Problems in connection with verbal forms in the Amarna letters from Jerusalem, with special reference to EA 286

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Abstract

Long ago Albright and later his student, Moran, pointed out that in various instances the scribe of Ḫabdi-Heba of Jerusalem diverged widely from other Canaanite scribes. The "northerliness" of the Jerusalem letters is evident from both the writing and the language. In addition, Rainey called him a "scatterbrained scribe". In this paper the characteristics of the Jerusalem scribe and his letters are studied and verbal forms in the West Semitized Amarna tablets are analysed, with special reference to EA 286. The conclusion is that despite the Assyrianisms and other characteristics of the letters which are peculiar to this scribe, the hybrid character of the letters from Jerusalem is evident. They offer us good examples of what has been called a "Canaano-Akkadian mixed language".

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JERUSALEM SCRIBE AND HIS LETTERS

More than three decades ago, Albright (1944:26) in connection with the disuse of mimation in standard Akkadian and in the vernaculars of Mesopotamia and the West by the Amarna period, pointed out that the scribe of Ḫabdi-Heba of Jerusalem diverged widely from the usage of the other Canaanite scribes.

His student, Moran, at present the foremost scholar of the Amarna letters stated that several peculiarities of the Jerusalem Amarna letters (EA 285-291) set the Jerusalem scribe in another scribal tradition than that found in the other Canaanite Amarna letters (Moran 1961:59). As to verbal forms, the Jerusalem scribe never employs the y-preformative in the verb; he uses muṣṣuru, "to send", as in letters of Hurrian provenance, instead of wuṣṣuru with the Canaanite scribes, and Assyrian ezābu, "to leave", rather than Babylonian ezēbu (Moran 1961:68, n. 42; for w/muṣṣuru cf. EATS:98).

In a recent study, Moran collected more evidence to support Albright's above-mentioned conclusion:
"Compared with the scribes in Palestine and along the southern Phoenician littoral, the Jerusalem scribe is indeed constantly extra chorum. But this is only part of the problem. Compared with other scribes in a wider setting, he is no longer simply an anomaly; he is an alien. For, by and large, what sets him apart in Palestine is paralleled in the writing and language we find as we move northward along the lines of the several Syrian traditions" (Moran 1975:146).

The "northerliness" of the Jerusalem letters is evident from both the writing and the language (Moran 1975:146-155).

1.1 Paleography.

Schroeder's list (VAS XII:73-94) reveals the preponderance of northern forms in the Jerusalem column.

1.2 Syllabary.

In his earlier study, Moran (1961:59) held that while the Jerusalem Amarna evidence on etymological t, s and š is not without difficulties, the apparent anomalies are to be explained as due to the syllabary which the Jerusalem scribe employed, rather than as reflecting a complicated and unparalleled development. Now, as to the syllabary which the Jerusalem scribe employed, Moran (1975:150-151) points out: AS² 129 KUM = qu in ḥal-qu-mi (EA 286:51); AS² 184 SAR = šūr in EA 290:20 and see lu-ša-še-ra (EA 285:28; 286:45; 287:18); AS² 218 TE = de₄ in li-de₄-mi (EA 286:25), etc. In the Amarna archive all occurrences of TE = de₄, with only one exception, are confined to forms of the verb idū, and these are found in letters from Mitanni, Qatna, Amurru, Tyre, Alashia and two northern sites (EA 260, 317).

Whereas in all thirteen cases of pītāt(t)u, "archers, troop of soldiers" (< Egyptian pḏt; EATS:87), AS² 223 PI = pī, a value confined in the Amarna archive to texts from Assyrian, Mitanni, Alashia and Syria, AS² 223 also gives for PI the value ā as in the verb ā-qa-bi (EA 286:22) and perhaps also in the verb ū-ša-ā-ru (-ā- instead of -wa-, ll. 21, 24). AS² 238 gives for ḤAR the value ḫīn, as in the verb li-isk-kīn (EA 286:38; 287:13, 40; 288:48) and in the Mari liver models, Middle Assyrian, Ugaritic and Boghazköy texts. Thus, Moran concluded, the Syrian non-Palestinian cast of the Jerusalem scribe's syllabary is clear.

