–5
21.	171.21–172.8	C. 198.11–21**
22. Mar Ephrem	209.15–18	Heb.Sanc.VI, 1225–1241
23.	212.19–22	Heb.Sanc.VII, 229
24.	218.17–21	cf. C. 228.16–21
25.	219.8–11	C. 228.12–14*

**=Literally identical *=Almost literally identical Without *=Identical in content

The survey shows us twenty-five coincidences. Five times (numbers 1, 2, 5, 9, and 22) Isho'dad indicates the source he used by mentioning the name of "Mar Ephrem." In all the other cases he keeps silent about the name of his source.

---

[51] C.= Leloir, *Commentaire*; C.A.= Leloir, *Commentaire … Folios Additionnels*; Heb. Sanc.= Beck, *Ephraem Syrus.*

Twenty-three passages are derived from Ephrem's commentary on the Diatessaron, two passages (numbers 23 and 24) are from other writings ascribed to Ephrem. In sixteen cases Isho'dad associates himself closely (*) to very closely (**) with Ephrem's text. In particular Isho'dad has made use of Ephrem's work when interpreting the text of John 2, "Jesus changes water into wine" (numbers 2 and 3), the text of John 4, "Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman" (numbers 4, 5, 6, and 7) and especially when interpreting the text of John 11, "the death of Lazarus" (numbers 14 to 21). It is remarkable that Ephrem's voice is completely absent in the so important Christological passage of Jn 1:1–18. I have previously pointed out that this is possibly connected with his Christological views, which no longer suited Isho'dad's on this point as discussed in his commentary.[52]

Number 8 of the survey—an explanation of Jn 5:17 (*My Father is working still, and I am working*)—is very interesting because of the fact that Ephrem's explanation is also extant in Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom.[53]

The numbers 13, 18, and 24 also have a parallel in the commentary of "The Interpreter."[54] In number 13 Theudas and Judas are called "thieves and deceivers," who tried to break into the pen referred to in Jn 10:1. These two names are also to be found in the explanation of Theodore bar Koni.[55]

Overall, what strikes one most is that the extent of Ephrem's contribution to Isho'dad's commentary on the Gospel of John is very limited. In Gibson's edition this contribution consists of 97 lines out of a total of 2721 lines—3.5% of the commentary. With that it is clear that the designation of Ephrem's work as the "most important source"[56] at least for Isho'dad's commentary on the Gospel of John is not appropriate.

4.1.3 *Nestorius*

On one occasion[57] Isho'dad cites words of Nestorius (circa 386–circa 451 CE), Archbishop of Constantinople.[58] The passage referring to Jn 20:17 deals with the holy Trinity, more specifically with the interrelationship of the Son with the Father.

---

[52] Hofstra, *Isho'dad van Merw*, 110. For Ephrem's christological views, cf. Beck, *Ephräms Trinitätslehre*, 1.25–27; Yousif, "Symbolisme christologique;" Lange, *The Portrayal of Christ*.

[53] Theodore of Mopsuestia: Vosté, *Commentarius*, 103, 3–13; John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Iohannem*, PG 59:214–15; Childers, *The Syriac Version*, Mêmrê 38.4, 273.28–274.6 (Syriac text).

[54] Vosté, *Commentarius*, 200.25; 27–29; no. 18: 227.24–28; no. 24: 349.16–31.

[55] Scher, *Liber Scholiorum II*, 165.12–13.

[56] Harris (Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 1:XVI): "Next in importance to the Ephrem quotations we should place those which are said to come from 'the Mephaššekana' or 'Interpreter';" and (1:XVII): "Of these writers, those quoted most frequently are Ephrem, Josephus and Theodore."

[57] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:220.7–10.

[58] Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 117; the Syriac life of Nestorius is presented by Brière, "La légende syriaque."

A great deal of Nestorius' work was destroyed because of his supposed heresy. What has, however, been preserved is the *Liber Heraclidis*, written towards the end of his life and discovered in 1895.[59] It proved to be impossible to trace this quotation in this work. Perhaps it is derived from a letter of Nestorius, which has been lost.

4.1.4 *Joḥanan of Beth Rabban*

The chronicle of Séert makes mention of Joḥanan of Beth Rabban (†566/567)[60] as the author of a book with "Questions."[61] This remark is supported by the catalogue of ʿAbdishoʿ, in which it is reported that it applied to questions about the Old and New Testaments.[62] The book itself has been lost. Ishoʿdad refers in his commentary on the Gospel of John once by name to an opinion of Joḥanan of Beth Rabban. In connection with Jn 4:5 he mentions that Joḥanan of Beth Rabban has said that Sichar—the place mentioned there—is the same as Sichem.[63] It cannot be excluded that still more material of Joḥanan of Beth Rabban has been inserted in Ishoʿdad's commentary.[64]

4.1.5 *Aḥob of Qatar*

On the strength of data from the commentary on John written later on by the East Syrian author Abu al Faradj ʿAbd Allah Ibn al-Ṭayyib (†1043),[65] it is to be assumed that one passage of Ishoʿdad's commentary on the first chapter of John must be ascribed to the Syrian author Aḥob of Qatar, known because of his biblical

---

[59] Bedjan, *Nestorius*; Nau, *Nestorius*; Abramowski, *Untersuchungen*.

[60] As a teacher attached to "the School of Nisibis" at the same time as his relative Abraham beth Rabban was head of this school (Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 115–16).

[61] Scher, *Histoire nestorienne* (PO 7.2 [=no. 24]).

[62] Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 3.1:72.

[63] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:133.18.

[64] One could possibly think of the following passages: 121.3–10; 126.10–12ff.; 126.15; 152.11–153.1; 192.2–3, because of their question-and-answer scheme.

[65] Cf. Eugène Tisserant and Émile Amann, "Nestorienne (L'Église)," *DTC* 11.1:157–323 (see 271–72, 275–78 for text); Graf, *Geschichte*, 2:160–77; the commentary on St John is part of a commentary on the Gospels, which Ibn al-Ṭayyib completed in 1018 CE. For the MSS and a description of this commentary, see Graf, *Geschichte*, 2:167–69. It is edited by Yusuf Manqurius and Tafsir al-masriqi, *Kommentar des Orientalen, das ist des Priesters Abu'l Farag, zu den vier Evangelien*. See also Faultless, "The Prologue to John;" idem, "The Two Recensions." I had at my disposal MS (syr) arab. Chaldean Church Mardin no. 134, lent to me by J.C.J. Sanders.

interpretation, and considered for election as Catholicos in 581 CE.[66] The passage in question gives an explanation of the phrase: *The Word became flesh* (Jn 1:14).[67]

4.1.6 The Tradition of the School

For their knowledge Syriac exegetes drew not only on the commentaries of illustrious predecessors, but also on the so-called "Tradition of the School," a collection of traditions, handed down originally "from mouth to ear," and afterwards put down in writing in the exegetical centres of the Syro-Antiochian world.[68] In Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Gospel of John two passages can certainly be ascribed to this source. The first passage deals with the order of the things that took place at the Paschal Supper and is introduced with the words "as the Teachers hand down."[69] The second passage gives a reaction by "the Teachers of the Schools" to an explanation by Theodore of Mopsuestia on Jn 19:34–35, where it says *One of the soldiers struck Him in His side with a spear and blood and water flowed out immediately. He who saw it, has given testimony and his testimony is true.*[70] Possibly also another passage can be counted as part of this source.[71] In this passage Ishoʿdad mentions that one of the Theoforoi[72] has said that "in the time of our Lord there was nobody as evil as Judas, just as there was nobody as good as our Lord etc." Although there is no direct reference to "the Teachers of the School" the character of the passage and the assignment of this explanation to "one of the Theoforoi" make it plausible that it belongs to this source.

4.2. Greek Authors

Having presented the survey of the older sources of Syrian exegetical tradition used by Ishoʿdad in his commentary on the Gospel of John, we will now pay attention to the Greek sources. We will first look at the most important sources and then to the sources that only played a limited part in his commentary.

---

[66] For Aḥob of Qatar, see Baumstark, *Geschichte,* 131–32; Duval, *Lexicon syriacum,* 3:XIX; Cowley, "Scholia of Aḥob of Qatar," 338–39.

[67] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:114.1–7; Ibn al-Tayyib: MS (syr) arab. Chaldean Church Mardin, no. 134, fol. 317r.18–20. The influence of IoM's work on that of Ibn al-Tayyib's is considerable, cf. Hofstra, *Ishoʿdad van Merw,* 190–93; 194n24.

[68] Barḥadbešabba gives a definition of this term. Cf. Scher, *Cause de la Fondation,* no. 18, 382–83. See also Van Rompay, "Quelques remarques," 41–42; idem, *Le commentaire,* XXXIII.

[69] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:183.12–184.4.

[70] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:210,7-11.

[71] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:186,9-14.

[72] According to RPS, 2:4366, *s.v.* ܘܐܝܩܣܘܪܟܬ the meaning is "Deum ferens, indutus." It would be a synonym for ܟܝܘܠܗ ܠܒܫܬ. Cf. Rom 13:14 for the latter.

4.2.1 Theodore of Mopsuestia

Within Syriac exegesis the work of Theodore of Mopsuestia (350–428 CE) occupied a central position.[73] Much of his work was translated into Syriac during the fifth century and incorporated into the heritage of the East Syrian church,[74] who conferred upon him the title of "The Interpreter."[75] After the condemnation of Theodore at the fifth ecumenical council of Constantinople (553 CE) most of his work was lost. Nevertheless part of it has been preserved in Syriac translation, including the commentary on the Gospel of John.[76]

In his introduction to Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Psalms, Van Den Eynde concludes that Theodore's commentary on the Psalms is unquestionably, both directly and indirectly, the principal source used by Ishoʿdad in the compilation of his work. Further, he speaks of "the dominating influence of the Exegete."[77] In a more recent study on Ishoʿdad of Merw's exegesis of the Psalms 119 and 139–146 Clemens Leonhard came to the conclusion that "30% of Ishoʿdad's commentary could be literary parallels to Theodore's commentary or can be read as direct reaction to the interpreter's text."[78]

Gibson, in her Preface to the translation of Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Gospels, already presented a list of 221 coincidences between Ishoʿdad and Theodore of Mopsuestia.[79] My own investigation revealed that Gibson's list is far from being complete. Her statements are not only often deficient, she also overlooked many parallels. I myself counted 370 coincidences between Ishoʿdad and Theodore's commentary on the Gospel of John.[80] In 196 cases Ishoʿdad associates himself closely to very closely with Theodore's text. In the other 174 cases Ishoʿdad cites Theodore in a freer manner. Only sixteen times does he mention the name of "Interpreter" as an indication of his source.[81] In two cases it concerns material from outside Theodore's commentary on the Gospel of John.

---

[73] Cf. note 12.

[74] Cf. Amann, "Théodore de Mopsueste," *DTC* 15.1:238; Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3.1:30ff.; Scher, *Histoire nestorienne* (PO 5.2 [=no. 22]), 289ff.; Vosté, "La Chronologie," 56–63.

[75] Cf. Ortiz De Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca*, 226: "Valuit apud Nestorianos tanquam 'beatus Interpres'."

[76] See note 13.

[77] Cf. Van Den Eynde, *Commentaire VI* (CSCO 434), XXIII.

[78] Leonhard, *Ishodad of Merw's Exegesis*, 244.

[79] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 1:XXXIII–XXXVI.

[80] It is beyond the scope of this article to publish the complete list of coincidences here, but it will be included in the forthcoming edition of Ishoʿdad's commentary.

[81] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:105.18; 110.9; 127.14; 134.6; 138.18; 145.2; 150.20; 151.1; 191.6; 205.9; 210.3.7.8; 222.10; 223.17; 229.11.

One of them gives a quotation from a letter of Theodore to a certain Kalistarton,[82] and the other Theodore's view on the meaning of the word "darkness" in Jn 1:5.[83]

Beyond this there are three more passages connected with other writings of Theodore's. The first of them,[84] dealing with the three categories of life, shows a relationship to a fragment from Theodore's commentary on Genesis.[85] The second passage, referring to the three ways in which the Scriptures say that we are born of God,[86] is to be found entirely in the commentary Dadishoʿ Qatraya (7th century) wrote on the book of Abba Isaiah,[87] and regarding which Draguet spoke of "une formule familiaire à Théodore de Mopsueste."[88] A third passage, finally, consisting of a list of the many ways in which things or persons "become,"[89] Ishoʿdad derived from Theodore's treatment of Gal 3:13 in his book "De Incarnatione."[90]

In another way also the commentary of Ishoʿdad on the Gospel of John has undergone the influence of Theodore of Mopsuestia. The range of thought is often that of the Interpreter as is illustrated by the parallels between the commentary of Ishoʿdad and Theodore's "Catechetical Homilies," especially in chapter 1 of John.[91]

The material extent of Theodore's contribution to Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Gospel of John is enormous. In Gibson's edition this contribution consists of 1108 lines out of a total of 2721 lines. This means that over 40% of the commentary is derived from the Interpreter's work. This makes it clear that the designation of Theodore's work as "the principal source" for Ishoʿdad's commentary is more than appropriate also for Ishoʿdad's commentary on the Gospel of John.[92] It seems obvious to me that Ishoʿdad had direct access to his source.

4.2.2 John Chrysostom

On one occasion Ishoʿdad, in his commentary on the Gospel of John, attributes a passage to a certain "John."[93] With that he alludes to John Chrysostom (circa 345–407 CE), who played an important part as an exegete, particularly in the West Syrian

---

[82] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:105.18. For Theodore's letters, cf. Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis,* 3.1:35.

