

The Epistolary Terms *k't*, *k'nt* in Official Aramaic, the Feminine Endings in Aramaic Dialects and Other Dialectal Features in the History of Aramaic

Elitzur A. BAR-ASHER SIEGAL

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

School of Language Science/The Department of the Hebrew Language

Mt. Scopus, Jerusalem 91095

Israel

E-mail: ebas@mscc.huji.ac.il

Abstract

*This paper concentrates on the etymology of the epistolary terms *k't*, *k'nt* in Official Aramaic and proposes that they are related to the root *k'-n*, used both in official correspondence from Middle Assyrian and in the Amarna letters. In this discussion various dialectal features in the history of Aramaic are discussed, among them: rule ordering with regards to the assimilation of the consonant *-n*, and the insertion of an anaptyxis between clusters of two final consonants; the existence of two allomorphs in Aramaic for the feminine ending, *-at* and *-t*; and a consideration of the existence of some connection between the dialect of the Sefire inscription and the dialect of the Hermopolis letters.**

* I wish to express my gratitude to Aaron Butts, Moshe Bar-Asher, Steven Fassberg, Aaron Koller and Na'ama Pat-El for reading and commenting on earlier versions of this paper, to John Huehnergard for discussing with me many parts of this paper and also to Werner Arnold for discussing with me certain aspects of the data from the dialect of Ma'lūla relevant to this paper. Finally, many aspects of this paper were discussed in my class, 'Biblical, Egyptian, and Targumic Aramaic' at Yale University during the fall of 2009. I wish to thank my students for their questions and feedback. References to the Aramaic documents from Egypt are according to Porten and Yardeni 1986–1999.

1. Introduction

The affinity between the Aramaic epistolary epigraphy from Egypt and the administrative correspondence in the biblical book of Ezra, both of which are dated to the period of the Persian Achaemenid dynasty, have long fascinated biblical and Aramaic scholars.¹ Folmer's decision to include the biblical dialect in her study of the Aramaic language in the Achaemenid period² was based on a resemblance that extends beyond the lexicon, revealing itself again and again at all levels of linguistic analysis. A prime example of this kinship is the distribution of the adverbs *k't*, *k'nt* and *k'n*, to which Folmer dedicated an exhaustive discussion.³ While *k'n* is well attested in other dialects, with the meaning of 'now', *k't* is rarely attested in dialects from other periods and *k'nt* is known only in the Aramaic letters of the book of Ezra and the Elephantine documents. In §2 we will discuss whether relics of these forms can be found in later dialects as well.

Following Folmer's survey, one should have in mind these several facts:

1. *k'nt* and *k't* never appear in the same source (besides Ezra).⁴
2. In the Aramaic of this period, these forms appear only in letters, as part of an epistolary formulation.
3. They come *almost*⁵ always at the beginning of letters, in the vicinity of the *praescriptio*, very often in one of the following formulae:⁶
 - a. *mn PN 'l PN wk'(n)t*
From PN to PN and-*k'(n)t*
 - b. Or following some greeting:
mn PN 'l PN šlm šgy' hwšrt lk wk'(n)t
From PN to PN, I send you abundant greetings of welfare and-
k'(n)t
 - c. *k't PN kn 'mr*
k't PN thus says

¹ *Inter alia*, Fitzmyer 1974, p. 205.

² Folmer 1995.

³ Folmer 1995, pp. 661–671.

⁴ My student Rotem Amiram has noted that in the biblical texts the form *k'nt* appears in the letter from the officials in the Trans-Euphrates to the Persian king, while the form *k't* appears in his response. Accordingly this may reflect a dialectal variation between the east and the west. For another example of a linguistic variation in a direct speech in a biblical text, see Bar-Asher 2008.

⁵ Some deviations will be discussed throughout the paper.

⁶ In addition, in ostraca *k'nt* occasionally appears at the beginning of letters alone without any longer formula.

It is evident that *k'nt* and *k't* function exactly in the same way, thus from a linguistic point of view, the fact that they never appear in the same text suggests that these are two dialectal variations of the same form.

Before considering the etymology of these forms we should examine their meanings, or, better yet, their functions in their context. Based on the function of *k'n* in other stages of Aramaic, and the functions of what are considered to be the cognates of these forms in other Northwest Semitic languages (which will be discussed below), most lexicons provide the translation: 'now'.⁷ However, most often such a reading seems unnatural, especially when these forms are repeated twice in the greeting section,⁸ without any specific content that requires a temporal adverb at all. Another problem with this translation is the distribution of these forms and the distribution of the more common word *k'n*. If we momentarily disregard the possibility that these are frozen formulae and assume that they share the same meaning, then it is unclear as to why *k'nt* and *k't* occur only at the beginning of letters while *k'n* appears everywhere. Another common translation, therefore, is as the conjunctive adverb 'thus'.⁹ This reading, however, seems redundant when these forms appear in expressions such as "*k't PN kn 'mr*" ("*k't* PN thus says"), where *kn* already delivers this function.

Fitzmyer, while discussing all three forms without distinction, describes their function as "a word that either introduces the body of the message or is repeated in the course of it as a sort of message divider; it marks logical breaks in the letter and has often been compared to English 'stop' on telegrams."¹⁰ For our purposes, he did not propose an explanation for the existence of various forms simultaneously.

Despite this, the overwhelming impression from a sensitive reading of these texts is that for some scribes it was almost obligatory to include either *k't* or *k'nt* at the beginning of a letter. The fact that *k't* survived as an ideo-

⁷ *Inter alia*, Bauer and Leander 1929, p. 74; BDB 1107 (under the root 𐤏𐤍𐤏); Rosenthal 1995, p. 92.

⁸ Ezra 4:10–11 and D 5, 1.

⁹ It is interesting to note that this interpretation was already given by the Syriac translator of Ezra. In 5:16 he translated *k'n* with *bāšā* 'now'. But in the letters he translated using the conjunctive adverbs *hākanā* 'thus' (4: 13), and *mekel* 'therefore' (4: 14, 21) (the latter is sometimes translated to English as 'and now', but this is not a temporal adverb outside of this context). I believe that these translations demonstrate a deep understanding of the language of Ezra, and, in this regard, I disagree with Hawley (1922, p. 37) who took it as a misunderstanding on the part of the Syriac translator. Later (§4.3.4), we will dedicate a special discussion to the way *k'nt* and *k't* are translated in the Syriac translation.

¹⁰ Fitzmyer 1974, p. 216. For more references to previous literature on the form see Fitzmyer (1974, p. 216, esp. n. 46). Similarly in HALOT, p. 1901, they took all three forms together and said that it is "a link into what is to follow, and marks that transition to the real point of concern in a letter."

gram in a Middle Iranian letter from Dura Europos contributes to this assessment as well.¹¹ Given such a case, it is worth considering that these forms are vestiges of an older formula whose meaning had become opaque semantically and functioned only formally, a well-known phenomenon in this type of epistolary formula. This assumption will be considered later in light of a number of factors (§4.3).

As for the etymology, there is almost¹² a consensus that all three have a similar origin of *k+* *NY+*(*t*): the temporal preposition *k*, with a noun derived from the root *NY* with the basic meaning of ‘time’, and finally *k’nt* and *k’t* have also the feminine ending, with an adverbial sense.¹³ Among the other Northwest Semitic languages, cognates of these forms are the Hebrew words *onā* (‘time, season’), *attā* and *kā’ēt* (‘now’), *t* (‘now’) in Ammonite and Edomite, as well as *nt’tn* in Ugaritic (‘now’).

While this etymology is definitely reasonable, it cannot explain two of the phenomena mentioned earlier. First, according to this etymology the terms all share the same origin; therefore, it would be more difficult to explain why either *k’nt* or *k’t* regularly appears in the same dialect with *k’n*. In addition, it does not explain why they are specifically and almost exclusively parts of epistolary formulation.¹⁴ These ‘problems’ should not be taken as reasons to reject the common etymology, as they can be simply explained as frozen old formulae. However, an alternative proposal that would provide an answer to these questions should be favoured. In the following discussion, I will first follow the common etymology and concentrate on explaining the dialectal difference between *k’nt* and *k’t*. Later (§4), I will propose an alternative etymology to these two forms that may have the advantage of providing an explanation for the distribution of them.

¹¹ See Henning 1959, pp. 415–416, esp. note on line 1.

¹² Bauer and Leander (1927, p. 255) suggest that the */w/* is not a conjunctive but rather a part of the root, and, therefore, propose that these words in Hebrew and in Aramaic are related to the root *w-’-d* based on the fact that almost always these forms follow a */w/*. It is hard, however, to justify such an etymology as it neither explains the origin of the */k/* nor provides an explanation for the shift of *d>t*. Levias (1930, p. 109) proposed the unlikely suggestion that this is a combination of the ‘deictic letters’ *K-’-N-T*.

¹³ See HALOT, p. 1901, and references there for the previous literature.

¹⁴ The fact that also in ancient Hebrew epistolography we encounter *w’t* (‘and now’) in a similar location strengthens this direction (see Pardee 1978, p. 339). However, since most of the Hebrew ostraca are very short, and contain only short instructions, it is possible that this is not part of the *praescripto* but rather marks the beginning of paragraphs, similar to the function of *k’n* in Official Aramaic letters or the function of *k’t* in the Hermopolis papyri (see below §4.3.2.2). This option can be supported by the fact that in the Hebrew ostraca where there is more than one paragraph, *w’t* is repeated at the beginning of each one. See, for example, Lemaire and Yardeni (2006, p. 197), and see also in Lachish 6 (Ahituv, p. 80).

