



This material has been provided by Asbury Theological Seminary in good faith of following ethical procedures in its production and end use.

The Copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyright material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to finish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be *“used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.”* If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

By using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.

Contact

B.L. Fisher Library
Asbury Theological Seminary
204 N. Lexington Ave.
Wilmore, KY 40390

B.L. Fisher Library’s Digital Content
place.asburyseminary.edu



Asbury Theological Seminary
205 North Lexington Avenue
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

800.2ASBURY
asburyseminary.edu

THE QUESTION OF CANAANITE-PHOENICIAN INFLUENCES
UPON THE HEBREW TEXT OF ECCLESIASTES

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Theology

by
Victor Paul Hamilton
May 1967

THE QUESTION OF CANAANITE-PHOENICIAN INFLUENCES
UPON THE HEBREW TEXT OF ECCLESIASTES

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Theology

Approved:

Dennis F. Kiulaw

G. Herbert Livingston

Victor Paul Hamilton

May 1967

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this study takes pleasure in expressing gratitude to those who have guided this project.

Professor Dennis Kinlaw has been most helpful. His intensive examination of the writer's manuscript and frequent consultations with the writer have proved extremely helpful. Here it was that matters of content and style were greatly sharpened and improved. Professor Kinlaw also graciously made available his unpublished manuscript of Ecclesiastes in the forthcoming volume of the Wesleyan Bible Commentary.

Dr. G. H. Livingston, this writer's instructor for many Old Testament courses, assumed not a small role. He, too, read the manuscript and made some helpful observations.

Appreciation is also expressed to Miss Susan Schultz, librarian at Asbury Theological Seminary, who read the manuscript for matters of format and style.

Finally, I express appreciation to my loving wife Shirley. Upon her shoulders fell the task of typing this thesis. This was no small assignment. Also her constant inspiration and encouragement were sorely needed at many a time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem	1
Procedures and Limitations	1
Interpretation	2
II. THE QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP	12
III. THEORY OF AN ARAMAIC ORIGINAL.	17
Problem and Procedure.	17
Early Studies of the Problem	17
Work of F. C. Burkitt.	19
Further Studies.	22
Summary.	23
IV. THEORY OF POST-EXILIC AND MISHNAIC HEBREW.	24
Work of Robert Gordis.	24
Summary.	29
V. AN EASTERN ORIGIN FOR QOHELETH	30
Northernisms in Qoheleth	30
Mesopotamian Vocabulary.	32
Summary.	33
VI. INFLUENCE OF CANAANITE-PHOENICIAN ORTHOGRAPHY.	34
Introduction	34
Archaeological Background.	35
Orthography.	37
Matres Lectionis	38

CHAPTER	PAGE
Confusion of Singular and Plural Verbs, Nouns.	39
Study of ה'יה	43
Study of מעשה and מעשי	45
Study of יך' and יך'י	46
Conclusions.	47
VII. CANAANITE-PHOENICIAN MORPHOLOGY.	48
Relative Pronoun	48
Indefinite Pronoun	53
Pronominal Suffixes.	55
Non-syncopation of the Article	61
Conclusions.	65
VIII. CANAANITE-PHOENICIAN SYNTAX.	66
Infinitive Absolute.	66
Enclitic Mem	71
Lamedh of Reinforcement.	78
Conjunctions	80
Definite Article	82
IX. CANAANITE-PHOENICIAN VOCABULARY.	89
תחת השמש	90
עלם	93
מלאך	95
מסכן	96
סגלה	97

CHAPTER	PAGE
כשרון	98
שדה ושדות	99
ובחדרי משכבך	101
הוללות	102
חוש	103
נפש	107
X. THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS	109
XI. CONCLUSIONS.	112
BIBLIOGRAPHY	116

CHAPTER I

I THE PROBLEM

The Hebrew Bible has been the object of intensive research over the years. Those devoting their entire life to its study have not been few. These penetrating studies have provided the contemporary reader of the Old Testament with rich dividends. Clarification has been brought to the Biblical text through many archaeological finds, especially with the help of the cognate dialects of Hebrew.

Our particular concern here is the Book of Ecclesiastes, called in the Hebrew Qoheleth. Recognition of both strange vocabulary and grammar in Ecclesiastes has not escaped the eye of careful scholars. The problem, however, is not the phenomenon itself but the explanation for it. Why do so many words turn up in Ecclesiastes, words not found elsewhere in the Old Testament? Why so many obvious departures from "normal" Hebrew syntax and morphology?

The thrust of this thesis shall be to examine the Hebrew of Ecclesiastes both in relation to the Hebrew language itself and in relation to neighbouring Semitic languages.

II PROCEDURES AND LIMITATIONS

The procedure shall be as follows. First, the book of Ecclesiastes shall be examined for purposes of interpretation. At first it would seem that such a study would be superfluous in the light of this topic. However, when it is remembered that not a few scholars have dated Ecclesiastes in the post-exilic period because of its "nihilistic" philosophy and theol-

ogy, then such a study does seem justified.

Subsequently, three alternative solutions to explain the language and grammar of Ecclesiastes will be examined. These will include:

(1) the suggestion of an Aramaic original of Ecclesiastes, (2) that Qoheleth's is a Hebrew midway between post-exilic Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew, (3) and that the anomalies of Ecclesiastes can be explained by Northernisms coupled with an Eastern origin for its composition.

Concentration shall then be placed upon the view that the Hebrew of Ecclesiastes is best paralleled by the neighbouring Phoenician tongue. This is the view currently championed by Mitchell Dahood, professor of Ugaritic at the Pontifical Institute in Rome. The theory shall be examined in four major areas: orthography, morphology, syntax and grammar.

It is hoped that such an analysis will shed light upon some of the lexical phenomenon of Ecclesiastes.

III INTERPRETATION

It is not an overstatement to say that the book of Ecclesiastes has evoked both a wonderful and a weird reaction in Biblical scholars and students of all ages. This is not at all surprising. Of the thirty-nine books that comprise the Old Testament Biblical canon Ecclesiastes has been viewed with most suspicion. The assumption is that its contents are wholly un-Hebraic in caste and that it projects itself as an intruder into the mainstream of the uniqueness of Israel's thought. For example, the author seems to be caught up and hopelessly imprisoned in the endless and monotonous cycles of nature. From this cyclical pattern there is no escape. There

is no potential or excitement in living. The sun rises; travels its course; it falls into the horizon -- a good example of the dullness of insignificant repetition. A man is born; he grows up and then works diligently to provide a living for himself. However, before the rewards of such arduous toil can be reaped, the cold, calculating voice of death appears and snatches man away, thus depriving him of at least a little pleasantness in this life. What aggravates the situation is the author's gnawing consciousness that those of his posterity who inherit his fortune may prove to be scoundrels themselves and that for which he has worked diligently will now be squandered by one who is unworthy morally to be the benefactor of such an inheritance.

It has been fashionable among biblical scholars, especially those of the last generation, to attribute a good portion of Ecclesiastes' philosophy to the mentality that prevailed in contemporary Greek philosophical circles of that age. Thus, the view of Heraclitus that sees everything in a state of flux is supposedly typified in this Hebrew book. One of the key phrases "vanity of vanities" (occurring no less than 29 times) is suggestive of that which is cloudy or vaporous, thus transitory, lacking the quality of permanentness or solidarity. Again, it has been thought that some of the pessimistic resignation of the Stoic school pervades this book. That is to say, the circumstances which envelop the Biblical writer's life have closed in upon him forming a type of prison which he is neither able to escape or evade. Then there is the view that sees a good injection of Epicureanism into the book's thought. The author's suggestion then seems to be that the best way to enjoy life, if

it can be enjoyed at all, is to "sow one's wild oats." He is not prepared to say that God does not exist, but he does proclaim that there is not a moral law operative in the world. His greatest joy in life is in eating, drinking and pleasure (2:4, 5:18, 8:15).

What is so remarkable about the above is that it is a flat contradiction of all that is proclaimed in the rest of the Old Testament. Thus we are surprised not only by some of the thinking that is included in Ecclesiastes, but perhaps surprised more by what is omitted. Several things strike us here as significant. For example, that special name of God given exclusively to the Israelites --Yahweh -- is glaringly absent from Ecclesiastes. Israel is mentioned only once. There are absolutely no references to the Covenant or the election of Israel, that divine and special announcement that was made originally to Abraham and then fulfilled in Moses. There seems to be no sense of the historic in Ecclesiastes, the consciousness of which filled every ancient Jew. It has been then the omissions as well as the additions that have been a stumbling-block to many a commentator.

Conservative scholars, having a high view of the divine inspiration and canonicity of the Old Testament have often viewed Ecclesiastes as the Achilles' heel in their system of thought. Thus, some have been frankly embarrassed when pressed for valid reasons for the book's incorporation into the Biblical canon. We believe, however, that such valid reasons do exist and that an honest investigation of Ecclesiastes will reveal that it assumes to itself a unique and indispensable role in the Bible. We find it difficult to accept the approach of most exegetes who have

interpreted the book through the eyes of the Biblical writer, supposedly, a morose, calloused, old man who now is reflecting on life as a very negative experience. Nor does it seem to do justice to the book to describe the author as the epitome of bitterness, who is "a rationalist, an agnostic, a skeptic, a pessimist, and a fatalist."¹

It will be well to remember that Ecclesiastes belongs to the third division of the Old Testament, known as the Ketubim or the Writings sometimes called the Hagiographa. This division then subdivides, one branch of which is called the Megillot or "the Rolls;" Also, it is assigned to that body of Hebrew Scriptures commonly classified as wisdom or sapiential literature. The function of these scriptural books is a complementary one and their content is not to be conceived as antithetical to the rest of the Old Testament. That is to say, the purport of these books is not so much theological, though this is not entirely absent, as it is practical. "It reveals a willingness to be critical, devoutly skeptical, a mind that does not have all of the answers, a mind that will not reject the light that has come from God through revelation but that is aware of the unanswered questions and is ready to tackle them."² It is from this perspective, we believe, that the interpretation of Ecclesiastes ought to be approached. To be sure, the book of Ecclesiastes is an involved tapestry with many different threads running through it and the task of unravelling these threads is not an easy one. The very composite nature

¹R.B.Y. Scott, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes (Vol. 18 of The Anchor Bible, Edited by W. F. Albright and D. N. Freedman, 38 vols., Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1965), 192.

²D. Kinlaw, Ecclesiastes, p.4 -- unpublished manuscript of forthcoming edition of Wesleyan Bible Commentary.

of Ecclesiastes makes such a task a difficult one indeed. For the most part the book has defied any attempt at systematic analysis and therefore any attempts to outline Ecclesiastes will appear rather artificial. This is not to suggest that the book is of a rambling nature nor that the author has put into words anything that came into his mind, be it rational or irrational, but rather to intimate the flexibility of the book and the complexity of the writer's thought.

The view one gets as he reads this book is that of an esteemed and experienced academician who is addressing himself either to a select group of pupils or else to the general populace whose whole philosophy of life and Weltanschauung is conditioned only by the created world "under the sun." He thus is addressing himself to a group of people who have attempted to answer the ultimate questions of life unaided by divine revelation. There are two methods of approach that can be used in such a situation as this. One is to spell out immediately one's own position and "lay all his cards" on the table. However, such a methodology often will only result in negative barriers being raised between the parties involved. Neither time nor space allows us, but a perusal of the New Testament gospels would reveal the relatively few times that our Lord ever conducted himself thus. The second approach evolves more around an elucidation of the opponent's view, an elaboration of its assumptions, the canons of its logic and finally its conclusions.

It is to this second approach that the writer resorts. Here, we believe, lies the clue to the book's interpretation. We may then well agree with G. S. Hendry when he says, "Qoheleth writes from concealed

premises.... Its apparent wordliness is dictated by its aim: Qoheleth is addressing the general public whose view is bounded by the horizons of this world; he meets them on their own ground, and proceeds to convict them of its inherent vanity."³

There are few readers of the Bible today who are unfamiliar with the introductory words of this Biblical writer in 1:2 "Vanity of vanities saith the Preacher; all is vanity." Obviously the frequency with which the word "vanity" appears in Ecclesiastes testifies to the importance of its study in evaluating the teachings of this book.⁴ It appears in most of the Semitic languages with basically the same connotation -- unreality, fruitlessness, emptiness, worthless. Perhaps a preferable meaning might be "breath" or "vapour," something lacking the quality of consistency or permanence. Thus a translation of the familiar "vanity of vanities," the Hebrew superlative, might be "change of changes" or "exceeding great change," "ceaseless change."⁵ We have intimated above that the Biblical writer is not necessarily stating his own affirmations or final conclusions about life in this world. Rather, he is bringing into prominence the verdict of the natural man with respect to the dismal life of this world. Thus we must not go astray here in assuming this is the Biblical writer's own philosophy. In the succeeding chapters the writer elaborates upon this hypothesis. Whether the experiences he describes are personal or observations of others is really incidental to the theme of the book (though the

³G. S. Hendry, "Ecclesiastes," The New Bible Commentary, ed. F. Davidson (Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), p.538.

⁴W. E. Staples, "The 'Vanity' of Ecclesiastes," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 2:95-104, April, 1943.

⁵Carl S. Knopf, "The Optimism of Qoheleth," Journal of Biblical Literature, 49:196, 1930.

former commends itself to this writer). Yet the Biblical writer does search into some areas of life where man has tried to find ultimate (and we stress the word 'ultimate') satisfaction. For example, the area of pleasure is examined -- 2:1-3. How many have tried to make a god out of entertainment? Compare also his discussions of work -- 2:4-6; possessions -- 2:7-11; wisdom 2:12-23.

While the first three of these do come in for some serious heart-searching, it is to the fourth item i.e. wisdom, that the writer constantly reverts, 1:18, 2:12-23, 4:13, 6:8, 7:4-7, 11-14, 16, 19, 23-25, 8:1, 16-17, 9:10, 13-18, 12:11. At least two observations emerge from a study of these passages. One is the sheer inability of wisdom to usurp the preeminent position in a man's personality that is uniquely the Lord's. The other is a positive observation. The writer is not anti-wisdom; rather he opposes the prostitution of wisdom. Thus he says, "wisdom is as good as an inheritance; yea, more excellent it is for them that see the sun" (7:11). Again, "I have also seen wisdom under the sun, on this wise, and it seemed great unto me" (9:13). Qoheleth's polemic is that men not impregnate wisdom with divine attributes. Realize it for what it is, accept it as a gift from God, use it properly and submit to its limitations. We can well agree with Eichrodt's suggestion that, "this dethronement of self-proud wisdom is also that which Koheleth seeks to accomplish when he acknowledges wisdom, limited as it is, to be of great value but, at the same time, through his reflection on the creative power of God, lays bare the fruitlessness -- the 'vanity' of wisdom in

regard to ultimate questions."⁶

In spite of the writer's negative evaluation he himself never fades into a mood of disillusionment or despair. Just at the time when we expect him to throw up his hands his belief in God begins to make itself felt. In no possible way may he legitimately be called a nihilist. There is a healthy approach to living that runs throughout the book. He says "there is nothing better than that he should eat and drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labor" (2:24). This verse, or its variations, is repeated no less than seven times in these twelve chapters -- 3:12, 13, 22, 5:18, 8:15, 9:7. In five of these seven illustrations it is explicitly stated that life itself is a gift from God and therefore is to be enjoyed. Many commentators go amiss, we feel, in reading into these verses a negative connotation which is not necessarily there. This is not the libertine Qoheleth advocating an uncontrolled, licentious approach to reckless, abandoned living but the sensible, reflecting man of God who knows that there is something positive and tangible in the daily round of life which comes to every man from the hand of God. Actually the basis for all this is his own words: "He hath made everything beautiful in its time" (3:11a). This verse then can be a good commentary on our popular saying: Two men looked through bars; the one saw mud, the other stars." There is a fitness and regularity about things and a wholesome optimism runs like a cable through his thought.⁷ Yet in this very

⁶ O. S. Rankin, Ecclesiastes (Vol. V of The Interpreter's Bible, ed. G. A. Buttrick. 12 Vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952-1957), p.17, citing Walter Eichrodt, Theologie des Alten Testaments (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1935), II, p.83.

⁷ C. S. Knopf, op. cit., 195-199.

verse he has reminded the reader that "God has placed eternity in their heart." Man is confronted by this sense of contrast between "time" and "eternity." At a later point more space shall be devoted to this problem word. Suffice it to say here; the traditional translation has most to commend it. There is planted in man an "otherness" the fulfilling of which is not met by indulgence in pleasure, the accumulation of wealth or the amassing of wisdom. Perhaps Qoheleth could say "I hated life," (2:17) or "I praised the dead that have been long dead more than the living that are yet alive," (4:2) because of the "almostness" about life. There is a frustration or a breaking point for the man clinging tenaciously to one of the above. When it fails to generate the expected results a man begins to regret even his own existence.

From what we have said above it will be seen that the key verse in Qoheleth is 3:11 -- "He hath made everything beautiful in its time: also he hath set eternity in their heart, yet so that man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end."

What most writers on Ecclesiastes have either overlooked or have omitted from their comments on the book has been the deep faith of the Biblical writer and his commitment to the moral character of God. Never does he call into doubt the fact of God's existence. He is pessimistic in his anthropology but thoroughly optimistic in his theology. In Qoheleth confidence is expressed not only in the surety but also in the fairness of God's judgment -- 3:17, 11:9, 12:14. A quiet confidence is expressed in the providence of God. Caprice and impulsiveness are hostile to God's divine plan. An interesting study in this relationship would be an examination of Ecclesiastes' philosophy of time. The last word has

yet to be spoken on this.

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole man" (12:13). Many versions insert the word "duty" and read "the whole duty of man." However, it is not in the original Hebrew text. Really, such an insertion detracts from rather than clarifies Ecclesiastes' interpretation. A man fulfills his wholeness or he becomes a whole man when, having seen the vanity of life under the sun that has eclipsed itself from God, he is able to look behind the sun and submit himself to divine care. Thus, long before those immortal words of St. Augustine were penned, "Lord, thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee," such a philosophy was finding expression in Ecclesiastes. Or, in the words of G. S. Hendry: "At all events, his resolute denial of all human possibilities at least clears the way for the new possibilities of God, and entitles us to speak of Ecclesiastes as standing before the threshold of the resurrection."⁸

⁸G. S. Hendry, op. cit., p.539.

CHAPTER II

THE QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP

The opening words of this book are as follows: "The words of Qoheleth, the son of David, king in Jerusalem." One cannot even begin to enumerate all the discussion that has gone into this somewhat puzzling supposed identification of the author. This identification appears again in 1:2, 12, 7:27, 12:8, 9, 10. Although the word in form is a feminine segholate participle of the Qal stem, it is consistently joined with a verb which is a third masculine singular. The only exception to this is 12:7 in which the verb appears as הָמַדָּה rather than מָדָה . The substantive comes from a Hebrew verb, קָהַל , which appears only in the Niphal and Hiphil in the Hebrew Bible and basically means "to assemble" or convoke."

This peculiar use of the feminine has evoked many interesting conjectures from scholars. G. A. Barton in his commentary lists five of them.¹ One is to take the word as agreeing with or standing for חָכְמָה , "wisdom," which is a feminine word. A second suggestion is to explain the feminine of this word as a personification of the assemblies of men. Thirdly, some have explained it on the analogy of an Arabic form as an intensive feminine formation. Still another views this word as a cryptogram in the pattern of the familiar Rashi for Rabbi Solomon Isaac. Most of the above, however, are mere conjecturings and have little to

¹G. A. Barton, The Book of Ecclesiastes, The International Critical Commentary (second edition; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clarke, 1959), p.68.

commend them. The explanation that seems to carry most weight is the one that explains the word as an explanation of an office.² Here we are aided by the analogies of expressions such as כֹּתֵב "the writer," in Ezra 2:5, Nehemiah 7:57 and חַדְשָׁן "the hunter," in Ezra 2:57 and Nehemiah 7:59. Such a construction also may be found in Greek. Compare for example, the use of the Greek feminine noun ἡ ἀρχὴ for "ruler" and "magistrate." Analogous to this also is our own English use of terms to represent royalty or high office -- "her Majesty," "his Excellency," or "his Highness."

Tradition has always attributed this book to Solomon. Yet it must be said that nowhere is it explicitly stated that he is the author. The writer only refers to himself as the somewhat nebulous "son of David, king in Jerusalem" (1:1, 12). Those sections of the Old Testament viewed traditionally as from the hand of Solomon include Psalms 72, 123, Proverbs, Song of Songs (or Solomon) and Ecclesiastes. In both of the Psalms credited to Solomon (72, 123) the superscription bears his name. It is stated both in Proverbs and the Song of Songs that Solomon is the author. Compare, "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, King of Israel" (Proverbs 1:1, 10:1, 25:1). Compare also, "The Song of songs which is Solomon's" (Canticles 1:1). This is not the place to discuss the validity of the above. It is included, however, to point out that the above books purport to be written by Solomon.

² This is the view accepted by Gesenius, Hebrew Grammar, ed. & rev. by E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, 2 Eng. ed., (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1960) 122r. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, & C. A. Briggs, Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), p.875a. is divided between the last and the third explanation. Henceforth, this latter reference shall be cited as BDB.

It is interesting to note at this point the diversification of viewpoint among conservative scholars among whom unanimity of opinion usually exists. For example, Archer³ and Unger⁴ maintain the Solomonic authorship while Young⁵ and Leupold⁶ reject it. With very few exceptions most scholars no longer consider a Solomonic authorship a live option.

It is interesting also to note that the majority of conservative scholars of the last century also rejected the traditional approach. Among these are Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, Havernick and Lange. It is commonly thought that the first voice to be raised in protest was that of Martin Luther. It is to Luther also that we owe the common translation that appears in most of our English versions of the Bible, The Preacher or der Prediger. Luther himself was to say:

This book ought to be more complete; there is too much broken off from it -- it has neither boots nor spurs -- it rides only in socks, just as I did when in the cloister -- I do not believe that Solomon was damned, but it was written to terrify kings, princes and rulers. Thus he did not write Ecclesiastes, but it was composed by Sirach at the time of Maccabees. But it is a very good and pleasant book because it has much fine doctrine concerning the household, and, moreover, it is like a Talmud, composed of many books, perhaps

³G. A. Archer, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), pp.462-472.

⁴M. F. Unger, Introductory Guide to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1951), pp.390-391.

⁵E. J. Young, Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), pp.339-341.

⁶H. C. Leupold, Exposition of Ecclesiastes (Grand Rapids: Baker Book 1952), pp.8-17.

from the library of King Ptolemy Evergetis in Egypt.⁷
 This expressed opinion should not be left as it is however. For, in a few years Luther himself was to repudiate this position and express himself more in favour of an earlier date though not accepting a full Solomonic authorship.

