CARMEN MARIS ALGOSI: AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF EXODUS 15:1-18

by
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The literature of the ancient Near East has given the invitation for a conservative interpreter to do an exegetical study of Exodus 15:1-18. The purpose of this thesis was to use the historical grammatical hermeneutic to examine the interpretative problems in this pericope of Hebrew poetry. The problems focused upon the interpreter's hermeneutical approach, the interpretation of key terms, the examination of some of the textual problems, and an analysis of the important syntactical elements in the Song of the Reed Sea.

The usage of form criticism and tradition history as an hermeneutical approach was examined in reference to the critical interpretative considerations. It was demonstrated that the title "Song of Miriam" was affected by a traditio-historical hermeneutic. It was observed that the usage of the form-critical and traditio-historical approach in answering the question about unity was not built upon objective proof but rather it was built of evolutionary presuppositions. Mosaic authorship was defended in light of the themes shared both in this song and the other books of the Pentateuch. A conservative date in the fifteenth century B.C. was confirmed by a number of philological arguments. The genre of this song has also been affected by form criticism. Five of the most prominent explanations of the Gattungen were examined and it was concluded that Exodus 15:1-18 may have had a number of literary types and hence it is an enigma for form critical purposes. It was also demonstrated that the traditio-historical interpretation of the setting has divorced Exodus 15:1-18 from its historical setting. The salient point of the strophic structure is the refrains in verses 6, 11, and 16. In light of the confusion in the various metrical studies, it was concluded that this was an invalid method of study.

Chapter IV dealt with the exegesis of this song. This involved an examination of problem terms. In many cases the cognate Semitic languages had to be consulted. It was discovered that Moses made use of parallel pairs. The abundance of them apparently implies that the poet had at his disposal a literary tradition from which he could draw these fixed pairs. In the process of inspiration, the Spirit of God guided Moses so that he used this literary tradition to help in composing the Song of the Reed Sea. The textual problems were considered in light of the assumption that the Masoretic Text was terminus a quo in textual criticism. The syntactical aspects of this passage were examined. Ugaritic was of great benefit for this aspect of research. Its importance was most profound for the examination of an example of three-line staircase parallelism in verse 11. In light of this study, it would be appropriate to conclude that the Song of the Reed Sea is a classic example of archaic Hebrew poetry.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Statement of Problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Importance of This Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Method of This Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Limitations of This Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER II. PRELIMINARY INTERPRETATIVE CONSIDERATIONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of Miriam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of Moses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of the Reed Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philological Arguments for a Conservative Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER III. CRITICAL INTERPRETATIVE CONSIDERATIONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gattungen Is a Hymn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gattungen Is a Hymn of Thanksgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gattungen Is a Hymn of Divine Enthronement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gattungen Is a Litany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gattungen Is a Hymn of Victory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Evaluation of These Studies of the Gattungen of Exodus 15:1-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthronement Festival of Yahweh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant Festival of Yahweh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumnal Festival of Yahweh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Evaluation of Cultic Interpretations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe and Meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER IV. EXEGESIS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prose Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Usage of the Imperfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Etymological Problem with השם</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exordium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Textual Problem with יהוה</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tetragrammaton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Examination of הוה</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Possible Anachronism两点</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymnic Confession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrain 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Anthropomorphism for Yahweh's Strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Etymological and Morphological Treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymnic Confession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrain 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Line Staircase Parallelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Parallel Usage of כפלנה</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Archaic Orthography of כפלנה</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Parallel Pair Reconsidered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strophe 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymnic Confession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophetic Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrain 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Reference to the Land or Yahweh's Sanctuary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Examination of ידילן</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahweh's Eternal Kingship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE

I would like to thank some of the individuals who have contributed their time and effort, which without these, it would have been impossible to complete this thesis.

Foremost, I would like to thank my God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His sovereign grace has saved me and guided me to this seminary.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Fowler and Professor Zemek for their patience and advice in preparation of this paper. At the outset of my research Mr. Fowler suggested key articles and books which were very helpful in the composition of his thesis.

A special thanks goes to Dr. James Price and Professor Stephen Schrader of Temple Baptist Theological Seminary for their help. Professor Schrader has suggested articles and provided me with books from his library.

It is also necessary to express my thanks to the faculty of Grace Theological Seminary for their dedication in training men for the Christian ministry.

I would also like to thank my wife and three children who have been patient and helpful in my seminary education. My parents have also been helpful with their prayers and love.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A Statement of Problems

Among the poetic sections of the Old Testament, few have captured the imagination or scholars as has *carmen maris algosi*,\(^1\) Exodus 15:1-18. The discovery of Ugaritic literature has been very influential in stimulating interest in Exodus 15:1-18 because of its poetical nature. Freedman has succinctly observed:

> Continuing discovery and publication of Canaanite cuneiform tablets, current research into the language and forms of early Hebrew poetry, and recent contributions to the elucidation of the poem in Exodus 15 have recommended further reflections on and reconsideration of certain aspects of this national victory song.

Hermeneutical Approach

An aspect of this pericope of archaic Hebrew poetry which has been problematic pertains to the interpreter's hermeneutical approach to Exodus 15:1-18. Most studies of

\(^1\) Translated: "The Song of the Reed Sea." This is taken from the Old Latin Version. This was one of the few translations which was not influenced by the Septuagint's translation of ἔρυθρη Θάλασσα.

this passage which are examined in the light of the ancient
Near Eastern literature are based upon a form-critical and
traditio-historical methodology. This has influenced the
areas of dating, authorship, and unity. Coats has con-
cluded that Exodus 15:1-18 is a basic unit, "a form-critical
and a traditio-historical unit."¹ This approach has also
affected Cross and Freedman's preference for a title for
this song. They have suggested that Exodus 15:1-18 could
legitimately be called either "the Song of Moses" or "the
Song of Miriam." They prefer the latter title for verse 21
has preserved the latter title from the superior tradition.²

Form criticism has also affected the analysis of the
Gattungen in Exodus 15. Rozellar has classified this as a
hymn,³ Noth as a hymn of thanksgiving,⁴ and Muilenburg as a
litany.⁵ Form criticism has also influenced the interpre-
tation of the Sitz im Leben. Mowinckel has related this to

¹ George W. Coats, "The Song of the Sea," Catholic
² Frank M. Cross, Jr. and David Noel Freedman, "The
Song of Miriam," Journal of Near Eastern Studies, XIV:4
(October, 1955), 237.
³ Marc Rozellar, "The Song of the Sea," Vetus
Testamentum, 11:3 (July, 1952), 227.
⁴ Martin Noth, Exodus, the Old Testament Library,
trans. by J. S. Bowden (Philadelphia: Westminster Press,
⁵ James Muilenburg, "A Liturgy on the Triumphs of
Yahweh," Studia Biblica et Semitica: Vriezen Festschrift
to the enthronement festival of Yahweh. Cross has maintained that the cultic setting is in the covenantal festival of Yahweh. Muilenburg has however traced its provenance to the autumnal festival of Yahweh. A major problem, therefore, pertains to hermeneutical approaches to the Song of the Reed Sea.

Interpretation of Terms

Another problem relates to the interpretation of key terms, in Exodus 15:1-18. Should the term רֵכֶן in verse 1, be translated as "chariot" or "charioteer"? If the former is preferred, this may suggest that רֵכֶן is anachronistic.

The etymological background of יִשְׁפָּח, in verse 4, has been related to a Hittite, Egyptian, and Ugaritic background.

דרֵנ in verse 17, has been related to an Arabic, Egyptian, and Ugaritic root. The usage of יָרָח in verse 12 is an enigma. Did the ground swallow the Egyptian army or did they drown in the Reed Sea? Possibly יָרָח is a reference to the underworld of mythology? It may however be understood

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as a metaphor for death?

Another question relates to the interpretation of שֶׁרֶם in verse 17. This word is usually rendered "temple."

Some critical scholars have consequently interpreted this as a reference to the Solomonic Temple.¹ If this is the case, this is an anachronism; unless this is to be regarded as a prophetic reference.² This may however be a reference to another earthly tabernacle? Possibly this could be a reference to the land?

There are a number of fixed pairs in this song. The mere mention of fixed pairs with some conservatives is tantamount to violating the third commandment. The widespread usage of parallel pairs indicates that their appearance in the Song of the Reed Sea is not coincidental. Their usage in this song demands interpretation. How do these relate to the Israelite poet? Does this mean that Israel shared a common literary milieu with the other nations in the ancient Near East? This random selection of key terms reflects some of the problems related to their interpretation.

Textual-Problems

There are a number of textual problems in this song. Verse 2 reads: נָּהֲרָיָּה. The Samaritan Pentateuch and Vulgate have added the first common singular pronominal suffix to נָּהֲרָיָּה. Does this indicate that the Masoretic Text should be emended? Is this an example of haplography? It has also been suggested that this might be an example of "the Textual ambivalence of Hebrew consonants"? The textual problems will be examined in this thesis, yet this writer has based his work on the a priori assumption that Masoretic Text is the fundamental witness to the original consonantal text which was θεόπνευστος. Therefore, the Masoretic Text is terminus a quo in textual criticism.

Many more examples could have been chosen to show the many problems which are an inherent part of Exodus 15:1-18; however, these will be discussed in their proper context. This provides an important background for the next section.

The Importance of this Study

Studies in Exodus 15:1-8 are legion. Most conservative interpreters have not availed themselves of the various resources which modern scholarship has unveiled from the ancient Near East. Conservatives who have written

commentaries have usually given an overview of this pericope and may have done exegetical work on a few key terms.\footnote{See Alan R. Cole, \textit{Exodus} (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 123-26.}

Craigie has compared the Song of the Reed Sea with the Canaanite literature from Ugarit, yet his work is related to only one aspect of this song.\footnote{P. C. Craigie, "The Poetry of Ugarit and Israel," \textit{Tyndale Bulletin}, 22 (1971), 19-26.}

Most of the studies which have interacted with the literature presently available from the ancient Near East were written by critical scholars.\footnote{In this thesis the term critical will generally be used in reference to those who use form criticism, tradition history, literary and redaction criticism to question the Mosaic authorship of Exodus 15:1-18. When the term critical is not used in this specific manner, but in a more general sense, it will usually be modifies by an adjective such as conservative, hence the conservative critical scholar.} These works were often written from a form-critical and/or a traditio-historical perspective or they have been strongly influenced with the attendant presuppositions. It would therefore appear that a study written by a conservative interpreter would be of some benefit to the Christian community.

\textit{The Method of this Study}

The Relationship to the Scope

The aim of this study is not to do a verse by verse exegesis. The aim rather is to do a thorough exegesis and
to analyze problems which have been elucidated from modern scholarship. The aspects of this song which are relevant to this goal will accordingly be examined.

The Relationship to the Procedure

A rejection of the critics' methodology

Rather than using the hermeneutical methodology of the critics, this writer will use the historical-grammatical hermeneutic. There are three reasons for rejecting the critics' methodology. First, Biblical critics are not trustworthy. This is not to say that their work is destitute of any value. Their scholarship certainly has great worth, however they do not have sound literary judgment because they do not respect the quality of the Biblical text.¹ Second, they are skeptical of the miraculous. If a Biblical event is of a miraculous nature, it must be questionable if it is unexplainable with scientific or rational reasons. If Exodus 15:1-18 is divested of the supernatural, then it is merely another tradition as the critics claim. These critics have been influenced by "the spirit of the age they grew up in."² Third, the critics reconstruction of the provenance of the texts which they have studied is superficial. They ask questions such as: "what vanished

² Ibid., p. 8.
documents each author used, when and where he wrote, with what purposes, under what influences--the whole *Sitz im, Leben* of the text."¹ The critics have overwhelming obstacles against them. There is almost a 3500 year gap between them and Exodus 15. There are tremendous religious and cultural differences. The habits of composition and assumptions of Biblical writers are often nebulous. Although the interpreter has greater light than ever before, these problems must mitigate the critics' reconstruction of the genesis of the Biblical texts. The fact is, who is in a position to say that the Song of Miriam in Exodus 15:21 is the provenance of verses 1-8. With the critics' presuppositions their reconstructions cannot be proven wrong, unless Moses was here to defend himself² and even then his authorship may still be questioned. The labyrinthian maze of the critics must therefore be rejected.

_A return to historical grammatical exegesis_

**Definitions**

There are two key words which are significant to this methodology and they will need to be defined. The Greek term ἐρμηνεύω means to "explain, interpret, proclaim,

The English term hermeneutics is derived from this word. The word exegesis is derived from the Greek word ἐξηγέω which means "explain, interpret, tell, report, describe." Both terms are closely related as Mare has observed:

Historical grammatical exegesis will be developed from the viewpoint that there is an inter-action and inter-relation between hermenia and exegesis and that they both are concerned with the principles of interpretation which the interpreter applies to the ancient texts of Scripture to determine its meaning in its own setting and culture.

Presuppositions

The conservative interpreter using the historical grammatical approach to hermeneutics needs to have certain presuppositions. To say that an interpreter has no presuppositions may sound auspicious, nevertheless this would place one in a spurious academic vacuum. The conservative must be enamoured with two presuppositions. The first presupposition is that the interpreter adhere to the doctrine of verbal inerrancy and inspiration of the canonical books of the Bible. This is sine qua non for a conservative.

3 W. Harold Mare, "Guiding Principles for Historical Grammatical Exegesis," *Grace Journal*, 14:3 (Fall, 1973), 14.
Another presupposition is a belief in genuine history. Mare has succinctly stated:

Another important presupposition for conservative hermeneutics is the principle of a personal historical scientific research which sincerely approaches the subject studied from an objective scientific viewpoint and, while doing so, realizes that there is something out there that really factually happened in the past.  

Procedure

The use of historical grammatical exegesis involves the usage of language and history. The usage of language has two basic aspects: lexical and syntactical exegesis. This not only involves the usage of Hebrew but also the other Semitic languages when necessary. The historical aspect of this exegetical method pertains to such details as authorship and cultural setting. It is especially important with the cultural setting to be acquainted with the ancient Near Eastern milieu. The method in this study therefore is the historical grammatical exegetical approach.

1 Mare, "Guiding Principles for Historical Grammatical Exegesis," pp. 16-17; see also Merrill F. Unger, "Scientific Biblical Criticism and Exegesis," Bibliotheca Sacra, 121:481 (January-March, 964), 57-65.
3 Mare, "Guiding Principles for Historical Grammatical Exegesis," pp. 19-22.
The Limitations of this Study

There are certain limitations which should be acknowledged. Archeology has illuminated many aspects of the cultural milieu of the second millennium B.C. Archeology has also provided the student of the Old Testament the cognate languages which are helpful in relation to the grammatical aspects of exegesis. It is too early to speculate about the influence that Ebla will have on Old Testament studies, but it certainly makes this writer cognizant of the finite nature of this study.

Another limitation pertains to the writer's academic inabilities. In a number of places it was necessary to use cognate languages, yet the writer must confess that he is a novice in using comparative Semitic languages. It is nevertheless hoped that their usage as been enlightening and not inhibiting.¹ A goal for this study has been to be as thorough as possible, yet there obviously will be areas where this goal may not have been achieved. It is nevertheless desired that this thesis will be of some value for a better understanding of *carmen aris algosi*.

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY INTERPRETATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Title

Exodus 15:1-18 has been referred to by a number of different titles. Cross and Freedman have referred to this as the "Song of Miriam."\(^1\) Others have referred to this as the "Song of Moses,"\(^2\) "Song of the Sea,"\(^3\) and "Song of the Reed Sea."\(^4\) These titles will be examined here.

Song of Miriam

Albright has also called Exodus 15:1-18 the "Song of Miriam."\(^5\) Cross and Freedman have preferred this title in order to maintain a distinction between Exodus 15 and

\(^1\) Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 237.
the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32. Another justification is derived from the fact that the *incipit* or the first line of a song would have often served as its title. One title of the poem is preserved in verse 1 which would justify labeling this as the Song of Moses, but verse 21 reflects the title of the song taken from the superior tradition which would justify labeling his as the Song of Miriam. Verses 1-18 have been viewed as an expansion of the supposedly older or more predominant cycle of tradition in verse 21, the Song of Miriam. There may be a need to make a distinction between Exodus 15 and Deuteronomy 32, but to refer to Exodus 15:1-18 as the Song of Miriam, in light of Cross and Freedman's perspective, seems to be unacceptable for a conservative interpreter. To be committed to this perspective, it would almost appear necessary that one would have to be committed to a traditio-historical hermeneutic.

**Song of Moses**

If it is true that the title of a song was derived from the incipit, it would be appropriate to refer to verses 1-18 as the Song of Moses. This would also reflect the author of the poem. This would not create any theological

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2 Cross and Freedman have suggested that this is possibly E, *Ibid*.
3 *Ibid*. 

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problems for a conservative. This, however, would not assist in making a distinction between Exodus 15 and the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32.

Song of the Reed Sea

The titles Song of the Sea or Song of the Reed Sea reflect the central theme of this event. In Exodus 14 the word בָּרֶק was used sixteen times. It was also used in Exodus 15:19-21 five times. This word also appears four times in verses 1-18. In this song בָּרֶק has a number of synonyms and synonymous phrases: הָעַל, verse 4; חָסֵד, verses 5 and 8; מַלְאָלָה, verse 5; and מַעַן, verses 8 and 10. Muilenburg has, made this observation:

The Song belongs, too, to the extensive literature relating to the Sea in the Old Testament and in the literatures of the other peoples of the ancient Near East. That the motif is resigned to be of central importance for the author is demonstrated by the immediate framework in which it is enclosed.

It would not be spurious to use the title Song of the Sea or Song of the Reed Sea for these reflect the subject matter of Exodus 15:1-18. It would consequently appear that these last two titles and the title Song of Moses would be legitimate to use. In order to avoid confusion with the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32, Exodus 15:1-18 will be referred to as the Song of the Reed Sea in this thesis.

Unity

The question of the unity of Exodus 15:1-18 has been a problem for critical scholars. At the turn of the century, Sievers contended that verses 1-13 were old and that verses 14-18 were added by a later writer.¹ Watts has also questioned the unity of this passage with this statement: "The very loose, even poor, poetic form makes one wonder what happened to the verses."² The critical scholars especially concerned are those involved in tradition history. Fohrer's laconic remark is definitive: "Traditio-historical study not only inquires how the textual units achieved their final form but also seeks to trace the entire process by which the units-came into being."³

³ Ernst Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, revised and rewritten by George Fohrer, trans. by David E. Green (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 30; see also the concise paperback on tradition history by Walter E. Rast, Tradition History and the Old Testament, Old Testament Series, ed. by J. Coert Rylaarsdam (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972); the other two terse volumes in this Old Testament series were helpful in the writing of this thesis, Norman C. Habel, Literary Criticism and the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971) and Gene M. Tucker, Form Criticism and the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971); the editor has written the same forward for all three books; his forward is extremely helpful as far as providing a synthesis of literary criticism, form criticism, and tradition history.
Coats has examined Exodus 15:1-18 by means of a form critical and traditio-historical study. He has contended in this study that the origin of Exodus 15:1-18 lies in the Song of Miriam, verse 21.\(^1\) Coats has stated that it was not certain that the Song of Miriam\(^2\) extended back to the time of Moses, but his implication was that this was a possibility.\(^3\) The Song of Miriam, therefore, is to be regarded as the oldest form of the Song of the Reed Sea.\(^4\) Noth has indicated that the reason why verse 21 was regarded by some critical scholars as the oldest formulation of the Reed. Sea tradition is because of its brevity.\(^5\) Coats has

\(^1\) Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 8.
\(^2\) In this thesis the Song of Miriam will be used in reference to Ex. 15:21b.
\(^3\) Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 8; it is interesting to observe that Westermann has suggested that it is probable that Ex. 15:21 originated at the historical time of deliverance. He calls this "the oldest Psalm of Israel," Claus Westermann, *The Praise of God in the Psalms*, trans. by Keith R. Crim (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1965), p. 89.
\(^5\) Noth, *Exodus*, p. 121; some critical scholars, however, regard this as a spurious conclusion, see Frank Moore Cross, Jr., "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," *Journal for Theology and the Church: God and Christ: Existence and Province*, V (1968), 11, n. 34; cf. also Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960). One of the subjects that Lord discusses is the use of formulas and formulaic expressions in composing oral poetry. This author recognizes that this approach has inherent problems for a conservative,
likewise set forth that the Song of Miriam is the earliest form of the Song of the Sea. Verses 1-18 were a later stage in the development of the Reed Sea tradition.\(^1\) Coats' methodology may not be a facsimile of Noth's traditio-historical approach, yet they both share an evolutionary approach because this is an inherent part of the traditio-historical interpretive methodology.

According to Coats verses 4-10 should be associated with the Sea tradition. There is internal disunity in verses 4-10. There appears to be a shift in image between verses 4-5 and 6-10. The focus of verses 4-5 lies on the destruction of the enemy by casting them into the Sea. This suggests that a distinct tradition supposedly lies behind verses 4-5. This distinct tradition was either an independent poem or the Song of Miriam.\(^2\) The focus of verses 6-10, however, has changed to crossing the water on a path in the Sea.\(^3\) This supposedly reflects the influence of the Jordan tradition, but it may be used to reflect the problems involved in assuming that brevity is synonymous with antiquity.

\(^1\) Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 17.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Cf. Frank E. Eakin, Jr., "The Reed Sea and Baalism " *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXVI:4 (December, 1967), 383; Eakin explains the change in image by suggesting that Israel has used Baal mythology and has recast it in terms of Yahweh's victory over Yam.
\(^4\) Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 17.
Verses 12-17, according to Coats, should be associated with the Jordan tradition. Verses 12-13; are a transition from Sea to Conquest. Verse 12 has a brief allusion to the event at the sea while verse 13 is the only allusion to Yahweh's leadership in the wilderness.\(^1\) Verses 14-17 allude to the fear of the Canaanites. This is a reference to the conquest theme.\(^2\) Therefore, when Coats concludes that the Song of the Reed Sea is a basic unit, he is concluding "that the Song of the Sea constitutes a basic whole, a form-critical and traditio-historical unit."\(^3\)

To draw this conclusion based upon this methodology is certainly untenable for a conservative interpreter. The subjective nature of Coats' approach is obvious. To accept his thesis, one has to accept that the Song of Miriam is older than the Song of the Reed Sea and that it, also, lies behind verses 4-5.\(^4\) The subjective element in this methodology is demonstrated by the wide disagreement among critical scholars about the traditio-historical development of

\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 17.
\(^4\) Cf. Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 237; they have not accepted this assumption.
the Reed Sea tradition.¹ Hay’s remarks reflect this dilemma:

The widely divergent solutions offered for the literary puzzle, each supported by plausible but unconvincing arguments, leave us no certainty about the literary structure except in regards to a single conclusion: the story as it now stands is a composite of several traditions which, having been brought together, fail to present a clear picture of a comprehensible event. Whether by their own arguments to that end, or unintentionally by their failure to provide a credible solution, the critics have placed this fact beyond doubt.²

The presupposed evolutionary aspects of tradition history are also detrimental for this approach. Noth, also, has reasoned that the Song of Miriam lies behind the Song of the Reed Sea. This assumption is based on the conclusion that brevity reflects antiquity.³ Albright has demonstrated the fallacy of this rational.⁴ The truth is that ancient Oriental literature may have a variety of lengths. There

¹ This disagreement is readily noticeable by comparing Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth"; Eakin, "The Reed Sea and Baalism"; Brevard S. Childs, "A Traditio-Historical Study of the Reed Sea Tradition," *Vetus Testamentum*, XX:4 (October, 190), 406-18; Coats, "The Traditio-Historical Character of the Reed Sea Motif"; and Coats, "The Song of the Sea."

² Lewis S. Hay, "What Really Happened at the Sea of Reeds?" *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXIII:4 (December, 1964), 399; Hay after recognizing this dilemma with the Song of the Reed Sea seeks to solve the problem by an encounter in which Israel defeated the army of Pharaoh. The same criticism that he has applied to others also applies to his thesis, it is “supported by plausible but unconvincing arguments.”