2. *k'nt* and *k't* in the history of Aramaic

k'n appears with a temporal meaning¹⁵ in other dialects of Aramaic: in Daniel and, most notably, in the Targum (and, consequently, in the Babylonian Aramaic of the later Geonic literature)¹⁶ and in other late, Western dialects.¹⁷ The picture with *k't* is slightly more complicated. In general, like *k'nt*, it appears regularly for the first time in this corpus, but with one earlier exception: in Old Aramaic in the Sefire inscription there is one occurrence of *k't* with a clear temporal meaning. This may not indicate that it was common in the lexicon of Old Aramaic, since this might simply be another example of the affinity between the Aramaic of Sefire and the Canaanite languages; thus, this specific form may be regarded in light of the Hebrew adverb *kā'ēt* and the Ugaritic *'nt/ʿm*, both meaning 'now'.¹⁸ The affinity between the dialect in which the Sefire inscriptions were written and the Canaanite languages is found in all of the linguistic aspects, from the lexicon (for example, the root '-w-d for 'testimony, covenant', instead of the Aramaic root *s-h-d*) to the grammar (infinitive of Peal without preformative *m*, and examples of infinitive absolute).¹⁹ Without entering into a discussion of the significance of this similarity, for our purposes it is enough that the dialect of Sefire was somehow in contact with some Canaanite language. Therefore, when Hebrew, for example, regularly has something that only occurs in Aramaic in one text, the Sefire inscription, we should consider how much of a genuine form of Aramaic it is.

Folmer argues that unlike *k'n*, neither *k't* nor *k'nt* is attested in later Aramaic dialects.²⁰ This claim, however, is not so simple. It is possible that

¹⁵ It should be noted that it also has some discursive functions in later dialects. See, for example, the entry כָּעַן in Sokoloff (1990, p. 266), and its function in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic.

¹⁶ See Morgenstern (2002) about the style of language of the Geonim and their customary use of archaic forms often found only in earlier Aramaic but not in the Babylonian Jewish literature.

¹⁷ See Beyer 1984, p. 661 and Sokoloff 1990, p. 266.

¹⁸ In fact, another close similarity to Hebrew is found in the very sentence in which *k't* appears:

wk't hšbw 'lbn šybt by ['by]

Now, the gods have brought about the return of [my father's] house (Stele III, 24, Fitzmyer 1995, p. 140)

The construction of *hšbw... šybt*, a finite verb followed by a cognate object, is very common in literary Hebrew, in fact common with the same root (see Fitzmyer 1995, pp. 160–161).

¹⁹ For a discussion about this close similarity with the Hebrew formula and previous literature about this line of thought, see Fitzmyer 1995, p. 160.

²⁰ Folmer 1995, p. 670 and n. 367.

relics of these forms can be found in Late Aramaic, in two of the Late Eastern dialects, and maybe in the Neo-Western dialects as well.

In Babylonian Aramaic we encounter the form *KTY* (אכתי), in Mandaic the form *K'NDYA* (אכאנדיא), and in the modern dialects the form *kandi* for the adverb with the meaning 'still, yet'. Nöldeke has proposed that the Babylonian and the Mandaic forms are genetically related, and that they are a combination of the preposition 'd 'until' and the adverb *k'n* 'now'.²¹ He referred to the fact that the combination of these forms occurs in Ezra 5:16. In that specific context, however, the combination has a literal meaning of 'until now'. Rather, better support for his proposal is found in the language of the Targum of Onqelos, which regularly translates the Hebrew words *ōd* and *ōdennū* 'still' with the combination of 'd *k'n*.²² Nöldeke, however, did not explain the origin of the /t/ in JBA [=Jewish Babylonian Aramaic] and /d/ in Mandaic.²³ If we assume that the original adverbs were not *k'n*, as Nöldeke proposed, but rather *k't* and *k'nt* in JBA and Mandaic respectively, then the derivation is explained:

'd *k'a(n)t* > *dk'a(n)t* > *aka(n)t* + *ī/ya*

The shift of /t/ > /d/ at the beginning of a word is a rule in these dialects, and the elision of /d/ is very common in both. And finally the quiescence of the pharyngeal /'/ in this environment is expected. Mandaic went through a further change of a vocalic progressive assimilation of /t/ > /d/, due to the voiced /n/.²⁴ As for the endings, it is possible to accept Macuch's proposal that originally there was a gentilic ending *-it*, functioning as an adverb with an apocopation of the final /t/.²⁵

If this etymology is correct then we do have vestiges of both *k't* and *k'nt* in later dialects, and it supports the analysis that they meant 'now' during the official period as well.

²¹ Nöldeke 1875, p.26. It is worth mentioning that cross-linguistically it is very common to have the adverbial lexeme 'now' as the source for 'still'. This is the case in Hausa, where *har yānzū* 'until now' means also 'still', and in Lithuanian, where from *dabar* 'now' derived *dar* 'still'. For a survey of the phenomenon, see Heine and Kuteva 2002, p. 218.

²² See Sokoloff 1990, p. 266.

²³ Similarly Sokoloff (2002, p. 136) left it as ער כען +?.

²⁴ For /t/ > /d/ shifts in the middle of words in Mandaic, see Macuch 1965, pp. 60–61.

²⁵ Macuch 1965, p. 44. Accordingly, the final /t/ of *k'(n)t* was not perceived anymore as adverbial and another adverbial ending was added. A similar phenomenon occurred with the Hebrew cognate *attā*, in which both the /t/ and the /ā/ are functionally adverbial.

²⁶ Spitaler 1938, p. 122 §114, 1d. An alternative form is *l'axett* which is a combination of the adverbial prefix *l* and the preposition *'a(l)*, which is reminiscent of the JBA and Mandaic forms. It should be noted that Levias (1930, p. 109) already discussed all these forms together, but in a very different way.

Similarly we encounter in the dialect of Ma'lūla the form *xett(i)*²⁶ for the meaning of 'still'. /k/ normally shifts to /x/ in initial word position in this dialect. Therefore, it is very likely that the origin of this form is *k'ent*, especially since it also explains the gemination of the final /t/. The only problem with this proposal is that usually pharyngeal consonants did not go through any process of weakening in this dialect;²⁷ and also an original /tt/ should have become /čč/,²⁸ unless the form in Ma'lūla derived from a form similar to the Mandaic one.

An alternative etymology has also been proposed by Macuch, suggesting that the Mandaic form derived from *kdi* (the preposition *k* + the relative pronoun) with the following derivation *kdī* (pronounced *kddi*) > *kændi* (a dissimilation) > *kandi*.²⁹ While Macuch did not offer any support for this proposal, it is significant that in Samaritan Aramaic *kd-* has the meaning of 'still'.³⁰ This proposal, however, does not explain why *kdī* would be pronounced *kddi*. In addition, it does not explain the connection between the Mandaic and the JBA forms, making it unlikely. However, it does fit the form *xett(e)* from Ma'lūla. The shift /d/ > /t/ is regular with the relative pronoun, and the geminate /t/, while still not explained, supports Macuch's proposal.³¹

To conclude, it is possible that derivations of *k't* and *k'nt* are found in later dialects, but it is not definite, since an alternative proposal is somewhat possible. The absence of these adverbs in earlier and later dialects and their appearance only in certain formulae invites a reconsideration of whether the common etymology of these forms is indeed accurate, but we shall return to this question later (§4).

²⁷ Usually this phenomenon is attributed to the contact with Arabic. See, for example, Bergsträsser 1983, p. 99. This can explain the fact that occasionally we do encounter words in this dialect which do not have a pharyngeal consonant, but which are reflexes of words with them, especially when the word does not occur in Arabic; for example, in the word that actually expresses 'now' *hāš(i)*, which derives from *hāša'ā*. According to Werner Arnold (personal communication) the lack of the pharyngeal is not the problem, since it is very difficult to pronounce the /' / immediately after /x/ if the two consonants are not separated by a syllable border, and therefore it could have disappeared easily.

²⁸ As in *ittā* > *ečča* 'a woman', *attiq* > *ačceq* 'old'.

²⁹ Macuch 1965, p. 44.

³⁰ Tal 2000, p. 378.

³¹ In this case we would assume that the JBA form was borrowed from a dialect in which the relative pronoun became /t/ as in Ma'lūla. Spitaler (1938 p. 122) proposed examining a connection between the *xett(e)* in Ma'lūla and the adverbial form *kaddu* 'now' found in all the western dialects of Late Aramaic, which derives from *kad+hu*. Accordingly, it is possible that the forms with a final /t/ derived from a combination of *kad+hi*. While this hypothesis might explain the form in Mandaic, it is hard to explain the d > t shift in the JBA and Ma'lūla forms.

3. The relation between *k't* and *k'nt*

3.1 *The problem*

Prima facie, having two variations of one word in Official Aramaic, one of which has an extra /n/, should not surprise us, as it is quite common that the same word has two such variations; either the one without the /n/ is a result of an assimilation of an /n/ before another consonant, or the one with the /n/ is a result of dissimilation.³² Thus, in our case, since the /n/ is part of the root, one could easily assume that the variation of *k't* and *k'nt* is simply a token of this larger phenomenon. Folmer, however, demonstrated that our case is not so simple, since, on the one hand, the form *k't* appears in the Arsham archive where there is *never* an assimilation of the /n/; and, on the other hand, in the ostraca there are many instances of such an assimilation, and in this corpus we almost always encounter *k'nt*, without the expected assimilation.³³ For this reason Folmer promoted the idea that both forms are of a different origin, but without proposing an alternative etymology for them.³⁴ As said earlier, since these forms have the same function and never occur together, it is natural to assume that they are two dialectal variations of the same form. But, in order to follow this direction, we need to propose an explanation for the puzzle Folmer raised.

The lack of the expected form *k'nt* in the Arsham archive does not pose a serious problem. While it is possible that the form *k't* was inserted as such to the dialect in which the Arsham archive was written, such an explanation is not available in the other direction, that of the lack of the /n/ in the ostraca. Even if *k'nt* had been inserted from a dialect where the assimilation was not active, we would expect that the assimilation would occur after such an insertion; thus, we should provide an explanation for how such a form is possible in dialects where assimilation of /n/ to the next consonant was a rule. The following sections will be devoted to this.