Solomon has been the traditional "wisdom patriarch" in ancient Israel. The origin of this is to be found in I Kings 4:32 where it is stated that Solomon "spoke three thousands proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five." Few there are who accept this statement as it stands. Rather, this is regarded as carry over from the Egyptian court practice and thus the legendary must be separated from the historic. There are some who have called into question the thesis that the Hebrew literary wisdom movement received its initial impetus from Solomon.⁸

There are not a few indications in the Biblical text that the writer, if not Solomon himself, at least lived a remarkably parallel life to that of Solomon. Apparently he was a man of very unusual wealth. "I gathered me also gold and silver, and the treasures of kings and of the provinces; I got me men-singers and women-singers (2:8a). At times he tried the erotic to satisfy him (8:26). He was a man who was actively engaged in building enterprises (2:4-6).

If, however, we look at the problem from the other side it will be

⁷J. P. Lange, "Ecclesiastes," Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, tr. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), pp.15-16, citing M. Luther, Works Erlangen Ed. Vol. 62, p.128.

⁸R. B. Y. Scott, "Solomon and the beginnings of wisdom in Israel," The Society for Old Testament Study. Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East. (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1955), pp.262-279.

seen that most of the arguments against Solomonic authorship come from an examination of the internal evidence of Ecclesiastes. The following are the lines of argumentation usually followed. One, the spirit of the age described by the writer does not fit into Solomon's period. Unrighteousness prevails. True piety is missing. Kings are tyrannical. Immorality is flagrant. Yet in the time of Solomon the picture was just the opposite. It was a time of prosperity, joy and ripening faith in Yahweh. Two, various expressions in the book seem to indicate that the writer was a man much later than Solomon. In 1:12 he says, "I the Preacher was King over Israel in Jerusalem," the inference here being that the king has either abdicated or else has been dethroned. The most incisive argument that has been brought forward is that of the language of Ecclesiastes. Everyone who has worked in the original language of the book has been struck by its linguistic oddities. It is felt that the book bears affinities to Israel's literature of the post-exilic period. Both its grammar and its vocabulary are distinct. Theories have been advanced to explain this, most of which suggest a post-exilic date.

Four of these theories will be examined with particular attention paid to the suggestion that the book is of North Canaanite provenance.

CHAPTER III

I PROBLEM AND PROCEDURE

This chapter shall concern itself with an investigation of the theory that advances an Aramaic original for Qoheleth. Representative views shall be discussed in light of their contribution to the question of this thesis.

II THEORY OF AN ARAMAIC ORIGINAL

It has long been recognized that Qoheleth has not only a unique thought structure but also has a unique linguistic idiom. It was the tendency of the scholars of the last century to attribute this abnormality to both the influence of Greek philosophy and Greek language. Really, the latter suggestion, viz. the Greek language, was "a stab in the dark" to account in some way for the linguistic anomalies of Qoheleth. This led then to some very far-fetched identifications. Among these two were very prominent. One was to connect the word $\square\lambda\pi\theta$ "decree," with the Greek word $\phi\theta\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\mu\alpha$. More spectacular was the attempt to link the familiar $\psi\omega\sigma\eta\eta\ \eta\eta\eta$ "under the sun," with the Greek expression $\acute{\upsilon}\phi\ \acute{\eta}\lambda\iota\omega$. Scholars soon discovered the erroneousousness of this theory and quickly dismissed it.

Scholars, however, did not dismiss the problem as one of impossible solution and soon turned their attention to the frequent occurrence of Aramaic vocabulary and grammatical formations. Since the book had been rather unanimously dated in the post-exilic period, and since this was

the time that Aramaic began to supplant Hebrew as the spoken language of the Jew, was it not plausible to assume that Qoheleth was tinged by Aramaic influences regardless of its origin, whether in Jerusalem or Alexandria?

In 1902 E. Kautzsch published his Die Aramaismen im Alten Testament. Kautzsch suggested that there were at least 29 Aramaisms in Qoheleth. In proportion to the number of chapters (12) this gave a heavier allowance for an Aramaic influence for Qoheleth than for any other book in the Old Testament.

D. S. Margoliouth in 1903 was similarly struck by the strangeness of Qoheleth's Hebrew.¹ Certain of the idioms were to him not so much late Hebrew as they were foreign Hebrew. He noted for example, "That which is, is far off, and deep, very deep; who can find it out?" (7:24), and "The words of the wise heard in quiet are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools" (8:17). There is a frequent use of the present participle. Certain phrases, apparently not corrupt, seem to have an unintelligible character (4:17, 10:15, and 12:46). There is a want of sharpness that characterizes some of the aphorisms (10:9). The writer resorts to such neo-Hebraisms as $\Upsilon\text{D}\Pi$ "business," for the usual $\text{D}\text{D}\Upsilon$. The unusual NDZ "lest," is used instead of the more common HDL . Margoliouth was also the first to stress the fact that the familiar "under the sun" was not a Grecism but could be found in two Phoenician inscriptions, the Eshmunazar and Tabnith inscriptions. Taking all this data into consideration, Margoliouth suggested the possibility that Qoheleth was an adaptation of a work in some other language. True, his

¹D. S. Margoliouth, "Ecclesiastes, Book of," Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Funk and Wagnalis Company, 1903), V, 32-34.

conclusions were rather far-fetched. He suggested that the original language was Indo-Germanic. Yet to him must go the credit for really bringing the linguistic problem to the surface.

Although he dated the work ca. 300-250 B.C., it is to his credit that he pointed out the error which many of his successors were to commit at a later date. With regard to the post-exilic language of Qoheleth he cautioned that many of the supposed modernisms of the Hebrew may really represent usages introduced into Palestine at a much earlier period. The relative *W* for \aleph and the abstract substantive ending \aleph could both be traced from Akkadian. Again, much of its modern vocabulary can be largely attested in ancient times. The Hebrew word \aleph "to straighten" comes directly from the Akkadian takkenu "to correct." Though Margoliouth had raised some problems he offered no final conclusions. This was to be done by those who should follow him.

The first suggestion that Ecclesiastes was a translation from an original Aramaic was to come from F. C. Burkitt.² He felt definitely that the work betrayed the awkward swiftness of a translation. If it was a translation, it was translated from the Aramaic. Such a hypothesis, Burkitt thought, would solve many of the linguistic problems of Qoheleth.

Burkitt marshalls two texts from Qoheleth to substantiate his view. The first is 7:14b. The RSV translates this: "so that man may not find out anything that will be after him." The problem here is the identifi-

²F. C. Burkitt, "Is Ecclesiastes A Translation?" The Journal of Theological Studies 23:22-28, 1922.

cation of "him." Does it refer to God or man? Most of our English versions take it as a reference to man. Thus the Hebrew אַחֲרָיו , "after him," connotes that which man is yet to meet, his future or even after his death. Burkitt takes exception to this and feels that the "him" refers to God and not man. He makes his appeal to the Syriac language in which "to find a thing after somebody" means to "find someone guilty or responsible for some misdemeanor." He, therefore, translates the verse: "God has made one thing against the other in such a way that no man should find any occasion of complaint against Him (God)." The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is clear. What we have here is an over-literal translation from an Aramaic original by a translator who mistakenly referred "him" to man. This is good theology and may be linked with other passages in Qoheleth of a similar theme (3:11), but it is not necessarily a true interpretation of this passage.

In the first place, an examination of the verse will reveal that it falls at the end of a unit, i.e. 7:1-14 and within the scope of a larger section (5:10-6:12). The larger section deals with wealth and human destiny in general and 7:1-14 in particular deals with a wisdom of life which takes full account of the great negatives of this life, viz., adversity, sorrow and death. The wise man is he who successfully integrates death with his view of life and regards it as that which points to a hidden dimension of life. Thus, within the bounds of the context, a reference to God's handiwork seems a bit out of place while the reference

to man is quite legitimate. A second observation also has been made.³ Burkitt has overlooked the fact that this identical expression occurs twice more in Qoheleth. "So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should enjoy his work, for that is his lot; for who can bring him to see what will be after him?" (3:22). "For who knows what is good for man ---- For who can tell man what will be after him under the sun?" (6:12). If Burkitt is going to be consistent the same connotation must be given to these passages and, of course, such an interpretation in 3:22 and 6:12 would be meaningless.

The second illustration advanced by Burkitt is the translation of '𐤒𐤓 in the expression "the second youth" in 4:15. He contends that in Aramaic "second" often connotes "the second in command." A metaphorical translation of the verse is now needed. The youthful generation are now biding their time, occupying the second rank and awaiting the opportune moment to supplant their elders. To this it can be answered that even if the reference is to the king's successor, it in no way invalidates the text and is good Hebrew. To clear up the confusion some have excised '𐤒𐤓 from the text. Such a solution, however, is not supported by the textual evidence nor by the witness of the versions. Another solution has been to identify "the second" as another youth who is attempting to usurp the position of the poor and wise youth in v.13.⁴

³O. S. Rankin, Ecclesiastes (Vol. 5 of The Interpreter's Bible ed. George Buttrick. 12 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952-1957), p.13.

⁴Barton, op. cit. p.120.

Most exegetes take it as referring to the youth who, one day, will succeed the king.⁵ Another view was presented by Irwin.⁶ He maintained that the reference is just to some common youth, one of the king's many subjects, poor but wise. His translation becomes: "that youth, who continued in his own station in life."

It is interesting to notice that a quarter of a century elapsed until this theory once more was given any serious attention. Two scholars who maintained the theory of an Aramaic original were Zimmermann⁷ and Torrey.⁸ Robert Gordis, however, has offered rather effective rebuttal of these views.⁹ The current champion of this approach is H. L. Ginsberg.¹⁰

⁵ Robert Gordis, Koheleth - The Man and His World (second edition; New York: Block Publishing Company, 1955), p.235; and H. W. Hertzberg, Der Prediger, (Kommentar Zum Alten Testament, Vol. 17, Stuttgart: Gutersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1963), p.103.

⁶ W. A. Irwin, "Ecclesiastes 4:13, Journal of Near Eastern Studies 3:255-257, October, 1944. On this view Hertzberg remarks: Diese Auslegung, die, dem Sinn des Granzen vollig zuwiderlauft, wird unterbaut durch die (unbegrundete) Streichung des vorangehenden ']W7' .

⁷ F. Zimmerman, "The Aramaic Provenance of Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly Review 36:17-45, 1945; and "The Question of Hebrew in Qoheleth," Ibid. 40:79-102, 1949.

⁸ C. C. Torrey, "The Question of the Original Language of Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly Review 39:151-160, 1948.

⁹ R. Gordis, "The Original Language of Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly Review 37:67-84, 1946; "The Translation Theory of Qoheleth Re-examined," Ibid. 40:103-116, 1949; "Koheleth-Hebrew or Aramaic?" Journal of Biblical Literature 71:93-109, 1952; and Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament, An Introduction, tr. by P. Ackroyd (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p.496.

¹⁰ H. L. Ginsberg, Studies in Koheleth (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950), pp.16-39; His "The Structure and Contents of the Book of Koheleth," Vetus Testamentum, Supplement III (1955), pp.138-149; and for his latest contribution "The Quintessence of Koheleth," Biblical And Other Studies, ed. A. Altmann (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp.47-59.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls accompanied by the keen insights of other scholars has forced Ginsberg to modify somewhat his conclusions, but his overall approach to Qoheleth has remained basically the same. The position he presents has not, however, found any wide acceptance among Old Testament scholars.

III SUMMARY

More telling to this writer, though, than the fact that few scholars have found this theory tenable is the tortuous emendations of the Massoretic text that have been felt necessary to support the theory of an Aramaic original. One gets the feeling that the text is being emended to fit the theory rather than the theory being emended to fit the facts of the Biblical text.

CHAPTER IV

THE THEORY OF POST-EXILIC AND MISHNAIC HEBREW

It is indeed strange that, for a long period, a clue to Qoheleth's unique language was never sought by an appeal to the Hebrew language itself. We have already mentioned above that it was fashionable to treat it as either a book filled with Grecisms or else a translation from an Aramaic original. Those who have seriously studied the Hebrew tongue are cognizant of the steps through which it has passed in its historical development. Yet the feeling has prevailed that such an approach would not clear up the linguistic difficulties.

The task of bringing this theory to its proper place of significance fell to Rabbi Robert Gordis of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. No one has ever doubted the presence of Aramaic words, phrases or grammatical constructions in Qoheleth. The conclusion to be drawn from this seemed to some to be that the book had been translated into Hebrew from Aramaic by someone who was rather ignorant of the Aramaic tongue. Such reasoning Gordis has severely called into question and has aptly demonstrated that the conclusion is an obvious non-sequitur.¹ Such a theory has risen, he believes, because of a gross misunderstanding of the place and function of Aramaisms in the Hebrew Old Testament. An examination of such Aramaisms will reveal that they fall into three categories. (1) They might be explained as examples of the North-West Semitic vocabulary, originally common to both Hebrew and Aramaic. Those that became common in

¹Robert Gordis, op. cit. pp.59, 200-201.

Aramaic but fell into disuse in Hebrew appear as Aramaisms. This often appears in poetry. (2) They may be words that entered Hebrew and Phoenician in the pre-exilic period and are representative of Aramaic influence on Northern Israel. (3) The possibility exists that it is a vocabulary that entered Hebrew after the Exile when Aramaic became the spoken language of the Israelites. From this important differentiation of Aramaisms in the Old Testament the door is now open to date a book solely on the basis of Aramaic vocabulary anywhere between early pre-exilic times down to the first centuries of the Christian era. This is not surprising in that we do have Aramaic inscriptions dating as far back as the eighth century. Although Gordis does not attempt to establish a criterion for deciding into which of the above three classes an Aramaism may fit (although he does give some examples), he feels that "The abundance of evidence points overwhelmingly to a period when Aramaic was becoming the dominant language of Western Asia and exerting an ever more pronounced influence on Hebrew."² That is to say, an examination of all the Aramaisms in Qoheleth reveals their repeated use more often in late Hebrew Biblical books and in the Mishnah than in the early Hebrew writings. Gordis, however, makes his appeal not only to vocabulary but also to morphology and syntax: (1) abstract nouns ending in on (וְיָמֵי, וְיָמֵי), (2) the confusion of וְיָמֵי, וְיָמֵי verb forms, (3) infrequent use of waw consecutive, (4) the use of the participle as a present tense, (5) use of וְיָמֵי to the complete exclusion of וְיָמֵי.³

²Gordis, op. cit., p.59

³Barton, Ecclesiastes, International Critical Commentary, op. cit., pp.52-53, gives a more complete treatment of this under (1) Aramaic words, forms, constructions, (2) Persian words, (3) Mishnaic forms, (4) late Hebrew forms, (5) late syntactical developments, (6) Hebrew in Greek idiom.

Gordis has recognized the difficulties in the Hebrew text but this very fact, he feels ought to be of significance in arriving at the conclusion of the original language of Qoheleth. The problem is this: is a difficult text (ex. Qoheleth) indicative of an original or translation? Most students have felt that it is the latter. The assumption is that some translator, failing to match the idiom of the original language, tried and failed to put Qoheleth into good Hebrew. Gordis fails to see the reasoning behind this and comes to just the opposite conclusion. He is persuaded that a translation, though perhaps incorrect and missing the thrust of the original, will actually be much smoother than the original. The translator, assuming that he controls his own language, will fit the translation into the idiom of his own tongue. Since this smoothness and refinement is lacking in Qoheleth the assumption is that Qoheleth is an untouched original and not a translation.

If one dates Qoheleth in the post-exilic period, then one can posit a very formidable reason for this difficulty in the language. The lingua franca of this age would be Aramaic, the tongue of the writer. With this he would be most capable. Yet, wishing to give the book added spiritual weight, he would write in the liturgical language which was Hebrew. If, however, one moves the date of Qoheleth to a pre-exilic date he encounters some real, though not unnecessarily unsolvable, problems. An illustration from the Greek of the New Testament might be of help here. A study of the language in I and II Corinthians reveals a dichotomy between the two. I Corinthians unveils a rather pleasant, smooth Greek style. The reason for this should be clear. The author is very rational, thought-provoking

and deliberative in his thought. When one begins to read II Corinthians he notices that he now has left behind the deliberative Paul and is reading the emotional Paul, a temperament which produces an explosive Greek style. The problem here, however, is that Qoheleth is written not so much from the emotional mood of mind as from the intellectual, the deliberative, reasoning mind and yet the Hebrew is anything but pleasant. Perhaps the conclusion to the whole matter might be that not all gifted men are gifted writers with a writer's style. The Apostle Paul in the New Testament certainly was not the eptiome of finesse in the Greek language. Suffice it to say, it seems very likely that Qoheleth was written in a style lacking any parallel in the Old Testament. Gordis' conclusion is that:

"Qoheleth knew Aramaic but not Greek, and that his literary medium was the Hebrew of Second Temple Palestine, in a form which was beginning to approximate the Hebrew of the Mishnah."⁴

Gordis' theory has gained general acceptance among many scholars.⁵ We are unable to say "wide acceptance" because so many commentators are non-committal at this point and are apparently satisfied to compile the views and let the reader accept that one which is most plausible.

J. Van Der Ploeg in a review of Gordis' book generally accepts his conclusions with the exception of one passage - 8:2.⁶ The Hebrew text

⁴Gordis, op. cit., p.62.

⁵Rankin, op. cit., p.12-13.

⁶J. V. D. Ploeg, review of Gordis', "Qoheleth the Man and His World," Vetus Testamentum 4:107-108, January, 1954.

reads: $\text{רַמְּשׁוּ מִלִּפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ}$. The problem is the unusual רַמְּשׁוּ at the beginning. The RSV omits it all together and translates it: "Keep the king's command." Some have felt that רַמְּשׁוּ needs to be supplied as in 2:1, 15, but there is no textual warrant for this. Following the clue of the LXX some have felt here the presence of the direct object indicator רַמְּשׁוּ , as Barton in the ICC, rather than the independent personal pronoun. Gordis translates the passage: "I say: Keep the King's commands." He claims to be able to isolate a parallel in Rabbinic literature and two Biblical examples - Hosea 12:9 and Jeremiah 50:7 where the first person pronoun introduces a statement without a verb. To this Ploeg has replied:

Les deux textes bibliques, en effet, cités par Gordis, ne peuvent servir de parallèles que si l'on accepte l'exégèse peu commune que G. en donne tandis que le texte talmudique est par sa longueur même and par le fait qu'il cite plusieurs personnes au cours d'une discussion, claire et inambigu. Au reste, il y a une distance de plusieurs siècles entre le texte biblique and celui de la gemara et le rapprochement doit donc être éclatant pour constituer un argument fort.

Ploeg maintains that this abnormality in the Hebrew text is best explained by an original Aramaic $\text{רַמְּשׁוּ מִפְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ}$ (the face of the king). Appeal is made to Ahiqar VII:101 where one finds the same expression in a context which recalls the sentence in Qoheleth - "in presence of a king delay not."⁸ It is to be noted that this occurs in Qoheleth in a series of maxims and, according to Ploeg, it does not follow from this example that the whole book was translated from the Aramaic.

⁷ Ploeg, op. cit., p.107.

⁸ A. Cowley, Aramaic Papyri Of The Fifth Century B.C. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), pp.215, 223.

II SUMMARY

Robert Gordis' proficiency in Hebrew wisdom literature is widely known. His commentary on Qoheleth, Koheleth - The Man And His World, is easily the best treatment of the subject. One is impressed by his wide grasp of Rabbinical material and his ability to bring such work to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

Perhaps Dr. Gordis' chief contribution to the question of the original language of Qoheleth is his penchant criticism of the view that looks on Qoheleth as a translation of an Aramaic original.

However, Gordis' approach to Qoheleth does seem somewhat hindered by his refusal to appeal to the cognate Semitic languages. It is unthinkable that such linguistic relationship did not exist in the ancient world of the Near East.

Gordis' appeal to the Midrash (ca. 100 B.C. - A.D. 300) and the Talmud (ca. A.D. 100 - A.D. 500) forces him to date Qoheleth rather late.

CHAPTER V

AN EASTERN ORIGIN FOR QOHELETH

NORTHERNISMS IN QOHELETH

A third view has been advanced by Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon to explain the peculiarities of Qoheleth. Actually, Gordon was the first scholar to apply the Ras-Shamra finds of 1929 to the Hebrew text of Qoheleth. Certain northern idioms appearing in the Ugaritic texts found identical parallel only in Qoheleth. For example, the expression gl ksp in 51: II:27, "the shadow of silver," is found again only in Qoheleth 7:12 (צל הכסף). Not only the similarities of the idiom but also grammatical and lexical features common to Ugaritic seemed impressive. In the first place, there occurs in Qoheleth the unusual use of the infinitive absolute followed by the independent personal pronoun "I" for past meaning on the רקטול הוא pattern. This construction occurs once in Qoheleth 4:2 ושבח אני "and I praised," and once in Esther 9:1 ונהפך הוא "it was reversed." This grammatical form is attested rather frequently in Phoenician, especially in the Azitawadd text¹ and in Ugaritic.² In the second place, the Phoenician parallel pair 'dm - 'st as against the normal Hebrew שן - שן is found in Qoheleth 7:28 (שן - שן).

Following these leads Gordon has remarked: "I cannot help feeling

¹C. H. Gordon, "Azitawadd's Phoenician Inscription," Journal of Near Eastern Studies 8:112-113, April 1949.

²C. H. Gordon, "North Israelite Influence on Post-Exilic Hebrew," Israel Exploration Journal 5:85 n2, 1955. Cf. wngs hm "and they met," wsh hm "and they called," wpth hw "and he opened," w'rb hm "and they entered;" all from 52, 68-71.

that the northern character of Ecclesiastes should be stressed, rather than its reputed 'very late' and 'Greek' character. It is basically not a philosophical treatise of Greece; and whatever Greek elements there may be in it have come through Phoenician channels."³

These northernisms, alien to pre-exilic Judean Hebrew, influenced the Biblical post-exilic authors through the North Israelite tribes who since 722 B.C. had been under the captivity of the Assyrian Empire. Since these Northern Israelites were excluded from their homeland, the only alternative was a possible union with the Jews of Judah, the treatment of whom had been considerably less drastic under the control of the Babylonians and Persians. Gordon feels that this union had taken place by the time of the Achaemenian Empire.

The textual difficulties of Qoheleth (as of Chronicles and Esther) are to be explained not as Phoenicianisms or Canaanitisms, but as northern Hebraisms representing the dialect of northern Israelite tribes which they carried to Mesopotamia and Persia. Later, these same dialectal northernisms appeared in the post-exilic books of the Old Testament canon.

