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## **THE RELATIVE CLAUSE IN CANAANITE EPIGRAPHIC TEXTS<sup>1</sup>**

### **ABSTRACT**

*Within the various linguistic frameworks of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the relative clause has been the object of more scrutiny than perhaps any other clause type. It has a high frequency of usage, independent of text or register type, and in many languages it exhibits features (such as the movement or non-movement of the relativized noun phrase, the presence or absence of a resumptive constituent, and restrictive versus appositive semantics) that provide access to basic structural properties of that language. This paper will provide an overview of the features of the relative clause in the Canaanite languages as exhibited in epigraphic texts, highlight specific areas in which the current understanding of relative clause properties requires revision, and provide a few points of comparison with other Semitic languages.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Fifty years have now passed since Rosén's important study of the relative clause (RC) in Northwest Semitic (NWS) languages (Rosén 1959). Rosén combined an awareness of then-recent work in general linguistics with a deep knowledge of the NWS texts. It is not surprising, though, that the fifty years hence have witnessed numerous advances in both areas of study and thus it is appropriate that Rosén's topic, the RC, is revisited.

The RC is the only full subordinate clause that modifies a nominal item instead of a verb or clause and is perhaps the most commonly used subordinate clause in human language. It exhibits features providing information on a language's morphology (e.g., the forms of the relative elements), syntax (e.g., word order within the RC, the position of the RC vis-à-vis the relative head), and semantics (e.g., how the RC modifies its head, the function of non-obligatory resumption, the type of verb used within the RC). Moreover, some sort of relativization strategy exists in every language (Downing 1978:381). For these reasons, the RC has been examined extensively, perhaps more than any other general clause type, and, thus linguistic descriptions of relativization, whether typological or

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1 I thank André Arsenault, Ellie Sufrin-Disler, and two anonymous reviewers for making valuable comments on drafts of this essay. I have attempted to incorporate all their suggestions. All errors and infelicities are my responsibility.

language-specific, formal or functional, have become greatly refined since Rosén's study. Unfortunately, as with many other insights available from general linguistics, the refinements to our understanding of relativization have rarely been imported into Semitic studies, especially for analysis of the ancient Semitic languages. In the spirit of Rosén 1959, in this study I will revisit the basic features of the RC from the Canaanite epigraphic texts in light of recent linguistic research.

The data set I have used in my study also parallels Rosén's interest in the "pre-history" of the RC in NWS: I focus on the data we have from the earliest stages of the individual Canaanite languages, that is, the epigraphic data from the first millennium B.C.E. This enables me not only to sketch the features of the RC at the earliest stage of each language, but also to note possible diachronic developments. After an initial typological orientation to the RC, the sections proceed from poorly attested to better attested languages before finishing with brief comparative Semitic observations.

## 2. *ORIENTATION TO RELATIVE CLAUSES*

Three basic parameters of RC formation are salient for analyzing the Canaanite RC. They are (1) the basic syntactic components of the RC and their linear and hierarchical relationship to each other, (2) the nature of the relative elements used to mark a given clause as a RC, and (3) the semantic relationship of the RC to its head. But first we must start with a basic definition of the RC.

### 2.1. *Basic Definition and Syntactic Features of a Relative Clause*

The RC defies definition by exclusively syntactic or semantic features (Downing 1978:378; de Vries 2002:14-15); however, if we combine two properties, both syntactic and semantic in nature, we arrive at a reasonably accurate starting-point: (1) a RC is a *subordinate clause* and (2) it is connected to a matrix clause by a *pivot constituent* (de Vries 2002:14; 2005:127-28; Grosu 2002:145). As a subordinate clause, a RC is *syntactically* non-obligatory, like any other type of phrasal or clausal adjunct (e.g., adjectives, adverbs), even though the content of a RC may be *semantically* necessary for the identification of its head within the discourse. For instance, compare the RC in (1) to the complement clause in (2).

(1) I saw the dog that was black.

(2) I saw that the dog was black.

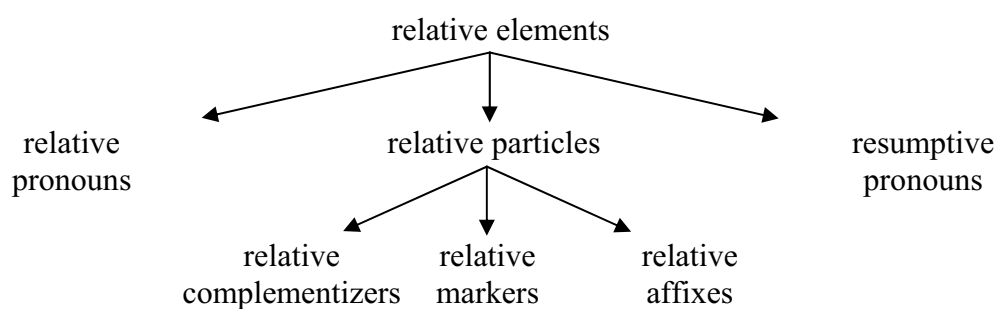
In (1) the main clause *I saw the dog* would be acceptable without the subordinate RC, whereas in (2) the omission of the complement *that the dog was black* would result in an incomplete clause. Notice a second difference between the relative and complement clauses. In the RC in (1) the head noun phrase (NP) *the dog* plays two roles, one within the matrix clause (as the direct object of the verb *saw*) and one as the head of the RC (hence, the notion of the relative head as a pivot). In (2) the NP *the dog* plays only one role, as the subject of the predication *was black*.

Beyond the classification as a subordinate clause and the pivot head, the RC in (1) has three basic syntactic features. First, the relative head is overt, that is, it is phonologically specified as *the dog* (compare the similar RC with a covert head: *what was black*). Second, the head precedes the RC that modifies it (that is, the linear order is head-RC). Finally, the head plays a role in the matrix clause and is thus formally external to the RC (that is, the hierarchical order is [head [RC]]). As we will see, these three syntactic features (type of head, linear order, hierarchical order) are also relevant to a proper description of the Canaanite RC.

## 2.2. Elements Used to Mark a Clause as a Relative

The constituents that mark RCs are often referred to as *relative pronouns*, *relative adverbs*, or more generally, *relative particles*. The various relative elements exhibit distinct characteristics, either in their morphological shape or syntactic behavior. The chart in Table 1 summarizes the types of relative elements exhibited cross-linguistically.

Table 1: Relative Elements (de Vries 2002:62)



*Relative* and *resumptive pronouns*, as ‘pronouns,’ carry agreement features (person, gender, number, or case) that match in some way the agreement features of the relativized noun in its role within the RC. *Relative markers* are similar in that they show some characteristics of pronouns, such as agreement features; however, the agreement features of relative markers reflect the relativized noun’s syntactic role within the

matrix clause, not within the RC. In contrast to the pronouns and markers, *relative complementizers* and *affixes* do not carry agreement features. These last two are distinguished from each other by their morphosyntactic status: relative complementizers are separate words, whether free or bound, whereas relative affixes are attached to a verb and indicate in some way the RC status of the clause in which the verb resides.

How to classify the relative elements is important for Semitic studies. Not only does it concern the general issue of descriptive accuracy – how do the various relative elements in the Semitic languages operate? – it becomes a fundamental issue of clarity when the Semitic languages are compared to or described using Indo-European languages. For instance, in nineteenth-century Hebrew grammatical descriptions, it was common to contrast the Hebrew relative element *šr* with Latin *qui, qua, quod*, German *der, die, das*, or even English *who, whom, which*. The Latin, German, and English elements are clear cases of relative pronouns, whereas the Hebrew element is not. Yet, as I will illustrate throughout this essay, the label “pronoun” continues to be used inaccurately in NWS studies (for more on this, see below, n. 25).

Associated with the relative elements are a number of typological implication universals, i.e., “if language A has property X, it will also have property Y” (see Downing 1978; de Vries 2002, 2005). One implicational universal, provided in (3), is particularly salient for our study of the Canaanite RC.

### (3) Typological Universals relating to the Use of Relative Elements

The use of a relative pronoun excludes a resumptive pronoun or clitic, and vice versa (IU)

The implicational universal in (3) adds to the question of the appropriate classification of the Canaanite relative elements: if the relative elements do not exhibit agreement features (see above) *and* the RCs may include a resumptive pronoun, what is the best classification(s) for the Canaanite relative elements?