Assuming that both forms were originally the feminine singular form, we can explain the dialectal variations in two ways. According to the first explanation (§3.2) there was a morphological difference between the dialects; according to the second explanation (§3.3) both forms reflect the same form, and the difference between the dialects was in terms of the order of sound changes. The proposals will differ in another aspect. While the second proposal will be able to explain the actual vocalisation in MT

³² For an exhaustive discussion of these phenomena, see Folmer 1995, pp. 74–94.

³³ Folmer 1995, p. 670. See also, Murauka and Porten 1998, p. 11, n. 46.

³⁴ Folmer 1995, p. 671.

[=Masorite Text], the first will assume that the vocalisation was influenced by the equivalent Hebrew forms, which should only account for the consonantal representation. This, of course, is not the first example of forms in Biblical Aramaic for which it has been suggested that the MT forms were influenced by Hebraism.³⁵

3.2 *First proposal*

3.2.1: As noted above, we assume here that both forms are from dialects in which there was a regressive assimilation of the /n/ before consonants,³⁶ but that there was a morphological variation between the dialects with regards to the feminine ending.³⁷ Accordingly, the form *k'nt* had the final ending *-at* [*kV'inat*]; while the form *k't* had the ending *-t* without a preceding vowel, and, therefore, the final *-n* went through an assimilation [**kV'int > *kV'itt > kē'ēt*]. Before explaining the motivation for this proposal, a general description of the variation of these feminine singular nominal markers across the Semitic languages in general, and in Aramaic in particular, is needed.³⁸

The Akkadian *-at* and *-t* alternate according to strictly phonological criteria. We see *-at* after bases ending in consonant cluster and otherwise *-t*, such as the following: *kalbatum* 'female dog', *bēltum* 'lady'. Similar distribution is found also in Ethiopic: *'əmnat* 'faith', *nəgəšt* 'queen', with a few exceptions. Arabic usually has *-at*, whereas *-t* is restricted to a very small number of biconsonantal words, such as *bintun* 'daughter'.

Hebrew and Aramaic went through a similar generalisation and the majority of the nouns with feminine endings have *-at*, in which the final *t* went through apocoptation and the stressed vowel became the vowel represented in MT by a *qamets*, *-at > ā*, regardless of the structure of the syllable preceding it. However, vestiges of the *-t* variant can be found in both languages. In Hebrew, this variant did not go through the apocoptation, and in the cluster of the final consonant there was anaptyxis, similar to the so-

³⁵ See, for example, Blake 1951.

³⁶ The assumption that the representation of the /n/s in this phonological environment in Official Aramaic does not reflect the actual pronunciation, but rather a historical writing is very common in the literature. For a survey of the scholarship on this, see Folmer 1995, pp. 74–76, and especially n. 75. For her opinion, see pp. 90–95.

³⁷ Folmer (1995, p. 80 n. 238) mentions this possibility regarding the difference between the form *šnh* appearing in most texts and *št* appearing in the text from Teima for "year", and later (p. 744) she includes this among the reasons for referring to Teima as a separate dialect. However, she did not develop this possibility any further.

³⁸ Most of the survey is taken from Brockelmann (1908, pp. 405–410 §225A) and Huehnergard (2002, pp. 73–88).

called segholate forms. Thus we regularly see **dalt > delet* and, and in Biblical Hebrew, the participle of the G-stem **šāmir > šōmeret*.

The evidence for the two allomorphs in Aramaic can be found in dialects with vocalisations. Both in Biblical Aramaic and in Syriac, in the long form of the noun (emphatic form) some words have a plosive [t] and some have a fricative one [θ/ʒ]. According to the general distribution of the phoneme /t/, this variation depends on the existence of a preceding vowel. Therefore, Huehnergard suggests explaining the Aramaic alternation by assuming the existence of the two allomorphs of the feminine ending, and, therefore, the following derivations: *Cat > Cta* and *Ct > Cta*.³⁹ To some extent, one can recognise a similar distribution to the one in Akkadian, as words with a cluster of consonants before the feminine ending, such as *malkētā* ‘queen’, usually have a fricative /t/. But it is impossible to explain the distribution according only to this.⁴⁰ For the purpose of our later discussion (§4.2.2), we should note that in Syriac we find words with a plosive /t/ after a syllable with a long /ī/, such as *qaddīšā*, *priqtā*.⁴¹

3.2.2: Independent of the discussion regarding the forms *kʿnt* and *kʿt*, it is worth suggesting that this alternation was common in Official Aramaic and, more specifically, in the Egyptian material, but for another reason.

Since the appearance of the Aramaic epigraphic material from Egypt, one of the grammatical peculiarities that has been noticed is the abundance of examples of feminine singular nouns with a final /t/ in the absolute forms. This is unique to this dialect, as it is almost⁴² unknown both in older dialects and later ones that regularly have the apocopated forms written with a final *-h* (and occasionally with a final *-ʿ*), representing a final vowel /ā/. Thus, one finds in the Aramaic material from Egypt both the forms *ʿgrt* and *ʿgrh* for ‘letter’ or *qbylh* and *qblt*⁴³ for ‘complaint’.⁴⁴ Some

³⁹ Huehnergard 2002. For an alternative synchronic approach and for a survey of the literature about this problem, see Edzard (2001, esp. p. 82). I wish to thank Naʿama Pat-El for referring me to this article.

⁴⁰ See Nöldeke 2001, pp. 17–18 §23 E.

⁴¹ In this context we can also consider the variation between the Syriac forms of the III-n passive participle in light of these two allomorphs: *zbittā* (<**zabintā*) and *zbītā* (<**zabīnatā*). However, since the latter is not a common word we do not have a clear tradition for whether the /t/ in the second word was plosive or fricative. If it was plosive the difference between the forms has to do with the occurrence or non-occurrence of an assimilation.

⁴² With the exception of *šʿr* ‘a ewe’ in Sefire I A 21 and *bqʿt* ‘valley’ II B 10 (Fitzmyer 1995, p. 191). Regarding other similarities between the Sefire inscription and the Egyptian material see below, §4.3.2.2.

⁴³ Regarding the variation of the writing of the /i/ vowel, see below n. 54.

⁴⁴ See Murauka and Porten 1998, pp. 65–66 §18 j.

have suggested ignoring these examples as mistakes,⁴⁵ whereas others have viewed them as examples of a local process of preserving a historic spelling unknown elsewhere.⁴⁶ Some have even suggested a local Egyptian influence, since the feminine ending /t/ was still written in the demotic script (although probably not pronounced at the time).⁴⁷

Among those who believed that we should consider this an areal phenomenon representing two types of pronunciation is Kutscher, who suggested that it is a remnant of an old accusative ending functioning as an adverbial accusative.⁴⁸ Wesselius proposed an instance of opposition of cases, *-h* for nominative/genitive and *-t* for accusative.⁴⁹ While Folmer accepts Kutscher's proposal that this is indeed a relic of an old accusative, she demonstrated that it is hard to support any synchronic evidence for this distribution, since the different forms appear in both subject and object positions. In addition, she noted that it is difficult to explain why we find both forms in the same letters.⁵⁰ In general, Kutscher's proposal is rather ad hoc given that in those Semitic languages that still maintain cases, the /t/ element of the feminine forms is part of the gender ending, not the case marking, with all cases having the /t/. It is then hard to explain why it would be retained only in the accusative case. Therefore, since there is no strong diachronic reason for this proposal, and it cannot be supported synchronically, it seems quite reasonable to reject it altogether.

Without any better explanation, I think that it would be reasonable to propose that these variations of writing the feminine ending with a final *-t* are to be explained as representations of the allomorph of the feminine ending in Aramaic without a vowel, assuming that the apocopation of the final /t/ occurred, like in Hebrew, only after a vowel, and not after a consonant. Thus *'grt* should be read as *'girt* (in fact similar to its Akkadian origin *igirtu*) and *'grh* should be read as *'girā* (<**'girat*).⁵¹ The advantage of this proposal is that, as demonstrated earlier, it can be connected to another phenomenon known to us in other Aramaic dialects: the two allomorphs of the emphatic feminine singular forms in Biblical Aramaic and Syriac. In the same way that we needed to assume either free variation in

⁴⁵ Kaufman 1974, p. 44 n. 63.

⁴⁶ Hug 1993, p. 65.

⁴⁷ Gibson 1975, pp. 127–128.

⁴⁸ Kutscher 1954, p. 236.

⁴⁹ Wesselius 1980.

⁵⁰ Folmer 1995, pp. 252–257.

⁵¹ A similar proposal has been made by Garr (1985, p. 59) regarding the form *š't* from Sefire.

these dialects or a dialectal isogloss, it would be reasonable to suggest the same for the Egyptian dialect, accounting for variations within the same texts.

3.2.3: In regard to the two forms *k'nt* and *k't*, if we accept that in Aramaic there were two possible forms for the feminine ending, we can see our two forms as representations of these: **kV'inat>kV'ēnat* **kV'int>*kV'itt>*kV'it> kē'ēt* (as a result of the assimilation of the /n/). Thus, at least in the first form, we do not follow the vocalisation in MT.

It should not bother us that we do not see an apocopation of the /t/ in the form *k'nt* for two reasons: first, as noted earlier (and as will be elaborated later), this form was a frozen form from an older stage, possibly before the apocopation occurred; second, it is used here as an adverb, and, as we can see in other dialects, such as Syriac, in this function the feminine absolute ending remained, despite its apocopation elsewhere (*ḥayyat* 'actively, alive', *šawyat* 'simultaneously').⁵²

3.3 Second proposal

A second proposal assumes that the morphology was similar and that the feminine ending was only a final *-t* in both dialects. Thus, the expected feminine singular form is *k-int*, a form with a final cluster of two consonants in which the first consonant is /n/.

Again if we assume a dialect with assimilation of /n/s before another consonant, as for example is the case in most of the ostraca from Egypt (§3.1), the cluster of /-nt/ at the end of the word is expected to go through either a regressive assimilation of the /n/ to the final /t/, or through an anaptyxis in which a vowel is inserted between the cluster of the two final consonants. This was the case with nouns in the pattern of one syllable with a short vowel and a final consonantal cluster *qVtl*. The question is, of course, what happened first—the assimilation or an anaptyxis? If the former, then the form **kV'int*⁵³ should become **kV'int>*kV'itt>kē'et*; if the latter, then **kV'inet>*kVi'net*. And with the shortening of an unstressed

⁵² See, Nöldeke 2001 §155 A, p. 99.

