

THE SONG OF DEBORAH:  
POETRY IN DIALECT

CHAPTER THREE

SAMGAR BEN-ANAT:  
AN ISRAELITE OVERSEER

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## CHAPTER THREE

### SHAMGAR BEN-ANAT:

#### AN ISRAELITE OVERSEER

Shamgar has been identified as an ‘Apiru, an Assyrian, a Canaanite, a Hanean, a Hittite, a Hurrian, a Phoenician, and a Syrian.<sup>38</sup> In all the studies I surveyed, only Kaufmann (1962: 112–113) and Luria (1984: 283–324, 1985: 105) have identified him as an Israelite. Consequently, it remains problematic for many commentators why a non-Israelite, even though he delivered Israel from oppression, was included among the minor judges of Israel. Though Boling (1975: 90) noted, “His story, brief as it is, is an example of traditionary erosion . . . ,” the Shamgar tradition actually suffered from deliberate early editorial activity. The resolution of the problems associated with Shamgar is to be found in recognizing first that he was indeed an Israelite, not an alien. The brief notices about him in 3:31 and 5:6–7,<sup>39</sup> when united and transposed to the beginning of the Song of Deborah, provide the necessary introduction for this poem of a Yahweh war.

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<sup>38</sup> ‘*Apiru*/*Habiru*: Shupak (1989: 517–525).

*Assyrian*: Sayce (1902: 474) who related the name to Samgarnebo which occurs in Jer 39:3; Tallqvist (1914: 192), cited by Kraft (1962b: 307); and Burney (1918: 76).

*Canaanite* or *Phoenician*: Albright (1921: 56; 1953: 111, but in 1968b: 43, note 98, he concurred with Noth that the name is Hurrian); Alt (1944: 72–75); van Selms (1964: 303–304); and Cundall (1968: 79).

*Hanean*: Fensham (1961: 197–198). Compare Craigie (1972b: 239–240) and Boling (1975: 89) who treated the Hanean evidence as analogous material.

*Hittite*: Moore (1898: 159–160; 1900b: 105).

*Hurrian*: Noth (1928: 122–123); Maisler (1934: 192–194); Feiler (1939: 221–222); Myers (1956: 711); Kraft (1962b: 306); Bright (1972: 172); Boling (1975: 89); Rendsburg (1982: 359); KB<sup>3</sup> (1969–1990) 1435.

*Syrian*: Garstang (1931: 284–288); and Danelius (1963: 191–193).

<sup>39</sup> van Selms (1964: 300–301) stated, “. . . the transposition by some Greek manuscripts of iii 31 to xvi 31 is not warranted,” and Boling (1975: 89) noted, “Certain LXX recensions have the Shamgar notice following the Samson conclusion in 16:31 . . . .” However, the narrative about *σεμεγαρ* (or *εμεγαρ*) υιος εναν in some LXX recensions of Ju 16:31 is not a *transposition* but a *duplication* of Ju 3:31, as Lindars (1995: 156) correctly noted. See the citations of MSS dgklnoptvy<sup>a</sup> in Brooke and McLean 1917: 797 (for Ju 3:31) and 862 (for Ju 16:31).

## I. Shamgar's identity

The reasons for uncertainty about Shamgar's identity are

- (a) the unusual nature of his name,
- (b) the reading of יַעֲלַי in Ju 5:6 as the name Yael, making Shamgar a contemporary of the heroine who assassinated Sisera,
- (c) an apparent contradiction between Ju 3:31 and Ju 5:6 as to whether Shamgar was a friend or foe of Israel.

Although it is explicitly stated in 3:31 that he delivered (שָׁמַר) Israel, Ju 5:6 suggests that in his time Israel experienced severe oppression. Some have argued that Shamgar was even responsible for the oppression of the Israelites.<sup>40</sup> Albright (1921: 60) had suggested,

After Shamgar's successful stand, presumably in connection with a Canaanite coalition, stiffened by the aid of Egyptian mercenaries, against the Philistines, he maintained his ascendancy over Galilee, like a medieval robber-knight, by keeping a small army of retainers, supported by the robbery of caravans and by exactions levied from the villages.<sup>41</sup>

Albright's proposal has been given new life by Lindars (1995: 158 and 236) who generously speculated,

It is thus conceivable that Shamgar was a foreign mercenary leader, who subjected northern or north-central Israel to much harassment in the confused period before the battle of the Kishon. That he also achieved a legendary success against the Philistines is not impossible, but it is hard to believe that *he also delivered Israel* [Lindars's italics] . . . . This [lack of adequate control to prevent constant risk from brigands] suggests that the mysterious Shamgar is not an oppressive ruler, but a legendary bandit, who took advantage of the weakness of the Canaanite city-states to harass the Israelite settlers.

However, the apparent contradiction in the tradition, making him both a foe and a friend of Israel, is resolved by recognizing the functional interchange of כּ “from” and מִן “from” in two similar phrases: בִּימֵי שָׁמַר בֶּן עֲנַת “*from* (after) the days of

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<sup>40</sup> Moore 1898: 159–160; 1900a: 60; and Alt 1944: 75 note 2.

<sup>41</sup> Note Alt's (1966: 181 note 21) acceptance of Albright's views.

Shamgar ben-Anath” and *בִּימֵי יַעֲלִי* “*from* (after) the days of Yael” in 5:6.<sup>42</sup> The oppression occurred “*from* (after) the days of Shamgar” (i.e., after his demise), not in his lifetime. Many have noted that the name Yael in Ju 5:6 is problematic since the oppression of Israel ceased in her days. Moreover, if *בִּימֵי שַׁמְגָר* suggests that Shamgar was responsible for the difficulties in Israel as enumerated in 5:6–7a, the parallel *בִּימֵי יַעֲלִי* would also necessitate Yael’s equal responsibility. But this is impossible since the oppression of Sisera was terminated during her time. Reading *בִּימֵי יַעֲלִי* as “*from* the days of Yael” would equally contradict the context. Kittel suggested (in BH<sup>3</sup>) that the four words *בִּן עֲנַת בִּימֵי יַעֲלִי* were an addition, and others have proposed deleting *בִּימֵי יַעֲלִי* or emending it to read *בִּימֵי יַבִּין*, “in the days of Jabin.”<sup>43</sup> J. Gray (1988: 427), following Weiser (1959: 76), proposed the paraphrase, “from the days of Shamgar to that of Jael.”

A more likely solution comes simply by revocalizing the MT which has two prepositional phrases composed of nouns in construct with proper names. The second phrase is better understood as a construct followed by a *yqtl* preterit, either a *hiph<sup>c</sup>il* or a *hoph<sup>c</sup>al* (*יַעֲלִי* or *יַעֲלִי*), of the stem *עוּל* “to attack, to deal out violence.” Pope (1965: 192) recognized this word in Job 30:13, *יַעֲלִי* “they attack.” It is a cognate of Ugaritic *ġlt* “violence” and Arabic *عول* “to do away with, to injure,” and, in form [4], “to slay covertly.”<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> The interchange of these prepositions is attested about a hundred times in Biblical Hebrew (see McDaniel 1968b: 199–200; Blommerde 1969: 19; Dahood 1970: 391; Soggin 1981c: 138). Compare the study of Zevit 1975: 103–112. It must be recognized that *ב* “from” and *בן* “in” are homographs, but were not necessarily homophones. Given the South Arabic use of *bn* and *mn* and the compound preposition *bn-mn* (Jamme 1962: 212–213, text 735, line 12), one can posit an original *בן* “from,” with the assimilation of the *ן*. See Rendsburg 1989: 110 for *בן* “in” occurring twice in Jonah 4:10.

<sup>43</sup> Albright 1968b: 43, note 99. For older proposals to emend *בִּימֵי יַעֲלִי* to *בִּימֵי מִימֵי עֲלִי* or *בִּימֵי אִיִּר*, see Cooke, 1892: 32, and Burney 1918: 114. G. A. Smith (1912: 86) treated it as a gloss but was uncertain about *בִּן עֲנַת*.

<sup>44</sup> See G. R. Driver 1956: 142; Lane 1872: 2311a, *عول* “destruction, death” or “anything that takes a man unexpectedly and destroys him”; 2311b, *غيلة* “the slaying covertly, or on an occasion of inadvertence”; 2310a, *غاليه عول* “a

Thus, **בִּימֵי יַעֲלֹ** means “from the days he attacked/used to attack” or “from the day he was assassinated.” The inference is clear that with the death of Shamgar conditions deteriorated for the Israelites. Josephus noted that Shamgar died (**κατέστρεψε τὸν βίον**) sometime during the first year of his governorship, which may hint at an assassination (*Antiquities* 5: 4: 3; Naber 1888: 1: 304).

## II. Shamgar ben-Anat’s name

Fensham’s statement (1961: 197), “His name and also the name of his ‘father’ testifies [sic] against his ascendancy from Israelite stock,” is characteristic of many who deny Shamgar an Israelite identity because **שַׁמְגָר** appears non-Semitic and **בֶּן עֲנָה** could be a Canaanite name. Most recently Lindars (1995: 157) bluntly stated, “Shamgar is not an Israelite name.” But his name may well be composed of three less commonly used Hebrew vocables, namely, **שִׁם** “to attack” (obscured by the MT pointing of **שׁ** for **שׁ**), **גֹּר** “to attack,” and **עֹן** “to help, to save.”

