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Joshua Blau, *An Adverbial Construction in Hebrew and Arabic: Sentence Adverbials in Frontal Position Separated from the Rest of the Sentence* (Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, VI 1). Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1977.

By RICHARD C. STEINER (Yeshiva University, New York)

This book deals with sentence adverbials in initial position which are joined to (or, in B's interpretation, separated from) the rest of the sentence by a conjunction and/or presentative. Among the Hebrew adverbial + conjunction/presentative phrases discussed are: Biblical *gam + ki/hinne*, *atta + ki/hinne*, *ax + ki/hinne*; Mishnaic *uvilvad + še*, *pa'amim + še*, *mikkan še*; Medieval *kimcaṭ + še/ʔašer/wə*, *ʔulay + še*, *lafi daʔaθ X + še*; Modern Literary *bentayim + wə*, *pitʔom + wə*, *kaʔaduaʕ + še*, *ax + še*; Modern Colloquial *betax + še*, *bircinut + še*, *madua + še*. Among the Arabic phrases dealt with are: Classical, post-Classical/Middle Standard *li-ṣālika + mā*, *laʔyan + mā*, *laʕalla + mā/ʔan*, *haqqan ʔanna*; Middle Substandard *ʔiṣān + fa*, *liṣālika + fa*, *bi-ḥaqqin + fa/ʔan(na)*, *bi-l-jumlati + fa(-ʔinna)/ʔan(na)*; Modern Standard *ḥt l-wāqiʕi + ʔanna/fa-ʔinna*, *bi-kalimatīn ʔuxrā + fa*, *ḥt l-ḥaqqiqati ʔanna*; Modern Colloquial *tūl il-layl + w*, *kull yūm + w*.

Even this small sample suffices to show the remarkable scope of this book. It traces the development of a syntactic construction through every period of the history of two languages (Hebrew and Arabic), adducing examples from well over a hundred ancient, medieval, and modern primary sources. The examples are accompanied by very learned philological notes in which the views of earlier scholars are discussed and criticized. The level of erudition is quite astonishing. I personally would be happy if I were capable of dealing with even ONE language in this fashion. The sad truth, however, is that I am not, and I shall, therefore, confine my remarks to the one language (Hebrew) and the one period (Biblical) in which I feel sufficiently at home to offer suggestions to one of the leading Semitists of our day.

My first suggestion is that, in a number of instances, the conjunction and/or presentative may be governed not, as B assumes, by the sentence adverbial which precedes it, but rather by a verb which does not appear on the surface. Thus, the expression *baḥalomi wəhinne* 'in my dream and behold' (Gen 40:9,16), dealt with on pp. 21-2, might be analyzed as having the same deep structure as *waʔere baḥalomi wəhinne* 'and I saw in my dream and behold', an expression which actually occurs in the following chapter (Gen 41:22). The advantage of this solution is that adverbials do not generally govern *wəhinne* in B1, as B. himself notes (p. 21), whereas the verb *ʔy* 'see' always takes either *wəhinne* or *ki* 'that' as a complementizer.

Similarly in Est 5:6

*ma ššəʔelaθex, wəyinnathen lax*  
*uma bbaqqasathex ʕaš ḥaši hammalxuθ, wəθeʕaš*

'What is your petition, . . . and it shall be granted to you.

And what is your request costing up to half the kingdom, — and it shall be done.'

the *wə* of *wəθeʕaš* may be governed by a deep structure imperative like *haggiḏi* (cf. Gen 29:15 *haggiḏa li ma mmaskurtexa* 'Tell me what your wages are' rather than by the adverbial *ʕaš ḥaši hammalxuθ*, as B. holds (p. 24). This suggestion is based on two observations:

- a) There is no adverbial in Est 5:6 which could explain the *wə* of *wəyinnathen* (cf. also the *wə* of *wəʔeʕeḏe* in Deut 12:30 *ʔexa yaʕavḏu haggoyim haʔelle ʔeθ ʔelohehem*

*wi<sup>2</sup>e<sup>c</sup>eše ken gam <sup>2</sup>ani* 'How do these nations worship their gods and I will also do so').

- b) The sequence *wə* + jussive (like *wə* + cohortative and *wə* + imperative) is almost always governed by a preceding imperative, jussive, or cohortative in BH. An example of imperative + *wə* + cohortative whose theme closely parallels that of Est 5:6 is Ps 2:8 *šə<sup>2</sup>al mimmenni wə<sup>2</sup>ettəna ...* 'Ask of me and I will give/make ...'