⁵³ As for the vowel after the consonant /t/, in the discussion I assume that it was an /i/ vowel, as it is in Hebrew, in order to fit the MT vocalisation. However, if the JBA and the Mandaic forms discussed in §2 are indeed related to these adverbs, then it is reasonable to assume an /a/ vowel; another reason to assume so would be that if this is the case then these adverbs are related to the third adverb *k'n*, which is vocalised as *k'an* in all attested traditions. Thus, *k't* and *k'nt* would simply be *k'n+t* (an explicit adverbial ending).

open syllable in Aramaic, we should expect **kV'ēnet*,⁵⁴ or in Biblical Aramaic we may actually expect the form we encounter in MT, of *kē'enet*.⁵⁵

Accordingly, the two forms *k't* and *k'nt* represent the two options, which, in turn, represent two dialects with different orders of phonetic rules. The possibility of such a difference among the Aramaic dialects has already been mentioned in the literature;⁵⁶ and there is good evidence for this variation in words demonstrating the same phenomenon in other dialects. In fact this is what we would expect in any noun with II-n root in one of the *qVtl* patterns. In Syriac we find *'nez* 'goat', but at the same time *geb* 'side' written as *gneb* with a *linea occultans*, indicating the fact that the /n/ is not pronounced.⁵⁷ In the case of *'nez* we find in Palestinian Aramaic and Mandaeic the form *'ez*.⁵⁸ In forms with the feminine ending, we find a difference between the Eastern and Western dialects of Syriac. Thus *zbantā* ('time') of the Eastern dialects was pronounced *zbattā* in the west.

All of these examples indicate that the order of the phonological rules may not be the same in different dialects. And even in one dialect it is possible to encounter the co-existence of two forms that reflect a different order, probably inserted in different periods or originating from different dialects. In reference to our discussion, in which the two forms never co-occur in the same text, it is reasonable to suggest that the split between *k't* and *k'nt* is due to a dialectal variation of the order of the phonetic rules.

Assuming the use of the allomorph *-t* in the adverbial ending in Aramaic can solve another problem in the history of Aramaic. As mentioned earlier, Syriac has a synchronic adverbial ending *ā'it* (spelled *'yt*). Most scholars explained the origin of this suffix as a generalisation of the feminine gentile ending.⁵⁹ Brockelmann has already proposed the following derivation: *āyt* > *āyit* > *ā'it*. Mayer raised three problems with this derivation: 1. Why did Brockelmann begin with *āyt*? Shouldn't he instead have started with *āyat*? 2. What is the origin of the glottal stop? 3. Mayer believes that the Y indicates a long *ī* and nothing in Brockelmann's explanation accounts for this.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ For a discussion about the dating of this reduction of vowels, see Kaufman 1984.

⁵⁵ For a longer discussion on the segholate nouns in Biblical and Other Aramaic Dialects' forms, see below, §4.2.3.

⁵⁶ Malone 1971; see also Coetzee 1999.

⁵⁷ Nöldeke 2001, p. 64 §99. The assumption that the original form had an /n/ relies on the form *janb* in Arabic. On the different options regarding the etymology of this word, see HALOT, p. 1840.

⁵⁸ The origin of this word was most likely **'anz*, containing the consonant /n/ as is the form in Arabic. See also Macuch 1965, p. 45.

⁵⁹ See *inter alia*, Duval 1881, p. 293 §104.1; Brockelmann, 1908, p. 493 §250b. For a review of the literature, see Butts 2010.

⁶⁰ Mayer 1995.

Therefore, Mayer proposed a different etymology; this was strongly rejected by Gensler,⁶¹ but, as noted by Butts, we should nevertheless consider Mayer's problems with Brockelmann's explanation.⁶²

Regarding the first problem, even Gensler agreed with Myer that Brockelmann's reconstruction of a simple /-t/ feminine ending is an ad hoc proposal.⁶³ However, according to the previous discussion it should be obvious why a feminine ending of just a -t is not surprising in Syriac, and, as we saw, it is very possible that this was a regular form with adverbs.

Regarding the second problem, Brockelmann's explanation can be divided in two stages:

1. Triphthongisation $\bar{a}yC > \bar{a}yiC$, as we see in Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic with $bayt > bayit$. Butts argues that this is an ad hoc explanation, since it does not work as a general rule. However, triphthongisation also does not occur as a rule in Biblical Aramaic, or at least there are exceptions to this rule. Based on our limited number of examples, one could also propose that this triphthongisation in Syriac occurs only with long stressed \bar{a} , and this will account for the fact that it is very limited.
2. $y_i > \bar{i}$: intervocalic y turns to a glottal stop (a common phenomenon in Aramaic), thus the following development: $\bar{a}yt > \bar{a}yit > \bar{a}'it$.⁶⁴ As Gensler also noted, occasionally there are forms with Y instead of $'$.⁶⁵

Concerning Mayer's third problem, with regards to the long \bar{i} , Gensler has proposed several solutions. In addition to the fact that it is not clear that there was any difference at this stage of Syriac between long and short i , it is worth noting that nothing in the spelling necessitates a long \bar{i} . In the same way, the spelling of $'id\bar{a}$ does not represent a historic long \bar{i} ; this is only the way the vowel i is indicated after the glottal stop l' , and therefore is an orthographic convention, rather than a phonological reality. Thus, it is possible that while historically short $/i/$ became $/e/$ in the history of Syriac, the short $/i/$ that resulted, probably later, by a phonological shift ($y\check{e} > i$ in the case of $'id\bar{a}$, and triphthongisation in our case) remained $/i/$. Butts 2010 proposes that the $/\bar{i}/$ is a remnant of another feminine ending.⁶⁶ Even if we accept his proposal, for our purpose the most significant point is that

⁶¹ Gensler 2000.

⁶² Butts 2010.

⁶³ Gensler 2000, p. 239.

⁶⁴ Gensler 2000, p.239, proposed alternatively the following development: $\bar{a}yt > \bar{a}iit > \bar{a}'it$.

⁶⁵ Gensler 2000, p. 239.

⁶⁶ Butts 2010.

even he had to assume the existence of the allomorph *-t*, for the feminine ending, which is our main argument.

4. New etymology

4.1 An Akkadian cognate epistolary formula

4.1.1: Folmer already argued that *k'n* and *k'(n)t* probably had different origins,⁶⁷ but did not suggest what they might be. The fact that they are used in the same dialects suggests that they also had different meanings. As argued earlier, if the different origins can also explain why *k'(n)t* appears only in the epistolary formulation, it would be an advantage to the theory.

Leaving momentarily the reasons behind the differences between *k'nt* and *k't*, I would like to consider the option that the two are still variations of the same form, but with a different etymology than *k'n*. In contrast to *k'n*, in which the *k* is a preposition, it is worth considering that in the case of *k'nt* and *k't*, *k* is, in fact, the first radical of the root *k'-n*. Based on the cognate *šukênum* in Akkadian and the possible cognate in Arabic, the meaning of the root *k'-n* would be 'to prostrate', 'to do obeisance', or 'to be humble'. To be more specific, according to this proposal we should read *k'nt* and *k't* either as a finite verb, meaning 'I do obeisance' (see §4.2.3), or as the feminine form of the passive participle **ka'in(a)t* functioning as an adverb, meaning 'in prostrating', 'doing obeisance' or simply 'humbly' (see §4.2.2). Moreover, we should consider this an Aramism of an Assyrian greeting formula known from Middle Assyrian (see §4.1.2).

This proposal works well with Greenfield's suggestion for another Akkadian administrative substrate in these letters: the distribution of the two Aramaic verbs for 'to send' *šlh* and *hwšr*.⁶⁸ According to Greenfield the former is used, like the Akkadian *šapāru*, in the sense of 'to write to someone', and the latter is a back formation of the Akkadian *šušuru*, with the meaning of 'to send goods or persons'.⁶⁹ Similarly the word *ṭə'em* in Biblical Aramaic should be translated as meaning a piece of official correspondence⁷⁰ in light of its Akkadian origin *ṭēm*, which is significantly different

⁶⁷ Folmer 1995, p. 671.

⁶⁸ Greenfield 1978, p. 153.

⁶⁹ For the distinction between the meanings of the verbs see Fitzmyer 1974, p. 210. See also Folmer 1995, pp. 652–660.

⁷⁰ Whether this is a "decree" or "report" depends on the relationship between the two parties of the correspondence. Compare with BDB p. 1094.

from its meaning in other Semitic languages (including Aramaic!) in which it means ‘taste, sense, feeling’.

In the following paragraphs I will explain the background for this proposal.

4.1.2 *The Akkadian verb šukēnum and its West-Semitic cognates:*⁷¹ Speiser, among others, suggested that the verb *šukēnum* derived from the root *k-‘-n*.⁷² In Old Akkadian the guttural is still represented in forms such as *uška’en*, but in the Babylonian dialects the regular form is *uškēn*. The vowel /e/ after the radical *k* can be explained in the Babylonian dialects if we assume the historical presence of one of the proto-Semitic consonants ḥ, ‘ or γ (g).