### A. **שַׁמְגָר**

The name **שַׁמְגָר** has been identified with the Hittite *Sangar(a)*, a name of a ninth-century king of Carchemish, suggesting that *šngr* is the correct reading of the name (which appears as **Σαναγαρος** in Josephus and *Sangar* in some codices of the Vulgate).<sup>45</sup> A. van Selms (1964: 300–301) identified **שַׁמְגָר** as a Canaanite name derived from a *shaph<sup>c</sup>el* of **בִּגְר** “to submit,” attested in the name **בֶּן בִּגְרֹאֵל** on a Hebrew seal. Danelius (1963: 191–193) interpreted Shamgar as a hybrid name composed of the Egyptian noun *šm<sup>3</sup>* “alien, der Landfremde” and the Hebrew **גֵּר** “alien.” Many have identified **שַׁמְגָר** with the Hurrian name *Ši-mi-qa-ri*

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[cause of] destruction destroyed him . . . or [destroyed him so that it was not known whither he had gone]”; 2318c, **لُعْتِيل** “he was deceived, and taken to a place and [there] slain”; 2319, **غَيْلَه قَتَلَه** “he beguiled him and slew him.” Note also Dozy 1927: 2: 231–232 who cited **غول** “nuire, causer du dommage” and **مغيلة** “méchanceté, malice” and **غائلة** “le moyen ou l’occasion de perdre quelqu’un, de le ruiner.”

<sup>45</sup> Moore 1898b: 159; Haupt 1914: 199–200, cited by Maisler 1934: 192; Burney 1918: 76.

found in the Nuzi texts, composed of the name of the Sun-god Šimiegi (= *Tmg*) and the (*a*)*ri* terminative frequently joined to Hurrian names.<sup>46</sup>

However, this last and most popular Hurrian identification also has its difficulties. Although the West Hurrian name *aršmg* occurred at Ugarit, it may not be the equivalent of the East Hurrian name *ši-mi-qa-ri* since the (*a*)*ri* termination and the *ar* prefix may not be the same element. Speiser (1930: 139–40; 1941: 204) noted that the nominal formative (*a*)*ri* in Hurrian names “indicated primarily that the person in question hails from a given place,” and that “the *r*- termination is particularly well-represented in the eastern group of the languages and dialects under discussion, where it is also found in place names.” Thus, it must be noted that, whereas Maisler (1934: 192–194) in his initial identification of Shamgar as a Hurrian name cited occurrences of the divine name *Šimiegi* in the West (Boghazkoi, Ras Shamra, and El Amarna), he cited no examples of the divine name plus the *r*- termination in the West. His examples of *ši-mi-qa-ri* are all from the Nuzi (East Hurrian) texts.

Ras Shamra examples of Hurrian names indicate a tendency in Syria-Palestine for the West Hurrian dialect. The clearest evidence is in the names compounded with the noun *iwri* “lord, king” as the initial element. This is consistently spelled *iwri*, indicating the West Hurrian dialect. In the East Hurrian (Nuzi) dialect, the noun appeared with the metathesis of *w* and *r* as *irwi*.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, to argue that Shamgar is the East Hurrian name

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<sup>46</sup> Feiler (1939: 221) identified it as a composite of the divine name *Simiq* plus the verb *ar* “to give.” On the Hurrian presence in Canaan, see note 100.

<sup>47</sup> The following statement of Speiser (1941: 68) is helpful:

. . . the parade example of the metathesis is *ewri* “lord,” which common-Hurrian form is opposed only by Nuzi *erwi*. Here the choice of this or that phonologic alternant has become characteristic of a dialectal division which separates Eastern Hurrian from other groups which are predominantly western.

For a listing of the occurrences of the name *Šimiq(a)ri*, see Chiera and Speiser 1927: 50, and Pfeiffer and Speiser 1936: 161. For the name *aršmg*, see Grondahl 1967: 366 and Soggin 1981c: 58 and references cited there. A full listing of the names with the *iwri* component and its variants is given by Grondahl 1967: 224–225. Note also Gordon 1965: pages 353–354, no. 116, and possibly page 365, no. 343. An East Hurrian name possibly appears in the

*Šimiqari*, elsewhere unattested in the West, appears to be an argument for the possible, not the probable.

The Masoretic pointing of the name as שמגר rather than שמיגר has obscured the Semitic derivation of the name. The reading of the MT may have been influenced by Gershom, the name given to sons of Moses (Ex 2:22), Levi (1 Chron 6:1), and Phinehas (Ezra 8:2), which appears to reverse the גר and שם elements of Shamgar. But the original name was probably שמיגר, with no etymological relationship to the name Gershom. The suggestion of Danelius, noted above, that Shamgar is a composite of the Egyptian *šm* “der Landfremde” and its Hebrew equivalent גר “alien,” is much more likely the correct derivation of the name Gershom where there is a more obvious Egyptian connection.

If Shamgar were originally *Šamgar*, the name is composed of participles of שים and גור (synonyms for “attack”) meaning “the charging assailant,” a fitting name for a military hero. The military nuance of the root שים has been recognized in 1 Sam 15:2, לו בדרך שם לר “they attacked them on their way” (NEB), 1 Kgs 20:12, שימו וישימו על העיר “Attack! And they attacked the city,”<sup>48</sup> and in Ezek 23:24, ישימו עליך סביב, “From all sides they

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Jebusite Araunah of 2 Sam 24:16. Although the MT Ketib reads הארנה (containing the West Hurrian *iwri*), the *Qere* retains הארנה (East Hurrian *irwi*). The ארנה of 24:18 and the ארנן of 1 Chron 21:15 appear to be corruptions of the *Qere*. See Mullo Weir 1967: 82. For the meaning of *iwri*/*irwi*, see Speiser 1930: 145, note 90. Compare the views of Brögelmann (1936: 727) who identified the name, according to the *Qere*, as a Hurrian name, but related it to the verb *ar* “to give” rather than with the *Ketib* and the noun *iwri*. Compare Feiler 1939: 222–225, Rosen 1955: 318–320, and Rendsburg 1982: 357–358.

<sup>48</sup> J. Gray 1970: 419, 423. Note also Eitan 1923: 49–50, where Eitan translated שים “to attack (in war)” in 1 Kgs 20:12, Ezek 23:24, and Job 23:6. The MT וישם “and he attacked them” in 2 Sam 12:31 can be added to the list. The participle שם “attacker” may also be attested in the name of Shemeber in Gen 14:2, where the MT שמאבר possibly stands for an original שם אביר, “mighty assailant,” an attractively ironic name for a petty king. The Samaritan reading of this name as שמאבר and the reading of 1QapGen 21:25 as שמיאבר would have essentially the same meaning (reading אבר as the causative *pi<sup>c</sup>el*) “the attacker destroys.” The suggestion of del Medico, cited favorably by Fitzmyer (1966: 145), that שמיאבר means “Mon nom est perdu,” would be more suited as a pejorative epithet than as a king’s name. The claim of Speiser (1966: 101) that the names of Shemeber’s allies, ברע and ברשע, were pejoratives needs to be

will arm against you” (JB) or “they shall array against you everywhere” (NAB).

The *qal* participle of גָּוַר stem II “to attack” is attested in Isa 54: 15, “should any attack you (הֲיִגְוֹר גְּוֹר יְגוֹר), it will not be my doing; the aggressor (גָּוַר), whoever he be, shall perish for his attempt” (NEB).<sup>49</sup> Powis Smith (1927: 934, 938) noted this verb in Ps 56:7 “they make attacks (יְגוֹרוּ), they lie in wait” and Ps 59:4 “mighty men are making attack on me (יְגוֹרוּ עָלַי עֲזִים).” It has also been recognized in Lam 2:22, reading מְגִירִי “my attackers” for מְגוֹרִי “my terrors” (McDaniel 1968b: 42–44; Hillers 1972: 41).

### B. ענת

Albright (1920: 55) and Noth (1928: 123) associated the name בֶּן עֲנַת with Beth-Anath in Naphtali (Josh 19:38), and Danelius (1963: 22) associated it with Del-Anath (LXX Josh 17:7). Others, like van Selms (1964: 302–303), Boling (1975: 89), and Lindars (1995: 157–158), identify it as a heroic epithet meaning “son of (the war goddess) Anath.” These interpretations falter because they treat Shamgar ben-Anat without regard to the poem’s other male military figure, Barak ben-Abinoam, who is similarly given a compound name. Since ben-Abinoam is clearly a patronym, it permits one to read בֶּן עֲנַת also as a patronym. Layton (1990: 218) noted, “Ben ‘Anat may be the patronym of Shamgar if we assume that the vocable *bēn* has been omitted,” on the assumption that עֲנַת was the name of the goddess and would require the original to have been בֶּן בִּתְעֲנַת. But, as will be demonstrated, שִׁמְגָר is the name and בֶּן עֲנַת the patronym. The two

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reconsidered. Given the frequent interchange of ב and פ, ברע is more likely the equivalent of פֶּרַע, cognate to Ugaritic *pr* “chief,” Egyptian *pr* “hero,” and Hebrew פֶּרַעַת “heroine” (Ju 5:2, discussed below). In light of the בר in Prov 31:2, ברשע “Barshūa” could be the masculine counterpart of בת שוע “Batshūa.”