[83] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:110.9–10. This quotation is not to be found in Theodore's commentary. It may be assumed that it is derived from another work of Theodore's.

[84] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:108.20–109.5.

[85] Sachau, *Theodori Mopsuesteni*, fol. 20a.3–13.

[86] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:110.21–111.2.

[87] Draguet, *Commentaire* (CSCO 326 [text]), 116.10–14.

[88] Idem, (CSCO 327 [transl.]), 89n3.

[89] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:111.14–112.13.

[90] Cf. Sachau, *Theodori Mopsuesteni*, ܡ-ܡܝ, 4.

[91] Tonneau and Devreesse, *Les Homélies Catéchétiques*. For a survey, see the list in Hofstra, *Ishoʿdad van Merw*, 114–115.

[92] Cf. Van Den Eynde, *Commentaire VI* (CSCO 434), XXIII.

[93] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:138, 15–18.

Church.[94] Among other things he wrote homilies on Matthew, John, and the Pauline Letters. Many of them have also survived in Syriac.[95] For our investigation in particular the homilies on the Gospel of John are important. In the passage mentioned above, Ishoʿdad records an exegetical discussion between John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia concerning the paralytic, who in Bethesda on the Sabbath was healed by Jesus (Jn 5:1–18). John Chrysostom praises the paralytic, because he, after being healed, gratefully declared that it was Jesus who had made him well.[96] Theodore, however, writes that he was acting in this way owing to his wickedness, for although he saw how Jesus' adversaries were raging with fury and eager for revenge because of the transgression of the Sabbath, he none the less went to them to say that Jesus had cured him, and in this way he betrayed his healer.[97] Both exegetes exhibit in their work knowledge of the opponent's view and record this as such, but without mentioning each other's name.[98] Ishoʿdad shares Theodore's view and calls the cured paralytic a person of inferior origin, considering him as one of those who at last urged the murder of Jesus. For in Ishoʿdad's opinion this paralytic was the one who slapped Jesus on the face in the court-house (Jn 18:22). So it was to warn him that Jesus said after his healing: *See you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you* (Jn 5:14). After he gave our Lord a slap, not only did the paralysis return, but also his hands shrivelled up, he became blind and suffered hellish pains, as a fulfilment of this warning.[99]

Besides this passage attributed to John Chrysostom, Ishoʿdad uses John Chrysostom's work on a large scale, without mentioning his name. As many as 51 other passages in his commentary can be ascribed to John Chrysostom.

These passages refer to the following chapters of John's Gospel:[100]

---

[94] Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*. Childers, "Studies in the Syriac Versions." Idem, *The Syriac Version*.

[95] Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 80–81.

[96] John Chrysostom: hom. 37, PG 59:209. See also Malingrey, *Jean Chrysostome*, 338.269–71; 342.323–24.

[97] Vosté, *Commentarius*, 102.6–7; 15–16; 23–24.

[98] Theodore of Mopsuestia: Vosté, *Commentarius*, 101.19–24; John Chrysostom: hom. 38, PG 59: 212.

[99] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:139.6–14.

[100] It is beyond the scope of this article to publish the complete list of coincidences here, but it will be included in the forthcoming edition of Ishoʿdad's commentary.

Chapter 1:	5 passages	Chapter 10:	11 passages
Chapter 2:	1 passage	Chapter 11:	4 passages
Chapter 3:	4 passages	Chapter 12:	6 passages
Chapter 5:	9 passages	Chapter 13:	1 passage
Chapter 7:	1 passage	Chapter 14:	1 passage
Chapter 8:	2 passages	Chapter 20:	5 passages
Chapter 9:	2 passages		

As can be deduced from this survey, Isho'dad used the material of John Chrysostom in particular concerning John 5 (the chapter about the paralytic) and John 10 (the passage about the Good Shepherd). In thirty-six passages Isho'dad associates himself closely to very closely with John Chrysostom's text of his homilies on the Gospel of John. In sixteen passages Isho'dad cites his source in a freer manner. In fifteen cases the material Isho'dad derived from John Chrysostom also has parallels in the work of Theodore of Mopsuestia. This indicates that, in spite of all variety, there is a certain connection between the two great exegetes. In one passage they both derive their explanation from Ephrem Syrus' work.[101]

Isho'dad introduces the material he derived from John Chrysostom in several ways: "and it is asked," "some say," "one of the Theoforoi says," "some explain it as," "others say," "according to some," "according to one of the godly men." In five cases it concerns the explanation of particular words. In two cases topographical matters are at stake.

In closing, it can be said that John Chrysostom's contribution to Isho'dad's commentary on the Gospel of John is substantial. In Gibson's edition this contribution consists of 160 lines out of a total of 2721 lines. This means that almost 6% of the commentary is derived from John Chrysostom's work. With respect to this it is remarkable that Isho'dad only once mentions the name of his source; and what is more, only to oppose a view of his.

4.2.3 Gregory Nazianzen

Claude Détienne in his introduction to the Studia Nazianzenica I, states that among all the Greek Fathers there is no one who saw so much of his theological work being translated and studied in the Syriac World as Gregory Nazianzen (330–390 CE).[102] Together with his friend Basil the Great (†circa 378) and his brother Gregorius of Nyssa (†circa 395) he, as one of the three Cappadocians, exerted great influence on the Syriac Christians. They conferred upon him the title of "the Theologian."

Isho'dad in his commentary on the Gospel of John also used the work of Gregory Nazianzen. He particularly incorporated material from his "Orationes" and

---

[101] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:140.3–7. See note 53.

[102] Détienne, "Grégoire de Nazianze." See also Taylor, "Les Pères Cappadociens."

his "Epistula Theologica." The following list gives us a survey of the coincidences between Ishoʿdad (IoM) and Gregory.

	Text IoM	Text Grégory Nazianzen
1. Gregory	110.8–9	Or. 39.2; 152.9–11[103]
2.	113.3–7	OLP I.156; L.T. 101.62, no. 61[104]
3.	140.10–12	Or. 30.10; 248.1–4*; 250.5–6*(a); 249.1–5; 251.1(n)[105]
4.	140.12–13	Or. 30.11; 252.41–42*(a); 253.42–43(n)*.
5.	140.15	Or. 30.11; 254.3–4**(a); 255.3–4**(n)
6.	140.15–16	Or. 30.11; 254.7–8**(a); 255.7–8**(n)
7.	140.18–19	Or. 30.10; 250.14–17*(a); 251.15–17*(n)
8.	140.19–21	Or. 30.10; 250.21–23(a)*; 251.22–25*(n)
9.	141.1–3	Or. 30.10; 252.35–40**(a); 253.36–42**(n)
10.	141.4–6	Or. 30.10; 250.11–14*(a); 251.11–15*(n)
11.	141.6–10	Or. 30.10; 250.6–11**(a); 251.5–11**(n)
12.	141.17–18	Or. 30.11; 254.9–10**(a); 255.8–10**(n)
13.	142.17	Or. 30.11; 256.20–21**(a); 257.20–21*(n)
14.	142.19	Or. 30.11; 256.28*(a); 257.29 *(n)
15.	150.1–3	Or. 41.4; 322.38–41[106]
16. Theologian	222.15–18	

**=Literally identical *=Almost literally identical Without *=Identical in content

In passage 1 Ishoʿdad mentions an opinion of Gregory's about the meaning of the words "light" and "darkness" in Jn 1:5. Ishoʿdad incorporates this opinion into a collection of exegetical views around this text. He writes: *Gregory, however, allegorically calls both the body in which the Word-God dwelt and the world "darkness."* This collection, which contains old tradition-material, may have already existed as such in the exegetical centres of the Syrian Church and so have been adopted by Ishoʿdad in his commentary. As is already indicated above concerning another quotation from this group of traditions, it is remarkable how Ishoʿdad deals with Gregory's text in a free way.[107]

Passage 2 proposes to interpret the words of Jn 1:14 *The Word became flesh* in the sense of *He took on the flesh*. This explanation of Jn 1:14, which is widespread within

---

[103] Greek text: Moreschini and Callay, *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 38–41*.

[104] Syriac text: Abramowski and Roey, "Das Florilegium;" Greek text: Callay and Jourjon, *Lettres Théologiques* (L.T.).

[105] Syriac text, versio antiqua (a) and versio nova (n): Haelewyck, *Sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni IV*.

[106] See note 103.

[107] See note 46.

Syriac exegetical tradition,[108] Isho'dad did not adopt directly from Gregory's work, but it came into his commentary via the work of another East Syrian exegete, Isho' bar Nun.[109]

The passages mentioned in numbers 3 to 14 are related to the explanation of Jn 5:19 *The Son can do nothing of His own accord, but only what He sees the Father doing.* The way in which Isho'dad deals with his sources when interpreting these words is truly admirable. He reshapes them into an impressive new unity.

The passage mentioned under number 15 refers to Jn 7:37 and speaks about the Jewish Feasts that have been adopted by the Christians, and how the Church celebrates them.

The last passage about "the receiving of the Spirit" (Jn 20:22) Isho'dad ascribes by name to "the Theologian," but I could not find this quotation in Gregory's work. However, I found it—literally—in the commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia.[110] Was Isho'dad here perhaps mistaken?

4.2.4 Other Greek Authors

The following Greek authors only played a limited part in Isho'dad's commentary on the Gospel of John:

4.2.4.1 Flavius Josephus

Isho'dad in his commentary refers in one instance to words of the Jewish author Flavius Josephus (37–circa 100 CE). This reference is related to the delay in building the Second Temple.[111]

4.2.4.2 Origen[112]

On one occasion in his commentary on the Gospel of John Isho'dad cites the work of Origen (185–254 CE).[113] This quotation relates to the number of fish (153) in the description of "the miraculous catch of fish" in Jn 21:1–11.[114] The following words Isho'dad ascribes to Origen: *(About) this "A hundred and fifty-three"* [Jn 21:11] *Origen (says) it symbolizes the Holy Trinity.* So far I have not succeeded in recovering Isho'dad's reference in Origen's work.

---

[108] For a survey, see Hofstra, *Isho'dad van Merw*, 73–75.

[109] MS Cambridge Add. 2017, fol. 87r.11–87v; Hofstra, *Isho'dad van Merw*, 128–29.

[110] Theodore of Mopsuestia: Vosté, *Commentarius*, 358.12–14.

[111] Text (IoM): Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:125.7–10. Text: Nodet, Bardet, and Lederman, *Flavius Josèphe: Antiquités XI*, 86–88.

[112] For Origen (185–254 CE) see Heussi, *Kompendium*, 67–68.

[113] Text (IoM): Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:224.15.

[114] The number of 153 fish has occupied the commentators during the ages. For a survey of the history of interpretation see Beasley-Murray, *John*, 401–4.

4.2.4.3 Eusebius of Caesarea

With reference to the text *And the hour is coming when anyone who kills you will think (he is offering) a service (to God)* (Jn 16:2), Ishoʿdad in his commentary[115] writes about a persecution that took place in Gaul under the reign of Emperor Verus (130–169 CE).[116] Gibson is of the opinion that Ishoʿdad took this description from Irenaeus (from 178 CE Bishop of Lyon).[117] Although indeed this persecution in Gaul took place during the lifetime of Irenaeus, the description is derived, nevertheless, from the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius of Caesarea (circa 265–339).[118] In Eusebius' extensive report the various elements of Ishoʿdad's text can be retraced: (a) the Bible verse (Jn 16:2) cited, (b) the statement that the persecution this time came from the Gentiles, (c) the mentioning of place (Gaul) and (d) time (under the reign of Verus), (e) the atrocities Christians were accused of.[119] For the rest, Ishoʿdad does not cite Eusebius' work directly here. He derives this passage almost literally from Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on the Gospel of John.[120]

4.2.4.4 Athanasius

In his commentary on Jn 1:14 Ishoʿdad ascribes the following exegetical view to Athanasius (295–373 CE): *Athanasius says: "The flesh immediately was the flesh of God. Immediately soul, immediately soul of God."*[121] The conception in question occurs in the work of various Syrian exegetes.[122] In Athanasius' work this quotation cannot be found. It has been adopted by Ishoʿdad from one of the letters of Timothy I.[123]

---

[115] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:197.21–198.14.

[116] Lucius Aelius Verus (130–169 CE) was the son of Lucius Aelius Caesar and co-Roman Emperor with Marcus Aurelius from 161 until his death in 169.

[117] In the margin Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:198, mentions: "Irenaeus, (*MPG*, VII, col. 1235–36)."

[118] Greek text: Eusebius van Caesarea, *Historia Ecclesiastica* (PG 20:415–16); Syriac text: Wright and McLean, *The Ecclesiastical History*, Book 5, 1–15, 247.11–253.5.

[119] Wright and McLean, *The Ecclesiastical History*, 253.4–5 [a]; 249.15–16 [b]; 248.19 and 249.7.10 [c]; 247.17–18 [d]; 252.18–19 [e]. This last element (atrocities ascribed to Christians) is also present in Irenaeus' passage cited by Gibson. These accusations were widespread in antiquity. See e.g. Quispel, *Felicis Octavius*, IX.1–7.

[120] Vosté, *Commentarius*, 289.18–19*; 289.24–290.14*. It is notable that all MSS of IoM's commentary read ܓܐܘܣ (Gaius). Theodore of Mopsuestia, however has ܓܠܝܘܣ (Gaul).

[121] Text IoM: Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3.115.6–7. For Athanasius: Heussi, *Kompendium*, 97.

[122] TbK: Scher, *Liber Scholiorum II*, 80.8–10; Timothy I: Braun, *Timothei Patriarchae* (CSCO 74 [text]), 158.25–28.

