

# JOURNAL OF NORTHWEST SEMITIC LANGUAGES

VOLUME 50/1-2

2024

*50 YEARS*

EDITORS:

J COOK I CORNELIUS M JOUBERT G R KOTZÉ  
R M VAN DIJK-COOMBES

VOLUME EDITORS:

I CORNELIUS & G R KOTZÉ

*at Stellenbosch University  
South Africa*

Editorial Board:

Meir Malul (Haifa), Cynthia Miller-Naudé (Bloemfontein), Jacobus Naudé (Bloemfontein), Herbert Niehr (Tübingen), Hermann-Josef Stipp (München), Ernst Wendland (Lusaka), Arie van der Kooij (Leiden)

Department of Ancient Studies

Stellenbosch University

The *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*  
(ISSN 0259-0131) is published half-yearly

*JNSL* is an accredited South African journal. It publishes peer reviewed research articles on the Ancient Near East. As part of the *peer review policy* all contributions are refereed before publication by scholars who are recognised as experts in the particular field of study.

**Contributions and books for review should be sent to**

The Editor: *JNSL*  
Department of Ancient Studies  
Stellenbosch University  
Private Bag X1, Matieland, ZA-7602  
SOUTH AFRICA  
e-mail: ancient7@sun.ac.za

**Subscriptions should be sent to the same address but marked as**  
Subscription: *JNSL*

**Copyright**

Department of Ancient Studies, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch,  
SOUTH AFRICA

**House rules**

Articles submitted for publication must be according to the house rules  
on the homepage

***JNSL* homepage (house rules, contents, subscription)**

<http://academic.sun.ac.za/jnsl/>

**TO ORDER: Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages**  
Send an e-mail to Ms L C Swanepoel (ancient7@sun.ac.za)

Per Invoice	\$ 70.00
	€ 65.00
Booksellers	- 30%

***For further subscription information:***

**E-mail Ms L C Swanepoel (ancient7@sun.ac.za)**

## CONTENTS

<i>Foreword: Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages at 50</i>	i
<i>Articles</i>	
Sel·lam El Ammari Alonso, The “Babel-Like Confusion” Persists: Review of Scott B Noegel’s “ <i>Wordplay</i> ” in <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts</i>	1-21
Itzhak Amar, Heroism and Heroes in the Book of Chronicles	23-49
Ian Atkinson, Paths of Movement and Eli’s Fall	51-65
Erasmus Gass, Adoni-Şedeq oder Adoni-Bezeq – Der mysteriöse Name eines kanaanäischen Lokalpotentaten	67-95
Christopher B Hays, Once More into the Valley of the Shadow of Death: A Reconsideration of Semitic Compound Nouns including <i>MT</i>	97-113
Marcus Joubert, הלל and ידה as Near-synonyms in the Psalms? An Analysis of the Frame Element Instrument/Manner	115-138
Tarsee Li, Deuteronomy 6:4 in the Syriac Peshitta	139-152
Cynthia L Miller-Naudé and Jacobus A Naudé, Pronominal Reference and Agreement in Vocative Expressions in Biblical Hebrew	153-169
Daniel Radzinski, On the Source of צנתרות	171-176
Beat Weber, Monocola, Ambiguity and Propositional Density: Poetic Art, Technique and Rhetoric in Psalm 81	177-187
<i>Book List</i>	189
<i>Addresses of Authors</i>	191

## **FOREWORD: JOURNAL OF NORTHWEST SEMITIC LANGUAGES AT 50**

This is the 50<sup>th</sup> volume of the journal.

The first volume of JNSL (Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages) was published by Brill in Leiden in 1971 and edited by the late Charles Fensham. Other editors followed: the late Piet van Zijl, Walter Claassen, the late Hannes Olivier, the late Ferdinand Deist, Paul Kruger, Johann Cook, Christo van der Merwe, Izak Cornelius and Gideon Kotzé. Volume 50 has two new appointees in the Department of Ancient Studies, Renate van Dijk-Coombes and Marcus Joubert as editors.

It was later published by Stellenbosch University, first the Department of Semitic Languages, later Semitic Languages and Cultures and then Ancient Near Eastern Studies and now Ancient Studies. These names indicate the changes that took place in the field of research and focus of the Department. Over this period the scope of the journal also changed, including not only traditional Semitic languages but also all cultures of the Ancient Near East (now called Western Asia and North Africa). Or as stated on the website (<https://academic.sun.ac.za/jnsl/>):

We publish articles dealing with linguistic, translational, literary, text-critical, historical, religious and cultural issues related to Ancient Near Eastern texts and societies, as well as articles addressing theoretical issues underlying these fields.