<sup>49</sup> Note Whybray 1981: 189. The G-stem of *gr* in the Ugaritic Keret text (lines 110–111: *wgr . nn . ḥrm . srm pdrn*) was translated by Ginsberg (1946: 16, 38), following T. H. Gaster (1944–1945: 277), “do thou attack the villages, harass the towns.” J. Gray translated (1964: 46; 1988: 439), “he tarried, remained inactive at the town.” Note Arabic تجريره “course de gens de guerre en pays ennemi,” and جري “faire des incursions dans un pays” cited in Dozy (1927: 1: 190a, 191a) and discussed by Kopf (1976: 193–194).

patronyms **בן אבינעם** and **בן ענת** are examples of unifying elements structured into the poem, insensitivity to which has led many to assert that the poem lacks structural uniformity. But the unifying elements are present.

The bronze arrowhead inscription coming from the Lebanese Beqa<sup>c</sup> (published by Milik [1956: 3–6] and restored by Yeivin [1958: 585–588] to read: **חגן זכרב[על] / בן בנענ[ת]**, “the arrow of Zakir Ba[<sup>c</sup>al] / son of Ben<sup>c</sup>ana[th]”) led Aharoni (1975: 256) to state, “. . . ‘the son of Anath’ was an ordinary Canaanite name, and need not be taken to mean that Shamgar was the son of the goddess or a resident of the town of Beth-Anath.” One need not, therefore, concur with Shupak’s conclusion (1989: 523–424) that **בן ענת** was Shamgar’s military “cognomen,” and was indicative of “his association with a troop of [<sup>c</sup>*Apiru*] fighting men which was named after the Canaanite goddess of war.”

But **בנענת** was not only a Canaanite name, it was also an Israelite name. Dhorme (1910: 301) recognized that **בענה** (in 2 Sam 4:2, 5; Ezra 2:2; Neh 7:7; 10:28) was a variant spelling of **בן ענה**. Dhorme’s suggestion was accepted by Milik (1956: 5) who stated:

There are at least three examples of *bin* in the inscriptions, where *n* is assimilated to the following consonant: *bplsb<sup>c</sup>l* on the Tabor knife . . . *byhymk* and *bklby* in the Byblos inscriptions and some biblical names, among them our *b<sup>c</sup>nh* / *b<sup>c</sup>n<sup>2</sup>* . . . .

Thus, **בן ענת** and **בענה** are the same name, with the former retaining the unassimilated **ן** of **בן** as well as the original **ת** ending.

The vocable in these names, **בן ענה** or **בן ענת** and **בענה**, is **עון**, a cognate of Arabic **عون** [forms 3, 4, 6] “to help, to aid” and the prefixed nouns **معونه** and **معون** “the officer appointed for rectifying the affairs of the commonality, as though he were the aider of the wronged against the wronger,” and of South Arabic <sup>c</sup>*nt* “an auxiliary troop” (from <sup>c</sup>*wn*, “to help, to save, or to aid”).<sup>50</sup> The

<sup>50</sup> See Lane 1872: 2203bc, 2204b; and Jamme 1962: 433b (*h<sup>c</sup>n*), 445a (*<sup>c</sup>nt*). Evidence that the root is **עון** and not **ענת** or **עני** is found in the Ugaritic names *bn<sup>c</sup>n* (written also *bn.<sup>c</sup>n*) and *<sup>c</sup>n*, as well as in the feminine *bn<sup>c</sup>nt*, (*bn*)<sup>c</sup>*ntn*, and *<sup>c</sup>nt*. The Ugaritic *bn<sup>c</sup>nt* or *bn<sup>c</sup>n* refers to Anat or to her male counterpart An(a)/A-na, since, as Milik noted (1956: 5, note 25), “the onomastic category ‘*bn* + divine name or epithet (often in caritative form with -*ay*, -*an*, or -(*a*)*m*)’ seems to have been rather popular among the army of Ugarit.” On the god

*common noun* בעל “lord” in Isa 54: 5 (“for your ‘husband’ [בעליך] is your maker, יהוה צבאות is his name”) and the epithet בעליה “Yahweh is lord” in 1 Chron 12:5 offer parallels to this use of ענת. The vocables בעל or ענת—properly used as common nouns in names—would later be misunderstood as divine names.

The name ענת corresponds to the South Arabic *‘nt*, cited above. The noun occurs elsewhere in the name ענתתיה (1 Chr 8:24). This usage is distinguished by its reduplicated feminine ending (like דלתות, עזרתה, and קשתות) and the theophoric יה suffix. Despite Albright’s claim (1924: 85) that the יה ending is a scribal error resulting in the corruption of the place name Anathoth, the MT, just as it stands, makes excellent sense meaning “Yahweh is my helper,” much like the more common עזריה(ו) and עזראל. The ת ending occurs elsewhere as a type of abstract noun used in titles and designations of office for *males* and should not be confused with the ת feminine ending.<sup>51</sup>

Recognition of ענת as a common noun does not preclude agreement with either Craigie (1978: 374–381) or Taylor (1982: 99–108) that the Song of Deborah reflects the poet’s recasting of motifs from the Anat myths.<sup>52</sup> Likewise, the poet’s transferring

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An(a), see Albright 1924: 86–87. The Arabic *عنت* “to treat harshly, to cause one to perish” (Lane 1874: 2108b) would be of interest if the בן ענת were not a patronym. Otherwise, בן ענת could be a synonym of בן הכות (Deut 25:2) “one worthy of smiting” or בן מות (2 Sam 12:5) “one worthy of death.” See note 87.

<sup>51</sup> GKC 122<sup>r</sup> and S. R. Driver 1913: 466. See W. Wright 1896 (reprint 1962): 139 (sec. 233c) for Arabic examples in which intensiveness is indicated by the suffixed feminine *-atun*. See below the discussion on לעזרת in Ju 5:23b, pages 205–206.

<sup>52</sup> Craigie noted that the following features of the Anat tradition have been transferred to Yahweh or to Deborah: (1) Anat’s male assistant, Yatpan, appears as Barak; (2) Anat’s role as the “maiden” and her leading of warriors is shifted to Deborah; (3) the “Mistress of the Dominions” and the “Mistress of the Stars” motifs are ascribed to Yahweh. Taylor presents a strong case for the poet’s using the image of Athtart in detailing the person and actions of Yael and the image of Anat for portraying the character of Deborah. He noted, “Athtart was summoned to act as a head crusher in response to a ‘challenge of dominion’

Anat's power and activities to Deborah and Yahweh does not require the dismissal of the historical Shamgar tradition.

### C. Other biblical uses of עון

Several other occurrences of עון support the interpretation given here for the patronym ענת בן, including וענותך in Ps 18:36 (or וענתך in the parallel text of 2 Sam 22:36), מענה in Deut 33:27, and עין in Deut 33:28. (In Ps 60:7, עננו “save us” is obviously a synonym of הושיעה “save” and יחלצון “rescued.”)

#### 1. Ps 18:36

Buhl and Kittel (BH<sup>3</sup>) emended the problematic וענותך and וענתך of Ps 18:36 and 2 Sam 22:36 to עזרתך, “thy help.”<sup>53</sup> But emendation is unnecessary. The ענת of MT וענתך is equivalent to South Arabic *‘nt* and Arabic معون “help, assistance,” as noted above (page 51). When restored by a metathesis of the נ and ו, so as to read וענתך, the variant spelling of MT וענותך in Ps 18:36 (though lacking the prefixed מ) approximates معون. The וענותך הרבני is rightly rendered in the RSV “thy help made me great.”

#### 2. Deut 33:27

The suggestions of Cross and Freedman (1948: 196, 209) on this passage are attractive. They read,

מענ אלה קדם His (Jeshurun's) refuge is the God of old  
מתחת >ר זרעת עלם Under him are the arms of the Eternal.

But translating מען (= מענו) “his refuge” remains problematic in the context of the following second-person elements:

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[by Yassib to his father Keret] . . . the point of similarity between Athtart and Jael is to be seen in that Jael crushes the skull of one whose military actions no doubt constituted a challenge to Yahweh's dominion.” Garbini (1978a: 5–31) saw the poem as a contest between Yahweh and a Philistine weather god and Soggin's (1981c: 99–101) critique of this was on target.

<sup>53</sup> Cross (1950: 310) rendered the MT by “your favor,” noting that the word was difficult. Dahood (1966b: 116) translated “your victory,” relating the MT to Phoenician ענו “to conquer.” But, given the context of the subsequent militant action spoken of by the psalmist, a reference at this point in the psalm to “victory” seems premature.

- (1) the vocative “O Jeshurun” in 33: 26,
- (2) the 2ms suffixes of בעֲזֹרְךָ “for your help” and מִפְּנֵיךָ “from before you” in 33:26 and 27b, respectively,
- (3) the combined vocative and 2ms suffix אֲשֶׁרִיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל “happy are you, O Israel” in 33:29.