The Persian words (for example קלנד in 8:11), the cultural milieu, the complete absence of any Greek influence all suggested to Gordon an eastern origin for Qoheleth. Thus Qoheleth is viewed as being rooted in the commercial tradition of Mesopotamian society with the place of writing in Achaemenian Mesopotamia before Alexander the Great. In this Gordon is supported by his former pupil Anson Rainey.⁴

³C. H. Gordon, Ugaritic Literature (Rome: Pontificum Institutum Biblicum, 1949), p.133.

⁴A. F. Rainey, "A Study of Ecclesiastes," Concordia Theological Monthly 35:148-153, March, 1964.

Gordon and Rainey both draw attention to one of the key words in Qoheleth 𐤒𐤍𐤕 - "trouble, labour, toil." Cf. 1:3, 2:10, 10, 21, 24; 3:13, 4:6, 8, 9; 5:14, 18; 6:7, 8:15; 10:5. In these passages it has the meaning "toil, labour" (BDB 765b). Within the family of Semitic languages it seems best related to the Akkadian nēmelu - "profit, property, substance," rather than "labour."⁵

The word used for "property" or "treasures" (𐤒𐤍𐤕 - only pl.) in 5:18 and 6:2 is found again only in Joshua 22:8 and II Chronicles 1:11, 12. It is best related to the Akkadian nikāsum. The word is found also in Biblical Aramaic-Ezra 6:8; 7:26.

Again, Qoheleth alone of all the Biblical writers uses 𐤒𐤍𐤕. It is found in 4:13; 9:15, 16 but nowhere else in the Old Testament. Its relation to the Akkadian muškēnum is obvious. The latter, often translated "villein" was a designation of a distinct social class in Akkadian society.⁶

At this point someone may raise the question that it is rather strange that such a "secular" book could possibly arise among the exiles of Mesopotamia. Rainey contends, following a clue from lack of any reference to the Law of Moses by the Jews at Elephantine (though they did have a copy of Ahiqar's proverbs), that for many Jews of the Persian diaspora international wisdom books were the main religious literature.⁷

⁵Rainey, Ibid., p.150; and Gordon, "North Israelite Influence," op. cit., p.87.

⁶E. A. Speiser, "The Muškēnum," Orientalia 27:19-28, 1958.

⁷Rainey, op. cit., p.154.

Perhaps this argument could be better met by a more adequate understanding of Qoheleth. The book is not really "secular" at all in the light of the contemporary use of that word. Following the interpretation of this book suggested in Chapter one, one feels little surprise that such a book should arise among exiles. Some of the great works on Christian apologetics were committed to writing in just such circumstances, whether they be from the early Church, the middle ages or from the famous Nazi prisoner Dietrich Bonhoeffer in our own age.

II SUMMARY

The arguments presented by both Gordon and Rainey appear rather formidable. It is especially noteworthy to observe not a few strange vocabulary words with an East Semitic cognate. Unfortunately, neither of the above two scholars has elaborated upon their hypothesis. The suggestion of a Mesopotamian origin of Qoheleth is an enticing one and does merit more investigation than this study has given it.

CHAPTER VI

THE INFLUENCE OF CANAANITE - PHOENICIAN - ORTHOGRAPHY

I INTRODUCTION

The main thrust of this thesis concerns the question as to whether the linguistic peculiarities of Qoheleth may best be explained by appeal to the influence of the Canaanite - Phoenician language on Hebrew. Though Phoenician ties with Qoheleth had been mentioned as far back as the turn of the twentieth century, it was not until Professor Mitchell Dahood of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome elaborated this thesis so that scholars began to take notice.

Beginning with an article in Biblica, one of the publications of the Pontifical Institute, Dahood has since enlarged on his thesis in five succeeding articles.¹ As a pioneer suggestion Dahood's views have been warmly welcomed by some and suspiciously rejected by others. It is interesting to note, however, that no scholars have scoffed at all his conclusions nor have any endorsed all his views. Most seem to have adopted a "wait and see" attitude.

Dahood himself has not been satisfied to limit his research to Qoheleth but has attempted to extend his discussion and apply his conclu-

¹M. J. Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence on Qoheleth," Biblica, 33:30-52, 191-221, 1952; a summary of this article as "The Language of Qoheleth," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 14:227-232, 1952; "Qoheleth and Recent Discoveries," Biblica, 34:302-318, 1958; "Qoheleth and Northwest Semitic Philology," Ibid., 43:349-365, 1962; "Canaanite Words In Qoheleth 10:20," Ibid., 46:210-212, 1965; and "Phoenician Background of Qoheleth," Ibid., 47:264-282, 1966.

sions to Job,² Proverbs³ and Psalms.⁴

That which has lent credence to Dahood's views has been the amazing archaeological discoveries of the Near East in the last seventy-five years. All of these rich finds have revolutionized the approach of scholars to the Old Testament, both theologically and philologically. The discovery in 1887 of the Amarna Tablets made available to scholars a wealth of Canaanite linguistic material consisting of individual words, grammatical forms and idiomatic phrases. In 1935-36 the unearthing of thousands of tablets from Mari on the Euphrates River brought to light many personal names and words which are Northwest-Semitic in character. The most sensational of all finds has resulted from the excavations at Ras Shamra on the coast of Northern Syria in 1929. Ugarit, the ancient name of the city, gave to Biblical scholars an entirely new idea of Canaanite civilization. Most important was the discovery of clay tablets not like the Akkadian syllabic script, but rather a previously unknown alphabetic script.

Since the decipherment of these tablets discussion has been waged by the linguists as to the relationship between Hebrew, Phoenician and Ugaritic. Some men like A. Goetze of Yale considered Ugaritic so remote

²M. J. Dahood, "Northwest Semitic Philology and Job," The Bible In Current Catholic Thought, J. L. McKenzie, editor (New York: Herder and Herder, 1962), pp.55-74.

³M. J. Dahood, Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), 72 pp.

⁴M. J. Dahood, Psalms I, I-50 (Vol. 16 of The Anchor Bible, eds. W. F. Albright and D. N. Freedman. 38 vols. New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1964-67).

from Biblical Hebrew and Phoenician that it cannot be considered as belonging to the same groups of dialects at all. Others, like Albright, see a significant relationship here. It should be pointed out that Dahood was a pupil of Albright's at Johns Hopkins University and generally follows the views of his esteemed mentor.

Dahood, working from the Ugaritic finds, has proceeded to base his study within the context of Northwest Semitic philology. Here, he believes, will be found the clue to Qoheleth. Such a view was bound to come forth from some corner as a result of archaeological clarification of Canaan. Albright in 1945 with regard to Phoenician could say: "We can now follow the development of the Phoenician script and language from about the twelfth century B.C. to the third century A.D. to which the latest Punic inscriptions belong."⁵

Dahood's approach has been to subject Qoheleth to investigation from four approaches: orthographic, morphological, syntactical and that of vocabulary. Though Dahood is not willing to let his case rest on one approach or one illustration, he feels that the cumulative evidence points to an obvious conclusion. Thus he states his proposition: "The Book of Ecclesiastes was originally composed by an author who wrote in Hebrew but who employed Phoenician orthography, and whose composition shows heavy Canaanite - Phoenician literary influence."⁶

A few remarks should be made on the above statement. First, it is stated that Qoheleth was written originally in Hebrew and thus is not a

⁵W. F. Albright, "The Old Testament And Canaanite Language And Literature," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 7:5, January, 1945.

⁶Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.32.

translation either from Phoenician or Aramaic. Secondly, though maintaining Canaanite and northern influence in Qoheleth, Dahood does not deny the presence of Aramaic coloring in syntax and vocabulary. Nor does this thesis deny similarities to Mishnaic Hebrew for, as Dahood states, Phoenician has a number of syntactical and lexical parallelisms with Mishnaic Hebrew not found in Biblical Hebrew.

Obviously every illustration brought forward by Dahood can not be treated in detail here. The more important observations of Dahood though will be examined for their value and insight. Orthographic data will be examined first.

II ORTHOGRAPHY

Orthography is that part of grammar that deals with letters and spelling. The most ancient type of writing grew out of man's attempt to picture objects, ideas and events. This resulted in what is known as the pictograph. From this grew ideographic writing in which pictures were employed to denote objects, ideas, and sounds. Cuneiform used signs as syllabic symbols while Egyptian produced signs for the consonants of the syllable or word, the vowels being unrepresented. In Egyptian in the case of monosyllabic words with a single consonant signs developed that could represent single consonantal sounds. It may be that the development of the alphabet was related to this. At any rate the alphabet of the Canaanites evolved as a purely consonantal alphabet without vowels.

The first development towards vowel writing in the Semitic scripts was in the use of matres lectionis "mothers of reading," to indicate long

vowels. As F. R. Blake has said: "These signs were developed from the historical spelling of consonants which had become silent as the result of contraction, and which came to be regarded as the sign of the long vowel resulting from contraction."⁷ Terminal matres lectionis appeared first in early Hebrew, Moabite and Aramaic inscriptions about the tenth century B.C. Medial matres lectionis were to follow later. Albright states that, "the use of matres lectionis was not introduced into Biblical Hebrew until the fifth century B.C. under Aramaic influence."⁸ As is well known, there is no evidence at all of these vowel letters in the Phoenician inscriptions.

Dahood reasons as follows. If a book in the Hebrew Bible was composed in the fifth to the third centuries B.C. it would be replete both with internal and terminal matres lectionis as this was the time of their highest distribution in Biblical Hebrew under the influence of Aramaic. However, if a book was composed in the standard Phoenician orthography of an identical period such vowel letters would be glaringly absent. This absence would make it impossible to recognize forms otherwise distinguishable, as for example, the singular and plural of a noun with its pronominal suffix. An examination of the major textual variants are to be ascribed,

⁷F. R. Blake, "The Development of Symbols for the Vowels in the Alphabets Derived from the Phoenician," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 60:396, September, 1940.

⁸W. F. Albright, "The Sea of Eliakim," Journal of Biblical Literature, 51:81, June, 1932; and F. M. Cross Jr. and D. N. Freedman, Early Hebrew Orthography (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1952), pp.1-10.

Dahood believes, to errors in copying from a Vorlage which lacked all matres lectionis. Since Dahood assumes Qoheleth was written in the fourth-third century B.C., he believes the original must have followed the Phoenician pattern of orthography, which was the only Canaanite system of that period lacking vowel letters.

An examination of those illustrations brought forward by Dahood reveals that most of them deal with 1) either singular verbs following plural antecedents and plural verbs following singular antecedents or 2) verbs and nouns with the second person pronominal suffix, in which it is impossible to distinguish singular and plural forms. Gesenius has explained the above, especially number one, as a syntactical peculiarity.⁹ Dahood's observations deserve perhaps a more extensive analysis than this.

In 4:17 the MT has גלגל. To this Kittel adds a note. He advises that this be read with the Qerē of many manuscripts גלגל (singular) and that the Ketib is גלגל (a plural). Dahood argues from this that the translators confused the singular and plural forms and were unable to decide between the two.

To this example may be added the following:

7:18; 11:6	<u>יד</u>	"your hand" (singular) and <u>יד</u> (plural).
11:9	<u>כילדותך</u>	"in your youth" and <u>כילדותך</u>
11:9	<u>בחורותך</u>	"in your youth" and <u>בחורותך</u>
12:1	<u>בוראך</u>	"your creator" and <u>בוראך</u>
5:5	<u>מעשה</u>	"work(s) of" and <u>מעשי</u> (7:13, 8:11, 14; 11:5)

⁹Gesenius, op. cit., p.11 (2 H); and Rainey, op. cit., p.149.

The difference between the above forms seems to be a very small one - only a yodh. Yet the addition of this one letter does make a significant change. Gesenius on this particular point has remarked: "In support of the view formerly adopted by us that the ' is only orthographically retained, too much stress must not be laid on the fact that it is sometimes omitted, thereby causing confusion in an unpointed text with the singular noun."¹⁰ To this Dahood has responded that the tendency of the Hebrew language in post-exilic times was to write scripto plena and not scripto defectiva. He, therefore, feels the above explanation to be inadequate if Qoheleth wrote in normal, post-exilic, Hebrew orthography. (It should be pointed out here that Dahood assumes a post-exilic date for Qoheleth and bases his argument on this). If Hebrew does not give us the answer, where can one turn? Dahood feels that a solution to the problem can be had by an appeal to the forms with pronominal suffixes in Phoenician in which it is impossible to distinguish the singular and plural forms.

The problem then is whether to look outside the Hebrew language for an explanation to this phenomenon or let the Hebrew tongue answer its own problem. Dahood's argument does have its appeal. Yet there are a number of other passages in the Old Testament in which the same phenomenon occurs. In Exodus 3:5, a passage very similar to Ecclesiastes 4:17, one meets the expression $\text{לֹא תִגַּע בְּרַגְלֶיךָ}$ - "Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet...." An alternate reading to this is לֹא תִגַּע , the same as in Ecclesiastes 4:17

¹⁰Gesenius, op. cit., p.257 (91k).

and a form attested by 53 manuscripts. One wonders if Dahood would ascribe this textual variant to Phoenician influence. Thus this construction is not peculiar to post-exilic literature. In Jeremiah 38:22 the expression "your feet (רגלך) are sunk in the mire" occurs. Many manuscripts read רגליך . Is this Phoenician influence on Jeremiah?

In the case of כּוֹרְאִיךָ "your creator" many commentators have taken this to be the plural of majesty like the Hebrew אֱלֹהִים and קִדְשִׁים.¹¹ Gesenius, while recognizing plural participles used as attributes of God, feels that this should be read as a singular.¹² Gordis feels that here we might have the suffix added as if to a Lamed - he (Lamed-yodh) form. Gesenius has given us other examples, of which Ecclesiastes 12:1 is not one, in which before a suffix beginning with a consonant, the original ay of the termination has been contracted and the yodh has disappeared. The result is a form indistinguishable from the singular.¹³ For example compare מַחַנְיָךְ in Deuteronomy 23:14 in which verse מַחַנְךָ occurs just before.

We turn our attention now to examine those passages in which there is disagreement between the verb and antecedent. This will apply mostly to the verb הִיָּה "be, become." The first instance is 1:16 כֹּל אֲשֶׁר הִיָּה as against כֹּל אֲשֶׁר הָיָה. Rejecting any idea of a distributive plural, Dahood attributes this not to the original writer, who no doubt knew that

¹¹Barton, op. cit., p.195.

¹²Gesenius, op. cit., p.399 (124k).

¹³Ibid., p.273 (93ss).

the antecedent of אשר was plural in number, but to the copyist who would have been inclined to put down the singular היה as the simplest forms of the consonants ה.י.¹⁴

Compare also the following:

1:10 לעלמים אשר היה

2:7 ובני בית היו לי and ובני בית היה לי

2:7, 9, and 4:16 שהיו and שהיה

From the above there seems to be disagreement sometimes in Hebrew between the verb and the subject. Barton points out that Hebrew is not always careful about the agreement of subject and predicate.¹⁵ As an example, Ecclesiastes 10:15 is appealed to in which the masculine noun עמל is taken as a feminine and so connected with a verb in the third feminine singular. However, the thrust of Dahood's argument is not against agreement in gender but agreement in number. Gordis is ready to explain the singular of 1:10 either as a result of the neuter use of היה (Genesis 15:17, 47:24 and Exodus 12:49), or because of the verb's attraction to אשר, which is construed as a singular relative pronoun governing a third person singular verb.¹⁶ Obviously the clue to this passage will evolve from an interpretation of לעלמים. This is the only place in the Hebrew Bible where the expression of the preposition ל and the plural noun occur together. Whenever it occurs without a prefixed preposition it is always

¹⁴Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.37.

¹⁵Barton, op. cit., pp.75-76.

¹⁶Gordis, op. cit., pp. 197-198.

in a construct relationship and bears the meaning of "everlasting." Perhaps the most appealing solution to the problem is that advanced by Hertzberg when he says: "Der Singular ה'ה ist eigenartig, wird sich aber wohl daher erklären, dass die קלמ'ם kollektivisch als eine grosse Einheit ausgefasst werden."¹⁷

We cite one more passage alluded to by Dahood. It is the somewhat enigmatic verse of 4:10. The RSV translates this: "For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow...." The MT reads for "fall" a third person plural י'פל. Some of the versions have read this as י'פל. Dahood reasons that this textual variant arose from a copy in which no final vowel letters were written at all. Since the context was ambiguous, some versions chose the singular and others preferred the plural.

As we have intimated above, we are obviously unable to subject each of Dahood's examples to any type of an exhaustive analysis. Accordingly, we have selected three suggestions of Dahood. One is the verb ה'ה. Our reasons for choosing this example are: (1) it is the one cited most often by Dahood in the establishment of his hypothesis; (2) the verb "to be" is irregular in almost every language and is always a "problem" verb; (3) it occurs much more frequently than any of the other examples. Therefore, the Hebrew Bible will give us a wide background for purposes of investigation. The plan for this research problem included an exhaustive check of every occurrence of ה'ה, והיה, היו, והיו, שהיה, שהיו. This was done through the aid of Mandelkerns Concordantiae Hebraicae

¹⁷ Hertzberg, op. cit. p.68; and Gesenius, op. cit., p.466 (145u).

Chaldaicae. Each reference was checked for a variant manuscript reading in Kittel's critical apparatus. We have noted only those instances in which there is varying textual witness. If a variant reading was suggested by the editors with no textual evidence for support, such references were not recorded in our study. Below is the tabulation of the results of the search. The reading of the Massoretic text is first recorded and then the emendation.

I הִיר to הִיה

1. Genesis 41:53 - "The seven years of plenty that were."
2. Ecclesiastes 1:10 - "The ages which are before us."
3. Ecclesiastes 2:7 - "And slaves were to me."
4. Ecclesiastes 4:16 - "All who were before them."
5. Lamentations 4:8 - "It has become as dry as wood."
6. I Chronicles 24:28 - "Of Mahli: Eleazer who had no sons."

II הִיה to הִיר

1. Genesis 30:42 - "And the feebler (flocks) were Laban's."
2. Exodus 13:9 - "And it shall be as a sign to you upon your hand."
3. Exodus 30:4 - "And they shall be holders for poles."
4. Exodus 33:7 - "And everyone who sought the Lord...."
5. Joshua 17:18 - "And its farthest borders shall be to you."

III הִיה to הִיר

1. Genesis 41:48 - "He gathered all the food which were plenty."
2. Numbers 26:33 - "Zelophehad had no sons."
3. Numbers 27:3 - "He did not have sons."
4. Jeremiah 50:6 - "My people have been lost sheep."

IV ַהִיָּה to הִיָּה

1. Ezra 48:1 - "The tribes they shall be his."

V ַהִיָּה to הִיָּה

1. Ecclesiastes 2:7 - "More than all who were before me in Jerusalem."

It should be noted that of all the occurrences of הִיָּה (in the third person) in the Old Testament, only 17 references were found in which there was some textual variation with regard to number. Eleven times a singular was interpreted as a plural. Six times a plural was interpreted as a singular by other versions. Four of these references (almost one quarter) are from Qoheleth. Eight of them are from the Pentateuch -- in which instances the major textual variant is that offered by the Samaritan Pentateuch. It is to be noted that of all the above references only one is from that part of Biblical literature commonly assigned to the post-exilic period (I Chronicles 24:28) in addition to those from Qoheleth. Again, it is plain to be seen that Qoheleth far and away has a higher proportionate use of such verbal disagreement than any comparable portion of the Old Testament. In this it is unique. Also, the different textual variants given by Kittel for those references in Qoheleth are, generally speaking, much more broad than for the other cited sources.

Our second example involves the use of the singular and plural construct. Dahood cites five examples from Qoheleth of הַיָּמִים and יָמִים in which textual variation arises - 5:5, 7:13, 8:11, 15, 11:5. He reasons that such a variant arose from an original consonantal text יָמִים, a reading which baffled translators as to either its singularity or plurality.

An examination of all of the occurrences of this construction in the Old Testament reveals an identical textual variant in the following passages:

Jeremiah 10:15

Job 1:10

Job 24:31

Psalm 28:5

Psalm 115:4

Canticles 7:2

Lamentations 4:2

I Chronicles 32:19

It does seem strange that of thirteen identical textual variants, five of them (38 %) should appear in Qoheleth. Again, we must admit in Dahood's favour that here is a phenomenon that proportionately occurs much more frequently in Qoheleth than in any other book of the Old Testament. Our study of $\eta\eta\eta$ and $\eta\psi\psi\eta$ does seem to lend credence to Dahood's argument that a peculiar orthography is to be found in Qoheleth.

A third example for consideration is that of $\eta\eta'$ and $\eta'\eta'$ - "your hand" or "your hands." Here some interesting data comes to light. Below are the passages in which this textual variant arises.¹⁸

Altogether there are 26 passages in which the manuscripts are divided between the singular and the plural. Twelve occur in Deuteronomy. One wonders why there is such pronounced variation in Deuteronomy. Be that

¹⁸

Exodus 4:21; 13:9; Numbers 27:18; Deuteronomy 2:7; 6:8; 7:24; 12:17; 13:10; 14:29; 15:10; 20:13; 23:21; 28:12, 33; 30:9; I Kings 22:34; Isaiah 3:6; Jeremiah 40:4; Psalm 10:14; 39:11; 138:7; 145:16; Proverbs 3:27; Ecclesiastes 7:8; 11:6; II Chronicles 18:33.

as it may, the data above brings many of Dahood's conclusions into serious questioning. He does not seem to have taken into consideration any alternate explanations for textual variants. And as is well known, such could arise in different ways. His basic assumption is that the influence of the original consonantal Vorlage is seen in these variants. Such a consonantal text therefore "opened the door" for various interpretations by the different translators. Edwin Yamauchi has pointed out that textual variants between the Septuagint and Massoretic text could arise in one of three ways.¹⁹

1. differences due to a cultural and theological bias of the translator.
2. differences due to a radically different Vorlage which has been literally translated.
3. stylistic factors.

Commenting on those particular differences in Qoheleth Yamauchi has remarked: "Most of the variations between the MT and the LXX of Qoheleth are very slight, and are not even due to any pronounced stylistic patterns, much less to any discernable theological bias. They are simply the inevitable discrepancies of a translation."²⁰ Dahood has overlooked the fact that many of the above variants arose simply from the fact that the translators failed to interpret the Hebrew idiom correctly and thus substituted a plural for a singular. It would seem that Dahood would have real difficulty in ascribing the anomalies of the orthography of the Pentateuch and the prophets to Phoenician influence.

¹⁹Edwin Yamauchi, "The Sapiential Septuagint," Bulletin Of The Evangelical Theological Society, 5:109-114, Fall, 1962.