1.3 Orthography.

Initial and intervocalic w is often written m, thus muššuru instead of wuššuru, "to release, to send", as in lu-ša-še-ra (EA 286:45). Instead of the traditional and archaic qī-bī-ma the Jerusalem spelling of this verb is qī-bī-ma (EA 286:1; 287:65; 290:2) as at Ugarit, in Middle Assyrian, the Nuzi letters and Middle Babylonian.
1.4 Assyrianisms.

The most striking feature of the Jerusalem scribe's language, says Moran, is its large Assyrian component, unique when compared with peripheral Akkadian elsewhere in the West. This applies to the demonstrative pronoun-adjective (genitive anni'ē in EA 286:11), the noun ā-re-ē, "roof" (EA 287:37), with the Middle Assyrian shift /im/ > e, and verbs where Assyrian influence is especially strong.1

Finally, two lines of evidence come to the fore: the absence in the language of the Jerusalem letters of the truly distinctive features of "Reichsakkadisch", and the presence of a large West Semitic component (Moran 1975:155, and for examples of West Semitic see Moran 1975:166, n. 78). Thus Moran concludes that, if we may define the Jerusalem scribe in geographical terms as a "northerner", he is no less a "southerner". This curious situation may be explained from the background of the Jerusalem scribe's master, ćAbdi-Heba who was not a governor but a soldier and who had come to the throne not in an established line of succession, but by the personal intervention of the pharaoh. It seems that ćAbdi-Heba and his scribe came to Jerusalem from Syria, somewhere along the border between "Reichsakkadisch" and "Canaanite-Akkadian" (Moran 1975:155-156).

This study of Moran is followed by one of Rainey (1978a) on "The scatterbrained scribe" of the Jerusalem letters. What is pertinent for our subject is the following statement:

"Despite many of the Canaanisms (glosses, idioms and qtl verb forms), the letters from Jerusalem have some distinct features of their own which set them apart from the usual 'Canaanite' epistles of the Amarna archive. Most notable is the preference for Akkadian verbal forms when a prefix tense is required. The volitive nuances ... are invariably expressed by the precative, and precisely the Assyrian forms at that (cf. Moran 1975:153). When an imperfect is in order, the scribe eschews the usual hybrid forms of West Semitized texts by adding the affirmative of the Canaanite indicative yaqtulu to Akkadian verbs and uses

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1 See Moran 1975:153-154 where examples from the Jerusalem letters are listed under the following headings:

(a) Where there is a distinction between Babylonian and Assyrian in forms of the precative, the later is the rule (10x) without exception:

1 p. īmar (EA 286:40, 46), Babylonian īmar, le-lu-ub = īrub (EA 286:46), Babylonian īrub; see Moran 1975:164, n. 58; Rainey 1979a:144; 3 p. lūṣi (EA 286:54), Bab lūṣi; for other precatives in EA 286 see ll 25, 34, 38, 44, 45, 53.

(b) Primaē 'aleph verbs are consequently (13x) treated as in Assyrian, e.g. Š impl. šerib, Babylonian šurib, in EA 286:62.

(c) Mediae infirmæ verbs.

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Akkadian forms without even the ubiquitous y-prefixes of the other Canaanite letters (cf. Moran 1961:68 n. 42) ..." (Rainey 1978a:141-142).

However, after the strictly linguistic analysis has been made and various phenomena identified, there remains a few instances which defy classification. This is, however, where the "scatterbrained scribe" comes into the picture.

"Of course, a scribe writing in Canaan, using occasional West Semiticisms, but still following a relatively foreign, North Syrian system with many Assyrianisms, and adopting certain Egyptian poetic, or semi-poetic, idioms might be expected to develop some kind of complex! All these cultural influences at once were flowing through his brain. He evidently thought in Canaanite or in some related West Semitic dialect, and wrote in his own brand of pseudo-Akkadian" (Rainey 1978a:150).