On the other hand, I agree with B's tacit assumption (p. 23) that no deep-structure imperative has been deleted in Ju 16:2

*‘aš <sup>2</sup>or habboqer waharənuhu*

pace the exegetes (e.g. Septuagint, Isaiah of Trani, Altschuler, and S.R. Driver in BDB and *Tenses*) who have interpreted this sentence to mean 'Let us / We will wait until morning and kill him.' All of these exegetes assumed, no doubt, that BH *‘aš* always means 'until' and hence can modify only atelic verbs. In actual fact, BH *‘aš* can also modify telic (also called "accomplishment", "achievement", "wholistic", or "nonsubinterval") verbs, in which case it means 'by (the time of)' (cf. Rashi on Nu 10:21, II K 16:11, Ez 33:22), and that is clearly the meaning of *‘aš* in our verse, as Yechezkel Kaufmann points out in his commentary. B. renders *‘aš* here as 'in' rather than 'by', but since Israeli Hebrew *‘ad* (like Yiddish *bis*) has the same ambiguity as its BH counterpart, it is likely that B's understanding of the sentence is the same as mine.

Another suggestion which I would like to offer concerns B's assertion (p. 22) that "the use of *waw coniunctivum/consecutivum* separating a sentence adverbial from the rest of the sentence is comparatively frequent, especially after temporal adverbs ...." It is clear from the qualifier "comparatively" and from the examples which follow that B. is dealing here only with cases in which the sentence adverbial is not preceded by *wayhi/wəhaya* 'and it was/will be'. The extremely (not comparatively) frequent use of these verbs with temporal adverbials followed by *wə* is dealt with in a different section (pp. 7-8), apparently because B. assumes that they have a different structure.

This assumption is also revealed by B's translations on pp. 7-8. For example, Gen 8:6

*wayhi miqqeš <sup>2</sup>arba<sup>c</sup>im yom wayyištaḥ noaḥ <sup>2</sup>eθ ḥallon hatteva ...*

is rendered 'And it came to pass at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark' (the adverbial modifies *wayhi*) rather than 'And it came to pass that, at the end of forty days, Noah opened the window of the ark' (the adverbial modifies *wayyištaḥ noaḥ* etc.). The former rendering has the weight of tradition behind it, but I believe that the latter rendering is shown to be correct by the many instances in which an unmodified *wayhi/wəhaya* takes a clause as its subject.

This structure is seen most clearly when *wayhi/wəhaya* is followed by either a non-temporal subordinate clause, e.g. Gen 41:13

*wayhi ka<sup>2</sup>ašer paḥar lanu ken haya*  
'And it came to pass that as he interpreted to us, so it was.'

(also Nu 15:24, Dt 21:14, Ju 4:20, and many others), or a verbal clause, e.g. Gen 4:14

*wəhaya kol moš <sup>2</sup>i yaharəni*  
'And it shall come to pass that anyone who finds me will kill me.'

(also Lx 18:22, 33:7, Jos 7:15, I K 17:4, II K 8:21, 20:4, Is 22:7), or a nominal clause with a pronominal subject, e.g. Gen 42:35

*wayhi hem mōriqim šaqqehem ...*

'And it came to pass that they were emptying their sacks ...'

(also II Sam 13:30, I K 12:20, II K 2:11, 8:5, 13:21, 19:37, Jer 37:13). There are even cases where the sentence following *wayhi/wšhaya* has a pronoun for a subject and *hyy* for a verb, e.g.

*wšhaya hu yihye lōxa lōfe* (Ex 4:16)

'And it shall come to pass that he will be as a mouth to you'

*wšhaya hu ušmuraθo yihye qqōšēš* (Lev 27:10,33)

'And it shall come to pass that it and its substitute will be holy'

In all of these cases, it is clear that we must translate 'And it came/shall come to pass that S', and I see no reason why this rendering should change simply because S happens to begin with a temporal adverbial.

My third suggestion concerns B's attempt (p. 27) to determine which constituent of *halo* (i.e. *ha* or *lo*) governs *ki* in the phrase *halo ki* (I Sam 10:1). I suggest that we must distinguish between *halo* used in its literal sense, 'nonne?', and the idiomatic, i.e. semantically unanalyzable, *halo* in this verse.

Used literally, *halo* introduces a question, particularly when it is feared that the answer will be negative, e.g.

*halo ʔašalta lli bōnaxa* (Gen 27:36)

'Didn't you set aside a blessing for me?'

*halo θaʔaše* (II K 5:13)

'Won't you do it?'

Used idiomatically (and presumably with a different inflection), *halo* introduces an assertion. This usage is particularly clear (the Jewish custom of answering a question with a question notwithstanding) when the assertion introduced by *halo* happens to be the answer to a question, e.g.