It is difficult to admit in the same context a 3ms suffix ךָ referring to Jeshurun. Thus, the MT מַעֲנֵה “savior” in Deut 33:27 must be synonymous with בעֲזֹרְךָ “as your helper” in 33:26, where the ךָ of בעֲזֹרְךָ does double duty. Synonymous parallels (though not synonymous parallelism) can be recognized:

There is none like El, O Jeshurun,  
 who rides the heavens as<sup>54</sup> your helper (בעֲזֹרְךָ)  
 (who rides) the clouds in his majesty!  
 (Your) savior (מַעֲנֵה) is the God of Old;  
 underneath are the arms of the Eternal!<sup>55</sup>

(Meter 3 + 3 + 2 / 3 + 3; Syllables 6:9:9::8:9)

### 3. Deut 33:28

The third occurrence of עֹן is in Deut 33:28, where the MT בְּדֵד עֵין יַעֲקֹב was translated by Meek (1927: 333–334), “The fountain of Jacob undisturbed.” Freedman (1948: 196) and Cross (1973: 157), following Budde and Cassuto, read, “Securely apart dwells Jacob.” But the MT עֵין can also be read עֵיִן, a *pi<sup>c</sup>el* corresponding to Arabic عَوْن [3] and [4] “to assist, to help.” By so reading, the tricolon 33:27b–28 can then be translated as it stands in the MT without further difficulty. The initial ךָ of וַיִּגְרַשׁ

<sup>54</sup> The translation of כָּ as “as” reflects the *beth essentiae*. See GKC 119<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> Compare T. H. Gaster (1947: 56, 60–61) who translated, “Who humbles the ancient gods, and shatters all time-honored might.” Ginsberg (1948: 26) countered, “who spread out the primeval tent, and extended the everlasting canopy”; and Gordis (1948: 71–72) responded with the alternative, “. . . Dwelling-place of the God of old, The outstretching of the everlasting arms.” Seeligmann (1964: 78) proposed, “He humbles the gods of Yore and shatters the Arms of Eternity.”

and the ך of ויאמר can be retained as emphatic uses of ך, whereas the third ך of וישכן must be retained as the voluntative ך with the jussive (GKC 109<sup>1</sup>). The preposition אל of 28b is needed and cannot be considered a scribal error as T. H. Gaster (1947: 62) hesitatingly proposed, nor emended to read על with the Samaritan text, as Freedman (1948: 210) and Cross (1973: 158) suggested. Deut 33:27b–28 can then be translated:

He drove out the enemy before you!  
 Yea, he commanded destruction (השמד)<sup>56</sup>  
 so that Israel might dwell securely.  
 By himself (בִּדְדוֹ) he helped (עִיֵן) Jacob  
 into a land of grain and wine.  
 Yea, his heavens drip dew!

(Meter 3 + 2 + 3 / 3 + 3 + 3; Syllables 10:5:8::7:8:7)

A sequential infinitive such as בוא could have been used after עיין (= עיין), but an ellipsis is attested in 33:26c, where the participle רכב is understood rather than stated, “(who rides) the clouds in his majesty.”

Given this evidence for עיין as a verb and ענת, עונת, and מענת as nouns synonymous with עזר, it is no longer necessary to insist that ענת בן must be related to the Canaanite goddess. The ענת element in and of itself is no clear sign that a person so named must have been a non-Israelite.

#### D. Excursus on the extrabiblical uses of ענת

Since the vocable עיין is attested in Hebrew as a noun and verb synonymous with עזר, the use of ענת at Elephantine demands at least passing notice. No one has questioned the Jewish identity of

<sup>56</sup> I follow here the suggestion of Gordis (1948: 72) who pointed out that “השמד is the Hiphil infinitive (not the imperative), here used substantively. . . .” He compared similar verbs in 1 Sam 15:23; Isa 14:23; Job 6:25, 26; 25:2, and in the Mishnah. Note the translation of Cross (1973: 157), “He drove out the enemy before you; <Before you> he smashed <the foe>.”

the garrison at Yeb because of the ענה element in the name Anati. Shamgar ben-Anat can be extended the same courtesy, for the ענה in his name, as at Elephantine, was probably the noun “helper, savior,” not the divine name Anat. What Kraeling (1953: 84) called the “liberal attitude of some of the Elephantine Jews” need not be questioned. The syncretism noted in Amos 8:14 may well have flourished at Yeb.<sup>57</sup> The Elephantine אשם ביהאל was probably related to the אשמת of Samaria and Hamath (2 Kgs 17: 30), and perhaps even to the earlier designation of Aṭtarat at Ugarit as the *šm bʿl* “the name (hypostasis) of Baal.”<sup>58</sup> But this does not mean that every occurrence of ענה must be related to the goddess rather than to the common noun behind her name.

It now seems certain that the divine names ענה and תנה were actually substantives abstracted from longer appellations. Albright (1968b: 117) reconstructed the original appellation of these two names as follows:

Similarly the name *ʿAnat* is probably an abbreviation of an original *ʿAnat-panē-Baʿal*, meaning something like ‘Turning of Baal’s Face’, that is ‘Wrath of Baal’. The word *pānīm*, ‘face, presence’, connotes both favour and disfavour in the Hebrew Bible, where it must sometimes be rendered ‘wrath’, depending on the context.

He argued (1957: 339–340; 1968a: 195) that *ʿanat* is related to Akkadian *ettu* “sign, omen,” Aramaic ענה “sign, time, destiny,” and Hebrew עת “time,” so that, “the name of *ʿAnat* then probably meant originally ‘sign, indication of purpose, active will,’ and was originally applied to the personified or hypostatized will of Baal.”<sup>59</sup> Albright (1968b: 113) also identified Anat and Tannit as

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<sup>57</sup> Following here the proposal of Neuberg (1950: 215), in reading, “those who swear by the Ashimah of Samaria [באשמת שמרון] and say, ‘By the lives of thy gods, O Dan, by the lives of thy pantheon, O Beersheba!’ they shall fall and never rise again!” Note Ackroyd 1968: 4 note 1, and compare A. Vincent 1937: 566.

<sup>58</sup> Kraeling 1965: 175–176. For a discussion on Asherah as the consort of Yahweh, see Dever 1984: 21–37; Lemaire 1984: 42–51; Zevit 1984: 39–47.

<sup>59</sup> Compare the proposal of Deem (1978: 25–30) that Anath means “lover,” arguing that since ענה means “to inflict pain or sorrow, to rape,” in the *piʿel*, the *qal* meaning could be “to have sexual intercourse by consent,” i.e., “to love.” Given the intensive and iterative nature of the *piʿel*, if the *qal* means “to

the same goddess, but postulated different etymologies for the two names:

. . . the Carthaginian appellation of the goddess Anath, *Tennit-panê-Ba<sup>c</sup>al* means ‘Radiance of the Presence of Baal’, or the like. Tennit was often identified with Juno Caelestis, Juno as queen of heaven, or as Virgo Caelestis, ‘the Heavenly Virgin’ (cf. the standing appellation at Ugarit, *batultu<sup>c</sup> Anat*, ‘the Virgin Anath’).<sup>60</sup>

Although more than one goddess could have been related to Baal, the probability that two different goddesses were called by the same title, “the face of Baal,” seems unlikely. Consequently, it remains doubtful whether “the turning of Baal’s face” and the “wrath of Baal” adequately explain the phrase ענת פן בעל.<sup>61</sup>

Cross (1973: 33) noted that problems persist with identifying Tannit and Anat as the same goddess. He offered an alternative derivation of the name Tannit, suggesting that Tannit (“the One of the Serpent” or “the Dragon Lady”) was the feminine counterpart of *tannin* “serpent.” But this derivation also is not without difficulty. Since the male *tannin* was the adversary of Baal and Anat and the victim of Anat’s violence, it appears unlikely that a female *\*tannintu* or *tannittu* would also have been “the face of Baal” and have shared a common title with the goddess Anat.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the serpent is not found among the fertility symbols which accompany Tannit (which are the pomegranate, the palm tree, the dove, and the fish). Were Tannit the “Dragon Lady,” one would expect some representation of the serpent or the scorpion,

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love” one would expect the *pi<sup>c</sup>el* to mean “to love passionately.” Little merit can be given to this reversal of meaning, although “to love” could be well within the semantic range of ען “to help.”

<sup>60</sup> Albright argued (1968: 37, 118) for the equation of Tannit with Hebrew תַּנִּית (Num 12:8), going back to *\*tannit* (= *tabnit*) “form, structure, image,” with the development *tabnit* > *tannit* > *tennit*. This progression is explained in part by the El-Hofra inscriptions which include the variant titles ΘINIΘ ΦANE BAA and ΘENNEIΘ ΦANH [BA]A.

<sup>61</sup> On the interchange of פני and פני, see Isa 1:12 and Ps 42:3 where, contrary to the suggestions in BH<sup>3</sup> and BHS, the MT can be retained as the *niph<sup>c</sup>al* and read with פני rather than פני. Compare the use of פני in Gen 19:13.