2. VERBAL FORMS IN THE WEST SEMITIZED AMARNA TABLETS

After the early and detailed studies of the verbal usages in the Amarna letters by Böhl (1968, reprint of the 1910 edition), Ebeling (1910) and Dhorme (1951, reprint of the 1913-14 edition), and the pioneering studies of Albright (see Albright 1966 with a bibliography of earlier studies), it was the latter's student, Moran (1950a), who found the syntactical key to the West Semitic verbal system as revealed in the correspondence from Byblos, and which can be applied to other towns represented in the Amarna archive. Thus, he paved the way for a complete reappraisal of the Amarna tablets as witnesses to pre-Hebrew West Semitic syntax. Moran (1950a:24) started his discussion of the finite verbal forms in the dialect of Byblos with the remark that few problems of Semitic grammar have taxed the ingenuity of scholars more than that of the nature of the finite verbal forms.

Rainey (1973:235) who, with some of his students, have recently contributed much towards a better understanding of the verbal forms in the West Semitized Amarna tablets, stated:

"In the Amarna tablets from Canaanite city states one finds verbal forms practically unheard of in any other corpus of Akkadian texts. This statement is as true today as it was at the turn of the century when scholars first began to appraise the linguistic testimony of the Amarna archive. It is now clear that these unusual constructions cannot be dismissed as mere barbarisms, although there is a certain sense in which some conflate forms may be reckoned as such. But they cannot be considered accidents; they appear with surprising regularity in epistles from the most diverse origins (within the Canaanite sphere plus some texts from central Syria and two from Cyprus). Most deviations from the standard Babylonian patterns of inflection can be explained as hybrids of West Semitic elements, especially prefixes and suffixes, with Akkadian words."

He concluded that the re-classification of all verb forms in the West Semitized Amarna tablets was sorely needed and would facilitate numerous improvements in
translation and interpretation (Rainey 1973:262). Some years later he observed that
the resorting of the "many mixed forms" is now under way (Rainey 1977:34).
Furthermore, Rainey applies Moran's results not only to the West Semitized
Amarna tablets but also to a contemporary letter, recently discovered at Kamid el-
Loz (Rainey 1976), and the Taanach texts that attest to the use of a West Semitized
language a century earlier than the Amarna archive (Rainey 1977).

In summary, we can say that the most striking West Semitic features in the EA
tablets long ago accepted by scholars are: (1) the y-prefix, sometimes written ia, but
mostly with the PI or WA sign; (2) taquitu(na) third plural common and (3) the G
passive, completely foreign to Akkadian (Rainey 1975a:296).

Moran (1950a:25-52; 1951:33-35; 1960:1-19), distinguishes the perfect and three
modes, namely the imperfect (yaquitulu(na)/(y)iqqul), yaqul and yaqula, and defines
the energetic in -una (Moran 1950a:53-56; cf. Rainey 1975b:186-187). It should be
noted how the West Semitic Amarna scribes applied the Akkadian verbal forms for
their own verbal system.²

2.1 qtl perfect

West Semitic suffix conjugation has been called "punctual qatal" (Moran 1961:54)
and so-called West Semitic "perfect" (Rainey 1973:236), and reveals in the EA texts
three patterns: qatal, qatil and a rarer qatul. The perfect says nothing of present,
past or future and may be called a tenseless aorist.

Qtl perfect is to be found in EA 288:7 (sic for 5), 41, 45 (Moran 1975:166, n. 78) in
respectively ša-ka-an, "has set" (cf. Ebeling 1910:56), and de-ka (for Knudtzon's te­
ka), "has been slain."

In EA 286 we come across the following qtl perfects:

2.1.1 Third singular masculine

pa-ṭa-ar[-mi], "he has broken with" (l. 8) from ptr, "to separate". For the enclitic
particle -mi often used, see Moran 1950a:9f.; Rainey 1976:341, n. 34.

ša-ka-an, "he had established" (l. 26)

Chicago, 1987, Rainey read a paper "In search of the Canaanite verb", in which he gave the following
analysis of the prefix conjugation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative:</th>
<th>Injunctive:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preterite yaqul, -u</td>
<td>Jussive yaqul, -u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect yaqulu, -una</td>
<td>Volitive yaqula, -u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energic yaqulun(n)u</td>
<td>Energic yaqulun(n)a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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2.1.2 Third singular feminine

pa-ťa-ra-at, with plural subject, "she has broken away" (l. 35). When the predicate precedes the subject in the plural, the verb is often in the singular. Syncope of the second root vowel often occurs in third singular feminine; compared nakirat (EA 335:16) with paṭar at here (Bohl 1968:48).