³ Noth, *Exodus*, p. 121.

are nine Sumerian epic tales from about 1800 B.C. which vary in length from approximately one hundred to six hundred lines.¹ The Egyptian story of Sinuhe, which dates about 1900 B.C.,² is slightly longer than the Tale of the Two Brothers³ and the Contendings of Horus and Seth.⁴ Both are preserved in versions dating about the thirteenth century B.C. Kitchen makes this interesting observation about these Egyptian stories: "These exhibit a constancy of average length over six centuries (alongside shorter and longer pieces, both 'late' and 'early'), and they did not grow by gradual accretion."⁵ As far as the interpretive methodologies used by critical scholars in connection with the unity of the Song of the Reed Sea are concerned, one could almost conclude that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

This thesis is based upon the a priori assumption that the Scriptures are the Word of God, as they claim to

² Ibid., pp. 18-22.
³ Ibid., pp. 23-25.
⁴ Ibid., pp. 14-17.
be, and hence the unity of Exodus 15 would be the logical result of this assumption. The strophic structure of this poem also demonstrates the unity in Exodus 15:1-18. This will be examined in chapter 3. The poetical pericope of Exodus 15 was composed by Moses after the great deliverance of Yahweh. He and the children of Israel sang the song which is recorded in verses 1-18. Verse 21, which is a repetition of verse 1, possibly functioned as an anti-strophe. Moses subsequently recorded this song which has been preserved in the Scriptures. It is this piece of poetry which is regarded as a basic unit in this thesis.

Authorship

The subject of authorship is usually regarded as a subject in the field of literary criticism. Literary critics have been divided about the authorship of Exodus 15:1-18. Driver has assigned verses 1-18 to the Elohist writer who took this from a collection of national hymns. Some have questioned the validity of assigning the work of Exodus 15:1-18 to the literary sources JEDP. Albright has

reflected this with the following statement:

The Wellhausen structure, which divided the Pentateuch into a number of different documents and even attempted to split single verses among three or more different sources, has proved to be an exaggerated system against which many protests have been leveled.1

The knowledge of Egyptian, Assyrian, and especially Ugaritic literature has revamped the critic's understanding of Old Testament literature in general and Exodus 15:1-18 in particular. The result is that many critical scholars have abandoned this artificial hermeneutic.

Some contemporary critical scholars have assigned Exodus 15:1-18 to either the Yahwist or Elohist traditions.2 Cross has assigned this "to the Yahwist no later than the early tenth century, and is more easily explained as belonging to common traditions in the shrines of the league."3 Cross' conclusions have been drawn from his traditio-historical study of this poem.4 A commitment to this methodology is quite unacceptable for a conservative interpreter.

Westermann has indicated that the Song of Miriam was

3 Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," p. 11.
uttered as a declarative praise to God immediately after God delivered them.¹ It would appear that if one has made this concession and if one has interacted with the literature of the ancient Near East, the conclusion could then be drawn that it is possible that Moses wrote this song or at least that it was compiled in the general time span of Moses' life. The point is, even for the critical scholar the Mosaic authorship of the Song of the Reed Sea should be within the realm of possibility.

There appears to be a number of reasons for accepting the Mosaic authorship of the Song of the Reed Sea. Exodus 15:1 indicates that Moses took the lead in singing this song. This also indicates that Moses was responsible for the composition of this song.

Further verification comes from Moses' development of the theme "covenant-faithfulness." The noun רְאוֹן is used twenty-one times in the Pentateuch. Moses used this noun in Exodus 15:13, "You have guided with your covenant-faithfulness (רְאוֹנִי) the people whom You have redeemed." God had made a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15. The elements of this covenant included a posterity who would belong to Yahweh and the land of Canaan. In Exodus 15:13, 16 this posterity was called Yahweh's people for He had purchased

¹ Westermann, *The Praise of God in the Psalms*, pp. 83-88; Westermann has used the title "Song of Miriam" to refer to verse 21b of Exodus 15.
Israel. In verses 13 and 17 Israel expected to enter the land of Canaan. In Exodus 15:13 Moses affirmed that God had been faithful to His covenant. The usage of this theme in Exodus 15:13 is consistent with the other usages ofיִרְאָה in the Pentateuch.

Moses has developed two other motifs or themes which confirm his authorship of the Song of the Reed Sea. The first theme relates to Yahweh's description as a warrior in verse 3. This was not a novel theme for it had been introduced in the religions of the ancient Near East in reference to other deities and it may have been inherent in some of the patriarchal traditions. If there was any novelty, it would have been that it was on the "international" level. In Deuteronomy 1:30 God fought for Israel just as He had done at the Reed Sea. The motif of war is a central thought in Deuteronomy 7. Deuteronomy 7:18 is a reference to the Exodus. Deuteronomy 33:2-5, 26-29 relates to war and the

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2 "Motif" is used in this thesis to refer to the theme or content and not to external form.

need to depend upon Yahweh for victory.¹

The second theme is the conception of Yahweh as king in verse 18. This motif is found in other literature from the ancient Near East. It is not novel in the Old Testament. The novelty is derived from "the setting and broader horizons of the conception."² Yahweh, a victorious warrior, was very appropriately acclaimed king. The acknowledgment of Yahweh as king is a theme in the book of Exodus. This concept should be coalesced with the usage of יְהֹוָה in Exodus. In Exodus יְהֹוָה often has the nuance of acknowledging Yahweh's sovereignty. In Exodus 5:2 Pharaoh stated that he did not know יְהֹוָה, Yahweh. Pharaoh did not recognize the sovereignty of Yahweh. Yahweh used His plagues to demonstrate to Pharaoh that Yahweh was Lord of all and not Pharaoh. This concept of יְהֹוָה is stated in Exodus 8:10, 22, 9:14, and 9:29. In Exodus 9:29 Moses told Pharaoh that he would stretch out his hands to stop the plague of hail so that Pharaoh would know (יְהֹוָה) that the earth belonged to Yahweh.

Yahweh also wanted the Egyptians to know that He was sovereign. This is demonstrated in Exodus 7:5. In Exodus 14:4, 18 Yahweh stated that He would use the drowning of Pharaoh's army so that Egypt would know (יְהֹוָה) that Israel's God was יְהֹוָה. God wanted Israel to recognize His sovereignty, Exodus 6:7, 10:2, and 11:7. The deliverance

¹ Ibid., p. 65.
² Ibid., p. 64.
from the Egyptians is used approximately one hundred times in the Old Testament. The purpose of this event was for Israel to recognize (i.e. יִהְウェָה) the sovereignty of Yahweh, Exodus 16:6. The acknowledgment of Yahweh as king in Exodus 15:18 is a grand climax to the God who has demonstrated His absolute sovereignty over the Egyptians and their gods.

This theme is also mentioned in Deuteronomy 33:5. The whole book of Deuteronomy was written in the form of the Near Eastern covenant treaties of the second millennium B.C. This is significant for Yahweh, the king, made a covenant with His vassal, Israel. Deuteronomy presupposes that Yahweh was recognized as King. Since the motifs developed in Exodus 15 are also developed in the whole book of Exodus and Deuteronomy, this would tend to verify that Moses was responsible for the composition of the Song of the Reed Sea.

Date
Late Date

The subject of the date for the Song of the Reed Sea has not gone without debate in this century. One of the

latest dates suggested was 350 B.C. which was defended by Haupt.\(^1\) Bender dated it in 450 B.C.\(^2\) Pfeiffer has placed it in the second half of the fifth century B.C.\(^3\) Noth has more recently stated that this is a relatively late piece which was inserted secondarily into its context.\(^4\) Fohrer has placed it in the late preexilic period.\(^5\) Three reasons have been suggested for these late dates. Verses 13-18 have presumably presupposed the conquest of the land of Canaan.\(^6\) Another argument for a late date was the supposed anachronistic reference to the Philistines in verse 14. It has finally been proposed that verse 17 presupposes the building of the Solomonic Temple.\(^7\) 

\(^1\) Paul Haupt, "Moses' Song of Triumph," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, 20 (April, 1904), 153-54.  
\(^2\) A. Bender, "Das Lied Exodus 15," *Zeitschrift für die Altttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 23 (1903), 47.  
\(^4\) Noth, *Exodus*, p. 123; Noth has indicated that the Song of the Reed Sea is an expansion of verse 21 and that it essentially has no role in the sources; Coats has agreed with Noth's conclusions in "The Song of the Sea," pp. 4-5.  
\(^6\) Philip J. Hyatt, "Yahweh as 'the God of My Father,'" *Vetus Testamentum*, V:2 (April, 1955), 13  
\(^7\) Cf. Mowinckel's argument against an early date, see Sigmund Mowinckel, "Psalm Criticism between 1900 and 1935 (Ugarit and Psalm Exegesis)," *Vetus Testamentum*, V:1 (January, 1955), 13-33.
Earlier Date

The Song of the Reed Sea has been dated in the tenth century B.C. by Sellin\textsuperscript{1} and Driver.\textsuperscript{2} Cross and Freedman have also argued for an early date. They have affirmed that the song was written in the tenth century B.C. and as early as the twelfth century in its original form.\textsuperscript{3} Robertson has placed the date of this song in the twelfth century B.C.\textsuperscript{4} Albright has gone so far as to date it in the early thirteenth century B.C.\textsuperscript{5} Most of the scholars who would adhere to a date between the tenth and thirteenth centuries B.C. have also defended the essential unity of Exodus 15:1-18. Most of these scholars maintain this early date because of the archaic language of this song. A great influence on these scholars has been the study of Ugaritic for it has provided an early language which is cognate with Hebrew and it has provided an early corpus of literature which is

\textsuperscript{1} Sellin, \textit{Introduction to the Old Testament}, p. 189.
\textsuperscript{3} Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 240.
characterized by parallelism.¹

Conservative Date

The conservative date is established by the evidence of Scripture. Of a definitive nature on this subject is 1 Kings 6:1. According to this passage the exodus from Egypt happened 480 years prior to the fourth year of Solomon's reign which is generally regarded as 966 B.C.² The children of Israel, therefore, left Egypt in 1446 B.C. Exodus 15:1 indicates that the Song of the Reed Sea was composed after the crossing of the Reed Sea. This was shortly after their departure from Egypt.

Philological Arguments for a Conservative Date

Very often faith in the God of the Bible is viewed as a faith of ignorance. The faith of ignorance relegates the aspects of a grammatical and historical hermeneutic to a superficial acquaintance. However, since the Bible is the Word of God, it will be confirmed by true history and grammar. The conservative interpreter should therefore be

a diligent student of all the aspects of grammar and history which can elucidate a given passage of Scripture. The confirmation of this early date for the writing of Exodus 15 is corroborated primarily by philological arguments. Although Childs does not agree with a date as early as Cross and Freedman have suggested, nevertheless he does recognize the importance of their philological arguments. His remarks are germane: "Of the various arguments brought forth, the philological arguments carry the most weight."¹

*The preterite*

A possible philological argument for a conservative date pertains to the usage of the preterite in Exodus 15:1-18. The preterite in form is an imperfect, however it functions as a preterite.² Battenfield has succinctly


summarized the usage of the preterite, "The point is, an
imperfect, when indicating a preterite aspect" is translated
as a 'past,' in poetry by the context only and in prose
following ‘az."¹ In order to use legitimately the argument
that the usage of the preterite is evidence of archaic
Hebrew poetry, it is first necessary to demonstrate that the
perfect and imperfect aspects are predominantly used to
narrate past events.² The context of Exodus 15 is a lucid
reference to the recent victory of Yahweh over the Egyptian
army at the Reed Sea. As would be expected, the perfect
aspect is used quite often. It needs to be demonstrated that
the imperfect aspects function in a parallel sense to the
perfect aspect. Two examples are found in verse 5, יַסְכִּים אִים, and in verse 12, הַכְּבָלַת יָם. In verse 5 יַסְכִּים אִים obviously does
not refer to a frequent happening for "the deeps" only
covered the Egyptian army once. Also הַכְּבָלַת יָם is parallel
with יַסְכִּים אִים. Although הַכְּבָלַת יָם morphologically is in the imper-
fect aspect, it obviously is not referring to frequentative
action for the earth swallowed them at the time of the death

²70; LaSor has indicated, that there was a preterite at
Ebla; "the preterite forms ik-tub and ik-su₁₁-ud are
similar to Akkadian iprus and Hebrew yiqtol"; if this has
been correctly identified this would support the theory that
there was an original yqtl preterite in West Semitic.

¹ James R. Battenfield, "Advanced Hebrew Grammar,
(unpublished lecture notes, Grace Theological Seminary,
1977)

² Robertson, Linguistic Evidence, p. 27.
of the Egyptian army. It should also be observed that
\( הָכִּילֵיָה \) is in a parallel relation with \( גָּפַר \). In verses 14-16 a succession of verbal forms are used: perfect-imperfect-perfect-perfect-imperfect-perfect-perfect-imperfect-imperfect-perfect-imperfect-imperfect. It is therefore clear that there is a parallel relationship between the perfect and imperfect aspects of the verbs in these verses and that these verbs do not describe action which is qualitatively different. The comments of Robertson aver this:

If the suff\(^1\) and pref forms describe qualitatively different types of action or states, the poet went from one to another in a bewildering fashion. It is easier to take all the verbs as syntactically equivalent.\(^2\)

This distribution between the perfect and imperfect aspects of the various verbs also has occurred in Ugaritic poems. In the Ugaritic poem Anat I an example of this is found in lines 4-9.

\[
\begin{align*}
qm \ y't\ 'r & \quad \text{He arose, he served} \\
w \ yslhmnh & \quad \text{and he ate} \\
ybrd \ td \ lpnwh & \quad \text{he extended a breast before him} \\
bhrb \ mlht & \quad \text{with a sharp sword} \\
qs \ mr'i \ ndd & \quad \text{a slice of fatling, he went} \\
y'sr \ wysqynh & \quad \text{he served drinks and he gave him to drink.}\(^3\)
\end{align*}
\]

This pattern in Ugaritic reflects its antiquity. It would

\(^1\) This is how Robertson refers to the perfect aspect; he also refers to the imperfect aspect as the prefix; \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 8-9.
\(^2\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 30.
appear that the perfect and imperfect aspects of the verbs are equivalent syntactically. Exodus 15 has this same distribution and it indicates that the imperfect aspect functioned as a preterite. This reflects the antiquity of the poem.

The preservation of a-visible in a final-visible verb when it opens a syllable

Another philological argument for an early date of Exodus 15 is the preservation of a yod or waw when it opens a syllable. There are a number of examples of this found in Ugaritic literature. Text 125:24 reads wy’ny krt, "and Keret answers",1 Anat 1:9 wysqynh, "and he gave him to drink",2 and Keret 1:26 ybk, "he cried."3 In Hebrew the -/l was not usually preserved. There are some examples of this, however, in early Hebrew where the final - was preserved. An example of this is found in Exodus 15:5 ḫîyim. Another example is found in Numbers 24:6 ḫn. This does not mean that if a standard form appears in the same poem that this is not genuine archaic Hebrew poetry. An example of this is Deuteronomy 32 for verse 37 preserves the form ḫh and verse 3 preserves the form ḫn.

Certain words probably had a tendency to preserve the archaic orthography. A reason for this tendency is that

1 Ibid., p. 192.
2 Ibid., p. 253.
3 Ibid., p. 250.
a syllable closing \( v \) or \( w \) would have formed a diphthong, but the vowel following would have had a tendency to preserve \( v/l \). With the loss of the final short vowel, \( v/l \) would have closed the syllable and would have eventually been lost. When \( yod \) or \( waw \) was in the intervocalic position even though it remained syllable opening, they were eventually lost through elision. This apparently was the case in verb forms with afformatives beginning with a vowel. Such would be the case with the third feminine singular and third common plural of the imperfect aspect. Thus, it would not be out of place to discover the usage of archaic forms in early Hebrew poetry as is the case in Exodus 15:5, in fact it verifies that this is genuine archaic Hebrew poetry.

**The archaic relative pronoun**

A conservative date is further corroborated by the use of the archaic relative pronoun. In Ugaritic the relative pronoun was \( d \) and \( dt \). An important concern which is derived from the usage of the relative pronoun in Exodus 15 is the usage of \( d \). This relative pronoun appears to be inflected according to number, gender, and case but at the same time it appears as if this relative pronoun was treated

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1 There are a number of passages where the \( yod \) and \( waw \) are preserved: Numbers 24:6, Deuteronomy 32:37, Psalms 36:1, 9, 57:2, 77:4, 78:44, 122:6, Job 12:6, 19:2, 31:8, and Proverbs 26:7.

indeclinably. The relative pronoun can be traced to the Proto-Semitic relative pronoun *d*. The Ugaritic relative pronoun is cognate with the Arabic relative pronoun, the nominative is *du*, the genitive is *di*, and the accusative is *da*. The Proto-Semitic *d* became יְדִ in Aramaic and יִ in Hebrew. The relative pronoun יִ is used twice in verses 13 and 16 of Exodus 15. This once again reflects the archaic nature of Exodus 15:1-18.

*The nun energicum*

The appearance of the archaic pronominal suffix יְנִ supplies further support for a conservative date of Exodus 15. This suffix is found in Exodus 15:2 on יְנִפְרַנְפָּה. The generally used third masculine singular pronominal suffix is יְנִ or יְנִ. The latter, *nun energicum*, is a vestige of its predecessor יְנִ. The implication is that this archaic form would have a tendency to appear in genuine archaic poetry.2 If this is true, it should be possible to confirm this hypothesis from Ugaritic. In Ugaritic there are four different forms of the third masculine singular pronominal suffix: -ח, -ח, -נ, -ה.3 The two forms of this -ן and -ה are germane to this discussion. There are a number of examples of

2 The exception to this would be if this was an example of archaizing in a latter poem.
the former. Text 127:26 reflects this by the usage of wywšrmn, "and (it/) they instruct(s) him";1 1 Aqht 59, tšnn, "she set him";2 76:1:12, yhnnn, "he shows him favor"3 and 151, tshtnn, "they caused him to wake up."4 There are a number of examples of the latter: ’Ant 1:5, yslhmnh, "he feeds him"5 and 1:9, wysqynh, "and he gave him to drink."6 Consequently, this demonstrates the antiquity of the nun energicum and hence this is further confirmation of the archaic nature of the Song of the Reed Sea.

The pronominal suffix מ

Another suffix which is characteristic of early Hebrew poetry is the third masculine plural7 pronominal suffix מ. This suffix is used nine times in Exodus 15:1-18. This consistent usage has caused various reactions among scholars. Some have explained this as conscious and artificial archaizing.8 Cross and Freedman have however indicated that the consistent usage of this suffix is

1 Ibid., p. 38, par. 6.17.  
2 Ibid.  
3 Ibid.  
4 Ibid.  
5 Ibid.  
6 Ibid.  
7 Hereinafter referred to as 3mp; also other such references will be abbreviated in the same manner.  
indicative of the genuine antiquity of Exodus 15.¹ There are two reasons for this latter position. First, archaizing is usually characterized by the misuse or mixed usage of archaic forms. This, however, is not the case in Exodus 15:1-18. The second proof of this is a rebuttal to the argument that this suffix only occurs with verbs.² This kind of argument overlooks the fact that there are no examples in Exodus 15 of a noun with a 3mp suffix affixed to it.³ The presence of יָהָר, therefore, in Exodus 15 does not warrant the conclusion that Exodus 15 is an example of archaizing.

The enclitic mem

The last confirmation of a conservative date for the Song of the Reed Sea is the usage of the enclitic mem. Ugarit and the Amarna letters have made clear the existence of the enclitic mem.⁴ The usage of the enclitic mem is still enigmatic for scholars are not certain whether its absence or presence causes any difference.⁵ Hummel has

² See Kautzsch, Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar, p. 258.
⁴ Robertson, Linguistic Evidence, p. 80.
added seventy-six examples to an already established list of thirty-one examples in Hebrew. Since many of the examples were not recognized by the Masoretes, the interpretation of the data has not been without problems. In Exodus 15 these problems are not of consequence for the enclitic *mem* is prefixed to the preposition כ. Since the Amarna letters and Ugaritic literature attest to the usage of enclitic *mem*, the antiquity of it is well established. If it can be established that it was present in early Hebrew and that it was used more frequently in early Hebrew poetry than in standard Hebrew poetry, this could be used as further confirmation of an early date. There are fifty-two examples of the usage of כ in poetry and two of these are found in Exodus 15:5, 8.

It has been established that the majority of these examples occur in early Hebrew poetry. This does not establish solid proof for an early date, but it does verify that it was used regularly in early Hebrew poetry.

When these arguments are viewed collectively, they provide strong support for a conservative date. The point to be made is that Mosaic authorship and hence a late fifteenth century B.C. date is not refuted by the philological

3. Ibid., p. 108.
arguments, rather it is supported by them in that these philological considerations are characteristic of Northwest Semitic languages in that general time period.
Chapter III

Critical Interpretative Considerations

Genre

The study of literary types or *Gattungen* is a means of determining, for the form critic, insights into the beliefs of a people. This methodology is based upon the assumption that prior to written literature there was an oral tradition. Gunkel had indicated that the narratives of Genesis were communicated orally by means of sagas. The work of Gunkel is the foundation for the investigation of *Gattungen*. Gunkel's methodology was demonstrated in his extensive research in Genesis and Psalms. The disciples of Gunkel used his approach for other portions of Scripture.


For example Hugo Gressman examined the genre of the historical writings outside the Hexateuch.¹

The usage of the literary genre by the form critic has made some valuable contributions for the exegesis of the Old Testament. One of these contributions is that form criticism has demonstrated the artificial nature of the documentary hypothesis.² Another contribution is the classification of Formgeschichte by literary types. This has been enhanced by the investigation of literary types in the larger background of other literature of the ancient Near East. This has given the conservative interpreter a much greater understanding of the Old Testament, especially the poetical sections.³ Exodus 15:1-18 will presently be examined in light of the various literary types which have been used to describe this song.

The Gattungen Is a Hymn

The Song of the Reed Sea has been examined in reference to its literary type. Inspite of the great attention

¹ Hahn, *The Old Testament in Modern Research*, p. 130.
it has received, there still remains no consensus of agree-
ment among form critical scholars about the genre of Exodus
15:1-18. Fohrer has maintained that this song is a hymn.¹
His conclusions are based upon his classifications of the
literary types in the poetry of ancient Israel.² Fohrer has
defined a hymn as "a song praising the greatness and majesty
of Yahweh in his creation and governance of the destiny of
men and nations."³ There are hymnic elements in the Song of
the Reed Sea. The perorations in verses 6 and 11 are an
example of the poem's hymnic elements. Watts⁴ and Rozellar⁵
have also classified Exodus 15 as a hymn.

The *Gattungen* Is a Hymn of Thanksgiving

Martin Noth primarily views the Song of the Reed Sea
as a hymn with elements of a thanksgiving song incorporated
into it.⁶ One of the aspects of a thanksgiving hymn is that
the body of the hymn is made up of a narrative interwoven
with elements of confession and confidence.⁷ In the Psalms
this need is expressed either through the sin of the

¹ Sellin, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 188.
individual or through the enemies' wickedness from which the individual is then freed.\textsuperscript{1} This latter need appears to be represented in this song. It must be pointed out however that even Noth has recognized that it is not primarily a thanksgiving song.\textsuperscript{2}

The \textit{Gattungen} Is a Hymn of Divine Enthronement

Mowinckel has indicated that this is a hymn of the divine enthronement.\textsuperscript{3} According to Mowinckel's classification of psalms, an enthronement psalm is one where Yahweh is saluted as king. Often in the introduction the characteristic phrase \( \text{ךָלֶם נֹשֵׁא} \), appears. This phrase does not appear in the introduction of the Song of the Reed Sea, but \( נֹשֵׁא \) does appear with the imperfect aspect of \( \text{ךָלֶם} \) in verse 18. This psalm was supposedly connected with the harvest and new year festival. The poet had experienced a vicarious vision in which Yahweh had done some great deeds, such as

\begin{enumerate}
\item Noth, \textit{Exodus}, p. 123.
\item Mowinckel, \textit{The Psalms in Israel's Worship}, I, 126.
\item \textit{Ibid.}, p. 107; it should be observed that the interpretation of Mowinckel of \( \text{ךָלֶם נֹשֵׁא} \), is very speculative; this phrase would be better understood as "the Lord is king" or "the Lord reigns," instead of "the Lord has become king," Otto Eissfeldt, "Jahwe als Konig," \textit{Zeitschrift für die Altestamentliche Wissenschaft}, 4.6 (1928), pp. 84-88; John Gray disagrees with Eissfeldt's criticism, John Gray, "The Kingship of God in the Prophets and Psalms," \textit{Vetus Testamentum}, XI:1 (January, 1961), 1-29.
\end{enumerate}
defeating Pharaoh and his army. He has also conquered their gods, Exodus 15:11. Yahweh then took the throne. The Reed Sea becomes the primeval sea and Egypt becomes Rahab, the primeval dragon. Mowinckel was not referring to a particular historical event but rather to a mythical event which was real to the poet. Since the events of each are associated with the creation of the world and the exodus from Egypt, the people have a basic knowledge of the events to which the poet refers. As Mowinckel has stated:

They take it for granted that the series of events referred to is well known beforehand to those who are to hear or sing the psalm; they refer to a (mythical) conception which they share with a larger group. The enthronement of Yahweh must to them have been an event which could be both presented and alluded to, because the group knew that it had now taken place.