<sup>62</sup> Note *nt* III: 37–38, *Pištbn . tnn . šbm[n]h . mššt . bgn . qltn*, “I muzzled Tannin, I muzzled him; I destroyed the winding serpent” (= *CTA* 3: III: 37–38).

such as appears in the Palmyrene representations of Shadrapa (Satarapes), the spirit of healing.<sup>63</sup>

A more probable derivation is found in recognizing that the names Anat and Tannit were originally common nouns from the vocable עון “to save.” The noun ענת was discussed already.<sup>64</sup> Here it will suffice to note that the bilingual inscription from Lapethos provides further evidence that Anat, identified with the goddess of victory Nikē and the savior goddess Pallas Athēnaïe, was an עזר figure. The inscription reads in part: לַעֲנַת בְּעִזְרָהּ . . . Ἀθηναῖα Σωτῆρις Νίκη “to Anat the strength of the living . . . to Athena, the Savior Nikē” (i.e., to the Savior “Victory”).<sup>65</sup>

The Phoenician name תנת was probably originally spelled תענת, from the stem עון, with forms similar to the שובה, שובה, תשובה pattern (GKC 85<sup>p</sup>, 85<sup>v</sup>). The ע was elided or assimilated and \*ta<sup>c</sup>nt became ta(n)nt, which, with the anaptyctic vowel, became tannit (just as \*ba<sup>c</sup>l > ba<sup>c</sup>al > בל and \*šurš > šuriš = σურς).<sup>66</sup>

Thus, תנת and ענת name the same goddess who stood before Baal as an עזר כנגדו “a savior, consort.” This role of Anat is clearly attested in the Ugaritic texts.<sup>67</sup> She was the savior who visited the Underworld that she might restore Baal to life. She

<sup>63</sup> Note Starcky 1949: 43–85, fig. 8 and pl. IV; and Astour 1967: 236.

<sup>64</sup> See pages 50–53. Note Benz 1972: 382, 429–431 for a summary of the data on Anat and a survey of other views on the etymology of the name Tannit.

<sup>65</sup> Donner and Röllig 1962–1964, vol. 1, 9–10 (text 42) and vol. 2, 59.

<sup>66</sup> Note Harris 1936: 32–34; Berthier and Charlier 1955: 238; and especially Friedrich and Röllig 1970: 13, 93–94, sections 31 and 194. The ע of בעל (= bal) may represent the vowel letter a rather than the original ע consonant as in El Hofra text 4, where the anticipated פני (φανε) was written פענא. Note also פאא for בעל in text 13:2.

<sup>67</sup> Note <sup>c</sup>nt IV: 83–84, hlk . °aht . b<sup>c</sup>l . y<sup>c</sup>n . tdrq / ybnt . °abh, “Baal eyed the coming of his sister, the approach of the daughter of his father”; UT 76: III: 11, wp . n<sup>c</sup>mt [.] °aht, “and so, (most) pleasant sisters” (G. R. Driver, 1956: 119); UT 76: II: 16, 20, n<sup>c</sup>mt . bn . °aht . b<sup>c</sup>l . . . hwt . °aht, “(most) gracious among the sisters of Baal . . . Mayest thou live, sister!” These texts are also cited by Porten (1969: 170–171). Anat, having been introduced into Egypt by the Hyksos, appears in Egyptian mythology as the spouse of Seth who was equated with Baal. Porten noted that Anat became a favorite with Ramesses II.

repeatedly and successfully confronted Mot with the simple command, *tn ʿly*, “Give me my brother!” (*UT* 49: II: 12).

The motif expressed in the appellations *תנת פן בעל* and *תנת פנא בעל* appears in Gen 2: 18, where Eve stands before Adam as *עזר כנגדו* “a savior as his consort,” who will save him from *לְבִדּוֹ* “his being alone” by providing him with progeny.

Just as *פן בעל\** and *תנת פנא בעל* can mean “the Helper before Baal,” the Elephantine names *ענתביתאל*, *ענתיהו*, and *ענתי*, also reflect the noun *ענת* applied to Yahweh and Bethel. They are like biblical names compounded with *עזר*. Consequently, *ענתיהו* is no more problematic than *עזריהו*. If the evidence can be sustained that the god Bethel was worshiped at Elephantine, *ענת ביהאל* simply means “the savior (is) Bethel.”<sup>68</sup> The Hebrew *ענתי* would mean “my helper/savior,” like the *עזרי* in 1 Chron 27:26.

The abstract noun *ענתי* could have been used as a male title or designation. Cazelles (1956: 134) noted the use of a similar noun in 2 Sam 23:1, where *זמרות ישראל* occurs in synonymous parallelism with *משיח אלהי יעקב*. The expressions are titles of David meaning, respectively, “the friend of the Warrior of Israel” and “the anointed of the God of Jacob.” He concluded that the *ת* ending of *זמרות* may be related to Egyptian and Akkadian nominal forms which end in *-t* or *-ty*, with the same titular function.<sup>69</sup> The MT *עזרת יהוה* “the *Savior* (\**zmr* = זמר) Yahweh” or “the Warrior (\**dmr* = זמר) Yahweh,” in Ju 5:23, is another example.

The Benjaminite name *ענתיהו* “Yahweh is my Savior,” (in 1 Chron 8:24) with the reduplicated *ת* ending, is another example of *ענת* used in a Yahwistic name. It seems highly improbable, therefore, that names at Yeb with the *ענת* element designate a consort of Yahweh, or reflect the survival of some type of Anat worship.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Porten (1969: 173–179) has argued against the probability of the worship of Bethel or Eshem at Elephantine and has provided a bibliography.

<sup>69</sup> See page 206 below. Note Dahood 1970: 412.

<sup>70</sup> Compare Dussaud (1942–1943: 286) who stated, “On peut en déduire que, dans les papyrus judéoaraméens d’Eléphantine, Anat est une déesse-soeur,

It is easy to see how the titular epithet עֲנִיתִיהוּ or בְּעֲלִיָּהּ could have contributed to pre-Philonic hypostatic speculation. When the collocation of the appellative and the divine name עֲנִיתִיהוּ “the Savior Yahweh” was understood as “the helper of Yahweh,” the identification of חֲכֻמָּה “Lady Wisdom” as the helper (Prov 8:22–32) would have been very natural. Thus, while the Elephantine עֲנִיתִיהוּ sheds light on early hypostatic speculation, it provides little evidence for the survival of Anat worship by the Jews of Yeb. At Elephantine, עֲנִיתִיהוּ was simply a common noun.

### III. Shamgar’s status as “overseer”

Although Shamgar is given credit for delivering Israel in Ju 3:31 (וַיִּשַׁע גַּם הוּא אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל), the *title* מוֹשִׁיעַ or שֹׁפֵט is not used for him. As Boling (1975: 89) commented, “there is a complete absence of any familiar rubrics, whether of the salvific or administrative forms.” A. van Selms (1964: 294) concluded,

Shamgar, therefore, is rather out of place in the list of ‘minor judges’ who . . . would have been real judges, in our sense of the word, at the central sanctuary . . . There is yet more that creates an aura of isolation around this judge. All the regular elements in the description of the work of Israel’s ‘judges’ are lacking . . . He could be completely omitted from the book without disturbing its chronology.

Huesman (1975: 297), on the other hand, dissociated the heroic Shamgar of 3:31 from the “oppressor” Shamgar of 5:6 by replacing the name of Jabin in Ju 4:2 with the name of Shamgar, doubling his evidence that Shamgar was an oppressor of Israel. However, such a view, which diminishes the status of the *heroic* Shamgar, must be rejected for the reasons that follow.

#### A. A motif from a Sumerian *Königshymne*

In Römer’s publication (1965: 50–51) of *Königshymnen* from the Isin period, several lines of one hymn introduce a motif strikingly similar to one in Ju 3:31:

Die Männer des Zerstörens . . . die Menschen, die Feindseliges reden, [habe ich] fürwahr am Boden x x [---] . . . x, mit Wonne mit der Axt (!?) ihren

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ce qui s’accorde avec sa fonction habituelle dans les textes de Ras Shamra.” Note also A. Vincent 1937: 652 and Kapelrud 1969: 14.

Nacken ab[gesch]nitten (!?), . . . das Fleisch (!?) der *sa-gaz* Leute (wie Erdschollen) mit der Picke zerbrochen (?).<sup>71</sup>

This approximates the LXX (B-text) of Ju 3:31 *καὶ ἐπάταξεν τοὺς ἀλλοφύλους εἰς ἑξακοσίους ἄνδρας ἐν τῷ ἄροτρόποδι* “and he smote the aliens, up to six hundred men, with the plowshare,” as well as the translation of the MT offered in this study: “he smote with a plowshare two bands of marauders, with a goad he plundered hundreds of men.” The destruction of vaguely identified hostile aliens with agricultural instruments was an act which merited praise for a Sumerian king. Shamgar’s similar heroism resulted in his elevation to a significant, though brief, political position in early Israel.

In Ju 3:31, *במלמד הבקר* “with the goad of the ox” need not be read as two bound nouns. The MT *מלמד* is the *maqtil* form of *למד* (a common form for nouns of instrument) meaning “a goad, a striking instrument.” The idea of the “goad” is contained within the word *מלמד* itself, without the need for a *nomen rectum*.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, the MT *בבקר* can be dissociated from *מלמד* “goad” and from the *noun* *בקר* “ox, cattle.” It can be read instead as the *verb* *בקר* “to examine, to search, to judge,” introducing a new clause—without doing an injustice to Shamgar’s feat of striking down his enemies with a goad (*מלמד*) and a plowshare (*אֵת*).