Finally, many languages allow a relativization strategy in which there is no overt relative element marking the RC (e.g., *the man Ø I met yesterday*): such clauses are often called ‘unmarked,’ ‘bare,’ or ‘asyndetic’ RCs. However, I do not take them as ‘unmarked’ or ‘bare;’ instead, I understand such RCs to be introduced by a covert relative element, that is, a relative element that has zero phonological content. For this reason, I will use the term ‘zero relative’.

### 2.2.1. Resumptive Pronouns and the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy

For languages that use resumptive pronouns, the positions in which they appear correspond to the ‘Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy’ (NPAH), given in (4).

(4) The Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (Keenan & Comrie 1977:66)

Subject > Direct Object > Indirect Object > Oblique > Genitive > Object of Comparison

The NPAH primarily addresses the positions from which languages can access a noun for relativization; Keenan & Comrie summarize the hierarchy as follows:

On the basis of data from about fifty languages, we argue that languages vary with respect to which NP positions can be relativized, and that the variation is not random. Rather, the relativizability of certain positions is dependent on that of others, and these dependencies are, we claim, universal. The Accessibility Hierarchy (AH) ... expresses the relative accessibility to relativization of NP positions in simplex main clauses. Here, “>” means ‘is more accessible than’ .... The positions on the AH are to be understood as specifying a set of possible grammatical distinctions that a language may make. We are not claiming that any given language necessarily distinguishes all these categories, either in terms of RC formation or in terms of other syntactic processes. For example, some languages (e.g. Hindi) treat objects of comparison like ordinary objects of prepositions or postpositions. In such cases we treat these NPs as ordinary Obl[iques], and the O[bject of] Comp[arison] position on the AH is unrealized (1977:66).

The hierarchy also strongly predicts the positions in which a language may use the resumptive pronouns. That is, Keenen & Comrie note that if a language uses resumptive pronouns, it will use them first and more often in the less accessible positions “down” the NPAH (i.e., rightwards in [4]) (1977:92). Furthermore, however high on the NPAH a language uses resumption, such as in the indirect object position, it will also use resumption at each of the less accessible positions below the indirect object.

### 2.3. *Semantic Types of Relative Clauses*

Another parameter of relativization that is salient for the study of the Canaanite RC is the semantic relationship of the RC to the relative head. In many languages RCs fall into a twofold (restrictive / appositive) or threefold (restrictive / appositive / maximalizing) classification based on their semantic relationship to the head (de Vries 2002: chp. 6). Consider the three types illustrated in English (5).

(5) Three Semantic Kinds of Relatives (modified from Grosu & Landman 1998:128)

- a) *Restrictive*: I took the three books that were on the table.
- b) *Appositive*: I took the three books, which were on the table.
- c) *Maximalizing*: I took the three books that there were on the table.

The RC in (5a) defines the head *the three books* – it is only the three books lying on the table that are of concern in this clause, regardless of how many books are in the room. A restrictive RC provides information necessary for the head to be correctly identified among a set of possible discourse referents, which in (5a) would be from among all the contextually likely *books* (e.g., books on the shelf, books on the desk). The appositive RC in (5b) does not define or limit the head *the three books*, but simply adds information that the speaker/writer has deemed of interest to the audience. A helpful addition to (5b), which would drive home its appositional nature, is to include the phrase *by the way*, i.e., *I took the three books, which, by the way, were on the table*. This phrase functions as an informal test to determine the restrictiveness of an RC: if *by the way* may be added without any change of meaning, the RC is appositive; if it changes the meaning, the RC is restrictive.

The maximalizing RC in (5c) specifies that all three books on the table were taken and that there were no more than three books on the table. Moreover, a maximalizing RC does not define the head against some other set relating to the head NP (e.g., *the books on the table* versus *those on the shelf*); such a contrast is the semantic domain of a restrictive RC. Rather, a maximalizing RC has only the amount or number of RC head items in view. In the case of (5c), then, the statement is true if and only if the three books on the table both were taken and constituted all of the books on the table. I have yet to find any clear examples of a maximalizing RC within the Canaanite languages.

Some languages distinguish restrictive and appositional RCs by morphological, lexical, orthographic, or intonational means. For example, a comparison of (5a) and (5b) illustrates that English appositive RCs are often marked prosodically by a pause and orthographically by commas. Additionally, the relative complementizer *that* cannot be used to introduce an appositive RC. The task for the study of the Canaanite RC is to determine if any of these languages use a strategy to distinguish semantic types of RCs. The cross-linguistic tendencies listed in (6) will provide some guidance in sorting through the data (see de Vries 2002:182-96).

(6) Criteria for Distinguishing Restrictive and Appositive Relative Clauses

Relative Head

- a. A head cannot be a unique referent to support a restrictive RC.
- b. Restrictive RCs only modify NPs, whereas appositive RCs may modify any type of head.
- c. An indefinite head must be specific to support an appositive RC.

Relative Element

- d. Zero-relativization is only restrictive.

2.4. *Summary*

I have now introduced the three basic parameters by which I will analyze the Canaanite RC data. In terms of syntax, I will note whether or not a relative head is overtly present, whether the relative head is positioned outside or inside of the RC proper, and whether the relative head precedes or follows the RC proper. In terms of lexical features, I will note the relative elements used in the Canaanite RCs and determine the accurate classification for each. In terms of semantics, I will address the use of restrictive and appositive RCs and note any specific criteria for distinguishing the two in the Canaanite languages. All three parameters, with their various options, are summarized in (7).

(7) The Parameters of Relative Clause Formation (modified from de Vries 2002:17)

Syntactic Features

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| a. <i>Presence of head</i>                           | overt head / covert head |
| b. <i>Hierarchical position of head w.r.t the RC</i> | external / internal      |
| c. <i>Linear order of head and RC</i>                | head-RC / RC-head        |

Relative Element

d. Presence of relative pronoun	yes/no
e. Presence of particle	yes/no
f. Presence of resumptive pronoun	yes/no

Semantic Features of RCs

g. Kind of modification/relation	restrictive / appositive / maximalizing
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The list in (7) will serve as a guide in the investigation of the RC in the individual Canaanite languages starting in the next section. (I reference the relevant universals or features in section one using the sign →.) In addition, I will also note diachronic developments where the data are sufficient to draw reasonable conclusions.

3. *EDOMITE, AMMONITE, MOABITE, AND PHILISTINE*

The lesser known languages among the Canaanite dialects provide us with very little RC data. The Moabite royal inscription, the Mesha Stele, is the only example of a long narrative text; otherwise, our small data set comes from ostraca or inscribed objects (e.g., the incense altar from Khirbet al-Mudeyineh). The seven extant RCs, given in (8)-(14), come from texts dating from the first half of the first millennium B.C.E. (The gap in a RC lacking resumption is indicated by \_\_\_\_ in all the examples below.)

(8) Moabite: Mesha, ca. 850 BCE

*wʔnk mlkt[y ʕl] mʔt bqrn ʔšr yspty ʕl hʔrʔ*  
 ‘and I ruled over hundreds in the towns **that** I added \_\_\_\_ to the country’ (KAI 181.28-19)

(9) Moabite: Kh. Mudeiyineh, 7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> BCE

*mqt[r] ʔš ʕš ʔ lšmʕ lys[p] bt ʔwt*  
 ‘(an/the) incense altar **that** Elishama made \_\_\_\_ to add to the Oracle house’ (Dion and Daviau 2000; Rainey 2002)

(10) Edomite: Horvat ‘Uza (ca. 600 BCE)

*wʔt tn ʔt hʔkl ʔšr ʕmd ʔhʔmh*  
 ‘and now, give the food **that** \_\_\_\_ (is) with Ahi’immo’ (ln. 3-4; Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985)

(11) Ammonite: Heshbon Ost I, ca. 600 BCE

*lbʕš[ʔ] ksp 20 + 20 ʔšr ntn l[...*



‘to Baasha: 40 (pieces of) silver **that** he gave \_\_\_ to ...’ (Aufrecht 1989, #80.6; Jackson 1983, H1)

(12) Ammonite: Seal of Abinadab, ca. 600 BCE

*ʔbndb šndr lʕš<tr>t bsdn*

‘Abinadab, **who** \_\_\_ made a vow to Ashtarte in Sidon’ (Aufrecht 1989, #56, Jackson 1983, AS #49)<sup>2</sup>

(13) Philistine: Ashkelon, c. 600 BCE

---]m<sup>c</sup>br š tš[---

‘from the (cereal) crop **that** you ...’ (Cross 1996:64)

(14) Philistine: Tel Mique (Ekron), 7th BCE

*bt bn ʔkyš bn pdy bn ysd bn ʔd bn y<sup>c</sup>r šr ʕqrn lptgyh ʔdth*

‘The temple Ø(**that**) Akish, son of Padi, son of YSD, son of Ada, son of Yair, ruler of Ekron, built \_\_\_ for PTGYH, his mistress’ (KAI 286 1:1)<sup>3</sup>

Every RC in (8)-(14) has an overt relative head (→7a) that is clearly external to the RC (→7b) and positioned before the RC (i.e., the RC is postnominal) (→7c). All but one are introduced by overt relative elements (→7d-e), with the Philistine RC in (14) the only example of a ‘zero relative.’<sup>4</sup> The examples in (8), (9), (11), (14) and, presumably, (13)

2 The two Ammonite relative elements may be etymologically related to each other and also to the identical looking Phoenician and Punic relative elements (as well as Hebrew š-). Whether they are or not, though, is irrelevant to the syntax of the clauses they initiate. On the etymology of these items, see Harris (1936:55); Gevirtz (1957); Schuster (1965); Friedrich & Röllig (1999:73); Krahmalkov (2001:94); Huehnergard (2006); Holmstedt (2007).