²⁰Ibid., p.113.

CHAPTER VII

CANAANITE - PHOENICIAN MORPHOLOGY

I THE RELATIVE PRONOUN

It is well known that the relative pronoun ϖ stands out in Qoheleth with unusual frequency. As a matter of fact, it occurs 68 times within the space of twelve chapters as against the regular ϖ (89 times).

Biblical scholars have usually agreed that the use of this particular relative is limited to late Hebrew and is indicative of passages with North Palestine colouring.¹ Noteworthy it is that this is the characteristic relative for the Song of Solomon -- used thirty-two times there. As Archer points out, this is a source of embarrassment to those conservative scholars (Delitzsch and Young for example) who prefer to place the latter in the age of Solomon but consign Qoheleth to the post-exilic period.² Thus this peculiar relative turns up en masse in two Biblical books supposedly separated by at least five hundred years!

Also significant is the fact that ϖ turns up in the Old Testament in Judges 5:7, 7 (the Song of Deborah); 6:17; 7:12; 8:26. It appears in

¹W. F. Albright, "Archaic Survivals In The Text of Canticles," Hebrew and Semitic Studies - Presented to G. R. Driver, eds. D. W. Thomas and W. D. McHardy (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1963), p.1; and BDB, p.979a. Compare the following passages in Qoheleth: 1:3, 7, 9, 9, 9, 9, 10, 11, 11, 14, 17; 2:7, 9, 11, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 18, 18, 19, 19, 20, 21, 21, 22, 24, 26; 3:13, 14, 15, 18, 22; 4:2, 10, 10; 5:4, 15, 15, 16, 16, 18; 6:3, 10; 7:10, 14, 24; 8:7, 14, 14, 17; 9:5, 12, 12; 10:3, 5, 14, 16, 17; 11:3, 8; 12:3, 7, 9.

²Archer, op. cit., p.466.

II Kings, Jonah, Lamentations, Job, Psalms, Ezra, I Chronicles and possibly in Genesis.

Dahood is quick to identify this with the Phoenician relative WN .³ His judgment on this is accepted by some and rejected by others. The only difference in forms seems to be prothetic aleph. Still its etymology is somewhat of an enigma and its relation to the Phoenician, though possible, is by no means established. The writer has yet to read anything detailed from Dahood on Canticles. However, Dahood, if he would be consistent, it would seem, would have to posit a Phoenician influence on Canticles. Though the etymology is somewhat obscure it can be said that the function of the particles is similar in both Phoenician and Hebrew.⁴ Harris does point out a syntactical difference between the two. He observes that Phoenician W and WN , unlike Hebrew W , are never used as conjunctions.⁵ His conclusion is that the Phoenician WN may very well be connected with the Akkadian sa which has the function of both relative and genitive.⁶ Dahood's hypothesis is thus lent credence by both Harris and Friedrich.⁷

³Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.45.

⁴Z. S. Harris, A Grammar of the Phoenician Language (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1936), p.54; and J. Friedrich, Phonizisch - Punische Grammatik (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1951), p.51

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.; and S. Langdon, "The Etymology of the Babylonian Relative Pronoun," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, 31:271, July, 1915.

⁷Compare also G. Bergstrasser, Das hebraische Präfix W "Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 29:40-56, 1909.

Voices of protest have been raised against this identification. S. Gevirtz has examined this in detail.⁸ Gevirtz begins with an examination of a representative list of Phoenician forms with an initial 'aleph of which the prothetic origin is undisputed. Those who have connected Phoenician $\aleph X$ with Hebrew ψ have done so by establishing a prothetic function for the 'aleph. Such a morphological element is not lacking in Biblical Hebrew. Its purpose there is to avoid harshness in pronunciation and thus it is a helping sound; for example, $\psi \aleph \aleph X$ and $\psi \aleph \aleph \aleph$ (arm) - cf. Ges. p.70 (19m). Friedrich having examined the Phoenician - Punic inscriptions has analyzed all the occurrences of prothetic 'aleph and has noted its use before (a) sibilants, $\aleph \aleph X$ for $\aleph \psi$ "two;" the demonstrative pronoun $\aleph X$, "this," for \aleph ; the relative pronoun $\aleph X$ for ψ ; (b) before the preposition $\aleph - \psi \aleph \aleph \aleph X$ "in the holy place" for $\psi \aleph \aleph \aleph$; (3) before unclassified forms.⁹

Gevirtz is ready to dispute the use of a prothetic 'aleph before sibilants. The very plethora of words in Phoenician beginning with a sibilant lacking any such type of addition seems to be tangible evidence. His examination reveals that evidence is lacking for such a suggestion and this causes him to look with suspicion upon two of the above illustrations - the demonstrative and the relative. Gevirtz maintains that the prothetic 'aleph is employed only for reasons of euphony. He says: "the 'aleph

⁸S. Gevirtz, "The Phoenician Particle $\aleph X$," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 16:124-127, April 1957.

⁹Friedrich, op. cit., pp.36-37.

is introduced prothetically to aid in the enunciation of an initial two-consonant cluster."¹⁰ Therefore, it now becomes necessary to demonstrate that *s* of the Phoenician inscriptions was characterized by a two-consonant cluster sound. And this has never been demonstrated. On this particular point Harris has remarked: "To the best of our knowledge, the sounds were pronounced in Phoenician much as they were in Hebrew There is no evidence from the transcriptions that the *W* was ever pronounced other than *š*."¹¹ Thus the possibility of identifying Hebrew relative *W* with Phoenician relative *ʿN* is seriously called into question.

It is surprising that no one has sought identification between Phoenician *ʿN* and the Hebrew particle *ʿN* of which there are at least two instances in the Old Testament - II Samuel 14:19, Micah 6:10 and possibly a third - Proverbs 18:24. The obvious meaning of *ʿN* in these examples equals the Hebrew *Wʾ*. This then is identified with Ugaritic *ʿ*, Aramaic (ʾ) *ʿN* and Akkadian *iššu* (Late Babylonian).¹²

Liberty is taken here to expand on Gevirtz's proposed etymology to point out that certainly no unanimity of opinion prevails as to the identification of Phoenician *ʿN* with the Hebrew relative *W*. This forces caution in the adoption of Dahood's identification.

¹⁰Gevirtz, op. cit., p.125

¹¹Harris, op. cit., p.22

¹²Gevirtz, loc. cit.

The very fact that this Hebrew relative is composed of װ and dagesh would suggest there was originally more than just װ, hence the doubling of the following letter. It is true, according to Jouon, that this relative must have existed all the time in Hebrew in the spoken language. Before the exile it had been replaced almost completely by װן. After the exile (if we date Qoheleth and Canticles there) it reappears rather frequently. In the post-Biblical period it replaces completely װן.¹³ Because of its frequent identification with the Akkadian ša, it is surprising that only a few have identified Qoheleth with a possible eastern semitic origin (see chapter five).

In conclusion, it must be said that too little is known about the relative to use it in dating documents. Perhaps, if we really understood its usage, we might be inclined to use it for early dating and not late as is so often done. Note the comment of M. H. Segal.

Now whatever the relationship of the two forms to each other, there can be no doubt that she is as old as asher, if not older. Its confinement in the earlier books of the Bible to North Israelitish documents would prove that its use must have been common in the colloquial speech of northern Palestine, under the influence, to some extent at least, of the Phoenician ʿ-sh, sh, the Assyrian sha, and perhaps also the Aramaic zī, dī. The scarcity of its occurrence even in these documents must be explained by the assumption that it was regarded as a vulgarism which the literary language had to avoid. Its use gradually extended to southern Palestine, and being the shorter and more pliable form, it must in the course of time have entirely supplanted the longer asher in the

¹³p. Jouon, Grammaire De L'Hébreu Biblique (Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifical, 1947) p.89 (par. 38); and Gordis, op. cit., p.403 who uses this very point for amplification of his theory that the Hebrew of Qoheleth stands midway between classical Biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew.

language of the common people, and from this it descended directly to Middle Hebrew. But the literary prejudice against it seems to have remained even after Biblical Hebrew has ceased to be a living speech.¹⁴

II THE INDEFINITE PRONOUN

We turn our attention now to an examination of what Dahood has called the indefinite pronoun - וְ-הוּא , related as it is to the discussion above.¹⁵ It is found eight times in Qoheleth. Five of these references - 1:9, 9; 3:15, 22; 8:7; 10:14 - Dahood would translate by the Latin id quod which is the Hebrew וְהוּא . The remaining two - 6:10, 7:24 - equal quidquid or the Hebrew וְהוּא-כֵן . All of the above examples occur in stereotype sentences with the verb הָיָה - "what shall be," or "what has been." A closer examination of these eight occurrences reveals that two exhibit interrogative force - 8:7, 10:14; five general relative force - 1:9, 9; 3:15; 6:10 and 7:24; and one 3:22 is a transition between the two. Curiously, the Septuagint and the Vulgate have translated these constructions as interrogatives - "What is it that was? The same that will be!" Most commentators recognize the construction as late, one that often appears in the Mishna and is identical with the Aramaic וְהוּא (Barton) or וְהוּא (Gordis) - cf. Daniel 2:20, 29, 45 and Ezra 7:18.¹⁶

¹⁴Archer, op. cit., pp.465-466, citing M. H. Segal, A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew.

¹⁵Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.45

¹⁶Barton, op. cit., p.75; Gordis, op. cit., p.197; and BDB 553a.

Dahood has taken exception to this line of reasoning and prefers to identify it with the Phoenician compound $\Psi\aleph\aleph$ found in the Kilamuwa inscription of the ninth century B.C. It is interesting that Dahood has made his appeal for a morphological identification to an inscription that precedes Qoheleth by four to five hundred years. Be that as it may, Dahood is not alone in this identification.¹⁷

The Phoenician text (Kilamuwa I line 4) reads as follows:

$\Psi\aleph\aleph$ and he did nothing. But I, Kilamuwa, Son of TM - what I did...."

It is obvious from this line that $\Psi\aleph\aleph$ in Phoenician and $\Psi\aleph\aleph$ in Hebrew assume identical functions. Donner and Rollig have called this Phoenician form "Zusammen gesetztes Relativum," and translate it, "was auch immer."¹⁸ Yet they do not make any connection with a similar Hebrew construction.

Actually, the difference between the two forms seems to be a small one - $\Psi\aleph\aleph$ and $\Psi\aleph\aleph$ or $M\check{H}\check{S}$ and $M'\check{S}$. In the Phoenician there has been the retention of the prothetic 'aleph as discussed above. As Gevartz once more has pointed out, one would expect such an 'aleph to be elided under the influence of the immediately preceding full vowel mō.¹⁹

In connection with this discussion we might also point out that the

¹⁷M. Lidzbarski, Ephemeris Für Semitsche Epigraphik (Giessen: Alfred Topelmann, 1915), Vol. III, p.227; and Harris, op. cit., p.82. (though Lidzbarski is undecided between the Aramaic and Hebrew).

¹⁸H. Donner and W. Röllig, Kanaanäische Und Aramäische Inschriften (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1964), Vol. II, p.32.

¹⁹Gevartz, op. cit., p.126; and Friedrich p.52 par. 124c.

Hebrew כַּשְׁמֶה is usually identified with the Phoenician כַּשְׁמֶה translated by Harris as "just as," and by Lidzbarski as "weil," or "also." Against this Gevirtz has identified it with Ugaritic km it, which Gordon has translated "....as there is."²⁰

III PRONOMINAL SUFFIXES

Dahood has called to our attention the fact that the third masculine plural pronominal suffix is used five times with a feminine antecedent in Qoheleth. These passages are:

1. 2:6 בְּרִכּוֹת מַיִם לְהִשְׁקוֹת מֵהֶם
 "pools of water to draw from them." מֵהֶם refers back to בְּרִכּוֹת n.f.
2. 2:10 וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר שָׁאַלְתִּי עֵינַי לֹא אִזְלַתִּי מֵהֶם
 "and anything my eyes desired I did not withhold from them."
 - עֵינַי n.f. refers back to מֵהֶם
3. 10:9 מִסִּיעַ אֲבָנִים יַעֲצֹב בָּהֶם
 "the one quarrying stones is hurt by them." - בָּהֶם refers back to אֲבָנִים n.f.
4. 11:8 שָׁנִים הַרְבֵּה יַחִיהַּ הָאָדָם בְּכָלֵם יִשְׂמַח....
 "if a man lives many years let him rejoice in all of them."
 - בְּכָלֵם refers back to שָׁנִים n.f.
5. 12:1 שָׁנִים...אֵין-לִי בָהֶם חִפְּץ
 "the years draw nigh....I have no pleasure in them."
 - בָּהֶם refers back to שָׁנִים n.f.

²⁰Gordon, Ugaritic Literature, op. cit., p.113; and his Ugaritic Manual (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1955), 3:55, p.130.

Hebrew grammarians have noticed this phenomenon elsewhere and have been ready to offer an explanation for it. An examination of several constructions in the Old Testament reveals a weakening in the distinction of gender which probably passed from the colloquial language into that of literature.²¹ Also it is commonly asserted that the Hebrew language expressed a preference for masculine over feminine suffixes.

This formation is by no means limited to pronominal suffixes but is extended also to other grammatical forms. For example, the second masculine singular and plural occur in addressing feminine persons in the imperative - cf. Judges 4:20, Micah 1:13, Zechariah 13:7, Isaiah 23:1, Amos 4:1 (and Gesenius pp. 325, 326 - par. 110k); the same occurs in the perfect and imperfect - cf. Ezra 23:49, Ruth 1:8, Job 2:22, Canticles 2:7 (and Gesenius p.459 - par. 144a). The Hebrew dislike of using the feminine form is exemplified sometimes by the fact that of several predicates only that which stands next to the feminine substantive is inflected as feminine - cf. I Kings 9:11, Jeremiah 20:9, and Psalm 63:2 (and Gesenius p.428 - par. 132d).

Also, examples of interchange on third person plural suffixes are not wanting - cf. Genesis 26:15 (but Gesenius p.162, par. 60h); also Genesis 31:9 in which the MT has אֲנִי . However, about 50 MSS read אֲנִי ; also Genesis 31:16 אֲנִי referring to אֲנִי n.f. Here one would expect אֲנִי . We note also the use of the masculine plural independent pronoun אֲנִי in Zechariah 4:10 whose antecedent is אֲנִי

²¹Gesenius, op. cit., p.440 (135o).

(Compare number two above). One more example shall be cited -- that of I Samuel 17:40 in which לִבְנֵי (see above number three) is apparently treated as a masculine - "...he chose five stones....and put them (לִבְנֵי) - not לְבָנִים as one would expect. More examples could be cited but we shall limit ourselves to the above few. It will be seen from this discussion that at least two of the five examples cited by Dahood - עַיִן (eye) and לִבְנֵי (stone) embody both a masculine and feminine gender elsewhere in the Old Testament.

Dahood is ready to admit, however, that such a lengthy enumeration of such gender inconsistencies do exist in the Old Testament, the most of which can be explained as a result of "dissimilation."²² Yet he still is persuaded that this cannot fully explain the phenomenon encountered in Qoheleth. The reasons he gives are two: (1) this hardly seems sufficient to justify five anomalies within the space of twelve short chapters; (2) the author consistently avoids the use of the feminine plural suffix. It is not found at all in Qoheleth.

He is, therefore, prepared to look to the pronominal suffixes of Phoenician for a possible solution. A glance at either Harris' or Friedrich's grammar will quickly reveal that Phoenician does not have a distinctive third plural feminine suffix form.²³ Thus, it is probable that Phoenician used the masculine form for both genders. In the Phoenician inscription, Larnax Lapethos II, or Narnaka usually dated around the end

²²Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.43.

²³Harris, op. cit., p.47; and Friedrich, op. cit., p.46-47.

of third to second century B.C., Cooke has drawn attention to line 4 and 5 in which the independent plural pronoun למלך agrees with feminine למלכה , perhaps intimating that the form was used for both genders.²⁴

It may also be pointed out that it is not unheard of in Phoenician for some morphological element to assume the role of dual genders. For example, Friedrich, commenting on the demonstrative ל has said: "Im Phönizisch - Punischen ist abweichend von den anderen kanaanäischen Sprachen ל noch durchaus für beide Genera ganz allgemein in Gebrauch."²⁵

It is interesting to note some of the reactions of commentators to the above proposal. Hertzberg seems to concur with Dahood in each of the examples cited.²⁶ Strangely, Gordis says nothing at all either about the gender inconsistencies, a possible solution, or Dahood's hypothesis. Either he has overlooked them (and that is highly improbable) or else he has deliberately bypassed them as being of insufficient consequence to merit any special discussion. The writer has yet to meet a scholar who has contested with Dahood on this identification.

In summary it would be well for us to hold any final judgment in abeyance. Dahood himself is ready to admit that his solution is only tentative in the light of the paucity of available materials. Perhaps such inconsistencies in the Old Testament are not as "isolated" as Dahood

²⁴G. A. Cooke, A Text-book of North-Semitic Inscriptions (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1903), p.85.

²⁵Friedrich, op. cit., p.49.

²⁶Hertzberg, op. cit., pp. 79, 80, 184, 200, 206.

would like to think. Again it should be pointed out that Dahood is resting his case to a large degree on the weight of accumulative evidence and the argument from silence. Also, in the above five passages there is no textual variation given in Kittel's critical apparatus for any of them. Apparently, the versions treated this as common and therefore did not make emendations in their translation. Yet in other portions of the Scripture they did make such emendations even with identical words.

We turn our attention now to a discussion of the third masculine singular pronominal suffix. The discussion that has been waged on this subject has not been small mainly because of the possibilities for the third masculine singular suffix in Phoenician. The most commonly accepted opinion is that the Phoenician masculine and feminine suffix in the singular is yodh. The exception to this is, according to Harris, the Byblian dialect which had as a suffix in the thirteenth century he (ה) and from the eleventh century on waw (ו) in the masculine and he (ה) in the feminine.²⁷

In addition to the above forms there does appear to be in Phoenician a form of the third masculine suffix not indicated in the orthography - i.e. a pure vowel, probably \hat{o} as in Hebrew.²⁸ These appear in the Kilamuwa

²⁷Harris, op. cit., p.51; Albright disputes the use of a special Byblian dialect and prefers to look upon these latter forms as archaizing. See his "The Phoenician Inscriptions of the Tenth Century B.C. from Byblus," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 67:159, July-September 1947.

²⁸

F. M. Cross Jr. and D. N. Freedman, "The Pronominal Suffixes of Third Person Singular in Phoenician," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 10:228, October, 1951.

Inscription. Cf. ידו (yado) - וְכָל שָׁלַח יָדוֹ - "and everyone stretched forth his hand." This is sometimes referred to as the zero morpheme. Also we would add to the above the occurrence of two forms of this suffix in Punic - N and 'N after long vowels. Cross and Freedman trace the yodh suffix from an original - ihū which became with the palatalization of the he after the i vowel - iyū.²⁹

Dahood has picked up this yodh suffix from Phoenician and has applied it to one problem passage in Qoheleth - 2:25.³⁰ The Hebrew of the passage reads: כִּי מִי יֹאכַל וּמִי יִחַוֵּשׂ חַוְּץ מִמֶּנִּי "For who can eat and have enjoyment apart from him?"

The problem word is, of course, מִמֶּנִּי which many of the manuscripts emend to מִמֶּנִּי. Yet it should be pointed out that some manuscripts have taken the Hebrew literally and felt any shift was unnecessary. Dahood feels that such a change is unnecessary and the problem can be met by an appeal to the yodh suffix in Phoenician. He has listed other examples of this identical phenomenon in the Old Testament.³¹ He claims to have found this suffix in Psalms, Judges, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Jonah, Micah, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Job, Proverbs, Lamentations, Nehemiah and Qoheleth. Thus in fourteen books of the Old Testament he has found this

²⁹Cross and Freedman, op. cit., p.229.

³⁰Dahood, "Qoheleth and Northwest Semitic Philology," op. cit., p.353; and "The Phoenician Background," op. cit., p.269-270.

³¹Dahood, Psalms I - 50, Anchor Bible, op. cit., p.11.

eighty times. Dahood has anticipated the argument against his view on orthographical or paleographical grounds. He maintains that the Dead Sea finds have demonstrated the improbability of mistaking a waw for a yodh.

The question remains as to whether it might be a good first person pronominal suffix. This is certainly possible here. An examination of this chapter reveals that the personal pronoun "I" occurs more times in this chapter than in any of the others in Qoheleth -- some thirty-one instances. This seems to be plain evidence that chapter two is the most autobiographical of all and, therefore, one should not be surprised that even in an orthodox statement about the author's God he should insert an additional remark about his own life. Too, it ought to be remembered that one of the uses of the Hebrew preposition ׀ is that of comparison. May this not then legitimately be translated: "For who can in excess of me eat and have enjoyment?" or else colloquially, "Can anybody have a better time than I?" Such a statement would not be out of line at all in light of the context of the chapter. True, the writer has remarked that he hated life. But why? -- because there was no pleasure in these things? He had tried all of these things and there was pleasure, yet he desired more. Why then does he say - "I hated life." Perhaps because of the "almostness" about it.

IV THE NON-SYNOCOPATION OF THE ARTICLE

It is well-known in Biblical Hebrew that the definite article on a substantive, if preceded by a proclitic preposition ׀, ׀, ׀, is

omitted in favour of the preposition (rather it is syncopated,) with the latter assuming the vowel of the article. Yet there are examples in the Old Testament where such syncopation has not taken place, three of which are to be found in Qoheleth.

1. 6:10 שְׁהַתְּקִיף - "who is stronger than he."
2. 8:1 כְּהַחֲכָם - "who is like the wise man?"
3. 10:3 כְּשֶׁהַסּוֹכֵל - "he walks in the way like the fool."

What is one to do with this phenomenon? Grammarians usually have recognized that exceptions to the above rule occur almost exclusively in the later books.³² Dahood has taken exception to this and has remarked that at least five examples of the non-syncopation of the article have been noted in the Neo-Punic inscriptions, approximately three centuries before Christ.³³ These are:

1. לְהַחֲיִים - "For the living: - Cooke, op. cit., p.147
2. לְהַרְעֵת - "For the good pleasure" Ibid., p.148
3. לְהַרְעֵת - "For the good pleasure" Ibid., p.158
4. לְהַמִּינֹכַד - "For the prince" - Donner and Rollig, KAI, op. cit.,
Vol. II p.127 no.120.2
5. בְּהַשָּׁנָה - "In the year" - Ibid., Vol. I, p.25, no. 130.3

³²Barton, op. cit., pp.52-53; Gesenius op. cit., p.112, (35n); Jouon, op. cit.; p.85, par. 35e - "les exemples se trouvent surtout dans les livres postérieurs." and H. Bauer and P. Leander, Historische Grammatik Der Hebraischen Sprache (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1962), p.227, par. 25x - "Seltener sind die älteren Formen wieder hergestellt worden....Diese Neubildungen kommen hauptsächlich in den jüngeren Büchern vor."