2.1.3 One singular common

ip-ša-ti (epešu + West Semitic -ti), "I have done" (l. 5). With regard to morphological deviations, Bohl, Ebeling and Dhorme have already noticed the first singular common suffix -ti instead of the standard Akkadian -iša, thus qatāti (with the -ā of -āšu) > qatalti (without -ā-) which is probably the original West Semitic form (see Rainey 1973:237 for references and compare Ebeling 1910:57). Moran (1950a:17) pointed out that qti perfect apaš from epešu, "to do, make", is always active and qti perfect apiš always passive as respectively in EA 122:31-33 and 40-44.

2.2 * yaqtulu as present-future (see Moran 1975:166, n.78)

Ebeling (1910:50-52) compared the Akkadian G present-future formation ipar(r)as with the "Canaanite" present formation yiqatal, etc. As to the modal use of yaqtulu(na), it is in the first place indicative (Moran 1950a:49) for which the West Semitic Amarna scribes used the Akkadian subjunctive forms (Moran 1950a:39-49; 1951:33-35). In the texts from Byblos, the largest single group of Amarna texts, dating over a period of approximately thirty years, two principal uses of the indicative in the fourteenth century B.C. can be established: a present-future and a past iterative (Moran 1960:7, n. 3; 1961:63-64; Rainey 1971:88; 1975a:399).

The following examples may be given:

i-ka-lu, in the combination karši akālu, "they blame (me)" (EA 286:6). In a letter from Lab'ayu exactly the same phrase appears with the West Semitic y-: yi-ka-lu ka-ar-ši-ya (EA 254:16). The primae 'aleph verb ik(k)alu reflects the Babylonian form, not the Assyrian ekkalu (Moran 1975:153). The phrase ik(k)alu karšiya is glossed by ú-ša-a-ru (cf. ll 21, 24), not a preterite (contra Ebeling) but a present West Semitic gloss on the Akkadian present ikkālu, "they are eating", (CAD A-1, s.v. akālu; Rainey 1974:308; EATS:93). The verb u-ša-a/wa-ru seems to be developed from šaru II D. Note the gloss ši-ir-ti (AHw s.v. šaru II; Ebeling in EAT:1548) with the same meaning and probably from the same root + West Semitic -ti (EA 252:14).
Rainey (EATS:93, s.v. ṯāru II; G 'to be maligned') regards ʿa-ša-wa-rū (or ʿa-ša-ā-rū?) in EA 286:21, 24 as West Semitic indicative first singular common.

ta-ra-ia-m[u], "you love" (EA 286:18) with ʿa for ʿaleph, thus from ʿarāmu. There is no Nebenform ʿarāmu (see EAT:1493); all Knudtzon's spellings with ṣ are simply graphic representatives of ' (EATS:87). The verb ta-ra-ia-mu here need not be plural; it may be second singular masculine West Semitic indicative in direct speech (Rainey 1974:307; EATS:87).

ta-za-ia-rū, "you hate" (EA 286:20), according to Ebeling (1910:51) an Assyrian present-future of the type ʾikāṣad, whereas Rainey regards this verb, from ẓēru, as West Semitic indicative second singular masculine (EATS:99; cf. Rainey 1974:310).

u-.fa-wa/a-rū, "I am maligned" (EA 286:21, 24). This verb has been discussed above. Ebeling (1910:60; EAT:1518, s.v. ʿārū II) regarded this verb as passive-preterite first singular common, and compared the traces of a passive Qal in Hebrew. Rainey, who regards the G passive, foreign to Akkadian, as one of the most striking West Semitic features in the EA tablets, takes u-ša-wa/ā-rū as West Semitic indicative first singular common (EATS:93). For other examples of EA passive verbs with the preformatives ʿu (3rd sg. m.), ʿu- (3rd f.), ʿu-/u...na (3rd pl. m. and f.), nu- (1st pl. c.) (see Ebeling 1910:59-60). ta-ša-mī-u (EA 286:50) is one example of uncontracted verba tertiae infirmae (in this case ʾemū, "to hear", instead of Knudtzon's ʾamū) in the Jerusalem letters.