#### B. The Qumran *למחנה* *מבקר* and the “Community Overseer” of Ugarit

The use of a nominal form of *בקר* “overseer” as a synonym for *פקיד* “overseer, commissioner” is attested in 1QS 6:11–14 where the “overseer of the many” is also identified as *האיש הרבים* *האיש הפקיד ברואש* *על הרבים* (11–12) and as the *האיש הפקיד ברואש* *על הרבים* (14).<sup>73</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Lines 217, 218, and 226. Compare also Albright 1968b: 71, note 74, who translated, “I have verily broken the SA.GAZ . . . with the pick-axe; on his neck (?) I have verily imposed the yoke (?)”

<sup>72</sup> Moscati 1964: 80; GKC 85°. Guillaume (1961–1962: 4) cited Arabic *لمد* and *لمن* “he slapped, struck, taught” as cognate to *למד*.

<sup>73</sup> Burrows 1951: pl. 6, lines 11–12, 14; Brownlee 1951: 24–25.

T. H. Gaster (1956: 50, 98, note 57) translated both titles as “the superintendent of the general membership,” and equated the former noun to the ἐπίσκοπος “bishop” and the latter to the ἐπιμεληταί “stewards, overseers” of the Essene community mentioned in Eusebius and noted by Josephus.<sup>74</sup> These were appointed positions, with the latter one, χειροτονητὸς ἐπιμελητής, being an official elected by the gesture of the outstretched hand.

The מִבְּקָר of IQS 6:12, 20 and its appearance fifteen times in CD cols. 9, 13–15 may be the *hoph'al* participle מִבְּקָר “one who was elected overseer” rather than a *pi'el* participle, מִבְּקָר, as read by some commentators. The “Rule for the Overseer of the Camp” (מִבְּקָר לְמַחֲנֵה סוּךְ) in CD 13:7–19 and 14:8–18 identifies the מִבְּקָר as a colleague of the Qumran judges.<sup>75</sup>

He is to bring back all of them that stray, as does a shepherd his flock. He is to loose all the bonds that constrain them, so that there is no one in his community who is oppressed or crushed (CD 13: 9–10) . . . . Anything that anyone has to say in a matter of dispute or litigation (כָּל רִיב וּמִשְׁפָּט), he is to say to the overseer . . . wages for at least two days per month are to be handed over to the overseer (וְנָתַן אֵל יַד הַמְּבַקֵּר). The judges are then to take thereof (וְהִשׁוּפְטִים מִמֶּנּוּ הַתִּנּוּ) and give it away for the benefit of the orphans (CD 14:11–14). (Gaster 1956: 81, 83)

If Shamgar “had been appointed” (הִבְּקָר) and had functioned as a מִבְּקָר, his responsibilities would have been quasi-judicial, assuming that there was some correspondence between the two communities even though they were separated by a millennium.

The Ugaritic evidence concerning the root בִּקְר/פִּקְר is limited but significant. In *PRU* II 56: 7 (*UT* 1056: 7) the phrase *pqr yhd* occurs, which Gordon (1965: 470) translated “overseer of the (religious) community,” noting that “both words anticipate Qumran usage: מִבְּקָר הַיַּחַד.” The Ugaritic title does not correspond exactly to the Qumran title, מִבְּקָר לְמַחֲנֵה, and the functions of the office were probably different in two such disparate communities. But the use of פִּקְר in Ugaritic for a community

<sup>74</sup> See Naber 1895: 5: 162 (Josephus, *War*, 2: 8.3); and “Eusebii Pamphili Praeparatio Evangelica,” *PG* 21: cols. 640 and 643.

<sup>75</sup> For the text of the Zadokite Fragment, see Rost 1933: 25–26; for a translation of the text, see T. H. Gaster 1956: 76–84.

leader means that the Qumran usage of מִבְּקָר, like its Nabatean counterpart,<sup>76</sup> was not an innovation of that community.

Although בִּקְר/פִּקְר is unattested as a noun in Biblical Hebrew (unless a פִּקְר was corrupted to the more common פִּקֵּד), the Qumran מִבְּקָר employs a traditional term attested in Ugaritic texts without the מ preformative. Were it not for the *pqr yhd* appearing in Ugaritic the proposed revocalization of MT הִבְקֵר to הִבְקָר could be dismissed as an unlikely anachronism. However, these extra-biblical references suggest that in the phrase הוּא הַבְּקָר וַיִּשַׁע גַּם הוּא the first word was the stem בִּקְר, used for a quasi-judicial appointment.

### C. The use of בִּקְר in Ezek 34:11–22 and Lev 27:33

Although the nouns פִּקְר, בִּקְר, and מִבְּקָר do not occur in Biblical Hebrew, the verb בִּקְר “to oversee” does appear. The use of בִּקְר as a synonym for פִּקְר “to look after” (similar to the use at Qumran of the synonyms מִבְּקָר and פִּקִּיד) was noted in Gesenius-Buhl (1921: 112) for Ezek 34:11–12, where the collocation of שֹׁפֵט, בִּקְר, and נֹצֵל approximates the collocation of בִּקְר and שֹׁפֵט in Ju 3:31. The prohibition given in Lev 27:33, which forbids any substitution for or exchange of “every tenth animal of all that pass under the herdsman’s staff,” used the verb בִּקְר “to judge”: לֹא יִבְקֵר בֵּין טוֹב לְרָע, “there must be no judging between good and bad (animals).”<sup>77</sup>

In light of such texts in which the semantic range of בִּקְר overlaps the meaning of פִּקְד and שֹׁפֵט, it is not surprising that בִּקְר, rather than פִּקְד or שֹׁפֵט, was used for Shamgar’s activities. Had nouns been used rather than verbs, he would have appeared as a מִבְּקָר “overseer” and a מוֹשִׁיעַ “a deliverer.” Therefore, although the familiar rubric שֹׁפֵט is missing, the consonantal MT permits one to recognize him as overseer and deliverer. He

<sup>76</sup> For the Nabatean מִבְּקָרָא, see Negev 1982: 25 and bibliography cited there.

<sup>77</sup> This use of בִּקְר followed by the prepositions בֵּין and לְ parallels the use of שֹׁפֵט followed by בֵּין and לְ in Ezek 34:17 and 22 (שֹׁפֵט בֵּין שֹׁהַ and וַשֹּׁפֵט הִי בֵּין שֹׁהַ). Note also Ezek 34:20.

would have qualified, no doubt, as a savior-figure for the pre-Deuteronomic *Retterbuch!*

#### IV. Shamgar's victims

If the proposal proffered in this study, that Ju 3:31 was at one time an integral part of the Song of Deborah, proves correct, then the two earliest poems in Israelite literature contain a common enigma. The Song of the Sea and the Song of Deborah make reference to Philistines although they were not on the scene until after the eighth regnal year of Ramesses III, circa 1190 (Faulkner 1975: 242; Barnett 1975: 371). The solution to this Philistine problem is not to be found by pushing the events into the later Philistine era. The proposal made by Mayes (1969: 353–360; 1974: 91–99) that the Philistines in Judges 4–5 provide the basis for dating the victory over Sisera at the time of the Israelite defeat of the Philistines at Aphek, towards the end of the eleventh century, is untenable.<sup>78</sup> His conclusion (1974: 94), that “even if the arguments which have been adduced in support of this date of the battle against Sisera are not very reliable, it is still probable that the conclusion is correct,” is less than convincing.

Nor is the use of פלשת in Ex 15:14 to be explained simply as an anachronism, as argued by Cross (1955: 237–250). Albright (1968: 41–42) was correct in maintaining, “it is no longer necessary to insist on an anachronism in this passage, which suits a thirteenth-century background so well.” But, Albright’s proposed emendation of the alleged anachronism is not convincing either. He changed MT פלשת ישבֵי to read כל בני שת “all the Children of Shut,” the name of a semi-nomadic group known from the nineteenth century B.C.E.<sup>79</sup>

Excluding the LXX, which did not *transliterate* פלשתים as a name but *translated* it by ἀλλόφυλοι “alien tribes” (presumably aware of a Hebrew cognate to Ethiopic *palasa* “to migrate, to emigrate”), exegetical tradition can be faulted, in words taken

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<sup>78</sup> Note also Watts 1957: 378, note 2.

<sup>79</sup> Note Albright’s earlier proposal to emend MT פלשת ישבֵי to ישבֵי הר, cited by Cross and Freedman 1955: 249.

from Barr (1968: 268), “for a strong tendency towards leveling the vocabulary and the interpretation of that which is rare as if it was [*sic*] that which was more normal.” What appears to be “the Philistines” in Ju 3:31 is the dual of the feminine collective noun פִּלְשְׁתִּים “marauders, troops” (being morphologically like קָרְיָתַיִם “twin cities”). In Ex 15:14, the same noun appears in the plural, with defective spelling, as would be expected in early texts.<sup>80</sup>

The stems are attested in the following:

- (1) Aramaic בלש “to search, to investigate, to ransack, to break up clods of earth,” and אבלושי “ground-diggers”;
- (2) Aramaic פלש “to dig (after), to perforate, to penetrate”;
- (3) Syriac ܦܠܫ “to break through, to perforate” which in the *ethpe*<sup>c</sup>al means “to be pillaged, to be plundered”;
- (4) Syriac ܟܠܫ “to dig into, to search, to investigate.”