3 It is possible to take (14) as a clause with a fronted accusative object: ‘a temple Akish built for Ptghy.’ The problem with such a non-relative analysis, though, is that it is difficult to ascertain a good reason for the noun *bṯ* to be fronted as a topic or focus of the clause. Furthermore, the relative clause analysis is supported by the syntax of introductory statements in dedicatory texts from Syria-Palestine such as I have given below in (21)-(24), all of which use overtly introduced relative clauses in precisely the same context to explain who made the dedicated object and for whom.

4 As I noted above in section one, zero relatives – that is, those RCs not introduced by an overt relative element – are more commonly referred to

are object relatives, in which the head is coreferential with the object position within the RC, whereas the clauses in (10) and (12) are subject RCs.

None of the RCs in (8)-(14) exhibits resumption ( $\rightarrow$ 7f) nor do any of the relative elements show discernible agreement features (for instance, the relative  $\text{ʔšr}$  in [8] follows the masculine plural head *qrn* ‘towns’ and the relative  $\text{ʔš}$  in [9] follows a masculine singular noun). These two facts taken together indicate that first millennium B.C.E. Moabite, Edomite, Ammonite, and Philistine did not use relative pronouns or markers but rather relative complementizers ( $\rightarrow$ Table 1).

Contextually, the RCs in (8)-(11) and (13)-(14) appear to be semantically restrictive ( $\rightarrow$ 7g), since the information within the RCs critically aids in the identification of each relative head.<sup>5</sup> The contextually clear restrictive sense of the RC in (14) supports the typological universal that zero relatives are semantically restrictive, not appositive ( $\rightarrow$ 6d). Finally, example (12) accords with the use of appositive relative modification, since the proper noun *Abinadab* is a unique referent and needs no definition ( $\rightarrow$ 6a).

#### 4. EPIGRAPHIC HEBREW

There are thirty-two interpretable RCs from the published corpus of epigraphic Hebrew, mostly from the Arad and Lachish ostraca. The examples in (15)-(17) are representative (see Gogel 1998:168-72 for a basic overview of the epigraphic Hebrew RC).<sup>6</sup>

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within Semitic language studies as ‘unmarked’ (versus ‘marked’), ‘bare’, or ‘asyndetic’ (versus ‘syndetic’) relative clauses.

5 None of the studies I have consulted for Edomite, Ammonite, Moabite, and Philistine include any discussion of RC semantics.

6 My count of thirty-two includes unprovenanced texts but excludes lines too fragmentary to read with confidence and reconstructions. There are eight examples in unprovenanced texts, mostly seals, within private collections (again, see Dobbs-Allsopp *et al.* 2005 for the full texts): Moussaïeff Ostraca 1.1, 2.4-6; Avigad-Hecht seal 1.1-2; Avigad Hebrew Bullae 1, 2, 3. Finally, to this latter group we can add two RCs in ostrakon 2 (lines 6 and 9) of the unprovenanced texts published in Lemaire & Yardeni (2006). In provenanced texts there are twenty-two epigraphic Hebrew RCs (see Dobbs-Allsopp *et al.* 2005 for the full texts): Arad 8.9; 18.6-8; 29.7; 40.4-5; 71.2; Kuntillet Ajrud 16.1; Lachish 2.5-6; 3.4-6, 10-12; 4.2-3, 3-4, 11-12, 9.4-9; 18.1; Lachish Bulla

## (15) NP relative head

*wldbr ʔšr šwtny*‘and regarding the matter **that** you commanded \_\_ me’ (Arad 18.6-8)

## (16) Definite relative head

*kkl hʔtt ʔšr ntn ʔdny*‘according to all the signs **that** my lord gave \_\_’ (Lach 4:11-12)

## (17) Appositional RC

*zʔt [qbrt šbn]yhw ʔšr ʔl hbybt*‘this is the [tomb of Sheban]iah, **who** \_\_ (is) over the palace’ (Silw 2.1)

These three RCs are postnominal (→7c) and their heads are overt (→7a) and external (→7b). The promotion of the relative head from within the RC has left a gap (→7f). The head in (15) is indefinite whereas the heads in (16) and (17) are definite. The relative word in all three clauses appears without discernible agreement features: the relative heads in (15) and (17) are masculine singular and the relative head in (16) is feminine plural but the relative element ʔšr in all three remains the same. This last observation strongly suggests that Hebrew ʔšr is a complementizer and not a pronoun or marker (→Table 1).<sup>7</sup> Example (17), with the unique referent [*Sheban*]iah (→6a), indicates that Hebrew also used appositive RCs in addition to restrictive ones.

The next RC presents us with a new feature to add to our profile of the Canaanite relative: (18) provides us with our first example of a RC without an overt head (→7a).

## (18) Covertly-Headed RC

*wʕt hʔh [ʕ]bdk [l]bh ʔl ʔšr ʔm[rt]*‘and now, your servant has inclined his heart to Ø(the thing) **that** you said \_\_’ (Arad 40.4-5)

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6.2, Yavneh Yam/Mesad Hashavyahu 1.6-8, 8-9; Papyrus Murabbat 17a 1.2; Nahal Yishai 1.1; Samaria Basalt 1.1; Silwan 2.1, 2-3; 3.2.

7 Even Gogel, in her otherwise excellent grammar of epigraphic Hebrew, uses imprecise language to describe the Hebrew relative element: “The relative *pronoun* in epigraphic Hebrew is ʔšr. This *particle of relation* brings the clause introduced by it into relation with an antecedent phrase or clause” (1998:168; italics added, RDH).

The relative complementizer in Hebrew (and all other Canaanite languages) serves to introduce (technically, to ‘nominalize’) the RC (Holmstedt 2006). The complementizer *ʔšr* itself is not a nominal item; thus, it cannot serve as the prepositional complement for *ʔl* ‘to’ in (18). Instead, the RC is headed by a covert noun, the content of which is only recoverable from the information provided in the RC. This type of RC is often referred to as ‘free,’ ‘independent,’ or ‘headless.’ However, within a linguistic framework such as generative syntax, which allows covert (or phonologically empty) items to have syntactic reality, the type of RC illustrated in (18) is not viewed as syntactically free, independent, or headless, but as dependent on a covert head. Henceforth I will use the label ‘covertly-headed’ RC for this type.

It is important to note that since the covert head is itself semantically vacuous and only receives definition by virtue of the following RC, covertly-headed RCs are always semantically restrictive. This is both descriptively accurate for the data I have compiled and follows from the typological criterion given above in (6c) – a covert head cannot be specific and thus cannot host an appositive RC.<sup>8</sup>

RCs with relative heads in the bound form (i.e., construct state), as in (19), are also semantically restrictive.<sup>9</sup>

(19) bound relative head (i.e., in the ‘construct’)

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8 Gogel (1998) does not include any discussion of restrictive versus appositive RCs in epigraphic Hebrew. For Biblical Hebrew, most reference works (such as Kautzsch 1910, Waltke and O’Connor 1990, or Van der Merwe, Naudé, Kroeze 1999) lack any discussion of RC semantics. Joüon-Muraoka (2006; first edition, 1993); followed by Arnold & Choi (2003:184-85) stands out as the exception by introducing the distinction between what Muraoka calls “limiting” and “non-limiting” RCs. The short discussion in Joüon-Muraoka (1993 or 2006 editions) does not address if and how Hebrew distinguished between the two types.