In EA 288, another Jerusalem letter, four uncontracted forms occur, three from la/eqā, "to take", namely ti-li-qi-u, "they capture" (l. 38), iq-qi-ā-šū for yigge-u-šū (Hebr. ʾiqā+ Bab. suff. -šū?; Ebeling in EAT:1546) or iq-qi-u-šū, "they have smitten him" (l. 44), ʾi-il-qi-a-ni, "let him take me" (l. 59), and one from gabā, "to speak," in the form i-qa-bi-u, "they shall say." The necessary corrections are to be made to Ebeling's (1910:75) and Knudtzon's transliterations. The verbal form iq-qi-ā-šū (Knudtzon's ig-qi-ā-šū) is problematic. Knudtzon’s tentative translation, "ihn haben Diener geopfert", points to a derivation from the verb naqā, "to sacrifice", a viewpoint also held by Bottéro (see Moran 1987:517, n. 10). But la/eqā is also probable in view of la-qi-mi (EA 286:27), and the occurrence in yet another Jerusalem letter of the verbal forms la-qa-ṭu (EA 287:36) and la-qi-ṭu (l. 56), derived from a root lqā = Hebrew רפ (Böhl 1968:64-65; cf. Ebeling in EAT:1451, s.v. lakātu).

To return to ta-ša-mī-u in EA 286:50, the question remains whether we have here second or third plural. While Ebeling regarded it as second plural, "ihr hört" (Ebeling 1910:51, 75; in EAT:1511, s.v. ʾamū II), followed by Albright with "Do you not hearken unto me" (ANET:488), although "you" for the pharaoh is singular.
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Moran (1987:509) interprets *ta-*ša-*mi-u* as third plural: "ils ne m'ont pas écoute." From the verbal form itself it is difficult to be definitive.

*ni-*mu-*tu(m)*, "we shall die" (EA 288:61), from *mātu*; see Rainey (EATS:81), who cites West Semitic jussive first plural common *ni-*mu-*ut*, "If ... not ... then we die" (EA 362:11).

### 2.3 Third plural *taqtulu(na)*

From the rule of model congruence in purpose clauses (indicative-indicative, volitive-volitive) Moran concluded that a third plural masculine Canaanite *taqtulu(na)* did exist. He had to abandon his earlier attempt to explain all occurrences of *taqtulu(na)* with a plural subject, being construed as a collective, as third singular feminine (Moran 1951). Rather than considering *ḥapiru* the subject of the verb *ti-*li-*qi-u* (EA 288:38) as such a collective with the verb third singular feminine, we have to regard the verb (with *t*-preformative < *y*-prefix) as third plural masculine (Moran 1975:166, n. 78).

In a recent study, Izre'el (1987:80) points out that there are approximately 150 third plural masculine forms with a *t*-prefix in the Amarna letters written in the Canaanite-Akkadian mixed language. As against these, he has collected only sixteen forms which could be taken as third plural masculine forms and having a *y*-prefix. All these occurrences should, however, be regarded as actual passive forms with the initial PI sign read as *yu* instead of *yi* (Izre'el 1987:86).

"To conclude, when establishing the verbal paradigms of those Amarna letters which are written in the mixed Canaanite-Akkadian language, only the prefix *t*-should be listed for the third plural. Wherever a verbal form which has a plural subject appears to have a *y*-prefix, we should try to find an alternative explanation for the phrase, analyzing the verb as third singular masculine" (Izre'el 1987:87).

Only once a *t*-prefix for a third plural masculine form is attested in the Jerusalem letters, namely the above-mentioned *ti-*le-*qē-u*, "they conquer" (EA 288:38). The gloss *ta-*za-*qaʃ* in EA 287:41 may be another instance, although a third singular feminine is also possible (Izre'el 1987:89-90).