³³Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.46 and Friedrich, op. cit., p.50, par. 119 from whom Dahood presumably took his lead.

All the occurrences of two of the above shall be examined -
 להרעת and כהשת - through the glossary in Donner and Rollig's
Kanaanäische Und Aramäische Inschriften. The first study of - להרעת
 - included all the instances where this word occurred with a lamedh in
 the Phoenician, Punic and Neo-Punic Inscriptions. This study revealed
 the following: there are five instances of the above in the Phoenician
 inscriptions - 10:3, 7; 17:1; 33:3; 48:2.³⁴ In all of these examples
 the syncopation of the article has taken place. In the Punic inscrip-
 tions eleven examples were found - 70:1; 78.2; 79.1; 81.1; 83.1; 85.1;
 86.1; 87.1; 88.1; 97.1; 105.1. Again, the article was syncopated in
 every example. In the Neo-Punic inscriptions this illustration was found
 only once - 172.3 - and the article had not syncopated. To explain the
 function of the article here Donner and Röllig have remarked: "Das ך
 nach der Proposition durfte zur Aenderung eines Murrelvokals (hebr. Schwa)
 gedient haben, gibt also einen nach e gefarbtten Vokal wieder oder auch
 den Artikel ohne Synkpe."³⁵ There was discovered an interesting form in
 94.1 (Punic inscription from Carthage) in which the article seems to have
 been omitted in preference of an 'aleph (X). Is this possibly another
 example of non-syncopation or is this perhaps another prothetic 'aleph?

The second investigation was a study of כהשת . In this case
 only the Neo-punic inscriptions were checked. Here were found seven

³⁴All references are to be found in Kanaanäische Und Aramäische Inschriften.

³⁵Ibid., Vol. II, p.157, number 172.3; and p.105, number 94.1.

instances of ש prefixed by ז - 118.2; 130.1, 3; 137.1; 141.3; 163.4; 173.3. In six of the seven references the article has syncopated. Only in 130.3 did syncopation not take place. In the identical inscription (130) the word for "year" occurs twice. The article is syncopated the first time but added the second time.

As was intimated above, most scholars have attributed the non-syncopation of the article to the books commonly assigned to a late period - Daniel 8:16 (להלן); Nehemiah 9:19 (להנחתם); II Chronicles 10:7 (להעם); Psalm 36:6 (בהשמים). Still, it should be pointed out that this construction occurs also in earlier portions of the Old Testament - cf. I Samuel 13:21 (ולהקרדמים); I Samuel 9:13 (כהידם); and Genesis 39:11 (כהירם). Thus, what Dahood had attested in late Hebrew and Neo-Punic shows up in Biblical documents, admittedly infrequently, at least half a millenium earlier! This has not been the first time (compare the discussion on the relative ש) that those elements thought to be indicative of lateness in the language have appeared in some of the earliest documents of the Old Testament.

Various solutions have been offered to these three examples from Qoheleth. For שהתקיא some have vocalized the ketibh given by Kittel שהתקיא as שהוא תקיא (probably on the basis of 2:22 - שהוא); others have made it שהתקיא and have pointed the article with a following dagesh. One of the possible readings suggested by Kittel is שתקיא . According to Gordis this represents a conflation of two variants עם שתקיא ממנו and עם התקיא ממנו , both of

which mean "with one mightier than he (God)."³⁶ As for 10:3 - כשהסכל
 - most of the versions read the Qerē כְּשֶׁהִסְכֵּל - as in LXX. Some have,
 however, preferred the Ketib for euphonic reasons - the he separating
 two sibilants.³⁷

In conclusion perhaps it should be said that one should treat
 with caution an attempt to identify with Qoheleth a linguistic peculiarity
 whose use has been substantiated only five times in Phoenician, Punic and
 Neo-Punic writings but whose use is observed in some of the earlier docu-
 ments of the Old Testament. Yet, in favour of Dahood, it can not be
 denied that there is an obvious parallelism here.

³⁶Gordis, op. cit., p.253; and on כְּשֶׁהִסְכֵּל in 8:1 see Hertzberg,
op. cit., p.143.

³⁷Hertzberg, op. cit., p.183 - "da es leichter erscheint, die Streichung
 als die Einsetzung des ungeschickten ךּ anzunehmen ist Ketib zu belassen,
 auch wohl aus euphonische Gründen, da so die Zischlaute voneinander
 getrennt werden."

CHAPTER VIII

CANAANITE - PHOENICIAN SYNTAX

I THE INFINITIVE ABSOLUTE

The use of the infinitive absolute in Hebrew has often been a puzzle to Biblical scholars. That it has been a very versatile grammatical element has long been known. Some have even suggested abandoning the term. The discussions on its formation and function have not been small.¹

Our interest at this point does not centre upon an elaborate investigation of the infinitive absolute. However, that which is most important to us here is its use as a finite verb in the Hebrew Bible. Here we stop to point out two syntactical functions of this infinitive in Hebrew: (1) it is used as an emphatic imperative, direct and indirect (Deuteronomy 5:19; Exodus 13:3, 20:8, inter alia), and (2) it is the apparent equivalent of other finite forms and may be used to continue the thrust of the finite verb.²

Of particular interest in Qoheleth is the use of the infinitive absolute followed by the independent personal pronoun as a substitute for the finite verb. The case in point is 4:2 אֲנִי אֶת הַמֵּתִים
- "And I praised the dead." Such a construction is found only once more in Esther 9:1. Dahood thinks he has uncovered another example of this in

¹F. R. Blake, A Resurvey of Hebrew Tenses (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1951), pp.20-24.

²A. Rubinstein, "A Finite Verb Continued by and Infinitive Absolute Biblical Hebrew," Vetus Testamentum 2:362-367, October, 1952.

Ecclesiastes 9:15. The MT reads $\text{וְגַמְלֵט הָרָא אֶת הָעִיר}$ - "And he delivered the city." The troublesome pronoun can best be explained, according to Dahood, by repointing the MT וְגַמְלֵט to וְגַמְלֵט . It does not appear that the subject (הָרָא) is emphatic but rather the verb. Therefore, as it stands, the pronoun seems to lack a syntactical purpose in the sentence but an infinitive absolute solves this problem.³

We are concerned here principally with Ecclesiastes 4:2. Some have viewed this as a shortened piel participle with the mem preformative omitted perhaps through textual error. Others (see Kittel's apparatus) have emended the form to וְשָׂכַחְתִּי - which form appears in 8:15.

Scholars have been hard pressed to account for only two occurrences of such a phenomenon in the Bible. It should be pointed out that not infrequently the infinitive absolute in lieu of the finite verb is accompanied by its subject when such a subject is a noun.⁴ Yet, only twice does the pronominal subject occur - Ecclesiastes 4:2 and Esther 9:1.

How surprised scholars were then, when not a few illustrations of the infinitive absolute with the pronominal subjects began to turn up in the El-Amarna tablets, the Phoenician inscriptions, and in the Ugaritic finds. Thus, Dahood's readiness to identify Ecclesiastes 4:2 with Phoenician syntax seems obvious.

In the royal inscriptions from Phoenicia, one is introduced to epigraphs written in the style of a monologue, the speaker being the king

³ Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.50.

⁴ Gesenius, op. cit., p.347 (113 gg).

who refers to himself in the first person singular. In speaking of his achievements the king uses one of the following sentence patterns:

qtl + subject ('nk) + object.

yqtl + subject ('nk) + object.

One does not look too long at these two examples to observe the obvious problems in number two. It seems to defy analysis. If yqtl was a finite verb, it would normally represent a third person imperfect. However, in the example the subject is the first person 'nk which would require 'qtl if an imperfect.

The approaches to this "linguistic barbarism" have in the main been two. One approach has been to identify these two forms as participles. This has been defended by Julian Obermann.⁵

Obermann contends that one is not here meeting in the yqtl 'nk pattern a new sentence pattern but a "new" morphological fact - in Phoenician the form of the causative participle was yqtl. It would then appear that the Phoenicians had inherited a causative participle of the type yqtl, which eventually came to be replaced by mqtl.⁶ Obermann, though virtually standing alone in this identification, feels his conclusion justified in light of the disagreement concerning the morphology of the causative stem in general - Hebrew hqtl, Akkadian šqtl, Arabic 'qtl,

⁵J. Obermann, "Phoenician YQTL 'NK, "Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 9:94-100, April, 1950; and "Does Amarna Bear on Karatepe?" Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 5:58-61, 1961.

⁶Ibid., pp.98-99. Incidentally, he appeals to Ecclesiastes 7:26 - ûmôšê 'anî - "and I have found," for a parallel.

Minacan sqtl.

The second approach has been to take the above as infinitives absolute with pronominal subjects. In this most scholars have concurred.⁷ In Phoenician the Hebrew ׀ has given away to a yodh. This is known as the Yif'il conjugation.⁸ That such an identification as an infinitive absolute has been missed by no less an authority than Friedrich shows the inherent difficulty with this syntactical feature. He has remarked on these forms: "Der verfasser der Inschrift hat die barbarische Sprachgewohnheit, 'nk 'ich' mit der 3 Person Sing. Mask. des Perfekts (statt mit der 1. Pers. Sing.) zu verbinden." It is true that G. R. Driver has said: "No Phoenician infinitive absolute forms, however, seem to occur in the causative theme."⁹ Against him is not only the emendations of the text he makes to fit the text into his own theory but also the strong testimony of the Phoenician Inscriptions itself. Turning to the inscription of King Azitawadd we meet by far the most interesting and most important of all extant Phoenician inscriptions. Here one meets the following forms:¹⁰

⁷R. T. O'Callaghan, "The Great Phoenician Portal Inscription from Karatepe," Orientalia, 18:184, 1949; A. M. Honeyman, "Phoenician Inscriptions from Karatepe," Le Museon, 61:50, 1948; and C. H. Gordon, "Phoenician Inscriptions from Karatepe," Jewish Quarterly Review, 39:42, July, 1948.

⁸For a study of the possible explanation between the two forms see, Harris, op. cit., p.43.

⁹G. R. Driver, "Reflections On Recent Articles," Journal of Biblical Literature, 73:130 n.24, 1954.

¹⁰The writer has taken these examples from those listed by J. Heusman, "Finite Uses of the Infinitive Absolute," Biblica, 37:271-295, 1956.

Column I

(line 3) yhw	'nk	I restored
(line 4) yrhb	'nk	I extended
(line 6) wml'	'nk...wp'l 'nk:	And I filled...and I set....
(line 9) wrtq	'nk...wytn' 'nk:	And I destroyed...and I established
(line 10) wp'l	'nk	And I made....
(line 11) wysb	'nk...wst 'nk:	And I dwelt...and I established
(line 13) wbn	'nk	And I built
(line 17) wbn	'nk	And I built
(line 18) w'n	'nk	And I humbled....
(line 20) yrđm'	'nk....ysbm 'nk:	I brought them down.... I settled them.

Other forms could be multiplied from column two of this inscription and also from the Yehimilk and the Kilamuwa Inscriptions. J. W. Wevers has also examined some of these yqtl 'nk constructions and has concluded: "From the scattered evidence cited above it can be safely concluded that the phenomenon of the infinitive absolute used as narrative tense is proto-Canaanite (if not proto-Semitic) in origin."¹¹

All of the above Phoenician and Hebrew materials have been given clarification due to the new field which the Akkadian of the Amarna letters has opened. The Amarna finds seem to offer irrefutable evidence for the infinitive absolute. This construction is elsewhere unknown in Akkadian and gives one an illustration of the tie-in between East Semitic and

¹¹J. W. Wevers, "The Infinitive Absolute in the Phoenician Inscription of Azitawadd," Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 62:317, 1950.

North-West Semitic. The evidences for those instances of the infinitive absolute in the Amarna tablets have been brought to light by W. L. Moran.¹² He has listed four examples of the infinitive absolute with a noun subject and six examples of the infinitive absolute used with a pronoun subject - altogether ten illustrations. Perhaps all of the above remarks will help to cement the relationship between Phoenician, Ugaritic and Hebrew.

Enough has been said to substantiate Dahood's contention that Qoheleth's use of the infinitive absolute as a finite verb is good North-west Semitic syntax. Yet, the phenomenon is by no means late. It is interesting to note that in Phoenician it occurs most frequently in the Azitawadd Inscription which is dated by most scholars in the eighth century and is taken as an example of early Phoenician. Then of course, the Amarna tablets go back to the latter half of the second millenium B.C. Again, there is in Qoheleth a grammatical formation found in the very early documents of the Near East.

II THE ENCLITIC MEM

A glance at some of the older Hebrew grammars will reveal that no such thing as "an enclitic mem" ever came in for discussion. The reason for this is obvious. True, it was long known to have existed in Akkadian and some of the south Semitic dialects. The evidence for it was not small in the Amarna tablets discovered in the last quarter of the past century. Yet in the words of Hummel: "Until the discoveries at Ras Shamra, the

¹²W. L. Moran, "The Use of the Canaanite Infinitive Absolute as a Finite Verb in the Amarna Letters from Byblos," Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 4:169-172, 1950; "Does Amarna Bear on Karatepe?" An Answer, Ibid., 6:76-80, 1952; and C. Brockelmann, Grundriss der Vergleichenden Grammatik (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961), p.168, par.88b.

Amarna evidence was judged entirely according to the norms of classical Akkadian; enclitic mem there was considered normal Akkadian, and any irregularities were attributed to the carelessness and ignorance of native scribes."¹³

Hummel has gone through the Old Testament and discovered, he believes, 133 illustrations of the enclitic mem. These are listed as follows with the number of occurrences of that type in parenthesis - (a) generally accepted prior to his study (31); (b) an enclitic mem in a construct chain (17); enclitic mem after nouns with pronominal suffixes (13); enclitic mem instead of intensive plurals (6); (c) other uses of enclitic mem with nouns (16); (d) enclitic mem with verbs (19); (e) enclitic mem with prepositions (4); (f) an adverbial accusative with the enclitic (1).

After examining all the instances of this construction which he could find in the Old Testament, Hummel confesses that he is unable to make any suggestions as to the meaning of enclitic mem in Hebrew. In any case, it does not seem to reflect the conjunctive force of the Akkadian - ma, a usage lacking also in the Ugaritic tablets. Hummel does remark:

Many times one might theorize that the enclitic had emphatic force or the like, but it is practically impossible to demonstrate either this or the opposite view that the enclitics were meaningless. We rather suppose, however, that the original emphatic force (if any) of the enclitics gradually diminished, until, perhaps about the time of the Exile, this now useless feature of the language was discarded.¹⁴

¹³H. D. Hummel, "Enclitic Mem in Early Northwest Semitic, Especially Hebrew," Journal of Biblical Literature, 76:90, 1957. Easily the definitive treatment of the subject, though now ten years old; an up-to-date treatment of this subject is needed; cf. also W. L. Moran, "The Hebrew Language in Its Northwest Semitic Background," The Bible And The Ancient Near East, G. E. Wright, editor (New York: Anchor Books, 1965), p.68.

¹⁴Ibid., p.106.

An analysis of those illustrations cited by Hummel reveals that the Psalms and Isaiah yield the most lucrative results. Those Biblical books usually assigned to a later date give only meagre evidence - Daniel, Job, Proverbs, Canticles and Qoheleth. In a footnote to the article by Hummel, David Noel Freedman has remarked:

Study of the distribution of enclitic mem in biblical literature suggests that after the archaic period (down to the tenth century), it was primarily a feature of Jerusalem poetic style. In association with the court and temple, the tradition persisted (in poetry) down to the time of the Exile, and beyond among those who were carried away captive, though it died out shortly thereafter. Thus after the archaic period, we find the use of enclitic mem most common in books like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Psalms.¹⁵

Dahood has drawn our attention to three examples of this enclitic mem in Qoheleth - 4:16, 10:15, 18.¹⁶ We shall turn our attention to just one of these examples 10:15 and use it as a base for discussion. The Hebrew text reads

עמל הכסילים תיגענו

"The toil of a fool wearied him."

There are at least two interesting observations to be made on this passage. First עמל, a masculine noun, is treated as a feminine noun only here, and has for its verb a third feminine imperfect. Secondly, and this is more significant, the plural noun "fools" is linked with a singular suffix on the verb, an obvious inconsistency. It appears that the transla-

¹⁵Hummel, op. cit., p.107.

¹⁶Dahood, "Qoheleth and Northwest Semitic Philology," op. cit., pp.355,356; and "Canaanite Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.194.

tion "the toil of fools wearies him" is ruled out in light of the fact that the context uses the singular throughout. Therefore, it seems that it should be rendered "the toil of a fool (himself) wearies (himself)."

The approaches in solving the problem have not been few. Gordis maintains that the singular suffix on the verb is distributive, since both the singular suffix and the plural in הַכֹּסֵלִים are here used generically - cf. Deuteronomy 21:10, 28:48; Hosea 4:8, Zechariah 14:12, Psalm 5:10. Accordingly, he translates the passage "the efforts of the fool exhaust him."¹⁷ Some have emended the verb to a masculine imperfect and read the singular $\text{עַמַּל הַכֹּסֵל מִתִּי יִגְוַנֶנָּה}$. The verse then becomes a question - "When will the fool's toil tire him?" This is the rendering accepted by Bentzen and Hertzberg.¹⁸

Dahood is dissatisfied by such unnecessary changes in the Hebrew text. Therefore, he believes it preferable to explain the apparent plural noun as the singular noun לֹדֵד followed by the enclitic mem. This then would bring agreement with a singular suffix in the verb and with the singular verb in the second half of the verse - "who does not know the way to the city."

It does seem fairly obvious that the enclitic mem was known not only in East Semitic Akkadian but also in Northwest Semitic Hebrew and Ugaritic. But what about Phoenician? Is there clear testimony to the construction here? Indeed, the witness to it given by Hummel is sparse.

¹⁷Gordis, op. cit., p.184, 314.

¹⁸Hertzberg, op. cit., p.193, "(Des) Toren Muhen, (wann) wird (es) ihm über sein?"

He cites only one example אֵלִים נֶרְגַל "the god, Nergal" - corresponding to Ugaritic ilm.¹⁹ G. R. Driver, reviewing Dahood's Proverbs And Northwest Semitic Philology has said: "Neither the Phoenician nor the Aramaic language, which both have demonstrable elements with the Ugaritic dialect, has preserved any trace of such an enclitic termination."²⁰ Here he will get some argument from others.

Cyrus Gordon, was the first to identify an enclitic mem in Phoenician. It is to be found in Azitawadd's Inscription line 20. The text reads:

'nk 'ztwd 'ntnm yrđm 'nk yšbm 'nk

"I, Azitawadd, subjugated them, bringing (them) down (and) settling (them).

Gordon has remarked: "YRDM and YSBM are causative adverbial infinitives. The -M is probably not the suffix "them" (which in this text is -NM) but rather the Phoenician reflex of Accadian -umma attached to the adverbial infinitive which occurs also in Ugaritic."²¹

There was discovered in the summer of 1964 an eleven line Punic inscription dating to the late sixth century B.C. at ancient Etruscan Pyrgi. The last sentence of this inscription reads

וְשָׁנָה לְמֵאשָׁ אֵלִים בְּכַת־יְיָ שָׁנָה כִּם הַכִּכְבִּים אֵל

"And may the years of the statue of the deity in her temple be years like the stars of "El."

¹⁹Hummel, op. cit., p.91.

²⁰G. R. Driver, Review of Dahood's "Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology", Journal of Semitic Studies, 10:116, Spring, 1965.

²¹C. H. Gordon, "Azitawadd's Phoenician Inscription," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 8:114, April, 1949.

The problem here, of course, is the phrase כַּכּ הַכּכּבּוֹת אֵל.

The translation "like the stars of El" was first offered by Dahood.²² He feels this rendering is supported by Isaiah 14:13.

ממעל לכוכבי-אל ארזים כסא

"Above the stars of El I shall raise my throne."

This Isaian passage is generally thought to be under heavy Canaanite poetic influence. Dahood appeals to UT 76:I:4-5 and the parallelism between bn il "the sons of El" and phr kkbm "the assembly of the stars." This special relationship between El and the stars is seen in Job 38:7 and Psalm 139:17, 18.

What then looks like the absolute plural hkkbm Dahood explains as a construct plural with enclitic mem. He states: "The interposition of an enclitic mem between the regens and the genitive of a construct change is of frequent occurrence in Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry and prose."²³ Appeal is then made to the only instance of the definite article prefixed to a construct chain - Numbers 21:14. MT has w^e'et-hann^ehālîm 'Arnôn, "the torrent beds of the Arnon." This appears in the consonantal text as hnhlym 'arnwn. With the enclitic it appears as hannah^a lê-m 'Arnôn.

For final confirmation Dahood points to the Piraeus Phoenician Inscription - rb khnm 'lm nrgl "chief of the priests of the god Nergal."

²²M. Dahood, "Punic hkkbm 'l and Isaiah 14, 13," Orientalia, 34:170-172, 1965; and J. A. Fitzmeyer, "The Phoenician Inscription from Pyrgi," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 86:295, July-September, 1966.

²³Ibid., p.171.

²⁴Ibid., p.172; and Hummel, op. cit., p.97.

Here Dahood sees two enclitic mems in a single construct chain. He chides Donner and Rollig for remarking: "Unsemitische and fehlerhafte Konstruktion (stat. abs. statt stat. cstr.), da die Verfasser der Inschrift vielleicht nur noch Griechisch als Muttersprache gebrauchten."²⁵ However, on this inscription one might have to reckon ultimately with G. A. Cooke's observation that $\square \square \square \square \square \square$ equals "the Greek ἀρχιερεύς, a title almost equivalent to a proper name, and therefore, apparently $\square \square \square \square \square \square$ is not in the constr. st. before the following genitive. The usage may be due partly to carelessness and partly to the unconscious recollection of the title ἀρχιερεύς in current Greek speech."²⁶ This is not entirely convincing however. In favour of Dahood, it should be pointed out that

$\square \square \square \square \square \square$ is not in the construct state morphologically, though syntactically it is so related to the following genitive. It does appear that one meets here a good enclitic mem in this Phoenician inscription.

Is it not interesting to note that the form of the expression appealed to in Isaiah 14:13 above does not appear with enclitic mem!