9 There are two possible interpretations of the quantifier *kl* in (19): either (1) it modifies a covert head, e.g., ‘every(thing)’ (see Gogel 1998:168-69), or (2) it serves as a substantive and is itself the relative head. Given that the quantifier *kl* can serve as a substantive in the Hebrew Bible, as in *yôṣēr hakkol hû* ‘he is the creator of everything’ (Jer 10:16) and also given that relative heads may be in the bound form before an RC, as in *kol yāmê ʔāšer yiškon heʿānān ʿal hammiškān* ‘all the days that the cloud dwelled over the tabernacle’ (Num 9:18), it seems simpler to take *kl* as the bound-form relative head in (19).

*w<sup>c</sup>t kkl ʔšr šlh ʔdny kn ʕšh ʕbdk*

‘and now, according to all **that** my lord sent \_\_, so your servant has done (Lach 4.2-3)

The restrictive nature of clitic RC heads, that is, nouns in the bound form, is due to the semantic dependency created by the cliticization of the noun, viz., it receives its specificity from its clitic host. In the case of (19), and, for example, Gen 1.1 in the Hebrew Bible (see Holmstedt 2008), the clitic host that defines the bound noun is a RC, which by virtue of its cliticized head is necessarily restrictive.

The final epigraphic Hebrew RC example, in (20), is open to interpretation but may present the first occurrence of the use of resumption (→7f) in our developing profile of the Canaanite RC.

(20) RC with (questionable) use of Resumptive Pronoun

*dbr ʔšr lʔ yd<sup>c</sup>th*

??‘a thing **that** you do not already know **it**’ (Lach 2.5-6; see also Lach 3.5-6, 4.3-4, and Mous 2.4-6)

It is possible to take the RC in (20) as containing resumption by means of the clitic object pronoun on the verb, *yd<sup>c</sup>th*. Elsewhere in epigraphic Hebrew the 2ms perfect verb is written without a final *-h*, suggesting that the few cases with a *-h* represent the verb plus 3ms object pronoun *-h* (see, among many others, Cross 1985:43-46; Rollston 2006:62, n. 42).<sup>10</sup> If the four examples with the final *-h* within a RC do represent resumption, they are then the only Iron Age cases of relative resumption in Hebrew outside of the Bible.

Another option is to take the forms with the final *-h* as alternate writings for the 2ms perfect verb without a clitic object pronoun (that is, the *-h* is a final *mater lectionis* for the final /a/ of the 2ms verb; see, among many others, Gogel 1998:83-87; Schniedewind 2000:160). This second option is supported circumstantially by the very constrained use of resumption in the Canaanite languages in the first millennium, as we will see more clearly from the Phoenician data in the next section. While

10 For the 2ms perfect verb without the final *-h*, see Arad 2.5-6, 7-8, 3.5, 3.8, 17.3-4, 40.5; Yavneh Yam 1.14. For the four examples of 2ms perfect verbs with the final *-h* within an RC, see Lach 2.5-6; 3.5-6, 4.3-4, and Moussaieff 2.4-6 (compare with examples not within an RC: Lach 3.8, 5.4; Arad 7.5-6, 40.9).

resumption at the genitive (NP-internal)<sup>11</sup> and oblique (object of preposition) positions is required, resumption at the object position is optional and unattested before the second half of the first millennium B.C.E. Given how high object resumption is on the NPAH ( $\rightarrow 4$ ), that it is unattested in any other epigraphic Hebrew RC, and that Canaanite as a whole does not use object resumption until late in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium, it is unlikely that object resumption is the accurate analysis for (20).<sup>12</sup>

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11 For NWS languages, the genitive position is most often realized as a possessive suffix on an NP. This is also known as relativization from (or resumption in) the ‘NP-internal’ position. This kind of genitive/NP-internal resumption is obligatory in most languages and is thus often excluded from general discussions of relative resumption; even English, a language that does not generally use resumptive pronouns, requires this type of resumption (e.g., I saw the man<sub>i</sub> who had run over his<sub>i</sub> dog yesterday).

12 Admitting the Biblical Hebrew data does little to clarify the analysis of (20) or the general development of resumption in ancient Hebrew. There are many examples of RC resumption in the Hebrew Bible and, as the NPAH leads us to expect, the great majority are in the genitive/NP-internal and oblique (object of preposition) positions within the RC. Resumption in the object position occurs less frequently and its use is highly constrained: it is used (1) to disambiguate verbal semantics in cases when a verb taking an accusative or oblique complement results in distinct meanings, or (2) to signal that the object carries focus pragmatics within the RC (see Holmstedt 2002: 103-106). Concerning the RC in (20), it is not clear that either function within Biblical Hebrew fits the context. Neither the verb [y-d-ʿ] ‘to know’ nor the verb [š-l-ḥ] ‘to send’ appear to take non-accusative NP complements in epigraphic Hebrew. Furthermore, taking the object within the RC as pragmatically marked for focus (i.e., the thing that you didn’t already know *it* [versus something else]) makes no contextual sense. Thus, the -h on the 2ms forms should be taken as a *mater lectionis*.

It is worth making one further comment on resumption in Biblical Hebrew as it may relate to epigraphic Hebrew. As we would expect, resumption at the highest position on the NPAH, subject resumption, is extremely rare in the Hebrew Bible, with only forty clear examples in the entire corpus: Gen 7:2, 8; 9:3; 17:12; 30:33; Exod 5:8; Lev 11:26, 39; Num 9:13; 14:8; 17:5; 35:31; Deut 17:15; 20:15, 20; 29:14 (2x); 1 Sam 10:19; 1 Kgs 8:38, 41; 9:20; 2 Kgs 22:13; 25:19; Jer 40:7; Ezek 12:10; 14:5; 20:9; 43:19; Hag 1:9; Ps 16:3; Song 1:6; Ruth 4:11, 15; Qoh 4:2; 7:26; 9:9; Neh 2:13, 18; 2 Chr 6:32; 8:7. What is particularly striking about the cases of subject resumption in the Hebrew Bible

## 5. PHOENICIAN

Let us now turn to Phoenician, the northernmost ancient Canaanite dialect. Phoenician is often divided into three forms, Byblian, Standard (or Tyro-Sidonian), and Punic (the dialect originating in Carthage in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE.).<sup>13</sup> In this study I will survey and discuss the RC data from Byblian and Standard Phoenician, but I have omitted Punic due to space limitations.

### 5.1. Byblian Phoenician

Byblian Phoenician, referring to the texts associated with the dialect of ancient Byblos (see, e.g., KAI 1-12, 280), provides us with our earliest datable texts and thus the earliest Canaanite RC examples:<sup>14</sup>

(21) Ahiham, ca. 1000 BCE

ʔrn ɡ pʕl [ʔ]tbʕl bn ʔhrm mlk gbl lʔhrm ʔbh

‘the coffin **that** Ittobaal, son of Ahiham, king of Gubl, made \_\_ for Ahiham his father’ (KAI 1.1)

(22) Yehimilk, ca. 950 BCE

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is that there is no discernible diachronic development according to the typical three-stage model of biblical Hebrew (archaic, classical, and late). That is, there are no more examples of this kind of resumption in books commonly classified as ‘late’ biblical Hebrew than in books commonly identified with the earlier, ‘classical’, stage of the language. To add fuel to the fire, neither the Hebrew of Ben Sira nor the language of the non-biblical Qumran texts differs much from the biblical profile (in contrast to the marked absence of resumption in the epigraphic texts). It is only with Tannaitic Hebrew that we finally see an increase in the use of subject resumption; see, for example, *kəʔādām šehûʔ qôreʔ battôra* ‘like a man who he is reading the Torah’ (Ber 1.2). If the use of resumption typically develops along a set path (see below), it may be a syntactic feature that should be taken into account in the chronological models developed for ancient Hebrew, including the Hebrew in the Bible.

13 Many discussions of Phoenician distinguish the dialects not only by geography but also along chronological lines, i.e., “early/old” and “late” stages (Segert 1976:27-30; Friedrich & Röllig 1999:4; cf. Krahmalkov 2001:5-15). For this discussion of the RC, there is no need to use chronological labels since I indicate the generally accepted dates of the texts from which my examples come.

14 See KAI 1.1; 4.1; 6.1; 7.1; 9 A.3, B.3; 10.1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 5, 6, 7-8, 11-12; 11.