The *Gattungen* Is a Litany

Muilenburg regards this as a liturgy or litany. A litany is a sentence followed by a response. Fohrer has indicated that a liturgy "results from the linking of several literary types to form a larger composition." A hymn is a general classification of a literary type which may

include aspects of other literary types. Likewise the term liturgy is a broad term which may contain a number of Gattungen. Muilenburg has further indicated that this psalm was composed for liturgical purposes in the cult. It was supposedly used for the celebration at the autumnal festival.¹ Muilenburg has several reasons for this being a liturgy. This song has a specific beginning and ending. Although they are separate, they still stand in relation to each other. The primary divisions are of the same approximate length and they are permeated by hymnic refrains in strategic places, such as verses 6, 11, and 16. These primary divisions are divided into strophes. Key words are found in key positions in order to help the poem make progress. The images are also found in climatic contexts. Similar cola will be repeated in the same literary context, such as verse 5, יְהַבֵּית, and verse 10, יִנְהָלֵהוּ. A very important factor is the alternation between confessional speech of praise and the narrative concerning the enemy.²

² Ibid., p. 237.
The Gattungen Is a Hymn of Victory

The genre of this psalm has been regarded as one of victory by Cross and Freedman\(^1\) and also Cassuto.\(^2\) Kitchen also regards this as a song of triumph.\(^3\) Kitchen advocates this view because of the external background. This is the Hebrew counterpart to the Egyptian hymns of triumph by Tuthmosis III, Amenophis III, Ramesses II, and Merenptah.\(^4\) This also supposedly fits the context.\(^5\) It also fits the historical background.\(^6\)

An Evaluation of these Studies of the Gattungen of Exodus 15:1-18

It would appear that the preceding analysis of the various literary types leaves one with no consensus on this subject. One of the basic problems with most of these views is that most scholars regard the genesis of Exodus 15:1-18 as the cult. This separates the Song of the Reed Sea from the historical context of Exodus 14-15. Mowinckel, who has interpreted this song as an enthronement psalm, has based his arguments upon his speculations about Israel's

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\(^1\) Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 237.
\(^6\) *Ibid.*
New Year Festival. He has drawn some of his conclusions about Israel's New Year Festival from the Babylonian New Year Festival.¹ By doing this Mowinckel has divorced this song from its immediate context in Scripture.

This song appears to be a concatenation of many literary types. The song apparently does have hymnic elements. It appears to have the characteristics of a thanksgiving song. It does have liturgical elements. Finally, it does have the characteristics of a hymn of triumph. If Fohrer's statement is accurate that a liturgy "results from the linking of several types to form a larger composition,"² the liturgical genre may tentatively be preferred.

Muilenburg's analysis of Exodus 15 as a liturgy, however, is not without problems for the conservative interpreter. The Hungarian scholar Szorenyi has listed some criteria for determining if a psalm may be classified as cultic or non-cultic.³ He indicates that if a psalm had a liturgical usage in the cult there should be certain intrinsic evidences for a cultic setting, such as a description of the Temple, or a sacrifice, or a festival or some

¹ Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, II, 233-34; Mowinckel's reasoning is not based on solid objective facts, see Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, P. 955.
other cultic act.\textsuperscript{1} If there is no cultic emphasis, this psalm is not liturgical.

The Song of the Reed Sea may supposedly appear to be the concatenation of many literary genres. A poem with many literary types is an enigma for form critical purposes because the form critic's purpose in determining the literary genre is to determine the cultic setting of a psalm. A similar situation is found in Psalm 36. Psalm 36 tentatively has three literary genres in thirteen verses. Dahood has drawn this conclusion: "The coexistence of three literary types within a poem of thirteen verses points up the limitations of the form-critical approach to the Psalter."\textsuperscript{2} This conclusion should be applied to Exodus 15:1-18 as Childs' conclusions reflect, "the Song does not reflect any one genre in its form which would give the key to its function within the early life of the nation."\textsuperscript{3}

\section*{Setting}

The word setting is used as a synonym for the German expression \textit{Sitz im Leben}.\textsuperscript{4} Gunkel was not satisfied

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} \textit{Ibid}.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} Childs, \textit{The Book of Exodus}, p. 244.
  \item \textsuperscript{4} Tucker, \textit{Form Criticism and the Old Testament}, p. 15.
\end{itemize}
with only classifying the literature of the Old Testament by
literary types, but he also attempted to discover the *Sitz
im Leben* or the situation in life from which a specific
literary genre arose.¹ Every ancient literary genre was
initially related to a specific aspect of the national life
of Israel, maintained Gunkel. By studying the usage of each
type of *Gattungen*, the situation in life in which it was
used could be located.² An example of this was Gunkel's
analysis of the Psalms. Gunkel had raised a question which
needed an answer. In essence this question was, were the
Psalms used by the community of Israel or by the individual
Israelite as he worshipped? Since many of them seemed to
express a personal religious feeling, they were assigned to
the postexilic period because it was regarded as the age of
the individual. Gunkel maintained that the oral form
regressed in time to the days of the worshipping community.
Therefore, in oral form they originally were cultic hymns
which were composed for worship in the pre-exilic days of
Israel's amphictyony.³

Mowinckel carried this process a step further "by
refusing the artificiality of detaching the psalms from the

137-38.
rituals that had supposedly shaped them."¹ There is a methodological difference between Mowinckel and Gunkel. The latter began with similarities of form and worked to a common cultic *Sitz im Leben* for all the forms of a literary type. Mowinckel reversed this procedure and "begins with the cult, and derives the various literary forms from the exigencies of the cult."² A primary difference between Mowinckel and Gunkel, therefore, is Mowinckel's cultic emphasis.³ This cultic emphasis of Mowinckel has laid a foundation for modern day Old Testament studies.⁴ Of course, some in their zeal have gone further than Mowinckel. Others however have cautiously questioned and modified Mowinckel's approach to the Psalter as well as the other Hebrew poetical sections.⁵ Those who approach the poetical sections of the Old Testament consequently approach it with a cultic

consciousness. Davies' comments are germane: "It is the quest for 'cultic reality' and the cultic nucleus; which now dominates contemporary study of the Psalms."\(^1\) The various settings for Exodus 15:1-18 will presently be examined.

**Enthronement Festival of Yahweh**

Exodus 15 has been associated with the enthronement festival of Yahweh.\(^2\) Mowinckel maintains this presupposition. Weiser associates Exodus 15 with the covenant festival, but this is essentially the same presupposition as Mowinckel's. Weiser verifies this conclusion when he states that Exodus 15:1-18 "is a festival hymn to Yahweh . . . and to have been composed for the enthronement of Yahweh, which was celebrated at the national feast of the covenant."\(^3\) Weiser's festival of the covenant is the cultic


\(^3\) Arthur Weiser, *The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development*, trans. from the 4th ed., with revisions by the author, by Dorothea M. Barton (New York: Association Press, 1961), p. 106; Weiser would probably not agree with this statement, but Mowinckel would, see Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, II, 228-29; cf. also Helmer Ringgren, "Enthronement Festival or Covenant Renewal?" *Biblical Research*, 7 (1962), 45-48; Ringgren has observed that there are many similarities between Mowinckel and Weiser, but he has also recognized that each has a different emphasis.
basis from which he interprets most of the Psalms.\(^1\) An important caution must be mentioned in reference to Mowinckel and Weiser's use of the cult. Muilenburg has stated that Mowinckel sees too many types under the rubric of the enthronement festival of the New Year.\(^2\) This same criticism should be applied to Weiser.

**Covenant Festival of Yahweh**

Cross has associated the Song of the Reed Sea with the covenant festival of the spring New Year.\(^3\) Cross has maintained that Exodus 15 possibly originated in the cult at Gilgal in the twelfth century B.C.\(^4\) His conclusions have been stimulated by his studies in early Hebrew orthography.\(^5\) Cross has further been influenced by the assumption that Israel shared certain motifs with her Canaanite neighbors. Ugaritic literature has provided a basis for this assumption.

In Ugaritic literature Baal was a divine warrior who


\(^3\) Ibid.

overcame *Yamm*. After this victory a palace was built for *Ba’l* on Mount *Sapon*. A great feast was given among the gods and then the temple cult was inaugurated.¹ After this *Ba’l* became a slave to *Mot*. *Ba’l*’s consort ‘*Anat* defeated *Mot* and *Ba’l* was consequently released. *Ba’l* entered into another conflict with *Mot* and defeated him.² *Ba’l* and ‘*Anat* next went to war with *Lotan*, a dragon who corresponds supposedly to the biblical Leviathan. *Lotan* was equated with *Yamm*. The result of this victory over the dragon was "to establish the rule of the warrior-king of the gods."³ Cross has stated his purpose for discussing the *Ba’l* cycle:

> The *Ba’l* cycle relates the emergence of kingship among the gods. The tale of the establishment of a dynastic temple and its cultus is a typical subtheme of the cosmogony and its ritual, and is found also in *Enuma, elis* and . . . in the Bible.⁴

The motifs of the Ugaritic literature are supposedly transparent in the Song of the Reed Sea. Three of these themes which are observable are the following: the divine warrior enters into combat and gains the victory at the Sea, a sanctuary is built on the mount of inheritance, and the god manifests his eternal kingship.⁵

Cross’ interpretation of these motifs has not left his presuppositions unaffected. He has observed in Exodus

¹ Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," p. 5.
15 that there is no reference to an east wind blowing to split the sea so that the Israelites are able to cross on a dry sea bed. Neither is there reference to the Egyptians drowning in the sea.\textsuperscript{1} In the so-called late prose sources in the Bible, the primary motif becomes the dividing of the sea and Israel crossing on dry ground.\textsuperscript{2} The poetical sections developed in two directions. In one group the language is mythical and in the other the creation battle with \textit{Yamm} is interwoven with the historical tradition of Exodus.\textsuperscript{3} Cross has derived the following conclusion:

Our survey brings us to the conclusion that the Song of the Sea cannot be fitted into the history of the prose and poetic traditions of the Exodus, except at the beginning of the development in the period of the judges. Its independence is remarkable, preserved by the fixity of its poetic form while prose traditions, especially those orally transmitted, developed and crystallized in a complex development.\textsuperscript{4}

It is from this analysis that Cross has concluded that Exodus 15:1-18 was composed for the cultus of the early league shrine at Gilgal. It is at Gilgal that the Exodus and Conquest are brought together in these cultic acts. Verses 1-12 of Exodus 15 represent the victory at the Reed Sea and verses 13-28 the conquest of the land. Cross has reconstructed the cultic festival at Gilgal around Joshua 3-5.\textsuperscript{5} The ark was carried in a formal procession to Gilgal.

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 16. \textsuperscript{2} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 17-19. 
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 19-20. \textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 20-21. 
\textsuperscript{5} Cross, "The Divine Warrior in Israel's Early Cult," pp. 26-27.
The Jordan was dammed. Not only was the battle array permitted to pass over on dry ground, but it pictured the crossing of the Reed Sea as well as the crossing over into the new land. When they had traveled from Shittim to Gilgal, they set up twelve memorial stones to the twelve tribes when they celebrated the covenant festival. Then the circumcision etiology was carried out and the general of the host of Yahweh made an appearance. Cross calls this the "Passover-Massot," the old spring festival of the New Year. Therefore, the provenance of Exodus 15 is found in the Gilgal cult in the twelfth century B.C.¹

Some cautions must be observed in reference to Cross' analysis of this song. Cross has stated that there is no reference to an east wind blowing to split the sea so that Israel is able to cross on dry ground. He has also stated that there is no reference to the Egyptians' drowning in the sea.² Cross' interpretation of some of the information contained in this song is questionable. Although Exodus 15 does not specifically mention the strong east wind and the path through the sea, it certainly depicts these in verses 8-10. The strong east wind is referred to in verse 8 "the blast of your nostrils" and in verse 10 "blew with your wind." Verse 8 seems to indicate that there was a path in

² Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," p. 16.
the sea. The prepositional phrase יָדָם is used in Joshua 3:13, 16 to refer to a path for crossing the Jordan River.\(^1\)

Cross has also stated that the Song of the Reed Sea was brought together in the early days of the judges.\(^2\) If this is the case, this would have been one of the few times that all of the tribes of Israel cooperated during the period of the judges.

A final caution deals with the motifs. There may be a similarity between the motifs of the Song of the Reed Sea and the mythological texts pertaining to Ba‘l.\(^3\) The Hebrews were undoubtedly aware of some of the mythology of her neighbors due to their cultural contacts and undoubtedly some of the imagery would be shared because they shared a common cultural setting. However, if there are common motifs, a conservative interpreter must insist that there is certainly a theological distinction. Knife's remarks are germane:

> In the common culture of the ancient Near East, similar vocabulary, thought forms, poetic structure, figures of speech, etc., belonged to each ethnic group in common. Hence, the parallels that crop up everywhere. But the meaning in biblical literature, is often

\(^1\) Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 14, n. 50.
\(^3\) Craigie, "The Poetry of Ugarit and Israel," p. 25.
unique because of its distinctly different theological and philosophical viewpoint.¹

Harris has appropriately concluded "that mythological symbols are used in the Bible for purposes of illustration and communication of truth without in the least adopting the mythology or approving of its ideas."²

Autumnal Festival of Yahweh

The Song of the Reed Sea has also been associated with the autumnal festival by Muilenburg³ and Clement.⁴ Clement has evidently been influenced by Newman's development of the festival cult. There are two themes in Newman's development of this celebration. First, Jerusalem is chosen to be Yahweh's dwelling place. Second, Yahweh chooses the Davidic dynasty to reign over Israel.⁵ Newman, however, does not see the Sinaitic covenant as having been used in the

Jerusalem autumnal festival.\textsuperscript{1} But Clement maintains that it was used in the festival. Clement has based his reason for this on the assumption that the Sinaitic and Davidic covenant are two stages in the religious development of Israel.\textsuperscript{2} In defense of this point, Clement attempts to prove that Exodus 15 and Psalm 78 "set forth the election of David and Mount Zion as the goal and climax of the exodus and conquest."\textsuperscript{3} Hence, the conclusion has been drawn that Exodus 15 was used in Jerusalem's autumnal festival.

An Evaluation of Cultic Interpretations

It would appear that in these various cultic interpretations there are some inherent weaknesses. The preceding analysis of the various cultic settings of Exodus 15 demonstrates the conflicting interpretations. Another major criticism is that these cultic interpretations have divorced the composition of Exodus 15 from its immediate context in the Scriptures. A final criticism is that many scholars have not recognized a difference between an original and a secondary \textit{Sitz im Leben}. A factor which may have an influence on this presupposition is the possibility that the Song of the Reed Sea was used in worship in subsequent times. Craigie has seen this danger and has made this valuable

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Ibid.}, n. 23.
\textsuperscript{2} Clement, \textit{Prophecy and Covenant}, p. 62.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 64.
caution:

This may account for the ease with which so many scholars find its *Sitz im Leben* in the regular life of Israel, and it points to the danger and difficulty of failing to distinguish between an original and secondary *Sitz im Leben*.1

*Strophe and Meter*

A study of the strophic and metrical structure for a particular section of Hebrew poetry is *sine qua non* for the interpretation of that passage. The discoveries of the Ugaritic literature have contributed much in the elucidation of Hebrew poetry. The result is that the modern interpreter has a greater understanding of Semitic poetry in general and Hebrew poetry in particular. The strophic and metrical analysis for the Song of the Reed Sea has not been unaffected. Coats has made the statement that the "metrical and strophic structure in vv. 1b-18 suggests that the Song of the Sea should be considered a classical example of Hebrew poetry."2 The purpose of this section is to analyze the strophic and metrical structure of Exodus 15:1-18.


2 Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 3.
Strophe

At the beginning of this century, Driver made this remark about the strophic structure of Exodus 15: "there is at present little unanimity among scholars."¹ The following chart has been incorporated into this thesis to show the structural divisions proposed by some prominent scholars who have analyzed the strophic structure of Exodus 15:1-18.

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¹ Driver, *The Book of Exodus*, p. 129.
² A number in parentheses means that the author(s) has excised this verse from the text.
³ This writer has taken most of this chart from Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 2; the analysis by Freedman has been added by this writer; the articles from which this synopsis was derived are: Hans Schmidt, "Das Meerlied, Ex.,
The preceding synopsis reflects a lack of consensus about the strophic structure of Exodus 15. This situation has however been rectified by Muilenburg. Freedman has verified this observation with this comment:

The existence of a strophic structure in this poem may be regarded as highly probable if not virtually certain. The single most important clue has been provided by Professor James Muilenburg in his recent study Exodus 15.

Muilenburg has defined a strophe in this way:

A strophe, then, may be defined as a series of a bi-cola or tri-cola with a particular beginning and a particular close, possessing unity of thought, structure, and style.

The strophic length may be reflected by an alphabetic acrostic, the cryptic "Selah," natural "sense-groups," or a refrain. In Exodus 15 the strophic structure is elucidated


4 That is by the natural structure of the psalm; this may include a change of subject or addressee or some other rhetorical feature.
because of the refrains in verses 6, 11, and 16.

According to Freedman the salient point to understand the strophic structure is the refrains. The word refrain is not being used in a technical sense for a refrain is a line of poetry which is repeated periodically in a poem. Actually these refrains are dividers or buffers between the strophes. These refrains or dividers connect what precedes and follows. In verse 6 the poet used the tetragrammaton twice. It was not used in verses 4-5, but it was used in verses 2-3. In verses 4-5 the poet is concerned with the enemy and in verses 7-10 he is concerned with the enemy. Thus, verse 6 not only summarizes the first strophe, verses 2-5, but it is the terminus a quo for the following strophe.

Verse 11 does not relate as well to the theme of its respective strophe as verses 6 and 16 do, but there is a reason for this. Verse 11 is the apex of the poem and hence it relates more generally to the preceding and following strophes. Verse 6 focuses on Yahweh's powerful right hand which destroyed the enemy and verse 16 focuses on the crossing of Yahweh's people into the promised land. Verse 11 is the fulcrum between these two. Yahweh is responsible for the victory at sea and for the triumphant march to Canaan.

2 Ibid., p. 185.
In verse 16 the strophe is brought to a masterful conclusion. The repetition of the phrase "until thy people pass over" accentuates the movement of Israel into the promised land of Canaan. Thus the connection between the refrain and the preceding strophe is clear.¹

The refrains also stand apart from their strophes in form and content. These three refrains share formal characteristics which set them apart from the rest of the poem.² Only three refrains resemble the design of partial repetition which is familiar from other Biblical poetry as well as Ugaritic poetry.³ The content of the refrains is listed in the following:

verse 6

Your right hand, O Yahweh is glorious in power
Your right hand, O Yahweh shatters the enemy.

verse 11

Who is like You among the gods, 0 Yahweh?
Who is like You awesome in holiness
Awesome in praiseworthy deeds worker of wonders?

³ Ibid.
verse 16  הָעַד-קָנָּה Until Your people  
ירָקְיָה יָהֵウェ ה pass over, O Yahweh  
ירָקְיָה יָהֵウェ Until Your people  
סָפָרְקֶנָּה whom You purchased, pass over.

The repetitive parallelism should be noticed. The parallelism in verses 6 and 16 could be illustrated in the following pattern:

verse 6  ab/cd  
ab/ef  
verse 16  abc/abd

Verses 6 and 16 are couplets, however verse 11 is a triad. The first two bicola of verse 11 reflect this parallelism. They might be illustrated in the following manner:

abc/adc

The last bicolon of verse 11 breaks this parallelism. This has presented a problem for some. It has been suggested that the last bicolon of verse 11 should be taken with verse 12.² Freedman maintains that the reason why verse 11 is more elaborate than verses 6 and 16 is because it is the apex of the poem. He likens these three refrains to a pyramid. The two regular refrains, verses 6 and 16, form the base and verse 11 is the apex of the pyramid.³

This parallelism is further demonstrated by the

¹ This writer is using c to represent ספָרְקֶנָּה.
² Watts, "The Song of the Sea--Ex. XV," p. 373.
usage of the divine names in the refrain. In Exodus 15:1-18 the divine name is used ten times and the abbreviated form Yah is used once. The divine name is used once in the exordium, verse 1, and twice in the coda, verses 17-18. In verse 2 Yah is used once and in verse 3 Yahweh is used twice. A reason for its usage in verses 2-3 is because Yahweh is the object of the confession.\(^1\) As far as the poem is concerned, the tetragrammaton appears in verse 6 twice and once in verses 11 and 16. This would appear to be significant for outside of the exordium, the coda, and the two verses where Yahweh is the subject of interest the divine name is only used in the refrains. This would appear to demonstrate the unique nature of verses 6, 11, and 16. The uniqueness of these three verses is the argument for them being understood as refrains or dividers. Freedman's conclusion is germane: "Thus the three refrains or dividers form the skeletal structure on which the poem is built."\(^2\)

The first strophe is composed of verses 2-5, the second strophe is made up of verses 7-10, and the third strophe is composed of verse 12 through the first half of verse 16. The first strophe has two stanzas: verses 2-3 and verses 4-5. The first stanza focuses upon the triumph of Yahweh. The second stanza focuses upon the Sea as the

\(^1\) *Ibid.*

place of the enemies' destruction. Both stanzas are made up of three bicola. The last half of verse 1 does not appear to fit in directly with the first strophe. The two bicola of the last half of the first verse appear to be an exordium or an introduction. It does not fit in with the strophic structure of the first strophe.¹ It should be observed that the first stanza is apparently an expansion of the first bicolon in the exordium. The first bicolon of the exordium could be translated:

I will sing to Yahweh
for He is highly exalted

The name Yahweh was used in the exordium and it appears to be a key word along with other variants of the divine name in verses 2-3. In verse 2 הָיָה appears, in verse 3 אלהי and אלהי are used, and יהוה is used twice in verse 3. The expansion is significant and this is corroborated by the fact that there is no mention of a divine name in the second stanza of the first strophe. An expansion of it שֵׁפֶן, in verse 1, is יָדָיו and יָדִים in verse 2. Therefore, this demonstrates that stanza 1 of the first strophe is an expansion of the first bicolon in the exordium.²

The second bicolon of the exordium could be translated:

The second stanza of the first strophe is an expansion of the second bicolon in verse 1. An important word in this bicolon is the word sea. Four synonyms are used: מָשָׁל, ṭוֹלַח, and טֹלָח. The verb used in the last bicolon of verse 1hmArA has four synonyms in verses 4-5: חַזְקָה, חַזְוָה, חַזְוָה, and גּוֹזָה. This would appear to confirm the fact that stanza 2 of the first strophe is an expansion of the last bicolon in the exordium. The second strophe has two stanzas: verses 7-8 and verses 9-10. The content of these sections justifies this division. In verses 7-8 the poet deals with the effect of the violent storm on the enemy, verse 7, and the sea, verse 8. Verses 7-8 are in the form of a confessional. In verse 9 the poet regresses in time to the enemies decision to pursue Israel through the Reed Sea in order to destroy and to plunder her. The destruction of the enemy is described in verse 10 which is in sharp contrast to the enemies original expectations.