*halo ze Dawið ʔeveð šaʔul mēlex Yišrael* (I Sam 29:3)

'Why that is David, the servant of Saul, King of Israel'

*halo zoθ Baθ-ševaʔ baθ ʔeliʔam ʔešeθ ʔUriyya haḥitti*

'Why that is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, wife of Uriah the Hittite'

The *halo* which introduces assertions is not exactly equivalent to *hinne/hen*, since the former, unlike the latter (but like Swedish *ju*) is used only with propositions whose content the speaker assumes the addressee is already aware of; but, aside from this difference, the two particles are remarkably alike. Both serve as a rule to introduce premises, i.e. assertions which serve as the basis for a logical conclusion, a command, or a question. Accordingly, I suggest that the semantic similarity between *halo* and *hinne* be given at least as much weight as the formal similarity between *halo* and *ha* in determining the reason for the use of *ki* after *halo*.

I turn now to the theoretical aspects of the book. Having uncovered a striking similarity between Hebrew and Arabic (and, with less documentation, Ugaritic, Amarna Canaanite, and Aramaic) in their treatment of sentence adverbials in initial position, B. sets himself the formidable task of trying to explain this treatment. The question he poses is indeed a puzzling one: Why do these languages insert a conjunction and/or presentative between the

sentence adverbial and the rest of the sentence?

B's answer is that the conjunction and/or presentative serves to remove the contrast between grammatical and "psychological" structure which characterizes sentences which have sentence adverbials in initial position. For example

"... in the Hebrew sentence modelled on Gen. xli:17, \**ba-hālōmī ʾānī ʿōmēd ʿal šəphat ha-yōʾn* 'in my dream, I was standing on the bank of the river', ʿōmēd is the grammatical predicate, ʾānī the grammatical subject, *ba-hālōmī* adverbial. Psychologically, however, *ba-hālōmī* 'in my dream' is the subject, as it is the term known from the context, Pharaoh's dream being the theme of the whole chapter; accordingly, the rest of the sentence, exhibiting novelty, serves as the psychological predicate. In order to remove the contrast between the psychological and grammatical structure, the psychological subject, the adverbial, is separated by a presentative (or a conjunction) from the rest of the sentence, the psychological predicate. This occurs in Gen. xli:17, *ba-hālōmī hinənī ʿōmēd ʿal šəphat ha-yōʾn* 'in my dream, behold, I was standing on the bank of the river', where the adverbial is separated from the rest of the sentence by *hinənī*." (p. 6)

This answer is not entirely clear. In what sense is the contrast removed? Has the addition of a conjunction somehow changed the grammatical or psychological function of *baḥlōmī*? No such change is apparent. Then does "removal of contrast" have some well-known technical meaning? To answer this question, I went back to Hermann Paul's *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*, a book which B. cites several times in discussing this concept.

Paul illustrates the conflict between grammatical structure and psychological structure using the German equivalent of 'Karl will travel to Berlin tomorrow'. The psychological predicate of this sentence, i.e. the part which the addressee is assumed to be ignorant of, will, of course, vary depending on the situational or linguistic context; the grammatical predicate will not. It is clear, therefore, that in some contexts there will be a contrast between the two, e.g. following questions like:

*Where will Karl travel tomorrow?*  
*Who will travel to Berlin tomorrow?*  
*When will Karl travel to Berlin?*

Paul goes on to point out (p. 285) that many languages have constructions (today we would speak of "transformations") which serve to eliminate this contrast, e.g. clefting and pseudo-clefting:

*It is to Berlin that Karl will travel tomorrow.*  
*The one who will travel to Berlin tomorrow is Karl.*

These transformations eliminate the contrast by turning the psychological predicate into the grammatical predicate. Is this what B. means by "removal of contrast"? If so, how does the mere insertion of a conjunction between the psychological subject and its predicate bring this about? B. doesn't tell us.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In commenting on a pre-print of this review, B. writes that the main function of *wshinne*, etc. ... is to serve as a marker of a psychological structure which is out of the ordinary." It is not clear to me whether this statement is meant as an interpretation of the statement quoted above (viz. "... to remove the contrast between the

There is another aspect of B's theory which I find difficult to understand. It is the assumption, borrowed from Paul (p. 287), that sentence adverbials usually play the role of psychological subjects. B. writes (p. 11):

"Such a function is natural for conjunctive adverbials, which refer to something already known from the context. This is found, for example, in Biblical Hebrew, Gen. xxxii:21, *gam hinnē 'abhdākhā ya'āqōbh 'ahārēnū* 'moreover [i.e., in addition to what was mentioned before—the psychological subject], behold, your servant Jacob is behind us [the psychological predicate]'...."

No-one will deny that conjunctive adverbials hark back to the preceding sentence in the sense that their truth conditions must be stated partly in terms of the truth conditions of that sentence; but that is not the same as saying that they are known from the context. Paraphrases like 'moreover' = 'in addition to what was mentioned before' don't really help, because only PART of each paraphrase will turn out to be known from the context. Moreover, such paraphrases usually take the form of prepositional phrases, which do not, in general, conform to traditional notions of subjecthood; it makes no sense to ask what knowledge the speaker intended to impart about 'in addition to what was mentioned before'.