Since this root has only a narrow use in the Š-stem with its derivative *muškēnum* (‘dependant, bondsman of the palace, poor man’), Speiser believed that the original root was *k-‘-n* and was borrowed from the Central Semitic root *k-n-‘*.⁷³ This root has in Hebrew the meaning of ‘obedience’ and ‘submission’. In Arabic in the I form (*kanā’a*) with the preposition *‘ilā*, it means ‘to submit to’ and in the IV form (*‘akna’a*), it means ‘to humble oneself’. In late Western Aramaic, the Samaritan dialect uses the verb *k-n-‘* in the G-stem to mean ‘to yield, to submit oneself’,⁷⁴ and in the passive participle it has the sense of ‘to be humble’.⁷⁵ Finally, in JPA [=Jewish Palestinian Aramaic] it has the meaning of ‘bending down’ and ‘being in low spirit’.⁷⁶ Later, the derivative *muškēnum* made its way through Assyrian back to the West Semitic languages, as the word *miskēn* in Hebrew and Aramaic, *maskīn* in Ethiopic, and *miskīn* in Arabic (‘poor’) attests. From Arabic it arrived into some Indo-European languages (the Italian *meschino*, Spanish *mesquina* and French *mesquin*).

Speiser did not explain the exact relationship between the two cognate roots, though it is quite clear that his proposal assumes that the Akkadian root is a result of metathesis. It is worth noting that such a metathesis between a nasal and a pharyngeal is known to us from elsewhere, with the preposition *‘aml‘im*⁷⁷ in Hebrew and Aramaic and its Arabic cognate

⁷¹ I wish to thank Cory D. Crawford for sharing with me many of the references on the Akkadian root.

⁷² Speiser 1935; 1952.

⁷³ Speiser 1935. This proposal was repeated by Tropper (1999). I wish to thank Aaron Butts for referring me to this paper.

⁷⁴ Tal 2000, p. 397.

⁷⁵ Tal 2000, p. 397.

⁷⁶ Sokoloff 1990, p. 263.

⁷⁷ For a brief discussion about the variation *‘aml‘im*, see Bar-Asher 2003–2007, n. 2.

ma'a.⁷⁸ Also relevant to this is the variation we encountered earlier in the Ugaritic form *'nt/'tn* for 'now', as the metathesis is to avoid such a sequence.

Regardless of the relation between the Akkadian *šukênum* and the Hebrew root *k-n-*, the forms *k'nt* and *k't* should be considered in light of the Akkadian verb. The major reason for such a proposal is the fact that in Middle Assyrian often at the greeting-opening of formal letters we encounter a form of the verb *šukênum*. For example, the following opening to letters is common in the archive from Tell Billa:⁷⁹

Ana PN bêliya tuppi PN [ardika] ultakain...

To PN my lord, the tablet of PN your servant. I do obeisance...

Similarly in the Amarna letters, again at the greeting, there is a regular formula with the verb *šubēhunu*, whose meaning is also 'to prostrate oneself', and it is widely agreed that it is derived from the verb *šukênum*, although the exact derivation is still unknown.⁸⁰ It is worth mentioning that in both dialects this verb often occurs in the Št-stem, adding the reflexive meaning. For our purpose it is enough that in the Middle Assyrian administration and in the northwestern periphery these verbs were used in epistolary formulae, specifically in the opening part, next to the names of the senders and the addressees.

Thus, based on the similar location of *k'nt* and *k't* in the letters, and the possibility that they share the same root, I would like to propose that they are historically related. They are either a finite verb with an equivalent meaning, or they are examples of Aramaic adverbial forms in the passive participle forms, which, similar to the Št-stem forms, had the meaning of 'being prostrated' or 'humbly'. In other words, *k'nt* and *k't* are the Aramaised form of the Akkadian greeting used to convey the same meaning.

According to both explanations, in Aramaic these forms are in the G-stem, and not in the C-stem as would be expected if this is indeed a calque of the Akkadian expression. But it is possible that the forms of the equivalent root *k-n-* influenced the choice of stems, since the verb *k-n-* in the C-stem requires a direct object with the meaning of 'humiliating', and, as noted earlier, we do find in late Western Aramaic the use of the verb *k-n-* in the G-stem, meaning 'to yield, to submit oneself', and 'to be humble'. Accordingly we assume that this was also the case in Aramaic (at least of the west!) in its Official period.

⁷⁸ See Brockelmann 1908, p. 270 §98, 2β. For a similar proposal and other examples from Akkadian, see Tropper 1999, p. 92.

⁷⁹ See Finkelstein 1953, pp. 135-136: 62, 1-3, 63, 1-3.

In order to support this proposal I should explain the different possible readings, and briefly mention another consequence of this connection.

4.1.3: If we accept this etymology, keeping in mind that this root was also used in the Amarna letters, one may consider the possibility that the association between the roots *k-‘-n* and *k-n-‘* and their derivatives was known to the speakers of the North-West Semitic languages. In this case, maybe this connection stands behind the etiologic story about Cana’an in Genesis 9, when at the end of the story he is cursed: “Cursed be Cana’an! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers.” Perhaps the relation between *kēnā‘ān* and slavery was made in this etiological story (as I by no means propose that this is the real etymology!) through the fact that the *muškē-num* is in a lower class than the regular *awilum* (although not completely a slave as is the *wardum*).

4.2 Possible derivations of *k’nt* and *k’t*

4.2.1: If we follow this direction, we may read this form in one of two ways: either that these are examples of feminine singular passive participle forms, functioning as adverbs (§4.2.2), or that, similar to the Assyrian formula, they are examples of a finite verb (§4.2.3). In the following sections I will elaborate more on these options.

4.2.2 *The forms k’nt and k’t as adverbs*: According to the first proposal these are feminine passive participles functioning as adverbs. The background to this proposal should be briefly explained. In different dialects of Aramaic, and particularly in the Egyptian dialect of Elephantine, feminine singular adjectives function as adverbs when they are not used as predicate adjectives co-referring with a specific feminine participant of the sentence, or as adnominal adjectives. In fact, most commonly, but not exclusively, these forms appear with their original /t/ ending. In contrast, in later dialects, such as Syriac,⁸¹ synchronically it might be accurate to speak about an adverbial ending that contains the consonant /t/. At this stage in the history

⁸⁰ See Speiser (1952, pp. 91–91) and Rainey (1996, p. 185) for a discussion about the relation between these verbs (and for a survey of the literature on this topic). It should be noted that representation of original /t/ with *ḥ* is quite common in the Amarna letters; the question is more about the representation of original /k/ with signs that contain *ḥ*. See also Tropper 1999, p. 93.

⁸¹ In Syriac, feminine adjectival forms are still used as adverbs (such as *‘aryat* ‘barely’), see Nöldeke (2001, p. 99 §155A), but the adverbial ending *-ā’it*, to which a separate discussion was devoted in §3.3.4, is the most common.

of Aramaic the correct synchronic description would be of different functions for the feminine singular adjectives, depending on their contexts.⁸² This is clear from the fact that we see variations of forms such as *rḥmt* / *rḥmb*⁸³ ‘affectionately’. Thus, in the same way that *gst* ‘harshly’ or *rmyt*⁸⁴ ‘in Aramaic’ are feminine adjectival forms used as adverbs, it is plausible to suggest that in the context of letters, the feminine form of the passive participle **kaʿin(a)t*, is only another example of an adjective functioning as an adverb.

Obviously, according to this proposal we should not follow the MT regarding the vocalisation, but instead rely only on the consonantal representations. In this regard, the defective spelling of /i/ is of course known from older stages of Aramaic,⁸⁵ but even among other Egyptian texts one can still find forms such as *yhb* for *yēhib* (given), or *ktbn* for *kētibān* (written).⁸⁶

As for the relation between *kʿt* and *kʿnt*, the same previously discussed proposals can be applied here as well.⁸⁷ If we follow the proposal of two allomorphs of the feminine ending, the fact that we find the two allomorphs for the same grammatical category (a passive participle) should not surprise us. In fact, a similar phenomenon can be found in Hebrew with the feminine singular active participle. While in Biblical Hebrew the form is *qōtelet* (<**qātilt*), in Mishnaic Hebrew we encounter *qōtēlā* (<**qātilat*); this should not be taken as a diachronic development between the Biblical and the Mishnaic forms, but rather as an example of the fact that these corpora represent two different dialects.⁸⁸

4.2.3 *The forms kʿnt and kʿt as a finite verb*: Both the Middle Assyrian formula *ultakain* and the regular form from the Amarna letter *sušḥehin* are first person singular verbal forms; in the former it is in the precative form and in the latter it is in the preterite. In the Amarna letters the verb *sušḥehunu* appears only in the Canaanite letters,⁸⁹ while the regular verb

⁸² Compare with Murauka and Porten, 1998, p. 180 §46 h, and see there for a list of words in this category.

⁸³ See §4.3 about this variation.

⁸⁴ It should be remembered that the Y here does not represent the vowel /i/, but rather the consonant /y/, as this is a gentile form, which in Aramaic contains this consonant.

⁸⁵ See, for example, in Sefire; Fitzmyer 1995, pp. 182–183.

⁸⁶ See Murauka and Porten 1998, p. 33 §6 d.

⁸⁷ It is possible to assume that in one dialect the feminine ending was *-t* and in the other *-at*, despite the fact that there was a cluster of consonants after a long vowel (*qātilt*), as was demonstrated in §3.2.1.

⁸⁸ See *inter alia*, Bar-Asher 2006, p. 573.

⁸⁹ Rainey 1996, p. 185.

with the same meaning is *maqātu*. The verb *maqātu* is mostly in the preterite form,⁹⁰ but occurs also in the suffix conjugation (*maqatati*).⁹¹ In the Amarna letters it occurs usually with complements in the formula, “I fall at the feet of my lord seven times and seven times,” but, as we saw, in the Middle Assyrian formula, it stands alone, probably with the meaning of ‘I do obeisance’. Therefore, if we assume that the Aramaic forms are calque of the Akkadian formulae, we would expect them also to be a finite verb, and, most probably, in the first person common singular form of the suffix conjugation.

Thus, the original Aramaic form for the root *k-‘-n* (assuming that it was in the G-stem) should be **ka‘Vnti/tu*. The regular Aramaic form for 1st c sg *qitlēt* resulted from apocopation of the final vowel with a later anaptyxis, which broke up the final consonantal cluster. Given the regular sound shifts of Aramaic, this was the historical development: **qatVltu*⁹² > **qatVlt* > **qətəlēt* > *qitlēt*. Having this in mind, it is possible to explain both *k’nt* and *k’t* accordingly.