The structure of this second strophe is similar to the first strophe in that first there is a confession and then an historical narrative. The first stanza has four bicola and the second stanza has five bicola. In this

strophe the two stanzas have a number of parallels. In the opening line of verse 8 is הָרֹב and in the, opening line of verse 10 is הָרֹב. The position of the illustration in verse 8, וַחֲרִישָׁה, is duplicated by the position of the figure in verse 10, וַחֲרִישָׁה. A structural diagram of verses 8 and 10 follows:

verse 8

ינָרֹמָה מִמְדַנָּה
נַעֲבְדָה קַמְלֵוֶת מַלֵּיָה
כָּפָאִים חֲלָפִיתָה יַלָּבְּרָה

verse 10

נְשֵׁפָת בְּרֹוֹרָה
כָּפָאִים יָמ
כָּפָאִים אֶדְרִיָּה

The ending of the second stanza, כָּפָאִים אֶדְרִיָּה is also similar to the ending of the first stanza כָּפָאִים אֶדְרִיָּה. Not only are the endings of the two stanzas similar but they also are reminiscent of the theme in stanza 2 of the first strophe. The phrase in verse 7 ברָב מְאֵן is reminiscent of the phrase in the exordium מִתֶּה מְאֵן.¹ Thus this should tend demonstrate the unity within the poem.

The third strophe likewise has two stanzas: verses 12-14 and verse 15 through the first half of verse 16. relationship of the third strophe to the poem has not

remained unquestioned. As Watts has said about this section: "The very loose, even poor, poetic form makes one wonder what has happened to the verses."\textsuperscript{1} Coats regards verses 12-17 as a subsequent addition.\textsuperscript{2} This position is unwarranted for there are many affinities between the third and second strophe. The first stanza in this strophe has four bicola like the first stanza in the second strophe. The second stanza of this strophe has five bicola like the second stanza of the second strophe. This strophe follows the pattern of the first and second strophe. The first stanza is a confession and the second stanza is a narrative.

The first stanza of the third strophe has a number of affinities with the rest of the poem. In verses 12-13 the 2ms pronominal address which was used in reference to Yahweh has been used previously in verses 7 and 10. The hymnic confessional style which was used in the first stanza of the two preceding strophes is the formal structure of this stanza.\textsuperscript{3} In verse 12 יָנִּים is used. This word has appeared twice in verse 6. A similar word is used in verse

\textsuperscript{1} Watts, "The Song of the Sea--Ex. XV," p. 377.
\textsuperscript{2} Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 17.
\textsuperscript{3} This writer is using the word confession in the sense that this stanza, and the first stanza of the first and second strophe, is primarily addressed to Yahweh in either the second or third person.
Verse 12 concatenates the two preceding strophes with this strophe. Verse 12 is a recapitulation of the content in the preceding section of Exodus 15. Verses 13-14 advance the story from there. This stanza of this strophe is a contrast with the first stanza of the second strophe. In verse 7 God overthrew Israel's adversaries with פֶּלְלָה and הֶרֱבָּךְ, but in verse 13 Yahweh protects and guides His chosen nation with חַסְדָּי and יְזִיזוּ.  

It should be observed that the second stanza of the third strophe also has a number of affinities with the rest of the poem. The subject matter of verse 15 is similar to verse 9. In verse 9 the enemy boasted about their anticipated victory and in verse 15 the foreign nations who will oppose Israel will be terrified because of Yahweh's victory at the Reed Sea. In verse 8 Yahweh has control over nature and in verse 15 He has dominion over nations. There is another outstanding affinity between the second stanza of the second strophe and the corresponding stanza of the third strophe. In the former, verse 10, the poet summarizes that stanza by using the second person pronoun, which refers to Yahweh, in a confessional form. Verse 16 is a facsimile of verse 10. In verse 10 the enemy sank like lead and in verse 11 Muilenburg, "A Liturgy on the Triumphs of Yahweh," p. 185.


3 Ibid., p. 187.

4 Ibid., p. 188.
the anticipated enemy will be silenced like a stone.¹

In summary of the strophic analysis of Exodus 15, the salient point is an understanding of the cadre of Exodus 15. The framework of Exodus 15:1-18 is that of refrains or dividers in verses 6, 11, and 16. Having an understanding of this, the strophic structure of the pericope of Exodus 15:1-18 becomes elucidated.

Meter

In analyzing the meter of any pericope of Hebrew poetry, it becomes obvious that there is much subjectivity involved. Gottwald has made note of this subjectivity:

But the metric hypotheses rest upon a combination of inferences from parallelism and application of the Masoretic accents, rather than on any intrinsic evidence from Biblical Hebrew.²

When it is considered that Exodus 15 was composed in the latter part of the second millennium B.C. and that the Masoretic scribes inserted their accentual system in the Hebrew Old Testament in the latter half of the first millennium A.D., it leaves a question in the mind of the interpreter as to whether or not they knew where the poet had intended to have the words stressed. Bright has made this

point, "but we must not forget, too, that frequently we cannot be altogether sure what the meter is because we do not know how the poet intended the words to be stressed and pronounced in oral recitation."\(^1\) It is, therefore, understandable why this area of metrical analysis has been abused. The study of Ugaritic has provided a source of information to correct these abuses, as Gordon has correctly observed from his study of Ugaritic for he has succinctly observed:

> Perhaps the most important fact to bear in mind is that the poets of the ancient Near East did not know of exact meter. Therefore emendations *metri causa* are pure whimsy. . . . All that is asked of those who maintain metric hypotheses is to state their metric formulae and to demonstrate that the formulae fit the text. Instead they emend the texts to fit their hypotheses.\(^2\)

In order to demonstrate that a metrical analysis of Exodus 15 is superficial, a metrical analysis of this pericope of Scripture will be examined.

This poem is essentially a four stress distich 2:2. There are six or possibly seven places where it is a six stress distich: verse two (twice), five, eight, fourteen, the last half of sixteen and possibly verse seventeen. A metrical analysis could be diagrammed for Exodus 15:1-18 in the following way:


There are some questionable elements in this metrical analysis. In the first bicolon of verse 2, it could be scanned as 3:3 or as 3:2 or 2:3 or finally as 2:2. The counting of this verse will be influenced by the way מְלֹא הָעָם is counted in the first colon and יַעֲרָר לִי in the second colon. Verse 3 could be rendered as either 2:2 or 3:2. This analysis would depend on how מִלֵּי נֶאֶז is counted.

1 Freedman, "Strophe and Meter in Exodus 15," pp. 193-94; this writer has made only minor revisions of Freedman's chart. The revisions only affect the structural outline and not the metrical arrangements.

2 Ibid., p. 176.
Freedman has analyzed the first bicolon of verse 4 as 3:2, however this may be questionable.\(^1\) Coats has counted it as 2:2.\(^2\) Verse 5 could be rendered as either 2:3, 2:4, 3:3, or 3:4.\(^3\) Another ambiguity is found in verse 11. The first two bicola could be rendered 3:3:3,\(^4\) however Freedman has more recently expressed a preference for 2:2/2:2/2:2.\(^5\) The metrical analysis is dependent upon the analysis of and הַשְּׁדִּישׁוֹת. The meter of verse 14 should apparently be recognized as 3:3. Gray, however, counts this as 3:4.\(^6\) This is plausible if הַנִּשָּׁה is linked together. The last example, demonstrating the inherent weaknesses of the metrical analysis, is found in the third bicolon of verse 15.

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 179.
\(^3\) Freedman, "Strophe and Meter in Exodus 15," P. 179.
Usually מְלָלָה is part of a construct chain however the Masoretic punctuation discourages this. Freedman has suggested that מְלָלָה should be understood as an emphatic adverb. If this is the case, this is parallel with the first bicolon of verse 15, וַזָּרַע מְלָלָה, "indeed, they were terrified." The meter might consequently be 2:2 for this bicolon.¹

This analysis should demonstrate the subjectivity and inconsistencies involved with the metrical analysis. The difference between 2:2, 2:3, or whatever may not be that significant. Further confirmation is derived from Babylon and Ugarit. In the poetical texts from Babylon, there is often a four-stress distich, 2:2, but this is interspersed with a six-stress tristich, 2:2:2, or even a seven-stress tristich 2:2:3. Ugaritic literature reveals a six-stress distich, but there are numerous examples violating this.²

Since Ugaritic and Hebrew are related chronologically³ and dialectically, a metrical analysis must remain suspect. Young's conclusions about the metrical system in Ugaritic poetry are germane:

³ Dahood dates the Ugaritic tablets from about 1375-1195 B.C.; see Dahood, Psalms, III, XXII.
Nor does it manifest any evidence of an accentual metric system, or syllabic metric system. Variation is the norm, not the exception.¹

These, therefore, "argue strongly the futility of seeking metrical exactness in the poetry of the OT."² It is therefore useless to look for a metric system in the Song of the Reed Sea.

CHAPTER IV
EXEGESIS

The Greek word ἔχειν ομαί literally means "to lead out."¹ In theology this word is commonly used in reference to "a critical explanation of a portion of the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament."² The primary purpose of this chapter is to give a critical explanation of Exodus 15:1-18.

Prose Introduction

The first half of verse 1 is a prose introduction to the Song of the Reed Sea. There is a syntactical consideration and an etymological problem that will be examined in this section.

The Usage of the Imperfect

The interpreter's understanding of the imperfect aspect of the verb has gone through some revisions in recent years. An aspect of this revision is demonstrated by the

interpretation of דָּרְשָׁנָהּ. Gesenius has explained the usage of the imperfect when used after this particle as placing an emphasis upon the duration of the action. Williams classifies this as a usage of the preterite. In a prose context מֵאֶל plus the imperfect often functions like the perfect aspect of the verb. This usage is tantamount to the Greek aorist tense, it has no horizon. Instead of translating המֵאֶל as "then Moses used to sing," it would be better translated prosaically "then Moses sang."

The Etymological Problem with המֵאֶל

The Hebrew name for Moses המֵאֶל has an etymological problem. There are basically three views about the etymology of this name.

A Hebrew name

The first view indicates that המֵאֶל is a Hebrew name taken from the verb מַעַל, "to draw out." Thus מַעַל is a qal active participle and would mean "one who draws forth."

Much of the controversy on this name centers around Exodus 2:10. Exodus 2:10 could be translated: "So the child grew and she brought him to the daughter of Pharaoh, and he became her son and she called his name Moses for she said 'because I have drawn you out of the water.'" The problem is this, to whom does the pronoun she refer? Kitchen answers that it refers to his mother. He reasons that the pun would come most naturally to an Hebrew and not to an Egyptian. The daughter of Pharaoh, then, assimilated this Semitic name into the common Egyptian word Mase. The Egyptian word ms was a common word for child in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries B.C. This is possibly an ellipsis from some longer name such as Ramose, "Re is born." This view, therefore, is teaching that hw is a Semitic name which was assimilated into Egyptian.

There are a few problems with this view. The pronoun she in verse 10 could just as well refer to Pharaoh's daughter. There also is a difference between hw and . It would appear that following Kitchen's logic that a qal passive participle would have been used in the text. A final question might be raised, how does one know that this name was assimilated into Egyptian? Perhaps the Hebrew word

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1 This refers to the last reference to this pronoun in verse 10.
3 Ibid.
is an Egyptian word which was assimilated into Hebrew at that time?

*An Egyptian name from ms*

Another theory about the etymology of ḫw,mo is that it is derived from the Egyptian word *ms*. This word means "child."¹ It comes from the verb *msi*, "bear, give birth."² The substantive is sometimes used in the sense of "son of so and so." Usually this usage is in connection with a theophoric name which is comprised of two elements such as *Ah-mose*, "son of the moon," or *Ra-meses*, "son of re."³ It is usually assumed that Moses was a theophoric name with Moses being an abbreviated form of a longer name such as *Hapmose*, "son of the Nile." When Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Hebrews 11:24, he eliminated the name of the heathen god from his name.⁴ The context appears to indicate that Pharaoh's daughter did name Moses. Others have indicated that the name Moses was not a

² Ibid.
theophoric name. Pharaoh's daughter simply named him ms, "boy" or "child" and by this the anonymity of Moses finding was explained.¹ Not only does Cassuto espouse that the daughter of Pharaoh named him Son, but he also denominates that this is a double pun. Since the name Moses is an active participle form, there is another pun for Moses drew Israel from the waters of servitude.² If this is the case, that Moses means "son," this is not an etymological paronomasias but a paronomasia of assonance.

An Egyptian name from mw-se

There is another view which is closely related to the second, but it deviates enough from the other view to deserve comment. It is suggested that Moses is an Egyptian name made up of two words mw-se.³ The Egyptian word mw means "water" and it is used metaphorically for seed in the sense of son. This metaphorical usage of the word is applied to divine beings and, consequently, it is possible to understand the daughter of Pharaoh applying this to the baby Moses since she may have regarded him as a gift of the Nile god.⁴ The Egyptian word se means "pond, lake, expanse

¹ Alan H. Gardiner, "Communications: The Supposed Egyptian Equivalent of the Name of Goshen," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, V (1918), 221.
of water."\(^1\) Yahuda then applied it to the Nile River.\(^2\) Therefore, Moses means "son of the Nile." The emphasis in the name Moses is supposedly on se, "Nile," so the writer preserved this emphasis by the prepositional phrase מֶּנֶנֶו. The relationship between hw and Uhtiywim;\(^3\) is secondary and for stylistic purposes.\(^3\) It would appear that Yahuda's position is based upon scholastic gymnastics.

**Conclusions**

Some conclusions should be drawn from this. The paronomasia is probably one of assonance and not etymology. This seems to be a literary device used by Moses. In Genesis 4:1 Eve named her first born son Cain, יִתְנָקֵא because she had acquired, יֹהִית לָנָא, him with the help of the Lord. In verse 25 of this same chapter, Eve gave birth to another son and she named him Seth, יַשְּהָ, because God gave, יִשָּה, to her another son.\(^4\) The point is this, the understanding of a present day interpreter should not be read into Exodus 2:10. The one who named Moses probably named him "the one who draws forth" simply because that is exactly what happened, she drew him from the water. It would also appear that

\(^3\) *Ibid.*
\(^4\) Examples of this are numerous in Genesis; cf. also Genesis 5:29, 21:3, 6, 25:26, 29:32-35, 30:8, 11, 13, 18. This is a list of a few examples.
Pharaoh's daughter named Moses. The clause immediately preceding the one under consideration states that Moses "became her son." This appears to indicate that he became the son of Pharaoh's daughter and she subsequently named him Moses. Another reason why Pharaoh's daughter named him is because she was the one responsible for Moses having been drawn out of the waters. A frequent objection is raised that Pharaoh's daughter could not have given Moses this name for it is a Semitic name. It is possible that Pharaoh's daughter was acquainted with the Semitic languages. It is also possible that the Hebrew verb is of Egyptian origin. Another verb ms means "to bring."\(^1\) Possibly at this time or earlier, it was incorporated into Hebrew.

Exordium

The exordium is the poetical incipit to the Song of the Reed Sea. The verb נָתַן נָפַשׁ presents a textual problem. The various ramifications of the tetragrammaton will be analyzed. The verb נַעֲשֶׂה also is a word that is not used too frequently. Finally, the translation of הָרַב עַב או suggests that it is an anachronism. These problems will be examined.

A Textual Problem with הָרַב עַב או

In Exodus 15:1 the cohortative verb הָרַב עַב או is preserved in the Masoretic Text\(^2\) however the reading in the

\(^1\) Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, p. 570.
\(^2\) Hereinafter referred to as the MT.
Septuagint, Vulgate, and Peshitta reflect that they were translated from הָרָּעִים. There are a couple of reasons why the reading of the MT is to be preferred. First, the Samaritan Pentateuch reads וְרָעִים. This reading appears to be a conflate reading which combines the reading הָרָּעִים in verse 1 and יְרֵעִים in verse 21. The Sam. would therefore support the reading in the MT. Another reason supporting the reading of the MT is that the 1cs is used in other pericopes of Hebrew poetry. An example of this is found in Judges 3:5. Also the change between the cohortative and the imperative occurs in Numbers 10:35 and Psalm 68:2. The reading of the MT is therefore to be preferred.

The Tetragrammaton

The tetragrammaton still remains problematic for some. Germane to this is the question concerning the provenance of the divine name. There are a number of theories offered to explain it.

הוהי originated with the Kenites

One hypothesis is that the divine name originated with the Kenites. When Moses worked with Jethro, he

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1 Hereinafter referred to as LXX.
2 Hereinafter referred to as V.
3 Hereinafter referred to as S.
4 Hereinafter referred to as Sam.
supposedly borrowed the name of the god of Jethro and then applied it to his God. This theory has no support in the Old Testament and there does not appear to be any attestation of any Kenite god bearing this divine name. In fact, "Yahweh appears to have been a name peculiar to Israel and to have been borrowed from Israel when it occurs in the proper names of other tribes."¹

Another theory is that "originated from a primeval interjection Yah.² This was used in connection with the moon cult. The complete name of Yahweh or Yahu, then, is the combination of the interjection plus the third person singular pronominal suffix: "O it is he." If this is the correct interpretation, how is the religious content of the name to be explained?³


² G. R. Driver, "The Original Form of the Name 'Yahweh': Evidence and Conclusion," Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 4.6 (1928), 24.

Some scholars have however contended that this word is patterned according to the imperfect aspect of a finite verb. Two questions are therefore raised, what is the basic meaning of הוה or הוה and is the verbal stem a qal or an hiphil?

What is the basic meaning of הוה or הוה?

In relationship to this question, a number of suggestions have been made. The first suggestion is that it comes from the Arabic ʰhw meaning "passionate love," one who acts passionately, hence "the passionate one." Another suggestion is that it comes from יוה and the Ugaritic ʰwt, "word." The resultant idea is "he who speaks." A third view is that this contains a causitive idea, "to cause to fall" from the verb יוה. This was used to refer to rain or lightning. Another suggestion is that this is derived from the Arabic verb ʰhw, "to blow." Yahweh was supposedly seen as a storm god. There is another alternative which appears to be more credible. This alternative indicates that the tetragrammaton is derived from יוה which became יוהו. ¹

Abba has suggested that the original sense of the verb was "to fall." From this developed the idea "to befall," "to

become," and hence "to be."\(^1\) This view appears to be the most tenable. This would harmonize well with the revelatory exposition of the tetragrammaton in Exodus 3:14-15.\(^2\)

Is הָיוֹת in the hiphil or qal stem?

*Hiphil stem.*—Another question raised is this: is הָיוֹת in the hiphil or qal stem? Albright has testified that this is an hiphil form.\(^3\) A justification for this conclusion is that the name Yahweh has been well established in primitive epigraphic sources. It appears in the seventh century B.C. Lachish letters. From the ninth century B.C., the Mesa’ Stone has the divine name recorded. The name Yahweh appears in Amorite personal names from the Mari texts.\(^4\) From this list of Amorite personal names, two forms have been represented *yahwi* and *yahu*. These are hiphil imperfects and hence they have a causative idea.\(^5\) Another

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4 Cross lists these usages in "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," *Harvard Theological Review*, 55 (1962), 252.

justification is drawn from, the Barth-Ginsberg law.\(^1\) The hypothetical imperfect stative intransitive form would be וְיַהֲנָיו which developed in Hebrew to hyh;\(^2\) Since it is supposedly well established that the form of the tetragrammaton does appear to be in the hiphil stem and since the Barth-Ginsberg law excludes the qal stem, מֹלֶם must be in the hiphil stem.\(^3\)

*Qal stem.*--Other scholars, however, maintain that the divine name is in the qal stem.\(^4\) A relevant passage in interpreting the tetragrammaton is Exodus 3:14-15. It has been pointed out, however, that the usage of מֹלֶם is not valid since מֹלֶם is a 3ms form of the verb and not 1cs.\(^5\) Kosmola recognizes this but remarks that "it is certainly meant to be an explanation of the name, and it is

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\(^1\) James D. Price, "Ugaritic" (unpublished lecture notes, Temple Baptist Theological Seminary, 1978); the so-called Barth-Ginsberg law states that when a appears as the thematic vowel, the vowel of the preformative in the yqtl verb form will be i; see Gordon, *UT*, p. 71, par. 9.9; see also Cross, "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," p. 252, n. 121; and William Sanford LaSor, *Handbook of Biblical Hebrew* (2 vols.: Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), II, 94, par. 27.332.

\(^2\) Cross, "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," p. 252.

\(^3\) See an earlier article written by Albright on this subject, see W. F. Albright, "Contributions to Biblical Archaeology and Philology," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLIII:3-4 (1924), 370-78.

\(^4\) Abba, "The Divine Name Yahweh," p. 324.

the only one we have." Another reason why this is in the qal stem relates to the early vocalization of the qal. Most scholars agree that this word should be vocalized as Yahweh. This is attested by several church fathers as well as from the abbreviated forms יְהִי and יְהִי. If the qal stem was originally vocalized with qames as the preformative vowel, this would explain why some have thought that this was in the hiphil stem. Kosmola has confirmed these observations:

It is certain that this reading with an in the first syllable goes back to the most ancient times of Israel. Although we are by no means certain of the early Hebrew vocalisation, we do know that the first vowel of Qal impf. was originally (still preserved in P Guttural verbs), which would make it quite possible to understand the name YHWH as the Imperfect of Qal, especially when we consider the reading Yahweh is very old and that names tend to preserve their ancient reading.

Therefore, if Exodus 3:14 is a valid testimony about the stem of the divine name and if the vocalization of the tetragrammaton reflects an ancient form of the qal, יְהִי should be regarded as being in the qal stem.

1 Hans Kosmola, "The Name of God (YHWH and Hu')," Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute, II (1963), 103; Arnold has solved the problem, at least for himself, by suggesting that יְהִי does not belong to E but was added to the completed text of the Pentateuch several hundred years after the middle of the seventh century B.C., see William R. Arnold, "The Divine Name in Exodus III.14," Journal of Biblical Literature, XXIV (1905), 109.


3 Kosmola, "The Name of God (YHWVH and Hu’), " p. 104.

4 It is not within the scope of this study to discuss the translation of the phrase "I am that I am" in Exodus.
An Examination of הָהָגָה

This verb is used seven times in the Old Testament. Four of the seven usages are found in Exodus 15:1-21. The basic meaning of the term is "to rise up."¹ In Aramaic הָהָגָה means "to rise, grow" in the peal and in the ithpeal it means "to boast, be exalted."² In Syriac it appears in the pael, aphel and ethpael. In the ethpael it means "to exalt oneself, be arrogant." It also occurs in Mandeanc. There the peal and pael appear only in the active participle. In the ethpael it means "to be shining, outstanding."³ In Akkadian ga'um means "to be presumptuous."⁴ The nouns and adjectives which have developed from this word carry the idea of rising, arrogance, or majesty. Egyptian has a term 3:14, but there are two excellent articles discussing this: E. Schild, "On Exodus 3:14--'I am that I am,'" *Vetus Testamentum*, IV:3 (July, 1954), 296-304; Bertil Albrektson, "On the Syntax of הָהָגָה הָהָגָה הָהָגָה in Exodus 3: 14, " in *Words and Meanings: Essays Presented to David Winton Thomas*, ed. by Peter R. Ackroyd and Barnabas Lindars (Cambridge: University Press, 1968), pp. 15-28.


which is parallel to הָּגָה, g3y, "to be high." The word also appears in Cushite gui meaning "to stand up, be exalted." A biradical root g' with opposite meanings "to become high or deep" possibly lies behind these forms. If this is true, קָעָה, "valley," may have originally been connected with קָעָה. The basic meaning would then be "to be or become high." This is the sense of the usage in Ezekiel 47:5. In Job 8:11 it means "to grow." From this developed the metaphorical sense of "pride," on the negative side, and "exaltation," on the positive side. This word has the nuance of exaltation in Job 10:16. This same idea is found in the four places it is used in Exodus 15:1-21.

A Possible Anachronism אֹרְחַם?