This aspect of B's theory is more intelligible when applied to adverbials which are more noun-like, e.g., temporal adverbials, but even there it is difficult to accept. It seems to me that sentence-initial temporal adverbials are used in BH to introduce a NEW temporal frame of reference—not to refer to an old one.

Finally, it should be noted that contrast between grammatical and psychological structure is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the insertion of a conjunction. That it is not necessary is shown by the presence of *w* in examples like

*hinne ha'am hayyose mimmiṣrayim wayxas 'eθ 'en ha'areṣ* (Nu 22:11)  
'Lo, the people which has come out of Egypt (and) has covered the earth from view'

*wahaḥayil hayyose 'el hamma'araxa wəhere'u bammilḥama* (I Sam 17:20)  
'And the army going out to the lines (and) shouted in battle'

*'mry mlk yḏr'el wy'nw 't m'b ymn rbn* (Mesha 4-5)  
'Omri, king of Israel, (and) oppressed Moab many days'

in which the portion of the sentence preceding *w* is both the grammatical and psychological subject, and the portion following *w* is the grammatical and psychological predicate. That it is not sufficient is shown by the regular absence of *w* in examples like

*{'ašer yḏabber hannavi ...} bəzaʕon dibbəro hannavi* (Deut 18:22)  
'(If the prophet speaks ...) the prophet has spoken it maliciously'

*{wəhamminḥay kəminḥay Yehu ben Nīmšī} ki bəšigga'on yinḥay* (II K 9:20)  
'(And the driving is like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi) because he drives crazily'

and examples like

psychological and grammatical structure") or as an alternative to it. In any case, it seems that the interpretation which I have given to B.'s statement is not the one which he intended.

{*ma ttəvaqqeš?*} ... ʔeθ ʔahay ʔanoxi məvaqqeš (Gen 37:(16-)17)  
'(What are you looking for?) ... I am looking for my brothers'

{*ma raʔu bəveθexa?*} ... ʔeθ kol ʔašer bəveθi raʔu (II K 20:15)  
'(What did they see in your house?) ... They saw everything in my house'

{*ma ʔatta koʔe, Yirmiyahu?*} ... maqqel šaqeš ʔani koʔe (Jer 1:11)  
'(What do you see, Jeremiah?) ... I see an almond rod'

and examples like

{*Yəhuša.*} ʔatta, yošuxa ʔaḥexa (Gen 49:8)  
'(Judah!) You, your brothers shall praise you'

{... *Mixayhu.*} wəhaʔiš mixa, lo beθ ʔelohim (Ju 17:(4-)5)  
'(... Micah.) And the man Micah, he had a temple'

{*ʔAšonay* ...} ʔAšonay, baššamayim kisʔo (Ps 11:4)  
'(the Lord ...) The Lord, His throne is in the heavens'

Though there are differences between these examples (the first set has manner adverbials in initial position serving as psychological predicate; the second set has direct objects in initial position serving as psychological predicate; the third set has (pro)nouns in initial position serving as psychological SUBJECT), they all have a psychological structure (defined in terms of the preceding context, given in parentheses) which differs from their grammatical structure. And yet *w* is not present in these examples or in the other examples of these types which I have seen.

B's treatment of "adverbials which express judgment on the rest of the sentence" as LOGICAL (rather than PSYCHOLOGICAL) predicates (pp. 15-8) is much easier to understand, particularly if read in conjunction with Irena Bellert's excellent article (in *Linguistic Inquiry*, 8 (1977), 337-51) on the semantics of sentence adverbs in English. Nevertheless, in view of the ambiguity of the term "logical predicate", a definition should have been provided, rather than a mere list of references (p. 5, n. 11). B. probably has in mind something similar to the generative semanticists' logical-structure predicate, but I, for one, did not realize this at first. So I checked one of the references on B's list (Jespersen's *Philosophy of Grammar*), only to be confronted by a bewildering array of definitions and a suggestion that the term be scrapped!

While on the subject of terminology, I might note that B's term "adverbials which express judgment on the rest of the sentence" is a bit misleading. The examples adduced by B. (especially p. 17) show that this term covers not only evaluative and modal adverbials, but also frequency adverbials.

One final point. B. believes that the function of the conjunctions (Hebrew *še*, Arabic *ʔan*, *mā*, Aramaic *də*, German *dass*) which follow evaluative, modal, and frequency adverbials is to separate these adverbials from the rest of the sentence (p. 15). The traditional view, if I am not mistaken, is that these conjunctions are complementizers, whose function is to indicate that the following clause (or its truth, or the fact, event, or state of affairs which it denotes) is an argument of the adverbial. I, for one, find the traditional view very attractive, and I would like to know B's reasons for rejecting it.