In addition to this volume, a special book publication is planned for 2025, with contributions by former editors and editorial board members.

We look forward to the next 50 volumes of JNSL.

Izak Cornelius and Gideon Kotzé

*Sel-lam El Ammari Alonso*

*Complutense University of Madrid / University of Granada*

**THE “BABEL-LIKE CONFUSION”<sup>1</sup> PERSISTS: REVIEW  
OF SCOTT B. NOEGEL’S “WORDPLAY” IN ANCIENT  
NEAR EASTERN TEXTS**

*ABSTRACT*

*This review will bring to light some shortcomings in Noegel’s “Wordplay” in Ancient Near Eastern Texts. The goal is to contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon of wordplay and its presence in ancient texts, particularly in the HB, and to assist in the recognition and assessment of other linguistic manipulations that are not wordplays but are traditionally included among them. The main problem with Noegel’s book is the lack of a precise definition of wordplay that outlines its scope and aids in identifying its types. This question renders precarious the taxonomy that he establishes. In the last section of this article, some advice from modern linguistics will be sought to overcome the weaknesses identified.*

*Itzhak Amar*

*Bar-Ilan University*

## **HEROISM AND HEROES IN THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES**

### *ABSTRACT*

*This article explores the theme of heroism within the Book of Chronicles. The study explores the portrayal of heroism within the genealogical lists (1 Chron 1-9) and the narratives featuring the monarchs (1 Chron 10-2 Chron 36). The analytical findings reveal a discernible dichotomy drawn by the author, wherein the tribe of Benjamin embodies one extreme, and Solomon represents the opposite. Positioned between these extremes is King David, whom the author perceives as epitomizing the synthesis of heroic attributes.*

*Ian Atkinson*

*University of Cambridge*

## **PATHS OF MOVEMENT AND ELI'S FALL**

### *ABSTRACT*

*The preposition בעד is found accompanied by י only in 1 Sam 4:18, which has led to numerous interpretations and textual emendations throughout the centuries. Most modern translations render the prepositional phrase as some variation of “beside”, potentially explained by Driver’s (1890:39) emendation of י בעד to בי, even though such a reading is never attested in the Hebrew Bible for בעד governing an inanimate landmark with the movement of an animate trajector (BHRG §39.9). The MT as it stands is intelligible, however, with the י הושערה in 1 Sam 4:18 fitting the profile for an opening in a wall, in analogy with the clearer cases of “through” for בעד with הלך.*

*Erasmus Gass  
Universität Augsburg*

## **ADONI-ŞEDEQ ODER ADONI-BEZEQ – DER MYSTERIÖSE NAME EINES KANAANÄISCHEN LOKALPOTENTATEN**

### *ABSTRACT*

*In zwei unterschiedlichen Erzählungen gibt es eine Figur mit ähnlichem Namen (Jos 10,1-5: Adoni-Şedeq und Ri 1,5-7: Adoni-Bezeq). Literarkritisch kann gezeigt werden, dass es sich kaum um denselben Lokalpotentaten handeln kann. Außerdem ist es vor dem Hintergrund der Textüberlieferung unwahrscheinlich, dass in Jos 10,1-5 ursprünglich von Adoni-Bezeq die Rede war. Die beiden Eigennamen sind darüber hinaus nur schwer onomastisch zu bestimmen. Entweder deutet man diese Namen als identifizierenden Nominalsatz („Mein Herr [ist] Şedeq“ bzw. „Mein Herr [ist] Bezeq (der Blitzgott)“) oder als klassifizierenden Nominalsatz („Adon [ist] Gerechtigkeit“ bzw. „Adon [ist] Blitz“). Da zudem beide Erzählungen in Jos 10 und Ri 1 literarische Bildungen sind, die vermutlich bereits die assyrische Zeit voraussetzen, lässt sich über die Historizität von Adoni-Şedeq und Adoni-Bezeq nichts Gesichertes mehr sagen.*

*A figure with a similar name can be found in two different narratives (Josh 10:1-5: Adoni-Şedeq and Judg 1:5-7: Adoni-Bezeq). It can be shown with the aid of source-criticism that it can hardly be the same local potentate. Furthermore, against the background of the textual tradition, it is unlikely that Josh 10:1-5 originally spoke of Adoni-Bezeq. Furthermore, the two proper names are difficult to determine onomastically. Either one interprets these names as identifying nominal clauses („My Lord [is] Şedeq“ or „My Lord [is] Bezeq (the lightning god)“) or as classifying nominal clauses („Adon [is] Justice“ or „Adon [is] Lightning“). Moreover, since both narratives in Josh 10 and Judg 1 are literary formations that presumably already presuppose the Assyrian period, nothing more can be said with certainty about the historicity of Adoni-Şedeq and Adoni-Bezeq.*