A statement of the problem

The participle אֹרְחַם is derived from the verb אָרֵחָם. The verb means to "mount and ride, ride." BDB has suggested that the substantive usage of the participle is "rider." This word has commonly been understood as meaning to ride horseback as in the calvary. This significance of the word is reflected in the translation of the LXX, V, Old Latin, and Syro-Hexaplar. If this is the proper

1 Ibid., p. 34.5. 2 BDB, p. 938. 3 Ibid. 4 Keil and Delitzsch, The Pentateuch, II, 56. 5 Hereinafter referred to as L. 6 Hereinafter referred to as S; see Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 243, n. 2.
understanding of the term, this is possibly an anachronism for the calvary was not introduced into the ancient Near East until the twelfth century B.C. by the Indo-Europeans.¹

Solutions to the problem

Vowel points of אָטְחָנ should be emended

There are two possible solutions to this problem. Haupt has suggested that the vowel pointing of אָטְחָנ be changed to בְּחָנ.² To verify this point, Haupt has observed that the Greek word ἄρμα, "chariot,"³ is in the margin of a Greek manuscript.⁴ This marginal note may only indicate that the translator wanted to clarify the meaning of this word which he evidently thought was nebulous. Another possible corroboration is the usage of בְּחָנ in Exodus 14:9 and 15:19. This may possibly suggest that there should be a change in the vowel points. This should not be a problem for a conservative interpreter since the vowel pointing is a subsequent addition to the consonantal text. He should nevertheless be cautious in emending the vowel points for they do

² Haupt, "Moses' Song of Triumph," p. 158.
⁴ Haupt, "Moses' Song of Triumph," p. 158.
preserve Masoretic tradition. רְכָּב should be understood as "charioteer"

There seems to be a more preferable alternative. It has been suggested that originally בַּקּ הָ ר means to "mount" and it was used in reference to either a vehicle or an animal.¹ The participle בַּדְּרֹ א should thus be understood as "charioteer" in Exodus 15:1.² This is further supported by the last half of verse 21 in Jeremiah 51 where the context clearly demands that בַּדְּרֹ א be understood as charioteer. Therefore, if Albright's conclusions are valid, the conclusion that בַּדְּרֹ א means charioteer in Exodus 15:1 certainly appears to be legitimate.

Strophe 1

Strophe 1 is comprised of verses 2-5. This strophe has two sections: the hymnic confession in verses 2-3 and the historical narrative in verses 4-5. The interpretative problems will be examined in each section respectively.

Hymnic Confession

A philological treatment of בֵּית הָיָה

There are a number of different suggestions about the root from which this noun is derived. BDB has indicated

¹ KB, p. 891.
that this word should be rendered as "strength, might" and they relate it to the root כנפ. KB have rendered this as "protection, refuge" and they trace it to the verb חנה "take refuge, bring into safety." This would then be cognate with Arabic 2 "take refuge, seek protection."3 Barr has related this to another Arabic word gàzi, "warrior," which comes from gàza, "go forth to war."4 This would then be related to a hypothetical Hebrew root כנפ.5 It might be possible to defend any of these suggestions since they fall within a general semantic range of meaning which could fit the motif of war in the immediate context of Exodus 15.

Since Ugaritic is a Northwest Semitic language and since its dates are approximately contemporary with the composition of Exodus 15, Ugaritic parallels would take precedence over Arabic which is a Southwest Semitic language and it is much latter historically than Hebrew. Ugaritic parallels would presently support the suggestion that כנפ would have been

1 BDB, p. 738.
2 KB, p. 687.
3 BDB, p. 731; the LXX may allow for this because it translates this phrase as βοηθὸς καὶ σκέπαστής, "a helper and a shelter"; but the Targum of Onkelos as well as the V do not follow the LXX.
4 Barr, Comparative Philology, p. 29.
derived from the root מֵרָה.¹

This word is translated "song" in the King James Version,² Revised Standard Version,³ New American Standard Bible, Jerusalem Bible,⁵ and New International Version.⁶ It has been translated "defense" in the New English Bible.⁷ Cross and Freedman have translated it as "protection."⁸ These two alternatives will presently be examined.

Song or praise. --Loewenstamm has translated מֵרָה as "praise" or "glory."⁹ In order to justify this translation, Loewenstamm has attempted to refute the idea that מֵרָה represents two different proto-semitic roots: zmr, "to sing, play an instrument," and dmr, "strength" or even

² Hereinafter referred to as KJV.
³ Hereinafter referred to as RSV.
⁴ Hereinafter referred to as NASB.
⁵ Hereinafter referred to as JB.
⁶ Hereinafter referred to as NIV.
⁷ Hereinafter referred to as NIV.
"protection."\(^1\) He has three reasons for rejecting this. First, the evidence supporting two different proto-semitic roots is supposedly not conclusive. The contention that there is a proto-semitic root \( zmr \) is based upon Ugaritic \( zmr \). This is very speculative.\(^2\) KB have adduced a Ugaritic root \( zmr \) to verify their rendering of this as "to sing, play an instrument." They recognize, however, that this is questionable.\(^3\) Another proof for a proto-semitic root \( zmr \) is taken from Arabic \( zmr \). This may however have been borrowed from Hebrew or Canaanite.\(^4\) Loewenstamm is attempting to prove that Hebrew \( יָסְרָה \) is not related to a proto-semitic \( zmr \) meaning "to sing, play an instrument."

His second reason for rejecting this contention that \( יָסְרָה \) represents two different proto-semitic roots is that there is an Ugaritic verb \( dmr \) which is tantamount to Hebrew \( יָסְרָה \), "to sing, play an instrument." Loewenstamm views Ugaritic text RS 24.252 as a hymn addressed to El and as describing Ugarit. Lines 3-4 read: \( דָּשְׁרָה וַיִּדְמוֹר בָּקָנְר וַתִּלְבָּב בְּתֵּפַת וְמַסְלָת \), "who sings and plays upon harp . . . upon timbrel and cymbals."\(^5\) Ugaritic \( syr \) and \( dmr \) have a strong

similarity with Hebrew נֵפֶל and נָפָל. From this Loewenstamm has concluded that Hebrew נָפָל is identical with Ugaritic dmṛ.\(^1\)

His third reason for rejecting this is that the wide distribution of dmṛ, "protect," is not able to be corroborated. One of the proofs for נֵפֶל meaning "protection" is that it appears with זֶה "strength." Loewenstamm then tries to demonstrate that there is a valid connection between זֶה, "strength," and됨ֶל, "praise." Since it had already been proven in RS 24.252 that dmṛ had the meaning "to play a musical instrument," it should follow that the usage of the noun dmṛ in line 9 should have a similar meaning. The noun זֶה is used with dmṛ in line 9.\(^2\) Loewenstamm concludes then that there is a connection between זֶה "strength" and dmṛ "praise." This connection between the parallel terms is further confirmed by Psalm 59:18 זֶה אִלֵּךְ אֲנִמֶלָה, "My strength I sing to thee." The verb נָפָל, "to sing" is closely connected with the noun זֶה. Loewenstamm then defines והמֶל as "the praise of God in cultic music."\(^3\) This definition is supported by Psalms 81:3, 98:5, Isaiah 51:3, and Amos 5:23. What then is the connection between זֶה and והמֶל? Loewenstamm answers, "The God to whom זֶה is given

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 466; Loewenstamm recognizes that there is a possibility of two homonymous roots derived from the proto-semitic root dmṛ.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 467.

\(^3\) Ibid.
in the cult, gives צי to those who sing in His praise."\(^1\)

Protection or defense.--A legitimate alternative to the translation of נחמ as "song" or "praise" is to translate it as "defense" or "protection."\(^2\) There are four reasons for this translation. First, the problem in interpreting verse 2 does not focus only on the first colon, but the bicolon of which it is a constituent part. This is significant when it is considered that the bicolon is the basic unity in Hebrew poetical verse and that this bicolon appears three times in the three contexts: Exodus 15:2, Psalm 118:14, and Isaiah 12:2.\(^3\) The text reads:

\[
\text{נתה לשלושה}
\]

Yahweh is three things to the author: צי, נחמ, and שושה. This would tend to exclude the idea that נחמ means "song" or even "praise." The reason for this is that one would expect נחמ to have a meaning in a general

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 468.
\(^2\) T. H. Gaster, "Notes on 'The Song of the Sea' (Exodus XV)," Expository Times, XLVIII (1936-37), 45; it is also attested in the Samaritan Ostraca, see Barr, Comparative Philology, p. 182; see also Herbert B. Huffmon, Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts: A Structural and Lexical Study (hereinafter referred to as Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts) (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1965), pp. 187-88.
\(^3\) Simon B. Parker, "Exodus XV 2 Again," Vetus Testamentum, XXI:3 (July, 1971), 376.
semantic range with יְשׁוֹעַ and חֲלוֹזָה.\(^1\)

Another reason confirming a translation of לְמַרְתָּה as "protection" is a syntactical consideration. Some examples should be observed where one colon has a synonymous pair of words joined by וָע and this is followed by a parallel colon with another synonym.\(^2\) In Psalm 46:2 כַּמַּה וּלְמַרְתָּה appears in the first colon and the parallel colon has a further synonym לְמַרְתָּה. Two synonyms are found in the first colon of Genesis 3:18 כַּמַּה וּלְמַרְתָּה. The synonym כַּמַּה לְמַרְתָּה is found in the parallel colon. In Isaiah 60:18 כַּמַּה is parallel with כַּמַּה. In Job 3:5 כַּמַּה is parallel with כַּמַּה. This would suggest that לְמַרְתָּה is within the same semantic field as יְשׁוֹעַ and חֲלוֹזָה.

A third reason for this translation is taken from Ugaritic text RS 24.252. Loewenstamm's interpretation of line 3 appears to be correct,\(^3\) but his interpretation of line 9 is problematic. This appears to be a prayer and not a hymn\(^4\) that Ugarit would eternally share the attributes of Rapi‘u. The sequence of nouns is then a list of the attributes of Rapi‘u. Line 9 is addressed to lr(pi/u) ars.

The remainder of nouns in lines 9-10 read: ‘זק dmrk (10) l(i)ak htkk nmrtk, "your strength, your protective force,

\(^1\) Ibid. \(^2\) Ibid. \(^3\) Ibid., p. 3, n. 5. \(^4\) Loewenstamm, "The Lord Is My Strength and My Glory," p. 4.66.
your 1 . . . , your authority, your divine power.”¹ It
would appear that a rendering of "protection" or “protective
force” would concatenate with this list of attributes better
than "praise" or "glory."

There is a fourth reason for this rendering of מַרְחָט.
Since מַרְחָט is in juxtaposition with מַרְחָט in Ugaritic and
Hebrew, this pair should be recognized as a fixed pair.²
This would indicate that the poets in Ugarit and Israel had
a common cultural setting from which they drew fixed pairs.
Gevirtz has recognized this with the following statement:

The poets of ancient Syria and Palestine had at their
command a body of conventionally fixed pairs of words
upon which they might freely draw in the construction
of their literary compositions.

Dahood prefers the usage of "parallel pairs" for the expres-
sion "fixed pairs" has wrongly been interpreted as a fixed
sequence.⁴ A parallel pair may be used "in the same colon

¹ Parker, "Exodus XV 2 Again," p. 378,
² This was a term coined by Ginsberg in 1936; see
H. L. Ginsberg, "The Rebellion and Death of Ba’lu,"
Orientalia, V (1936), 176-80.
³ Stanley Gevirtz, Patterns in the Early Poetry of
Israel, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, no. 32
⁴ Mitchell Dahood, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Parallel Pairs,"
Ras Shamra Parallels: The Texts from Ugarit and the Hebrew
Bible, Vol. I, Analecta Orientalia, 49, ed. by Loren R.
Fisher (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1972), pp. 77-
78; Gevirtz has given a list of fixed pairs and has noted
their sequence in Ugaritic and in Hebrew, see Stanley
Gevirtz, "The Ugaritic Parallel to Jeremiah 8:23," Journal
of Near Eastern Studies, XX:1 (January, 1961), 41-46; this
article by Gevirtz and his insistence on a fixed sequence
or in the respective clauses of a bicolon. The significance of parallel pairs is that the terms are synonymous. This is especially beneficial when the etymology of one of the terms in a fixed pair has been regarded as doubtful. This is helpful with יָצָר וְיָשָׁר for if this is a parallel pair must be synonymous with יָשָׁר. This would exclude a translation of "song," "praise," or "glory."

Therefore, the best translation of יָשָׁר would be "protection" or "defense."

Hendiadys.--The word hendiadys is made up of three Greek words which literally mean "one through two." The motivated Craigie to question the value of fixed pairs since in Hebrew the order will be reversed at times; Craigie's reaction was based upon outdated material, see P. C. Craigie, "A Note on 'Fixed Pairs' in Ugaritic and Early Hebrew Poetry," Journal of Theological Studies, XXII:2 (April, 1971), 140-43; since Craigie's reactions are not based upon current literature on this subject, his conclusions must remain suspect; in this study the criterion which will be followed for determining whether a pair of terms is a legitimate fixed pair is that the terms must be truly parallel in either Hebrew or Ugaritic; the pair must be parallel in one dialect and in the other it may be "strictly parallel," in juxtaposition, or in collocation; see Dahood, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Parallel Pairs," pp. 86-87.

1 Ibid., p. 73.  
2 Ibid., p. 74.  
3 Ibid., p. 83.  
4 Ibid., p. 291, par. 414.  
5 It would appear in light of this and Loewenstamm's discussion that Ugaritic text RS 24.252 has two homonyms for dmnr; line 3 has dmnr, "to play an instrument," and line 9 has dmnr, "protection." This would suggest that there were two proto-semitic homonyms for dmnr: one meaning "to sing, to play an instrument" and the other meaning "to protect"; both of these appeared in Hebrew as two homonyms דָּבָר.
definition of Speiser is germane:

This is a method where by two formally co-ordinate terms--verbs, nouns, or adjectives--joined by 'and' express a single concept in which one of the components defines the other.¹

There is an example of this even in colloquial English "I am good and mad." This statement should be interpreted as "I am very angry."² Hebrew has many examples of this. A few of these are the following: Genesis 1:2, יָםָהָה, "a formless void"; Job 4.0:10, חֵי בְּחָנָן, "glorious splendor"; and Job 10:21, אֱלֹהֵי חַשְׁךָ, "blackest darkness."³ It has been suggested that the fixed pair צִיוֹרְךָ אֱלֹהִים be understood as an hendiadys.⁴ Good has also recognized this as an hendiadys and has consequently translated it "my singing about strength."⁵ Since it has been suggested that קָמֶה does not mean "song" or "praise," Good's suggestion will need to be modified. A better translation would be "strong protection" or "protective strength."⁶

¹ E. A. Speiser, Genesis, in The Anchor Bible (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1964•), p. LXX.
² Ibid.
³ Williams, Hebrew Syntax: An Outline, p. 16, par. 72.
The textual ambivalence of Hebrew consonants

The textual problem

In Exodus 15:2 the noun חַּלּוֹנָה presents a textual problem. The Sam. and V add the 1cs pronominal suffix.¹ The LXX and S, however, agree with the reading in the MT which does not have the 1cs pronominal suffix. A possible reason for the omission of this suffix is that the latter reflects early Hebrew orthography. Another alternative is that this may be an example of haplography.²

A solution to the textual problem

This is possibly an example of what Lehman has labeled "the textual ambivalence of Hebrew consonants."³ This principle indicates that a consonant may be associated with the word preceding and following it. This apparently was not recognized by Masoretic scribes. Two examples will demonstrate this principle. The first is found in 2 Samuel 5:2, מָאָזוּ אֶזְכְּוִי. The Masoretic tradition reflects the problem. If this principle is correct, the final he on מָאָזוּ אֶזְכְּוִי also serves as the definite article for אֶזְכְּוִי.

¹ Felix Perles, "Miscellany of Lexical and Textual Notes on the Bible," Jewish Quarterly Review, II (1911-12), 115, n. 41; Perles suggested that the text should be read מָאָזוּ אֶזְכְּוִי with מ functioning as an abbreviated form of the tetragrammaton.


A second example is found in 2 Samuel 21:12 which reads: שֶׁמֶץ וַהֲפָלָשִׁים. The initial he on הֲפָלָשִׁים serves both as the definite article and also as the locative he for שֶׁמֶץ.

This may affect the interpreter's understanding of יְהוָה in Exodus 15:2. It is possible that yod not only served as the initial letter in the divine name but it performs another function by serving as the 1cs pronominal suffix for the preceding word.\(^1\) This would demonstrate that this is not an example of haplography. This may also explain why the Sam. and V have this pronominal suffix. These versions have preserved an early tradition which antedates that which is preserved in the MT.

The early orthography of יְהוָה,

The LXX has deleted יְהוָה from verse 2. This should not raise a problem concerning the authenticity of its presence in the MT. Cross and Freedman have suggested that יְהוָה should be understood as יְהוָ.\(^2\) The abbreviated form of the divine name is followed by יְהוָ. In the early orthography יְהוָ and יְהוָ would not have been separated. Cross and Freedman's suggestion is that the division between the two words should be after י and not before it. Their reason

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 98.

for this is that הַיָּמִים reflects early orthography which might be expected in Exodus 15.¹ Of course this does not present a problem for a conservative since none of the consonants have been affected.

The abbreviated הַיָּמִים, should nevertheless be preferred for poetical reasons. The use of this monosyllable causes the repeated Yahweh at the end of verse 3 to be very impressive.² In the hymnic confession the divine name appears to be written in a climactic progression: Yah, my God, God of my father, Yahweh, Yahweh.³ The preservation of הַיָּמִים as it appears in the MT, should be preferred.

The usage of synonymous parallelism in problem solving

Ugaritic poetry

The fundamental feature of Ugaritic poetry is that the meaning will be repeated in parallel form.⁴ These examples will demonstrate this. II Aqht VI:27-28 reads:

\[\text{irs hym watnk}^5 \quad \text{blmt waslk}^5\]

"Ask for life and I'll give it to you for immortality, and I'll bestow it on you."⁶

¹ Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Gordon, UT, p. 131, par. 13.108.
⁵ Ibid., p. 248.
Another example is found in I Aqht 117:

\[ \text{in smt} \quad \text{"there is not fat}\]
\[ \text{in } \text{zm} \quad \text{there is no bone."}^{1} \]

A final example is Krt 131-33:

\[ \text{wng mlk lbty} \quad \text{“and depart king from my house;}\]
\[ \text{rhq krt lhzry} \quad \text{be distant, Krt, from my court."}^{2} \]

The synonymous parallelism is obvious in these texts. This appears to be a characteristic of Canaanite poetry.

Hebrew poetry

This also is a characteristic of Hebrew poetry. If two lines are an example of synonymous parallelism and the meaning of one term is problematic, a general semantic range of meaning can be established for the problematic term because of the parallelism. The parallelism in the last half of verse 2 should be observed:

\[ \text{ylixe hz,} \quad \text{yhelox,} \]

The verb הָנָּה has been translated in various ways. KJV has rendered it as "I will prepare him an habitation." This is supported by the Targum of Onkelos.\(^4\) This translation in the T° seems to reflect that the translator had regarded הָנָּה as

\[ \text{1 Gordon, } UT, \text{ p. 131, par. 13.108.}\]
\[ \text{2 Ibid., p. 132, par. 13.108.}\]
\[ \text{3 Muilenburg, "Poetry," pp. 673-74.}\]
\[ \text{4 Hereinafter referred to as T°.}\]
a denominative verb. Another translation of this is "I will praise Him." This translation is supported by the Sam. and LXX. Most modern versions essentially translate it in this manner. Since הָנָא is parallel with דֹּהֵן "to be high, exalted, rise," a general semantic range of meaning has been established and this rules out the translation of T⁰.

The etymology of הָנָא

Since a general semantic range of meaning is clear because of the parallelism, the interpreter should then consider the possible meanings for the term. The verb הָנָא has been regarded as a hapax legomena. This verb has a homonym which is regarded as a denominative verb from הָנָא "abode of shepherd or flocks." Albright has related this word to Arabic nẉy, Ethiopic newa, Ugaritic nẉyt, "settlement," Mari nawum, Hebrew הָנָא "pastoral or nomadic abode," and הָנָא "range, pasture." He has suggested that these forms are derived from a general root meaning "to aim at." The word then developed in two directions: "to look or gaze

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2 See NASB, NEB, RSV, JB, and NIV.
3 BDB, p. 926.
4 Ibid., p. 627.
5 Cross and Freedman, Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry, p. 56, n. e.
ardently at" and "to reach or settle." The hiphil stem, which is found in verse 2, would then be translated "I will cause him to be the object of ardent gazing" or more simply "I will admire him."\(^1\) Whether or not Albright's suggestion about the etymological background of this term is accepted is not essential. The salient point is that his conclusions must be accepted because of the synonymous parallelism.

The metrical imbalance in verse 2

Since this same bicolon has a metrical imbalance, Cross and Freedman have suggested that אָדַע אָדַע be transposed with אָדַע אָדַע.\(^2\) They have indicated that this is a common scribal error which is highly probable since both words begin and end exactly alike.\(^3\) Freedman has more recently corrected himself with the following words:

It would have been a simple matter to switch the verbs of the two cola and produce an exact syllabic balance (9:9); but presumably the poet preferred to overbalance the bicolon as in the preserved text . . . . Since the text makes good sense and poetic parallelism is maintained, we should assume that the pattern is deliberate, and that the poet (presumably for melodic or rhythmic reasons) chose a 7:11 pattern against the normal or expected 9:9. That an unbalanced bicolon is a legitimate variation of the normal balanced variety can be established from the corpus of early Israelite poetry.\(^4\)

\(^1\) Ibid. \(^2\) Ibid. 
\(^3\) Ibid. 
There is a textual problem with אִשׁ וּפְלֵתָה. The Sam. reads: גֵּבֹר וּפְלֵתָה. This is followed in part by the LXX which reads σωματικός πολέμους and the S מְלֵתָה. “a warrior and a man of war.” There were possibly two ancient variants: יהוה גֵּבֹר and אִשׁ מְלֵתָה. The latter is represented by the MT. The former is represented by the more or less corrupt conflagations of the other versions. Since the Sam. and LXX agree against the MT, they attest to an ancient Palestinian recension as early as the fifth century B.C. This is however no reason to emend the MT for it represents the "main current" of tradition. As Battenfield has succinctly stated:

Though other families of text types have come to light in recent generations, the proto-Masoretic is as old as any, and has a long worthy tradition behind it.

Although the Sam. and LXX reflect an old Palestinian recension, the reading of the MT is still to be preferred.

1 Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 244,
The theological problem with יְהוָה אִשׁ מֶלֶךְ

It has been suggested that the phrase יְהוָה אִשׁ מֶלֶךְ be understood as a war cry.\(^1\) Whether or not this statement is accurate, it is not readily discernible. The description of Yahweh as a warrior has also raised a theological question for some because war appears to be contrary to the character of the God of the New Testament. How could Yahweh, therefore, use Israel to execute judgment upon her enemies?\(^2\) Tomes has indicated that it is questionable that God would identify Himself with one group of people and not another, and that He would spare one nation and destroy another.\(^3\) His solution to the problem is that "God Himself has proportioned his revelation according to our developing capacity to receive it."\(^4\) There appears to be a better alternative as Miller has observed:

Following Calvin's lead, Reformed theology has taken the sovereignty of God as the central tenet of its creed. But perhaps, more than Calvin, the Old Testament sees


\(^4\) Ibid., p. 473.
the theme not merely, as a theological affirmation but as the very pivot upon which the life of the disciple should revolve.1

Historical Narrative

*The* matres lectionis for the final vowel o

Cross and Freedman have pointed out that the final he in verse 4 is a *matres lectionis*. After the tenth century B.C., final he was used quite often as a final vowel letter to represent a final a or o.2 The usage of final he as a *matres lectionis* probably developed from a consonantal he following a. This usage of he occurred on forms ending with a feminine suffix, words with the directive he, verbs ending with final he, and forms such as the interrogative הָמָה. The final he became quiescent and when it was retained in the spelling it became a *matres lectionis*. This usage of final he then extended to all usages of final a then to final o and e.3

An example of this is found in the Mesha Stone


2 Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," pp. 244-45, par. 5.

3 Ibid., see also Cross and Freedman, *Early Hebrew Orthography*; it is interesting to observe that Ugaritic at an earlier period of time apparently used final y as a *matres lectionis*, see Gordon UT, p. 95, par. 10.4, the preposition b has lcs pronominal suffix *by*; p. 101, par. 10.14, preposition *‘m* has lcs pronominal suffix ‘*my*; p. 107, n. 1, the conjunction *k* appears with the variant spelling *ky* in some prose sources.
(ca. 835 B.C.). The word nbh should be read "Nebo."\(^1\) An example is also found in the Siloam Inscription. The word hnbqbh literally means "its being tunneled through." The final he apparently is a final vowel letter for o.\(^2\) The Lachish Letters have the word ‘bdh, "his servant," which might be vocalized ‘abdo.\(^3\) The Old Testament has such familiar examples as: nbh הלם, "Solomon"; nbk לכה, "Scoho";\(^4\) nbל, "Shiloh"; and nbייהו, "Jericho." Other examples are available, but these demonstrate that the final he was a matres lectionis for the final vowel o.

Should nb ל be deleted for metrical reasons?