In the case of *k’nt*, ignoring the MT vocalisation, it is possible to propose that this form was *ki’nēt*. However, it is even possible to explain the MT vocalisation, having in mind the following reasons: Among the nouns descending from the original *qVtl* nominal patterns in Biblical Aramaic, one finds two types of forms reflecting two different orders of phonological rules: *qētēll/qētal* or *qetel*.⁹³ Similar to this, one can find in Biblical Aramaic next to the regular **qataltu* > **qatal* > **qətəlēt* > *qitlēt* derivation of the 1st c sg

⁹⁰ Rainey 1996, p. 56.

⁹¹ Rainey 1996, p. 285.

⁹² For a discussion about the apocopation of such final vowels, see Murauka and Porten 1998, pp. 99–100.

⁹³ These forms are known in the literature as the Hebrew segholates. There is a long debate as to whether these are genuine Aramaic forms, or merely Hebraisms. Spitaler (1968), among others, was inclined to see them as Hebraisms. More recent scholarship tends to take the MT as reflecting genuine dialectal Aramaic forms. Important research on this is in Malone’s 1971 paper, which suggested considering this fact in light of the wave theory and proposed that different dialects had different rule ordering. See also Murauka (1976), who made the case for the MT forms. I would like to add that the fact that a similar phonological distribution is found in the verbal system (with 1st c sg and 3rd f sg forms), for which there is no Hebrew parallel, supports this direction. But this is not the only support. In the Septuagint the title *b’el tēm* (found in MT in Ezra 4: 8), which is the Akkadian administrative title *bēl tēm*, is taken as a name and transliterated as Βεελτεεμος (1 Esd. 2: 12) or βααλταμ (2. Esd. 4:17). Both forms, *beel* and *baal*, (and especially the latter!) may indicate a form with two vowels, in the manner of a Hebrew pattern. There is an earlier testament of this form in an Aramaic context, but it was missed in the literature (see also Garr (1985, p.45), who suggested that the anaptyxis began to spread from middle pharyngeal nouns to other strong nouns). On this topic see also Blau 2006, pp. 195–198.

suffix conjugation, also the alternative derivation: **qataltu* > **qatal* > **qatalet* > *qētelet* (the only example for the 1st c sg is in the C-stem, with a guttural: *haškaha*). Thus, this pattern with the root *k-‘-n* would result in the MT vocalisation for this root: *kē‘enet*—the form we have in MT. Since this is a III-n verb, in the older stage, an assimilation is expected.⁹⁴ Thus assuming that with a stative meaning of ‘doing obeisance’ the thematic vowel was /i/,⁹⁵ this is the expected derivation: **ka‘intuli* > **ka‘ittuli*⁹⁶ > **ka‘itt* > *kē‘et*. Again, this is the actual MT vocalisation.

Accordingly, the difference between the forms *k‘nt* and *k‘t* reflects one of the following reasons for variations: 1) two different orders of derivation or two different dialectal forms of the 1st c sg form;⁹⁷ 2) that a form like *ki‘net/kē‘enet* reflects a later analogy to other strong verbs, which did not happen in the other dialectal form *kē‘ēt*;⁹⁸ or 3) that there was a dialectal variation concerning the assimilation of the /n/.

4.3 Final remarks

4.3.1: If indeed the epistolary terms *k‘nt* and *k‘t* resulted from a borrowing of an Assyrian formula into the administrative correspondence jargon in Aramaic (probably even before the time the Achaemenid dynasty inherited Aramaic as the administrative language), the original meaning was probably no longer transparent to the Aramaic scribes at the time of the attested documents. This fact can be demonstrated most notably from the fascinating example of a draft and the actual petition in the Cowley collection (30 and 31, A4.7–8). In A4.7, 4 it is written “*k‘n ‘bdk ydnyh wknwth kn ‘mrn*” “*k‘n (=now) your servant ydnyh and his colleagues saying thus.*”

⁹⁴ In fact an example of another III-n verb in the 1st c sg form without assimilation is found with the verb ZBN ‘to buy’, as in Pad 1, 11, K 4,3 and K 9,3, where we encounter the form *zbnt* ‘I bought’ and *ntnt* ‘I gave’, BM II 2.11 and C 11,1 (see also, Folmer 1995, pp. 76–80).

⁹⁵ Compare with *sged* ‘to worship’.

⁹⁶ Compare with the verb NTN ‘to give’ in Hebrew; the form of the 1st c sg is *nātatti*.

⁹⁷ The possibility that there were different forms for this grammatical category is known to us from Biblical Aramaic, in which we encounter *qitlēt*, *qētelet* and *qētelet*.

⁹⁸ A possible analogy to this is 2 Sam. 22: 35 *niḥat* and its parallel in Ps. 18: 35 *niḥtā*. The form in Samuel was previously misunderstood in the literature, but from the context it is clear that this should be a feminine participle form of the root *n-ḥ-t*. The original expected form will be **ninḥāt* (compare with **nišmart* > *nišmeret*), and with the regular phonological rules the expected derivation is **ninḥatt* > **niḥāt* (the vowel a in the MT should reflect a misunderstanding of the form). This is what the consonantal form in Samuel shows, which was probably later changed in Psalms, reflecting the fact that this form was not known to its speakers (this is following the common idea about the relation between the two versions of David’s song).

This was corrected in A.4.8, 3 to “*k’t b[d]k ydynyh [...] k’t your servant ydynyh...*” This correction teaches us two things: first, that this was probably a frozen formula that the scribe failed to utilise correctly; and second, that, similarly to modern scholarship, some scribes made a folk etymology that related *k’n* and *k’t*, and probably also understood *k’t* to have a temporal meaning. Another example of such folk etymology will be proposed in §4.3.2.2, but before that, one other possible reason for this connection will be demonstrated in the following section.

4.3.2.1: Earlier, in §2, we reviewed the existence of vestiges of *k’nt* and *k’t* in other dialects in the history of Aramaic. We concluded that it is possible that they appeared only in letters from this Achaemenid period, with the exception of *k’t* in an older stage as evidenced in the Sefire inscription. It has also been noted that it is possible that the occurrence of *k’t* as an adverb in this inscription could be under the influence of the Canaanite languages. If we accept the proposal that *k’t* in the correspondence from Official Aramaic is a form of the verb *k-’n*, we should assume that in the history of Aramaic there were two forms of *k’t*, perhaps even both pronounced as *kē’t*, with different etymology. Since it is possible that the temporal meaning of *k’t* was known to some Aramaic speakers, especially to those who were in contact with Canaanite languages, and probably the other meaning became opaque to them, it is reasonable that they connected semantically the homophones, and reinterpreted the *k’t* from the epistolary formulation in light of the Canaanite meaning. This could be the case in the following example as well.

4.3.2.2: As became clear from Folmer’s exhaustive review of the functional distribution of the forms *k’t*, *k’nt* and *k’n*: *k’t* and *k’nt* were preserved for the formal formula, while *k’n* was used with its regular temporal meaning. This is the case in the letters from the Yedanya communal archive (see especially A4.2, A4.3, A4.4–5, A4.8) and similarly in the letters from the Arsham archive (see especially A 6.7, A6.10; and this is also the impression from the rest of the corrupted letters, because of the contexts in which each of the terms appears). As mentioned earlier, this is clearly also the case in the biblical text, in which the distribution is extremely strict (compare Ezra 4: 10, 11 and 17 to Ezra 4: 13, 14 and 21). It is also true of other letters (D.7.1 and D.7.5) and it is especially remarkable in D7.56 where we find *k’t* and *k’n* one after the other; if they have the same meaning or function it seems redundant:⁹⁹

⁹⁹ For a list of all occurrences of these form in the Elephantine material see Porten et al 1996, p. 90–91.

To my brother Jashib	.1 אל אחי ישיב
Son of Shabbethau and his companions,	.2 בר שבתי ואחברוהי
your bother Akban.	.3 אחיכון עקבן שלם
May my brother be well at all time, and <i>k't</i>	.4 אחי בכל עדן וכעת
<i>k'n</i> (now) Asaetes and his son	.5 כען לא אבו אסתס
did not wish to come to the place (or after)	.6 וברה למאתה באתר
the grain	.7 עבורא

However, this distinction was not always maintained, and *k'n* occasionally occurred in the opening formula, and *k't* and *k'nt* in the middle of the letters with temporal meaning (D. 7.9 and D.7.16¹⁰⁰). In the letters from Hermopolis (especially A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4, A2.5) only *k't* occurs, mostly in cases with temporal meaning, and not in the regular formulae found in the other correspondences. However, it must be noted that if the two forms co-occur in one document this is the distribution: *k'nt* or *k't* at the opening formula, and *k'n* in the message itself.¹⁰¹

If our proposal regarding the Assyrian origin of these forms is correct, then, with the exception of Hermopolis, the occurrences which do not fit to the proposed distribution should be considered as errors made by the scribes. As mentioned in the previous section, in A4.7, which is the draft of A4.8, it is clear that such mistakes happened and the scribes felt the need to correct themselves in their proofreading. This mistake probably resulted through a folk etymologically relating *k't/k'nt* and *k'n*.

The exclusive use of *k't* in the Hermopolis letters should be treated differently. First it should be remembered that these letters were private and unofficial; therefore, it is not surprising to find no epistolary formula in this circumstance. Second, it is clear that these correspondences were written in a different dialect. As Greenfield and Porten and Kutscher have demonstrated, this is a different dialect on every linguistic level and contains clear western characterisations.¹⁰² Therefore, it is possible that this dialect preserved the older form and meaning of the adverb *k't* from Sefire, found in Hebrew, of 'now'.

¹⁰⁰ In these examples it might be the case that there are secondary openings in the letters.

¹⁰¹ The only exception I found is D.7.24 where *k'nt* appears at the opening and then *k'n* and *k'nt* alternate in the body of the letter.

¹⁰² Greenfield and Porten 1968; Kutscher 1971.

