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The persistence of space: formalizing the polysemy of spatial relations in functional elements

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A primer in Biblical Hebrew

A

Since three chapters in this dissertation discuss phenomena in Biblical Hebrew, this appendix provides the necessary background for readers unfamiliar with this language. For reasons of space only a very brief introduction can be given; reference works can be consulted for more information.

A.1 Orthography and phonology

Like many other Semitic languages, Biblical Hebrew was originally transmitted in a consonantal script. I take my examples from the Masoretic Text, a standard version of the Hebrew Bible which was vocalized by a group of scholars in the 7th to 9th centuries of the common era. Occasionally I will remark on alternative vocalizations or textual emendations, but in general I follow the Masoretic Text.

Transliteration in this dissertation follows the guidelines of the *Journal of Semitic Studies*. Tables A.1 and A.2 provide an overview of the consonant and vowel inventories, respectively. Some comments on these tables:

- Since the transliteration follows traditional conventions that may not be transparent to the general reader, phonetic values are provided as well. These follow the Tiberian tradition according to Edzard (2011). Some of the phonetic values are disputed, and in any case they reflect various sound changes after the demise of Biblical Hebrew as a living language. The phonetic values are listed to give the reader some support in pronunciation if desired; the precise phonetic rendering is irrelevant to us here.
- The consonants */k m n p ʃ/* have a different form at the end of a word, extending below the baseline or (in the case of */m/*) closed.
- The consonants */b g d k p t/* are spirantized after vowels, indicated in the transliteration with a macron above or below the letter. In the

א	ʾ	[ʔ]	ח	ḥ	[ħ]	פ	p	[p]
ב	b	[b]	ט	ṭ	[ṭ]	ף	ḥ	[f]
ב	ḇ	[v]	י	y	[j]	צ	ṣ	[s]
ג	g	[g]	כ	k	[k]	ק	q	[q]
ג	ḡ	[ɣ, ʁ]	כ	ḵ	[x, χ]	ר	r	[ʀ, ʁ, ʀ]
ד	d	[d]	ל	l	[l]	ש	ś	[s]
ד	ḏ	[ð]	מ	m	[m]	ש	š	[ʃ]
ה	h	[h]	נ	n	[n]	ת	t	[t]
ו	w	[w]	ס	s	[s]	ת	ṭ	[θ]
ז	z	[z]	ע	ʿ	[ʕ]			

Table A.1 Transliteration and phonetic value of Biblical Hebrew consonants.

א	a	[a(:)]	א	ə, Ø	[a, Ø]
א	ā, â	[ɔ(:)]	א	ă	[a]
א	ε	[ε(:)]	א	ě	[ε]
א	ē	[e(:)]	א	ǎ	[ɔ]
א	ī, i	[i(:)]			
א	ū, u	[u(:)]			
א	ō	[o(:)]			

Table A.2 Transliteration and phonetic value of Biblical Hebrew vowels.

Hebrew script the non-spirantized pronunciation is indicated with a dot in the letter.

- The transliteration *y/wh* is used for the divine name יהוה ‘Yahweh’, which is traditionally not pronounced but replaced by *’ădōnāy* ‘my lord’ or *’ēlōhīm* ‘God’.

A.2 Verbal morphology

Verbal forms are based on a triconsonantal root, which delineates a certain semantic field. Within this field, verbal templates consisting of a vowel pattern and, in some cases, affixes, derive a specific verbal meaning through specifying one of three different types of Aktionsart: simple, pluractional, and causative. The system of verbal templates (also called “stems” or “bin-yanim”) is also used to specify active, passive, reflexive, and middle Voice. As shown in table A.3, not all Aktionsart-Voice combinations are productive in Biblical Hebrew anymore.¹ This table also indicates the glossing abbreviations used for these templates.