Kittel has suggested that nb ל, "army," should be deleted from the text for metrical reasons.\(^5\) There are two reasons why this word should not be excised from the text. It has been argued that the presence of nb ל creates a metrical imbalance. According to the stress system of analysis there is a discrepancy between bicola 4a and 4b of 5/4. This analysis does not appear to be significant when it is

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\(^1\) Ibid., p. 40, par. 40.  
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 49, par. 23.  
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 53, par. 53.  
observed that there is a parallelism of content between the two bicola for 4a has five content words as does 4b.¹ There is another reason why יִלְוָה should not be excised from the first colon of verse 4. There is absolutely no textual support for this emendation. It must be concluded that יִלְוָה rather than being otiose, is a necessity and a genuine part of verse 4.

A philological treatment of יִלְוָה

The etymological background of יִלְוָה in Exodus 15:4 is still an enigma. The problem focuses on what is the relationship between וָלָה, "three," and ויִלְוָה, "officer" or "troops"? In order to answer this question, it will be necessary to examine some of the cognate languages.

Cognate languages

Hittite.--Bender has argued that since Egyptian chariots carried only two men and since this word implies three men, this must indicate a Hittite custom.² Cowley has suggested that the Hebrew word may be related to a Hittite word sal-li-is which indicated a high military position.³

² Bender, "Das Lied Exodus 15," p. 19-
Ugaritic.--Gordon has however indicated that this word may refer to three horses instead of three men. The Ugaritic phrase under consideration is the phrase *tlm sswm mrkbt*. Gordon has translated this phrase "three horses and a chariot."¹ Sukenik has clearly demonstrated that chariots were pulled by teams of three horses: two horses and one horse for reserve.² In light of Gordon and Sukenik's observations, Cross and Freedman have translated this word as "troops."³ This word possibly became used in reference to the charioteers of the chariots with three horses. It subsequently was used in a more general sense of "troops" or "officers." Because of Exodus 14:7, it appears that the nuance of "officer," in this context, is primarily in vogue.

Egyptian.--Craigie has offered another alternative as a solution to this problem.⁴ In order to represent Craigie’s suggestion, the phrase 𓊦𓊶𓊤𓊥𓊨𓊣𓊤𓊤 needs to be examined. Yahuda has stated that the Egyptian phrase


² Yigael Sukenik, "Note on *tlt sswm* in the Legend of Keret," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, II (1948), 11.


"the choicest of" is tantamount to עב.¹ The noun עב is possibly a nominal adaptation of the Egyptian srs,² "to have command of (a corps)."³ Hebrew ל is equivalent to Egyptian. Gardiner has stated that the Egyptian ל "corresponds to the Hebrew resh, more rarely to the Hebrew lamedh."⁴ Egyptian ס is also brought over into Hebrew as ש. An example of this is בוש which corresponds to Egyptian hsb.⁵ Craigie has maintained that this argument is convincing in the light of the Egyptian subject matter in this line.⁶

Guidelines for using cognate languages

The usage of comparative philology needs to have certain guidelines in order to avoid abuse. Fensham has set forth four principles to serve as guidelines in using


² Craigie, "An Egyptian Expression in the Song of the Sea (Exodus XV 4)," p. 85.


⁴ Craigie, "An Egyptian Expression in the Song of the Sea (Exodus XV 4)," p. 85.

comparative philology for Ugaritic. These have been adapted in this thesis for usage with Hebrew. First, the most important principle is to use a Northwest Semitic language such as Ugaritic, Aramaic, Phoenician, and Amorite. Second, if the first step has no results, the interpreter should use the East Semitic language of Akkadian. Third, the interpreter should use Arabic, South Arabic, and Ethiopic only when steps one and two are unfruitful. Finally, the least important principle is the usage of Hurrian, Egyptian, and Hittite.

Cautions and Conclusions

In light of these guidelines, it would appear that the usage of Hittite and Egyptian does not offer the best explanation of the etymological background of מַעְלַיָּא. Since the Hebrews had cultural contact with Egypt, in particular 430 years of dwelling in the land of Goshen, this would indicate that Craigie's suggestion may have some merit. Some cautions need to be considered. It would appear that if one is able to establish that a phrase in one language is used in another language, this would suggest a higher degree of correspondence than for a word. It does not appear that there is a valid correlation between the Egyptian phrase *stp.w.srs* and the Hebrew phrase מַעְלַיָּא.

Craigie has proven that *stp.w* and *srs* are used in Egyptian, but he did not prove that this was a phrase used in Hebrew. Another caution pertains to whether or not שֵׁם is a nominal adaption of *srs*. Gardiner stated that the Egyptian *ר* rarely corresponds to Hebrew שֵׁם.¹ Craigie has assumed that this rare correspondence has occurred here. More evidence is needed to prove this correspondence. A third caution should be contemplated. Does this suggestion offer a more plausible explanation than Ugaritic? If there is a viable explanation from a Northwest Semitic language such as is the case with Ugaritic, is it necessary to use a language for comparative purposes which is remote and does not offer as viable an option? The most plausible explanation, therefore, would be the one available from Ugaritic.

Should the vowel pointing of עֲבְדָּה be emended?

The MT has preserved the reading עֲבְדָּה but this is not supported by the LXX and S which have preserved the reading עֲבָדָה. The S often follows the MT, but this does not rule out the influence of the LXX upon the S. Thus, when the S agrees with the LXX against the MT, then "the twofold witness has no more value than that of the Septuagint alone."² In the original consonantal text, there would not have been any

¹ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, p. 27.
any difference between ḫūnāṣ and ḫūnāṣ.¹ Either form in this context would make good sense: they were cast or He cast. However, even though the vowel pointing does not have the same authority as the consonants, nevertheless the reading of the MT is to be preferred. The comments of Wurthwein reflect this preference:

> The pointing does not have the same authority as the consonantal text. This is a matter to bear in mind in textual criticism. At the same time it must be remembered that the Masoretes did not follow their own ideas in vocalising the text, but endeavoured to express exactly the tradition they had received.²

*The translation of ḫūnāṣ בֹּקָר

Various translations

The translation of ḫūnāṣ בֹּקָר as the Red Sea originated from the reading in the LXX: ṭι ερυθρη θαλασσασ. This translation was followed by the V, in mari rubro "in the Red Sea." The translation of the Old Latin Version, however, followed the MT with these words: in mare algosum "in the Sea of Reeds." The different translators of the LXX did not know how to handle this phrase for in Judges 11:16 the same phrase was translated ἕως θαλάσσης Σίφ. The translator of Judges evidently thought of ḫūnāṣ as a proper name and attempted to transliterate it as Σίφ.³ Most lexicographers

indicate that יָּם is a loan word from Egyptian twf\(^1\) which means "papyrus, papyrus-marshes."\(^2\) "Rushes" or “reeds” is the suggested meaning by BDB.\(^3\)

The sea over there

Snaith has rendered this phrase as "the sea over there."\(^4\) He has interpreted this phrase in this manner on account of its various usages. This phrase was used to refer to the Red Sea, the Arabian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and it was used in reference to "remote and unknown places."\(^5\) It is from this that Snaith has concluded that "the phrase thus means 'the sea over there,' as the speaker pointed vaguely in a southerly direction."\(^6\)

World beyond

A rather radical interpretation of this phrase is the interpretation of Towers. He understands this as a

\(^1\) BDB, p. 693; see also KB, p. 652.


\(^3\) BDB, p. 693; "rushes" or "waterplants" is the translation suggested by KB, p. 652.


\(^5\) Liddell and Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, p. 693.

reference to the "world beyond." The Sea of Reeds was supposedly used in reference to the world beyond. After a person died he was regenerated by passing over this Sea of Reeds. At this time his soul was regenerated and changed by divine action. Then the soul was lifted up to heaven.

Towers summarizes with this allegorical statement:

Therefore it would not be too much to assume that the place of crossing or passing over referred to in the Old Testament recalled to the writer's mind the name of the celestial $\textit{i}3\textit{rv}$, 'sea of reeds' and that the poet saw in that name the ancient idea of regeneration.

This interpretation is not credible for he has allegorized the historical significance of this event. Although Snaith's interpretation appears to be quite creative, he nevertheless has produced no evidence to support his translation of this phrase. The most tenable translation is "the Reed Sea."

Does $\textit{moh}$ add a mythological note to the description of the sea?

The mythological background

The noun $\textit{moh}$ is used in the Old Testament in reference to "the primaeval ocean(s), the deeps of the sea or the subterranean water. Jackson has suggested that "the myth

2 Ibid., p. 151.
3 Ibid., p. 153.
4 KB, p. 1019.
of Creation is always in the, background."¹ Because of the usage of this term, Clement has also visualized, a relationship between Genesis 1:2 and Exodus 15:5. He has stated that מָוהַתּ:

lends a mythological note to the description of the sea, identifying the waters of the underworld, which were subdued at creation, but the demonic force of which had constantly to be kept in check by God.²

Clement may have drawn this conclusion because מָוהַתּ is thought to have been derived from Ti'amat of the Enuma Elish, the Babylonian creation account; but their usage would indicate that they are distinct in meaning.³ There may be some etymological relationship, but מָוהַתּ does not appear to have been derived from Ti'amat.⁴

The usage of מָוהַתּ in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament מָוהַתּ is used thirty-six times. In Genesis 1:2 it refers to the primaeval ocean. Sometimes

⁴ Ibid., p. 4.6.
it refers to the sea. An example of this is Psalm 107:26. In Jonah 2:5 it refers to the Mediterranean Sea. It appears to be a reference to the subterranean waters in Psalm 78:15 and Deuteronomy 8:7. Seven times in Exodus and the Prophets, it is used in reference to crossing the Reed Sea. In Exodus 15 is parallel with ים סוף. This usage is clearly in reference to the sea. This usage is also found in the Ugaritic literature. Text 52:30 reads: *gp ym wys*y'd gp thm.* It should be observed that the same parallel as is found in Exodus 15:4-5 is also found in this text: *ym* and *thm.* It should therefore be concluded that מים is generally used in reference to "oceans and lakes."2

Refrain 1

This refrain is found in verse 6. There are two significant interpretative considerations which will be examined. The first pertains to an anthropomorphism for Yahweh's strength and the second appertains to an etymological and morphological treatment of נני לָךָ.

An Anthropomorphism for Yahweh's Strength

The noun נני means "right hand" or "right side."3

Since the Hebrew oriented himself according to where the sun

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3 KB, p. 384.
rose, this word also means “South."\textsuperscript{1} It is also used in a metaphorical sense to denote strength. This is true when it is used as an anthropomorphism of God.\textsuperscript{2} The right hand of the Lord acquires a temple-site in Psalm 78:54. It is the right hand which is full of righteousness in Psalm 48:11 and it dispenses blessings in Psalm 16:11.\textsuperscript{3} The Akkadian creation epic \textit{Enuma Elish} has a significant parallel to this usage of the right hand of God. The passage reads: \textit{issima mitta imnasu usahiz}, "He (Marduk) lifted the mace, grasped it in his right hand."\textsuperscript{4} In Exodus 15:6 it is with the right hand that Yahweh crushes the enemy. The right hand of Yahweh in Exodus 15:6 is therefore an anthropomorphism of Yahweh's strength.

\textbf{An Etymological and Morphological Treatment of יְרִיָּהּן,}

A continual problem has been יְרִיָּהּן. Two areas will be contemplated: the first relates to the etymology of the term and the second pertains to the morphology of the term. This second area reflects the problem, is יְרִיָּהּן in the form of a participle or an infinitive?

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{3} BDB, p. 411.
\textsuperscript{4} Rabinowitz, "Right and Left," p. 178.
The etymology of יְרִידָן

General usage

The root יְרִידָן seems to be of West Semitic origin. This term originally appears to have had the meaning to "be broad, large, powerful."¹ Some important background information is to be drawn from the Phoenician inscriptions where the verb has the meaning "to be great, powerful" or "to rule" and in the piel it means "to make great, glorify" usually in reference to kings or gods.² The adjectival form of this word is used in both Phoenician and Punic inscriptions meaning "'great, powerful' in reference to gods, kings, lands, power, rain, etc." and sometimes it is used as a technical term for a different ruler.³ The root also appears as an adjective in Ugaritic referring to the different materials in Aqhat's bow.⁴ It is also used in reference to a mighty storm,⁵ to a large extension of land,⁶ and

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid., p. 352, par. 92.
to governmental authorities.¹ The feminine 'drt is also used in Ugaritic text 119 in reference to an "upper-class wife," att adrt.² The noun carries the nuance of "chief" or "a big thing."³

Old Testament usage

_The substantive.—_דְּרִית_ means "mighty, glory, honor."¹ This is illustrated in Ezekiel 17:8 where it is used of the grape vine as a figure of Israel's glory. It is also used to denote a cloak or mantle in Joshua 7:21, 24. It is used of the king of Nineveh's mantle in Jonah 3:6 and a prophet's mantle in 1 Kings 19:13, 19, 2 Kings 2:8, 13, and Zechariah 13:4. The mantle may denote one who is powerful but also the mantle is large and wide.⁵

_The adjective.—_דְּרִית is used in the sense of mighty. It modifies the noun waters in which the army of


² Gordon., _UT_, p. 352, par. 92; cf. with lines 4, 7, 9, 16, and 18 of this text on p. 190.


⁴ Ahlstrom, "דְּרִית, " p. 73.

⁵ _Ibid._
Pharaoh perished in Exodus 15:10. This same sense is used in reference to water in Psalm 93:4, to great ships which sail the sea in Isaiah 33:21, to mighty or powerful nations in Ezekiel 32:18. In Ezekiel 17:23 great cedars are represented by the idea of splendor or glory. Kings killed by Yahweh are described as רֵעָם יְהֹוָה, "mighty" or "famous" in Psalm 136:18. This nuance is used in reference to princes in Jeremiah 14:3 and 25:34. Yahweh is also described with this term. Yahweh is mightier than "the mountains of prey" in Psalm 76:5 and the powerful waves of the sea in Psalm 93:4.

The verb.—In the Old Testament רֵעָם appears three times, Exodus 15:6, 11, and Isaiah 42:21. In Isaiah 42:21 the verb appears in the hiphil. In this passage Yahweh will magnify and make glorious, רֵעָם, His law. In Exodus 15:11 the niphal is used, "Who is like You among the gods, Yahweh, who is like You awesome, רֵעָם, in holiness?" Yahweh is pictured here as the mightiest one in the assembly of gods. He should be feared more than the other gods for Yahweh is the exalted one. In Exodus 15:6 Yahweh's right hand is

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1 Ahlstrom, "םוֹרֵעָם", p. 74.
2 This is probably a reference to the gods of the Egyptians.
described as being awesome, יָרָא, in power. The awesome power of Yahweh's right hand was demonstrated by shattering the enemy.¹

In Exodus 15:10 יָשָׁר יָרָא וְרָּעָה, "mighty waters" or "powerful waters," appears to serve as a good parallel with verse 11. In verse 10 Yahweh blows with His wind or breath, רוּחַ, so that the enemy sink into the mighty or powerful waters of the Reed Sea; and in verse 11 none of the gods are as awesome, יָרָא, as Yahweh. The power of the water though great is subjugated to Yahweh as are the false deities.²

It is therefore discernible how יָרָא has developed from the original meaning "to be broad, large, powerful." Of particular importance to the context of Exodus 15 is that יָרָא, when it is used of Yahweh, is used in connection with His mighty acts and His supernatural deeds.

The Morphology of יָרָא

The word יָרָא, as far as morphology is concerned, is an enigma. The final yod, on this term has caused much of this confusion. Rashi has stated that the yod was redundant.³ The Masoretic scribes vocalized יָרָא as a nihal participle. Moran has supposedly discovered a number of

absolute infinitives with an i ending. It was therefore suggested that יַּרְדּוּנ be revocalized as an infinitive absolute.¹ The question therefore is this: is יַּרְדּוּנ a participle or an infinitive?

An infinitive absolute?

The basis for this revocalization was Moran's discovery of three infinitive absolutes with the hireq compagnis in the Jerusalem and Byblos Amarna letters.² The primary argument for יַּרְדּוּנ being changed to an infinitive absolute is the parallelism between the two bicola in verse 6. The subject of the second bicolon יֵכֹן has a predicate יֵכֹן. The noun יֵכֹן, is also used in the first bicolon and it should presumably be the subject of this bicolon. If this is the case, it should also have a predicate. If יַּרְדּוּנ is a niphal participle, יֵכֹן would not be the subject for it is feminine and יַּרְדּוּנ is masculine. The subject would have to be יֵכֹן for then there would be concord of person between subject and verb, but this would then violate the parallelism between the two bicola.³

A participle?

There are two reasons why this should be left as a niphal participle. The evidence which Moran views as certain may not be very certain. The evidence that Moran has provided is best understood as subordinate clauses.¹ These might best be translated by "if" and "when."² Moran has responded to this objection by claiming that the rendering of these as subordinate clauses is the result of a translation into another language. The speech categories of one language is not necessarily a valid category in another language. The Semitic languages often use paratactic constructions which would sometimes become subordinate clauses when translated into certain other languages.³ The remarks of Moran are valid, but these might be negated if the infinitive absolute itself is an indication of subordination.⁴ There is not enough evidence to determine the accuracy of Moran's suggestion.

¹ Julius Oberman, "Does Amarna Bear on Karatepe?" *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, V (1951), 58.
⁴ In verse 11 ḫmn is clearly a niphal participle; it is interesting to observe that the Sam. has ḫmn and this makes it clear that the translators of the Sam` understood this to be a niphal participle; this might verify that ḫmn should be regarded as a niphal participle.
Another reason why יִרְדָּנ should not be revocalized as an infinitive absolute is that the majority of י_ endings in Hebrew are found on participles which are in the appositional position functioning as adjectives. Robertson has collected a list of twenty-seven participles and six nouns which have this ending. He has observed that the participle can be in any stem, it can have either voice, it can be in either gender, but it is always singular.\(^1\) Also twenty-six of these twenty-seven participles are used as adjectives in the appositional position.\(^2\) It would certainly seem to be legitimate to conclude that the odds are greatly in favor of י_ being attached to a participle and not an infinitive.

**Strophe 2**

Verses 7-10 make up the second strophe of this pericope in Exodus 15. Just as the first strophe had two sections: the hymnic confession and the historical narrative,

\(^1\) Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, pp. 70-71.
\(^2\) Ibid., pp. 72-73; some scholars have concluded that the hireq compaginis was a remnant of the genitive case ending, see Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, p. 252, par. 90k; it has been maintained that this emphasized the bound relationship, see J. Barth, "Die Casusreste im Hebraischen," *Zeitschrift der Deutsche Morgenlandische Gesellschaft*, 53 1899, 593-99; in light of Robertson's analysis these would be incorrect; Robertson conjectures that "the -y in these 29 examples is related to the morpheme -y which converts nouns into adjectives or into actor nouns, cardinals into ordinals and proper names into a gentilic," see Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 74.
so does this second strophe. The hymnic confession is in verses 7-8 and the historical narrative is inverses 9-10

Hymnic Confession

A parallel pair

The parallel pair בִּלְמָא and מַמְדַּפָּה is found in verses 6 and 7 of Exodus 15. This parallel pair is also found in Ugaritic text 76:II:24-25 which reads:

\[
\text{nt’n bars iby} \quad \text{"We have planted my foes in the nether world}
\]
\[
\text{wb’pr qm ahk}^{1} \quad \text{and the attackers of your brother in the mud."}^{2}
\]

This pair is also found in 2 Samuel 22:49 and they are found with the sequence reversed in 2 Samuel 22:40-41.\(^3\) Dahood has suggested that בִּלְמָא be translated "your foes." Though it does not have the 2ms pronominal suffix, the other member of this fixed pair does have it. This is suggested on the basis of "the principle of the double duty suffix."\(^4\) This principle was recognized by Delitzsch in Psalms 107:20 and 139:1.\(^5\) The implication of this was not fully appreciated

\(^1\) Gordon, \textit{UT}, p. 182.
\(^3\) See also Gevirtz, "The Ugaritic Parallel to Jeremiah 8:23," p. 44.
\(^4\) Dahood, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Parallel Pairs," p. 98, par. 6h
until the study of Ugaritic clarified its usage. The following Ugaritic texts reveal this principle: 127:37-38, \textit{mlk} and \textit{drktk};\textsuperscript{2} Anat 1:16-17, \textit{bhr} and \textit{bmskh};\textsuperscript{3} II Aqht 1:26-27, \textit{bt} and \textit{hklh};\textsuperscript{4} and II:11-12, \textit{p'n} and \textit{gh}.\textsuperscript{5} The best rendering, therefore, of \textit{בּיָהֶלֶק} is "your foes."

\textit{A metaphor for the divine wrath of judgment}

The last half of verse 7 may be understood in two different ways. This may reflect general truth about Yahweh or it may relate to the specific historical background of Exodus 15:1-18.\textsuperscript{6}

General truth about Yahweh

The metaphor in verse 7 is not the same as the other metaphors in the rest of this song. This metaphor likens anger to a burning fire. Pharaoh's army was not consumed by fire but they were drowned in the Reed Sea. This may also

\textsuperscript{1} Dahood, \textit{Psalms}, I, 17.
\textsuperscript{2} Gordon, \textit{UT}, p. 194.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 253. \textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 24.7.
\textsuperscript{6} Robertson, \textit{Linguistic Evidence}, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{7} \textit{Ibid.}
refer to general truth about Yahweh because of the usage of the imperfect aspect. Since the drowning of Pharaoh's army has already occurred from the poet's perspective, one would not expect the verbs to be in the imperfect aspect. Verses 7 must therefore be a reference to general truth about Yahweh.

Specific historical background of Exodus 15:1-18

The terms in the last half of verse 7 will presently be examined in order to determine whether they should be interpreted literally or metaphorically.

---The noun is derived from the verb נרה which means to "become, be hot, burning." The resultant nuance of meaning for the noun is "burning anger." This term is usually used in reference to God's anger. It might seem strange that the poet would picture the drowning of an army with נרה. The emphasis with נרה, however, is not on the means by which Yahweh destroyed the enemy, but rather it is a metaphor to picture Yahweh's anger.

---The usage of related terms for אכל in the background of the ancient Near East is informative. The

---Ibid.
---KB, p. 331; see also Jastrow, Dictionary, I, 499, 501.
---BDB, p. 354.  
---Ibid.
Egyptian verb *wnm*, "to eat," is used of both men and animals. Figuratively it meant "to have the right of use (of a possession) or to be absorbed in something (e.g. sorcery, spiritual power, hunger)."\(^1\) It is also used of things which consume such as flames and diseases. The Sumerian word *ku*, "to eat," originally meant "to consume or use up." The Akkadian verb *akalu* is often used in a figurative sense "'to spend' money" or "'to use up' something." It is used of "consumption" or "destruction."\(^2\) As far as the Semitic languages are concerned, the root 𐤀𐤃𐤃 is attested in everyone with the meaning "to eat" which is used in reference to man or beast.\(^3\)

It is readily discernible how the metaphorical sense "to destroy" developed for to eat is to consume food and to destroy is to consume a prey. With this metaphorical sense 𐤀𐤃𐤃, is closer linguistically to the Akkadian usage of this term than to the Egyptian. Israel consumes her enemies in Deuteronomy 7:16, Ezekiel 19:3, 6, 36:13, and Zechariah 12:6. Israel and the land are consumed by her enemies, Isaiah 1:7, Jeremiah 8:16, 10:25, 50:7, and Psalm 79:7.\(^4\)

\(^3\) *Ibid.*  
Sometimes fire is the subject of נַעֲרָן. The fire of God devoured the sons of Aaron in Leviticus 10:2. Although נַעֲרָן is used in the imperfect aspect, this does not present a problem for it has already been demonstrated that the imperfect aspect was used as a preterite in verses 5 and 8. In this context the burning anger of Yahweh consumed the enemy via the Reed Sea.

—This noun appears to be derived from שָׁשְׂרֵן. In Aramaic שָׁשְׂרֵן means "to be old." The Akkadian noun qissatu means "chaff" and kissitu possibly means "dry wood." The Arabic verb means to "dry out, become old." In the Old Testament שָׁשְׂרֵן "is used to typify worthless inflammable material."