Taking everything into consideration one should realize that the enclitic mem is probably not a live feature in either Punic or Phoenician. What examples there may be of this phenomenon in Phoenician are rare, and by no means unambiguous. Strange it is that the enclitic shows up so frequently in Hebrew and Ugaritic but is virtually non-existent in its neighbouring dialect.

²⁵ Donner and Röllig, KAI, op. cit., p.72, num.59.2.

²⁶ Cooke, op. cit., p.101.

III THE LAMEDH OF REINFORCEMENT

It is now commonly recognized that the simple translation of the preposition ל "to" just does not fit in the Hebrew and non-Hebraic documents of the Ancient Near East. One of the uses for this preposition is that of reinforcement and emphasis. By some this has been called the asseverative ל. Its employment has been discovered in some of the Amorite personal names - Sumi-la- ammu, Ammi-la- addu.²⁷

This lamedh now clears up some otherwise confusing passages in the Old Testament.²⁸ Thus, Psalm 89:19 which reads

כִּי לַיהוָה מִגִּנּוּן וּלְקֹדֶשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִלְכֵנוּ

is to be translated - "For truly is Yahweh our shield, truly the Holy One of Israel our King." It may also be used with vocatives - Psalm 68:34 - לִרְכָב - "O Rider."

Dahood has advanced three illustrations of this particle in Qoheleth - 9:4; 10:3; 3:17.²⁹

That which has gained widest acceptance is his interpretation placed upon 9:4. As a matter of fact he was not the first to suggest this. The latter half of the text reads:

כִּי לְכֹלֵב חַי הוּא טוֹב מִן הָאֲרִיָּה הַמֵּת

"For a living dog is better than a dead lion."

Years ago Gesenius suggested that sometimes "a substantive introduced by ל 'in respect to' - serves the same purpose as the casus pendens

²⁷Moran, "The Hebrew Language," op. cit., p.68.

²⁸Probably the best study is F. Notscher, "Zum emphatischen Lamed," Vetus Testamentum, 3:372-380, October 1953.

²⁹Dahood, "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence," op. cit., pp.192, 193.

beginning the sentence."³⁰ Regarding 9:4 Gesenius refers to the idea of P. Haupt (John Hopkins University Circulars, xiii. no.114; Baltimore, 1894) who states that here the ל is not the preposition, but an emphasizing particle answering to the Arabic la, "surely," and Assyrian lû.

Thus, our translation of the above might be phrased: "Surely a live dog is better...." "or with regard to a live dog, he is better...." In any case, it is obvious that we do not have the simple preposition. Notscher has translated this passage in agreement with Dahood - "Denn gewiss, ein lebender Hund ist besser als ein toter Lowe."³¹

The second passage cited by Dahood is 10:3 וְאָמַר לְכָל סָכַל הָרָא "And he said to everyone: he is a fool."

It will be seen that the function one gives to the lamedh will depend upon the interpretation placed on the verse. To whom does the וְאָמַר refer -- to the speaker himself or to his audience? Is this the picture of a fool priding himself that he is such, and giving vent to his evaluation of himself? Or can we agree with Dahood who refers to the comments of Podochard and Levy that the perversity of the fool manifests itself in this, that while esteeming himself to be wise, he thinks that all others without exception are fools. Barton has accepted this view.³² Thus he translates: "Also when a fool walks in the way his heart is lacking and he says of everyone, he is a fool." Although Barton takes לְכָל

³⁰Gesenius, op. cit., p.458 (143e).

³¹Nötscher, op. cit., p.379.

³²Barton, op. cit., p.161. Gordis accepts the first explanation - "He announces to all that he himself is a fool." op. cit., p.308.

as "concerning everyone," Dahood believes the analysis of ל as the lamedh of reinforcement gives more point and vigor to the aphorism - "he says without exception to others they are fools." It does seem there is little to choose between the views of Dahood and Barton. Either one communicates adequately the sentiments of this proverb. From the Hebrew itself it is impossible to get a final interpretation of this verse as is witnessed by the many translations not only of contemporary commentators, but also by the ancient manuscripts.

IV CONJUNCTIONS

Our interest in this section concerns the translation of the conjunction למה - normally "why." It occurs in three passages

5:5 אל-תתן...למה יקצף האלהים....

Let not your mouth lead you into sin
And do not say before the messenger it was a mistake.
Why should God be angry at your voice....RSV.

7:17 אל-תרשע...למה תמות....

Be not wicked overmuch,
neither be a fool;
why should you die before your time? RSV

7:16 אל תרשע...למה תשומם

Be not righteous overmuch,
and do not make yourself otherwise;
why should you destroy yourself? RSV

Dahood has registered his protest against this "staccato" translation which, he feels, has risen from a failure to understand the use of the conjunction ל in Phoenician -- especially those instances in which

it introduces a negative clause of purpose and is translated "lest."³³

It is indeed true that this conjunction in Phoenician may take on the meaning "lest." This was recognized also in the Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon.³⁴ Yet, an examination of the Phoenician Inscriptions reveals only one instance where this takes place. It is to be found in the Eshmunazor Inscription of the fifth-fourth century B.C. - line 21. Cooke has translated this: "Nor uncover me, nor carry me from this resting-place, nor take away the coffin of my resting-place, lest these holy gods...."³⁵ It does seem precarious to suggest that one example in Phoenician (though others may exist) may explain numerous examples in the Hebrew Bible - though the parallel is obvious.

It is to be noted that the ancient versions (for example, the Septuagint) correctly interpreted these passages. They translated the in at least one of several ways.

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Genesis 27:45; Exodus 32:12;
Psalm 79:10; 115:2; Ecclesiastes 7:16 | למַה = μήποτε |
| 2. Jeremiah 40:15 | למַה = μη |
| 3. Genesis 47:19; II Samuel 2:22;
Ecclesiastes 5:5, 7:17; II Chronicles 25:16 | למַה = ἵνα μη |
| 4. Joel 2:17 | למַה = ὅπως μη |

³³Dahood, "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.195. Jouön apparently recognized this use in the Old Testament but did not apply it to 5:5 - "pourquoi Dieu devra-t-il s'irriter?" - op. cit., p.497, par.161h; p.305, par. 113m.

³⁴Friedrich, op. cit., p.119, par. 258b. - " למַה...bedeutet eigentlich 'warum?', geht dann aber wie hebr. למַה über die warnende Frage in die Bedeutung der Konjunktion 'damit mich' über," and BDB 554b.

³⁵Cooke, op. cit., p.32, 39; and Donner-Röllig KAI Vol. II, op. cit., p.23.

In these thirteen examples the Hebrew conjunction is to be translated "lest." Thus, this phenomenon is not limited to Qoheleth. It is interesting to note, however, that the three examples from Qoheleth are taken by the Septuagint in the sense of "lest" and not "why." On the whole it seems to have been used, though infrequently, as a synonym for the classical

לֹא. In all fairness to Dahood it should be pointed out that of the thirteen examples given above only one is identical in form with those of Qoheleth, i.e., a prohibitive command or negative imperative. This parallel is Joel 2:17 - "Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and make not (לֹא-לְתַתֵּן) thy heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations - why (lest - לֹא-לְמַעַן) should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

V THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

There is common agreement among scholars that the Hebrew of Qoheleth violates the normal use of the definite article in the Old Testament. No less than two dozen examples of such departure have been noticed. Such a high rate indeed deserves the attention of all. And such attention it has received. The use or non-use of the article is one of the two cardinal arguments (the other being vocabulary) advanced by those accepting a Hebrew translation from an Aramaic original. Again, such diversity has been identified with the same anomaly in the Mishna.

It is not strange, therefore, that Dahood should come up with a third alternative -- that such is best explained by an equally obtuse

definite article in Phoenician.³⁶ Examining only the most serious deviations from normal Hebrew syntax, Dahood sees at least three clearly broken patterns of Hebrew elsewhere. In the first place, Hebrew syntax demands the use of the definite article with common nouns following the accusative particle את.

3:15 והאלהים יבקש את נדרף

"And God seeks what has been driven away."

4:4 וראיתי אני את-כל עמל ואת כל כשרון

"And I saw all the toil and all the skill...."

7:7 ויאכזר את-לב מתנה

"And a bribe corrupts the mind."

8:9 את-כל זה ראיתי

"All this I saw."

12:14 את-כל-מעשה... יבא

"For God will bring every deed into judgment."

Dahood reasons that the natural explanation for this was that the author was influenced by his habitual use of a dialect which had no fixed rule concerning the definite article and its employment - Phoenician. There has been a lot of question on this in Phoenician. It is true that Harris says: "In the use of the article, Phoenician goes its own way," and that Friedrich remarks: "Im Phönizischen scheint keine Regel über Setzung oder Nichtsetzung des Artikels beim Substantiv erkennbar."³⁷

³⁶Dahood, "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence," op. cit., pp.197-201.

³⁷Harris, op. cit., p.66; and Friedrich, op. cit., p.139.

But the latter also adds: "Die Masse der phönizischen und punischen Inschriften verwendet den Artikel in derselben Weise wie das Hebräische und Moabitische."³⁸ A glance at some of the Phoenician Inscriptions does reveal that the article is both inserted and omitted. In particular, this phenomenon prevails in the Eshmunazor Inscription. Six times in this twenty-two line inscription is the particle followed by a noun lacking the article. Two of these are proper names and thus the article is omitted as in Hebrew (Ges. par. 125d.)

1. line 4 אל יפתח אית משכב ז
 "Do not open this resting-place."
2. line 5 and 7 ואל ישא אית חלת משכבי
 "Do not take away the coffin of my resting-place."
3. line 10 and 11 ...ישא אית חלת ז ואית זרע...
 "Who shall take away this coffin and the seed of that prince?"

It should be noticed, however, that of the five examples cited by Dahood from Qoheleth, three of them - 4:4; 8:9; 12:4 - involve the use of כּל. In the light of this it is well to remember that כּל does appear in Hebrew before a noun in the accusative lacking the definite article. Here one may point out Gesenius' remark: "As accusatives determined in other ways, we have in the first place to consider the collectives introduced by כּל entirety, without a following article or determinative genitive, inasmuch as the meaning of כּל includes a determinative sense...."³⁹ Compare

³⁸Friedrich, op. cit., p.137.

³⁹Gesenius, op. cit., p.363 (117c).

the following:

1. Genesis 1:21 וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים...אֵת כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ...וְאֵת כָּל-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
 "And God created...every living creature...and every winged bird."
2. Genesis 1:30 ...אֵת-כָּל-יֶרֶק עֹשֶׂה...
 "Every green plant for food I have given."
3. Genesis 8:21 אֵת-כָּל-חַי
 "Every living creature"
4. Deuteronomy 2:34 וַנִּלְכְּדָה אֵת-כָּל-עָרָיו
 "And we captured all his cities"
5. II Kings 25:9 וְאֵת-כָּל-בַּיִת גָּדוֹל שָׂרַף
 "And every great house he burned down."

More examples could be added to these, but enough indication, it would seem, has been given to substantiate Gesenius' view that כל in itself acts as a determinative. Thus there is here a valid explanation for the missing definite article. This then leaves two examples from Qoheleth - 3:15 - אֵת נִרְדָּף ; and 7:7 - אֵת-לֵב. It is interesting to note that in two of the examples given above one meets this identical phenomenon.

Genesis 8:1 וַיִּרְחַח יְהוָה אֵת-רִיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ
 "And Yahweh smelled the pleasing odour."

II Kings 25:9 וַיִּשְׂרַף אֵת-בַּיִת יְהוָה
 "And he burned the house of Yahweh."

Many more examples of this could be brought forward from the Old Testament.⁴⁰ Perhaps enough has been said to observe that established

⁴⁰Gordis has done a study of the definite article in Qoheleth in his survey, "The Original Language of Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly Review, 37:81-83, 1946. Unfortunately, this article was not available to the writer.

rules for use of the article in Hebrew by no means stand up under close scrutiny.

A second rule for the article which Dahood feels the Hebrew of Qoheleth often violates is this -- the adjective which modifies a substantive which is determined either by the article, a pronominal suffix, or because it is a proper noun, must also take the article. In two instances this rule is not followed by Qoheleth

6:8 מה-לעני יודע

"What is there to the knowing poor man?"

10:6 במרומים רבים

"in many high places."

It is plain from the above that we do have two clear illustrations of an adjective lacking an expected definite article. It is somewhat amusing to see the attempts that have been made to reconcile 6:8 with normally accepted rules of Hebrew syntax.⁴¹ Concerning 10:6 a number of possibilities exist. Barton takes רבים as an appositive to מרומים "high positions - many of them."⁴² Gordis believes there is Biblical warrant for these variations and he cites Jeremiah 2:21 - הגפן נכריה - "the wild vine," and Ezekiel 39:27 where, interestingly, רבים again is met without the article - הגוים רבים - "the many nations."⁴³ Perhaps an exhaustive search of the Old Testament would reveal more

⁴¹Gordis, op. cit., pp.250, 251 lists some of them.

⁴²Barton, op. cit., p.176.

⁴³Gordis, op. cit., p.310.

examples of this. Dahood himself only points to one example (although there may be more) from the Phoenician Inscriptions. This is to be found in the Yehimilk Inscription line 4 and 5 אל גבל קדשם
 -"the holy gods of GBL (Byblos.)"⁴⁴ Dahood here finds a parallel for fourth or third century Qoheleth in tenth century Phoenician.

It is well known that in Phoenician the demonstrative usually lacks the article. In this it differs from Hebrew. Hebrew הרבך הזה
 = Phoenician הרבך זה . We meet here an interesting agreement between Phoenician and Moabite (הבמת זאת - "this high place") against Biblical Hebrew.

Dahood's third observation is that in Qoheleth where nouns occur in a series one may have the article and the other not.

2:8 וסגלת מלכים והמדינות

"I gathered...treasure of King's and provinces."

7:7 כי העשק יהולל חכם

"Oppression makes the wise man foolish."

7:25 רשע כסל והסכלות הוללות

"the wickedness of folly and the foolishness of madness."

10:20 יוליך את הקול...יגיד דבר

"will carry your voice...will tell the matter."

Other examples of this could be cited but the above should be enough. Those who have held to the Aramaic theory would ascribe these diversities to the Hebrew translator who confused the absolute and emphatic

⁴⁴Friedrich, *op. cit.*, p.139; and W. F. Albright, "The Phoenician Inscriptions," *op. cit.*, p.156.

states of nouns. Dahood has sought to buttress his argument by an appeal to Phoenician where identical inconsistency apparently exists.

It does seem obvious that the Hebrew of Qoheleth does depart at times from the normal use of the article in the Old Testament. A study of some other Biblical books (perhaps of equal length) would reveal whether or not the article receives the same treatment elsewhere. Perhaps one is confronted here by date of which the generally accepted explanation of usage might have to be altered or at least re-evaluated if one had further evidence. Unfortunately, no recent exhaustive study of the definite article in Biblical Hebrew is available - (if so, the writer is unfamiliar with it).

CHAPTER IX

CANAANITE-PHOENICIAN VOCABULARY

It seems only logical that a work so replete with Northwest Semitic grammar would include also a matching vocabulary of that geographical region. Dahood feels this to be the strongest point for his argument. Consequently, he easily devotes more attention to this aspect than to all the others combined. Dahood is a Ugaritologist and will, of course, make every attempt to tie Hebrew and Ugaritic together.

No one can deny that textual and lexical problems in the Old Testament, hitherto unclarified, have now received fresh insight from Ras Shamra. And that it has assumed its place as a neighbour in the Semitic family is not to be denied. The problem, however, is one of evaluation. Just how far does Ugaritic fulfil the role of clarifying the Biblical text. On this Biblical scholars are not agreed. Men like Dahood and Albright feel it is nothing less than revolutionary. (They speak of lexical and not philosophical or theological concerns). Thus these men are prepared to say that all serious Biblical study will have to be revised in the light of these discoveries.

On the other hand men like G. R. Driver, though accepting its obvious assistance for Biblical studies, have been more reticent and cautious.

The Pan-Babylonian theories of Haupt and his contemporaries have long passed away, half-forgotten and unlamented, thanks to their extravagances; and the pan-Ugaritism of the present age will go the same way. That Accadian and Arabic may solve many problems in the Old Testament is natural; they are vast languages, which have

lasted for immense periods of time and been spread over immense tracts of country, nearly surrounding Palestine. Contrariwise Ugaritic was a local dialect, confined to a single centre, which lasted scarcely a century and died out many centuries before the full development of the Hebrew language; and it was apparently a mixed dialect, the result of unknown historical circumstances. No one denies that it can throw light here and there on Hebrew problems; but those who invoke it must remember that it is as likely to be illuminated by Hebrew as Hebrew by it. It must be used with logical discretion combined with a proper feeling for Hebrew idiom and usage, not as a panacea for every idiomatic peculiarity or palaeographical slip in the biblical text. Finally, he who uses it must understand not only the Ugaritic text which he is using but also the Hebrew text which he is trying to interpret; and he must be sure that the latter requires a fresh interpretation before having recourse to the latter and using it wholesale with little regard to the meaning that it may be thought to impose on the passage.¹

Thus two alternative approaches to the lexical relationship between Ugaritic and Hebrew are offered. The plan in this chapter then shall be to select and treat some of the more prominent words or phrases to which Dahood calls attention. Obviously it is impossible here to treat every word which Dahood discusses. Space does not allow this. Again, on many of these proposed solutions Dahood himself realizes that the conclusion, often put forward for lack of a better one, is at best tentative. At least everybody is ready to admit some hesitations in this area and scholars usually are not slow to admit that still they are canvassing terra incognita.

I תחת השמש "UNDER THE SUN"

This pivotal phrase of Qoheleth occurs no less than 29 times within

¹G. R. Driver, review of Dahood's "Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology," Journal of Semitic Studies, 10:116-117, Spring, 1965.

the space of twelve chapters. It is no accident, however, that it does appear with such a rate of frequency. More than any other phrase of the book it reveals the perspective of the author. It has received much attention from a lexical as well as a theological viewpoint. It occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament. Why then so often here?

Various solutions have been suggested. Some clarification did come when the expression turned up in two Phoenician Inscriptions - Eshmunazor and Tabnit - both usually dated in the fourth or third century B.C. H. L. Ginsberg commenting on this had said: "As the only other Semitic document in which it occurs is the certainly Ptolemaic Book of Ecclesiastes, the conclusion is inescapable that not only in the latter, but in our inscriptions as well, it is a translation - loan of ὁφ ἡλίω. The Phoenicians may have borrowed it as early as 360 B.C. under Straton, Hellenophile king of Tyre, or else shortly after the conquest of Alexander."² From this, however, it may still be stated that the expression came into Qoheleth through Phoenician channels.

Against the identification of Ginsberg it may also be argued that the expression occurs apparently in an eighth century Aramaic Inscription. This has been argued by Fitzmeyer in his discussion of the Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire.³ On Face C, line 5 of this inscription the word sms is

²H. L. Ginsberg, review of Harris "Grammar of the Phoenician Language," Journal of Biblical Literature, 56:142, June, 1937.

³J. A. Fitzmeyer, "The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire I and II," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 81:207, August-September, 1961. I am indebted for this reference to B. Peckham, "The Development Of The Late Phoenician Scripts" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964), p.80.

preceded by a lacuna which Fitzmeyer prefers to fill in by tht. Thus he reads, "may they do good (beneath) the sun." If such a suggestion is correct (although no confirmation is possible), one may have to quit using this expression for purposes of late dating. In this case the expression would antedate that of the Phoenician Inscriptions by at least three centuries. Incidentally, Fitzmeyer points out that Dupont-Sommer in his important work, Les Inscriptions Araméenes de Sfiré also suggests the possibility of tht.

Of course Dahood has used this expression to augment his argument for a Canaanite substratum in Qoheleth. Note the two occurrences of the expression in the Phoenician inscriptions.

1. Tabnith, line 7 and 8

אל י (כ)ן ל (ך) זרע בחים תחת שמש

"May there not be to you seed among the living under the sun."

2. Eshmunazor, line 12

תתאר בחים תחת שמש

"May they not have comeliness among the living under the sun."

The conclusion from this seems obvious. The writer of Qoheleth "adopted" this passage from his Phoenician milieu. Yet, following the same line of argument, could one not come to just the opposite conclusion? Since it occurs 29 times in Qoheleth and only twice in Phoenician, could one not legitimately argue for a Hebrew substratum for the Phoenician Inscription?

All this discussion has been intensified by the discovery of

"under the sun" in Elamite.⁴ Here then the expression is met in the east. Perhaps this lends credence to Gordon's view that Qoheleth reflects an eastern rather than a western outlook.

II עָלַי "ETERNITY"

The interpretations and translations placed on this word have not been few. Barton has translated it "ignorance."⁵ Gordis makes it "the love of the world."⁶ This comes very close to the marginal reading in ASV - "the world," a meaning the word may assume. R. B. Y. Scott has translated it "enigma."⁷ Dahood's own rendition of it comes very close to these - "darkness."⁸ Evidently these men have taken this word as a derivative of the common Hebrew verb עָלַי - "conceal." It is interesting to note that this is the only time the word is translated with this meaning even though it occurs several more times in Qoheleth. As a matter of fact Dahood even states that this meaning for עָלַי occurs no where else in the Old Testament. Frankly, this writer feels "hard-pressed" even to admit this one occurrence. Therefore, he would like to register his

⁴J. Friedrich, "Altpersisches und Elamisches," Orientalia, 18:28-29, 1949; C. H. Gordon, "North Israelite Influence," op. cit., p.87; and A. Rainey, op. cit., p.98.

⁵Barton, op. cit., p.98.

⁶Gordis, op. cit., p.146.

⁷Scott, op. cit., p.221 - who draws attention to the Babylonian Theodicy, line 256: "The mind of the god, like the center of the heavens, is remote...his knowledge is difficult."

⁸Dahood, "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.206.

opinion that the traditional translation of the word - "eternity" - in agreement with the Septuagint (αἰῶνια) seems the most acceptable.⁹

The arguments advanced against the translation "eternity" are usually two. First, the rendition, "he has put eternity into their hearts so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning unto the end," it is argued, does not make sense. The thrust of this argument is difficult to see. Man is not merely a creature of time, for there is within him that which transcends time. Man seeks to stand back from the time-process and to discern the plan and pattern of the whole, but he is not able. Thus there is a tension in the life of man between the Today and the Forever, a tension which cannot be completely resolved.¹⁰

Secondly, Dahood remarks that the Ugaritic verb ḡlm means "to grow dark," "to cover over." This is found once in the KRT text.

1. line 19 mḡdtt. ḡlm ym - "at six (their) day was darkened...."
2. 125.50 () K. mḡyh . wḡlm - "the lad attracts his sister."