*bt ʒ bny yḥmlk mlk gbl*

‘the temple **that** Yehimilk, king of Gubl, built \_\_\_’ (KAI 4.1)

(23) Elibaal, ca. 915 BCE

*mš ʒ pʿl ʔlbʿl mlk gbl byḥ[mlk mlk gbl lb]ʿlt gbl ʔdtw*

‘the votive stele **that** Elibaal, king of Gubl, son of Yehi[milk, king of Gubl,] made \_\_\_ for Ba‘alat of Gubl, his mistress’ (KAI 6.1-2)

(24) Shiptibaal, ca. 900 BCE

*qr ʒ bny šptbʿl mlk gbl bn ʔlbʿl mlk gbl byḥmlk mlk gbl lbʿlt g  
bl ʔdtw*

‘the wall **that** Shiptibaal, king of Gubl, son of Elibaal, king of Gubl, son of Yehimilk, king of Gubl, built \_\_\_ for Ba‘alat of Gubl, his Mistress’ (KAI 7:1-4)

The examples in (21)-(24) demonstrate that Byblian Phoenician relativization occurs precisely as in the other Canaanite languages we have covered: the relative head is overt (→7a) and externally positioned (→7b), the RC is postnominal (→7c), and there is a gap in each RC (i.e., there are no resumptive pronouns) (→7d). Since each head in these four examples is masculine singular, there is no information on whether the relative element in these early first millennium texts carries agreement features matching that of the relative head. Thus, we may refer to the Byblian relative element as either a *relative marker* (if we assume it carried inflectional features) or a *relative complementizer* (if we assume it had no inflectional features), but not as a *relative pronoun* (→ Table 1) (contra Schuster 1965; Friedrich & Röllig 1999:72-74, 208-201; Krahmalkov 2001:93-103).

The RC data from later Byblian texts, sampled in (25)-(27), conform to the basic RC pattern of the earlier texts and add our only Byblian examples of covert heads and resumptive pronouns.

(25) B. Shiptibaal III (c. 500 BCE)

a. *bmškb zn ʔš ʔnk škb bn*

‘in this resting-place **that** I lie in **it**’ (KAI 9 A.3)

b. *]qr hmškb ʔš tp[tḥ]*

‘[ ] of the resting-place **that** you op[en \_\_\_\_ ]’ (KAI 9 B.3)

(26) Yehawmilk, ca. 450 BCE

a. *ʔnk yḥwmlk ... ʔš pʿltḥ hrbt bʿlt gbl mmlkt ʿl gbl*



‘I am Yehawmilk ... **who** the Lady Ba‘alat of Gubl made **me** king over Gubl’ (KAI 10.1-2)

b. *whpṯḥ ḥrṣ zn ʔš ʿl pn pṯy z*

‘and this gold inscription **that** \_\_\_\_ is opposite this inscription of mine’ (KAI 10.4-5)

c. *whṣpt ḥrṣ ʔš btkṯ ʔbn ʔš ʿl pṯḥ ḥrṣ zn*

‘and the gold winged-discs **that** \_\_\_\_ are in the midst of the stone **that** \_\_\_\_ is over this gold doorway’ (KAI 10.5)

d. *whṣrpt zʔ wṣmdh whktrm ʔš ʿlhm wmspnṯḥ*

‘and this portico and its pillars and the capitals **that** \_\_\_\_ are upon them and its roof’ (KAI 10.6)

e. *km ʔš qrʔt ʔt rbtṯ bṣlt gbl wšmṣ ql*

‘at Ø/(the time) **that** I called my Lady, Ba‘alat of Gubl \_\_\_\_, and she heard my voice’ (KAI 10.7-8)

f. *qnmy ʔt kl mmlk wkl ʔdm ʔš ysp lpṣ mlʔkt ʿlt mzbḥ zn wṣlt pṯḥ ḥrṣ zn wṣlt ṣrpt zʔ*

‘Whoever you are, any king or any man **who** \_\_\_\_ may again do work upon this altar and upon this gold doorway and upon this portico’ (KAI 10.11-12)

(27) Batnoam (early 4<sup>th</sup> c. BCE)

*km ʔš lmlkyt ʔš kn lpny*

‘like Ø/(those) **that** \_\_\_\_ (belonged) to the queens **that** \_\_\_\_ were before me’ (KAI 11)

The majority of examples from these 6<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century BCE texts lack resumption within the RC (→7f): all subject-relatives lack resumption (26b, c, d, f), (27) as does the temporal, covertly-headed oblique relative in (26e). We cannot say with any certainty whether the object relative in (25b) included or lacked resumption due to the textual break at the end of the line. However, (25a) and (26a) clearly show resumption with a locative prepositional phrase (PP) and an accusative object, respectively. (For further remarks on resumption in Phoenician, see section 5.3.) Finally, the examples in (26e) and (27) are the only covertly-headed RCs extant in Byblian and the RCs in are restrictive, which accords with my discussion of covertly-headed RCs in epigraphic Hebrew (section 4).<sup>15</sup>

15 None of the Phoenician-Punic grammars or studies I consulted in this study commented on the restrictive-versus-appositive semantics of Phoenician RCs.

## 5.2. *Standard Phoenician*

Under the rubric of Standard (or Tyro-Sidonian) Phoenician (see, e.g., KAI 13-61, 281-294) scholars include texts from Phoenician proper, the larger region of the Levant, and locations throughout the Mediterranean as far west as Spain. This larger corpus provides us with numerous RCs, all of which exhibit the relativization profile established so far: the relative head is generally overt but may be covert ( $\rightarrow 7a$ ), the head is always external to the RC ( $\rightarrow 7b$ ), the RC is postnominal ( $\rightarrow 7c$ ), and there is most often a gap in the RC (i.e., no resumption) ( $\rightarrow 7f$ ). The examples in (28)-(31) illustrate the variety of RC strategies in Standard Phoenician (see Schuster 1965; Friedrich & Röllig 1999:270-72; Krahmalkov 2001:93-103).<sup>16</sup>

(28) Zincirli (Kilamuwa) (ca. 825 BCE)

a.  $w^{\text{2}}n[k] \text{ klmw } br \text{ tm } m^{\text{2}}\text{š} p^{\text{c}}lt \text{ bl } p^{\text{c}}l \text{ hlpny}\{h\}m$

‘I am Kilamuwa, son of TM. Better than Ø/(the things) **that** I did \_\_ those [i.e., the rulers] before me did not do’ (KAI 24.4-5)

b.  $wy\text{š}ht \text{ r}^{\text{2}}\text{š} \text{ b}^{\text{c}}l \text{ ḥmn } \text{š} \text{ lbmh } wrkb^{\text{2}}l \text{ b}^{\text{c}}l \text{ bt}$

‘and may Ba‘al Hamon, **who** \_\_ belongs to BHM and RKB‘L, the masters of the house, destroy his head’ (KAI 24:16)

The two RCs from the Kilamuwa text show gaps at the object (28a) and subject (28b) positions. The second example (28b) illustrates the common use of an overt head while the first example (28a) provides a rare case of a covert head. In (28a) the covert head is also preceded by the comparative preposition *m-*, which is prefixed directly onto the relative word *š*. With a covert head, the RC in (28a) is necessarily restrictive, but the RC in (28b) modifies a unique referent, *Ba‘al Hamon*, and is thus

16 See KAI 13.3; KAI 14.3-4, 7 (2x), 7-8, 9, 10, 10-11, 16-17, 17-18, 19, 19-20; KAI 15; KAI 17.1-2; KAI 18.1-3; KAI 19.1-4, 9-10; KAI 24.4-5, 6-7, 13-14, 15, 16; KAI 26AI:2, 9, 14, 15, 18-19; AII:3-4, 4-5; AIII:7-8, 13, 15-16; AIV:1; BI:1, 5, 8, 9, 10-11, 12-13; BII:11-12; CI:2, 16; CII:2-3, 4, 9-10; CIII:1-3; CIV:7-8, 14, 19; KAI 27; KAI 30; KAI 32; KAI 33; KAI 34; KAI 37 A.4-5, 6, 7, 10, 13; B.5, 7, 8; KAI 38.1-2; KAI 39.2-3; KAI 40.2, 3 (2x); KAI 43.1-3, 4-5, 6, 7-8, 9, 12-13; KAI 45; KAI 47.1-3; KAI 50:3, 5, 6; KAI 51.2; KAI 54.1-2; KAI 55; KAI 57; KAI 58; KAI 59.1; KAI 60.2, 3, 3-4, 7; KAI 277.1-4; KAI 281.1; KAI 282; KAI 287.2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 7; KAI 288.1, 2-3; KAI 290.1-3; Cyprus-Idalion #12; Umm el-‘Amed xiii.1-3; Magnanini #2.

appositive (→6a). Now consider a few examples from the slightly later Karatepe text.