Synthesis.--When שָׁשְׂרֵן is used in relation to fire, here Yahweh's burning anger, with נַעֲרָן, it should be understood as a metaphor for divine wrath. In the poetical

1 Ibid., pp. 238-39.
2 KB, p. 858.
3 Jastrow, Dictionary, II, 1L33.
4 KB, p. 860.
5 Ibid.
section Isaiah 47:14, לְטָהֵר is used with שָׁא and לְטָהֵר. A synonym of לְטָהֵר, "consume," is used, שָׁא. This strophe in Isaiah 47 comprises verses 13-15. It pertains to the judgment directed against the astrologers of Babylon and is obviously used metaphorically.¹

In Joel 2:5 the sound of fiery flames, לְטָהֵר, consumes, לְטָהֵר stubble, לְטָהֵר. This verse is used metaphorically of the time when Yahweh's judgment will be carried out in the day of Yahweh. In Obadiah 18 Judah is represented as the instrument of God who will carry out God's destruction on Edom. The house of Jacob will be a fire, לְטָהֵר, and the house of Joseph a flame, לְטָהֵר. The house of Esau will be stubble, לְטָהֵר, and Israel will set them ablaze, לְטָהֵר, and they will consume them, לְטָהֵר. It should be observed, therefore, that when the concept of fire is used of consuming stubble, it may reflect a metaphorical usage to convey the motif of judgment upon the wicked.² Therefore, in reference to Exodus 15:7 where the burning anger of Yahweh consumed the army of Pharaoh as stubble, this must be understood not as general truth but as a metaphor to


describe the divine wrath of judgment upon the Egyptians via a watery grave.

*Do the images in verses 8-10 depict a path in the water?*

Cross has suggested that the first part of this song is earlier than the prose and poetic sources in the other sections of the old Testament. One of his reasons for suggesting this is that there is no image in verses 8-10 which depicts a path in the waters. He further summarizes his reasons for this conclusion with the following:

Most extraordinary, there is no mention of Israel's crossing the sea, or of a way through the deep places of the sea for the redeemed to cross over. . . . So far as we can tell, the Egyptians are cast out of barks or barges into the stormy sea: they sink in the sea like a rock or a weight and drown.\(^1\)

It would appear that Cross has made some faulty observations. There are a number of reasons why these conclusions are illegitimate.

\(רָכְבָּה\)

This Hebrew word means to "heap up."\(^2\) The cognate Aramaic term means "pile, heap, stack."\(^3\) Old South Arabic "רָכְבָּה" and Akkadian *arammu* are used in reference to a "seige-dike."\(^4\) Outside of Exodus 15:8 the only other place this

\(^1\) Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," pp. 16-17.
\(^2\) KB, p. 737.
\(^3\) Jastrow, *Dictionary*, II, 1117.
\(^4\) KB, p. 737
verb is used is in Jeremiah 50:26 where grain is heaped up. The noun הַרְפָּם, "heap," is used as a heap of rubbish in Nehemiah 3:34, a heap of grain in Haggai 2:16, and a heap of grain and fruit in 2 Chronicles 31:6. The picture in Exodus 15:8 appears to be one of water being heaped up or gathered together in a stack. The picture is much like a dam.

The etymology of יָרַפ. --The etymology of this word is uncertain. It has been related to הָרָפֵא, "leather, bottle, skin." The most plausible suggestion is to relate this to Arabic "high hill, hill rising high into the sky" also "earth-heap, sand-heap." Cross has agreed with this conclusion and has suggested that יָרַפ be translated "hill."

The Old Testament usage יָרַפ. --This word is used six times in the Old Testament. The suggested translation is "dam, barrier," or "heap." Psalm 78:13 is taken from Exodus 15:8. In Joshua 3:13 and 16 this word is used in

1 Ibid.
2 Jastrow, Dictionary, II, 884.
3 BDB, p. 622.
4 Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," 16, n. 58.
5 KB, P. 595.
6 BDB, p. 622.
reference to the Jordan River when the waters stood as a wall so that the children of Israel could cross into Canaan. In Psalm 33:7 the word is used in reference to Yahweh's creative activity. In this passage presents a textual problem and many early versions read . In Isaiah 17:11 apparently refers to a harvest heap. It would appear to be legitimate to understand as a "barrier, heap, or wall" which is verified by the T with , "wall," and the LXX with , "wall."

The meaning of . means to "thicken, condense, curdle." This definition is corroborated by the cognate word in Syriac and Aramaic. This term is used three other times in the Old Testament besides Exodus 15:8. In Zephaniah 1:12 is used to demonstrate the thickening of undisturbed wine. In Job 10:10 this verb denotes the curdling of cheese. In Zechariah 14:6 it is used with reference to the heavenly lights becoming congealed or coagulated and hence making darkness. These usages would verify the basic meaning of this term.

1 Jastrow, Dictionary, II, 1541.
2 Liddell and Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, p. 1767.
3 KB, p. 845.
4 Ibid.
5 The Qere reads .
Cross' interpretation of **חֶבֶר**---Cross and Freedman have conjectured that the usage of **חֶבֶר** in Exodus 15:8 reflects an early development of this term. Instead of it meaning to "congeal" or "coagulate," they conjecture that at this early stage it meant to "churn," "ferment," or "work."\(^1\) This has influenced Cross' interpretation of this term and this passage. Rather than having a path through the Reed Sea and having the dammed up waters collapse on Pharaoh's army, he has the Egyptian army pursuing after Israel in barges. The Reed Sea is churning from the strong east wind which the breath of the Deity has sent forth to consume Pharaoh's army. The barges are tossed into the stormy sea and the Egyptians sink like a rock and drown.\(^2\)

*The contextual interpretation.*--The language of this verse does not appear to be in favor of Cross' interpretation. His interpretation of **חֶבֶר**, may have some merit but it is lacking in support because the context of Exodus 15 is not in favor of it. The normal meaning of **חֶבֶר**, "to congeal or solidify,"\(^3\) concatenates well with the context.

Three events take place with the blast from Yahweh's

\(^1\) Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 246, n. 3.
\(^2\) Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," pp. 16-17.
The waters were heaped up, the streams stood like a wall, and the deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea. These certainly argue against Cross' interpretation. Coats' comments on this subject are germane:

In vv. 8-10, however, the image depicts a path in the waters. The enemy is not thrown into the sea; he pursues into the sea, only to have Yahweh's wind cover him with water.²

Historical Narrative

Two parallel pairs

The first parallel pair is שֵׁשׁ and דְּבַר in verse 9.

This pair is also found in Ugaritic text 67:1:18-20 which reads:

\[hm \text{ imt imt nps blt}\]
\[hmr (\text{)}h-t\ bklat\]
\[ydy ilim hm sb’(?)\]

"Lo! truly, truly I have wasted (my) life, truly I eat mud (grasping it) with both my hands. Lo! seven.”³

This pair is also found in Psalm 143:6:

I stretch out my hands to you my soul was like a land of weariness to you.

¹ This should probably be understood as a metaphor for the strong east wind, Exodus 14:21; see Keil and Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch*, II, 52.
⁴ Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, pp. 103-5.
It is again found in Job 2:4-5:

אֵל אַשְרָה לָא שָׁר
יִתְנַה בּוֹרֵד כְּפָא
אֹלֶג שְׁלֵחוּ אֶנַּעְר
All that a man has
he will give for his life
but stretch forth your hand.

Exodus 15:9 reads:

תֵּלָלְאָמוֹ נָפְשִׁי
סָרְק מַרְבִּי
תָּאוֹרְשֵׁמוֹ נָר
my desire will be sated on them
I will draw my sword
my hand shall subdue them.

One of the basic presuppositions in using fixed pairs is that these words were generally used as synonyms.\(^1\) Dahood has indicated that the sense of text 67:1:18-20 is obscure.\(^2\)

Hence this is not valid proof that this pair was a parallel pair in Ugaritic. In Psalm 143:6 נָפְשֵׁי and וְנָר appear to function synonymously, but in Job 2:4-5 and Exodus 15:9, there does not appear to be any connection. In Exodus 15:9 נָפְשֵׁי seems to be coalited with the preceding colon, "I will divide the spoil." The parallel pair appears to be וְנָר and וְנָר and not נָפְשֵׁי and וְנָר. Unless further evidence appears, this should caution against hasty conclusions.

\(^1\) This does not necessarily indicate that they were synonyms etymologically but simply that they were used synonymously in the various contexts in which they were used together; see Shemaryahu Talmon, "Synonymous Readings in the Textual Traditions of the Old Testament," *Scripta Hierosolymitana: Studies in the Bible*, Vol. VIII, ed. by Chaim Rabin (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), p. 337.
\(^2\) Dahood, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Parallel Pairs," p. 279, par. 389d.
It has also been suggested that בָּרָה and דַּאָ, in verse 9, are a fixed pair. This pair is used in Ugaritic text 128:IV:24-25:

\[
yd bs’ tslh \quad \text{"She stretched forth her hand into the bowl,}
\]
\[
hrb bbsr tsten \quad \text{she put a large knife into the meat."}^2
\]

In Psalm 22:21 the one suffering asks the Lord to deliver him from the sword, בָּרָה, and his treasure from the hand, דַּאָ, of the dog. This pair is also found in Psalm 144:10-11. The psalmist has described how God had delivered David from the sword, בָּרָה. He then asked God to deliver him from the hand, דַּאָ, of the enemies. In Psalm 149:6 the faithful were to have the praises of God in their mouth and a sword, בָּרָה, in their hand, דַּאָ. Job 5:15 states that the Lord rescues from the sword, בָּרָה, and from the hand, דַּאָ, of the strong. The usage of this parallel pair, in light of the example from Ugaritic and the examples from the Old Testament, appears to be a valid example of a fixed pair. These two words function as synonyms and might be viewed much like a cliche.\(^3\)

\(^1\) Gordon, *UT*, p. 195; these two lines are essentially repeated in 128:V:7-8.
\(^3\) Gevirtz, *Patterns in the Early Poetry of Israel*, p. 9; see also Dahood, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Parallel Pairs," PP. 74-75, par. 2.
A hapax legomena

Defining a semantic field

The verb לוח in verse 10 is a *hapax legomena*.

There are three homonymic verbs לוח.¹ This is a good example to demonstrate that by defining a semantic field in a general context the correct homonym can be recovered. The semantic field is limited in range by the preceding phrase, "the sea covered" and also by the following phrase, "like lead in the fearful waters." This rules out the homonym which means to "grow shadowy, dark."² It must, therefore, have the meaning to "sink."³

Cognates as verification

Since this verb is a *hapax legomena*, it would be correct to check for cognates. It is possible to trace the etymology of this verb back to Akkadian salalu, "sink, sink down," hence it is used of "sleep" especially in reference to death.⁴ There are two other possible derivations. The first connection is from Aramaic לוח "filter," and Arabic *sll*, "to strain, clarify." Another possible derivation is from South Arabic *dll*, "perish," and Arabic *dll*, "perish,

¹ This is root II, see KB, p. 804; see also BDB, pp. 852-53, they list four homonyms.
² Barr, *Comparative Philology*, pp. 136-37.
³ KB, p. 804.
be absent." If the observations on Akkadian *salalu* are accurate, it would appear more tenable to trace the provenance of *לבל* homonym II, through it. A reason for this is that it concatenates well with the context of Exodus 15. Another reason for this is that whenever a Northwest Semitic language does not offer a legitimate option, the East Semitic language of Akkadian is to be preferred for usage in comparative philology. Some of the early versions have offered further confirmation. The LXX has translated *לבל* with the aorist form of δωω "to cause to sink, sink, plunge in." The T° has translated this verb with יפב יפב "to sink, insert, immerse, cover."

Refrain 2

This refrain brings to a climax the second strophe which pertains to Yahweh's victory over the enemy. This is done by demonstrating that Yahweh is more powerful than all the gods of the Egyptians. This evidently was designed as a taunt about the Egyptians' gods. This is also done by demonstrating Yahweh's mighty acts. Four aspects of this

2 The Aramaic verb לבל does not appear to offer a reliable option for the concept of "filter" is further removed semantically than the Akkadian *salalu* "to sink."
refrain will be examined: an example of three-line staircase parallelism, the parallel usage of ṣā, the archaic ḫā, and a parallel pair reconsidered.

Three-Line Staircase Parallelism

The subject of three-line staircase parallelism has not been widely recognized in the study of ancient Hebrew poetry. Albright recognized climactic parallelism, but he only recognized two-line climactic parallelism.1 Dahood was one of the early advocates of a three-line staircase parallelism.2 Loewenstamm has indicated that the three-line climactic parallelism evolved from two-line climactic parallelism.3 This process should however be reversed for there is not a good example of two-line climactic parallelism in Ugaritic, but there are twenty-three clear examples of three-line staircase parallelism. Rather than having a simple to complex development, there is a complex to simple development.4

Greenstein sets forth three rules governing the usage of three-line staircase parallelism. These rules are the following:

(a) the initial two words of the first line are reproduced in the second line;
(b) the last word(s) of the first line is (are) either the grammatical subject NP of the first two lines or a vocative;
(c) the second and third lines are parallel either synonymously or synthetically. When the parallelism of the second and third lines is synonymous, very often there is a syntactic chiasmus in the third line, a stylistic transformation by which the word order is inverted; where there is no chiasmus, the verb is sometimes deleted in the third line.¹

The following examples from Ugaritic literature should demonstrate the rules set forth by Greenstein:

Krt 21-24
\begin{verbatim}
y'n htkh krt
y'n htkh rs
mid grds tbth wbtm
\end{verbatim}
"Keret sees his progeny
He sees his offspring is poor
His seat and house are broken."²

Text 127:54-57
\begin{verbatim}
ytbr hrn ybn
ytbr hrn risk
'ttrt, sm b'l qdqdk³
\end{verbatim}
"May Horn on break, O my son
May Horon break thy head
Ashtoreth name of Baal thy pate."⁴

II Aqht 6:26-28
\begin{verbatim}
irs' hym l'Aqht gzr
irs hym watnk
blmt waslhk⁵
\end{verbatim}
"Ask for life, O Aqhat, the hero.
Ask for life, and I'll give it to you;
for immortality, and I'll bestow it on you."⁶

¹ Ibid., p. 97.
² Gordon, UT, p. 250. ³ Ibid., p. 194.
⁴ Pritchard, ANET, p. 148; this text was translated by Ginsberg.
⁵ Gordon, UT, p. 248.
It should be observed in these three texts that the first two words of the first line are initially repeated in the second line. It should also be observed that the last word of the first line in each of these texts either functions as the subject for the first two lines, Krt 21-24, or it functions as a vocative.\(^1\) It should be observed, finally, that the third line in each of these examples is parallel synonymously or synthetically with the second line.

There are two possible examples of this in Exodus 15:1-18. The first is found in verses 6-7 and the second in verse 11. Exodus 15:6-7 could be pictured accordingly:

\[
\text{יִמַּעִית יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי, בְּצֶרֶת}
\]
Your right hand, 0 Yahweh, awesome in power.

\[
\text{יַמַּעְיִית יְהוָה הָרֵעֵשׁ אָזְאִיב}
\]
Your right hand, 0 Yahweh, shatters the enemy.

\[
\text{זָכַרְתִּי נְאֹן הֲחֵרִים קָמִית}
\]
By the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your attackers.

It should be observed that the first two words of the first line are repeated in the second line. It should also be observed that the tetragrammaton not only functions as the second word but it also must function as the vocative. In the three examples previously cited the subject or vocative was always the third word in the line. Also, in the two

\(^1\) It should be observed in II Aqht 6:26-28 that \textit{I}Ag\textit{h}t is not the last word in the line. This may initially seem to contradict Greenstein's rule b, but \textit{gzr} is to be understood as an epithet referring to the addressee and, therefore, it does not contradict rule b, see Chaim Cohen, "Studies in Early Israelite Poetry I: An Unrecognized Case of Three-Line Staircase Parallelism in the Song of the Sea," \textit{Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University}, 7 (1975), p. 16, n. 20.
examples cited, which had a vocative, II Aqht 6:26-28 and text 127:54-57, the vocative was used in the first line but not in the second line. In Exodus 15:6 the vocative is used in both lines. It appears, in addition, that the first half of verse 7 is initially designed to be in parallel with the first part of verse 8.¹ These facts appear to mitigate the conclusion that Exodus 15:6-7 is an example of three-line staircase parallelism. Albright's explanation of Exodus 15:6 as an example of climactic parallelism should be preferred. This could be illustrated as: ab/cd//ab/ef.²

The second example, following the suggestion that this is an example of three-line staircase parallelism, is found in Exodus 15:11. This could be visualized as:

מִֽי־כּֽמָֽלָֽקָה הָיֹֽוָֽהָ Who is like You among the gods, O Yahweh, מִֽי־כּֽמָֽלָֽקָה נָאָרָֽה בָֽקַֽדֶּשׁ Who is like You awesome in holiness, נּוּרָֽהָ חָוָלָֽה עֵשָֽׁה פֶּלָֽא Astonishing in praiseworthy deeds, a wonder worker?

The first two words of the first line, מִֽי־כּֽמָֽלָֽקָה, are reproduced in the second line. In addition, the tetragrammaton is in the vocative. Finally, the second and third lines are parallel synthetically. If the observations made by Greenstein about three-line staircase parallelism are correct, verse 11 would appear to be a legitimate example of three-line staircase parallelism.

The Parallel Usage of רָאָה

The interrogative pronoun רָאָה is used twice in verse parallel relationship. This parallel relationship is reflected in Ugaritic text 126:V:14, 17, 20. This is also found a number of times in the MT: Jeremiah 23:18, Amos 3:8, Nahum 1:6, Psalm 15:1, and Job 19:23.1

The Archaic Orthography of קַמָּלֶה

The Sam. has translated קַמָּלֶה with קֶמּוּל. The spelling of the Sam. reflects later orthography.2 This text was apparently used often in worship for the text is relatively free of corruption and also it is full of archaisms.3

A Parallel Pair Reconsidered

A suggested parallel pair is מְלַע and שֶׁש. This is supposedly parallel with Ugaritic il and bn qds.4 This parallel pair is used in Ugaritic text 129:19-20, 137:37-38, II Aght I:3-4, 8-9, 11-14, 22-23. This pair should influence the translation of שְׁשׁ קַמָּלֶה. The traditional rendering of this prepositional phrase is "in holiness," but if this is a

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parallel pair it might suggest that it be rendered "among the holy ones." These two alternatives will presently be examined.

_Holy ones_

The prepositional phrase שִׁפְיוֹן has been translated "in holiness." The LXX and Syro-hexaplar have translated this with the plural מְדוֹנָן. Cross and Freedman have regarded this as the correct reading and have indicated that this would be supported by the parallel word מְנוֹן.¹ They have translated the latter word as "mighty ones" and the former as "holy ones."² Since Cross and Freedman have regarded the reading of the LXX and Syro-hexaplar as the correct reading, they had to emend the text.³ Muilenburg has however offered another alternative to this emendation. Instead of emending the text, he has suggested that שִׁפְיוֹן be regarded as a collective. The LXX and Syro-hexaplar translators may have understood this as a collective and consequently reflected this in their translation so that they translated this with a plural. Muilenburg has translated יְמִים as "gods" and שִׁפְיוֹן as "holy ones."⁴

² Ibid., p. 24.2. ³ Ibid., p. 247, n. 35.
⁴ Muilenburg, "A Liturgy on the Triumphs of Yahweh," p. 244.
In holiness

The parallelism of שֵׁם with מִלָּה and its corresponding translation as "holy ones" is possible. There are nevertheless two reasons which mitigate this possibility. It should initially be observed that if this verse is an example of three-line staircase parallelism, it should be considered that this would argue against these two words being a fixed pair\(^1\) in this context. The salient point of three-line staircase parallelism is that it is climactic, especially between lines 1 and 2.\(^2\) In the first line the poet had asked the first rhetorical question, "Who is like You, O Yahweh, among the gods?" In the second line the poet then moved one step further with the second rhetorical question, "Who is like You awesome in holiness?" It should secondly be noticed that in the first refrain, verse 6, יָדֹא was followed by a prepositional phrase הַכֹּבָא. In this refrain the same word רַדֹּא is followed by another prepositional phrase שֵׁם. This would suggest that שֵׁם should be rendered as "in holiness" because of its parallelism with הַכֹּבָא, "in power."

\(^1\) The parallel pair in Ugaritic is il and bn qds and not מִלָּה and שֵׁם.

\(^2\) Greenstein, "Two Variations of Grammatical Parallelism in Canaanite Poetry and Their Psycholinguistic Background," p. 100.
Strophe 3

This strophe is made up of verses 12-15. Verses 12-14 make up the hymnic confession, and verse 15 and the first half of 16 comprise the prophetic narrative. As it has already been observed, many critical scholars have regarded this as a later expansion of this poem. The strophic structure, however, argues against this assumption. The prophetic nature of this section has been the source of much of this confusion. This should not present a problem for this strophe "is full of an optimism which is based on the victory over the Egyptians which Yahweh had just won."¹

Hymnic Confession

The hymnic confession is made up of three bicola. It should also be observed that verses 12-13 have the same style as do the other verses immediately following the other two refrains. Each verse has its distinctive theme: verse 12, Yahweh's victory at the sea; verse 13, the wilderness wanderings; and verse 14, their destination. The assonance of three verbs should be noticed: נָחַל in verse 12, נָחַל in verse 13, and נְחָל in verse 13.² Two aspects of this hymnic confession will be considered: the contextual usage of זָרָן and the usage of פָּלַשְ׀תָּה.

The contextual usage of מַרְכָּז

The cognates

The Hebrew noun מַרְכָּז has a general meaning of "earth, land."\(^1\) The Akkadian cognate is used with the cosmic sense of "earth." It is also used to denote the "Underworld," a specific territory or "land," and "ground."\(^2\) In Ugaritic 'rs has the meaning of "earth, ground, Underworld."\(^3\) The cognates, therefore, concur with the general meaning of מַרְכָּז.

Old Testament usage

*Cosmological sense.*--This term is used in the sense of "earth" in contrast with heaven. A bipartite division is found in Genesis 1:1 when God created the heavens and the earth. In Genesis 14:19, 22 El Elyon is referred to as the creator of heaven and earth. In Genesis 1:10 there is a tripartite division of heaven, earth, and sea.\(^4\)

*Land.*--This usage indicates a specific territory.

The land of the north shows direction, Jeremiah 3:18. It may be used in a topographical sense such as the plain of

\(^1\) BDB, p. 75.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 392.  
\(^4\) Ibid., pp. 395-97.
Jordan, Genesis 19:28. It occasionally expresses a relationship to a person like Genesis 31:3 "land of the fathers" and to a name of a group of people or land like "the land of the Canaanites" in Exodus 13:5.¹

Theological.--The reference to the land of Canaan as an inheritance of Abraham and his descendants has theological significance. Genesis 15:18 indicates that the boundaries of this inheritance were given. This is called the land of the Canaanites, Exodus 3:17, and the land of the Amorites, Deuteronomy 1:7.²

Ground.--This is the nuance of meaning when יָרָץ speaks of the earth's constitution or produce. The earth gives fatness in Genesis 27:28, increase in Deuteronomy 32:32, and produce in Joshua 5:12. Sometimes it is used in reference to a desolate land, Ezekiel 32:15. The mourner sits on the ground in Job 2:13. In Genesis 2:7 man was created out of the dust of the ground.³

Underworld.--This is a contrast with the land of the living. It is the place of the departed dead. This sometimes is אָרָץ "the earth beneath," Ezekiel 31:14, 16, 18, 32:18, 24. In Psalm 63:10 it is used in reference to תַּחַת, "the depths of the earth." This is the same

¹ Ibid., pp. 400-401. ² Ibid., p. 401. ³ Ibid., pp. 397-99.
nuance as in Psalm 71:20, 95:4. This word may also appear without any modifiers for those who descend into the earth are dead, Psalm 22:30 and Job 16:17.\(^1\) With this usage there is a possible connection with Sheol, Job 10:21-22.\(^2\)

Usage in Exodus 15:12

*Usage with בָּלָע.*--Etymologically this word is derived from the root בָּלָע, "to swallow." This appears in Aramaic and postbiblical Hebrew. It has corresponding forms in other Semitic languages.\(^3\) The meaning originally was "to gulp down" or "to swallow" and literally "to snatch with the mouth and to gulp down through the esophagus."\(^4\) This verb is used of Yahweh's judgment. It is used in connection with רָאָה in Numbers 16:32, 26:10, Deuteronomy 11:6, and Psalm 106:17. Each of these is a reference to where Korah and his company were swallowed by the earth. This usage of רָאָה with בָּלָע in this context reflects that they involve death and in Numbers 16:33 there is a connection with Sheol.