[123] For Text Timothy I: see note 122. André de Halleux, in his review of my dissertation about the Prologue of St John, considers this quotation "une citation ps.-athanasienne courante dans les florilèges monophysites." Halleux, "Bibliographie," 207–26, 208. Unfortunately he did not provide references.

5. ISHOʿDAD'S COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN IN RELATION TO THE EAST SYRIAN EXEGETICAL TRADITION

Inquiry into the place of Ishoʿdad's commentary within the narrower circle of East Syrian exegetical tradition shows that there is a close relationship between his work and that of a number of predecessors.

5.1 Ḥenanišo

Ishoʿdad mentions once the name of Ḥenanišo (†700), whose commentary on the Gospels has been lost except for a few fragments.[124] Ishoʿdad cites an opinion of Ḥenanišo, referring to Jn 9:6.[125]

5.2. Ishoʿ bar Nun

In his catalogue, among other writings ʿAbdishoʿ ascribes to Ishoʿ bar Nun[126] a work entitled: *Questions on the Entire Text of the Two Parts, that is of the Old and New Testaments.*[127] In the Cambridge MS Add. 2017 a large number of questions and answers from this work have been preserved,[128] probably a selection from the original work.[129] The author, from Beth Gabbārē on the Tigris, who had for a long time been a teacher at the so-called Great Convent on Mount Izla and, from 823–828, patriarch of the East Syrian Church, wrote his book most probably in the second half of the eighth century.[130] In his work he used the literary genre of "Questions and Answers" which was very popular in antiquity and originated in the teaching of sophists and rhetoricians.[131] Within the narrower circle of East-Syrian exegetical literature, others like Joḥanan of Beth Rabban, Michael and Daniel bar Tubhānitā, preceded him in this genre.[132] The work of Ishoʿ bar Nun was written as a handbook for theological students. The questions and their answers were generally

---

[124] Reinink, *Gannat Bussame, I*, XXVII; Ḥenanišo, note 105: "D.h. Katholikos Ḥenanišo I (†699/700), dessen Evangelienkommentaar bis auf wenige Fragmente untergegangen ist." Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 209.

[125] Text IoM : Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:159.11.

[126] Abbeloos and Lamy, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, 3:181–83; 187–88; Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 219–20; Brooks, *Eliae Metropolitae Nisibeni:* (CSCO 62 [text]); Clarke, *The Selected Questions*; Gismondi, *Maris, Amri, et Slibae*, 66–67 [Pars prima, versio Latina], 38–40 [Pars altera, versio Latina]; Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca*, 202; Molenberg, *The Interpreter Interpreted.*

[127] Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3:165–66.

[128] A description of the manuscript is in Wright and Cook, *A Catalogue*, 2:555–60; Molenberg, The *Interpreter Interpreted*, 15–20.

[129] Molenberg, *The Interpreter Interpreted,* 20–25; 47–48; 328.

[130] Molenberg, *The Interpreter Interpreted*, 2; 561.

[131] For the origin and development of this genre, see Bardy, "La littérature patristique."

[132] Scher, *Histoire nestorienne* (PO 7.2 [=no. 24]); Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3:72, 147, 174.

related to obscure places and words in the texts of the Old and New Testaments and were meant as a contemporary supplement to other commentaries that had to be studied beside the Bible.

Inquiry into Ishoʿ bar Nun's "Questions and Answers" was, for a long time, confined to the questions and answers on the Old Testament.[133] In studying these questions again and again it was asked, in view of mutual agreements, what kind of relationship there was between the work of Ishoʿ bar Nun, the "Scholion" of Theodore bar Koni and particularly the commentary of Ishoʿdad of Merw. The thesis posed by Ernest G. Clarke that the three authors, in the compilation of their works, consulted independently a common older source, appeared very soon to be untenable.[134] Investigations based on the works of Lucas Van Rompay, David D. Bundy, and Corrie Molenberg led to the conclusion that, where the mutual relation between Theodore bar Koni's Scholion and the work of Ishoʿdad remained obscure, Ishoʿdad had used Ishoʿ bar Nun's questions and answers as one of his sources in composing his commentary.[135] In 1993 and subsequently in my contribution to the Symposium Syriacum VIII, held at the University of Sydney in the year 2000, I gave an impulse to drawing into the inquiry those questions related to the New Testament by editing and commenting on the questions and answers on the Gospel of John.[136] Moreover the relation to the commentary of Ishoʿdad and, where possible, to Theodore bar Koni's Book of Scholion, was also subjected to more detailed investigation.

The following survey shows that Ishoʿdad in his commentary on the Gospel of John has 7 passages in common with Ishoʿ bar Nun's work "Questions and Answers."

	Text Ishoʿdad	Text Ishoʿ bar Nun
1.	103.11–15; 104.2–6	86v.6–8*; 86v.8–87r. 2**
2.	112.17–114.1	87r.2–88r.9**
3.	123.10–12	81r.2–6*
4.	128.17–130.8	88r.9–90r.8*
5.	134.6–7 (ToM); 134.13–19 (Ephrem)	90r.8–14*; 90r.4–90v.11*
6.	143.10–20	90v.11–91r.11**
7.	150.5–151.7	79v.10–81r.1–4*

**=Literally identical *=Almost literally identical Without *=Identical in content

---

[133] Clarke, *The Selected Questions*; Bundy, "The 'Questions and Answers';" Molenberg, *The Interpreter Interpreted.*

[134] Clarke, *The Selected Questions,* 165.

[135] Van Rompay, "Isoʿ bar Nun and Ishoʿdad of Merv;" Bundy, "The 'Questions and Answers'," 178; Molenberg, *The Interpreter Interpreted*, 21–22; 333–34.

[136] Hofstra, *Ishoʿdad van Merw*, 125–134; idem, "Ishoʿ Bar Nun's 'Questions and Answers'."

In the above-mentioned contribution to the Symposium Syriacum VIII, I have already commented on numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 of the survey.[137] Here I will confine myself to discussing numbers 3 and 7.

In the passage mentioned under 3, Isho‘dad discusses a problem in the biblical text of Jn 1:28: *These things took place in Bethany beyond Jordan.* Isho‘dad states that this is an error of the copyist, for Bethany is close by Jerusalem and not near the River Jordan, and proposes the following two solutions.[138] He thinks it is possible to translate: *These things took place in Bethany and beyond the Jordan,* or to choose for the reading *Beth-abara* and to translate: *These things took place in Beth-abara beyond the Jordan.*[139]

This topological subject is also to be found in the work of John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia (ToM).[140] In this they probably follow a conception of Origen's. The latter in his commentary on John admits that in nearly all the copies βηθανια is found. But because of the fact that in his travels he was unable to locate a Bethany by the Jordan, he chose for the reading βηθαβαρα, which he apparently found in a few copies current in his day.[141] It is notable that whereas Origen still records that nearly all the copies read ἐν Βηθανια, John Chrysostom[142] and Theodore of Mopsuestia[143] speak of "more accurate (ἀκριβέστερον) manuscripts" which have ἐν Βηθαβαρα. This line is still continued by Isho‘ bar Nun[144] and Isho‘dad,[145] who hold the opinion that in the rendering ἐν Βηθανια we are dealing

---

[137] For a detailed description of these texts, see Hofstra, "Isho‘ bar Nun's 'Questions and Answers.'"

[138] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:123.14-18.

[139] In this case ‘Abara is an important place in the neighbourhood of Galilee and Gadara. In IoM's opinion this conception is supported by Mk 3:8 and 5:1. Perhaps the fact that the Old Syriac Versions read ܒܝܬ ܥܒܪܐ loco ܒܝܬ ܥܢܝܐ also played a part in this opinion (see Kiraz, *Comparative Edition*).

[140] Theodore of Mospsuestia, PG 66:11, 733, vs. 28. John Chrysostom, hom. 17, PG 59:107.

[141] See Preuschen, *Origenes Werke,* 4:149–50 [Book 6, §24 (40)]. In Origen's choice also an etymological aspect played a role. Apart from that the spelling Bethabara varies in the MSS of Origen's commentary. Beside Βηθαβαρα he writes Βηθαρᾳ, Βαθαρᾳ and Βηθαραβᾷ. The last-mentioned form is also to be found in ℵ[b] Syr[hmg] and is an orthographical variant of Βηθαβαρα as a result of metathesis (Metzger, *A Textual Commentary,* 200n6).

[142] Ταῦτα ἐγένετο ἐν Βηθανια. Ὅσα δὲ τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἀκριβέστερον ἔχει, Ἐν Βηθαβαρα, φησιν. Ἡ γὰρ Βηθανια οὐχι πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τῆς ἐρήμου ἦν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐγγύς που τῶν Ἰεροσολύμων (hom. 17, PG 59:107).

[143] Ταῦτα δὲ ἐγένετο οὐκ ἐν Βηθανια, ἀλλ᾽ ἐν τῇ Βηθαρα, ὡς τὰ ἀκριβῆ περιέχει τῶν ἀντιγράφων. ἡ γαρ Βηθανια οὐχι πέραν Ἰορδάνου, οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τῆς ἐρήμου ἦν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐγγύς που τῶν Ἰεροσολύμων (PG 66:11, 733).

[144] ܥܒܡ ܚܘܒܟ ܐܬܘܣܠܕܝܬ. ܐܝܟܢ ܗܘ، ܘܗܘܐ ܠܡ ܚܒܢܬ ܐܢܫ ܚܒܢܐ ܚܒܟܝܬ ܐ ܐܟܢܝܐ، ܐܝܟܟܥ ܚܝܒ ܚܢܟ ܚܢܕܝܐ، ܕܗܘ ܚܢܟ ܚܝܒ ܚܢܟ. ܠܐ ܡܢܚܟ ܠܢܝܘܪܝ (MS Cambridge Add. 2017, fol. 81r.2–6).

[145] Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:123.13–14.

with a corrupt text. Most likely Ishoʿ bar Nun and Ishoʿdad rely on the Interpreter's work.

In passage 7 Ishoʿdad deals with the question during which feast Jesus entered Jerusalem. For his explanation he uses the material Ishoʿ bar Nun (IbN) provides on this issue. Ishoʿdad shuffles this material into a new unity. The following survey elucidates this:

Order of IbN		Order of IoM
1. fols. 79v.10–80r.13*	(2)	150.5–6*
2. fol. 80r.13–15*	(4)	150.6–8
3. fols. 80r.15–80v.11**	(3)	150.8–19**
4. fol. 80v.15–16	(1)	150.19–151.2**
5. fol. 81r.1–6*	(5)	151.3–7*

**=Literally identical *=Almost literally identical Without *=Identical in content

Ishoʿdad's different order has in part something to do with the fact that he does not bring this problem up in connection with the entry of the Lord on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but with the explanation of Jn 7:37: *Now on the great day, which was the last day of the feast …* There the Feast of Tabernacles is meant. With regard to this feast there is a word written by "The Interpreter" saying that our Lord entered Jerusalem on the Feast of Tabernacles, while it was really the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Ishoʿ bar Nun states that this was changed by carelessness of the scribe and quotes another word of the same Interpreter that these things happened in the proximity of the Lord's Passion.[146] Theodore bar Koni shows he also has knowledge of this problem.[147]

Ishoʿ bar Nun's contribution, as is represented above, to Ishoʿdad of Merw's commentary on the Gospel of John, consists of 101 lines—almost 4% of his commentary. But it is possible that more material in Ishoʿdad of Merw's commentary should be ascribed to Ishoʿ bar Nun. There are a number of passages that have the form of the question and answer scheme.[148] They cannot be traced back to the work of Ishoʿ bar Nun as we have it now, but we should consider it to be "a selection" of his original questions and answers.

---

[146] MS Cambridge Add. 2017, fols. 79v.10–80r.8.

[147] Scher, *Liber Scholiorum II*, 118.25–119.4.

[148] E.g. Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:121.3–10; 126.10–12.15; 152.11–153.1; 160.13; 182.12–18; 192.2–3.

5.3 Theodore bar Koni

In his "Scholion,"[149] completed in 792 CE, Theodore bar Koni[150] dedicated ten scholia to the Gospel of John.[151] In Ishoʿdad's commentary on John there are many corresponding passages to be found between both authors, eighty-four in total.[152] Fifty-seven of these go back to the work of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Moreover there are twenty-seven corresponding passages, for which no parallels can be found in the work of the Interpreter. This concerns the following passages in the work of Theodore bar Koni (TbK) and Ishoʿdad of Merw.

Text IoM	Text TbK
1. 109.14	II. 133.6*
2. 115.1–7	II. 80.10–19
3. 115.6–7	II. 80.8–10*
4. 115.14–20	II. 160.1–2
5. 116.7–8	II. 29.14–16*
6. 116.20	II. 160.2–4*
7. 122.6–8	II. 163.1–6*
8. 127.14–20	II. 158.21–25**
9. 128.5–8	II. 158.25–28*
10. 133.3–8	II. 155.6. 10–13*
11. 140.18–19	II. 155.20**; 156.1–2**
12. 150.5–6	cf. II. 118.10–11
13. 150.19–20	II. 118.25–26**
14. 158.10	II. 165.4–6**
15. 162.3–4	II. 165.12–13*
16. 174.16–175.11	II. 91.23–92.17*
17. 176.11–13	II. 166.15–16**
18. 178.6	II. 166.17–18
19. 180.19–21	II. 166.19–21**
20. 181.5–6	II. 166.22–24*
21. 207.4–6	II. 93.14–17**
22. 207.10–13	II. 92.26–29**
23. 207.13–15	II. 92.18–22*
24. 210.20–211.2	II. 96.25–27 neg.