### 2.4 Infinitive *qatālī*

"Addaya has left (inf. *paṭāri*) in the same way as the garrison" (EA 287:46-47). Instead of Knudtzon's *pa-*ṭa-*ar(ʃ)* we should read the verb as *pa-*ṭa-*a(ɿ)-ri(ɿ)* as is evident from Schroeder's autograph. A study of the Amarna letters of Byblos gives proof of the Canaanite infinitive absolute as a finite verb (Moran 1950b) of which the above-mentioned *paṭāri* is an excellent example (Moran 1952:77), but see the G..."
infinitive *e-ra(l)-ba* in EA 286:43. Furthermore, in the Amarna period the South Canaanite form was actually *qatɔli* and not *qatɔli* (*a > ɔ*) and with the later loss of final short vowels it became *qatɔl* as in Hebrew (Moran 1950b:172, n. 36).

3. **EA 286**

1. Say (*qi-bi-ma*) [to] the king, my lord:
2. a message of *Abdi-Heba*, thy servant
3. At the two feet of my lord, the king,
4. I fall (*am-quṭ-(*mi*²)) seven times and seven times.
5. What have I done (*ip-ša-ti*) to the king, my lord?
6. They blame me (*i-ka-lu ka-ar-ši-ya*) \ *u-ša-a-ru* (I am maligned)
7. before the king, my lord: "*Abdi-Heba*
8. has broken (*pa-ṭa-ar-(*mi*⁵)* with the king, his lord".
9. Behold (*a-mur⁵*), as for me, (it was) not my father
10. and not my mother \ who set me (*ša-ak-na-ni⁶*)
11. in this (gen. *anni*¹) place;
12. (but) the mighty arm of the king (Albright in ANET:487: "the arm of the mighty king")
13. which brought me (*u-še-ri-ba-an-(*ni*⁷)* into the house of my father.
14. Why (of all people) should I commit (*e-pu-(*uš*⁹*)

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4 Despite Edzard’s argument that according to the context *amqut* should be translated “herewith I fall,” Rainey (1974:305) favours the rendering of this verb (G ind. pret.) with "I have fallen." *Abdi-Heba* had to prostrate himself 7 + 7 times before he could speak. -mi as an enclitic particle was often used (Moran 1950a:9f; Rainey 1976:341, n.34).
5 In Late Babylonian the imperative *a-mur* has, as introduction to a sentence, the meaning “behold!,” like Aramaic *ānu/ālu* (AHw s.v. *āmārū*, A, 10). This applies also to Middle Babylonian as is evident from this Amarna letter. Cf. also Hebrew אַּמָּה.
6 As in EA 288:15 *šaknāni* is G stative (permansive) 3rd sg. m. + suffix 1st sg. c. According to Ebeling (1910:53) *šaknāni* is an example of the Assyrian permansive which is to be compared with West Semitic perfect (see Böhl 1968:42).
7 *š* pret. 3rd sg. m. of *erebu* + suffix 1st sg. c. (Ebeling 1910:63) in the sense of "has installed me" (CAD D, s.v. *dunnu*) or "has brought me (back)" (CAD E s.v. *erebu*). Note, however, the vowel harmony (GAG § 10e) in *š* present *ēsēr(r)ubu* (Babylonian *ušerēbu*) in EA 287:11.
8 A long established expression for accession to the throne (Moran 1975:156 and 166, n. 80).
9 Perhaps *e-pu-(*uš* with acc. *ama*, ‘a sin’) = *eppaš*, Assyrian *eppaš*, but perhaps *epaš* with volitive force as may be the case with *e-ru-*ub in l. 39, interference from Canaanite volitive *equt* (Moran 1975:153). West Semitic volitives are expressed by the jussive *yaqut* which was the equivalent of Akkadian *iprus* (see Ebeling 1910:45, 46). The West Semitic Amarna scribes used the Akkadian indicative for their own jussive (Rainey 1971:87, citing Moran). West Semitic volitives were also expressed by *yaqula*. Moran borrowed the term ‘volitive’ in this connection from P Jolion as the most general designation of those forms which indicate command, wish, request, etc. (Moran 1960:12, n. 2).
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15. /10 transgression against the king my lord?
16. As truly11 as the king, my lord, lives (TIL.LA = ibullu),
17. I say (a qa bi12) to the Commissioner of the king, my lord:
18. "Why do you love (ta-ra-ia-m[uj])
19. the Apiaru, but the governors
20. you hate (ta-za-ia-ru)?" And thus
21. I am maligned (u-Ia-wa-ru) before the king, my lord.
22. Because I say (a-qa-hi) "Lost are (Ja1-qa-ar-mi(!)13)
23. the lands of the king, my lord", I am consequently
24. maligned (u-Ia-wa-ru) before the king, my lord.
25. But let the king, my lord, know (it li-de4-mi) (although)
26. the king, my lord, had established (Ia-ka-an) (here)
27. a garrison, Enhâmû took it away (la-qi-mi)
28. [entirely] [.........] [........]
29. [Egy]pt ...
30. [Now], o king
31. [here are no m]ore (ia-a-nJu-mi) garrison troops
32. [and therefore], let the king [pro]vide (f[u] l)i-[i]s-ki-in) for the wants of his land!
33. Let the [k]ing [pro]vide for the wants of his land. Broken away (pa-za-ra-at)