(29) Karatepe (Azitawadda) (ca. 720 BCE)

a. *wtrq ʔnk kl hrʿ ʔš kn bʔrʃ*

‘I have removed all the evil **that** \_\_\_ was in the land.’ (KAI 26 AI:9)

b. *wysʿ hšʿr z ʔš pʿl ʔztwd*

‘and [another king] pulls up this gate **that** Azitawadda made \_\_\_’ (KAI 26 AIII:15-16)

c. *wbmqmm ʔš kn lpm nštʿm ʔš yštʿ ʔdm llkt drk*

‘and in places that had formerly been feared, **that** a man was afraid to walk on the road \_\_\_’ (KAI 26AII:3-5)<sup>17</sup>

These examples mirror the lack of resumption at the subject (29a) and object (29b) positions that we saw in the Kilamuwa examples and add an example of a gap at the oblique (29c) position. The Karatepe examples are all overtly-headed and (29c) illustrates that Phoenician RCs can be stacked, that is, sequential RCs can modify a single head.

Standard Phoenician texts that are chronologically later provide few changes in the patterns of RC formation. Consider examples (30) and (31), from the third to second centuries BCE.

(30) Umm el-‘Amed / Ma‘sub (222 BCE)

*km ʔš bn ʔyt kl ʔhry [hmqdš]m*

‘like Ø/(the way) **that** they built all the others of the sanctuaries \_\_\_’ (KAI 19.9-10)

(31) Tyre (Throne of Ashtart / Abdi-ubasti) (2<sup>nd</sup> c. BCE)

*ʿštrt ʔš bgw hqdš*

‘Astarte, **who** \_\_\_ is in (the) holy community’ (KAI 17.1-2)

The RC in (30) has a covert head (and is thus restrictive) and a gap in the oblique (manner) position. The RC in (31) has an overt head, the proper noun *Astarte*, which makes the RC an appositive, and shows a gap in the subject position.

Note that with all of the overtly headed examples in (28)-(31), the relative element ʔš did not show any agreement features, whether for

17 Note that I mostly avoid the use of the English *wh*-words, such as ‘where’, which would provide a smoother translation for (29c). The *wh*-word ‘where’ encodes the locative features of the relativized word, unlike the Phoenician relative complementizer.

person, number, gender, or case (→Table 1). Thus, as with Byblian, the relative ʔš in Standard Phoenician must be considered a relative *complementizer* not *pronoun*.

Finally, zero relatives appear – albeit infrequently – throughout the history of Standard Phoenician, as the examples in (32) demonstrate (see also Schuster 1965:443-44; Krahmalkov 2001:100-101).

(32) Zero Relatives in Standard Phoenician

a) Arslan Tash, 7<sup>th</sup> c. BCE

*bt ʔbʔ bl tbʔn whšr ʔdrk bl tdrkn*

‘a(ny) house Ø(**that**) I enter \_\_, you should not enter, and a(ny) courtyard Ø(**that**) I tread \_\_, you should not tread!’ (KAI 27.5-8)

b) Umm el-‘Amed (3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> BCE)

*ʕbdʔlm bn mtn bn ʕbdʔlm bn bʕlšmr bplg lʔdk*

‘Abdilim son of Mittun son of Abdilim son of Baalsamor Ø(**who**) \_\_ (is) from the district of Laodicea’ (KAI 18.1-3)

c) Greece-Piraeus (96 BCE)

*šmʕbʕl bn mgn ʔš nšʔ hgw ʕl bt ʔlm wʕl mbnt h[.]s[.]r bt ʔlm*

‘Shamaʕ-Baʕal, son of Magon, who (is) the chief of the community Ø(**that**) \_\_ (is) over the temple of the gods and over the buildings of the courtyard of the temple of the gods’ (KAI 60.2)

While the first RC (32a) establishes that the gap can occur in the object position of a zero-relative, much more common is the type of zero-relative we see in (32b-c): a subject relative with a non-finite predication. From the contexts we can see that all three RCs in (32) are clearly restrictive, which accords with the implicational universal concerning zero-relatives and restrictiveness (→6d).

### 5.2.1. Resumption in Phoenician

Among the epigraphic Canaanite texts of the first millennium only Phoenician has left us with unambiguous cases of RC resumption; but even in the Phoenician texts the examples are limited, though they appear to increase over time. The two Byblian examples, presented above in (25a) and (26a), are both from the second half of the first millennium. and (33) presents us with the earliest example from a Standard Phoenician text.

## (33) Genitive (NP-Internal) Resumption:

Arslan Tash (7<sup>th</sup> c. BCE)*ḥwrn ʔš tm py*‘Hawran, **who his** [= whose] command is bound’ (KAI 27:16)

The resumptive element in (33) is the clitic (possessive) pronoun on the subject noun within the RC, *py* ‘**his** command’. In Standard Phoenician, as in all NWS languages, this genitive type of resumption is obligatory, since without the resumptive possessive suffix coreferential with the relative head, *ḥwrn* ‘Hawran,’ the noun within the RC would have no syntactic or semantic connection to the matrix clause. In contrast, languages with true relative pronouns manifest the possessive or genitive relationship by agreement features on the relative pronoun itself; the remnants of such a system are still visible in English *whose*, as in *Hawran, whose command is bound*.

Standard Phoenician texts from later in the first millennium exhibit resumption at positions higher in the NPAH (→Table 1):

## (34) Oblique Resumption:

Cyprus-Lapethos ii (274 BCE)

*hdlt hnḥ[.]št ... ʔš bn mnḥt ḥny*‘the bronze plaque ... **that** in **it** (are) the details of my beneficence’ (KAI 43.12-13)

## (35) Subject Resumption

a) Cyprus-Idalion (254 BCE)

*bšnt 31 lʔdn mlkm ptlmys ... ʔš hʔ št 57 lʔš kty*‘in year 31 of the Lord of Kings, Ptolemy, ... **which it** is year 57 of the Kitionite’ (KAI 40.2)

b) Cyprus-Lapethos ii (274 BCE)

*bšnt 11 lʔdn mlkm ptlmyš ... ʔš hmt lʕm lpš šnt 33*‘in year 11 of the Lord of Kings Ptolemy, ... **which they** (are) year 33 of the people of Lapethos’ (KAI 43.4-5)

The RC in (34) exhibits resumption in the oblique (object of preposition) position inside the RC. The two examples in (35) are the only two cases of subject resumption that I have found in any of the Phoenician texts in

KAI. The dates of these last two are worth noting: they are both late first millennium BCE.<sup>18</sup>

Assuming that the examples in (25a), (26a), and (33)-(35) are representative of Phoenician grammar, it is possible to draw some tentative diachronic conclusions. The chronological distribution of the extant Phoenician RCs suggest that resumption in the first half of the first millennium was only employed in the genitive/NP-internal and oblique positions. It was only later, towards the second half of the first millennium (and mostly in the late second half), that Byblian and Standard began to allow resumption higher up the NPAH, at the object and subject positions.

### 5.3. *Excursus: The Karatepe Text and Pied-Piping*

There are a number of possible relativization strategies that either do not occur at all in Semitic languages or are very rare and then perhaps develop due to language contact. For instance, Semitic RCs were originally neither internally-headed nor prenominal. For languages that do allow prenominal RCs, such as Ge'ez, it may be that this feature reflects non-Semitic influence, such as the Cushitic substratum of Ge'ez (see Dillmann 1907:532-36; Gragg 2004:427). Additionally, pied-piping and preposition-stranding are two features of RCs that are utilized widely in, for instance, English (as in 'the car in which I rode' and 'the car that I rode in'), but are generally prohibited in Semitic.

The constraint on preposition-stranding is demonstrated in the Byblian (25a) and Standard (34) Phoenician RCs: if a PP is required within the RC and its complement is coreferential with the relative head, a resumptive pronoun is required. Similarly, none of the Canaanite examples presented so far or listed in the footnotes exhibits pied-piping, that is, the raising of a preposition from within the RC along with the relative head. What, then, do we do with the rare Canaanite example (in this case, the only example in Phoenician) of pied-piping, given in (36)?