---

[149] Editions and translations: Addai Scher, *Theodorus bar Koni, Liber Scholiorum I* (CSCO 55 [text]); idem, *Theodorus bar Koni, Liber Scholiorum II* (CSCO 69 [text]). Robert Hespel and René Draguet, *Théodore bar Koni, Livre des Scolies I, Mimre I-V*, CSCO 431 (transl.); idem, *Théodore bar Koni, Livre des Scolies (recension de Séert) II. Mimre VI-XI*, CSCO 432 (transl.). Robert Hespel, *Théodore bar Koni, Livre des Scolies (recension d'Urmiah)*, CSCO 447/448; idem, *Théodore bar Koni, Livre des Scolies (recension d'Urmiah). Les Collections annexées par Sylvain de Qardu*, CSCO 464/465.

[150] Amann, "Theodore Bar-Koni;" Baumstark, *Geschichte*, 218–19; idem, "Die Bucher I–IX;" Brade, *Untersuchungen*; idem, "Nestorianische Kommentare."

[151] Scher, *Liber Scholiorum II*, 154–69.

[152] A complete survey will be given in the forthcoming edition.

25.	211.9–212.4	II. 93.29–94.20**
26.	212.6–7	II. 94.28–95.1**
27.	212.10–11;13	II. 154.2–3*

**=Literally identical *=Almost literally identical Without *=Identical in content

Now the question arises: What is the mutual relation of all these corresponding passages? Van Den Eynde, regarding Ishoʿdad's commentary on Genesis, has developed the opinion that Ishoʿdad did not know the work of his predecessor and that Ishoʿdad, writing his commentary, had at his disposal various commentaries, including the commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia.[153] Moreover he supposed that Theodore bar Koni and Ishoʿdad of Merw made use of a common older source, containing in addition to exegesis a great many etymologies.[154]

In my dissertation concerning the Prologue of John I followed Van Den Eynde's opinion, although I had some reservations.[155] This objection arose not only from the fact that there was too little material to make a thorough decision, but also because in some passages the texts of Ishoʿdad and Theodore bar Koni more closely agree with each other in the choice of words than with the work of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Now, after studying the entire commentary of Ishoʿdad of Merw on John and collecting all the corresponding passages, it is time to adjust my opinion.

It is evident from Theodore bar Koni's and Ishoʿdad's work that both authors had at their disposal Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on the Gospel of John, resulting in the above-mentioned fifty-seven corresponding passages originating in the work of the Interpreter. In addition to this it is striking that in many cases Ishoʿdad's text is much more closely associated with Theodore bar Koni's text than with the text of Theodore of Mopsuestia.

One of these cases I will discuss here as an example. The text in question goes back to a somewhat long-winded section in Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on Jn 5:19 *The Son can do nothing by Himself.*[156] Theodore bar Koni[157] and Ishoʿdad[158] summarize the text of the Interpreter. Ishoʿdad's text is almost literally identical to that of Theodore bar Koni. In addition to this, the switch in the sequence of the examples used by Theodore of Mopsuestia in his commentary is notable. The

---

[153] Van Den Eynde, *Commentaire I* (CSCO 156 [transl.]), XX.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Hofstra, *Ishoʿdad van Merw*, 136. See also idem, "Ishoʿ bar Nun's 'Questions and Answers'," 72–75.

[156] Vosté, *Commentarius,* 108.28–110.4; 110.13–17; 28–29 and 111.20–24.

[157] Scher, *Liber Scholiorum II*, 156.6–26.

[158] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:142.2–18.

Interpreter mentions as his first example Judas and subsequently Peter.[159] Theodore bar Koni mentions first Peter and then Judas and Isho'dad does likewise.[160]

In theory there are three possible explanations for these correspondences:

1. Theodore bar Koni and Isho'dad independently came to almost the same recapitulation of the material found in Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on Jn 5:19, including the switch in the sequence of the examples above-mentioned.

2. Theodore bar Koni and Isho'dad independently drew on a common older source, containing inter alia recapitulations of Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary. Then it has to be supposed that both have adopted almost literally the recapitulation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's explanation of Jn 5:19 from the common older source, including the switch in the sequence of the examples.

3. Isho'dad adopted almost literally the recapitulation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's explanation of Jn 5:19, including the switch in the sequence of the examples from Theodore bar Koni.

The explanation mentioned under 1 is most unlikely and so drops out. Regarding explanation 2: the supposition that Theodore bar Koni copied this common older source almost literally would be totally at odds with the character of Theodore bar Koni's work as qualified inter alia by Clarke.[161]

On the contrary, the supposition (explanation 3) that Isho'dad used the work of Theodore bar Koni on this point, perfectly fits the picture we have acquired of Isho'dad as a compiler who copies various sources and knows how to insert them into his commentary.

Regarding the twenty-seven passages common to both authors which have no parallel in the work of Theodore of Mopsuestia: in five cases it is a matter of non-literal correspondences,[162] but in twenty-two cases Isho'dad's text is closely to very closely associated with Theodore bar Koni's text. One example of these corresponding passages related to the Passion of Christ will be discussed here, namely Jn 18:12 and 27.[163]

---

[159] Vosté, *Commentarius*, 109.6–9.

[160] Scher, *Liber Scholiorum II*, 156.13–15 (TbK); Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:142.5–7 (IoM).

[161] Clarke, *The Selected Questions*, 176: "the general conclusion is that this author has shown a remarkable independence from his predecessor in the matter of biblical exegesis," and 177: "It is clear that Theodore bar Koni's editorial attitude requires a high level of alertness and acumen."

[162] Numbers 12 and 13 have their parallel also in the work of IbN and apply to a problem raised by an inaccurate statement of ToM concerning the question during which feast Jesus entered Jerusalem. Although IoM here, as we saw above, follows the work of IbN, it is important to note that this problem is not absent in TbK's work.

[163] Scher, *Liber Scholiorum II*, 93.14–17; Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:207.4-6.

ܠܩܝܦܐ. ܕܝܢ ܐܦ ܗܕܐ. ܢܘܕܥ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܡܢ ܒܝܬ ܐܢܢ ܕܟܦܪ ܟܕ ܠܘܬ ܚܠܡܝܟܐ ܦܛܪܘܣ ܗܝ ܢܦܩ ܟܕ ܡܪܢ ܦܩܝܕ ܗܘ ܠܡ ܚܢܢ ܕܝܠܢ ܠܒܝܬ ܡܒܟ ܟܐܦܐܢܘܣ. ܘܚܪ ܒܫܡܥܘܢ ܘܐܬܕܟܪ ܘܒܟܐ.	ܢܘܕܥ: ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܕܠܒܟܐ: ܢܘܕܥ ܚܢܢ ܠܡ ܐܝܬ ܕܝܘܚܢܢ ܦܛܪܘܣ ܗܘ ܟܕ ܢܦܩ ܟܕ ܡܪܢ ܗܝ ܢܦܩ ܕܝܠܗ ܠܒܝܬ ܡܒܟ ܟܐܦܐܢܘܣ. ܘܚܪ ܠܡ ܒܫܡܥܘܢ ܘܒܗ ܒܝ ܒܟܐ.

Translation:

We also make this known that John the evangelist mentions "the house of Annas" (as the place) where Peter denied, when our Lord came out to go to the house of Caiaphas in his chains. "And He looked at Simon and he remembered and he wept."	And we ought to know that John mentions "the house of Annas" (as the place) where Peter denied, when our Lord came out to go to the house of Caiaphas in his chains. "And He looked at Simon and at that very moment he wept."

Ishoʿdad discusses the discrepancy between John and the other evangelists about the place of Peter's denial: in the house of Caiaphas (Mt 26:57, Mk 14:53, Lk 22:54), or in the house of Annas (Jn 18:13). Both authors offer the solution that it happened at the very moment Jesus left the house of Annas going on his way to the house of Caiaphas. In their opinion with this the discrepancy is solved. Besides the similarity of these passages with respect to content the literal similarity is also notable. Only in a few small parts does Ishoʿdad's text differ from Theodore bar Koni's. These small differences have something to do with the way Ishoʿdad inserts this text into his commentary.[164]

In conclusion, the correspondences between Theodore bar Koni and Ishoʿdad of Merw in his commentary on the Gospel of John can be best explained by assuming that Ishoʿdad of Merw knew the work of his predecessor Theodore bar Koni and used it in his commentary on the Gospel of John. The assumption of a common older source is, in view of the correspondences between both authors, unnecessary and not to the point, apart from the fact that we do not know which older source Theodore bar Koni and Ishoʿdad of Merw might have used then.

5.4 Timothy I

Ishoʿdad in his commentary on the Gospel of John also made use of the writings of Timothy I, who for more than forty-three years (780–823) as Catholicos gave guidance to the East Syrian church.[165] Once Ishoʿdad quotes Timothy by name.[166]

---

[164] IoM uses the words "we ought to know" many times when inserting a source, see e.g. Gibson, *The Commentaries,* 3:104.9; 105.12; 110.21; 116.2; 123.22. IoM omits the words "also" and "the evangelist" because he does not need them in his commentary. At the end both authors cite Lk 22:61. However, IoM's text ("at that very moment") is influenced by Jn 18:27.

[165] See Baumstark, *Geschichte,* 217–18; Bidawid, *Les Lettres,* 1–4; Putman, *L'Église et*

This quotation cannot be traced back to the writings of Timothy that have been preserved. Isho'dad will have adopted it from a Christological passage derived from one of Timothy's letters that has been lost[167] or from his book with "Questions."[168] Moreover he has frequently made use of Timothy's work without mentioning his name. There are 20 coincidences to be noted between Isho'dad and Timothy I. All these coincidences relate to the first chapter of John as is shown in the following survey.[169]

	Text IoM	Text Timothy
1.	104.14	ܩ, 19–20 (BL)
2.	104.19–20	ܩ, 4–5 (BL)
3.	104.21	ܝ, 28.* (BL)
4.	106.1–3	207.20–24 (BE)
5.	107.4–6	181.12–15 (BE)
6.	107.13–14	230.23–24 BE)
7.	110.18–19	175.10–11* (BE)
8.	113.3–7	174.8–17 (BE)
9.	113.9–10	ܝ, 24–25 (BL)
10.	113.21	ܠܠ, 14–15 (BL)
11.	114.1–4	ܟ, 9–10; ܟܡ, 5–7
12.	114.15–17	253.1–4; 7–9* (BE)
13.	114.19–20	ܣ, 23–24 (BL)
14.	114.22–115.5	159.1–13* (BE)
15.	115.6–7	158.25–28 (BE); ܟ, 22–26** (BL)
16.	116.15–16	ܟܠ, 17–18 (BL)
17.	118.15–16	ܠܠ, 18 (BL)
18. Timothy	118.16–119.2	cf. 10.18–28; 242.4–5; 249.8–9 (BE)
19.	119.11–14	231.17;175.24 (BE)
20.	119.14–15	170.9–14 (BE); ܝ,15–20

**=Literally identical   *=Almost literally identical   Without *=Identical in content

---

l'islam, 3:13–23; Gismondi, *Maris, Amri, et Slibae*, 63–66 [Pars prima, versio Latina], 37–39 [Pars altera, versio Latina]; Tisserant, "Timothée I," *DTC* 15.1:1121–39; Abbeloos and Lamy, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, 2:165–72; 179–82.

[166] Gibson, *The Commentaries*, 3:118.16–119.2.

[167] 'Abdisho' speaks of a collection of 200 letters in two parts (Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3.1:163). Fifty-nine of them have been preserved.

[168] In this work, which has been lost, various questions in the field of religion might be dealt with (Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3.1:163). Perhaps it could be identified with the "Collection of discussions" held by Timothy with Patriarch George of Bě'eltan. (Abbeloos and Lamy, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, 2:181–82n1).

[169] The abbreviations in parentheses indicate: Bidawid, *Les Lettres* (BL); Braun, *Timothei Patriarchae I: Epistulae I* (BE).

The corresponding passages are partly of an exegetical character, concerning the interpretation of Jn 1:14 (numbers 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 18) and Jn 1:16 (numbers 19 and 20), and partly they include Christological statements (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 17). All these passages cited by Ishoʿdad are derived from the letters Timothy wrote, dealing with Christology.

5.5 Tradition-Source

In his commentary on the Gospel of John Ishoʿdad proves himself a devoted follower of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the historical-grammatical method of the School of Antioch.[170] Nevertheless there are also seven passages in his commentary on the Gospel of John that absolutely do not fit into this framework.

	Indication	Text IoM	Tradition
1.	ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ	102.18–103.4	A miracle attending the writing of the Gospel
2.	ܡܫܠܡܝܢ	115.14–20	Two traditions about Qiyoré, connected with Jn 1:14
3.	ܡܫܠܡܝܢ	123.2–10	A tradition about Nathanael under the fig-tree (Jn 1:49)
4.	ܡܫܠܡܝܢ	172.20–21	A tradition about Lazarus being a bishop (Jn 11)
5.	ܡܫܠܡܝܢ	174.5–16	A tradition about Ephraïm (Jn 11:54)
6.	ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ	209.12–15	A tradition about Jesus' undergarment (Jn 19:23)
7.	ܡܫܠܡܝܢ	215.6–22	A tradition about the angels in the tomb (Jn 20:12)

Because I have already commented upon the passages 1 to 5 in my contribution to the 10th Symposium Syriacum in Granada (2008) I will only give a description of the passages mentioned under 6 and 7.[171]

The sixth tradition is related to Jn 19:23b, where mention is made of Jesus' undergarment that *was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom*. In the tradition mentioned by Ishoʿdad and introduced with the words "it is handed down," supernatural power is ascribed to it. That is, when there is lack of rain, if it is taken

---

[170] For the exegetical methods of the School of Antioch, see Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*. For the exegetical methods of Theodore of Mopsuestia, see Bultmann, *Die Exegese des Theodor von Mopsuestia*; Robert Devreesse, "La Méthode exégétique;" idem, *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste*. In IoM's commentary on St John these exegetical methods find their expression among other things in (a) a coherent explanation of the text, (b) the explanation of difficult words and notions, (c) attention to the customs of the Scriptures, (d) attention to metaphorical speech usage, (e) attention to typology, and (f) usage of literary stylistic device and profane science (see Hofstra, *Ishoʿdad van Merw*, 217–27).