10 Moran (1975:152) points out that the Jerusalem scribe quite frequently employed the "Glossenkeil", sometimes quite normal at the beginning of the line as here where it may serve to mark the line as a run-over of the preceding. There are, however, instances without explanation.
11 For aqa, cf. enuma (l. 47) to indicate confirmation, and West Semitic adi (Moran 1987:510, n. 5). For other West Semitic usages of adi, see EATS:61.
12 a qa bi = aqabbi (ll. 17, 22, 39, 49) Akkadian G present 1st sg. c. In l. 22 Moran (1975:161, n. 37; 1987:510, n. 4) reads a qa bi instead of Knudtzon's yi qa bi; Albright (in ANET:487-488) renders the verb in ll. 17, 49 "I will say," in l. 22 "it is said", and in l. 39, "I keep saying". Knudtzon's tentative reading yi qa bi, "Ich sage (od. es gesagt wird)" in l. 22 presupposes 1st sg with y-, but see Böhl 1968:55; cf. West Semitic indicative 3rd sg. m. yi-iq Bu in EA 362:46 with y- (EATS:78 s.v. gabâ).
13 The verb halâqu, "to perish, be lost", occurs several times and in different forms in the Amarna letters (see EATS:72). In EA 286 we find the G stative (permansive) 3rd sg. f. in ll. 22, 49, 60, 63 with the subject in the plural: "Lost are the lands ..."; in l. 51 G stative 3rd pl. with the subject in the plural. In l. 37 ihalilq is the Akkadian G present for D 3rd sg. m. (EATS:72). For the i in the preformative two solutions have been offered. Firstly, the Canaanite scribes treated the unfamiliar Akkadian iparras as a Canaanite pr el, hence the forms (y)iqatil with the characteristic vowel of the imperfect (Albright & Moran 1950:165-166; cf Ebeling 1910:61-62; Dhorme 1951:434-437). A second solution is that the West Semitic scribes confused G iparras with the the D uparras/uparris; consequently one finds D forms with a vocalization borrowed from the G present-future. To distinguish between 1st and 3rd sg., they affixed y + vowel (usually written with the WA or PI sign to be pronounced ya, yî or yu). This solution, repeatedly offered by Rainey (1971:90, n. 33; 1974:298; 1975a:418-419; 1977:35; 1978b:13*, cf Izre’el 1987:35) seems to comply better with the available evidence.
36. have all the [land]s of the king, my lord. Ili-milku
37. is causing the loss (i-ḥal-li-iq) of the whole land of the king,
38. and therefore the king, my lord, has to provide for (li-is-kin) the wants of his land.
39. As for me, I say (a-qa-bi): "I want to enter (e-ru-ub-mi it-ti)
to the king, my lord, and visit (Albright in ANET:487 more literally: "let me see the two eyes of the king"; ū la-mur-mi)
40. the king, my lord", but the hostility
41. against me is strong (dannu), so I cannot (la a-la-ah-e)
42. enter (e-ra(!)-ba, G inf.) to (i-i-tu instead of it-ti, l. 40) the king, my lord.
43. So, may it be good (ū li-it-ra-us) in the eyes of the kin[g]
to send (lu-ma-še-ra) garrison troops
44. in order that I may enter (le-lu-ub = lerub) and see (la-mu-ur; cf. l. 40) the two eyes
45. of the king, my lord. \ As truly as the king, my lord,
46. lives, when the commis[sioners] go forth (iit-ta-ši-ū, < ᾶš)\n47. I say (a-qa-bi) (to them): "Lost are (ḥal-qa-at-mi) the lands of the king".
48. But they do not listen to me (ta-ša-mi-ū).
49. Lost are (ḥal-qu-mi) all the governors;
50. there is not (ia-a-nu-mi) a (single) governor (left to) the king, my lord.
51. Let the king turn his attention (li-din ... pa-ni-šu) to the archers
52. that the archers of the king, my lord, may go forth (lu-ši-mi, < ἀσ, l. 48).
53. The king has no lands (left) (ia-a-nu-mi, l. 52).
54. (These) Ḫapiru plunder (ḥa-bat) all the lands of the king (i.e. Ili-milku, l. 36)
55. If there are (i-ba-aš-ši) archers (here)
56. in this year, will remain (i-ba-aš-ši) (intact) the lands of
57. the king, my lord. But (ū) if there are not (ia-a-nu-mi) archers (here)
58. the lands of the king, my lord, will be lost (iḥal-qa-at).
59. To the scrib[e] of the king, my lord: a Message of Abdi-Ḫeba,
60. thy [ser]vant. Present (še-ri-ib) eloquent words
61. to the king, my lord. Lost are (ḥal-qa-at)
62. all the lands of the king, my lord.