Against this identification two objections may be brought. First, there is already a noun derived from עלם - תעלמה which means "a hidden thing." When the verb means "be concealed," a passive form is required.¹¹ Secondly, the Ugaritic form ḡlm cited by Dahood is accepted

⁹For a detailed discussion of this word see the discussion by O. S. Rankin, The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 5 op. cit., pp.46-49.

¹⁰G. S. Hendry, op. cit., p.541.

¹¹Rainey, op. cit., p.155, n.78.

by most not as a verb but as a common Ugaritic noun "lad."¹²

III 𐤊𐤍𐤋 "PRIEST"

We are all familiar with the usual translation of this word - "messenger," or "envoy." It does then strike one as strange that the writer of Qoheleth would use it in the rare sense of "priest". The only other example for this is found in Malachi 2:7 - "For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger (𐤊𐤍𐤋) of the Lord of hosts." The passage in Qoheleth is 5:5 (6) - "Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger (𐤊𐤍𐤋) that it was a mistake...." This has been translated by the Septuagint as 𐤀𐤏𐤃𐤍, but this does not necessarily imply it as the original reading. Gordis has remarked that the, "'messenger of God' is precisely the term for the Temple emissary, coming to collect the unpaid pledges.... The term is applied to priests and prophets (Haggai 1:13; Malachi 3:1). Qoheleth may be using the term with a sarcastic overtone."¹³

Dahood appeals to the Phoenician Ma'asub Inscription, line two and

¹²Gordon translates the former - "a sixth were youth (victims) of the sea." Ugaritic Literature, p.67; Albright - "a sixth, the child of YAM" - "New Canaanite Historical and Mythological Data," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 63:28, October, 1936; and Rainey "lads of a day," i.e. they died prematurely on the day of birth, loc. cit.; as against Dahood and Gray, The Krt Text In The Literature of Ras Shamra (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), p.28. Compare also Gordon's treatment of this word in his Ugaritic Textbook (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), p.464, no. 1969.

¹³Gordis, op. cit., p.239; and BDB 521b.

three in which the מְשִׁיבִים appears in a sacred procession as some kind of religious functionary.¹⁴ Thus, it is suggested that מְשִׁיבִים be understood as the "messenger" sent out by the high priest from Jerusalem to the out-lying Jewish communities to oversee the fulfillment of vows.

IV אֲבִיָּוִן "POOR"

This word is found only four times in the Bible - all in Qoheleth - 4:13; 9:15, 15, 16. Formerly it was treated as an Aramaic loan word. Dahood refers to Harris' glossary in which it is listed as a Phoenician proper name.¹⁵ However, it is far more prominent as the designation of a distinct social class in Akkadian. Apparently it is a very popular word borrowed by Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic, Ethiopic and even Italian and French.¹⁶ "The functional force of muškênum is that of the 'state's dependant' who assumed certain onerous obligations and restrictions in return for fief - holdings.... The position of 'subject' in relation to 'master' gave the word its derived sense of underprivileged, pitiable...while the person designated as the muškênum may have deserved sympathy, the designation itself enjoyed an unusually rich and sustained career."¹⁷

Rainey has placed emphasis on this word in his argument for an eastern origin for Qoheleth. It reflects both the bureaucratic way of

¹⁴Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.207. In this he is joined by Rainey, op. cit., p.148; and Hertzberg, op. cit., p.120.

¹⁵Harris, op. cit., p.120.

¹⁶Speiser, "The Muškênum," Orientalia, op. cit., p.19.

¹⁷Ibid., pp.27-28.

life and the political structure of feudalism under the Persians. Evidently, Qoheleth wrote in this milieu.¹⁸

V תְּלִימָה "POSSESSION, PROPERTY"

This word occurs only once in Qoheleth - 2:8 - "the treasure (תְּלִימָה) of kings and provinces." The meaning "treasure" is found again only in I Chronicles 29:3. In both of these passages it applies to the treasure of rich men and kings. In other parts of the Old Testament the word assumes a different meaning - "valued property, peculiar treasure." In Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:18 the term is used exclusively of the people of Israel. From this we get our familiar expression of the King James Version - "peculiar people."

Dahood draws attention to the use of the word in Ugaritic.¹⁹ The reference is Text 2060:7, 12. In both of these instances the meaning is "his treasure." This recently deciphered text may be found in the supplement of Gordon's Ugaritic Textbook. Yet it should be pointed out that the word occurs also in Akkadian in a Mesopotamian context.¹⁹ In this dialect the word sugullu is usually a herd of cattle or horses. The Akkadian verb sikiltum yields the meaning "to accumulate savings." The primary connotation of the noun is something like "private purse."²¹ From

¹⁸ Rainey, op. cit., p.151.

¹⁹ Dahood, "The Phoenician Background," op. cit., p.267; and Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook p.448 no.1735.

²⁰ Rainey, op. cit., p.150 n.28.

²¹ E. A. Speiser, "Nuzi Marginalia," Orientalia, 25:1, 1956.

it develops the secondary sense of "cherished possession, treasure." However, in this identification some problems exist. In Nuzi sikiltum and segullā apply to persons of inferior legal status (women, bondsmen, minors). In Biblical and Akkadian usage it applied to treasures of rich men and kings. Moreover, one is struck by those Biblical passages where Israel is said to be segullā chosen by God from among all the nations. In Akkadian, however, the word often denotes "embezzled property."²² What one meets here then is a good illustration of how a neutral root picks up opposite connotations in different languages. There are other examples of this. Compare, for example, וָיָן which in Biblical Hebrew means "to have a sense of enjoyment." In Aramaic and Syriac it comes to mean "have a sense of pain." Incidentally, the word has never been discovered in Phoenician.

VI קָוַן "SKILL, SUCCESS"

This word occurs three times in Qoheleth. Twice it has the meaning of "skill, success" (2:21 - "in wisdom, in knowledge, in skill," and 4:4 - "all skill of work" = skillful work). Once it occurs with the meaning "success, profit" (5:10 - "and what profit have the owners of it?"). Twice it occurs in verb form: 11:6 - "you do not know whether this shall succeed;" 10:10 - "an advantage for giving success is wisdom." Dahood points out that the word is not an Aramaism, but rather is found frequently in Ugaritic in the form ktr.²³ Gordis remarks that "the root occurs also

²² M. Held, "An Old Babylonian Dialogue," Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 15:11, 1961.

²³ Dahood, "Canaanite - Phoenician Influence," op. cit., p.206; Gordon, Ugaritic Textbook pp.424-425, no. 1335; and For Hebrew usage BDB 507a, 506b.

in Esther 8:5 and in Psalm 68:7 - which has mythological affinities with the Ugaritic god Kothar."²⁴ Harris also lists four personal names from Phoenicia in which the root occurs.²⁵

It is surprising that no one, at least to the writer's knowledge, has ever attempted to identify "skill" with an Akkadian cognate. There is a good Akkadian verb kešēru which has several meanings. Its basic meaning is "to renovate." However, one of the established meanings is "succeed" from which the noun "success" is derived - kašartu.²⁶

VII שָׂדֵה וְשָׂדֵהוּ - "CONCUBINE"

This word, occurring only here in the Old Testament, has not been easy to identify. The majority of versions admit the impossibility of exact identification. Most of them, however, usually render the word by "concubines." It is interesting to note the grammatical formation here. The singular of a word is followed by its plural or the masculine is followed by the feminine of the same word. This is found elsewhere in Hebrew. Compare Gesenius' remark that "the juxtaposition of the masculine and feminine form from the same stem serves sometimes to express entirety."²⁷

As has been said, great diversity prevails as to the meaning of these words. The Septuagint has translated them: "cupbearers - male and

²⁴Gordis, op. cit., p.214.

²⁵Harris, op. cit., p.113.

²⁶L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), p.459; and W. Von Soden, Akkadisches Handwörterbuch Vol. 5 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), p.461.

²⁷Gesenius, op. cit., p.394 (122v).

female." Other of the older versions parallel this. This concensus led Barton to remark that "the ancients accordingly understood the word to refer to the pleasures of the table in some way."²⁸

The following are some of the proposed etymologies for the word:

(1) some connect it with sadda "to hide," supposing it to be an appropriate reference to a veiled oriental woman; (2) it has been connected with sid which means both "demon" and "lord"; (3) from the Akkadian šadādu, "to love;" (4) Driver suggests in Kittel's Biblica Hebraica that the original reading was שדה ושדה - "a princess and princesses." The most widely accepted meaning for the word is "concubine." This conclusion has been reached by at least three different routes. Some have supposed that it was a derivative of sanda, "to lean upon"; so they took the word to mean "bed" and hence "concubine." Others derived it from שד - "breast" - hence "concubine." This is the view accepted by Gordis.²⁹ He draws attention to the fact that parts of the body are used to represent the whole. For example, רחם, usually meaning "womb," which means "woman" in Judges 5:30, Mesha Inscription 1.17 and Ugaritic.³⁰

Attention must be drawn to one more solution, the one accepted by Dahood. J. T. Milik in his review of Gordis' Koheleth - The Man and His World draws attention to this very phrase.³¹ Here he notes that the phrase

²⁸Barton, op. cit., p.91

²⁹Gordis, op. cit., p.209; "mistresses, a goodly number"; and BDB p.994b.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹J. T. Milik, review of Gordis' "Koheleth - The Man and His World," Revue Biblique, 59:590, 1952; and Dahood, "Recent Discoveries," op. cit., p.307.

occurs in one of the Amarna letters. Pharaoh Amenophis III demands from Milki-el, governor of Gezer, forty young ladies. The Akkadian word used here is šaditum, apparently identical with the Hebrew סדו. Milik also remarks that the word occurs in Ugaritic under the form št (from šd-t) and in Arabic sitt. Yet, the meaning "concubine" bears more closely, it appears, on the Akkadian cognate than on the Ugaritic. To the writer's knowledge, the meaning "concubine" has never been claimed for the Ugaritic št.

VIII רבחדר י' משכך "AND IN YOUR BED-CHAMBER"

The word חדר - "chamber, room" occurs only once in Qoheleth, but is found elsewhere in the Old Testament. This particular combination also occurs in three other places - Exodus 7:28 (usually assigned to "J", therefore, very early); II Samuel 4:7 and II Kings 6:12; and Ecclesiastes 10:20. Neither the word nor this coupled expression is, therefore, peculiar to Qoheleth.

The verse before us reads: "Also in your thought (among your friends?) do not curse the king and in your bed-chamber do not curse the rich." Some have been dissatisfied with the plural construct of חדר in light of the parallel singular חדר in the first half of the verse. Several Hebrew manuscripts read the singular חדר.³² Against this emendation Dahood has objected, pointing to the well-established Canaanite

³²G. R. Driver, "Problems and Solutions," Vetus Testamentum, 4:233, July, 1954.

practice of employing words for dwellings in plural form even though they are to be translated in the singular.³³

The word does seem to have a good Ugaritic cognate. The word hdr and mškb do occur together in one of the Ugaritic texts - 1151:6 - b[h]dr mškb, translated by Gordon as "in the bedroom."³⁴ Compare also the statement of Schaeffer: "Ce sont là, selon M. Virolleaud, des associations de mots toutes bibliques comme aussi hdr mškb 'chambre à coucher,' ce qui atteste de nouveau l'étroite parenté entre l'idiome d'Ugarit et l'hébreu."³⁵

𐤇𐤍 as "chamber" also appears in the Phoenician Inscription from Arslan Tash in Upper Syria, dating from about the seventh century B.C., line 19 - bhdr hsk - "in a dark chamber."³⁶ Compare also the Micipsa Inscription from Algeria (KAI op. cit., Vol. II, p.150, no. 161.3), where a second use of "chamber" (das Gemach) is used.

IX הוּלָלָה "MADNESS"

The above word occurs in this form four times in Qoheleth - 1:17; 2:12; 7:25; 9:3. Only once in the Old Testament does the alternate form

³³Dahood, "Canaanite Words," op. cit., p.212.

³⁴Gordon, "Ugaritic Textbook," op. cit., p.394, no.842; and Dahood, "Recent Discoveries," op. cit., p.211.

³⁵C. F. A. Schaeffer, "Les fouilles de Ras-Shamra-Ugarit, seizième et dix-septième campagnes (1951, 1952 et 1953), (Rapport sommaire)," Syria, 31:25, 1954.

³⁶W. F. Albright, "An Aramean Magical Text In Hebrew From the Seventh Century B.C.," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 76:9, December, 1939.

occur and it is in Qoheleth - 10:13 - הוֹלִלְוֹת. In each of the former four examples Biblica Hebraica suggests a change to the latter form.

Dahood has felt such an emendation to be unnecessary in light of the parallel חִכְמוֹת used elsewhere in the Old Testament - Proverbs 1:20; 9:1 and probably 14:1, reading חִכְמוֹת for the MT חִכְמוֹה.³⁷ On this whole question Jouon has made an interesting observation.

Une affirmante הִי distincte de la finale plurielle est douteuse. Le mot חִכְמוֹה Sagesse, traité comme un singulier dans Pr 1, 20; 9:1, semble être une sorte de pluriel de majesté; au lieu du pluriel normal qui serait חִכְמוֹת on a vocalisé hok - à l'analogie du singulier חִכְמוֹה. Le mot הוֹלִלְוֹת folie (Ecclesiastes 1, 17; 2:12; 7:25; 9:3) à côté de הוֹלִלְוֹת (10:13) est suspect; si la vocalisation הִי est authentique, elle est peut-être à l'analogie de חִכְמוֹת.³⁸

Dahood points out that חִכְמוֹת has been recognized as Phoenician both by Ginsberg (an ardent supporter of an Aramaic original) and by Albright.³⁹ From this it is argued that הוֹלִלְוֹת can be identified morphologically as Phoenician on the basis of analogy.⁴⁰

X חַוֵּה "ENJOY"

It has already been noticed from the preceding discussion that one

³⁷Gesenius, op. cit., p.241 (86L).

³⁸Jouon, op. cit., p.211 (88mk).

³⁹W. F. Albright, "Some Canaanite - Phoenician sources of Hebrew wisdom," Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East, M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas, editors (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, Vol. III. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), p.8. Albright refers to the parallel form milkot (for milkat) "Queen" - name of a deity.

⁴⁰Dahood, "Northwest Semitic Philology," op. cit., p.350.

of the problem verses in Qoheleth is 2:25. Previously, this verse was discussed with regard to the peculiar pronominal suffix. Now attention must be turned to the second verb of this verse. The usual translation is: "For who can eat and who can enjoy apart from him (from me)?" The concern here is the verb שׂוּן which has been translated by "enjoy," or "feel pleasure." In this sense the word is a hapax legomenon (BDB 302a). It is interesting to note its meaning in the cognate languages, particularly Aramaic and Syriac. In this latter tongue the word connotes "to feel pain," just the opposite of what is met in Qoheleth. Then, of course, there is a good Hebrew verb שׂוּן which means "to hurry," or "to make haste."

That this verb has given trouble not only to the modern commentators but to the ancient writers is clear. An examination of their manuscripts will reveal this. One of the suggested readings is שׂוּן . This is followed by the Septuagint, Peshitta and Theodotion.⁴¹ Apparently the reason for this was the occurrence of this verb in the preceding verse where it follows לֹדֵן , as in verse 25. A second proposal is that credited to Aquila and Symmachus. They have read $\text{שׂוּן} = \text{סוּן}$ "feel pity."⁴²

The majority of modern exegetes have followed the Targum (שׂוּן) and have associated it with the Aramaic root שׂוּן , Syriac שׂוּן , "to

⁴¹It is also followed by Köhler - Baumgartner, op. cit., p.284.

⁴²This is the reading adopted by Gordis, op. cit., p.217. He remarks (p.216) that it has scarcely been proved that the Hebrew שׂוּן could mean "enjoy." Accordingly, he has translated the passage: "For who can enjoy a pleasure or abstain, except it be by His will?" (p.142).

feel," or "to perceive." Joseph Reider makes another suggestion. He has derived the word from the Arabic ḥawīṭa "to be full of food." It is thought that this derivation provides a fit synonym for לדן. The translation of the passage is then: "For who eats and who gorges himself with food if not I?"⁴³ The chief argument against this is meaning. Is this what Qoheleth is saying and has Reider offered us too strong a synonym? Nevertheless, a case could be made for an equalization of "gorge" and "enjoy."

There yet remains another possible etymology and this is the one Dahood prefers. This suggestion links the Hebrew וּלְחַמְדָּה with the Akkadian ḥašāšu, "to be happy," and the Ugaritic ḥš.⁴⁴ This seems to be legitimate.⁴⁵

⁴³J. Reider, "Etymological Studies in Biblical Hebrew," Vetus Testamentum, 2:129-130, April, 1952. Although we wish to express some reserve on this identification, we are interested to note Reider's retention of the MT first person pronominal suffix. See our discussion above, pp.59-61.

⁴⁴Dahood, "Recent Discoveries," op. cit., p.307 who lists ubštk - "thy joy." Compare also Köhler - Baumgartner, loc. cit.

⁴⁵F. Ellermeier, "Das Verbum וּלְחַמְדָּה in Koheleth 2:25, Eine exegetische, auslegungsgeschichte und semasiologische Untersuchung," Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 75:197-217, 1963 is easily the definitive treatment of this verse. Both the context and Semitic cognates are closely checked. His translation of the verse is: "Es gibt nichts Besseres für den Menschen, als dass er bei seinen Mühen wohlgenut esse und trinke. Auch von diesem habe ich gesehen, dass es von Gottes Hand ist. Denn wer hat zu essen, und wer muss sich sorgen, ohne dass, er es so gesetzt hat?" (p.217). His general conclusion is that the word means not "to enjoy" but "to worry about." This results first of all from the context. Secondly, the history of the interpretation proves the usual rendering of וּלְחַמְדָּה "to enjoy" to be untenable. Thirdly, comparative philology confirms the suggested translation, and for the Hebrew puts the distinction of the two stems of וּלְחַמְדָּה somewhere near: וּלְחַמְדָּה/וּלְחַמְדָּה - "to hurry," and וּלְחַמְדָּה "to worry about."

However, the problem is the identification of the Akkadian cognate. Is it to be related to baššū which does mean "to enjoy" or to the verb bašū of which two meanings are "to move quickly," (sich bewegen) or "to worry," (sich sorgen)?

Dahood has made his appeal to two lines of the Ugaritic text 125:4, 5 part of which reads uhstk lntn 'tq.⁴⁶ He has accepted Ginsberg's translation in ANET "or thy joy turn to mourning."⁴⁷

There is by no means any unanimous approval on this however. There does exist some alternative identifications. Gordon is hesitant to identify the word.⁴⁸ He translates the passage "Like a dog in thy house do we slink; Like a cur in thy bower --- Nor we be allowed to pass through thy bower." Virolleaud who first published the text was similarly baffled.⁴⁹

G. R. Driver has translated: "Thy looks are passed away like a dog's, thy lustiness too... Or is thy lustiness passed away?"⁵⁰ Finally,

⁴⁶Dahood, "Recent Discoveries," op. cit., p.307.

⁴⁷H. L. Ginsberg (trans.), "Ugaritic Myths, Epics, Legends," Ancient Near Eastern Texts, ed. J. Pritchard (second edition; Princeton: University Press, 1955) p.147. For a third voice compare F. Rosenthal's remarks in his review of Ginsberg's The Legend of King Keret. A Canaanite Epic of the Bronze Age in Orientalia, 16:402, 1947. He says: "In support of his assumption that hšt means 'joy', Ginsberg might also have referred to the poetic Akkadian root hšš of the same meaning."

⁴⁸C. A. Gordon, "Ugaritic Textbook," op. cit., p.405, no.1019; and his "Ugaritic Literature," op. cit., p.77.

⁴⁹C. Virolleaud, "Le Roi Keret et Son Fils (IJK, première partie). Poème de Ras Shamra," Syria, 22:109, 1941. He remarks that the word "doit être un synonyme ou un équivalent de bt 'maison'."

⁵⁰G. R. Driver, Canaanite Myths And Legends (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), p.41.

Gray has rendered the passage: "Like a dog into thy house do we pass, even as a cur do we pass the door of thy portal... Or through thy portal is passage not permitted?"⁵¹

Enough has been said to point to the multifarious interpretations placed on this word by different scholars. The conclusion of Dahood then ought to be perhaps a tentative one. It is interesting to note that Ginsberg, when he meets this identical word hsṭk in the previous line, is at least consistent. Here he translates it in adjectival form - "his joyous countenance."

XI WDJ "APPETITE"

The word does appear a simple one for purposes of translation. But the word does have a broader range than the commonly understood "soul" or "life." It can be translated "appetite." There is an obvious pattern in Qoheleth's thinking on this word. Seven times the word appears in his book, and everytime the connotation is "appetite." Compare, for example, the remark that: "Ec. uses WDJ only in the sense of (a) hunger, (b) thirst, (c) appetite in general; the WDJ craves, lacks, is filled with good things."⁵² BDB claims 46 illustrations of this translation, but it is curious to notice that of seven times in Qoheleth this is the meaning each time - cf. 2:24; 4:8; 6:2, 3, 7, 9; 7:28. This has also been recognized by others. D. Lys states: "Les 7 textes de l'Ecclésiaste utilisent tous

⁵¹J. Gray, The Krt Text In The Literature of Ras Shamra (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), pp.18, 49.

⁵²BDB 660b.

nèphèsh sur les sens fondamental du besoin, du desir et de la jouissance...

Il est tout de même curieux que Qoheleth ait employé nèphèsh uniquement dans ce sens."⁵³ Contemporary commentators on Qoheleth have recognized this also. Compare Gordis⁵⁴ and Hertzberg.⁵⁵

The translation "appetite," or "throat" for נפש is not without parallel in the Semitic cognate tongues. In Akkadian napistu may mean "throat," as may the Ugaritic נפש. In addition to the basic meaning "soul" one also meets the translation "appetite" in Ugaritic. Cf. 127:11 - "His appetite she opens to eat." In text 67:I:7 the word is best translated "throat" or "gullet." "Yea, into the gullet of 'Il's Beloved, the Hero!"

These secondary meanings have been questioned by some, especially the meaning "throat." Yet most have agreed that the meaning is legitimate in three of the Semitic languages - Hebrew, Ugaritic and Akkadian.⁵⁷

⁵³ D. Lys, Nephesh, Histoire de L'Ame dans la Révélation D'Israël Au Sein Des Religions Proche-Orientales (Paris: Presses Universitaires De France, 1959), pp.192-193.

⁵⁴ Gordis, op. cit., p.250; on 6:17 he remarks: " נפש is the seat of the appetite, hence 'stomach' (Isaiah 5:14, 29:8; Psalm 107:9, Proverbs 16:26), here equivalent to 'desire'."