[171] For a more detailed description of the passages 1 to 5, see Hofstra, "Some Remarkable Passages."

outside and lifted up towards heaven, rain will come down in abundance. This tradition is also to be found in the "Cave of Treasures."[172]

The last passage contains a tradition about the two angels Mary Magdalene saw seated in the tomb, *one at the head and one at the feet* (Jn 20:12). In this tradition these two angels are identified as Gabriel, messenger and minister of the New Covenant, and Michael, minister of the Old Covenant. About them "they hand down" that they entered the tomb with the Lord and remained there after his resurrection to honour the place and to announce his resurrection. These leaders of the angels had also carried the Lord solemnly to the tomb with many thousands of angels. This tradition does not stand on its own. The involvement of Gabriel and many angels is also spoken of in the work of (pseudo) Ephrem.[173]

What the seven passages mentioned above have in common is that Isho'dad cites them with the term "they hand down" (passages 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7) or "it is handed down" (passages 1 and 6). The emphatic and consistent way in which Isho'dad uses this indication leads us to suppose that these passages belong together and are derived from one and the same source, which we will call "Tradition-source" according to the words with which they are introduced.[174] It may be concluded that this "Tradition-source" is characterized by interest in miraculous and legendary events, which in the course of time get attached to a holy event (the writing of the fourth Gospel), an important Christological text ("and the Word became flesh"), a mysterious fig-tree (Nathanael), a person who was raised from the dead (Lazarus), a holy place (Ephraim), Jesus' undergarment and the angels at the tomb.

This all leads to the conclusion that Isho'dad by inserting into his commentary this material from the "Tradition-source" evidently broke new ground compared with his predecessors. For example, Isho' bar Nun's "spiritual exegesis"[175] still started with the concrete biblical text and he tried to understand this text more deeply at a spiritual level, but in this kind of tradition the biblical text slips more into the background and gives rise to delivering legendary traditions concerning holy matters and persons. It is clear that embodying traditions of this kind is at odds with the premises of the historical-grammatical method confessed by him in imitation of Theodore of Mopsuestia.

The insertion of this legendary material once again emphasizes the fact that Isho'dad of Merw's commentary is a combination of different genres. Here lie its significance and strength, as is once again apparent, for most of the traditions figuring in our passages would never have been known were it not for Isho'dad's

---

[172] Ri, *La Caverne des trésors* (CSCO 486 [text]); § L.8–11; 416, 8–10.

[173] Beck, *Ephraem Syrus* (CSCO 412 [text]), Sermon 7.70, nos. 81–93; 72, nos. 149–69; idem, *Ephraem Syrus* (CSCO 413 [text]), Sermon 7.122, nos. 81–93; 125, nos. 149–169.

[174] This "Tradition Source" needs to be distinguished from "The tradition of the School" (see under 4.1.6), in which we meet a purely exegetical source. See Hofstra, "Some Remarkable Passages," 333–34.

[175] Molenberg, *The Interpreter Interpreted*, 364.

commentary. In these passages he provides some insight into legendary traditions about Biblical texts, which in the course of centuries came into being in the East Syrian Church.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbeloos, Jean B. and Thomas J. Lamy. *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Ecclesiasticum III*. Leuven: Peeters, 1872.

Abramowski, Luise. *Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 242. Subsidia 22. Leuven: Peeters, 1963.

Abramowski, Luise, and Albert van Roey. "Das Florilegium mit den Gregor-Scholien aus Vatic. Borg. Syr. 82." *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 1 (1970): 131–80.

Assemanus, Joseph Simonius, ed. *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*. Part 3 vol. 1. Rome: Sacra Congragatio de Propaganda Fide, 1725.

Baarda, Tjitze. *The Gospel Quotations of Aphrahat, the Persian Sage*: *Aphrahat's Text of the Fourth Gospel*. Academisch Proefschrift Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Meppel: Krips, 1975.

Bardy, Gustave. "La littérature patristique des 'Quaestiones et Responsiones' sur l'Écriture Sainte." *Revue Biblique* 41 (1932): 210–36, 341–69, 515–37; 42 (1933): 14–30, 211–29, 328–52.

Baumstark, Anton. *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*. Bonn: A. Marcus & E. Weber, 1922. Repr. Berlin: Gruyter, 1968.

———. "Die Bucher I-IX des Kataba Diskolion des Theodoros bar Koni." *Oriens Christianus* 1 (1901): 173–78.

Beasley-Murray, George R. *John*. Word Biblical Commentary 36. Waco: Word Books, 1987.

Beck, Edmund. *Ephraem Syrus: Sermones in Hebdomadam Sanctam*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 412–13. Scriptores Syri 181–82. Leuven: Peeters, 1979.

———. *Ephräms Trinitätslehre im Bild von Sonne/Feuer, Licht, und Wärme*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 425. Subsidia 62. Leuven: Peeters, 1981.

Bedjan, Paul. *Nestorius: Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas*. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1910.

Bidawid, Raphaël J. *Les Lettres du Patriarche Nestorien Timothée I*. Studi e Testi 187. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1956.

Biesen, Kees den. *Bibliography of Ephrem the Syrian*. Giove in Umbria, Terni: K. den Biesen, 2002.

Brade, Lutz. *Untersuchungen zum Scholienbuch des Theodoros bar Konai.* Göttinger Oriëntforschungen 1. Reihe Syriaca 8. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1975.

———. "Nestorianische Kommentare zu den Paulusbriefen an der Wende vom 8. zum 9. Jahrhundert." *Oriens Christianus* 66 (1982): 98–114.

Braun, Otto. *Timothei Patriarchae I: Epistulae I.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 74–75. Scriptores Syri 30–31. Leuven: Peeters, 1914–1915.

Brière, Maurice. "La légende syriaque de Nestorius." *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 15 (1910): 1–25.

Brooks, Ernest W. *Eliae Metropolitae Nisibeni Opus Chronologicum I.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 62–63. Paris: Typographeo Reipublicae, 1909-1910.

Bultmann, Rudolf. *Die Exegese des Theodor von Mopsuestia.* Posthumously edited by Helmut Feld and Karl Hermann Schelkle. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984.

Bundy, David D. "The 'Questions and Answers' on Isaiah by Isoʿ bar Nūn." *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 16 (1985): 167–78

Callay, Paul, and Maurice Jourjon. *Grégoire de Nazianze: Lettres Théologiques.* Source Chrétiennes 208. Paris: Cerf, 1974.

Childers, Jeff W. "Studies in the Syriac versions of St. John Chrysostom's Homilies on the New Testament, with special reference to Homilies 6, 20, 22, 23, 37, 62, 83, and 84 on John." D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1996.

———. *The Syriac Version of John Chrysostom's Commentary on John: Mêmrê 1–43.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 651–52. Scriptores Syri 250–51. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.

Clarke, Ernest G. *The Selected Questions of Ishō bar Nūn on the Pentateuch: Edited and translated from Ms Cambridge Add. 2017 with a Study of the Relationship of Ishōʾdādh of Merv, Theodore bar Kōnī, and Ishō bar Nūn on Genesis.* Studia Post-Biblica 5. Leiden: Brill, 1962.

Cowley, Roger W. "Scholia of Aḥob of Qatar on St. John's Gospel and the Pauline Epistles." *Le Muséon* 93 (1980): 329–43.

Détienne, Claude. "Grégoire de Nazianze dans la tradition syriaque." Pages 175–83 in *Studia Nazianzenica I.* Edited by Bernard Coulie. Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca 41. Corpus Nazianzenum 8. Turnhout: Brepols, 2000.

Devreesse, Robert. "La Méthode exégétique de Théodore de Mopsueste." *Revue Biblique* 53 (1946): 207–41.

———. *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste.* Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1948.

Dorn, Boris. *Catalogue des Manuscrits et Xylographes Orientaux de la Bibliothèque Impériale Publique de St. Pétersbourg.* St Petersburg: Académie impériale des sciences, 1852. Repr. Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat, 1978.

Draguet, René. *Commentaire du Livre d'Abba Isaïe par Dadišo Qaṭraya.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 326–27. Scriptores Syri 144–45. Leuven: Peeters, 1972.

DTC : *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique.* Edited by A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, and E. Amann. 15 vols. in 30 parts. Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1903–1950.

Duval, Rubens. *Lexicon syriacum auctore Hassano bar Bahlule voces syriacas graecasque cum glossis syriacis et arabicis complectens.* 3 vols. Paris: E Reipublicae Typographaeo, 1888–1901.

Faultless, Julian. "The Prologue to John in Ibn Al-Ṭayyib's Commentary on the Gospels." Ph.D. diss., University of Oxford, 2001.

———. "The Two Recensions of the Prologue to John in Ibn al Ṭayyib's Commentary on the Gospels." Pages 177–98 in *Christians at the Heart of Islamic Rule: Church Life and Scholarship in ʿAbassid Iraq.* Edited by David Thomas. The History of Christian-Muslim Relations 1. Leiden, Brill 2003.

Gibson, Margaret Dunlop, ed. and trans., *The Commentaries of Ishoʿdad of Merv, Bishop of Ḥadatta (c. 850 A.D.) in Syriac and English.* Introduction by J. Rendel Harris. 5 vols. Horae Semiticae 5–7, 10–11. Cambridge: University Press, 1911–1916.

Gismondi, Henricus. *Maris, Amri, et Slibae de patriarchis Nestorianorum commentaria.* I–IV. Rome: De Luigi, 1896–1899.

Graf, Georg. *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur.* 5 vols. Studi e testi 118, 133, 146–47, 172. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944–1953. Repr. 1959–1960.

Haelewyck, Jean-Claude. *Sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni opera, versio syriaca IV: Orationes XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, et XXXI.* Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca 65. Corpus Nazianzenum 23. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.

Halleux, André de. "Les manuscrits syriaques du 'CSCO'." *Le Muséon* 100 (1987): 35-48.

Harris, J. Rendel, ed. *Fragments of the Commentary of Ephrem Syrus upon the Diatessaron.* London: C.J. Clay, 1895.

Hespel, Robert, and René Draguet. *Théodore bar Koni: Livre des scolies (recension de Séert).* 2 vols. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 431–32. Scriptores Syri 187–88. Leuven: Peeters, 1981–1982.

Heussi, Karl. *Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte.* 12th ed. Tübingen: Mohr, 1960.

Hofstra, Johan D. *Ishoʿdad van Merw, "En het Woord is vlees geworden": De plaats van het commentaar van Ishoʿdad van Merw op Johannes 1,1-18 binnen de Syrische exegetische*

traditie. Academisch Proefschrift Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Kampen: Mondiss, 1993.

———. "Ishoʿ Bar Nun's 'Questions and Answers' on the Gospel of St. John and Their Relation to the Commentary of Ishoʿdad of Merv and Theodore Bar Koni's Scholion." *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 56 (2004): 69–93.

———. "Some Remarkable Passages in Ishoʿdad of Merw's Commentary on the Gospel of St. John." *Parole de L'Orient* 35 (2010): 303–35.

Kiraz, George Anton. *Comparative Edition to the Syriac Gospels Aligning the Sinaiticus, Curetonianus, Peshîṭtâ, and Ḥarklean Versions.* Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Lange, Christian. *The Portrayal of Christ in the Syriac Commentary on the Diatessaron.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 616. Subsidia 118. Leuven: Peeters, 2005.

Leloir, Louis. *Saint Éphrem: Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, version arménienne.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 137 and 145. Scriptores Armeniaci 1–2. Leuven: Peeters, 1953–1954.

———, ed. and trans. *Saint Éphrem: Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant Texte syriaque (manuscrit Chester Beatty 709).* Chester Beatty Monographs 8. Dublin: Hodges Figges, 1963.

———. *Saint Éphrem: Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant Texte Syriaque (Manuscrit Chester Beatty 709) Folios Additionnels.* Leuven: Peeters, 1990.

Leonhard, Clemens. *Ishodad of Merw's Exegesis of the Psalms 119 and 139–147: A Study of His Interpretation in the Light of the Syriac Translation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's Commentary.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 585. Subsidia, 107. Leuven: Peeters, 2001.

Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones, and Roderick McKenzie. *A Greek-English Lexicon.* 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1940; with supplement 1968.

Malingrey, Anne-Marie. *Jean Chrysostome: Sur l'égalité du Père et du Fils: contre les anoméens homélies vii–xii*. Sources Chrétiennes 396. Paris: Cerf, 1994.

Manqurius, Yusuf, ed. *Tafsir al-masriqi: Kommentar des Orientalen, das ist des Priesters Abu'l Farag, zu den vier Evangelien.* 2 vols. Cairo: Al-Tawfiq, 1908–1910.

Mayer, Wendy, and Pauline Allen. *John Chrysostom.* London: Routledge, 2000.

Metzger, Bruce M. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament.* London: United Bible Societies, 1971.

Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus … Series Graeca.* 162 vols. Paris: Garnier, 1857–1886.

Mingana, Alphonse. *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts.* 3 vols. Cambridge: Heffer, 1933–1939.

Moesinger, Georgius, ed. *Evangelii concordantis expositio facta a Sancto Ephraemo doctore Syro.* Translated into Latin by Johann Baptist Aucher. Venice: Monasterio S. Lazari, 1876.