\(^{4}\) Schupphaus "בָּלָע," p. 137.
Synthesis.--Of the five categories of definitions for יָרָח, two may offer legitimate interpretations of Exodus 15:12. Rashi understood this as a reference to the ground and the burial of the Egyptian army.¹ The context of Exodus 15 is a description of the destruction and death of the army of Pharaoh. In verse 6 Yahweh's right hand shattered the Egyptian army. In verse 12 Yahweh stretched forth His right hand and the earth swallowed them. Cross and Freedman have interpreted this as a reference to the underworld.²

The concept of יָרָח being equated with the underworld was possibly a Semitic idiom. In Akkadian there is a parallel usage for "'Ishtar has descended ana erseti, into the earth' i.e. into the Underworld."³ In Ugaritic there is also a parallel. Text 67:V:14-15 reads: wrd bt hptt 'rs byrdm 'rs,⁴ "Go into the depths of the earth below, be numbered among those who descend into the earth."⁵ Text 76:II:24-25 expresses the same concept, nt'n bars iby wb 'pr qm ahk,⁶ "we have planted my foes in the nether world, and in

¹ Exodus, p. 78.
³ Ottosson, p. 391
⁴ Gordon, UT, p. 179.
⁵ Ottosson, 392
⁶ Gordon, UT, p. 182.
the mud those who rose up against your brother.¹ Israel shared this concept of רָעָה with her Semitic neighbors.

They did not share the mythological system of other Semitic cultures for the Old Testament certainly indicates that there was a theological distinction between Israel and the "world." The point is, רָעָה in certain contexts was tantamount with the underworld, the place of the departed dead. This concept would appear to concur best with the context in Exodus 15:12.

*Is פֶלְשַׁי an anachronism?*

A statement of the problem

Exodus 15:14 lists the Philistines as one of the constituents who were dwelling in Canaan at the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt.² If this was written by Moses in the fifteenth century B.C., a problem is encountered for many scholars place the inception of the Philistines' entrance into Canaan in the twelfth century B.C.³ If this is correct, it possibly leads to one of two conclusions: the Song of the Reed Sea would consequently have been written after 1000 B.C. or that its appearance in this song should Philistia.

¹ Dahood, *Psalms*, I, 144.
² The Philistines have left their mark on the land of Canaan for the name Palestine, פֶלְשׁי is identical with Philistia.
³ Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," p. 44.
be regarded as an anachronism.¹

A tentative solution to the problem

_Origination._—There are a number of Old Testament passages which associate the Philistines with Caphtor.² The location of Caphtor has been generally associated with Crete. Near the end of the third millennium B.C., new groups of people appear to have entered Palestine. This is attested by the tombs of Tell el-'Aggul. These appear to have been seafaring nomads who came from the Aegean world to Cyprus and then to Palestine.³ Wiseman has verified this assumption with these words:

> The name "Caphtor" recurs in cuneiform documents as Kaptora, and is identifiable with Egyptian Keftiu. People from Keftiu are represented in tomb-chapels at


² These passages are: Gen. 10:14, Dt. 2:23, Jer. 47:4, and Amos 9:7.

Thebes of the fifteenth century B.C.; those paintings that are demonstrably first-hand representations clearly depict the same people as featured in the frescoes at Knossos in Minoan Crete, and correspond to what is known of Minoans and Mycenaen alike.¹

Yamauchi confirms this further, "In any case what has become crystal clear is that the Philistines came from the area of the Aegean and that they were in close contact with the Mycenaen Greeks."²

_Date of arrival._--It has been suggested that the Philistines were present in Palestine in the thirteenth century B.C.³ For the interpreter who adheres to a late date for the Exodus, the evidence coalesces well. For the interpreter who defends an early date for the Exodus, there are problems. Although there are no specific extrabiblical


references to the Philistines in Canaan before the twelfth or thirteenth century B.C., there is evidence to support that there was trade between the Aegean world and Canaan about 2000 B.C.\(^1\) This is further corroborated with the following statement:

> Although there are no extrabiblical references to the Philistines in Canaan before the twelfth century B.C., it is known that trade was common between western Asia and Crete early in the second millennium. One of the Mari Tablets (18th century B.C.) records the sending of gifts by the king of Hazor to Kaptara (Caphtor). Philistines did not have a dominant position in southern Palestine during the Patriarchal Age, but early trading centers appear to have been established at that time.\(^2\)

The evidence does not clearly equate the Aegean Sea people with the Philistines, but it is not impossible that the Philistines were a part of the Aegean Sea people. Since Exodus 15:14 and the other references to the Philistines in the Pentateuch\(^3\) do not have any textual problems with this word and they do not suggest any glosses, this would be a preferable solution for the present.

\(^1\) It is interesting to notice a critic who uses archaeology to confirm an early date for the Philistines' entrance into Canaan, see John J. Bimson, *Redating the Exodus and Conquest*, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series*, 5, ed. by David J. A. Clines, Philip R. Davies, and David M. Gunn (Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1978), pp. 93-110.


\(^3\) Gen. 21:34, 26:1, 8, 14, 15, 18, and Ex. 13:17 use the name Philistine.
Prophetic Narrative

The usage of identical verbs

The parallel usage of the verb *ahd* is found in Ugaritic text 132:1-2 and 137:40. The former has not been well preserved and the translation of this text is not possible, but the parallel usage of this verb is obvious.¹ Text 137:40 reads: *(ymnh ʿtrr)(?) tuhd smalKh tuhd ʿtrt,*² "(His right hand Ashtore)th seizes, Ashtoreth seizes his left hand."³ This same usage of ḫ轾খ is also found in Ruth 3:15, Ecclesiastes 9:12,⁴ and Exodus 15:14-15.⁵

The metaphorical usage of animal names for nobility

In Ugaritic and Hebrew literature, animal names are occasionally used in reference to leaders.⁶ There are some twenty-five examples in the Old Testament where animal names

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³ Translated by Ginsberg in Pritchard, *ANET*, p. 130.
⁴ Not only does Eccl. 9:12 reflect the identical usage of this verb, but they are found in different stems: the niphal participle and qal passive participle; in similar examples to this, critical scholars have wanted to emend the MT, but Held has demonstrated that this was part of the Canaanite literary tradition, see Moshe Held, "The Action-Result (Factive-Passive) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXXIV:4 (December, 1965), 272-82.
are used metaphorically for leaders or nobles. In Exodus 15:15 שַׁלְיַ֣ת and יָֽלָּדִ֑ים are used in this manner. The latter word literally means "male sheep" or "ram." It is also used in a metaphorical sense of "leaders, chiefs, nobles." The former word basically means "cattle." The context of Exodus 15 demands that both words be rendered in the sense of "chief" or "leader."

Refrain 3

Strophe 3 focused on Israel's proleptic entrance into Canaan and it also focused on Israel's uniqueness as Yahweh's people. This is demonstrated in this strophe by the parallel cola which are: verse 13 שָׁלְיַת and verse 16 שָׁלְיַת. Refrain 3, which is made up of the last half of verse 16, brings this third strophe to a climax.

2 KB, p 37.
3 Dahood, Psalms, I, 9; see also BDB, p. 18, they list this usage as homonym III.
4 KB, p. 52.
5 Ibid., this is listed as homonym II; see also Patrick D. Miller, Jr., "Two Critical Notes on Psalm 68 and Deuteronomy 33," Harvard Theological Review, 57:3 (July, 1964), 240-43; and M. Dahood, "The Value of Ugaritic for Textual Criticism," Biblica, 40 (1959), 160-70.
Coda

This section is outside of the strophic structure of this poem. It was written in a confessional style by addressing Yahweh in the second person and it appears to bring the Song of the Reed Sea to a climax. Three aspects of this coda need to be analyzed and these are: verse 17 as a reference to the land or Yahweh's sanctuary, an examination of יָדַ אֲלִי in verse 17, and Yahweh's eternal kingship in verse 18.

A Reference to the Land or Yahweh's Sanctuary?

The language of verse 17 is usually interpreted to refer to the holy mountain of Yahweh where His sanctuary was located. Most critical scholars have understood this as a reference to Mount Zion or Mount Horeb.1 The context of this song may however argue that this is a reference to the land of Canaan. This verse will be examined in three of the following areas: the usage of רַחַ, the parallel pair בַּשֵּׂעִי and נָמָּר, and the contextual usage of שֶׁפֶךְ אֶלְּפָּה.

The usage of רַחַ

The definition of רַחַ

The noun רַחַ basically means "mountain" or "mountains."2 It may be used in a topographical sense to refer

2 KB, p. 241.
to a specific range of mountains, Joshua 20:7; to a specific mountain, Exodus 19:11; and to refer to a site on a mountain which is inhabited, Joshua 11:21, 15:33, 48. It may also be used to refer to mountains which are used as boundaries as in Joshua 15-21. This word may also be used in reference to the geographical area of Palestine. This usage reflects the geographical landscape of Palestine. The entire land of Israel may be called "the mountain of Israel," Ezekiel 36:1-4; and it may be subdivided and called "the mountain of Judah," Joshua 20:7, 21:11, and "the mountain of Israel," Joshua 11:16, or "the mountain of Ephraim," Joshua 19:50.1

The contextual usage of רַחַף

‘nt 3:26-27.--The Ugaritic cognate gr has been used to interpret רַחַף in Exodus 15:17. ‘nt 3:26-27 is a key text for it uses the cognate words for רַחַף, שִׁפַּם, and נַחַלְתֶּךָ.

This passage states the following: בְּתֵית הָגְּדוֹל הַזֶּה בַּהַר נַחַלְתֶּךָ, "in the midst of my mount (who am) the god of Sapon, in the holy place, in the mount of my inheritance."2 In the ancient Near Eastern milieu mountains were often recognized as the dwelling places for deities or it was the place where

2 Gordon, UT, p. 254.
the gods assembled. The words *gr nhlty* should supposedly be understood as a formula in the early literature of Ugarit and Israel to refer to the seat of a deity either in his cosmic shrine or the earthly counterpart. In this text Baal is the god of Saphon.

*Exodus 15:17.*--In light of *gr nhlty* Cross has indicated that נַחַלָה is a general term which refers to the land of the deity. This is a reference to Canaan with its many hills and to the cosmic shrine. The earthly manifestation might supposedly have been Gilgal. The antiquity of this Ugaritic phrase indicates that נַחַלָה does not need to be dated in David or Solomon's time because it is thought to be late. This phrase, however, in the context of Exodus 15 is void of any mythological connotations. The noun נַחַלָה is often used in reference to the land of Canaan as Israel's inheritance. The two verbs which begin verse 17, הבאאמה, confirm this. God was not bringing and planting Israel in a cosmic or earthly shrine whether it was Gilgal,

1 Talmon, “רֶה,” p. 4.41.
3 Ibid., p. 24.
4 Albright, review of *L'epithete divine Jahve Seba'ot: Etude philologique, historiœ et exegetique*, p. 381, n. 5.
5 BDB, p. 635, see נַחַלָה, par. 1a.
Mount Sinai, or the Temple in Jerusalem. Yahweh was about to bring and to plant Israel in the land of Canaan. The inhabitants of Canaan were to experience fear because the God who defeated the Egyptians at the Reed Sea would also defeat the Canaanites. The purpose of this was to gain for Israel Yahweh's inheritance, the land of Canaan.

The parallel pair בֵּית and הַנַדָּח

In Ugaritic

The parallel pair יָטָב and הָנִל, are used in Ugaritic. Text 51:VIII:12-14 reads in the following manner: mk ksu tbth hh ars nhlth wngr, “the throne on which he sits (is) deep in mire and the land of his heritage is filth.” These same lines are found in text 67:II:15-16. In ‘nt VI:14-16 this pair is also found, kptr ksu tbth hkpt ars nhlth, “to Kaphtor the throne that he sits on Hikpat the land of his position.” In each of these cases, this pair is used in

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2 If this was the Temple in Jerusalem, this would have to be understood proleptically, at least for a conservative; in light of the discussion in this study, this does not appear to fit the context.
3 Gordon, UT, p. 173-
4 Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends, p. 103.
5 Gordon, UT, p. 178.
6 Ibid., p. 255.
7 Translated by Ginsberg in Pritchard, ANET, p. 138.
mythological texts.

In Hebrew

The fixed pair בֵּית הָאָדָם and לְנָחָל are used two other places in the old Testament besides Exodus 15:17. In Psalm 69:36-37, the psalmist was anticipating the time when men would be able to return to the land of Judah and Jerusalem. The result of this would be that men would dwell there and their descendants would inherit the land. Deuteronomy 12:10 has also used this fixed pair in reference to the land of which Israel was about to obtain possession. In verse 11 God indicated that He would set a place apart for His dwelling. Therefore, it cannot be substantiated that this pair in the Old Testament has mythological connotations as it does in the literature of Ugarit. The fact that this pair is used in the Old Testament is obvious, but the writers of the Old Testament used it in reference to Yahweh's land, the land of Canaan.

*The contextual usage of בֵּית הָאָדָם*

Various interpretations of בֵּית הָאָדָם

This has been understood as a reference to the Solomonic Temple, God's dwelling at Gilgal, His residence

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2 Driver, *The Book of Exodus*, p. 139.
at Shiloh,¹ and Mount Sinai.² Most critical scholars who have regarded this as a reference to the Solomonic Temple have maintained an anachronistic view towards this poem, however Keil and Delitzsch have regarded this as a prophetic reference to Solomon's Temple.³ It has also been suggested that this was a reference to the land.⁴

The definition of וֲתֹא ר
This term should be related to either a Northwest Semitic root וַיֹּא ר "to separate, cut off"⁵ or a root from the East Semitic language of Akkadian quddushu which means to be "bright, clear."⁶ The root וַיֹּא ר, "to separate, cut off," appears to be the most acceptable suggestion.⁷ From this developed וַיֹּא ר, "sacredness";⁸ וַיֹּא ר, "sacred, holy";⁹ וַיֹּא ר

¹ BDB, p. 874.  
³ Keil and Delitzsch, The Pentateuch, II, 55.  
⁴ Noth, Exodus, p. 126.  
⁵ Young, The Book of Isaiah, I, 242, n. 19.  
⁷ See the reasons given for this by Young, The Book of Isaiah, I, 242, n. 19.  
⁸ BDB, p. 871.  
⁹ Ibid., p. 872.
and יִשְׂרָאֵל, "temple-prostitute";¹ and מִקְדֶּשׁ, "sacred place, sanctuary."²

The usage of מִקְדֶּשׁ in Exodus 15

This term should tentatively be interpreted as a reference to the land of Canaan. There are two reasons for this.

The immediate context.--The subject matter of verses 13-17 deals with Israel's entrance into the land of Canaan. There possibly is a parallel between מִקְדֶּשׁ in verse 17 and נָחַת פֶּדוֹת in verse 13. This latter phrase may refer to the sanctuary of Yahweh, 2 Samuel 15:25, nevertheless it also is used more comprehensively to refer to the whole land of Israel in Jeremiah 25:30.³ This seems to be the correct interpretation of נָחַת פֶּדוֹת in this context. Therefore, in light of the context and the parallel in verse 13, מִקְדֶּשׁ should be understood as a reference to the land.

Psalm 78:54.--This parallel passage indicates that this is a legitimate interpretation. This verse is read:

נְבֵי יְמֵי אֲלֵי-גַּבֹּל קֶדֶשׁ

וַיַּסְתַּמֵּחַ יְמִינֶנָּה

It should be observed in this verse that Yahweh brought Israel to the boundary of His holy place. This is related

¹ Ibid., p. 873. ² Ibid., p. 874-. ³ Noth, Exodus, p. 125.
to the mountain which is a reference to the land of Canaan and not Mount Zion for that is dealt with in verse 69. The contextual setting of Psalm 78 places verse 54 in the historical setting which corresponds to their entrance into the land of Canaan.\(^1\) The usage of שַׁעֲרַת in verse 17, therefore, is not a reference to the sanctuary but rather to the holy place, Yahweh's dwelling, the land of Canaan.

An Examination of דֹּרֶךְ

The textual problem

The noun דֹּרֶךְ in verse 17 presents a textual problem. Cross and Freedman have indicated that eighty-six Hebrew manuscripts have replaced דֹּרֶךְ with יִדְרֶשׁ.\(^2\) The Sam. has also followed with יִדְרֶשׁ. Because of the primacy of the MT, the reading דֹּרֶךְ is to be preferred. This is further confirmed for דֹּרֶךְ and יִדְרֶשׁ are often used in parallel. The following passages confirm this: Exodus 23:17, 34:23, Isaiah 3:17, 49:14, Micah 1:2, Psalm 30:9, 35:22, 38:16, and 130:1-3.

The etymology of דֹּרֶךְ

A number of etymological suggestions have been proposed for דֹּרֶךְ. Albright has revived Yevin's proposal that

\(^1\) Talmon, “דֹּרֶךְ ,” p. 432.
יִדְנָא is derived from an Egyptian noun *idnw*, "administrator, steward."\(^1\) Some have related this to an alleged Akkadian cognate *dananu*, "be mighty."\(^2\) God is therefore pictured as one having "power" or "strength."\(^3\) This word is attested in the Akkadian letters from Mari\(^4\) and in the Tell El-Amarna Tablets.\(^5\) These are found in proper names and offer no etymological help.\(^6\) Zimmerman relates this to נְדָא which evidently came from the Arabic verb . It would then have the nuance of "founder."\(^7\)

The Ugaritic cognate offers a more preferable solution since it is from the same family of languages as Hebrew. The Ugaritic cognates are: *‘ad* and *‘adh*, "father and/or lord," and *‘adt*, "mother and/or lady."\(^8\) This

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1 Albright, review of *Ugaritic Handbook*, pp. 388-89.
2 KB, p. 10.
suggestion is corroborated by text 52:32-33 which reads: *hlh tsh 'ad 'ad whlh tsh um um,*1 "Behold, she cries, 'father, father,' and behold, she cries, 'mother, mother.'"2 The noun 'ad is parallel with 'um, "mother." This indicates that 'ad means "father." Another text corroborating this is 77:33-35 which reads: *'adnh yst msb mznm umh kp mznm,*3 "her father prepares the frame for the scales, her mother the pan of the scales."4 In this text 'adn is once again parallel with 'um. This clearly establishes that 'ad and/or 'adn mean "father." This development of "father" to "lord" is readily discernible.5

Yahweh's Eternal Kingship

*A literary phrase*

In verse 18 the literary phrase יְהַוֶּהְנָי הָאָדָם has two Ugaritic parallels: 68:32, *b’lm yml(k),*6 "let Baal reign" or "Baal shall reign," and text 49:1:27, *ymlk ‘ttr ‘rz,*7

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5 *Ibid.,* p. 60.
"let Attar the terrible reign."¹ Lipinski considers Exodus 15:18 and Ugaritic text 68:32 to be a very close parallel. He has suggested that both are an exultation in a cultic act of Yahweh and Baal.² Both follow victories, Baal's victory over Yam and Yahweh's victory over Pharaoh's army.³ There are some problems, however, with Lipinski's interpretation. The interpretation of Ugaritic text 68:32 is uncertain for the text has been damaged. Lipinski's reconstruction has the vanquished enemy, Yam, proclaiming this acclamation, but in Exodus 15 Yahweh's friends, not His enemies, proclaim this acclamation.⁴ This phrase is also terse and therefore its significance for comparison is limited.⁵

A parallel pair

In Ugaritic

The concept of Yahweh being acclaimed as king forever has a close parallel in the other Semitic cultures of the ancient Near East where these people acclaimed the

³ Ibid.
⁴ Schoors, "Literary Phrases," p. 43, par. 31g.
eternal kingship of their deities. This motif of a god's eternal kingship was expressed by the parallel pair mlk and 'lm. This is found in Ugaritic text 68:10, tqh mlk 'lmk drkt dt drdrk,¹ "You will receive your eternal kingdom/ kingship, your dominion of all generations."² It is also found in text 2008:9³ where Pharaoh is addressed as mlk 'lm.

In Hebrew

This pair is expressed in Hebrew with either a nominal or verbal form of יְלִם. The nominal form is used in 1 Kings 1:31, Psalms 10:16, 24:7, 9, 29:10, 145:1, and Jeremiah 10:10. The noun מָלֵךְ is used with מֵלֶם in Psalm 45:7 and 145:13. The verbal form of יְלִם is used in Exodus 15:18, Psalm 146:10, and Micah 4:-7.⁴ Exodus 15:18 is the first expression by Israel of Yahweh's eternal kingship in the Old Testament.

Verse 18 is a germane conclusion to Exodus 15. Yahweh had proven His sovereignty over the gods of Egypt, one of whom was Pharaoh, with the ten plagues. Pharaoh then sent his army with their chariots after the children of

² Dahood, Psalms, III, 34.2.
Israel. Yahweh miraculously split the Reed Sea. This provided an escape for Israel and a watery grave for the Egyptians. Just as Yahweh had demonstrated His sovereignty over the Egyptians and their gods, He would likewise demonstrate His sovereignty over the inhabitants of Canaan. *Carmen maris algosi* was composed to praise Yahweh for these mighty acts. It was to this Sovereign One that Moses and Israel climactically acclaimed: ייהוה ימלך ל злоוה נזר.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

One of the problems stated at the outset of this study related to hermeneutical approach. Form criticism and tradition history have even affected one's preference for a title. The unity of Exodus 15:1-18 has been questioned. It was noted that the usage of the form-critical and traditio-historical approach in answering this question was not based on objective proof but rather it was based upon evolutionary presuppositions. This critical approach has also influenced the subject of authorship. It was pointed out that Exodus 15:1-18 reflected a number of themes which it shared with some of the other books of the Pentateuch. This was used to corroborate this assumption that Moses was the composer of this song. The date has also been affected. In light of 1 Kings 6:1, a date of 1446 B.C. appears to be set by the Scriptures. This conservative date was confirmed by a number of philological arguments which indicated that this song could have been composed in this general time period.

Form criticism has also influenced one's interpretation of the genre. Five of the most prominent explanations of the Gattungen were examined. Exodus 15:1-18 appears to have many literary types and hence it is an enigma for form
critical purposes. Tradition history has also affected the critic's interpretation of the setting. Three of the prevailing interpretations of this were examined. It was demonstrated that these have divorced Exodus 15:1-18 from its contextual setting. Another major criticism is that scholars have failed to make a distinction between a secondary and an original *Sitz im Leben*. The strophe and meter were also examined. The salient point of the strophic structure is the refrains in verses 6, 11, and 16. The confusion in the various metrical studies was observed and it was concluded that these studies in meter demonstrate much subjectivity and many inconsistencies.

Chapter IV dealt with the exegesis of this song. The purpose of this chapter was to deal with the interpretative problems. In relationship to this subject, the problematic terms were examined. Of particular importance in this regard was the usage of parallel pairs. The abundance of them apparently implies that the poet had at his disposal a literary tradition\(^1\) from which he could draw

\(^1\) Cf. Robert C. Culley, *Oral Formulaic Language in the Biblical Psalms, Near and Middle East Series*, 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967); Culley's emphasis is on the use of formulas and formulaic phrases in the process of oral composition and hence "the sound of words and phrases is of particular importance in oral poetry," p. 15; the result of this is that parallelism is not the primary characteristic of Hebrew poetry, rather meter becomes the dominant factor, p. 119; thus there are certain presuppositional and methodological problems with Culley's approach.
these fixed pairs. In the process of inspiration, the Spirit of God guided Moses so that he used this literary tradition to assist in writing the Song of the Reed Sea.

This chapter on the exegesis of this song also examined the textual problems. Another area of consideration was the syntactical aspect of exegesis. The importance of Ugaritic was most profound for the examination of an example of three-line staircase parallelism in verse 11. The archaic orthography was also germane for it reflects the antiquity of this poem.

In light of the majestic nature of this pericope of early Hebrew poetry, it could be stated that *carmen maris algosi* "should be considered a classical example of Hebrew poetry."1 Verse 18 of this chapter is a fitting climax not only to this song but also to this study: יְהוָה יִמְלָךְ לְצָלַם יִשְׂרָאֵל.  

1 Coats, "The Song of the Sea," p. 3.
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