⁵⁵ Hertzberg, op. cit., p.130. " נפש bedeutet hier "Verlangen, Appetit, Hunger" der nicht ausgefüllt wird."

⁵⁶ Gordon, "Ugaritic Textbook," op. cit., p.446, no.1681.

⁵⁷ H. A. Brongers, "Das Wort 'NPS' in den Qumranschriften," Revue de Qumran, 4:408-409, note 2, October, 1963. He refers to a monograph by A. Murtonen who says: "...this meaning is attested only in Akkadian, Ugaritic and Hebrew and even in them it is somehow ambiguous and disputed."

CHAPTER X

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

The impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls upon Biblical studies is too well documented elsewhere to need discussion here. In particular, then, this chapter shall be limited to those finds that bear on our study.

Four scroll fragments of Qoheleth were discovered in Cave IV near Khirbet Qumran. This is usually identified as 4QQoh. Those passages which appeared included 5:13-17; 6:3-8 on the first fragment; 7:1-2 on the second; 7:2-6 on the third; and 7:19-20 on the fourth. Indeed the sampling is small but enough evidence was now available for purposes of detailed study, especially in light of Qoheleth's relationship to the other Qumran materials and the Massoretic text.

Students are indebted to James Muilenberg for the first detailed study of these fragments.¹ Interesting is his study of the (a) orthographical variants between it and the Massoretic text and (b) the study of the textual variants between the two. Of the former he discovers eleven discrepancies.² Formerly this study stressed the use of matres lectionis in later Biblical Hebrew with a profuse employment of these in the Dead Sea Scrolls. That is to say, the more the Hebrew language progressed, the greater was the tendency to a plene writing. An examination

¹J. Muilenberg, "A Qoheleth Scroll From Qumran," Bulletin Of The American Schools of Oriental Research, 135:20-28, October, 1954.

²Ibid., pp.24-26

of these variants does reveal that most of them consist of a mater lectionis which is in the fragment but is not found in the Massoretic text. Muilenberg remarks: "The orthographical situation can be stated briefly: 4Q uses the scriptio plena less frequently than DSIa, to which it is paleographically kin, but more often than MT."³ Attention should be brought here to his interesting comment on one particular passage, a passage which lends credence to Dahood's hypothesis. For 6:8, where the MT reads ky mh, the fragments read kmh. On this he points out: "It seems likely that here we have a preservation of Phoenician spelling in the omission of the mater lectionis, especially significant since the scribe usually employs the fuller form elsewhere (ky or ky')."⁴

The discovery of these scrolls has not only shed light on the language but also on the date of the book. Those who seem now to suffer most seriously would be (a) those who have dated Qoheleth very late (second century or so) and (b) those who have posited an Aramaic original for the book. The reason for this does appear obvious. Scholars who have dated Qoheleth a bit earlier (400-300 B.C.) feel themselves to have "escaped unscathed" from this criticism. The finds of Cave IV usually are dated ca.175-150 B.C. F. M. Cross Jr., an authority on the Scrolls, has said of these particular fragments: "Since the text of the manuscript reveals textual development, it is demonstrably not the autograph, and

³Muilenberg, op. cit., p.24.

⁴Ibid., p.25.

hence the date of composition must be pushed back into the third century."⁵

Perhaps most devastating of all is the trenchant criticism levelled by Gordis against the proponents of a late Aramaic original. He says:

The book of Qoheleth was written about 275-250 B.C.E. and now we have the existence of manuscripts of the book among these sectarians about a century and a half later. It is impossible to believe that this short space of time could have been sufficient for all the steps in the process that must be assumed by the translation theory - the book could be written in Aramaic, become widespread and popular, be translated into Hebrew, become accepted as Scripture, not only in normative Judaism but even among these sectarians, whose deep faith was at the farthest possible remove from the Biblical sceptic; and be recopied in their scriptorium for their use. The Biblical book of Qoheleth was written in Hebrew.⁶

If any confirmation is possible for any view of Qoheleth, it is that of Dahood. But the issue is a minor one. True, the orthography does mediate between the extremes found elsewhere in the Scrolls and in the Massoretic Text. Yet, as Muilenberg has pointed out: "Such a statement is not designed as a chronological datum, however, for the presence or absence of matres lectionis does not follow a unilateral development."⁷ Then, of course, the omission of the vowel letter might possibly be a scribal omission.

In conclusion, the only thing one may be dogmatic about is that by the middle of the second century B.C. the inhabitants of Khirbet Qumran had as part of their body of religious literature a Hebrew Qoheleth.

¹F. M. Cross Jr., The Ancient Library of Qumran (revised edition; New York: Anchor Books, 1961), p.165.

²Quoted in Gordis, "Qoheleth and Qumran - A Study of Style," Biblica, 41:395, 1960; Dahood, "Recent Discoveries," op. cit., p.304; and Muilenberg, op. cit., p.28 - "The evidence does not strengthen the view of the proponents of an Aramaic original, but seems rather to support a Hebrew Vorlage."

³Muilenberg, loc. cit.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSIONS

In the main the thrust of this study has been an examination of the position of Mitchell Dahood on the Hebrew text of Qoheleth. Other views or approaches have been described not in exhaustive detail but only for what they lend by way of contrast to Dahood's view.

Basically, we have been confronted by two methodologies. One of these may be termed the vertical methodology. This approach is best represented by Gordis and now by Alexander Sperber in his A Historical Grammar Of Biblical Hebrew. These men are not prepared to look to the cognate Semitic tongues as the explanation of Biblical Hebrew. At least, this is not their starting-point. Great stress is laid on the fact that the Hebrew Scriptures were written by a people which remained a recognizable religio-cultural-ethnic group for centuries with an unbroken literary tradition, and that the Hebrew Scriptures contain within themselves adequate explanations for most of the problems.

A second methodology lays great stress on the Semitic family out of which the Hebrew language was spawned. It is never treated, therefore, in isolation, apart from its relationship to neighbouring dialects. It is now commonly accepted that in the ancient Near Eastern world there existed a good deal of exchange among different peoples. That is to say, a Mesopotamian was not altogether ignorant of the current events of Palestine or perhaps even Egypt. In the light of wide commercial contacts and tribal movements of the Near East it seems plausible to assume that the great

cities of that day exhibited some of the identical characteristics of our large ethnic cities of today.

Gordon has argued that Qoheleth carried his Hebrew with him into Mesopotamia, only to bring it back to Judah with a Mesopotamian colouring. Dahood looks on Qoheleth as a Northerner, a man whose speech and writing reflected to some degree the Phoenician dialect.

Obviously, this study has not been able to treat every subject and illustration raised by Dahood. Of necessity, this treatment has been selective. Parenthetically, it should be pointed out that every effort has been made to treat not only the tentative points of Dahood's arguments but also those areas in which his conclusions seem most justifiable.

Basically, the method of procedure of this investigation has been to examine the Hebrew text of Qoheleth, paying special attention to orthography, morphology, syntax and vocabulary. It was hoped that such a study would answer the question: Are the anomalies of Qoheleth's Hebrew best explained by Canaanite-Phoenician literary influence or by the Hebrew literary tradition itself?

Dahood has collected many cogent parallels to Phoenician and Ugaritic passages. That such parallels do exist between Phoenician, Punic and Biblical Hebrew is hardly surprising. Since Biblical Hebrew and Phoenician both emerged from an identical Northwest Semitic background, one would expect to find a relationship between the two. Thus there is a close kinship geographically, linguistically and culturally. The problem, however, is: are these parallels or direct borrowings?

Frankly, one must be impressed by the mass of data gathered by Dahood. The very fact that he has defended his position in six successive articles over a period of fifteen years suggests that he has not yet said the last word on the subject. Albright has indicated his identical approach to Qoheleth.¹

The examination of the orthographical variants in Qoheleth revealed only a paucity of identical examples elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. The lack of matres lectionis can only be counted for in one of two ways. Either this betrays the influence of Phoenician in which such vowel omissions were the rule or else Qoheleth was written in early Hebrew orthography (pre-exilic), an orthography antedating the introduction of vowel letters.

Dahood's discussion on morphology is very enticing, especially those sections that deal with the relative pronoun, pronominal suffixes and the non-syncopation of the article. Each of these phenomena is readily attested to in Phoenician. To be sure, this study has brought to light some parallels to the above from other books of the Old Testament. This, however, in no way can invalidate Dahood's hypothesis. Although scattered parallels may be found elsewhere, one must give good reason why so many Phoenician characteristics turn up in this twelve chapter book.

¹Albright, "Canaanite-Phoenician Sources of Hebrew Wisdom," op. cit., pp.14-15. See especially his comment: "It must be emphasized that the Qumran finds have proved that normal literary Hebrew in the last two centuries B.C. (including Ben Sira) classicized in conscious opposition to the dominant Aramaic; it was neither like the language of earlier Qoheleth nor like that of the later Mishnah (though nearer the latter than the former, which is definitely aberrant, as far as the evolution of literary Hebrew is concerned)," (p.15 n.3).

It should be noted, however, that the relative pronoun used in Phoenician always had a prothetic 'aleph. If the author of Qoheleth wrote in Phoenicia, is it not strange that such a commonplace detail of Phoenician morphology would escape him? The very fact that this identical relative is found in Judges, Joshua, and Canticles, all commonly ascribed to North Israelite origins, should say something here.

The discovery of the Azitawadd Inscription at Karatepe brought to light the unique use of the infinitive absolute plus personal pronoun for a finite verb. This immediately cleared up the use of the infinitive absolute in Qoheleth 4:2. This construction is found elsewhere in the Old Testament only in Esther 9:1.

Here, this study raises a question. An examination of all the above plus vocabulary reveals affinities between Chronicles, Esther and Qoheleth.² It is commonly accepted that the writer of Chronicles lived in Judea. The author of Esther lived in an environment where the customs of the Persian court were well known to him. Then, since neither of these two books came from Phoenicia, it is unnecessary to assume that Qoheleth did either. May not these alleged Canaanitisms be northern Hebraisms, part of which infiltrated the southern section of Palestine under the influence of migrating northern families?

Dahood has raised many an interesting question but is himself ready to admit the tentativeness of many of his own solutions and proposals. At least the opportunity has been left for further consideration and happily, the whole discussion shows no signs of abating.

²Rainey, op. cit., p.149.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Albright, W. F. "Archaic Survivals In The Text of Canticles," Hebrew And Semitic Studies Presented To Godfrey Rolles Driver. Edited by D. Winton Thomas and W. D. McHardy. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1963. Pp.1-7.
- _____. "Some Canaanite - Phoenician Sources of Hebrew Wisdom," Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East. Edited by M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum. Vol.III. Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1955. Pp.1-15.
- Archer, Gleason L. A Survey of Old Testament Introduction. Chicago: Moody Press, 1964.
- Barton, G. A. The Book of Ecclesiastes. The International Critical Commentary. Second edition. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clarke, 1959.
- Bauer, H. and Paul Leander. Historische Grammatik Der hebraischen Sprache. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1962.
- Blake, F. R. A Resurvey Of Hebrew Tenses. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1951.
- Brockelman, Carl. Grundriss Der vergleichenden Grammatik Der semitischen Sprachen. 2 vols. Second edition. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961.
- Brown, F., S. R. Driver and C. A. Briggs. A Hebrew And English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.
- Cooke, G. A. A Text-book of North-Semitic Inscriptions. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1903.
- Cowley, A. Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923.
- Cross, Frank Moore. The Ancient Library of Qumran. Revised edition. New York: Anchor Books, 1961.
- _____, and David Noel Freedman. Early Hebrew Orthography. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1952.

- Dahood, Mitchell J. "Northwest Semitic Philology And Job," The Bible In Current Catholic Thought. Edited by J. L. McKenzie. New York: Herder and Herder, 1962. Pp.55-74.
- _____. Proverbs And Northwest Semitic Philology. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963.
- _____. Psalms I, I-50. Vol.16 of The Anchor Bible. Edited by W. F. Albright and David Noel Freedman. 38 vols. New York: The Doubleday Co., 1964-67.
- Donner, H. and W. Röllig. Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1964.
- Driver, G. R. Canaanite Myths And Legends. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clarke, 1956.
- Eissfeldt, Otto. The Old Testament, An Introduction. Trans. Peter Ackroyd. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.
- Friedrich, J. Phonizisch-punische Grammatik. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1951.
- Gesenius, W. Hebrew Grammar. Second English edition. Edited and revised by E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1960.
- Ginsberg, H. L. "The Quintessence of Koheleth," Biblical And Other Studies. Edited by A. Altman. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963. Pp.47-59.
- _____. "The Structure and Contents of the Book of Koheleth," Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East. Edited by M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum. Vol.III. Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1955. Pp.138-149.
- _____. Studies In Koheleth. New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950.
- _____. (trans.). "Ugaritic Myths And Legends," Ancient Near Eastern Texts. Second edition. Edited by James Pritchard. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955. Pp.129-155.
- Gordis, Robert. Koheleth, The Man And His World. Second edition. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1955.
- Gordon, C. H. Ugaritic Literature. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1949.

- _____. Ugaritic Manual. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1955.
- _____. Ugaritic Textbook. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965.
- Gray, John. The Krt Text In The Literature of Ras Shamra. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955.
- Harris, Zellig S. A Grammar of the Phoenician Language. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1936.
- Hendry, G. S. "Ecclesiastes," The New Bible Commentary. Edited by F. Davidson. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1953. Pp.538-546.
- Hertzberg, H. W. Der Prediger. Kommentar Zum Alten Testament. Vol.17. Gerd Mohn: Gutersloher, 1963.
- Jouon, Paul. Grammaire De L'Hébreu Biblique. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1947.
- Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner. Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958.
- Lange, J. P. Ecclesiastes. Commentary on the Holy Scriptures. Trans. Philip Schaff. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.
- Leupold, H. C. Exposition of Ecclesiastes. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1952.
- Lidzbarski, Mark. Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik. 3 vols. Giessen: Alfred Topelman, 1902-1915.
- Lys, D. Nephesh, Histoire de l'Âme dans la Révélation D'Israël au Sein Des Religions Proche-Orientales. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959.
- Margoliouth, D. S. "Ecclesiastes, Book of," The Jewish Encyclopedia V, 32-34. Edited by Isidore Singer. New York: Funk and Wagnalis Company, 1903.
- Moran, W. L. "The Hebrew Language in Its Northwest Semitic Background," The Bible And The Ancient Near East. Second edition. Edited by G. Ernest Wright. New York: Anchor Books, 1965. Pp.59-84.
- Rankin, O. S. Ecclesiastes. Vol. V of The Interpreter's Bible. Edited by George A. Buttrick. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952-1957.

Scott, R. B. Y. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes. Vol. 18 of The Anchor Bible. Edited by W. F. Albright and David Noel Freedman. 38 vols. New York: The Doubleday Co., 1964-67.

Von Sodon, W. Akkadisches Handwörterbuch. 7 vols. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1959-1966.

Unger, M. F. Introductory Guide to the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1952.

Young, Edward J. Introduction to the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949.

B. PERIODICALS

Albright, W. F. "An Aramean Magical Text In Hebrew From The Seventh Century B.C.," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 76:5-11, December, 1939.

_____. "New Canaanite Historical And Mythological Data," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 63:23-32, October, 1936.

_____. "The Old Testament and the Canaanite Language and Literature," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 7:5-31, January, 1945.

_____. "The Phoenician Inscriptions of the Tenth Century B.C. from Byblus," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 67:153-160, July-September, 1947.

_____. "The Seal of Eliakim And The Latest Preexilic History of Judah, With Some Observations On Ezekiel," Journal of Biblical Literature, 51:77-106, June, 1932.

Bergstrasser, G. "Das hebraische Prafix W," Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 29:40-56, 1909.

Blake, F. R. "The Development of Symbols for the Vowels in the Alphabets Derived from the Phoenician," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 60:391-413, September, 1940.

Brongers, H. A. "Das Wort 'NPS' in den Qumranschriften," Revue de Qumran, 4:407-415, October, 1963.

Burkitt, F. C. "Is Ecclesiastes A Translation?" The Journal of Theological Studies, 23:22-28, 1922.

- Cross, F. M. Jr., and D. N. Freedman. "The Pronominal Suffixes of the Third Person Singular in Phoenician," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 10:228-230, October, 1951.
- Dahood, M. J. "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence on Qoheleth," Biblica, 33:30-52, 191-221, 1952.
- _____. "Canaanite Words in Qoheleth 10.20," Biblica, 46:210-212, 1965.
- _____. "The Language of Qoheleth," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 14:227-232, July, 1952.
- _____. "Phoenician Background of Qoheleth," Biblica, 47:264-282, 1966.
- _____. Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology, reviewed by G. R. Driver, Journal of Semitic Studies, 10:112-117, Spring, 1965.
- _____. "Qoheleth and Northwest Semitic Philology," Biblica, 43:349-365, 1962.
- _____. "Qoheleth and Recent Discoveries," Biblica, 34:302-318, 1958.
- Driver, G. R. "Problems And Solutions," Vetus Testamentum, 4:225-245, July, 1954.
- _____. "Reflections On Recent Articles," Journal of Biblical Literature, 73:125-136, 1954.
- Ellermeier, F. "Das Verbum $\omega\eta\eta$ in Koh. 2:25. Eine exegetische, auslegungsgeschichtliche und semasiologische Untersuchung," Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 75:197-217, 1963.
- Fitzmyer, J. A. "The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire I and II," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 81:178-222, August-September, 1961.
- _____. "The Phoenician Inscription from Pyrgi," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 86:285-297, July-September, 1966.
- Friedrich, J. "Altperisisches und elamisches," Orientalia, 18:1-29, 1949.
- Gevirtz, S. "The Phoenician Particle $\omega\aleph$," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 16:124-127, April, 1957.
- Ginsberg, H. L. "Qoheleth 12:4 In The Light of Ugaritic," Syria, 33:99-101, 1956.

- _____. The Legend of King Keret. A Canaanite Epic of the Bronze Age, reviewed by F. Rosenthal, Orientalia, 16:399-402.
- Gordis, R. "Koheleth - Hebrew or Aramaic?" Journal of Biblical Literature, 71:93-109, 1952.
- _____. Koheleth - The Man And His World, reviewed by J. T. Milik, Revue Biblique, 59:588-591, October, 1952.
- _____. "The Original Language of Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly Review, 37:67-84, 1946.
- _____. "Qoheleth And Qumran," Biblica, 41:395-410, 1960.
- _____. "The Translation Theory of Qoheleth Re-examined," Jewish Quarterly Review, 40:103-116, 1949.
- Gordon, C. H. "Azitawadd's Phoenician Inscription," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 8:108-115, April, 1949.
- _____. "North Israelite Influence on Postexilic Hebrew," Israel Exploration Journal, 5:85-88, 1955.
- _____. "Phoenician Inscriptions From Karatepe," Jewish Quarterly Review, 39:41-50, July, 1948.
- Harris, Z. S. A Grammar of the Phoenician Language, reviewed by H. L. Ginsberg, Journal of Biblical Literature, 56:138-143, June, 1937.
- Held, M. "A Faithful Lover in an Old Babylonian Dialogue," Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 15:1-26, 1961.
- Heusman, J. "Finite Uses of the Infinitive Absolute," Biblica, 37:271-295, 1956.
- Honeyman, A. M. "Phoenician Inscriptions from Karatepe," Le Museon, 61:43-57, 1948.
- Hummel, H. D. "Enclitic Mem In Early Northwest Semitic, Especially Hebrew," Journal of Biblical Literature, 76:85-107, 1957.
- Irwin, W. A. "Eccles. 4:13-16," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 3:255-257, October, 1944.
- Knopf, C. S. "The Optimism Of Qoheleth," Journal of Biblical Literature, 49:195-199, 1930.

- Langdon, S. "The Etymology Of The Babylonian Relative Pronoun," American Journal Of Semitic Languages And Literatures, 31:271-281, July, 1915.
- Moran, W. L. "'Does Amarna Bear on Karatepe?' - An Answer," Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 6:76-80, 1952.
- _____. "The Use of the Canaanite Infinitive Absolute as a Finite Verb in the Amarna Letters from Byblos," Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 4:169-172, 1950.
- Muilenberg, J. "A Qoheleth Scroll from Qumran," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 135:20-28, October, 1954.
- Nötscher, F. "Zum emphatischen Lamed," Vetus Testamentum, 3:372-380, October, 1953.
- Obermann, J. "Does Amarna Bear on Karatepe?" Journal of Cuneiform Studies, 5:58-61, 1961.
- _____. Phoenician YQTL 'NK," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 9:94-100, April, 1950.
- O'Callaghan, R. T. "The Great Phoenician Portal Inscription from Karatepe," Orientalia, 18:171-205, 1949.
- Rainey, A. F. "A Study of Ecclesiastes," Concordia Theological Monthly, 35:148-157, March, 1964.
- Reider, J. "Etymological Studies In Biblical Hebrew," Vetus Testamentum, 2:113-130, April, 1952.
- Rubinstein, A. "A Finite Verb Continued by an Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew," Vetus Testamentum, 2:362-367, October, 1952.
- Schaeffer, C. F. A. "Les Fouilles de Ras Shamra - Ugarit. Quinzième, seizième et dix-septième campagnes (1951, 1952 et 1953), (Rapport sommaire)," Syria, 31:14-67, 1954.
- Speiser, E. A. "The muškênum," Orientalia, 27:19-28, 1958.
- _____. "Nuzi Marginalia," Orientalia, 25:1-23, 1956.
- Staples, W. E. "The 'Vanity' of Ecclesiastes," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 2:95-104, April, 1943.
- Torrey, C. C. "The Question of the Original Language of Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly Review 39:151-160, 1948.

- Virolleaud, C. "Le roi Kéret et son fils (IK, première partie).
Poème de Ras Shamra," Syria, 22:105-136, 1941.
- Wevers, J. W. "The Infinitive Absolute in the Phoenician Inscription
of Azitawadd," Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft,
62:316-317, 1950.
- Yamauchi, E. "The Sapiential Septuagint," Bulletin of the Evangelical
Theological Society, 5:109-115, Fall, 1962.
- Zimmermann, F. "The Aramaic Provenance of Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly
Review, 36:17-45, 1949.
- _____. "The Question of Hebrew in Qoheleth," Jewish Quarterly Review,
40:79-102, 1949.

C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

- Kinlaw, Dennis. Ecclesiastes, unpublished manuscript of forthcoming
edition of Wesleyan Bible Commentary. Edited by Charles W. Carter.
To be published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.
- Peckham, Brian. "The Development Of The Late Phoenician Scripts."
Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy dissertation, Harvard University,
Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964.