Molenberg, Corrie. *The Interpreter Interpreted: Išoʿ bar Nun's Selected Questions on the Old Testament.* Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit Gröningen, 1990.

Moreschini, Claudio, and Paul Callay, eds. *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 38-41.* Sources Chrétiennes 358. Paris: Cerf, 1990.

Nau, François. *Nestorius: Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas.* Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1910. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2010.

Nodet, Étienne, Serge Bardet, and Yohanan Lederman, eds. *Flavius Josèphe: Les antiquités juives. Livres X et XI.* Antiquitates Judaicae 5. Paris: Cerf, 2010.

Ortiz de Urbina, Ignatius. *Patrologia Syriaca.* Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studium, 1965.

Parisot, Jean. *Aphraatis sapientis Persae Demonstrationes.* Patrologia Syriaca 1–2. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1894–1907. Repr. 1980.

Payne Smith, R., ed. *Thesaurus Syriacus.* 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1891. Repr. Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1981. Repr. in 3 vols with *A Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus* Piscataway: Gorgias, 2007.

Pierre, Marie-Joseph. *Aphraate le Sage Persan.* 2 vols. Sources Chrétiennes 349 and 359. Paris: Cerf, 1988.

Pigoulewski (Pigulewskaya), Nina W. "Les Manuscrits syriaques bibliques de Léningrad." *Revue Biblique* 46 (1937): 83-92, 392-400, 556-62; 47 (1938): 83–88, 214–26.

———. *Katalog sirijskiw rukåpisej leningrada.* Moscow–Leningrad, 1960.

Preuschen, Erwin. *Origenes Werke: Der Johanneskommentar.* Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 4. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1903.

Price, A. Whigham. *The Ladies of Castlebrae: A Story of Nineteenth-Century Travel and Research.* Gloucester: A. Sutton, 1985.

Putman, Hans. *L'Église et l'islam sous Timothée I (780–823): Étude sur l'église nestorienne au temps des premiers ʿAbbāsides avec nouvelle édition et traduction du Dialogue entre Timothée et al-Mahdi.* Recherches (Institut de Lettres Orientales). Orient Chrétien 3. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1975.

Quispel, G. *M. Minucii Felicis Octavius.* Leiden: Brill, 1949.

Reinink, G.J. *Gannat Bussame, I: Die Adventssonntage.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 502. Scriptores Syri, 212. Leuven: Peeters, 1988.

Ri, Su-Min. *La Caverne des trésors: Les deux recensions syriaques*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 486–87. Scriptores Syri, 207–208. Leuven: Peeters 1987.

Sachau, Eduard. *Theodori Mopsuesteni fragmenta syriaca e codicibus Musei Britannici Nitriacis*. Leipzig: Engelmann, 1869.

———. *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*. Verzeichniss der Syrischen Handschriften 23. 2 vols. Berlin: A. Asher, 1899.

Schäublin, Christoph. *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der Antiochenischen Exegese*. Theophaneia 23. Cologne-Bonn: P. Hanstein, 1974.

Scher, Addai. *Catalogue des manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés dans la Bibliothèque épiscopale de Séert (Kurdistan)*: *Avec notes bibliographiques*. Mosul: Dominicains, 1905. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2011.

———. *Histoire nestorienne (chronique de Séert)*. Patrologia Orientalis 5.2–7.2. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1910–11.

———. *Theodorus bar Koni, Liber Scholiorum I*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 55. Scriptores Syri 19. Leuven: Peeters, 1960.

———. *Theodorus bar Koni, Liber Scholiorum II*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 69. Scriptores Syri 26. Leuven: Peeters, 1960.

———. *Cause de la Fondation des écoles, par Barḥadběšabba ʿArbaya, évêque de Halwan*. Patrologia Orientalis 4.4. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1907. Repr. Turnhout: Bepols, 1971.

Soskice, Janet. *Sisters of Sinai: How Two Lady Adventurers Discovered the Hidden Gospels*. New York: Knopf, 2009.

Spuler, Bertold. "Die nestorianische Kirche." Pages 120-169 in *Religionsgeschichte des Orients in der Zeit der Weltreligionen*. Edited by Alfred Adam, Johannes Leipoldt, and Geo Widengren. Handbuch der Orientalistik 1. Der nahe und der mittlere Osten 8 / Handbook of Oriental Studies 1. The Near and Middle East 2. Leiden: Brill, 1961.

Sullivan, Francis A. "Theodore of Mopsuestia." Pages 18–19 in vol. 14 of *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Prepared by an editorial staff at the Catholic University of America. 18 vols. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967–1996.

Taylor, David G.K. "Les Pères Cappadociens dans la Tradition Syriaque." Pages 43–61 in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque*. Edited by A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet. Études Syriaques 4. Paris: Geuthner, 2007.

Tonneau, Raymond M., and Robert Devreesse, ed. and trans. *Les Homélies Catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste: Reproduction phototypique du Ms. Mingana Syr. 561*. Studi e testi 145. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1949.

Van Den Eynde, Ceslas. *Commentaire d'Išoʿdad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament I: Genèse.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 156. Scriptores Syri 75. Leuven: Durbecq, 1955.

———. *Commentaire d'Išoʿdad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament II: Exode-Deutéronome.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 176–79. Scriptores Syri 80–81. Leuven: Durbecq, 1958.

———. *Commentaire d'Išoʿdad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament III: Livre des Sessions.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 229–230. Scriptores Syri 96–97. Leuven: Durbecq, 1962–1963.

———. *Commentaire d'Išoʿdad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament IV: Isaïe et les Douze.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 303–4. Scriptores Syri 128–129. Leuven: Durbecq, 1969.

———. *Commentaire d'Išoʿdad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament V: Jerémie, Ézéchiel, Daniel.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 328–29. Scriptores Syri 146–147. Leuven: Durbecq, 1972.

———. *Commentaire d'Išoʿdad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament VI: Psaumes.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 433–34. Scriptores Syri 185–186. Leuven: Durbecq, 1981.

Van Rompay, Lucas. "Išoʿ bar Nun and Ishoʿdad of Merv: New Data for the Study of the Interdependence of their Exegetical Works." *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 8 (1977): 229–49.

———. *Le commentaire sur Genèse-Exode 9, 32 du manuscrit (olim) Diyarbaker 22.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 483–84. Scriptores Syri 205–206. Leuven: Peeters, 1986.

———. "Quelques remarques sur la tradition syriaque de l'oeuvre exégétique de Théodore de Mopsueste." Pages 41–42 in *IV Symposium Syriacum 1984: Literary Genres in Syriac Literature.* Edited by H.J.W. Drijvers. Orientalia Christiana Analecta 229. Rome: Pont. Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1987.

Vosté, Jacques-M. "La Chronologie de l'Activité littéraire de Théodore de Mopsueste." *Revue Biblique* 34 (1925): 54–81.

———. *Theodori Mopsuesteni commentarius in evangelium Iohannis apostoli.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 115–16. Scriptores Syri 62–63. Leuven: Officina Orientali, 1940.

Vosté, Jacques-M., and Ceslas Van den Eynde. *Commentaire d'Išoʿdad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament 1: Genèse.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 126. Scriptores Syri 67. Leuven: Durbecq, 1950.

Wright, William. *A Short History of Syriac Literature.* London: Adam & Charles Black, 1894. Repr. Amsterdam: Philo, 1966.

Wright, William, and Stanley Arthur Cook. *A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge.* 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1901.

Wright, William, and Norman McLean. *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius in Syriac: Edited from the Manuscripts, With a Collation of the Ancient Armenian Version by Adalbert Merx.* Cambridge: University Press, 1898. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2003.

Wilmshurst, David. *The Ecclesiastical Organisation of the Church of the East, 1318–1913.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 582, Subsidia 104. Leuven: Peeters, 2000.

Yousif, Pierre. "Symbolisme christologique dans la Bible et dans la nature chez S. Éphrem de Nisibe: De Virginitate VIII–XI et les textes parallèles" *Parole de l'Orient* 8 (1977–1978): 5–66.

CHAPTER 13
THE HEBREW AS A TEXT CRITICAL TOOL IN RESTORING GENUINE PESHITTA READINGS IN ISAIAH

Jerome A. Lund

Accordance Bible Software
Kviteseid, Norway

1. INTRODUCTION

Scholars view the ancient versions of the Hebrew Bible correctly as sources of textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, since they were based on Hebrew manuscripts. The Peshitta OT, as a daughter version of the Hebrew, is used in such a way. But the opposite may be true as well, namely, that the Hebrew Bible can be used as a source of textual criticism of the daughter version. In this study, I will present a number of suggested emendations of the extant Syriac text of Isaiah projected on the basis of the Hebrew, emendations which represent the original Peshitta translation.[1] No Syriac biblical manuscript collated for the Leiden scientific edition contains any of these readings.[2]

---

[1] This research came about as a by-product of the tagging of the Syriac text of Peshitta Isaiah for Accordance, an electronic concordance program produced by Oaktree Software. In the tagging of the Syriac I constantly consulted the Hebrew. When a divergence was evident, I investigated its *raison d'être*. For the cases presented in this essay it seemed apparent that the reason for the divergence lay in an inner Syriac corruption of an earlier Syriac reading not found in any known Syriac MS. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to colleagues who commented on a preliminary version of this essay presented at the XI Symposium Syriacum hosted by the University of Malta on July 16, 2012, especially to Bas ter Haar Romeny. I have attempted to include all unambiguous cases of inner Syriac corruption in the book of Isaiah.

[2] I will use the following abbreviations: MT = the Masoretic Hebrew, as per Elliger and Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (5th ed.) with the Groves-Wheeler Westminster Hebrew Morphology software; L = the Leiden edition of the Peshitta OT; *P = my restoration of the

The earliest complete manuscripts of Peshitta Isaiah come from the sixth century,[3] some 350–400 years after its translation.[4] The earliest dated manuscript of Isaiah, 5ph1, from 459/460 CE, the under-text of a palimpsest, yields only occasional recoverable readings.[5] Since a Hebrew text very much like that preserved in the MT served as the source text of the OT Peshitta,[6] the MT can be used with discretion as a tool in restoring genuine Syriac readings.[7] A check of the pre-Masoretic Hebrew biblical texts, collated for the critical editions, yielded no divergent data of significance for the present study. Comparative reading of the Hebrew and the Syriac, together with retroversion of the Syriac to Hebrew, alerts one to the possibility of an inner Syriac error shared by all extant Syriac manuscripts. The suggested errant readings reflect known types of textual transmission errors that make the postulated recovered readings credible.

Great caution needs to be exercised when evaluating possible inner Syriac corruptions. For example, Gillian Greenberg and Donald M. Walter declare the case of ܒ̈ܢܬܐ ܕܫܒܝܩܢ *forsaken daughters* in Isa 10:14 to be an inner Syriac corruption of ܒ̈ܥܐ ܕܫܒܝܩܢ *forsaken eggs* on the basis of the Hebrew בֵּיצִים עֲזֻבוֹת *forsaken eggs*.[8] At first blush this assertion appears plausible since the two words in question are graphically similar. Yet, on closer consideration, a check of the Syriac lexica shows that the noun ܒܪܬܐ "daughter" can also mean "egg."[9] Hence, their assertion of an inner Syriac corruption in this case is invalid.

---

original Peshitta rendering on the basis of the Hebrew. For the Hebrew I also compared Goshen-Gottstein, *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah*. For the volumes not yet published in the Leiden edition of the Peshitta, I consulted MS 7a1 directly.

[3] Brock, *Isaiah*, VIII–X.

[4] Weitzman, *The Syriac Version*, 258 and 261.

[5] Brock, *Isaiah*, XIII–XVI, records the recoverable readings of MS 5ph1.

[6] Weitzman, *The Syriac Version*, 15.

[7] Ibid., 292–99. For unattested inner-Syriac corruptions in the Twelve Prophets, see Gelston, *The Peshitta of the Twelve*, esp. 94–96 and 98–100.

[8] Greenberg and Walter, "Introduction to the Translation," in *The Book of Isaiah*, XXĪV. Greenberg and Walter translate the Peshitta text of the 19th century print published by the Dominicans of Mosul (1887–1891; Isaiah appears in the second volume, 1888), the textual basis of which print is unstated. That text is unscientific in the sense that it contains no apparatus of variant readings nor does it divulge its source or sources. On the positive side, the Mosul print does provide interpretation of ambiguous forms by adding vocalization.

[9] *SL*, 192; RPS, 579.