The nominal forms which are cognates of Hebrew פִּלְשֵׁת are Aramaic בלשת and בולשת “marauders, troop(s)” and the Syriac ܦܠܫܝܢ “thieves” and ܟܠܫܝܢ “thieves, marauders.”<sup>81</sup> This stem is attested in Job 37:16, מפלשי עב, “the breaking open of a cloud” (repointing ש to שׁ), and may be original to Job 36:29 (NRSV “spreading of the clouds”) if the reading of MS Ken 245 (noted in BH<sup>3</sup>) is retained as the *lectio difficilior*, since it reads מפלשי for MT מפרשי.<sup>82</sup> The LXX translator appears to have had

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<sup>80</sup> The פִּלְשְׁתִּים of 1 Sam 12:9 are more likely the Philistines of Ju 13–16, not the “marauders” of Ju 3:31.

<sup>81</sup> For the Aramaic, see Jastrow 1903: 7a, 175b, 1185a; for the Syriac, see R. Payne Smith 1897–1901: 541, 3164 and J. Payne Smith 1903: 47, 449. Note Ethiopic *palasa* “migravit, emigravit, ivit de loco ad locum,” (Castell 1669: 3014c) and Akkadian *palāšu, pallišu* “Einbrecher” (*AHW* 815).

<sup>82</sup> If the textual variant cited for Job 36:29 were read and interpreted as פלש “to perforate,” the poetic line would be in logical sequence with the preceding references to rainfall, and the line would not have to be transposed to follow verse 31, as proposed in the NEB and by Pope (1965: 231, 237). The line could better be read, “. . . can anyone understand the perforations of the clouds (מפלשי עב), the thundering from His pavilion?” Obviously one variant reading cannot be given much weight, but, likewise, it cannot be ignored. It is possible

פִּלַּשׁ “to break open, to break up” in his lexical repertoire since מִפִּלְשֵׁי-עַב in Job 37:16 was translated ἐπίσταται δὲ διάκρισιν νεφῶν, “and he knows (the) separation of (the) clouds.”<sup>83</sup>

The poet’s use of dual feminine nouns in the initial verse of the poem (i.e., the פִּלְשָׁתַיִם in Ju 3:31 when transposed), in 5:16 (הַמְשַׁפְּתַיִם), and in 5:30 (רַקְמַתַּיִם and רַחֲמַתַּיִם) reflects a balanced use of these forms which corresponds to the balanced use of the dual suffixed forms in 5:11 (פְּרוּזָו “his two warriors”) and 5:22 (עֲקָבוֹ “its two slopes”). The prevalence of the dual forms in this tradition is also evidenced in the אֵלוֹן בְּצַעֲנַיִם in Ju 4:11 (although the NRSV, following the plural of the *Qere* בְּצַעֲנַיִם, has *Elon-bezaananim*), which Soggin (1981c: 61, 66) translated “oak of the caravaners,” followed by Schloen (1993: 32–33) who cited cognate טַעַן/צַעַן “to load [a beast with] cargo.” Without commenting on the significance of the dual form of the *Ketib*, Soggin also cited the Arabic cognate طعن “to pack up (for carriage on a beast of burden).”<sup>84</sup>

The problem of the Philistines in Ex 15:14 has a comparable solution. The meaning of פִּלְשֵׁת יְשָׁבֵי in Ex 15:14 is transparent when יְשָׁבֵי is read as the Hebrew equivalent of Aramaic יְשׁוּב “settlement, inhabited land.”<sup>85</sup> The phrase means “the settlements of the marauders.” Communities of such nomadic peoples are mentioned in Ju 8:10 (בְּנֵי קָדָם = B-text ἀλλοφύλων and A-text οὐδὼν ἀνατολῶν), in Ju 8:11 (הַשְּׁכוּנֵי בְּאֵהָלִים מִקָּדָם) “the tent

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that פִּרַשׁ and פִּלַּשׁ were by-forms in which the liquid ל and ר were interchangeable like the occurrence of MT בְּאַלְמִנּוֹתָיו “in its towers” in Isa 13:22 for the anticipated בְּאַרְמִנּוֹתֶיהָ, or the Aramaic interjections אֵלוֹ and אַרוֹ. Note also פִּרְשָׁא “goad, plowshare” (Jastrow 1903: 1243).

<sup>83</sup> The LXX did not associate the word with פִּלַּשׁ = ζυγός. MT פִּלַּשׁ was evidently recognized as a synonym for פִּקַּע/בִּקַּע “to split open, to break up” and פִּרַץ “to break through, to break open.”

<sup>84</sup> Note Lindars’ (1995: 192) objection, “However, in this case *’elon* should have the article and the preposition should really be preceded by the relative (supplied in Pesh), as in the next phrase, so that it seems more likely that *b* is a root letter . . . the name being derived from *bs* = ‘cut off, bring to an end’ (cf. LXX<sup>A</sup> ἀναπασομένων) or ‘plunder’ (cf. LXX<sup>B</sup> πλεονεκτούντων). Indeed the name could well be ‘tree of the plunderers’ . . . .”

<sup>85</sup> Jastrow 1903: 599b.

settlements of the eastern tribes), and in Num 31:10, (כל עריהם) “all of their hosts in their encampments”).<sup>86</sup>

Without emending Ex 15:14 to provide an ethnicon, the very people whom Albright thought the poet had in mind are indicated by the collective noun פלשת, i.e., the ἀλλόφρονοι.<sup>87</sup> The verse can be translated, “the peoples heard, they shuddered, anguish seized the settlements of the marauding tribes (ישבי פלשת).” Anxiety among the Amalekites and the Midianites about the incursion of Israelites into territories which they considered their rightful domain is sufficiently attested in Num 24:15–24 and Ju 8 that an indirect reference to them in Ex 15:14 would not be out of place.

In Ju 3:31 the פלשתים “two marauding troops” defeated by Shamgar could possibly have been nomadic tribes of the Trans-Jordan, making Shamgar’s feat similar to Gideon’s defeat of “all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the east,” mentioned in Ju 6:33. But as Aharoni (1967: 240) noted,

Incursions by desert nomads in search of plunder such as those carried out by the Midianites, the Amalekites and the people of the East . . . into the Jezreel Valley were possible only after the Canaanite cities in the region had been weakened by their defeat before Barak.

Consequently, it seems improbable that Shamgar had to deal with marauders from the Trans-Jordan.

Aharoni’s (1975: 259–260) proposal to credit Shamgar with the destruction of Beth Shan Level VII (at the close of the thirteenth century and the end of the nineteenth dynasty) and to identify the “Philistines” killed by him as Aegean mercenaries serving in the Egyptian garrison is very problematic. Since the Philistines are mentioned for the first time in the inscriptions of Ramesses III among the Sea Peoples, but are not listed among the Sea Peoples named by Merneptah, reference to them in

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<sup>86</sup> See the discussion on pages 158–161 which deals with the MT עורי “the troops of Deborah roused themselves” in 5:12.

<sup>87</sup> Nomadic tribes in the vicinity of Edom and Moab are referred to by names which are composites of בן and a combative term, including (1) the בני קדם in Ju 8:11, who could be called “the attackers” in light of South Arabic *qdm* “attack” (Jamme 1962: 447a) rather than “the sons of the east” or “eastern tribes,” cited above; (2) the בני שת “the warriors” in Num 24:17, a name with a cognate to South Arabic *št* “to war, to skirmish,” (Jamme 1962: 449b); and (3) the בני שאון “sons of battle-clamor, warriors” (BDB 981a). See above, note 50.

connection with Beth Shan Level VII is at best an appeal for an anachronism in the text. Aharoni (1975: 259) found it necessary to stipulate cautiously, “Even if they were not true Philistines but some other segment of the Sea Peoples, it would not be surprising that they should be called Philistines since that became the standard biblical terminology for all Aegean races that appeared in the land.”

But the use of *גוי כרתים* in Zeph 2:5 and the appearance of the *כרתתי*, *פלתי*, and *גתים* in 2 Sam 15:18 indicate that other names were used for the Aegean people. If *פלשתים* in Ju 3:31 really means Philistines, it remains a difficult anachronism. It would be unusual if the destruction of an Egyptian center in Canaan were referred to solely by an anachronistic ethnicon, accurate or other-wise, for some of the mercenaries found in that Egyptian garrison.

The problem is further complicated by the lack of agreement on the dating of Beth Shan Level VII (opinions vary by almost two centuries from the time of Amenhotep III [1417–1379] to the time of Merneptah [1236–1223]) and on dating the use of Aegean mercenaries at Beth Shan (opinions differ as to whether such troops were used before, during, or after the reign of Ramesses III [1198–1166]).<sup>88</sup>

While the anthropoid coffins found at Beth Shan provide convincing evidence for an Aegean presence there (possibly as mercenaries), it must be noted, as Aharoni (1975: 258) himself stated, “Of much significance is the fact that in the Beth Shan burials none of the typical Philistine pottery, so much in evidence in the anthropoid burials at Tell el-Far’ah, was found.” This absence of any Philistine pottery led Dothan (1957: 157) to conclude that, at the time of the Aegean presence at Beth Shan, Philistine pottery had not yet emerged.