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18 Segert 1976 suggests that the Nora Stele (late 9<sup>th</sup> c. BCE, Sardinian; KAI 46) contains an instance of subject-resumption in a RC. His reading of lines 2-3, which follows KAI, is at odds with the readings of Peckham (1972) and Cross (1972). Based on my own reading of Peckham's original photograph, I concur with the readings and interpretation of Peckham (1972) and Cross (1972) against that of Segert (1976) and KAI: there is no RC and therefore no subject-resumption in lines 2-3 of the text. (I am grateful to Brian Peckham for the use of his original photograph of the Nora Stele.)

(36) Karatepe (Azitawada), 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> c. BCE

??bmqmm **bʿš** kn ʿšm rʿm bʿl ʿgddm

‘in places **in which** evil men were \_\_, gang leaders’ (KAI 26 AI.13-15; // BI.8 // CII.2-3)

Although my English translation is acceptable, it reflects a phenomenon that is utilized nowhere else in Canaanite epigraphic texts (hence, the ??-marking indicating it to be a questionably acceptable clause). Even in those Semitic languages that exhibit pied-piping, it is either extremely rare (e.g., four possible occurrences in Biblical Hebrew),<sup>19</sup> a notably unexpected diachronic or dialectal development (e.g., Maghrebine and Judeo-Arabic; see Blau 1999:62), or the possible influence of language contact (e.g., pied-piping, preposition-stranding, and prenominal RCs in Geʿez may reflect the Cushitic [SOV] substratum).

Indeed, I suspect that the bilingual nature of the Karatepe inscription (Phoenician and Luwian) may be the underlying reason for pied-piping in the Phoenician version of the text. Consider the Luwian version (37) of the Phoenician clause above in (36).

(37) Luwian Version of Karatepe (Azitawada), 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> c. BCE

(“FINES”) i+ra/i-há-za (MALUS) á-tu-wa/i-r+i-i-zi-wa/i-ta /CAPUT-ti-zi/

frontier.DAT.PL

evil.NOM.PL-CONNECTIVE-LOCAL

head.NOM.PL

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19 In the entire Hebrew Bible, out of over 600 examples of a preposition + ʿăšer, there are only four examples that have been identified as possible cases of pied-piping: Gen 31:32; Isa 47:12; Ezek 23:40; and Ps 119:49. However, the verb + b- ‘in, with’ preposition in the two clauses preceding the RC in Isa 47:12 suggest that the preposition in baʿăšer belongs to the matrix clause: ‘stand with your spells, with your many sorceries, with what you have toiled (over) from your youth’. Similarly, for the preposition + ʿăšer Ezek 23:40 (i.e., ‘For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and decked yourself with ornaments’, NRSV) there is a plausible non-pied-piping analysis. The preposition laʿăšer may be appositional to the previous l- phrases and thus is to be taken with the initial verb in the verse, ‘to send’, that is, ‘you sent for (those) who you washed and painted your eyes and bedecked yourselves (for)’. The syntax of Gen 31:32 and Ps 119:49 remain unclear, but see Parunak (1996:109) for a possible pragmatic solution to Gen 31:32. The weight of the evidence indicates that pied-piping was not a normal feature of Hebrew relativization in any ancient Hebrew dialect; thus, if any of the four examples in Gen 31:32, Isa 47:12, Ezek 23:40, and Ps 119:49 are actually cases of pied-piping, they are likely grammatical mistakes by their authors.

*REL*-ta-na a-ta á-sa-ta u-sa-li-[zi]

that in be.3PL.PAST robbers.NOM.PL

‘frontiers that evil men were in’ (Hawkins 2000:51, §XIX-XX)

Notice that the Luwian RC allows preposition-stranding, unlike Phoenician. The different syntax of RCs, including the syntax of adpositions, raises the possibility that Luwian relativization strategies influenced the syntax of the Phoenician text, particularly concerning the RC pied-piping in (36) (on other features suggesting Luwian influence, if not a Luwian base-text, see Younger 1998).<sup>20</sup>

## 6. THE CANAANITE RELATIVE CLAUSE IN SEMITIC CONTEXT

Three features from this study of the Canaanite RC have emerged as in need of much more careful description in grammars and other reference works: the relative element, resumption, and restrictive/appositive semantics. A quick examination of other Semitic languages confirms the conclusions I have drawn for the Canaanite RCs.

### 6.1. The Semitic Relative Elements

Consider a fuller picture of the Semitic relative elements. While the various Canaanite relative elements no longer carry agreement features, other languages, such as Old Akkadian, Ugaritic, Old South Arabian, Classical Ethiopic (*Geʿez*), and Classical Arabic, have inflected relative elements.<sup>21</sup> Even the inflected Semitic relative elements, though, are of a different type than, say, Latin or German relative pronouns. The inflected

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20 Although our understanding of the grammatical system of Luwian remains rudimentary, from the available evidence it appears to be an SOV language, with an internally-headed primary relativization strategy, although an externally-headed option exists. Moreover, Luwian adpositions, which are normally postpositions but may also be prepositions, are not strongly bound to their host NP. Thus, if the relative element is fronted, the adposition may move with it, resulting in pied-piping. On Luwian grammar, see Marangozis (2003) and Payne (2004). I thank Petra Goedegebuure of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago for discussing the Luwian RC and the Luwian version of the Karatepe text with me.

21 On Old Akkadian, see Deutscher (2001, 2002); Hasselbach (2005). On Ugaritic, see Tropper (2000); Bordreuil & Pardee (2004). On Old South Arabian, see Beeston (1962), 1984; Nebes & Stein (2004). On Classical Ethiopic, see Dillmann (1907); Lambdin (1978); Gragg (2004). On Classical Arabic, see Wright (1898); Fischer (2002).



Semitic relative elements must be classified as relative markers, since their agreement features match those of the head noun in its matrix clause position (not its position within the RC, which is what relative pronouns indicate). Consider, for example, the Old Akkadian relative marker:

Table 2: The Old Akkadian Relative Marker

	SINGULAR		DUAL		PLURAL	
MASC	NOM	<i>šū</i>	NOM	<i>šā</i>	NOM	<i>šūt</i>
	GEN	<i>šī</i>	OBL	--	OBL	<i>šūti</i>
	ACC	<i>šā</i>				
FEM	NOM	<i>šāt</i>	NOM	--	NOM	<i>šât</i>
	GEN	<i>šāti</i>	OBL	--	OBL	<i>šât</i>
	ACC	<i>šât</i>				

That these relative elements are markers is demonstrated by the example in (38) (see Deutscher 2001:406-407).=

(38) Old Akkadian Relative Clause: RIME 2.1.2.6:6

*in-šan-t-im      šališ-t-im      š-āti      Enlil*

in year FS-GEN    third FS-GEN    REL-FS.GEN    Enlil

*šarrūt-am      iddin-u=šum*

kingship-ACC    gave.3MS-SUB=him

‘In the third year **that** Enlil gave him the kingship’

However, due to the redundancy of matrix clause agreement features on relative elements (in contrast to the syntactically useful information provided by RC agreement features on relative pronouns), relative elements seem to be inherently unstable and systems that use them eventually replace them with a relative complementizer. This is precisely what we see between Old Akkadian and later stages of Akkadian – the inflected relative marker shifted to an uninflected relative complementizer *ša* (Deutscher 2001, 2002).

In West Semitic the same shift can be seen in *Geʿez*, Epigraphic South Arabian, and Ugaritic. The Ugaritic shift is an interesting case, since the 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. snapshot of the language that is preserved just happens to exhibit the relative element as it shifts systems. In other words, while some RCs in Ugaritic use a relative marker *d/dt*, which syllabic evidence suggests carried agreement features matching the gender, number, and case of the relative head in the matrix clause (see

below, Table 3), other Ugaritic RCs use a relative complementizer *d*,<sup>22</sup> which carried no agreement features.

Table 3: The Ugaritic Relative Marker (modified from Tropper 2000:235)

	SINGULAR			PLURAL	
	NOM	GEN	ACC	NOM	OBL
MAS	<i>dū</i>	<i>dī</i>	<i>dā</i>	<i>dūtu</i>	<i>dūti</i>
FEM	<i>dātu</i>	<i>dāti</i>	<i>dāta</i>		

A much later case of the shift from relative marker to relative complementizer occurs in Arabic – and not once but twice. The first case concerns the shift of the relative *d*-, which is inflected in the pre-Classical poetic texts of one tribe but not others (see Wright 1898, vol. 1:272-73; Huehnergard 2006:112-13). The second case concerns the Classical relative marker *ʔallaḏī*, which often lacks agreement features in Middle Arabic (Blau 1961:235-37; 1999:87-88; 2002:55).