*Christopher B Hays*

*Fuller Theological Seminary / University of Pretoria*

**ONCE MORE INTO THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW  
OF DEATH:  
A RECONSIDERATION OF SEMITIC COMPOUND  
NOUNS INCLUDING *MT***

*ABSTRACT*

*Every occurrence of צלמות in the Hebrew Bible is associated in its context with imagery of death, suggesting that the Versions, which overwhelmingly rendered it with “shadow of death”, correctly understood the intention of the original authors. This essay also discusses six different terms in Ugaritic that are most plausibly explained as compound nouns involving mt, “death”, and suggests that an analogy to theophoric divine names led all these terms to be transmitted as compound nouns in W. Semitic scribal traditions. The alternative theory, that there was a noun צלמות/צלמות, “darkness”, cannot be disproven, but the fact that the root šlm does not seem to have been productive in Iron Age West Semitic languages makes it unlikely.<sup>1</sup>*

*Marcus Joubert  
Stellenbosch University*

**הָלַל AND יָדָה AS NEAR-SYNONYMS IN THE PSALMS?  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE FRAME ELEMENT  
INSTRUMENT/MANNER<sup>1</sup>**

*ABSTRACT*

*This paper aims to take a small step towards better grasping the different “praise” words, both their conceptual overlap and differences. Two of the most important and frequent verbs for praise הָלַל and יָדָה are regarded as (absolute) synonyms in Biblical Hebrew. This study is contextualized within Frame Semantics. All instances in the Psalms, in which the Frame Element instrument/manner is instantiated in the use of הָלַל and יָדָה, are analyzed. The data shows that it could be argued that there exists a conceptual distinction between the two verbs as far as this Frame Element is concerned. This draws the overall degree of conceptual overlap between the two verbs into question for the whole corpus.*

*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages 50/1-2 (2024), pp. 139-152*

*Tarsee Li*

*Oakwood University*

## **DEUTERONOMY 6:4 IN THE SYRIAC PESHITTA**

### *ABSTRACT*

*There is no consensus on the meaning of Deuteronomy 6:4. However, the ancient translations may give us clues to how the passage was interpreted. This study focuses on its translation in the Syriac Peshitta, considering the syntax of the enclitic pronoun, the syntax of the numeral “one”, and the syntax of the remaining words of the sentence. I conclude that the Syriac translation of the last part of the verse should be analyzed as an instance of left dislocation followed by a tripartite nominal clause: “The Lord our God, the Lord is one”.*

*Cynthia L Miller-Naudé and Jacobus A Naudé*  
*University of the Free State*

## **PRONOMINAL REFERENCE AND AGREEMENT IN VOCATIVE EXPRESSIONS IN BIBLICAL HEBREW<sup>1</sup>**

### *ABSTRACT*

*Although vocative expressions are pragmatically second person in that they are used to address or call to someone within the speech situation, the internal syntax of vocative expressions in Biblical Hebrew exhibits a puzzling alternation in the use of second-person and third-person pronominal reference to refer to the addressee. This article re-examines the issue of pronominal reference within vocative expressions by considering the linguistic features of the head of the vocative expression and the syntax of phrases and/or clauses that modify it. A syntactic explanation of the distribution of second-person and third-person pronominal reference is offered based upon the agreement of pronominal elements to their antecedents.*

*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages 50/1-2 (2024), pp. 171-176*

*Daniel Radzinski*

*Independent scholar*

## **ON THE SOURCE OF צנתרות**

### *ABSTRACT*

*It is proposed that the Hebrew Bible hapax legomenon צנתרות (XYṬXṬ) arose as a scribal error of צנורות (XYṬYṬ) in Old Hebrew script.*

*Beat Weber*

*Basel / University of Pretoria<sup>1</sup>*

**MONOCOLA, AMBIGUITY AND PROPOSITIONAL  
DENSITY: POETIC ART, TECHNIQUE AND RHETORIC  
IN PSALM 81**

*ABSTRACT*

*Poetry is the richest form of all forms of linguistic expression. Psalm 81 is used here as an example. The psalm constitutes chiefly a speech of God and demonstrates how creative literary techniques can be used in the service of (prophetic) proclamation aimed at “listening to YHWH”. Two monocola are placed at hinge points (vv. 6c and 11c), serving as structural markers. They are associated with indeterminate deictic references so that ambiguity generates multiple readings. Due to intra-textual equivalences and with the catalysing effect of allusions to passages from Deuteronomy, different statements come into play. These include, among other things, the double aspect of filling the mouth or being sated with the word of God and bodily nourishment (vv. 11c and 17ab).*