	Simple	Pluractional	Causative
Active	Qal (none)	Piel (PLURACT)	Hiphil (CAUS)
Passive	Passive qal (PASS)	Pual (PLURACT.PASS)	Hophal (CAUS.PASS)
Reflexive	n/a	Hithpael (PLURACT.REFL)	n/a
Middle	Niphal (MID)		

Table A.3 Names and glossing abbreviations for verbal templates.

In many cases the meaning of a root in a certain template has lexicalized. In such cases, I will not gloss Aktionsart and/or Voice but simply give an appropriate English translation.

¹ The reflexive Voice of the simple and causative template dropped out of use. Though listed under simple Aktionsart, the niphal is not properly related to any type of Aktionsart and never had parallels in the pluractional or causative templates.

Finite forms are inflected for person, gender (masculine or feminine, except in the first person, which has common gender), and number (singular or plural). There are two main verbal conjugations: a suffix conjugation and a prefix conjugation. The suffix conjugation indicates person, gender, and number using suffixes and marks perfective/gnomic aspect and/or past tense. The prefix conjugation indicates person, gender, and number using both suffixes and prefixes, and marks imperfective aspect, non-past tense, and various modal nuances. Since these conjugations are traditionally called “perfect” and “imperfect”, respectively, I use PFV and IPFV to gloss them. However, it should be kept in mind that they are not pure aspectual forms.

A dedicated conjugation is used to relate sequential events in the simple past in narrative texts. This conjugation, the *wayyiqtol*, consists of a conjunction (*wa-*) followed by an old preterite (*yiqtol*). The conjunction is semantically very light and can be translated as ‘and’, ‘but’, ‘then’, ‘so’, zero, or otherwise, depending on context. I gloss the conjunction in *wayyiqtol* forms as WAYQ and assume a morpheme boundary rather than a clitic boundary after the conjunction.

A less frequent form is *wəqāṭal*, of which the main function is to continue a previous modal form. This form consists of the conjunction *wə-* followed by the form of the suffix conjugation (*qāṭal*), though in some forms the stress shifts. I gloss the conjunction in these forms as WQAT and again assume a morpheme boundary rather than a clitic boundary, to distinguish these forms from regular suffix conjugation forms following a conjunction.

In addition to these four main conjugations, Biblical Hebrew has an imperative for the second person (glossed IMP) and a jussive for the second/third person (glossed JUSS).²

There are two types of infinitives. The ‘infinitive construct’ is most similar to the infinitive or gerund in Indo-European languages; it is glossed as INF. The ‘infinitive absolute’ has various uses, the most notable of which is to strengthen a finite form of the same verb in the immediate context. This form is glossed INFABS.

Each verbal template has its own participle form, glossed PTCP. The *qal* template additionally has a passive participle, which is distinct in form but

2 The volitive of the first person exists but does not appear in the examples in this dissertation. The M.SG imperative, marked by $-\emptyset$, can be extended with a “paragogic” $-\ddot{a}$, which has little semantic value; I treat it as a allomorph of the M.SG.

similar in meaning to the participle of the passive qal. I gloss the passive participle of the qal as PTCP.PASS (the participle of the passive qal, which does not appear in this dissertation, would be glossed PASS.PTCP).

When pronominal, objects are indicated with suffixes on the verb.³ On the infinitive construct, a pronominal suffix may indicate both the subject and the object.

A.3 Nominal morphology

Nouns and adjectives are declined for gender (masculine or feminine) and number (singular, plural, or dual; the latter is of limited productivity). I do not gloss grammatical gender on nouns except where needed to clarify agreement features on verbs and adjectives.

Nominal forms can be in two ‘states’. The absolute state is used in most environments. The construct state is used in possessive constructions to mark possessedness. Nominals in the construct state are immediately followed by their possessor. I gloss the construct state with ‘.of’ or ‘-of’, and do not mark the absolute state.

3 In some conjugations the object suffix can be preceded by an “energetic” *n*, which has little semantic value; I do not gloss this morpheme.

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