## 6.2. Resumption in Semitic Relative Clauses

The possible diachronic change in the use of resumption in Canaanite, that is, the move up on the NPAH over time, is circumstantially corroborated by what we find in Ugaritic, Aramaic, and Ethiopic. In the late second millennium, Ugaritic allows resumptive pronouns, but only in genitive/NP-internal (KTU 1.14.3.39-41) and oblique (KTU 1.17.1.17-19) positions. Given the number of RCs available in published Ugaritic texts (just under seven hundred), the lack of resumption higher than the oblique position on the NPAH supports the sketch I have offered: for the NWS languages of the Levant this expansion of resumption did not occur until the second half of the first millennium BCE.

In the Old Aramaic texts of the first millennium B.C.E., resumption is used very rarely, with one genitive/NP-internal example in the Tell Fekhariyeh text (KAI 309.5) and one oblique PP example in the Bar-Hadad text (KAI 201.4-5). Similarly, the wealth of Imperial Aramaic data lacks even one example of subject resumption and provides us with only one questionable example of object resumption (B3.10.8-9). The use of

22 It is impossible to determine the vocalization of the indeclinable relative word. Tropper suggests /dā/ (2000:236), although it is unclear if there is any the evidence for this. An alternative proposal for the coexistence of the two types of relative elements, see Pardee (2003/2004:137-38; so also Bordreuil & Pardee 2004:55).

resumption higher on the NPAH is, however, clear in forms of Aramaic from later in the first millennium BCE and onwards. It appears in the fourth century BCE Imperial Aramaic of the book of Ezra (e.g., subject resumption in Ezra 4:9, 6:15), the second century B.C.E. Middle Aramaic of the book of Daniel (e.g., object resumption in Dan 4:27; see Naudé 1996), and classical Syriac (Noldeke 1904:278-90).

Finally, Ethiopic exhibits a change in the use of resumption between the classical form of the language, *Geʿez*, and modern Ethiopic languages, such as Tigrinya and Amharic. Specifically, whereas *Geʿez* prohibits the use of resumption in the object position within the RC, Tigrinya and Amharic allow it (Hailu Fulass 1983). While this diachronic development occurs much later than in the NWS languages, it provides further support that such a development appears to be a natural one in Semitic languages in general.

### 6.3. *Restrictive and Appositive Relative Clauses in Semitic*

I noted that the Canaanite data evince certain strategies for marking a RC as restrictive – when the head is covert, when the head is bound to the RC, or when the RC is a zero relative. These strategies for marking a restrictive RC are privative in that their presence unambiguously designates restrictiveness but their absence indicates nothing. That is to say, overtly-headed RCs, RCs with free form heads, and marked RCs may also be restrictive, but this can only be deduced from the context (e.g., if the head is a unique referent). These strategies in Canaanite are also manifested in other Semitic languages.<sup>23</sup> For instance, the few zero relatives in Early Aramaic (e.g., KAI 226 1.4, 8-9) are all semantically restrictive, which aligns with both the Canaanite data and typological expectations. Similarly, covertly-headed RCs (e.g., A4.3.10-11; C1.1.91) and zero relatives (e.g., B3.11.2; C1.1.95) in Egyptian (Imperial) Aramaic are also semantically restrictive.<sup>24</sup> Ugaritic operates similarly, with

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23 Note that Lipiński (2001) does not recognize the distinction between the two types in any Semitic language. This is consistent with the general lack of discussion on RC semantics in Semitic grammars, particularly those of the ancient languages.

24 Contrary to the assertion of Muraoka & Porten (2003:169), early Aramaic, as with each of the other languages in this survey, does have a formal strategy by which restrictive RCs are marked: if an RC has a covert head, if it has a bound form head, or if it is zero-marked, it is restrictive.

covertly-headed RCs (e.g., KTU 1.14.3.38) and zero relatives (e.g., KTU 1.14.2.50-51) used only for restrictive modification.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This examination of the RC in Canaanite texts has covered six languages (Edomite, Ammonite, Moabite, Philistine, Hebrew, Phoenician), with references to texts spanning nearly a millennium. I have analyzed the data by means of an understanding of the RC gained primarily from linguistic typology, with some influence of generative linguistics (e.g., pied-piping), and I have placed the Canaanite RC in comparative context by noting parallels to other ancient Semitic languages. The result of my study is the identification of three features of relativization that must be presented with greater clarity and linguistic nuance in the appropriate Canaanite (and NWS) grammars or comparative Semitics works.

First, the Canaanite languages used both restrictive and appositive RCs and, where there are data of zero relatives, they corroborate the typological universal that this relativization strategy is semantically restrictive. Second, in the earliest material for each of the languages covered (for which chronological stages can be determined), resumption occurs only in the genitive/NP-internal and oblique PP positions and appears to be grammatically obligatory. Resumption at the object and subject positions within the RC begins to appear only in the later stages of the languages. It therefore appears that resumption for positions further left on the NPAH was a development for NWS languages only in the second half of the first millennium B.C.E. As such, there is great potential in using this feature to refine diachronic analyses of the individual languages, including the complex biblical Hebrew corpus.

The third and final RC feature that deserves comment is the shift in Semitic from using an inflected relative marker, which provides redundant information (in contrast to actual relative pronouns). Thus, against Rosén (1959) and almost every other description of the RC in ancient Semitic languages, we should *immediately* dispense with the label “relative pronouns.” The use of “pronoun” for any of the Semitic relative elements at any stage of development reflects the inaccurate importation of Indo-European grammatical terminology into Semitic studies. We have relative markers, relative complementizers, and resumptive pronouns, but not relative pronouns.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, we see the shift from inflected

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25 Lipiński’s (2001) description of the relative in Semitic starts well, with the statement that “Semitic languages do not have any real relative pronoun”

relative marker to uninflected relative complementizer occurring in the late third millennium/early second millennium B.C.E. (Old Akkadian), late second/early first millennium B.C.E. (NWS), and late first millennium CE (Arabic, *Geʿez*). We can conclude from this temporal disparity that each language branch or sub-branch experienced this process independently; in other words, it is unlikely that the shift in

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(2001:533), but he then later comments that *ʔāšer* in Hebrew became “a generalized ‘relative pronoun’” (2001:535), thereby obscuring the typological distinction between the different types of relative elements. The use of “pronoun” for Semitic relative elements was excusable before linguistic typology provided an adequate set of terms, such as I provide above in Table 1. There has been little excuse for at least the last twenty years and yet “pronoun” continues to be used in, for example, Biblical Hebrew studies:

There is a fundamental difference between the Hebrew relative pronoun and its counterpart in the major Indo-European languages. The former is unchangeable and its main function is to signal that what follows it is an attribute, mostly in clause form, qualifying the preceding antecedent ... By contrast, in Indo-European relative clauses the relative pronoun is an integral and essential part of the relative clause, and it often displays a variety of morphologically inflected forms, the choice of which depends on the grammatical category or categories of the antecedent on the one hand, and on the syntactic status of the relative pronoun within the relative clause on the other (Joüon & Muraoka 2006:558).

Much of Muraoka’s description is reasonably accurate (the degree of accuracy depends on one’s linguistic framework), but it also illustrates the confusion that a good typology of relative elements can clear up. The Hebrew relative element is not a pronoun in any formal sense of the term and the continued use of this term in recent grammatical works perpetuates inaccurate linguistic description. The correct classification of the respective Semitic relative elements has long been recognized, for instance, in Akkadian studies (see Ravn 1941) and Ethiopic studies (see Palmer 1962, Hailu Fulass 1983):

The term “relative *particle*” and not “relative *pronoun*” has been used to refer to the element *zā-*. The choice of terminology results from the fact that *zā-* indicates that a clause is a relative clause, but it does not in any way mark the kind of distinctions that are shown by relative pronouns, such as English “who,” “whom,” “whose.” Distinctions of this kind, which are here called “referential relations” are marked in Tigrinya by the concord of certain elements within the relative clause with the noun it modifies (Palmer 1962:38-39).

Akkadian was the catalyst for the shift in Ugaritic nearly a millennium later, and it is similarly improbable that the shift in Ugaritic was the catalyst for the shift in both Arabic and Geʿez nearly two millennia later. Two more conclusions proceed from this: (1) these data confirm that comparative Semitists are correct in reconstructing the inflected relative marker system for proto-Semitic, and (2) the break between East and West Semitic was before the late third millennium. Neither reconstruction has recently been in doubt, to be sure, but further support is always valuable.

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