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<sup>88</sup> Albright (1975: 2, 511) and Aharoni (1975: 258) identified the Beth Shan material as evidence of a pre-Ramesses III employment of mercenaries at Beth Shan. But Barnett (1975: 377) noted: “Ramses III claims to have utterly defeated them [the Sea Raiders] and suggestions that he and his successors settled groups of Peleset (Philistine) mercenary garrisons in Beth-shan in Palestine are demonstrated by the finds there of ‘Sea People’ burials.” This latter view is also affirmed by Dothan (1957: 157), G. E. Wright (1964: 63–67), Fitzgerald (1967: 192–193), Malamat (1971: 35), and Mazar (1971: 168). For a discussion on the dating of Beth Shan Level VII, see Kempinski 1975: 213–214.

Another difficulty with Aharoni's proposal is that Shamgar's victory does not suggest an attack against a city nor the destruction of a city. Even allowing for poetic hyperbole, it would be difficult to take this single-handed action of Shamgar, armed with only an oxgoad, as evidence of his violently destroying a garrison town from which Egypt exercised hegemony over Galilee. Such an interpretation removes Shamgar's feat from the category of a historical notice into the genre of legend and makes a historical inquiry unwarranted.

But when the פִּלְשְׁתִּים of Ju 3:31 is vocalized פִּלְשְׁתִּים rather than פִּלְשְׁתִּים and identified as *marauding* elements of the Sea-Peoples or their precursors, the text fits the historical context. At least from the time of the razzia of the Lydian Mopsos which brought Ashkelon to destruction, the eastern Mediterranean seaboard experienced the brunt of repeated incursions from western Anatolia and the Aegean, culminating about 1200 B.C.E. with the invasion of the Sea Peoples which caused the destruction of the Hittite empire and threatened Egypt and her Asian provinces.<sup>89</sup> Coastal towns and inland cities in Syria-Palestine were destroyed by the Sea-Peoples. As Malamat (1971: 29) noted,

Such localities as Jaffa, Ashdod, Tel Mor, and even Gezer show evidence of having been destroyed twice—first apparently in the time of Mer-ne-Ptah, in hit-and-run raids from the sea; and the second, a more massive action in the time of Ramses III, involving settlement on the conquered sites.

Fortunately, the topographical list of Ramesses II (1304–1237 B.C.E.) on the hypostyle of the Great Temple of Amon at Karnak preserves in its twenty-five name-rings the names of several marauding groups in the Egyptian province of Asia, probably in Canaan-Galilee, during the last half of the thirteenth century.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Barnett 1975: 364–366, especially 365, note 1, where he noted that the Madduwattash episode and the date of Mopsos have been put back by some scholars to the early fourteenth century. See Mendenhall 1973: 146–148, 168 and Desborough 1975: 680. On the Sea Peoples, in general, see Sandars (1985); and for Mopsos, in particular, see Roscher 1894–1897: 3208–3210 and *PW* 16a: 241–243.

<sup>90</sup> Simons 1937: 75–79, 157–159, nos. 7, 8, 13, and 21, respectively. On the Asiatic campaigns of Ramesses II, see Kitchen 1964: 47–55. The names *nrm* and *r<sup>c</sup>* in the name-rings *q<sup>3</sup>w<sup>3</sup>nrm* and *q<sup>3</sup>sr<sup>c</sup>* have not been identified, and no

These names are among those compounded with the preformative nouns *qs*, *qws* or *qys*, including *q<sup>3</sup>sr<sup>c</sup>*, *q<sup>3</sup>w<sup>t</sup>isr* (which was corrected to read *q<sup>3</sup>s<sup>t</sup>isr* on the basis of the list of Ramesses III), *q<sup>3</sup>w<sup>s</sup>nrm*, and *q<sup>3</sup>y<sup>s</sup>rybn*.

A satisfactory explanation of the *qs*, *qys*, and *qws* elements has been lacking thus far. Yeivin (1971: 24, 192) rejected both Hebrew קשׁ and Arabic قوس “bow, bowmen” as the cognate or loanword. He surmised that כוש was intended and that the transcription of *qs* for *kš* was used “to differentiate between the familiar (to the Egyptians) *kš* = Nubia, who were Africans, and the Asiatic groups of Cushites.”

This suggestion is possible, but it appears more likely that *qs* (*qw/yš*) is the cognate of Arabic جيش<sup>91</sup> “a raider, an (irregular) military force, marauding troops,” the Syriac and Aramaic ܣܘܫܢ “band,” and South Arabic ȝyš.<sup>92</sup> It is the equivalent of the Egyptian *pd.t* “a troop” (Faulkner 1962: 97; Shupak 1989: 518) and a synonym for Hebrew גדוד “troop, band.” The use of *q* in

suggestion is being offered here. However, the name *rybn* can be recognized as the name Reuben, i.e., ריבן for ראובן, characterized by the elision of the ר (see GKC 68<sup>h,k</sup>), well-attested in other extrabiblical texts like the נארהבה and הבה in the Aramaic papyri (see Cowley 1923: 1–2, 70).

The syllabic *ra-yu-bu-na* for the anticipated *ra-yu-bi-na* may reflect the corruption in the Egyptian syllabic orthography frequently attested from the time of Ramesses III, and possibly from the time of Ramesses II (see Albright 1934: 14 [sec. 24] and 20 [sec. 33a]). This identification of *rybn* with Reuben would preclude Reuben’s participation in an exodus from Egypt during the reign of Ramesses II and would add weight to the arguments of Burney (1921: 52) and others that Reuben, like other tribes, had not participated in the sojourn in Egypt in the first place (see Rowley 1952: 112, 139). The suppression in Canaan of the band of Reuben by Ramesses II explains in part the subordinate position of Reuben among the tribes even though he was recognized as the firstborn of Jacob. The occurrence of the names Sisera and Reuben in the same topographical list of Ramesses II suggests that the hostility between these two disparate bands spanned the reigns of both Ramesses II and Ramesses III.

<sup>91</sup> Arabic كاشه/كوشه “detachment, troop” reflects a common interchange of ק and כ. On Egyptian *t* = Hebrew כ, see Gardiner 1911: 24 (where בית ספר appears as *beth-t-p-r*) and Albright 1934: 65, no. 13.

<sup>92</sup> See, respectively, Lane 1872: 494a; and Hava 1915: 670; R. Payne Smith 1897–1901: 685; J. Payne Smith 1903: 69; Jastrow 1903: 237–238; and Jamme 1962: 82. Note that the Syriac ܣܘܫܢ has a pejorative meaning.

Egyptian for the Semitic *g* is reflected in the name for Gezer (*qa-di-ra* = גזר).<sup>93</sup> Consequently, the ring-name *q<sup>3</sup>s<sup>3</sup>t<sup>3</sup>sr*, which Yeivin transliterated “Kushsisera,” can be translated “(territory) of the marauding troops of Sisera.” The name Sisera here can be identified with the Sisera of Judges 4–5. However, it need not be the same person, but a family or clan name or a title.

It is impossible to reconstruct history from such limited evidence, but one can conjecture that the suppression of someone named Sisera by Ramesses II eventuated in an aligning of the Sisera clan with the Canaanite forces of Jabin at Hazor, and that from these suppressed marauders came the Sisera who survived the destruction of Hazor and, in turn, oppressed the Israelites.

If Sisera was a Luwian name, as proposed by Albright (1920: 61; 1970: 15), Garbini (1978a: 15–31), Soggin (1981c: 63), and others—rather than Hurrian or Illyrian, as proposed by Burney (1918: 15), Alt (1944: 78), Noth (1958: 37), and J. Gray (1967: 208)—the events leading to Sisera’s oppression of the Israelites become even clearer. Having survived the defeat of Jabin at the hands of the Israelites, Sisera witnessed the success of Shamgar and the Israelites against his kinfolk, the precursors of the Philistines. After Shamgar’s death, he altered that situation for two decades and gave the advantage to his adopted relatives, the native kings of Canaan who ruled under the shadow of Egyptian hegemony.

Beem (1991: 158–162) noted that Shamgar did not easily fit the category of a *minor* judge (in contrast to the *major* judges, the “deliverers”) since his brief story lacked the “minor judge framework,” which included these seven elements: (1) the transitional phrase ‘after him’; (2) the name of the judge; (3) the tribal, clan, or regional designation; (4) the years of service; (5) the notice of death; (6) the place of burial; and (7) often a personal detail. He concluded (159, 162) that this “superhuman hero” does not fit the major/minor judge classification: “he stands there . . . with his oxgoad, bigger than any of our categories.”

In my opinion, the Shamgar story lacks five of these seven elements. The narrative provides only his name and some personal details. Shamgar, stands apart from the major/minor categories because his story, now bifurcated in Ju 3:31 and 5:6,

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<sup>93</sup> Albright 1934: 58, note 10.

was originally an integral part the older *poetic* tradition—not the later *prose* tradition dealing with major/minor judges.

Beem's study provides, however, the clue as to why the original **וְאַחֲרָיו הָיָה** in Ju 3:31 was changed into the MT **וְאַחֲרָיו הָיָה**. Once Shamgar's poetic lines were bifurcated, the phrase was transformed into the initial element (i.e., the transitional phrase 'after him') of the 'minor judge' framework.