2. RESTORATIONS OF LOST READINGS

2.1 Restore ܩܘܪܚܬܐ *bald spots* in place of ܩܘܪܙܬܐ *lightning flashes* (Isa 3:24; 15:2; 22:12)

Isa 3:24:

MT: וְתַחַת חֲגוֹרָה נִקְפָּה וְתַחַת מַעֲשֶׂה *and in place of well set hair baldness*

L: ܩܘܪܙܬܐ ܟܠܗܝ ܘܣܠܩ *and in place of plaited hair lightning flashes*

*P: ܩܘܪܚܬܐ ܟܠܗܝ ܘܣܠܩ *and in place of plaited hair bald spots*

Isa 15:2:

MT: בְּכָל־רֹאשָׁיו קָרְחָה

        and on all his heads baldness

L: ܩܘܪܙܬܐ ܪܝܫܘܗܝ ܘܒܟܠ

        and on all his heads lightning flashes

*P: ܩܘܪܚܬܐ ܪܝܫܘܗܝ ܘܒܟܠ

        and on all his heads bald spots

Isa 22:12:

MT: לְבְכִי וּלְמִסְפֵּד וּלְקָרְחָה וְלַחֲגֹר שָׂק

        for weeping, and for mourning, and for baldness, and for girding sackcloth

L: ܘܣܩܐ ܕܢܚܒܫ ܘܠܩܘܪܙܬܐ ܘܠܡܪܩܕܬܐ ܠܒܟܝܐ

        for weeping, and for mourning, and for lightning flashes, and for girding sackcloth

*P: ܘܣܩܐ ܕܢܚܒܫ ܘܠܩܘܪܚܬܐ ܘܠܡܪܩܕܬܐ ܠܒܟܝܐ

        for weeping, and for mourning, and for bald spots, and for girding sackcloth

In Isa 3:24, 15:2, and 22:12, restore ܩܘܪܚܬܐ "bald spots" in place of ܩܘܪܙܬܐ "lightning flashes" where the Peshitta manuscript tradition uniformly evidences corruption of ܪ to ܙ. The lexicographer Michael Sokoloff, following Carl Brockelmann, has properly recognized this as an "old error,"[10] where early in the transmission of the text in Syriac the graphically similar letters of ܪ and ܙ were confused.[11] In these verses, the Hebrew reads קָרְחָה "baldness," the cognate of ܩܘܪܚܬܐ "bald spot, baldness." Translated from the Greek φαλάκρωμα "baldness," the Syrohexapla uses the noun ܩܘܪܚܘܬܐ "baldness" in Isa 3:24 and the cognate ܩܪܚܘܬܐ "baldness" (of the back of the head)[12] in Isa 15:2.[13] The Peshitta of Leviticus correctly renders Hebrew קָרַחַת "bald spot" as ܩܪܚܘܬܐ (Lev 13:42–43).

---

[10] Ibid., 1324 and 1343. RPS, (followed by J. Payne Smith [*CSD*], 492), does not recognize this error. *CSD*, 498, however, does record the lexeme ܩܪܚܘܬܐ "baldness."

[11] This error occurs in Lev 21:5, Deut 14:1, Ezek 7:18, and Amos 8:10 as well.

[12] *SL*, 1405.

[13] In Isa 22:12, the Greek uses ξύρησις *shaving (of the head)*, which the Syrohexapla renders as ܓܘܙܬܐ *cutting hair*. For the Syrohexapla, see Ceriani, *Codex Syro-Hexaplaris*.

Any attempt to create the meaning "baldness" from ܡܒܪܩܐ "lightning flash," as has been done in the past, is begging the question in my opinion.

Similarly, instead of the attested ܘܠܐ ܬܚܦܘܢ ܒܝܬ ܡܩܘܪ̈ܬܐ ܒܝܬ ܚܢܬܟܘܢ in Deut 14:1, we should read ܘܠܐ ܬܚܦܘܢ ܒܝܬ ܡܩܘܪ̈ܬܐ ܒܝܬ ܚܢܬܟܘܢ *and you should not make bald spots on your foreheads* (MT: וְלֹא־תָשִׂ֧ימוּ קָרְחָ֛ה בֵּ֥ין עֵינֵיכֶֽם). Moreover, if one considers the ܪ to ܕ change to be valid for the noun, then one must also emend occurrences of the verb ܩܪܚ with that meaning in the same fashion.[14] Accordingly, emend the attested reading ܘܠܐ ܢܣܒܘܢ ܡܦܪ̈ܩܬܐ ܡܦܪ̈ܩܬܐ ܒܪ̈ܝܫܝܗܘܢ in Lev 21:5 to ܘܠܐ ܢܣܒܘܢ ܡܩܘܪ̈ܬܐ ܒܪ̈ܝܫܝܗܘܢ *and they should not make bald spots on their heads* (MT *qere*: לֹא־יִקְרְח֤וּ קָרְחָה֙ בְּרֹאשָׁ֔ם). Further, in Jer 16:6, read ܘܠܐ ܢܩܘܪܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ *nor should they make themselves bald for them* [*the dead*] (MT: לָהֶ֖ם יִקָּרֵ֑חַ וְלֹ֥א) instead of ܘܠܐ ܢܣܒܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ (the reading of manuscript 7a1).

2.2 Restore ܐܚܪܝܐ *the last* in place of ܐܘܚܕܢܐ *the authority* (Isa 8:23)

Isa 8:23:

MT: וְהָאַחֲר֖וֹן
          and the last
L: ܘܐܘܚܕܢܐ
          and the authority
*P: ܘܐܚܪܝܐ
          and the last

On the basis of the Hebrew הָאַחֲר֖וֹן *the last* in Isa 8:23, restore ܐܚܪܝܐ *the last* for the attested form ܐܘܚܕܢܐ *the authority*. Elsewhere in Isaiah the translator rendered Hebrew אַחֲרוֹן "last" as ܐܚܪܝܐ "last" (Isa 30:8; 41:4; 44:6; 48:12). This is also the case in the Pentateuch.[15] The formal equivalent ܐܘܚܕܢܐ is incongruous with a source reading הָאַחֲר֖וֹן, but ܐܚܪܝܐ is not. It is reasonable to assume that the original Peshitta translation read ܐܚܪܝܐ, which became corrupted within Syriac transmission to ܐܘܚܕܢܐ. A scribe lapsed by reading the graphically similar ܚܕ in place of ܚܪ, adding the ܘ in his mind and on his writing medium to fashion ܐܘܚܕܢܐ.

2.3 Restore ܟܠܢܐ *Calno* in place of ܒܠܝܐ *Balyo* (Isa 10:9)

Isa 10:9:

MT: הֲלֹ֣א כְּכַרְכְּמִ֔ישׁ כַּלְנֹ֑ו
          Is not Calno as Carchemish?
L: ܗܐ ܐܝܟ ܟܪܟܡܝܫ ܒܠܝܐ
          Behold, Balyo is as Carchemish

---

[14] *SL*, 1314, (Peal meaning 1c and Aphel meaning 1) does not do so.

[15] Borbone, *Concordance: The Pentateuch*, 5.1:21.

Severus:[16] ܗܐ ܟܠܒܘ ܐܝܟ ܟܪܟܡܝܫ

Behold, Calno is as Carchemish

*P: ܗܐ ܟܠܒܘ ܐܝܟ ܟܪܟܡܝܫ

In Isa 10:9 restore ܟܠܢܘ "Calno" for ܒܠܝܘ "Balyo." Now, the Leiden edition of the Peshitta reads the geographic name as ܒܠܝܘ, whereas Severus records it as ܟܠܢܘ.[17] The Hebrew כַלְנֹו confirms that the reading of Severus is correct. One could postulate that the reading ܒܠܝܘ, attested in all OT Peshitta manuscripts collated for the Leiden edition, arose by confusion of graphically similar letters in transmission, namely ܟ became corrupted to ܒ[18] and medial ܢ became corrupted to medial ܝ.[19] The variant gleaned from Severus' Isaiah commentary, to wit ܟܠܢܘ, is the preferred reading of the OT Peshitta.

2.4 Restore ܘܐܪܝܐ *and a lion* in place of ܘܐܬܪܥܐ *and I will think* (Isa 15:9)

Isa 15:9:

MT: לִפְלֵיטַת מוֹאָב אַרְיֵה

a lion for the fugitives of Moab

L: ܘܐܬܪܥܐ ܥܠ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܡܬܦܨܝܢ ܡܢ ܡܘܐܒ

and I will think about those who escape from Moab

*P: ܘܐܪܝܐ ܥܠ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܡܬܦܨܝܢ ܡܢ ܡܘܐܒ

and a lion for those who escape from Moab

In Isa 15:9, restore ܘܐܪܝܐ *and a lion* for ܘܐܬܪܥܐ *and I will think*. Over against the Hebrew which reads לִפְלֵיטַת מוֹאָב אַרְיֵה *a lion for the fugitives of Moab*, the Peshitta

---

[16] Benedictus, *Syriace et Latine* (vol. 2 of *Ephraem, Syrus, Saint*), 38, line 16. Bas ter Haar Romeny informed me orally that the Isaiah commentary attributed to Ephrem by Benedictus (Mubarrak) is in reality that of the ninth century monk Severus. See Romeny, "Ephrem and Jacob of Edessa," 535–57, especially 541–42, which focuses on the Book of Genesis.

[17] I thank ܫܪܓܐ Shraga Assif of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for pointing me to R. Payne Smith (RPS 1747), who notes the variant reading of Ephrem under his entry ܟܠܢܘ.

[18] The letter ܟ became corrupted to ܒ also in Deut 22:9 in view of the Hebrew (so Weitzman, *The Syriac Version*, 295). Instead of ܠܐ ܬܙܪܘܥ ܬܠܡܟ ܒܦܠܘܒܘ *do not sow your furrow with a mixture*, read ܠܐ ܬܙܪܘܥ ܟܪܡܟ ܒܦܠܘܒܘ *do not sow your vineyard with a mixture* (MT: לֹא־תִזְרַע כַּרְמְךָ כִּלְאָיִם). One might consider the Syriac attested reading more logical than the Hebrew one, which might be the reason that a scribe consciously or unconsciously altered the text. This is the only time in the Pentateuch that the Syriac has ܬܠܡܐ "furrow" as a formal equivalent of כרם "vineyard," whereas it has ܟܪܡܐ "vineyard" 18 times and ܙܝܬܐ "olives" once (Lev 19:10) (Borbone, *Concordance: The Pentateuch*, 407, 408, and 273 respectively).

[19] Gelston, *The Peshitta of the Twelve*, 98, points out a similar inner-Syriac error of ܝ replacing ܢ in Amos 6:2, where the geographic name ܟܠܢܐ (Hebrew: כַלְנֵה) became corrupted to ܠܟܠܝܐ, the initial ܠ being the preposition.

reads ܘܐܬܪܥܐ ܥܠ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܡܬܦܠܛܝܢ ܡܢ ܡܘܐܒ *and I will think about those who escape from Moab*. Now, in Syriac the verb ܐܬܪܥܐ *I will think* graphemically resembles the noun ܐܪܝܐ "lion"; ܝ and ܢ being difficult to distinguish at times in manuscripts. The Hebrew word אַרְיֵה is hardly a rare word, so that one would expect the translation ܐܪܝܐ in Syriac as in Isa 11:7, 31:4, 35:9, and 65:25.[20] The editor of *The Hebrew University Bible* suggests correctly that this may be an inner Syriac development.[21] This case demonstrates the confusion of two graphically similar letters, namely ܝ and ܢ, when attached to the following consonant.

2.5 Restore ܫܦܪܐ *dawn* in place of ܫܘܦܪܐ *beauties* (Isa 21:4)

Isa 21:4:

MT: נֶשֶׁף חִשְׁקִי
             the twilight of my pleasure

L: ܫܘܦܪܐ ܕܪܓܬܝ
             the beauties of my pleasure

*P: ܫܦܪܐ ܕܪܓܬܝ
             the dawn of my pleasure

In view of the Hebrew נֶשֶׁף "twilight," restore ܫܦܪܐ "dawn" as a replacement for corrupted ܫܘܦܪܐ "beauties" in Isa 21:4.[22] Elsewhere in Isaiah the Peshitta renders נֶשֶׁף once as ܨܦܪܐ "morning" (Isa 5:11) and once as ܪܡܫܐ "evening" (Isa 59:10). Outside of Isaiah, the following formal translation equivalents of נֶשֶׁף appear: ܨܦܪܐ "morning" (1 Sam 30:17; Ps 119:147), ܫܦܪܐ "dawn" (2 Kgs 7:5, 7; Job 3:9; 7:4), ܪܡܫܐ "evening" (Prov 7:9), and ܚܫܘܟܐ "darkness" (Jer 13:16; Job 24:15). All the translation equivalents have to do with light and darkness, generally with regard to a time of day, but not with beauty. It would seem that an original ܫܦܪܐ "dawn" became corrupted to ܫܘܦܪܐ "beauties" within Syriac transmission by the addition of ܘ. There is a variant without the *syame*, to wit ܫܘܦܪܐ "beauty," which may be an intermediate link.

2.6 Restore ܢܬܚܒܫܘܢ *and they will be shut up* in place of ܢܬܚܫܒܘܢ *and they will be reckoned* (Isa 24:22)

Isa 24:22:

MT: וְסֻגְּרוּ עַל־מַסְגֵּר
             and they will be shut up in a dungeon

---

[20] In Isa 21:8 the Peshitta does not render Hebrew אַרְיֵה.

[21] Goshen-Gottstein, *Isaiah*.

[22] So Greenberg and Walter, "Introduction to the Translation," in *The Book of Isaiah*, XXV. See also Sokoloff, *SL* 1534, who alludes to this emendation.