In fact, the connection between the Hermopolis papyri and the Sefire inscription might be even stronger. Gibson noticed that many of the personal names in the letters are Syrian Semitic, “suggesting that some of their [the senders of the letters, EBAS] ancestors originated from Mesopotamia or at least northern Syria.”¹⁰³ In addition, based on a list of features which he believed are typical of the Syrian region, Kutscher suggested that the letters were written by speakers of a Syrian dialect.¹⁰⁴ If we accept this hypothesis, originating independently from the onomastic evidence and the linguistic data, we can find a deeper connection between the letters and the Sefire inscription from Aleppo, which is dated to the mid-eighth-century BCE; this connection is strengthened by the fact that they are from the same area and only few centuries apart (the Hermopolis letters are dated to between the sixth and fifth centuries BCE).¹⁰⁵

Even if Kutscher’s hypothesis is rather speculative, one should note that some of the peculiar linguistic traits which he identified among his diagnostic features are attested in the Sefire inscription as well (although these are also typical to other Old Aramaic dialects):

1. Final *ā* spelled with *-h*¹⁰⁶
2. Assimilation of *n* (although this is of course not unique to Sefire)
3. Western word order¹⁰⁷

At any rate, it is possible that the use of *k’t* in these letters reflects a different dialect, potentially from Syria, which had an adverb similar in form to the Hebrew and the Ugritic to express ‘now’. The high frequency of this adverb in the private letters from Hermopolis can accordingly still be related to a folk etymology of the similar form (homophone?) in official letters.

4.3.3: If our proposal is correct, and *k’t/k’nt* was originally either a finite verb or a feminine passive participle used adverbially with the meaning of ‘being prostrated’ or ‘humbly’, we would expect it only in the writing of an inferior to his superior.¹⁰⁸ This is clearly not the case in Ezra 4: 17, where

¹⁰³ Gibson 1975, p. 126.

¹⁰⁴ Kutscher 1971.

¹⁰⁵ Connections between the Sefire inscription and the Aramaic found in Egypt were discovered as well. For example, Greenfield (1969, p. 201) regarding the ‘periphrastic imperative’; Murauka and Porten (1998, pp. 151–152 n. 711) for examples of 3rd pl pronominal object suffixes; and see above n. 42 for examples of a *-t* feminine ending (see Kutscher 1971, p. 107).

¹⁰⁶ Fitzmyer 1995, p. 179.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Fitzmyer 1995, pp. 205–206.

¹⁰⁸ As for differences between the formulae depending on social rank, see Fitzmyer 1974, p. 213 and Pardee 1978, p. 336.

k't occurs in a letter from the king. First, in the next section, there will be mentioned the possibility that this form is missing in a Syriac variant of the biblical text, but even if it does exist there, if we assume that it is a relic from an older period and not transparent to the speakers of the time, its use should not surprise us and it can be understood merely as part of the greeting formula. This is similar to the way in which in today's English 'Mr' is used in formal language even when the writer has the authority, despite the fact that etymologically it derives from 'master', used only when a person in an inferior social position addressed a person with authority over him.

4.3.4: Finally, I would like to draw attention to one of the earliest documented treatments of the meaning of the discussed forms—by an Aramaic native speaker, the translator of Ezra to Syriac. While *k'n* is always translated as conjunctive adverbs,¹⁰⁹ *k'nt* in Ezra 4: 10–11 is translated by a form with similar phonemes to the original. There are four variations in the different manuscripts and early editions:¹¹⁰ *k'nt* (vocalized as: *'ak'net*), *kn't* (vocalized as: *'akn'et*), *k'nt* and *'k'nt* (vocalized as: *'ak'enet*). Hawley says about this translation that it “shows that the translator did not understand this word.”¹¹¹ However, this explanation is doubtful, since it was not in the translator's nature to have left meaningless words in the translation.¹¹²

As for the last variation, *'ak'enet* 'as *'enet*', according to this, the translator provided a morphological translation, in which *'ak* translated *k* not in the temporal sense but rather in the sense of 'as' and the second part is left untranslated, since *'enet* has no sense in Syriac. While the Syriac translator of Ezra did occasionally 'translate' according to similar sounds,¹¹³ he did so only with meaningful words. Also, it should be noted that this translation appears in all manuscripts only in relation to verse 10.¹¹⁴ All manuscripts have one of the other three forms in the translation for verse 11 (A and C have *kn't*, and F²e has *kn'it*).

As those three forms stand, there is only one way to parse them: as verbal forms of the 1st common singular suffix conjugation of either the verb *k'-n*

¹⁰⁹ See above, n. 4.

¹¹⁰ Based on the work of Moss 1933, and I am using the same references he used. In the brackets I put the vocalisations as found in some of the editions.

¹¹¹ Hawley 1922, p. 37.

¹¹² When encountering words for which he did not understand the meaning, the translator either left them without an explicit translation (see, for example, 4: 13 with the list of tributes, or the omission of *šālū* in 4: 22) or with other similar sounding words (for example, the word *kēnāwāthōn* (4: 9), which is related to the Akkadian word *kinattūtu* 'colleagueship', is translated *'akwāthōn*, lit. 'like them', probably in this text with the sense of 'their equals').

¹¹³ See Weitzman 1999, pp. 37–38

¹¹⁴ The printed editions always have *k'nt*.

or *k-n-*, either in the G-stem or in the C-stem. This is an exact calque of the Assyrian verbal form in the greeting formula, either using the same root (*k-ʿ-n*) or the Northwest Semitic equivalence (*k-n-*), either in the C-stem as it is in Akkadian or the G-stem as expected in Aramaic. It is worth considering, then, that this form was in fact still known to the translator of Ezra to Syriac, and, if so, it contributes to our proposal.

As for the translation of *kʿt*, in Ezra 4: 17, the textual facts are not simple. While the printed editions have *kad menʿat* ‘when it arrived’, in S we encounter simply *menʿat* ‘it arrived’, and in A and C we encounter again the form *knʿt* as in verse 11. According to Hawley, *kʿt* from the MT was taken as the beginning of the next sentence and translated with the words *kad menʿat* ‘when it arrived’, most likely relying on the shared consonants (*kad menʿat*).¹¹⁵ Similarly, Moss assumes that this is the latest version.¹¹⁶ While this is definitely possible, it is worth considering another fact. Examining the translation in the rest of the chapter reveals that the Syriac translator added in another place the information confirming that the letters had actually arrived.¹¹⁷ If this is the case, it is possible that *kʿt* was not translated in the Syriac translation,¹¹⁸ and one should wonder whether this is an omission made by the translator, or maybe an indication for a variant in which this form was not there. In turn it is possible to speculate that this is related to the fact that in this context the king was the writer, and, therefore, it was not appropriate to use this form (see 5.4). Accordingly, either it was not in the original text, or it was omitted by someone who understood what might be its original meaning. This of course supports the possibility that we proposed, that the original meaning was still known to the Syriac translator.

A note of clarification should be added here. At first this proposal might seem absurd, as I am suggesting that this formula is so old that some scribes in the Egyptian Aramaic text were not familiar with the lexeme and therefore could not recognise it, but that it was still alive to some extent in the Classical Syriac world. However, in the history of a language, in an era without communication between the various locations of speakers of the same language, it is possible that a meaning of a word would remain transparent in some parts of the world while for others it would become obscure.

¹¹⁵ Hawley 1922, p. 38.

¹¹⁶ Moss 1933, pp. 68–69.

¹¹⁷ See Ezra 4: 23, the addition of *kad ʿetā paršagnā* ‘when the letter arrived’. In this case Hawley says: “This is a free but good translation” (1922, p. 39).

¹¹⁸ According to this, it should be argued that the forms that appear in the manuscripts are later additions in order to follow the MT, a common phenomenon among these manuscripts (see Moss 1933).

Let me provide another example of such a phenomenon, with some similar participants: In the book of Ezra we encounter seven times the word *kənātā* ‘colleagues’; this noun derived from the Akkadian noun *kinattu*, with a similar meaning. In the Syriac translation of these passages it is translated with the combination: *'akwāthōn* ‘like them’. Such a translation indicates that whoever translated this text into Syriac was not familiar with the meaning of the word and therefore chose to translate it alternatively with another combination consisting of similar sounds (see n. 82). However, while the original sense of this lemma was already not clear to this (relatively early) translator, we do find this word in the Syriac of other (later) authors¹¹⁹ and it was even still used freely in the thirteenth century in the language of Barhebraus.¹²⁰ Thus, a word, especially one borrowed from another language and therefore not connected by its root to other active words in the lexicon, can be transparent, but later remain transparent only in some areas. Thus we encounter that while *kənātā* was not familiar to speakers of the language in one place, it was still transparent and even part of the active lexicon of other, much later speakers. Similarly it is not absurd to suggest that Aramaic borrowed the use of the root *k'n*, especially in the context of official letters, and while it was used in Egypt in the Official period only as a frozen formula, it was still transparent in the Syriac world of the translator of the Bible. Since the Syriac translator of Ezra was from a different location it is not unlikely that he would inherit some eastern uses of this root.

5. Conclusions

In this paper I proposed the following:

1. Different dialects of Aramaic had different rule ordering with regard to the assimilation of *-n* and the insertion of an anaptyxis between clusters of two final consonants. This could explain, for example, the difference between dialects with the form *'nez* and those with the form *'ez* for ‘goat’, or between *zbantā* and *zbattā* for ‘time’.
2. Following Huehnergard’s proposal that there were two allomorphs in Aramaic for the feminine ending, *-at* and *-t*, I proposed considering that this is the reason behind the feminine nouns in Egyptian Aramaic written with final /t/. Accordingly, they represent forms without the vowel.

¹¹⁹ See, Sokoloff 2009, p. 638.

¹²⁰ Joose 2004, p. 30 §1.5.5.