4. **CONCLUSION**

By means of a study of certain verbal forms in the Amarna letters from Jerusalem, especially EA 286, we have tried to characterize the Jerusalem scribe and his letters.

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14 Except in EA 285:23, ibaHi is uninflected and is used with subjects in the plural as in EA 286:57, 58. Note the use of the negative yānu (Hebr [*ינ*] in 11.33, 52, 55, 59, and see Moran 1950a:14-15.
Despite the Assyrianisms and the peculiarities of "a scatterbrained scribe". The hybrid character of these letters is evident and we have good examples of what Izre'el recently called "Canaano-Akkadian mixed language", a fact that seems to be perpetuated in the later Israelite traditions (Ez 16:3).

ABBREVIATIONS

ANET = Pritchard 1955
AS2 = Von Soden - Röllig 1967
EA = El-Amarna tablets
EAT = Knudtzon 1964
EATS = Rainey 1978a
GAG = Von Soden 1952
VAS = Schroeder 1915

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Die Levitiese stede: kultiese sentra of staatsadministratiewe setels?

H W Nel

Abstract

The premise of this paper is that the Levitical cities should not be regarded as cultic centres, but they should rather be looked upon as legislative and judiciary centres/seats manned by non-priestly Levitical civil servants. These Levites also provided for the cultic needs of the surrounding Israelite tribes. Most of the problems regarding the Levitical cities can be accounted for should this hypothesis be accepted. The Josian reform is then no longer a religious reform only, but it forms in fact a crucial element in the abolition of the power of the non-priestly Levites in the state organisation. Ezechiel’s denunciation of these Levites is not due to their maladministration of the cult, but rather to their mismanagement of state affairs. Because the Josian reform caused large-scale unemployment in the ranks of the non-priestly Levites, it became one of the prime reasons for their unwillingness to return from exile.

1. INLEIDING


2. LEVITIESE STEDE:UTOPIE OF REALITEIT?

In hoofsaak bestaan daar twee uiteenlopende sienings in verband met die Levitiese stede: utopies en histories.

2.1 Die Levitiese stede-tradisie is utopiese fiksie

Wellhausen (1961:153-158) en Kaufmann (1953:40-46) is voorstanders van die teorie dat die tradisie rondom die Levitiese stede utopiese fiksie sonder enige