L: ܘܢܬܚܫܒܘܢ ܥܠ ܚܒܝܫܐ

and they shall be reckoned with the prisoner

*P: ܘܢܬܚܒܫܘܢ ܥܠ ܚܒܝܫܐ

and they shall be shut up with the prisoner

In Isa 24:22, restore ܘܢܬܚܒܫܘܢ *and they will be shut up* as a replacement for the corrupt reading ܘܢܬܚܫܒܘܢ *and they will be reckoned.* The Leiden edition of the Peshitta reads the verb ܘܢܬܚܫܒܘܢ *and they will be reckoned* as the formal translation equivalent of the Hebrew וְסֻגְּרוּ *and they will be shut up.* Elsewhere in Isaiah, the Hebrew verbal root סגר has as its formal translation equivalent the Syriac verbal root ܐܚܕ (Isa 22:22; 24:10; 26:20; 45:1; 60:11). In those cases, the verbal root refers to doors, gates, and storehouses, but not to people. By contrast, when the Hebrew verbal root סגר refers to people, the Syriac translators of other books rendered such Hebrew verbs with ܚܒܫ "shut up." Accordingly, in Deut 32:30, the translator rendered וַיהוָה הִסְגִּירָם as ܘܡܪܝܐ ܚܒܫ ܐܢܘܢ, both meaning *and the Lord had shut them up.* So too, in Ezek 3:24, the Syriac translator rendered בֹּא הִסָּגֵר בְּתוֹךְ בֵּיתֶךָ as ܙܠ ܐܬܚܒܫ ܒܓܘ ܒܝܬܟ, both meaning *Go, shut yourself within your house.* Since the Hebrew verbal root סגר here in Isa 24:22 refers to people, we should expect to find the verbal root ܚܒܫ as its translation equivalent. It seems clear, then, from the Hebrew that a scribe wrote ܘܢܬܚܫܒܘܢ *and they shall be reckoned* instead of ܘܢܬܚܒܫܘܢ *and they shall be shut up* by simple metathesis of contiguous consonants, a known type of scribal error. Subsequent copyists repeated the error uncritically because the new reading makes sense in Syriac.

2.7 Restore ܢܬܦܩܕܘܢ *they will be visited* in place of ܢܬܦܪܩܘܢ *they will be redeemed* (Isa 24:22)

Isa 24:22:

MT: וּמֵרֹב יָמִים יִפָּקֵדוּ

and after a multitude of days shall they be visited

L: ܘܢܬܦܪܩܘܢ ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܣܘܓܐܐ ܕܝܘܡܬܐ

and after a multitude of days they shall be redeemed

*P: ܘܢܬܦܩܕܘܢ ܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܣܘܓܐܐ ܕܝܘܡܬܐ

and after a multitude of days shall they be visited

In Isa 24:22, restore ܢܬܦܩܕܘܢ *they shall be visited* as a replacement for ܢܬܦܪܩܘܢ *they shall be redeemed.* The primitive reading must have been ܢܬܦܩܕܘܢ in light of the Hebrew יִפָּקֵדוּ. An early scribe metathesized the last two letters of the root in his mind and at the same time switched the primitive ܩ to ܪ. Thus, he wrote ܢܬܦܪܩܘܢ instead of ܢܬܦܩܕܘܢ, a reading which makes perfect sense in Syriac. As a result, it was copied further without question. Moshe H. Goshen-Gottstein recognized this error.[23]

---

[23] Goshen-Gottstein, *Isaiah.*

2.8 Restore ܩܫ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ *his elders* in place of ܩܕ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ *his holy ones* (Isa 24:23)

Isa 24:23:

MT: וְנֶגֶד זְקֵנָיו כָּבוֹד
     and before his elders glory

L: ܘܩܕܡ ܩܕ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ܂ ܢܫܬܒܚ
     and before his holy ones he will be glorified

*P: ܘܩܕܡ ܩܫ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ܂ ܢܫܬܒܚ
     and before his elders he will be glorified

In Isa 24:23, in light of the Hebrew זְקֵנָיו *his elders*, one should read ܩܫ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ *his elders* instead of ܩܕ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ *his holy ones* (a ܫ/ܕ interchange).[24] While the preferred Syriac translation for זָקֵן is ܣܒܐ in Isaiah (Isa 3:5, 14; 9:14; 20:4; 37:2; 47:6; 65:20), the translation ܩܫܝܫܐ "elder" also appears (Isa 3:2; 24:23). The word ܩܕ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ differs from ܩܫ̈ܝܫܘܗܝ in only one letter. In addition, the secondary reading makes sense in Syriac, so that there would be no reason for a subsequent scribe to question its validity.

2.9 Restore ܩܪܒܐ *in battle* in place of ܩܘܪܒܐ *shortly* (Isa 27:4)

Isa 27:4 (Syriac has different clause division than the MT within the verse):

MT: בַּמִּלְחָמָה אֶפְשְׂעָה בָהּ אֲצִיתֶנָּה
     … in battle. I would step on it and burn it …

L: ܩܘܪܒܐ ܐܦܘܚ ܒܗ ܘܐܘܩܕܝܗ܂
     In proximity (shortly) I would blow on it and kindle it …

*P: ܩܪܒܐ ܐܦܘܚ ܒܗ ܘܐܘܩܕܝܗ܂
     in battle I would blow on it and kindle it …

In light of the Hebrew בַּמִּלְחָמָה *in battle*, the Peshitta of Isa 27:4 must have read ܩܪܒܐ *in battle*, which was later changed to ܩܘܪܒܐ *in proximity/shortly* within the Syriac text tradition (difference of the minus versus the plus of a vocalic ܘ following the graphically similar ܩ).[25] The formal translation equivalents of Hebrew מִלְחָמָה "battle" in Peshitta Isaiah are as follows: the noun ܩܪܒܐ "battle" (Isa 2:4; 3:25; 21:15; 22:2; 28:6; 30:32; 36:5; 42:25), the adjective ܩܪܒܬܢܐ "war-like" (Isa 3:2; 13:4; 42:13), the verb ܠܡܬܟܬܫܘ "to fight" (Isa 7:1; 41:12), and ܩܘܪܒܐ "proximity" (only in this verse). Further, the Peshitta Pentateuch attests three formal equivalents of Hebrew מִלְחָמָה, namely ܚܝܠܐ, "army," ܩܪܒܐ, "battle," and ܩܪܒܬܢܐ, "war-like," all of which are reasonable.[26] As measured against other formal translation equivalents

---

[24] So Weitzman, *The Syriac Version*, 296. Goshen-Gottstein, *Isaiah*, fails to record this divergence from the Hebrew.

[25] Goshen-Gottstein, *Isaiah*, is silent with regard to this divergence from the Hebrew.

[26] Borbone, *Concordance: The Pentateuch*, 5.1:959.

of Hebrew מִלְחָמָה "battle," the translation ܩܘܪܒܐ, "proximity" stands out like a sore thumb. One should expect the graphically similar word ܩܪܒܐ, "battle." The two words ܩܘܪܒܐ and ܩܪܒܐ have the same consonants and differ only in the plus (or minus) of one vowel letter, a ܘ. The reading ܒܩܘܪܒܐ of the Peshitta, therefore, appears to be secondary, corrupted from an unattested original ܒܩܪܒܐ.

2.10 Restore ܘܒܒܬܝ, *and in the houses of* in place of ܘܒܒܬܐ *and in the houses* (Isa 42:22)

Isa 42:22:

MT: וּבְבָתֵּי כְלָאִים הָחְבָּאוּ
and they kept hidden in prisons[27]

L: ܘܛܫܝ ܐܣܝܪܐ ܒܒܬܐ
and the prisoners hid in houses

*P: ܘܛܫܝ ܐܣܝܪܐ ܒܒܬܝ,
and they hid in prisons (houses of prisoners)

In Isa 42:22, where the Hebrew has a construct chain בְבָתֵּי כְלָאִים, the Syriac has two nouns, ܒܬܐ and ܐܣܝܪܐ, independent of each other syntactically. In Syriac, the noun ܒܬܐ is the object of the preposition ܒ, while the noun ܐܣܝܪܐ functions as the subject of the verb ܛܫܝ. One could postulate that the Peshitta read a Hebrew variant ובבתים *and in (the) houses*. However, one could also postulate that during Syriac text transmission, a slight change occurred, where a postulated original ܘܒܒܬܝ, was changed to ܘܒܒܬܐ (a final ,/final ܐ interchange).

2.11 Restore ܘܐܪܘܝܬ *and I made (them) drunk* in place of ܘܐܪܦܝܬ *and I weakened (them)* (Isa 63:6)

Isa 63:6:

MT: וַאֲשַׁכְּרֵם בַּחֲמָתִי
and I made[28] *them drunk*[29] *in my rage*

L: ܘܐܪܦܝܬ (variant:[30] ܘܪܦܝܬ) ܐܢܘܢ ܒܚܡܬܝ,
and I observed them in my rage

---

[27] The fragment 4Q61 f1_8:9 yields the variant ובבית *and in a house of* (an error by metathesis of two contiguous letters) for ובבתי *and in houses of* (Accordance, Module DSSB-C [Dead Sea Scrolls Biblical Corpus], prepared under the leadership of Martin G. Abegg, 2009).

[28] Or: "will make."

[29] The Masoretic variant וַאֲשַׁבְּרֵם *and I will smash them* (or: *and I smashed them*), seemingly reflected in Tg. Jonathan (וְאֲדוֹשְׁשִׁינוּן בְּחמתי *and I will crush them in my rage*), does not appear relevant.

[30] The variant ܘܪܦܝܬ is secondary and derives from the reading ܘܐܪܦܝܬ.

*P: ܘܐܪܘܝܬ ܐܢܘܢ ܒܚܡܬܝ

        and I made them drunk in my rage

The formal correspondence of ܐܢܘܢ ܘܐܪܕܝܬ (*and I observed them*) to וָאֲשַׁכְּרֵם (*and I made them drunk*) in Isa 63:6 is an anomaly, the meanings of the verbs being incongruous. In the Pentateuch (Gen 9:21; 43:34; Deut 32:42) and elsewhere in Isaiah (Isa 29:9; 49:26), the Syriac verb ܪܘܐ renders the Hebrew verb שכר. There is no reason to expect another rendering in this verse. The preserved Peshitta reading ܘܐܪܕܝܬ ought to be regarded as an inner Syriac error of ܕ for ܪ, incorrectly transcribed from an original ܘܐܪܘܝܬ.[31] The Syriac variant reading ܘܐܪܘܝ derives from the Aphel ܘܐܪܕܝܬ.

Similarly, manuscript 7a1 Jer 48:26 contains the error of ܕ replacing original ܪ in light of the Hebrew for this same root. Instead of the imperative ܐܕܥܘܗܝ *weaken him*, the Peshitta should read ܐܪܘܝܗܝ *make him drunk*, corresponding to the Hebrew הַשְׁכִּירֻהוּ *make him drunk*.

3. CONCLUSION

Due to the fact that a Hebrew text very close to that preserved in the MT was the source text of the Peshitta OT, the MT can be used with discretion as a text-critical tool in restoring genuine readings of the Peshitta OT lost to the extant manuscript tradition. The emendations of the text of Peshitta Isaiah suggested in this essay are made credible because they reflect known types of scribal errors, to wit, confusion of graphically similar letters (ܪ and ܕ; ܒ and ܟ; and connecting ܢ and connecting ܝ), other single letter differences (ܥ and ܪ where both words suit the context; the addition of a ܘ, once immediately following the graphically similar ܦ; final ܐ and final ܝ), and the metathesis of two contiguous consonants.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Accordance, *Oak Tree Software Inc.*
        http://www.accordancebible.com/OakTree-Software.

Benedictus, Petrus. *Syriace et Latine.* Vol. 2 of *Ephraem, Syrus, Saint, 303–373: Sancti patris nostri Ephraem Syri Opera omnia quae exstant Graece, Syriace, Latine: in sex tomos distributa: ad mss. Codices Vaticanos aliosque castigata, multis aucta, interpretatione, praefationibus, notis, variantibus lectionibus illustrata …* Rome: Typographia Vaticana, 1740.

Borbone, P.G., J. Cook, K.D. Jenner, and D.M. Walter in collaboration with J.A. Lund and M.P. Weitzman, eds. *Concordance: The Pentateuch.* Part 5 vol. 1 of *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version.* Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Brock, Sebastian P. *Isaiah.* Part 3 vol. 1 of *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version: Part III.1.* Leiden: Brill, 1987.

---

[31] So Goshen-Gottstein, *Isaiah.*

Ceriani, Antonio Maria, ed. *Codex Syro-Hexaplaris Ambrosianus: Photolithographice editus.* Milan: Bibliothecae Ambrosianae, 1874. Repr. Piscataway: Gorgias, forthcoming.

Elliger, Karl and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.* 5th ed. Revised by Adrian Schenker. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1977 and 1997.

Gelston, Anthony. *The Peshitta of the Twelve Prophets.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.

Goshen-Gottstein, Moshe H., ed., *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah.* Jerusalem: Magnes, 1995.

Greenberg, Gillian, and Donald M. Walter, "Introduction to the Translation." Pages XV–XVI in *The Book of Isaiah according to the Syriac Peshitta Version: With English Translation.* Text edited by George A. Kiraz and Joseph Bali. Translation by Gillian Greenberg and Donald M. Walter. Surath Ktobh 1. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2012.

Groves-Wheeler Westminster Hebrew Morphology. Software version 4.14. Glenside, Pennsylvania: The J. Alan Groves Center for Advanced Biblical Research, 1991–2010.

Payne Smith, J., ed. *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, founded upon the Thesaurus Syriacus of R. Payne Smith.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1903. Repr. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1998. Repr. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1999.

Payne Smith, R., ed. *Thesaurus Syriacus.* 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1879–1891. Repr. Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1981. Repr. in 3 vols with *A Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus* Piscataway: Gorgias, 2007.

Peshitta Institute, Leiden, ed. *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version.* Leiden: Brill, 1966–.

Romeny, R.B. ter Haar. "Ephrem and Jacob of Edessa in the Commentary of the Monk Severus." Pages 535–57 in *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone, Studies in Honor of Sebastian P. Brock.* Edited by George A. Kiraz. Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 3. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2008.

Sokoloff, Michael. *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's 'Lexicon Syriacum'.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2009.

Weitzman, Michael P. *The Syriac Version of the Old Testament: An Introduction.* University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 56. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

INDEX

INDEX OF BIBLICAL REFERENCES

MANUSCRIPTS AND INSCRIPTIONS

INDEX OF ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL AUTHORS

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND EDITORS

INDEX OF SUBJECTS