3. In light of point 2, the following derivation was proposed for the Syriac adverbial suffix *ā'it*: *āyt* > *āyit* > *ā'it*, answering criticisms raised against similar proposals in the past.
4. The etymology of the epistolary terms *k't*, *k'nt* is related to the root *k-n-*, used both in official correspondence from Middle Assyrian and in the Amarna letters.
5. To read the etiological story about Cana'an as a slave in Genesis 9 in light of the etymological connection between the root *k-n-* and the root of the Akkadian word *muškēnum*, attributed to a lower civil status.
6. To consider the existence of some connection between the dialect of the Sefire inscription and the dialect of the Hermopolis letters.

It is important to note that besides point 5, which depends on point 4, all the other proposals are independent. Thus, rejecting any specific one does not entail rejecting the rest.

Abbreviations

- BDB Brown, F., Driver S. R. and Briggs. C. A., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Oxford: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1907, 1955.
 HALOT Koehler L. and Baumgartner W. *The Hebrew and the Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Leiden: Brill 2000.

References

- Ahituv, Sh.
 2008 *Echoes from the Past*. Jerusalem: CARTA Jerusalem.
- Bar-Asher, E. A.
 2004– “An Explanation of the Etiology of the Name Ammon in Genesis 19, Based
 2007 on Evidence from Nabataean Aramaic and the Safaitic Arabian Dialect,”
Zeitschrift für Althebraistik 17–20: 3–10.
 2008 “Linguistic Markers in the Book of Ruth,” *Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 18: 25–42.
- Bar-Asher, M.
 2006 “Mishnaic Hebrew: an Introductory Survey,” in *The Literature of the Sages, Second Part*, edited by S. Safra, Z. Safrai, J. Schwartz, P. J. Tomson. Amsterdam: Royal Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Blau, J.
 2006 “Topics in Hebrew Grammar,” *Lšonénu* 68:183–200.

- Bauer, H. and Leander, P.
 1927 *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen*. Halle: Max Niemeyer.
 1929 *Kurzgefasste Biblisch-Aramäische Grammatik mit Texten und Glossar*. Halle: Max Niemeyer.
- Bergsträsser, G.
 1983 *Introduction to the Semitic Languages: Text Specimens and Grammatical Sketches*. Translated by P. T. Daniels. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns.
- Beyer, K.
 1984 *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Blake, F. R.
 1951 "Hebrew Influence on Biblical Aramaic," in *A Resurvey of Hebrew Tenses, with an Appendix: Hebrew Influence on Biblical Aramaic*, pp. 81–96. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute.
- Brockelmann, C.
 1908 *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*. Vol. I. Berlin: Reuther & Reichard.
- Butts, A. M.
 2010 "The Etymology and Derivation of the Syriac Adverbial Ending **-ā'ūt*," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 69: 79–86.
- Coetzee, A.
 1999 "Hebrew and Aramaic Segholation and the Generality and Ordering of Phonological Rules," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 44: 215–225.
- Duval, R.
 1881 *Traité de grammaire syriaque*. Paris: F. Vieweg.
- Edzard, L.
 2001 "Problems with Post-Vocalic Spirantization in Syriac: Cyclic Rule Ordering vs 'Early Phonemization with Paradigmatic Levelling'," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 46: 77–95.
- Finkelstein, J. J.
 1953 "Cuneiform Texts from Tell Billa," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 7: 111–176.
- Fitzmyer J. A.
 1974 "Some notes on Aramaic Epistolography," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 93: 201–225.
 1995 *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico.
- Folmer, M. L.
 1995 *The Aramaic Language in Achaemenid Period: A Study in Linguistic Variation*. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Department Oosterse Studies.

- Garr, W. R.
1985 *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000-586 B.C.E.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Gensler, O. D.
2000 "Why Semitic Adverbializers (Akkadian *-iš*, Syriac *-ʾāīt*) Should Not Be Derived from Existential **it*", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 45: 233-265.
- Gibson, J. C. L.
1975 *Textbook of Syrian Semitic inscriptions*. Vol. 2. *Aramaic Inscriptions, including Inscriptions in the dialect of Zenjirli*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Greenfield, J. C. and Porten, B.
1968 "The Aramaic Papyri from Hermopolis," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 80: 216-231. [Reprinted in Greenfield 2001, 40-55.]
- Greenfield, J. C.
1969 "The 'Periphrastic Imperative' in Hebrew and Aramaic," *Israel Exploration Journal* 19: 199-210. [Reprinted in Greenfield 2001, pp. 56-67.]
1978 "Some Reflections on the Vocabulary of Aramaic in Relationship to other Semitic Languages", in *Atti del Secondo Congresso, Internazionale di Linguistica Camito-Semita, Firenze, 16-19 Aprile 1974* (Quanderni di Semitistica 5), edited by P. Fronzaroli, pp. 151-156. Florence. [Reprinted in Greenfield 2001, pp. 154-159]
2001 *ʿAl Kanfei Yonah: Collected Studies of Jonas C. Greenfield on Semitic Philology*, edited by P. M. Shalom, M. E. Stone and A. Pinnick. Leiden: Brill; Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press.
- Hawley, C. A.
1922 *A Critical Examination of the Peshitta Version of the Book of Ezra*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Heine, B. and Kuteva, T.
2002 *World Lexicon of Grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huehnergard, J.
2002 *Introduction to Comparative Study of the Semitic Languages, Course Outline*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University.
- Hug, V.
1993 *Altaramaische Grammatik der Texte des 7. und 6. Jh.s v. Chr.* Heidelberg: Orientverlag.
- Joose, N. P.
2004 *A Syriac Encyclopaedia of Aristotelian Philosophy: Barhebraeus (13th c.), Butyrum Sapientiae, Books of Ethics, Economy and Politics*. Leiden: Brill.

- Kaufman, S. A.
 1974 *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic* (Assyriological Studies 19). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 1984 "On Vowel Reduction in Aramaic," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104: 87–95.
- Kutscher, E. Y.
 1954 "New Aramaic Texts," review article on *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri* by E. G. Kraeling. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 74: 233–248. [Reprinted in Kutscher 1977, pp. 37–52.]
 1965 "Contemporary Studies in North-Western Semitic," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 10: 21–51.
 1971 "The Hermopolis Papyri," *Israel Oriental Studies* 1: 103–119.
- Kutscher, K. Y., Ben-Hayyim, Z., Dotan, A. and Sarfatti, G.
 1977 *Hebrew and Aramaic Studies*. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press.
- Lemaire, A. and Yardeni, A.
 2006 "New Hebrew Ostraca from the Shephelah", in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives*, edited by S. Fassberg and A. Hurvitz, pp. 197–245. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Levias, C.
 1930 *Diqduq Aramit Bavlit / A Grammar of Babylonian Aramaic*. New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation. [In Hebrew]
- Macuch, R.
 1965 *Handbook of Classical and Modern Mandaic*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Malone, J. L.
 1971 "Wave Theory, Rule Ordering, and Hebrew-Aramaic Segolation," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 91: 44–66.
- Mayer, W. R.
 1995 "Zum Terminativ-Adverbialis im Akkadischen: Die Modaladverbien auf *-*š*," *Orientalia* 64: 161–186.
- Morgenstern, M.
 2002 *Jewish Babylonian Aramaic in Geonic Responsa, Studies in Phonology, Verb Morphology, Pronouns and Style*. Unpublished PhD diss. Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
- Moss, C.
 1933 "The Peshitta Version of Ezra," *Le Muséon* 46: 55–110.
- Muraoka, T.
 1976 "Segolate Nouns in Biblical and Other Aramaic Dialects," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 96: 226–235.

- Muraoka, T. and Porten, B.
1998 *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic*. Leiden: Brill.
- Nöldeke, T.
2001 *Compendious Syriac Grammar*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns.
- Pardee, D.
1978 "An Overview of Ancient Hebrew Epistolography," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97: 321–346.
- Payne Smith, R., Payne Smith, J. P., Margoliouth, D. S., Bernstein, G. H. and Quatremère, E.
1879-1901 *Thesaurus Syriacus*. Oxford: E Typographeo Clarendoniano.
- Porten, B. and Yardeni, A.
1986-1999 *Osef te'udot Aramiyot mi-Misrayim ha-'atiqah / Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt*. Jerusalem: Hebrew University; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns. [In Hebrew]
- Porten, B. et al.
1996 *The Elephantine Papyri in English: Three Millennia of cross-Cultural Continuity and Change*. Leiden: Brill.
- Rainey, A. F.
1996 *Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets: A Linguistic Analysis of the Mixed Dialect Used by Scribes from Canaan* (Handbuch der Orientalistik 21). Leiden: Brill.
- Rosenthal, F.
1995 *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Porta Linguarum Orientalium 5), 6th, revised edition. Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Sokoloff, M.
1990 *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period*. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press.
2002 *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods*. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press.
2009 *Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin: Correction, Expansion, and update of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns.
- Speiser, E. A.
1935 "The Etymology of Meschino and Its Cognates," *Language* 11: 20–22.
1952 "The 'Elative' in West-Semitic and Akkadian," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 6: 81–92.
- Spitaler, A.
1938 *Grammatik des neuaramäischen Dialekts von Ma'lūla (Antilibanon)* (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 23, 1). Leipzig: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft.

1968 "Zum Problem der Segolisierung im Aramäischen", in *Studia Orientalia in Memoriam Caroli Brockelmann* (Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Gesellschafts- und sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe 17: 2/3), edited by M. Fleischhammer, pp. 193–199. Halle.

Tal, A.

2000 *A Dictionary of Samaritan Aramaic*. Leiden: Brill.

Tropper, J.

1999 "Zur Etymologie von akkadisch *šukênu* / *šuhehunu*," *Die Welt des Orients* 30: 91–94

Welles, C. B., Fink, R. O., Gilliam, J. F. and Henning, W. B.

1959 *The Parchments and papyri* (The Excavations at Dura-Europos, 5,1). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wesselius, J.-W.

1980 "Reste einer Kasusflektion in einigen früharamäischen Dialekten," *Annali dell'Istituto universitario orientale di Napoli* 40: 265–268.